ABSTRACT

THESIS: TRANSFORMING SUBURBIA ONE UBIQUITOUS LOT AT A TIME: UNDERSTANDING AND MITIGATING THE ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS OF SUBURBIA (Creative Project 3 cr.)

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This creative project seeks to highlight the relationship between the history and values of mid-1900s residential communities in the United States and the ecological impacts that have resulted. This history is instrumental in order to understand the sprawling pattern of suburban neighborhoods that exist on the fringe of nearly every urbanized area. An analysis of the negative environmental impacts associated with the construction and occupation of these suburban homes demonstrates a need for a transformation of sprawling places in order to be more ecologically sound. Case studies highlight suburban developments that have attempted to mitigate particular ecological concerns through design and resident behavior. Research and analysis of case studies contributed to the creative element of this study—an entry for the James Rose Center for Landscape Architectural Research and Design competition entitled, “Retrofitting Suburbia 2.0: Exploring the Aesthetics of Landscape Experience in the Age of Sustainability.” Design renderings created for the competition illustrate how a single-family suburban lot in Northwest Muncie, Indiana can be retrofitted for ecological sustainability.