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Living and Sustainability: An Environmental Critique of Design and Building Practices, Locally and Globally

1. Paper / Proposal Title:

Flexible Neighborhood for sustainable living

2. Format:

Verbal presentation supported with target group video

3. Author(s) Name:

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4. University or Company Affiliation:

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5. Abstract (300 words):

In housing, the developers' target is to satisfy users' needs, however the challenge they face is to provide an adequate sustainable house for an unsustainable or changing users' social needs. Is it possible for the housing market approaches and prototypes to meet the ongoing changes without changing?

An adequate sustainable housing is not just a shelter that satisfies the resident's physical needs, the resident's different social needs should be taken into consideration. A house is not four walls and a rooftop; it's a habitat. And this habitat wouldn't be sustainable if it doesn't correspond to the users' developing need. The changing nature of development brings about new needs, new social groups are formed and other groups

are fading. The social change is understandably faster than the housing development process. The developers should break free from the identical prototype image and focus on supplying more flexible houses in an integrated sustainable neighborhood; flexible enough to cope with the change and satisfy the user's present and future needs. The design should not be time bound; it should be easily modified according to the changing social needs.

This paper argues that flexibility in housing is needed for a sustainable living; but for the houses to be flexible they have to be part of a flexible neighborhood. The way each house function to be part of its neighborhood, is very important for the sustainability of this neighborhood. The members of the neighborhood should bond and benefit from each other to maintain the social satisfaction of each member of the community. Housing developers have always focused on the provision of flexible houses designs, but they rarely explained how to cluster these houses to form a flexible neighborhood. As the users' social needs couldn't be satisfied with a flexible house but with a flexible cooperative neighborhood.

6. Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Post graduate student at Ain Shams University in Cairo, faculty of engineering urban planning and design department. Currently working as a teaching assistant at MSA University in Egypt, I teach 4th and 3rd year studio courses including all urban and housing courses. I am a freelance interior designer and a Japanese tutor. Ever since I graduated I worked at several projects including the million housing unit one of the biggest social housing projects in Egypt, UNHCR project for educating Syrian refugees about old Cairo, urban design of part of Yas Island in Dubai, in addition to several landscape and design projects.