Housing and Community – School and Practice
1983-2011
Jackson Ward
Richmond, Virginia

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Thesis submitted to the faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Architecture in Architecture

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Housing, Community, Energy, Practice, Time
ABSTRACT

If books have a life of their own, oftentimes very different from what their authors might have imagined, how about buildings? How about buildings that only exist on paper, or pixels?

Do Time, Tools, Practice, deform or inform the work of years ago?

Finally, where have the intentions, the meanings, the hopes, of those years at this University lived these past twenty plus years? Were they released only when I unrolled those drawings, or have they lived with this student as he practiced his profession each day?
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I originally chose this site, Abner Clay Park, Jackson Ward, in Richmond, Virginia for an Urban Design project in Walter Butke's Studio in September 1985. There was no Program for this project, only the triangular shaped site with a small playground and 2 tennis courts. The Site is bounded by West Leigh Street on the North, West Clay Street on the South, with Brook Road slicing an angle between on the West. The Eastern edge of the site is taken by Richmond Public Schools Adult Career Development Center.

At the end of the Quarter I had produced little work but had decided to develop what I had into my Thesis project. Walter Butke agreed to chair my Committee in April, 1986.

**NARRATIVE**

I once saw Arthur Ashe play tennis. In 1967, the Western Open, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Arthur Ashe was an Army Lieutenant then, before he turned professional. He wasn't difficult to pick out that day, and he played like no other.

Arthur Ashe grew up in a house in Brook Field, a short distance up Brook Road.

"Brook Field was just an athletic paradise, a dream world for a kid who likes to play sports." — John McPhee, Levels of the Game

The house was torn down, and Brook Field was developed for the Richmond Post Office.

The Arthur Ashe Monument was dedicated on July 10, 1996, Arthur Ashe's 53rd birthday, three years after his death.

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Jackson Ward has many narratives. According to the National Park Service it is a "fine 19th Century Residential District." The entire ward was designated a National Historic Landmark in May, 1978. The Arthur Ashe Monument was dedicated on July 10, 1996, Arthur Ashe's 53rd birthday, three years after his death.

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Google's Top Ten for Jackson Ward May, 2011

The Adult Career Development Center is a multi-functional facility funded as a public alternative school by Richmond City Public Schools in Richmond, Virginia. The purpose of the school is to assist students 16 years and older in obtaining either a General Equivalency Diploma (GED) or a high school diploma.

Students have the option of earning a high school diploma by completing the requirements of the Performance Learning Center (PLC) or the General Achievement Diploma (GAD). Also, ACGC houses the federally funded programs Early Head Start and Head Start. The center provides classes for adults through the Office of Adult Basic Education. It also serves as a center for ESL classes and certified Nursing Assistant classes. In addition, ACGC provides the opportunity for career counseling and work-study experiences. We are a partner with the City Lights Initiative, which includes Capital One, The Black History Museum, The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, and The Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority.

We invite you to visit us and to become partners with us in serving the adult citizens of Richmond. We are passionate about our mission as we help students to graduate and to move on to their next step to have a better life through education and to become productive citizens of our society.

Dr. Clara Scott, Principal ACGC

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The site has not changed a bit since 1980. The Armory is still shuttered. The main Commercial on Broad Street is still plagued by crime.

### Steady Sounds Robbed – Again!

The 1988 maps show the Armory, now referred again to as a robbers' nest. The 1980 map refers to it as a parking garage.

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A bridge connects the Adult Career Development Center with additional "Seed Spaces." These spaces give the students at the Center the opportunity to learn about and work with those involved in the workaday activities in the market and shops below.

The Mechanical Systems for heating and cooling the project are located beneath the raised plinth/plaza at the point.

The Cooling Tower is sunken beneath street level and a focus for the plaza. The rising mist from the tower will be a welcome attraction on Richmond's hot days, and, when illuminated at night, be a marker in the neighborhood for the Commercial activities of the site.

Mark Brandfass
Pittsburgh, PA

Project Title: Housing and Community
Jackson Ward, Richmond Virginia

Chapter Four: Site Plans

Date: 05/31/2011
August 1988
Housing and Community
Jackson Ward,
Richmond Virginia

Chapter Eleven
Views into
the Yard

Date
05/31/2011