



We Do Incremental Development

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What's on your mind, Ryan?

We Do Incremental Development

Invite

From Notifications



Ryan Schultz

3d ·

Hi, I wanted to reach out to this group to see if anyone might have an interest in redeveloping a multifamily project that's near completion in Eau Claire, WI.

Having teamed up with the GC very early, we worked very hard to get this 71 unit down to \$100/sf without compromising the integrity of the design.

As an architecture firm, we do things very differently. One key aspect is that all our construction documents, from past projects, are free and open source.

For example, the CDs for this Eau Claire project can be found here <https://tinyurl.com/y6mbau2n> and are free to be used by anyone, at any time. An animation of the project can be found here. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sklz_bG6Gq8

We essentially give away our work because it actually provides work for us in the end. We only charge for our time tweaking the drawings to a particular site, or the time it takes to apply all the lessons learned from the previous project.

With such an approach, A/E fees that were once 6% of construction cost, can be reduced to 1% or 2%.

It's an approach that's a win/win for both the architect and developer.

In that light, I was wondering if anyone may have any interest to redevelop this project elsewhere?

Would be happy to chat.

All the Best, Ryan
ryan@openingdesign.com
<http://openingdesign.com/>



26



+ 2

Like Heart Shocked Face Bryan Mock, Stella Osborn and 105 others · 48 Comments

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Chatta Brisco

this is a very beautiful design. love the materiality.

3

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David Maxam

Seems like just the liability should be worth more than 1%

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 3d



Calip Farris

I see structural included in that set also, I know for sure I would be charging at least 1% on my fee just for liability alone. Not to mention if this is a reuse project in other locations, considerable changes may be required for different permitting agencies and associated codes. High winds regions, earthquake regions, clay soils or high consolidation below foundations; all constitute a potentially separate design. I generally don't mind working with architects to keep a design as similar as possible, but a lot of the ones I've come across just want a simple re-stamping fee which 95% of the time isn't going to cut it.

2

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Allan Branch

Kevin Wattenbarger

1

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Kevin Wattenbarger

Allan Branch I like where you're coming from. What about smaller 12-16 unit projects?

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Ryan Schultz Author

The modular aspect is amenable to reducing the units. Basement parking, however, dictates a lot.

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 2d



Adam Nelson

Come build this on this defunct quickie mart site asap.



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3



Ryan Schultz Author

we're on it! 😊... should be done tomorrow.

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 3d

3

26



Adam Nelson

Ryan Schultz I knew I was talking to the right person.

Like · Reply · 3d

2



Dana Poindexter
Truett Smith

Like · Reply · 3d



Jim Manson

Curious if the black exterior is just an aesthetic or if there is a calculated warming effect in winter, and, if so, what the numbers are in terms of utility cost reductions?

Like · Reply · 3d



Ryan Schultz Author

Hi Jim, was aesthetics. Might be some negligent warming, but there's rigid insulation behind that fiber cement.

These are the types of exercises, however, that we'd like to dive deeper into with every new redevelopment of this project.

Would also be nice to entertain more advance prefabricated approaches with each new development as well. We already have some low-hanging-fruit ideas on that front.

Like · Reply · 3d

1



Aby Gutierrez

I'm in Franksville Wisconsin, I will definitely look into this, I already have a location

Like · Reply · 3d

2



Jason Fritts

is that lot under an acre Ryan? Looks like great density. Is the \$100/sf const cost even with the underground garage? Seems very impressive on your costs!! Looks nice

Like · Reply · 3d



Ryan Schultz Author

Thanks Jason, yes that included the basement. The GC was there from the 1st sketch, and leaned heavily on their subs & suppliers to value engineer as we went.

Yes, the site is 0.8 acres.

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2



Rob Anderson

I love this design! What incentives, if any, did the local jurisdiction provide for the project and is that included in the \$100/sf number?

Like · Reply · 3d



Ryan Schultz Author

Thanks. That cost was all in, except land. Not privy, unfortunately, to capital stack.... they did however get the land for a deal, as it was bought from the city.

Like · Reply · 3d



Rob Anderson

Thanks! I appreciate the info.

Like · Reply · 3d



Marshall Swatt

Really great design and license model! Similar to the software world.

Like · Reply · 3d

2



Brittany Reese

How many square feet is the building at \$100/sf per unit if you don't mind my asking?

Like · Reply · 2d



Ryan Schultz Author

Np, about 91k sf.

Like · Reply · 2d



Alex Pereira

100nsf? That's impressive. No idea how you pulled that



 **Ryan Schultz** Author
Alex, me either, honestly.
[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 2d

 **Stella Osborn**
I love all that you do!! BUT how in the world is this able to be constructed for \$100 / SF ??!! I would love it if this were possible, but anything in Atlanta as far as multifamily is costing at least \$150/ SF minimum to build.....
[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 2d

 **Ryan Schultz** Author
Hi **Stella**! Yes, it would have NEVER happened if we didn't team up with the GC super early. There was intense back/forth with the subs and suppliers to achieve target costs. Granted, it was in upper Wisconsin, so construction costs are obviously a little lower than Atlanta. Regardless, I'm still surprised we did it as well. The developer got a deal on this project.
[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 2d · Edited

 **Cary Westerbeck**
Stella Osborn I like it, but in Seattle even at low cost it would be \$250 sf for hard costs alone, usually more. It's nuts here.
[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 2d

 **Thomas Dolan**
250 a foot here. [Like](#) 2

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 2d

 **Aby Gutierrez**
I have 7 acres by hwy 94 and hwy K exit in Franksville WI. 2 exits away from the huge Foxconn development. Would like to do something like this but not sure how to go about funding the project. Any advice would be appreciated.
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 **Matthew Denker**
This is excellent, as is your plan and the pricing. Love it. Also, love the VTACs. I've never understood why they're not more common.
[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 2d

 **Clark N. Rinehart**
 **Brian L. Burnett** [Like](#) 1

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 2d

 **David Barbour**
Interesting design. As a fellow architect in Connecticut, I applaud your open source approach.

As I look at your construction drawings, I have one question. There are 1 bedroom units which have the bedrooms on the interior side of the living space, and they have no windows. Under our building code (IRC), we wouldn't be permitted to create a bedroom without windows. How do you do that?

I'm working on an adaptive reuse project to create apartments in a former department store. The unit plans are very deep and I'm having trouble getting code compliant bedrooms, which aren't on an outside wall.

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 **Ryan Schultz** Author
Hi **David**, we had the same question. The following correspondence with our AHJ might help you.
<https://www.dropbox.com/.../Gmail%20-%201205.2.1%20RE...>



DROPBOX.COM
Gmail - 1205.2.1 RE_ 1205.2.1
RE_ With ...edrooms be...

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[Like](#) 2

 **Ryan Schultz** Author

**David Barbour****Ryan Schultz** Great! Thank you.[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 2d**Bernice Radle****Ryan Schultz** I cannot imagine trying to rent apartments without windows.[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 1d

Write a reply...

**Rob Szudzik**

Are you saying architects are paid too much at 6%

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 2d**Ryan Schultz** Author

Nope, often times (and I live and breath it) even 6% is not enough for a ground up, new design.

However, if you can redevelop a project, with only slight changes, I think architects would make more money (translated as provide more value) with this open source approach than they currently do. We're not selling the 'thing', we're selling our knowledge that allowed us to get there and the knowledge to modify it.

We don't need to reinvent the wheel. With each new development, the wheel gets improved, as we can imbue the drawings/project with more intelligence and lessons learned from project to project. That's the real value.

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 2d**Ryan Schultz** Author

It's also interesting to note that one of the reasons why software engineers are one of the most sought after, and in demand professions right now, is partly due to this open source culture.

They don't waste their time building libraries, they just build off what was done before and it's their understanding of that software library, and ability to change it, that makes them valuable--imho.

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 2d**David Ellison**

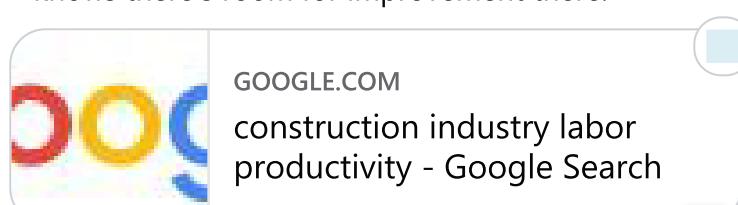
Racing to the bottom are we? Can we build any uglier or any cheaper?

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 2d**Ryan Schultz** Author

we can however, build more efficiently and reverse the trend that our industry alone is known for.

<https://www.google.com/search...>

I believe that's a commendable pursuit, and god knows there's room for improvement there.

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · Remove Preview · 2d**David Ellison**

We need to obsess a little less on efficient labor, give people meaningful jobs at fair rates of compensation and realize that life is not about maximizing profit. Creating beautiful places that are built in a sustainable manner should be a much higher priority.

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 2d**Ryan Schultz** Author

these pursuits are not mutually exclusive.

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Write a reply...



**John Cohrs**

Just a couple of questions and observations, and I don't mean to sound confrontational. Here goes: 1) Did you really build this somewhere for \$100/SF, or is that what your cost estimate shows might be possible? Will that GC sign a contract for the \$100/SF cost with no C.O.'s unless owner initiated?; and 2) while I understand your "open source" concept to this design, that means that context doesn't matter? This can, in theory, be built in any town and neighborhood without regard for its history and surrounding? Thanks.

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 2d**Ryan Schultz** Author

1) final costs were those. 2) yes GC signed a contract for less, 100/sf was with change orders 3) I believe context is important to a point, but a large portion of what an architect puts in their drawings, is not necessarily context sensitive. Context doesn't dictate how standard partition details are done, or how ADA applies to a unit layout, or how a beam connection is detailed out.

There are opportunities for a happy medium here I believe. One could make the argument, that since less is spent on a brand new, ground up design, that more can be spent on improving the design, or making it more contextual.

5

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 2d**Brinn Miracle**

Ryan Schultz excellent thoughts on context. I'm always looking for ways to disrupt the architecture industry. Wishing you all the success in your endeavors!

2

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 2d**Nat M. Zorach**

Ryan, e-mailing you now!

1

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 1d**Matthew Heimann**

Ryan, Im curious to know what were some of the major items of the design in which you changed/modified in order to get the build at such a low price point. i really like that design/build model of being able to be flexible with the design to hit a certain price point and seems like that really helped on this one. Great job on price and design

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 16h



Ryan Schultz Author
Hi Matthew,

In general, we relied on the project subs and suppliers to help us reach these target costs. We were flexible and accommodate their New Activity knowledge/expertise. We didn't design and detail things out too prematurely. I believe there would be absolutely no way to achieve these costs, if they were not part of the 'design' team.

Specifically...

- a very modular design, from everything to facade layout, to room layout, to kitchen/bathroom layout
- floor to floor with precut stud sizes
- a flat facade, no ins/out...create visual intrigue other ways with balcony/window layout... and material changes.
- a straight run foundation
- no ins/outs
- working closely with the precast and truss suppliers to design more efficient layouts, etc.
- exposed ductwork. Avoided dampers in certain areas.
- VTAC's at exterior wall, size windows big enough to not require piped ventilation
- using 4x6 joist and additional sheathing to achieve 30min rating at corridors--avoided drywall ceiling, and rated dampers.
- stock window sizes
- prefabricated balconies
- Wood framed stairs, vs, CMU.
- Prefabricated wall panels

In general, there's a lot of lessons learned as well, that we'd like to apply to the next redevelopment of this project.

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