

# Research

open  
standard

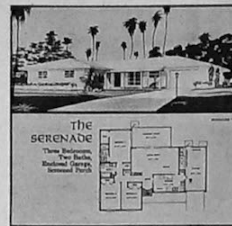
## Homes for America

D. GRAHAM

Belleplain  
Brooklawn  
Colonia  
Colonia Manor  
Fair Haven  
Fair Lawn  
Greenfield Village  
Plainsboro  
Pleasant Grove  
Pleasant Plains  
Sunset Hill Garden

Garden City  
Garden City Park  
Greenlawn  
Island Park  
Levittown  
Middleville  
New City Park  
Pine Lawn  
Plainview  
Plandome Manor  
Pleasantville

Large-scale 'tract' housing 'developments' constitute the new city. They are located everywhere. They are not particularly bound to existing communities; they fail to develop either regional characteristics or separate identity. These projects date from the end of World War II when in southern California speculators or 'operative' builders adapted mass production techniques to quickly build many houses for the defense workers over-concentrated there. This 'California Method' consisted simply of determining in advance the exact amount and lengths of pieces of lumber and multiplying them by the number of standardized houses to be built. A cutting yard was set up near the site of the project to saw rough lumber into those sizes. By mass buying, greater use of machines and factory produced parts, assembly line standardization, multiple units were easily fabricated.



"The Serenade" Cape Coral unit, Fla.

Each house in a development is a lightly constructed 'shell' although this fact is often concealed by fake (half-stone) brick walls. Shells can be added or subtracted easily. The standard unit is a box or a series of boxes, sometimes contemptuously called 'pillboxes'. When the box has a sharply oblique roof it is called a Cape Cod. When it is longer than wide it is a 'ranch'. A



Set-back, Jersey City, New Jersey

The logic relating each sectioned part to the entire plan follows a systematic plan. A development contains a limited, set number of house models. For instance, Cape Coral, a Florida project, advertises eight different models.

- A The Sonata
- B The Concerto
- C The Overture
- D The Ballet
- E The Prelude
- F The Serenade
- G The Nocturne
- H The Rhapsody



Two entrance doorways, 'The Newell House', Jersey City, N.J.



Center Court, Colmanwood Development, Jersey City, N.J.

two-story house is usually called 'colonial'. If it consists of contiguous boxes with one slightly higher elevation it is a 'split level'. Such stylistic differentiation is advantageous to the basic structure (with the possible exception of the split level whose plan simplifies construction on discontinuous ground levels).

There is a recent trend toward 'two home homes' which are two boxes split by adjoining walls and having separate entrances. The left and right hand units are mirror reproductions of each other. Often sold as private units are strings of apartment-like, quasi-discrete cells formed by subdividing laterally an extended rectangular parallelepiped into as many as ten or twelve separate dwellings.

Developers usually build large groups of individual homes sharing similar floor plans and whose overall grouping possesses a discrete flow plan. Regional shopping centers and industrial parks are sometimes integrated as well into the general scheme. Each development is sectioned into blocked-out areas containing a series of identical or sequentially related types of houses all of which have uniform or staggered set-backs and land plots.

In addition, there is a choice of eight exterior colors:

- 1 White
- 2 Moonstone Grey
- 3 Nickel



LAWN GREEN

- 4 Seafoam Green
- 5 Lawn Green
- 6 Bamboo
- 7 Coral Pink
- 8 Colonial Red

As the color series usually varies independently of the model series, a block of eight houses utilizing four models and four colors might have forty-eight times forty-eight or 2,304 possible arrangements.



Housing Development, rear view, Bayonne, New Jersey



Housing Development, front view, Bayonne, New Jersey

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### Big Form — Small Grain Constellations and Aggregations for Future Living

In the first phase of the semester project we are investigating existing housing projects in view of their performative qualities and typological configurations. Divided into 4 categories (slab, cluster, table, terrace) the relationship between s and xl, between the parts and the whole is analyzed through specific observations based on references from the past as well as from the contemporary context. While the emphasis is put on how apartment units are specifically designed for certain users, how the units are assembled and how the whole complex creates an urban form within a given context we should already project how far these aspects can be translated to the semester project.

As we also would like to reflect the standardization of architectural production our attention will also be directed towards the building details. How do certain elements create a specific quality (openness, flexibility, aesthetic quality, etc.)? How is the building detail related to specific life-styles or modes of everyday live? How can we achieve low-cost construction while still creating a 'plus', something that goes beyond the banal or the trivial? How do certain detail solutions lead to a kind of de-standardization of housing production?

The main goal of the research phase is to create narratives for the existing that would then inform and inspire the design process. Besides the common tools of research and analysis (descriptive texts, image documentation, drawings and diagrams illustrating the design ideas) we would also like to experiment with more poetic or lyrical types of re-descriptions in text and model. Even though the research part forms an independent work, it serves also as the starting point of a design process that will continuously establish a dialogue between the findings of the research exercise.

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	DESIGN	RESEARCH	PIV Bauökonomie
OCT		09/ Presentation Program 10/ Hand-out Aufgabe Null 13/ Hand-in Aufgabe Null	
		19/ Intro Master Studio	
	CONFIGURATION Concept Phase	26/ Desk-crits	25/ PIV Lecture 15 – 16pm A201a
NOV			01/ PIV Lecture
	Design Phase 1	02/ Hand-in Research Hand-out Design Task	15/ PIV Lecture
		23/ Desk Crits	22/ PIV Lecture
		24/ Input lecture Ringvorlesung	
		30/ Midterms 1	29/ PIV Lecture
DEC	AGGREGATION Design Phase 2		06/ PIV Lecture
		07/ Desk Crits	
			13/ PIV Lecture
JAN			
		04/ Desk Crits	
		11/ Midterm 2	
			13/ PIV Hand-in
	PRESENTATION Design Phase 3	25/ Desk Crits	
FEB			
		01/ Layout Check	
		08/ Final Presentation	
		15/ Hand-in Booklet	

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### HAND OUT

OCTOBER 19, 2pm

A606

- Assignment
- Reference project
- Templates

### DESK-CRITS

OCTOBER 26

- Determination of the specific features and the conceptual model

### RESEARCH PRESENTATION

DECEMBER 2 — 2pm, Halle 7 (to be confirmed)

### HAND-IN

- Typological analysis according to the templates
- Conceptual model (scale and technique determined during the desk-crits)

### ASSIGNMENT

Investigate the selected reference project according to the research categories (see following page). The descriptive text of the research should be accompanied by additional drawings, diagrams and images. Axonometric drawings of the reference project have to be elaborated according to the given templates.

### ADDITIONAL COMMENT

The exercise is understood as applied research for the design project and should be based on specific observations creating a narrative for the project. The narrative serves as a starting point and dialogue for the design process and should therefore already focus on the elements that will be elaborated in detail for the semester project.

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Research on the reference projects will follow 4 categories:  
context—units/users—features—configuration/aggregation  
For each category InDesign A2 templates are provided that  
address the important questions for each topic.

### CONTEXTUAL/HISTORIC

With the contextual research the historic as well as the  
physical context is investigated. It includes the evolution  
of the given reference, the (social, political, economic)  
conditions under which it was developed, but also the  
immediate context where it is placed.

### UNITS/USERS

The research on the units/users serves for an investigation  
on the living models behind the given spaces. What kind of  
profiles fit within these standards? What is the relationship  
between private and collective?

### FEATURES

Under this rubrique specific elements will be analyzed  
regardaring their performative qualities. Which elements  
determine the characteristics of the project and give them  
extra qualities beyond the ordinary standard?

### CONFIGURATION/AGGREGATION

With the help of axonometric drawings the composition  
of the parts and the whole is shown. While configuration  
addresses the internal spatial and programmatic  
constellation, aggregation referes to the overall context an  
the performanace of the project with a given public space.