
PERMACUL[TEC]TURE - GROWING FOR THE FUTURE

Creating intervention for the rapid new urbanisation of the Johannesburg inner city.

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A design project submitted to the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment, University of the Witwatersrand, in fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Architecture.

Johannesburg 2008

This dissertation is submitted to the School of Architecture and Planning, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Bachelor of Architecture – 2008

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the following people for their help and support during this dissertation. Without them, this dissertation would not have been possible:

Many special thanks to Kirsten Doerman, for your guidance and time and urging me towards my goal.

Lorin Burgoyne, for your time, reassurance and motivational talks. Your thorough knowledge in agriculture inspired me so much.

Randall Bird, for your guidance and input. Your efforts have made this year well worth it.

Alan Mabin, your knowledge on the social developments of Johannesburg has greatly broadened my perceptions of architecture and the social impact on Johannesburg.

Jean-Paul Zietsman and Henning Rasmuss for your crits and urging me to push forwards.

Heather Hong, the constant support throughout this year and for putting up with all the hassle, mess, late nights and tantrums. Your loving encouragement and support was much needed and appreciated throughout the year.

My Greek friend, George Flack-Davison, who has always put time aside for me the whole year, I know you had more important things to do and commitments.

To all my other friends for being there and making this year fun-filled and an exciting adventure. You have all played a part in my keeping level headed and my sanity.

Thanks all!



This thesis aims to explore the theme of “space” within the context of the inner city environment. Such exploration aims to inform the design process of an architectural intervention to alleviate the quality of life of people arriving from rural areas within the city of Johannesburg.

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MOTIVATION

Cities around the world are expanding vertically as well as horizontally. We see the increases in the value of land space as well as living spaces. Many migrants who come into the city find it difficult to live in the city suffer poor living conditions with poor unmanaged facilities.

In addition, these migrants find it hard to find jobs and as a result there is also the concern of malnutrition. By reviewing the possibility of optimising land use for agriculture, multiple level farming, and low cost accommodations, this will hopefully alleviate rising food costs and hunger, poor living conditions and unemployment.

“Quality of life” and “urban regeneration” is the crux of this thesis. The aim is to give rural people who are migrating into the city, a place, (through the proposal) of a communal farming and a housing model.

WHY AGRICULTURE?

Agriculture how is it integrated with architecture will be the driving force with which to explore the idea of urban regeneration and improved quality of life. The use of spaces to maximise areas for local vegetative farming will become important to the program.

Urban agriculture is seen as a solution to the problems of the runaway growth of cities in developing countries.

Urban Agriculture, thus contributes to a wide variety of urban issues, by providing multiple benefits for urban inhabitants with many different functions.

To make the transition toward a sustainable society, it is imperative that we take responsibility for our own lives and meet our basic needs for food, shelter, energy, gainful employment, and supportive community.

Questions

How to improve the quality of life of people who live in the city through architecture?

How can my intervention allow people to become self reliant in terms of growing food?

How to give people ownership of spaces?

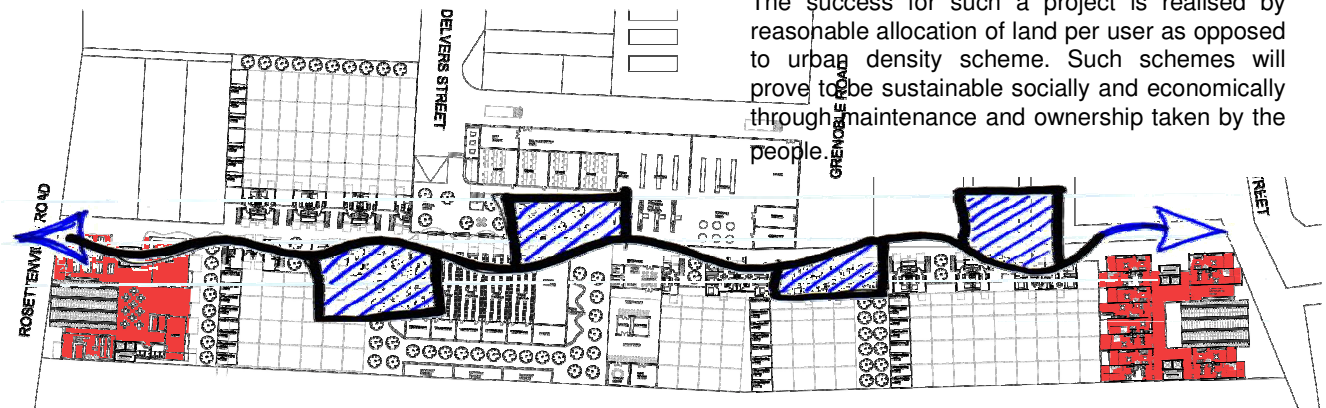


The architectural intervention is to be an urban agriculture centre which comprises of 2 main components:

- Training or skills development facility** for educating on agriculture;
- Living typology-** apartments which addresses the need for accommodation.

These two components can be further broken down into 4 distinctive areas.

- 1: Residential
- 2: Farming
- 3: Market space
- 4: Skills training

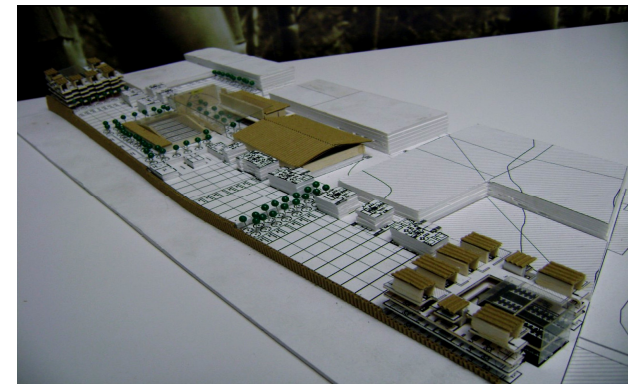


Goal

- Improve quality of life for the residents.
- Addressing the needs for community living.
- Allowing for future expansion and change (adaptability)



Site: Marshalltown



The success for such a project is realised by reasonable allocation of land per user as opposed to urban density scheme. Such schemes will prove to be sustainable socially and economically through maintenance and ownership taken by the people.

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Main Picture

Mary Fitzgerald square, Newtown's Place

Photograph: Preston (2006:77)