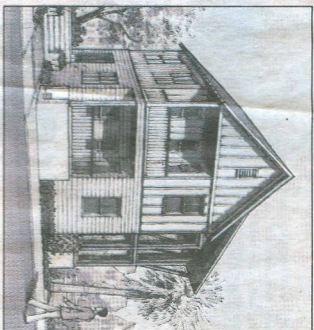




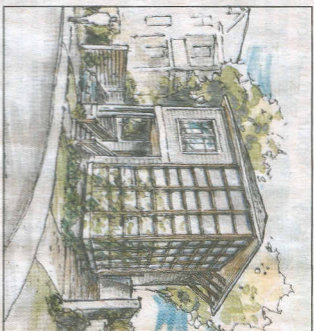
DALE WATSON/PROVIDED

A group of Charleston architects came up with this design for a new affordable home on a narrow lot downtown.



AARON EDE/PROVIDED

Architects came up with this design for a small, postage-stamp sized lot near a busy downtown street.



DALE WATSON/PROVIDED

Architects came up with this design for a very small, square lot next to a street with a lot of traffic.

Architects gather to tackle small problems for Charleston

A few weeks ago, almost three dozen architects agreed to spend their Friday hunched over a few small tables in an effort to help solve one of Charleston's ongoing challenges.

Specifically, they were volunteering their time to design affordable houses for three downtown sites the city owns and plans to build on.

The sites are pretty typical of downtown parcels. One was a narrow rectangle that fronts on a historic street that's mostly developed,



ROBERT BEHRE

Architecture

Another was a site behind an older home, essentially a backyard site. The third was a small square parcel at the corner of a quiet street and a

much busier one.

Then they were given the constraints: Each house design needed to be within a certain range of square feet; needed to have a certain number of bedrooms and bathrooms; and should be simple to build and relatively inexpensive to maintain.

They were members of the Custom Residential Architects Network, a newly formed group. Eddie Bello, former city preservation architect now with McMillan Pazdan Smith,

says this is one of the network's first projects.

"One of the things we wanted to do as a group is perform some type of public service," he says. Designing affordable housing is a nice change because residential architects' clients usually ask them to do larger, higher-end work. "We have said this is an opportunity to show that good design doesn't have to be expensive," he says.

The architects were divided into six groups with about five or six per

group, and by the end of the day, as beer bottles slowly replaced water bottles, each group had a series of sketches and schemes.

Architect Bill Huey, who serves on the network's steering committee with Bello and Architect Steve Herdeng, says the next step will be to talk with the city, perhaps do some sort of pricing exercise and decide which plans have the most promise — and the most potential from the

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Architects tackle small problems

ARCHITECTS From Page 1B

city's viewpoint.

The designs all looked creative, though some are developed more than others. Each had a novel element though also appeared to fit into the city's vernacular architectural traditions. Two renders, Dale Watson and Aaron Ede, helped sketch a version of the design that will be easier for average folks to read.

Bello says it's too soon to say how many of the preliminary designs will be fleshed out — and even more premature to guess how many might actually get built.

But he feels sure at least a few will.

So in a few years, a few families might find themselves on the couch inside their hand-some yet affordable home, indebted to a gathering of talented that they probably knew absolutely nothing about.

Charles Towne Landing's archaeological work can benefit if you go online and vote for it on the Archaeological

The architects

The architects who participated in the recent affordable housing design project include the following:

Janette Alexander
Elizabeth Allen
Scott Anderson
Michael Atkinson
Nick Barrett
Dennis Blaschke
Douglas Boyce
Alice Burruss
Martin Cizler
Meghan Clemmens
Darryl Cobb
Abby Freeman
Sam Furr
Ron Gossen
Alexey Grigorief

Jim Henshaw
Steve Herlong
David Hill
Ashley Jennings
Robbie Lesslie
Bronwyn Lurkin
Chad McDonald
Athanda Mole
Alan Purvis
Dan Schaeffer
Chris Schmitt
Nathan Schutte
James Selvitelli
Tyler Smyth
Clay Tucker
Bill Warlick
Kevin Whalley
Dale Watson (renderings)
Aaron Ede (renderings)

Institute of America's web-

site. Its competitors include sites in Florida, Michigan, Belize, Italy and Spain. The winning site gets free admission to the institute's next conference — plus good exposure. To vote, visit <http://archaeological.org/outreach/>

contest/submissions

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