



Malcolm X Academy, 3rd and 4th Grade
Student Proposals
Hunters View Neighborhood Redevelopment Project



Introduction

How can the new Hunters View HOPE SF housing revitalization project respond to the special needs of children and youth? This is the question explored by 3rd and 4th grade students in Mr. Moore and Ms. Fredrikson's classes at Malcolm X Academy this spring. The students worked with architectural educator Shirl Buss from the University of California, Berkeley Center for Cities and Schools and Rommel Taylor, Prescott Reavis, Katherine Williams and Michael Huang from the San Francisco Chapter of the National Organization of Minority Architects. Together we engaged in a series of hands-on architecture and planning projects to identify and document the student visions for how this housing development can be a catalyst for positive change in the community.

Some of the goals for the project were:

- To engage students in research about their local environments

- To promote a positive sense of place by building upon assets, strengths of the school, neighborhood, and community

- To introduce students to a diverse group of professional planners and architects

- To honor students' voices by creating and presenting their ideas in drawings, models, and artifacts

During the course of the project the students identified how the special needs of students and neighbors of all ages and abilities might be incorporated into the final design of this project. This document represents our process and the products we produced.



The Educators

The students are supported every day by their dedicated teachers, and their special aids. For this project, each of the primary teachers, Ms. Fredrikson and Mr. Moore, opened up their classrooms and allowed the students to engage in messy, hands-on projects with a team of architects. They often got involved in the projects themselves as well. They in turn were supported by many community members and volunteers, including Ms. Bailey and Mr. Riley.



Mr. Moore



Ms. Fredrikson



Ms. Bailey



Mr. Riley



Shirl Buss, Center for Cities and Schools

This project was coordinated by Shirl Buss who is a designer, educator and urban planner. For more than 20 years, Buss has worked with children and adults on design and construction projects, with a specialty in consensus-based participatory design. As an educator and researcher, Buss' work focuses on children, youth and the urban built environment. Ms. Buss is a consultant for the Center for Cities and Schools at the University of California at Berkeley. The Center for Cities & Schools works to promote high quality education as an essential component of urban and metropolitan vitality to create equitable and sustainable cities and schools for all.

The Architects from SFNOMA

National Organization of Minority Architects



Katherine Williams

Katherine is a Frederick P. Rose Architectural Fellow at the San Francisco Housing Community Development Corporation. As a fellow, her work has ranged from tracking very large development projects in her neighborhood to managing a small community center renovation project. Katherine is currently assisting on the project management of an 18 home affordable condo building. Katherine also served on the board of Urban Ecology. Katherine graduated from Howard University and is a LEED Accredited Professional.



Michael Huang

Michael was born in Taipei, Taiwan, and grew up in Bradenton, Florida. He has a B. Arch from Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago. He currently works as a junior designer for Gutierrez Associates, in Oakland, where he prepares drafting and presentation material from concept design phase through construction documentation for various commercial and residential projects. Michael also has been active in Architecture for Humanity, an international network of building professionals who bring design, construction and development services to communities in need.



Prescott Reavis

Prescott Reavis has spent the majority of his career focusing on the programming, planning, managing, designing and the construction of buildings which enable healing, learning and discovery, throughout the country. Mr. Reavis's latest endeavors are the design and planning of the Energy Center for the University of California's San Francisco Medical Center at Mission Bay with Anshen + Allen. Furthermore Prescott is the Corporate Internship Coordinator for Anshen+Allen. Prescott has mentored students of all ages about the architecture and the built environment.



Rommel Taylor

Rommel Taylor graduated with a degree in Architecture from California College of the Arts. His professional design experience has focused on work for nonprofit organizations, public housing, single-family homes, and public work. In his art he explores the aesthetic, social, and narrative potential of public and private spaces. He is passionate about exposing young people to architecture, art, and design. He currently works for the San Francisco Department of Public Works Bureau of Architecture.

Our Process

1. Mapping

To begin the project, we looked at maps of the neighborhood surrounding Malcolm X Academy between 3rd Street and the waterfront, and south of Evans Avenue and north of Gillman Avenue. We used a key to locate prominent landmarks, important to us: our homes, the school, our favorite places. We also spent some time assessing the assets and deficiencies in the neighborhood. Each student had his or her own map of the neighborhood, and made notations on those maps. The attached map represents a composite of our responses and assessments. This does not include homes. To document where we live, we constructed a 3-dimensional map of the neighborhood, and built mini-models of our own homes and placed on that map.



NAME **COMPOSITE**
not including homes

MY NEIGHBORHOOD, MY COMMUNITY

MY HOUSE	HOW I GET TO SCHOOL
MALCOLM X ACADEMY	WHERE I GO
MY FAVORITE PLACES-WHY?	OTHER SPECIAL PLACES
PLACES I DON'T LIKE-WHY?	

Our Process

2. Brainstorming

For our second session, the architects presented a summary of the John Stewart Company master plan and renderings of the proposed Hunters View redevelopment project. We discussed what this project means for the students who actually live there, and what this means for the school and community.

The students asked a few questions, and then together we all brainstormed about how the development might be more responsive to not only youth but people of different ages. We briefly discussed the newspaper article in the SF Chronicle about this project.

We brainstormed, and generated some very strong ideas for how to make the HOPE SF development more youth-friendly, more responsive to youths needs, and more connected to the school. The list included community assets that the students felt would be beneficial to not only youth, but their families and friends. The list included: library, recreation center, businesses, adventure playground, swing, treehouses, zipline, skatepark, swimming pool, park, safe paths to school, water park, theater, arcade, recording studio.



3. Prioritizing

During our third session we organized our wish lists into four categories: open space, recreational space, businesses, community resources. Then we divided into team, with each team focusing on one of these categories. We looked at sources of inspiration-images of places that were similar to those on our wish list. We also looked at the map of the master plan in more detail--especially those areas that feature open space, community buildings, and those spaces that are adjacent to Malcolm X Academy. Each team selected images from the sources of inspiration. They also prioritized which features they felt would be most important within their category. And they answered a set of questions that established a rationale for why they selected what they did. They made posters that documented this process and encapsulated their recommendations.



Our Process

4. Study Models

After we established our priorities, we spent more time evaluating some of the best ideas on the on wish lists. We went back into our teams to develop in more detail the top ideas, and The students worked at a 1/4" scale on these study models and explored how architecture is created by thinking 3-dimensionally, as well as in plan. As they became more realized, the students were able to see the advantages and disadvantages of their proposals, and were able to work through some of the problems of scale, form and content.



Our Process

5. Proposals into the Master Plan

Finally, the students went to work integrating their best ideas into a larger version of the master plan. They created smaller scale models of their best ideas, and developed them in more detail to integrate them meaningfully into the space/planned buildings for the Hunters View project. The intention was to start to marry their ideas with the actual plan for the development, and to suggest to the developers some of the more realistic ways in which to incorporate their ideas into the final project. Those proposals can be seen in more detail in the following pages.

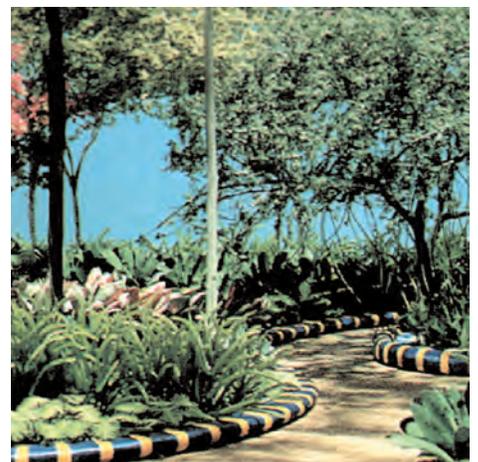


Our Recommendations

for the HOPE SF Hunters View Neighborhood Redevelopment Project

1. Safety

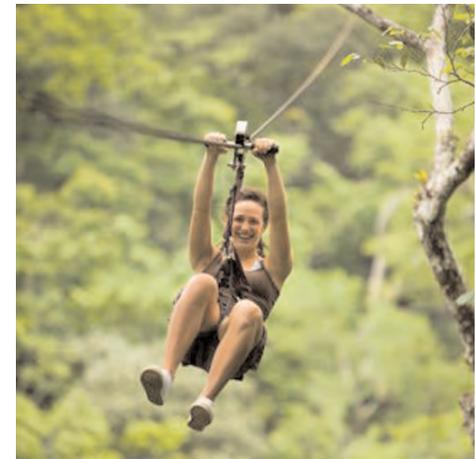
Students are very concerned about existing conditions in their neighborhoods and community with respect to safety and security. Collectively they constructed a visual taxonomy of the spaces and places that they avoid, fear, or have anxious feelings about. (i.e. "there is a lot of shooting on that street") There are a few places that the students have identified as safe havens: the Boys and Girls Club, their own homes, and the school. Their proposals for the HOPE SF Hunters View project included many suggestions for safe pathways, streets, and routes that connected the home environments to the local resources, businesses and the school.



Our Recommendations

2. Physical Challenges and Recreational Diversity

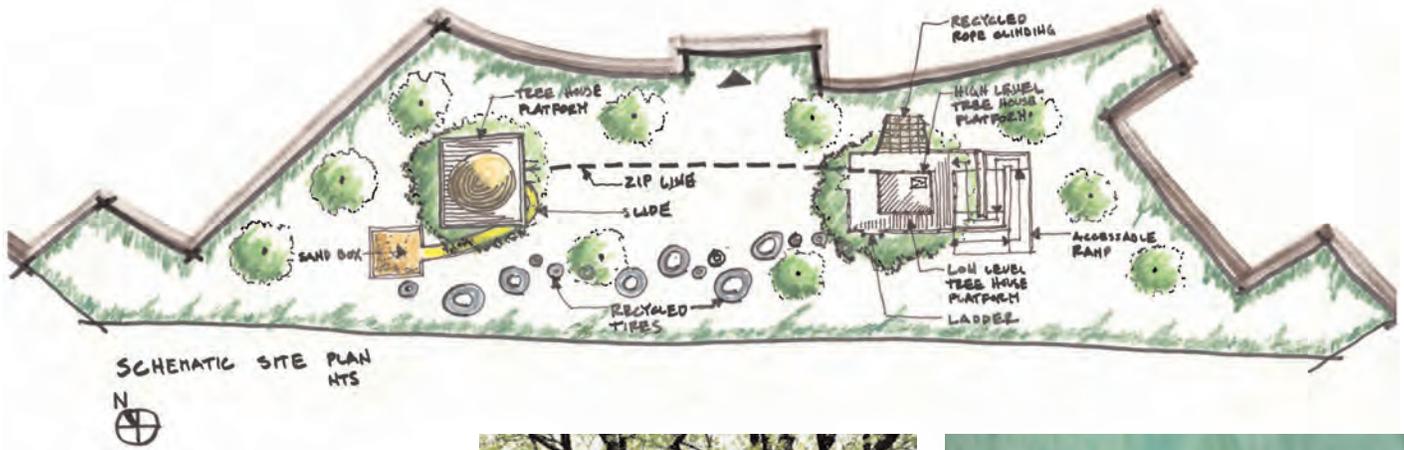
Overwhelmingly, the students are excited about integrating outdoor recreational opportunities into the open spaces and green spaces currently identified in the master plan for the Hunters View revitalization project. They came to consensus about the importance of having safe places for play, exploration and physical challenge. They are also excited about integrating these recreational opportunities into the neighborhoods, and making them available and accessible to students during the school day. Their ideas include: organized sports facilities; intergenerational recreational green space; adventure playground; and places to explore and find sanctuary (such as treehouses). Ideally these places would be linked to the school by safe and visually pleasant bike and footpaths.



Our Recommendations

2. Physical Challenges and Recreational Diversity

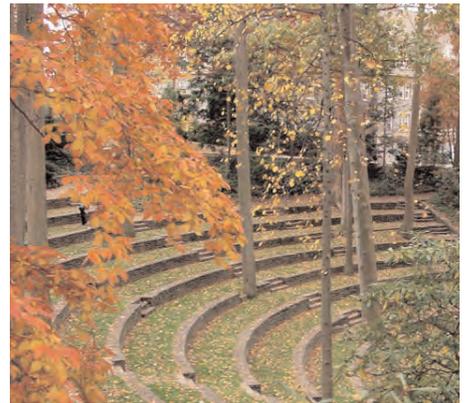
Within this category, a major recommendation the students had was to create an adventure playground, with a treehouse integrated into it. Ideally this would be a place where the students could come during special times during the school day to play and relax. They had a great deal of passion and enthusiasm for this idea. They recommended that it be integrated into the green open space immediately adjacent to the school.



Our Recommendations

3. Community Connections

The students expressed skepticism about how the school might be linked to the new Hunters View community in a meaningful way. It was hard for them to visualize how the redevelopment project could possibly impact, let alone improve, the quality of their everyday lives. However, with some prompting and visualizing exercises, the students became more excited about the possibility of integrating community resource nodes into the residential neighborhoods and linking those nodes to their school physically and/or technologically. Some of the community resource nodes they identified as being most important included: library and tech resource center; performance space/theater; art galleries and community gathering places.



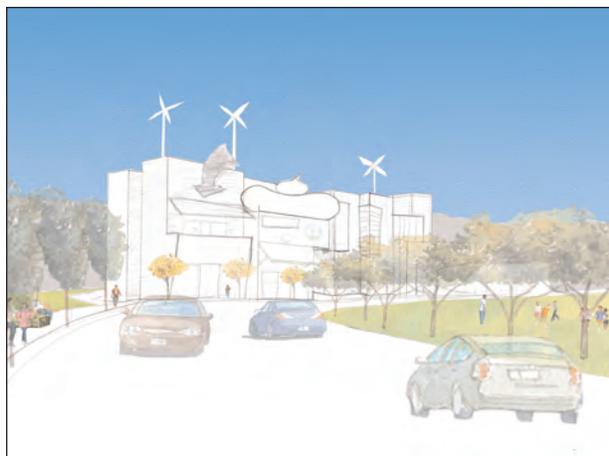
A collage of images related to the redevelopment project. On the left, there are four small photographs of colorful, child-like architectural models. To their right are four architectural drawings labeled "THEATER FACADE", "GALLERY FACADE", "LIBRARY FACADE", and "ENTRY GATE". On the right side of the collage is a larger architectural site plan showing a building layout with labels for "ENTRY GATE", "PARK", and "MATCOX x ACADEMY". The text "Ideas from the kids" is written vertically on the left side. At the bottom right, the text "Hope SF Hunter's View Neighborhood Redevelopment Project" is displayed.



Our Recommendations

4. Businesses and Economic Development

Many of the students are very enthused about creating the physical infrastructure within which adults and youth would have the opportunity to operate and patronize small locally owned businesses. Most of the identified businesses are focused on food vending and consumption, although the students are also interested in opportunities to make and sell creative art work and recreational commodities.



You are invited to

A Gallery of Creative Proposals

for the HOPE SF Hunters View

Neighborhood Redevelopment Project

Thursday, May 28, 2009

1:40 – 2:40 p.m.

Malcolm X Academy
350 Harbor Rd, San Francisco

The UC Berkeley Center for Cities & Schools, and SFNOMA (National Organization of Minority Architects) worked with 3rd and 4th graders at Malcolm X Academy on a series of hands-on architecture and planning projects to express their visions for community change.

Young people from Mr. Moore and Ms. Fredrikson's classes focused on the Hunters View HOPE SF neighborhood revitalization project now being developed by Hunters View Associates.

The students identified how the special needs of students and neighbors of all ages and abilities might be incorporated into the final design of this project.

Please come and honor these students as they present their ideas, drawings and models.



For information, please contact Shirl Buss at shirl@LSA-Design.com

