

# Stewardship of Modern Resources

## Issues and Opportunities

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INTO

October 13, 2011

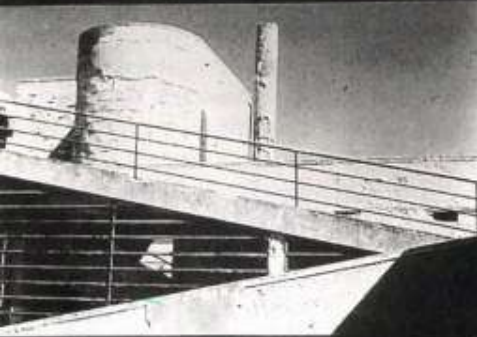
David N. Fixler  
FAIA, LEED AP

do\_co mo.mo-US



# Villa Savoye

The most architectural thing  
about this building is  
the state of decay in which it is.



Architecture only survives  
where it negates the form that  
society expects of it.  
Where it negates itself by  
transgressing the limits that  
history has set for it.

Modernism  
becomes history  
and is  
resurrected







# In which it is opined that Grand Central is not at all a thing of beauty, but an eyesore, depressing to the spirit, and should be knocked down.

BY J. JORDAN KAMIK

As one who has absolutely no connection with any real estate interests or with anyone involved in real estate, I query the statement of the Municipal Art Society that the building proposal at Grand Central will "deprive the people of New York of the extensive public benefits which derive from the continued presence of the terminal in its present form."

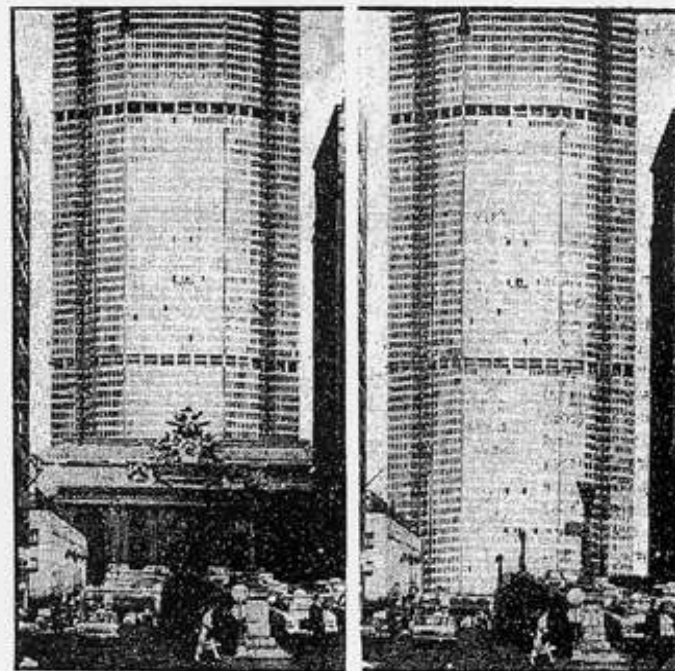
This gratuitous assertion is palpably inconsistent with the aspect of the one long dark gruesome passageway and the other garish arcade, both leading from Lexington Avenue, the seedy shops on the 42d Street side and the dreary ambience that prevails throughout the great hall.

To state that the station "evokes a spirit that is unique in this city" begs the question: What spirit? And who is responsive to that "spirit"?

I challenge anyone to stand in Grand Central and declare that any spirit illumines a single face that rushes through on its intent journey from here to there. Would the art society issue a ukase ordering the thousands to pause in their daily trek and take in the inspiring "grandeur" and savor its mystique? When did Messrs. Wagner, Botein, Seymour, Plimpton, Rosenman and Webster last see Grand Central?

This fantasy of an edifying glory of yore does not square with the present reality which is depressing and which hastens the traveler on his way, sometimes wary, and surely oblivious and heedless of the cheerless scene.

The absentee landmarks lovers should rather commission a topflight photographer to prepare an elaborate "coffee table" portfolio of Grand Central in spectacular color and black and



white (no grays, please!) so that they may hold on to their conceits and enjoy having their egos scratched. Many other monstrous "landmarks" ought to be preserved only in the same style.

The zealous tastemakers are of a breed comparable to the morality imposers who, perhaps unconsciously and guilelessly, imitate the totalitarians who know what's good for the common people. Anyone who disagrees with them is, perforce, a mother hater and a sinner.

This is not to say that "progress" is an unalloyed joy. To the dichards, it is an abomination that must be stopped at all cost since it disturbs the womblike security of happier (?) times. Let this generation, however, make its own mistakes and not be bound to the errors of the past. The dynamics and energies of this or any other city will inevitably displace inharmonious impediments and create new structures consonant with contemporary needs and life styles.

The insidious characterization of the builders' motives "to produce revenue" sounds especially sour coming from those who have devoted lives and careers to "making it." One can take that accusation from saints and the honest Consciousness III people, but not from those who would impudently and arrogantly impose their own parochialism upon others.

Ask people at random whether or not they prefer the present Penn Station complex to the old pile of rock that used to stand there. Take true random samplings of feelings about the old Grand Central and a proposed new Grand Central. I will bet money that the old must give way to the new.

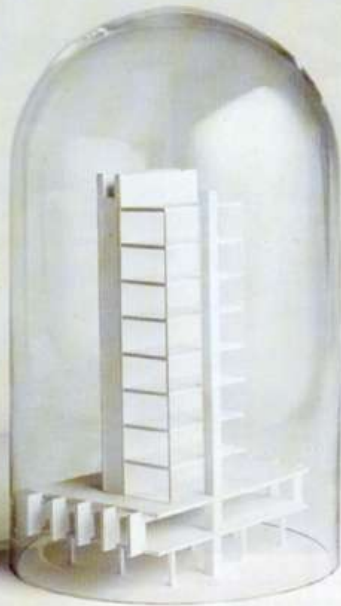
Walden Park is an impossible, as well as an absurd, dream in New York City whose entire *raison d'être* is commerce, manifested not only in business, technological and professional enterprises, but also in all of the arts—painting, theater, music—which do not subsist on pure and noble thoughts. The snobs, the pseudo-intellectuals, the "ecomaniacs" and the dropouts can afford the luxury of self-indulgent whimsy, but New York must continually find effective means for fulfilling the ever-increasing imperatives that have made this the most vital and the most creative metropolis in the world.

Let not a dead hand still the pulse that enlivens the spirit nor quench the spark that stimulates the imagination to seek new solutions to new problems. I am confident that Marcel Breuer's design will enhance the grandeur of the city. [Does anyone want to bring back the dirty old Sixth Avenue between 47th and 59th Streets?]

J. Jordan Kamik is a patent lawyer in New York City.

## New York Times, 1972

The Architecture Issue  
**The New York Times Magazine**  
MAY 18, 2009 / SECTION 8



**Is It Time for the Preservation of Modernism?**

**James Tracy:** But What if We Don't Like It? **Niccolò Oursanelli:** But What if It Was Communist? **Kurtis Jacobs:** But What if It's Just a 60% L.A. Developer? **ALSO:** **Michael Kimmelman** meets Oscar Niemeyer in Brazil, **Pilar Viladas** on Sotheby's man behind the modern-furniture market, **Dominic** visits the very modern apartment of a MoMA curator and **Herbert Marcuse** on what swinging London felt like, architecturally. **PLUS:** Who are the people who really do live in glass houses?

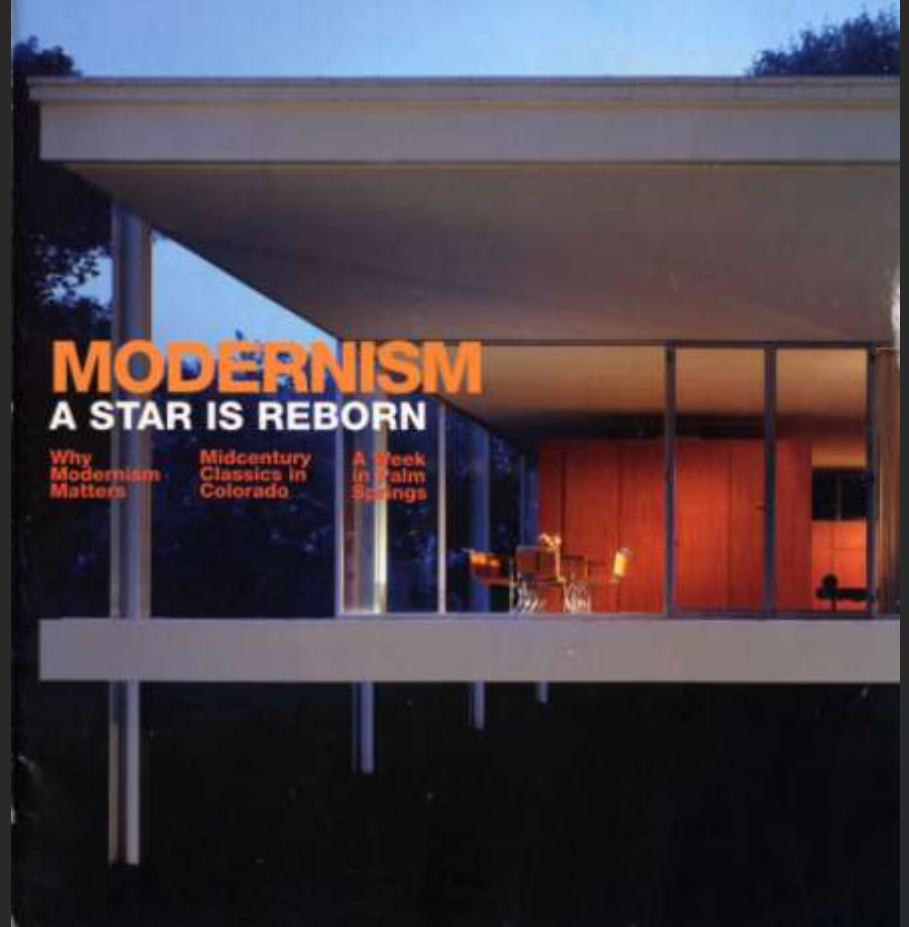
Preservation  
THE MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

**MODERNISM**  
**A STAR IS REBORN**

**Why  
Modernism  
Matters**

**Midcentury  
Classics in  
Colorado**

**A Week  
in Palm  
Springs**



# I. The Modern Movement

- Society
- Technology
- Aesthetics

# Society

Kiefhoek  
Housing

Rotterdam

J. J. P. Oud







## Technology

Van Nelle Factory  
Rotterdam

Brinkmann & van  
de Vlugt







**Aesthetics**

Barcelona  
Pavilion

Mies van der  
Rohe











Brasilia:

Oscar Neimeyer &  
Lucio Costa





Advocacy:

Change and Obsolescence

TWA Terminal  
Kennedy Airport

Eero Saarinen



TWA









Gettysburg Cyclorama  
Richard Neutra





Prentice Women's  
Hospital

Chicago

Bertrand Goldberg







Michael Reese  
Hospital

Chicago

TAC

Loeb, Schlossman,  
Bennett





Bell Labs  
Holmdel , NJ  
Eero Saarinen





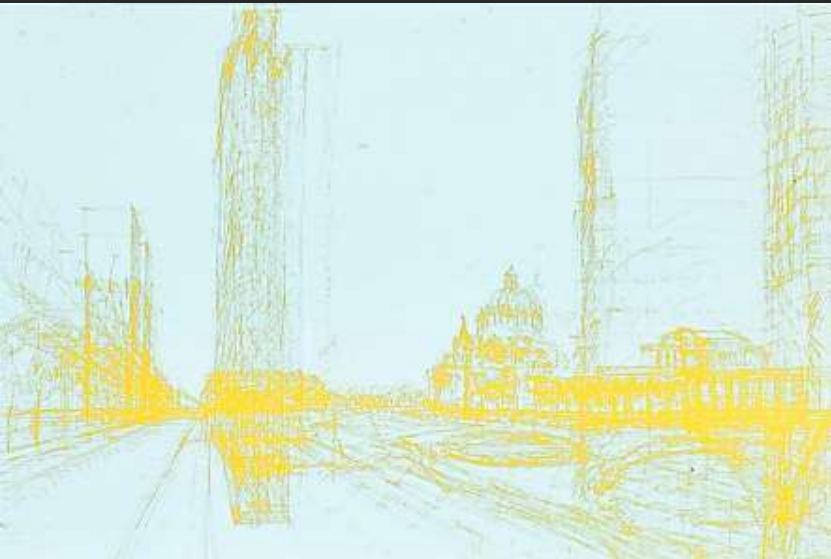
## Third Church



Washington, DC



# Christian Science Center





Orange County  
Government Center  
Paul Rudolph  
Goshen, New York





44- 46 Brattle and  
Design Research  
Cambridge, MA





# Rehabilitation of Mid-Century Modernism



## Reasons for Rehabilitation

- There is a lot of it
- Much of it is architecturally and/or historically important.
- Rehabilitation is the sustainable approach: Sustainability itself is a modern movement, and there is an enormous amount of heritage and energy embodied in the inventory of mid-century modernism

## Rehabilitation of Mid-Century Modernism



## Rehabilitation Challenges

- There is a lot of it ....
- Balance of Character Retention and the Improvement of Performance.
- The educational challenge – promoting understanding and appreciation of mid-century modernism
- Affirmation of Human Scale - Mitigation at the pedestrian level ...the First Impressions

## Rehabilitation of Mid-Century Modernism



## Technical Challenges

- Durability and thermal performance of exterior materials – especially exposed concrete, curtain walls and glazing systems
- Failure of untested materials and systems
- Outdated, inefficient and inadequate building systems
- ADA and Code upgrades
- Program specific design - Inflexibility
- Limited space to run systems – sometimes cast into structure
- Unsympathetic changes over time compromise optimum efficiency
- Cumulative problems overburden maintenance programs





ZONNESTRAAL TUBERCULOSIS SANATORIUM, HILVERSUM, 1932, JOHANNES DUiker & BERNARD BUIJOET. 2009



Zonnestraal  
Sanatorium

Viipuri  
Library



Lecture Hall  
Restoration







Viipuri Library



Harvard  
University

Lamont Library



Lamont  
Library Café  
Adaptive Use



# Van Nelle Factory



Iconic  
Functionalism

Restored  
original  
curtain wall



Van Nelle Factory

Dialogue of inner and outer glazing



Full climate  
controlled  
inner  
structure,  
minimal  
tempering in  
interstitial  
zone

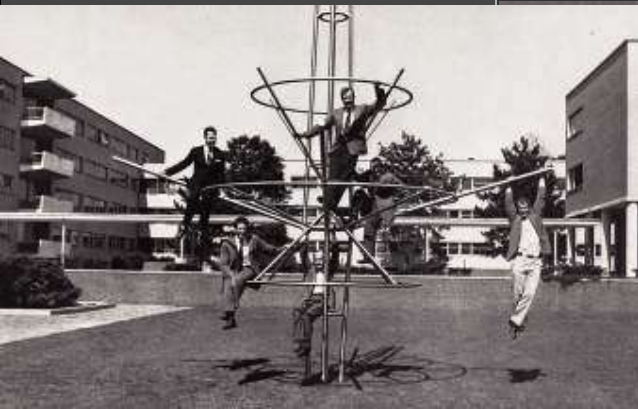


# Van Nelle Factory



Moderately  
tempered  
transient  
zone





Harvard Graduate  
Center  
Harkness  
Commons

TAC



# Harvard Graduate Center



## Updating Walter Gropius/TAC





# Harvard Graduate Center



Updating Walter Gropius/TAC

## Baker House at MIT –



Updating Alvar Aalto designed Residence Hall

Performance Enhancements through interpretation of Intent

## Baker House – Code and system upgrades



Aesthetic choices



Holyoke Center  
Harvard

J. L. Sert



“First Impression”  
Upgrade  
Arcade infill



# Holyoke Center



Before (above)  
and after  
façade  
improvements



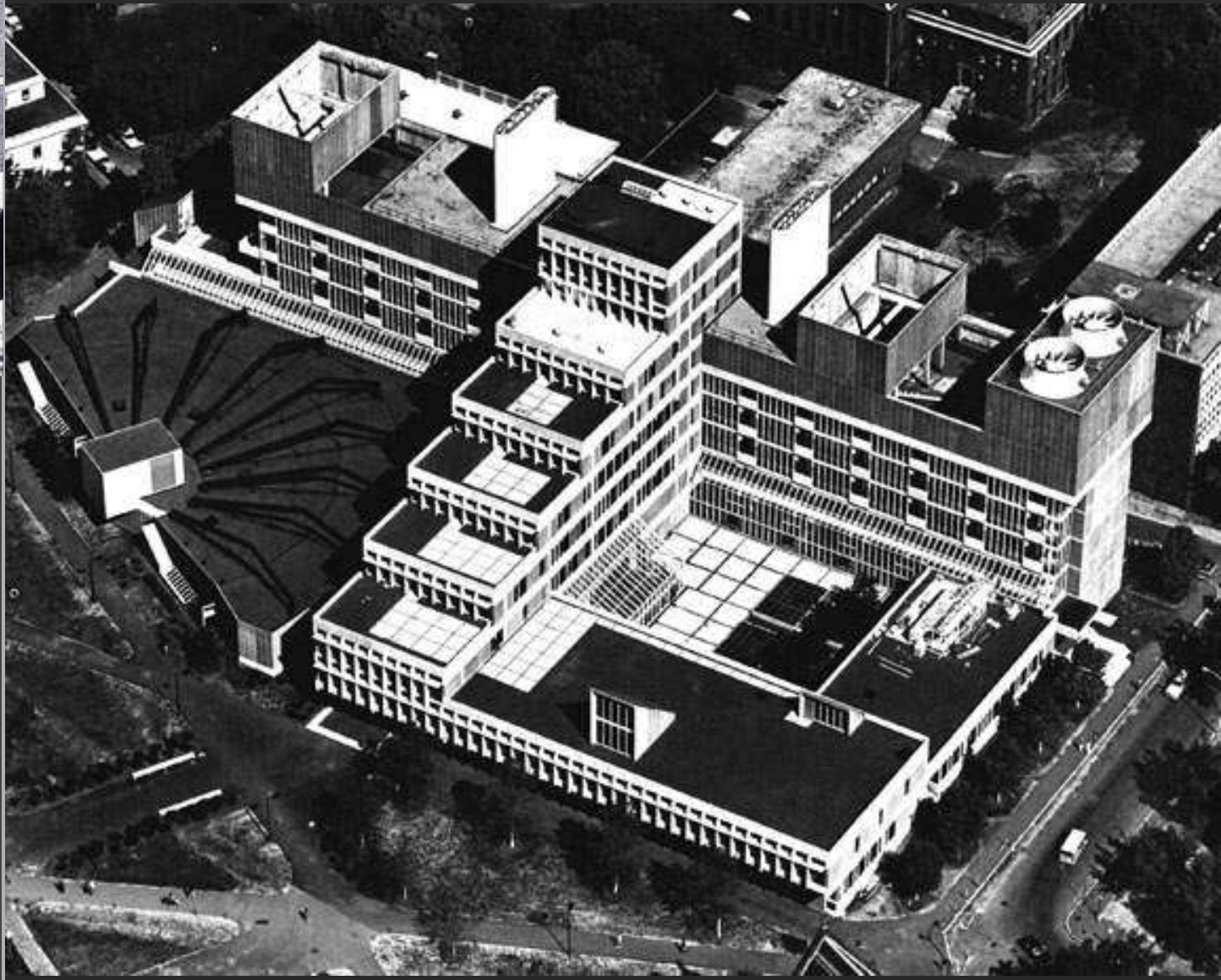




Harvard  
Undergraduate  
Science Center

J. L. Sert 1972

Leers-Weinzapfel  
2001







# Hilles Library



Harvard University

Harrison &  
Abramovitz

1965



## Hilles Library



Lighting  
redesign  
reinforces  
architectural  
statement,





## Hilles Library



Lighting  
redesign saves  
approx. 50%  
energy costs



# Boston City Hall



Image,  
Materiality and  
function



# Boston City Hall & Plaza



## Scales of Intervention



## / Modernism and Sustainability

*“Sustainability is a  
Modern Movement”*

# Vatican Papal Audience Hall

## Photovoltaic array on signature P.L. Nervi structure



# The Modern House



Gropius House

Lincoln, MA 1938

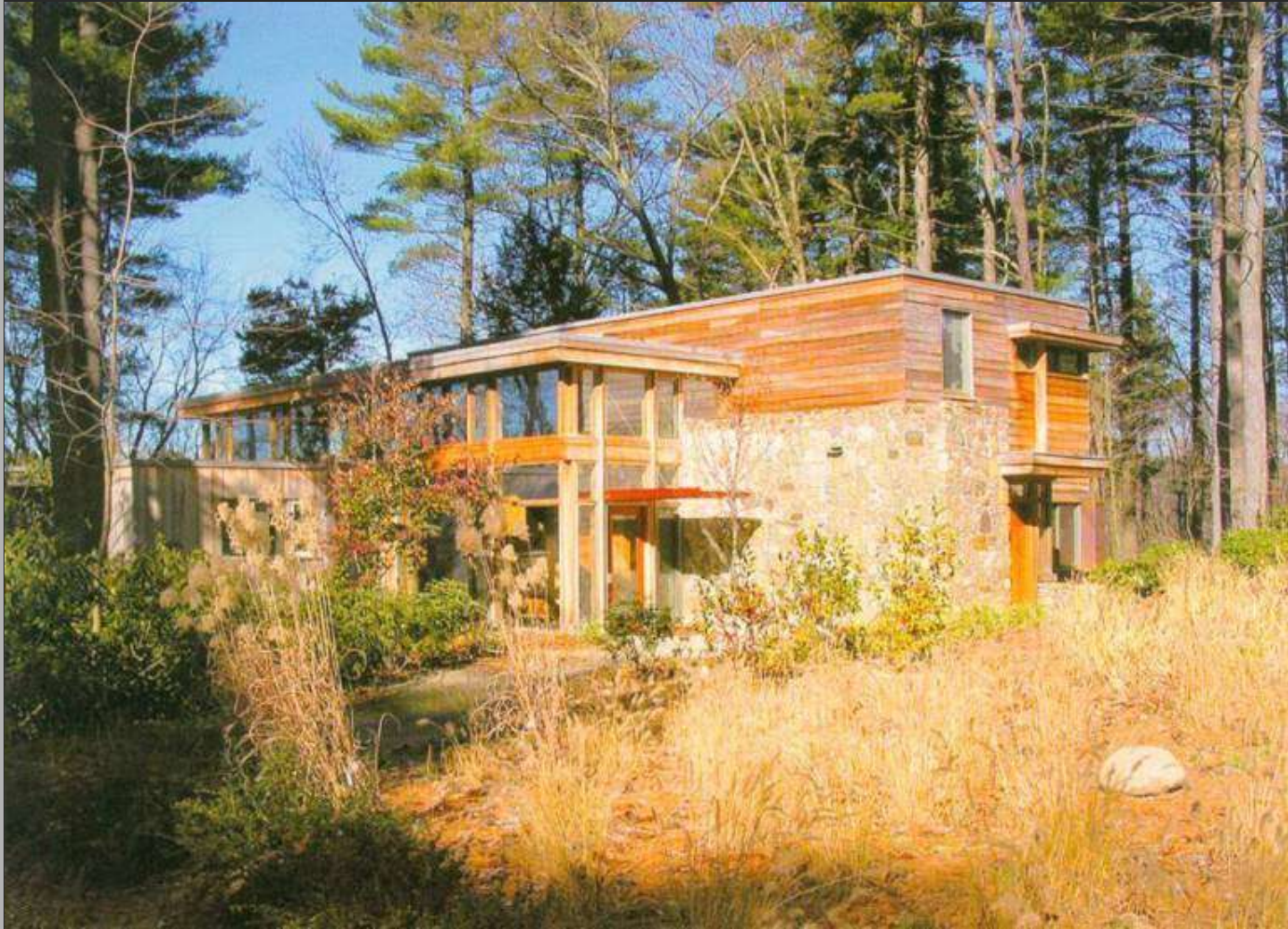




Chamberlain  
Cottage



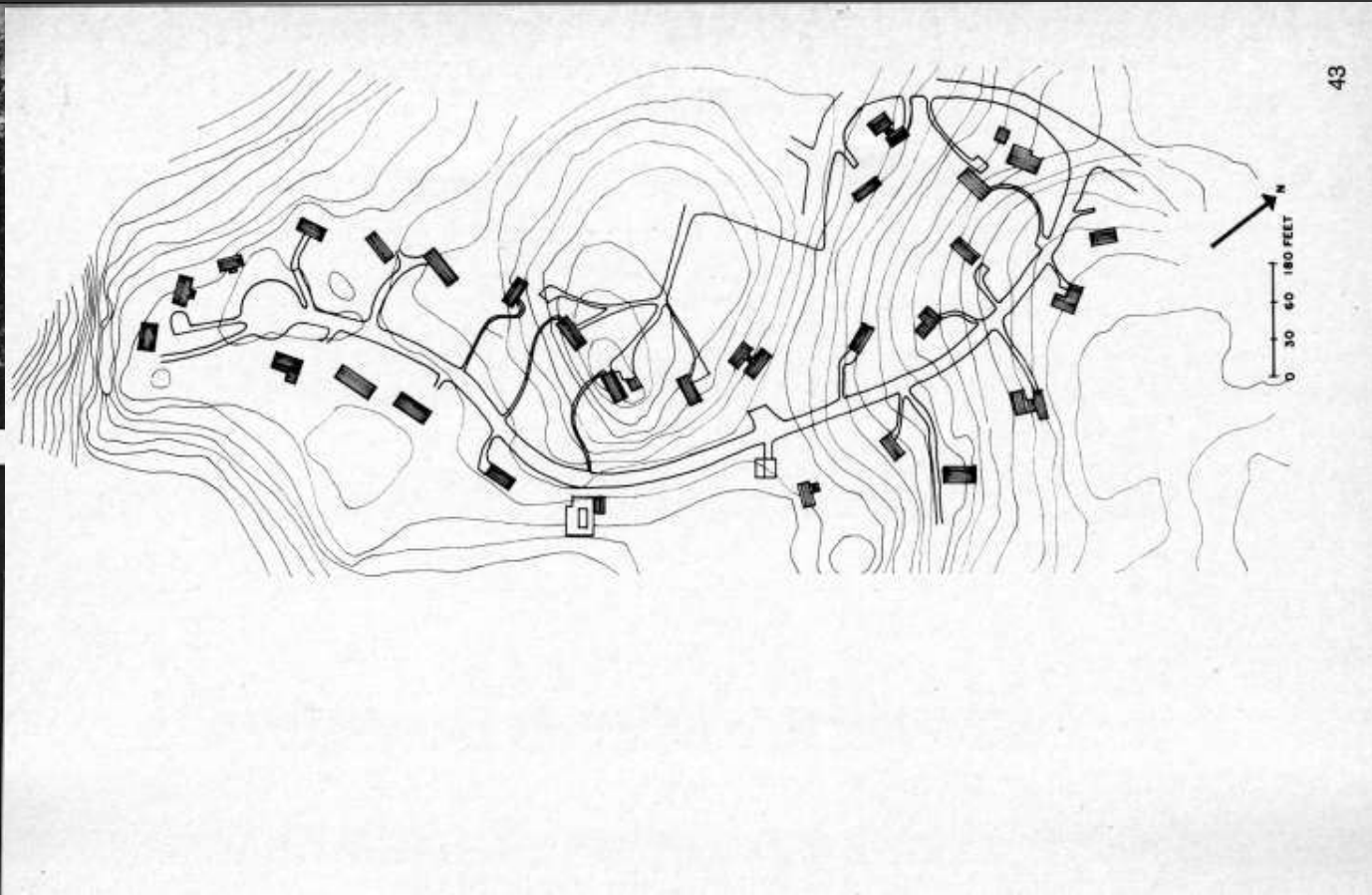
Wayland, MA , 1940 Marcel  
Breuer



Expansion 2002



# Modern House Developments



6 Moon Hill  
Lexington, MA  
TAC 1946-





Henry Hoover

Hoover House  
1935-6

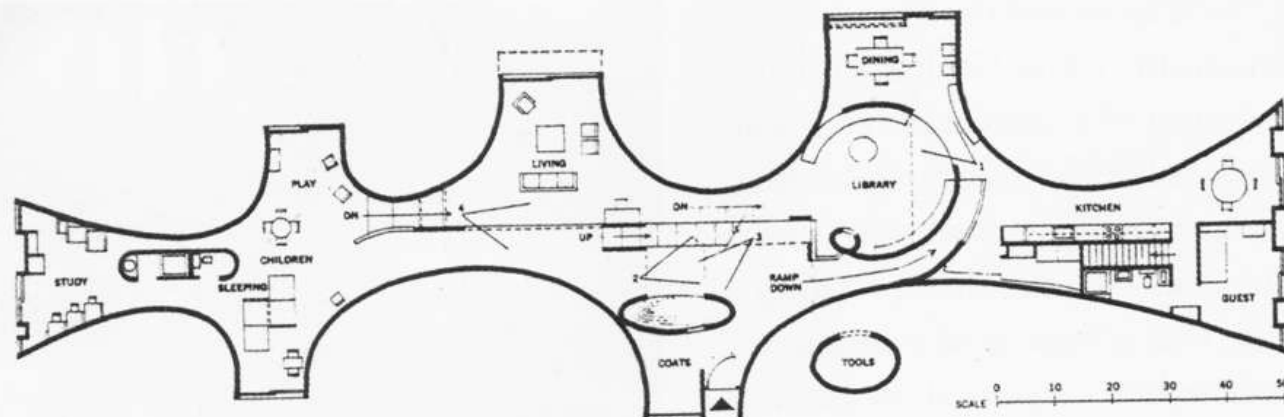
Lincoln







Stevens-McNulty  
House  
Lincoln 1967





# Barbican



# Barbican





# Barbican



# Barbican





/ End

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