

Cluster Housing Pioneer Zane Yost Leaves a Remarkable Legacy

By Joanne Carroll



Karl Zane Yost, architect and disciple of Buckminster Fuller, died at St. Vincent's Hospital on Wednesday, September 7, 2011 after a long illness. He was 81. Affectionately known as "Zane," he was born in Zanesville, Ohio on May 3, 1930. He received a BA in Architecture from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he studied under Buckminster Fuller.

As a sophomore at MIT, working solely from Fuller's earliest formulae, Zane built the first wood-strut geodesic dome. It was later reassembled as a guest house on his parent's property in New Hampshire. After graduation, Zane was selected by Fuller to supervise the construction of the first public geodesic dome at the Triennale in Rome, Italy where he lived and studied on Fulbright Scholarship. He was drafted into the US Army during the Korean War and served in Germany until 1957.

In the early part of his career, he worked for architect Victor Christ-Janer in New Canaan, before establishing Zane Yost and Associates in 1962. His firm was responsible for designing and building low, moderate and high-income housing across New England. A member of the American Institute of Architects, he served as chair of the National Housing Committee and received a CSA/AIA honor award in 1979 for the

development "Summerwood on the Sound" in Old Saybrook, the first condominium project in CT to receive funding from the U.S. Dept of Housing and Urban Development to utilize active solar technology.

I was 39 years old when I joined Zane Yost & Associates in the 80's, and I credit any success I've had in the housing industry to what I learned from my dear friend. Zane was a talented land planner, and a builder's architect. He could get the most marketable housing units out of even the most difficult piece of land. Zane was a pioneer of cluster housing. His "Not Lot" became a popular form of detached condominium development, currently referred to in zoning as "open air" condominiums. He designed thousands of multi-family and detached condominium communities for some of the leading developers in Connecticut, such as *Lake Place* in Danbury for Davon Development; *Summerwood on the Sound*, Old Saybrook, *Lansdowne*, Westport, *Strathmore Lane*, Norwalk, *Farmington Woods*, Farmington, *Village at Glen Lochen*, Glastonbury, and *Four Beaches*, East Haven, for Kerschner Development, *New Concord Green* in Norwich for Brom Builders and most recently *Holly Farm*, in East Haven for Distinctive Homes of CT, which won a HOBI Award for *Best 55+ Community* in 2006.

It's amazing how much one life can hold – so much kindness . . . so many creative ideas, so much love. His wife of 53 years, Megan, and their children, Deidre, Owen, Molly and Jason were always the heart of Zane's life. What a great way to live and what a legacy he leaves behind. God bless you, Zane!



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