

THE TOWN PAPER

A PUBLICATION ABOUT PLANNING TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOODS

Planning Southport: In the Traditional Fashion

By John Massengale

I grew up in Darien. Soon after I got my driver's license, I discovered Southport, which I thought was the most beautiful town in Connecticut. It is an honor and a pleasure to now be working on such an important site in the town.

Our team is bringing to Southport the principles of traditional town planning, also known as new urbanism. That does not mean we are bringing the city to Southport. Rather, we are trying to reinforce the principles that built the parts of Southport we love, while turning back principles of sprawl that make most of us think changes to our towns just make them worse and worse.

In the rest of the country, opposing sprawl with the principles of new urbanism is becoming quite common. The Pew Center for Civic Journalism polled Americans from coast to coast in February, asking what national, state and local issues mattered most to them. Urban sprawl was the most important issue in the country, especially in Northern California and Colorado. Not surprisingly, these are two parts of the country where new urbanism has become the most discussed form of planning.

Our dislike of suburban sprawl comes from a variety of factors, from loss of open space and teenage alienation to traffic congestion and economic and aesthetic blight, from a lack of affordable housing to a lost sense of community.

Americans drive more miles and spend more time in traffic jams every year, leading to a declining quality of life. According to Harvard University political scientist Robert Putnam, the longer we spend in traffic, the less likely we are to be involved in our communities and families. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report that sprawling suburbs, in which it is difficult to walk or bicycle from place to place, are a cause of much of the nation's epidemic of obesity.

One of the solutions proposed by new urbanists is to reintroduce the practice of building neighborhoods, where we can live, work and play without relying on our cars. This is in opposition to the prevailing pattern of development, which is single-use office parks, shopping centers and residential subdivisions separated by roads unus-

able for anyone who doesn't have access to a car. That includes the young, the old and the poor.

New England and New York are the last parts of the country where new urbanism is catching on because we have such a good network of towns and transportation. With the exception of places like central Long Island or northern New Jersey, we haven't had sprawl development on the scale of the rest of the country. But we all think things used to be better. (See sidebar on page 7.)

We are happy with our beautiful houses, but we are less happy with all the traffic on I-95 and the disintegration of our old town centers -- both a direct result of the suburban building patterns we have been following. Although we don't have sprawl on the scale of the rest of the country, our zoning establishes exactly the same patterns. We have it on a smaller scale, but as we can see on the Post Road, little changes one at a time can eventually add up to big changes.

Southport's Dawid Property is only a small site. New urbanists call it an "infill site." New urbanism in other parts of the country is often on the scale of complete, almost self-contained new neighborhoods, on 80 to 200 acres.

Here, we are reinforcing a great neighborhood with an important but vulnerable site next to the Great Chinese Wall of the Connecticut Turnpike. An office park was proposed for it -- a threatening development that made the citizens of Southport turn out to buy the site so that something better can be done.

We hope to hear from you during the charrette weekend about what you would like to see on the site. We will draw up your ideas with some of the best traditional architects in the country, and we will use the advice of the best new urban retail consultants to make a place that will help rather than harm the old Southport center. Crucial to that will be reinforcing the character of the Old Post Road, which has weakened since the Turnpike was built. Plainly put, it is too large and amorphous to be a comfortable place for pedestrians. But successful neighborhoods require streets where pe-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



An aerial view that includes the 4.4-acre parcel near the Southport Railroad Station now owned by Southport Village Partners, LLC. This piece of property, bounded by Rennell Drive, Old Post Road and John Street, will be designed at a charrette being held from October 27 - 30 at Eagle Hill Southport School.

Photo: Debranne Cingari

Southport Charrette Schedule

Day One: (Friday, October 27)

2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Tour Merchants Shops

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Opening Reception

Day Two: (Saturday, October 28)

9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Visioning and Village Walk Around

4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Condo Buyers/Brokers Meeting

Day Three: (Sunday, October 29)

2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Neighbor Drop-in

4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Merchant Drop-in

Day Four: (Monday, October 30)

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Closing Reception and Presentation

Please RSVP Julie Cofer at (203) 332-1717 X15



Charrette location: Eagle Hill Southport School, 214 Main Street, Southport, Conn.

Photo: Debranne Cingari

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Bridgeport, CT 06605

THE
TOWN
PAPER

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Debra Rodgers is our project coordinator. She gathers specific project information from the charrette team and gets it to the newspaper team.

Michael Morrissey is an architect, urban designer and artist. His designs and watercolor renderings produced during charrettes help people visualize the look of a future town. His work is shared with you in *Perspective*.

Elly Shaw-Belblidia lives in a traditional neighborhood and writes about elements found in a TND plan and how they relate to the residents who live there.

Mike Watkins, an architect and town planner, serves as *The Town Paper* consultant.

Shailandra Singh is an architect and artist. She drew the wonderful cartoons for this paper.

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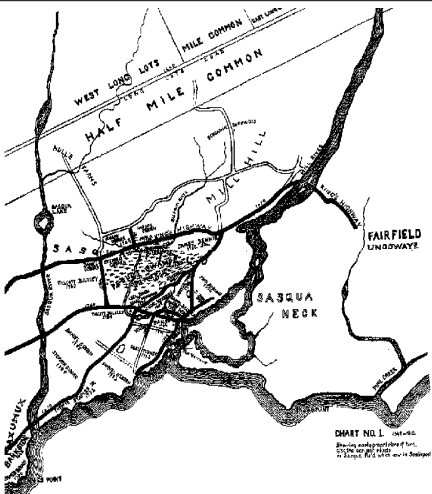
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The Southport plan, from 1648-1810.

B E I N G P R E P A R E D



Charrette Terminology

Built Environment: the human habitat as envisioned jointly by urbanists and environmentalists.

Civic Use: premises used by organizations considered to support the common good and therefore given special treatment within TNDs. Civic sites should be reserved within every TND even if their advent is in the distant future.

Community: a sustainable human habitat that is complete and compact; a neighborhood or village.

Density: number of building units per acre.

Infrastructure Cost: the cost of service improvements on a given site, including utilities, streetscapes and thoroughfares, but excluding common amenities and buildings.

Liner Building: a building conceived specifically to mask a parking lot or a parking structure from the street frontage.

Live/work: a single-family house or townhouse with the first floor available as a commercial space, either independently leased or in conjunction with the residential unit above.

Mixed-Use: multiple functions within the same building or the same general area. One of the principles of TND development from which many of the benefits are derived, including that of pedestrian activity and traffic capture. Suburban zoning categories specifically prohibit mixed-use; TND ordinances assure it.

Neighborhood: a community sustaining a full range of ordinary human needs. In

its ideal form, the neighborhood is a compact urban pattern with a balanced range of living, working, shopping, recreational and educational accommodation.

Network: the pattern of thoroughfares and principle structuring device of the urban pattern.

Open Space: area free of building that, together with a well-designed system of thoroughfares, provides a public realm at all scales of urbanism.

Green – a medium-sized public space available for unstructured recreation. A green is surrounded by building facades, its landscape consisting of grassy areas and trees. Requires limited maintenance.

Square – a public space, seldom larger than a block, at the intersection of important streets. A square is enclosed by frontages; its streetscape consists of paved walks, lawns, trees, and civic building. Requires substantial maintenance.

Plaza – a public space at the intersection of important streets set-aside for civic purposes and commercial activities. A plaza is enclosed by frontages; its landscape consists of durable pavement for parking and trees requiring little maintenance.

Close – a small green area surrounded by a thoroughfare providing vehicular access to several buildings to create a socially useful space.

Outbuilding: a secondary building associated with a principal building by ownership and shared lot. May be rented but not sold separately. Syn.: accessory building, ancillary building, backyard cottage, garage apartment, granny flat.

Pedestrian Shed: the distance most people will walk rather than drive, providing the environment is pedestrian-friendly (equiva-

lent to one-quarter of a mile or 1,320 feet).

Public Realm: those parts of the urban fabric that are held in common such as plazas, square, parks, thoroughfares and civic buildings.

Sectors:
Civic - religious, cultural and educational institutions operating for the common good.

Public – government operating for the common good by bridging gaps left by the private sector.

Private – development entities operating for profit.

Setback: the mandatory minimum or maximum distance between a frontage line and the face of a building. Open porches, balconies, overhangs and ramps are usually exempt from the setback requirements.

Terminated Vista: the view that occurs at the end of a thoroughfare. In planning, the terminated vista is always given careful consideration.

Third Place: a location that fulfills a necessary social role between the private and the public realms. Can be cafes, pubs, exercise clubs, corner stores, etc.

Urban Fabric: the generic term for the physical aspect of urbanism. This term emphasizes building types, thoroughfares, open space, streetscapes and frontages while excluding environmental, functional, economic and socio-cultural aspects.

Vernacular: the common language of a region, particularly in reference to the architectural construction of a building.

TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOODS

Perspective

By Michael Morrissey

One of the primary components of any charrette is the preparation of a set of perspective drawings and paintings often referred to as renderings. These visual documents, developed during the charrette, respond to the locale, public process, architectural and urban design concepts, and codes. The renderings are used to communicate the vision of the plan and create consensus.

Shown here is a set of five renderings drawn during a charrette for Brytan, a traditional neighborhood development (TND) planned by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company in Gainesville, Fla. This sequence of eye-level drawings walks the viewer through the project from the most rural to the most urban neighborhoods. This range of rural-to-urban is known as the

“**Transect.**” There are four sections of the Transect identified in this project (Neighborhood Edge, Neighborhood General, Town Center and Town Core). This ensemble of drawings is at once technical and instructive and simultaneously gives an impression of the overall vision for the town.

In the Brytan charrette renderings, a variety of architectural influences are apparent. My inspiration came from such places as Charleston, S.C.,

Windsor, Fla., Nantucket, Mass., and even a few classic 1920s town centers like Palmer Square, N.J., and Lake Forest, Ill.

I have completed over 60 charrettes nationwide in the past three years. The expo-

sure to so many wonderful American towns (old and new) and architectural styles has allowed me to combine local vernacular traditions with significant regional and national precedents.



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Neighborhood Edge

The edge is the most rural zone, approximating the country. The edge is characterized by curvilinear streets, single family homes with coach houses located at the rear, generous setbacks, curbless road beds, no sidewalks, and irregular tree planting to create a natural or picturesque setting.



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Neighborhood General - 1

Two views of the neighborhood general are necessary to show the largest area in the master plan. It is composed primarily of one- to two-story single-family detached homes. A low picket fence is used to define the pedestrian realm. A corner store, as shown in this view, may be located here.



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Neighborhood General - 2

This view is primarily residential but more urban in character. It is located closer to the town center. A mix of housing, including townhouses, side yard and courtyard types, shares a common set back and garden wall. A regular row of street trees, such as live oaks that grow extremely well in Gainesville, give the residential streets a special canopy.



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Town Center

This mixed-use town center is composed of two- to three-story buildings with retail at the base and commercial and residential above. The alignment of storefronts forms a continuous street wall, primarily brick, with an array of attachments: deep overhangs, bracketed balconies, bay windows, door casements, blade signage and deep canopies.



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Town Center Core

The sequence ends with the most urban zone. Here three- to four-story loft apartments, the most intense residential use with retail at grade, are planned as longer street wall increments that bend and form dense streets and urban spaces. Trees are designated for squares. The buildings are zero set back. Periodic arcades cover the with 12- to 15-foot sidewalks.

Making the Connection

Imagine yourself 200 feet above the neighborhood in which you live. Look down at the lay of the land below. Follow the thoroughfares laid out for you – not just the streets, but the paths and bike trails as well. Then imagine you have no car.

How difficult is it to get to the market, the dry cleaners, the movies or a restaurant? How many people will you encounter on a daily walk? How close is the nearest park? Maybe these places are within your view from above, but follow the streets with your eyes – do they leave you short of your destination?

If so, you are probably peering down on a neighborhood short on connections.

Connections are the places in a neighborhood where one street meets another, where sidewalks join alleys, where paths converge with sidewalks. Connections make it possible to take a number of different routes in order to reach the same destination.

Traditional neighborhood develop-

ments (TNDs) are planned to include many connections to move people and cars smoothly and efficiently to their destinations. In order to include as many connections as possible, streets are laid out in a grid-like fashion (see diagram at right).

Note the number of cross streets. These cross streets create travel options for the pedestrian and driver that disperse all types of traffic throughout the neighborhood. Cross streets also make “corners” – places for meeting friends or waiting for a bus. Alleys and pathways add to the connection network, creating additional opportunities for social interaction between neighbors on parallel streets and around the edge of the neighborhood.

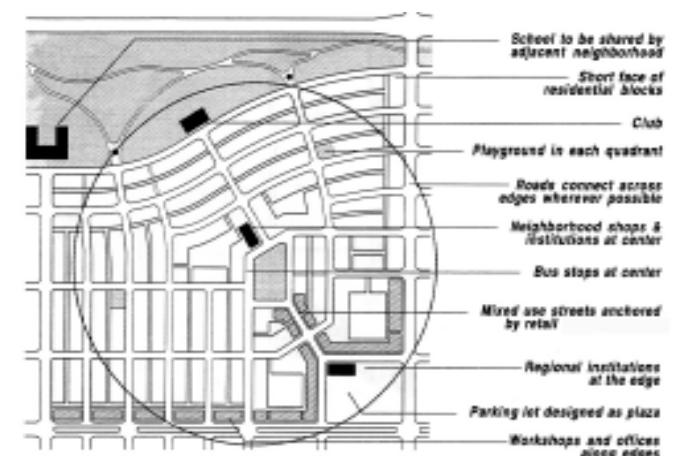
Although a large number of connections were included in the planning of our country’s older traditional neighborhoods, they have been largely eliminated from the design of conventional suburbia. One-way in/one-way out streets designed with cul-de-sacs to ease turning have replaced the

interconnected network of streets reminiscent of older neighborhoods. While possibly reducing the number of cars traveling on any given local residential road, this also resulted in an undesirable congestion of traffic on the “collectors” these roads feed into.

Traffic congestion may be the most visible negative consequence of conventional neighborhood design. However, the social connections lost by eliminating street corners and sidewalks may be more devastating.

Southport, fortunately, has been blessed with a great network of connections. The project being planned in this

charrette will extend this network to another side of the village. In doing so, Southport residents will continue to be connected both physically and socially.



The TND Model, *The Lexicon of the New Urbanism*, Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company, 1999.

T O W N P L A N S

Learning from the past ...

Charleston, Annapolis, Stonington and Newport. What do all of these towns have in common? They are highly sought after places to live, work and socialize in. Although these towns were planned and built over 200 years ago, they have proven to be sustainable. In fact, these towns have become increasingly valuable over time, as evidenced by the cost of residential and commercial space.

These towns, and others like these (see list at right), were planned in a similar fashion. Narrow streets are laid out in a grid-like pattern. Street blocks are typically short; there are lots of cross streets and intersections. Parks are interspersed throughout the plan. Civic sites, reserved early on for important buildings such as the town hall, places of worship and educational institutions and were given places of prominence. All are mixed-use (residential, commercial, civic and office uses are permitted) and offer a long list of different housing types to their residents.

As years pass, all of these cities and towns continue to improve in function and aesthetics. Care is taken to preserve many of the civic and residential buildings. Parks, initially quite plain, have been orna-

mented with statuary and landscaping. Plazas originally planned as places to gather for social events continue to be used in the same manner.

The planning methods used to develop these valued towns have not been incorporated in the build-out of this country since the 1950s. Yet as today's planners search for ways to combat the negative impact of "suburban sprawl," they are looking at successes from the past to guide them. Traditional town planning has returned as an alternative.



Photo: Michael Morrissey



Photo: Michael Morrissey



Photo: Michael Morrissey



Photo: The Town Paper

Great Towns and Neighborhoods

Annapolis, Md.
Charleston, S.C.
New Canaan, Conn.
Ridgefield, Conn.
Litchfield, Conn.
Stonington, Conn.
Newport, R.I.
Alexandria, Va.
Lenox, Mass.
Salem, Mass.
Edgartown, Mass.
Carmel, Calif.
Williamsburg, Va.
Georgetown, D.C.
Philadelphia, Pa.
Savannah, Ga.
Woodstock, Vt.
New Orleans, La.
Greenwich, Conn.
Vail, Colo.
Bennington, Vt.
Grosse Point, Mich.
Chestnut Hill, Pa.
Cambridge, Mass.
Lake Forest, Ill.
Telluride, Colo.
Princeton, N.J.
Nantucket, Mass.

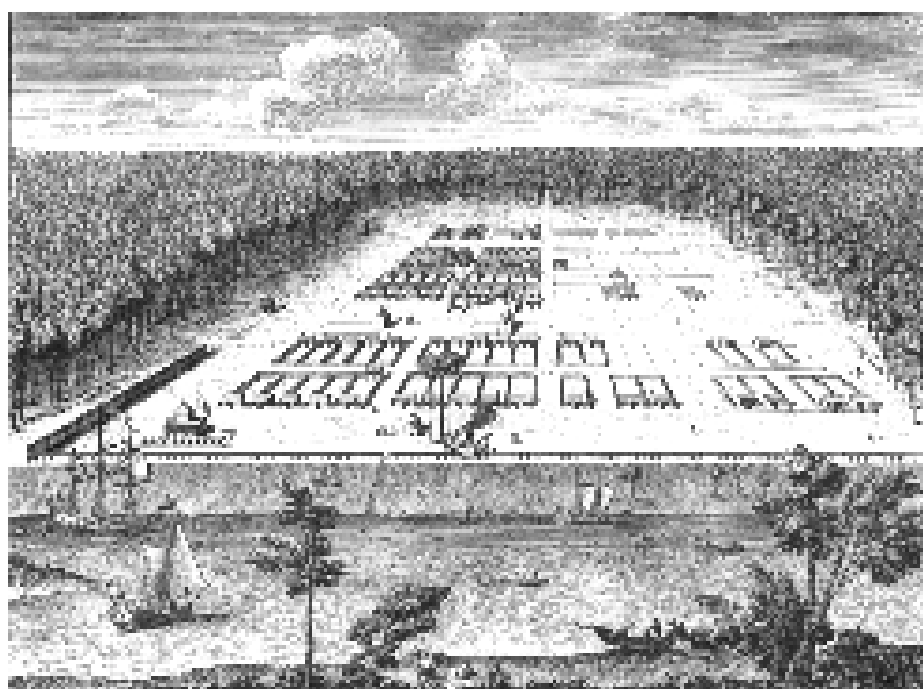


Above and right: **Scenes from Savannah.** John Edward Oglethorpe designed the plan for Savannah (far right) in 1733. Savannah's social life has always centered around the squares. Oglethorpe established four squares originally, then added two more three years later. Today there are 22 squares in Savannah.



Photo: Michael Morrissey

Savannah -- A plan of value holds its value.



Plan courtesy of V & J Duncan Antique Maps and Prints

T O W N P L A N S

... to plan for a better future.

Planning has undergone dramatic changes during the last 50 years. Beginning in the 1950s, town designing was replaced with the practice of developing single-use pods. Pods are building clusters comprised solely of residences, office space or commercial space. Additionally, the residential units are segregated further into single-family dwelling pods, townhouse pods or apartment complex pods. The mixing of uses and building types was not only discouraged, it was made illegal when municipalities across the country adopted segregated zoning ordinances.

This shift in direction resulted in the reliance of people on the automobile. During the 1950s, car ownership became the rule rather than the exception. With a large portion of the population behind the wheel, planning became the engineer's ultimate challenge. The question quickly became, "How do we get all of the people living in the housing pods to the office and commercial pods quickly?" The answer, of course, was to build more roads.

Millions of miles of highway (collector roads) have been built to connect the residential suburbs, office parks and commercial strip centers that now proliferate the countryside.

Each day, more and more people feed into the collector roads in order to get to work, schools, civic institutions and entertainment centers, then return to the highway to get home. It is not difficult to envision why our roads cannot handle the traffic.

Twenty years ago, an alternative to pod-development planning was attempted on a piece of property in Florida. The town, the first new traditional neighborhood development (TND) was called Seaside. Seaside was a success from many standpoints. Seaside proved that "towns" can still be planned and built and that people are willing to purchase homes in this type of neighborhood.



Like their predecessors, a mix of housing and civic buildings and commercial buildings are found in all new traditional neighborhoods. From top to bottom: Vermillion, N.C., Haile Village Center, Fla., Celebration, Fla., (bottom left), and I'On, S.C. (bottom right).

All photos: The Town Paper



In fact, home prices in Seaside have soared as the demand far exceeds the supply. The same seems to be holding true in

other TND developments.

Today, municipalities once fearful of even contemplating traditional neighborhood devel-

opment are now adopting codes to ease their approvals.

Great New Towns

Kentlands, Md.
Seaside, Fla.
Vermillion, N.C.
Celebration, Fla.
Civano, Ariz.
Prospect, Colo.
Amelia Park, Fla.
Harbor Town, Tenn.
Riverside, Ga.
WestClay, Ind.
Amelia Park, Fla.
Tannin, Ala.
Windsor, Fla.
Playa Vista, Calif.
Longleaf, Fla.
Belmont Greene, Va.
Laguna West, Calif.
I'On, S.C.
Habersham, S.C.
Coffee Creek, Ind.
Lakelands, Md.
King Farm, Md.
Orenco Station, Ore.
Fairview Village, Ore.
Legacy, Texas
Middleton Hills, Wis.
Daniel Island, S.C.
Rosemary Beach, Fla.



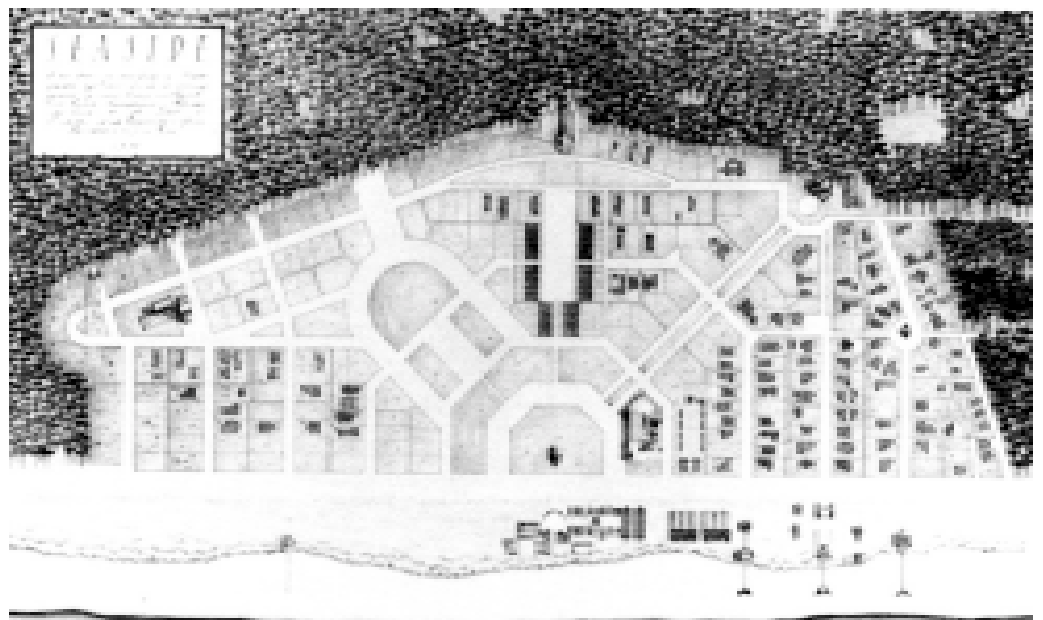
Photo: Mike Watkins

Above and right: Scenes from Seaside.

Seaside (far right) was designed by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company in 1980. It is considered the little town that changed the world as planners and homeowners realized the brilliance of returning to a formula that has worked for hundreds of years.



Seaside -- Setting the precedent for the future.



Courtesy Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company

THE CHARRETTE TEAM

John Montague Massengale, AIA, is an architect and well-known new urbanist. He has won awards for architecture, town planning, historic preservation and architectural history from organizations and publications ranging from three chapters of the American Institute of Architects to *Progressive Architecture* and *Metropolitan Home*. Massengale is the coauthor of *New York 1900, Metropolitan Architecture and Urbanism 1890-1915*, the first architecture book nominated for a National Book Award, and coauthor with Robert A.M. Stern of *The Anglo-American Suburb*. A graduate of Harvard, he lives and works in Bedford, N.Y.



Robert Orr of Robert Orr & Associates, LLD is an architect with 30 years of national and international experience. Orr was educated at Yale, after which he received some of the best training in the country during his 10 years of apprenticeships under Phillip Johnson and then Allan Greenburg. In the mid-1970s, Orr joined his Yale classmate Andrés Duany to teach at the University of Miami School of Architecture, forming the early tenets of what is now known as traditional neighborhood development. Orr's work has received national and international awards. By seamlessly engaging America's diverse architectural traditions, a Robert Orr project reflects a sensitivity to place, the people who build it, and the people who use it.



Patrick Pinnell, AIA, is an architect, planner, author and architectural educator, with his office in Hartford, Conn. Current work includes the planning of Hartford's downtown and region, co-leading the urban design team for the Save Fenway Park effort in Boston, and work with Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company on a number of new developments around the country. Pinnell has taught in the United States, Europe and Japan. A member of the Congress of the New Urbanism, Pinnell has long-standing interest and experience in housing and town planning issues. Historically connected work includes participation in drafting a new master plan for Thomas Jefferson's Monticello and renovating Sprague Hall for the Yale School of Music.



Michael Bernard Morrissey is an architect and town planner. Graduating in 1987 from the School of Architecture at the University of Waterloo, he was awarded the Lieutenant Governor's Medal for design excellence. Over the past three years, Morrissey has completed over 60 charrettes with Andrés Duany, of Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company, and other nationally prominent new urban firms and developers. Duany has referred to Morrissey as the "principal image maker of traditional town planning in North America." A member of the Congress of the New Urbanism since 1994, Morrissey is currently involved in the newly formed Institute for Traditional Architecture (ITA).

Milton W. Grenfell, is an architect, architectural history teacher and guest lecturer. He founded Grenfell Architecture in Charlotte, N.C., in 1986. Grenfell is a frequent contributor of architectural articles to newspapers and magazines. He designed a memorial to Benjamin Franklin for a park and a pavilion for the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, both for Philadelphia, Pa. Grenfell has served on numerous historic committees and preservation groups.



Julie Cofer of Civic Communications started her company four years ago after recognizing the need to engage people in the planning and developing of their communities. The Southport Village planning process will be the 11th charrette in which she has actively assisted in coordinating meetings and building community relations. After growing up in the city of Atlanta, she now resides in historic Charleston, S.C. Her background includes a business degree from the University of Georgia, non-profit, publishing and sales experience. Cofer brings a lifelong commitment to public involvement into every project she undertakes.



Dale McIvor, chairman of the Executive Committee of Southport Village Partners, LLC, lives in Southport with his wife Katherine Watts and their two young children. He is a founding partner of Southport Partners, a technology investment-banking firm in Southport. He has worked for several companies in the areas of finance, mergers, international operations and strategic planning. He holds an M.B.A. from Harvard and engineering degrees from the universities of Michigan and Maryland. McIvor is currently the president of the Sasquanaug Association for Southport Improvement.



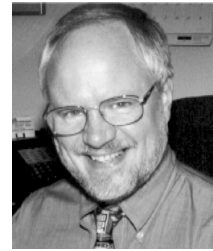
Richard H. Saxl, the attorney for Southport Village Partners, LLC has been engaged in the practice of law in Fairfield County since 1976. He served the town of Fairfield as its town attorney from 1997 until the change of administrations in 1999. In that capacity he handled all zoning and land use litigation for Fairfield, including cases argued before the Connecticut Appellate and Supreme Courts. Saxl chaired the Fairfield Land Acquisition Committee and was instrumental in drafting legislation adopted by the town for acquisition of open space. Additionally, Saxl served on the Fairfield Town Plan and Zoning Commission for 12 years, including two terms as its chairman.

SOUTHPORT VILLAGE PARTNERS, LLC

phone: (203) 332-1717 x12 fax: (203) 332-7396 e-mail: STUBUILD@aol.com

Stuart Baldwin, Managing Member
2704 Fairfield Ave.
Bridgeport, CT 06605

October 2000



Dear Neighbors:

Although my wife and I have only lived in Connecticut for four years, Harriet is a Mayflower girl, and each of our families has roots in Connecticut back to the 1630s. It was only fitting that we settle in Southport, one of this state's most charming villages. Once I drove over the Tide Mill bridge on Harbor Road for the first time, I knew I was home. That initial reaction to the built environment and setting has now been joined by an understanding of the wonderful human climate we have here as well.

So, as we begin the exciting process of designing an appropriate expansion of the community we all cherish so much, Southport Village Partners, LLC would like to express our appreciation to the many people who have helped make our acquisition of the former Dawid property a reality.

First and foremost is Dale McIvor, who tirelessly organized the friends and neighbors who became the founding members of SVP and has continued to play a key role in positioning our group for success. Having no financial interest in this project of any kind, to avoid any conflict of interest with his important role as president of the Sasquanaug Association, Dale has spent and continues to spend countless hours solely out of his love for the Village and his desire to see it protected and enhanced.

Our attorney, Dick Saxl, with his gracious yet highly effective manner and wealth of local contacts, has also been tireless in protecting our interests, promoting the project and providing strategic input that went far beyond his excellent grasp of the law.

Our banker, Donna Milne and her underwriters of the First Union Private Client Group, in Southport, have demonstrated time and again that a bank can care about the community it serves, be highly creative in the financing options it offers, and be amazingly responsive to its client.

Our nationally renowned architects, Robert Orr of New Haven and John Massengale of Bedford, N.Y., and the full charrette consulting team have already demonstrated the creativity and attention to architectural detail and sense of place that will make our project a joy and delight to behold, live in, work in or just stroll through.

Countless other friends and neighbors have helped out, including: surveyor Dave Huntington, who quickly drew a terrific preliminary layout map over last Thanksgiving weekend; headmaster Leonard Tavormina, who made Eagle Hill available to us for our charrette; and Stephen Stout, who rallied his Spruce Street neighbors and obtained petitions in favor of the project from them.

Most importantly, we salute the more than 20 local residents who cared enough about protecting Southport from the inappropriate, and understood the wisdom and good business opportunity of the traditional neighborhood development we contemplated, to invest over \$3.5 million into this venture, oversubscribing the initial offering. This continues a long Southport tradition (think Eagle Hill School, Lower Wharf Park, Southport Village Park, etc.) of residents coming together to seek a positive outcome from what could have damaged the community and putting their own funds up to do so. [There are a limited number of investment units still available, please contact us for more details.]

We have a vision for this property, which the charrette will refine, of transforming one of the few eyesores around into a beautiful extension of the Village, with walkable, tree-lined streetscapes, brick townhouses with varying period details, real shops that complement our current merchants, and historic-looking but Internet-ready professional offices. We seek primarily to serve the needs of current Southport area residents, reducing sprawl and traffic congestion by creating pedestrian friendly space to live, work and play in. Older residents who no longer need their large homes will now have a beautiful luxury condo option right in the Village. Others will be able to walk from their homes to their office or the train station. Moderate priced condos in the mixed-use building will allow the younger generation to stay in town and create further options for others who don't require as much space as the luxury condos.

We will have done our job well if, 50 years from now, a new resident or visitor would find our project indistinguishable from the rest of the gorgeous fabric of our Village. We look forward to your involvement in this charrette to help ensure that we do it right!

With much appreciation,

Stuart Baldwin

2704 Fairfield Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06605

SOUTHPORT VILLAGE PARTNERS, LLC

phone: (203) 332-1717 x12
fax: (203) 332-7396
e-mail: stubuild@aol.com

THE PROPERTY

History of Southport, Connecticut

In 1637, Enoch Griswold and his family settled in the approximate current location of the Southport Congregational Church. They were the first European settlers of the area, joining peaceful Native Americans who also inhabited Sasqua, the early name of Southport.

In the same year, the region was invaded by the Pequot Indians, who were fleeing westward after earlier disastrous encounters with the now avenging colonists. It was here in Sasqua that the Great Swamp Fight took place, ending the Pequot War with the colonists victorious after the Pequots disdained all overtures of peace. The local Sasqua Indians were not harmed.

The Unquoway Colony, which includes the present town of Fairfield and village of Southport, was settled in 1639 by some of the very colonists who had fought the Pequot Indians two years earlier. These settlers had come over from the Connecticut River valley area and included soldier and statesman Roger Ludlowe. In 1661, the Sasqua Indians sold our antecedents what is now Southport for 13 Coats, 2 yards of cloth apiece and a little wampum! For the next 70-80 years, the village was a sort of market garden and pasture-lot adjunct of Fairfield. Indeed, in 1775, permission was given to pasture sheep on any highway, with a keeper. Some would say this tradition continues today at rush hour on the Turnpike, albeit without the keeper!

The first houses were cabins built of logs, the cracks stopped with mud, and oiled paper served for windows. Many of the houses that came a few years later, when saw mills had been built to prepare the

boards and timbers, were a story and a half or two stories high with a “lean-to” at the back. Thus a recurring Southport theme was started of building up and out when times were good! Part of the village’s charm, however, is that so many colonial era and other historic houses remain here in use as private residences. A multitude of architectural styles are represented: true colonials, gambrel roofed houses with dor-



Southport Park, purchased by subscription of 50 village residents in 1914, is administered by the Sasquanaug Association.

Photo: Debranne Cignari

mers, houses with porticos of Doric and other tall columns, and many types of brick and stone buildings.

Our magnificent harbor has always been a defining factor in village life. Records as early as 1694 indicate sailing vessels heading out from Mill River (the early name) harbor bound for New London, laden with supplies. Another recurring theme starts as early as 1799, with the Fairfield town clerk requesting that the state start a lottery to finance dredging of the harbor. Today, as any boater knows, our harbor is in desperate need of dredging again. Hopefully, we won’t have to wait as long as the former residents did. The federal government did not build a dyke until 1825, and the pier and breakwater at the harbor entrance were built

with a government grant of \$10,000 in 1831. By 1840, practically all of the vessels sailing out Southport carried passengers. However, it was also a very active commercial harbor, with the local specialty, the Southport Globe Onion, an important export. Indeed, Pequot Yacht Club’s two magnificent buildings were onion warehouses in the mid-1800s. The merchant marine that flourished beginning

about 1750 and whose activities led to the name change from Mill River to Southport had just about given up by 1900, and today our harbor is all the prettier being recreational only.

The railroad came in 1846-1848, which ended the career of the stagecoach. As many commuters can attest, it still plays an important role in village life today.

A trolley line was constructed in 1894 and was eventually supplanted by the relentless rise of the automobile. However, our gorgeous flagstone sidewalks and the steady stream of pedestrian, jogger and stroller traffic on our streets, so different from many suburbs, keeps the battle a fair fight, calming traffic and making Southport a nicer place.

Churches have played a major role in community life. Southport’s first congregations were started in 1828 by the Episcopalians and in 1834 by the Congregationalists. Both have beautiful church buildings in the village today. The former public Pequot School on Main Street was built in 1918 and is now Eagle Hill Southport School, where we will hold the charrette. A great fire in 1894, led to the establishment of another important village institution, the Southport Fire Department, in 1895. It still operates from its historic building on Main

Street. today.

In 1894, one of Southport’s finest old mansions, the Marquand house, was taken down, and the Pequot Library building, which had quietly and mysteriously come into being among the trees behind it, was presented to Southport by Mr. and Mrs. Elbert B. Monroe, the daughter and son-in-



Pequot Library, a gift presented to Southport by Mr. and Mrs. Elbert B. Monroe, is currently being renovated by Robert A.M. Stern.

Photo: Debranne Cignari

law of Mr. Marquand. It is a private library, operated for the benefit of the residents of Fairfield and is a terrific example of the impressive, but short-lived Richardson Romanesque style of architecture. A renovation is currently being planned by architect Robert A.M. Stern.

Southport was a village of unpaved and unlighted streets until the birth of the Sasquanaug Association in 1887. This organization oversaw the laying of much sidewalk, installation of street lamps, and the purchase of Sea Lodge by Southport Beach. It also administers the 11-acre Southport Park, which had been purchased by subscription of about 50 village residents in 1914. The Southport Conservancy was founded in 1984 to preserve village assets and accept tax-deductible contributions.

Village Treasures

Southport Village Partners, LLC is a private, for-profit venture owned by its investors. While we have no affiliation with any of the following institutions, we wish to recognize their part in helping maintain the special character of Southport. We encourage our readers to find out more about their programs:

Eagle Hill Southport School
214 Main Street
Southport, CT 06490
(203) 254-2044

Pequot Library
720 Pequot Avenue
Southport, CT 06490
(203) 259-0346

The Sasquanaug Association for Southport Improvement, Inc.
P.O. Box 471
Southport, CT 06490

The Southport Conservancy, Inc.
56 Old Post Road
Southport, CT 06490
(203) 254-2680

Continued from page 1

Town Planning

destrians feel comfortable.

To improve the character of the Old Post Road, we will probably propose some things that aren’t possible under your current zoning, like pulling the stores right up to the street as the builders did in the old Southport Center. These variances to the Fairfield code are needed to make a successful neighborhood center, as opposed to a shopping center, an office park or a residential subdivision.

We look forward to working with you on this important project. Together we will create something to be proud of.

John Massengale, AIA, is an architect and well-known new urbanist. He will help design the Southport Village project.

New Urbanism in New England

By John Massengale

Some states -- like Florida, North Carolina, Colorado and California -- are hotbeds of neo-traditional and new urban projects. Connecticut and the other New England states have only one new urban development between them, with a handful of rehabilitation projects in a few cities like Providence and Hartford.

In addition, many of the new urban developments in those states are large projects on virgin land that form complete neighborhoods. These are known as greenfields, traditional neighborhood developments, or TNDs. Our site in Southport is a small portion of an old traditional neighborhood.

Therefore, many of the images you’ll see during the charrette and in the *Town Paper* are from places and climates that don’t seem to have much in common with Southport. Town planners will tell you, however, that it’s important to distinguish architecture and its style from planning and its form. Traditional streets and squares in Florida have a great deal in common with traditional streets and squares in Connecticut, even though the buildings and trees on and around them might be very different.

Streets and squares form what is known as the public realm. Good streets and squares are crucial to the success of a neighborhood, because they create a public realm where we want to walk. They are a physical manifestation of the “common good.”

Southport Village is a reflection of good urbanism. The people who have chosen to live in the village already recognize the power of good design. This understanding will facilitate the task we have before us, which is designing another great section of Southport.

PUBLIC SPACE

An Amenity That's Going Places



Sidewalks encourage walking. (Kentlands, Md.)

Q: Why was the sidewalk offended? A: Because we took it for granite

And we do -- take sidewalks for granted. For years they were always there, then somewhere in the 1950s or so they started to disappear. America's highway system was in its heyday. Cheap mortgages and cheap land drew families away from urban centers. Suburbs grew with houses isolated from shopping areas. It was almost impossible to walk to places for errands; the car was a necessity. With no place to walk to, sidewalks didn't matter.

The lowly, forgotten sidewalk,

though, is the network of a neighborhood. On the smallest scale, a sidewalk encourages walking and puts you in contact with neighbors. And on a broader scale, if there are shops and offices that can be walked to, sidewalks encourage those trips. On a still broader scale, if there is mass transit, sidewalks will take you to the point where you catch that mass transit.

Traditional neighborhood developments (TNDs) seek to do all of the above -- strengthen social

fabric by bringing neighbors in closer contact, put businesses within walking distance, and connect to mass transit. None of this is possible without the sidewalk threading it together.

Sidewalks help the environment, as they reduce pollution from automobiles. Sidewalks promote exercise. They help us savor our surroundings as we stop to admire someone's garden, a new paint job or a bird's nest.

As the Charter of the New Urbanism points out, sidewalks also

encourage "independence to those who do not drive, especially the elderly and the young." So sidewalks, along with mixed housing types, encourage diversity of ages in our neighborhoods.

Southport residents are very proud of the Town's flagstone sidewalks, which add to the character of the village. These sidewalks let us walk past each other's homes and our green spaces and encourage us to connect with our neighbors. In this way, we bring the world a little closer.

Giving It the Treatment



DPZ & Company

Above: An aerial view of a traditional neighborhood. Open space is dispersed throughout the plan. (Annapolis, Md.)

At right: An aerial view of a conventional suburban neighborhood. The open space is behind the houses. Placed here, this space will rarely be used.



DPZ & Company

Municipalities across the country have been unified in their goals to set aside open space that is to remain "green." Developers are often required by law to reserve certain percentages of their land as open

space just as they are required to pay for such infrastructure as streets and water and sewage lines. In this regard, allowances for some quantity of open space are not vastly different when developing a CSN versus a TND. There is a great difference, however, in treatment of this space.

Typically, much of the open space in a conventional suburban neighborhood is found around the edges of the development, providing a buffer between the new community and adjacent properties. A small percentage of the lots in these developments back up to this open

space. These are usually considered premium lots and carry a higher price tag for the buyer. When the houses are built and occupied, open space reserved by the developer is cut off from a major portion of the community. Thus it becomes useless, and even unseen, by most of the residents living in the development. In addition, irregular, leftover ground is included in open space percentages. These pieces are identified *after* the planning process is completed. Imagine how much less useful Perry Green would be if it was located behind the homes that face it on Harbor Road.

In a traditional neighborhood, allocation of open space is given high priority during the planning

process. Instead of being placed behind private lots it is placed prominently in front. Land -- in the form of squares, greens and parks -- is designed to accommodate active and passive recreational demands throughout the neighborhood.

In a TND, care is taken to locate open space along routes pedestrians will travel and that will be highly visible from nearby residential and commercial buildings to ensure frequent use. Because there are a number of squares and parks dispersed throughout the TND plan, more can enjoy and benefit from having these public spaces within view or located only a short walk away.

Up Your Alley

The alley is a staple feature of neotraditional developments, for many good reasons.

First and foremost, alleys take garages off the street and tuck them out of sight behind the houses. This move results in a number of benefits. It takes an unsightly but necessary element of the home (the garage) and places it away from the public realm where it cannot be seen. Also the driveway out front is no longer needed. Pedestrians can walk along the sidewalk without fear of being backed into by an automobile. By cutting the space between houses, alleys encourage social contact among neighbors. This is the overarching goal of neotraditional planning: rebuilding the social fabric of our neighborhoods.

Suburbanites often seek homes on cul-de-sacs to offer

their kids a relatively safe spot for bike riding and games. Alleys offer an alternative. "The kids play kickball, baseball, they're out there right now playing tennis," said Lorraine Kinman, mother of three boys, when asked about the alley behind her house in Kentlands, a traditional neighborhood in Gaithersburg, Md. Before moving to a neotraditional neighborhood, Kinman said, she would not have chosen to have an alley behind her house. "Now I definitely see it as a plus."

Town planners try to create neighborhoods with a mix of housing costs so people of different incomes and backgrounds can live together. In older cities, grander homes fronted the street while alleys filled in with smaller housing. Alleys can do this in newly developing neighborhoods, too. "Carriage houses,"

for example, are usually apartments built above garages on alleys. Most have one bedroom and are ideal rental housing for single adults or couples. Owners like them as a source of rental income.

In some homes on alleys, garages connect directly to a deck or porch for quick access. Most garages on alleys, however, will sit some distance from the residence. This can be seen as an advantage or a disadvantage. It's an advantage to remove smelly and potentially hazardous items -- garbage cans, gasoline, and old paint cans -- from spaces attached to your home. It can be a disadvantage to have to run through the rain with grocery bags.

Alleys are service roads, traveled by heavy equipment like garbage trucks and snowplows that may mash the grass and run over bushes. Most cities or



homeowners associations would be reluctant to pour beautification funds into them. But as a new neighborhood matures, inevitably some of the residents' decorating energy flows into the alley. This will come well after the flurry of activity of building the new house, then furnishing it, then working on the garden and trees. Eventually, though, it will come, maybe in the form of an arch, a birdhouse or a trellis of climbing roses.

Any city planning feature inspires differences of opinion (even a simple sidewalk can be



Alleys are used for play, leisurely walks and service pick ups. (Left, Abacoa, Fla., right, Kentlands, Md.)

controversial). Overall, though, alleys have a lot going for them. They make it possible to look down the street at a beautiful stretch of homes and trees, unblemished by garages. Neighbors are closer together, thus able to get to know each other better. All this wins out easily over a few wet grocery bags.

P R I V A T E S P A C E

The Need for Some Closure



Fences along sidewalks not only create a pleasant visual effect, they also help separate the public from the private realm. (*Lakelands, Md.*)

A fenced yard is like a framed painting. A painting can look okay on its own, but in the right frame, it looks fantastic. The same goes for fences. The fence sets the yard off from its surroundings. The stretch of fences then frames the street, maybe drawing the eye toward one of those attractive focal points (“terminating vistas”) that city planners strive for.

In neotraditional neighborhoods where houses sit close together, the fence has a psychological and social function. It sets up a comfortable border, a buffer between you and the folks next door. While many people who are drawn to these types of neighborhoods think of themselves as highly gregarious, most of us also have an innate need for privacy that the fence pro-

TECTS. The image of two neighbors leaning on the fence, deep in conversation, would probably change without the fence -- those neighbors would feel compelled to maintain a greater physical distance if the fence wasn’t standing between them.

Front yard fences in most communities must be low enough and have enough open space to permit a view of the house they adorn. Think of the difference between most of the fences on Pequot Avenue and the high, massive stone walls on most of Beachside, Pequot’s name in adjacent Westport. A spot check of neotraditional communities shows widely varying policies on front yard fences. Seaside, Fla., requires that every house have a painted wooden picket fence, and every fence on the same

street must be of a different design. Homeowners in Seaside frequently design their own fences; most of them are custom built. Kentlands in Gaithersburg, Md., also requires houses to have front fences or hedges but does not mandate diverse designs on the street.

Other communities, including Celebration in Florida, Middleton Hills in Wisconsin and Har-Ber Meadows in Arkansas do not require fences. King Farm in Maryland provides backyard privacy fences as a standard feature.

Whether required or not, built sooner or later, fences are one more way that we express ourselves through our homes. They offer beauty, protection and something to lean on.

The Best Seat in the House

Any description of a new traditional neighborhood inevitably mentions the porch. Porches evoke that feeling of old-time America when we knew our neighbors because they weren’t sequestered inside. These covered outside rooms give us the chance to be part of street life, at the same time offering a comfortable cushion of privacy. Like fences, porches allow us to be close while maintaining our separate domains.

Porches serve many functions. They’re a halfway spot for talking to those we don’t know quite well enough to invite inside. They’re a gathering point for kids. You can visit with a friend on a porch without worrying about the mess inside your house.

And they’re acceptable territory for teenage courtship even when the parents aren’t home.

A porch’s layout and style give a glimpse of the owner’s personality. Full-length, up-and-down porches, a New Orleans trademark, may indicate a Louisiana connection. For those who prefer a Victorian style, a few well-placed gingerbread details add character without great cost. Some decorators advocate a full-blown living space on the porch, complete with couches, plants, footstools and bookshelves.

Porches should be deep enough to move around on. A porch that’s too shallow won’t provide a comfortable, usable space and will end up as mere ornamenta-

tion. Har-Ber Meadows, a new traditional neighborhood in Arkansas, requires that porches have a depth of at least six feet, and many are built from eight to 10 feet deep.

Many homebuyers feel they have to sink every dollar into getting the largest possible interior floor space. A porch, on the other hand, may seem like a frill they can live without. Yet, a well-designed porch offers valuable and attractive living space.

Porches are so popular in Southport, they spawned a paint color -- Southport Blue -- to identify the ceiling color traditionally used (supposedly to confuse the devil!).



Porches can be a halfway spot for talking to those we don’t know quite well enough to invite inside. (*Amelia Park, Fla.*)

A Lot to Gain



The detached garage becomes a backdrop in this informal garden. (*Kentlands, Md.*)

It can take months or years of living in a traditional neighborhood development (TND) to fully understand what makes it click. You know you like the feel of the street but can’t explain what makes it different. Eventually you realize and appreciate the design elements that set it apart from most suburban developments: sidewalks, narrow streets, porches, garages off the street, houses close to the street and to each other, and small yards.

This last feature, the small yard, scares some people off. “I was devastated at first” by the loss of space, said Allison Llerena, who moved from a 2-acre spread in New Jersey to a townhouse in Kentlands in Gaithersburg, Md. She worried about where her two children would play. They bought a home across the street from a park, though, and the family adapted quickly.

Some people dread losing the yard as a buffer against neighbors. A person who truly loathes contact with neighbors and wants no one to know his or her business shouldn’t be looking in this kind of a development. But most of us want a balance of privacy and social contact in our lives. Houses can sit close together without neighbors feeling on top of one another. “I

still have my privacy. If I want to socialize, I hang out on the front porch,” explained Mario Llerena.

Physical layout can help preserve a healthy separation between neighbors. Many neo-traditional neighborhoods require fences or a row of bushes around yards both to provide an aesthetic frame as well as a comfortable psychological barrier when houses sit so close together. Trees can also provide a screen between your home and everyone else.

Some yards can be large enough to accommodate swing sets, sand boxes, even tree houses. If not, common ground areas provide natural play space. Also, alleys and sidewalks are rollerblade and bike-friendly and make great places for the occasional lemonade stand or chalk artist.

TNDs include public spaces meant to increase social interaction among adults as well as children. Also a TND may offer more in the way of recreation areas than other neighborhoods -- tennis and basketball courts, children’s playgrounds and swimming pools are amenities in many of these communities.

Avid gardeners may regret losing vast spaces for practicing their hobby. But small gardens can be exquisite. Anyone who has visited the old neighborhoods of cities like New Orleans, Charleston, S.C., and Savannah, Ga., and has peeped through gates at courtyard gardens can testify to this.

Denise Morrow, a dedicated gardener who moved from a third of an acre lot to a townhouse, doesn’t regret the change to a smaller space. Her new garden is a small enclosure that she says gives her a feeling of privacy and coziness, and she is “not overwhelmed” by the size of the garden. The small space is manageable and has little nooks and crannies that provide plenty of creative opportunities.

The final winning argument for many buyers is the obvious advantage of less lawn to maintain.

Mario Llerena was spending two days a week taking care of his lawn every summer. “It eats into your hobbies and your activities with your children,” he said. His advice, “Leave your big property behind, and gain a life!”

C S D v s T N D

Conventional Suburban Development

In conventional suburban developments, houses are set back away from the street. There are a high proportion of cul-de-sacs and looping streets within each pod. Through traffic is possible only by means of a few "collector" streets which, consequently, become easily congested. Parking lots typically dominate public space. Garages are highly visible, long driveways lead out onto wide streets, and turns are constructed with large turning radii to make it easy for cars to maneuver. There are no sidewalks. *(Huntersville, N.C.)*



Suburban neighborhoods are comprised exclusively of residential homes of comparable market value. Moving up or down within your existing neighborhood is not possible. When children leave their childhood home or individuals reach retirement age, they must move out of their community to find suitable living arrangements. *(N. Potomac, Md.)*



Because of single-use zoning, residents in conventional suburban neighborhoods must rely on their car to fulfill all their daily needs. Commercial establishments are located in strip malls along high volume collector roads. Although developers of these shopping centers must go through an approval process, these buildings are not held to the architectural standard found in neighborhoods. Non-descript "boxes" are the norm. *(Gaithersburg, Md.)*



- The neighborhood area is structured as pods of cul-de-sacs, accessed by collectors and arterials.
- Include an adequate balance of shopping centers and business parks, but are isolated in pods.
- Thoroughfares are oversized, prohibiting any pedestrian experience. A maximum amount of traffic is generated.
- Housing ranges from garden apartment to single-family houses, but each market segment is segregated.
- Open space is in the form of buffers, easement, setbacks and land between pods.
- Civic buildings do not normally receive distinguished sites.



Diagrams by Tom Low, for Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company, 1992.

Traditional Neighborhood Development



In traditional neighborhood developments, people are given priority over the automobile. Streets are laid out in a network so that there are alternate routes to most destinations. This permits most streets to be smaller with slower traffic and to have parking, trees, sidewalks and buildings. Houses are pulled up to sidewalks. Streets are narrower with tight corners to slow down traffic. Garages are typically located in alleys. *(Southern Village, N.C.)*



Traditional neighborhoods are comprised of a variety of types of residential homes -- single-family, townhomes, cottages, accessory units above garages. This allows for a wide range of pricing within the neighborhood. Moving up or down within the existing neighborhood is possible. *(I'On, S.C.)*

Because traditional neighborhoods are zoned mixed-use, the opportunity for commercial establishments to be built within the neighborhood exists. This zoning allows for a corner store to be built. Walking to a book store, the pharmacy or a restaurant establishment is once again possible. This will reduce the number of car trips required by homeowners living within these communities. *(Kentlands Market Square)*



- The neighborhood area is limited in size, with clear edges and a focused center.
- Shops, workplaces, schools and residences for all income groups are located in close proximity.
- Streets are sized and detailed to serve equitably the needs of the automobile and the pedestrian.
- Building size and character is regulated to spatially define streets and squares.
- Squares and parks are distributed and designed as specialized places for social activity and recreation.
- Well-placed civic buildings act as symbols of the community identity and provide places for purposeful assembly.



By Forbidding Mixed-Use Areas, Certain Citizens Suffer Particularly:

- * **The commuters**, by forbidding mixed-use areas, the investment of personal time in the activity of commuting is mandatory. A person who drives two hours a day spends the equivalent of eight working weeks a year in the car.
- * **The young**, who are below the legal driving age and are therefore dependent upon adults for their social needs. They are bused from schools, be-

cause they are located far from the neighborhood, and isolated at home until their working parents arrive. The alternative is to relegate one parent to a career as the child's chauffeur. The single-family house with the yard is a good place for childhood only if it is structured as part of a neighborhood, where the child can walk or bicycle to school, to play, to the store, to the movies and to friends.

- * **The elderly**, who lose their self-sufficiency once they lose their drivers' licenses. Seniors who may continue to live independently within a neighborhood are consigned to specialized retirement communities in sprawl.

Above excerpt taken from a presentation by Andrés Duany to the American Institute of Certified Planners.

MORE ABOUT PLANNING

Peaked Your Interest? Other Ways to Learn About New Urbanism

Suggested Reading Material:

The New Urbanism by Peter Katz

The Anglo-American Suburb by Robert A.M. Stern and John Massengale

Outside Lies Magic by John Stilgoe

Experiencing Architecture by Steen Eiler Rasmussen

Home From Nowhere: The Rise and Decline of America's Man-Made Landscape by James Howard Kunstler

Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream by Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck

Architecture, Choice or Fate by Leon Krier

American Architecture and Urbanism by Vincent Scully

The Classical Language of Architecture by John Summerson

The Elusive City by Jonathan Barnett

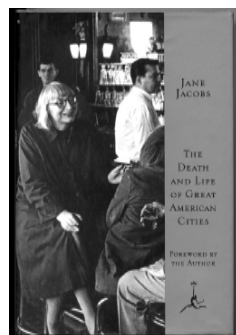
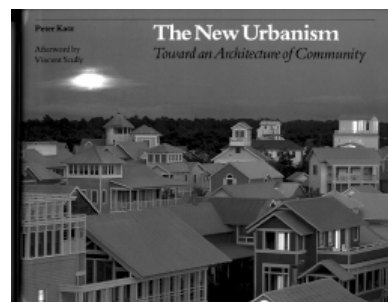
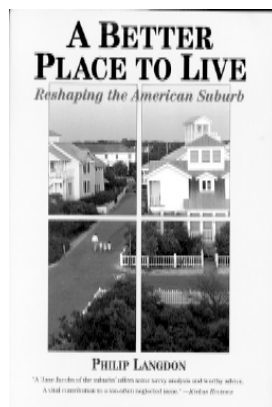
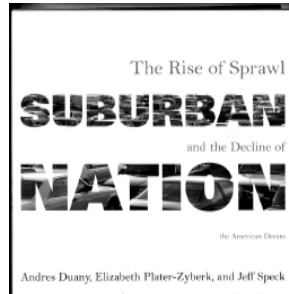
Civic Art by Hegemann & Peets

Home From Nowhere: Remaking Our Everyday World for the Twenty-First Century by James Howard Kunstler

The Next American Metropolis by Peter Calthorpe

A Better Place to Live by Philip Langdon

The Death and Life of Great American Cities by Jane Jacobs



The Checklist

By the end of the charrette, you will become aware of the important principles embodied in a traditional neighborhood development. This checklist covers many qualities that distinguish a TND from conventional suburban sprawl. (This list is mostly comprised for greenfield sites.)

- ☐ There is a discernable center. This is often a plaza, square or green, and sometimes a busy or memorable intersection. A transit stop should be located at this center.
- ☐ Buildings at the center are placed close to the sidewalk and to each other, creating an urban sense of spatial definition. Buildings at the edges are placed further away and further apart from each other, creating a more rural environment.
- ☐ Most of the dwellings are within a five-minute walk from the center. This pedestrian shed (or area people find comfortable to walk) averages one-quarter of a mile.
- ☐ There are a variety of dwelling types. These take the forms of houses, rowhouses and apartments, so that the young and older, singles and families, poor and the wealthy, can find places to live.
- ☐ There are places to work in the form of office buildings or live/work units.
- ☐ There are shops sufficiently varied to supply the ordinary needs of a household. A convenience store, post office, bank machine and gym are the most important among them.
- ☐ A small ancillary building should be permitted within the backyard of each house. It may be used as a rental apartment or as a place to work.
- ☐ There should be an elementary school close enough for most children to walk from their dwelling. This distance should not be more than one mile.
- ☐ There are playgrounds or green spaces near every dwelling. This distance should not be more than one-eighth of a mile.
- ☐ Thoroughfares within the neighborhood form a continuous network providing a variety of routes to disperse traffic. The thoroughfares connect to those of adjacent neighborhoods as often as possible.
- ☐ Thoroughfares are relatively narrow and shaded by rows of trees that slow traffic and create an appropriate environment for pedestrian and bicyclist.
- ☐ Parking lots and garage doors rarely end or front the thoroughfares. Parking is relegated to the rear of buildings and usually accessed by alleys or lanes.
- ☐ Certain prominent sites are reserved for public buildings. A building must be provided at the center for neighborhood meetings.

Developer's Choice:

Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream by Andrés Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk and Jeff Speck.

"This book is not only a passionately argued, carefully reasoned dissection of the mess that is becoming man-made America but also a clear program of steps that can be taken to enhance the humanity of both our suburbs and our cities while conserving our rapidly dwindling countryside."

-- Robert A.M. Stern, Dean, Yale School of Architecture

For More Information ...

Congress for the New Urbanism
The Hearst Building
5 Third Street, Suite 725
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 495-2255
www.cnu.org

New Urban News
P.O. Box 6515
Ithaca, NY 14851
(607) 275-3087
www.newurbannews.com

National Town Builders Association
P.O. Box 18224
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 518-6300
www.townbuild.com

The Seaside Institute
P.O. Box 4730
Seaside, FL 32459
(850) 231-2421
www.seasidefl.com

The Town Paper
209 Holmard Street
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
(301) 990-8105
www.TNDtownpaper.com

Urban Land Institute
1025 Thomas Jefferson Street, N.W.
Suite 500 West
Washington, D.C. 20007
(202) 624-7086
www.uli.org

SCENES FROM SOUTHPORT



Photo Captions:

Top left: An overview of Spruce Street with the gas lanterns.
Top right: Southport Village by the harbor and Pequot Yacht Club.
The following three photos show parts of the property SVP acquired:
Second row, left: 68 and 56 John Street
Second row, upper middle: The office and two small barns between 136 and 68 John Street
Second row, lower middle: Christine's Hairdressing Salon on the left parcel of 265 Old Post Road.
Second row, right: Front face of Pequot Mews
Bottom left: Lower wharf parcel. Inset: Plaque noting supporters and contributors who acquired the land.

All photos on this page taken by Debranne Cingari

"Congratulations to Southport Village Partners, LLC on their land acquisition and planned traditional neighborhood development."

FIRST UNION
Private Client Group

First Union National Bank
Private Client Group
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Charrette (shä-ret´) n.

A charrette is a planning session, usually lasting several days or a week, that incorporates the expertise of a variety of individuals. Some planners use this method when designing traditional neighborhood developments (TNDs). It is thought that by including as many community members as possible in the process a better product is arrived at more efficiently.

The term charrette is derived from the French term for "little cart" and refers to the final intense work effort expended by architects to meet a project deadline. In Paris, during the 19th century, professors at the Ecole de Beaux Arts circulated with little carts to collect final drawings from their students. Students would jump on the "charrette" to put finishing touches on their presentation minutes before the deadline.

Each charrette is held on or near the project site and in the presence of those affecting and affected by the outcome. Architects, engineers, environmental consultants, local public officials and interested citizens are in-

vited to join the planners for a series of intensive work sessions. Formal and informal meetings are held throughout the week with various approving agencies and interest groups. Updates to the plan are presented periodically, affording the public an op-



Robert Orr makes a presentation to the public for an expansion to the Clubhouse he designed in Kentlands, Md.

portunity to ask questions and give immediate feedback to the planners.

Ultimately, the purpose of the charrette is to give those concerned enough information to make good decisions during the TND planning process.