

MDP Proposal
Supplemental Submission
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a. Title

Planning Architecture: Utopia vs. Meaning

b. (1) Background

Urban Utopias have always been a counterpoint to real cities. They are generated by our desire to exist in a better place. Indeed, when any government or organization gains enough control over its subjects, it begins to coerce them into creating the ideal city. Two hundred years ago, Emperors and Kings began reworking their medieval cities into urban masterpieces. One hundred years ago, ideal cities were new factory towns created by wealthy industrialists. Today, the ideal city is the domain of the City Planning Department.

Architects have also been interested in utopia. But in practice, they are most often charged with the task of accommodating the particular dystopias of their clients. The varied deviant urban requirements of individuals, while tolerable to any real group of people, often don't fit in with the expectations of those who regulate the urban utopia. Hence, architects, interested in solving the varied problems of individuals and organizations, find themselves in constant confrontation with the Planning Department, and its normative, homogenous, utopian goals.

The conflictual goals of planners and architects not only are preventing cities from developing into healthy, diverse, unique urban places, but they are preventing architecture from becoming a true expression of people's existence in their city. Residential architecture in the North American city offers one of the greatest opportunities for architectural expression. Often located within an urban fabric that has traditionally promoted diversity and individuality, detached housing presents architects with sites and a programme open to a rich variety of interpretations and architectural expressions. Historically, this openness has allowed neighbourhoods to contain a mix of neo-historical styles, from Classical to Ancient Egyptian, Art-deco to Gothic. Presently, after societal admissions to non-nuclear families, people working at home, and the possibility of shared or communal accommodation, people's housing needs are even more varied than in the past. This variety fuels the possibility for even greater architectural richness, especially in the relatively dense inner city context of narrow lot housing. However, current Planning requirements are stifling the possibility for a meaningful architecture. The result is an a city with regulated variety and controlled (and censored) expression.

b. (2) Literature Review

Architecture and Utopia, Manfredo Tafuri
Architecture vs. Planning, Center: A Journal for Architecture in America, vol. 6.
Between Dystopia and Utopia, Constantinos A. Doriadis
Building and Power, Thomas Markus

Good City Form, Kevin Lynch
Modernist Visions and the Contemporary American City, conference papers
New Towns and the Suburban Dream: Ideology and Utopia in Planning and Development,
ed. Irving Lewis Allen
Of Other Spaces, Michel Foucault
One Hundred Mile City, Deyan Sudjic
Poetics of Space, Gaston Bachelard
Reurbanization in Calgary: An Urban Design Proposal, Thomas Ainscough **MDP**
The Edge of the Millennium, ed. Susan Yelavich
The Normative Content of Modernity, Jurgen Habermas
Utopia, *or, No Place*, Thomas More
Utopia/Dystopia, Peylan E. Richter
Viral City, Carlo DiStefano **MDP**

c. Objectives

The paper will consider the idea that the Department's utopic city, and the idealized, democratic process it uses to achieve it, are a major force in the stifling of the architecture of our inner cities. The effect this has on architectural meaning will be explored, and its significance considered. As well, this paper will illustrate this effect through the presentation of case studies.

I will design a dwelling for a 25' inner city lot in Calgary for a family with a variety of plausible requirements. This design will evolve as the paper progresses and likely bifurcate into two breeds of the same original idea: one that is allowed to flourish, and another which remains within the envelope of the City's planning requirements.

d. Methodology

1. Write Critical Essay

A theoretic research paper where,
I will explore possibilities for architecture in Calgary's inner city within the context of my hypothesis that the Planning Department's codified goals reflect utopic, and therefore unattainable, ideals; and
I will investigate the actual conflictual relationship between planning regulations and architecture with case studies.

- Literature review

This will involve the review of materials relevant to topics of utopia, planning and meaning in architecture.

- Meaning

I will describe the rich architectural possibilities of the inner city residential context, and the possibilities for translating them into meaningful residential architecture.

- Utopia

My study of utopia will focus on how current Planning regulations constitute a utopia, and how its imposition effects the meaning and significance of architecture.

- Case studies

By introducing two case studies and presenting my design project, I intend to illustrate the effect of utopia on meaning, and thereby the implications of planning architecture.

- Conclusion

2. Complete Design Project

Over the course of writing this paper, I will design an inner-city dwelling for a 25' lot. It will be built by one family that demands a diverse program, including secondary residential space, generous office space, and a workshop, in addition to many other more normative requirements.

The development of the design will be considered in the paper, as it is expected that it will change as I my understanding of the Department's utopia and their regulations. develops I expect there may be two designs at the end of the process. One design will evolve to fit within the envelope of the City's requirements. Another will likely be in conflict with planning requirements, and yet still be an societally acceptable deviant urban condition.

3. Write MDP Document

A compilation of the critical essay and design investigation with an introduction, conclusion, and appendices.

e. Chapter Headings

1. Introduction
2. Background/Literature Review
3. Meaning
 - Architecture for living in the city
4. Utopia
 - The 25' lot building envelope
5. Case Studies
 - Case Study One
 - Case Study Two
6. Design Investigation
7. Conclusion

f. Supervisory Committee

Faculty supervisor: Prof. John Brown
External supervisor: Prof. Paul Woodrow