Shared Space

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http://www.hopfensperger.co.uk/index_files/SharedSpace.htm
Shared Space

Definition: A unique approach to urban design that utilizes non-conventional methods of traffic management

“Treat the driver like an idiot and they will behave accordingly”

-Hans Monderman
Outline

• Shared Space Introduction
  ✓ Urban traffic problem
  ✓ The solution
  ✓ The Philosophy

• Shared Space Projects
  ✓ Drachten, The Netherlands
  ✓ Oosterwolde, The Netherlands
  ✓ Cambridge, MA

• Shared Space Environment
  ✓ Geometric aspects
  ✓ Suburban environment
  ✓ Culture/Purpose
Early America

- Markets
- Commerce
- Social Center
- Not focused on movement
The Automobile

- Early 1900s
- Focus remained social
- No traffic controls
Present Day

- Focus on the automobile
- Little interaction
- Loss of social aspect

www.pps.org
Sign, Sign, Everywhere a Sign...
Highway

Regulated

Impersonal

Predictable

Single Purpose

Traffic Signs and Markings

The Public Realm

Culturally Defined

Personal

Unpredictable

Multipurpose

Eye Contact
Removes traffic controls in the city
- Lights
- Signage
- Road Markings

Encourages the social aspect of the space
- Promotes communication through eye contact
- Removes elevation changes at curbs
- Reduced vehicle speeds
Shared Space Projects: Drachten, The Netherlands
Shared Space Projects:
Drachten, The Netherlands

www.share-space.org
Shared Space Projects: Oosterwolde, The Netherlands

www.share-space.org
Shared Space Projects: Cambridge, Massachusetts

johnkeyes.com/archives/ massachusetts/cambridge/

www.bostonsquares.com/ harvard

www.answers.com/topic/ harvard-square
Shared Space Projects:
Cambridge, Massachusetts

European vs. U.S. Approach to Shared Space

- The examples from The Netherlands were measures to manage traffic flow and address congestion.

- Yes, they incorporated aesthetic elements in the design, but that was not the main focus of the project.

- The Winthrop Street project is part of a larger development project that is attempting to improve the quality of life for the neighborhood.
Niche Market in the United States?

- Transformation
  - Neglected zones
  - Now booming
- Belltown
  - Profusion of housing
  - Healthy commercial scene
  - Vibrant cultural life
  - Urban living is being realized
Niche Market in the United States?

- Urban infill development
  - Commercial
  - Residential
- Attract people
  - Visitors
  - Businesses
  - Workers
- Park starved area
- Open Space!
  - Lunch outs
  - Recreation
  - Shopping
  - Commercial scene at waterfront

“Pedestrian Envrironment,” Denny Regrade Urban Center Village Draft Neighborhood Plan, 2004
Shared Space Geometric Aspects

- Assist in effort to calm traffic
- Narrow street entrances
- Discontinuity
  - Play areas
  - Benches
  - Flower beds
  - Trees
- Road bending
- Alternated Parking

www.urban75.org/london/london-snaps.html, 2007
Shared Space in the Suburbs

• Similar idea already
  ✓ Dead end streets
  ✓ Cul-de-sacs
• Neighbors
  ✓ Not interactive in today’s society
  ✓ Interaction encouraged
• Play environment
  ✓ Forget “don’t play in the streets” concept!
  ✓ Safe
  ✓ Increased volume
  ✓ Increased Complexity
• Pride in traffic environment
  ✓ Neighborhood flower beds
  ✓ General upkeep

Shared Space Culture

- Works in Netherlands
- “Laid back” society
  - 5 weeks vacation
  - Closed on Mondays
  - Having set schedules
- United States contrast
  - Entrenched on being on time
  - Keeping up in a fast-paced world
  - “Time is money” philosophy
- Different results
  - Right of way sharing?
  - Safety problems?

http://www.indymedia.org.uk/images/2006/03/336315.jpg
Shared Space Purpose

- Promote commercial interests
  - Shops
  - Businesses
- Encourage personal interaction
  - Tourist attractions
  - Scenic areas
  - Open spaces
  - Rich tradition
  - Cultural upkeep
- Increase traffic flow
  - Laweiplein, Netherlands
    - Large flow
    - Auto flow similar
  - Through auto traffic
    - Shares highway characteristics
      - Point A to
    - Viable alternative route

http://www.indymedia.org.uk/images/2006/03/336315.jpg
**Shared Space Discussion Questions**

- Any questions about shared space in general?
- Are there any roads in the Twin Cities or other places that could benefit from a street or incorporating some of it’s concepts?
  - Washington Ave on Campus?
  - Nicollet Mall?
- Do you think the sharing concept would work in America?
- Would you trust your real or hypothetical kids to play on a shared street in the suburbs?
- What about any negative effects for blind people?
  - Any ideas of how they could be assisted in this type of environment?
- How should the shared street be funded?
  - Would it be easier to get businesses on the shared street to contribute because of the consumer friendly environment it creates?
- Any ideas for dual purpose strategic road blocks besides park benches, fountains, or flower beds?
  - Would you hang out on a bench in the middle of a shared street like the people in the London picture?