



Thomas Dolan Architecture : Planning Issues

Compact Pedestrian-Oriented Mixed Use Communities

Live/work is by its very nature a mixed-use building type and land use. As such, it enables both the possibility of far less reliance on the automobile by its residents and the relief that diminished traffic impact brings to its neighbors. Compact pedestrian-oriented mixed use communities, such as those proposed and built by members of the Congress for the New Urbanism, are a natural setting for live/work projects, and in fact many have been included in some of the best known communities, including Celebration, Seaside, Kentlands and Suisun City, California. In fact, one could say that when one includes all three proximity types (live-with™, live-near™ and live-nearby™) virtually all housing in New Urbanist communities--except perhaps detached single family residences--would qualify as live/work.

What follows are excerpts from the Charter of the Congress for the New Urbanism which are relevant to live/work and its ideal pedestrian-friendly setting:

“The Congress for the New Urbanism views disinvestment in central cities... and the erosion of society's built heritage as one interrelated community-building challenge. We stand for the restoration of existing urban centers and towns within coherent metropolitan regions.

“We advocate the restructuring of public policy and development practices to support the following principles: neighborhoods should be diverse in use and population; communities should be designed for the pedestrian and transit as well as the car; cities and towns should be shaped by physically defined and universally accessible public spaces and community institutions; urban places should be framed by architecture and landscape design that celebrate local history, climate, ecology, and building practice.

<http://www.live-work.com/revise/lwi/codes/pedestrian.shtml>



“The neighborhood, the district, and the corridor are the essential elements of development and redevelopment in the metropolis. They form identifiable areas that encourage citizens to take responsibility for their maintenance and evolution. Neighborhoods should be compact, pedestrian-friendly, and mixed-use. Many activities of daily living should occur within walking distance, allowing independence to those who do not drive. Interconnected networks of streets should be designed to encourage walking, reduce the number and length of automobile trips, and conserve energy.

“Within neighborhoods, a broad range of housing types and price levels can bring people of diverse ages, races, and incomes into daily interaction, strengthening the personal and civic bonds essential to an authentic community.”