Kennedy Homes, Affordable Housing _A New Paradigm

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In April 2012, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research, for the first time, included "Using Housing as a Platform to Improve the Quality of Life", as a research goal out of four primary goals in its Strategic Plan. Cited as priorities, was education, early learning and development, improvement of health, economic security and self-sufficiency, in various low to very low income population groups.

Kennedy Homes, Florida, provides a case study demonstration project on how housing can improve "quality of life", creating a new paradigm for affordable housing. National and regional examples are reviewed for comparative climate sensitive and architecturally distinctive affordable housing references, with emphasis on the creation of multi-dimensional public, semi-public, private and semi-private, "collective and individual" spaces with an emphasis on architecturally significant project design as a basis for change.

At Kennedy Homes, local and regional confluences of climate, financial and urban constraints provide for a population of individuals and families of between 28% and 60% of area median incomes in Sailboat Bend, an historic district of Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Located on a significant urban corridor linking downtown and I95, the eight and a half acre site is a transit oriented greenway project exploring landscape and site as an historical redevelopment construct. Kennedy Homes is rooted in an architectural tradition of regional subtropical modernism with local construction techniques and a strategy of efficiency and innovation for affordable design. This USGBC LEED Gold for Homes project, currently being completed, includes adaptive use non-residential structures, eight new two to five story Senior and Multifamily residential buildings in a verdant two city block, including 132 unit urban sustainable courtyard environment of one, two and three bedroom units and community facilities.

Concepts and alignments are paired to provide measurable outcomes. Process and product, city and site, global and local, community and individual, modules and standards are explored in relation to the individual and the whole, the historical and contemporary, the city and the unit. Complex relationships between public and private spaces, safety and security, measured and balanced between the celebration of views, intimate spaces, and notions of place are inspired by the Florida Everglades and paired with urban form, climate responsiveness and traditional housing typologies. Concepts and solutions for volume and scale within the mega block and the unit are explored within the framework of conventional and modular construction systems and historic preservation.

Kennedy Homes proposes inclusive design oriented sustainable affordable housing with demonstrable outcomes for "quality of life" and the greater good.



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