TOWARDS A MORE CREATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN ENVIRONMENT
A Probe into Cohousing and Community Design

by

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ABSTRACT

In the new information age, the way people work, live and play has changed with the advent of new communication techniques. However, the way we perceive and approach urban design is still far from addressing these issues.

A survey of urban theory literature reveals a call for the cities to be more innovative and creative and adopt a more environmentally driven position, which can only be made possible through active citizen participation in the urban process.

This dissertation, based on this call, hopes to establish a framework for the design of creative and sustainable mixed-use developments where the dwellers are able to achieve a certain level of influence and actively participate in the design of their physical environment. It will look into the recent studies on citizen participatory urban processes, focusing particularly on cohousing communities. The social and environmental values of cohousing communes and the processes that help them translate these values into built form will be examined. The process of community design and a survey of network based 3D interactive computer-aided design tools shows how such a design process can be facilitated and managed and re-evaluates the role of the architect in such projects.

Lastly, we will discuss the relevance of such developments in the context of Singapore, especially in the light of the nation's ambition to become an 'Intelligent Island' and a 'Renaissance City'.

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