

residential architect

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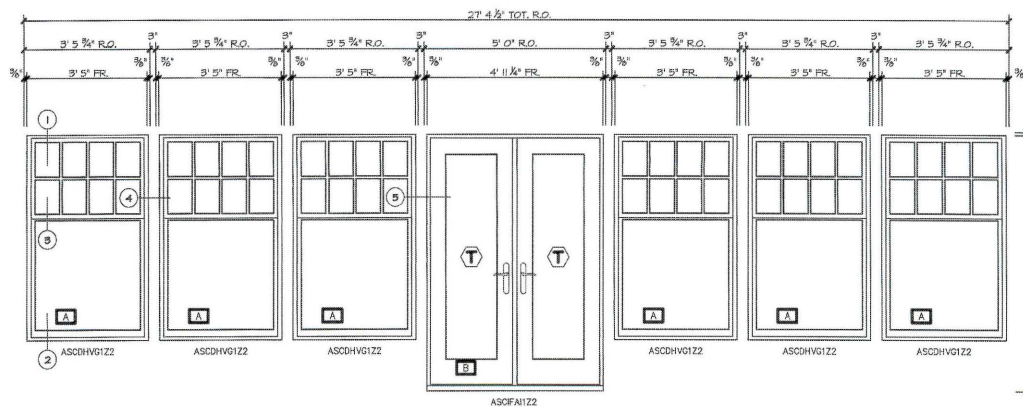


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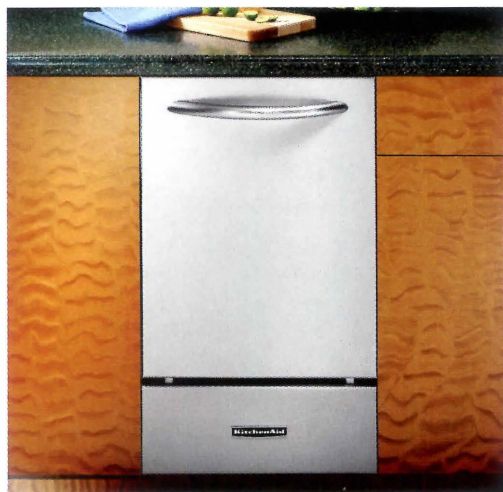
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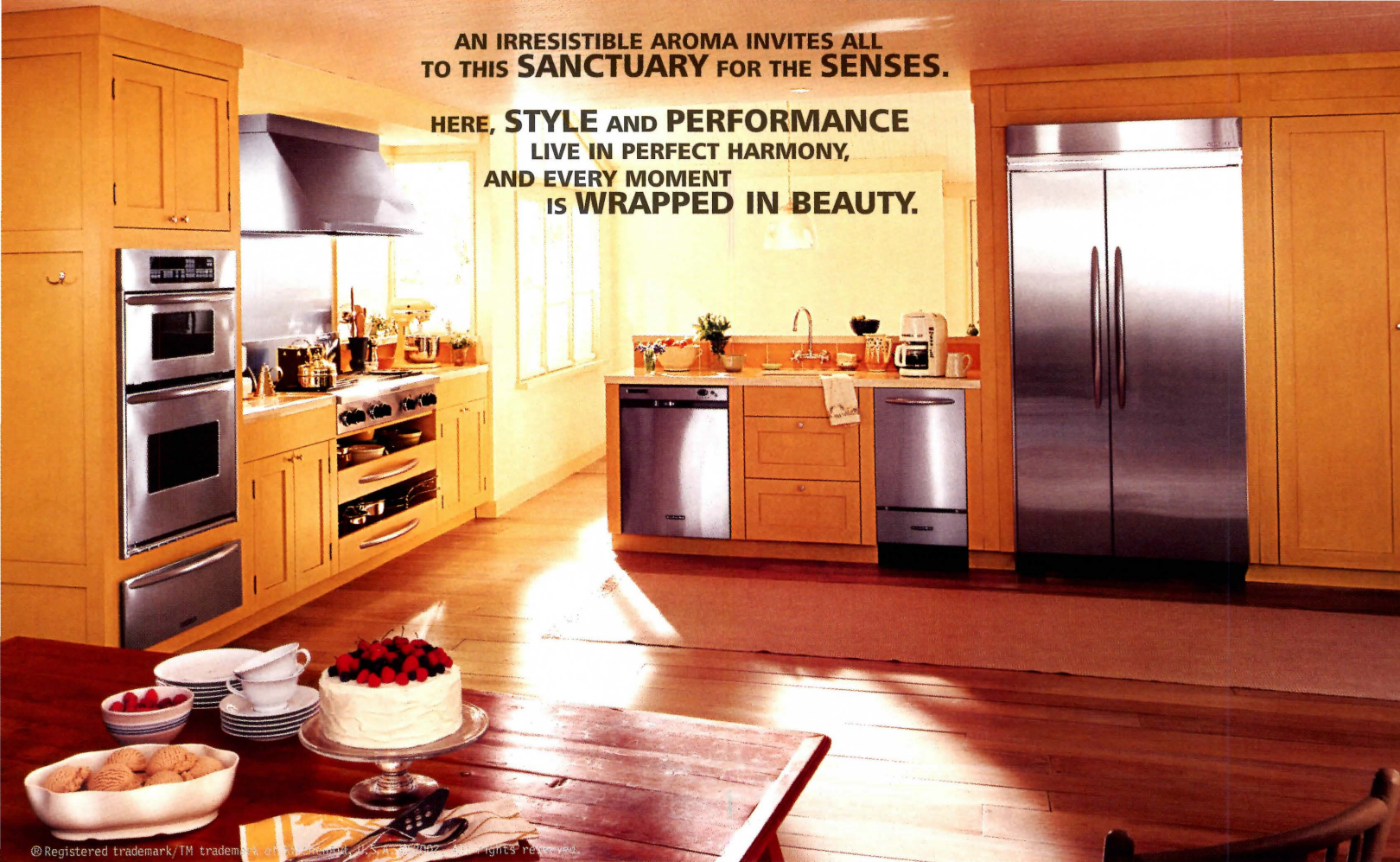
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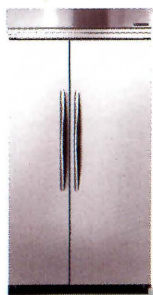
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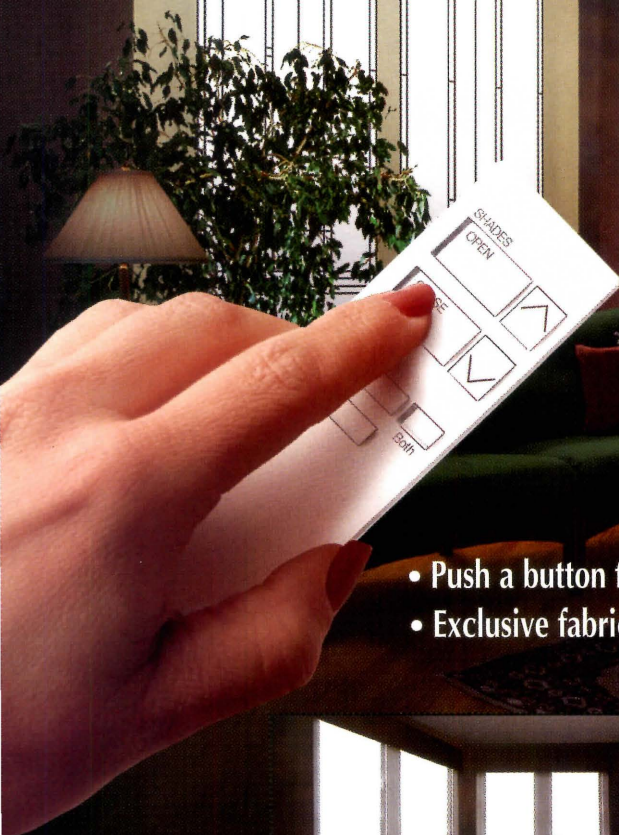
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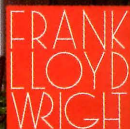
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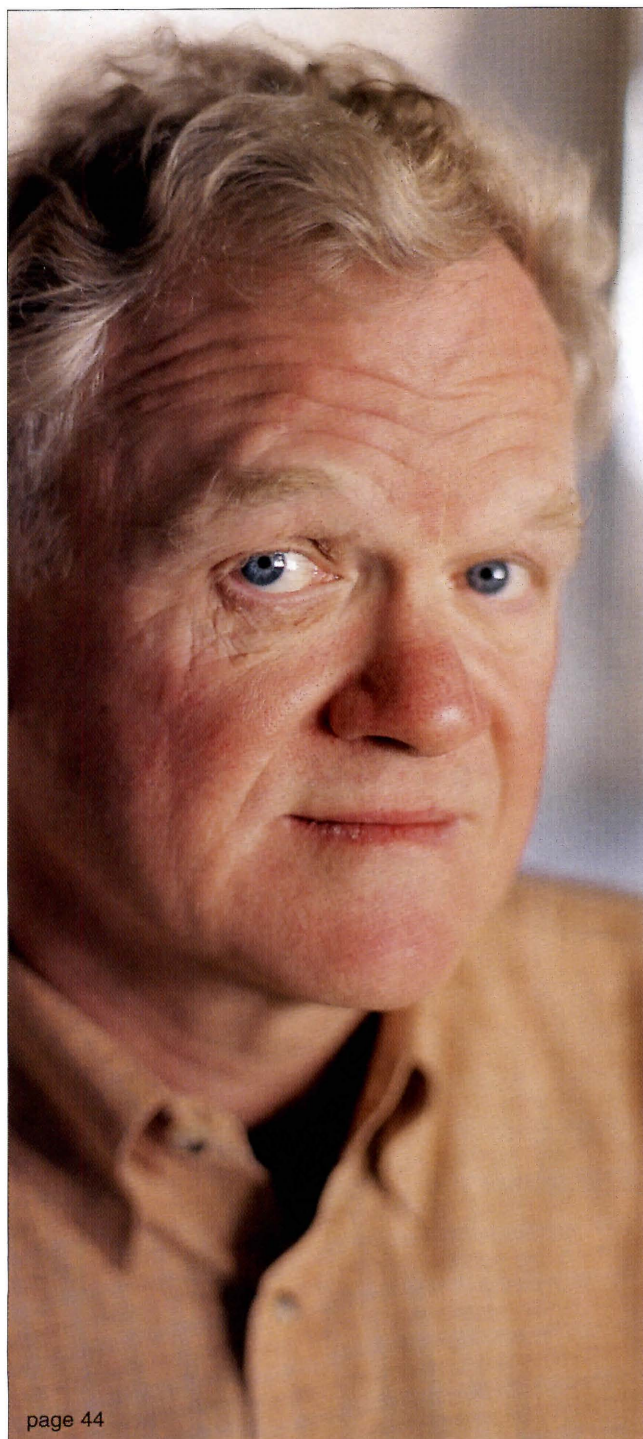
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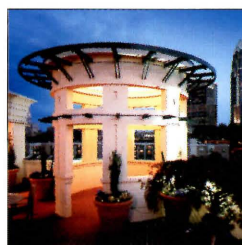
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residential architect
design awards

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Turn to page 9 for information on how to enter *residential architect's* fourth annual design awards competition.

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call for entries

residential architect design awards

the fourth annual

residential architect Design Awards, sponsored by *residential architect* magazine, honor the best in American housing. Awards will be given in ten categories, encompassing custom home design, renovation, kitchens, baths, design details, multifamily housing, single-family production housing, and affordable housing. From the winners, the judges will choose a Best Residential Project of the Year. Note: Entries in the kitchen, bath, and design detail categories are not eligible for Best Project.

who's eligible?

Architects and designers.

Other building industry professionals may submit projects on behalf of an architect or designer. Hanley-Wood employees, their relatives, and regular contributors to the magazine are not eligible.

what's eligible?

Any home or project completed after January 1, 1999.

when's the deadline?

Entry forms and fees are due no later than November 25, 2002. Completed binders are due January 7, 2003.

where will winning projects appear?

Winning projects will be published in the May 2003 issue of *residential architect* magazine.

how will projects be judged?

A panel of respected architects and design professionals will independently select winners based on design excellence. They may withhold awards in any category at their discretion.

entry form

To register, you may do any of the following:

call Shelley Hutchins at *residential architect*, 202.736.3407

mail this form to Shelley Hutchins, *residential architect* Design Awards 2002, One Thomas Circle, N.W., Suite 600, Washington, D.C. 20005

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number of entries

categories

1. Custom Home, 3,500 square feet or less
2. Custom Home, more than 3,500 square feet
3. Renovation (residential remodeling and additions)
4. Multifamily Housing
5. Single-Family Production Housing, detached
6. Single-Family Production Housing, attached
7. Affordable Housing (At least 20 percent of the units must be affordable to families earning 80 percent to 120 percent of the local Median Family Income. Consult your area HUD office or local government office for the MFI.)
8. Kitchen (new or renovated)
9. Bath (new or renovated)
10. Design Detail

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from the editor

the dark side of urban renewal

who can afford back-to-the-city prices?

by s. claire conroy

What does your downtown look like these days? In Washington, D.C., we've got an urban renewal boom going full blast. Areas that have languished in decay for 30 years are being transformed. New one-bedroom "loft" (a seeming oxymoron) apartments are selling in the high \$300,000s. And townhouse shells in need of total rehabilitation are selling for \$350,000 to \$600,000—"Bring your architect!" shout the real estate ads.

These properties sell two days after the open house. That's how long it takes for the escalation clauses on all the multiple offers to soar to their caps. Realtors price properties "attractively"—meaning the better side of plausible—and then watch them snap up for \$50,000 over asking. For the privilege of overpaying, buyers must present what's called a "clean contract," one with no contingencies at all. No financial contingency; no buyer's home sale contingency; no bank appraisal; and—the greatest folly of them all—no home inspection contingency. Unbelievable, but true.

It's a crazy game, and it takes a lot of money. Despite stock market woes, people are still buying housing lickety-split, fueled by piles of equity in their current properties and rock-bottom mortgage interest rates. Even if they nab the home of their dreams, buyers are battered and bruised, dazed and confused. What just happened here? Realtors, builders, and developers can't believe their eyes. They muse, albeit quietly, about whether we're in a "bubble."

Well, who knows yet whether it's a bubble. But we do know it's a fever, one that feeds on itself. The demand for this close-in housing drives the price of unimproved property up, up, up. And then when it's renovated, subdivided, loftified, it must sell for top dollar to recoup the developer/remodeler's investment. Slick finishes in the kitchens and baths take care of the upscale market positioning, and the thing sells in a heartbeat.

The result of all of this is that Washington looks a whole lot better. The housing boom has brought with it plenty of snazzy supporting retail. You can get a latte on nearly every street corner. Beneath the good looks, however, something



Mark Robert Halper

sinister lurks. None of this fine new housing is "affordable;" all of it is aimed at the "luxury" tier of the market. The "haves" have a great deal to cheer about; the "have-nots" have even less to call their own. People living on the margin, and even those with decent incomes but no previous homeownership to boost their buying power, are being pushed farther and farther out of the city.

It's such an intractable problem. How do you ask developers to leave money on the table, to turn those expensive, desirable infill lots into less-than-market-rate housing? Is it possible to have the pretty new buildings and make them more affordable?

That's exactly what architect David Furman, FAIA, is doing in his hometown of Charlotte, N.C. He couldn't get any developer to build the kind of housing he had in mind—high-design, high-quality, but lower-cost apartments—so he sold his own home and went into business building them himself. It's a mitzvah—a good deed—and we wish him great success. Now if only someone would step up to the plate here in Washington, D.C. **ra**

Questions or comments?
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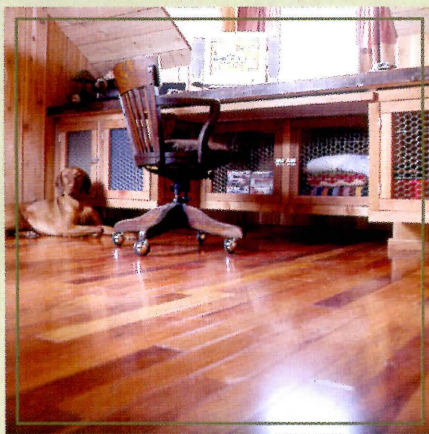
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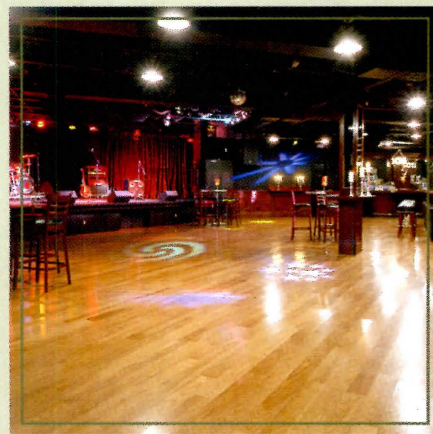
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letters

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blast from the past

I picked up an old copy of *residential architect* (March 2001) at my health club in Washington a few weeks ago and found the magazine quite interesting—in part because my wife and I are in the process of working with an architect to build a second home in southern Colorado.

I was struck by the editorial you wrote in that issue (“The Not So Ugly House,” page 13) about small vs. large vs. ugly home design. I too have read Sarah Susanka’s books, Tracy Kidder’s book, and architectural magazines, with an eye toward designing a smaller house with distinctive detail and real livability.

Our home in Washington has about 2,500 square feet, where three kids were reared. We’d like our second home to be no larger than 2,000 square feet, but we have had a tough time persuading our architect to follow suit. The trend, inevitably, seems to be toward building bigger and grander. We finally limited the size by giving an absolute top limit on what we would spend, and we insisted that floor space should come second to good and

innovative construction.

In any event, I enjoyed your column for the food for thought it provided. I look forward to seeing future issues of your magazine.

Stan Wellborn
by e-mail

gropius gripe

What prompts this letter is “From Bauhaus to His House” (“End Quote,” March, page 96) and its rather astonishing description of the Gropius house, especially the part “Visited by luminaries including Frank Lloyd Wright and Marcel Breuer . . .” That is a rather curious statement since the house was done while Breuer and Gropius were partners.

All people “in the know” can verify that the house was, for the most part, designed by Marcel Breuer. So, he didn’t visit the house—he designed it. I think the record should be corrected. It doesn’t have to say he designed it (which he did), but the record should show that it was at least a Gropius/Breuer project.

Herbert Beckhard, FAIA
New York City

end quote from bauhaus to his house

gropius house, Lincoln, Mass., 1938
walter gropius

“when i built my first house in the u.s.a.—which was my own—I made it a point to absorb into my own conception those features of the new england architectural tradition that i found alive and adequate.”

—first of a series of self-mockeries by walter gropius

The first house Walter Gropius designed after moving to the United States from Germany in 1934 was a modest structure for himself and his family in Lincoln, Mass. The house combined the 14th-century kind of the Breuer house with New England vernacular. It was a two-story, clapboard-sided, a brick chimney, and a screened-in porch. Visited by luminaries including Frank Lloyd Wright and Marcel Breuer, the Gropius House became a model for architects who wanted to balance the existing new materials of the Industrial Age with the comforting elements of traditional residential design. The Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA) now owns and maintains the house. For information on tours, call 781.229.8796 or go to www.spnea.org.



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“all we have are many, many oral histories that suggest that gropius was the main designer of his house.”

Senior editor Meghan Drueding replies: Thank you for your letter regarding my March “End Quote” piece on Walter Gropius’ house, but none of my research supports your claim. Peter Gitelman, Director of Education for the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA), which owns and operates the house, says, “Breuer and Gropius were partners at the time, so it is natural to assume that each man primarily designed his own house with input from the other. Breuer undoubtedly had some influence—the vertical rafters off the porch

are often attributed to him—but there is no smoking gun that confirms his involvement. All we have are many, many oral histories that suggest that Gropius was the main designer of his house.”

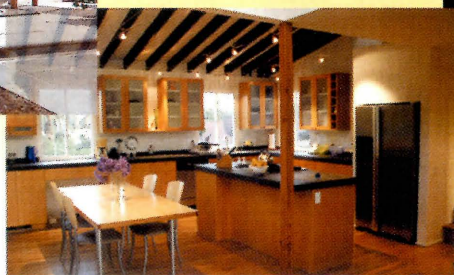
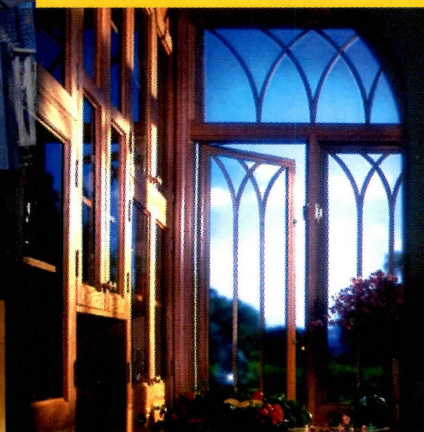
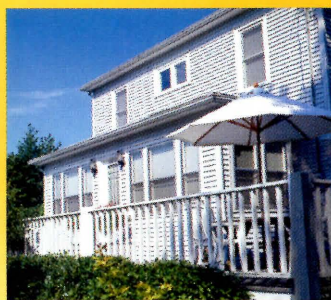
Likewise, Joachim Driller’s 2000 book *Breuer Houses* concludes that, though there has been much speculation on Breuer’s involvement, no solid evidence exists. The SPNEA does acknowledge in a booklet about the house that Breuer designed much of the furniture in it, and I wish the space had been available for me to mention this and other details.

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home front

tips and trends from the world of residential design

capital gains

Washington, D.C., is undergoing an urban renaissance. Assorted prospectors are churning old, depressed housing stock into prettified single-family homes and condominiums and then selling them for top dollar. For the most part, this urban renewal avoids any design risks—only kitchens and their



Courtesy DiVISION ONE

stainless steel finishes reflect any Modern sensibilities. DiVISION ONE, a young Rockville, Md., firm, plans to change all that. “Our main goal is to bring contemporary architecture into the city,” says

principal Ali Honarkar.

He and partners Mustafa Ali Nouri and Craig Williams have already designed and developed a five-unit townhouse development, Logan Heights, in the rapidly gentrifying Shaw/Cardozo neighborhood about a mile from the White House. Since all three architects have construction experience, they served as

their own general contractor, too.

Instead of a mediocre rehash of the neighborhood’s prevailing Federal style, these three-story rowhouses have boldly Modern painted-brick elevations jazzed up with light green, gray, and yellow EIFS panels and stainless steel railings. Open, light-filled floorplans include a mix of custom and off-the-shelf items:



maple flooring, concrete countertops, and IKEA kitchen cabinets. Prices start in the low \$400,000s; one heavily upgraded unit sold for \$670,000.

The trio is betting that some of D.C.’s upwardly-mobile homebuyers harbor a pent-up desire for Modern design. Meanwhile, they’ve used themselves as a test case—Honarkar and his wife, Debi Fox, already have bought one of the units.



Photos: Debi Fox

Washington, D.C.-area firm DiVISION ONE is shaking up the traditional design of our nation's capital. The mod Logan Heights row-houses take in sunlight through skylights, translucent glass, and open railings.

DiVISION ONE has two more design/develop/build projects in the works—another townhouse cluster across the street from Logan Heights and an interior renovation of a brownstone in the city's high-rent Dupont Circle area.

—meghan drueding

hotel paradiso

Guests of Chicago's historic Blackstone Hotel will be able to linger a little longer after the building finishes its conversion into high-priced condominiums. Designed in 1908 by Marshall & Fox, the ornate hotel will become best-address apartments priced at \$3.4 to \$8.5 million apiece. Chicago-based Lucien Lagrange Architects is designing the 4,000- to 7,000-square-foot units and restoring the hotel's lavish Beaux-Arts exterior, lobby, and ballroom according to guidelines set by the National Register of Historic Places.—*shelley d. hutchins*



Courtesy Lucien Lagrange Architects



Christian Richters

The Dutch owners use the glass pavilion as a place to read, meditate, and enjoy uninterrupted views of the French countryside. Ineke Hans of Amsterdam designed the recycled plastic furniture, another new-age counterpart to the venerable limestone walls.

clear favorite

Dutch architect Dirk Jan Postel of Kraaijvanger-Urbis in Rotterdam has been experimenting with laminated glass for years. Apparently practice makes perfect: His latest project, a vacation home for a Dutch couple in the Burgundy region of France, won Grand Prize in the 2002 DuPont Benedictus Awards.

Postel and his clients developed the idea for the project after discovering on the property a limestone abutment that served as an unused explosion chamber during World War II. They turned it into a kitchen, bath, and bedroom and topped the stone base with a laminated glass pavilion. Two of the panels support the entire weight of the two-ton cantilevered roof, made of stressed-skin timber. "The absence of all interfering elements is interesting. Each element highlights and strengthens the other," said one judge.

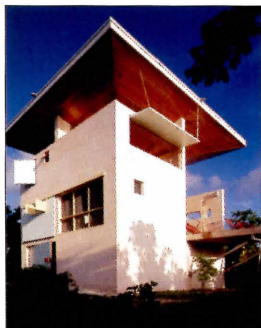
Postel explains, "Both the glass and the limestone keep their own merit this way. I like the impression of the glass cutting through the limestone, as if it doesn't end."—*m.d.*

calendar

residential architect design awards: call for entries

entry form and fee deadline: november 25
completed entries deadline: january 7, 2003

Our annual *residential architect* Design Awards program honors outstanding residential architecture in the following categories: custom, renovation, multifamily, affordable, production, kitchens, baths, and design details. A project of the year is selected from the category winners; all winning projects will be published in the May 2003 issue of *residential architect*. Shown: 2002 project of the year. See page 9, call 202.736.3407, or visit www.residentialarchitect.com to receive an entry form.



James West/J West Productions

dbew design competition

deadline: september 17

Sponsored by Hannsem Corporation in Seoul, Korea, this year's Design Beyond East & West competition highlights the theme, "Dual Income Single Child Family." This open competition will award \$42,000 to projects that incorporate social changes such as "smart" appliances, the kitchen as a gathering place, and creative spaces for children. For further details, visit www.hanssemcompe.com or e-mail compe@hanssem.com.

aia honor awards exhibit

the octagon, washington, d.c.
august 1–30



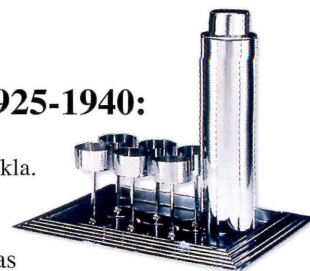
© Scott Frances

View winners of the 2002 AIA Honor Awards. Photographs of the projects will be accompanied by comments from the jurors.

Shown here is the Dayton House by Minneapolis-based Vincent James Associates, winner of the excellence in architecture award. Call 202.638.3105 for museum hours.

american modern, 1925-1940: design for a new age

philbrook museum of art, tulsa, okla.
august 25–november 10



More than 150 objects—such as furniture, appliances, and even a bathroom sink—show the evolution of American industrial design between the world wars. Featured designers include Isamu Noguchi, Eliel Saarinen, Russel Wright, and Norman Bel Geddes, whose 1937 "Manhattan" cocktail set is shown here. Visit www.philbrook.org or call 918.749.7941 for museum hours.

frank lloyd wright and the modern metropolis

renaissance hotel, white plains, n.y.
september 18–22

The Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy's annual conference focuses on Wright's ideas for reconstructing more organic and livable metropolitan regions. Herbert Muschamp, architecture critic for *The New York Times*, will give the keynote address. Call 773.324.5600 or visit www.savewright.org to register.

restoration & renovation

convention center, cleveland
october 10–12

The annual conference and exhibition for professionals who restore, renovate, and recreate historic structures and their appurtenances will meet in Cleveland. For more information, call 800.982.6247 or visit www.restorationandrenovation.com.

american housing conference

renaissance hotel, chicago
october 17–18

Organized by BUILDER magazine, *residential architect*'s sister publication, this conference focuses on future market trends and demographics of housing consumers. For registration details, call 800.867.9018 or visit www.hanley-wood.com/inperson/ahc.

continuing exhibits

Hungarian Ceramics from the Zsolnay Manufactory, 1853-2001, through October 13, Bard Graduate Center, New York City, 212.501.3000.

—shelley d. hutchins



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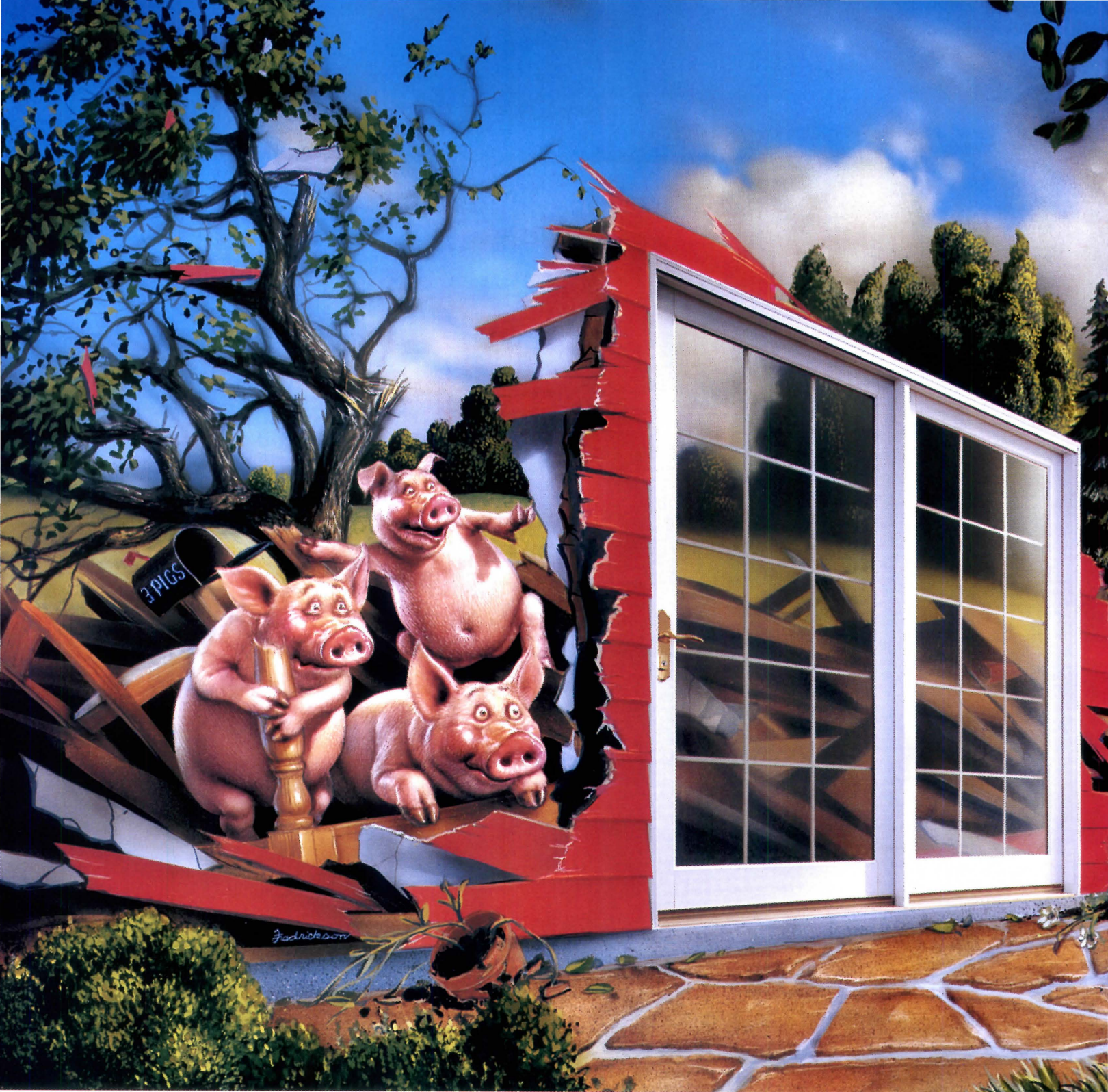
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what it takes to make a village.

by kathryn mccamant

I first came across cohousing communities as an architecture student studying in Denmark in 1980. It seemed such an obvious approach to housing that I assumed most American architects would already know about it. I assumed wrong.

There was nothing written in English about these new communities that combined the autonomy of private homes with the advantages of community living. Designed as planned-unit developments, cohousing communities cluster homes around extensive common facilities such as a kitchen and dining hall, sitting areas, children's play rooms, guest rooms, and laundry facilities. Each home is self-sufficient with a complete kitchen, but common facilities and activities—particularly group dinners held several times a week—are an integral part of daily life.

The physical design of cohousing encourages a strong sense of community. Pedestrian-oriented site plans keep cars at the periphery and place play and garden spaces (people space) between the houses. Informal gathering spaces

are defined by picnic tables and children's play areas throughout the site. Kitchens face the common areas between homes, making it easy to keep an eye on the kids or nab a neighbor for a recipe. These features create a different feel from a neighborhood of cul-de-sacs and garages. Typically 12 to 40 units, cohousing developments establish intergenerational neighborhoods where everyone really does know your name.

Several years after that first trip to Denmark, as my husband, architect Charles Durrett, and I pondered how

we would juggle careers and family, we kept thinking of the Danish communities we had seen. In 1984, we returned to Denmark to take a closer look. This trip eventually led to our book *Cohousing: A Contemporary Approach to Housing Ourselves* and the beginning of the North American cohousing movement.

growth and change

For a decade we have lived in a cohousing community ourselves: Doyle Street Cohousing in Emeryville, Calif. We celebrated its 10-year anniversary last week-

end, and the next day, we celebrated the groundbreaking for a new 30-unit community just north of San Francisco. Sixty-eight completed cohousing projects now span North America with another 150 in the planning stages. Cohousing is attracting middle-class families, singles, and seniors seeking a strong sense of community, shared facilities that complement private residences, and comfortable, energy-efficient homes.

Our firm, The CoHousing Company (part of McCamant & Durrett Architects) has provided
continued on page 28



© Robert Froio

Opportunities for socializing abound in cohousing. This car-free walkway in a community designed by the author's firm creates a casual meeting spot for adults and a safe play area for children.



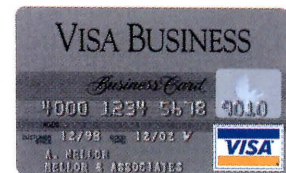
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design and development services for dozens of these communities (for an example of McCamant and Durrett's work, see page 57). Early on, we found that in order to have the opportunity to design cohousing, we needed to learn how to market, develop, and finance it as well. We eventually became a full-service cohousing development company in addition to an architecture firm.

One of defining characteristic of cohousing is active participation of future residents in the design and development of the community. Our firm involves residents in the earliest stages through a series of design workshops, and we keep homebuyers updated by working closely with various committees. The homebuyers' involvement helps

blueprint for success

Working with a group client requires a disciplined design process with explicit agreements about when input from the group is needed and when it is too late. As architects, we must have group facilitation skills and listen to the consensus of the group—not just hear the ideas we prefer. At the same time, participants want to hear our professional opinions. I consider it my job to challenge the participants to understand their options and the implications of their decisions—especially monetary choices. The professional team must continually set realistic expectations about the budget and building standards.

The most important initial input our firm can

receive from a community is a clear program that establishes their design criteria and priorities. We seek maximum involvement from our

clients in the earliest programming and schematic design phases; then the professionals work out the details. Most of the community members we work with cannot afford custom homes. So, though we design custom neighborhoods, we must not let our clients slip into thinking that the customization extends to each individual unit.



Courtesy The CoHousing Company

Periodic community celebrations are an important part of cohousing. Here, residents of Doyle Street Cohousing (the author's home) in Emeryville, Calif., convene to share a meal.

"cohousing developments establish intergenerational neighborhoods where everyone really does know your name."



© Robert Frolo

them create a unifying voice during the entitlement process. It also helps them build a social community as we build the physical structures. The buyers also are significant investors in the development partnership, which ties them to the financial success of the community and reduces the risk of producing a traditional housing product.

I find that one of the most exciting aspects of a participatory design process is the ability to get direct market feedback on the tradeoffs people are willing to make. Homebuyer involvement has allowed our firm to use "green building" techniques, which would otherwise not be seen as marketable by speculative developers. We find that cohousing residents are ready to give up attached garages for more usable, child-friendly outdoor areas, even in northern climates like Michigan and Massachusetts. They value high-quality, energy-efficient heating and cooling systems and willingly increase house prices and forego air conditioning in order to include hydronic heat. They also will scale back the size of private homes to afford more community facilities.

Despite the growth of new cohousing across the

country, it is clearly a niche market. Few developers and homebuyers will invest the time in creating this type of housing, even with its many benefits. Nevertheless, much can be learned from these communities. Most of us need a balance of society and privacy in our lives. Incorporating some of cohousing's community-oriented features into conventional housing will create more friendly places to live, to raise our children, and to grow old.

Kathryn McCamant is a coauthor of Cohousing: A Contemporary Approach to Housing Ourselves (Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press, 1994.) She is also a founding principal of the design and development firm The CoHousing Company, a division of McCamant & Durrett Architects, in Berkeley, Calif. For more information contact The CoHousing Company at www.cohousingco.com. ra

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by cheryl weber

■ t's the common theme in architects' bad dreams, the stuff of tortured visions in the night. That vinyl wall covering a developer used in your condo design becomes a breeding ground for virulent mold. A roof leak ruins a client's priceless painting. A crack appears in the foundation wall of a million-dollar home.

When you're an architect, the possible scenarios for getting sued are omnipresent. And as one of life's unpleasantries, a spec or installation gone wrong ranks right up there with a house fire or a car accident. Not only can a claim cost thousands of dollars and damage your reputation, but the process of defending yourself disrupts your productivity and your peace of mind.

Residential claims against small architecture firms are growing at a steady pace, especially among condominium projects, according to a survey conducted by Victor O. Schinnerer & Company, an insurance firm in Chevy Chase, Md. Between 1996 and 2000, the number of claims the company paid involving condo projects increased at an annual rate



David Plunkert

of 17 percent, compared to 6 percent for all building projects. Even litigation involving townhouse and single-family home projects, considered relatively trouble-free, increased annually by 15 percent. Think about your liabilities too much, and you might

start questioning the clients in your life, not to mention your creative freedom.

Yet despite the wild cards inherent in residential design, there's a lot you can do to protect yourself. Many architects have figured out how to institute safeguards—through contract language, office

checklists, and that ultimate preventative measure, managing clients—that let them sleep easier at night.

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Professional liability insurance, also called errors and omissions, is the funding

continued on page 34



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source for the truly scary types of claims, those that can result in big money. And it's expensive—not only in monthly premiums, but because you have to purchase it for the long term to keep from throwing your money away. "You have to have the insurance when you make the mistake and when the claim comes up nine years later," says architect and attorney Charles Heuer, FAIA, of the Heuer Law Group based in Charlottesville, Va. How much should you buy? "How much can you afford?" responds Heuer, who also runs the AIA's Legal Line (e-mail, legalline1@aol.com). Some architects feel the threat of claims never goes away, even after they retire.

Manhattan attorney David Pfeffer, LePatner & Associates, says residential architects typically purchase basic policies of \$1 million or less. The cost of protection diminishes as you go up from there, much like having an auto policy for \$300,000 plus an umbrella policy for \$1 million. The coverage architects buy, he says, should be in proportion to the dollar value of what they're designing. It also should be based on past experiences and on the reputation of the contractors they're dealing with. "Even on a small project, money can be eaten away quickly by defense costs, which come off the top of the policy," Pfeffer says. "If there's

haunted houses

Just when you've figured out how to avoid toxic clients, there's toxic mold to worry about. In the past two years, high-profile cases have spurred a slew of mold claims from people who occupy a variety of buildings, from estate homes and condominiums to schools and public libraries. Last year *The New York Times* reported, for example, that one California lawyer is handling mold complaints for 1,000 clients who claim that the black slime growing behind drywall or in HVAC ducts has made them sick or lowered their property values. And in Texas, where the hot, wet climate is a breeding ground, mold claims have more than doubled between 2000 and 2001. Insurers, who pay a lot of money to settle such claims, hope it's a short-term scare. But until it passes, architects should pay attention.

Pathogenic or allergenic molds can grow when the spores encounter significant amounts of moisture. As liabilities go, it's partly a design issue, partly a construction management issue, and partly a maintenance issue, says

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Frank Musica, AIA, with the insurance group Victor O. Schinnerer Co. He advises approaching concerned clients with a positive, yet proactive attitude. "Let them know that mold is everywhere and there's only so much you can do to keep it out," he says. "Make sure they know you're looking into materials and designs that make the building weather-tight while letting it breathe." On renovations, ask a worried owner to have the house tested before work begins to establish a baseline. And advise them it's critical to select a knowledgeable contractor who will protect the materials and the jobsite during construction. It also might be prudent to issue a maintenance schedule to ensure that HVAC ducts are cleaned regularly.

For most buildings, Elliott Elliott Norelius Architecture recommends air-exchange systems to bring fresh air into the house. "We do see mold as a concern for the future," Matt Elliott, AIA, says. "As houses get built tighter and tighter; we can't rely on people to open windows, especially when it's a second home, which can sit vacant for months at a time."—c.w.

a delay in construction, the owner sues the contractor, and the contractor points a finger to the architect because of unclear drawings."

Heuer offers a telling perspective on the inner workings of a malpractice suit. On most claims, he says, the homeowner is unable to prove that the architect has made a serious technical error. In order for the plaintiff to win a settlement, your mistakes have to be in the category of gross negligence—you missed something big that nobody else would have missed. "So a homeowner, not familiar with all this stuff, has expectations that everything will be perfect," Heuer says. "The client gets bent

out of shape and wants to bring a claim, and gets into court or arbitration, and is unable to prove a negligent mistake, but a lot of money gets spent on attorney fees.

"The key point in liability protection," he adds, "is that most claims against the architect have little or nothing to do with a technical error, and everything to do with communication errors—disappointed expectations. That's why prevention is so important. Once somebody makes a claim, it's big bucks. And for a small firm, that can be killing. Even if the insurance company is paying the money, there's always a deductible."

continued on page 36

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limiting your liability

One way to reduce your liability is to spread it around. Five years ago, the large Memphis firm Looney Ricks Kiss instituted a new policy to cut back its exposure. Unless the firm is hired for full services (as defined by the AIA's *The Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice*), which include overseeing construction and approving payment requests from contractors, the contract limits its liability to the total architectural fee. Since adopting that policy, Carson Looney, FAIA, says only three clients have balked. One was a developer building 300 spec homes that wanted the firm to assume liability for all of

them. "In the course of negotiations, if the client doesn't like our terms, we'll offer to buy a project-specific insurance and put it into our bill," Looney says. "We get a quote, and they realize what the real issues are. If we're paid to take responsibility, we'll cover it. But we can't possibly be held responsible for things outside our control."

The policy stands on custom homes, too. While LRK still carries errors and omissions insurance, Looney says the contract clause keeps them from being brought into frivolous suits from owners who are simply disgruntled. "If we have major issues where we've just been negligent, that's a different story," he says.

"We're responsible for it."

When LRK's market shifted to mixed-use projects, it devised the same careful approach to condominium design, considered more of a magnet for lawsuits. The firm requires the client to pay for a project-specific maintenance manual, like one they'd get with a new car, specifying the type and frequency of services that need to be performed. "Whether it's 12 units or 112, people moving into a condo have been told there's no maintenance, and then they don't recaulk around windows like you would on a single-family home," Looney says. "Problems start to show up, and they throw in a thousand

bucks to hire an attorney."

Indeed, Looney has seen condo associations fail to require simple upkeep such as caulking and painting. When the owners take care of those things, he reasons, the only problems that surface will be real ones. The manual also defines acceptable conditions for various materials, such as the types of cracks that are common on poured-in-place concrete. "Too many people think construction should be like a Mercedes in a showroom, but our homes haven't been manufactured over and over again," Looney says. "There are tolerances for the innate properties of materials."

continued on page 38

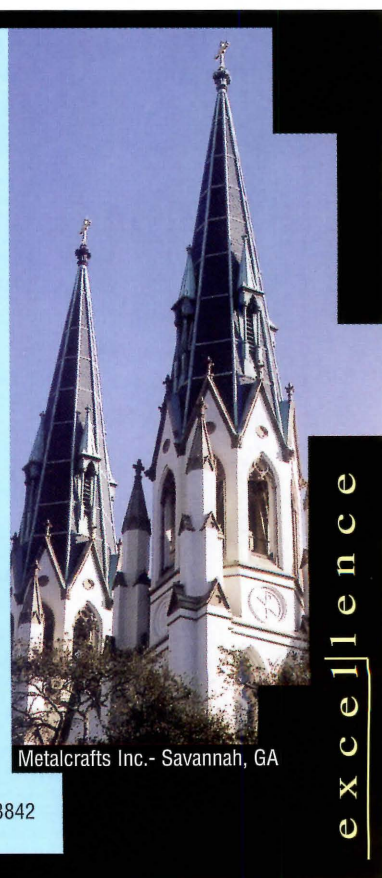
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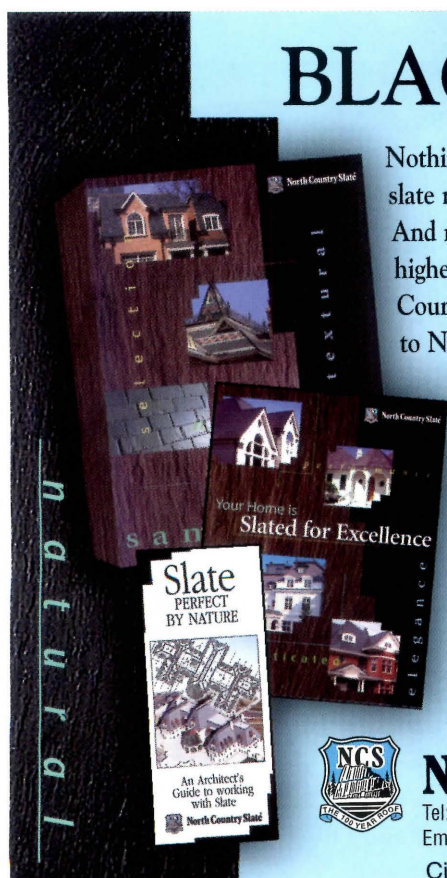
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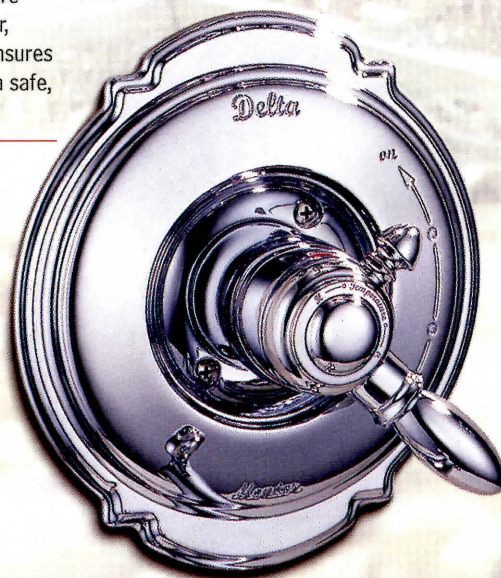
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eyes wide open

Laura Montllor, AIA, Montllor Box Architects, Long Island, N.Y., is attuned to the tolerance levels of her clients, too. Rather than putting them on the defensive by asking them to sign an intimidating contract up front, she eases them into the work with a letter of agreement and a fixed fee that covers schematics. That approach buys time to build understanding and trust before they commit to the big bucks and the B155 AIA contract she typically uses.

"For residential work I think this is paramount," she says. "You have less risk because you've spent more time at the beginning work-

ing things out with them. During schematics, I have quite a few meetings to explain what the construction process is like, and I'm getting paid while educating them. For clients, it's a difference of committing to \$2,000 versus \$500,000. It's a comfort level we're providing." Before finalizing a contract, for example, Montllor has a chance to explain how project costs are developed, how market and economic variables affect the final bid, and that fee increases may result from design changes at the late stages of design development.

Most disputes occur as a result of cost or schedule overruns, according to Pfeffer. He advises that in

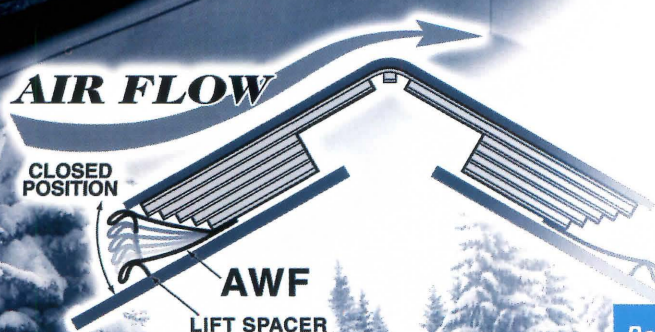
their contracts, architects should promise to adhere to a project schedule but state that they won't be responsible for delays caused by others—clients, contractors, outside consultants. So it's only logical to cover yourself with a paper trail. "If a contractor is falling behind, the architect should immediately write a letter to the client, CCing the contractor, relaying concerns that the contractor hasn't reported to work for the last three days," Pfeffer says. "Make sure the project team members are carrying adequate insurance policies, and that you have a written agreement with them specifying time and budget."

Elliott Elliott Norelius Architecture, Blue Hill, Maine, strives to avoid client sticker shock by being aggressive about cost issues. The architects won't start designing until they've given clients a projected budget based on their wish list of spaces, making sure the clients' financial means matches up with their program. "Almost all of our projects increase in scope, cost, and schedule, but we make sure that they take responsibility for adding that 2,000 square feet to the house, doing it in a conscious way," says Matt Elliott, AIA. "We tell clients we work them pretty hard and don't make a lot of decisions for them, so that

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in the end they understand how they got there." Like LRK, Elliott Elliott Norelius's contract limits the liability on projects to the fee they've been paid. "The idea is that psychologically we're saying we're on board for this, but not this," Elliott says, "and that we don't have a huge slush fund of insurance money out there."

SALA Architects, Minneapolis, favors the same straightforward approach. When it becomes clear that the cost will exceed the stated budget because the program has grown, the firm makes sure the original budget is obliterated in everyone's minds. "We send out a letter getting them to sign off on

an enlarged budget," says Tim Fuller, AIA. "Our fee rises accordingly if we're working on a percentage-of-construction basis."

An early collaboration with the builder, of course, is a classic way to reduce in-house cost-estimating errors. Ben Trogon, AIA, Ben Trogon Architects, Seattle, works through initial schemes with contractors who know the firm's work and design intent. "At the same time the client is interviewing the general contractor, we're asking for an educated guess on costs," Trogon says. "It's a way for a contractor to introduce himself to the client and offer preliminary numbers without working up a bid."

architect on board

Ultimately, so much may depend on whether or not you're out there on the job site, being paid to observe what's going on. Pfeffer believes that master architects, traditionally, were heroes in clients' eyes because they delivered both quality workmanship and designs that matched their budgets. By contrast, when architects provide design services with only limited construction involvement, they lose control over the contractor and the project costs. They're often unable to protect the client from contractor overcharges. And in the end, the client may lose confidence in the entire process. "The design profession has

almost unilaterally handed their projects to construction managers and owners' reps," Pfeffer laments.

Heuer agrees that getting paid to oversee construction is the best way to avoid being sucked into a lawsuit. Practically, the strategy of refusing liability for construction errors that occur on someone else's watch works better for large firms like LRK than for small ones, he says. For example, if the contractor or the homeowner makes changes without an architect's knowledge, what happens when something goes amiss and the contractor claims the drawings were wrong? For small firms, "the ostrich approach can be worse than being around,"

continued on page 40

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Heuer says. "You won't have the liability, but it's proving it that's the killer. If you're there, you get paid, and you get to see what's going on and prevent problems, thus protecting yourself."

mind over matter

As a way of staying out of court, most architects put supreme faith in their intuition and their ability to respond to clients—and rightly so. "Every job has

technical problems," Heuer says, "but the ones that result in claims have communication problems."

Washington, D.C., architect Mark McInturff, FAIA, practices in a city full of

lawyers, yet he says not one of his 400-plus clients has ever lobbed a lawsuit. "If any issue comes up, we're all over it," he explains. "It's as simple as, if a roof leaks, be there within 20 minutes or less; it doesn't matter what time of day. If a client says there's something going on during construction that they don't like, be there right away. Any time you sense there's a problem, instant response is the best thing."

Recently, one of McInturff's former clients became skittish after reading a report about problems with EIFS. The architect hired an independent inspector to check for water damage on the house, which had been completed four years earlier. "We spent quite a bit of time with the people doing the inspection," he says, "watching them the whole time, without charging the client."


Cincinnati architect John Senhauser, FAIA, draws confidence from years of experience. His professional peace of mind depends, in part, on the new-client checklist his firm goes through to determine whether they want to or are capable of doing the project. He doesn't feel especially vulnerable. "We try to be prudent, but not to let the fear of liability drive the business," Senhauser says. "If I let it determine what it is we're doing from a design standpoint, our work would be pretty shallow." *ra*

Cheryl Weber is a contributing writer in Severna Park, Md.

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Conference Agenda

Thursday, October 17

2:00–2:15 p.m.	Strategy + Growth = Value: An Introduction
2:15–3:30 p.m.	The Housing Continuum: Facing the Great Divide ALL NEW consumer research by BUILDER & REMODELING magazines and the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University to document the gulf between what consumers actually want in their homes and what builders and remodelers think they want.
3:30–4:30 p.m.	Growth Markets For the Decade Builders who have diversified into new markets share their secrets for growth.
4:30–5:15 p.m.	Investment Outlook Lenders deliver a primer on debit-equity packages and tell you how to prepare before you talk to financial sources.
5:15–6:15 p.m.	Financing Growth—Meet the Lenders Set up private sessions with leading lenders to explore your company's options for growth.
6:30–7:30 p.m.	Networking Reception

Friday, October 18

8:00–9:15 a.m.	Seize Your Demographic Future Leading demographic and marketing consultants deliver new market data on growth markets—with practical tips to convert this data into actionable, profitable plans.
9:15–10:30 a.m.	End Games Builders share inside information on how they sold their company to investors, their employees and bigger builders.
10:30–10:45 a.m.	Break
10:45 a.m.–12:00 p.m.	The Acquisition Trail Builder Top 100 companies share their shopping lists of characteristics they look for in companies for sale.
12:00–1:30 p.m.	Luncheon—The Next Ten Years A look at the new Census data and what it means to household formations and their effect on new home sales in the next decade.
1:45–2:00 p.m.	Break
2:00–3:00 p.m.	The Value Proposition Learn how to value your company—and increase its value—from the industry's leading deal broker and a top accounting firm.
3:00–4:00 p.m.	The Public Markets Leading investment bankers provide a first-hand guide to taking your company public.
4:00 p.m.	Conference Adjourns

Agenda subject to change.

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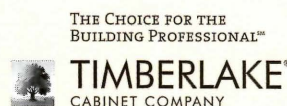
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david furman is putting his home
and his business on the line.
and it feels great.

no fear

by s. claire conroy

you want something done right, you do it yourself.

For years, David Furman, FAIA, has designed some very nice architecture. He's devised lots of attractive—even innovative—housing. And along the way, he's made many developers a lot of money. He's even tried his hand at doing the big development thing himself and was, to his ultimate chagrin, a success. The problem was, it was so easy to get sucked into building the housing he no longer has the heart for: the luxurious, high-end stuff designed for the well-heeled. On the surface, the work looked sexy: urban apartments and townhouses swathed in granite and stainless steel. High-dollar infill sites, high-dollar flash, and high-dollar price tags.

It's this kind of work that's passing for urban renewal right now. At first flush, it looks and feels great. Old, tired housing stock is replaced or reinvigorated. Scary storefronts and trash-filled parking lots disappear in favor of semi-mod loft apartments and rows of new townhouses designed along historicist lines. Maybe an

old rental building is gutted and upgraded. A Starbuck's drops anchor, a new Rite Aid or a CVS comes in, and then, if you're really lucky, a grocery store with health-food pretensions invests in this burgeoning new neighborhood. Voilà, you've got a full-fledged urban renaissance.

Developers love it because they can churn one \$500,000 patch of land into multiple \$500,000 condos—just add absolute-black granite countertops. Existing owners love it because they watch their property values soar. To most, this passes for progress. Urban blight and flight is transformed into bustle, bounty, and bidding wars. It's impressive and exciting for a select group: monied professionals. For those who are barely scraping by, it's another corner of the city they can no longer afford. And low-income buyers and renters aren't the

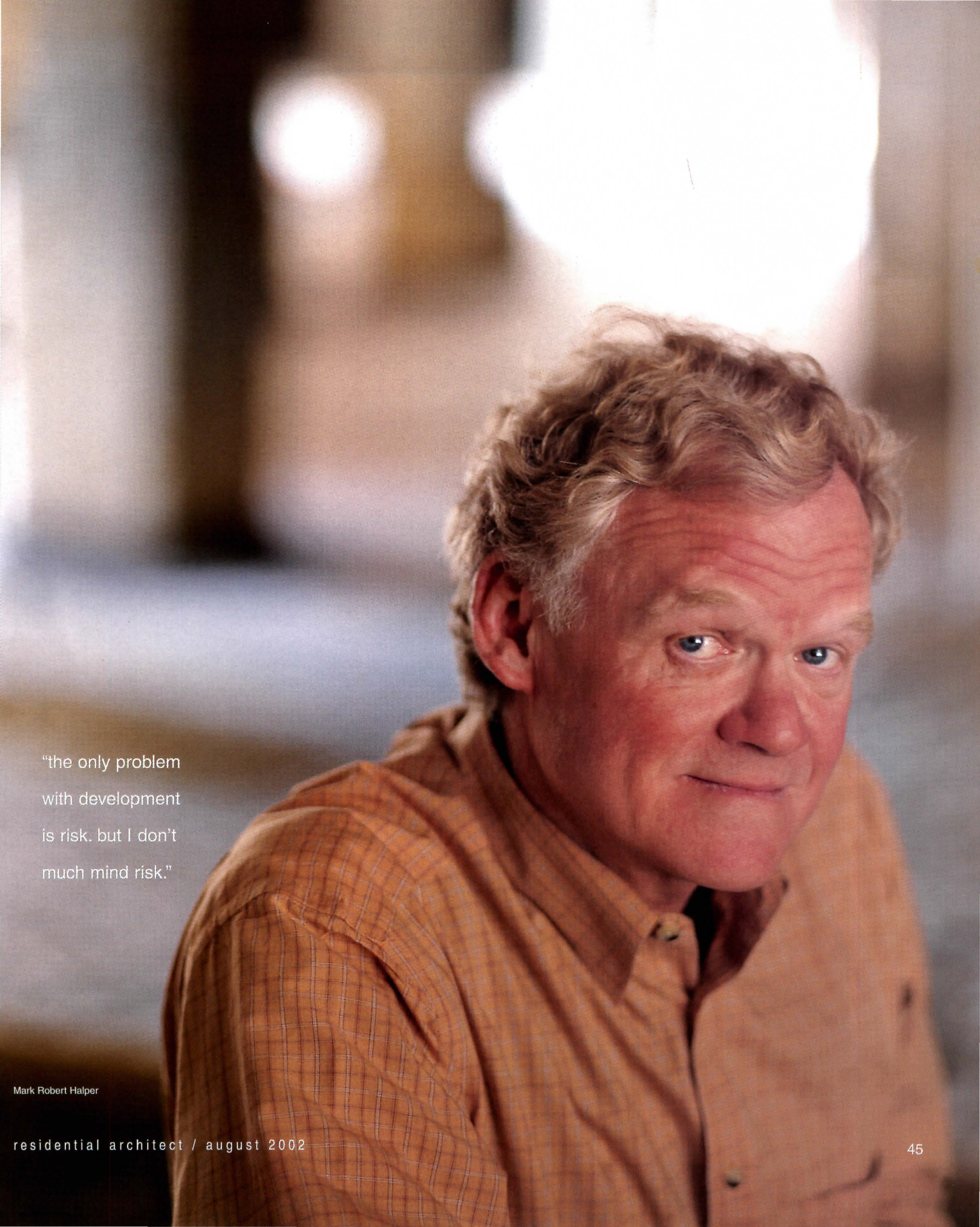
only ones affected. Increasingly, middle-class buyers find city doors closed to them as well. Real estate appreciation and gentrification is pricing all but the well-to-do out of desirable urban markets.

Even with our troubled economy, this scenario is playing out in most major cities as developers look for maximum safety and maximum return on their investment. It's happening in David Furman's hometown of Charlotte, N.C., and he wants to be part of the solution, not the problem. Three years ago, he extracted himself from the development company he started with partner

Furman believes the best way to make city living more affordable is to make the units smaller. At 500 square feet each, the Silo Lofts are compact, but an open plan and plenty of glass will make them live much larger.



Risden McElroy

A portrait of Mark Robert Halper, a man with curly, light brown hair and blue eyes, wearing a brown and orange checkered button-down shirt. He is looking slightly to the right with a thoughtful expression. The background is blurred, showing warm, out-of-focus lights.

"the only problem
with development
is risk. but I don't
much mind risk."

Mark Robert Halper

no fear



Furman has moved out of his townhouse in Charlotte's upscale Myers Park neighborhood and into one of his condos at Gateway Lofts (above and right).



Tim Buchman Photography

Charlotte's greatest housing triumph is its First Ward makeover from blighted public projects to a lively mixed-income neighborhood. Furman's 8th and Alexander townhouses (below, left and right) are a linchpin in the master plan.



Tim Buchman Photography

Queens Road West, an upscale development of 22 townhouses Furman built and lived in while partnered with The Boulevard Company, has appreciated from an average price of \$500,000 to nearly \$900,000 in just five years.





Rick Alexander & Associates

Atherton Heights, another Boulevard Company project, pioneered Furman's inverted floor plan townhouse. A bedroom/office is on the first level, public spaces on the second, and the master suite on the top. Roof decks grab a measure of private outdoor space.

Chris Branch, The Boulevard Company, and started a new venture, Boulevard Centro, dedicated to edgy, interesting, affordable urban infill housing.

"I am convinced you don't do things forever," says Furman. Still, most people would like to try because for most, change is frightening. Changing your life while everything is going well is beyond many people's wildest imaginations—not so for David Furman. To finance his new move and to bridge the gap caused by a project that hit a snag, he's selling his own home. It's a townhouse in a development he designed and built with The Boulevard Company. The development, on the edge of an upscale tree-lined residential neighborhood filled with some of the most expensive single-family homes in Charlotte, represents one of his old company's biggest successes. "Queens West really put The Boulevard Company on the map. It was a corner site with topography that we managed to get rezoned for high density. We put 22 units on that lot—back-to-back interior housing."

Securing that rezoning wasn't easy. Homeowners in established neighborhoods rarely are happy to see a high-density project wedged into their green space. "It took 50 community meetings to get that project approved," says Furman. "I despise having to do that sort of thing. I started the Centro thing so I can work where I'm wanted."

Nowadays, most neighborhood associations are delighted to see Furman—known around town for his high-quality, high-design work—come in and rescue an eyesore site. That was certainly true of his Gateway Lofts project on West Trade Street, which he currently calls home. Part of the larger Gateway Village complex that includes offices, retail, and rental apartments, the lofts gussy up the streetscape and hide a huge parking garage behind them. Priced in the \$100,000s, the handsome units represent some of the most affordable residences in the development. The project hit

a construction snag that delayed opening and drained some of Furman's resources. That's part of why he's occupying one of the units—and part of why his house is for sale. "The only problem with development is risk," says Furman. "but I don't much mind risk."

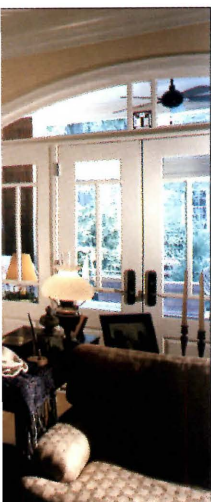
Furman is also *persona grata* over on West 10th and North

"people will trade
space for proximity
if you make it
cool."

Smith streets, where he snapped up a lot barely big enough for a pick-up game of basketball and is breaking ground soon on a 32-unit loft project. The 5,400-square-foot site is adjacent to a flour-milling plant

and its complex of grain elevators. Instead of trying to hide the industrial view with his building, Furman's design embraces the silos as an aesthetic amenity, one that lends both theme and character to his Silo Urban Lofts.

By most condo standards the Silo units are tiny. At 500 square feet, they're no bigger than a typical studio apartment. But the wide-open units will have few



Rick Alexander & Associates

no fear

interior walls, 10-foot-high ceilings, and walls of glass looking out on a skyline view. Barbie doll-size kitchens will have just two-burner cooktops and overhead combination convection/microwave ovens. Furman figures young urbanites will eat out or bring home prepared meals, so why load up on commercial-style and -sized appliances? His main goal was to get the price to \$100,000 and under. It worked, and the project sold out last November. "With urban housing going gangbusters for the last few years, the only way you can make it more affordable—because land prices are more expensive and construction is more expensive—is to make it smaller," he explains. "People will trade space for proximity if you make it cool."

That's what Furman wants to do in his new life: Make it affordable; make it cool. That's why he left The Boulevard Company, which does fine urban

and suburban residential work but does so at mostly market rates. Of course, he still needs to make a living for himself and others; therefore, he and his staff of 25 wear a number of hard hats: There's Boulevard Centro, Furman's new development company; David Furman Architects, which designs all of Centro's work; and The Housing Studio,

"the move of urbanism is huge. the only thing that gets in its way is price."

which does design-for-hire work for big developers such as Post Properties and Summit Properties. He also has a real estate company to sell the property he develops. It's called, appropriately,

Runaway Train Real Estate Company.

Wise-guy company names aside, Furman feels more in control these days because he's doing what he wants to do, where he wants to do it. He's reshaping his hometown in a way he believes everyone can live with. "I think we're moving toward being a brand," he says. "If I started to cut back, it

would be on outside work. I'd do smaller projects—ones that are easy to get financed, easy to get a handle on."

After more than 20 years of improving the quality and affordability of housing in Charlotte, Furman is already at the point of doing infill adjacent to his own infill work. And plenty of blanks remain in the city's master plans to keep him busy for a good long time. "A lot of the success of our company is to due to the success of Charlotte. When Bank of America moved here, we became the number two banking town in the country."

That's meant a runaway money train for many real estate prospectors in the market. But Furman wants to make sure there's a place for bank tellers to live, not just bank vice presidents: "With Boulevard Centro, there are three sets of criteria: exclusively urban work, exclusively affordable, and exclusively more adventurous," he says. "The move of urbanism is huge. The only thing that gets in its way is price. We want to rethink the way people live." **ra**



Risden McElroy

The ultimate in affordable housing are single-room occupancy buildings, or SROs. Furman designed this one, a first for Charlotte, pro bono.

Park West (below, left and center) won BUILDER magazine's top award in 1999. The affordable townhouses, which borrowed design cues from nearby bungalows, sold out in one weekend. Furman's Housing Studio still designs market-rate housing like Bayshore Parkside (below, right) for other developers.



Tim Buchman Photography



Tim Buchman Photography





Tim Buchman Photography



Furman designed Uptown Place for Post Properties, an upscale urban infill developer. The mixed-use building in Charlotte's Fourth Ward contains 227 apartments, shops, and restaurants.



Risden McElroy

Skyline Terrace continues Furman's work in Charlotte's revitalized First Ward. The affordable "townlofts" take open plans to three levels, plus roof terraces.



Tim Buchman Photography



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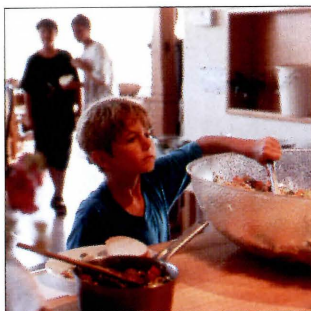
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S

Several doctors and nurses, two lawyers, and a college professor live at Cantine's Island, a 12-home development in Saugerties, N.Y. The attractive community of single-family houses designed by Belmont, Mass., architect Raym deRis features simple architectural forms and a thoughtful land plan. Residents share ties to the New York City area and an interest in living lightly on the land. The houses sold for an average price of \$170,000 at the time of the project's completion in 1998.

While it may sound like a relatively mundane subdivision, Cantine's Island is anything but a run-of-the-mill development. It is in fact a cutting-edge social experiment called cohousing. Contrary to misconceptions, this has nothing to do with tie-dyed T-shirts and cult-based Utopian cooperatives. "We prefer that the words 'commune' or 'collective' never be brought up in relation to cohousing," says Melissa Emery of Wonderland Hill Development Corporation, a leading developer of cohousing based in Boulder, Colo. "They're not what it is at all."

just the facts

So what exactly is it, then? Architects Kathryn McCamant and Charles Durrett, whose 1988 book *Cohousing: A Contemporary Approach to Housing Ourselves* introduced the European concept of cohousing to North America, are the people to ask. They list six defining characteristics: A design process with resident participation, a neighborhood design that encourages social interaction, private homes with kitchens as well as common facilities with community kitchens and dining rooms, resident management of common areas, collective decision-making regarding community issues, and separate income sources for each household.

Essentially, cohousing provides an option for people interested in greater community involvement than typical housing developments provide. While it shares some physical traits with New Urbanism, cohousing places a stronger emphasis on social structures than its more

conventional counterpart. “New Urbanism does claim to foster community by the way it arranges buildings, and I think that’s all right,” says Wayne Moody, a Tucson, Ariz., planner who helped design Milagro, a cohousing development currently under construction in his hometown. “It works for the mainstream buyer, so it will be more popular. But if you’re talking about cutting-edge planning, I think cohousing is better.”

social life

The number of people who agree with Moody is growing. Before 1995, eight cohousing communities existed in the United States. Now there are more than 50, and about 100 new ones are in the works. Cohousing traditionally has been popular among single parents and older people, who especially appreciate the security of having neighbors they feel comfortable calling in emergencies. It also attracts those who live alone and those who work at home. “The workplace is the main social connection for many people,” says McCamant, who with Durrett runs architecture and development consulting firms in Berkeley, Calif. “In cohousing, you rebuild those connections that are lost when you work at home.”

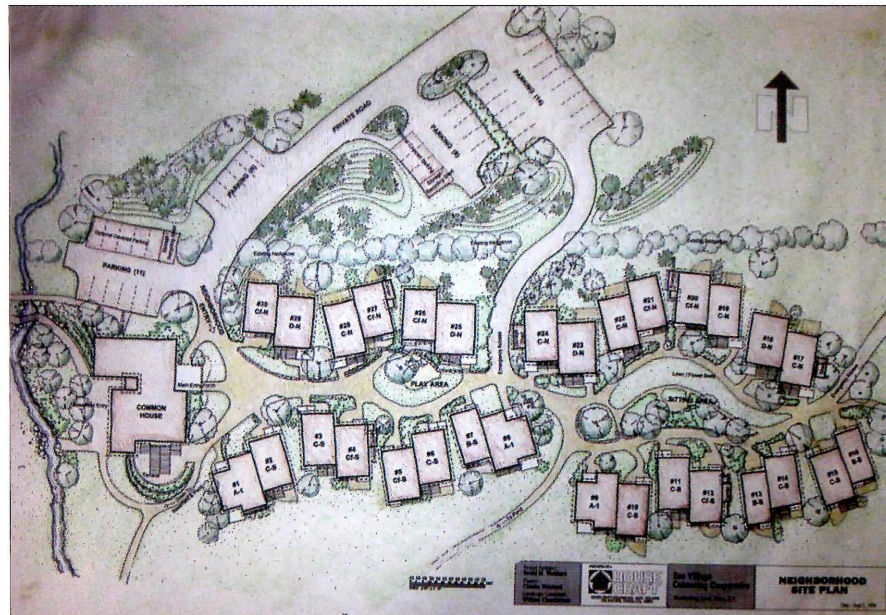
Demographic surveys point to rising numbers of all of these buyer types. U.S. Census data, for example, shows that the percentage of one- or two-person households rose from 46 percent in 1970 to 59 percent in 2000. And the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported in May 2001 that 9.3 million people now work at home full-time. But demographics alone aren’t powering the

continued on page 54

Simple saltbox-inspired duplexes are equipped with deep roof overhangs to provide shade and shelter from the weather.



Photos: Laura Miller



A curvy, pedestrian-only “main street” leads to the common house. Units are sited to enhance privacy.

a community garden, playground, and composting stations foster casual social opportunities among neighbors.



Being kind to Mother Nature is integral to the culture at EcoVillage. The common house (left) and some units are topped with wind turbines and solar collectors for a future hot-water heating system.

saving grace

EcoVillage Cohousing Cooperative (EVCC) in Ithaca, N.Y., isn't your everyday cohousing community. It has a cooperative

ownership structure, which differs from the usual condominium or planned-unit development setup. It's part of an umbrella organization, a nonprofit called the EcoVillage at Ithaca, which includes four more planned cohousing neighborhoods and an organic farm—all within the same 176-acre parcel. And its emphasis on sustainability is more pronounced than in many cohousing communities.

Despite its differences, EVCC provides a fine model for cohousing. The 15 duplexes, designed by architect Jerry Weisburd of Housecraft Builders, evoke traditional rural structures such as the New England saltbox. His wife and partner, planner Claudia Weisburd, Ph.D., staggered them along a meandering pedestrian street, siting each unit for maximum solar gain.

The common house contains a central kitchen and dining room, play room, sitting room, office space, laundry and storage facilities, and multipurpose rooms. Two cov-

ered carports also shelter a woodworking shop and a recycling shed; more outdoor parking is included at the edge of the three-acre neighborhood. A community garden, playground, and composting stations foster casual social opportunities among neighbors, who range from families with young children to childless couples to retirees.

In addition to keeping the size of the homes to a modest 922 to 1,642 square feet, the residents incorporated ambitious environmental elements into the design. For example, underground pipes allow eight-unit clusters to share a hot-water heating system, which reduces the amount of natural gas burned. Cellulose insulation, dual piping for a future graywater recycling system, and high-efficiency triple-paned windows also contribute to sustainability. And because they often use the common kitchen, residents opted for small, energy-saving ovens and refrigerators in their individual kitchens.

project:

EcoVillage Cohousing Cooperative, Ithaca, N.Y.

architect/builder/development consultant:

Housecraft Builders, Ithaca

developer:

EcoVillage Cohousing Cooperative, Ithaca

unit size:

922 to 1,642 square feet

number of units:

30

site size:

3 acres

construction cost

(including common house):

\$100 per square foot

cohousing movement. The same desire for a strong sense of community spurring the success of neo-traditional developments plays a significant factor in the spread of cohousing. “We’ve become so focused on autonomy and privacy. Some of us think we’ve gone too far to that extreme,” says McCamant, echoing the sentiments of many cohousing advocates. “Extended families are getting more spread out. People are spending more hours commuting, which gives them less time to spend socializing.”

Residents of cohousing have their social time built into their days. A trip to the common parking lot or garage, a standard element in most of these projects, can lead to casual conversations with neighbors. Often, the common kitchen is used for shared dinners, cooked by a rotating list of volunteer residents. Other frequent functions for community spaces include exercise rooms, guest apartments, tool sheds, music rooms, and libraries. The system is cost-effective and sustainable, since individual units don’t have to be as large as they normally would to accommodate all of these activities. And instead of each resident owning a tool set to haul out once or twice a year, the group buys one for everyone to use.

the long view

Of course, sharing tools with dozens of other people (cohousing communities usually range from 12 to 42 households) requires a certain level of trust among the community’s members. Also, unplanned social meetings mean “alone time” might be harder to

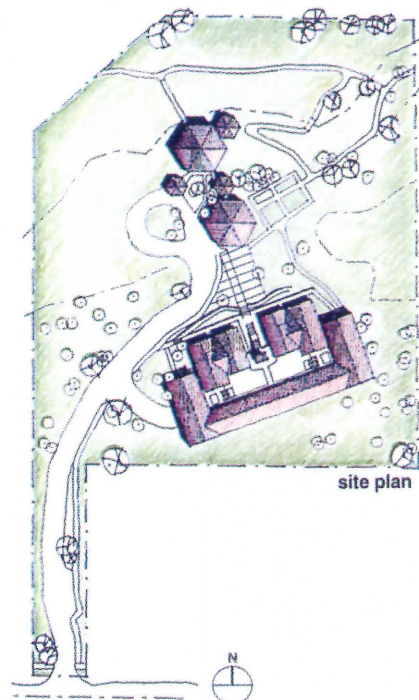
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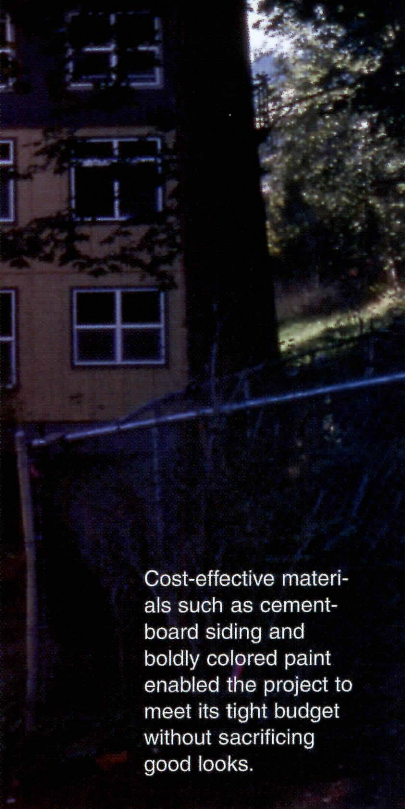
Exterior photos: Courtesy Robertson Merryman Barnes Architects



A campus-like plan (right) places buildings along a pedestrian path and isolates parking away from dwellings (above).



"having a consultant to help with decisions makes the process smoother."—linda barnes, faia



Cost-effective materials such as cement-board siding and boldly colored paint enabled the project to meet its tight budget without sacrificing good looks.



Stephen Cridland

In cohousing, sightlines from the units to the common areas encourage a sense of community. This home-office nook (above) overlooks Trillium Hollow's courtyard.

multifamily ties

Portland, Ore., architect Linda Barnes, FAIA, and her clients made some tough choices when planning a site for the cohousing

community Trillium Hollow. "The original concept was to have cottages and duplexes that would step up the hill," she says. "It was lovely, but much more expensive than the group could afford."

So the community's members—which include medical professionals, retirees, and several people who work at home—scaled back to a 28-unit multifamily building with underground parking. Barnes mitigated the building's mass with a varied exterior color scheme, and she maximized light and fresh air in each 600- to 1,600-square-foot unit by arranging the complex around a central courtyard. She emphasized sight lines from each dwelling into the courtyard to help residents feel connected to their neighbors. "That's what making neighborhoods is all

about," she says. "You have to separate people from their cars and allow them time and places to interact with other members of the community."

Leaving the two original buildings on the property intact was another cost-effective measure. One serves as the common house; the other holds an additional unit over a garage. Trillium Hollow's development consultant, Chris ScottHanson of Cohousing Resources in Bainbridge Island, Wash., facilitated the project's planning and construction schedule. "Cohousing can be very time-consuming for the people involved," says Barnes. "But having a consultant to help with decisions makes the process smoother. When it's done that way, I think cohousing makes a lot of sense."

project:

Trillium Hollow, Portland, Ore.

architect:

Robertson Merryman Barnes Architects, Portland

builder:

S.D. Deacon Corp., Portland

developer:

West Hills Planned Community, Portland

development consultant:

Cohousing Resources, Bainbridge Island, Wash.

unit size:

600 to 1,600 square feet

number of units:

29

site size:

3.7 acres

construction cost:

\$78 per square foot

find in cohousing than elsewhere. These factors may forestall cohousing from becoming a mass movement, at least here in the United States. It's hard enough to convince people to abandon the privacy of their cars for public transportation, let alone to share community resources on a daily basis.

However, those at the forefront of the cohousing movement point to its potential to influence communities in a far-reaching way. "Cohousing is a great way to get market-rate housing into pioneering city neighborhoods," says architect Peter Waller, a principal at Pyatok Associates in Oakland. "The homebuyers have more confidence in their investment because they're not moving in there by themselves—they've got each other. It's becoming kind of like live-work units or artists' lofts—developers are mentioning it in the same breath as those housing types as a way to attract people to city neighborhoods."

Jim Leach, the founder of Wonderland Hill Development, sees equal value in adding cohousing to neo-traditional communities, which he's done at Highland Gardens Village in Denver. "Cohousing has an important role to play as one of the more aggressive models of community development," he says. "Within a larger development, it can get a group of pro-active residents together who can really plant the seed for public interaction throughout the community."

Cohousing may not be for all homebuyers, but it gives them a choice that's different from the other residential offerings out there. In a world where the monotony of tract development has become a fact of life, more choice is good news for everyone. **ra**

Done right, cohousing treads the line between public and private without stepping on either toe. Bellingham balances its boundaries with private porches and public green space.

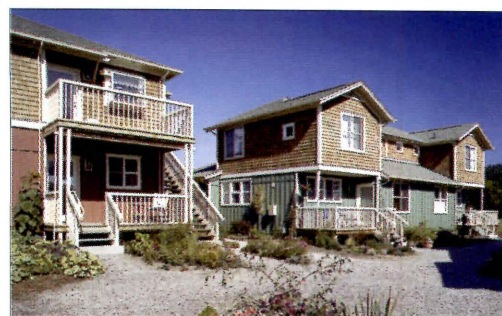


Photos: © Randall J. Corcoran



The CoHousing Company's site plan severs cars from housing and pushes them to the perimeter. Walking paths weave throughout the town-house clusters.

"we kept the cost of the hydronic heat down by doing it for each building, rather than each individual unit."—kathryn mccamant



In the community kitchen, commercial-style appliances and vast workspaces serve a real purpose: cooking meals for a restaurant-sized crowd.

town on the farm

Bellingham Cohousing in Bellingham, Wash., came together through a process known as "streamlined development." Pioneered

by Boulder, Colo., developer Jim Leach, it entails hiring a developer or development consultant to line up an architect, builder, planner, and all the other professional assistance a cohousing group needs. "I don't know if it's actually streamlined," says Leach, "but it's more streamlined than when the people in the group try to do everything themselves."

His company, Wonderland Hill Development, selected husband-and-wife team Kathryn McCamant and Charles Durrett of The CoHousing Company in Berkeley, Calif., to create a 33-unit townhouse project on a 5.8-acre former farm. McCamant and Durrett clustered the homes on the north side of the site, leaving two acres of wetlands untouched. They and the group opted to keep the original farmhouse on the site intact and transform it into a

common house. In addition to standard uses such as a community kitchen and dining room, the 4,800-square-foot house also contains an arts-and-crafts room, guest rooms, and a library complete with books, periodicals, videos, and CDs.

McCamant and Durrett configured the site plan to save some existing trees. The parking spots around the northern perimeter of the project and the pedestrian paths that wind through it are paved with loose gravel to slow stormwater runoff. The group also was able to include a hydronic heating system, which is healthier for a home's inhabitants but usually much more expensive than forced-air heat. "We kept the cost of the hydronic heat down by doing it for each building, rather than each individual unit," says McCamant. "That's the sort of thing you can do with cohousing."

project:

Bellingham Cohousing,
Bellingham, Wash.

architect:

The CoHousing Company, Berkeley, Calif.

builder:

S.D. Deacon Corp., Portland, Ore.

developer:

Wonderland Hill Development Company,
Boulder, Colo.

development consultant:

Cohousing Resources,
Bainbridge Island, Wash.

unit size:

780 to 1,600 square feet

number of units:

33

site size:

5.8 acres

construction cost:

Withheld

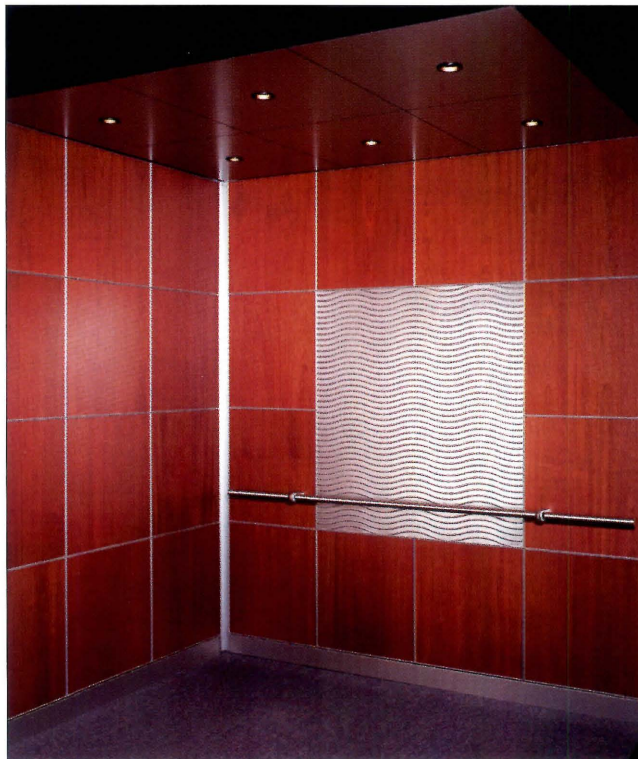
moving on up

elevators are an up-and-coming residential spec.

by nigel f. maynard

Once an oddity in residential applications, elevators are gaining favor among architects for their versatility in solving accessibility and design problems. A number of trends are responsible for lifting the humble elevator's residential profile. For one, the aging baby-boom generation will not likely go quietly to the old folks home. Boomers are going to want to age in place as long as possible, and elevators will help them do so. Additionally, the soaring cost of land means that, increasingly, building up is the most cost-efficient way to give Americans the square footage they crave. Elevators will make taller houses a more marketable building type. And, of course, many people with disabilities have long relied on elevators to enable them to use all of their house—not just a single floor.

Joe Coratola, a Bethesda, Md.-based architect, has included 10 elevators in the 50 houses he designed last year. Architect Tom Ahman in University Park, Md., is using two in a 38,000-square-foot addition to a single-family home. And Paul Barbee of Barbee-Curran Elevator Co. in Rockville, Md., is consult-



Courtesy Forms + Surfaces

Forms + Surfaces' economical product doesn't look cheap with mahogany veneer, stainless steel, and clear anodized aluminum.

ing on a 30-unit townhouse development in Reston, Va., where each five-level unit will have an elevator.

"The market itself is growing rapidly," confirms Scott Hollat, vice president and product manager for residential elevators at Matot in Bellwood, Ill. Although Matot is one of the smaller players in the market, the manufacturer sells about 450 residential units per year.

Larger market demand has brought with it more choices—from the mechanisms that drive the elevator to the materials that clad

the interior. Prices vary depending on the number of stops the elevator must make and the opulence of its interior design. Modest units begin at \$10,000, but some units are priced at \$40,000 or more.

inner workings

Two types of drive systems operate residential elevators: hydraulic and cable drum. Determining which is the superior choice for residential applications depends on whom you ask. Barbee says a hydraulic unit—which starts slowly and speeds up—offers a more

commercial feel and is what people are more familiar with in an office building. Cable drum is slower and more constant, he says. Coratola specs hydraulic systems because he believes they provide a smoother ride, quicker response time, and quieter operation. Hollat, however, considers the cable-drum system more reliable. "[Hydraulic systems] require more after-market maintenance once they are installed. Most of the time, homeowners neglect them, and they don't get the maintenance they need," he says.

No matter which drive system you spec, the possibilities for interior finishes are seemingly limitless. Residential Elevators in Tallahassee, Fla., manufactures and distributes a cable-drum elevator, a hybrid self-start/self-stop version, and a roped-hydraulic unit. Unfinished birch is standard on all units, but etched glass, raised panels, and exotic hardwoods are available as alternatives, vice president Steve Hawley says. Stainless steel, brass, and other metals also are options.

Inclinators in Harrisburg, Pa., offers a variety of elevators sized for virtually any project. They furnish prefinished hardwood or veneer raised and recessed

panels, custom colors, and assorted styles of molding. Units also may be custom finished in the field.

Cable-drum custom cabs from Appleton, Wis.-based Waupaca Elevator Co. contain raised and flat panels in several species of wood, national sales manager Susan Nicewander says. Other options include brushed or polished bronze, brushed brass, chrome, stainless steel finishes, and two types of gates.

Cemcolift in Hatfield, Pa., makes three types of hydraulic-lift elevators that are built to order. In addition to standard finishes, designers can choose from stainless steel and bronze metal. Fully automatic safety doors that open if they encounter an object also are available.

If manufacturers' cab finishes are not slick enough for your clients' tastes, Forms + Surfaces in Carpinteria, Calif., provides a pre-

engineered interior system called CabForms. The easy-to-spec economical product (prices start at \$5,000) looks like a custom interior system, says marketing manager Laura Camp. Just choose one of three systems—full-panel; stile, rail, and inset; or interlocking grid with eight standard configurations—and the company does all the take-offs, makes the components, and ships them out.

elevation regulation

Residential elevators abide by less stringent codes than commercial products, but the laws can't be ignored. "One thing you've got to remember is that you still have to deal with local codes with regard to rating the shaft walls and providing safety stops," Joe Coratola says. "Some of the same issues you have with commercial elevators still apply."

Distributors are a valuable resource. Many know the ins and outs of local codes and are especially adept at matching the elevator to the client's particular needs. "A lot of architects take the easy way out and simply download specs off of a Web site," Barbee says. "This often leads to a unit that doesn't fit the client."

Steve Hawley has witnessed how taking shortcuts can lead to errors. "Architects often don't make the cab large enough to accommodate ADA compliance," he says. "I have seen architects' plans that had inside dimensions of 48 by 48

the lift list

a few examples of conveyor purveyors

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www.acmehomeelevator.com

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215.703.0358
www.cemcolift.com

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Schumacher Elevator Company

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www.schumacherelevator.com

ThyssenKrupp Elevator

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www.thyssenkruppelevator.com

Waupaca Elevator

Appleton, Wis.
800.238.8739
www.waupacaelevator.com

inches. You'll never maneuver a wheelchair in there."

The solution to such an oversight is simple: See the distributor early. "I like to be involved in the design process so I can know exactly what the clients need and what kind of house they have," Barbee says.

fitting in

Designing a new home to accommodate an elevator is easy, according to the experts. "All you are doing is stacking closets above one another," Scott Hollat says. "It's all stud and dry-wall construction." The best place to put the elevator, suggests Coratola, is adjacent to another vertical

element—the stair.

Adding an elevator to a renovation, however, can be trickier. Architects often struggle with determining the right location for the unit. Coratola suggests placing the elevator in the rear to coordinate with the existing house. "We try to integrate it with the facade and pick up some roofline," he says. "We also put a deck around the shaft and use the deck to hide the pump room."

If you've never thought about these design issues before, chances are you'll have to think about them in the not-too-distant future. Residential elevators are, without a doubt, an up-and-coming spec. **ra**



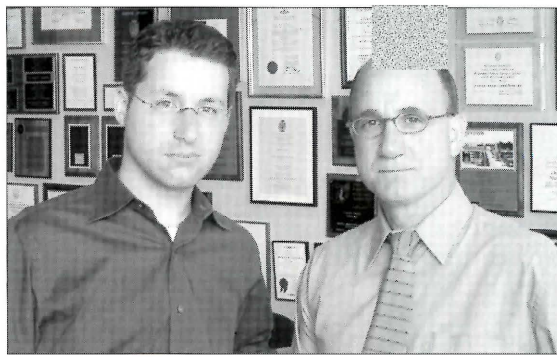
Courtesy Inclinator

Inclinator's acrylic panels lessen the elevator compartment's visual obtrusion.

architects' choice

product picks from the pros.

city architecture



*michael caito and paul volpe, aia
cleveland*

saturn's glow

Louis Poulsen's Saturn light fixture is a favorite of City Architecture, especially for porch ceilings on townhouses. "It's contemporary, gives off a great light, and creates a tremendous streetscape," says principal Paul Volpe. The product has a 10.6-inch flat-steel reflector ring and a clear- or opal-glass enclosure. It comes in 8.3- or 9.3-inch lengths and in white, stainless steel, or hot-dipped galvanized finishes. Louis Poulsen Lighting, 954.349.2525; www.louispoulsen.com.



a to zinc

Rheinzink is a durable, low-maintenance roofing and wall-cladding material made of zinc, copper, and titanium. City Architecture uses it for custom interior applications but also specs it on the canopies of contemporary townhouse projects. "It's a great metal because it's real dull and dark but finishes to a great patina," says Volpe. It's offered in a bright or blue-gray preweathered format and in various styles, including corrugated and perforated panels, tiles, sheets, and rolls.

Rheinzink, 604.291.8171; www.rheinzink.com.

—nigel f. maynard

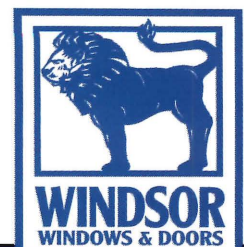
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personal touch

The built-in look for appliances is red hot, but design possibilities don't stop at the refrigerator door. Newton, Iowa-based Jenn-Air introduces a side-by-side refrigerator that can be customized inside and out. Available in 42- or 48-inch versions, the Luxury Series offers two modular design choices and a variety of mix-and-match interior components, including tilt-down bins and their line of A La Carte storage drawers and Elevator shelves. The units are available in stainless steel or with a custom front panel. Jenn-Air, 800.536.6247; www.jennair.com.

—nigel f. maynard

blue streak

Sydney Blue flooring is harvested from Eucalyptus trees that yield wood with a Janka hardness rating of 2023 (red oak, by contrast, is 1510). The higher rating means the product will stand up especially well to everyday foot traffic, says Kristy Mayers of Boral

Timber, an Australian company with U.S. offices in Novato, Calif. The Australiana grade shown here has an extra dose of natural features, including spirals, burls, and insect marks. Standard dimensions are 3¼ inches wide by 4 feet long. A 5¼-inch width and classic (less figured) grade also are available. Boral Timber, 800.267.2560; www.boraltimber.com.



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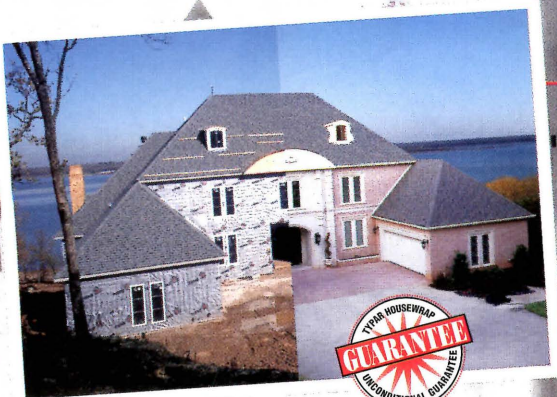
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mood indigo

In the Mood bathroom furniture builds on a theme of 14-inch squares arranged in horizontal or vertical rows. Optional interior lighting illuminates transparent blue, orange, or white glass panels, framed in aluminum, light maple, or white wood. Options include sideboards of various depths and widths, tall cabinets, vanity units, low cabinets, rolling containers, and medicine cabinets. All come with scratch-proof glass. Duravit, 888.DURAVIT; www.duravit.com.



unified front

The Wing cabinet commands attention with a Plexiglas-backed, perforated steel door that opens and stops in any position. Soft interior lighting permeates clear glass shelves and produces glowing pinholes when the door is closed. Natural beech, cherry, maple, walnut, mahogany, and wenge veneers are offered, as well as a great variety of colored lacquers. All finishes come in high gloss or matte. Custom widths range from 39% to 59 inches. Studio Becker, 510.865.1616; www.studiobecker.com.

mod quad

Inspired by Arts & Crafts design, the Time series of kitchen cabinets combines a period look of cubes and rectangles with today's taste for angular lines and modern materials.

Recessed toekicks add a touch of elegance. Oak and cherry finishes and a complete palette of embossed lacquers are available. Varenna by

Poliform, 877.VARENNA;

www.varenna.com.





white light

The latest kitchen collection from high-end cabinetmaker Poggenpohl is sleek and versatile. The ALU2000 line has extruded-aluminum shelves, self-closing drawers, and elegant cabinet hardware. The compartmentalized system, with its large assortment of accessories, lends itself to custom configuration. Finishing materials include maple, dolomite, stainless steel, and satin-frosted glass.

Poggenpohl, 973.812.8900;

www.poggenpohl-usa.com.



black magic

Refined minimalist lines and lush materials (white marble, glass, cherry wood and wenge finishes) distinguish

Porcher's Kyomi collection. The Como basin pairs with a white marble base and any single-control faucet. The set also

includes a pedestal version of the basin table, a free-standing table, and wall-mounted solid wood cabinets. Porcher

by American Standard, 800.524.9797;

www.americanstandard-us.com.

maple delight

Solid maple construction, stainless steel hardware, and pinhead-glass door panels characterize the City furniture group. The vanity accommodates a vessel or drop-in sink and can be topped with wood or frosted glass. Additional pieces include a linen cabinet, wall cabinet with towel bars, and mirror. Firma Bath Furniture, 905.851.5552.



—shelley d. hutchins

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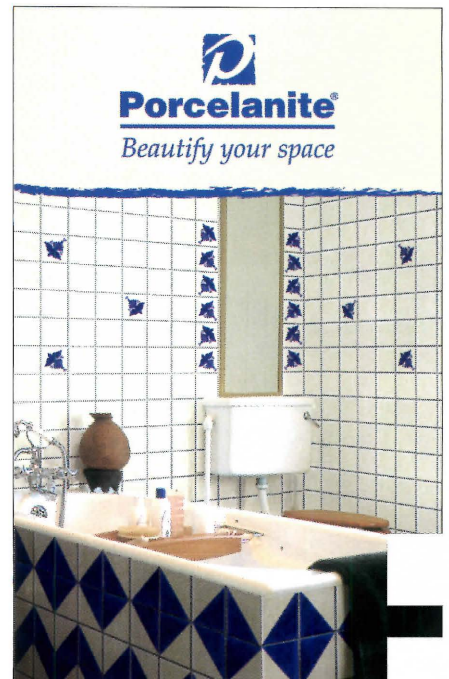
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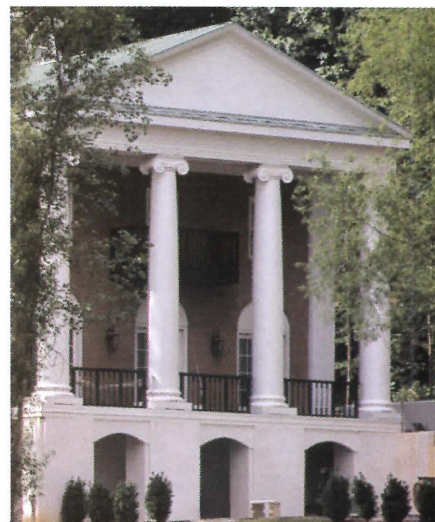
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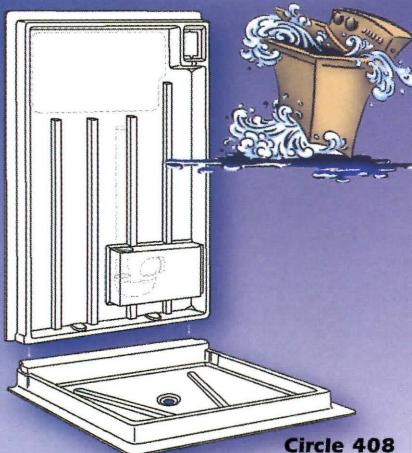
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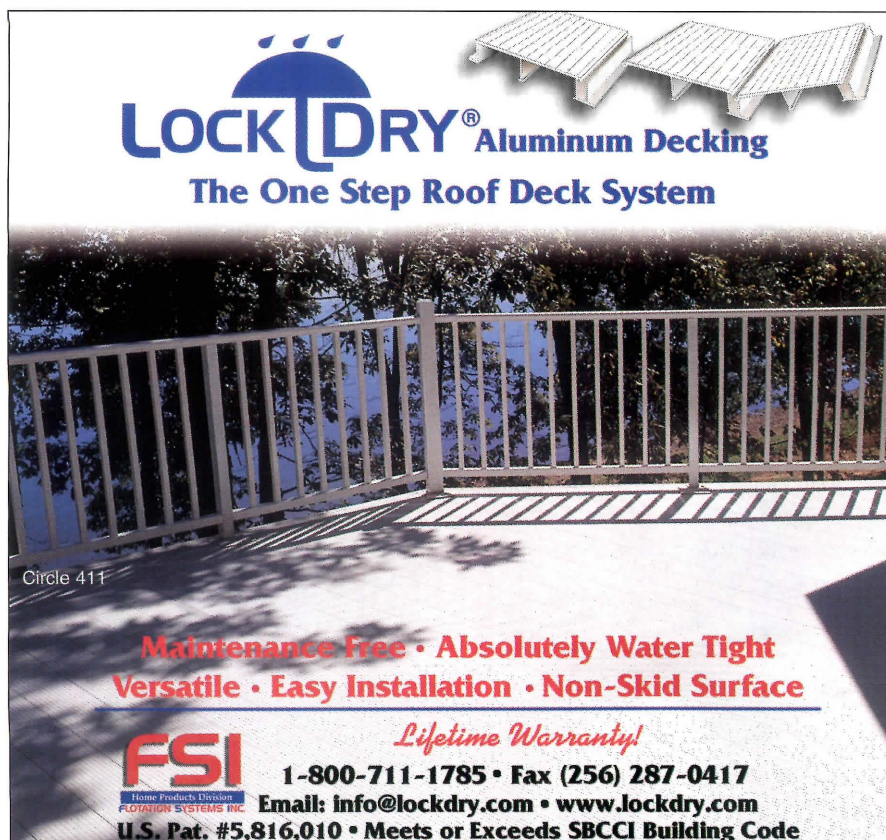


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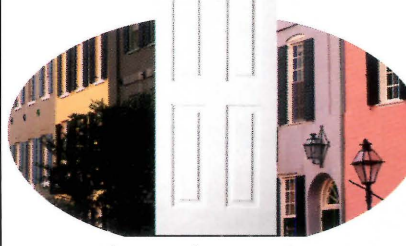
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end quote

the box rebellion

habitat '67, montreal, 1967

moshe safdie, faia

*“originality in itself cannot be the criterion
for measuring excellence in architecture.”*

—moshe safdie

moshe Safdie was a 25-year-old architecture student at McGill University when he designed an experimental apartment complex as his thesis project. The Canadian government agreed to build his design as part of the 1967 World's Fair in Montreal, and so began the development of Habitat '67, a work that landed Safdie in the history books.

The 158-unit community comprises 354 prefabricated concrete boxes stacked in a staggered pattern: A

Modern version of an Italian hill town. For each home, the design incorporates a garden located atop the roof of the unit below. Covered walkways weave throughout the project and contribute to the sense of community, which was one of Safdie's primary goals. Some units have been remodeled to combine neighboring apartments; 150 households now call the complex home. This year marks the 35th anniversary of Safdie's achievement.—*meghan drueding*



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