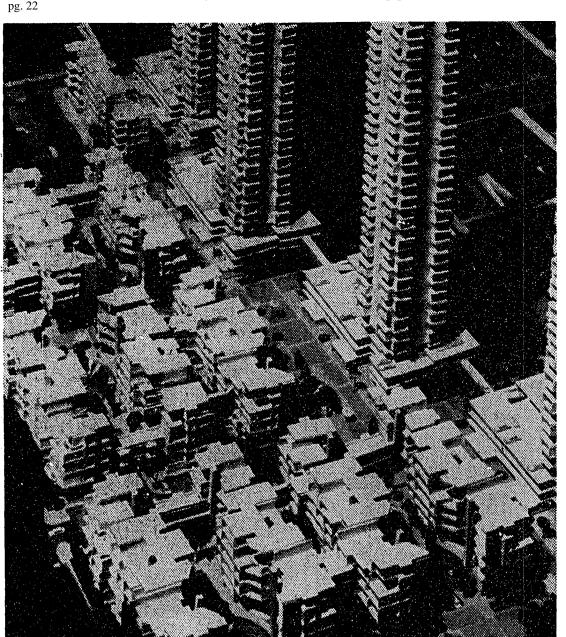
Design for Progress: Novel Concept for East Harlem Project Is a Break ... By ADA LOUISE HUXTABLE

New York Times (1923-Current file); Aug 23, 1963; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times



EMPHASIS ON VARIETY: Model of prize-winning design for East Harlem renewal project demonstrates juxtaposition of towers and low-rise buildings in confined urban area.

Novel Concept for East Harlem Project

Design for Progress

Is a Break From Tired Boxes of Past

By ADA LOUISE HUXTABLE

The results of the Ruberoid marked trend toward "busy"

dle income development in East dow patterns and and Redevelopment Board offer abstract attack this year.

coupled with the fact that its common in private mediocrity chitecture controversy spring.

ing, but it has the virtue of Certainly the difficulty of producing fresh, imaginative adapting these valid and proideas in a field stale with repegressive trends to the financial tition. design for Boston's new City minimized. Hall, now under construction,

by a team of New York architects previously unknown to The fact that Milton Mollen the political establishment. It and the Housing and Redevelopbuildings at Chandigarh India. San Francisco's Golden Gate-

way competition resulted in housing designs for urban remany other cities to desirable alternatives to uninspired buildings. the last communities to learn.

tion is one excellent answer to

design. The contest results repreresent an architectural breakthrough for the city on several counts. They disclose much of significance that is going on in the field today, very little of

takings.

All of the prize-winning deproblems is the real prize that signs showed it. There was a came out of the competition.

strong new style in building quite different from the stand-financing

ardized product that characterizes so many official under-

Design Competition for a mid-facades, rich in balconies, win-Harlem for the City Housing shapes that often approached sculptural a ray of light in the dark pic- Sometimes it was architecture city-sponsored con- for sculpture's, rather than for struction which has been under people's sake, to the jury's distress. But one conclusion was in-

The board's search for new escapable. Based on new strucapproaches through competition tural techniques increasingly own latest designs are also mov- there is a whole range of teching toward more imaginative nological possibilities and essolutions, could mark the be-ginning of the end of the era of tapped in the housing field. Most municipal mediocrity that of the entries dealt with these brought on the city's civic ar- larger ideas, creatively and exlast perimentally concerned with construction and site use, which Competition is a procedure could then be interpreted for that is costly and time-consum- individual neighborhood needs.

and code limitations that the A competition produced the city must deal with cannot be Good Design Costly The fact that Milton Mollen

is an electrifying scheme not ment Board are willing to take unrelated to LeCorbusier's on these headaches, when it is precedent - setting government so much easier to keep turning in buildings out of the same tired. but tested, mold is perhaps the most significant gain of all. Economics are not on the side of architectural excellence in

newal that opened the eyes of housing with a tight cost ceiling. Good ideas take time, and time is money. New solutions, properly thought through, are New York has been one of never as cheap as the rubber stamp. Stripping a building to The underwriting of prizes and a box, using minimum standard expenses by a business corpora- materials and putting the greattion is one excellent answer to est possible number of units the city's current lack of finto it is the most economical nances to pay the costs of good solution. But this solution is a design

sure contribution to the city's progressive deterioration. The Housing and Redevelopment Board is still handicapped by its past image, which sits firmly and depressingly in the public eye on almost every ur-

which has filtered through to ban renewal site. To change the bureaucratic circles. There is a image it will have to deal with other restrictive factors—costs,

> and codes-beyond architectural design. Its apparent willingness to