



humane design

improving the human habitat

Issue #2, June, 2006

RECENT WORK...

- 16th & Park (pictured above)- Study for an Indianapolis neighborhood commercial / mixed-use district anchored by Kroger. For EDEN Design.
- 96th & Westfield Study, Carmel (below) - 3-D modeling and interpretation of proposed long-range plan. For EDEN Design.



- Lodge at Northfield Park, New Castle - proposed spec office/retail building



- Faith Missionary Church - construction was completed in Fall 2005 on this two-phase addition and renovation project.



BEYOND THE TIPPING POINT

I just returned from the 14th Congress for the New Urbanism where Andres Duany explained that the concepts espoused by New Urbanists - namely walkable, compact, diverse neighborhoods - have reached a “tipping point” in acceptance by developers and the public.

Humane Design has perhaps reached a tipping point, as well. This month, I have added three new “second generation” clients, and hope to (finally) establish a Midwest chapter of the Congress for New Urbanism. Many thanks to my clients and supporters who have made the first 21 months possible!

I’m glad to provide what I hope is useful content here in my newsletter. However, allow me to formally announce the content-rich Humane Design website. I have been adding to it for almost a year, so please visit the site and explore, if you have not already done so.

www.humane-design.com

I hope you will periodically visit humane-design.com for resources and ideas about how to improve the human habitat.

-Jeremy Fretts

SELECTED CONTENT FROM HUMANEDESIGN.COM:

- **Basics of Form-Based Coding**, explains the basic differences between zoning and this new concept for old-fashioned townmaking.
- **Mixed-use project reviews**, including Atlantic Station (Atlanta) and South Side Works (Pittsburgh)
- **Faith and Urbanism**
“A church...can be the cornerstone of an entire neighborhood... That is IF they build so that there is not a field of parking isolating the faithful and their campus from the surrounding neighborhood.”
- **Pleasant Place to Work** challenges the American Workplace, and suggests that the E.U. may something to teach us.
- **Daylit contemporary worship space** photos are online in the “good examples” resource area.
- **Fluorescent lightbulbs** - quality matters! Look in the “knowledgebase”
- **Best of** - Ergonomic and stacking chair recommendations
- **Unbuilt work** - Fun projects that didn’t get built...at least not as shown here.
- “Friendly Pedestrian” t-shirts



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HIGHLIGHTS FROM MY CONTINUOUS EDUCATION...

• January, 2005 - Attended “New Partners for Smart Growth” conference in Miami, including “Advanced Placemaking” workshop with Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk & Chuck Bohl.

Tip: It is politically incorrect to oppose “green” development. Therefore, if you are having trouble with approvals, do a green project! (from Andres Duany at New Partners conference)

Tip: Provide road signs at temporary dead-ends: “Future street connection to adjacent development,” so that residents know what to expect in the next phase. (from attendee at New Partners conference)

• February, 2005 - Attended lecture by author Joel Garreau (*Edge Cities*)

Revelation: More people commute INTO Hamilton County each day than commute out. Carmel, Fishers, Hamilton County - we already ARE the city of the 21st century.

To ponder: If people can commute or telecommute from anywhere to anywhere, why would they CHOOSE to live and work here?

• June, 2005 - Attended Congress for the New Urbanism, in Pasadena, CA., and toured stunning examples of courtyard housing old and new.

• June, 2005 - Toured “Greyfield” (shopping mall) redevelopment at Lakewood, Colorado; the redevelopment of Stapleton airport into an entire new town within Denver, and a mixed use project in Boulder, CO (see photo below).

• September, 2005 - Hosted CNU President and former Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist during a visit to Indiana

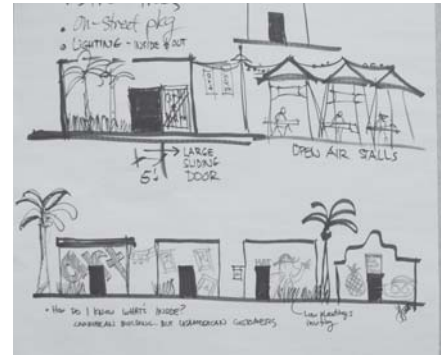
• November, 2005 - Toured Atlantic Station development in Midtown Atlanta. A full review is posted at www.humandesign.com.

• January, 2006 - Toured South Side Works development in Pittsburgh. A full review is online at www.humandesign.com.

• February, 2006 - Participated in charrette for the Meridian Park Neighborhood in Indianapolis with Ball State Students and professors.

• June, 2006 - Attended CNU XIV in Providence, Rhode Island. For complete coverage and extensive resources, see www.humandesign.com.

Pictured: Mixed-use block at Eighth & Pearl, Boulder. Courtyard housing sits atop parking structure and behind retail/office section.



Caribbean concepts for Timbuktu neighborhood, Miami. Jeremy's concept drawings for this workshop led by Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk.



Deputy P.M. of Great Britain John Prescott, a featured speaker at CNU XIV



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE CONGRESS FOR THE NEW URBANISM

Jeremy Fretts

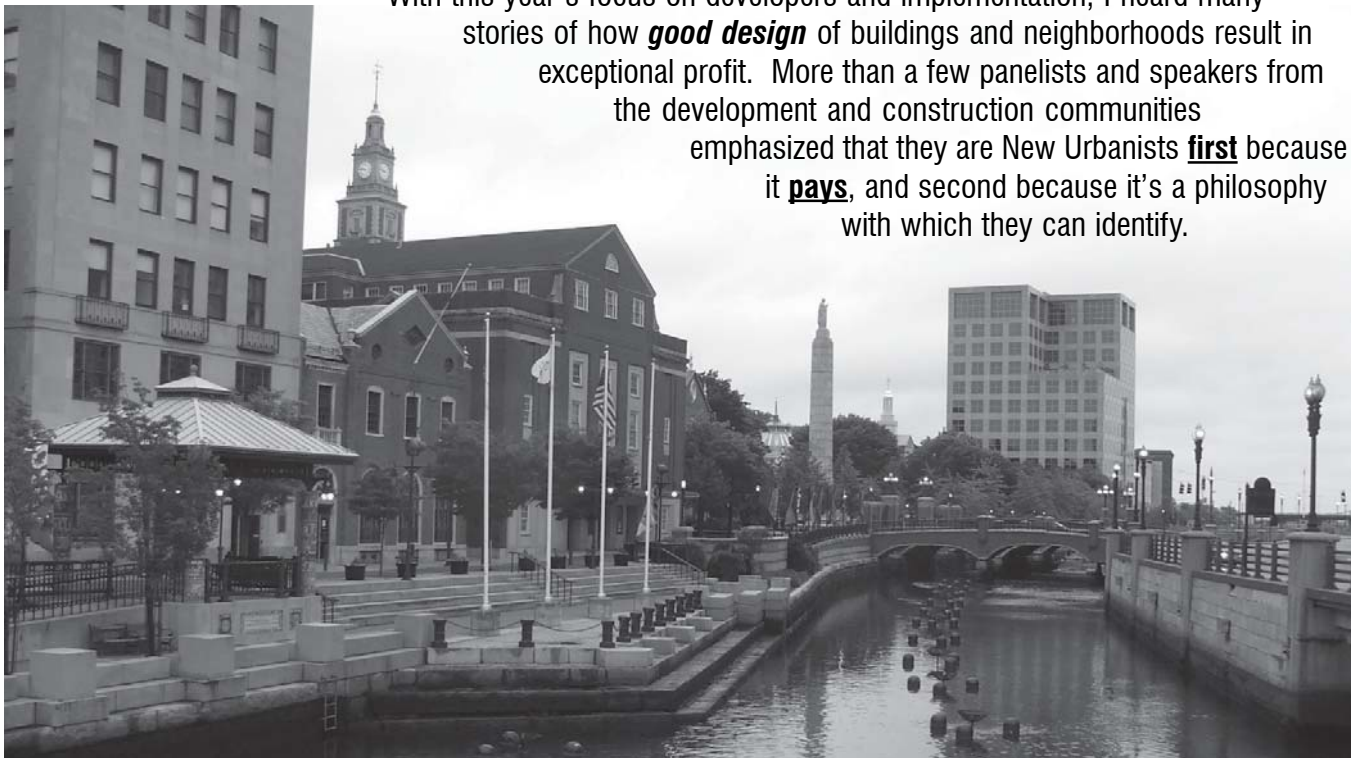
Greetings to my new urbanist and developer friends who were unable to attend CNU XIV. I have done my best to summarize a few highlights and useful tips gathered at this year's Congress, held June 1-5 in Providence, Rhode Island. Of course, it is impossible to capture the full breadth of learning and inspiration that occurs at this premier gathering of urban visionaries.

First, let me announce here that we are officially beginning a regional chapter of CNU for Indiana and western Ohio. Stay tuned for more information.

My teachers for the week in Providence included:

- **Jed Selby**, 27-year old wunderkind developer of riverfront South Main in Buena Vista, Colorado. Jed & sister Katie are developing the first kayaking-focused TND.
- **Christopher Alexander**, famed (and long-winded) architect-author of "A Pattern Language" and other expensive volumes.
- **Leon Krier**, visionary French architect and urbanist
- The Honorable **John Prescott**, Deputy Prime Minister of Great Britain
- **Andres Duany**, Duany Plater-Zyberk & Co.
- **Lee Sobel**, US Environmental Protection Agency
- **Doug Storrs**, developer of Mashpee Commons
- **Yaromir Steiner**, developer of CocoWalk, Easton Town Center, and more
- **Marilyn Taylor**, Skidmore Owings & Merrill, Chairman of Urban Land Institute
- **Marianne Cusato**, designer of the now-famous "Katrina Cottage" for homeless residents of the Gulf Coast (Marianne also designs "society homes" for New York's wealthiest).
- The developers & architects of Stapleton, CO; Celebration, FL; and Poundbury, UK
- And many others!

With this year's focus on developers and implementation, I heard many stories of how *good design* of buildings and neighborhoods result in exceptional profit. More than a few panelists and speakers from the development and construction communities emphasized that they are New Urbanists **first** because it **pays**, and second because it's a philosophy with which they can identify.



At the same time, this year's Congress focused more than ever on affordable housing. CNU members recognize that the great success of NU communities only garners us more criticism for failing to serve the underprivileged. The greatest growth in homelessness is among WORKING FAMILIES. "Worker housing" is a phrase which is increasingly used in discussing ways that workers at low-paying jobs can live in close proximity to their jobs. We need affordability other than what Todd Zimmerman calls "drive 'til you qualify."

With CNU's landmark response to the hurricane ravaged coast, we have begun to change the nature of the the housing discussion in the United States. There is no reason that small, affordable homes cannot also be well designed. This is proved by the incredible desire across multiple markets for the "Katrina Cottage." The wealthy are seeking to recreate this affordable-housing design for their mountain vacation cottages; the middle class are building them as alley rental apartments to generate additional income in West Coast neighborhoods, and the poorest of the poor will begin receiving these well-designed cottages from FEMA. CNU XIV celebrated the return of dignity to affordable housing.

Marilyn Taylor, Chairman of the Urban Land Institute and a partner in the famed architecture firm Skidmore Owings and Merrill, shared statistics that will define our world in the next 20 years. In 2007, for the first time in history, more than one-half of the world's population will live in cities. By 2030, the United States population will increase by 90 million people. Density is no longer an option. Good design must supercede the bad impression that the word makes on most Americans. Why do eight million people CHOOSE to live in Manhattan, asks Marilyn?

FROM THE EXPERTS:

"LAZY MAN PLANNING" BENEFITS DEVELOPER

Traditional street grids, including alleys, provide greater marketplace flexibility for developers. David Pace, developer of Baldwin Park, refers to it as "Lazy-Man Planning." With a 120' deep block structure, he can vary the lot WIDTH as needed for whatever product happens to be most marketable at a given moment in time. He is able to sell a variety of house types, townhouses, live-work units, or apartment buildings all designed to fit the 120' depth.

Speaking of density: Hong Kong has 74,000 people per square mile. New York City has a meager 26,000 people / mi square.

Finally, I'll close with a new spin on New Urbanism from Andres Duany. What New Urbanists do is simply "assemble and connect what would be built anyway." We assemble the parts into a whole which

- Increases walkability
- Increases compactness
- Increases diversity

CNU is composed of diverse practitioners who are not afraid to look at the big picture, and embrace the full complexity of city-building. We refuse to oversimplify, and we welcome anyone to our ranks who is willing to engage in this level of discourse. (Amen, Rev. Duany.)

Please make sure to visit www.humandedesign.com for several additional postings on specific topics extracted from the Congress. I'd also be happy to share more specifics on any of the sessions I attended.

Jeremy Fretts is principal of Humane Design, a design and advocacy firm based in Fishers, Indiana.