Revitalizing a Neighborhood and Building Community through Architecture

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The past year has been a time of great personal growth and has been a great learning experience for me as I look to my design future. For that, there are a few people that I would like to thank.

First I would like to thank my Professor Bob Fisher. Bob has pushed me to be the best that I could be. However, along the way he has also allowed me to develop my own viewpoint, though sometimes it may have stressed him out more than me. Bob, you have been a great professor and a great mentor, thank you.

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Project Abstract

In the past few years, the world has begun to return to the city. The rural population has been decreasing since the Industrial Revolution. More recently, with the advent of the automobile and good highways and roads, people moved out of the cities to the suburbs. As a result of this influx, development of communities within the city has come into focus. Human beings need community and community is currently hard to find in the ever-growing cities. The building of community can and needs to occur. This developing of community in the urban context can occur through neighborhood revitalization. Neighborhood revitalizations often aid in giving an area an identity which in turn develops a sense of "community." Multi-use Community Centers are an excellent way to begin the process of revitalization and the building of community. Located in Indianapolis, a neighborhood on the southeast side between New York Street and Ohio Street is in desperate need of this type of revitalization. This area is a rather diverse neighborhood, yet it has no sense of community.

The past year I have investigated urban revitalization and the role that architecture plays in it. During this research, I have found that sports related facilities have had a great impact on revitalizations. However, these facilities alone do not successfully achieve revitalization. To be successful, one must incorporate a mix of activities. By incorporating athletics, community activities, and basic skills programs, a single facility can have an immensely positive impact on a neighborhood. While the reviving of a neighborhoods' aesthetics is important, it is not the only issue that needs to be addressed when looking at urban revitalization. The building of community must be a focus in any revitalization effort. How can a building achieve the dual task of revitalizing a neighborhood and building community? Through a Multi-use Community Center I will attempt to answer that question. The goal of this building will be to see if the many needed functions of a revitalization can exist together as one facility. The focus of the design will be how can and how does the building contribute to building "community" within the neighborhood. I have attempted to solve this by addressing three main issues.

The first is how does the building affect people operationally? Does the building operate in a manner that builds a sense of community? Does it involve members of the surrounding neighborhood?

Secondly, I will address the physical aspect of the structure. Does the building symbolize community to its neighbors and how would one accomplish this?

The last issue is that of psychology. Does the building have a positive psychological impact on individuals and does it foster interaction between them?

The final goal is to produce a Multi-Use Community Center that serves to improve the neighborhood psychologically as well as physically.
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In recent history, the world has focused on moving out of the urban environment. However, today, the rural population has shrunk to less than five percent and is still shrinking. At the same time, in the developing world, it is the cities that are growing. Because of this move back to the city, the focus of community is on the rise. The key to the survival and future health of this renewed urban society is the development of communities within the city. Human beings need community. If no communities are available for constructive means, there is often destructive, crime infested communities that result. The ultimate question is how can architecture build this community within this new urban context? It can begin with the revitalization of a neighborhood itself. Urban Revitalization and Urban Community often go hand in hand. Areas in classic need of revitalization often have a low sense of community due to the lack of pride within the neighborhood itself. This lack of pride could result from architectural disrepair, or be due to a lack of community involvement. By restoring the area, a sense of community will begin to develop between the neighborhood members. How can the architecture embedded within the revitalization strengthen this sense of community?

When an individual attempts to design with the intent of neighborhood or urban revitalization, one must first understand how urban revitalization occurs and the factors that drive it. Throughout history, successful revitalization efforts have included the building of athletic facilities such as baseball stadiums, football stadiums, basketball arenas, and multiuse athletic facilities. While these athletic facilities are catalysts for urban renewal, they are not the only component necessary to achieve a successful revitalization. Accompanying these facilities one must incorporate and offer opportunities for job skills training programs and other coping skills. These programs focus on reeducating the members of the neighborhood that have previously been in financial or emotional devastation. By offering programs such as these, individuals are given the chance to become productive members of society again. It is this combination of athletic facilities and basic humanities programs that drive a successful urban revitalization. The revitalization of a smaller community could essentially work the same way. A single neighborhood can benefit from these same larger scale athletic facilities and programs. Therefore, a multiuse community center which incorporates smaller-scale athletic facilities while offering job skills training programs could be a catalyst to an ailing neighborhood.

How can the architecture of these new complexes effect the building of community? Architects are now faced with this question in designing these facilities. There are three areas of focus in designing for community. One must focus on how the building impacts individuals operationally, physically, and psychologically.

Operationally, a building can produce a sense of community rather easily. This can be achieved in a number of ways. By creating a program that is all-inclusive, any individual within the surrounding community can become a user. For example, combining facilities to accommodate for senior citizens, youth programs, and underprivileged individuals, can result in a great sense of diversity within the building and may bring many different social groups together forming a single united community. Providing job opportunities for community members is another way a building can operationally produce a sense of community. Giving individuals a sense of belonging is a great way to build pride and community within a neighborhood. Physically, a building can also stimulate a sense of community within a neighborhood context. Designing buildings that are closely related to its context is a great way to begin. Not only designing with the physical context in mind but also the historical context of the neighborhood. Where did it come from? How was it first developed? Who are its (continued on next page)
current tenants and what are their backgrounds? These are only a few of many questions that can be asked before designing. By responding to these questions, the individuals within the community generate a sense of place within the much larger city. They develop a sense of connection to each other within the smaller neighborhood.

Finally, a building can promote community through psychological aspects of design. Some architectural aspects that achieve this lie in the sensitivity to scale, materials, form, and adjacent connections. For example, a building whose scale is not imposing and relates to the individual is often much more inviting and personable than is a fourteen story tower. Material selection is also a very important aspect to address. The choice of materials whether inside the structure or outside can directly affect a persons perception of the building. A structure that is finished in concrete will portray a cold, hard feeling to visitors. Conversely, a building that is finished with wood and brick will give the feel of a warmer more inviting building. Another area of impact is building form. The form that a building takes has a direct effect on the buildings personality. A building with a concept of community may take on a form that is very comparable to the structures around it. This may give the neighborhood members a sense of comfort and familiarity. However, if the building expresses a vastly different view of architecture than its surrounding neighborhood, it could have a negative impact on its visitors and neighbors. Lastly, connections are very important to building community psychologically. Connections can come in many different areas, from visual connections, to actual connections, to metaphorical connections, to contextual connections. All of these connections can have a great effect on how the structure is perceived to pedestrians within the building as well as passing by the building and therefore must be considered.

Though the ultimate goal of neighborhood revitalization and the building of community is a very tall task, it is attainable through the use of these multi-use facilities. These multi-use facilities have proven to be great catalysts for interaction between individuals of different cultures and social groups. As Peter Drucker states, “Individuals need an opportunity to achieve, to contribute, to matter.” These multi-use facilities are great ways to fulfill these needs of city life.

Facility Programming

Historically, there have been many attempts at revitalizing neighborhoods and communities. These attempts have taken various paths ranging from the insertion of athletic facilities, to civic buildings, to the implementation of community programs. My attempt is to bring all of these very different approaches together in the same program, that of a Multi-Use Community Center. The Multi-Use Community Center concept is not a new idea in the architectural world. Community centers have been designed for many years now and have traditionally been very diverse in their function. They have ranged from youth centers, to senior centers, to athletic centers, to basic civic centers. From athletics, to social services, to the arts, community centers are intended to serve everyone equally. The most successful of these community centers, however, are those that are unique to their housed environment and surrounding neighborhoods. The building’s architectural qualities as well as its functional program must relate to its community. Because of this focus on community needs, the program for this Multi-Use Community Center will be very unique. The facility will incorporate functions within a series of five major sectors: Communal/Common Space, Athletic Facilities, Community Facilities, Administration, and Service/Mechanical. These areas are expanded on in the following building program outline.
Multi-use Community Center Program Description

Communal / Commons Space
This space is intended to be located throughout the facility. It is not intended to be a single lobby space with a single entry. The space will function as a gathering space throughout the building and serve as entries to each individual space. Spaces within the commons will include: public restrooms, coat check areas, reception desk(s), small intimate seating areas as well as larger much more public gathering spaces, and areas of exhibition space.

Athletic Facilities
The athletic facilities are intended to stay rather small and serve only the surrounding neighborhoods, not the entire city of Indianapolis. They are also intended to be accessible individually and not as a single group. The athletic sector of the facility will include the following:

Gymnasium — This space will accommodate a full scale high school regulation basketball court as well as volleyball courts. The space will provide a limited amount of seating for spectators.

Weight Training Room — This room will be a small scale weight room that will accommodate free weights as well as cardiovascular equipment.

Aerobics Room — This is intended to be large enough to hold aerobics classes that the like for groups of up to approximately thirty individuals at a time.

Locker Rooms — A single men’s and women’s locker room will be provided to serve the gym, weight training room, and aerobics rooms.

Athletic Offices — These offices will house athletic coordinators and allow for the presence of extra management solely for the purpose of managing the athletic facilities.

Small Class Room — This classroom will be relatively small and will be an all inclusive classroom. It will serve as a training space, activity space, lecture space, and meeting space.

Community Facilities
The community facilities are spaces that are intended to serve the community from a intellectual standpoint. This sector of the community center is to include job training functions, community interaction spaces, and multi-use spaces. The community facilities include will the following:

Job Skills Training Class Rooms — These classrooms are intended to be used for community based classes dealing with continuing education. The spaces will be large enough to hold up to approximately thirty individuals at any one time. One of these class rooms will be used solely as a computer class room as well.

Learning Center — This space will function as a small scale library for individuals within the surrounding community as well as the job skills programs to study, trade books with one another, or check out certain resources. The space will include some stacks, computers, periodicals, and basic research materials.

Job Skills Administration Offices — A group of offices will be provided exclusively for the job skills teachers and organizers. There will be a small secretarial space, a few offices, as well as a conference room.

Community Café — The café is intended to be a small sandwich shop for individuals who are participating in activities within the facility as well as serve as a small kitchen for preparing dinners for functions occurring in the Multi-purpose room. This space is envisioned as spilling out into the communal space.

Multi-Purpose Community Room — This space is intended to be a large two-story space that can be used for a number of different functions. It will incorporate a small stage area for public lectures or small plays. It will also be available for community functions such as meetings, receptions, open houses, and the like. The space will also incorporate a small exhibition area to display information about up coming events and exhibitions. Table and chair storage will also be supplied.

Community Lounge — This space is a small informal activity space for community members to come and play pool, ping-pong, cards, etc. The lounge is intended to be used at all times of the day and its goal is to be an area of interaction between the many different types of individuals using the facility.
**Building Administration**

A group of offices will be provided exclusively for the use of building administration. An office will be provided for the facility's head administrator, additional administration, and secretaries. A small conference room will also be provided. This group of offices will be located in an area that is easily accessible to the central communal/commons space and that is centrally located within the facility.

**Service and Mechanical Rooms**

The service and mechanical rooms will house all mechanical systems as well as provide a service dock. This space will also house a space for janitorial services, a trash area, and supply area. It shall be centrally located within the building allowing for easy access from all the many functions of the facility. The mechanical systems within this space shall be able to independently run each of the sectors of the building at any one time.

As you can see, the proposed building program is very diverse in its functions. The combination of these different types of facilities into a single unit will be a great challenge and a great opportunity. By combining athletic facilities, community based facilities, administration facilities, and basic building amenities into one single structure, it provides a great opportunity to reach out to a wide range of neighborhood residents and bring them together as a single community.

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**Program Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Square Feet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communal/Commons Space</td>
<td>6,000 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Administration (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Lounge</td>
<td>2,000 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Purpose Community Room</td>
<td>3,000 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Café Dining Room</td>
<td>500 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Café Kitchen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Job Skills Training Offices (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conference Room</td>
<td>250 sf</td>
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<tr>
<td>Job Skills Training Classrooms (4)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Center</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletic Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Athletic Classroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aerobics Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weight Training Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gymnasium</td>
<td>10,000 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locker Rooms</td>
<td>1,600 sf</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Net Square Feet**

34,150 sf

**Net/Gross Factor**

A net gross factor of 70/30 is applied to the total net square feet of 34,150 to accommodate space required for corridors, elevators, interior/exterior walls, structure, and mechanical/environmental systems which are difficult to program without a designed building configuration.

**Total Estimated Square Feet**

48,790 sf
After addressing the building typology that was to be studied and designed, I set out to investigate some building precedents. The multi-use facility is a very difficult one to pinpoint and is often times a very diverse building. As I began to find examples of these custom designed spaces, I focused on a group of three buildings located all in California. The three facilities included the Irvington Community Center, Sherman Heights Community Center, and Albany Library & Community Center. All three of these facilities though different in design and function addressed and dealt with the same issues, problems, and responses. Through the investigation of these building precedents, I have come to a few general conclusions about successful Community Center design.

First, the building must address its context. The final facility must not only address its community from a programmatic stance, but must also address its neighbors from an aesthetic standpoint. This can be achieved through facilities massing and spatial planning. Often times, large masses are avoided and one-story compact buildings are used which accompany large quantities of sky lighting. This incorporation of sky lighting solves the problem of lack of day-lighting that is often a result of the compact buildings. Material selection is also key in addressing the facilities context. This use of material provides a visual link to a community as well as providing a sense of familiarity and comfort for the local users. The buildings street presence is also very important. A buildings street presence enhances the buildings interaction with its neighborhood.

Second, the building must focus of functionality aspects. Facilities that combine athletic functions with learning functions often must find ways to separate the functions. Similar activities should be kept together, passive areas and active areas must somehow be separated. When addressing the issue of separating the functions, the designer must also be conscious of circulation patterns since good sequencing is key to helping people find activities within the center. These very different functions can be separated with common lobby spaces which can adequately serve both functions. This lobby should showcase the facility and provide smooth transitions into the very different spaces.

The following page briefly outlines the projects that were studied.
Irvington Community Center
Freemont, California, ELS & Logan Architects

Facility includes preschool learning programs, basketball courts used for high school games and city games, and a multi-use community room. The design concepts focused around community context. The facility size was reduced with exterior terraces lessening the perceived height. The athletic facilities were programmed to be separate from the classrooms and community spaces with a common lobby space. Noise control was a big issue. Noise from the gym was to be dampened with wood strips over steel members and noise absorbing insulation was to be used wherever possible.

"Building fulfills program needs without sacrificing its form of expression." Architectural Record

Sherman Heights Community Center
San Diego, California, Rob Wellington Quiqley Architect

This facility consists of a restoration of an 1890 Victorian home into offices, as well as a 12,500 square foot facility that included meeting rooms, counseling rooms, multi-purpose rooms, community area, and a child care center with classrooms and a kitchen. Conceptually, the building called for a structure that gave its community a recognizable public center, yet was respectable to its residential neighbors and character. The architect used stick framing and tilt-up concrete panels to achieve a civic appearance. The buildings pitched roofs, wood siding, and porches give the structure a residential quality sought out by the community as well.

"...this building is a very externally focused community center." Architectural Record

Albany Library & Community Center
Albany, California, Marquis Associates

Consisting of library spaces with stacks and private reading areas, conference rooms, children's areas, computer rooms, a multi-purpose room with a kitchen and courtyard, and a Parks and Recreation Office, this facility is quite a diverse center for learning. The building is located at a major intersection in Albany California. Because of its noisy site, computer controlled lighting and HVAC systems provide back noise for the buildings interior as well as the installation of sound panels and wall insulations. The building also avoids large masses so not to overwhelm its residential neighbors and uses compact one-story volumes with an abundance of sky lighting.
Indianapolis is the capital city of Indiana. Located in Marion County, it is a prototypical city in the Mid-Western United States. Sprawling across central Indiana, it is a city that holds a horizontal generosity of space due to an uncanny foresight on the part of its first planner, Alexander Ralston. As a result of its flat landscape, location far from an ocean, lake, or mountain, the natural environment has proved to be of little consequence in shaping the form of the city. The city is divided into a square mile grid that is centered on Monument Circle. Monument Circle contains a 284 foot monument honoring the soldiers and sailors of the civil war. This monument circle is a great example of the spirit of place that stimulates civic pride and allows public spirit to flourish within a city center (Gadski, 1).

Indianapolis is a city that presents an image of mixed character. It contains high-rise towers that dominate the city’s skyline as well as grain stores that rise boldly near the capitol building and a governmental center. A coal-burning plant sits within eyesight of the Hoosier Dome, convention center, and luxury hotels. Most importantly it contains a central business district that has a scale that decreases harshly and inconsistently at the edge of the downtown area, forming an uneasy transition into the surrounding residential areas.

The economy in Indianapolis is also very diverse. Pharmaceuticals, electronics, insurance, government, and automobile-related industries dominate the area. However, recently tourism, entertainment, conventions, and service-based industries have grown to prominence within the area.

Throughout its past, Indianapolis has struggled with its identity as a city. It has held many different themes. It was first seen as the “Capital City” reflecting its tradition and stability. It then moved to a “Crossroads City” reflecting its historic development and contemporary culture. Next it became known as a “Dynamic City” reflecting its focus on sports, tourism, and competitiveness. And finally it has been known as a “Livable City” reflecting its commitment to neighborhood, community, and diversity. This commitment to neighborhood and community makes it a perfect candidate for this proposed multi-use community center.

Through Indianapolis’s struggle with its identity, it surprisingly has remained a very cohesive city. The Circle that was placed at the center of the mile square plan so many years ago still functions as the center of the town square, remaining very active during traditional events and everyday experience. This cohesiveness has resulted from the city focusing on a single urban design goal. Indianapolis’s goal is to create public spaces, places, and forums so sublime that the rich and the poor, the able and the disabled, and the young and the old share a common communion when experiencing them (Gadski, 15).

Historically, Indianapolis has seen a boom in historic preservation. Little workers’ cottages in Lockerbie Square and on Fletcher Avenue, rundown commercial buildings along Indiana and Massachusetts Avenues, and old wholesale houses on South Meridian Street all have been areas where preservation has been focused. Lockerbie Square, which is located on the east side of Indianapolis, is the city’s first historic district and since has seen much restoration done. Areas have seen new street pavements, tree plantings, sidewalks, light standards, and even the reappearance of houses. The historic focus within the area is restoring the Victorian homes. Many of these homes appeared within Lockerbie Square and its adjacent neighborhoods. Residential developments have reappeared within Lockerbie as a result of the conversion of historic industrial buildings into condominiums or apartments. An example of this is the Indianapolis Glove Factory in Lockerbie Square which was converted into condominiums. In the future, Historic Landmarks Groups will continue to promote preservation efforts by neighborhood groups, private developers, and owners of individual historic buildings.
Indianapolis native, Michael Graves, has often called Indianapolis an “architectural wasteland.” The proposed site area is exactly as Graves states, a “wasteland” with only a sense of past and no sense of now. The site lies on the east side of downtown Indianapolis. It is located on the east edge of the square mile grid of the downtown area. The actual site is bordered by Ohio Street to the south, New York Street to the north, East Street to the east, and a small service alley to the west. The site is roughly 250 feet by 450 feet. It is currently the home to “Alright Parking,” a parking lot that services the surrounding buildings. However, the lot is rarely filled with cars due to an abundance of parking throughout the surrounding blocks. The site has a very diverse atmosphere and location to it. It is surrounded by small business such as law offices, Architectural offices, general office complexes, and small retail buildings. It is also flanked by light industry such as American Graphics and the like. To the other sides, it is surrounded by residential areas. To one side it is shielded by small three-story town homes which are currently under construction. To the other side is Lockerbie Square. Lockerbie Square is a very interesting area. It is the first historic district in Indianapolis and contains many row houses as well as refurbished industry that is currently being reused as condominiums. Also in the Lockerbie area is Lockerbie Market. This area contains small business, a grocery store, Laundromat, and drug store. This small development serves as a small market for its surrounding residents.

Obviously, the site area is very diverse in its uses and residents. The integration of small retail, business, industry, and residential provides an interesting mix of individuals. This incredible diversity of people and function allows for great site potential.
New York Street (North Edge)

The North edge of the site contains primarily a series of small business and residential. There are two law offices which occupy a historic two-story block building, as well as a series of small apartment complexes. Extending out this direction from the site lies Lockerbie Marketplace and Lockerbie Square, two of the Historic Districts within the Indianapolis area. This area has a very rich past. It includes many Victorian style homes and structures from the early 1900's. These homes all contain a small fenced in area and small gate along the front sidewalk. Walking the area, one gets the feeling of an upper class neighborhood. This is true; yet walking for a few more blocks one would find that the diversity would begin to increase. The area changes from upper class to lower class within a few blocks.

Lockerbie Marketplace, which is located due west of Lockerbie square, is an area that was designed to be a mixed use community node. This area includes a small Osco Drugs, a dry cleaners, a grocery store, and small restaurants. Today, it is used exclusively by a very sparse amount of nearby residents and surrounding small business.

With its diverse residential neighborhoods, and small business, this edge of the site offers great potential to become a strong community connection for the proposed site.
East Street (East Edge)

The **Eastern border** of the site is also very diverse in nature. This area is in desperate need of revitalization. It contains numerous run down or abandoned buildings as one would continue to venture eastward. Immediately across from the site is a large Methodist Cathedral, an old abandoned house, large parking lots, and small business. The scale of this area is kept rather low with the exception of the cathedral's tower.

This facade also contains a building which is currently located on the site. This building is a Victorian style historic home which is currently being used as a small daycare center. It currently occupies the Northeastern most part of the site. This building will remain on the proposed site and become part of the proposed facility. Since the structure contains the historic quality of the neighborhood, it would be a travesty to remove it or rebuild it. The building offers great opportunities during the design process.

This east side of the site, though it is very downtrodden, offers great opportunities for streetscape connections to the adjacent neighborhoods. East Street could become a great street for public interface.
Ohio Street (South Edge)

To the South of the site stands a mix of different buildings and functions. A six story parking garage dominates the view to the south. This parking garage was originally built along with Market Square Arena. Since Market Square Arena's recent removal, it now has a limited number of everyday users and therefore could supply the entire neighborhood with parking in the future. In front of the parking garage, is a relatively small Amoco gas station. This gas station is rundown and seldom used. It is surrounded by additional parking areas for the adjacent rundown businesses. To the left of the site, is light industry. American Graphics occupies this corner. This factory has a dark and dirty feel to it and is in desperate need of rehab. Continuing further down the street one would find a large uninviting power substation as well as a number of destroyed warehouses.

As you can see, this side of the site is in desperate need of rehabilitation in the near future. With the south edge of the site being developed more as an industrial area it offers the possibility to increase the proposed facility's scale and offers the possibility of material change.
Service Alley (West Edge)

The West side of the site currently contains new construction. A series of town-houses are being built adjacent to the service alley and are facing the site. Here, the neighborhood seems to be realizing its true potential. These homes are three stories tall and are being constructed of brick and limestone. Another building along this alley is 225 North New Jersey. This building is six stories tall and is a contemporary office building and headquarters for the architectural firm HNTB. The building is built of “granitized” precast concrete panels and mirrored glass. Though the service alley is rather small, it could provide entry to parking or future on site services.

Development to the west of the site seems to be already progressing in the right direction. With current addition of numerous town homes, it offers an additional connection for the site. This new influx of individuals into the neighborhood should only help the proposal for a new multi-use community center in the area.
Design Objectives

**Designing** for the building of community within a neighborhood is a very complex task. However, the goal can be achieved. In this instance of community design, the focus will be in many different areas. These design objectives will fall into three different categories: operational building impacts, physical building impacts, and psychological building impacts.

1. **Design a Multi-Use Community Center that promotes “community” operationally.**
   - The buildings program will be all-inclusive, offering opportunities for community members to share their work, hold a job, and attend events.
   - The building will provide a activity and social focus for the local community.

2. **Design a Multi-Use Community Center that symbolizes “community” physically.**
   - The building will relate to its context, historical and physical.
   - It will blend with its Victorian style surroundings.
   - It will relate well to the streetscapes of the adjacent areas.
   - It is to have a scale that is sensitive to its neighbors both residential, industrial, and commercial.
   - It will be a representation of the community itself.

3. **Design a Multi-Use Community Center that psychologically builds “community” within the neighborhood.**
   - The structure will be sensitive to scale, relating to the individual visitor.
   - It will be sensitive to material usage in the adjacent areas as well as have a sensitivity to its own quality of spatial usage. It won’t turn people away but will make them comfortable with their surroundings.
   - Its form and presence will symbolize “community.”
   - Its form will be a catalyst for personal interaction between members of the community itself.
Conceptual Approach

After addressing three main areas of design concerns to be undertaken during the development of the community center, I began to look at a conceptual response. After investigating the contextual relevance of Lockerbie square to the north, and how to create an atmosphere that would promote interaction were my main focus, I developed two main concepts that would help drive my initial design.

**Concept One: Row Houses**

When attempting to relate to the neighborhood context to the north and to the west, I first began to look at the neighborhoods layout. The Victorian style homes in Lockerbie square gave the appearance of a series of row houses. The roofs were all built with steep gables that were oriented toward the street. Their facades were composed of windows that were often grouped in two and threes, and its materials were almost exclusively brick and limestone. Each of the homes along East Street also contained a small fenced in yard on the sidewalk side that was a semi-private space. These spaces sometimes were closed off from the street with small walls or small gates. With this in mind, I felt that the buildings façade along East Street should reflect this idea of row houses. These spaces could be pushed and pulled from the sidewalk creating small and large, intimate and public spaces between them and the sidewalk. These different pieces could be broken into each of the many different building functions as well and could appear as a group of fingers reaching out to the street. These individual pieces could then be connected to a central corridor space. This concept seemed to me to be a very community based approach and was very contextually relevant.
Concept Two: Interior Street

After the development of the row house concept, I began to address the idea of a central corridor and how to promote interaction within the space. In Ray Oldenburg's book, "The Great Good Place," he states that a city's Main Street is an area where...

"informal socializing spills out into the street and into places of commerce that would not tolerate it. It is for this reason that Main Street is almost as much a third place as any site along it."

He also goes on to say that...

"only successful streets and sidewalks, parks and squares, parkways and boulevards are being used by people sitting, standing, and walking."

It is this sense of place and interaction that my project is seeking. Therefore, I felt that the interior corridor should act as its own Main Street of sorts. It should be created in the form of an interior street. The corridor should be an area where individuals stop and chat with a neighbor, sit and read a book, or just sit and relax. This space should be very active at all times of the day. It should also be a space that functions as a street yet still gives the facility a sense of unity.

This central corridor could also incorporate a series of side streets that intersect the spaces created as row houses. These side streets could become a "serving" space which would provide entrances to the many different functions along the interior street. The "serving" spaces could also supply the building with its public amenities such as bathrooms and storage. These spaces could also provide areas of more intimate seating or gathering yet become very transparent allowing light to penetrate into the central corridor.
Though this corridor is envisioned as taking the character of a city street, it is not intended to be a single height, expansive corridor. The space should contain a number of height changes as one travels from one end to the other. These height changes should articulate where sky lighting would occur. The space is also envisioned as having numerous catwalks across the corridor thus creating other views and areas of possible interaction.

**Design Studies**

**Elevations**
After working through my initial design concepts, I began to investigate the building facade. I began to sketch a number of elevation studies suggesting different alternatives. How would I relate to the existing contextual piece on the North edge of the site? How would I give the building a community image? These were very big factors in the actual facade exploration. My conclusion was that the historical Victorian structure would merely be a indicator of scale and proportions. I didn’t feel it was appropriate to mimic the Victorian style construction. I decided that the existing window heights would become lines that would extend down the facades to create my own window systems.

**Roof System**
The next question was that of a roof structure. How should this relate to the surroundings? Should it relate at all? Struggling with this issue, I went through a series of investigations comparing a flat roof structure, with a gabled roof system. After this series of studies and discussions, I decided that both roof systems had their place within my design. I wanted the large spaces to contain gables to once again give the appearance of individual row houses. However, I also wanted the “serving” spaces between to drop in height allowing the “served” spaces to become more prominent. *(continued on next page)*
Here, I felt it was more appropriate to use the flat roof system to achieve my goal. Once I had decided on a basic roof system, I was faced with a new question. Should the gabled roof system of the new facility match the pitch of the existing neighborhoods, or become its own entity? Ultimately I felt that the roof gables should become their own entity, but that some piece, such as sky lighting, should take on the characteristic of the steep gabled roofs of the neighborhood. These taller skylights would also help relate to the silo type structure on the existing day care’s south side. Placement of the sky lighting would occur above all places of entry as well as above the central gathering space outside of the café/community lounge. This would provide an accent to each entry and give the interior street an abundance of natural lighting. The placement of the sky lighting would also define where the height changes above the interior street would occur. The image of the final ceiling height and sky lighting is envisioned as a illuminated cloud above the interior street.

**Entrances**

The next issue of concern was that of entries. Where and how should the main entries occur? The entries to me seemed to be an area of great focus within community buildings. This was a space that I felt had to somehow appeal to its surrounding community. After investigating the site, I felt that in order to achieve the concept of an interior street, I must not have too many entries. An entry at each end of the corridor should be more than sufficient. I felt that each of these entries, off New York and Ohio Street, should be equally important. I also felt that they should be a dominant fixture within the exterior façade. Again, I worked through a series of ideas and finally decided that the entry would be best articulated as a kiosk. This type of structure seemed to me to be a great beginning and ending point for the central corridor.
Interiors
When actually getting inside the building, the project began to take form. Conceptually, the interior street wanted to be very transparent and open throughout. However, I didn't feel that this would be very effective. I felt that if the space was continuous throughout, it would feel very large and imposing almost as if you were walking through downtown Chicago. I wanted this space to relate to a single individual's scale yet also grow to the scale of the exterior of the building. Through a series of interior corridor perspectives and models, I investigated how this change of height and sky lighting may actually occur. I found that the articulation of heights and placement would have to come from the placement of the skylights. The next question was how to break up the repetitiveness of the interior. Should each interior space have its own character and use of material in the image of an actual street façade? I struggled with this question for quite some time. In the end, I felt that the interior materials should reflect the exterior materials to a degree. I felt that introducing too many different materials would make the building lose its integrity. Its exterior would not be reflecting its interior. So I decided to limit myself to about three materials, brick, limestone, and wood paneling. I also decided that as one progresses through the corridor, the materials should change from wood paneling to brick. The wood paneling would be used when the scale was dropped helping to create a lighter, warmer feel, were as, the brick would be used where the scale was much larger and where their was more natural light.

After establishing my main design objectives and conceptual ideas, I began to progress into my final design development. This was an ever changing process and was always in the design stage.
Legend

1. Existing Day Care Facility
2. Learning Center
3. Multi-Purpose Room
4. Building Administration
5. Café/Kitchen
6. Mechanical/Service
7. Open Below to Gymnasium
8. Weight Training Room
9. Central Corridor (Interior Street)
10. Handicapped and Administration Parking
11. Additional Handicapped Parking and Service Dock

Café/Kitchen Detail
Legend

1. Existing Day Care Facility
2. Learning Center
3. Multi-Purpose Room Below
4. Building Administration
5. Café/Kitchen
6. Mechanical/Service
7. Open Below to Gymnasium
8. Weight Training Room
9. Central Corridor (Interior Street)
10. Handicapped and Administration Parking
11. Additional Handicapped Parking and Service Dock
12. Job Skills Classrooms
13. Conference Room
14. Job Skill Administration
15. Community Lounge
16. Aerobics Room
17. Athletic/Multi-Use Classroom
18. Storage
19. Open to Below
20. Gymnasium
21. Men’s and Women’s Locker rooms
22. Mechanical Chase
Mechanical Systems
The diagram to the left indicates the basic mechanical system that is intended. The mechanical room will be centrally located on the first floor. The mechanical systems will then travel up through a specified chase and into a set of bulkheads that run throughout the central corridor. These bulkheads will then disperse the conditioned air both up to the glass sky lighting, and down to the actual corridor. From these bulkheads, the duct work will then branch out and into the individual spaces through the ceiling/floor sandwich. A sub-level mechanical space will then be located below the central corridor where the air will eventually be exhausted.

The central corridor bulkheads will also serve additional purposes. These bulkheads will not only serve as mechanical runs throughout the facility, but will also be used as a scaling devise within the corridor by giving the space an element which brings the overall scale down to a more personal level. The bulkheads will also provide an area in which lighting fixtures can be concealed. These lighting fixtures will direct the light up to the skylights creating a cloud of light within the central corridor.
Sections
The southern half of the facility is occupied by the athletic functions. In the drawing below, the left portion of the drawing is the gymnasium. This space is a full sub-level (10 feet) allowing space for bleachers. These bleachers will also function as stairs in specified areas to allow for an additional entrance into the gymnasium. The space located on the main level will be an informal lobby. This space will be occupied by individuals who may just be stopping in to observe for a few minutes or the space may become a small gallery during different events. The corridor wall throughout this space is not a wall at all. A series of glass doors/panels will compose the wall and have the ability to slide open during events. This will be provided for acoustical reasons.
Design Development

Interior Street Perspective (Looking South)
Design Development

East Street Perspective (Looking North)

East Street Elevation
Elevations

The following elevations are located on New York Street, the northern edge of the site. This entrance is considered to be the main community connection. The material selection on the exterior facades is intended to be a dark local brick. A light Limestone is to be used for the base of the facility as well as between the window systems. The windows are to be operable with a dark forest green molding. This forest green is to also be used throughout as an accent color. The roof structure is to be a green standing seam metal roof.

On the exterior of the East Street elevation, there will be a series of low walls which will also act as a bench for pedestrians. These spaces will be located outside of the “serving” spaces and will have access from the interior corridor. The low walls are intended to reduce scale as well as create a series of informal gathering spaces along the streetscape.
Design Development
Design Development

Entry Exploration Model

Entry Exploration Model

Interior Corridor Exploration Model
After a year of research, investigation, schematic design, and design development, I am very pleased with my results. I feel that the overall experience I have had with this project was a positive one. I began with very strong feelings about community development within the urban atmosphere and after spending an entire year on the topic, I feel even stronger about them. I believe that for city living to continue, it must focus more on the development of communities. As my research has stated, human beings need community and without it, cities will not survive. The development of multi-use facilities would be a great stepping stone in this process of developing community within the urban environment.

I would encourage all individuals to research this topic in further depth by looking at some real life models. Europe for example is very successful at community development. Around every corner one can find a small tavern, bookstore, coffee shop, or some other form of public gathering. Though these places seem trivial and of little impact, their actual impact is immeasurable. I would encourage everyone interested in this topic to read Ray Oldenburg’s “The Great Good Place” and begin to form your own images and thoughts of community.


