Holcim Awards 2005

ENCOURAGEMENT

2+2+1 House, Cheng Du, China

The project is credited for its awareness of social dynamics and concomitant transformations in lifestyles brought about by increasing urbanization and densification. Although based upon research of traditional housing typologies, the project is widely applicable to other regions facing similar challenges. The project offers a promising approach to maintaining links between generations and thus manifests an ambitious ethical vision. The scheme also displays skill in addressing ecological and economic challenges by promoting moderate cost, medium density, multi-storey residential units in a compact, yet refined series of units. The compactness of the architecture does not limit the freedom of inhabitants from directly influencing their living environment. Nor does the compactness necessarily reduce the flexibility of the units to adapt to further changes in social structure. The project is a significant and aesthetically accomplished contribution to debates pertaining to the sustainable development of culture.

Project description by author

The background of Design

In 21st century, our country is getting aging, which causes many problems. Resources are lack, the ecosystem is destructed, the gap between the rich and the poor is more and more obvious, etc. All these problems must be attached much importance if we want to establish a harmonious society and realize the sustainable development.

More than two thousands years ago, a famous philosopher Mencius said, ‘Care and love my elder, as well as the human old.’ Through many years, the respect for elders, the love for the old, cares for the aged are still the fine tradition in China. The traditional Chinese family is natural organization cares for the aged, and it is an important characteristic of Chinese traditional culture.

Sustainable development natural environment and economy regarded people as the center to point compound sustainable development of culture.

The resident can make some adjustment of the house as the nature, the society, economy, culture etc.

Most older do not live with their children in our country at present. However, what the contemporary senior citizen misses is not only the matter provides, but also the family relatives and descendants’ consolation.

The existing housing pattern cannot adapt to the family scale change and life style. And we have to move into another set of big houses, which way cause resources waste, especially land resources and certain repeated construction.

The design goal

Hold Chinese more and more “2+2+1” family (two old men, a couple and a child) high-efficiently and reasonably.

Save land resources, improve old men’s material living environment and spiritual living environment, promote family’s emotion and the social moral.

The design idea

In our design, the space - 3 m (long) * 3 m (width) * 3 m (high). -is the basic module, and every household occupies 12 pieces of such module, in one floor or two floors, divided into several areas: old men’s living area, young people’s living area, and corresponding communication and sharing area.

Use steel portal frame construction and the same scale -3.9m (long) * 3.9m (width) * 3.0m (high) -is mass produced, which helps reducing the cost of building - to achieve sustainable development of economy.

Relevance to target issues (by author)

Quantum change and transferability

Our design is a transformation based on Chinese traditional housing pattern, and it may apply to any district or city in China. We enable such aspects as the family relationship, the social structure, the moral standards, the environment quality, the potency of land use to obtain enhancement, so as to achieve a kind of sustainable development of the person occupied environment.

Ethical standards and social equity

We use the same dwelling areas to embody social equality by promoting the old people’s living quantity, paying attention to the old-age community of the opposite minority of society. Three generations live in the same house and they still own their independent space, which helps look after each other. Thus it can relieve more and more serious aging problems of our society in a certain extent.

Ecological quality and energy conservation

With gathering land resources, we can have more spaces to build garden in the sky, create green city, and even regulate microclimate in the mean time, recycling utilization of land can be really realized. The high-efficient realization of land and sharing of some facilities can reduce the waste of energy.

Economic performance and compatibility

Our design can adapt to the change of family structure. The resident can make some adjustment of the house type according to their requests by themselves, so as to achieve the reutilization of land. Every housing unit with the same scale - 3.9m (long) * 3.9m (width) * 3.0m (high) - is mass produced, which helps reducing the cost of building - to achieve sustainable development of economy.

Contextual response and aesthetic impact

Chinese traditional supports for elders and yard space may be inheritance of context and culture to achieve sustainable development of culture.