

## Apartmenthouse for transitory dwelling "casa de transito"

[ Project title ]

**HAo8\_SBKQW**

[ Office ID ]

### Project information

#### Project data

**City**  
Havanna

**Country**  
Cuba

**Type**  
Urban planning

**Status of planning**  
Final design stage

**Status of formal permission**  
Applied for permit

**Estimated start of construction**  
Mar '09

**Last modified**  
Feb 15, 2008

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Workshop, Ana and Paolo

#### Further author(s) & legal guardian(s)

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#### Prize money distribution statement

### Project description

"Casa de transito", not just a building, but an innovation in social, ecological and economic aspects.

The construction of new apartments in the midst of the historic city center of Havanna responds to the urgent need of the population for housing. Hundreds of people have to be evacuated from their homes in the old quarters each year for safety reasons due to the critical condition of their houses. For these families this means living for years at the outskirts of the city in slums with a very poor system of public transport, i.e. long and tiresome hours of travelling to work, and, specially for children and old people, being torn out of the familiar and social security system with its informal relations and structures of help and support.

The renovation of a house in the historic center generally takes years due to lack of materials and money, so people suffer under the above described conditions for a long time.

The casa de transito will provide for the first time apartments for temporary living in the familiar context of an old town quarter. For the time of renovation of their deteriorated house they will live in the casa de transito and then give way to the next users as soon as their homes are rebuilt. Through this constant change the casa will multiply its efficiency and contribute to strengthen important social structures in the city.

The house will be built as far as possible with local materials and offers small but comfortable rooms with a very simple standard. It respects the historic substance of the adjoining houses in taking up traditional elements of local architectures but has its own expression of timeless modernity. For the first time in Cuba the use of solar technology in housing construction is planned. With a system of substituting drinking water with rainwater for humidification another important ecological task will be addressed: the economical use of clean water as one of the most precious resources of the country. The project so contributes to a higher awareness for sustainable construction and living.

The cooperation with the local authorities during the whole planning process intensify mutual learning and benefit. The professional dialogue on construction standards, local needs, conditions and restrictions between first and third world architects enlarge the horizon of both and contribute to an innovativ design.

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## Measuring up to the target issues for sustainable construction

### Quantum change and transferability

[ Self assessment ]



"Reduce to the max", this statement best describes the philosophy of the building: social, economical and ecological. The very simple standards of the appartments and the planned use of solar technology, for the first time in Cuba for housing purposes, will boost the sensibilisation for sustainability and ecological criteria in construction. We will stress the importance of maintenance and try to empower the inhabitants to cope with these tasks jet hardly known to cuban dwellers. With the possibility of staying in the neighbourhood and so continue to participate in social life during the time of the renovation of their houses, these appartments contribute substantially to the quality of life for many people, with a special benefit to children and the old.

### Ethical standards and social equity

[ Self assessment ]



The planning process has its own qualities through an intense cooperation with local authorities. The dialogue between Swiss (western) ideas about living conditions, housing, construction quality and the Cuban reality has fruitfully stimulated the outcome of the actual project. The responsible local architect had been invited to stay for 4 weeks in Switzerland, working together with the Swiss colleagues on the project, She presented the project-results twice and held lectures about the general problems of conservation and housing in Habana vieja to Swiss architects. This focus on the intercultural dialogue between equal partners is giving our first-third world cooperation an totally new twist and enhances valuable learning processes on both sides.

### Ecological quality and energy conservation

[ Self assessment ]



For the first time in Cuba in housing-construction the use of solar technology is planned. Furthermore a rainwater collection system will be installed and used as far as possible to substitute drinking-water for humidification. Through these mechanisms economic operation will be guaranteed and the use of free energy sources will be enhanced

### Economic performance and compatibility

[ Self assessment ]



Construction costs will be kept as low as possible by using local materials where available. The standards will be very simple, answering basic needs of the tenants. To ensure the maintenance ot the building, one of the biggest problems in Cuban housing, the overall budget contains respective positions for the following 10 years, part of which will be withheld and payed annually to the caretakers.

### Contextual and aesthetic impact

[ Self assessment ]



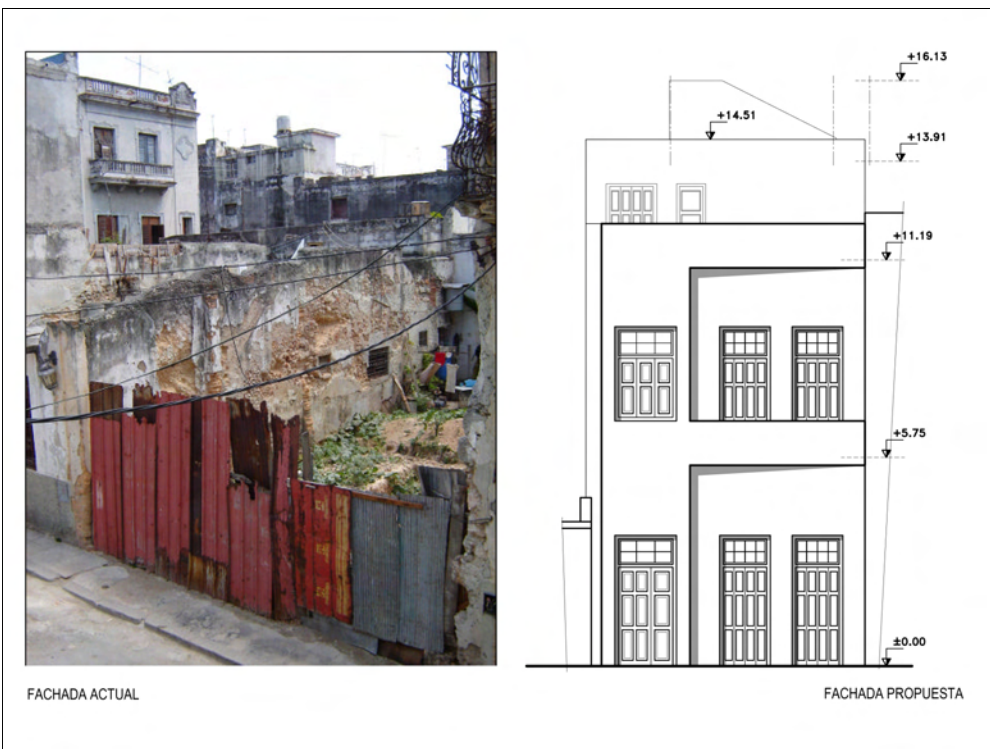
The new building is organized with respect to traditional typology: architectural elements as verandas and double-height rooms make reference to the historical building-context of Habana vieja, zone of protection of historical monuments (Unesco world cultural heritage). All the same the building is reduced to clear modern forms an has therefore its very own expression without mimikry the old.

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## Project visualization

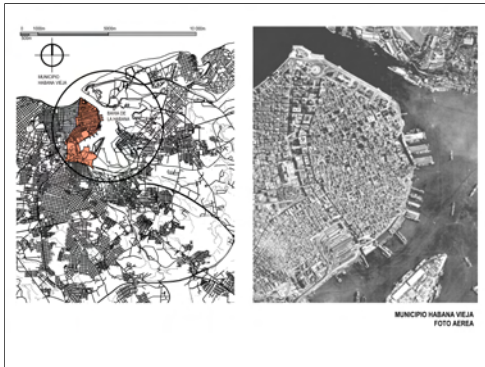


working model



building lot and front drawing

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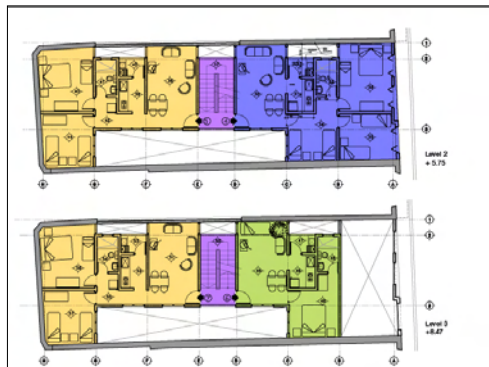
overview Havana



situation "Conde 55"



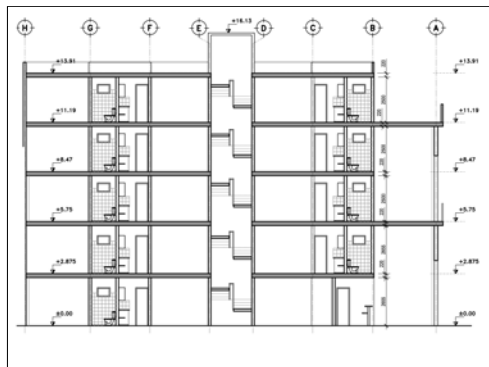
floor plan level 0 and 1



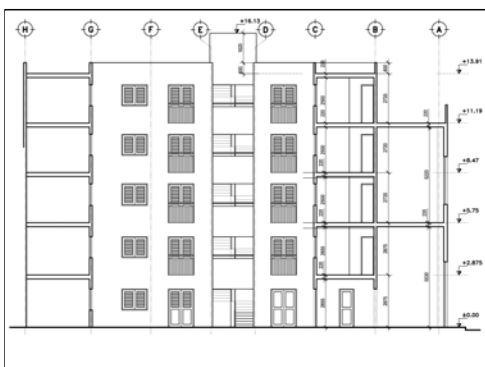
floor plan level 2 and 3



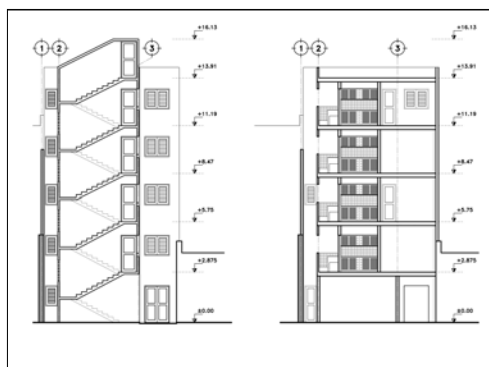
floor plan level 4



section 1-1



section 2-2



section 3-3 and 4-4