

PROPOSAL

FROM: Fred D. Moyer, Department of Architecture  
TO: University Research Board  
SUBJECT: A Community Advocacy Depot for Champaign County

The purpose of this research proposal is to secure support for an investigation into participatory environmental design utilizing immediately available physical and social conditions of poor communities as a context. This investigation has already begun during Semester II, 1969-70, and the establishment of necessary lines of communications, the acquisition of community based working space and actual project involvement has been accomplished. In order that the objectives of increased knowledge within the profession regarding participatory design can be realized it is vital that the endeavor now begun be continued during the 1970-71 academic year.

Community design centers, under various names, are a very recent phenomena in urban areas, large and small, across the country. Interest within the profession of architecture into such centers reflects a conscience concerned for the "user" of architecture. Increasingly, the user is not the client or the owner, nor is he represented in ~~planning~~ traditional planning processes. The advocacy concept seeks to link decision-making with community need at the level of <sup>the</sup> individuals most affected by that decision-making. Specific goals and areas of activity for the Community Advocacy Depot for Champaign County are described in greater detail within APPENDIX I.

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The generation of new knowledge in this area cannot be accomplished from the vantage point of the classroom nor from the conduct of simulated studies under theoretically simulated circumstances. The nature of the subject precludes these possibilities. It is fortunate for the research purpose that its objective can be met by locally available real conditions and that the request for this study assistance has come, as it must, from the leadership of the poor community.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>John Lee Johnson, Co-Chairman, Concerned Citizens Committee  
Richard C. Davis, Co-Chairman, Concerned Citizens Committee

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Investigation of the kind described here is urgently required if our nation is to respond intelligently to an environmental crisis. Recent national attention has focused upon attributes of community air and water. To be added to these concerns are the attributes of the community's man-made living environment. Of distinct importance is the input of desired life-style, the recognition of what is required. The University of Illinois is offered an opportunity to make what is anticipated to be a significant contribution to the body of knowledge required and, at the same time, provide service to its community. Results of the research investigation would be documented and made available on a wide basis.

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Should support for this proposal be forthcoming, <sup>it</sup> is planned that the Community Advocacy Depot would continue annually on a recurring basis. The facility would be established for training of the new kind of professional required for advocacy planning work. The Depot would also be able to address itself to projects of varying scales over a sufficiently period of time to test alternative methods of approach and accompanying to measure accompanying results.