

THESES AND DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS 1994

HOMEBUILDERS' AND REMODELERS' ROLES IN THE ADOPTION AND DIFFUSION OF UNIVERSALLY-DESIGNED HOUSING

Beatriz E. Blanco

The study described homebuilders' attitudes and behaviors relative to the diffusion of universal design features in both new and remodeled single-family housing. A questionnaire mailed to a random sample of 507 builder-members of the National Association of Home Builders yielded 137 usable responses (27%). Nearly two-thirds were single-family homebuilders, while one-third were residential remodelers. The sample builders perceived a future potential market for universally-designed housing, but perceived current demand to be low. The majority agreed that accessible housing is important and needed, but perceived the costs of universal design items to be higher than for traditional residential features. Most respondents disagreed with the idea of implementing universally-designed housing via building code requirements. Sample builders incorporated the 25 specified universal design features occasionally or less often. The five items implemented most often were anti-scald controls, door thresholds of 3/4" or less, shower seats, door frames with 32" clear passage, and low window sills. The most frequent rationale for inclusion was "client request," followed by "builder-option."

Masters, 1994
B. J. White
Kansas State University

SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAMS IN HAMPTON PUBLIC HOUSING

Tamara L. Conklin

The purpose of this study was to examine tenant participation in self-sufficiency programs in Hampton Public Housing and to explore relationships that might exist between participation in programs, demographic factors, and housing values. Data were collected from 42 residents. The sample consisted primarily of black female single parents between 19 and 25 years of age. Marital status, number of dependents, and household type were found to be significantly related to level of program participation. House-

Abstracts

holds most likely to be involved in higher level programs were married couple households, households with two dependents, or dual-parent and multi-generational households.

Most respondents had lower level housing values. Households most likely to have higher level housing values were those where respondents were separated, widowed, or divorced. No significant relationship was found between level of program participation and level of housing values. Households with two adults present may have offered more opportunities for respondents' participation in educational programs. Most participant households included children and their program involvement often centered around children.

Masters, 1994
J. O. Beamish
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

USER PARTICIPATION IN THE HOUSING DESIGN PROCESS THROUGH THE USE OF COMPUTERS : HOME BUILDER'S RESPONSE

Liza Medek

This thesis investigates the reaction of builders to the participation of home buyers in the design process through the use of computer-aided design (CAD). A review of the role of computers within the homebuilding industry is provided, including a historical overview of the use of CAD. The state of the art in CAD software applications is explored, with an assessment made of three low-cost software programs. Following a description of the existing design process in the homebuilding industry, a proposed system of user participation is outlined. A survey is taken of six builders in the Montreal and Ottawa regions to determine industry response to home buyer use of CAD as a design tool.

An analysis of the survey results reveals that although the builders are not currently participants in such a process, they are tentatively positive in their receptiveness to the idea of user-related CAD. The builders express many reservations concerning the available CAD systems, and declare little interest in adopting the process as it presently exists. The relevant computer programs are found wanting, revealing a need for further development of both the software applications and the procedure for implementing CAD at the user participation level. Suggestions are offered for improvements in the process to the benefit of builder, designer, and end user.

Masters, 1994
A. Friedman
McGill University