

MoMA

MoMA PS1

FORECLOSED: REHOUSING THE AMERICAN DREAM PROPOSES INFRASTRUCTURE CHANGE FOR AMERICAN CITIES AND SUBURBS

MoMA Exhibition Sets Out to Address National Foreclosure Emergency and Rethink Architectural Possibilities

Foreclosed: Rehousing the American Dream

February 15–August 13, 2012

The Robert Menschel Architecture and Design Gallery, third floor

Press Preview: Monday, February 13, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

NEW YORK, February 2, 2012—*Foreclosed: Rehousing the American Dream*, a major initiative to examine new architectural possibilities for American cities and suburbs in the context of the recent foreclosure crisis in the United States, culminates in an exhibition at The Museum of Modern Art from February 15 through August 13, 2012. *Foreclosed: Rehousing the American Dream* was jointly conceived and organized by Barry Bergdoll, MoMA's Philip Johnson Chief Curator of Architecture and Design, and Reinhold Martin, Director of Columbia University's Temple Hoyne Buell Center for the Study of American Architecture. Bergdoll and Martin invited five interdisciplinary teams of architects—including members with expertise in economics, finance, housing, and public policy, in addition to architect team leaders—to develop proposals that offer new and inventive ways of thinking about the relationships among land, housing, infrastructure, urban form, and public spaces, for five sites across the country—near New York; Chicago; Tampa; Los Angeles; and Portland, Oregon—located in metropolitan areas that lie within a corridor between two major cities.

The five sites chosen have characteristics that make them particularly pertinent to nationwide challenges associated with the international financial downturn, including a significant rate of foreclosure, and a considerable amount of publicly held land available for development. The teams developed proposals based on the ideas drawn from *The Buell Hypothesis*, a research publication (available at www.buellcenter.org and summarized in the publication accompanying the exhibition) by Mr. Martin, and Leah Meisterlin and Anna Kenoff of the Temple Hoyne Buell Center, which envisions a rethinking of housing and related infrastructures that could catalyze urban transformation, particularly in the American suburbs. The resultant proposals are not a set of blueprints for the development of specific places so much as an array of visions that invite rethinking the physical and financial architecture of living, working, and commuting in the extended suburbs.

"MoMA has always aspired to be a showcase for the most significant and creative architecture and design work being done today...but there are times when it can also take the lead to serve as a catalyst to invite architects and designers to work in new ways on the most pressing issues of our times," says Mr. Bergdoll. "Often these challenges are not posed by everyday

commissions. *Foreclosed: Rehousing the American Dream* invited new dialogues between the disciplines that shape our environments in suburbs and cities, as well as between the financial and physical architectures of housing, transport, and daily life. Questioning outdated assumptions, the designs in turn invite new discussions about a territory too often ignored by the design professions and too often leapfrogged by developers—the first ring suburbs of major cities. These projects suggest more sustainable, more equitable, futures, filled with optimism for places where that is often in short supply."

"The foreclosure crisis revealed a crisis of the imagination that has delayed an urgently needed conversation about the default settings of the 'American Dream' and its most visible symbol, the suburban house. These projects can help start such a conversation," continues Mr. Martin.

The five interdisciplinary teams of architects—led by principals at MOS Architects, Studio Gang, WORKac, Visible Weather, and Zago Architecture—were each assigned a site within a U.S. megaregion, then developed proposals to address the issue of foreclosure in each area during the initiative's workshop phase at MoMA PS1 from May to September 2011. Each team engaged in a cross-disciplinary conversation, analyzing and eventually imagining the redesign of their specific sites, from older east coast suburbs with rail connections to newer subdivisions accessible only by highway. During this initial phase, they discussed their projects with the public in a series of open studios. To follow the progress of proposals developed through the workshop phase, visit [MoMA's Inside/Out](#) blog.

In the early weeks of the workshop phase, the teams spent time in their assigned megaregions—visiting potential sites for intervention, meeting with local residents and officials, and considering what type of architectural program would respond to the local needs and realities of the existing population. As a result, the proposals developed for the five sites provide radically different visions of a rethought suburbia. The proposal for Cicero, Illinois, responds to the need of multigenerational housing for new immigrants, while the proposal for Temple Terrace, Florida, calls for a new financial structure that transfers ownership of land from private developers back to the taxpayers, and proposes a reconvening of the town meeting as a forum. The proposal for East Orange, New Jersey, suggests transforming public streets into new mixed-use ribbon buildings. The proposal for Keizer, Oregon, seeks to increase the density of the city in an effort to ultimately increase the public's access to nature, while the proposal for Rialto, California, adds variety to the existing identical large-scale housing system.

At the center of the exhibition are models, drawings, renderings, animations, and analytical materials produced by the five teams developed during the workshop period. In addition, the research presented in *The Buell Hypothesis* will be shown with contextual material in the gallery as background to the proposal.

Foreclosed: Rehousing the American Dream Proposals:

Cicero, Illinois

The Garden in the Machine

Team Leader: Jeanne Gang, Gang Studio (Chicago, Illinois)

Cicero, an aging inner-ring suburb set on the edge of metropolitan Chicago, has lately become an arrival point for new immigrants to the region. Built for a previous generation, the original single-family houses have often been repurposed as multifamily dwellings by more recent residents. Presently Cicero is experiencing a high rate of foreclosure of industrial as well as residential properties, which has prompted the team led by Jeanne Gang of Studio Gang to develop a proposal with a distinctive feature that concerns the dialogue between architecture and both human and natural ecologies, interweaving a response to both situations.

The team identified three challenges affecting Cicero, common to a majority of suburbs: industrial decline, rising unemployment coupled with high poverty rates, and environmental conditions. The team turns these problems into potential opportunities by taking on both the urban fabric of the town and the financial architecture of living and working there. The team set out to create new housing types that are generally prohibited under the existing zoning codes. The proposal introduces a new kind of "Recombinant House," enabling flexibility for multigenerational families. This type of housing would be affordable, allowing people to buy housing units that suit the needs of families as they change. Under this new model of ownership, residents would own their individual spaces, but the land and shared amenities would be owned by a private trust—decoupling the previous notion that ownership is a home and the land beneath it. By creating modular housing prototypes that are able to mix families and generations, are adaptable to changing needs and budgets, offer communal spaces shared by families, and develop work spaces that allow for businesses, the team has created a solution that is both specific to Cicero and applicable elsewhere.

Keizer, Oregon

Nature-City

Team Leader: Amale Andraos and Dan Wood, WORKac (New York, New York)

Reinventing British urbanist Ebenezer Howard's classic term "Town-Country," WORKac's proposal *Nature City* integrates a wide variety of housing types—across a range of affordability—with publicly accessible nature, including ecological infrastructure, sky gardens, urban farms, and large swaths of restored native habitats. Bringing a higher density and more sustainable living to the metropolitan edge, where the greatest development pressures have long existed, the proposal also provides larger economic growth for the city and the site.

The proposal for *Nature City*, focusing on Keizer, Oregon, a suburb of Portland that lies on a possible high-speed rail connection between Eugene, Oregon, and Seattle, Washington, includes an impressive variety of housing types that offer vital services for the town as a whole. A wide range of ecological functions make a city infrastructure that promotes sustainable living as a shared individual and communal undertaking, and also generates new living experiences and new kinds of public spaces from its various components. One such example of this is the creation of a rounded, ziggurat-like housing complex, which provides terraces with yards and community amenities built atop a domed plant. The plant would process organic waste into compost, creating methane gas that runs a fuel cell providing electricity for the community. Commercial offices and retail spaces are intermixed and combined with public transportation, facilitating a pedestrian lifestyle. In *Nature City* the housing would offer various financial options: half rentals and half ownership, a percentage of affordable housing, and 70 percent market-rate housing. This radical new vision of suburban living combines the density generally associated with large cities with a direct connection to nature, not only as a vista, but for recreation and as a mechanism for ecological infrastructure as well.

Orange, New Jersey

Thoughts on a Walking City

Team Leaders: Hilary Sample and Michael Meredith, MOS Architects (New York, New York)

Despite being well served by a regional transit system that includes both trains and buses, there is still a significant rate of foreclosure and a high rate of unemployment in Orange, a suburb of individual bungalows and single-family structures between New York City and Newark, New Jersey. An in-depth analysis of the suburb has sparked MOS Architects and their team to create a proposal suggesting a new form of urbanism and architectural occupation of the street. The proposal considers aspects of municipal budget and infrastructure, public health, and new models of ownership to promote flexibility and diversity—a range of issues that extends far beyond those generally considered in isolated development plans.

Their proposal calls for the radical gesture of eliminating many of the public streets that make up Orange and replacing them with three-story structures that offer a mixture of commercial, office, and residential spaces, the latter including different apartment types that might be used for a variety of live/work situations. The new ribbons of buildings, rewriting both the physical and social space of the city's center, would be developed as public housing. These street-converted linear buildings, owned by a Limited Equity Company, are intended to reduce tax burden on an economically challenged city and to redevelop the street as a new economic engine. The proposal developed by MOS creates a rich variety of spaces and relationships incorporated around both the existing single-family houses and the new ribbon development.

Rialto, California

Property with Properties

Team Leader: Andrew Zago, Zago Architecture (Los Angeles, California)

Rialto—falling between Los Angeles, California, and Las Vegas, Nevada—has a long history as a nodal point in Southern California's "Inland Empire," once a heartland of agribusiness and now one of the largest metropolitan regions in the country. *Property with Properties*, the proposal created by the team led by Andrew Zago of Zago Architecture, has chosen Rosena Ranch, a failed developer subdivision on the unincorporated edge of Rialto that has left acres of unbuilt lots among a small section of nearly identical large-scale houses, as the focus of their analysis.

Although the landscape is vast, the failed subdivision contains houses whose square footage is inflated to the point where they seem almost to rub against one another, creating a narrow range of housing options. The team's proposal looks to create a richer mix of uses, housing types, living situations, and landscapes, rather than to remake the unbuilt section of Rosena Ranch. It looks to understand the attraction of suburbs—including their social, economic, and spatial arrangements—and creates a new form of architecture and suburbanism from that pre-existing notion. New housing configurations move away from the serial repetition of an individual home with a driveway and a patch of lawn to variations of housing, including duplexes and row houses, creating a novel way of achieving the classic suburban goal of merging indoors and outdoors. The planning of the larger site would include narrowing streets to make them more circuitous and overlaying paths for pedestrian movement across the site. Rather than manipulate the natural characteristics of the site, Rosena Ranch would be developed to allow for seasonal rivers and wildlife to move in and through the suburb in natural channels. *Property with Properties* produces a wide range of possibilities for new mixtures of living, retail, and amenities in a previously repetitive suburb.

Temple Terrace, Florida

Simultaneous City

Team Leader: Michael Bell, Visible Weather (New York, New York)

Temple Terrace—a suburb transformed in the 1920s into a hybrid incorporated city and corporate orange grove—has recently tried to adopt a plan to redevelop 225 acres of land centered on a major intersection in an attempt to create a new "downtown" area. Led by Michael Bell of Visible Weather, the team assigned to Temple Terrace proposes to create a new linear town center, based, not on

the originally proposed intersection, but on a hypothetical commercial strip of land running parallel to Tampa, resulting in a new mixed-use development, which would integrate spaces for city government, municipally owned “incubator” offices for business startups, and three different forms of housing. This proposal would call for a return of the “town meeting” by creating an invisible city hall at the heart of a mixed-use community, and allowing daily life to be easily led without recourse to cars.

Replacing the original development plan that utilized public/private partnership, the team proposes the creation of a Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT), a tax designation for an entity investing in real estate, designed to reduce or eliminate corporate tax and distribute the taxable income into the hands of investors. Differing from typical REITs, the REIT for *Simultaneous City* would propose that the land remain a public asset and the income derived from the development would be shared with the citizens. The proposal for *Simultaneous City* parallels the existing geographical infrastructure of Temple Terrace while at the same time offering a new layer of financial, structural, and environmental engineering.

FUNDING:

The exhibition is made possible by The Rockefeller Foundation. This is the second exhibition in the series *Issues in Contemporary Architecture*, supported by Andre Singer.

The accompanying workshops are made possible by MoMA’s Wallis Annenberg Fund for Innovation in Contemporary Art through the Annenberg Foundation.

Additional support for the publication is provided by The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation.

ISSUES IN CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE SERIES:

Foreclosed is the second in a series of Architecture and Design exhibitions at MoMA called *Issues in Contemporary Architecture*, which focuses on timely topics in contemporary architecture with an emphasis on the urban dimension in order to increase public dialogue around seminal issues in architecture. The series was launched in 2009 with [Rising Currents: Projects for New York’s Waterfront](#), a major initiative that brought together teams of architects, engineers, and landscape designers to address and create infrastructure solutions to make New York City more resilient in response to rising water levels.

PUBLICATION:

The accompanying publication *Foreclosed: Rehousing the American Dream* is forthcoming in April 2012. The publication will present each of the five proposals in detail through photographs, drawings, and renderings as well as interviews with team leaders. Featuring texts by Barry Bergdoll, MoMA’s Philip Johnson Chief Curator of Architecture and Design; Henry N. Cobb, a founding partner of Pei Cobb Freed & Partners; and Reinhold Martin, director of the Temple Hoyne Buell Center, *Foreclosed* will examine the relationship between land, infrastructure, and urban form, exploring potential futures for America’s extended metropolises. 8 x 10”, 188 pages, 170 illustrations. Paperback, \$35.00. Available in April at the MoMA Stores and online at [MoMAStore.org](#). Available to the trade through ARTBOOK | D.A.P in the United States and Canada, and through Thames & Hudson outside North America.

EXHIBITION WEBSITE:

A dedicated website will be launched on February 14, 2012. The website will include a blog with guest contributors; project overviews with model photographs, renderings, and animations; archived videos of open studio and public programs; and filmed interviews with team leaders, narrating the process and ideas behind their finished proposals. [MoMA.org/foreclosed](#)

MoMA’S INSIDE/OUT BLOG:

Throughout the workshop phase of *Foreclosed: Rehousing the American Dream*, the organizers of the exhibition, members from the five architect teams, and industry professionals contributed blog posts providing insight and tracking the *Foreclosed* initiative. To follow the progress of the teams and the proposals developed through the workshop phase, visit MoMA’s Inside/Out blog.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS:

"Public Dreams and Private Needs" Symposium

Friday, February 17, 2012, 12:00–5:00 p.m.

Theater 3 (The Celeste Bartos Theater), mezzanine, The Lewis B. and Dorothy Cullman Education and Research Building

In this first part of a two-day symposium organized with the Buell Center at Columbia University, the leaders of the five multidisciplinary teams working on projects for the exhibition *Foreclosed: Rehousing the American Dream* share their final proposals for housing and related infrastructures that could catalyze urban transformation, and discuss the principal issues they grappled with throughout the workshop phase and their residencies at MoMA PS1. Experts in fields beyond architecture join the team leaders in discussion.

"What is Foreclosed? Housing, Suburbanization, and Crisis: A Forum"

Saturday, February 18, 2012, 10:00–6:00 p.m.

Rotunda, Low Memorial Library, Columbia University in the City of New York

The forum will use the five projects featured in *Foreclosed: Rehousing the American Dream* as a point of departure to explore issues engaged by architecture and urbanism when considered in a cultural, political, and economic context.

Additional programs will be planned with partner organizations. Event updates will be announced on the exhibition website or visit MoMA.org/talks.

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Press Contact:

Sarah Jarvis, (212) 708-9757, sarah_jarvis@moma.org

Margaret Doyle, (212) 408-6400, margaret_doyle@moma.org

For downloadable high-resolution images, register at MoMA.org/press.

Public Information:

The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, NY 10019, (212) 708-9400, MoMA.org

Hours: Wednesday through Monday, 10:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m. Friday, 10:30 a.m.–8:00 p.m. Closed Tuesday

Museum Admission: \$25 adults; \$18 seniors, 65 years and over with I.D.; \$14 full-time students with current I.D. Free, members and children 16 and under. (Includes admittance to Museum galleries and film programs).

MoMA.org: \$22.50 adults; \$16 seniors, 65 years and over with I.D.; \$12 full-time students with current I.D. *No service charge for tickets ordered on MoMA.org. Tickets purchased online may be printed out and presented at the Museum without waiting in line.* (Includes admittance to Museum galleries and film programs).

Film Admission : \$12 adults; \$10 seniors, 65 years and over with I.D.; \$8 full-time students with current I.D. (for admittance to film programs only)

[MoMA/MoMA PS1 Blog](#), [MoMA on Facebook](#), [MoMA on Twitter](#), [MoMA on YouTube](#), [MoMA on Flickr](#)