COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

South Africa: A development in community theory and education engagement.

ARCHITECTURE

A

FACILITATOR

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BY GRACE, LOVE AND MERCY  _ JESUS CHRIST MY LORD AND SAVIOUR. DEDICATED TO_ THE NICE FAMILY AND THE PEOPLE OF MAMELODI
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

_A community engagement facilitator for Mamelodi East in partnership with the University of Pretoria._
“CULTURE EQUALS GRAMMAR, AND THE COMMUNITY ENTERS AS THE DIALOGUE.”
Poetic of people. (M. Edwards, 1991)

“BUILT FORM IS ONLY A POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENT SINCE IT SIMPLY PROVIDES POSSIBILITIES OR CLUES FOR SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR.”
Planning for people. (M. Broady, 1968)

“THROUGH WISDOM A HOUSE IS BUILT, AND BY UNDERSTANDING IT IS ESTABLISHED; BY KNOWLEDGE THE ROOMS ARE FILLED WITH ALL PLEASANT AND PRECIOUS RICHES”
NKJV Holy Bible. (Proverbs 24:3,4)
AFRICA
SOUTH AFRICA
Gauteng
Tshwane
Mamelodi

Figure 2
African Context
INTRODUCTION to community engagement

Community development and social intervention has been practised by most Universities, colleges, Government and NGOs' world wide, each one responding to its own context and subsequent social situation and structure. However in recent time one finds this development to reach beyond the immediate community and its context but rather to a societal stage; meeting the need for more. It is by this thinking that the concept of community engagement is realised. As noted in a paper by the University of Western Australia:

“in its statement on community engagement, the university argues that engagement with the community is not just service to it through imparting knowledge about social issues and problems. Engagement is defined as a reciprocal process whereby communication and interaction effectively lead to a shared perception of social issues and concerns”

“Genuine engagement moves beyond the level of mere service and allows the opportunity for societal response to help redefine the nature of the problem itself and perhaps forge new solutions.”

We as a South African people find ourselves in a context richly entangled by cultures, races, ages, ethnics and histories. We all share a country of diversity and we all deal with a full spectrum of people of all economic backgrounds and livelihoods on a daily basis.

The common denominator is education or the lack their off. The effect that this has on people and on the development of a country and communities.

To address community engagement at any level one needs to address and understand what the social boundaries and obstacles are that prevent a people to effectively live and develop together.

Community engagement allows for the merger of these two paradigms. This is realised through the use of tertiary education by involving all tiers of educated people and all tiers of economic affluence with the possibility to deliver certain civic functions that holistically affects and develops the community.

We are all people with the same needs and same aspiration some have bigger dreams and others smaller goals living in communities and surviving as individuals, as noted by Paul Oliver

“Humankind is social, and the need to be in the company of others extends beyond safety and self-preservation. Companionship and competition, argument and appreciation, the sharing of problems and the giving of advice, and the discussion and dispute about issues of mutual concern are essential among all social groups”

“But a broadening of local knowledge and experience. The news of events, the exchange of ideas and information and the expansion of the intellect and the heart are made more possible in the social life of the village and Small Township”

This dissertation will endeavour to realise the vision of the University of Pretoria of academic service learning and the vision of Dr. Tokwane head of faculty of Community Engagement; but go one step further beyond the immediate and propose a holistic effective method of engaging with the community, the Mamelodi East Community. As expressed by Howard P Butcher of the University of Western Australia

“engagement with the community is not just service to it through imparting knowledge about social issues and problems, engagement is defined as a reciprocal process whereby communication and interaction effectively lead to a shared perception of social issues and concerns”

In summary the principle methodology aimed in this dissertation: Creating a community engaged campus and tertiary education by combining service learning, education, providing the require a civic service and developing a facilitary platform to the community, thus becoming an open door for community activity and interaction. Not just repeating the lines but actually playing the role.

“The physical and social design needs to be interlocking”

To attempt a postulated design hypothesis on community engagement one needs to firstly define the term community and the methods pertaining to engaging with this community and secondly contextualise and possibly regionalise the theme to South Africa and its people. Only then can one effectively formulate an architectural approach to making social webbing architectural programmatic while being socially responsive to the South African and African environment.

“Architectural design like music to film is complementary to human activity it does not shape it.”
CONTENTS

1_ Chapter 1_ A briefing in Community development.
1.1. The challenge
1.2. A solution
1.3. Attempting the need
1.4. The sub solutions_ resolving the need.

2_ Chapter 2_ Glossary of discourse terms and definitions.
2.1. Terms
2.2. Definitions

3_ Chapter 3_ An urban vision of “RURBAN” place making.
3.1. Hans Strijdom_ Both an edge and a pathway.
3.2. “Rurban”_ a peri Rural peri Urban concentration.
3.3. Mamelodi East development Vision.
3.4. A “Rurban” place making policy

4_ Chapter 4_ Development in Community space theory.
4.1. Social space theory
4.2. Culture, identity and communication, a social dialogue
4.3. Community engagement principles
4.4. A Summary

5_ Chapter 5_ Historic & Contextual Analysis _ Mamelodi.
5.1. Mamelodi historic time line
5.2. Vista university history
5.3. Mamelodi East, a context analysis
5.4. Mamelodi East, a social analysis
5.5. Mamelodi East, a civic evaluation
5.6. Tertiary education facts and figures
5.7. Non Government Organisation profiles

6_ Chapter 6_ Engagement by Architectural Design.
6.1. Community facility and African context precedents
6.2. Theoretical approach of built form
6.3. Analytical process of architectural reasoning
6.4. Social derivative space programming
6.5. Public Architecture design process

7_ Chapter 7_ Technical discourse.
7.1. Theory of structure
7.2. Systems & Service _ A sustainable approach
7.3. Tectonic approach
7.4. Material and embodied energy
7.5. Technical design process_ detail sketches
7.6. Existing structures_ images and sketches

8_ Chapter 8_ Technical presentation drawings

9_ Chapter 9_ Client _ Management _ Costing & Development
9.1. The client
9.2. Funding
9.3. Management proposal
9.4. Brief costing

10_ Chapter 10_ References.

11_ Addendum.
11.1 Final images & perspectives
Figure 3
Mamelodi
A housing fabric