Co-operative Housing: Living with Spring Creek

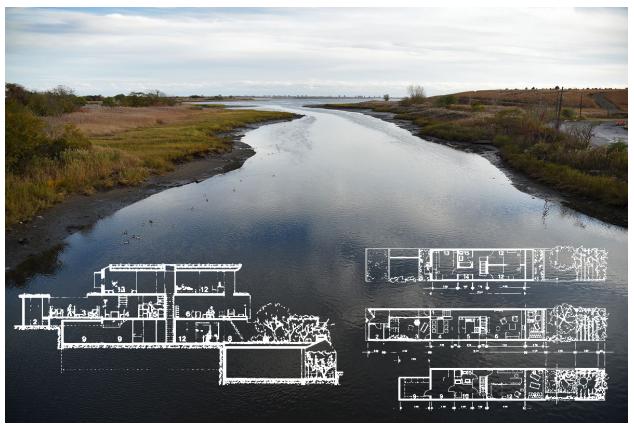|	
Type of Course:	**Graduate Studio + Research Workshop/Design Seminar**
M.Arch 2nd yr:	ARCH 73100 Architecture Studio III (6 cr) + ARCH 73501 Research Workshop (3 cr)
M.Arch 3rd yr:	ARCH 85101 Architecture Studio V (6 cr) + ARCH 85200 Research Workshop (3 cr)
MS Arch:	ARCH 91102/93103 Advanced Studio (6 cr) + ARCH 91202 Design Seminar (3 cr)

Class Meetings:	**Workshop M 9:30-12:20; Studio M/TH 2:00-5:20pm**
Office Hours:	**Monday 12:00-2:00 By appointment**
Instructor:	**Professor Nandini Bagchee (Studio) Professor Lama Hasan (Workshop)**
Location:	**TBD**
Semester/Year	**Fall 2025**

Spring Creek at Jamaica Bay Collage with drawings of Halen Estate, Atelier 5, 1960.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

This interdisciplinary architecture and landscape design studio explores what it means to live and build in a geography where water is both a threat and a resource. Centered on a 17-acre site in East New York, Brooklyn—within the Jamaica Bay watershed—students will design **cooperatively owned housing** and **community facilities** that respond to the **environmental challenges** of a depleted tidal creek.

The studio foregrounds the intertwined social and ecological imperatives of living with water. Students will critically engage with histories of land use, cultural traditions of collective living, and urban ecological systems, drawing on precedents that inform both architectural and landscape strategies.

Community partnerships will be central to the studio's approach. Students will collaborate with local residents and organizations—future stewards of the site—to envision housing and open space as interconnected infrastructures for living, working, and recreation.

PROJECT SITE + COMMUNITY:

In East Brooklyn, the neighborhood known as Jewel Streets -- a historically marginalized, low-lying area- has endured years of severe flooding and neglect. This ongoing predicament has politicized the residents and created a shared mission to improve the living conditions in their neighborhood. This campaign, supported by the New York Community Land Trust and local politicians has gathered great momentum. In response, the city recently initiated a project to implement flood mitigation infrastructure and put together a conceptual framework to create a more holistic living environment in this part of the city.

Alongside these long overdue improvements to the urban landscape- the city has also put forward an interest in developing mixed use housing on a vacant 17-acre public site just south of the infamous Jewel Street housing blocks. [1] This elevated site, currently under the jurisdiction of the HPD (Housing Preservation Development) is the southernmost block of buildable solid ground in the neighborhood along spring creek. Beyond this point the land gradually turns into a watery grassland that ultimately drains into Jamaica Bay.

ARCHITECTURE STUDIO:

Within the format of the architectural studio students will respond to the city's call for "mixed use" housing. Students will research the site in depth and speculate on how **cooperative housing** in close proximity to an estuary can be an asset to the community. What types of uses are desirable in this location? What is the basis of cooperation?

At the start of the semester, students will work in teams to research housing precedents and use these models to develop and think through their own proposals for the site in East New York. This particular housing studio will focus specifically on how shared uses and housing densities can work in a site where both human occupation and environmental responsibilities are equally important.

The studio is organized in 4 phases. Each phase will culminate in a specific set of submissions. Detailed guidelines for the submissions will be provided at the start of the phase.

I. Cooperative Housing (3 weeks)

Analysis of given housing precedents to understand the strategies of building density, program, circulation, units, materials, solar studies and accessibility.

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[1] See page 39 of the HPD progress report:
https://www.nyc.gov/assets/hpd/downloads/pdfs/services/jewel-street-progress-report.pdf

La Borda Housing Cooperative, Lacol Arquitectura Cooperativa, 2018.

II. Massing Studies (3 weeks)

Developing the massing diagrams for a cooperative model of housing on the 17 acre site that integrates community space and engages meaningfully with the wetland/ parkland to the south and to the jewel street flooded zone to the north. Working with the ideas and information emerging from the landscape workshop- students working in teams will develop a "masterplan" in teams that incorporates ideas for experiencing the larger creek/ watershed while laying out a overall plan for the housing.

II. Community Programming (2 Weeks)

Meeting with residents and activists from the neighborhood and diagramming what shared housing and ownership model would look like in East New York. Students will develop a clear program for unit types, indoor/ outdoor community spaces.

IV. Common Ground (6 weeks)

In the final weeks, individual students will pick a key aspect of the project within the masterplan and work at the architectural scale to define what makes their project proposal uniquely suited to cooperative ownership. Final presentations of the work will include the following:

- Visual and spatial narrative for cooperative living with water
- Site design and massing studies of low-rise high-density housing.
- Orientation of housing context and climate studies.
- Programing and design of cooperative spaces.
- Construction Methods & Material Strategies.

LANDSCAPE WORKSHOP:

The parallel workshop will investigate **Spring Creek**, a tidal waterway that connects East New York to Jamaica Bay. Through **landscape analysis**, **hydrology mapping**, and **field research**, students will trace ecological histories and future potentials along the creek corridor, situating the studio site within its larger watershed context.

At the midway point, students will propose landscape interventions to restore and reconnect the urban watershed.

I. Watershed (3 weeks)

Students will begin at the scale of the full watershed, layering topography, hydrology, infrastructure, and access to reveal hidden flows and systemic pressures.

II. Territory (3 weeks)

Reading the Creek. Students will explore Spring Creek through chosen "characters" – both human and non-human. Through fieldwork, mapping, collage, and visual timelines, they will construct ecological and narrative portraits that reveal how water shapes life at Spring Creek.

III. Habitat (3 weeks)

Designing with Water & Community. Students will translate research and community input into proposals where ecological systems and public life intersect. Working in teams, they will develop ecological and social programming diagrams, propose site-specific interventions, and create vignettes that show how flood infrastructure, habitat creation, and community gathering can be designed together.

IV. Stewardship (5 weeks)

Future Waters. The final phase focuses on strategies for long-term care. Students will consider what it means to live with Spring Creek for generations, and how communities can become co-stewards of its future.

REFERENCES:

On Neighborhood

HPD progress report: https://www.nyc.gov/assets/hpd/downloads/pdfs/services/jewel-street-progress-report.pdf

VIDEO: Excerpt from the documentary "Jewel Streets" by Sarah Jacobson, featured in the 2024 Brooklyn Film Festival. https://vimeo.com/1070881811 Password: eny_clt1!

Sergey Kadinsky, Hidden waters of New York City: a history and guide to 101 forgotten lakes, ponds, creeks, and streams in the five boroughs, Woodstock, VT : The Countrymen Press, 2016.

Waterfront Alliance. City of Water. Documentary film, 2007.
https://waterfrontalliance.org/initiatives/city-of-water/

On Housing

Bloom, Nicholas Dagen and Matthew Gordon Lasner. "Stabilizing the Middle." In *Affordable Housing in New York: The People, Places, and Policies That Transformed a City,* 139-188. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016.

French, Hillary. *New Urban Housing*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.

Leupen, Bernard and Harald Mooij. *Housing Design: A Manual*. Rotterdam: NAi Publishers, 2011.
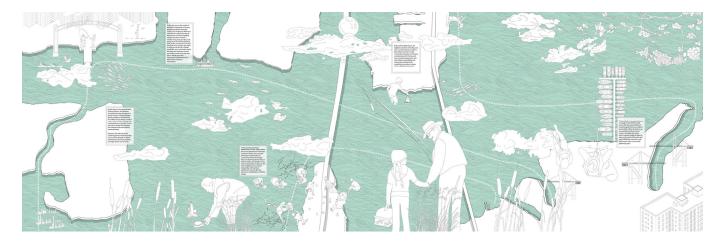
Karen Kubey, Low density High rise https://urbanomnibus.net/2012/07/low-rise-high-density-housing-a-contemporary-view-of-marcus-garvey-park-village/

On Landscape

Cox, Azzurra, Detroit in a Season of Mourning. Places Journal, 2018.
https://placesjournal.org/article/detroit-in-a-season-of-mourning/

Karvonen, Andrew. Politics of Urban Runoff: Nature, Technology, and the Sustainable City. MIT Press, 2011.

De la Peña, David, and Diane Jones Allen, eds. Design as Democracy: Techniques for Collective Creativity. Island Press, 2017.

Pedro Cruz Cruz, Jamaica Bay Studio with Professor Bagchee, Spring 2022.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE, M 9:30am-12:20pm, M/TH 2:00-5:20pm
Note: schedule below is subject to revision through the duration of the semester.

		Research Workshop (morning)	Studio (afternoons)
W1			
Th	08.28		**Grad Studio Lottery @ 2:00pm, rm. 107 (Spitzer)** Studio - Introduction
W2			
Mon	09.01	College Closed (Labor Day), No classes	
Th	09.04		I. Cooperative Housing – 5 Slide Review Hour SSA/JEDI Climate Survey (in studio) 2-3pm Convocation @ 5:00pm, Aaron Davis Hall
W3			
Mon	09.08	Workshop- Introduction (zoom)	Site Tour of Jewel Street and Spring Creek
Th	09.11		I. Cooperative Housing – Desk Crits Hour SSA/JEDI Climate Survey (in studio) 2-3pm Convocation @ 5:00pm, Aaron Davis Hall **Sciame Lecture: Tamar Renaud**
W4			
Mon	09.15	I. Watershed	I. Cooperative Housing – Desk Crits
Th	09.18		I. Cooperative Housing- Pin Up
W5			
Mon	09.22	No classes scheduled	No classes scheduled
Th	09.25		II. Massing Studies **Sciame Lecture: Adi Shamir-Baron**
Sat	09.27		**Sciame Lecture: Philip Schmerbeck**
W6			
Mon	09.29	I. Watershed- Due	II. Massing Studies
Th	10.02		No classes scheduled
W7			
Mon	10.06	II. Territory	II. Massing Studies- Introduction
Th	10.09		II. Massing Studies- Desk Crits **Sciame Lecture: Philip Kennicott**
W8			
Mon	10.13	College Closed (Columbus/Indigenous Peoples' Day), No classes	
Tu	10.14	II. Territory- Due	II. Massing Studies
Th	10.16		III. Community Programming

			Sciame Lecture: Nancy Ruddy and John Cetra
W9			
Mon	10.20	No classes scheduled	No classes scheduled
Th	10.23		III. Community Programming
Fri	10.24	Midterm	Midterm
W10			
Mon	10.27	III. Habitat	IV. Common Ground- Introduction
Th	10.30		IV. Common Ground- Desk Crit **Sciame Lecture: Ruchika Modi**
W11			
Mon	11.03	III. Habitat	IV. Common Ground- Desk Crit
Th	11.06		IV. Common Ground- Desk Crit **Sciame Lecture: Nandini Bagchee, Fabian Llonch, Shawn Rickenbacker - Panel**
W12			
Mon	11.10	IV. Stewardship	**Grad Sharing Session** IV. Common Ground- Desk Crit
Th	11.14		IV. Common Ground- Desk Crit
W13			
Mon	11.17	IV. Stewardship	IV. Common Ground- Desk Crit
Th	11.20		IV. Common Ground- Desk Crit
W14			
Mon	11.24	IV. Stewardship	IV. Common Ground- Desk Crit
Th	11.27		College Closed (Thanksgiving), No classes
W15			
Mon	12.01	IV. Stewardship - Due	IV. Common Ground- Desk Crit
Th	12.04		Final Review (Date TBD)

FINAL REVIEWS, Dec 08-12

Mon 08 Dec	Tues 09 Dec	Wed 10 Dec	Th 11 Dec	Fri 12 Dec
Foundation	**Foundation**	**Grad Studios**	**Grad Studios**	**Grad Studios**
TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

FINAL EXAMINATIONS, Dec 16-22 – No studio work shall be required during final exams week.

Mon   12.15   Student Portfolios due for: SSA/CCNY Archive, etc. as directed by instructor

Mon/Tu   12.15 + 16   Clean-up Days (all materials, projects, and any other items must be removed from studio)

Tu   12.16   End of Semester Assessment (faculty only)

FINAL GRADES

Fri   12.26   Final Grade Submission Deadline for faculty

GRADING/ATTENDANCE POLICIES AND STUDIO CULTURE

SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

<u>**Studio portion:**</u>

- Developing the ability to design at multiple urban scales. (NAAB PC.2)
- Responding to the specificity of place and people through the design proposal. (NAAB PC.2)
- Understanding how multi-scalar networks of infrastructure have impact on architecture at different scales. (NAAB PC.5)
- Synthesis of user requirements, regulatory requirements, site conditions, and accessible design into a design project. (NAAB SC.5)

<u>**Workshop portion:**</u>

- Understand the socio-ecological and political history of landownership in flood-prone zones. (NAAB SC.5)
- Explore adaptive reuse of grey infrastructure as a strategy for building both community and flood plain resilience.
- Collaborate across architecture and landscape disciplines to propose hybrid design solutions.
- Develop multiscale designs that operate from watershed to building detail. (NAAB PC.2)
- Develop speculative stewardship strategies. (NAAB SC.5)

Course Expectations:
- That students will develop a high level of independent thought and rigor and a willingness to go beyond both basic project requirements and their own perceived limits and abilities.
- That students will successfully complete all project requirements. No make-up or postponed project submissions will be accepted except in the case of medical emergencies or other extraordinary circumstances. Excused absences and project delays must be officially cleared by professor in advance to be considered valid.

Community Agreement:
- As noted on the schedule, the professor will make time for an *HOur SSA* session for a supportive open discussion among students.
- Studio members will work *together* to create a community agreement for interacting together over the semester. Definition: "A consensus on what every person in our group needs from each other and commits to each other in order to feel safe, supported, open, productive and trusting… so that we can do our best work."
  https://www.nationalequityproject.org/tools/developing-community-agreements
- *HOur SSA* will be repeated at the middle of the semester.

Methods of Assessment:

- ● Students will receive separate grades for the research workshop and studio project.
- ● Each student's design projects will be assessed individually, including work completed collaboratively (in pairs or teams).

● Assessment in the form of verbal comments and responses will be shared during periodic pin-ups and at scheduled reviews, to which external guests ("reviewers") may be invited.
● A brief written assessment –using a common rubric –will be provided mid-semester as well as at the end of the semester.

Grading Assessment:

● **Conceptual thinking & Research:** Ability to conceptualize in spatial terms, use of critical thinking skills and analytical rigor to develop a coherent research and design project.
● **Community Engagement:** Engaging with community partners and interpreting their input.
● **Project Development:** Work shows evidence of working in an iterative manner, from concept to resolution and back again.
● **Representation and Presentation**: Expressive use of 2D and 3D drawings to communicate. Oral and graphic communication during reviews.
● **Attendance and Participation**: Consistent level of preparation and on-time presence for each studio class and scheduled evening lectures. Participation in the work of colleagues.

Research Workshop (3 cr)

Precedent Study and Research	20%
Massing Study and Community Programming	30%
Design Development	20%
Representation & Presentation	20%
Attendance and Participation	10%

Studio (6 cr)

Territory	15%
Watershed	20%
Habitat	20%
Stewardship	20%
Final Portfolio/ book	25%
Attendance and Participation	10%

A (+/-) Work meets all requirements and exceeds them. Presentations are virtually flawless, complete, and finely detailed. Work exhibits professional, "museum quality" level of craft. Student has developed an individual design process that shows a high level of independent thought and rigor. Work shows evidence of intense ambition and effort to go beyond expectations, and beyond the student's own perceived limits of their abilities.

B (+/-) Work meets all requirements. Presentations are complete and finely detailed. Work exhibits professional level of craft. Student has developed an individual design process that shows a high level of independent thought and rigor.

C (+) Work meets minimum requirements. Deadlines are missed. While presentations may be somewhat complete, student has struggled to develop an individual design process and/or is lacking in craft or design resolution.

F   Work is below minimum requirements. Student does not develop adequate design process, and/or does not finish work.

INC   Grades of "incomplete" are not given under any circumstances unless there is evidence of a medical or personal emergency. In such cases, instructor and student develop a contract to complete work by a specified date, as per CCNY policy. Classes and/or work missed due to illness must be explained with a physician's note.

Notes:
C is the lowest passing grade for M. Arch I and M.S. Arch students. No C- or D grades may be given to graduate students.
Working in teams does not guarantee the same grade for each team member; grades are based on a range of criteria for each individual student.

For more information on grading guidelines and other CCNY policies and procedures, consult the current
CCNY academic bulletins: https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/registrar/bulletins

Office Hours:
Each studio/unit faculty member schedules regular office hours over the semester, as posted at the top of the syllabus. If a student needs to speak in private with a studio/unit critic, they should ask or email in advance to request a specific meeting time. Students may seek office hour appointments to discuss any matters of concern including personal, private matters and general inquiries about course related work, grading, assessment and content.

Probation & Dismissal: for program specific information related to grades, academic standing, probation and dismissal, please see your program academic advisor:
Graduate: Hannah Borgeson hborgeson@ccny.cuny.edu

Learning, Teaching, and School Culture Guidelines:
Working collaboratively and respectfully on studio assignments, with and alongside others, is an expectation in studio. Studio culture is an important part of an architectural education, and it extends to expectations for Faculty and the School's Administration as well. Please see the Spitzer School of Architecture Learning, Teaching, and School Culture Guidelines, which can be accessed on the SSA website here: https://ssa.ccny.cuny.edu/about/policies/.

Absence & Lateness:
Arriving more than ten minutes late to class will constitute an absence. Two unexcused absences will result in a whole letter grade deduction from a final grade; more than four will result in a failing grade. It is expected that all students will participate in all scheduled working, midterm and final reviews and contribute constructively to the discussions.

Absences due to Religious Observances:
Students who will miss any class sessions, exams, presentations, trips, or the like due to a religious observance should notify the instructor at the beginning of the semester so that appropriate adjustments for observance needs can be implemented. This could include an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirement that is missed because of an absence due to a religious observance on any particular day or days.

Readings & Journals:
Students are expected to keep a journal or sketchbook throughout the duration of studio to document their thought process & take notes of any texts, books, terms or references that are mentioned by either the studio critic or fellow classmates and to selectively follow up on these and any other assigned readings before the next class.

Academic Integrity:
As a student you are expected to conduct yourself in a manner that reflects the ethical ideas of the

profession of architecture. Any act of academic dishonesty not only raises questions about an individual's fitness to practice architecture but also demeans the academic environment in which it occurred. Giving or receiving aid in examinations, and plagiarism are a violation of an assumed trust between the school and the student.

Plagiarism, i.e. the presentation as one's own work of words, drawings, ideas and opinions of someone else, is as serious an instance of academic dishonesty in this context as cheating on examinations. The submission of any piece of work (written, drawn, built, or photocopied) is assumed by the school to guarantee that the thoughts and expressions in it are literally the student's own, executed by the student. All assignments must be the student's original work. Any copying, even short excerpts, from another book, article, or Internet source, published or unpublished, or generated by AI tools *without proper attribution* will result in automatic failure of the entire course.

Wherever possible, AI-produced works are not to be presented as raw, unedited outputs; some layer of critical revision, editing, or iteration is expected. If such tools are used, standard requirements of citation must be met, including: which AI tool was used; what prompt was used to generate the results; and date of access/creation. Since AI tools cannot take responsibility for submitted work or assert conflicts of interest, they cannot meet the requirements for authorship. Even when transparent in disclosing the use of AI tools, authors who use these tools remain responsible for the content of the work produced and are liable for any breach of ethics.

The CCNY Academic Integrity Policy: https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/about/integrity

For citations, the Chicago Manual of Style is recommended:
http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

AccessAbility Center (Student Disability Services):
The AccessAbility center (AAC) facilitates equal access and coordinates reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and support services for City College students with disabilities while preserving the integrity of academic standards. Students who have self-identified with AAC to receive accommodations should inform the instructor at the beginning of the semester. (North Academic Center 1/218; 212-650-5913 or 212-650-6910 for TTY/TTD). For further information, go to http://www.ccny.cuny.edu/accessability/ or email disabilityservices@ccny.cuny.edu

Health And Wellness Support:
City College's Office of Health and Wellness Services offers free and confidential counseling. Contact: Health and Wellness Services, Marshak Science Building, room J-15: counseling@ccny.cuny.edu.

Gender Based Violence Resources
City College has resources to support you if you have experienced sexual violence, intimate partner/domestic violence, gender-based discrimination, harassment or stalking. For confidential support, you can contact the Student Psychological Counselor: Confidential Advocate at (212) 650-8905 or the Gender Resources Program at (212) 650-8222. If you would like to report sexual misconduct, you can contact the Chief Diversity Officer and Title IX Coordinator, Sheryl Konigsberg, at 212-650-6310 or skonigsberg@ccny.cuny.edu. If there is an emergency on campus, you can call Public Safety at 212-650-777 and off campus call 911. https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/affirmativeaction

Library:
The school's library is a shared resource that is necessary supplement to all research and design work. Please direct questions to the library staff or the Architecture Librarian Nilda Sanchez-Rodriguez: nsanchez@ccny.cuny.edu

NAAB (National Architectural Accrediting Board)
The National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) is the sole agency authorized to accredit US professional degree programs in architecture. Since most state registration boards in the United States require any applicant for licensure to have graduated from a NAAB-accredited program, obtaining such a degree is an essential aspect of preparing for the professional practice of architecture. While graduation from a NAAB-accredited program does not assure

registration, the accrediting process is intended to verify that each accredited program substantially meets those standards that, as a whole, comprise an appropriate education for an architect.

More specifically, the NAAB requires an accredited program to produce graduates who: are competent in a range of intellectual, spatial, technical, and interpersonal skills; understand the historical, socio-cultural, and environmental context of architecture; are able to solve architectural design problems, including the integration of technical systems and health and safety requirements; and comprehend architects' roles and responsibilities in society.

Students should consult the NAAB website www.naab.org for additional information regarding program criteria, student criteria and all other conditions for accreditation.

NAAB CRITERIA ADDRESSED ([2020 Conditions for Accreditation](#))

PC.2 Design—how the program instills in students the role of the design process in shaping the built environment and conveys the methods by which design processes integrate multiple factors, in different settings and scales of development, from buildings to cities.

PC.5 Research & Innovation—How the program prepares students to engage and participate in architectural research to test and evaluate innovations in the field.

SC.5 Design Synthesis—how the program ensures that students develop the ability to make design decisions within architectural projects while demonstrating synthesis of user requirements, regulatory requirements, site conditions, and accessible design, and consideration of the measurable environmental impacts of their design decisions.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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