

Promises versus Realities: A Critical Assessment of the Integrated Design Process

Authors : Firdous Nizar, Carmela Cucuzzella

Abstract : This paper explores how the integrated design process (IDP) was adopted for an architectural project. The IDP is a relatively new approach to collaborative design in architectural design projects in Canada. It has gained much traction recently as the closest possible approach to the successful management of low energy building projects and has been advocated as a productive method for multi-disciplinary collaboration within complex projects. This study is based on the premise that there are explicit and implicit dimensions of power within the integrated design process (IDP) in the green building industry that may or may not lead to irreconcilable differences in a process that demands consensus. To gain insight on the potential gap between the theoretical promises and practical realities of the IDP, a review of existing IDP literature is compared with a case study analysis of a competition-based architectural project in Canada, a first to incorporate the IDP in its overall design format. This paper aims to address the undertheorized power relations of the IDP in a real project. It presents a critical assessment through the lens of the combined theories of deliberative democracy by Jürgen Habermas, with that of agonistic pluralism by political theorist Chantal Mouffe. These two theories are intended to more appropriately embrace the conflictual situations in collaborative environments, and shed light on the relationships of power, between engineers, city officials, architects, and designers in this conventional consensus-based model. In addition, propositions for a shift in approach that embraces conflictual differences among its participants are put forth based on concepts of critical spatial practice by Markus Meissen. As IDP is a relatively new design process, it requires much deliberation on its structure from the theoretical framework built in this paper in order to unlock its true potential.

Keywords : agonistic pluralism, critical spatial practice, deliberative democracy, integrated design process

Conference Title : ICSAUD 2020 : International Conference on Sustainable Architecture and Urban Design

Conference Location : Boston, United States

Conference Dates : April 23-24, 2020