THE FORUM
A MULTI-USE CENTER
LAFAYETTE, INDIANA

mark demerly  14 August 81
THE FORUM

The Forum, as subtitled, is a multi-use center, or as some have referred to it, a diverse-use center. Diverse, because the complex accommodates numerous facilities; retail, eating facilities, offices, housing, train station and a city hall. The basis of including all of these is to provide an active and vital center for a depressed midwest town. By providing a place for many and diverse groups of people interacting, will hopefully add a liveliness that presently is lost.

I should state that this project is a purely hypothetical one. This is a possible solution by myself in how to provide for the improvement of the downtown. A typical midwest downtown that is experiencing a depression due to the out flux of people to the suburban malls.

I feel that the way to bring these people back downtown, is to provide for a facility similar to the suburban malls that they escape to. Some of the key points for these malls success lies in their ability to provide a climate controlled facility, a completely enclosed shopping center, and by providing a one stop place to get everything. Basically, people today enjoy the convenience that these malls provide.

As I see it, diversification is the basis of these facilities, the inclusion of the department stores and small stores, the cafeteria and the food bar, along with the bank and cinema draws people there to use them. I want to utilize these same principles in the downtown, but with building types that respond to the existing building types around the site, as well as the space needs of the downtown area. A new city hall is one of these facilities that is drastically needed, and the adjacency of other governmental facilities, including the courthouse, to the site, makes it a key location for it.

Along with these indoor spaces, diverse outdoor facilities are also provided; an amphitheater, street side cafes and plazas where people can meet and participate in scheduled activities.

The key idea I have is that if you provide many activities, even the people that are not participating, will come to enjoy watching. People are what makes a downtown, or for that fact, any place, a great place to be or go to.
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RETAIL STORES

Consumer retail goods will be sold in these facilities. One large department store and a variety of speculative stores will comprise the function.

The department store will be occupied by a high quality merchandise store. This type of store is what is existing in the present downtown area, and would relate to the existing shopper as well as bringing in new shoppers. A exciting interior is wanted, but the easy future adaptation of the space due to changing needs is required.

The speculative shops will mainly be comprised of specialty shops and clothing shops. These speculative shops may vary in size, so a large retail space may be required for a women's clothing shop, while a small space is required for a card shop. Easy leasing of multi-bays is thus required to facilitate this need.

EATING ESTABLISHMENTS

These spaces are to provide a place to eat for workers in the facility, as well as surrounding downtown workers, and of course for the community people that come to the facility.

The four types of establishments projected are a restaurant that will seat 100 people, a cafeteria to seat 150 people, an eatery/market, and a cafe. A variety of atmospheres should be provided by them. The idea of market is one that should be thought of. This idea provides for a variety of daily eating experiences, something to satisfy anyone. The ability to purchase a sandwich, a piece of fruit, a chunk of bread, or a pastry delight.

CITY HALL

Almost all of the civic offices and departments will be housed in this new office space. By doing this, it will provide a more central, easier accessible, unified city hall for the community. The site also allows easier access and better contact to the other downtown governmental centers. The courthouse is located diagonally from the site and the county offices and federal offices are located within a block of the site. Primary spaces include: Financial, Administration, Planning, and Legislative facilities.
SPECULATIVE OFFICES

These should provide flexible open space for speculative renters of the space. The space may be divided into smaller sections or left as a large single space. It should be adaptable to either type or both. Though a large amount of office square footage is not presently in demand, the high volume draw of the retail section will create a high interest in leasing by certain firms. The fact that they are new will also add to this demand. The inclusion of office space will help to make the project economically feasible. This is important, considering the high percentage of general public space in the facility.

HOUSING

To help liven up the downtown and provide a new interest by the people in it, a small amount of apartments will be included. This will not be a new introduction in the downtown though. Some people presently live in the upper stories of the downtown as well as in old hotels existing there. The hope is that it will draw new people to the area, since the majority of the present occupants are elderly people. The communities interest in the housing is desired, but if this interest is not shown, the fact that Purdue University is only five minutes away would make it a desirable location for students also.

The apartments do not have to be of any large size, approximately 800 square feet, and an inclusion of different size units is preferred. The mixing of resident size is quite important. An additional need is that of a communal outdoor space, i.e. a courtyard or roof garden.

AMTRAK

This is a place that users of Amtrak can purchase tickets, board trains, wait for trains, and be provided with train information. The space will not always have people boarding trains, but will be open to provide information, sell train tickets, and receive and distribute small shipments that are coming off or going on the train. Since many of the people arriving are visitors, the other facilities in the building can act as a means to occupy people's time while waiting for someone. It will also act a promoter and introduction for Lafayette.
OUTDOOR PLAZAS

Outdoor activities encompass a wide range of present and future needs. The present activities needed are outdoor cafes, a water fountain, intimate and public meeting areas, and an amphitheater. These spaces should be able to accommodate both large and small groups.

The future projected need would be a plaza to exhibit art from the future neighboring art center. The art center would like to have the ability to use the amphitheater for lectures and presentations. These needs should be considered in the present design.

PARKING

A total of 530 paved parking spaces are to be provided on the site. The retail stores and restaurants require a total of 200 parking spaces. The city hall and speculative offices need 110 spaces, while the train station needs 20. An additional 200 parking spaces are needed on the site for the people that work in other downtown offices and businesses.

SERVICE

A dock is to be provided at a central receiving room for the unloading of food supplies and store goods. It should be located such that the trucks will not interfere in vehicular nor pedestrian traffic of the facility users. An interior service circulation should also be provided or some means planned for. This distribution and delivery of food and goods to the different areas, should occur without intrusion upon pedestrian traffic.

SECURITY

Due to the diverse times the building is used by different tenants (see charts), proper security measures must be provided. The proper protection for those areas not being used must be made to prevent intrusion into them. This security need should not be totally dependent on security guards and monitoring equipment, but be reflected in the building design. At least one easy and independent access should be provided for each building use zone (i.e. restaurant, offices, train station, housing).
## SPACE SUMMARY

### RETAIL STORES
- **DEPARTMENT STORE**: 90,000 SQ. FT.
- **SPECULATIVE RETAIL SPACES**: 20,000

**SUBTOTAL**: 110,000

### FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS
- **TABLE SERVICE RESTAURANTS**: 4,500
- **CAFETERIA**: 4,600
- **EATERIES**: 1,800
- **MARKET**: 1,500
- **CAFE (indoor)**: 600
- **COMMUNAL INDOOR EATING SPACE**: 1,680

**SUBTOTAL**: 37,000

### OFFICE SPACES
- **LAFAYETTE CITY HALL**: 16,000
- **FACILITY OFFICE**: 1,000
- **SPECULATIVE OFFICES**: 20,000

**SUBTOTAL**: 37,000

### HOUSING
- **18 APARTMENT UNITS**: 14,400

### RAILWAY STATION
- **AMTRAK STATION (excluding rail platforms)**: 1,650

### GENERAL PUBLIC SPACES
- **MAIN PUBLIC GATHERING AREA (indoor)**: 5,000

**NET TOTAL**: 157,930 SQ. FT.

**GROSS TOTAL (NET + 40%)**: 221,100 SQ. FT.
**BUILDING USE**

City hall
Speculative offices
Retail stores
Cateries/market
Cafeteria
Restaurant
Housing
Amtrak
Building security
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- city hall
- speculative offices
- retail stores
- eateries/market
- cafeteria
- restaurant
- housing
- amtrak
- building security
SITE ANALYSIS

LOCATION

The proposed facility is located in the downtown central business district of Lafayette, Indiana. The site, located across from the county courthouse, is bordered on the south by Main street, on the east side by 3rd street and continues on westward to the banks of the Wabash River. It's northern border occurs 200 feet south of Brown Street, which is the location of the south edge of a lumber yard.

MAJOR SITE STRUCTURES AND PATHS

There are three major structures on the site. The largest one is located at the corner of 3rd and Main, and is in disrepair and of no historical significance. The second largest building is located mid-way down the 3rd street boundary. The building is in fair condition, and is presently being occupied by a service garage. The third building is on the south edge, close to the riverfront. The present occupant is a small restaurant establishment. This building, building style wise, does not fit into the downtown building context. It would look much better along side of a food strip establishment.

There is a street that enters the site on the east side and exits on the south side. The street is not of major use, and it facilitates two way traffic. Along with the street, there is another transportation route that exist adjacent to the site. It is the newly relocated train tracks that carries all downtown railway traffic, as well as regional traffic. The railroad corridor will also be used by the existing Amtrak service that goes through town.
concepts
There are two major routes of pedestrian traffic that go by the site. There is the pedestrian traffic from the existing downtown area. People shopping in the area and employees from businesses and offices in the central business district. These are also people utilizing the county and federal office buildings located downtown.

The second route is a new one that has been formed due to the abandonment of the main street bridge. Its abandonment was due to the construction of the railroad corridor along the river. It has been replaced by another new bridge to handle the vehicular traffic and this one, which is still in excellent shape, is being used by pedestrian traffic from across the river. The majority of the traffic are students from Purdue University, which is located across the river in West Lafayette. Additional traffic is made up of shoppers coming from the shopping plaza across the river and residents of the West Lafayette community. This bridge also has a strong possibility of being the site of a weekly flea market or of being used as a place for community activities. These activities would produce more traffic on the bridge and onto the site.
Both routes are located along the south side of the site, but from opposite directions. Since the positioning of the outdoor activities should respond to pedestrian's traffic patterns, the south side was chosen for location of these spaces. As well as responding to the people, this placement also allows direct sunlight into the spaces. A strong desire for where people will be. People, primarily, do not like dark spaces.

After deciding on the general placement of the public outdoor spaces, a more specific location was needed. I could place it on the south east side of the site, which would be diagonally across from the county courthouse and its square. This sitting had two draw backs. For one it would be located on third street which is a major south bound street through downtown, and thus produces alot of traffic noise. The other reason, which is supported by Camilo Sitte's ideas on urban spaces, is that plazas or exterior spaces should not open onto each other. This can lead to the possible destruction of both spaces, or at least the weakening of their strength. Spaces can be adjacent to each other if they are some how seperated from each other, such as a wall or building with a gateway, or even by a colonade. This latter fact will be utilized later in the design of the outdoor space.

Taking these factors into consideration, I chose to locate the outdoor space, instead, in the middle of the south side of the site. This placement will also allow for a greater direct relationship between the this space and the interior spaces. By placing it in the middle, the interior spaces can be arranged around it.

The two pedestrian paths, while entering the site from opposite directions, also enter at different levels. Since the West Lafayette based pedestrians are entering the site by means of the abandoned main street bridge, which is at a +18 foot elevation then the site elevation. As well as this existing bridge deck elevation, the problem of bridging over the railroad corridor must also be made before entering the site.

I decided to utilize this elevation change and create two different plazas on the south side. The upper plaza can also be used by the future neighboring art center as well as by the proposed complex.
The basic concept for the outdoor spaces, therefore, is the dumbbell plan, where the road that intersects the site also separate the two plazas which are at different elevations. These plazas will have direct contact to the indoor spaces at each level, and the main entry at each level will be off these spaces.
BUILDING

The main spaces in the building are broken down into three basic categories; retail stores, eating facilities and the city hall. Due to the determination of the outdoor plazas being centrally located, I decided to wrap the building around them. This produced more direct contact to the plazas, it closed the plaza space in from the noisy traffic generated from the street east of the site, and by best utilizing the remainder of the site not occupied by the outdoor plaza.

I should add at this point that it may seem that I am putting more emphasis onto the outdoor space than on the building itself. But I feel that a strong outdoor space in the downtown is drastically needed. Most of the existing outdoor spaces occupy small, dark, demolished building areas, which are seldom used. They are simply left over spaces with no use. So I feel that the plazas should be best placed to accommodate their needs, instead of a plaza that becomes a left over space on the site and design.

Considering the importance of the outdoor space, I started organizing the interior functions. Since I wanted to surround the plaza, I placed the retail spaces in a large 'U'-shaped configuration. By doing this I was able to provide a direct pedestrian street
access to most of the stores at both the east and west pedestrian paths. The east side is adjacent to the existing downtown retail center, so a continuation of this existing retail shopper's path is very important. Easier identification of the presence of this new retail could be directly made if these stores were oriented towards shopping area surrounding the courthouse square.

The eating establishments were then zoned within the U-shaped retail band. This allows direct access to the eating areas from all of the retail, but more importantly, this allows direct access to the outdoor plazas. This is quite important, in that the eating activity could occur either on the inside or the outside. The climate is most pleasing the majority of the year, so sidewalk cafes would not be out of the question.

The third function, the city hall, is the most unique of all of the spaces in the facility. Though there is a strong connection between the courthouse and the city hall, a strong relationship with the retail or eating establishment does not exist. It's qualification for inclusion in the building is to provide a facility that will accommodate the communities needs, government needs and market/retail needs.

The strongest connection that the city hall has with any one space would be the outdoor plaza. The plazas act as a foreground for the city hall, a formal entrance into it. As well as the plaza helping the city hall the city hall can act as a strong backdrop for the plazas. The city hall can also act as a bridge between the two plazas, which are at different levels and separated by the road that intersects the site and the plazas.

Taking this analysis into consideration, I chose to locate the city hall in the center of the complex. As well as doing the things previously mentioned, the city hall is also allowed direct access to the street that goes through the site. This is important due to the need to pay bills and taxes. A direct and separate entrance, therefore, is required.

The city hall's uniqueness also lead to the decision of skewing it's placement against the rest of the facility. The city hall is rotated such that the front is oriented towards the courthouse. This reinforces the relationship between them, as well as signifying the difference between the city hall and the other spaces in the building.
The placement of parking was decided after the decision of where to place the building. Since the building occupies the south part of the site, the parking was located on the north part of the lot. Though this is the only place to put it, it is also the best. The building can act as a wall that will hide and alleviate the impact of the large parking required. It is also removed from the pedestrian spaces, thus eliminating the intersection of their paths.

Due to the amount of parking required, a certain amount of two level or more parking is needed. Since the plazas are at two levels, the building will also be at least two stories to respond to this level change. So by locating the leveled parking directly north of the building, entrance into the building at the second level is provided. The only problem with this solution is that the street that cuts through the site would also cut through the parking structure. I dissolved this problem by repositioning the street on the site. I kept the location the street has at the south side, but changed it on the east side. Instead of letting it exit at its present east location, I ran the street diagonally through the north part of the site, parallel to the railroad corridor, and let it exit at the next street north of the present street. This will allow direct access into the building with out crossing the street, as well as providing the second level entrance. The street east of the site that ran into the site, can now be used to acquire entrance into the parking structure.
CIRCULATION

The interior circulation is in the same U-shaped configuration that the retail spaces take on. This circulation path runs between the retail spaces and the eating establishments. This allows easy access to both zones. The entrance to this circulation spine is directly off the plazas, allowing easy penetration into the building, which allows easy penetration into the building.

Along the north side of the circulation spine, the street intersects it at its mid-point. The city hall also ties into the facility at this point, and the entrance from the parking structure can also occur at this point. Since so many paths intersect at this point and it is centrally located, I decided to use this as the location for the central and main vertical circulation core. As well as being a circulation core, it will be the location for the central mechanical plant and the location of the facility's restrooms.

A service corridor for the goods entering the facility also follows the circulation spine, but at a below grade level. The goods enter the building at the rear of the building at a lower elevation than the site level.
Along with this receiving dock being at a lower level, it is also located on the opposite side of the street than the majority of the facility. By the docks lower grade, a tunnel can pass under the street, allowing goods to be distributed through the service corridor.

docks lower grade, a tunnel can pass under the street, and allow goods to be distributed directly by means of the below grade service corridor. This separation of pedestrian and goods traffic eliminates a lot of the confusion and distraction that the goods entering can produce.

MECHANICAL

The mechanical system utilizes a central heating and cooling plant located in the central core of the building. The chilled water and hot water are distributed to individual exchange units for each space. The main route for the distribution of these lines would be located in the service corridors located at the below grade level. Since the corridor runs centrally between all the spaces, a short and direct route is accessible to all the spaces.
drawings
LOOKING WEST ON MAIN STREET TOWARDS THE FORUM, WITH THE ARCADE IN THE FOREGROUND

VIEW OF NORTH SIDE OF THE COMPLEX FROM ACROSS THE RIVER