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Shared Outdoor Space and Community Life

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Mike Brill, in a provocative 2001 *Places* article, pointed out that spatially defined social relationships have three basic forms — private life, public life, and community life — and that many critics of contemporary urban life have failed to distinguish between the latter two. According to Brill, “Some of our nostalgia and mourning is not for public life at all, not for the world of strangers; it is for something quite different, real and precious: local neighborhood life, community, a world of neighbors and friends, the parochial realm.”¹ In the discussion that follows, I will attempt to define in design terms, and describe in social-use terms, valuable settings for community life that have often been overlooked or poorly understood.

In contemporary Western cities, there are four broad categories of outdoor space. The most private are spaces owned by individuals and accessible only to them and their guests. In this category would be yards of private homes, private estates, and so on. At the other extreme is what is generally termed public space — areas such as neighborhood parks and streets which are publicly owned and accessible to all. A third, intermediate, category consists of spaces such as corporate plazas or a university campus, which are privately owned but generally accessible. The fourth category, what I term “shared outdoor space,” consists of spaces owned by a group and usually accessible only to that group. Such spaces include community gardens and the common landscaped areas of condominium developments, clustered housing, assisted-living facilities, and cohousing.

As a form in which buildings enclose a shared landscape, this category of space has many historic precedents — from monastic cloistered gardens, to the collegial courts of Oxford; from the common greens of Radburn, N.J., to the courtyards of contemporary clusters of live-work lofts. If such spaces are carefully understood and sensitively designed, they can provide an important transition space between the privacy of the dwelling and the public domain of parks, streets, and town centers. As such, they can serve as a setting for local social life, and for the safe play of children, the most environmentally sensitive residents of cities and towns.

Shared Outdoor Space in Four Communities

I begin by describing five examples of shared outdoor space. The examples are St. Francis Square, a mid-density housing co-op in San Francisco; Village Homes, a residential subdivision in Davis, Calif.; Cherry Hill, an affordable housing scheme in Petaluma, Calif.; Southside Park, a cohousing community in Sacramento, Calif.; and The Meadows, a traditional block in Berkeley, Calif., where the

backyard fences have been removed.

Completed in 1964, *St. Francis Square* was the first of many similar medium-density, garden-apartment schemes built in San Francisco during the era of urban renewal. The client for the 299-unit project (the Pension Fund of the ILWU) challenged the designers (Robert Marquis, Claude Stoller, and Lawrence Halprin) to create a safe, green, quiet community that would provide an option for middle-income families wanting to raise their children in the city. The project occupies an 8.2-acre, three-block site in the city’s Western Addition, and it has an overall density of 36.5 units per acre. Its design is based on a pedestrian-oriented site plan, with parking on the periphery and three-story apartment buildings facing onto three landscaped interior courtyards.

The shared outdoor space, which is owned and maintained by the co-op, is critical to this community. Its trees screen the view of nearby apartments, reducing perceived density, and its grassy slopes, pathways, and play equipment provide an attractive place for children’s play. Sitting outside with a small child, or walking home from a parked vehicle (or from one of three shared laundries), adult residents frequently stop to chat with one another. The courtyards at St. Francis Square are, in effect, the family backyard writ large. If these spaces were public parks, parents would not allow their children to play there alone, and residents would be less likely to help maintain them, question strangers, or help neighbors in need.

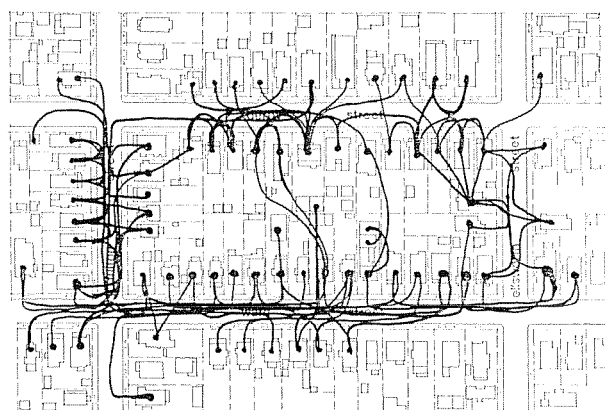
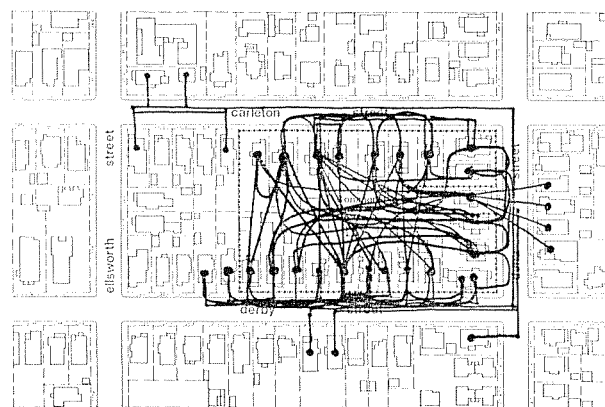
A postoccupancy evaluation of St. Francis Square was conducted by this author in 1969–70, and its findings were confirmed and expanded by a further year of observation when she lived there with her family (1973–74).² Numerous site visits since, plus conversations with the current management, confirm that the basic findings of almost thirty years ago are still relevant. In particular, there appear to be several reasons why the shared outdoor space at St. Francis Square is highly valued and well-used by residents: (1) narrow entries between buildings clearly mark the passage from the public space of street and sidewalk to the shared space; (2) the size of the courtyards (c. 150 x 150 ft.) and their height-to-width ratio (c. 1:6) give them a human scale; (3) the courtyards are bounded by the units they serve, and almost all units have views into the outdoor space (facilitating child supervision); (4) considerable attention and financial resources were focused on the quality of the common landscaping; (5) a clear distinction is established by fences and/or “keep-off” landscaping between private outdoor patios and the shared space of the courtyards; and (6) there is easy access from apartments and patios to the courtyards.

Village Homes is a 240-unit neighborhood completed in 1981 on the outskirts of the university town of Davis. A recent book by its designers, Michael and Judy Corbett, documents how it began as a “hippie subdivision” derided by banks and the local real estate industry, but has now become “the most desirable neighborhood in Davis.”³ Village Homes uses shared outdoor space as a successful aesthetic and social basis for neighborhood design. Individual houses are accessed from cul-de-sac streets and surround a central green. The long, narrow, tree-shaded, dead-end streets keep the neighborhood cooler in summer, save money on infrastructure, eliminate through traffic, and create quiet and safe spaces for children to play and neighbors to meet. The extensive pedestrian common area at the heart of the neighborhood includes spaces for ball games and picnics, community-owned gardens, and a vineyard and orchard. Lastly, drainage swales take the place of storm sewers, reducing summer irrigation costs by one-third and providing environments for wildlife and exploratory play.

This attractive environment — though accessible to outsiders bicycling and walking through — is definitely *not* a public park. Bounded by inward-facing residences, it provides a green heart to the neighborhood, a safe and interesting area for children’s play and adult exercise, and a strong sense of identity. A survey quoted in the Corbetts’ book indicates that residents of Village Homes know, on average, 40 neighbors and have three or four close friends in the neighborhood. In a nearby standard subdivision, residents know an average of 17 neighbors and have one friend in the neighborhood.

Cherry Hill is a 29-unit development of townhouses for low- and moderate-income families with children in Petaluma, a small town in Sonoma County north of San Francisco. The first residents moved into the project, built by the nonprofit Burbank Housing Development Corporation, in January 1992. Site planning hoped to establish a safe environment for the many children expected to live there, and support a sense of community among the residents. The Project Manager (John Morgan) had read about *woonerf*, residential precincts used to calm traffic in northern Europe, in a book by this author, and asked the designers (the woman-owned firm Morse and Cleaver) to pursue the idea.⁴

The resultant site plan consists of a narrow (22-ft.) access road which creates a one-way loop around a central green. Off this loop are four paved courtyards that permit cars to drive up to each house, and that create hard-surface play areas. As in European *woonerf*, cars and pedestrians coexist safely without sidewalks since the speed of cars is regulated by the narrow roadway, speed bumps, and the



Opposite: The Meadows neighborhood, Berkeley, Calif. In a 1974 study, residents knew more neighbors from all four adjacent streets (middle image) than did residents of a control block (bottom image). Drawings by Roger G. Cavanna.

dead-end nature of the street pattern. Unlike the standard gridded neighborhood, no cars enter Cherry Hill except those belonging to residents or known visitors.

The success of these design decisions was confirmed by a study conducted by architecture graduate students in April 1993 under the direction of this author, whose methods consisted of interviews with 17 of the 29 households and 7.5 hours of observation and activity-mapping in the shared outdoor spaces.⁵

Eighty-eight percent of the interviewed sample socialized with other families in their immediate courtyard; 64 percent with families elsewhere in Cherry Hill. Asked where they were most likely to bump into people they knew and stop for a chat, 94 percent cited their courtyard, 38 percent the central green, and 30 percent the street. Eighty-eight percent reported they would recognize a stranger walking in Cherry Hill, and two-thirds were very satisfied with the site plan. Reasons cited for satisfaction were that it is safe for children, close, intimate, simple, homey, convenient, and encourages community. The 18 percent “not satisfied” thought the courtyards created a “fish-bowl” effect, that the whole site was too tight, and that the central green needed to be more visible. When asked how they would rate the sense of community at Cherry Hill, 71 percent rated it “strong” or “very strong.”

Revisiting Cherry Hill today, it is clear its site plan has been highly successful in creating safe play spaces for children. During daylight, nonschool hours, children engage in such activities as rollerblading, rolling on the grassy slope, going round the loop on scooters, watching adults working on cars, and clustering around an ice cream truck. Two sections of the roadway have been formally designated for games — four-square and basketball. It seems reasonable to assume that were this a standard grid-pattern neighborhood with through traffic and no shared outdoor space, there would be less of a sense of community and much less outdoor play. Significantly, 50 percent of parents said their children watched less TV since moving to Cherry Hill. The other 50 percent said they had no TV, or that their children watched about as much as before.

Southside Park cohousing is a 25-unit urban infill development in inner-city Sacramento. It was designed by Mogavero Notestine and Associates in consultation with the residents, who number 67 (40 adults and 27 children). Completed in 1993, it contains fourteen market-rate, six moderate-income, and five low-income condominiums.

The site plan for Southside Park fits into Sacramento’s existing street grid, with most of the houses clustered around a common green on the interior of the block, and the remainder (two rehabbed Victorians and several new

units) in a smaller cluster across an alley. Front porches mark house entries from the street, while back porches and patios look out onto the common green. Residents eat meals together several times a week in the 2,500-sq.ft. common house.

While there has been no systematic postoccupancy evaluation of Southside Park, many casual visits by this author confirm what residents and designers hoped for: that the many children who live there are attracted to play on the common lawns, pathways, and play-equipment area; and that adult residents frequently meet while outdoors with their children, using the common laundry, working in the raised garden beds, walking back and forth to their cars, and in the common house. As at St. Francis Square, Village Homes, and Cherry Hill, the sense of community and the range of children’s outdoor play opportunities at Southside Park are largely the result of a site plan that curbs traffic flow and creates a central pedestrian green. Ironically, the street-facing porches at Southside Park are used by residents when they are seeking *privacy*, since the shared outdoor space on the interior of the block is such a social space.

The Meadows occupies a city block in Berkeley where backyard fences were removed to create a park-like shared space. From 1963 to 1973 a lecturer in real estate at the University of California acquired 27 properties on a block bounded by Derby, Dana, Carleton and Fulton Streets, most of which were single-family residences built between 1900 and 1920. Then, in a conscious experiment to create a unique residential environment, he began (from 1971 on) to remove backyard fences, unused garages, extraneous outbuildings, and paved areas, replacing them with grass, flowers, shrubs, trees, and walkways. The residents — who were all his tenants at the time — retained semiprivate patios, lawns, or planted areas close to their dwellings.

In a 1974 MLA thesis, Roger G. Cavanna compared this block with an adjacent control block (with regular fenced backyards) using standard techniques such as a questionnaire, a survey of behavior traces, and a recording of activities.⁶ Compared to residents of the block where the fences had not been removed, residents of *The Meadows* felt safer in the areas around their houses, had a higher opinion of their neighborhood, spent more time outdoors at the back of the house, and considered their backyard environment to be more open, attractive, and better maintained. The residents also knew more neighbors from all four adjacent streets (whose houses backed onto the shared space). By contrast, those in the control group knew mostly people on their block (i.e., next door or across the street).

While this study was conducted almost thirty years ago,



recent visits to this block revealed that the backyard fences have not been replaced, despite the fact that most dwellings are now owner-occupied. The central open space is very well used for children's play, studying, sunbathing, barbecues, basketball, and gardening. Residents maintain their own private (but unfenced) yards and patios, as well as adjacent portions of the shared outdoor space.

One might assume The Meadows is a "Berkeley 1960s" innovation, but in fact it follows other historic examples. In Boston's South End, for example, Montgomery Park comprises one-third of an acre entirely enclosed by 36 brick row houses. Established as a formal garden by the original builder of the houses in 1865, by the mid-twentieth century it had become run down, and the shared space had been virtually abandoned. From the 1970s on, however, a new group of residents removed debris, improved drainage, planted a lawn and perennial borders, took down fences, lobbied to have phone lines buried, removed a service road that circled the park, and restricted access from adjacent streets by installing locked gates. By the 1990s, the orientation of most of the buildings was toward the back, with a brick pathway delineating private backyards from shared space. The lush interior of the block is now equipped with moveable garden furniture and is used for informal dining and play, annual potlucks, weddings, birthday parties, and garden tours.⁷

A recent article in the *Atlantic Monthly* surveyed how variations on The Meadows and Montgomery Park may provide ways of redesigning conventional suburban blocks where the residents — especially those with children — are

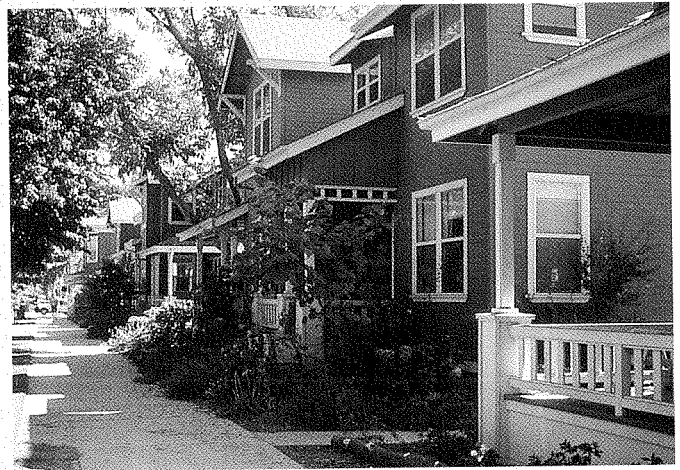
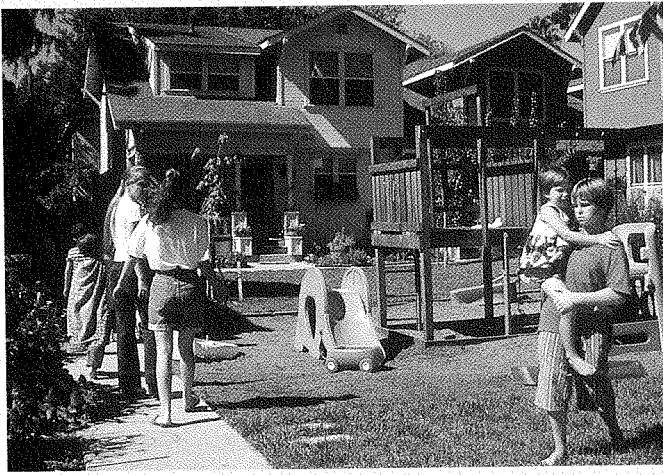
looking for more neighborly lifestyles, and for settings for play that are safer and more stimulating than conventional sidewalks.⁸

Characteristics of Successful Shared Outdoor Space

A review of the sites described above indicates that shared outdoor space can be a highly significant component of the neighborhood landscape if it meets the following criteria.

- (1) It is bounded by the dwellings it serves and is clearly not a public park.
- (2) Entry points from public streets or sidewalks make it clear it is not a public space.
- (3) Its dimensions and the height-to-width ratios of buildings and outdoor space create a human scale.
- (4) Each dwelling unit bounding the shared outdoor space has access to an adequately sized private outdoor space (patio, yard, balcony) to form a buffer between the residence and the common area.
- (5) There are clear boundaries and easy access between what is private (dwelling unit, patio, yard) and what is shared.
- (6) Care is focused on the layout, circulation pattern, planting, furnishings, lighting, etc., of the shared outdoor space. In particular, the design needs to focus on the needs of children (play equipment, paths for wheeled vehicles,

Above: A precedent for shared outdoor space — 1920s bungalow court, Berkeley, Calif. Photo by author.



areas for exploratory play, etc.). Research shows that children will comprise more than 80 percent of the users of such spaces if they are designed with the above criteria in mind.

(7) The nature of such spaces can vary from the rectilinear courtyards of St. Francis Square to the more rambling suburban greenways of Village Homes as long as all the above six guidelines are followed.

The above details are critical. It was the *lack* of many or all of these characteristics that rendered the shared outdoor space of many postwar public-housing projects, and many suburban Planned Unit Developments of the 1960s, non-functional. Unfortunately, those who criticized such spaces as being poorly maintained no-man's lands assumed (wrongly) that they could never work.⁹ There is ample evidence that if they are appropriately designed, not only do they work, but they become actively sought by people with a choice over how they live. For example, all 51 cohousing communities so far completed in North America (as well as an additional twenty under construction) feature site plans where units face onto shared outdoor space.¹⁰ Further evidence for the success of such schemes has been compiled by Community Greens: Shared Parks in Urban Blocks, a nonprofit initiative based in Arlington, Virginia.¹¹

The Need for, and Benefits of, Shared Outdoor Space

There is a further reason why we should look seriously at the forms of communities discussed above — typically, clusters of approximately 25 to 250 households. People are not being *forced* to live in such groupings, they are choosing to live there, and in the case of cohousing, they are working long and hard to bring projects into being. What is happening, this author speculates, is a yearning for a community of neighbors where one can recognize everyone, where numerous casual encounters occur each day (the “compost” of community), and where a sense of ownership and control allows subtle modifications to be made

to the shared environment as community needs change. People have a need to relate to a group which is larger than the family unit but smaller than a planner-designated neighborhood. In brief, there is a need for community life as distinct from public life. Toward this end, shared outdoor space needs to be reconsidered as a venue for neighborly interaction — one that is parallel and complementary to the public life of streets, plazas and parks.

There are demographic, economic, and psychological reasons why a reconsideration of shared outdoor space is particularly appropriate at this time. With increasing numbers of families where both parents are employed, the presence of a safe and interesting communal play space *right outside* the house is particularly attractive. This is equally true for single-parent families. Gone are the days, for most families, where a mother is home all day to walk or drive children to a nearby park. The potential sociability of a traffic-free, green area at the heart of a community (the shared outdoor space) is also appealing to the increasing number of single-person households (both young and elderly).

The presence of outdoor space whose management and maintenance may be shared by the group also provides an opportunity for people to have some sense of control over their nearby environment. The residents of the St. Francis Square co-op, for example, have made numerous changes to the shared outdoor areas of their community over the last forty years. Outside the private dwelling and its associated private outdoor space, there are relatively few opportunities for small groups to have the same sense of accomplishment through hands-on manipulation of the local environment.¹²

There may be larger social benefits to such activities as well. For example, a study of a low-rise housing project (Ida B. Wells, Chicago) determined that residents involved in greening activities (planting flowers or caring for plants and trees in shared outdoor spaces) experienced stronger ties with neighbors and a greater sense of community, felt a greater sense of ownership, picked up litter more often, and felt a greater sense of control over their environment, than residents who were not engaged in such activities.¹³ Evidence from interviews in communities with shared outdoor space indicates that such “working together” provides

Left: Southside Park Cohousing — shared outdoor space.

Right: Southside Park Cohousing — fronts of houses face the street, with a narrow entry path leading to shared outdoor space in the interior of the block.

All photos by author.

a profound sense of shared responsibility and community.¹⁴

Orientation to Shared Outdoor Space and Orientation to the Street

Does orientation to shared outdoor space mean that the street frontage does not engage the larger city environment? This could happen, but doesn't have to. In the case of Southside Park, Victorian-style houses with porches face the street across from similar neighborhood dwellings, while the backs of houses face a shared landscape in the rear.

St. Francis Square is not successful in this regard. Its porches, patios, and quality architectural detailing face the inner courtyards, while rather bland facades with fire escapes face the surrounding streets. Each group of six apartments shares an interior stair, with entries from both the street and the court. Because of activity in the courtyards, considerable personalization on balconies and patios, and the presence of a busy eight-lane highway (Geary Boulevard) on one long side of the development, the life of the Square is definitely introverted. However, later redevelopment schemes in this part of San Francisco took note of this, and some were designed with attractive porches on the street side as well as landscaped shared space and private patios at the back. Just because interior-block shared space exists does not mean that street life is ignored. The Meadows and Montgomery Park are good examples of successful orientations to both community life inside the block and public life on the street.

Does the creation of a community that is partially introverted result in an "exclusive enclave?" It could. But in many cases, the opposite is true. In many cohousing communities the strength of neighborliness has "spilled out" into the surrounding environment, allowing defunct neighborhood associations to be resurrected (as at Southside Park). Indeed, the cohousing common house may become the venue for neighborhood meetings. And one architect involved with many cohousing projects believes that when people become involved in a small group, such as a typical cohousing community of 30-40 households, they are *more* likely to become engaged in wider neighborhood concerns and meet people outside their "enclave."¹⁵

Shared Outdoor Space and Health

Americans are becoming more sedentary; obesity is on the rise. Between 1977 and 1995, walking and bicycle trips by children aged between five and fifteen dropped by 40 percent. For trips to school of one mile or less, only 31 percent are now made by walking.¹⁶ And according to the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and

Health Promotion, "physical inactivity has contributed to an unprecedented epidemic of childhood obesity that is currently plaguing the United States. The percentage of young people who are overweight has doubled since 1980."¹⁷

Particularly alarming — and underreported — is the fact that an increasing number of school districts are eliminating recess. According to one newspaper report, "As many as four out of ten schools nationwide, and 80 percent of the schools in Chicago, have decided there's no time for recess. Instead of romping in playgrounds, kids are being channeled into more classes in an effort to make their test scores rise on an ever-higher curve. . . ."¹⁸

This regrettable policy provides one more argument for the provision of attractive, usable, safe outdoor space immediately adjacent to home. It is not sufficient to provide sidewalks and neighborhood parks — though these are important — since most parents will not permit young children to play unsupervised in such public spaces. A shared space right outside the back door is much more likely to be used for unsupervised play after homework, before dinner, after dinner, on weekends, or during school holidays, thus promoting health through exercise.¹⁹

Shared Outdoor Space and the New Urbanism

It is important that we reconsider the communities and research discussed above and pay attention to existing research on site planning and community.²⁰ This is particularly important in light of current New Urbanist views regarding suburban design and public-housing redesign. Combing the New Urbanist literature, the most frequent reference to space shared by a group (that is not fully public) is the alley. In many New Urbanist communities the presence of alleys allows houses to be sited closer together and ensures that curb cuts and garages do not mar the streetscape. While these are laudable goals, it seems unlikely that a sense of local identity can be facilitated as well by these utilitarian passageways as by the provision of common greens bounded by the units they serve. Even more disturbing is the assertion by some New Urbanist developers that alleys are suitable places for children to play. It doesn't take much imagination to suggest that the experience (and possibly the subsequent environmental values) of children offered play space that doubles as a setting for cars, trash cans, recycling bins, and power lines will be vastly different from that of children (such as those at Village Homes, for example) who grow up amid creeks, fruit trees, wildlife, and gardens.

The most recent version of the *Municipal Smart Code* refers to five categories of public outdoor space — park,



4.

Map 1
St. Francis Square, San Francisco, CA

- CP:** Central Plaza
- S:** Shared outdoor space
- G:** Parking garage

Map 2
Cherry Hill, Petaluma, CA

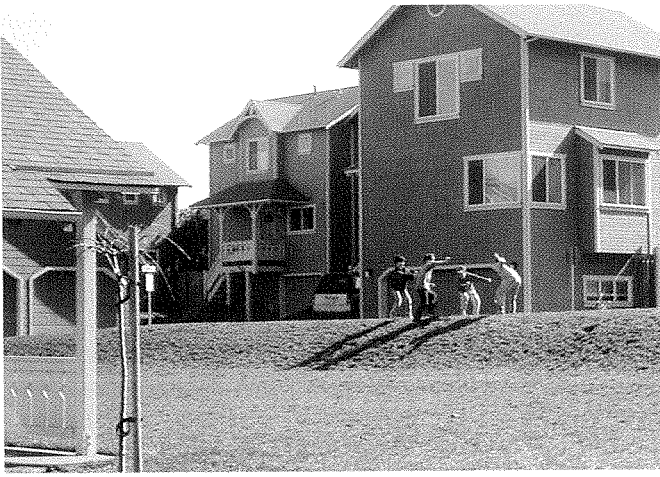
- S:** Shared outdoor space
- C:** Courtyards
- G:** Garage

Map 3
Southside Park Cohousing, Sacramento, CA

- K:** Kids' play equipment
- V:** Vegetable garden
- CH:** Common House
- S:** Shared outdoor space

Map 4
Village Homes, Davis, CA

- C:** Community center
- D:** Drainage swale
- S:** Shared outdoor space



green, square, plaza and playground — but has no category for shared outdoor space as defined above.²¹ The most recent version of *The Lexicon of the New Urbanism* defines only two categories of open space comparable to that defined in this article — the close and the quadrangle; it defines two comparable categories of housing arrangement — the private block and the compound.²²

Recently revised guidelines for “Designing and Developing Hope VI Neighborhoods” recognize the importance of shared outdoor spaces in revitalized public housing projects.²³ Unfortunately, these same guidelines recommend two elements in their design which may seriously compromise their usefulness: that they be accessible to outsiders by bike and footpath; and that the shared outdoor space be separated from homes by a street. Ease of accessibility by outsiders, either by footpath or by an encircling street, will most likely transform the image of shared space into that of a public park, thus compromising its function as a setting for social interaction, territorial monitoring, and safe children’s play. Territorial clarity and the delimitation of shared space that is not accessible to “outsiders” is especially important in public housing and high-density urban settings.

Above left: Cherry Hill — shared outdoor space.

Above right: St. Francis Square — courtyards are detailed so as to be attractive to children.

Below left: The Meadows — private and shared outdoor space.

All Photos by author.

In the above-cited publications, as in much planning and design literature, these categories of place are defined and described in general terms of location, form, landscape, etc. — but not in terms of how they are likely to be perceived, appreciated, and used. Nor are they designed in terms of the exacting attention to design detail described here. New Urbanism-inspired building codes are increasingly being adopted. And yet, while many of their goals and principles are undoubtedly positive, the successful types of site plans documented in this article are, in places, being legislated out of existence.

For example, the recently designed site plan for an affordable housing scheme in Windsor, Calif., incorporated shared outdoor space and was welcomed by its client, who had previously noted the success of Cherry Hill. However, the City Planning Commission, citing New Urbanist principles, insisted that the site must have a through street, that shared outdoor space “doesn’t work,” and that clustered housing around such a space creates “a ghetto.”²⁴ Such misunderstandings of the social implications of site planning are unfortunate, and point to the need for design judgements to be better supported by research.

The conclusions of all the above-quoted studies suggest that the category of outdoor space which has been defined here as shared outdoor space is of great significance in providing a setting for casual social interaction; for strengthening social networks at the local neighborhood level; for children’s play; and for enhancing a sense of responsibility and safety in the neighborhood. These findings are particularly pertinent in lower-income settings where residents may not be able to sustain wider social networks or take their children to areas of public recreation. They are also pertinent in all settings where there are likely to be families with children.

An Ongoing Discussion

Recently, another *Places* article appeared to take issue with the argument presented by Mike Brill, with which I began this article. In it, Emily Talen wrote:

The best that can be done is, first, to make sure that design doesn’t actively get in the way of social interaction and, second, to provide venues that allow for a variety of types of civic

*engagement. It doesn't matter if one then meets strangers or neighbors in these places. Both types of interaction can happen, both are important, and it is neither necessary, desirable nor plausible to focus on venues that exclude one or the other. . . . The issue of community life versus public life is thus a straw man.*²⁵

This statement, with which I respectfully disagree, appeared in the section "To Rally Discussion." Let us hope that the debate continues and that we look at other kinds of settings that may enhance community life. Above all, let us pay heed to one of Brill's main conclusions:

*A piece of important work for us all would be to seek more appropriate forms, by understanding community life more fully (and how it differs from public life), in some joint effort by those in psychology, sociology, anthropology, urban design and landscape architecture, and by citizens.*²⁶

Notes

1. Michael Brill, "Problems with Mistaking Community Life for Public Life," *Places*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (Fall 2001), 53.
2. See Clare C. Cooper, "Resident Attitudes towards the Environment at St. Francis Square, San Francisco: A Summary of the Initial Findings," Institute of Urban and Regional Development, University of California, Working Paper No. 126 (July 1970); and Clare C. Cooper, "St. Francis Square: Attitudes of its Residents," *ALA Journal* (December 1971).
3. Judy Corbett and Michael Corbett, *Designing Sustainable Communities: Learning from Village Homes* (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2000).
4. Clare Cooper Marcus and Wendy Sarkissian, *Housing as if People Mattered: Site Design Guidelines for Medium-Density Family Housing* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1986).
5. Clare Cooper Marcus et al., "Postoccupancy Evaluation of Cherry Hill, Petaluma, CA," unpublished study by students at the University of California, Berkeley, 1993.
6. Roger G. Cavanna, "Backyard Options in Residential Neighborhoods," MIA Thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1974.
7. "Community Greens," information pamphlet on Montgomery Park, Boston, MA, (no date).
8. William Drayton, "Secret Gardens: How to Turn Patchwork Urban Backyards into Neighborly Communal Parks," *The Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 285, No. 6 (June 2000).
9. Alice Coleman, *Utopia on Trial: Vision and Reality in Planned Housing* (London: H. Shipman, 1985).
10. *CoHousing: The Journal the Cohousing Network*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Summer 2000).
11. See their Web site at www.communitygreens.org.
12. Some opportunities that do exist are Adopt-a-Park schemes, Earth Day clean-ups, Sierra Club trail maintenance, house repair or construction through Habitat for Humanity or Christmas in April, volunteer maintenance or gardening on church or school properties, and community gardening.
13. Liesette Brunson, Frances E. Kuo, and William C. Sullivan, "Sowing the Seeds of Community: Greening and Gardening in Inner-City Neighborhoods," *American Journal of Community Psychology* (in press).
14. Clare Cooper Marcus, "Architecture and a Sense of Community: The Case of Cohousing," unpublished manuscript, 1992; and "Site Planning, Building Design, and a Sense of Community: An Analysis of Six Cohousing Schemes in Denmark, Sweden, and the Netherlands," *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (Summer 2000).
15. Conversation with Chuck Durrett, McCamant Durrett Architects, Berkeley, CA.
16. National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, "Promoting Better Health for Young People through Physical Activity and Sports," report to the President from the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary of Education, 2000.
17. Ibid.
18. Matt Schudel, "City Talk," *South Florida Sun Sentinel*, Nov. 9, 2001.
19. Though not the topic of this article, the continued popularity of culs-de-sac is partially due to their use as safe, near-home play spaces for young children.
20. Jan Gehl, *Life between Buildings: Using Public Space* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1987); Cooper Marcus and Sarkissian, *Housing as if People Mattered*.
21. See Civic Space Standards, section 6.10.
22. The Lexicon of New Urbanism (Duany Plater-Zyberk and Company, Nov. 1, 1999).
23. Department of Housing and Urban Development, *The New Face of Public Housing: Designing and Developing Hope VI Neighborhoods* (draft, 2002).
24. Conversation with Chuck Durrett, McCamant Durrett Architects, Berkeley, CA.
25. Emily Talen, "Exorcising the Ghost of Emily Latella," *Places*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (Fall 2002), 69.
26. Brill, "Problems with Mistaking Community Life for Public Life," 51.