Who Really Designs Housing?

This housing seminar will review the differences between the approaches of 3 housing client types: for-profit developers, non-profit developers, and universities. Housing developments designed by the instructor will be examined to demonstrate how the client’s values and funding strategies impact the design of the final physical products. The case studies will include market-rate developments, affordable housing and student housing. In addition to clients and their funding sources, the course will also examine the secret, and not-so-secret, design roles of regulatory agencies, elected officials, community organizations, market analysts, property management companies and maintenance staff. A sub-theme of the course will examine why the specialized purpose of developers and their funding sources (market rate, affordable, seniors, students, etc) reinforces demographic separation in our larger society.

ASSIGNMENT 1. Working in pairs, students will research community development examples in the US and other developed countries which conscientiously seek to integrate incomes, ages and uses into the same neighborhoods. Emphasis will be placed on not only the characteristics of the designs, but on what institutional and funding innovations were in place to make the outcomes so socially and economically diverse.

ASSIGNMENT 2. Working in pairs, students will research community development examples as in Assignment 1 but this time in developing countries. which conscientiously seek to integrate incomes, ages and uses into the same neighborhoods. Emphasis will be placed not only on the characteristics of the designs, but on what institutional and funding innovations were in place to make the outcomes so socially and economically diverse.