

# **Comprehensive Project Letters to Students**

**Vol No. 4 - Nov. 1999**

**from Jerry**

LA 490 Comp Prep  
Nov. 99  
Jerome Diethelm

## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

Name: A. N. C.

Title: Remaking the Made Landscape: Finding the Story in Bingen Point Marina

Comments:

A:

I think you are definitely on the scent of the comprehensive (an elusive beast) and the title: Remaking the Made Landscape of Bingen Point Marina seems right on target to me. The Marina landscape has been made and remade and with this development plan is being made again. There are a series and an overlaying of important stories (not just one) that make up this site. You point this out in your discussion. Story is a lovely metaphor for our "reading" of each of the many layers of transformation. Your remaking is the next layer, the next chapter, so to speak, one that has as an important part of its intent the revealing and expression of this riverfront palimpsest as an important part of its identity.

The building square footage, numbers of parking spaces, circulation system and kinds of uses included in the proposed layout provides you with an economic program and one version, not a very good one, of how it might be spatially located and patterned on the site. After looking at it, I agree with you that it needs a critical evaluation, and I would agree with you that a redesign of the overall site plan is a necessity. I don't imagine that that's a high priority for the people you've been working for, but that's what separates their present mediocre plan from the more profound piece of design work you're proposing to undertake. This is more ambitious than I thought you were earlier considering, but a much better, more interesting and challenging project. Your conception is getting richer and richer.

How to go about this. What will the end products be?

My first inclination is to dump all the proposed "pieces" off the site and start all over again with the existing program, making the assumption that more two story buildings would be possible and desirable. That one change would unplug the place and reduce the unpleasant sprawl and parking lot reality of the pleasant plan. I'm sure you could do a better circulation scheme than the awkward one I'm looking at.

But if we follow your ideas more faithfully, that strategy might not respond enough to the possibility that the base you will try to put the economically driven pieces on may itself need some remaking in order to better re-present its complex and interesting story and express its layered identity. That suggests a mapping of the stages of change as best you can, an assessment of what physical structure the place ought to have today, proposals for site reconfiguration and then an attempt to match existing program with the newly reconfigured or stages of site remaking you are proposing. It's quite possible that the current program will not fit the new site, and you can propose a revised version that you think would be more in keeping with the quality of the place.

The products I see. A series of site story overlays. A proposed new site configuration and perhaps a proposed staging of how to get from here to there. A new site plan, showing the new building, planting and parking configurations as they relate to an overall open space structure. A typology of open space types: courts, esplanades, quays, walks etc. and some specific development of a few important places that interweave present uses, biological values and expressions of the story layers of the site. Whew! This would be a challenge to any designer. Terrific, brilliant. Courage,

Jerry

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## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

Name: A. P.

Title: A Journey of Discovery: Morgenson F. Reserve - Costa Rica

Comments:

A:

What an extraordinary place and what a wonderful experience you must have had last summer. Your watercolors are terrific, powerful, and tropical in their color and pattern. I especially liked the close-up composition you made of leaf fronds.

I understand from your writing that you're planning three levels of work. I'd probably describe the site planning you'll do for the reserve itself as your main level with the others providing on the one hand, opportunities for some general regional recommendations as you suggest, and the other some more specific site/place proposals. Did I understand correctly that you'll be doing some trail system planning at the Reserve scale? If so, it would be good to know how things presently stand and an assessment of what needs doing.

Of the two areas you'll focus on, I only get a beginning understanding of them from the report. You make several suggestions about what needs doing for the lodging site, but are conveying mostly an appropriate sense of awe for the waterfall meditation place. Maybe that means you should just leave it alone. But, I imagine you chose it because there are some things to be done there to enhance and safeguard a special place. Let me in on what you're planning. More detail please. I called this "deeper parts" in class yesterday. A more refined explanation of "what needs doing" in each case will help guide you in your design work.

I also enjoyed your very sensitive and evocative writing. It really captures how special the place is and how important it is to appreciate and conserve it. I'd be interested now in your telling me what products you intend to produce. You can add this "what I intend to produce" part to your summary paragraph at the front of your report. Do you have enough programmatic material to do the schematic plan I'll be asking for next? at both Reserve and smaller place scales? This is an excellent project, a very attractive report, and really just needs some more specific whats to move you to the next level. Thanks,

Pura Vida,

Jerry

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## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

Name: B.T.

Title: Lei of Green

Comments:

B:

The idea of contributing your thinking to the Lei of Green planning effort for Honolulu and then working out a key piece of it such as the waterfront park area still seems like an excellent comp project. Your writing helps me understand the historic background and importance of the “Lei” process for the city. Your project needs a good abstract up front as I discussed in class and there are no project resources or precedents listed other than the historic plans you mention. Do you have copies of them? Which of the openspace and greenway books are you using as a reference?

My guess is that you already know what the park and open space system structure for this area ought to include – based on previous proposals and your own experience with the area - and could make this map right now as a context for your work. Why not just go ahead and do it. Here, here’s \$2 Billion for property acquisition. Go to it. Draw up a schematic proposal you can base your other work on.

More troubling to the development of your comp project planning is the absence of the materials you need in order to work on the waterfront (or what ever area you prefer) and develop a useful program to jump start and guide your studio work. If you’ve made any progress on this since the first part of the term I can’t tell from what you’ve given me. I hope you can remedy this in time.

Is there something I could do to help you move this along?

Let’s do talk about what you’re going to do.

Jerry

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## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

**Name:** B. V.

**Title:** A Neighborhood Center at 29<sup>th</sup> and Willamette

Comments:

B:

This is an especially good start, Ben. You've made a useful stab at putting together a 5¢ synoptic paragraph, perhaps only missing a bit of the how and the products of your work to round it off. That's of course what I am emphasizing this week.

You've used the models from the class effectively. I do understand the "problem" as you are interpreting and constructing it convincingly. I do understand who the users are and the nodal setting. Perhaps most importantly you have been willing to provide an evaluation of the situation that can yield a planning and design program of "what needs doing" from a number of important perspectives. The format you're using, mixing some narrative, photos, maps and bullets is easy to read and understand although you could probably use a paragraph in some cases to explain and set up the bulleted lists. I'd suggest a table of contents after the project summary at the beginning as another way to model what you're going to cover and another way to build your overall project conceptual structure in the reader's mind. Your mapping, numbers, naming of the parts and landscape time awareness are all admirable.

There is a disjoint, at least in my mind, between the nodal developmental focus of the project – which I think is right on – and the title which talks about the "Neighborhood Center At 29<sup>th</sup> and Willamette." I know this is a center of a larger nodal area development and that you intend this center as a key, vibrant, more pedestrian friendly part of the whole, a whole that consists of streets and The Street, residential areas, businesses etc. But you don't really get to the "center" area in your information, evaluation, or projections yet. If I were to project from what you've given me, I'd expect you to center the majority of your effort around the transformation of the Willamette St. corridor. Time to move your process on to the center itself, so that the final products can include a redesign of the 29<sup>th</sup> center area, connected to the rest of an evolving nodal structure.

You don't list any resources or precedents. But there are a growing number of books, publications and examples on which to base, or at least to begin your work. These include the writings of Peter Calthorp and the Calthorp office's recommendation for both Portland and Eugene; DPZ; and all the other literature, ideas and projects flowing out of the "new urbanism." Just using one of their principles, such as putting the buildings on the street and the parking to the side and behind would totally change Willamette. Getting from the present nodal state in stages to a better nodal world will be an important aspect of your project.

Terrific work, B.

Jerry

## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

Name: C. B.

Title: The River and the City

Comments:

C:

You are doing an excellent job of contextualizing the issue of storm water quality and awareness in our urban area. The reasons for focusing on such things are many: the need for greater awareness in order to influence and change urban behaviors; the potential to combine such awareness and more powerfully convey our relationships to our urban water systems through art.

But your project lies behind so many layers of context, like a fifth order stream, that we never get to it. In a sense, the outline is a credit to your keen intelligence and the training you have had to date in your education of writing papers. You know how the details are nested, many levels in behind the general themes, like river in the city, like the negative impact of urban life on river quality, like the varied health in the metro area along the Willamette of urban river relations.

But the storm water gardens that you are trying to get to remain just a title, and unless I froth and jump around and bully you a bit at this stage in the quarter, there will be no program for them and no basis for a schematic design at the end of the term which is only a few short weeks away.

Based on what you've written, I'd title your project, "**Stormwater Gardens in Eugene**," or some such and write up a project description, not so much a term paper on the subject. The idea is to do the analysis and program writing this term, not set up a program that requires you to spend the major part of your studio setting up a case for the demonstrations that inevitably then get short shrift.

The abstract I've been asking for, not an introduction to a topical paper on water and the human world, might sound something like this:

**This project proposes the development of a series of new stormwater gardens at key points along the Willamette at Eugene. The stormwater garden concept, modeled after similar projects in Portland and..., connects the need for higher quality urban water discharge to the immediacy of environmental education and understanding of ecological functions that can be conveyed directly through landscape art.**

**The key products of the study will include an overall conceptual map locating the priority components and typology of a proposed stormwater garden system; a more refined proposal for the Maurie Jacobs Park to wastewater treatment plant area (or other area you choose now); and a series of conceptual diagrams, sketches and precedent examples to stimulate the development of other key elements in the system.**

I want you to guess at the conceptual map now based on the information you have. I don't care if you change it as the project proceeds. I just want something that can grow. As you can see, if there is an obvious target area for a good demonstration project and I can get you to commit yourself, I can also get you into a different scale of mapping, analysis, evaluation and programming for what needs doing, people to talk to etc.

Your background material and justifying arguments for your project are very good. They are important contexts for your work, but use them in that way and keep them conceptually powerful but succinct.

What you need now, working backward from the end of the term is whatever makes it possible to provide two things:

1. Your first try at conceptual proposal for a stormwater garden system along the Willamette at Eugene; and
2. A schematic proposal for a specific stormwater garden. I know you'll be a bit surprised at my directness, but I'm just trying to be helpful. Make a first version this term and make it wonderful in the next.

Let the gardens flow.

Good luck with this,

Jerry

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## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

Name: D. A.

Title: Accessibility, Beauty, Cachet: The A B C's of Design for a Steeply Sited Rural Residential Landscape

Comments:

D: I enjoyed reading about the N. Estate in Silverton. Who and how these people are; their interests, dreams and hopes for their site; their strange “weeping phobias” and superstitions; their nearby family; all these things will influence and affect your work.

Here are some observations and comments:

You have an overview in your narrative that is largely a place overview. I think you need to precede this with a project abstract as I have been describing in class. I'd also like to view the overview at the same time I'm reading the description. How about moving a good diagrammatic plan up front as soon as you get one you can use? I think I'd buy an air photo of the property as we discussed to use for overall planning and locating areas, and then frame it with your plan pasted into it or drawn over it and give it to them to hang on their wall. An inexpensive path to immortalization of a kind.

I'd probably use the air photo or a simple plan I made from it to name all the areas I wanted to make recommendations for. The Entrance, for example; the Hillside; the Cow Area; the Secret Garden etc. I imagine a final Estate Report that describes the recommendations you are going to be making for each of these areas, including commentary about your general intent, the kinds and qualities you are striving for, plant and maintenance information and the like, that goes with the drawings you'll give them. You should try to do an outline of the report (not your comp report) as a way of helping to organize your work. What other products will you produce? If he is going to do a lot of the work himself, you'll need to orient the drawings to what he'll need. Maybe you can get him to hire the Lout brothers, at least for the heavy stuff.

I like your version of the evaluation I've been asking for: major challenges and major opportunities. You have good lists and they are usefully thorough. I think I'd sort them into categories of like kinds, places or whatever gathers likes together best for your and their understanding. The proposal has the potential to turn into a site schematic. I'll be looking forward to seeing your first try at it.

Very good serious, thorough, thoughtful start D, and thanks

Jerry



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## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

Name: D. C.

Title: Sweathouse Creek: Social Process and Fluvial Process Guidelines for Rural Development in Stream Corridors

Comments:

D:

An excellent beginning! You “construct” the problem well, bring it to life in a landscape you obviously care a lot about, are attempting to understand the complexity of the value conflicts involved, and are projecting new guidelines for development and repair along with an ambitious educational film as the central products of your work. Your abstract is a model of clarity and intent. I loved the poem and the photos, and wondered about the sweathouse of Sweathouse Creek. I’d personally appreciate a small map of the creek to look at as a part of the early narrative. You’re not using maps in your write up that I know you, a card carrying geographer, certainly have.

If there is anything important missing in this setup, it is probably a testing of your guidelines, an application or applications that both help you construct them and provide more tangible examples of how to do “what needs doing.” You also don’t provide much of an information base or an assessment of the creek related to proposed trail development. Are there existing parts to connect?

I’m ready to hear more about how you are going to go about this: your overall project strategy. I suspect you need a good geographic model of Sweathouse Creek, naming its key areas and reaches. And that you also need to identify and locate prototypical kinds of problems and problem areas that will be dealt with in the guidelines. And that you will also want to prioritize the problem areas and kinds as a way to guide the building of the buffer system and the places to repair, to enable you to say where to spend money first.

How about an outline for the guidelines as a first step backwards to the further planning and management of your project? How about an outline for the shooting script for the film?

How about a second pass now at evaluating a particularly high priority area – a next level look at e.g. the “Typical Areas” area, using your preliminary and evolving model for the guidelines as a set up for an end of term prototypical schematic example of creek repair, and buffer and trail development? How about some useful buffer models for this landscape?

I have great confidence that this will be an exceptional comp project.

Well done, now get back to work on it.

Jerry

## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

**Name:** D. D.

**Title:** Stream of Unconsciousness

Comments:

D: This is a hard project to get a good handle on. Your overall intent, “My intentions for this project are to address the issues at hand, modernization and industrialization, while integrating sacred symbolism into the modern landscape,” sounds like the profound work of a lifetime. How to take a good bite out of the apple of re-sacrilization of the modern world? And how to work with archetypes in Edinburgh? I don’t need any convincing that this is an important, needed undertaking, important to you, important to an evolving human consciousness, important to a healthier land and landscape. I’m just worried about how you might go about it in a way that was convincing, both satisfying to you and edifying to others. You stay at such a general level, I don’t get any real idea about what you really intend to do. I worry about your going to Edinburgh – especially when it will be COLD – without a very clear plan of what you need, what you’re looking for.

You write well and you are very informative in your description of Edinburgh. I enjoyed thinking back to my own visit to the city, the old and new city, the climb up to the castle, which made me feel, as though I were in Macbeth. I can understand why a place with a medieval heritage would be a better choice than say St. Louis. But I find myself getting impatient as I read about the city per se, when I really want you to talk about your project and the way the city provides the place for it.

So I hear you saying: in two parts, one virtual, one real. Feeling. An experience. The real project will emerge. The virtual part sounds more like a thesis right now (like your title), a study, rather than a design. The real part seems too remote and unplanned.

I know some of the archetypes you’ll be working with; you mention and show a number of them, but I don’t have a clue as to HOW you’ll be using, finding, relating to, or experiencing them.

I guess if I’m unusually direct, I really think this project will require some much clearer planning in order to create the insight, feeling and experience you are looking for. I’d cut to the chase with this one, even if that sounds sacrilegious, and let the virtual part be your intellectual context which drives the physical work. Start from the tangible rather than trying to get to it. Don’t you have better maps? Aren’t there some sequences through the city that are more interesting than others?

From what I have seen so far, I can’t really imagine your work reaching a “schematic” stage this term.

I’m worried. Tell me that you’ve got this all figured out.  
Jerry

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## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

Name: D. J.

Title: The Living Garden

Comments:

D:

The idea of creating a public healing garden is a very attractive one, and the site of the Vet hospital next to the other hospitals you mention makes it seem even more appropriate – a new public health institution in the form of a garden taking the place of the old. It makes me wonder if some interesting parts of the old hospital might be saved and incorporated into the new design? Maybe some roofless rooms make special garden plots?

I don't think you'll have too much trouble building your healing garden concept. The Quaker quote seems like a good start. Emphasizing the restorative, re-creational, and meditative aspects of large garden areas in the city is certainly part of it. Having opportunities for both passive contemplation and active gardening seems important. I think I'd just start compiling a list of the such things I wanted the garden to emphasize and say that these add up to what I mean by a healing garden.

You mention many of the components of your garden in the narrative. Meadow; entrances; gates; urban farm; buffer; other forms of enclosure; walks; and many more. Will there be a small pond or lake or water of some kind? I'd want to see reflections and hear water in my version that would include something akin to Monet's pond. Time to make a list of the elements and places you are starting to name, expand what you have as much as possible and see if you can relate these elements to the site. A good program will also say an urban farm of 3 acres or whatever. Use your knowledge of such places and precedents to help you guess at the right sizes of things so you will be able to do a schematic. A large meadow of how big? A small wooded area of ?

Try also moving toward a relational diagram of the elements you're working with. Which things might go where? When will the walks go and what should they connect to? If you do this now, you can take it with you and see if anything makes sense on site. What kinds of places does the site suggest? Work from both directions, from your programmatic desires and from the site's whispering. Revise your preliminary while you're there and then come back and try to improve it again. Set yourself up for further refinement in the studio.

Marrying emotional and intuitive thoughts and feelings with physical expression is the sine qua non. I can say that now and you'll know what I mean. Notice that our language about such things is always metaphoric. Places are warm, comfortable, friendly, moving, peaceful, tranquil. It will be important to try to articulate the qualities you want to grow in your garden in order to be able to design for them. These will be as critical programmatically as anything else you list. Treat them as serious programmatic elements and begin the tough process, using precedents, your own experience and the reactions of people you trust to get at the physical expressions that create this form of environmental meaning. At least at this stage start to clarify the feeling and qualities you want.

This is good work D., serious and thoughtful, full of potential for your design education.

Thanks,

Jerry

## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

Name: E. B.

Title: Rowena Wilds: A Community in Concert with Nature

Comments:

E:

This is a good beginning. It's written clearly and conceived well enough to allow me to give you some good feedback.

No, I don't think it's too much, but there's still some strategic scoping necessary to both cover all the territory and provide some of the tangible proof of the planning.

Yes, it's a far-reaching goal, one that sets up the need to better understand local history and habitat, water, fire and other natural processes in the area, the social goals and aspirations of your client group, and the county land use process - the political ecology - of the new community. You could ignore this latter context, but a better objective would be to try to set up the ways the county land use process could accept and encourage this kind of exemplary rural development. I had to do this in Scottsdale, AZ when I laid out the McCormick Ranch, a new community of 35,000 on seven square miles. They had a planned unit development ordinance (PUD) but no such animal as a planned area development (PAD) ordinance (so I made one up), and then I worked with the city planning staff of Scottsdale to create a new larger area coordinating structure. You don't have to go this far, just try to understand how your work needs to be able to help establish the legal structure within which it can flourish in itself and be a model for other projects.

I don't think I'd say "design a community," as you put it in your grand goal. I don't think you'll create a master plan either all by yourself. The people you are working for/with will continue to design a community and you will no doubt contribute richly to their general planning and longer-range master plan, or community planning process. I'd probably call your work the building of a Landscape Plan for Rowena Wilds. A Master Plan should probably contain political - e.g. decision-making structures - and economic aspects and legal aspects - CC&Rs - you won't be able to cover. A landscape plan would more naturally focus more on the issues you have outlined and become a central knowledge base and educational tool for rural dwelling. It would serve as a guide to siting decisions conservation planning and management, and provide the basis for county agreements about rural services.

I'd call your overall sensitivity method, as I understood it at the mid-term review - a one way sieve process. It aggregates ecological sensitivity zones, sensitivity to man,

and by differentiating the landscape into a range of more to less sensitive areas leaves it very generally rated into more or less suitable places for human dwelling.

The best place are where humans are the least intrusive and where the least management is necessary. This isn't necessarily where we humans always want to be, such as for example near the biologically rich and scenic water corridors. Attractiveness modeling, then, looks at the landscape from a human, social perspective, sieving out the best places for dwelling. To me the most interesting aspect of this project is the locus of places where these two perspectives overlap and the ways that they can be more specifically resolved.

So I see two levels of conservation management coming out of this.

1. Conservation plans for the larger commonly held areas of the 200 acre site; and
2. Conservation plans related to the settlement areas themselves, where some conflict is inevitable and new thinking is needed for deeper dwelling.

I'm a little skeptical about co-housing in the more urban use of the term for this group, but it would make sense to me to rehearse the possibility that three or four families might want to create a small farmstead community together, and that this might also serve as a gathering center for those in the group who prefer a more remote and private location.

**In any case, you need to create a social test case in order to do this part of your work.** This is a key to further comp project development. Give yourself a more explicit program so that you can actually do some sieving and siting. If you pick the right couples and they end up liking the version of rural community life you project, you could have a profound influence on this project. I think you can just call for the larger scale conservation plans and try to craft a local conservation plan that fits into your proposed new settlement plan as an integral part of its design.

Temporary dwellings as a way to spend time in more fragile, dangerous and less resilient areas sounds like a good idea. Overall circulation and communication on the site seems crucial. There is of course a ton of other things that need discussing. How about some more explicit work right now on the make-up of the common dwelling area of the Wilds. Names and numbers please. More explicit now.

Very good start E,

Jerry

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## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

**Name:** G. M.

**Title:** clrt cincinnati

Comments:

G:

I've read your project development report over a number of times. I admire its overall look, your skill at page layout and some of the images you've chosen, but I am baffled about the lack of more specific project development at this time in the term.

A new station, for example, isn't a small place or a small piece of work. But you are stuck in the land of regional maps, scales over which you can have only modest and very conceptual influence at best. I don't think you need to spend much time justifying a new light rail system. You can just say up front that your project is a part of the clrt system currently being planned for Cincinnati that connects key nodes in the urban region. Make a plan diagram of the system and its nodes as it is presently being proposed, modify it if you think anyplace important is missing, and then use it as the context for your more explicit work. Sure you can suggest some overall system level conceptual design ideas but keep it very conceptual and as an enabling context for your station area design.

As this point, you haven't shown me anything that would allow you to understand, evaluate or program the changes necessary for one of these station areas. Why not?

Try taking the proposed new transit system of nodes as your largest scale, a station area as the middle scale and some key part of it as the most refined scale of design transformation and go from there.

You're a little too far off the earth with this. And there's only room for one of us out here. And I'm not planning a comp project. If you're confused, let's talk about this further and soon.

Jerry

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## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

**Name:** D. C.

**Title:** Kai Tak Redevelopment

Comments:

D:

Kai Tak Airport really is a spectacular site and I can see from your good photos and maps why you are excited about working on such an important piece of Hong Kong. I worry about the scale of this project for you as a comp project, but you seem determined so here is what you need to do.

For the end of this term, you need to be able to do a conceptual site plan for both the airport site and the Chinese Medical Campus portion of the redevelopment.

In order to do a conceptual site plan for the airport you will need to designate how much land you intend to allocate to each important land use. How much for commercial, for mixed use, for housing not mixed, for recreation and public open space, and for special public institutions such as the Chinese Medical Center.

You can help determine this from existing plans and reports and try to use their amounts and density figures in your work.

You can also start by sketching out a conceptual land use and circulation plan right now that looks about right to you and measure the amount of land use that "fit's and use this as your plan. If you then chose the housing density you thought most desirable, regardless of economic pressure, you would be able to locate a number of housing units on the site and get some idea about the overall configuration. You need to pick housing types and densities now so you can make a first attempt at laying out a scheme for the airport. Next term you can build a conceptual model of this and improve it.

You must tell me how big, how many hectares a Chinese Medical Campus is, and then locate it in the place you think best on your airport schematic plan.

Then you must tell me what the components are for the medical campus. How many buildings will there be. Guess if you don't know and can't find out. And then how many and what kinds of gardens will be needed or desirable. And what size they should be. And how should things be arranged. Zoom in and do a schematic plan for the medical campus, showing its relationship to nearby land use and the waterfront, circulation and openspace system. This doesn't have to be perfect, just something more tangible to start with.

This is all needed this term so that it will be possible to improve and perfect something during the rest of the year. You need the information that will allow you to make these schematic plans, even if you have to guess right now and make things better later.

Try this now and ask me for help if you get stuck. This will give you some new material to show and discuss in your final project report. I'm trying to get you to land at the airport before its shut down for the fall term. Happy landing,

Jerry

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Jerome Diethelm

## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

Name: I. D.

Title: light rail spanning the Columbia

Comments:

I:

OK, I understand that your project is about MAX being extended north to Hayden Island, a “light rail spanning the Columbia.” But I think it is even more about what takes place on Hayden Island as a result of the new station. So I might call it A New Transit Center for Hayden Island, or something more descriptive of the transformation you were working on.

Lynch’s system is a useful way to analyze environmental structure, and his notions of imagability provide some normative guidance for making good places. From your diagrams, I read a car dominated, big box shopping island with no island or pedestrian qualities at all.

So what are your intentions? I know you’d like to make it more pedestrian friendly, plant more trees and improve stormwater management on the island. From your goals in class the other day, I know you are interested in improved connectivity, the development of the pedestrian environment and have some goals for land use change related to the new transit station.

This latter starts to sound less Lynchian and leans more in the direction of the building of transit nodes as recommended by Calthorp’s office and as practiced in Portland. Eugene’s Trans Plan, influenced by Shelley Poticha of Calthorp’s office, also follows the conceptual formula that you were introduced to in Rob’s class. 200 acre site; 1/4 mile walking radius; commercial center and some mixed-use offices and housing around the station; you remember the diagram? New higher density residences nearby within walking distance of the station. You don’t tell me any of this and so I’m wondering if you’re just going to fix the parking lots or what?

Let’s say you are going to add new housing and other uses on the island. How much and at what density? You need to say in order to have the elements to build into a schematic proposal.

I know you are going to site a new station on the island. Where? You don’t evaluate the place for possible station sites or tell me what a station site is. Portland has a lot of them to use as prototypes. Will there be a public square around the station? Will you stop at the edge or the center of the island? Will you keep some of the existing commercial uses?

You need an explicit – what, & how much? - program, saying what you intend to try to create on the island. Then you need a project methodology, an overall project strategy for getting from here to there. And then you need to try to identify what products you’re going to produce for this project. A good test as to whether you have enough programmatic information is whether you can produce the schematic plan for the island I am asking for by the end of this term.

We can talk more about this when we get together.

Jerry



## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

**Name:** J. K.

**Title:** Alton's Mirror

Comments:

J:

Alton's Mirror is a beautiful metaphor for the reflection of the South Bank of the river that needs to include more developed park and open space land in its next incarnation. You say that this has been done, as though the riverfront planning was all settled. It's not, but there are good ideas to build on and lots of room for more focused project work to demonstrate what the place might be like as it is transformed from the abstraction of a land use plan into a physically designed, vital, sensuous, sustainable place.

You need to use a land use plan as the basis for your project level work. You don't have to accept the city's present one from the Ferry St. Corridor and South Bank studies as your base condition. But you should fix your land use context now – however you want to conceive it - and zoom in or you will never develop programmatic information that allows you to do more focused work in one of its sub areas.

Why not keep the transit node as you've conceived it as a base assumption for your work. It certainly does provide a strong means for uniting the sides of the track and was a serious consideration of the earlier South Bank Study. The fact that the city seems committed now to redeveloping the train station area as their train node doesn't mean the matter is firmly settled. Perhaps your proceeding from another assumption will bring it back to life in an important way. The incorporation of light rail in the urban core was also a part of the Final Recommendations for the Ferry St. Corridor. Your search for a way to include it is admirable. You can check out the FSC -CAC proposal. Uniting the local light rail system with SP hasn't proved feasible for all the reasons I mentioned last Friday when we spoke.

What I'm trying to tell you as directly as possible is not to focus your comp project on the development of a new land use plan for the riverfront area. Revise and adjust the one that exists, developed out of years of citizen participation, along the lines that reflects your own attempt to influence the project and move on quickly now.

My favorite area along the riverfront (right now and that needs some programming and designing) is the piece of land where the Millrace emerges next to the old Steam Plant and that extends east past the power station and the piece of land next to it zoned for park use to where Eighth Ave. reaches the river, including the next piece of riverfront land which ought to be a superb site for a new building complex. The EWEB maintenance complex is another key site uniting the downtown back to its river. And then if you're serious about a transit station at the riverfront, How about using this as the key place for physical illumination? You could also focus on the Chiquita property, but that will be harder to pin down because the solutions to this site are so wrapped up in transportation planning.

Well those are my favorites, what's yours? I just get worried when anyone seems to think comp is really only about doing a land use plan after all my efforts to get you to generate a program for more focused work within such a context. Yes, you need to be able to make some contributions at this level, but it doesn't make sense to believe in participation and then ignore all the planning a community has done. Does it?

Over, Jerry

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## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

**Name:** L. M.

**Title:** Overlook

Comments:

L:

Whew! I'm overwhelmed too. But, I'm also impressed that you're thinking about the project richly and are well underway toward the materials and understanding of the place that you'll need to do a new estate plan.

I think you need an "overlook," call it an abstract and a table of contents – call it the view of the lake from the hill - for your project. I kept reading and wondering when you were going to tell me what the project was and what you were going to do. And then I found it at the end and it seemed to make good sense. I also like your page of design ideas, thoughts and possibilities. Your maps and photos are wonderful, and this imagery will swell with the advent of the Fairsted materials. What a resource.

I'd probably begin your report with a statement about Overlook, what it is and why it's important, that it's ripe for some new conservation oriented estate planning, how you're going to go about it and what you plan to produce that will contribute to the making of a new master conservation and development plan for the estate.

I'm somewhat skeptical that you can do a complete enough master conservation and development plan for Overlook for your comp. But you can certainly conceive of what such a plan, using precedents, ought to include and do some of the key parts of it such as the revitalization of the estate's core, the Japanese garden and Lily Lake as you suggest. If you are going to do this you'll need better information (yesterday and today) and a more explicit evaluation of these areas. You can conceptualize and develop goals for the larger areas of estate management without having to complete these in any professional sense at this time. I'm not sure what you're planning for your master's project, but if you wanted to and were clever, your Comp. Project could serve as a demonstration piece of a more thorough study of the landscape preservation and maintenance of Overlook.

Do you presently have a good air photo and useful plan of the existing estate? I can't remember seeing either, and these will be essential for your work. You will need to be able to compare these with earlier plans and drawings from the Fairsted abundance.

You don't list any estate conservation precedents that you're using to guide your work. Have you made an appointment to talk to Robert Melnick about it. Robert is the principal author of the site historic conservation guidelines the National Park Service uses, but you probably already know that. In any case he should be an important faculty resource for your project. He's busy at being Dean, but he's a teacher at heart and this is his subject.

Your mid-term report has the look of someone seriously interested and deeply involved in its subject. For the final I'd reorient it a bit so that it reads more directly as a project proposal, moving as close to making first pass schematic proposals for the areas you're concentrating on as your information allows. Working backward from these products as a measure of what you still need will be an important project strategy. Nice work, and

Thanks,  
Jerry

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## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

Name: M. A.

Title: The Ephemeral Wetland Education Center: a design for a temporary interpretive facility in the West Eugene Wetlands

Comments:

M:

I love the idea of an ephemeral wetland center that carries with it the idea of building it and then unbuilding it. The temporary nature of the place should lend itself to a more casual look and not building any more than is really necessary. I think you get the prize for the longest title. Dawn is a close second.

You've written this very clearly, M. It will be important to find out how much space and what kinds of facilities you'll need for the activities you list and more about the wetland center curriculum as you say. I hope you can fill this in from precedents, advice, and where necessary good estimates that allow you to proceed. If I couldn't get a curriculum from someone I'd make up my own, along with the teaching materials and experiences that brought it to life. But my guess is that there's plenty of help in town for this and Steve knows where.

You've written useful goals and objectives. Now see if you can make them even more specific and related to actual changes on the site. Two levels out of three aren't bad.

I know what you plan to do because you wrote it out. Now tell me what products you intend to have when you're finished as a means for further scoping this work.

Write some criteria for your trail system and try to locate it on the property at the same time, working back and forth. Will you need to design an information system for your trail(s)? Will you need to fence off the wetlands from the settlement area?

How might you portray the stages of building and unbuilding on the site?

Your overall project time diagram is terrific.

Try to do your site research this term so that you can use your studio time for refining and presenting your proposals.

Striving for more specificity in every area will help you do the end of term schematic and put you on a good path through the educational wetlands of the comp project.

Good going, and thanks.

Jerry

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## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

Name: M. I.

Title: The New Berlin: Redesigning Berlin's Central Open Space

Comments:

M.:

How about: The New Alex: Redesigning Berlin's Central Open Space? Or more German: Das Neues Alexander Platz... In any case, I don't think you're designing the new Berlin, just trying to focus on a central part of it and your title can convey this.

The background narrative you provide is very good. You need this deeper understanding of the place to avoid thinking that Alex is only what it's been during and after the period of the Wall and not, as you say, a reflection and response to the many historic layers of Berlin. I looked for a map indication after reading a few paragraphs, wanting to see where the things were you were referring to: the Fernsehturm, the Neptunbrunnen, the Spree etc. and how they related to one another. You should locate your focal area on your map of central Berlin and then blow the area up for further reference and evaluation.

What's missing at this point is any forceful, vigorous, assertive and courageous evaluation of this area, saying what's missing or not quite right or needs to be improved or added or connected to or... Imagine yourself being sent out by your firm and being asked to write a letter back to your client - after an extensive site visit - about the work you think needs to be done to make this place a special centerpiece of the New Berlin - an Alex for the new federal republic that remembers its many layers, but sets out to build a new identity for a new time.

It was good to see you referring back to your vivid presence to get at some of this. Try to focus on the difference between what's there now and what you saw in your imaginative projection so that you can help others see your understanding of this **difference** as a program for the future. Identify if you can the key projects you think will be necessary to set Alex on the road to its new future.

It will be hard to write goals for this project if you don't spell out some of the issues of the site more specifically, since "goals are just issues spelled backwards." It's good to ask the questions you've included and not necessary to be able to answer them all at once, but I need you to be willing to be openly critical of what's there now, try to explain why to yourself, so both of us can better understand the kind of work that needs to be done, that will be done. I'd also like to know what places or precedents inspire you, which ones have some of the qualities you admire and would like to see here in some way. You don't mention any precedents or resources for the project.

Also missing is a good paragraph synopsis of the project. It would be especially good if it could conclude it with the products you (think you) intend to produce. We talked about this in class and I tried to make up a version of what it would be like. Give it a try and then try to use the synopsis as an outline for your narrative, which by the way uses photos very nicely to show the places. I'd label these, since what they are isn't always obvious to non-Berliners. I'm expecting this to be a really first rate project Mischa.

Get on this and keep the Spree flowing,

Jerry

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## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

Name: M. L.

Title: urban symbiosis: the environmental restoration and urban re-integration of San Pablo Creek

Comments:

M:

There is certainly no question about methodology in your project. This is a model of where, what and how for San Pablo Creek in Orinda, CA, full of cultural texture and imagery. It's a handsome piece of work, and I imagine the Friends of Orinda Creeks will find it very useful as an intentional and organizational tool. Your concept of "urban symbiosis" is a powerful one and seems very appropriate. It should be an excellent conceptual guide for the work.

In "the cyclical design process" I have been calling your number 1: Constructing the design problem because I believe it emphasizes that this is a social process of articulating ends driven by community values. It certainly requires the identification of opportunities and constraints related to those ends. I think the second step is evaluating place differentials – the differences between the way things are and they way they might or ought or could be - and establishing an intentional structure for what needs doing, in your case from two separate points of view. Third is to develop planning and design proposals that relate to the various goals and fit well with an understanding of the site.

Fourth perhaps is to test refine and revise those proposals until they are satisfactory and successful integrations.

I make the distinctions from your number four "Evaluate Outcomes" because I think that each level involves evaluation, evaluation of what the problem is, what the opportunities and constraints are, what can and needs to be done, and when its done well. That's why I also call the "site analysis" in your design process diagram "site evaluation" because that's the kind of analysis I think it is.

For this class I have been trying to get everyone to develop programmatic material – the what needs doing – for the key scales of the project. You've identified some of this more particular material in earlier exercises, but it is missing here. In this report you've strengthened your overall project method and dropped out your more specific local efforts to rehabilitate and re-integrate a particular reach of San Pablo Creek. Why? Because it doesn't fit yet in the Friends report?

In any case, nice work as far as it goes. You'll need more program in the ritualizing dimension of your project's intentions, and you'll need to resurface some of your ideas about creek rehabilitation in order to produce the schematic proposal coming up. The class is designed to get you to do some of the analysis/evaluation this term so that you are well underway to some revising and perfecting in the studio.

Very thoughtful work, M.

Jerry

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## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

Name: P. C.

Title: Transitions Through Urban Landscapes

Comments:

P:

The project is getting clearer to me as you work with it, but I always get an uneasy feeling when I read the title which sounds too much like urban landscapes everywhere and not enough like a specific one in Burlington, Vermont. It has the ring of a book you should write someday. You don't help my unease when you write your goals at such a high level. "To understand the space that exists between a commercial/mixed use urban matrix and a residential matrix?" What space? What do you mean by understand it? Furthermore comp project isn't to do case studies, but rather to make planning and design PROPOSALS for some place. One can study something from a hundred different points of view.

I have been trying to get you to do a preliminary evaluation of a place so that you can be in a better position to suggest proposals and try them out. Doesn't make a good transition, or isn't village-like enough, or has lost touch with its landscape or settlement history are useful but very general beginning evaluations that **need to be particularized in real blocks along real streets that have real histories**, such as the Hood plant things you mention. You need some deeper where's, what's and a good project methodology – strategy.

"Transition markers" is too vague a concept for me, since it seems it can be almost anything, walls, trees, hitching posts... It also sounds too thingy. Aren't you planning to develop some improvement/enhancement plans for a, or some of the, connecting street corridors through the UTZ? And perhaps coordinating this work with greater mixed use, historic conservation, and public recreation in these new special corridor districts? Won't that require a development of the public elements that are systems – trees, information and regulatory signs, lights, walkways – as well as the elements that are special and place specific in the corridor – historic sites, the old ravine, the old milk plant? Do you intend these to be pedestrian passageways? Car corridors? Transit corridors? All of the above?

I guess I'd recommend that you pick a corridor site now ("The King Street Passage?") that allows you to take a particular look at it, make an evaluation of it from the points of view you're espousing, and try to turn the work that evaluation yields into the site schematic proposal I'm asking for this term. If you do that, my guess is that will help you along the path to developing some more general guidelines for "corridor passage zones" in Burlington.

You have good maps, but look at them and you will see that they are mostly at the level of abstraction of your goals. You need maps and photos and drawings that get us out of our satellites and allow us to walk down the streets and make our critical survey and start the process of generating the ideas and kinds of specific Burlington proposals that will add up to a terrific contribution to your hometown.

Get on this now and it will be a fine project. Stay too general and it could be a problem.

Jerry

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## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

Name: P. D.

Title: Skinner City Farm

Comments:

P:

This is a wonderful project, one that deserves everyone's support. Knowing Andrea, our former student, I'd guess you'll get the kind of inside the park department backing that will make everything work out.

The one endorsement and reference that seemed oddly missing was our own Urban Farm. Dennis Lueck writes that he knows of such places in Europe. How about right across Franklin? Isn't this a useful precedent?

Since this work is moving right along and you're obviously thinking about it well, I'm ready and eager to know more about it at a deeper parts level than City Farm. Why not do the more specific program that can translate into more specific areas right now?

I'm also ready for you to try to tell me what comp products you'll have, or would like to have, to illustrate, crystallize, make manifest, present, embody, this idea.

I understand that the public process for the farm will be part of a larger Skinner Butte Park effort by Parks. Why not set up an earlier Skinner City Farm public process of your own using your support group for the specific development of your comp project. You could hold regular discussion and critique sessions, say every two weeks, get everyone to comment en route, serve as your Farm consultants, and then all come, participate and support you in your final review.

Since the Farm is intended to provide alternative educational opportunities, it would be good to say more about that program, as you presently envision it, and project such needs spatially onto the site. If you intend to deal with stormwater, it would be good to know something about the present state of water on the site and a bit more about what you intend to do with it, where and how. If an important part of the Farm is to be a park, you might say some more about what that means. Do you intend to commemorate, rebuild Skinner's orchard. Will you connect the Farm to the cabin site? You have good issues/goals, but are still at the high end of the array in every case.

Good precedents, resources? *The Edible City Resource Manual...* I know there are lots that you know about and will draw from. How about some key ones.

Nice work P, and good luck with this. I'll see you at the Farm.

Jerry

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## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

**Name:** R. W.

**Title:** Wetland Interaction in Wildlife Safari

Comments:

R:

I agree that this can be a very fine project. It can be as you say, “ an excellent opportunity to increase public awareness of the ecological importance of wetlands. You describe it clearly, and I understand that it is a new wetland system extending along a boardwalk from the old kiosk to the Native American Cultural Theater. I tried to find the latter on you maps and didn’t see it, so you need better base maps that provide a clearer picture of existing conditions. Hope Bob has come through by the time you read this. Otherwise you need to call him and tell him your schedule this term. Have you spoken to Bart about this. I’d think he should be an excellent faculty resource for your work.

Since you know you will be doing some kiosk remodeling, boardwalk development, wetland-planting etc., you need to gather some precedent material to use for inspiration and reference. You’ll need some good existing condition drawings and photos of the kiosk and an evaluation of what needs doing. It would be good to learn how others have built their boardwalks in similar conditions, so you can build on their experience and avoid their mistakes. Since this is the kind of comp project that will probably get built and you will be able to really visit it in ten (or fewer years) you’ll want to do some careful, responsible, detailed professional work, not just another school project. The drawings for this kind of project can also be very good portfolio material and you might think ahead and try to create a range of kinds of drawings that can help you in the job hunting that is coming soon.

There are probably many existing wetland illustrations you can borrow or modify for your educational signage system. Moreen Raad’s comp project of a couple years back had similar materials as did Mary Carmen’s. I know that both included good sources for reference. They should be in the library for viewing there. Also, there are new wetland websites to check out and a growing number of reference books. Rob and Bart are good sources. But your client probably has some idea of what they want and may have already collected the reference you’ll need??? You don’t mention lighting. Will that be a part of the boardwalk project?

I think you’re asking thoughtful questions. Now it’s time to try to answer them at least preliminarily in an attempted program. For each element of the program, attempt to say what it needs to be, who its to be designed for, how many will use it, how big it needs to be, the other qualities it should have etc. You should then share your version of these things with your client and make whatever adjustments are needed. Use your own judgment, based on your research. And when your clients don’t have an opinion or don’t know or don’t respond in a timely way, your decision becomes the program. Write something up under each of the major project headings: kiosk; boardwalk; planting; educational signage.

This sounds like a simple project, but that is deceptive. Its very directness forces you to be very thorough. Yes, I agree. This can be an excellent comp experience, especially if your client is active and helpful.

Happy boardwalking,

Jerry



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## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

Name: P. M.

Title: Lower Willow Creek Restoration

Comments:

P:

I enjoyed talking with you about your project at lunch today and thought you were quite clear by the end of my apple and banana about the restructuring of your writing I was suggesting and why.

**I've been asking for a brief synopsis of the project at the beginning: what your working on, where and why, what you intend to try to accomplish, how you're going to go about it and what products you intend to produce. I characterized this as a project management structure and have been urging, "Try thinking this way." Such a paragraph becomes a good framework for the further organization of your project narrative.**

I would equate your B. 1. Goals to "what you intend to accomplish," i.e. your intentional structure, and your B.2 Method with "how you're going to go about it."

I also suggested you try the strategy of working backward from the products needed at the end of the term, especially the conceptual schematic and using that as a check to see if your preparation has the material you need to allow you to create one for Lower Willow Creek.

Under method you can discuss making assumptions about the basin using the existing projections, applying lessons and methods from precedent projects, working with the existing wildlife habitat evaluation information and trying to avoid conflicts that arise from restoration and the use of use of existing habitat and plant restoration guidelines in the project.

I'd place your background information in the report in a location that seems to be a natural location for deepening the understanding about what, where and why.

With respect to products, which have been necessary for the precedents you are using? If you can identify the products of your work now, you will be able to look deeper into the steps each will take and begin to estimate the time these tasks will take. If you have any difficulty breaking this down into what needs doing, just ask Sally. Just kidding. I think you'll be a natural at this once you get a little experience.

Happy managing,

Jerry

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## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

Name: R. C.

Title: Outdoor Recreation in a Functioning River Floodplain

Comments:

R:

Or how about Bowers Rock: River Recreation Plan, where recreation can have both meanings at the same time, polysemously speaking. Or? In any case, you set the problem up well - the interaction between healthy functioning rivers and human recreation - and have found an especially apt place to pursue the development of a better model for state park planning. I mean better in the sense of taking a few more steps forward into multi-functional (or polyvalent, multi-valued...) park planning.

I agree with you that you will be exploring “ecologically compatible planning and design...” and “opportunities to increase public awareness....” I think it’s important however to distinguish between exploring and proposing. Judges always have to judge: planners and designers inevitably – especially if they want to complete comp. – have to propose. If I had to guess right now what you’ll be proposing, it would consist of three things: 1. A new multi-functional model for river park planning that will spell out a process to be applied to more than the Bowers Rock site. This would include the larger scale assessment of any river site to contribute to the flood capacitance of the whole system, a matter not to be overlooked, as you are importantly aware. 2. An application of the process and a proposed plan for Bowers Rock State Park i.e. a demonstration of your process. 3. Important new ways to educate people using the park to the special functions, values, and qualities of this unique and dynamic landscape. In the trips I’ve made up the Rogue, for example, I’m always impressed by the high water markings up in the nearby trees.

Your narrative is clear and pleasant to read. You use maps well. The diagrammatic process you use for reading the landscape, revealing places, and placing issues and opportunities makes matters immediately obvious to the reader. It’s a good start at number one above. I like the idea of a recreational matrix related to land conditions.

Your goals are especially good I think, and I like the way they clearly establish the interaction of river health and public recreation, but I might say after the comma in the second section: especially designed to further the understanding and appreciation of river history, functions and values – or something to that effect that calls into play the need for new ideas related to number 3. Above.

Objectives? You’ll need to identify floodplains and habitats in order to manage for them etc. You’ll need to build a recreational river matrix in order to apply it...

This is a great start R, and the project has the potential to have an important life beyond our school. Soon, I predict, they’ll all be using your eManual on river park planning.

Keep it flowing,

Jerry

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## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

Name: S. H. F.

Title: Heller Healing Garden

Comments:

S: I've just gone ahead and named this garden for you relatives and you, assuming some of the family you refer to were Hellers. Note how close the word sounds. A place to raise a little heal?

You say you aren't getting anywhere, but it's nothing a little intentional mode, taken seriously won't cure. You need to turn your questions around now and say what you're going to do, trying to not just give general answers. Take your goals and objectives. (Please) They are both good representations of your intelligent use of the class models and your mild chicken-heartedness about moving into deeper whats. Note that each of the goal arrays stops at the objective level with a fairly general statement. No design object level stuff at all. Annoying, isn't it? Pleasing enclosures and appropriate vegetation taken to the next level in the array is? Private rooms that are, made out of, such as? Shade? How about an arbor that runs across the front of, or the planting of a large Sugar Maple near the...? Economic? How about coming up with something? Ecological? What native plants? One of the ways to do this is to use examples from your various books and precedents to show the deeper whats as you do with the cover of your report.

Questionnaires are useful devices and will get you some feedback, but you'd be miles ahead to take a good schematic with you that shows preliminary layouts for everything and use these possibilities to ask people there what they think. It will be easier for them to react to likes and dislikes and raise concerns if they have something more tangible to deal with. For a process like this, I think questionnaires are a little too verbal, probably better for commenting on a proposal than gathering materials for generating one. Designers can stimulate the process by having ideas, importing possibilities, rehearsing possibilities that stimulate feedback.

I think your project just needs your time and attention now to make some needed progress.

This will be a terrific learning experience with just a little more confidence mixed in right now. Here's a cup of Jerry's special confidence coffee to help you gear up for the next round. See you Friday.

Thanks,

Jerry

## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

**Name:** T. B.

**Title:** The Voices of Washington-Jefferson Park: a focus for the Whiteaker neighborhood

Comments:

T:

The Voices... is a very evocative title and your images from the Village of Arts and Humanities are very beautiful. I love the angel murals where the angels are the kids themselves. And the use of such places as Parc Gruell as a precedent certainly makes your intended direction clear. The metaphor of voices works in several ways, the multi-cultural and multiple-use and user nature of the park – social voices, and also the special voices of music and murals and dance, the voice of art.

And **“Thus my goal is to bridge physical, cultural and economic barriers through the use of art, music and dance as a common language.”** This is a noble goal, well stated, and a clear focus for your work.

What I like about it, if I understand you correctly, is that you really mean voices in its wider set of meaning. You intend to pay attention to the social dimensions of the concept and then more explicitly concentrate on some opportunities for new site art in the park at several scales and in multiple modes.

What I also like about it is that you are not trying to do a new all-purpose master plan for the park, but building on its current successes and responding to some of its ongoing problems by adding some important missing qualities. Missing at this point, however, are enough particulars to enable you to put together a schematic plan related to your new contributions to the park by the end of this term. This is your highest priority. How to get from here to there?

**How about naming the projects you have in mind related to art, music and dance and describing each one more explicitly?** You don't want to be in a position during comp studio of still wondering what these might be, what kinds of space or relationships they need, where they might best go etc. If you have more ideas and your ideas grow and change as you do your studio work, terrific, but you need a firmer launching set.

How about using your map, showing where people are in the park, and evaluating it from the point of view of where some of your new installations, pieces, constructions, overlays or whatever might go?

You already have experience with the site from your former studio, so why not use this knowledge now?

How about taking the map describing present uses and evaluating it from the point of view of where changes in the park surround might be needed to create a healthier social environment and even proposing some of the new uses and activities you think are important?

How about trying to interpret this evolving social setting for its potential relationships to your park art, tying the envisioned setting and the art together as called for in your beautiful metaphor?

In general, how about not just mapping and describing things, but also evaluating them from your principal points of view?

The goal array exercises can help you work down in scale and provide a guide to where you will need to put together more specific programmatic materials. Being willing to say what's working and what's not and being willing to have an opinion about what each area needs or the ways in which it could benefit from your overlays is what's needed to take this further.

I am anticipating such a lovely further and WJ Park could use a large dose of the inspiration I see you gathering for your studio work.

Thanks, and keep on this now when it counts.

Jerry

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## Mid-term Report - A Project Critique

**Name:** V. A.

**Title:** Roof Gardens

Comments:

V.:

Yes, I agree it was important to investigate the history of rooftop gardens and gather the materials and references needed to help you articulate your case for building them everywhere. I'm converted. Where do I sign up? Springing from rooftop gardens might get a little dangerous so I think I'll drop the metaphor. Splat!

From the way you write this up – and you write very well, very clearly with an obvious intelligence – I know this is still in your mind a thesis and the Dorilton is seen as a test case, a means toward a roof garden model. Your project is first the general: Roof Gardens, and then the application. You evaluate the general case well, but have only just begun to deal with the Dorilton. How do I get you to reverse the order for a while to Dorilton/Roof Gardens and ultimately to keep these two sides tightly together?

If I were to begin to write the beginning project abstract paragraph I've been trying to get you all to provide, based on what you've written, and keeping the general which is important to your conception, but trying to build up the role and presence of the particular in the project, it would probably go something like this:

This project uses the rooftops of the Dorilton Cooperative building on West 71<sup>st</sup> Street and Broadway on Manhattan's upper west side as a developmental model for a transferable rooftop garden process in New York City. The intent is to stimulate a deeper understanding of the environmental potential of such civic greening as demonstrate the untapped opportunity such places present for enhancing the quality of urban living. The intended products of the project include: a rooftop evaluation process and its application to the Dorilton; a model of rooftop garden types and a specific garden plan, planting plan and maintenance plan for the Dorilton; a palette of suitable plants for the New York city environment; and some recommended technical systems important to this special garden circumstance. The model will be applied to the rooftops nearby the Dorilton in a more preliminary and conceptual way as a means of conveying the great variety and potential of the model and the qualitative impact the process could have as it spreads across the rooftops of the city.

Then I'd go on to provide some background and justification for the idea i.e. use your present material.

Then I'd speculate about and begin to build the evaluation process and the rooftop garden typology.

Then I'd evaluate the Dorilton, find it a type A "rooftop painting" or whatever on the bottom level and a "solar garden type" on the upper with limited sports use...

And so on keeping the work building at both levels: specific/general and general/specific and speculating about how I was going to package and present all this to its greatest advantage. This a top floor conception, Valerie, a high wire undertaking, and it should also be a lot of fun. Build some of the lower floor structure now as quickly as you can.

Thanks,

Jerry