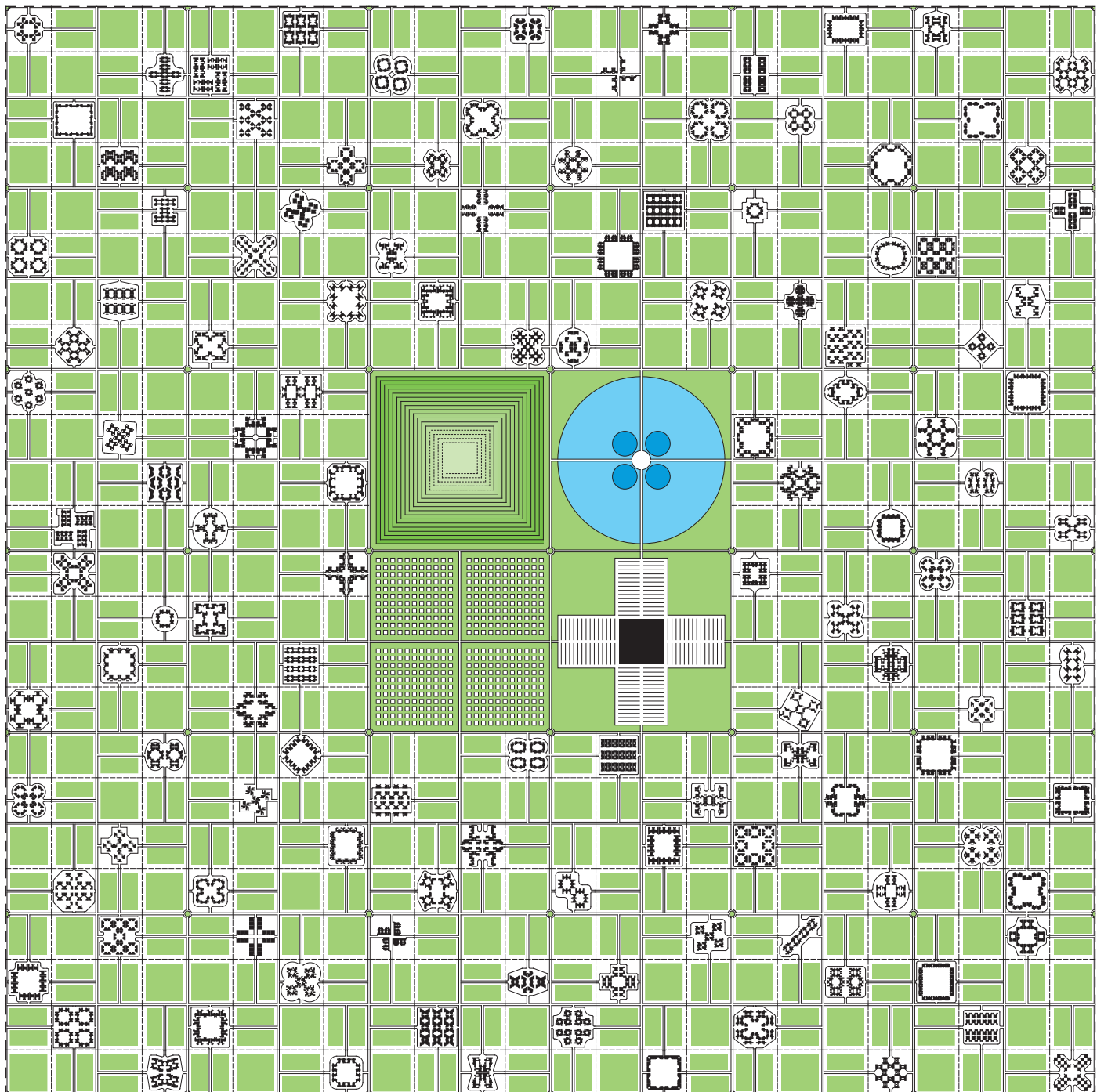


Freedomland: Speculations on Another America

KEITH KRUMWIEDE



A DISCOURSE CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FREEDOMLAND

Having been required by the times to draw up a detailed plan for the general improvement of American housing in the aftermath of the great financial crisis and its effect upon our collective confidence in the correctness of our living patterns, I humbly submit the following proposal.

We begin our description as did Sir Robert Mountgomery in describing his fabled proposal for the Margravate of Azilia: “You must suppose a level, dry, and fruitful Tract of Land, in some fine Plain or Valley” that, having been surveyed as part of the great parceling of America according to the methods set forth in the Land Ordinance of 1785, is continuously gridded into square townships of six miles per side, each containing THIRTY-SIX one mile square sections of 640 acres.

This grid, the framework for Thomas Jefferson’s vision of a rural democratic society of citizen farmers but also a great game board of rampant real estate speculation, provides the underlying structure for Freedomland, a new settlement model that reconciles resurgent dreams for an agrarian urbanism with long-habituated appetites for the domestic. Freedomland is premised on the following irrefutable truths: that local farming is good, being that it provides better food and makes better use of our increasingly limited resources than commercial agriculture; that urban living is also good, improving as it does the health, happiness, and prosperity of the populace; and that the majority of Americans, the veracity of the above notwithstanding, still aspire to the material and spatial luxuries represented by the detached single-family house as it is most resplendently found in suburbia.

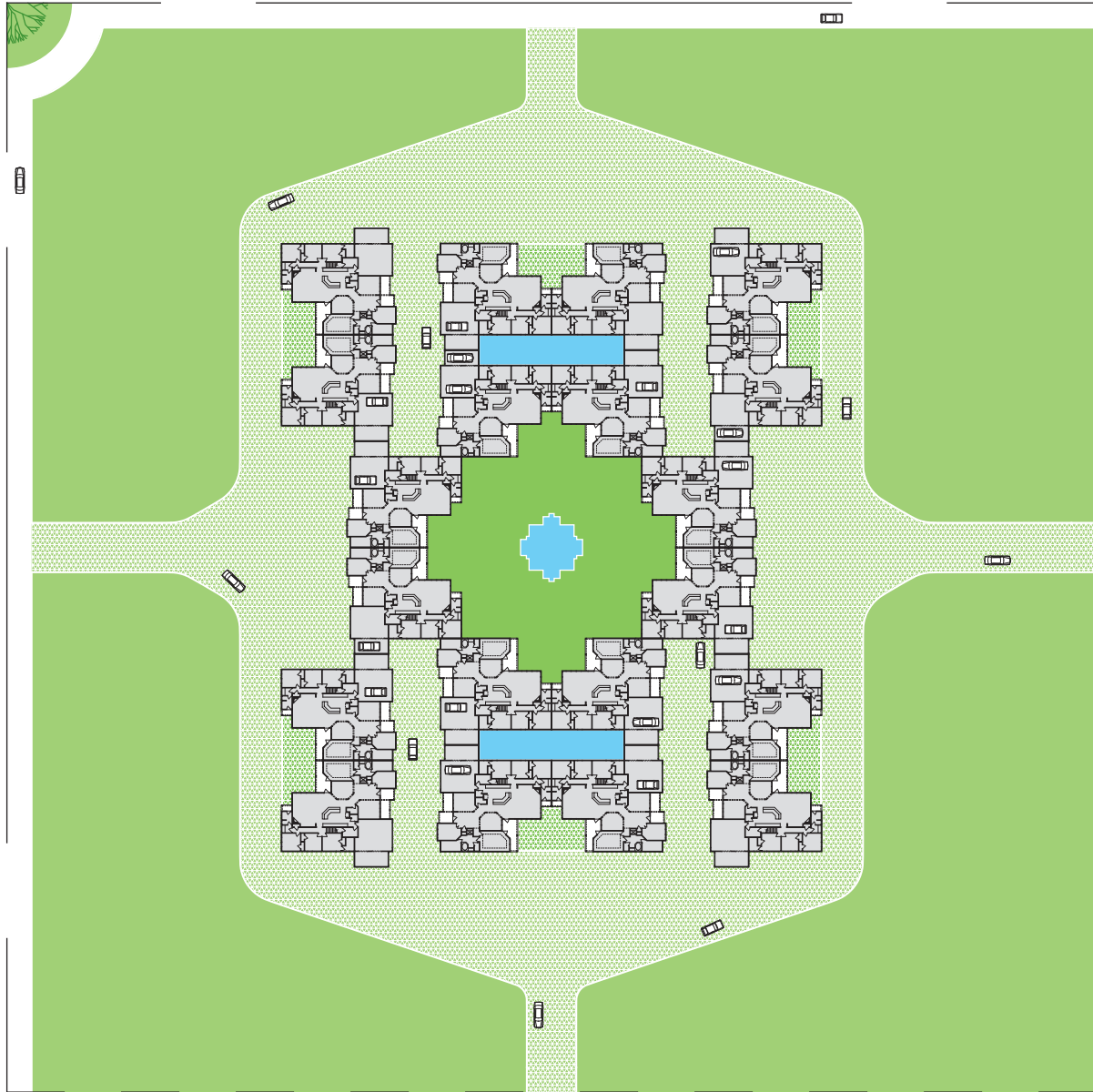
The plan of Freedomland results from the sub-division of a typical survey township into four equal squares, three miles to each side. The northwest and southeast quadrants are established as new towns and further subdivided to form THIRTY-SIX square sections of 160 acres each, excepting that area dedicated to the town’s primary roads which divide them at intervals of one half mile.

One survey township divided to form two towns and two natural preserves is the absolute minimum area necessary for the establishment of Freedomland. If this plan is aggregated to form a group larger than a single THIRTY-SIX square mile survey township, then a checkerboard layout results, in a like manner to that proposed by Mr. Jefferson, producing, at the grand scale, an alternating arrangement of town and country. There is no maximum limit to such an aggregation except for any geographical or political obstacles that may arise to thwart the just and proper extension of the settlement by the townspeople.



A VIEW OF FREEDOMLAND
Meadows near Greifswald, 1822
 Caspar David Friedrich

The four sections at the center of each town are occupied by a civic core comprised of the infrastructures necessary to the maintenance and preservation of the community. Whereas the original Land Ordinance reserved section SIXTEEN, at the center of every township, for the use of education, in Freedomland, the waste square, an ever-growing, manicured pyramid of refuse, rises there slowly. The water square, a circular reservoir nearly one half mile in diameter, occupies section FIFTEEN; the energy square, a forest of TWENTY-by-TWENTY ft solar panels, powers the town from section TWENTY-ONE; and the market square, anchored in section TWENTY-TWO by a ten acre big box of community and commerce, provides a venue for public assembly as well as access to those products and services not produced through the prodigious industry of the townspeople.

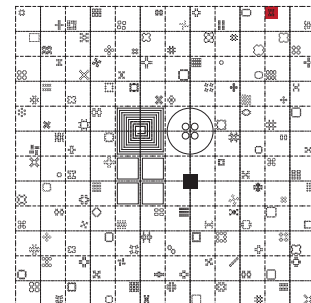
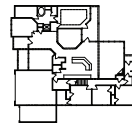


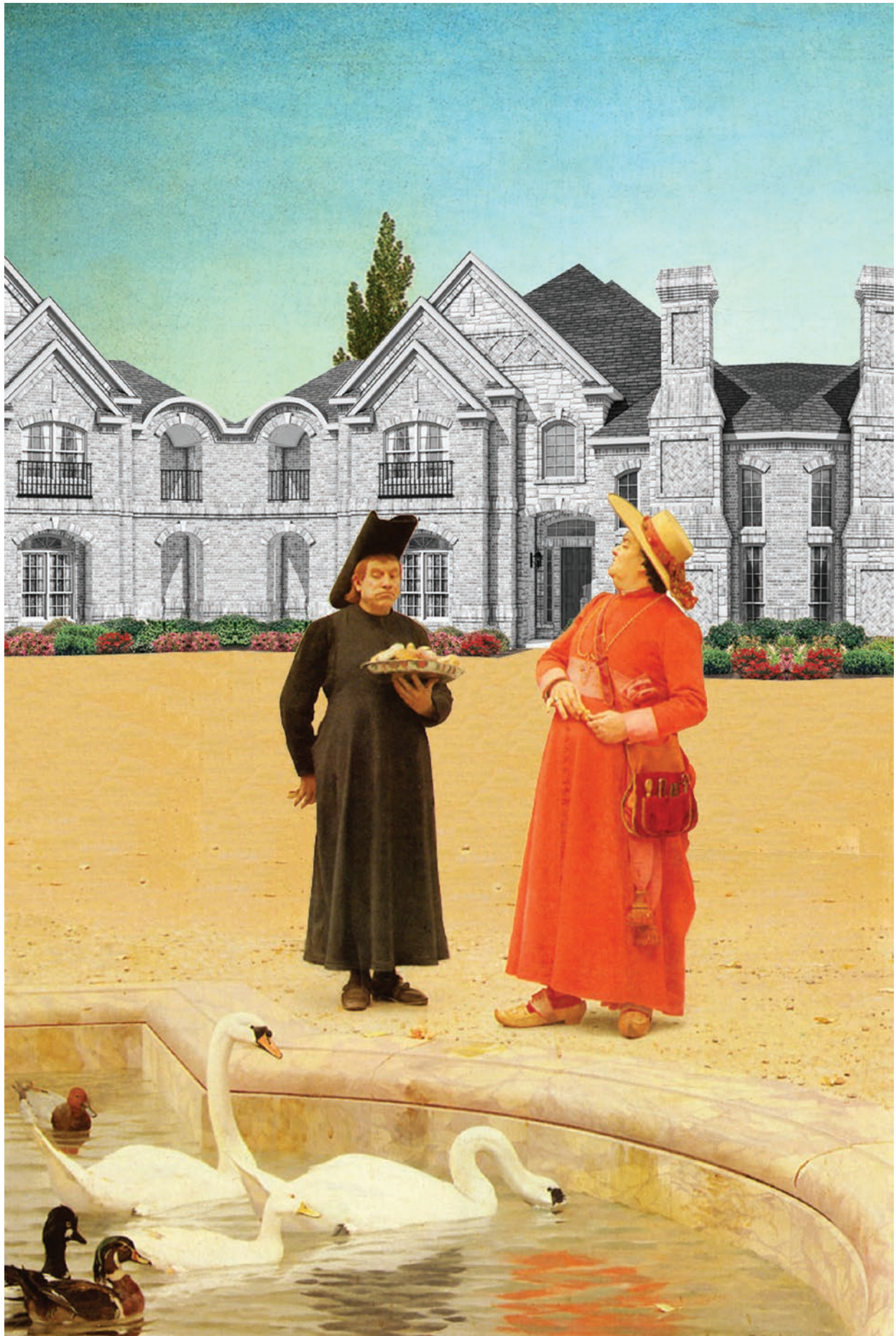
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Platz der Pope
NW 1/4 NW 1/4 Section 1

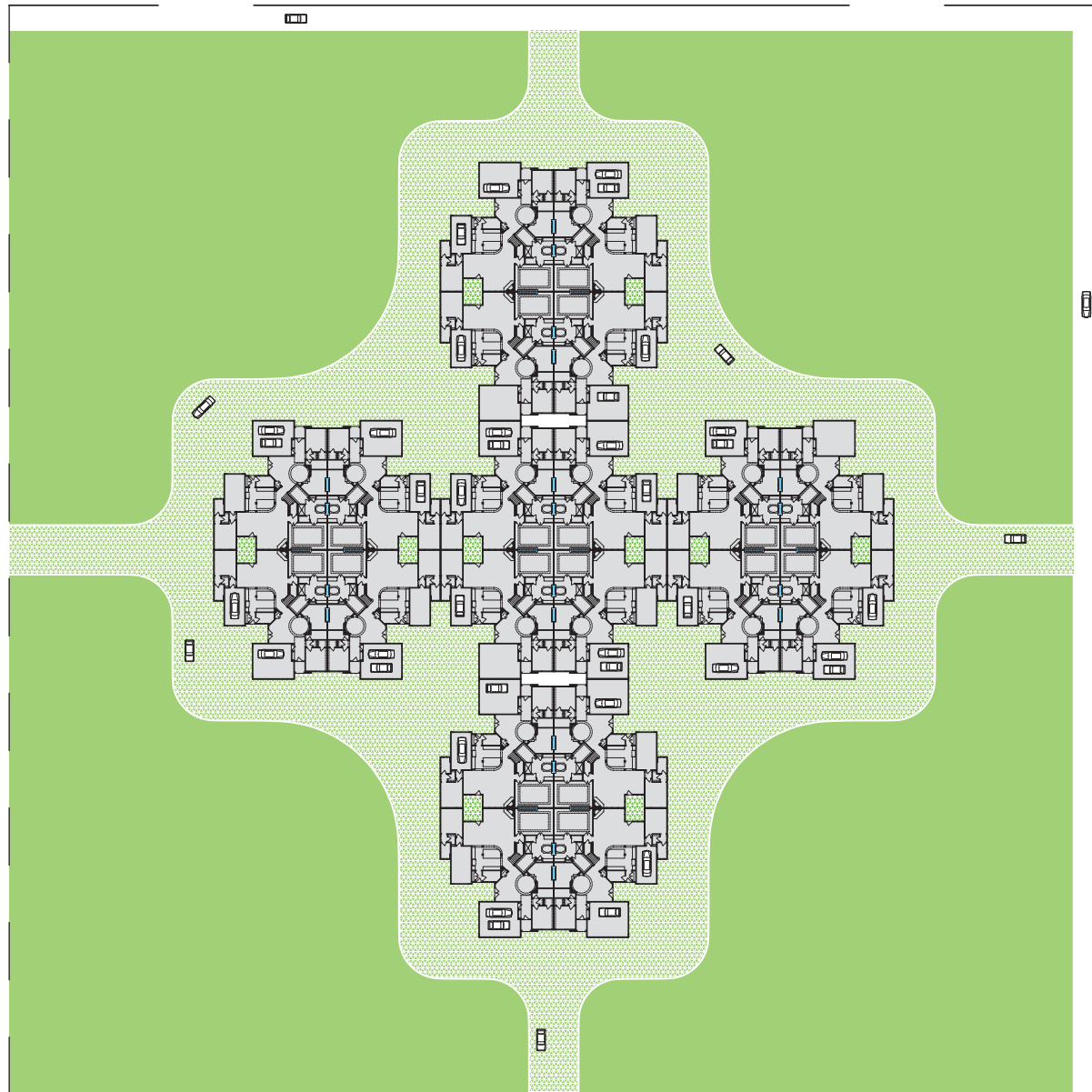
20 Houses
73,320 square feet
80 Bedrooms
60 Full Bathrooms
20 Half Bathrooms

Pulte Homes, Monet, 3,616 square feet, Texas





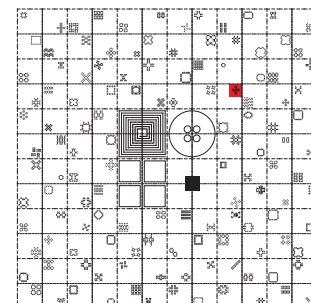
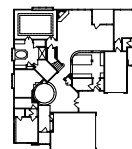
AN AWKWARD MOMENT AT PLATZ DER POPE, FREEDOMLAND
A Plate of Cakes, circa 1890
Jean Georges Vibert



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Exodus Landing
NE 1/4 SW 1/4 Section 11

20 Houses
60,860 square feet
80 Bedrooms
80 Full Bathrooms
0 Half Bathrooms



K. Hovnanian Homes, Bellvue VIII, 3043 square feet, Texas

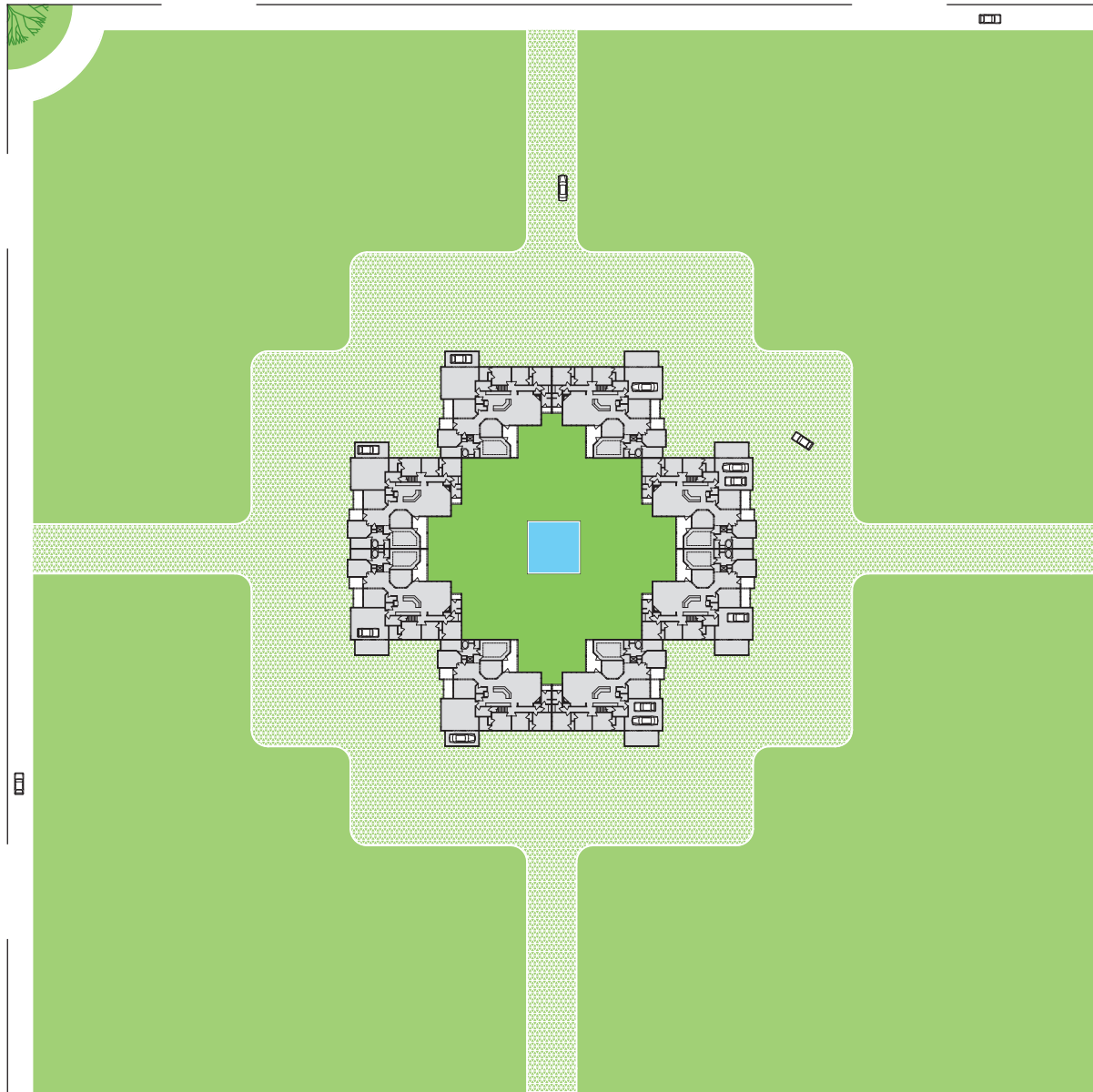


A VOLUNTARY STROLL NEAR EXODUS LANDING, FREEDOMLAND

A Sunday Stroll, 1841

Carl Spitzweg

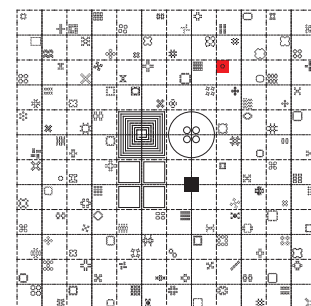
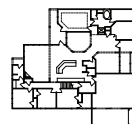
The THIRTY-TWO remaining sections are quartered by roads secondary to those abovementioned to form four equal parcels of FOURTY acres, less the dimension of the roads by which they are divided and served. The 128 individual neighborhood farm estates thus established, each an independent self-governing community, are further divided into four, TEN acre squares of which three are dedicated to agricultural pursuits while the dwellings are located on the fourth. In this manner, fully three quarters of every town in Freedomland shall remain open, green, and free of buildings.



Palais du Kern
NW 1/4 NW 1/4 Section 11

8 Houses
28,928 square feet
32 Bedrooms
24 Full Bathrooms
8 Half Bathrooms

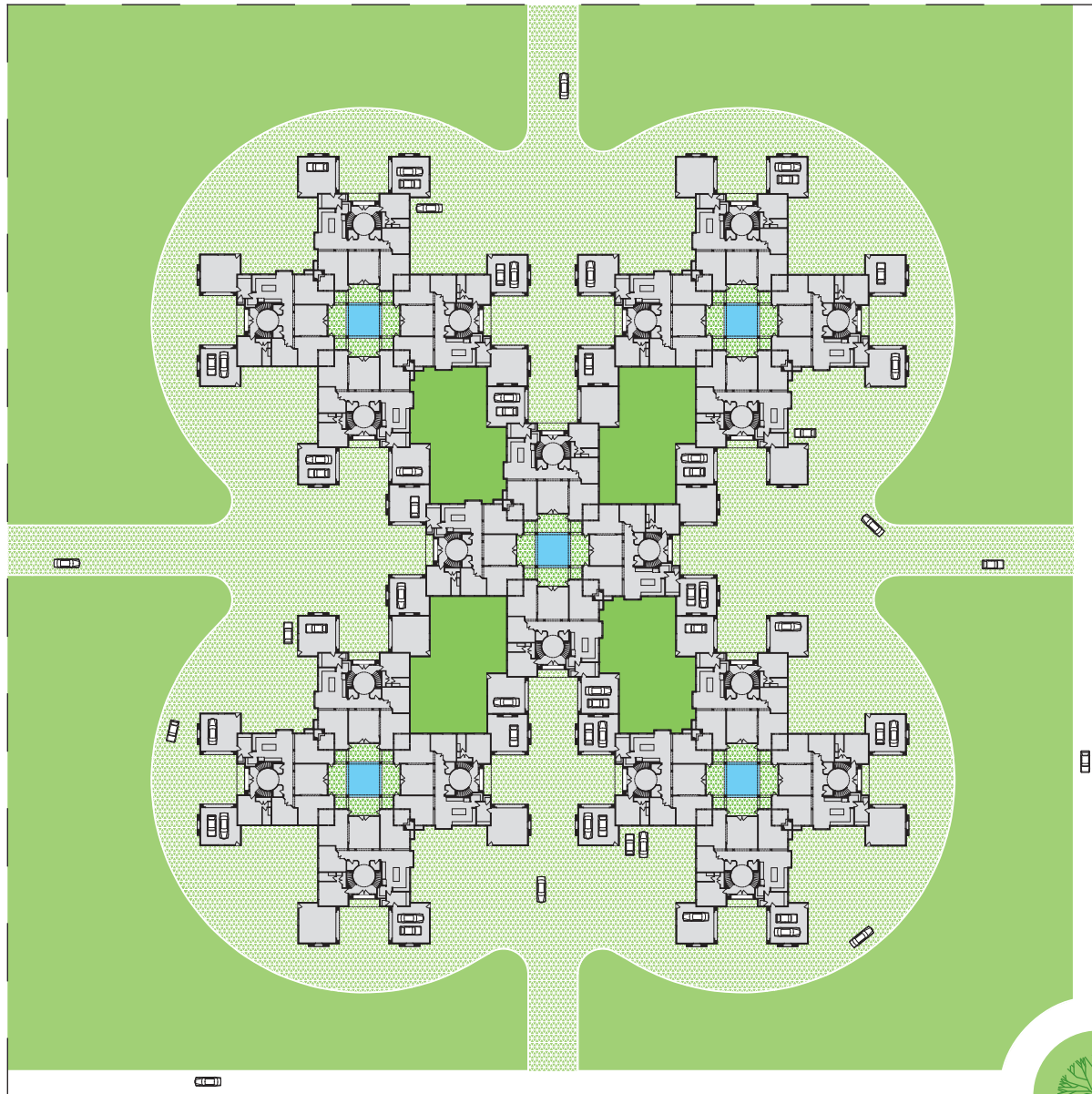
Pulte Homes, The Monet, 3,616 square feet, Texas





THE JUDGE HONES HIS SCYTHER AT PALAIS DU KERN, FREEDOMLAND
The Reaper, 1878
 Ferdinand Hodler

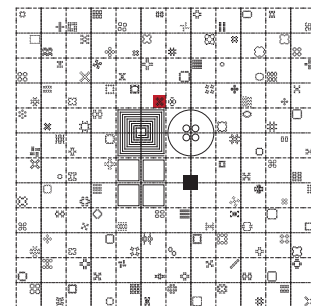
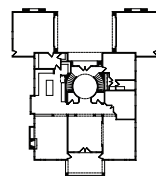
Each neighborhood estate in Freedomland is comprised of between EIGHT and SIXTY-FOUR houses, all those within any particular estate being one just like the next, and in this manner ensuring a cohesiveness of identity and consistency of character such that property values are protected and community values are promoted. Whereas architects have proven themselves disinclined, or perhaps just ill-prepared, to deliver designs desired by a majority of the American people, the houses in Freedomland are built according to designs carefully selected from among the best produced by the country's greatest builders, designs that have proven to be highly popular with persons possessed of the most discriminating taste and therefore certain to attract the finest type of citizen.



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Neo-Palladian Acres
SE 1/4 SE 1/4 Section 9

20 Houses
102,500 square feet
80-100 Bedrooms
80 Full Bathrooms
20 Half Bathrooms



Toll Brothers, The Mirador, 5125 square feet, Arizona

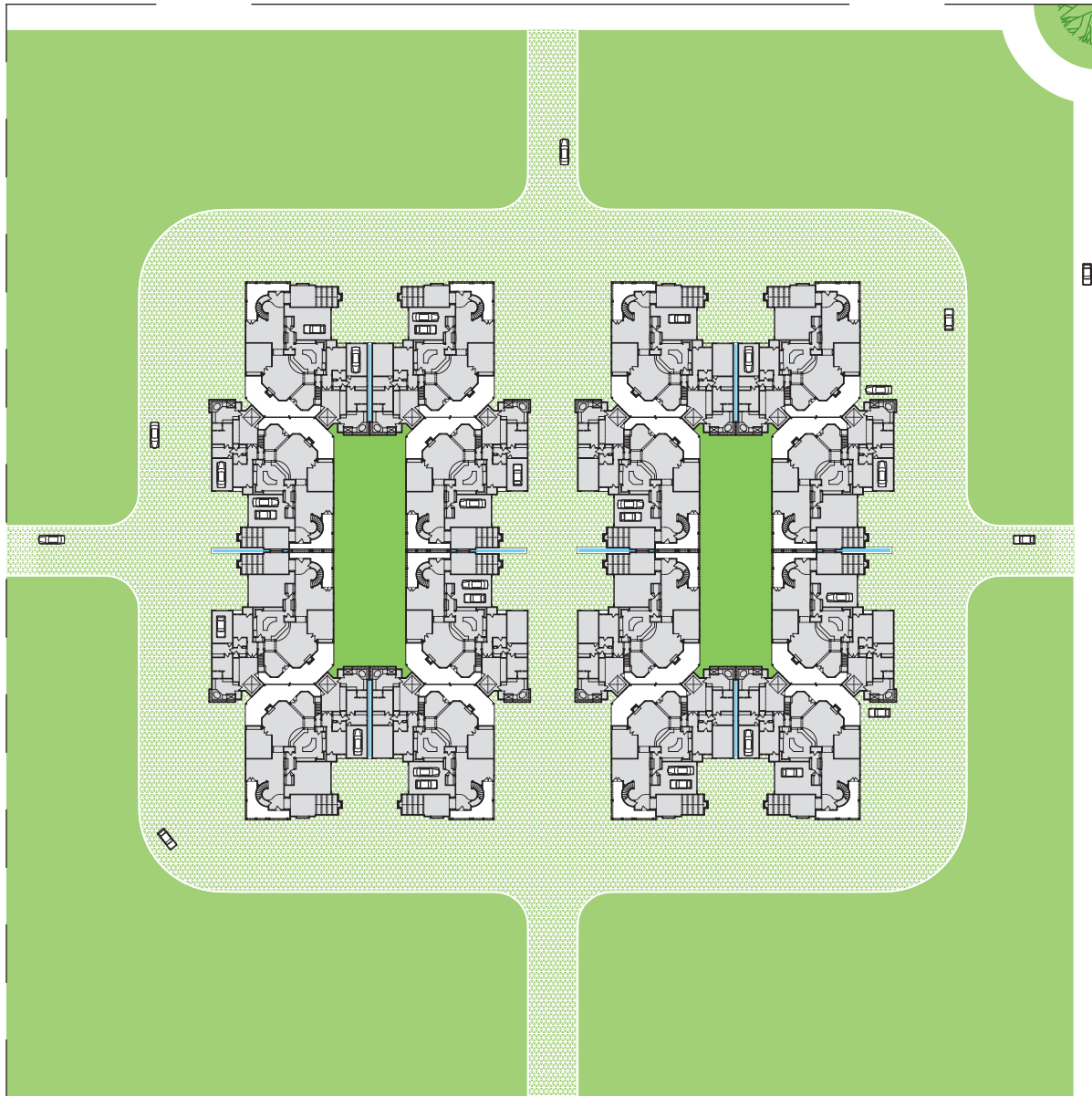


GATHERING FLOWERS NEAR NEO-PALLADIAN ACRES, FREEDOMLAND

Girl in a Field, 1857

Ludwig Knaus

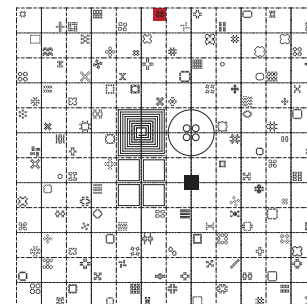
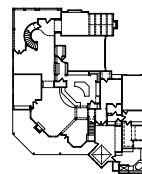
It being well known that people, by their very nature, are equally desirous of the pleasures of novelty as they are needful of the comforts of familiarity, Freedomland seeks to offer both in due time. Taking advantage of the increasingly short life span of our houses and in a manner similar to crop rotation, the entire estate, including the dwellings, which are dismantled and rebuilt, rotates counterclockwise every twenty years, completing a full rotation after eighty years. This has the positive effect of providing each resident, at regular intervals, with a new home that is exactly the same as their old home.



Smiley's Acres
NE 1/4 NE 1/4 Section 4

16 Houses
96,000 square feet
80 Bedrooms
80 Full Bathrooms
16 Half Bathrooms

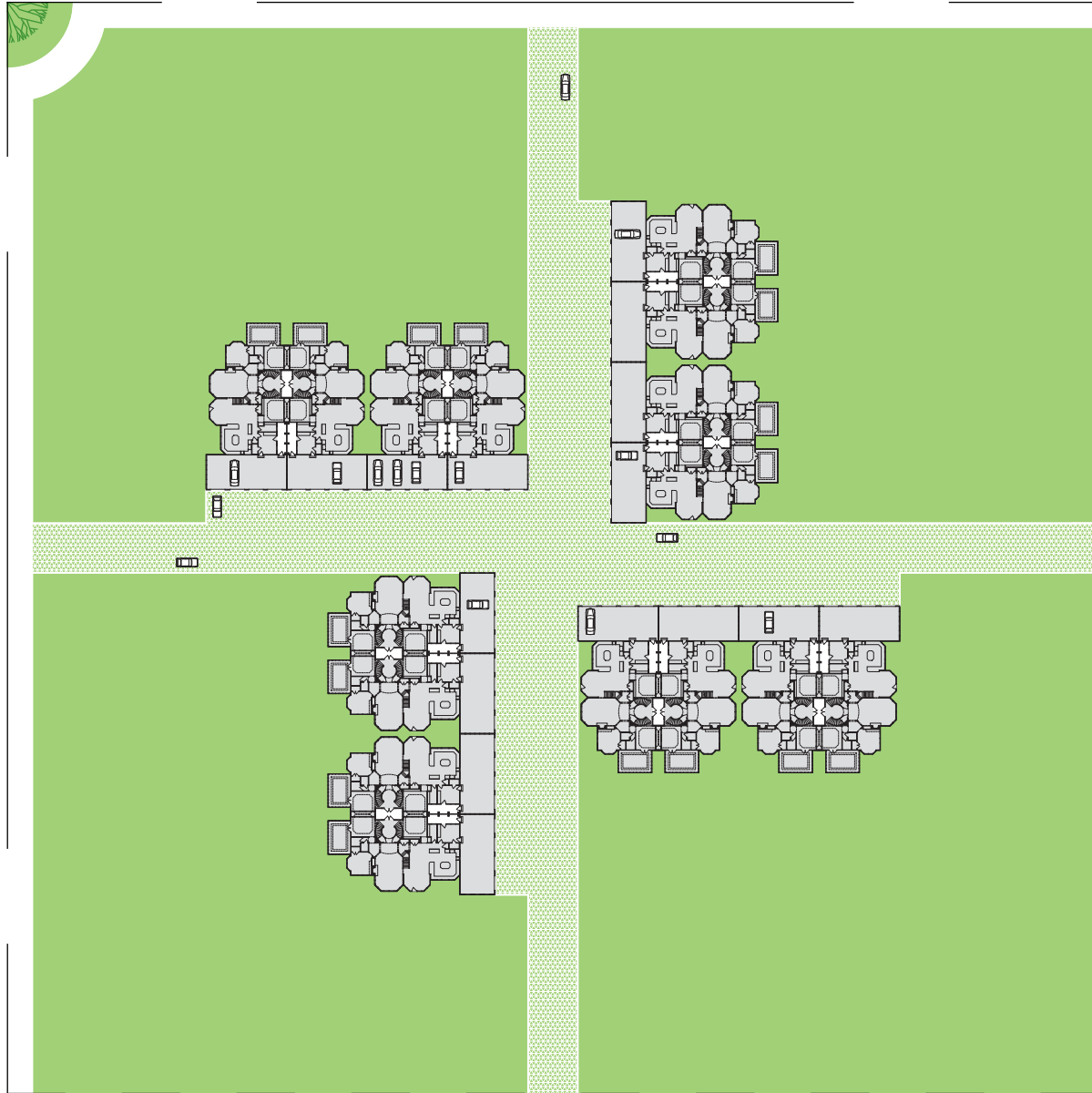
Meritage Homes, The Chalet, 6000 square feet, Texas





A SOLITARY FARMER WORKS SMILEY'S ACRES, FREEDOMLAND
The Veteran in the Field, 1865
Winslow Homer

As each estate rotates, this has the further beneficial consequence of producing an ever-changing prospect of built and open space throughout the town. Although the debris produced as a result of the dismantling and rebuilding will, in the early years, likely contribute to the rapid growth of the pyramid of waste at the center of each town, it is expected that the spirit of competition naturally occurring in a free society will, as it has in the past, stimulate advances in home building technology that cause the materials and methods employed in the ongoing re-creation of Freedomland to become ever lighter and more efficient. Such advances will allow each town to more sustainably pursue its cyclical regeneration, signaling to its neighbors its deep commitment to the stability and endurance of our beloved nation.

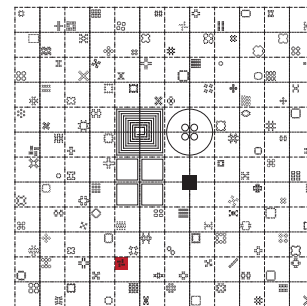
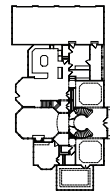


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Monticello Manor Homes
NW 1/4 NW 1/4 Section 33

16 Houses
85,200 square feet
64 Bedrooms
64 Full Bathrooms
32 Half Bathrooms

K. Hovnanian Homes, The Tara, 5325 square feet, Maryland





CITIZEN FARMERS AT MONTICELLO MANOR HOMES, FREEDOMLAND
The Return of the Reapers, 1886
Henry Herbert La Thangue



MR. AND MRS. ANDREWS OF SHADRACH WOODS, FREEDOMLAND
Mr. and Mrs. Andrews, 1749
 Thomas Gainsborough

It is hoped that this description, concise though it may be, is sufficient to describe the sublime structure of Freedomland, its natural and rightful connection to the foundational principles of our great country, and its superiority to our current modes of settlement.

Freedomland isn't free. Keith Krumwiede's staged utopian earnestness and Jeffersonian grandeur remind us of the pains and costs of McMansions, ranchburgers, and rampant speculation on the amber waves of grain and fruited plains of our manifest destiny. His proposals are at once beautiful and unnerving—an architectural Americana that sticks in our craw because it seems entirely natural and just as equally absurd.

—MARK PASNIK