

TRIANGLE GARDENS HOUSING PROJECT ELWOOD, WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

Architect, Wolfgang Gerson

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This little low rental housing project was the outcome of a study undertaken by the School of Architecture at the University of Manitoba at the request of the Greater Winnipeg Welfare Council. The project is financed and managed on a non-profit basis by a group of Winnipeg business men as a "pilot project" for the purpose of rehousing families from the slums. It was felt that such projects are essential as a prelude to any urban redevelopment involving housing. The study recommended that such projects should be kept small and distributed throughout the city, in suitable residential areas to help integrate the families housed within the project with the surrounding community.

The site was given to the corporation by the City. It is a flat triangular-shaped piece of land without features of interest, and bounded on one side by a railroad track. It was essential to retain a wide strip of land along the track and plant immediately some fast-growing willows and evergreens as a shelter-belt. From the beginning, however, we realized that within

the allowable budget only a bare minimum of landscaping could be done, and that within the next ten to fifteen years we could not rely on trees and foliage to create patterns of interest. Therefore we carefully sited the buildings in such a way that the open space outlined and walled in by the buildings with their rhythmic dot pattern of standard windows would create a sense of life and fun. Colour too became important in the summer green as well as in the winter's white. This scheme is essentially one of white surfaces and grey outlines, with brightly coloured panels, dark blue spur walls, dark red fences and doors in oranges, yellows and reds.

The plans of the houses are simple and uniform. For simplicity of framing the single run stair has been located in the same central location in all plans, whether there are two, three or four bedrooms. The entrance halls with a space for the buggy, and the kitchen-dining rooms face the front, and the living rooms face the back.

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