

P4 Reflection

Living with dementia in the Neighborhood

-Dementia nursing home within the Rotterdam city

Shuyan Lin

Student no.4404017

1. The relation between the theme of the graduation lab and the subject/case study

The New Guesthouse is the theme for the studio of the Architecture of Interior and we are supposed to design a new care home for dementia people within the city environment. The concept of New Guesthouse regards the care as an urban "quality injection" and aims to provide an opportunity to improve the social, medical and spatial quality of neighborhood within.

From my point of view, by bringing the care to the neighborhood instead of moving residents to standard care homes or institutions far away from the city where they live, the New Guesthouse becomes a win-win solution benefit both the neighborhood and the new care homes. One one hand, the city offers convenience for traffic and as well as the opportunity of multiple social interactions for the care homes. On the other hand, the insertion of new care homes bridges the relationship between the private and the public and improve the quality of the living environment simultaneously.

The location chosen in Rubroek is related to the theme of the studio. It is a typical neighborhood that built in 1970-80s including social housings and healthcare apartment for the elderly people. The site has both its advantages and disadvantages: locating in the center part, and sided by single and a busy street, the site enjoys both the nature scene and closeness to the city; while its shortcomings lie in the unclear morphologic language of the housing design and the undefined outdoor spaces. The Rubroek needs to be repaired and a new relationship should be built by introducing a new care center. How to integrate the dementia care home into the neighborhood and improve the quality of it becomes the main issue of my design.

2. The relationship between research and design

The research is about finding the relationship between the built environment-the city and the behaviors of individuals. By researching the real lives happening on the site especially the Goudesplein at the street corer, find that the core value of the site lie in the social interactions happened around both the perimeters of the buildings towards the streets and the sense of publicity of the Goudesplein entrance square. The elements analyzed in the research that help to create public sphere are applied in my new design. For example, the continuous perception of commercial corners are kept in the new design as the importance point of supermarket is kept in terms of program; the scale of Goudesplein is carefully studied applied in into the new design; the square is still used as public entrance space. The new design values the diversity of the social life happening at the corner square and continues to emphasize the public

atmosphere but the new project is not stopped here. The Rubroek is redefined by a series of outdoor spaces of different meanings based on the observation and study of its original situations.

The study of historical reference of hofjie in Netherland is also very important to my design concept. It not only about a typology that provides universal code for the urban design, for example its proximity to the city and nature at the same but also helps to understand the relationship between individuality and collectivity. This kind of typology is applied into my own designs in different scales in terms of building forms, space organizing, the relationship between exterior and interior, the façade design etc.

3. The relationship between the methodical line of approach and the graduation lab

My general approach of the design process is more about finding analogical elements in the site and try to use them.

The beginning of the design decisions is always related to the **observations** followed with analysis. I tried to evaluate the quality of different spaces in the site and find out the meaning elements that could be included in new design and the shortcomings that should be avoided.

The design is also based on study of existing **typology** for example the hofjie and the dementia living mode - De Hogweyk and other reference to find both the universal and local quality the healthcare architecture and translate them in my new design critically.

Testing the space quality by different types and scales of **modeling** is also one of the main method I use in my design. All the methodical line of my approach is never a linear process in my project. It is always about zooming in and zooming out in scale and looking back and ahead at the same time in order to take all the aspects into considerations.

4. The relationship between the project and the wider social context

The project is more than a user-orientated design. In this project, I try to explore more on the relationship of the public and private, the individuality and collectivity. I keep question myself what is healthcare architecture? What make a city? How healthcare position itself in the city and in its wider social context?

My project answers part of the questions by making decision of building healthcare facilities part of the city and connecting different social groups. This project is trying to find a balance between old and new, and repair the old and fragmented pieces of the city that mostly fast produced during 1970s and 80s instead of using tabula rasa strategy. The project offers both general and specific strategies to rebuild the new relationship between care and the city, which could also be applied in a wider social context.