

REWEAVING



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THE NEIGHBORHOOD FABRIC

How Modular Housing Can Build Affordable and Dignified Communities



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THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE
OF ARCHITECTS

i | ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & INVITATION



I have always considered our initiative, to weave modular housing into urban neighborhoods, as an open ended proposition. There is no end date in mind. I have envisioned a sustained process that evolves with the communities it serves, thoughtfully filling as many gaps on as many city blocks as possible. To realize such an ambitious goal, our team must now engage willing partners, stakeholders, and policy-makers. We seek an audience with these community leaders, to share our

proposal for dignified affordable housing. This publication is a collection of research, lessons and ideas which we have gathered since beginning our work in August 2005. Support has come from sponsors and volunteers, in the form of financial and material contributions, and commitments of time, talent, and even patience.

Motivating us out of the gate has been the national component of the American Institute of Architects. Creators of the Blueprint for America, our own professional organization has challenged us and equipped us the greatest. Thank you.

In addition to training, resources, and encouragement, the AIA has awarded us a Blueprint Supplemental Grant, providing us with the necessary funding to advance our initiative. A big thank you also goes to our dedicated collaborator, The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, School of Architecture and Urban Planning, especially Dean Robert Greenstreet, former Chair of Architecture Brian Wishne, and Professor Chris Cornelius.

With your leadership, we matched a talented group of students to our community design process. Thank you Jasenko Badic, Erin Lawrence, Bryan Finnegan, Ryan O'Connor, and Melanie Taylor of Team FOM, Alex Getson, Mike Mireau, Kevin Porter, Sara Rogers, and Erik Walsh of Team SKEAM, and Jon Brown, Erik Hancock, Isaac Wallace, Abby White, and John Wroblewski of Team RHSC. These students excelled and endured in every way possible, and their award-winning studio work brings life to the pages of this book.

Next, I wish to thank our neighborhood partners, with whom our initiative has become an enriching shared vision. To Milwaukee's Bob Greene of the Merrill Park Neighborhood Association, who embraced our concept with enthusiasm and optimism, I express my gratitude. You are a true advocate.

“An enriching shared vision...”

To Dominick Martinelli and Rachel Westergren of Neighborhood Housing Services of Southeast Wisconsin, thank you for your warm welcome, support, and commitment to our initiative in Racine. Your tireless dedication to affordable housing is unequalled. In conjunction with these partners in Milwaukee and Racine, we have forged a relationship with the cities as well. I am thankful to all at the City of Milwaukee and the City of Racine who have given us their time and expertise, providing us assistance, and residential sites on which to re-weave the neighborhood fabric.

Another key collaborator on our initiative has been our modular housing partner, Terrace Homes. I cannot express enough thanks to this team of expert modular home builders, especially firm leader Sarah Manternach-Wiedmeyer, and Jim Stommel. Whether sharing knowledge and timely information with our student designers, attending reviews and town hall meetings, developing cost estimates and working drawings, Sarah and Jim have given us undivided attention and consideration. This dedication is not taken for granted. Based 150 miles away in Friendship, Wisconsin, they have logged much time and many miles to meet with us.

Finally, through the ups and downs of this lengthy process, the greatest gift from them may be their patience. Jim has since moved on to other endeavors, offering his assistance whenever we need it, while Sarah and Terrace Homes remain steadfast in their commitment. Thank you so much.

Next, I extend my gratitude to the Wisconsin Preservation Fund, a non-profit organization which has donated generously and served as our secure fundraising repository, ensuring that other sponsors of our initiative receive tax deductible benefits, and peace of mind. I thank our growing list of sponsors whose generous support has strengthened our cause. Special thanks to AIA Wisconsin for encouragement, knowledge and financial resources. To Bill Babcock, Brenda Taylor, Mary Orello, and Tracy Drinkwater, you have led by example in embracing the Blueprint for America, and your partnership is very much appreciated. I am truly grateful for the camaraderie and collaboration with my AIA150 colleagues Marty Sell of AIA Wisconsin and Kelly Thompson-Frater of AIA Southwest Wisconsin. You have both inspired me to give my absolute best.

“An open-ended proposition...”

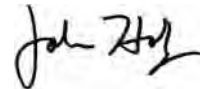
Thanks also to the folks at Kahler Slater Architects, Berghammer Construction, Riley Construction, Mortenson Construction, Delta Electric, and the Plunkett Foundation. Special thanks to the Kohler Company, which has donated box loads of water-conserving plumbing fixtures and faucets for our completed modular housing. Your generosity confirms that quality will be built into every aspect of these homes.

Another key sponsor of this initiative has been Plunkett Raysich Architects, where I have enjoyed the opportunity to grow my career as an architect and community advocate since arriving in 2001. Without the enduring trust and support of this firm, I would not have been able to lead this effort. For their understanding and flexibility with my work schedule, their hospitality to host meetings, and for their considerable financial contribution and endorsement of my work with AIA150, I extend my deepest gratitude.

Finally, I thank the people that have made up our AIA150 Executive Team and those that offered assistance over the past three and a half years. You have done the collective thinking, writing, and lifting for this initiative. Thank you, Chris Kronser, Joe Lawton, Karen Plunkett-Muenster, Mike Bahr, Michael Wallace, and Amy Allendorf, for a commitment that truly shines. Thank you, Ben Kossow, Matt Prince, Henry Kosarzycki, Paul Griger, Darrin Richert, Paul Greszczak, Paul Klein, Mark Rapant, Scott Davis, Devin Kack, Chad O'Donnell, Nic Pryor and Pauline Kleinke for a contribution of time and talent that is greatly appreciated.

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This long list of individuals speaks to the depth of our affordable housing initiative, as each contribution adds to the collective and indelible vision we are sharing with our community. Together, with our neighborhood partners, sponsors and team members, we have assembled a thoughtful body of work, to share with new partners and advance the dialogue with existing partners. Consider this book as an invitation to sustain our initiative, and build thoughtfully-designed affordable housing, one by one, block by block. Together we can reweave the neighborhood fabric.



*John Holz, AIA
AIA150 Director
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