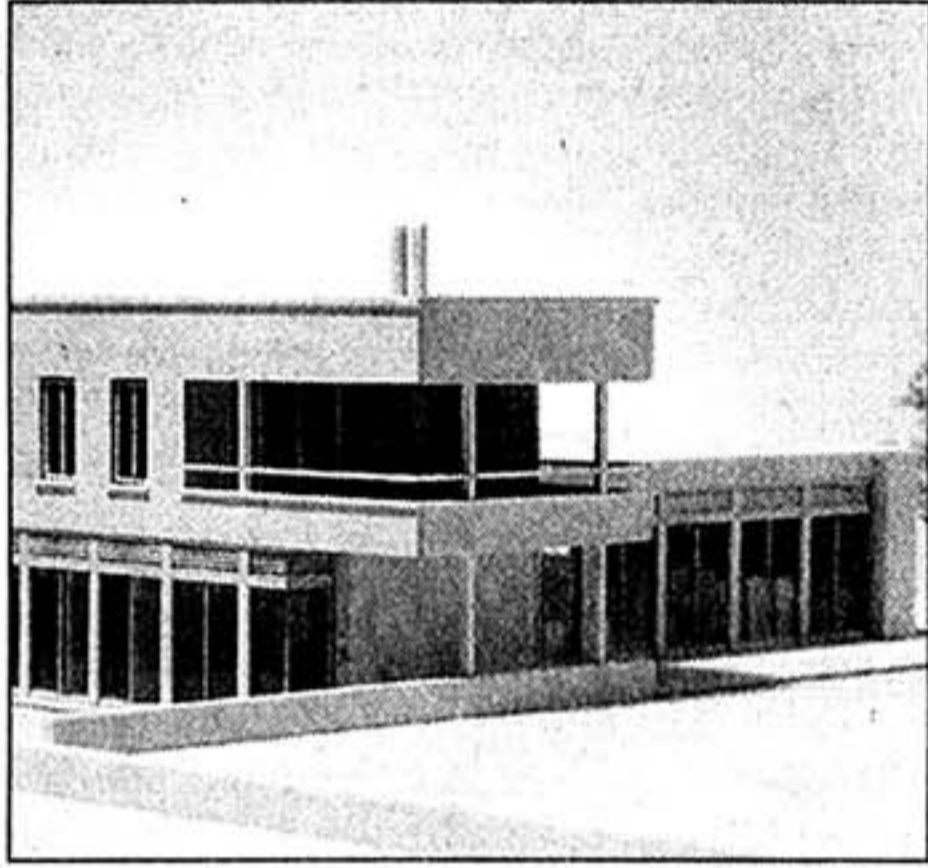
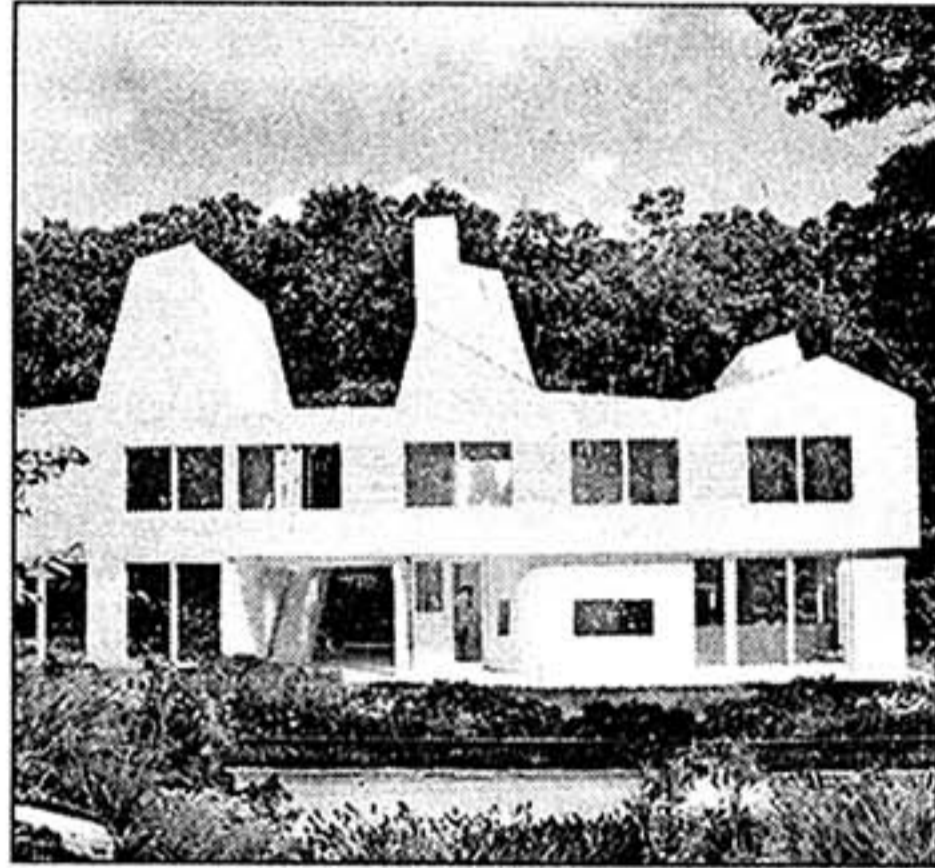


1 Subdivision, 36 Architects With a Modernist Flair



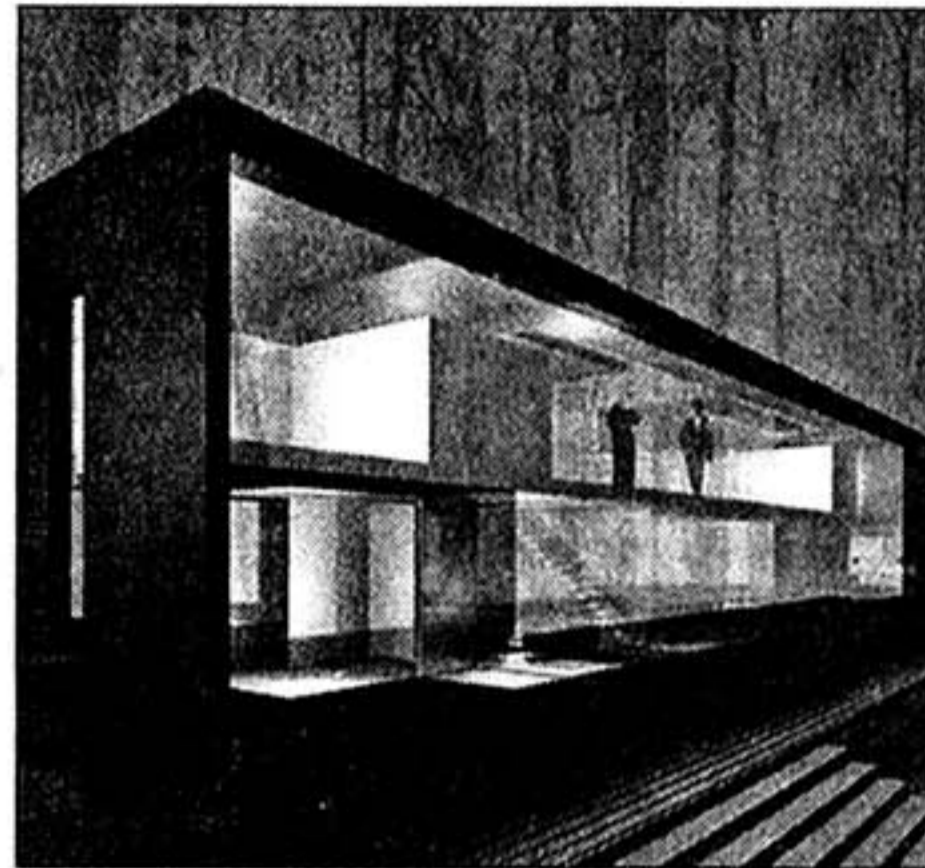
Selldorf Architects

Model of four-bedroom house designed by Annabelle Selldorf.



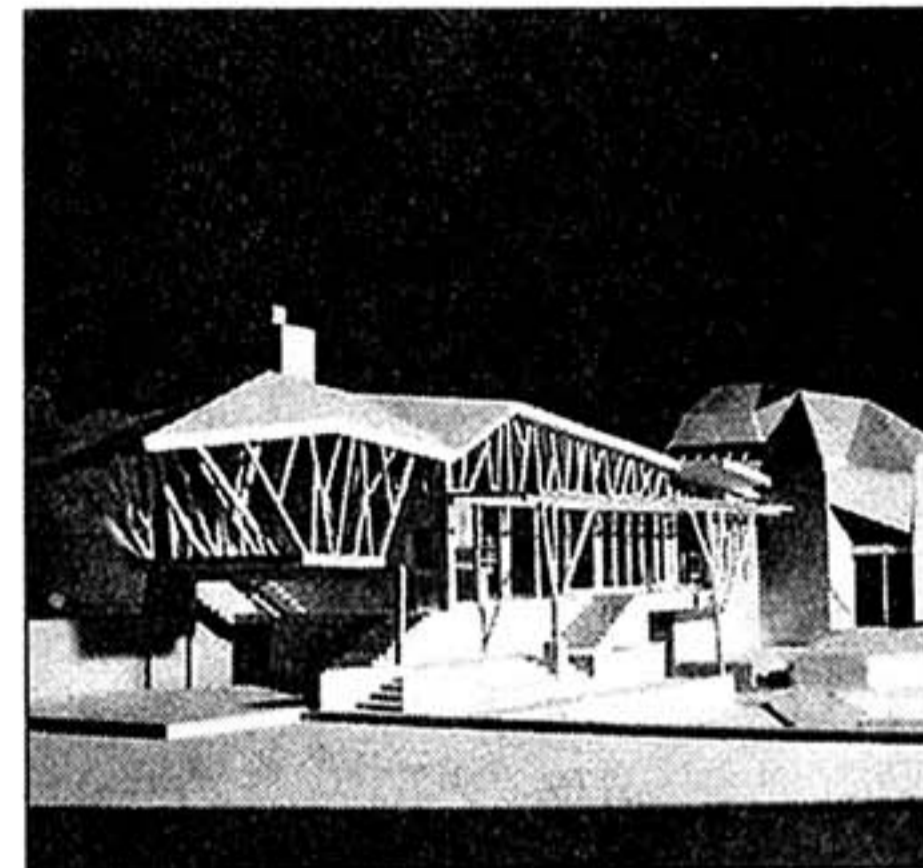
Matt Schnepf

The home at Houses at Sagaponac designed by Stan Allen.



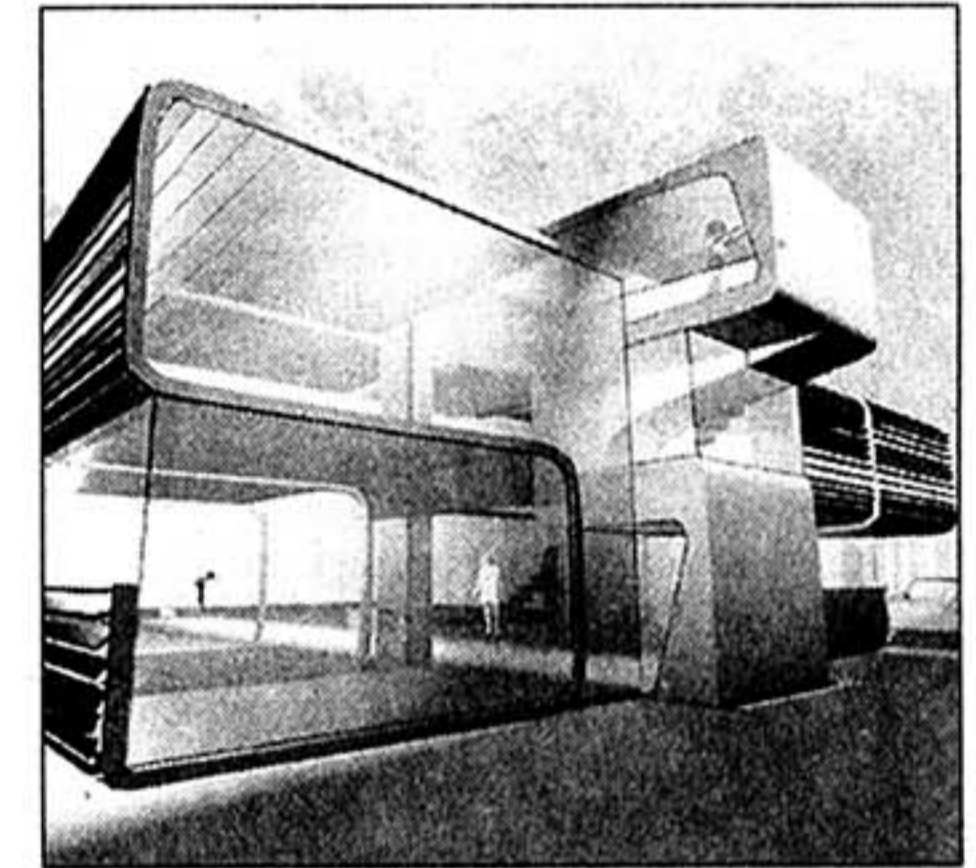
David Ellien

The design by Stephen Kanner of Los Angeles, in a night view.



David Ford

House designed by the late Samuel Mockbee of Canton, Miss.



ROY

Design by Lindy Roy, as an alternative to the McMansions.

A starry cast of designers and modest, but 7-figure, prices.

By CAROLE PAQUETTE

ON land surrounded by dense trees and low-bush blueberries in the area of Bridgehampton and Sagaponack that is just north of the South Fork's main road, 36 internationally known architects are designing 36 houses that are being built on speculation.

The project, an 80-acre subdivision called the Houses at Sagaponac, is being developed by Harry J. Brown Jr., a Southampton resident for 30 years and the president of the Brown Companies in Manhattan, an international real estate investment company.

The plan is to have widely known architects design homes that are relatively modest and economical by the standards of this very prosperous part of the world. It was conceived after Mr. Brown purchased 150 acres that were in foreclosure for \$1.6 million in 1994. Another developer had subdivided the original parcel into 45 lots and built some houses before going bankrupt.

Mr. Brown set out to construct houses on the property that would be "fun-oriented and blend with the outdoors" and that would revive the spirit of small summer houses typical of the 1960's. And, he said, they would provide "an antidote to the trend" of so-called McMansions that have proliferated on the East End.

The first 10 houses, most of which are in the final permit stages, are expected to be

completed by next summer. Six were designed by prominent New York City architects: Henry N. Cobb, Richard Gluckman, Stan Allen, Gisue and Mojgan Hariri, Lindy Roy and Annabelle Selldorf. The other four are by Marwan Al-Sayed of Phoenix, Shigeru Ban and Dean Maltz of Tokyo and New York City, Stephen Kanner of Los Angeles and the late Samuel Mockbee of Canton, Miss.

To advise him on the project, Mr. Brown turned to a friend, the New York City architect Richard Meier, designer of the Getty Center in Los Angeles. Mr. Meier designated the sites and chose the architects — who range in age from Ms. Roy, 38, to Philip Johnson, who is 96. "Basically, I wanted younger architects so they could show what they could do in residential design," Mr. Meier said. "But I also chose some older, more established ones to create a good mix."

The architects chosen were all modernists, because "that is what I believe in," he said. "Choosing who got what site was arbitrary," he added. "I put people who I thought would get along with one another next to each other so they could talk."

The sites range from 1 to 2.7 acres. The houses, which range from 2,100 square feet to 4,800, will sell from \$1 million to \$3 million.

Each architect's fee will amount to 11 percent of the construction budget of his or her house. The overall project is expected to cost \$70 million and has until now been financed personally by Mr. Brown. The company is currently meeting with banks to arrange construction financing, according to Sunitha Ramachandran, the project manager.

The sites are relatively indistinctive for the area. Sagaponack, north of Montauk

Highway, primarily includes vineyards and pondfront property with homes ranging from "cottages to castles, that sell from just under a million dollars to multimillions," said Judi Desiderio, vice president of Cook Pony Farm Real Estate, which has seven offices on the South Fork.

"It is an interesting idea to take what otherwise would be just a subdivision of spec houses," said Mr. Cobb, who is designing the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia.

"It's unusual for a group of architects like this to be invited to shape a subdivision. What its significance will be in the end is hard to say; it will be in the quality of the house," he said. "It will be interesting, a great many different architect's voices in one place operating within the constraints of zoning."

ACCORDING to Southampton's zoning code, 30 percent of each parcel may be cleared, and the rest must be left in its natural state. The maximum lot coverage of a roofed structure is limited to 15 percent of the cleared area. Working within these constraints, the architects received additional guidelines from Mr. Brown, including that the houses be less than 5,000 square feet and that they could be priced for about \$250 per square foot.

The Sunshine Group, a Manhattan marketing and brokerage firm, will be involved in marketing the houses, and they will also be made available to local Hampton brokers, according to Mr. Brown.

The architects participating include 10 women. The sisters Gisue and Mojgan Hariri, winners of the Young Architects Forum in 1990, applauded the fact that women were invited to participate. "The 21st century, finally!" Gisue Hariri said.

Their 4,600-square-foot, four-bedroom L-shaped house, which is the first under construction and is on the largest site, is expected to sell for \$2.6 million. The property is adjacent to a site assigned to Zaha Hadid of London and across the road from the Selldorf and Roy sites.

Mr. Cobb's house is on 1.3 acres adjacent to the site of his partner, James Ingo Freed. Including a courtyard, the building covers a total of 12,000 square feet, although the house itself is 3,600 square feet.

It will be the first house ever designed by Mr. Cobb, 76, whose credits include the John Hancock Tower in Boston. "I think after more than 50 years of practice, I'm ready to build a house," said Mr. Cobb, a former chairman of the Harvard Design School.

His house, which is estimated to sell for \$2 million, incorporates "a need for infinite space," he said. Because his lot is relatively small and heavily wooded, he designed the two-bedroom house around an interior courtyard, which includes a circular planting of 13 white fringe trees, which meet at a north-facing 26-square-foot towerlike studio with a 13-foot-high ceiling and high windows, he said.

A porch runs along the interior of the house, facing the courtyard, with its "idealized landscape that removes the owner from the world of a subdivision," he said.

Ms. Roy said she liked "the idea of providing an alternative to the overblown McMansions." Known for her designs for "extreme sites, such as a health spa in Botswana" she said she "was taken by the idea of what is a weekend house."

A blue mosaic-tiled swimming pool penetrates the interior of the first floor of the three-bedroom house. A sheet of water cascades from the second level into the pool.

The 3,300-square-foot house will sell for

\$1.9 million and has been reserved for a "well-known person in the arts field," Mr. Brown said.

There is also a potential buyer for the 3,600-square-foot house designed by Mr. Gluckman, who is designing the Musée Picasso in Málaga, Spain.

The three-bedroom simple box-style house, which will sell for \$1.95 million, reflects Mr. Gluckman's minimalist approach and is similar to his own house on the East End. It will have a large balcony and features wooden slat-screen panels configured to modulate the sun and shade.

Mr. Gluckman said that the project was challenging but that he would have favored more restrictions, such as using similar building materials and uniform sizes to "create some homogeneity among the buildings, but with no design restrictions."

Because the sites do not have significant features or views, Ms. Selldorf, who designed the Neue Galerie museum in Manhattan, said the project gave her "the opportunity to create an environment of its own."

Her 3,400-square-foot, four-bedroom house on 1.5 acres, which will sell for \$1.85 million, incorporates views of a sunken flower garden, an apple orchard and a courtyard.

The master plan for the Houses at Sagaponac, which includes walking trails throughout the development that lead to a public park, was designed by Stephen Stimson Associates of Falmouth, Mass.

The company is also creating the plan for the park, which is to be on a 13-acre preserved parcel leased from Suffolk County at the northern end of the property. It will include gardens, a pond and tree nursery, according to Anne Bohlen, the landscape project manager. ■