

Nohad A. Toulan School of Urban Studies and Planning

USP 524: Site Planning (3 credits) Spring 2012

Mondays 6:40 – 9:20pm, Ondine Hall 201

Instructor: Ken Pirie, kpirie@walkermacy.com 503.784.3658 (cell) 503.228.3122 (office)

Office Hours: Email or call me. Midday, evenings and weekends preferred

Course Overview and Objectives

The course is intended to provide a solid basis in all aspects of site planning, from analysis to the actual preparation of site plans for hypothetical building or public programs. The course serves as both initial preparation for public sector careers in the evaluation of site plan submittals and as an introduction to more intensive study in urban design and real estate development in subsequent PSU courses. The entire course is presented through a filter of green design and sustainability.

Course Format

The class will be presented in a collaborative format, with lectures from the instructor and from several professional guests, interactive discussion and debate and student presentations and critiques. Our emphasis will be on learning pragmatic details of the professional preparation of site plans and this will include opportunities for graphic exercises. We will progressively build our understanding of site planning with individual and group analysis of underutilized full-block sites in Portland, which will serve as microcosms of larger sites. We will form multidisciplinary “firms” of 4-5 people to each study one of these urban sites and these teams will work together to produce a professional final report and presentation. The study area for this quarter is **North Williams/Vancouver**—planning for underutilized sites between Broadway and Going Street in North Portland.

Course Evaluation

Each student will be evaluated based on:

- The thoroughness and creativity of their approach to studied sites
- Ability to work in a team and meet deadlines. Teams will evaluate internally.
- Attendance and participation in class discussion and exercises
- Clear presentation skills, including written, graphic and spoken. Drawing skill is **NOT** a prerequisite, but enthusiastic willingness to pick up pencil and pen and diagram or sketch by hand is encouraged.

Course Grading

Exercise 1: Inventory	10%
Team exercises (#2-#4)	8% for Ex. 2&3, 12% for Ex. 4, 28% total Bonuses available on Ex 3
Project Management and Team Participation	For Exercises 2-4, Final Report and Final Presentation, a grade of 2% for each (10% total) will be based on your personal evaluations of each other's project management and team participation.
Class attendance	9% (one explained absence permitted; 1% deducted for each subsequent/unexplained absence)
Participation in class	5%
Final group project and presentation	38% (30% for report, 8% for final presentation)
Grades:	A: over 90; A-: 85 to 90 B+:80-85; B:75-80

There is no final exam.

Course Readings:

Since there is no single book that would work for this class, there is NO textbook required, but I would highly recommend **The Smart Growth Manual by Duany, Speck and Lydon (McGraw Hill, 2010, \$24.99, cheaper on Amazon or used.)** There are many other excellent reference books for this topic, including:

1. **Planning and Urban Design Graphic Standards (APA Press—perfect text but \$250!)**
2. **Site Planning, Kevin Lynch (3rd edition)**
3. **Sustainable Urbanism: Urban Design With Nature, Douglas Farr**
4. **The Urban Design Handbook, Urban Design Associates**
5. **Graphics for Urban Design, Urban Design Group**

Several other class readings will be posted on a special Walker Macy FTP site and/or distributed in class. As sustainability is a prevalent theme in this class, I encourage students to read articles on line and share printed copies where possible.

Computer Software and Materials:

Hand-drawing is encouraged but not required. All drawings can be presented with the aid of a combination of Powerpoint, InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop and Word, according to team and student abilities and preferences. Final reports should be submitted in 11x17, double-sided color format so **Adobe InDesign will be very useful** for this. A working knowledge of all these simple programs will be professionally very useful to you (if not essential) so students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with them. The use of AutoCAD or GIS software is **not** required and you can produce a perfect final report without it, but if you or your team are familiar with and have access to these programs, by all means employ them. Past students have made good simple use of Google Sketchup.

Each team should have at least 1 engineering scale to ensure scaled drawings. You can borrow one from me if necessary. A digital camera will be important for site investigation and for the final report.

Final Report

Your team will be considered as a consulting firm for this project. This report provides an excellent opportunity to build materials for your career portfolios. The document should be creatively and professionally-designed with a maximum of 20 pages (11x17 seems to work best), in color or black and white, double-sided. I'll provide past examples for guidance. The report should include, but is not limited to the following information:

- Team Introduction and Vision Statement and Goals for the Site
- Vicinity Map and context. Urban design analysis of surrounding neighborhood
- A title block, north arrow and scale for all site drawings. Include firm's name.
- Site inventory and analysis (including but not limited to existing soils, climate, land use, noise, circulation, views, experiential factors). Include sketches, photos, maps, refined from your first two exercises.
- Summary of site's history, including photos or maps
- Regulatory framework and variances that will be requested. This is a summary of your Exercise #3 work.
- Summarize approvals process through the City. A flow chart works well here.
- Summary of neighborhood and public involvement to gain approvals
- A basic program for the site, with rationale for that program's marketability. Real estate students—feel free to go into more detail if desired, on potential unit sales prices, lease rates, project costs, etc.
- Summary of site circulation and access. (Summary of Exercise #4)
- Scaled cross sections of surrounding streets and across site. Photos of inspirations from other places.
- A technical, colored, **scaled** site plan (hand-drawn or in computer) with conceptual building footprints, basic dimensions, property lines, any existing easements, known utility lines, public space, topography
- An assessment of the project's contribution to sustainable urbanism
- Studies of your site plan's architectural form are encouraged but not required. It's more important to get the site plan correct than to spend time 'fussing' with Sketch Up. If you do use that program, keep it simple!

Team Work

I can't emphasize enough how important it is to work effectively in your teams. You will form your own teams and choose your own site (within parameters). **You should clearly articulate your team's personal goals for the class as well as outline your personal schedules when you first meet.** MURP students tend to have complementary schedules but it's good to mix teams up. Project management is a critical skill for the planning field so you will grade yourselves 2% for each team exercises, the Final Project and Presentation, for individual Project Management effort, selecting a different manager for each piece. Your team will grade that manager and the manager will grade your organizational contributions for each exercise. The cumulative management grade of 10% is significant--please take this into account.

Schedule:

April 5: Introduction

Student introductions. Course objectives and syllabus.

Fundamentals of urban design analysis.

Readings: Outside Lies Magic (Stilgoe). Urban Design for an Urban Century, Chapters 2 & 3

April 12: Site Inventory and Selection

Site analysis and exploration. Influences of climate, sun, soil, views, etc

Sense of place, intrinsic regional character, environmental systems, culture and history of a site

Researching a property (www.portlandmaps.com).

Preparing a base map. Understanding scale.

** Exercise #1 (due in class April 19): Students are required to select a site and record individual impressions.*

This exercise is intended to promote personal on-site creative discovery of the places this course will examine. (10%. Success in this exercise will come from loose, individualistic and creative submittals)

TBD: Graphics Tutorial

If there is interest, I will hold a Site Planning Graphics tutorial, which consists of a 2-hour briefing on Powerpoint and Adobe Suite programs and a bit of Sketchup.

April 19: Site Analysis

Guest presentation: Ellen Wyoming, Mercato Project

Presentations of selected site inventories

Graphic conventions and diagrams for site planning

Readings: Kevin Lynch, Site Planning Chapter 3.

**Exercise (#2) due May 3: Form teams, select a site and produce diagrams for site analysis.*

April 21, OPTIONAL site inventory field trip

I am available to meet you at your selected sites, to conduct a walking inventory and refine your site analysis exercise.

April 26: Regulatory framework (Guest: Bev Bookin)

Introduction to Portland's zoning code, public process and approvals.

Readings: Portland Title 33 (selected chapters); Smart Code. SG Manual: Sections 2.9, 2.10 and 6.5

**Exercise (#3) due May 17—analyze and summarize with text and graphics, the zoning, urban plans and regulations that apply to selected site. Outline preliminary program. (one submittal per team)*

May 3rd: The Market and Development Program (Guest: Brian Vanneman, Leland Consulting)

Analyzing the market and real estate forces affecting our selected sites and cities in general
Selecting an appropriate development program for selected sites

Readings: Misc. retail strategy readings to be distributed

May 10: Site Concept Design and Circulation (Guest: Alan Snook, DKS)

Complete, green, streets. Street types and appropriate dimensions.

Parking, walking, biking, transit, auto and service access.

**Exercise #4 (due May 28, electronically): Create existing and proposed street cross-sections for immediate site vicinity. Diagram proposed circulation. Draw initial concepts for your sites. (one submittal/team)*

I highly encourage teams to share in-progress work with me via email this week for feedback.

May 17: Architecture and Development (Guest: tbd)

Urban design and architecture—massing, FAR, envelopes.

How a program translates to a site plan.

The design and construction process. Green buildings. A case study building.

**Teams should begin to produce final reports. Final team reports must include descriptions of potential buildings and suggested architectural form and inspiration (photos, sketches or Sketchup).*

May 24: Green Infrastructure and Civil Engineering (Guest: Matt Johnson, KPFF)

Introduction to the basics of site civil engineering

Grading. Utilities (Water, Sewer, Power). Stormwater treatment.

Green infrastructure potential of selected sites

Readings: Recommend that students purchase “Low Impact Development” by the University of Arkansas Community Design Center (available at uacdc.uark.edu and at Amazon)

**Final team reports should consider how their sites will incorporate green infrastructure and respond to topography. Reminder that Exercise 4 is due Monday after this class. I will offer one-on-one meetings with each group at PSU to review their draft presentations and reports.*

May 31: Low Impact Design and Landscape Architecture (Guest: tbd)

Green roofs, public spaces, parks

**Teams should be producing/revising final reports. I highly encourage teams to share in-progress work with me via email for feedback.*

June 7: Final team presentations and critiques (with invited guests and refreshments!) This session typically goes a bit late. Please allow an extra half hour at the end.

Final Team projects (printed, bound reports) due by noon on June 15th. No final exam.