INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IN BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION

INFORMATION

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Around the Task Groups and Working Commissions

W104 – Open Building Implementation

Report on Open Building and Sustainable Environment September 20-22, 2004 Paris, France

The Conference

This annual conference on open building follows nine previous conferences held around the world since 1996. Other meetings have been held in Tokyo, Hong Kong, Taipei, Washington, DC, Helsinki, Brighton, Delft and Mexico City.
The theme of this year's 10th meeting anticipates the 2005 meeting (to be held in conjunction with the SB05 Sustainable Building Conference in Tokyo (www.sb05.com), by linking open building and sustainable environment in an explicit way. The principles of sustainable development have always been implicit in some ways in open building. Sustainable development, like open building, has to do with change - both the maintenance and nurturing of the "commons" and the respect for future generations who follow and must continue to inhabit the shared spaces and harness the common resources. In that sense, open building – whether at the level of the urban tissue or at the level of architecture - is also about change, understanding the commons and articulating the place of the individual. The convergence of these two sets of principles and practices is therefore sensible and auspicious. But much more work lies ahead to connect these two important streams of research, initiative and practice.
A proceedings document was produced for this conference. The first paper is by Professor Habraken – Change and the Distribution of Design. Following that paper are all the abstracts of the 34 papers and presentations, evidence of the diversity of ways in which open building principles are being explored and are flowering in practice around the world, in China, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, South Africa, Mexico, Finland, the Netherlands and elsewhere. At the back of the hard copy of abstracts is a CD containing all the papers and projects presented at the conference, along with the introductory essay by Professor Habraken.

Four Projects Were Presented

- "Smarthouse + 25kV", Robert Winkel, Architect, the Netherlands
- "Open Building In Health Care Architecture: The Case Of the Ino Project In Bern, Switzerland", Stefan Geiser, Canton Bern Building Department
- "Plus-Home Open Building Concept", Esko Kahri, Architect, Professor

- "Development Of Reusable Infill Systems For Elderly People's Living"; Shuichi Matsumura, Assoc. Professor, Tokyo University; Kyouko Muraguchi, Professor, Komazawa Women's Univ.; Seiichi Fukao, Professor, Tokyo Metropolitan Univ; Yongsum Kim, Ph.D Candidate, Univ. of Tokyo

Two Keynote Speeches were also presented by:
- "Open Building and Ecology", Lucien Kroll
- "Open Building and Sustainable Architecture", Frans van der Werf

With new urgency, governments, private corporations and institutions and private citizens are demanding sustainable new construction, regenerative neighborhoods and building adaptation rather than demolition. These demands are voiced in respect to both immediate and long-term community and individual values and aspirations.

Among the available theories and methods enabling professionals to meet these demands is "Open Building"(OB). However, the adoption-in-practice of known open building methods for the delivery of adaptable, open architecture is much too slow. In part, this is because some clients' old habits of asking for functionally determined buildings do not die easily. Other reasons can be found, including obsolete paradigms of practice and regulations, and difficulty in dealing with environments at all scales that are subject to change under conditions of widely distributed control.

This conference enabled us to discuss a number of sub-themes in such as:

- Case studies of the refurbishment of existing building stock
- Capacity analysis methods for open architecture
- Case studies of non-residential open building (medical, education, etc)
- Studies focused on balancing initial costs of OB with long-term facilities value
- Implementing urban transformation strategies based on decision level theory
- Progressive development strategies for sustainable development in developing countries
- Evaluating OB projects using building economics and architectural management theory
- Products, systems and supply channels for the delivery of open, sustainable buildings
- Teaching methods in support of open building
- Alternative paradigms linking Open Building and Sustainable Building

Conference Host Organization

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What is CIB W104 Open Building Implementation?

Open Building is the term used to indicate a number of different but related ideas about the making of environment, for instance:

- The idea of distinct Levels of intervention in the built environment, such as those represented by 'support' or 'base building, and 'infill' or 'fit-out', or by urban design and architecture.
- The idea that users / inhabitants may make design decisions as well as professionals;
- The idea that, more generally, designing is a process with multiple participants also including different kinds of professionals;
- The idea that the interface between technical systems allows the replacement of one system with another performing the same function - as with different fit-out systems applied in a specific base building;
- The idea that built environment is in constant transformation and change must be recognized and understood;
- The idea that built environment is the product of an ongoing, never ending design process in which environment transforms part by part. (www.habraken.com/john)

CIB W104 is an international network of researchers and practitioners who subscribe to the Open Building approach. In doing so we seek to formulate theories about the built environment seen in this dynamic way and to develop methods of design and building construction compatible with it.

Open Building provides strategies for sustainable buildings and neighborhoods Open Building enables built environments to last because they can adjust, meeting changing social and technical requirements.

This is accomplished in part by organizing physical elements at any scale (building product to urban tissue) in such a way as to minimize their mutual interference. Perhaps Open Building's most important goal is to combine the freedom of choice and dignity of individuals in their work places, dwellings and communities, with the ecological coherence and stability of culturally appropriate buildings and neighborhoods.

Three Basic Objectives of the Commission:

- To increase awareness of the principles of Open Building among professionals who shape the built environment, and among the people who live in that built environment.
- To support initiatives at national, regional and local levels that improve the efficacy of building construction and facility adaptation following Open Building methods.
- To be a platform for research and information dissemination among professionals committed to improving Open Building practices and methods.

The Commission has a relationship with the CIB Encouraged Journal OHI - Open House International: www.openhouse-int.com

CIB is the International Council for Research and Innovation in Building and Construction. Its website is www.cibworld.nl

Additional Information

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