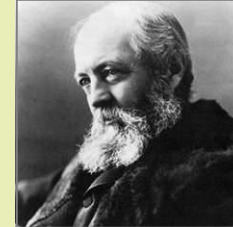




If They Build it, They Will Come!

Expect More. Expect Better Places.



Frederick Law Olmsted

Volume 6 Special Holiday Edition

*“Give us this day,
our daily
discount outlet
merchandise...”*

*Raise up the
multiplex and we
will make a
sacrifice...*

*Who remembers
when it all began
out here in no
man’s land...*

*Before they
passed the
master plan...
here in no man’s
land. “*

-Billy Joel

No Man’s Land
Goodnight, My Angel
River of Dreams
Sony Music

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Olmsted’s Legacy

“I’s seen those big machines come rolling through the quiet pines”... That’s how it all begins, but what we lose sight of is that that it really began with all of GOD’s creation. The rolling hills of Clermont are a unique place in Central Florida that for the most part lies in low flat lands. Machines do the work of man’s conquest of nature—turning the hills and mountains into flat planes ready for “development” and parking lots that are mis-guided by over fifty years of outdated commercial real estate land use policies—otherwise known as sprawl. Sprawl that continues to present day, unbridled and un hindered as seen by the expansive widening of roads (labeled as improvements) and facilitated by policy makers and land use planners with poor

vision doing business as usual. While slowly we see the outcome; vast parking lots to accommodate yet another “big box” retailer that no amount of lush landscaping will ever hide or enhance for the better or make us think its all good. The lack of vision I refer to is a misguided sense that what ever development that rolls in to town will undoubtedly be “good” for “the community bringing prosperity and jobs. To a certain extent that is true. But, what about the big picture? What does this say about us, and what we leave behind to your children and grand children? What kind of a place do we leave behind where parking lots are the major attraction while they really only try to mimic nature ? Lowes and its new neighbor “Hobby Lobby”, is this the best we can do? We all know the answer.



Urban Design

Urban Design is the art of creating and shaping cities and towns, giving form and character with the design of buildings, public spaces, streets, transport systems and amenities like parks and public places., neighborhoods and districts, and entire cities, to make them more functional, attractive, and sustainable.

So how much better is the saying, “if you build better cities, perhaps many more will come.”

Much Ado About Nothing

Any Where, USA

Welcome to anywhere USA.

Cities and towns are un-questionably about it's people. They represent how we want to live and what is important to us as a society. To the extent that they also demonstrate how we relate to our elders, our children, our commerce, and our places.

After all, what attracts people to live in cities and towns in the first place?

In the case of Clermont, Florida, WE SHOULD KNOW BETTER. To be better stewards of our land we must first embrace the "big picture" and offer a vision that will



Look beyond short term gains and develop a strategies that will take us farther as a community and not another target on the map for a corporation. Over a given time, businesses close and abandon their parking lots turning our towns into suburban wastelands.

Mixed-use walkable development plans offer cities and towns better methods to create growth that looks beyond the short term and even provides methods to optimize revenue gains and returns on investments.

The old ways are to be done away with and it is time that Lake County and the City of Clermont and more Florida communities make a conscious effort to renew their commitment to future generations and be sensitive to our environments.

Once the hills are flattened, who will ever put them back—what GOD has created who are we to destroy.

We would like to think that is it for the benefit of the greater good that we all struggle and work towards. The act of creation is bold and meant to enliven—it should be our civic duty to express this in the best manner that we know how. We should create better places. Denser, mixed use places where we ship, live, work and play interconnected to serve everyone—the elderly, the children, the poor and the wealthy.

"Your brain is drawing connections between place and memory, even if you don't realize it."
-Jonas Salk on the subject of "biophilic" design."



Courtesy Google Earth

Clermont doesn't get it..

Vast empty parking lots. "You have arrived nowhere." Absurdity at a Grand Scale. Vast parking lots mis-conceived by poor planners with outdated "sprawl" land use planning tools. Under utilized parking lots that have never used as they were designed show of lack of vision and corporate/government insensitivity to our environment and our community.

A Paris street. (Below)

Without comparing the vast distinctiveness between Paris and Clermont (save for the name which means) We do know that planning and sensitivity to fine grained development made it possible for all aspects of the community to come together in creating great places, streets, and neighborhoods for people to live, work, and play.





“We need better places for our community and our future generations.”



Sol Architecture + Partners LLC

Javier F. De Juan R.A., NCARB, MBA, CNU-a

Co-Founder and principal of Sol Architecture + Partners—NCARB certified Florida registered architect and urbanist with over 20 years of experience in Florida in a variety of public and private architectural projects.

SAP LLC is a Florida native practice offering a full range of professional architectural and interior design services including planning and urban design.

Our Vision: “To serve our communities and support them by advocating and developing sustainable, livable, walkable, and diverse compact mixed-use neighborhoods, towns, and streets.

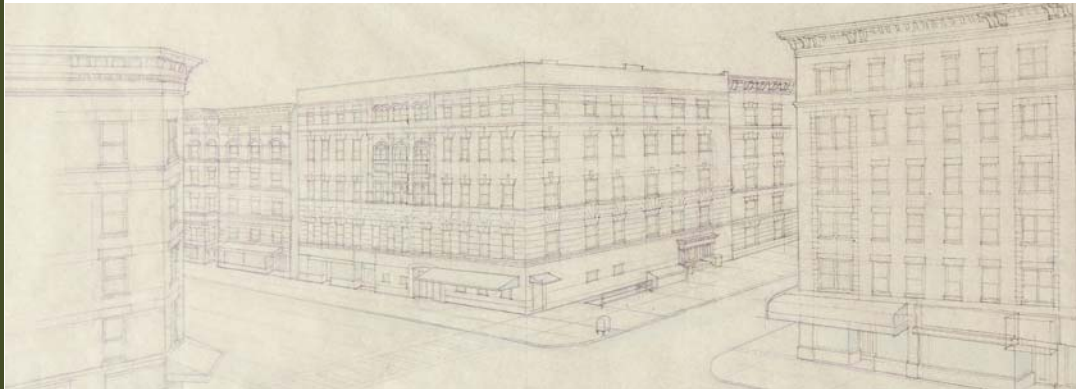


Illustration: Javier De Juan

ACT NOW! Expect more! Support better places and streets.

Donate and Learn more:

The Congress for the New Urbanism CNU.org

SmartGrowthAmerica.org

National Wildlife Federation nwf.org

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IN MEMORY

JOSIE “CHOPi” DE JUAN

Dedicated to our beloved Josie “chopi” - we miss you. You will always be in our hearts for the rest of the days our lives. We love you.

November 28, 2012.