2008 VICTOR L. REGNIER TRAVELING FELLOWSHIP

-OCTOBER-

MONTHLY REPORT

"WE DO NOT ENHARIT OUR LANDS FROM OUR ANCESTORS, WE BORROW IT FROM OUR CHILDREN."

Prepared by:
Dustin Stephany

SUMMARY

Before I begin, I just want to give a personal "thank you" to everyone who has helped me to get where I am today. If it wasn't for those people, I would not be able to experience the eye opening adventures and challenges that I have faced throughout my first month on my travelling fellowship. As promised, I will continue to do my best and if there is anything that I can improve, please feel free to let me know.

From my take of this trip, it is quite different from the two previous fellowship winners because I am studying more of a conceptual construction and design process that is not quite adopted yet in standard policies/procedures. Though with the understanding of deconstruction guidelines established and further research, learning how to designing for deconstruction can be a valuable tool for clients, business owners, design and construction firms while also reducing the environmental impact from our building materials.

The challenge of dealing with the conceptual idea of designing for deconstruction is that it is difficult to actually find projects which the building incorporated deconstruction in the initial design phase. Here in Scotland, construction and demolition wastes are the number one contributor to their landfills; however, only guidance standards are encouraged in order to reduce the amount of waste generated. I have spent the majority of the month reading various types of literature on deconstruction techniques, the pros and cons, and how to sell the idea to a client.

I am working from 10:00 -18:00 M-F at a small exhibition library where I have free internet and a big desk. I first was working at my roommate's (roommate from Milwaukee) flat where a building next to the flat was being demolished. Though the location was motivational, it was also quite distracting with the noise and now I have the space and quiet atmosphere to get my work done.

LITERATURE

As I mentioned before, the majority of my fellowship has been reading various literature. I need to understand what deconstruction practices are implemented in the UK and how they differ from what is already practiced in the United States. I am establishing a contact list of design and construction companies, special interest groups, prefabrication companies, and professors at universities. Additionally, I am learning how projects are funded and looking at what factors must be considered when designing for deconstruction as well as material recovery. With the information that I have, I plan on making PowerPoint presentations with which can be used to teach students, clients and companies why they should consider material reuse and how.

A document by CIRIA entitled "*Design for Deconstruction – Principles of Design to Facilitate Reuse and Recycling*" was purchased and has given me a good stepping stone of the feasibilities of reuse and recycling through the selection of construction materials and connection methods. The literature also addresses current and perceived drivers as well as hurdles for managing a project implementing D4D. The CIRIA is established in London and therefore many contacts and case studies have been established in the England area. Considering that I have only two more weeks in Scotland, my current work schedule consists of creating interviews with the various contacts established.

INTERVIEWS

Knowing the drivers and hurdles of D4D has given me a basic understanding for when I meet with various professionals. My first meeting was with Dr. Richard Laing from the Robert Gordon University (RGU). Dr. Gordon and I had an hour and a half long discussion on various RGU

publications that may be useful during my studies. He also spoke of an assignment for freshmen looking to join the built environment, where a building had to be designed for minimal waste, constructed by the student and then taken apart with 100% material recovery. Dr. Laing says that "this [assignment] is a good way for students to understand that buildings do not last forever and they need to consider this when designing."

We also spoke about the various types of stone and how each material is applied specifically in Scotland. Different types of stone are used throughout Scotland depending on the types of quarries and their location. For example, places around Aberdeen use granite while other place like Glasgow use sandstone for their building walls. Dr. Laing gave me a list of contacts throughout the UK as well as a number of companies and universities that are addressing guidance practices for designing for deconstruction.

Dr. Laing said that the concept of designing for deconstruction is not specifically addressed at the RGU but feels that the peer review board needs to reevaluate this concept and add it into the teaching curriculum to keep pushing green design.

Robert Gordon University

I also went to a building called the Fife Earthship located in Findhorn. This building was designed by architect Michael Reynolds where he and 11 others used construction materials such as old tires, glass wine bottles and cans to construct the building. The building is a visitor center which is used as a demonstration project for residential buildings. Though this concept is a little different from D4D, the end goal is the same when considering material recovery and reducing waste. The building is completely self sustaining with all of its energy coming from renewable energies such as wind, water and solar. The building took 8 days to construct but took 2 years of administrative work to get final approval by local building inspectors. This is the UK's first Earthship but there is another one located Brighton which also took two years for administrative approval. Through my research and projects such as this, I am finding that there is a large resistance in building designs that differ from the traditional designs implemented. Though these new designs are addressing today's issues, I feel that we are going to have more of these issues as time progresses.

Fife Earthship

WEBSITE

I have purchased a web address entitled www.design4deconstruction.com and plan on creating a website that will be a solely used as a teaching aid. As I continue to read and learn, I am trying to understand how I should set up the website so it can be most useful. Currently I am thinking about how to break the topic of Designing for Deconstruction into various PowerPoint presentations, addressing with different types of construction materials and the issues with these materials, how to sell the idea to a client based on different criteria, basic guidelines that can be used today, the steps needed in accessing the reuse vs. recycling of building materials, and why we have to adopt designing for deconstruction into the way we construct and design.

Being that this website would be used by professors, I am more than willing to adopt a better teaching technique if there is one for this concept.

PERSONAL LIFE

This fellowship has already been an amazing adventure for me and I could tell it was going to be by the first day of traveling to Edinburgh. Meeting up with my old roommate has made it really easy for me since he has been a help by showing me how to get around, places to visit, as well as the different Scottish cultures to experience. I have been able to feel quite comfortable adapting to what life is like here in Scotland. The only issues that I have faced is how they drive on the opposite side of the road. I recently I returned from a three day road trip in which two friends and I traveled up and around the coast of Scotland. I got to see some amazing castles, visit Loch Ness, as well as climb a mountain. Scotland has a lot of natural landscapes to see and I feel that being here during the fall season has been most enjoyable considering the variation in colors.

I have made a point to myself to be as environmentally friendly as possible in everything that I am doing throughout the fellowship. I believe that if we are to change the way we design to better the environment, I ought to change my lifestyle to better the environment. So far, this means that I have been buying my foods from local markets, reducing my carbon footprint by biking, carpooling and purchasing carbon credits for my flight to Europe, staying at facilities that are "eco-friendly," and even changing the way that I eat!

A few places I plan on visiting this next month are a school made out of cardboard, building complexes made by IKEA (Live Smart at Home), University of Salford's School of the Built Environment, CIRIA and BRE main offices, as well as the Edwin Shirley Staging Company and many more places. With the basic understanding of D4D, my goal in the next report is to write more about case studies, interviews, and D4D practices that are implemented into designs.

Once again "thank you" for this wonderful opportunity and if there is anything that ought to be addressed more directly, please feel free to email me at stephand@msoe.edu.