Project A

## Quick-Hitter Site Analysis

Abstract:

What does the term "comprehensive site analysis" mean to you? All too often, speculative urban site analysis ends after obtaining a developable plot's basic measurements. Our mission with Project A is to extract data, identify underlying systems and investigate existing conditions for an underdeveloped site in Washington, D.C. Our team should consider the sites "in context," as a part of a larger physical and socio-cultural system.

Students are to work in groups to actively mine for site data based on the suggested questions below, make inferences about the data's implications and communicate these layers through diagramming.
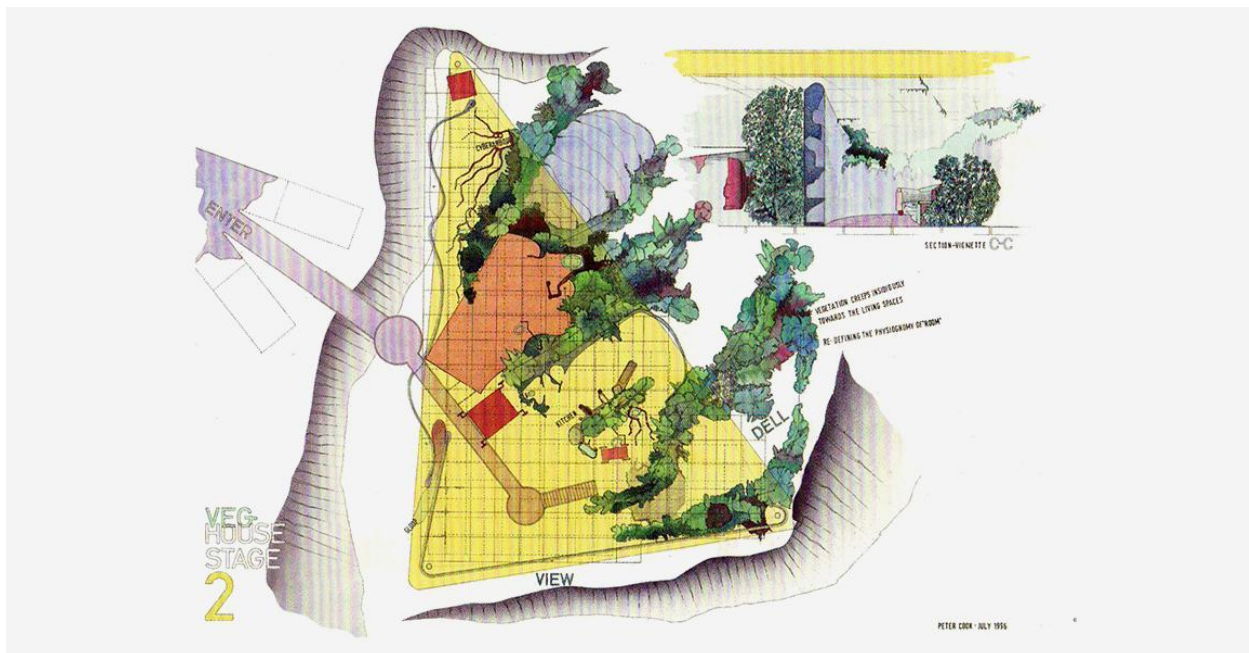
Veg House, Peter Cook

Site A:

Trinidad and Ivy City Lot
1201 Mount Olivet Rd. NE
SQ. 4052, LOT 174, 177

Site B:

Georgia Ave Active Corridor
5758 Georgia Ave. NW
SQ. 2935, LOT 819, 808 + PAR 87, SUF 563, 515

Site C:

14th Street Corner Lot
1740 14th St. NW
SQ. 0207, LOT 0114

Considerations:

For this exercise the teams **shall not** consider typical site analysis metrics for development (FAR, lot occupancy, setbacks, parking, building frontage, building heights, stories, utility systems, etc.). Consider the following questions in your research:

1. **Cultural Influences - What larger cultural trends are key to the community's identity?**
    a. Are there any primary local cultural identifiers? *Food, art, music, fashion, etc.*
    b. How much programmatic space is used for culturally-centric spaces? *Example: local theater*
    c. Are there culturally significant events that occur in the community on a monthly/annual basis?
    d. How present are religious institutions in the community?
    e. Which languages are spoken in the community?

2. **Demographics - Who are the primary dwellers in this community context?**
    a. What types of families typically live in the community? *Single, married, student, seniors*
    b. Which ethnic groups primarily identify with this community? *Consider recent trends*
    c. What is the average age of occupants? *Consider recent trends*
    d. How long do people typically live in the community? *Long-term homeowners, short-term renters*
    e. What is the basic occupational and economic standing of the residents?
    f. Have there been demographic shifts over time?

3. **Historical Context - What was here before and what remains today?**
    a. Are there historical landmarks in the community? *How important are they still?*
    b. Are there historical boundaries that define this "neighborhood" or "community"?
    c. How have the programmatic uses of this community changed over time?
    d. Did any historically significant events occur here?

4. **Site Transit Systems (Regional and Local) - How do people flow to and from the community?**
    a. How do people get here, and where are they coming from?
    b. How accessible is the general area via public transit?
    c. Are new transit technologies being utilized? *Bike share, car share, streetcar, etc.*
    d. How walkable is the neighborhood? *What is the best metric for walkability?*
    e. Does the use of the neighborhood change based on the time of day or year?

5. **Accessibility - Is the site generally prominent or unassuming?**
    a. What is the "ease of access" to the site?
    b. Generally, what are the topographic conditions of the site and its surrounding context?
    c. Does the site's proximity to services seem reasonable?
    d. Is this a generally "open" or generally "private" community? *Are primary users people who live there?*

6. **Programmatic Conditions - Which uses define the community within a reasonable area?**
    a. What emergency services are within reasonable distance of the site?
    b. What community services are within walking distance of the site?
    c. Are their adequate, healthy food services near the site? *Presence of food desert?*
    d. Are public parks and open spaces readily available in the community?

7. **Economic Measures - Are costs rising in the area and what does this mean for "community"?**
   a. Which economic trends define the costs of living and working in the community?
   b. Is this a section of the city with noticeable gentrification?
   c. Are businesses trending towards opening or closing in the area?

8. **Environment + Climate - Does the community have any defining elements related to climatic conditions?**
   a. Is the community close to a body of water? *How does this change the community?*
   b. What existing vegetation is prominent in the community? *Has this changed over time?*
   c. How do environmental systems affect the immediate site? *Sun, wind, light, water*

9. **Experiential - How can someone use their five senses to approach this community?**
   a. What are the local textures that make up the community vernacular?
   b. Are there any pronounced sounds, unique smells and tastes associated with the "place"?
   c. Are there any unique qualities related to how one approaches the community?

Deliverables:

Comprehensive Site Diagrams
11x17 format (minimum 4 per team)

Diagrams are to include multiple layers of data points based on student research. Presented in either physical (hand-drawn) or digital format, preferably combined. Group presentation and discussion at the end of class.

Project A will be due at the end of the second class period and will constitute 5% of the grade for the course. Students will have time to work in class.

Online Data Resources:

DC Atlas
DC Zoning Map
DC Transit Maps
DC Land Cost Map
Demographics Map
DC Office of Planning
DC Quick Facts
DC Forecasting
Basic DC Demographics
DC Public Land
Affordable Housing Tool
Vacant Properties (example)