Complex Projects

Shootings, crime, school dropouts, domestic- and gang violence, drug- and alcohol addiction; The South-side of Chicago today is notorious for its unsafe, empty and neglected neighbourhoods, in big contrast to the glorious days of the steel industry, once a driving force in the area. The withdrawal of the South works Steel Company in the 1970’s left the area only with the footmarks of what once was a vibrant and productive community.

The area around the site is in total isolation. In social sense, because of the neighbourhood’s lack of proper education, healthy food, health care and safety. In physical sense the area lies isolated as well, because of borders created by infrastructure, dividing the area in different social and ethnic classes, and the lack of proper public transportation from and to the South-side. The vacancies and empty plots are a reason the area is scattered and fragmented. This asks for an intervention that can provide it with proper access to jobs, education and health care.

By proposing common ground as a concept for development we are aiming to reconnect with reality. Injecting the South work sites with basic needs as schools, industry and agriculture, the neighbourhood can profit from education, work, and public functions. A direct interaction on the site between the production and consumption of food, will provide an example for cities in reducing their footprint while empowering the people of Chicago South in part of their basic needs: food as binding factor. Common ground is a framework for sustainable and flexible growth, with the potential for social, economic and environmental improvement of Chicago South. By designing a fragment of the total master plan I go deeper into the social, environmental and spatial implications of this proposition.

Food as common ground

By bringing people with different backgrounds together through food, which is something we all need, that binds us, a collective awareness for our current consumption behaviour can possible be achieved. Although the building is not a solution for the structural problems in the area, social, economic and environmental isolation, it can be an urban catalyst as a start for better conditions in the neighbourhood, providing work, education and social diversity. By exhibiting food production with architectural tools such as contextual, programmatic and spatial relations, light, materiality and spatial configuration food can be experienced, smelled, seen and touched.

As this complex on its own will not be an answer for our current food problematical and overconsumption, rethinking how we produce and consume can create more awareness for the effort it takes to feed us.

with this project, I have tried to give an answer to my research and design question:

Research question
To what extent can a building contribute to the structural problems of the social, economic and environmental isolation of Chicago South and a state of overconsumption in the city?

Design question:
How can architecture contribute to awareness for our current state of food production and (over)consumption in the city?
The school with open relations to Chicago South in response to the social, economic and environmental isolation of the area.

Ground floor, a field...
The problem: Chicago South & urban strategy fragment

The building has intricate relations with the landscape and its environment.

Large scale research fields: job production and consumption are victims of a state of cheap labor.

Vocational fields: Arboretum, pasture area livestock.

Social, economic and environmental isolation of the area. The building is a superimposition of a school, research facility and vertical farm. These three functions are articulated in three masses.

The manifest for common ground: The school with open relations to Chicago South in response to the social, economic and environmental isolation of the area.

Conclusion: Providing necessities for the future: environmental awareness and our common future.

COMMON GROUND
School for civic agriculture and food systems

Robert C. McCormick Foundation

Viewing Address: 5757 S. University Park Drive

University Park, IL 60466

Telephone: (708) 681-7840

Conclusion: Providing necessities for the future: environmental awareness and our common future.

Common ground:

An architecture platform building mass vistas landscape architecture platform building mass vistas landscape building structure facade

Collective memory, strong community, flexibility, density, ecological independancy.

A final state: failed system, unsustainable future.

Back to reality: The manifest for common ground: The school with open relations to Chicago South in response to the social, economic and environmental isolation of the area.

7 problems: tax, social, economic and environmental.

Tax on tax.

Awareness on food production and providing knowledge for the present and future.

RESEARCH ON FUTURE FOOD PROBLEMATICS

Agricultural enterprise: attracting energy

Providing for the future: environmental awareness and our common future.

Public functions and district board: providing for the future.

Educating students and civilians, institute with hidroponics and aquaponics.

2. vocational wing added to house more functions.

The building is a superimposition of a school, research facility and vertical farm. These three functions are articulated in three masses.


Program: total: 12.000 m² interior // 20.000 m² exterior.

Functions are articulated in three masses.

More secluded functions, such as vocational spaces.

The school with open relations to Chicago South in response to the social, economic and environmental isolation of the area.

Back to reality: The manifest for common ground: The school with open relations to Chicago South in response to the social, economic and environmental isolation of the area.

Conclusion: Providing necessities for the future: environmental awareness and our common future.
Plans

Chicago South & urban strategy fragment

the school with open relations to Chicago South in response to the social, economic and environmental isolation of the area.

Ground floor, a field

First floor

Roof and vertical farm
the school with open relations to Chicago South in response to the social, economic and environmental isolation of the area.
Cross section AA'
integrated urban food systems