COMMUNITY BUILDING AND THE ROLE OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract

Community building, an idea that still resonates at the beginning of the 21st century, across the range of practitioners, researchers, federal and local officials is involved with building residential environments. The question that poses itself “can we design communities?” What prompts and promotes a sense of community, and the role of the physical environment in it have been an area of continual efforts that aim to discern lessons that would guide the design and planning process of residential areas.

The notion of community is usually defined in the social sciences is defined in terms of two aspects: a social component, consisting of various types of social interaction, and psychological and emotional responses. The connection between physical design and community, particularly its affective component, is complicated. The issue in question in this paper is whether physical factors can affect certain aspects of social interaction. With the increased mobility available to people around the world, the significance of sharing the same physical boundaries as a basis for community formation is challenged more than ever before. The social goals of housing, dwelling/home design, including near-home spaces are in question.

The paper researches the idea of building communities the design level of the home environment. The significance of this paper lies in clarifying the role of the built environment in influencing social interaction among residents. It postulates that this role is inherent in the built environment’s potential to allow opportunities to “meet” and as well “control” social interactions with other inhabitants in the environment.

Keywords
community building, physical design, social interaction, spatial arrangement