

The Museum of Modern Art

11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Circle 5-8900 Cable: Modernart

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No. 10

FOR RELEASE:

Tuesday, January 24, 1967

PRESS PREVIEW:

Monday, January 23, 1967

3 - 5 p.m.

The New City: Architecture and Urban Renewal, an exhibition intended to help the public visualize some changes that architectural planning can offer to improve life in New York City, will be on view at The Museum of Modern Art from January 24 through March 13.

Co-sponsored as a public service by the City of New York, the exhibition consists of four demonstration projects commissioned by The Museum of Modern Art, shown in models, drawings and plans. The projects suggest a broad pattern of development for the area from 96th Street to 155th Street between the Hudson and the East River, including Randall's and Ward's Islands and the southern tip of the Bronx.

The proposals do not constitute a master plan, says Arthur Drexler, Director of the exhibition and of the Museum's Department of Architecture and Design, but are put forth for public discussion to suggest a frame of reference within which various interpretations and details are possible.

The Museum commissioned four teams of architects and planners associated with the faculties of four universities (Cornell, Columbia, Princeton and Massachusetts Institute of Technology) to suggest solutions for four urban problems in four sections of the area. Among the key proposals are:

- . The extension of the park system north from Central Park to the Harlem River, in two "green corridors" in which apartment towers and other free-standing structures would be built; and the simultaneous renovation of existing blocks.

- . Using the air rights over the railroad tracks on upper Park Avenue for a new 37 block-long building, erected in stages, that would create new housing without relocating the people who live in the area.

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. A public plaza at 125th Street opening on the Hudson River with long connected buildings in the river itself and related buildings along Broadway, enclosing a new waterfront park and making the waterfront visible and useful.

. Connecting Randall's and Ward's Islands to each other and to Manhattan, thus creating three new lakes for swimming and boating, to serve as centers for new neighborhoods which could then be built on the under-used land added to Manhattan.

The problems were defined by the Museum and the teams of architects to include specific social as well as aesthetic goals. Arthur Drexler says, "The arts of architecture and urban design are tools at our disposal: how we use them depends on what we want. We want to solve the pressing social problems of the day so that everyone will have the means, and the right, to live in cities as comfortable and beautiful as our fantastic resources can make them."

All the proposals made in the exhibition are technically and economically feasible, Drexler says. "Would they yield an urban scene healthier and more beautiful than what we have had? The four teams of architects and the Museum think they would. But do they represent changes we really want? Only the public -- which includes officials both elected and appointed -- can decide. The exhibition is meant to help the process along."

In an introductory section to the exhibition, various theories of city planning are shown in 49 photographs of work by architects and planners ranging from Ebenezer Howard to Le Corbusier. New towns recently completed and under construction in England and examples such as Reston in the United States and Tapiola in Finland are included.

The illustrated catalog accompanying the exhibition, edited by Arthur Drexler, contains an essay on new towns by Elizabeth B. Kassler and a discussion of New York City's particular problems by Sidney Frigand, Deputy Executive Director, Department of City Planning, as well as detailed statements on each project.

The exhibition was installed by Arthur Drexler, Director, Department of Architecture and Design.

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The projects are:

Project 1. Opening The Grid Plan (Cornell)

Team members: Colin Rowe and Thomas Schumacher; Jerry A. Wells and Alfred H. Koetter.

Assistants: ~~Steven Potters~~, Michael Schwarting, Carl Stearns.

Acknowledgments are also due to Franz G. Oswald.

Project 2. Housing Without Relocation (Columbia)

Team members: Jaquelin T. Robertson, Richard Weinstein, Giovanni Pasanella, AIA; Jonathan Barnett, Myles Weintraub.

Assistants: Benjamin Mendelsund, George Terrien, Paul Wang.

Structural consultant: David Geiger; Mechanical and electrical systems

consultant: Bernard P. Spring; Acoustical consultant: Michael Kodaras;

Construction Consultant: Edward Friedman.

Project 3. Building The Waterfront (Princeton)

Team members: Peter D. Eisenman, Michael Graves;

Assistants: G. Daniel Perry, Stephen Levine, Jay Turnbull, Thomas C.

Pritchard, Russell Swanson.

Project 4. Designing New Land (Massachusetts Institute of Technology)

Team members: Stanford Anderson, Robert Goodman, Henry A. Millon.

Photographs and additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019. Circle 5-8900.