

REVITALIZING NEW URBANISM:
EXTENDING ITS SCOPE THROUGH SMALL TOWN REHABILITATION

by

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(Under the Direction of Mark Reinberger)

ABSTRACT

New Urbanism is a comprehensive town planning approach that combats sprawl by planning towns based on traditional town planning methods. The Charter of the New Urbanism lists several principles based on historic preservation and revitalization, however numerous historic towns are in need of revitalization and are being overlooked while greenfield communities are being planned on the metropolitan fringe. The principles of New Urbanism need to be applied to historic communities; by adaptively reusing extant structures and only adding new development when needed the historic integrity and sense of place found in many historic communities would continue on.

INDEX WORDS: New Urbanism, Adaptive reuse, Historic preservation, Sprawl, Sense of place, Placelessness, Traditional neighborhood development, Historic construction/craftsmanship

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INTRODUCTION

New Urbanism is a holistic planning approach to community design. New Urbanism rejects sprawl and promotes traditional neighborhood design, urban centers and mixed-use zoning. New Urbanism is often referred to as traditional neighborhood development (TND), transit-oriented development (TOD), and sometimes, smart growth.¹ By promoting human-scale planning, mixed-use zoning, grid-pattern street design, green spaces, walkability, mass transit and public spaces, New Urbanism seeks to overcome the traffic congestion, placeless architecture and the demographic homogeneity of the ever-growing suburban landscape.

“New Urbanism” began in October of 1993 when the first Congress for the New Urbanism convened in Alexandria, Virginia.² The Congress was composed of leading architects, city planners and community designers. All were worried about the decline of cities and towns, separation by class and income, double income necessity, and environmental damage from constant dependence on automobiles.³ Many members of the Congress were already at the forefront of community design and had designed communities that would later be referred to as “New Urbanism”.

¹ It is important to note that traditional neighborhood development (TND), transit-oriented development (TOD) and smart growth are all different, but similar, approaches to community planning. New Urbanism often incorporates all three and is often referred to in their terms.

² Shelley R. Poticha, Foreword to Charter of the New Urbanism, ed. Michael Leccese and Kathleen McCormick (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2000), 1.

³ Poticha, 1.

Two such designers were architects and designers Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk from Miami. In 1981, Duany and Plater-Zyberk designed Seaside in Walton County, Florida.⁴ Seaside is often seen as the poster child for New Urbanism and traditional neighborhood development; Seaside features compact design to encourage walkability, emphasis on civic buildings, vernacular architecture, and a public beach (the major feature of Seaside).⁵

Towns such as Seaside paved the way for the Congress of the New Urbanism; it is important to recall that Seaside follows traditional neighborhood development and is modeled after historic cities and towns, and is thus not a completely new concept. By 1996, the Congress of the New Urbanism created the Charter of the New Urbanism. The Charter breaks down design principles into several areas: the region – metropolis, city and town; the neighborhood, district and corridor; and the block, street and building. The Charter has twenty-seven principles all related to the different areas of the community.⁶ Perhaps a New Urbanist approach could revitalize declined towns. By using the town structure that is already in place, New Urbanism can revitalize once vibrant towns by restoring their character, business and life. Loss of open space will also be prevented by using an existing town rather than building a completely new town elsewhere; in addition, the preservation and rehabilitation of an historic small town will prevent residents from having to move to suburbia and thereby contribute to sprawl.

As cities and metropolitan areas grow, small towns across the country lose their population. Metropolitan areas have more employment opportunities, newer housing,

⁴ Peter Katz, The New Urbanism: Toward and Architecture of Community (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), 3.

⁵ Katz, 4 - 9.

⁶ See Appendix B.

more grocery stores, more day care centers, more schools...more of everything. Along with all these amenities of metropolitan areas, there is sprawl, neighborhood (i.e. suburban) homogeneity of people, classes and architecture, and often, little or no sense of community. Small towns have local stores⁷, local restaurants, local dry cleaners, local day care and numerous other local businesses, where one can have a personal relationship with the person they purchase goods and services from. Historically, small towns grew organically as people from “different social classes and with varying skills formed the community”⁸; this created a variety of citizens with different backgrounds and incomes. As people move away and local businesses close, towns begin to dry up, leaving in their wake empty storefronts and empty houses.

As more and more of the population is subsumed within sprawl and as large corporations take over where local businesses once thrived, small towns across the nation suffer and die. Sprawl and its vices are like a domino effect running across the country; small towns just cannot compete with sprawl. However, many city planners and community developers are trying to combat sprawl. One approach to combating sprawl is New Urbanism, a city planning approach based on traditional towns and community planning.⁹ By modeling new towns on traditional neighborhood structures, New Urbanism seeks to overthrow sprawl and homogeneity and create a sense of place.¹⁰ The goal of New Urbanism is to create a real community with different socio-economic

⁷ In addition to threats created by sprawl and metropolitan areas, small towns often fall victim to Wal-Mart. Wal-Mart has been putting small, local businesses out of business for decades and many downtown and Main Street businesses have had to close because of Wal-Mart and other “big box” superstores of that nature.

⁸ Warren Boeschstein, Historic American Towns along the Atlantic Coast, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 9.

⁹ In general, New Urbanism is based on town planning from the 1920’s.

¹⁰ Refer to Appendix B for the Charter of the New Urbanism.

levels, parks, local businesses, a variety of housing types and walkability. In other words, New Urbanism is about real towns, not suburbia. New Urbanist communities are planned communities, unlike historic towns, which grew organically from necessity; they are often developed on an empty landscape; built where there was once open space. New Urbanism gets inspiration from historic small towns, many of which have now declined due to the effects of sprawl.

There are no hard and fast rules for defining the term “small town”. Some sources define small towns as a town or community with a population of 50,000 or less;¹¹ other sources consider a “small town” to be a town with a population of fewer than 12,000 people.¹² Other sources define small towns as towns with a population of over 750 and less than 30,000 – towns large enough to have a downtown, but small enough not to have too many urban qualities.¹³ Furthermore, in towns of this scale, the size of the downtown, or Main Street area, is often indicative of the size of the town at the time of the downtown’s last construction date.¹⁴ According to the United States Department of Agriculture, non-metropolitan areas contain 17% of the population (about 50 million people) and cover about 80% of the United States.¹⁵ The Office of Management and Budget divides non-metropolitan areas into two categories: 1) micropolitan areas

¹¹ Virginia M. Mayer, “The State of Small Cities,” in Main Street Renewal: A Handbook for Citizens and Public Officials ed. Roger L. Kemp (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2000), 7.

¹² Boeschstein, xiv.

¹³ Richard V. Francaviglia, Main Street Revisited: Time, Space, and Image Building in Small-Town America (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1996), xx.

¹⁴ Francaviglia, xx.

¹⁵ John Cromartie, Timothy Parker, Vince Breneman and David Nulph, Amber Waves: The Economics of Food, Farming, Natural Resources, and Rural America, 9, no. 1, The United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, 2011, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/amberwaves/march11/deatafeature/>, 25 February 2011.

centered on clusters of 10,000 residents or more, and 2) all other “non-core” areas.¹⁶ For the purposes of this thesis, any non-metropolitan town with an historic downtown in need of revitalization can be considered a “small town”; furthermore, defining “small town” in terms of population is difficult considering that the population of historic towns has decreased, part of what has led to their decline.

New Urbanism should consider these previously vibrant cities; they were once a contributing force the nation’s economy and still could be; while many structures can be rehabilitated to their original use, many others can be adaptively reused; which simply means adapting, or reusing, buildings for new purposes. Examples of adaptive reuse can be seen all over the country – historic mills converted into loft apartments, historic pharmacies converted into bars, historic stores converted into restaurants, and so forth. Any time a structure is converted to serve a purpose that it was not originally built for, it is being adaptively reused.

Adaptive reuse has three major benefits: 1) it reuses a building, therefore being more sustainable than new construction; 2) it helps maintain a sense of character and sense of place in a community or neighborhood and; 3) it provides an historical reference to the past. Reusing an existing building means less new building materials need to be incorporated, thereby saving the resources and energy that would go into creating the building materials and also the energy and resources that would go into destroying the old materials.¹⁷ Carl Elefante, architect and director of Sustainable Design at Quinn Evans

¹⁶ John Cromartie, Measuring Rurality: What is Rural?, Economic Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture, 2007, <http://www.ers.ugda.gov/Briefing/Rurality/WhatisRural/index.htm>, 25 February 2011.

¹⁷ Athena Sarafides, Creating Sustainable Communities: A Guide for Developers and Communities: Building Reuse and Adaptive Reuse, The New Jersey Department of

Architects, notes in his article “The Greenest Building Is...One That Is Already Built”, that “four out of every five existing buildings will be renovated over the next generation”.¹⁸ High estimates for adaptive reuse lead to the second benefit: maintaining character and a sense of place. According to Athena Sarafides, “the adaptive reuse of buildings can help to anchor a neighborhood and community”.¹⁹ Reusing an older building helps to retain the sense of time in which the building was constructed; sense of time is inextricably linked to the chronological identity of the community.²⁰ By reusing an older building not only are the physical aspects of the building saved, but the history and integrity of the building is also perpetuated. In a small town or community with relatively few buildings, maintaining architectural character is crucial to telling the history of the town. Many of the principles of New Urbanism apply to community revitalization and adaptive reuse. Unfortunately, many of these adaptive reuse projects are located on metropolitan fringes, which only exacerbates the problems associated with suburbia. Also, the adaptive reuse projects tend to only focus on neighborhoods and individual buildings. Total town revitalization has not yet occurred through New Urbanism. Although the tools are there, they have yet to be used.

Expanding and refocusing New Urbanism towards preservation and town rehabilitation will enrich New Urbanism with history and sense of place; incorporating preservation into New Urbanism will lead to the revitalization and growth of small towns,

Environmental Protection, (September 2007), p.1,
http://www.state.nj.us/dep/opsc/docs/Adaptive_Reuse.pdf, 2 March 2010.

¹⁸ Carl Elefante, “The Greenest Building Is...One That Is Already Built,” Forum Journal 21, no.4 (Summer 2007), 27.

¹⁹ Sarafides 1.

²⁰ John C. Waters, Maintaining a Sense of Place: A Citizen’s Guide to Community Preservation (Athens, Georgia: Institute of Community and Area Development, 1983), 1.

while allowing them to maintain their history and sense of character, minimizing the sprawl and placelessness of suburbia. The rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historic small towns is a viable alternative to new development: it will slow the growth of sprawl; it is more sustainable; it creates better communities; and it preserves architecture, history and culture. New Urbanism has the potential to holistically revitalize small towns, but it does not recognize preservation as much as it should.

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND TO NEW URBANISM

THE DECLINE OF DOWNTOWN

The advent of the automobile precipitated the decline of downtown. The automobile brought freedom, individuality and escape; it allowed people to come and go as they pleased, work far away from home and drive to the store. It also brought smog, long commutes to work, and an auto-dependent society.

In all fairness, the movement of people from downtown to the edges of the city came with the railroad, as railroad companies began building commuter stations and local stops around the mid-1840s – long before the automobile.²¹ The first horse-drawn streetcars appeared in the 1850's to further suburban growth. Horse-drawn streetcar lines used light rails, which were less expensive to operate and therefore less expensive for the passenger. However, residents of these first suburbs were largely affluent businessmen and their families and the suburbs were more like small villages than suburbs today.²²

For a brief period following the Civil War, steam power and the newly formed industrial fringes brought residents back to the city.²³ Technological advances in construction such as elevators, building heights and electricity increased the value of city

²¹ All information contained in this paragraph can be found in J. John Palen, The Suburbs, (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1995) 28-9.

²² Robert A. Beauregard, When America Became Suburban, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 32.

²³ Unless otherwise noted, all information contained in this paragraph can be found in Palen, 32-6.

land. However, by the turn of the century city residents once again began to move out of the city and commute in by streetcar.²⁴

While residents had slowly been moving away from the city center since the mid-1840s (except for a brief period following the Civil War), it was not until the electric streetcar, or trolley, that suburbanization really took hold.²⁵ The first reliable electric streetcar came on the market in Richmond, Virginia in 1888; over a decade later virtually all other public transportation had disappeared. Fare was cheap and middle-class residents could live within 10 or 12 miles of their work and afford to commute.

Streetcar lines sent out fingers of development from the city center and changed the geography of the city fringes.²⁶ Those who in the past could afford to commute to the city now had to contend with the sights and sounds of the streetcar (not to mention those who could now afford to ride the streetcar). Soon, wealthy residents who lived along the streetcar lines moved farther out to escape the undesirable side effects of the streetcar. Amenities such as power, sewer, and telephone poles began to grow along the streetcar lines, while poorer residents in the cities were still using outhouses and kerosene. The advantages of moving to the new suburbs were growing, but only for those economically able to move.

Automobiles next revolutionized the city and sent waves of people moving farther out from the city. Between 1890 and 1915, the streetcar and automobile were both on the market; however, private companies owned streetcars, a public resource, while the

²⁴ Occurring simultaneously with the horse streetcar was the cable car; first occurring in San Francisco in 1873, they had spread to the east coast by the 1880's.

²⁵ All information in this paragraph can be found in Palen, 36-7.

²⁶ All information contained in this paragraph can be found in Palen, 38-40.

government subsidized the purchase of automobiles, a private resource.²⁷ The 1916 Federal Road Act provided funds for states to organize highway departments and the 1921 Federal Road Act elicited help from the federal government in building highways. Highways were planned for all cities with a population of upwards of 50,000, and the federal government paid for the construction of all roads labeled “primary roads.”²⁸

Henry Ford’s invention of the assembly line allowed for ease of production and low costs; by 1927, the last year of Model T production, over 16 million Model T’s had been built.²⁹ The rise of the automobile meant the decline of the streetcar, which had catered to a few suburbs on the fringes of the city, but could never have gone as far into the countryside as the automobile.³⁰ The automobile took the middle class out of the city, leaving behind a dichotomy of rich and poor. People now commuted into the city to work, living as far away from the city as they wished. Expressways were soon built – arteries running into the city to take people to work and out of the city to take people home.

The Interstate Highway Act of 1956 was an important piece of legislation contributing to the growth of suburbia.³¹ The committee appointed to study the necessity of an interstate road system was formed under the Eisenhower administration; its chairman was Lucius D. Clay, board of directors for General Motors. Under the Interstate Highway Act over 41,000 miles of new expressways would be built with perimeters around the largest cities. In addition to the new expressways there was a

²⁷ James Howard Kunstler, The Geography of Nowhere: The Rise and Decline of America’s Man-Made Landscape, (New York: Touchstone, 1993), 86-7.

²⁸ Palen, 46.

²⁹ Palen, 43.

³⁰ Beauragard, 32-3.

³¹ All information in this paragraph can be found in Kunstler, 106-7.

budget for the widening and improvement of local roads. The goal of the Interstate Highway Act was to link all major cities through limited-access highways.³² Not only were these linked highways meant to help trade and commerce, but were intended for military usage if necessary during this Cold War era.

As the new expressway system opened up the suburbs for more development, it took away taxpaying citizens from the cities. The perimeters around the city became walls dividing city residents from suburban residents – in other words, a wall dividing those with money and those without money. Eventually businesses that had once been in the city sprung up along the expressways, simply as stores where one could stop in on the way home from work or on the weekend. Strip malls and shopping centers sprang up across the country; most were auto-oriented and not pedestrian friendly. Personal touches and interactions were taken out of shopping as national chain stores began to be built in suburbia.³³ Small towns and downtowns once had department stores, but these were soon abandoned and the department stores moved to the malls.³⁴ When an anchor store, such as a department store, is vacated it is difficult for other surrounding businesses to stay active. Suburbia not only built malls, but also took the business out of downtowns.

Food choices were also affected by mass suburbanization.³⁵ Supermarkets replaced local markets and corner stores, as they were more oriented towards the automobile culture. Food consumed in the home also began to change as T.V. dinners,

³² All information in this paragraph can be found in Beauragard, 84.

³³ Beauragard, 128.

³⁴ Rusty Brooks and Cindy Searcy, “Downtowns in Georgia: Where Are We and What Do We Know?,” Small Town 26, no. 3 (1995):16.

³⁵ All information contained in this paragraph can be found in Beauragard, 128.

frozen, and canned foods became readily available since supermarket food had to be shipped from long distances. Fast food chains also became popular during this time, as they supported the automobile culture. Both supermarkets and fast food restaurants were located along major roads and pulled people away from the downtowns.

Once vibrant downtowns now were used only for work, with occasional restaurants, bars and shops. Cities became divided into districts – residential (only lower and upper classes), dining/entertainment, and business. This division led to large areas of the city being unoccupied for hours (or days on the weekends), which bred crime and vagrancy. The automobile emancipated the middle class from the city thus ushering in suburbia – the downfall of the traditional city.

THE BEGINNING OF SUBURBIA

Ironically, the Great Depression ignited the fuse of suburbia.³⁶ After the stock market crashed in 1929, the home construction industry fell by 95%; by 1933 half the home mortgages in the United States were in default. To help combat the problem the Roosevelt administration created the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) in 1934. Through the Federal Housing Administration banks could make loans that would be backed by the federal treasury. This program reduced down payments on homes to 10% and mortgages to twenty or thirty years; before the Depression down payments had been 30 – 50% and mortgages had been about ten years. The Federal Housing Administration gave people a new chance to own a home, but only on their terms.

³⁶ All information on the Great Depression and suburbia can be found in Kunstler, 100-102.

The end of World War II and the return of the soldiers are often the major factors credited with the advent of suburbia. Indeed, the war had put a halt to many home construction projects³⁷ and the return of the World War II veterans who needed housing again reignited the flame of suburbia. The city houses that the Federal Housing Administration had originally frowned upon had only fallen into further disrepair; these houses largely became inhabited by rural, Southern, African-Americans who moved to larger northern cities as machines began to replace workers on farms.³⁸ It was during this time that government housing projects were created (hence the term “projects”) –out of the way, poorly built, places to corral the lower classes.³⁹ The large migration of lower, uneducated classes to the cities caused “white flight”, in which those who could afford to moved to the suburbs. White middle-class America began to move away from the city, but was not replaced since immigration was at historically low levels.⁴⁰ Cities began to decay as residency levels dropped. Furthermore, assistance was not available to those who may have preferred to stay in the city.

World War II veterans were also guaranteed easy mortgages under the Veterans Administration; between 1947 and 1957 about 50% of houses were sold under the Federal Housing Administration and the Veterans Administration.⁴¹ Once a developer’s plans were approved by the Federal Housing Administration all standardized models of

³⁷ John A. Dutton, *New American Urbanism: Re-Forming the Suburban Metropolis* (Milan, Italy: Skira, 2000), 104.

³⁸ Dutton, 104.

³⁹ Dutton, 79.

⁴⁰ Beauregard, 4.

⁴¹ Kunstler, 104.

that home were qualified for a loan⁴²; whereas purchasing a home in the city meant more time spent having the home inspected and possibly waiting weeks or even months.⁴³

Not only was a house in the city a hassle to purchase, but apartments were not covered by G.I. loans and town houses were not being built. Further, Americans prefer a single-family homes with a yard.⁴⁴ The American Dream of the single family detached home was soon to become a reality. Unlike the city however, the identical rows of houses provided no cultural institutions and required constant driving in order to carry out daily activities.

THE SPRAWL OF SUBURBIA

Sprawl has become so commonplace in our society that it no longer applies specifically to the development surrounding the city, but rather to un-oriented development anywhere. Sprawl is “diffuse, de-centered, without clear boundaries, and car-dominated....all car trips feed into a decreasing number of roadways...which become increasingly over-burdened and congested with new development.”⁴⁵ It is random unplanned growth in which movement from one institution to another is not practical or convenient.⁴⁶ Currently, over 60% of Americans live in suburbs (Figure 1.1).⁴⁷ Sprawl continues to push housing, businesses and jobs farther away from city centers and deeper into the hinterland.

⁴² This often meant that the home in question was approved before it was even built.

⁴³ Palen, 60.

⁴⁴ Palen, 61.

⁴⁵ Dutton, 17.

⁴⁶ Robert D. Bullard, “Introduction: Anatomy of Sprawl,” Sprawl City: Race, Politics, and Planning in Atlanta, ed. Robert D. Bullard, Glenn S. Johnson, and Angel O. Torres (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2000), 1.

⁴⁷ Bullard, 1.



Figure 1.1 Suburban planning (Arendt, Rural By Design, 35).

One of the key factors of sprawl is zoning. Zoning began in New York in 1916 when the New York City Board of Estimate created the first zoning law.⁴⁸ The law was enacted in order to stabilize property values, relieve congestion in the streets and transit lines, provide safety, and beautify the city. The 1916 zoning law divided New York into districts of specified use: business, residential and industrial.

Zoning is currently used across the country to separate most human activities⁴⁹ – residential zones, commercial zones and industrial zones. Planners found it easy to use zoning because once a tract of land was sold and zoned it could easily be sold to a developer who then had the ground rules laid out for what to build.⁵⁰ Because of zoning, developers and builders tend to specialize in building in relation to the zone; what emerges is groups of buildings each with their own parking lot one must drive to. Another problem is that many of the zoning ordinances are the same across the nation,

⁴⁸ All information contained in this paragraph can be found in Carol Willis, “Zoning and ‘Zeitgeist’: The Skyscraper City in the 1920’s,” Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, 45, no.1 (March 1986): 47-8.

⁴⁹ Dutton, 18.

⁵⁰ Todd W. Bressi, “Planning the American Dream,” in The New Urbanism: Toward an Architecture of Community, ed. Peter Katz (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), xxvii.

not taking local conditions and concerns into consideration.⁵¹ They are primarily aimed at protecting land values and keeping single and multi-family housing separate; in suburbia, many zoning codes require a certain amount of setback from the street, which means larger lot-size and higher prices.⁵²

Zoning keeps “like” together; the same size lots, similar architecture, and people from the same socio-economic class are kept in the same areas.⁵³ Douglas Kelbaugh, professor of architecture and urban design at the University of Washington and member of Kelbaugh, Calthorpe & Associates, says “most Americans...want to establish and reinforce their own social and economic status by living with others whose socioeconomic levels are as good as or better than their own. Also, many Americans believe that poorer households have different values and behavior patterns – such as great propensity to commit crimes. And many whites associate poorer households with ethnic groups they dislike...”⁵⁴

While zoning codes place people in the same socio-economic level together, they also separate daily activities so one must drive to do almost anything. One must drive to shop, eat, go to the park, and go to work; for instance, in metropolitan Atlanta, workers commute an average of sixty-six miles a day⁵⁵. Commuting has become a major part of suburban life – those who cannot drive, such as children and the elderly, must be

⁵¹ Bressi, xxvii.

⁵² Bressi, xxviii.

⁵³ John A. Dutton, architect and planner from Los Angeles, California, claims that zoning often results in racism, separation, and segregation (Dutton, p. 18)

⁵⁴ Douglas Kelbaugh, Common Place: Toward Neighborhood and Regional Design (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), 38.

⁵⁵ Jane E. Brody, “Communities Learn the Good Life Can Be a Killer”, New York Times, 30 January 2012.

chauffeured around. According to Douglas Kelbaugh, the amount visits paid to neighbors greatly decreases the higher the traffic on the street (Figure 1.2).⁵⁶ The car was supposed to bring independence and allow people to have more leisure time, but instead it has cut into leisure time and rendered groups of the population helpless.

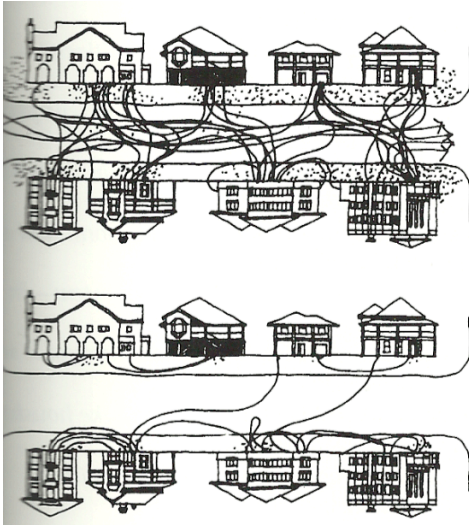


Figure 1.2 Number of neighborly visits on a low-traffic street vs. a high-traffic street. The average number of cars per day on the top street is 2000, while the bottom street experiences about 16,000 cars per day; streets with a high volume of traffic have less neighborly visits than low-traffic streets (Kelbaugh, 43).

Dependence on the automobile has done more than render certain sects of the population homebound; it has created a nation riddled with health problems.⁵⁷

According to Dr. Richard J. Jackson, professor and chairman of environmental health sciences at the University of California, Los Angeles, in a healthy environment “people who are young, elderly, sick or poor can meet their life needs without getting in a car” ; something not possible in suburbia. Rates of chronic disease such as Type2 diabetes,

⁵⁶ Kelbaugh, 43.

⁵⁷ All information contained in this paragraph can be found in Brody.

heart disease and fatty livers have soared since people began moving away from the places where they work and shop.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF NEW URBANISM

The New Urbanist movement has historical precedents. While traditional neighborhood development (TND) is the main catalyst behind New Urbanism there are also traces of the City Beautiful movement and the Garden City movement.⁵⁸ Both movements sought to undo some of the damage that had been done by the Industrial Revolution. The City Beautiful movement took place in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Industrial Revolution had scarred many cities; the City Beautiful movement, influenced by France's Beaux Arts school of architecture and Hausmann's redesign of Paris, emphasized civic buildings, parks, putting order to the cities suffering the most from industrial landscapes.⁵⁹ The City Beautiful Movement recognized the vices of the city and sought to correct them through planning, architecture, green spaces and sanitation.⁶⁰

Aesthetically, the American roots of the City Beautiful Movement were in Frederick Law Olmsted's Central Park and Daniel Burnham's White City of the Columbian Exposition, or Chicago World's Fair. Like the Columbian Exposition, City Beautiful proponents embraced natural beauty within the urban environment: wide boulevards linking civic buildings together with parks, playgrounds and other public

⁵⁸ Interestingly, both vestiges of both movements can also be found in suburbia.

⁵⁹ William Fulton, The New Urbanism: Hope or Hype for American Communities? (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, 1996), 7.

⁶⁰ William H. Wilson, The City Beautiful Movement, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 78.

gathering places.⁶¹ Much like New Urbanism, the City Beautiful movement put architecture on a walkable, human scale⁶² (a very grand, but still human, scale); urban designers such as John Nolen, incorporated parks and open spaces into neighborhood design.⁶³ For the City Beautiful, not only should civic buildings be linked by boulevards, but they should also be constructed in the same architectural style and situated in groups.⁶⁴ Cultural and civic buildings should be viewed together as an ensemble. This ensemble would be situated around a green space, plaza or at radial intersections. Their stateliness and cohesion would not only give them a sense of grandeur, but also would strengthen civic pride and bring a sense of community to city dwellers.

As the name implies, the Garden City movement sought to bring green spaces and natural areas to towns. Developed by city planner Ebenezer Howard around the same time as the City Beautiful Movement, the Garden City movement designed new towns surrounded by greenways on the periphery of larger cities⁶⁵ and connected with one another and the larger city (termed the mother city) by some type of rapid transit system.⁶⁶ Howard's theory was that keeping towns small would make them more manageable; he believed that cities like London, known for its vices during the Industrial Revolution, had sprawled out of control.⁶⁷

⁶¹ Wilson, 87.

⁶² Human scale, as opposed to gigantic, industrial-sized buildings.

⁶³ Fulton, 7-8.

⁶⁴ All information contained in this paragraph can be found in Wilson, 87-95.

⁶⁵ Fulton, 8.

⁶⁶ Frederick H. A. Aalen, "English Origins," in The Garden City: Past, Present and Future, ed. Stephen V. Ward (London: Chapman & Hall, 1992), 29.

⁶⁷ Jill Grant, Planning the Good Community: New Urbanism in Theory and Practice (New York: Routledge, 2006), 38.

Garden cities were not allowed to sprawl. Once they reached their population threshold they would replicate, rather than grow.⁶⁸ Population would be carefully monitored and strictly enforced; each town was to have a population of around 30,000, with the larger city having a population of almost twice that size.⁶⁹ Each smaller garden city would have a downtown area of about 1,000 acres with about 5,000 acres of rural land surrounding it (Figure 1.3). By creating smaller, “satellite” towns around a larger city much of the chaos and sprawl of the larger city would be dispersed.⁷⁰

Garden cities were to be radial with public space and civic buildings located in the center and a ring of residential area radiating out (Figure 1.4).⁷¹ The 5,000 rural acres per city were to be used for agriculture, industry, recreation, hospitals and retirement homes. All city land would be community owned, and land value increases would be put to public, rather than private, use. Howard envisioned a city run by its residents and a board of directors who would ensure that the city was functioning for the people.⁷²

⁶⁸ Robert Freestone, “Greenbelts in City and Regional Planning,” in From Garden City to Green City: The Legacy of Ebenezer Howard, eds. Kermit C. Parsons and David Schuyler (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 72.

⁶⁹ Aalen, 29.

⁷⁰ Grant, 38.

⁷¹ Unless otherwise noted, all information contained in this paragraph can be found in Aalen, 29-32.

⁷² Pierre Clavel, “Ebenezer Howard and Patrick Geddes: Two Approaches to City Development,” in From Garden City to Green City: The Legacy of Ebenezer Howard, eds. Kermit C. Parsons and David Schuyler (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 43.

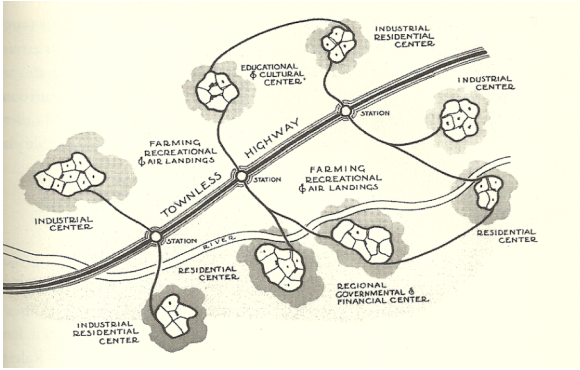


Figure 1.3 Once cities reached their capacity a new city was built. All cities were easily connected to the larger city by the railroad (Freestone, 87).

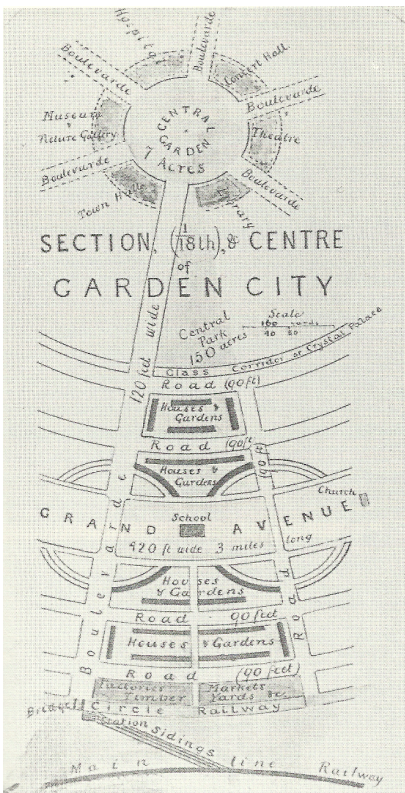


Figure 1.4 The radial planning of Garden Cities was later adopted by New Urbanists; the plan was to concentrate public space on the interior with private space radiating to the edge (Ward, 5).

Several communities in Britain were built on the Garden City model, the most famous being Letchworth; however, it was viewed more as a novelty rather than a

city model.⁷³ Garden cities eventually led to garden suburbs, which influenced the design of all suburbs. In America, town design called for blocks of residential and pedestrian-friendly areas centered around green spaces with automobile traffic on the periphery.⁷⁴ Street hierarchy and culs-de-sac were also introduced.⁷⁵ Soon, what had been developed as a way to combat city sprawl and diffuse the hoards of people packed into the city center turned into more of suburbia.

While both the City Beautiful Movement and the Garden City Movement were predecessors of sprawl they were also predecessors of New Urbanism. Similarity and hierarchy of architecture, along with ease of movement and the importance of public parks and plazas were taken from the City Beautiful Movement and used in New Urbanism. City individuality, nucleated city structure, mass transit and the idea of greenbelts and hinterland were taken from the Garden City Movement.

⁷³ Stephen V. Ward, "The Garden City Introduced," in The Garden City: Past, Present and Future, ed. Stephen V. Ward (London: Chapman & Hall, 1992), 4.

⁷⁴ Fulton, 8. Obviously, the Garden City Movement was a larger influence on modern suburban development than the City Beautiful Movement.

⁷⁵ Grant, 41.

CHAPTER 2

NEW URBANISM

Like the City Beautiful and Garden City movements of the past, the goal of New Urbanism is to bring order to community development and eradicate sprawl. By planning communities based on historic patterns (i.e., before suburbia and sprawl) New Urbanism intends to create more “neighborly” communities, decrease dependence on the automobile, make use of public transportation, create green spaces and utilize architecture common to the region it is built in. Also, consumers tend to prefer New Urbanism to traditional suburban development.⁷⁶

NEW URBANISM, NOT SPRAWL

Not only does New Urbanism seek to preserve traditional town design, but also to conserve the countryside. As sprawl spreads, more and more countryside disappears to accommodate new development. According to Randall Arendt, vice president for conservation planning at the Natural Lands Trust in Media, Pennsylvania, “five percent of development often ruins fifty percent of the countryside.”⁷⁷ Arendt advises being site sensitive, such as constructing buildings on the edges of fields or near groups of trees instead of ruining an entire site for a few buildings (Figure 2.1).⁷⁸

⁷⁶ Robert Steuteville, ed., New Urbanism: Comprehensive Report & Best Practices Guide, 2001-2002 ed. (Ithaca, New York: New Urban Publications Inc. 2001), 13-5.

⁷⁷ Randall Arendt, “Chapter Three,” in Charter of the New Urbanism, ed. Michael Leccese and Kathleen McCormick (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2000), 32.

⁷⁸ Arendt, Charter, 32.



Figure 2.1 Conventional development vs. Creative development. The amount of land saved in a creative development strategy is significant (Arendt, Crossroads, 50).

In Arendt’s book, Rural by Design: Maintaining Small Town Character, contributing writer Christine Reid, associate director of the Center for Rural Massachusetts in the Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning, University of Massachusetts at Amherst and former editor of the *Journal of the New England Landscape*, explains the difference between conventional development and creative development in a growing town.⁷⁹ In the scene Reid portrays, the fictional small town of Mt. Jessup, located 20 miles from the new satellite campus of a large state university, is growing due to the influx of people working for the university and businesses that support it (Figure 2.2).

⁷⁹ All information in this paragraph can be found in Christine Reid, “Evolution from Village to Town in a Typical Inland Site,” in Rural by Design: Maintaining Small Town Character, ed. Randall Arendt (Chicago: American Planning Association, 1994), 91-3.

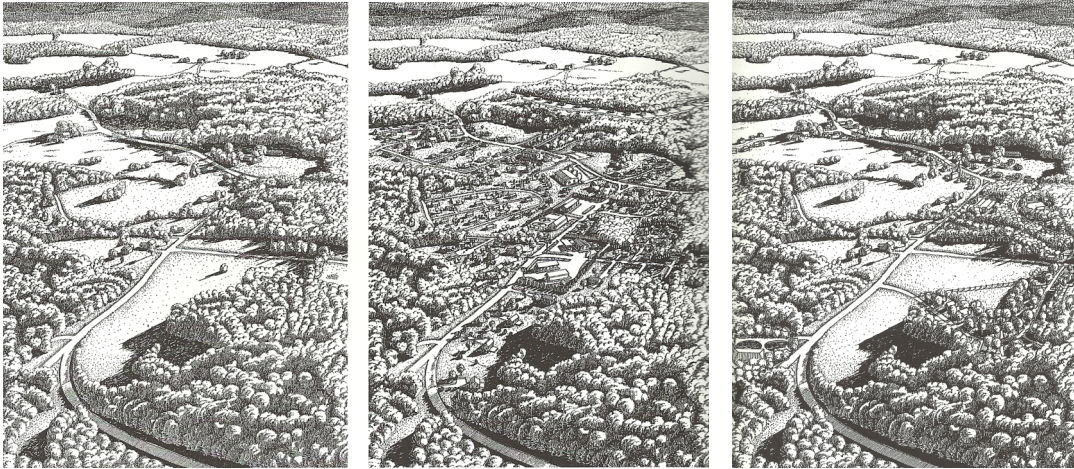


Figure 2.2 Mt. Jessup: current, conventional development scenario, creative development scenario (Arendt, Charter, 30-1).

In the conventional development scenario the zoning laws of the township are followed, but with no regard to the existing town or to the natural features of the land.⁸⁰ What had been field and pastures were now subdivisions; all houses were located on one-acre lots with two hundred feet of street frontage. The subdivisions were connected with thirty-foot wide roads (a standard width set for county highways). The new zoning laws were created with no regard to the existing town development patterns or to protect the rural character of the town; they were borrowed from a suburban community several towns away.

Other subdivisions followed the first, each one resembling the last until the town of Mt. Jessup looked like every other suburban town in the area.⁸¹ The former character of the “hamlet-and-farmstead” town was erased, as was the land, which had been used for crops and timber production. After the pastures became subdivisions the only other place to build was the forest, which was razed to become more subdivisions. Scenic

⁸⁰ All information in this paragraph can be found in Reid, 93-4.

⁸¹ All information in this paragraph can be found in Reid, 95.

viewsheds, such as hills, became zoned for houses and eventually the various roads used around town were rendered obsolete as larger arterial roads were introduced leading to “big box” stores surrounded by huge, unconnected parking lots. Only the pre-subdivision residents (the ones that were left) used the old stores in downtown; without enough business these stores eventually closed and the “heart” of Main Street was obsolete.

Reid explains that with a creative development strategy this scenario does not have to occur. Site sensitivity is a major focus of New Urbanism. Unlike the former scenario in which zoning laws were borrowed from a suburban area several towns over, site sensitivity takes individual towns, their character, physical features and the physical features of the land, into account. No two towns are alike; therefore the planning of each town should be different from the one next door.

In Reid’s creative development scenario a long-range planning committee looked at ways the town could maintain its rural character while accommodating the influx created by the university.⁸² First, the town’s natural assets were mapped and a plan was drawn up to preserve those assets rather than demolish them. Next, zoning ordinances were created and a master plan was drawn up; this helped citizens decide what sort of business and development they wanted to encourage and what they wanted to deter. The community decided they wanted to avoid strip malls, encourage infill design, create tighter neighborhoods rather than land-consumptive subdivisions, keep large tracts of land available for agricultural or forest use, conserve viewsheds, and create a mixture of affordable housing types.

⁸² All information in this paragraph can be found in Reid, 95- 9.

The first new development in this expanding town was a housing development.⁸³ Unlike the conventional development scenario where agricultural and/or forest land was filled to accommodate identical houses on identical one-acre lots, the creative development scenario clustered new houses on the forest edges in lots of different sizes according to what fit the terrain with minimal deforestation and grading. These new houses were of a similar vernacular style to the existing town houses and also were sited to mimic the existing settlement pattern of the town.

The town also created a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program to prohibit growth along agricultural and forest land and to encourage growth in areas deemed more acceptable to large-scale development.⁸⁴ TDR programs are also commonly used to restrict growth in historic districts or town centers, while encouraging growth in outlying areas where it is better suited. Through the smart use of planning and zoning the town of Mt. Jessup was able to meet the needs of the influx of residents while maintaining their identity as a town. New development grew with the land and layout of the existing town; TDR kept the woodland intact while creating new growth in other areas of town. Though expanded from its original size, Mt. Jessup maintained a city center and gradual decline in development as the town approached the countryside⁸⁵, physically marking it as a true town rather than an arterial string of development.

⁸³ All information in this paragraph can be found in Reid, 96.

⁸⁴ Reid, 96.

⁸⁵ This is known as the transect.

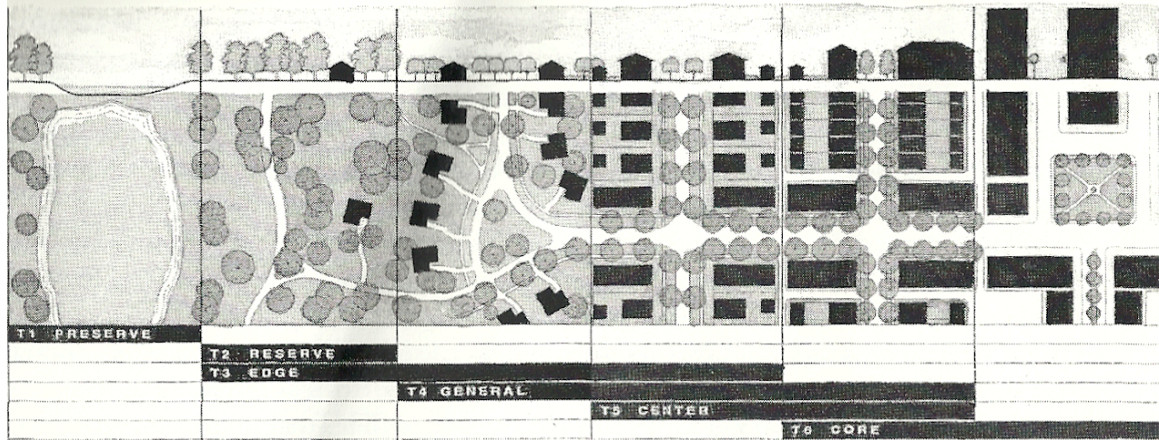


Figure 2.3 The transect (Steutville, 1-5).

Conserving hinterland is an important aspect of New Urbanism, thereby maintaining a distinct difference between towns – distinction between towns has been mostly eradicated by sprawl in metropolitan areas. As one moves farther away from the town and land becomes less developed, there should still be consideration as to how that land is developed (Figure 2.3). By keeping the same principals of high density-development in mind as in the town center, land can be conserved while still being built-out. Site sensitivity and lot size are key factors. As with interior development, buildings should be clustered on smaller lots and planned to fit in with the terrain (Figure 2.4).



Figure 2.4 Current development, conventional development, creative development. Clustering buildings on smaller lots planned for the terrain saves acres of land (Arendt, *Rural by Design*, 239).

In a true New Urbanist town and in an historically planned town the countryside has a major impact on the town. The countryside is the domain of farmers; in a self-sufficient (or mostly self-sufficient) town, farmers are an essential part of the town. Maintaining the countryside is about keeping a town self-sufficient and not having to rely so heavily on shipments from other places. Creating an Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) keeps growth centered in the town and keeps the town at a reasonable size (Figure 2.5); it is also helpful in making sure farmland and woodland are left free for necessary work outside of the town such as farming.



Figure 2.5 Traditional neighborhood design and New Urbanist design centers on the town center while growing out gradually to maintain the countryside (Dutton, 44).



Figure 2.6 Suburban design is de-centered and sprawls out, erasing farmland and woodland (Dutton, 14.)

In addition to distinction between town and country, and planning new additions with the terrain rather than in spite of it, there are several more features of New Urbanism that differentiate it from suburban sprawl (Figure 2.6). For one, New Urbanism embraces the use of multiple roadways and streets, rather than large arterials favored by most current developers. New Urbanism utilizes a more traditional grid-pattern for streets. According to Elizabeth Moule and Stefanos Polyzoides, architects and founders of the Congress for the New Urbanism, “streets are not the dividing lines within the city. They are to be communal rooms and passages.”⁸⁶ Streets are intended to be a component in a network, not the only passage to a destination (Figure 2.7). By having a variety of routes to take, traffic

⁸⁶ All information in this paragraph can be found in Elizabeth Moule and Stefanos Polyzoides, “The Street, the Block and the Building,” in The New Urbanism: Toward an Architecture of Community, ed. Peter Katz (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), xxii.

will be diluted,⁸⁷ as opposed to small roads feeding into one larger road that everyone must take.



Figure 2.7 Pedestrian-safe street vs. pedestrian-unsafe street (Duany and Plater-Zyberk, Traditional Neighborhood, 65).

For example, Charleston, South Carolina, which has an historic grid system, is 2,500 acres and has an annual tourist population of 5.5 million.⁸⁸ However, Charleston handles the traffic very well because of their grid system with multiple streets per destination. On the other hand, Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, which has nearly ten times the area of Charleston and only about 1.5 million tourists per year, experiences major traffic congestion because of their arterial roads (Figure 2.8).

⁸⁷ As opposed to the culs-de-sac and major arterials of suburbia, where a handful of major roadways lead to all destinations.

⁸⁸ All information in this paragraph can be found in Andres Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk and Jeff Speck, Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream (New York: North Point Press, 2000), 24.

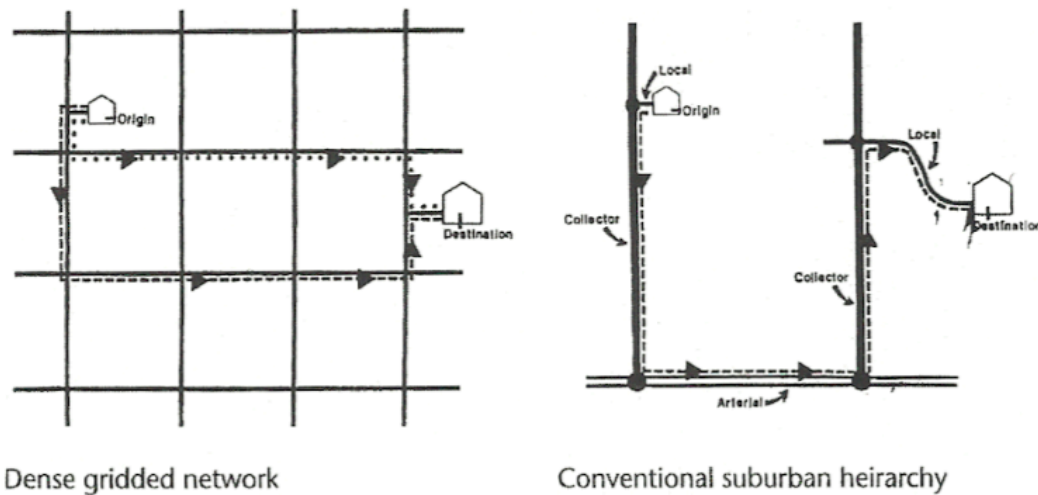


Figure 2.8 New Urbanist streets vs. suburban arterials (Kelbaugh, 154).

Although grid-pattern is a key feature of New Urbanist design, there are instances when having a terminal street is appropriate. In many New Urbanist towns there are streets that end at public buildings, such as the Rachel Carson Elementary School in Kentlands, Maryland (Figure 2.9).⁸⁹ Placing a civic building at a termination point of a street notes the prominence and importance of that building to the community; likewise, placing a green space as a termination point reinforces the importance of the environment.

⁸⁹ Katz, 41.



Figure 2.9 Civic building placed at terminal stresses its importance (Katz, 41).

According to Thomas J. Comitta, president of Thomas Comitta Associates, Inc., a town planning and landscape architecture firm in West Chester, Pennsylvania, “neighborhoods appear balanced spatially when buildings are complemented by plazas, squares, and other open spaces.”⁹⁰ The size and type of green space should be site-specific and relate to the area in which it is located. Types of green spaces include parks, ball fields (located outside the center of town), landscaped squares (as seen in Savannah) and greenways. Greenways are “vegetated corridors used primarily for outdoor recreational pursuits such as walking, jogging, hiking, biking, and horseback-riding.”⁹¹ They serve not only as a park-like area, but are commonly used as an Urban Growth Boundary, thus serving two purposes.

⁹⁰ Thomas J. Comitta, “Chapter Eighteen,” in Charter of the New Urbanism, ed. Michael Leccese and Kathleen McCormick (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2000), 116.

⁹¹ Randall Arendt, Rural by Design: Maintaining Small Town Character (Chicago: American Planning Association, 1994), 263.

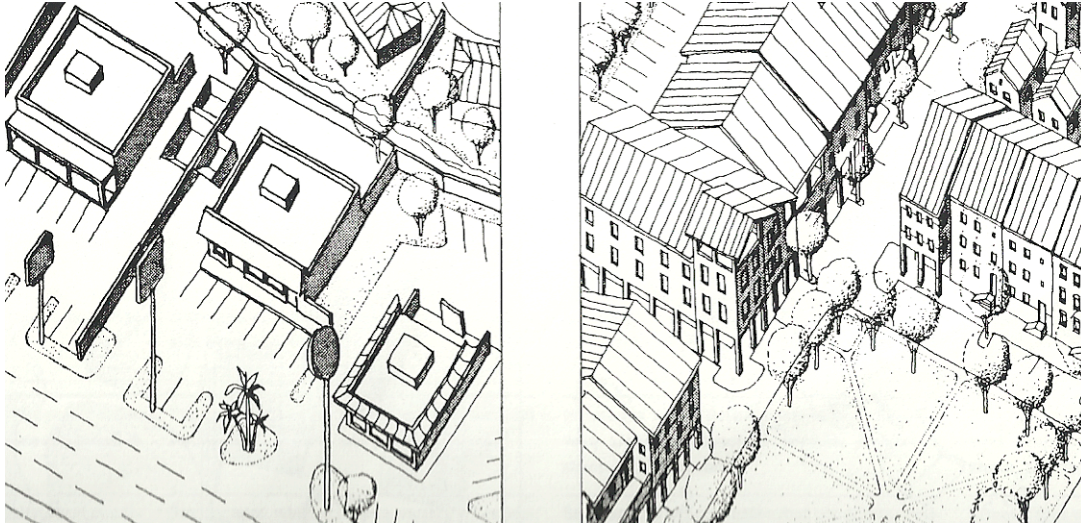


Figure 2.10 Suburban town development vs. New Urban town development (Steutville, 1-18).

Green spaces should also be located within walking distance for most residents; this means multiple green spaces rather than one large park (Figure 2.10).⁹² By having many and varied green spaces for people to enjoy, houses need not be on the large lots commonly used in suburban neighborhoods. Communal green spaces allow for smaller lot size for single-family residences, more multi-family residences and clustered lots. As with Mt. Jessup, green spaces do not always have to be added; they are often the main feature of creative development and are already extant. Multiple parks and plazas for residents to gather throughout the community help ensure activity throughout the day and night. Green spaces also attract customers to nearby shops and restaurants. Businesses located near green spaces allow workers to enjoy a break in the park. A mix of space such as this keeps people outside and is important for the health and economy of the

⁹² Randall Arendt, Crossroads, Hamlet, Village, Town: Design Characteristics of Traditional Neighborhoods, Old and New (Chicago: American Planning Association, Sep. 1999), 66.

community (Figure 2.11). Green spaces are historically important for civic use and bringing the community together as in the Green in New Castle, Delaware; the first structures built in the town in the 1670's were located around the Green, which remains a public space today (Figure 2.12).⁹³



Figure 2.11 At Seaside, the beach is the prominent public feature (Katz, 11).



Figure 2.12 The Green, New Castle, Delaware (Boeschstein, 181).



Figure 2.13 Historic mixed-use street (Boeschstein, 126).

⁹³ Boeschstein, 180-1.

Mixed-use development is very important for New Urbanism; it was also an important element of historic small towns. An 1886 Sanborn Insurance map of Stonington, Connecticut shows that most streets were a mix of commercial and residential; many blocks in Stonington remain mixed use (Figure 2.13).⁹⁴ Commercial and residential spaces are easily mixed spaces. These two types of spaces can be mixed in the same building, most likely with residential on top; however, both can be mixed in areas with civic and green spaces. For shop or restaurant owners who live above their businesses this method is very convenient. Crime and safety are another two reasons mixed-use is part of New Urbanism. Zoning keeps parts of cities and towns empty at certain parts of the day – often leading to crime because there are no “eyes on the street”⁹⁵. With a mix of commercial and residential uses there are people out-and-about most hours of the day, thereby cutting down on the amount of time available to commit a crime.

In northwest Philadelphia, the Chestnut Hill Realty Trust has begun buying up property in order to lease the downstairs to small family-owned business and keeping the upstairs for residential use. Constant activity to and from the businesses keeps the residences safe during the day and constant activity to and from the residences keeps the closed businesses protected at night.⁹⁶ In a traditional neighborhood most businesses are locally owned; locally owned businesses help foster a sense of community as one sees customers every day and has a relationship with them.

⁹⁴ Boeschstein, 126.

⁹⁵ Steuteville, 19-8.

⁹⁶ All information in this paragraph can be found in Arendt, Rural by Design, 22.

Economically, local businesses put back into the local community and help it prosper. Unique, non-generic, locally crafted items are also a benefit to the customers.

While much of the residential section of traditional neighborhood development is incorporated into the upper floors of shops and lofts, traditional houses are also major components. The private resources of the community should fill in around the public resources (Figure 2.14); this provides for more mixed use. However, residential buildings need to always be within walking distance of public spaces, such as parks, plazas, schools and government buildings, and mass transit, if applicable.

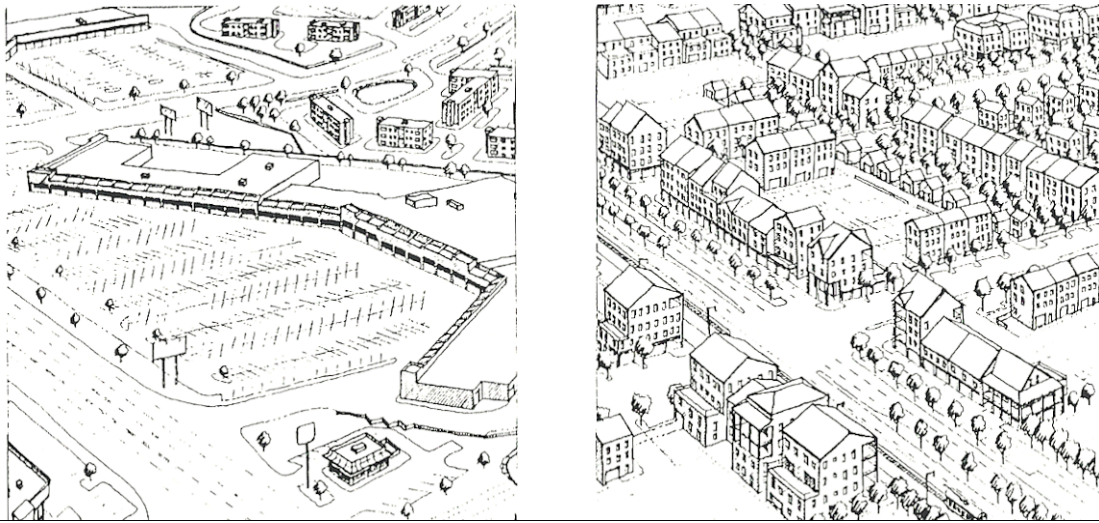


Figure 2.14 New Urbanism keeps commercial buildings within walking distance, as opposed to suburban development that is auto-oriented and pedestrian unfriendly (Steutville, 1-19).

Residential buildings should be built on small lot sizes to support high density to prevent sprawl. In keeping with pedestrian-friendliness, sidewalks should run in front of or beside all residences. Alleys are also an important method of community

planning (Figure 2.15). Garages should be located on the backs or sides of houses to keep with community character and aesthetics. Alleys serve as access points to garages; they can also be where garbage collection occurs and where utility meters and power lines are placed.⁹⁷ Locating these necessary, albeit less aesthetic, parts of the home in the alleys and out of sight allows for visual harmony and also keeps the streets and sidewalks free for local and pedestrian traffic.



Figure 2.15 New Urbanist alleys
(Katz, 44).



Figure 2.16 Beaufort vernacular
(Boeschstein, 244).

Private architecture should mimic the local vernacular in keeping with community tradition (Figure 2.17). Having a similar architecture that is different from the architecture in other parts of the country creates a sense of place, community and belonging. The local vernacular is very indicative of historic towns; for example, Charleston is known for its side-porch houses, New Orleans is known for its shotgun houses and Beaufort is known for its plantation-style houses with verandahs and large gardens. (Figure 2.16)⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Katz, 44.

⁹⁸ Boeschstein, 245.

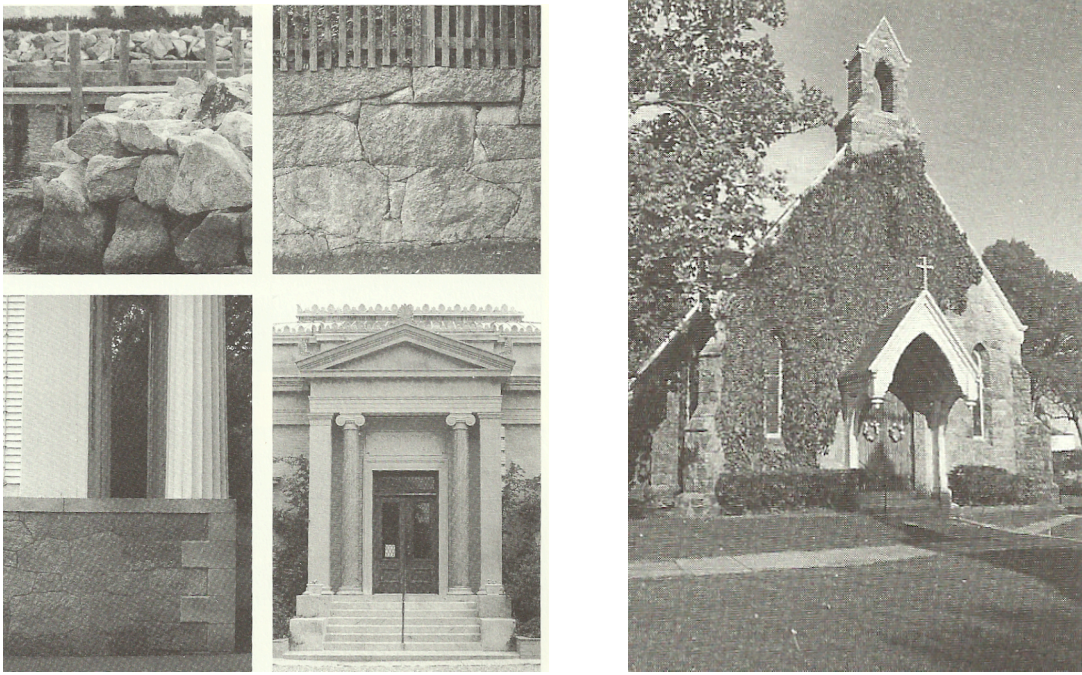


Figure 2.17 Vernacular stonework in Stonington, Connecticut
(Boeschstein, 129 & 131).

Diversifying the community by mixing ages and income levels also helps in prevent the stagnation that often occurs in suburbia when only people from the same socio-economic level live near each other. Mixing different economic levels throughout the community, rather than having economically divided districts, curtails mass poverty and is believed to cut down on crime. For towns that already have large tracts of government housing much can be done to improve the appearance of housing and make them look more like they are an integrated part of the community, rather than unattractive, unconnected buildings (Figures 2.18 & 2.19).⁹⁹ By planning government housing throughout, and architecturally similar to, the community, rather

⁹⁹ Steutville, 9-19.

than in one large district, New Urbanism hopes to relieve some of the stereotypes and stigmas associated with people who are on the lower end of the economic scale.¹⁰⁰

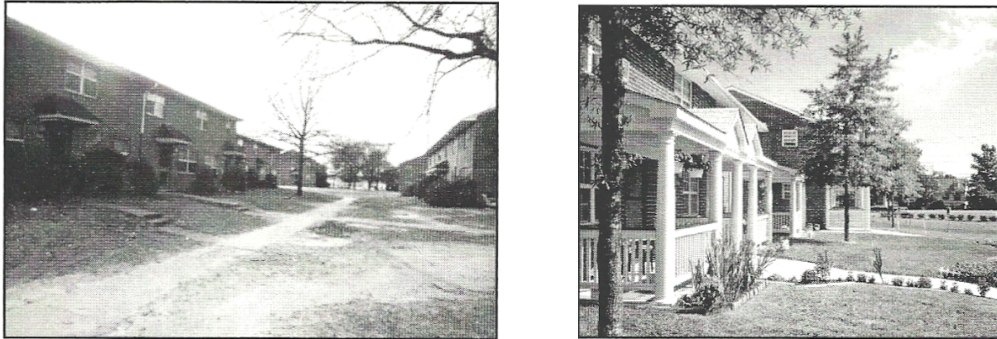


Figure 2.18 Unattractive public housing vs. attractive public housing (Steutville, 9-19).

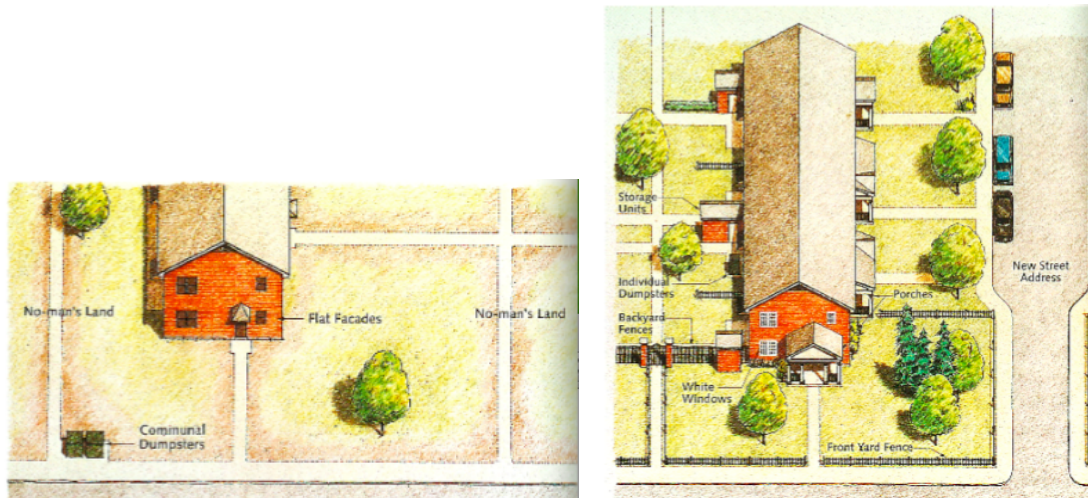


Figure 2.19 Unattractive public housing vs. attractive public housing (Dutton, 110).

CRITIQUES OF NEW URBANISM

New Urbanism is an all-encompassing approach to community design that bases its practices on traditional towns. It has many critics; for example, while New

¹⁰⁰ Kunstler, 129.

Urbanism seeks to overthrow sprawl and eradicate homogeneity, it often tends to do the opposite. New Urbanism has taken many criticisms including being called inauthentic, homogeneous, perpetuating, rather than eradicating sprawl, and being unaffordable, unsustainable and elitist.

Perhaps the biggest criticism is that it produces “fake” towns. While New Urbanism holds the promise of traditional neighborhood design with vernacular architecture it is often considered “fake”. As Jill Grant, director of the School of Planning at Dalhousie University, Canada, explains in her book Planning the Good Community: New Urbanism in Theory and Practice “the critics of new urban approaches...often deny that the created settings of new Urbanist developments constitute real places...”¹⁰¹. New Urbanism is supposed to rely on vernacular architecture, but in fact “western Canadian developments present imported examples of New England brownstones; southern-style cottages appear in Ontario communities” (Figure 2.20)¹⁰².

¹⁰¹ Grant, 181.

¹⁰² Grant, 181.

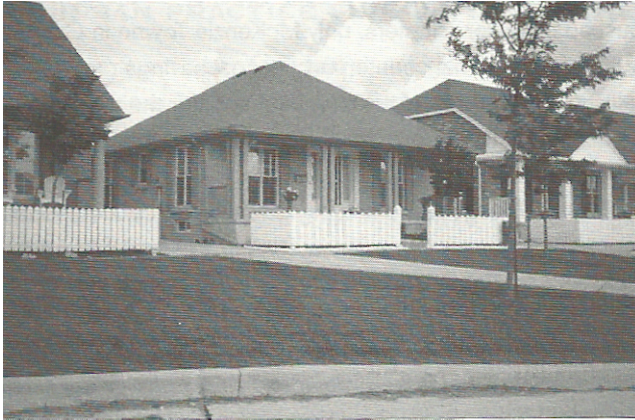


Figure 2.20 Non-vernacular cottages in Ontario (Grant, 182).

Many New Urbanist projects do, in fact, have a similar character or a similar style of architecture regardless of their geographical location. Currently, the Charleston house is popular far away from the low country that created it. This is not to say that all New Urbanist projects have identical architectural styles. For example, Seaside uses “vernacular styles of the southeastern United States and the Caribbean”¹⁰³. It is generally considered to be the first case of New Urbanism, developed in 1981 in Walton County Florida by Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk. Seaside occupies 80 acres, has about 2,000 residents and is located in the Florida panhandle.¹⁰⁴ The goal of Duany and Plater-Zyberk was to foster a sense of community by asserting public space over private. Thus, all public spaces, such as parks, plazas, streets, the beach and so on, were thought out before private spaces. After all public spaces were considered and laid out, private spaces were filled in. While Seaside has received international acclaim for its community planning, it also has its adversaries who consider it to be “too cute” and not a “real town”.

¹⁰³ Katz, 14.

¹⁰⁴ The following information on Seaside, Florida can be found in Katz 3-17.

Another argument against New Urbanism is that of affordability. While New Urbanism seeks to create real communities with a range of incomes, it is often only creating communities that are financially realistic to a certain demographic. Is New Urbanism only replacing suburbia in terms of socio-economics? Seaside features about 350 houses with 300 other residences such as apartments and hotel rooms. It has a school, a town hall, an open-air market, a tennis club, a tented amphitheater and a post office. While Seaside was originally intended to be an inexpensive beachfront community, it has increased ten times over its original value and has the feel of an upscale resort.

Another example is Atlantic Station in Atlanta, Georgia, which began with a broad residential price range. However, as time went by and as the community grew, homeowners began selling their properties in this trendy area for far more than they had originally purchased them. Suddenly, Atlantic Station became a community where only the rich could afford to live, not a “real” community in which there is a range of economic levels. The people who worked in the shops and restaurants could no longer afford to live there and were forced to commute to work.

Another critique of New Urbanism is the problem of greenfield development – when communities are built in an undeveloped area.¹⁰⁵ Most New Urbanist projects are greenfield developments, a very controversial issue. Not surprisingly, environmentalists are the most adverse to greenfield development. A greenfield site is an undeveloped site acquired for the purpose of building a new community. There are two major concerns with greenfield development: 1) greenfield development is

¹⁰⁵ Dutton, 123.

not sustainable because it destroys former green space such as farms, fields, wetlands and deserts; and 2) greenfield development is another form of sprawl.¹⁰⁶

Seaside is also an example of greenfield development; Seaside is a town that was developed where there had once been open space (Figure 2.21).¹⁰⁷ While based on a traditional neighborhood, it is not; Seaside does not have the history of an historic town and is often considered resort-like; not mention that 80 acres of untouched land had to be developed in order to build it.

Seaside uses the concept of the “five minute walk” – this means that all daily necessities are within a five minute walk of ones’ home (Figure 2.22). Living in such a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere encourages walking and promotes casual social encounters while discouraging auto use. Seaside also has a stringent mandate that buildings be set close to the property line – this enhances and defines the public space of the street. The major feature of Seaside is, of course, the beach. Seaside was designed to optimize waterfront access and views for the whole town and not just those who owned beachfront property. Sand footpaths run between buildings to make the beach more accessible. Seaside also features boardwalks and pavilions for more public beach access.

¹⁰⁶ Dutton, 125-6.

¹⁰⁷ The following information on Seaside, Florida can be found in Katz 3-17.



Figure 2.21 Seaside is a greenfield development (Katz, 7).



Figure 2.22 Seaside’s “five-minute walk” (Katz, 13).

The most obvious concern with greenfield development is that it destroys green space. Building entirely new communities where there was once a farm or forest goes against any sustainability principles espoused by the Congress for the New Urbanism.¹⁰⁸ Throughout the body of literature devoted to New Urbanism the comment is constantly made that suburban subdivisions name themselves after what they destroyed.¹⁰⁹ Greenfield development tends to be the same way. Perhaps the New Urbanist communities are not naming themselves after what was once there, but they are being built where there was once green space or, in this case, a seaside.

This first problem with greenfield development naturally flows into the second problem: that New Urbanism is simply replacing conventional suburbia. As sprawl and suburbia have consumed the countryside, New Urbanism is fast becoming the new replacement springing up on greenfield sites across the country. Kentlands,

¹⁰⁸ Principles 3, 18 and 27 of the Charter for the New Urbanism all deal with environmental issues.

¹⁰⁹ For example, if a subdivision named “The Orchard” were to be built where an orchard once was.

developed in 1988 by Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk is located in Gaithersburg, Maryland, a suburb of Washington, D.C.¹¹⁰ It is situated on a 356-acre tract originally called Kent Farm; a few of the original farm buildings were left at the end of the town commons for cultural reasons. A prominent tree, known as “Old Oak”, was also preserved and is the center of a group of residences. There are six neighborhoods in Kentlands and each combine elements of residential, office, civic, cultural and retail usage. There are several green spaces such as wetlands, greenbelts and squares to help define each neighborhood and create edges and boundaries.

Kentlands has over 1,600 residential units and over 5,000 total residents. Residences include carriage houses, single-family homes, townhouses and rental apartments above shops. Many of these residences (and other structures) are modeled after the architecture of the historic Kent Farm (Figure 2.23). The main focus of Kentlands is the historic Kent Farm on which the vernacular architecture of the community is modeled and which serves as a cultural center for the community. Certainly, the New Urbanist planning of Kentlands is far better than a suburban area named after Kent Farm that demolished the farm and surrounding land. However, planning the community on the metropolitan fringe of Washington D.C. could be considered replacing sprawl rather than eradicating it.

¹¹⁰ All information on Kentlands can be found in Katz, 31-45.



Figure 2.23 One of the original buildings (on right) that Kentlands architecture is based on (Katz, 40).

Preserving Kent Farm adds historic integrity to Kentlands and is a great example of New Urbanism utilizing historic preservation, however an entire town still had to be built. Had this community been built in an historic town an entire town could have been preserved rather than just a few historic buildings. It could have been a town replete with historic integrity instead of just a few historic buildings. Rather than replacing suburbia and increasing the amount of land consumed on the metropolitan fringe, it could have been built beyond the metropolitan area and revitalized a town in need of jobs, preservation, infrastructure and residents. There is the concern that New Urbanism is only replacing homogenous sprawl with more attractive sprawl.

In the book Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream, Andres Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk and Jeff Speck suggest that

“growth be focused in areas that are already at least partially developed”.¹¹¹ They continue on to say: “why create new places at all when existing places are underutilized?” Many greenfield developments are replacing sprawl, draining inner cities and wasting infrastructure. New Urbanism was created to fix these planning problems, not create new ones while perpetuating old ones.

In reference to Kentlands: rather than destroying open space could an historic town not have been revitalized? Revitalizing an historic town by extending infrastructure, adding more commercial and residential buildings and, if necessary, creating enough green and civic spaces that are walkable to the residences would have been more sustainable. Beyond sustainability issues, there are the people currently residing in historic towns; citizens already in place. There are jobs (though a declining number) in place; using New Urbanism to re-create an historic town would have added to the number of jobs, giving both old and new residents the chance for work. Also, there is the history and inherent sense of place that an historic town has that a new town does not. Seaside is often criticized for being “fake” and “resort-like” (it is not alone); much of this criticism would be non-existent were an old town to have been revitalized.

METHODS OF IMPROVEMENT

While the arguments against New Urbanism are numerous, most can be quelled with one answer: revitalize New Urbanism by rehabilitating a town. Instead of creating greenfield projects, New Urbanism should be used as a tool for small town

¹¹¹ All information in this paragraph can be found in Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 184.

revitalization. The problem of inauthenticity would be solved since the town in question would already exist; there would, of course, be architectural additions made to the town but all could be made in a similar vernacular to what is already extant.

Overlaying the principles of New Urbanism on a declining town will bring community and economy back to the town. Since the fundamentals of New Urbanism are based on traditional neighborhood development, it is more prudent to rehabilitate and revitalize traditional neighborhoods/towns rather than creating entirely new ones on the fringes of metropolitan areas. Rehabilitating existing structures and building new ones only when necessary keeps the architectural tradition of the town alive as opposed to creating an entirely new town that mimics those that existed in this country's architectural past. Again, the Mt. Jessup example is relevant. By creatively adding on to the town, the character and community were saved. This would not have happened had a conventional development scenario been implemented and would not have happened if a completely new town (even if a New Urbanist one) had been built on the outskirts of Mt. Jessup. A living community with a history and sense of place has far more character than a newly built town with no past.

Rehabilitating structures already in place would be much more environmentally sustainable than creating an entirely new town. Also, because a small town is being added to instead of created, the amount of greenfield development would naturally be less. According to Patrice Frey, "reinvestment in older neighborhoods offers a means to capitalize not only on the embodied energy and carbon in existing buildings, but also on the infrastructure that serves

buildings”.¹¹² If less greenfield development occurred on metropolitan fringes and more rehabilitation occurred in small, declining towns then New Urbanism would not be contributing to sprawl as it often is now.

Most small, declining towns are not located on the metropolitan fringe, and therefore their rehabilitation and revitalization would not replace suburbia – quite the opposite. Were these small towns across the country revitalized they would economically be able to retain their population, residents who may otherwise have to move to urban areas for work. Not only would they be able to keep many of their residents, but they could attract out-of-town families who may otherwise contribute to sprawl.

Finally, rehabilitation answers the question of affordability, that New Urbanism is feasible for only a certain section of society. If New Urbanism were used as a small town revitalization tool, a real town with real citizens (an actual cross-section of society) would benefit. However, with the revitalization and rehabilitation that will be taking place in the town it is important that prices be kept at an affordable rate for the citizens already living in the town. While the revitalization of the town should attract new residents, it should not forget the residents who are already living in the town.¹¹³

New Urbanism has the tools to combat sprawl and all of its vices, it is just not properly using them. The Charter of the New Urbanism needs to be revisited; of the

¹¹² Patrice Frey, Building Reuse: Finding a Place on American Climate Policy Agendas, The National Trust for Historic Preservation, (September 2008), http://www.preservationnation.org/issues/sustainability/additional-resources/building_reuse.pdf, 2 March 2010, 16-17.

¹¹³ Sean Zielenbach, The Art of Revitalization: Improving Conditions in Distressed Inner-City Neighborhoods, (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 2000), 31.

multiple principles pertaining to rehabilitation and revitalization few are being used. Revisiting the Charter and paying more attention to the principles regarding rehabilitation and revitalization should begin with downtrodden small towns across the country.

CHAPTER 3

SMALL TOWNS

Small towns range across the country from coast to coast. Historic small towns are the basis for the concept of traditional neighborhood development; development patterns popular across the country from initial European settlement up to World War II.¹¹⁴ Development of this nature is sustainable, cost efficient and saves the countryside. However, many of these small towns are becoming obsolete as people move away in search of work, better schools and a broader social life. Metropolitan areas and their fringes are growing out of control as much of the landscape is being subsumed by suburbia. Regardless of the amount of people moving away from small towns, studies indicate that Americans would still prefer a traditional neighborhood structure.¹¹⁵ The lifestyle offered by small towns is still preferable to the lifestyle offered by suburbia.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SMALL TOWNS

According to Kent Robertson, a professor of Community Studies at Saint Cloud State University in Minnesota, there are eight major differences between small and large downtowns.¹¹⁶ However, these exemplify the differences between small

¹¹⁴ Andres Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk and Jeff Speck, 3.

¹¹⁵ Arendt, Rural by Design, 4.

¹¹⁶ All information in this paragraph can be found in Kent Robertson, "Downtown Development Principles for Small Cities," in Downtowns: Revitalizing the Centers of

and large towns as a whole and not just the downtown area. The eight characteristics of small towns Robertson lays out are: 1) scale; 2) traffic congestion and crime; 3) corporations; 4) multiple large-scale development problems; 5) independent business; 6) lack of districts; 7) downtowns usually linked to residential areas; and 8) higher percentage of historic buildings.

The most obvious difference between small towns and large towns is scale. Skyscrapers and other large buildings are generally contained in larger cities; small towns are generally built to a more human scale (Figure 3.1).¹¹⁷ This means that buildings are generally three storeys high or less. Buildings also tend to take on different forms and have more embellishment to draw the pedestrians' attention and elicit interest (Figure 3.2).¹¹⁸ Historic small towns are built according to human scale because they existed before the advent of the automobile; towns were often built on the scale of a single-detached house.¹¹⁹

Small Urban Communities, ed. Michael A. Burayidi (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2001), 10-12.

¹¹⁷ Robertson, 11.

¹¹⁸ Francaviglia, 2-3.

¹¹⁹ Boeschstein, 59.

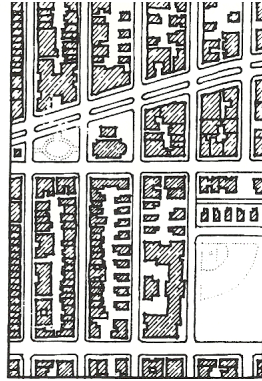
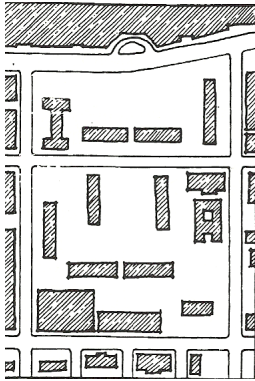


Figure 3.1 Auto-scale vs. Pedestrian-scale. In an auto-oriented city there are larger setbacks and more room for parking than in a human-oriented city. (Kelbaugh, 42).



Figure 3.2 Note the attractive and varied gables on these historic houses in a human-scale town (Boeschstein, 170).

As for siting, downtown stores and businesses are located on sidewalks rather than standing alone in large parking lots, which distance the customers from the stores and usually require that they drive rather than walk. Houses tend to be situated close to the street, which creates a sense of intimacy and safety for the pedestrian and allows the pedestrian to aesthetically appreciate the neighborhood since the houses are more visible.

Beyond the size of the buildings is the streetscape. Small towns have streets scaled for in-town, not commuter-scaled, usage by pedestrians and automobiles.¹²⁰ Freeways, perimeters and expressways do not generally factor into small town civic planning; in fact, most small towns are located on state highways as opposed to larger urban and suburban areas, which are located on interstate expressways. Since small towns tend to be more pedestrian-oriented the problem of traffic congestion rarely

¹²⁰ Randall Arendt, Rural by Design, 4.

surfaces. Also, according to Robertson, the problem of crime is greatly reduced in a small, as opposed to a large, town.¹²¹

According to Robertson, large corporate influence is far less in small towns than in large; for one, large corporate structures such as office buildings and hotels are absent, as is the economic influence of having a corporate center.¹²² In other words, small towns meet the everyday needs of consumers as opposed to having a large corporate influence that does not pertain to the lives of the residents.¹²³ In addition to limited corporate influence, small towns also tend to lack “multiple large-scale development projects such as sports stadiums/arenas, indoor shopping centers, convention centers and/or a mixed-use centers that act as development anchors”¹²⁴. By contrast, small towns tend to attract a greater percentage of local, independent businesses than larger towns or cities.

According to Roberson, “regional and national chains are far less interested in locating in small cities due to the reduced market area”.¹²⁵ Also, many small towns that once had department stores no longer do – many have been adaptively reused while many stand empty.

¹²¹ Robertson, 11. The tendency for crime to be less in small towns will also be discussed later in this paper.

¹²² Robertson, 11.

¹²³ Arendt, Rural by Design, 4.

¹²⁴ Robertson, 11.

¹²⁵ Robertson, 11.



Figure 3.3 Residences located on Main Street in a New Urbanist community in Atlanta (Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 188.)

Large cities are usually divided into districts – commercial, industrial, financial, etc. – whereas small towns tend to have all businesses¹²⁶ located together.¹²⁷ Small towns tend to be more mixed-use than divided.¹²⁸ Small towns have parks, civic gathering places, public buildings, restaurants, bars and offices located within the same few blocks, as opposed to having separate districts. Not only do small towns not have districts, but there are generally residences located in the downtown on Main Street (Figure 3.3). Upper floors of businesses often serve as the residence of the owner or are rented out.¹²⁹ They are also commonly “linked to nearby residential neighborhoods”.¹³⁰ Surrounding many larger cities are perimeters, auto-oriented businesses with surface parking and industrial sites. Small towns usually lack this unsightly zone and have residential neighborhoods near their downtowns. In addition to nearby neighborhoods, many of which are historic, many small downtowns have a relatively large number of historic

¹²⁶ Large industrial business is not located in downtown areas, but smaller industries such as auto-repair or even filling stations are often found in the downtowns of small towns.

¹²⁷ Robertson, 11.

¹²⁸ Arendt, *Rural by Design*, 4.

¹²⁹ Francaviglia, 8.

¹³⁰ All information contained in this paragraph can be found in Robertson, 11.

structures still extant.¹³¹ As will be discussed later, the growth of metropolitan areas and suburbia lessened the development in small towns; since there was less development many small towns were able to retain their historic districts.

Due to the fact that most small towns were planned before World War II, they tend to be harmonious¹³² in terms of architecture and planning, as opposed to suburbia with its plethora of bastardized architectural styles and road systems. Randall Arendt claims that the limitation of building materials, limited “architectural vocabulary”, and simpler technologies were the reasons for the harmony of older towns. However, regardless of architectural harmony and regular street patterns there was a wider variety of businesses and services. Towns were visually more harmonious, but functionally more diverse.¹³³ Many people prefer the planning and development of small towns to suburbia and larger cities.

A VIBRANT TOWN AND DOWNTOWN

Though suburbia continues to grow and sprawl across the country, many people claim they would rather live in a small town. There are those who end up sitting in a car for hours waiting to go to and from work. There are the so-called “soccer moms” who are forced to shuffle their children back and forth from school, extracurricular activities, and their friends’ houses. The elderly, with limited mobility and decreased night vision, also have to be chauffeured around suburbia. These are the people who would likely

¹³¹ Robertson, 12.

¹³² All information in this paragraph can be found in Arendt, *Rural by Design*, 3.

¹³³ It is this variety of function and harmony of civic planning that New Urbanism seeks to restore and replicate.

prefer walkability, the independence given by living in a pedestrian-friendly town and a shorter commute to work.

For example, Disney World is a major vacation destination for many suburbanites. According to Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk “the average visitor spends only three percent of his time on rides or at shows...the remaining time is spent enjoying the precise commodity that people so sorely lack in their suburban hometowns: pleasant, pedestrian-friendly, public space and the sociability it engenders.”¹³⁴ Many Americans may prefer to live in a traditionally structured town as opposed to suburbia (Figure 3.4),¹³⁵ but unfortunately it is not always possible with the planning systems practiced today. Though small towns have many pleasurable amenities, there is the problem of few jobs and, often, dying communities.

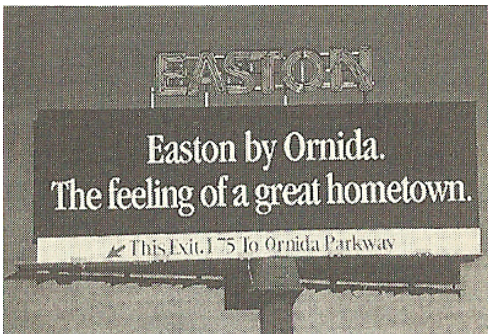


Figure 3.4 Developers marketing to people’s desire for a small town (Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 102).

¹³⁴ Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 63.

¹³⁵ Arendt, Rural by Design, 4.

Small towns often have communal spaces for gatherings, whether they be coffee shops, post offices, plazas or green spaces; they are places “where informal public life may be experienced”.¹³⁶ According to Arendt, people, especially children, favor the edges of small towns where there tends to be more green space. This is an area sorely lacking in suburbia where a copse of trees between subdivisions is often all a child has to explore within walking distance.

Another favored aspect of small towns is the downtown itself. While many small towns have declined or are currently declining, there are some that remain vibrant and healthy. A downtown that attracts people is considered a success.¹³⁷ The more pedestrian-friendly and socially diverse a downtown is the more people it will attract. A downtown that meets the social needs of residents, rather than just the business needs of residents, is considered a central social district rather than a central business district.¹³⁸ The health and vibrancy of a downtown is often an indicator of the health and vibrancy of the town as a whole;¹³⁹ a healthy social experience builds community rather than business alone (Figure 3.5). Having a reason to go downtown for an enjoyable experience is better experience than spending hours driving all over sprawl, sitting in traffic and going to numerous stores in order to only do a few things.

¹³⁶ All information in this paragraph can be found in Arendt, Rural by Design, 5.

¹³⁷ James B. Kenyon, “From Central Business District to Central Social District: The Revitalization of the Small Georgia City,” Small Town 19, no.5 (1989): 4.

¹³⁸ Kenyon, 6.

¹³⁹ Brooks Searcy, 14.



Figure 3.5 A healthy, vibrant downtown, Athens, Ga (Barnet, 11).

CHAPTER 4

REHABILITATION AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO NEW DEVELOPMENT

In many ways rehabilitation is an excellent alternative, financially, culturally and environmentally, to new construction. Financially, rehabilitation often costs less than new building construction. Reusing abandoned buildings builds a town's tax base, creates jobs and "may spur additional investment in the area".¹⁴⁰ Culturally, rehabilitation and adaptive reuse preserves historic structures that are anchors in the community. Finally, rehabilitation is an environmentally responsible alternative to new construction because of embodied energy, embodied carbon and fewer new materials used.

Many cities have successfully employed rehabilitation and adaptive reuse as a revitalization technique for abandoned properties.¹⁴¹ Many cities have experienced a decline in manufacturing; the conversion of a mill or warehouse into loft apartments can be seen in numerous cities across the country.¹⁴² Examples of non-residential adaptive reuse abound: in Charleston, South Carolina a solid waste incinerator has been converted into a municipal office and library, in Dallas, Texas a high school has been converted into an office building, in San Diego, California a mansion, the Heilborn House, has been converted to a bank and in York, Pennsylvania an abandoned department store has been

¹⁴⁰ Zielenbach, 30.

¹⁴¹ All information in this paragraph can be found in Robert W. Burchell and David Listokin, The Adaptive Reuse Handbook: Procedures to Inventory, Control, Manage, and Reemploy Surplus Municipal Properties, (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Center for Urban Policy Research, 1981), 313.

¹⁴² In Athens, Georgia the Leathers Building, an abandoned mill, has been converted into rental space and now holds a yoga studio, a restaurant, a bar, a wine store, a landscape architecture firm and a catering company.

converted to an office and retail factory. Rather than demolish these structures they were adaptively reused; historic structures were preserved and materials were saved.

HISTORIC CRAFTSMANSHIP

One economic benefit, and also a sustainability issue, is that while many historic buildings are thought to be “energy sieves”¹⁴³ the opposite is often true. Buildings constructed before the days of climate control are “actually more efficient than buildings of more recent vintage because of their site sensitivity, quality of construction, and use of passive heating and cooling.”¹⁴⁴ Before the advent of climate control, buildings were built to have maximum sun exposure in the cooler months and lesser exposure in summer months; landscaping and porches also helped to create shade.¹⁴⁵ Thicker walls and proper window placement helped to cut down on the amount of heat allowed in and out of the building. For instance, houses in the northern United States were often built in simple shapes with low ceilings to conserve heat; they generally had a small entrance porch to protect the entrance from the elements and had steep roof-lines to keep snow loads from building up.¹⁴⁶ While houses in the southern United States were often built in complex shapes with high ceilings to allow for air circulation; they generally had a large porch running the expanse of the house to create shade and provide an extra room for the house and had shallow-sloped roof to create a shadowy overhang for windows and

¹⁴³ Frey, 2.

¹⁴⁴ Frey, 2.

¹⁴⁵ All information contained in this paragraph can be found in Frey, 21 – 23.

¹⁴⁶ Boeschstein, 8.

doors.¹⁴⁷ In fact, according to the United States Energy Information Agency, buildings pre-dating 1920 are more energy-efficient than buildings built from 1920 until 2000.

Preserving pre-1920 buildings (whether returning them to their original function or adaptively reusing them for another function) means preserving their operating systems as well as preserving their aesthetic fabric.¹⁴⁸ Windows are a major component of historic operating systems: as much as fifty percent of a structure's heat loss is through windows.¹⁴⁹ While glass is often believed to be the biggest factor in heat loss, it is the window operating system, such as sash pockets and meeting rails, where outside air filtration is the largest and the most heat is lost.¹⁵⁰ Since it is the window systems that affect air filtration, and therefore heat loss, it is recommended that these systems be repaired rather than replaced.¹⁵¹ For instance, the efficiency of a replacement window in an original frame is only as good as the quality of the installation; retrofitting and reusing the original window will exceed the efficiency of a replacement window.

Retrofitting and reusing historic windows is not only better in terms of installation, but historic windows are often better in terms of quality, hardware and maintenance.¹⁵² The quality of wood used in historic windows is superior to the quality of wood used today. Historic windows are generally made from hard and soft woods harvested from unfertilized early-growth stock, which is denser and has more grain structure than fertilized or second-growth stock available today. The quality of historic

¹⁴⁷ Boeschenstein, 8.

¹⁴⁸ Elefante, 29.

¹⁴⁹ Walter Sedovic and Jill H. Gotthelf, "What Replacement Windows Can't Replace: The Real Cost of Removing Historic Windows", *APT Bulletin*, 36, no. 4 (Jan. 2005), 27.

¹⁵⁰ Sedovic and Gotthelf, 27.

¹⁵¹ All information contained in this paragraph can be found in Sedovic and Gotthelf, 27.

¹⁵² All information contained in this paragraph can be found in Sedovic and Gotthelf, 28.

wood coupled with historic milling methods, such as quarter-sawing and radial-sawing, gives historic windows greater stability both in terms of dimensional change and securing hardware. Historic window hardware, such as pulleys, ropes and weights, are not only durable, but are easily replaceable. Instead of having to replace an entire system (as with modern windows) historic hardware only requires individual components be fixed.¹⁵³ With proper maintenance historic windows can easily have a life of over one hundred years.¹⁵⁴

Beyond maintaining historic windows there is evidence to suggest that pressed-metal ceilings (often referred to as pressed-tin regardless of the metal) should be maintained to help keep the structure sound (Figure 4.1 & 4.2).¹⁵⁵ Pressed-metal ceilings have been around since the 1870's, but were largely made from corrugated iron and were advertised as being fire proof. Later made from steel, they were largely popular for five reasons: 1) fire resistance; 2) sanitation (including being rodent proof); 3) permanence; 4) cost and; 5) decoration.¹⁵⁶ They were very popular until the 1930's when the Depression slowed down construction, sheet metal was diverted to war purposes during World War II, and dropped acoustical tile became popular after the war.

¹⁵³ Sedovic and Gotthelf, 29.

¹⁵⁴ Sedovic and Gotthelf, 27.

¹⁵⁵ Michael O. Hunt and Robert R. Leavitt, "The Effect of Pressed-Metal Ceilings on Floor Stiffness", *APT Bulletin*, 38, no. 1 (2007), 27.

¹⁵⁶ Pamela H. Simpson, "Cheap, Quick and Easy, Part II: Pressed Metal Ceilings, 1880-1930", *Vernacular Architecture Forum*, 5 (1995), 154.

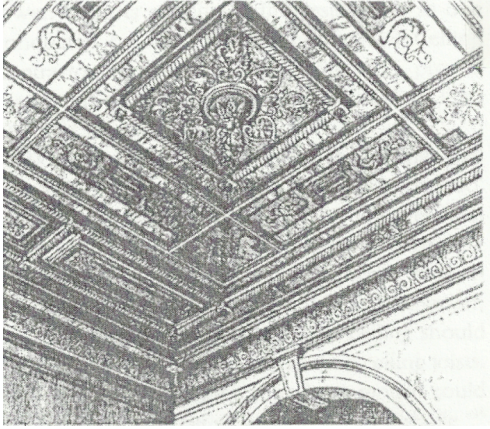


Figure 4.1 Example of sheet metal ceiling Courthouse at Council Bluff, Iowa (Simpson, 153).

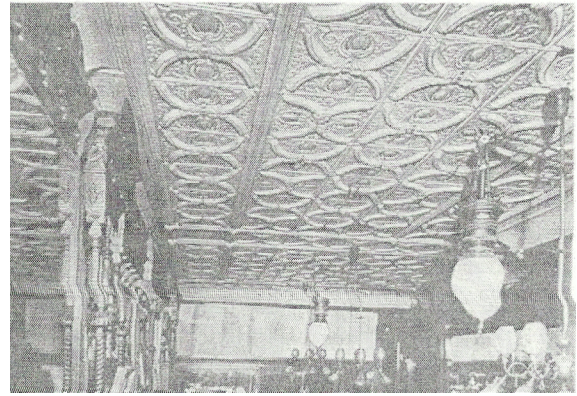


Figure 4.2 Interior of Philadelphia in restaurant with a pressed metal ceiling (Simpson, 156).

Retaining pressed-metal ceilings in historic structures may very well help keep the historic structures stable. Testing conducted on second and third storey wooden floors with a pressed-metal ceiling beneath resulted in a twenty-six percent difference in the stiffness of the floor than when the pressed-metal ceiling was removed.¹⁵⁷ While pressed-metal ceilings have long been regarded as beautiful, there is now evidence that they provide structural stability.

While there are many inherent and superior qualities to structures built before 1920, there are also drawbacks. Older forms of heating and cooling are not as sustainable as modern technology.¹⁵⁸ Modern heating and cooling systems should be coupled with historic retrofits to create a more sustainable and energy efficient structure. For buildings constructed after World War II (most notably buildings constructed between 1950 and

¹⁵⁷ Hunt and Leavitt, 29. Testing was conducted on the Masonic Hall (ca. 1888) in Lafayette, Indiana, which was being renovated and turned into condominiums. The stiffness of the second and third storeys was calculated before and after the original pressed-metal ceiling was removed.

¹⁵⁸ Frey, 23.

1980) there is a different set of guidelines for preservation. By the end of World War II construction technology began to change towards “increasing the complexity of mechanical and electrical systems”¹⁵⁹, rather than relying on historic construction practices. Rather than relying on design to provide temperature control and using traditional, materials, architects and developers began to experiment with new technologies and techniques. Materials used in this era often lack durability and rely heavily on the use of fossil fuels.¹⁶⁰ The economy was booming and cheap energy was abundant; architects and developers did not have the environmental concerns preservationists do today.¹⁶¹ Buildings from this era need to be transformed with sustainable alternatives to their existing deficiencies, while more historic buildings should be retrofitted and used to the maximum potential. Preservation should take structures into account on an individual basis rather than forcing structures to adhere to a specific set of prescribed standards.

¹⁵⁹ Elefante, 28.

¹⁶⁰ Elefante, 28.

¹⁶¹ Frey, 23.

CHAPTER 5

NEW URBANISM AS A REVITALIZATION METHOD

New Urbanism can be a powerful tool in combating the decline of small historic towns; it can also be helpful in revitalizing already declined towns.

“Revitalization can mean the physical redevelopment of blighted areas, the creation of additional jobs, the improvement of local infrastructure,”¹⁶² all of which are possible with New Urbanism.

Since New Urbanism bases its practices and methods on traditional towns it only makes sense that those same practices and methods would be advantageous to pumping life back into once thriving towns and town centers. Revitalizing a town keeps culture intact, whereas creating a new town on the fringes of metropolitan areas (where most New Urbanist communities are located) only replaces suburban sprawl. Bringing life back into downtrodden towns across the nation will keep sprawl at bay, cut down on hours commuted to work, help local businesses open and thrive, be more environmentally aware, and restore a sense of place to many communities.

Creating a New Urbanist community from a declining town could be easier than creating an entirely new community. For instance, the town infrastructure is already in place; there are already road systems, utility lines, buildings, houses, and so on. Using systems already in place for these towns is more cost-effective than building new roads and infrastructure. Not only is it more cost-effective to reuse and

¹⁶² Zielenbach, 23.

expand on existing infrastructure, it is more environmentally conscious and culturally aware. By working with what is already in place, the fundamentals of town planning are already taken care of.

Before any planning initiatives are taken the town should first create a master plan that will help create a vision for what the town is to become. The master plan should also be revised after initial construction in order to keep future undertakings in order. Creating a master plan keeps development in check; with revitalization old structures will be reused, sometimes for new purposes, but new construction will inevitably be built, a master plan will help visualize the planning goals for the town. In towns where there is no master plan there is often unwanted growth and development¹⁶³, unfortunately, once something is developed, it is too late to change; a master plan will keep the town goals on the horizon.

APPLICATIONS TO THE TOWN AS A WHOLE

Most small towns have a defined town center, or main street district; as they grew outward the street patterns and living spaces tend to become more blurred (Figure 5.1). This is exactly what New Urbanism seeks to achieve by having defined edges, or Urban Growth Boundaries (Figure 5.2).¹⁶⁴ These boundaries define one town from the next helping to foster a sense of community and civic pride. It also allows for each town to have its own hinterland and agricultural regions.

¹⁶³ For example, many Athenians lament the tall, massive buildings being built downtown, however without a master plan this is not unusual.

¹⁶⁴ Peter Calthorpe, "The Region," in The New Urbanism: Toward and Architecture of Community, ed. Peter Katz (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), xi.

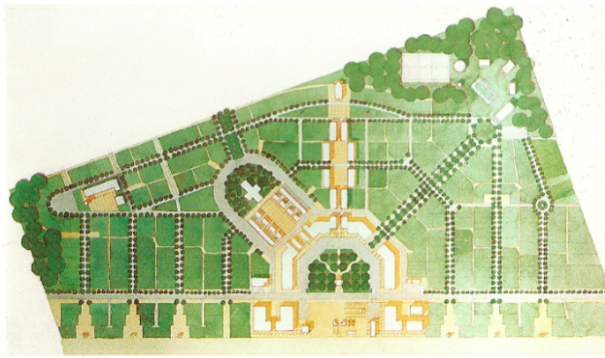


Figure 5.1 Seaside with its defined town center gradually declining development as it reaches the edge (Dutton, 34).

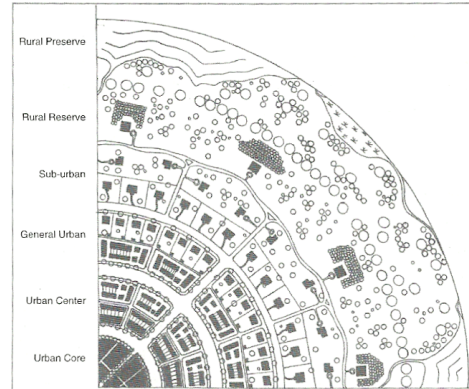


Figure 5.2 The transect with boundaries on the periphery (Grant, 75).

Towns are also more self-sufficient, perhaps even successful, if they each have their own hinterland. Agriculture and animal husbandry open up jobs within the community for the sale of items, such as a farmers market or local grocery stores. Local restaurants can also benefit from the local farms – better quality food often means more customers, which means more employees and more profit. Individuals in the community can also benefit from having local foods available by having ripper, fresher products. For both restaurants and stores local goods can also be very cost-effective in so far as they cut out the “middle man” and cut down on shipping costs.

The relationship between local farms and the town is symbiotic; the local farms obviously benefit the community, but the community allows the local farms to stay in business. As small farms struggle to stay in business, having a reliable outflow of resources is a necessity. With several farms being the main source of food for a community, their likelihood of maintaining business increases.

Maintaining the hinterland is a very important part of New Urbanism; however, towns grow and expansion is necessary. Depending on the size of the

existing downtown, “growing out” may be a small or large undertaking. For towns that have a large residential sector surrounding the town center, the focus of revitalization should be business and vice versa. Keeping mixed-use in mind, of course, bringing in business to the community is necessary. Without commercial enterprises, the community cannot support itself.

A growing town will call for additional structures to be built. Since New Urbanism calls for high density, additional architecture will almost always be required. However, new construction should always come after there is a plan for existing structures to be occupied. New construction should not take the place of existing construction or get business before it. Additional structures should only be added when there is a need for them. All existing buildings in need of rehabilitation should be rehabilitated and adaptively reused using historic construction methods and materials. As discussed in earlier chapters, historic construction is almost always more solid than new construction. Not only are historic construction methods and materials structurally better, but they are more sustainable as well. Once existing buildings, be they public, government, commercial or residential, are occupied then new structures should be infilled using the forms of the local vernacular architecture.

Downcity, a district in Providence, Rhode Island is a great example of infill and revitalizing a neighborhood in a large city; Downcity was developed in 1992 by Andres Duany and Elizabeth-Plater Zyberk (Figure 5.3).¹⁶⁵ An excellent example of infill design in a major city and of neighborhood revitalization, Downcity uses New Urbanist planning principles to bring downtown back to life. Downtown Providence

¹⁶⁵ All information on Downcity can be found in Katz, 154-9.

had an intact urban fabric consisting of blocks, streets and historic buildings; the revitalization project consisted of adding a new convention center, rerouting a major highway, adding new housing options and more retail. The key to the revitalization of Downcity was infill. The additions made to the urban fabric such as residences, commercial buildings, green spaces and civic buildings were all conceived as infill. Many of the “gaps” in downtown Providence were the result of large buildings being demolished and then converted to parking. Large, empty expanses are “destructive to nearby retail and pedestrian activity.” Planners decided to “front” many of these parking lots with “liner” buildings (with different uses) or green spaces, which promote retail and pedestrian activity, while retaining parking (Figure 5.4).



Figure 5.3 Downcity, Providence; a neighborhood revitalization project (Katz, 155).



Figure 5.4 A “front”, or building added to the front of a parking lot creating a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere (Katz, 154).

Depending on the current size of the town and the plans for expansion, different types of infill will be necessary. Many large cities such as Miami, Jersey

City and Pittsburgh have had large-scale infill in areas needing revitalization and expansion.¹⁶⁶ For example, Crawford Square on the edge of downtown Pittsburgh underwent a massive redevelopment by Urban Design Associates in 2000 (Figure 5.5). A once blighted and relatively vacant area, Crawford Square added five hundred mixed-use residences and a small park while maintaining the existing street grid system (one street was added). While the existing grid system remained it was reconfigured to have more efficient (and New Urbanist) travel and parking lanes, sidewalk, landscaping and lighting. New structures in Crawford Square are also designed with minimal street setbacks to reinforce the idea of human scale.

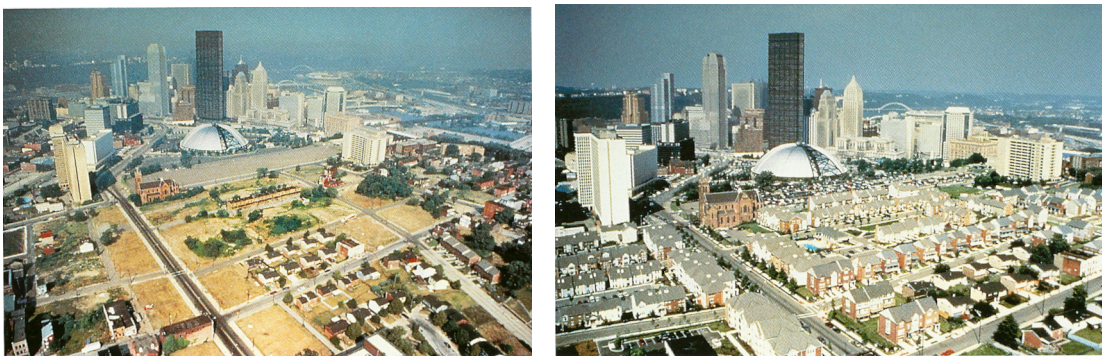


Figure 5.5 Crawford Square before revitalization and Crawford Square after revitalization (Dutton, 100).

As with Crawford Square, new architecture should be constructed so as to fit with existing architecture. Massing, scale, height and fenestration should all be considered when constructing additional buildings. Depending on the location and the desires of the community, style may also be an important factor. While New Urbanism rebels against homogeneity of architecture across the country, maintaining

¹⁶⁶ All information in this paragraph can be found in Dutton, 96-7.

the local vernacular is desired. The farther away from the city center the buildings are the more divergent their architecture can become.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Not only should the new architecture seek continuity with the old, but new street systems should be based on the existing street patterns. New Urbanism advocates a grid pattern street system for pedestrian-friendliness, ease of access, and less traffic congestion. Traditional towns usually have a grid pattern, but not all have as rigid a pattern as others.

In Crossroads, Hamlet, Village, Town: Design Characteristics of Traditional Neighborhoods, Old and New, Randall Arendt explains that many American towns built after the turn of the nineteenth century “bear the unmistakable mark of the rural land surveyor: the grid.”¹⁶⁷ The grid system was “stamped out over the earth regardless of local conditions...the familiar waffle-like pattern was applied relentlessly in areas where it made excellent sense and also in places where it made no sense at all.”¹⁶⁸ According to Arendt, the goal of street design should be interconnectedness, not necessarily a grid pattern.¹⁶⁹ Many towns planned before the nineteenth century did not necessarily adhere to the grid pattern and developed naturally around terrain features and organically developed as the town grew (Figure 5.6).¹⁷⁰ In older towns along the Atlantic Coast sites were accepted as they were and the town was planned around them; “town patterns express the shapes of the

¹⁶⁷ Arendt, Crossroads, 15.

¹⁶⁸ Arendt, Crossroads, 15.

¹⁶⁹ Arendt, Crossroads, 58.

¹⁷⁰ Arendt, Crossroads, 58.

underlying land” rather than altering the terrain to fit the idea of what a town should look like.¹⁷¹ Infill of new streets should complement the existing street and building network; eradicating old streets and relaying new streets to form a rigid grid pattern is not effective for maintaining existing town character nor is it sustainable.

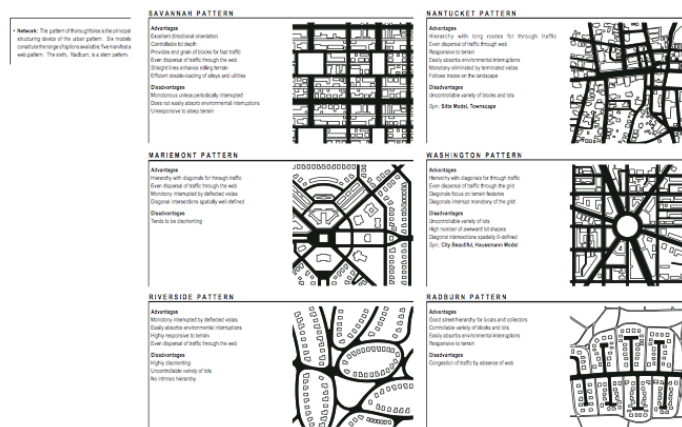


Figure 5.6 A variety of traditional “grid” systems along the Atlantic Coast (DPZ, Lexicon, D1).

Many towns have strange intersections that should be maintained rather than eradicated. For example, five-point intersections are a very common variety; so common that many towns identify communities and areas of town by such an intersection.¹⁷² The Department of Transportation does not like intersections such as this because they claim they are more dangerous than a regular four-point

¹⁷¹ Boeschstein, 7.

¹⁷² For example, Athens and Atlanta, Georgia and Columbia, South Carolina (just to name a few) all have five-point intersections and in each that area of town is known as “Five Points”.

intersection.¹⁷³ However, studies show that strange intersections such as this have fewer accidents than regular Department of Transportation approved intersections.¹⁷⁴

Rather than redo a street system, existing patterns should be worked on. In The Lexicon of the New Urbanism by Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk recommend several street patterns (Figure 5.7).¹⁷⁵ The square block is the most common and has been referred to the most in this thesis. The elongated block can have long, narrow buildings, less crosswalks, more footpaths, more parking and can easily be adjusted to a curved street. The irregular block allows for the most variety in footpaths, crosswalks, traffic signals and so on. It may be the most difficult pattern plat, but if it is being applied to an area that already has an irregular block pattern the difficulty is lessened.

¹⁷³ Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 36.

¹⁷⁴ Dunay, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 36.

¹⁷⁵ All information contained in this paragraph can be found in Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, The Lexicon of the New Urbanism, Duany, Plater-Zyberk & Co., version 3.2, 2002, www.DPZ.com, accessed 4 February 2010.

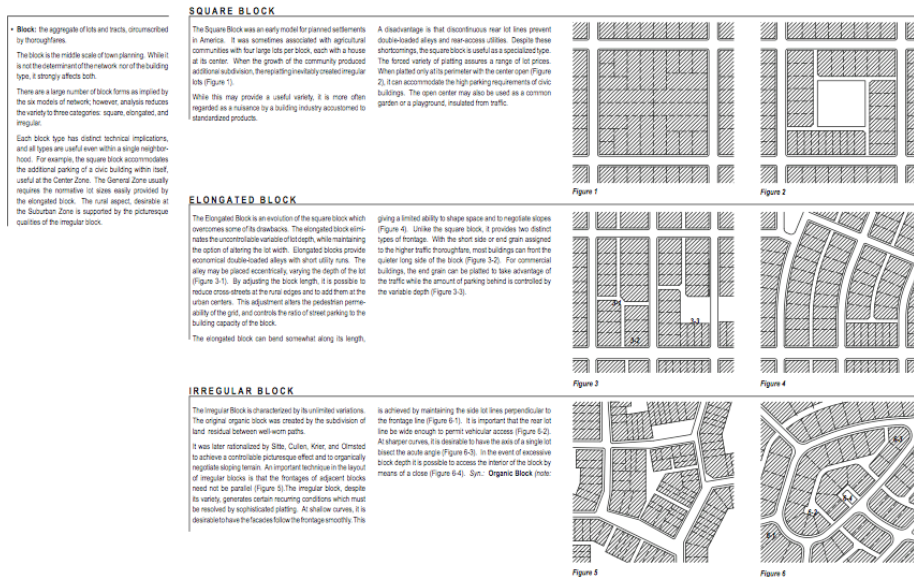


Figure 5.7 A variety of blocks; easily adjustable to fill out an existing streetscape (DPZ, Lexicon, D2).

Maintaining the existing street pattern is important. Not only is it important financially and culturally, but a grid pattern (whether square, elongated or irregular) is a much more efficient way to deal with traffic. Roads that interconnect with one another and provide multiple routes for a single destination lessen the effects of traffic and stave off congestion.¹⁷⁶ If there is an accident or other reason a road is blocked drivers can simply choose an alternate route rather than sit in traffic on the only road that leads to their destination.

¹⁷⁶ Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 24.

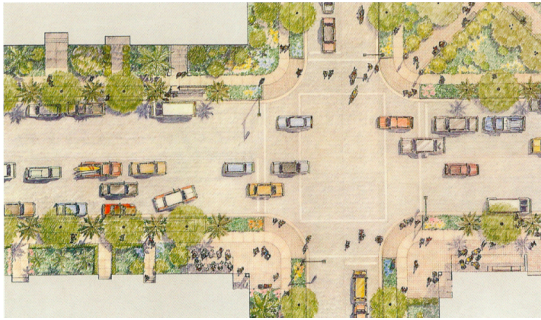


Figure 5.8 Pedestrian friendly street; still allows for the automobile (Dutton, 39).

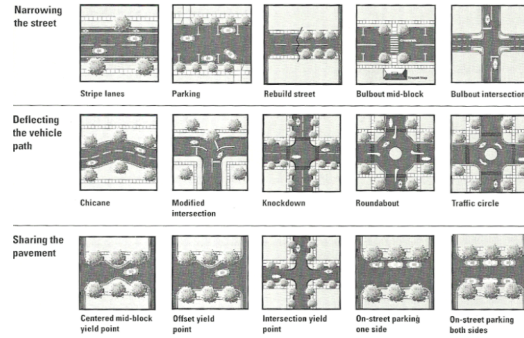


Figure 5.9 Several examples of how to slow traffic (Steutville, 8-23).

Street hierarchy is also important. Streets should cater to both the automobile and the pedestrian, with easily accessible crossings (Figure 5.8). There are several methods used to help slow automobiles and allow for easier pedestrian access: sharper turns at intersections or blocks, landscaped medians, roundabouts, traffic circles and street parking.¹⁷⁷ Keeping the pedestrian safe is an effective way to ensure that people will walk, rather than rely so heavily on driving, in a New Urbanist community and in traditional towns (Figure 5.9).



Figure 5.10 Pedestrian street activity (Katz, 185).

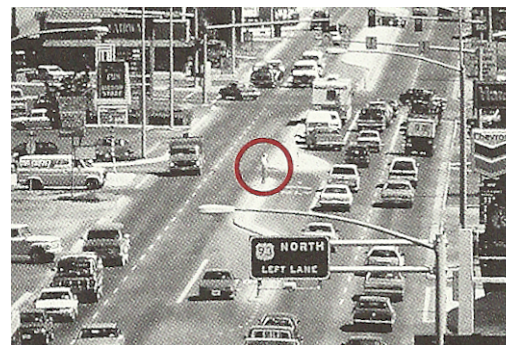


Figure 5.11 The pedestrian caught on a very unfriendly street (Arrington, 63).

¹⁷⁷ Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 24.

Sidewalks, of course, are the most fundamental design element aimed at the safety of pedestrians. As with most historic towns and downtowns, all New Urbanist communities, have sidewalks (Figure 5.10). Narrow streets, whether by having a landscaped median or just being narrow, also slow traffic. Street width and number of lanes often determine the speed a driver will go, regardless of the speed limit; drivers are more likely to drive slowly on a narrow street, especially if there are cars parked on the sides, than on a wide street (Figure 5.11).¹⁷⁸

Not only are narrow streets more pedestrian-friendly and safer but they also increase property values.¹⁷⁹ Narrow streets with buildings built close to the property line give people a sense of enclosure; people are attracted to places with “well-defined edges and limited openings” (Figure 5.12).¹⁸⁰ This can be true not only of streets with houses close to the property line, but also of streets with landscaped edges that create a sense of enclosure (Figure 5.13).¹⁸¹ Also, communities with narrower streets tend to attract more tourists and residents. Narrow streets, sidewalks, landscaped medians, roundabouts and traffic circles are not new to New Urbanism, these are all traditional means used when planning a town for pedestrians and not automobiles; most are found in historic towns and the addition of any traffic-slowing device should be added with planning continuity in mind.

¹⁷⁸ Douglas Farr, “Chapter Twenty-Two,” in Charter of the New Urbanism, ed. Michael Leccese and Kathleen McCormick (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2000), 142.

¹⁷⁹ Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 78.

¹⁸⁰ Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 74.

¹⁸¹ Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 79.

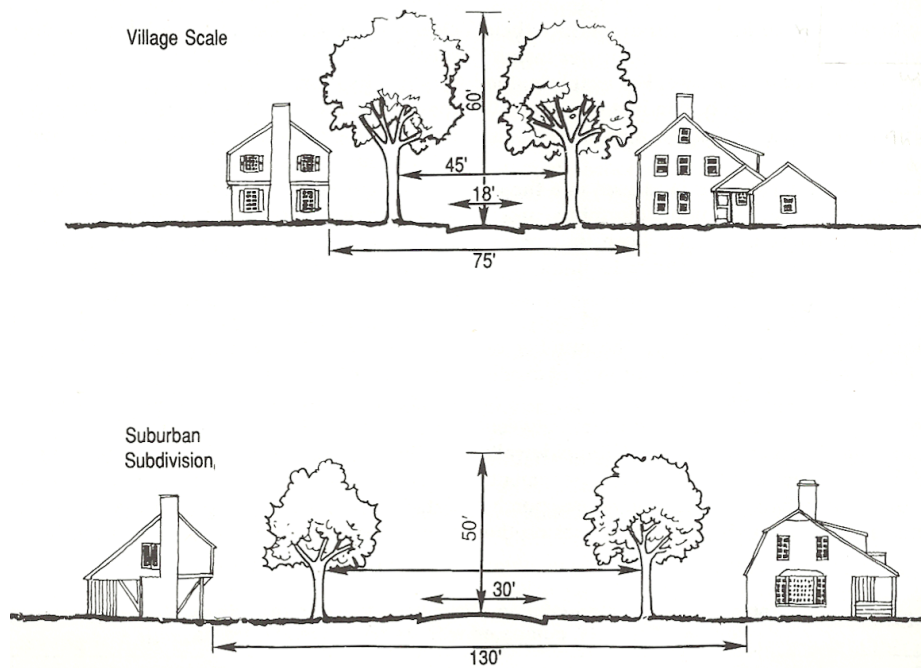


Figure 5.12 Village vs. suburban street widths, note the difference in setbacks (Arendt, *Rural by Design*, 10).

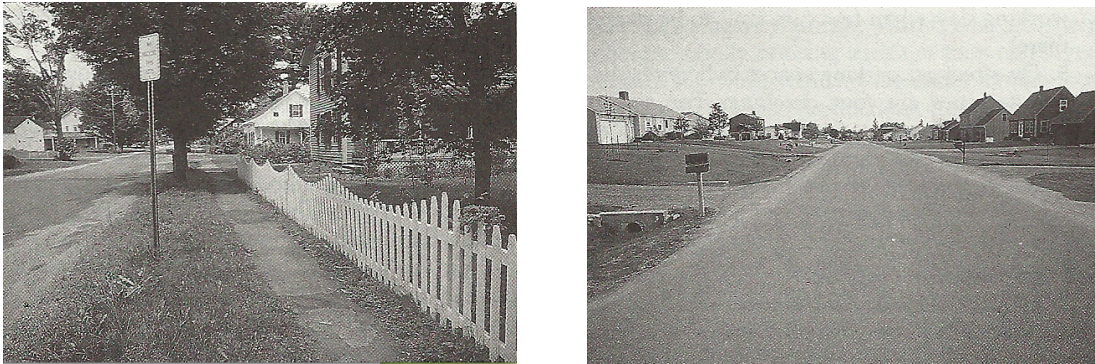


Figure 5.13 Note the enclosure in the traditional street as opposed to the vast expanse of the suburban street (Arendt, *Rural by Design*, 11).

In recent years, many streets have been designed with wider lanes for fire trucks (Figure 5.14).¹⁸² Fire trucks are built larger now than they were in years past, so maneuverability on narrow streets can be a problem. However, traditional

¹⁸² Steutville, 8-17.

neighborhood development is based on grid systems, has alleys and multiple points of access to buildings for fire trucks to use (Figure 5.15).¹⁸³ Wider streets create speeding hazards and are more dangerous to pedestrians, bicyclers and other vehicles;¹⁸⁴ if there are options for fire trucks, such as routing two trucks down different streets that both have access points to the fire, they should be used rather than risking the safety of the community on a daily basis. Street width is one of the many factors to be decided and written into the master plan; new streets should be added with respect to the extant grid system and traditional street widths.

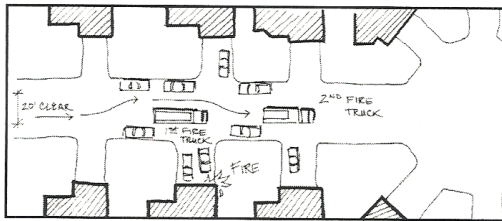


Figure 5.14 The cul-de-sac maneuver (Steutville, 8-17).

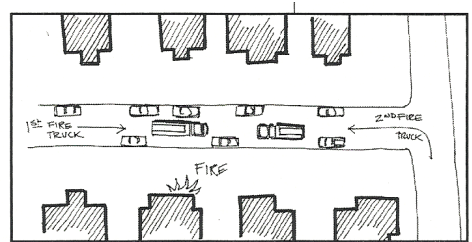


Figure 5.15 Fire trucks have multiple access points on a street grid system (Steutville, 8-19).

Another pedestrian hazard is curb radius.¹⁸⁵ Modern curbs have a very large curb radius – this makes turning easier for large trucks but causes cars to speed up. The larger the radius of a curb the wider the street needs to be so the combination of a wide curb radius and a wide street is a traffic hazard causing pedestrians to walk twice as far as a traditional intersection and allowing cars to speed and pay less

¹⁸³ Steutville, 8-17.

¹⁸⁴ Dunay, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 68-9.

¹⁸⁵ All information on curb radii can be found in Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck 69.

attention (Figure 5.16). Traditional geometric curbs create short distances for pedestrians to cross and force vehicular traffic to come to a complete stop, thereby making drivers slow and be more aware of the streetscape (Figure 5.17). Large curb radius is typically found in suburban development and would not adhere to traditional town development; the more traditional ninety-degree curb should continue to be utilized in new town development.



Figure 5.16 Large, hazardous curb radius (Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 69).



Figure 5.17 Traditional grid creates a safe pedestrian passageway (Duany, Plater-Zyberk, and Speck, 69).

Traffic circles are also an effective method for ensuring a slower driving speed; rather than stopping traffic, the way a traffic signal or stop sign would, traffic circles simply slow traffic.¹⁸⁶ On-street parking serves three ways to help slow down traffic: 1) a row of cars helps the pedestrian on the sidewalk feel more protected; 2) parked cars slow traffic since it is very possible there will be a pedestrian entering/exiting or that a car may back out; also drivers may be looking for parking

¹⁸⁶ Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 69.

themselves; 3) on-street parking allows for buildings to be built closer to the street, again making the driver slow down.¹⁸⁷

A standard four hundred foot block is the recommended length for pedestrian ease, but when city budgets do not allow for such short expanses another solution is to have footpaths running through blocks.¹⁸⁸ Footpaths can help “cut up” the size of a block and definitely make access through the block more pedestrian-friendly (Figure 5.18). According to The Lexicon of New Urbanism, the further into town the streetscape is the more rigidly patterned it should be; also the more pedestrian-friendly it should become.¹⁸⁹

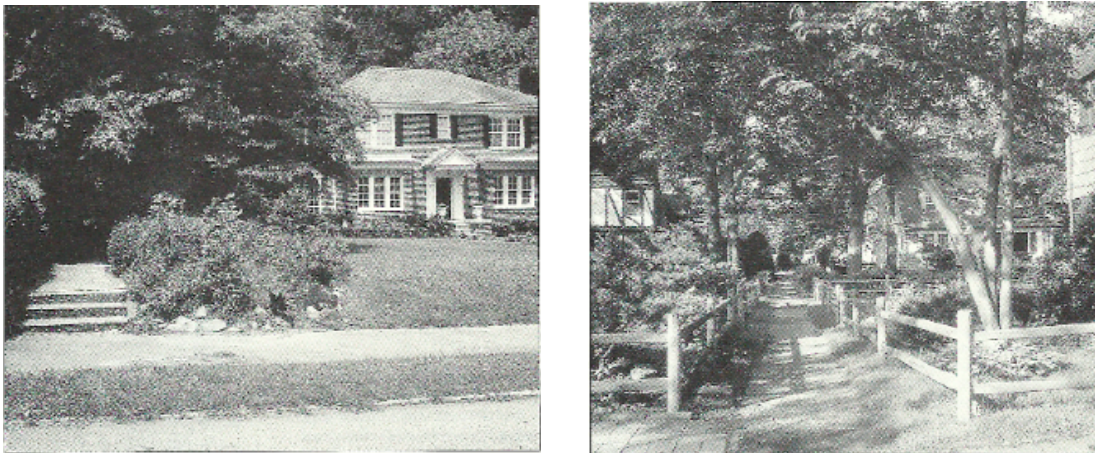


Figure 5.18 Footpaths in a traditional neighborhoods “cut up” the block (Arendt, Crossroads, 63).

Footpaths are a great way to divide up a block for pedestrian usage; they also lessen the cost of infrastructure since a footpath is not nearly the undertaking of a

¹⁸⁷ Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 144.

¹⁸⁸ Arendt, Crossroads, 63.

¹⁸⁹ Duany and Plater-Zyberk, The Lexicon of the New Urbanism.

road. They are also less invasive than adding new roads and can help keep the layout of the town as is. Footpaths, also known as pedestrian pathways, connect with green spaces, civic spaces and throughout the downtown “hold great promise in humanizing the downtown”.¹⁹⁰ In New Castle, Delaware footpaths developed as mid-block lanes to connect to the Green since New Castle’s block are long and run parallel to the Delaware River.¹⁹¹ More pathways keep the town on a more human scale and can add a sense of protection to residents.

TRANSIT

Regardless of the size of the town, public transportation should always be considered. Mass transit will greatly cut down on the number of parking spaces needed throughout the town. Stops should be located at prominent places such as the grocery store, post office, courthouse, ball fields, parks, and so on. Critics of New Urbanism often argue that while public transportation is a great idea, it is not used enough in New Urbanist communities.¹⁹² While many New Urbanist planners such as Peter Calthorpe advocate transit-oriented development (TOD), most communities are too small to support their own transit system.¹⁹³ However, with the transit-

¹⁹⁰ Kenyon, 17.

¹⁹¹ Boeschstein, 192.

¹⁹² Peter Hall, “Urban Renaissance, Urban Villages, Smart Growth: Find the Differences,” in New Urbanism and Beyond: Designing Cities for the Future, ed. Tigran Haas (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2008), 48.

¹⁹³ Hall, 48.

oriented development the idea is to connect several smaller cities with one larger, central city.¹⁹⁴

In many transit-oriented developments there is a regional plan in place to maintain Urban Growth Boundaries and direct development to certain areas while prohibiting it in others.¹⁹⁵ This is generally done with the intention of conserving environmental assets such as watersheds, wildlife, forests and farmland. A major drawback to transit-oriented development is that it is not feasible in areas already afflicted with sprawl since these areas have already lost many of their environmental assets and have no clear boundaries. For this reason, transit-oriented development is perfect for revitalized small towns. Since these towns will most likely have natural town boundaries intact (such as a countryside separating one town from the next) and have not been afflicted by sprawl they are candidates for transit-oriented development.

Linking several towns to a larger town through one transit system would be advantageous to the small towns and the large, central town. If there are several small towns clustered together (with their own edges and countrysides) a public transportation project could link them together. While each town would maintain its own identity, sharing transportation would be advantageous for those who worked farther away from their town center or anyone who needed to commute to the next town.

¹⁹⁴ Transit-oriented development is deeply rooted in the idea of the Garden City, which is discussed in Chapter 3.

¹⁹⁵ All information in this paragraph can be found in Dutton, 25.

There are many types of mass transit available, but the most cost efficient is a bus system (Figure 5.19).¹⁹⁶ Everything is already in place for a bus system – all that is needed is roadways. Since small towns are frequently found along state highways, the bus system would use what is already there. Aside from the buses, the only other expense would be a bus depot, which could be built at a central location. Spending money on transit also creates twice as many jobs as spending on new road construction.¹⁹⁷



Figure 5.19 Transit in Kentlands (Grant, 89).

While New Urbanism advocates working and living in the same town, it is not always possible. One criticism of New Urbanism is that there is not enough work for residents, and a daily commute to work is necessary. In cases where this is true, a

¹⁹⁶ Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, “The Traditional Neighborhood and Urban Sprawl,” in New Urbanism and Beyond: Designing Cities for the Future, ed. Tigran Haas (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2008), 68.

¹⁹⁷ Duany, Plater-Zyber and Speck, 95.

public transportation system could not only link up several small towns but could also link to a larger city or town to help cut down on the amount of commuting.

When creating a public transit system there are several rules that must be followed in order to be a successful.¹⁹⁸ First, transportation must be predictable and as frequent as possible. Second, routes need to be as efficient and logical as possible. Third, bus stops need to be clean, dry and safe. These rules should be followed for a public transportation system but should also be followed, as closely as possible, for the school bus system. A bus system should also be in place for the school system. While the majority of children will live within walking or bicycling distance to their school there are children on the edges or hinterland that will not. While many towns will be able to support their own school system, many will not and may have to share a school with another town. While New Urbanists prefer that each town have its own school, this is not always going to be possible.

In addition to public transportation, towns should accommodate cyclists. Bike racks should be ubiquitous throughout the town, especially at busy locations. Bicycle lanes should be on the busier streets and signs warning of cyclists should be throughout the community. Bicycle lanes should also be kept clean and free of debris; bicycle lanes are useless if they have rocks and glass in them.

CIVIC ARCHITECTURE AND SPACES

Most likely, when dealing with an existing town, most civic buildings will already be in place. However, some civic structures may need to be added; again no

¹⁹⁸ These three rules can be found in Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 202-3.

new construction should take place unless needed. New civic buildings should be added with regards to already existing civic architecture. Homogeneity of civic structures gives them importance and makes them easily identifiable. If the community does not like the architecture of the current civic buildings, if they are not homogenous, or both, retrofits or additions can be made to make them similar.

The courthouse is often a prominent feature of the county seat; many historic courthouses are a sense of pride for the community and a landmark structure. Modeling new civic structures on the historic courthouse is a way to visually tie the civic structures together. Having civic structures of similar appearance not only makes them more easily identifiable but also signifies their importance. However, matching architecture is not the only way to signify the importance of civic buildings.



Figure 5.20 Mashpee Commons post office (Katz, 174).



Figure 5.21 Seaside post office (Katz, 12).

For example, the post office in Mashpee Commons, a re-envisioned shopping center near Cape Cod, Massachusetts, is a very modest structure but is made

significant by its placement and orientation between other buildings and the public plaza in front of it (Figure 5.20).¹⁹⁹ The post office in Seaside, Florida is made prominent with pronounced architectural elements and as a stand-alone structure (Figure 5.21).

Homogeneity and prominent siting are not new to New Urbanism; they are trademarks of historic towns as well. In many historic towns civic buildings such as courthouses, churches, town halls, fire stations, libraries and schools were placed on higher ground or were built taller and statelier than the surrounding structures.²⁰⁰ Civic buildings are “visually prominent and conveniently located”²⁰¹ (Figure 5.22). These buildings were also built to fit in with their town by maintaining rhythms, proportions and setbacks; though similar to the rest of town, they remained apart by using different, and often more permanent materials such as brick and stone, and are generally stand-alone structures.²⁰²

¹⁹⁹ Katz, 174.

²⁰⁰ Boeschstein, 7.

²⁰¹ Boeschstein, 13.

²⁰² Boeschstein, 13.

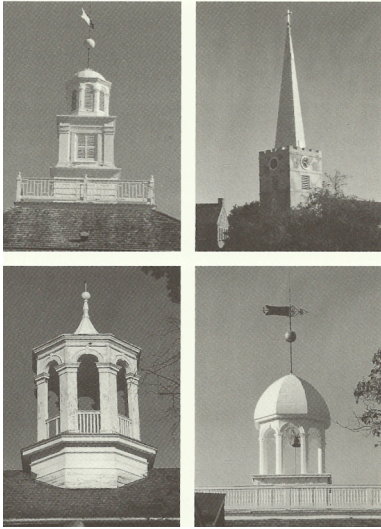


Figure 5.22 Prominent civic architecture in New Castle, Delaware (Boeschstein, 187).

Civic buildings, such as the courthouse, post office, and schools, can also foster a sense of community. For example, in the early 1990's in Castine, Maine the post office was considering relocating from it's historic building in town to a larger building on the outskirts of town; public outcry was so fierce that the post office decided to remain in their historic location to "retain the...role as the center of village life".²⁰³ Like the Green in New Castle, Delaware, historic towns made their civic buildings more prominent to mark their importance.²⁰⁴ Constructing the public buildings in high style²⁰⁵ and private buildings in vernacular types is also a way to denote a civic building's importance.²⁰⁶ With civic buildings designed in a similar

²⁰³ Boeschstein, 73.

²⁰⁴ Boeschstein, 13.

²⁰⁵ Public/civic buildings need not necessarily be in a high style, so long as they have a similar style. Likewise, private architecture need not necessarily be vernacular, so long as they do not mimic the civic architecture or take hierarchy above them.

²⁰⁶ Andres Duany, "Chapter Twenty-Five," in Charter of the New Urbanism, ed. Michael Leccese and Kathleen McCormick (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2000), 163-4.

style it is important to disperse them throughout the community so as not to have a monotony of structures.²⁰⁷

Schools are also important civic buildings. Schools foster a sense of community and belonging. Also, with one small school per community more quality care and a better education are to be had. Recent studies suggest that “schools with fewer than four hundred students have better attendance rates, fewer problem children and dropouts, and often higher test scores”.²⁰⁸ By locating the school within walking or bicycling distance of the students, parents will spend less time sitting in school-related traffic and children will gain a greater sense of independence (Figure 5.23).

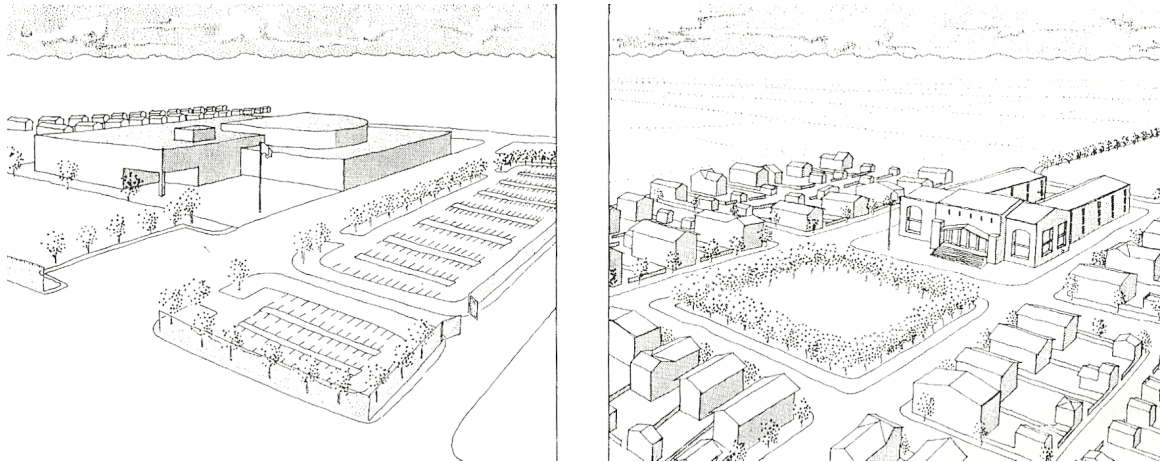


Figure 5.23 Suburban school with parking lot and unfriendly for pedestrians vs. a New Urbanist school that is walkable for students (Steutville, 1-22).

Public plazas and parks are important to community design. These likely already exist in the community, but may not be easily accessible to all residents.

²⁰⁷ Duany, Charter, 163-4.

²⁰⁸ Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 191.

Making them more accessible may require additional footpaths, crosswalks, sidewalks or even more green spaces depending on the size and design of the town. Advocates of New Urbanism assert the importance of public spaces to fostering community development (Figure 5.24). Upon moving to Bradburn Village, a New Urbanist community in Westminster, Colorado, one resident commented: “in my first month...I met more people than I had known the entire four years living in my old neighborhood...even just seeing other people made me feel less lonely.”²⁰⁹ Squares and plazas are not only important for community development, but are also important to children. Parks may seem to be the realm of children more than squares because of their recreational nature. However, squares and public meeting places allow children to witness how adults function through “repeated observation, imitation, and practice in relating to a range of adults in multiple contexts”.²¹⁰ Observation is a very important part of learning and so by observing how adults act children can learn how to behave and grow.

²⁰⁹ Spiess, Petra. It Takes a Walkable Village: How New Urbanism Makes Parenting Easier, Better! Cities & Towns online, 22 November 2011, http://bettercities.net/news_opinion/blogs/petra-spiess/15604/it-takes-walkable-village, 17 February 2012.

²¹⁰ Suzanne Crowhurst Lennard, “True Urbanism and the European Square: Catalyst for Social Engagement and Democratic Dialogue,” in New Urbanism and Beyond: Designing Cities for the Future, ed. Tigran Haas (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2008), 113.



Figure 5.24 Traditional European plazas foster a sense of community for residents (Lennerd, 113).

GREEN SPACES

Parks and playgrounds should be placed throughout the community. Being able to walk to parks, squares, and plazas is very important for New Urbanism because with traditional neighborhood development lot sizes are much smaller than with the average suburban lot; also, many residents live in multi-family housing such as townhouses and apartments. Since the amount of green space is so small on privately owned land, or even non-existent in the case of multi-family housing, it is essential to have public green spaces (Figure 5.25). While green spaces allow residents to play sports, schools to have recess and individuals to commune with nature, they also allow for community development (Figure 5.26). Since the green spaces in New Urbanism are for public use people will inevitably be around each

other, which has a much higher likelihood of fostering a sense of community than when all outdoor activities are done in one's backyard.



Figure 5.25 Houses facing the public park (Arendt, Crossroads, 54).



Figure 5.26 The Tree That Owns Itself and important community landmark in Athens, Ga (Arendt, Crossroads, 81).

Depending on the circumstances there will potentially be structures beyond repair. There have been successful cases of demolition where a dilapidated structure was replaced with green space.²¹¹ In Camden, New Jersey an abandoned drugstore was demolished and the land was converted into a park, in Fitchburg, Massachusetts an abandoned parking lot was converted into a park with playground equipment and in New Brunswick, New Jersey urban renewal land with “minimum redevelopment potential” was converted into parks. Though the goal is not demolition, but

²¹¹ All information contained in this paragraph can be found in Burchell, 323.

rehabilitation and adaptive reuse, there will always be exceptions; in cases where a small, walkable park is needed and the structure in question is “too far gone” demolition may need to be an option.

Larger green spaces, such as ball fields and dog parks, should be located in less urban spaces. These types of green space take up much more room than the occasional square or small park. Large recreational fields and parks also work well as Urban Growth Boundaries. Having a large ball field close to the town center goes against the principles of increased density; also, the only people who benefit from ball fields are players and spectators; green spaces located close to the town center should be ones that cater to the entire town.

COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

New Urbanism uses six general types of stores: the corner store, the convenience center, the neighborhood center, the community center, the regional center and the lifestyle center.²¹² The latter three centers are for large towns ranging from 50,000 to 150,000 residents –too large for the towns discussed here. The first three types of shopping centers are most commonly found in New Urbanist communities. However, the neighborhood center is based on a full-size grocery store, generally has a large parking lot, and needs up to 8,000 households to support it; it is also too large to be considered in this thesis.

²¹² The various types of shopping centers associated with New Urbanism are discussed in Robert Gibbs, “Urban Retail Planning Principles for Traditional Neighborhoods,” in New Urbanism and Beyond: Designing Cities for the Future, ed. Tigran Haas (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2008), 158-160.

The smallest retail type is the corner store, which generally needs about 1,000 households to support it.²¹³ However, if the corner store is located by a heavily auto-oriented road (such as a state highway) the number of households needed to support can be reduced. The corner store sells beverages, food and other frequently needed items. The busiest intersection should have a corner store and it should be reachable from plazas, schools and parks. The more foot traffic that will pass by the corner store the better business will be (Figure 5.27).

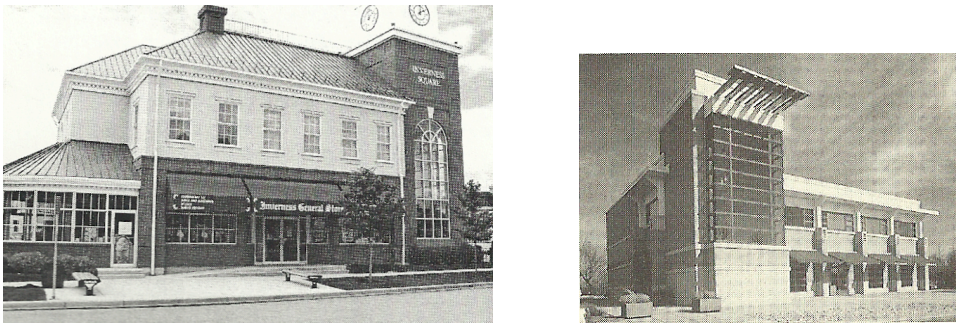


Figure 5.27 Two corner stores incorporated into their New Urbanist town (Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 188).

Convenience centers are very easily adaptable to a small town. Most small towns have a street of connected buildings (often the main street), which is really all a convenience center is. Convenience centers often include a specialty food store, a pharmacy, hair salon/barber shop, a bank, a coffee shop and a few other small businesses.²¹⁴ By being grouped in a “walkable cluster” these businesses are able to

²¹³ All information in this paragraph can be found in Gibbs, 158.

²¹⁴ Gibbs, 159.

generate more traffic than they would if they were located in stand-alone stores²¹⁵ – plus, they adaptively reuse the downtown area.

Convenience centers usually need about 2,000 households to be operational and should be located along a major road.²¹⁶ If the main street of the town is already located along a major road there is no need to change anything, but if the main street is located off the road there should be proper signage to the convenience center. When adding additional road and infrastructure the convenience center should always be kept in mind. Abandoned shops not located in what will become the convenience center should become home to new businesses, or perhaps former businesses where applicable.

Local business is a boost for the economy because it retains the money spent which cycles back into the town as opposed to going to a large corporation hundreds of miles away with concern only for their business and none for the community (Figure 5.28). Local business is not only good for the economy but builds a sense of community by creating a personal relationship between the shop-owner and customer. The owner and employees in local businesses often have a vested interest in the community and the economy of the town since both are related to how well their business does.²¹⁷

²¹⁵ Gibbs, 159.

²¹⁶ Gibbs, 160.

²¹⁷ Kenyon, 9.



Figure 5.28 Historic mixed use (Boeschenstein, 112).

The “personal touch” added with local business is not only a way to bring business in, but to keep customers loyal. Stocking items customers ask for and ordering items customers request increase loyalty and keep customers coming back. A New Urbanist project in Belmont, Virginia has a \$5 account for each child in the town; this not only assumes that children have some sort of freedom and autonomy²¹⁸ (both often lacking in suburbia), but that they are trustworthy. In addition, it builds character and gives the children more freedom and autonomy and trustworthiness.

As for restaurants, using local, seasonal produce supports other local business but is also healthier and more sustainable. A range of different types of restaurants is also a key to making the downtown area a place where people want to be. The more interests that can be pursued by more people the more attractive the downtown is. Depending on the climate and the season, outdoor dining is generally considered a popular choice (Figure 5.29).²¹⁹ Dining outdoors allows one to enjoy nature (albeit

²¹⁸ Duany, Plater-Zyber and Speck, 188.

²¹⁹ Kenyon, 17.

from a distance) but also to enjoy the architecture and streetscapes offered by their town; it also allows for more socialization.



Figure 5.29 Outdoor dining brings the community together and increases business (Beoschenstein, Rural by Design, 371).

RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

Upper floors in shops and restaurants can remain commercial, but can also be used for residential purposes. The business owner could live above for the sake of convenience or this space could be rented out or owned by someone else entirely. Regardless, upstairs, an area commonly abandoned, should be put to use, be it commercial or residential (Figure 5.30).

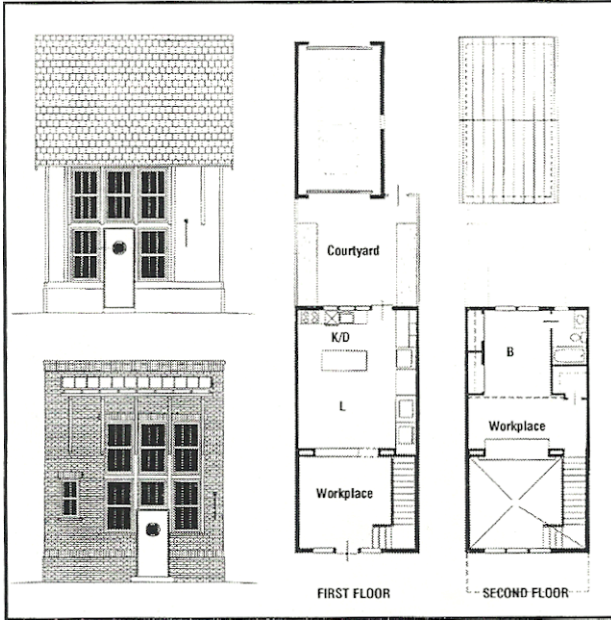


Figure 5.30 A typical lay-out of an upper storey residence and lower storey shop (Steutville, 5-18).

Not only does having residences on the upper floor of commercial buildings enhance the safety of the town by deterring crime, but adds height to the buildings. A building height of two to three stories “can create spatial definition for their streets and bring a sense of security back to their downtowns.”²²⁰ A feeling of security can only add to the desirability of the town and attract former residents and new residents.

Small towns already have residential neighborhoods, which need only be added to in order to incorporate more housing. Not just houses should be added though, but multi-family residences such as apartments and condos and, as discussed more thoroughly in chapter four, government housing. By having a mix of housing types and prices, residents can move to a bigger home as their families grow, or can move to a smaller home as their children move out on their own.

²²⁰ Duany, Plater-Zyber and Speck, 50.

In the New Urbanist town of Kentlands, in Gaithersburg, Maryland; there are six neighborhoods each with a variety of housing options (Figure 5.31).²²¹ Large single-family houses can be found on the north side of the town commons across from a cluster of townhouses; courtyard apartments are located near the town square and a shopping center while townhouses are located close to the school. Kentlands wanted to adhere to a major principle of New Urbanism – create mix of income levels (like those found in a traditional town). In order to bring a mix of income levels, towns must be willing to have a mix of housing types available to residents with a range of budgets.



Figure 5.31 A mix of residence types in Kentlands (Katz, 12).

²²¹ All information in this paragraph can be found in Katz, 31-45.

While residents can move from one house, or housing type, to another they are not forced to move from the community they live in. Moving from one community to another in order to change house size is almost a requirement in suburbia. For a growing family to move to a bigger home they almost always have to leave their community, neighbors, school and friends;²²² different housing types in one community keeps this from happening (Figure 5.32). When people have the ability to move and stay in the same community, they buy for the community first and for the specific home second.²²³

Another benefit of having a mix of housing types and prices is the lessons learned by children living in the community (much like the lessons learned by children in the town square or plaza). Having neighbors and seeing people from different walks of life creates a sense of empathy and understanding in children, regardless of which end of the socio-economic spectrum the children come from (Figure 5.33).²²⁴ Regardless of the type of housing being built, it should all be done in consideration of humanity. Just as the footpaths throughout the town humanize the town so do building practices. Building close to the property line keeps things on a human scale, as does building size and height.

²²² Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 44.

²²³ Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 48.

²²⁴ Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 45.



Figure 5.32 Quadruplex inserted into a single-family house area (Dutton, 55).

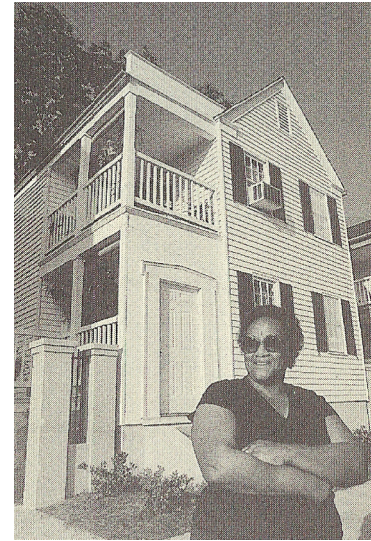


Figure 5.33 Government housing in Charleston, S.C. (Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 52).

Keeping garages in the back, or at least on the side, emphasizes humanity over industry (Figure 5.34).²²⁵ Without the unsightly garage dominating the front of the house, neighbors are reminded of the residents that live there as opposed to the car in the garage (Figure 5.35). Keeping garages in the back allows for a second access point to the house and also requires alleys. Alleys, which often have a bad reputation, can be neat and clean. They are primarily used for garages, mailboxes, electric meters, phone lines and so on. They can also be home to so-called “granny flats”, an apartment over a garage often rented out to young singles.²²⁶

²²⁵ Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 81.

²²⁶ Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 73.

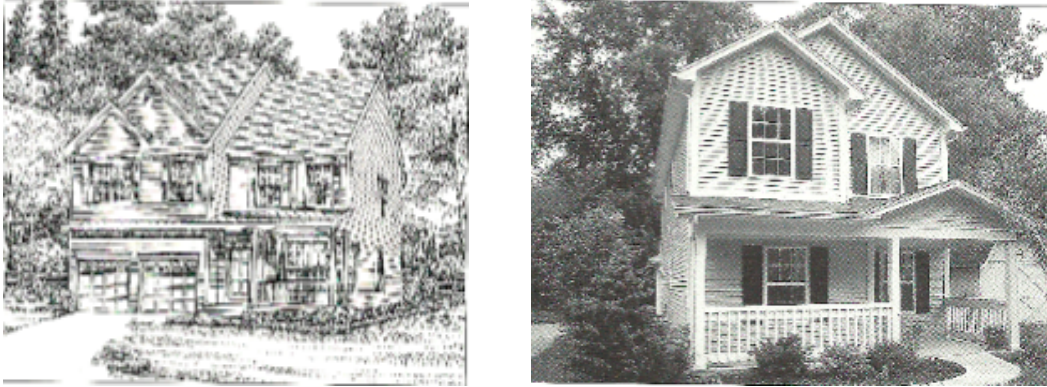


Figure 5.34 Traditional house design (Arendt, Crossroads, 85).



Figure 5.35 Garage dominated house (Arendt, Crossroads, 85).

While improving the economy of the declined town is the object, housing should always be kept at an affordable price. Many New Urbanist communities increase in prices over time²²⁷ and while this is an important part of making investments it is not necessary to drive out the local residents. Revitalizing a community should be primarily done for the existing community, not as a means to drive them out and replace them with a wealthier population.

²²⁷ Jill Grant, “The Challenges of Achieving Social Objectives Through Mixed Use,” in New Urbanism and Beyond: Designing Cities for the Future, ed. Tigran Haas (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2008), 80.

This chapter has suggested some of the ways to apply New Urbanism to existing towns in order to revitalize them. By taking the major tenants of New Urbanism and applying them to existing town systems declined towns across the nation can find new life. Downcity is a great example of downtown revitalization; of taking an unsafe, pedestrian un-friendly, and downtrodden area and creating a vibrant community with retail, living, and work space. Sense of community remains intact, but is built upon, the history of downtown is still relevant, but now there is a future as well, and sense of place is retained. The metropolitan fringe was not added to and land was not destroyed.

New Urbanism should focus on more projects such as Downcity to help with revitalization efforts. Downcity is a perfect example of how New Urbanism should be used; but not only used to revitalize downtowns and neighborhoods in large cities, but used to revitalize small towns across the country. If Downcity were to occur on a small scale, in small towns, then perhaps New Urbanism would fully live up to all it's principles.

CONCLUSION

New Urbanism is a city planning approach based on historic 1920's era towns and town planning; New Urbanism was created in response to the sprawl affecting our cities and towns today. New Urbanism seeks to create communities with a sense of place, different socio-economic levels, different demographics, local businesses, walkability and different housing types; in other words, real towns, not decentralized development spreading out from the metropolitan fringe like a cancerous growth.

The basic planning approach to New Urbanism is a town centered on the downtown, or town center, and slowly spreading out till it reaches the edge. The town center generally consists of civic buildings, green space and some commercial buildings; residential architecture fills in around public architecture and is a mix of different housing types. It is important that residences be located within walking distance of most commercial buildings, civic buildings and green spaces. New Urbanist towns are pedestrian-friendly with sidewalks, narrow streets, on-street parking, crosswalks, and landscaped streets and medians. The idea is to create a vibrant walkable community.

New Urbanism has been becoming more popular since it's inception in the early 1980's; Seaside, Florida is one of the first, and definitely most famous, examples of New Urbanism. While Seaside, and many other New Urbanist communities, is intended to be a "real" town, it is only affordable for the upper-middle class – the same can be said of suburbia. Affordability is not the only issue confronting New Urbanism; many critics argue that it only replaces sprawl rather than eradicating it. Cities such as Seaside were

built where there was once green space; many more New Urbanist communities are built on the metropolitan fringe and contribute to metropolitan issues such as traffic.

Finally, the biggest critique of New Urbanism is that it creates “fake” towns. Planning a completely new community with no history or past and expecting it to have the feel of a traditional, historic town is impossible. History and sense of place cannot be created overnight; these are intangible qualities that need time to grow. The revitalization of historic towns would keep the history and sense of place lacking in New Urbanist communities intact. By using the tools offered by New Urbanism to revitalize an historic town, New Urbanism could usher in a new wave of preservation.

Historic towns could have their local businesses, schools and industry rehabilitated by New Urbanism; residential and non-residential structures alike could be rehabilitated to their former use or adaptively reused for new purposes. New jobs would be created and an influx of people who would otherwise move to suburbia to work could instead live in a real workable community with history and a sense of place. The Charter of the New Urbanism has several principles related to preservation, yet few of them are used. New Urbanism has been successful in urban renewal projects such as Downcity in Providence, Rhode Island; the same techniques could be applied to small, historic towns to revitalize and preserve the entire town. Extending the scope of New Urbanism to incorporate preservation and rehabilitation of a small town will revitalize New Urbanism itself.

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APPENDIX A

PRINCIPLES OF URBANISM²²⁸

The principles of urbanism can be applied increasingly to projects at the full range of scales from a single building to an entire community.

1. Walkability

- Most things within a 10-minute walk of home and work
- Pedestrian friendly street design (buildings close to street; porches, windows and doors; tree-lined streets; on street parking; hidden parking lots; garages in rear lane; narrow, slow speed streets)
- Pedestrian streets free of cars in special cases

2. Connectivity

- Interconnected street grid network disperses traffic and eases walking
- A hierarchy of narrow streets, boulevards, and alleys
- High quality pedestrian network and public realm makes walking pleasurable

3. Mixed-Use and Diversity

- A mix of shops, offices, apartments, and homes on site. Mixed-use within neighborhoods, within blocks, and within buildings
- Diversity of people – of ages, income levels, cultures, and races

4. Mixed Housing

²²⁸ The Principles of Urbanism is taken from New Urbanism, “Principles,” www.newurbanism.org, accessed 27 January 2010.

- A range of types, sizes and prices in closer proximity

5. Quality Architecture and Urban Design

- Emphasis on beauty, aesthetics human comfort, and creating a sense of place. Special placement of civic uses and sites within community.
Human scale architecture and beautiful surrounds nourish the human spirit

6. Traditional Neighborhood Structure

- Discernable center and edge
- Public space at center
- Importance of quality public realm; public open space designed as civic art
- Contains a range of uses and densities within 10-minute walk
- Transect planning: Highest densities at town center; progressively less dense towards the edge. The transect is an analytical system that conceptualizes mutually reinforcing elements, creating a series of specific natural habitats and/or urban lifestyle settings. The transect integrates environmental methodology for habitat assessment with zoning methodology for community design. The professional boundary between the natural and man-made disappears, enabling environmentalists to assess the design of the human habitat and the Urbanists to support the viability of nature. This urban-to-rural transect hierarchy has appropriate building and street types for each areas along the continuum.

7. Increased Density

- More buildings, residences, shops and services closer together for ease of walking, to enable a more efficient use of services and resources, and to create a more convenient, enjoyable place to live
- New Urbanism design principles are applied at the full range of densities from small towns, to large cities

8. Green Transportation

- A network of high-quality trains connecting cities, towns, and neighborhoods together
- Pedestrian-friendly design that encourage a greater use of bicycles, rollerblades, scooters, and walking as daily transportation.

9. Sustainability

- Minimal environmental impact of development and its operations
- Eco-friendly technologies, respect for ecology and value of natural systems
- Energy efficiency
- Less use of finite fuels
- More local production
- More walking, less driving

10. Quality of Life

- Taken together these add up to a high quality of life well worth living, and create places that enrich, uplift, and inspire the human spirit.

APPENDIX B

CHARTER OF THE NEW URBANISM

Preamble

The Congress for the New Urbanism views disinvestment in central cities, the spread of placeless sprawl, increasing separation by race and income, environmental deterioration, loss of agricultural lands and wilderness, and the erosion of society's built heritage as one interrelated community-building challenge.

We stand for the restoration of existing urban centers and town within coherent metropolitan regions, the reconfiguration of sprawling suburbs into communities of real neighborhoods and diverse districts, the conservation of natural environments, and the preservation of our built legacy.

We recognize that physical solutions by themselves will not solve social and economic problems, but neither can economic vitality, community stability, and environmental health be sustained without a coherent and supportive physical framework.

We advocate the restructuring of public policy and development practices to support the following principles: neighborhoods should be diverse in use and population; communities should be designed for the pedestrian and transit as well as the car; cities and towns should be shaped by physically defined and universally accessible public spaces and community institutions; urban places should be framed by architecture and landscape design that celebrate local history, climate, ecology, and building practice.

We represent a broad-based citizenry, composed of public and private sector leaders, community activists, and multidisciplinary professionals, we are committed to reestablishing the relationship between the art of building and the making of community, through citizen-based participatory planning and design.

We dedicate ourselves to reclaiming our homes, blocks, streets, parks, neighborhoods, districts, towns, cities, regions, and environment.

We assert the following principles to guide public policy, development practice, urban planning, and design:

The Region: metropolis, city, and town

ONE

Metropolitan regions are finite places with geographic boundaries derived from topography, watersheds, coastlines, farmlands, regional parks, and river basins. The metropolis is made of multiple centers that are cities, towns, and villages, each with its own identifiable center and edges.

TWO

The metropolitan region is a fundamental economic unit of the contemporary world. Governmental cooperation, public policy, physical planning, and economic strategies must reflect this new reality.

THREE

The metropolis has a necessary and fragile relationship to its agrarian hinterland and natural landscapes. The relationship is environmental, economic and cultural.

Farmland and nature are as important to the metropolis as the garden is to the house.

FOUR

Development patterns should not blur or eradicate the edges of the metropolis. Infill development within existing urban areas conserves environmental resources, economic investment, and social fabric, while reclaiming marginal and abandoned areas. Metropolitan regions should develop strategies to encourage such infill development over peripheral expansion.

FIVE

Where appropriate, new development contiguous to urban boundaries should be organized as neighborhoods and districts, and be integrated with the existing urban pattern. Noncontiguous development should be organized as town and villages with their own urban edges, and planned for a jobs/housing balance, not as bedroom suburbs.

SIX

The development and redevelopment of town and cities should respect historical patterns, precedents, and boundaries.

SEVEN

Cities and towns should bring into proximity a broad spectrum of public and private uses to support a regional economy that benefits people of all incomes. Affordable housing should be distributed throughout the region to match job opportunities and to avoid concentrations of poverty.

EIGHT

The physical organization of the region should be supported by a framework of transportation alternatives. Transit, pedestrian, and bicycle systems should maximize access and mobility throughout the region while reducing dependence upon the automobile.

NINE

Revenues and resources can be shared more cooperatively among the municipalities and centers within regions to avoid destructive competition for tax base and to promote rational coordination of transportation, recreation, public services, housing, and community institutions.

Neighborhood, district, and corridor

TEN

The neighborhood, the district, and the corridor are the essential elements of development and redevelopment in the metropolis. They form identifiable areas that encourage citizens to take responsibility for their maintenance and evolution.

ELEVEN

Neighborhoods should be compact, pedestrian-friendly, and mixed-use. Districts generally emphasize a special single use, and should follow the principles of neighborhood design when possible. Corridors are regional connectors of neighborhoods and districts; they range from boulevards and rail lines to rivers and parkways.

TWELVE

Many activities of daily living should occur within walking distance, allowing independence to those who do not drive, especially the elderly and the young. Interconnected networks of streets should be designed to encourage walking, reduce the number and length of automobile trips, and conserve energy.

THIRTEEN

Within neighborhoods, a broad range of housing types and price levels can bring people of diverse ages, races, and incomes into daily interaction, strengthening the personal and civic bonds essential to an authentic community.

FOURTEEN

Transit corridors, when properly planned and coordinated, can help organize metropolitan structure and revitalize urban centers. In contrast, highway corridors should not displace investment from existing centers.

FIFTEEN

Appropriate building densities and land uses should be within walking distance of transit stops, permitting public transit to become a viable alternative to the automobile.

SIXTEEN

Concentrations of civic, institutional, and commercial activity should be embedded in neighborhoods and districts, not isolated in remote, single-use complexes. Schools should be sized and located to enable children to walk or bicycle to them.

SEVENTEEN

The economic health and harmonious evolution of neighborhoods, districts, and corridors can be improved through graphic urban design codes that serve as predictable guides for change.

EIGHTEEN

A range of parks, from tot-lots and village greens to ball fields and community gardens, should be distributed within neighborhoods. Conservation areas and open lands should be used to define and connect different neighborhoods and districts.

Block, street, and building

NINETEEN

A primary task of all urban architecture and landscape design is the physical definition of streets and public spaces as places of shared use.

TWENTY

Individual architectural projects should be seamlessly linked to their surroundings. This issue transcends style.

TWENTY-ONE

The revitalize design of streets and buildings should reinforce safe environments, but not at the expense of accessibility and openness.

TWENTY-TWO

In the contemporary metropolis, development must adequately accommodate automobiles. It should do so in ways that respect the pedestrian and the form of public space.

TWENTY-THREE

Streets and squares should be safe, comfortable, and interesting to the pedestrian. Properly configured, they encourage walking and enable neighbors to know each other and protect their communities.

TWENTY-FOUR

Architecture and landscape design should grow from local climate, topography, history, and building practice.

TWENTY-FIVE

Civic buildings and public gathering places require important sites to reinforce community identity and the culture of democracy. They deserve distinctive form,

because their role is different from that of other buildings and places that constitute the fabric of the city.

TWENTY-SIX

All buildings should provide their inhabitant with a clear sense of location, weather and time. Natural methods of heating and cooling can be more resource-efficient than mechanical systems.

TWENTY-SEVEN

Preservation and renewal of historic buildings, districts, and landscapes affirm the continuity and evolution of urban society.