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## A RE-EMERGING BUILDING TYPE: HYBRID HOUSING

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Today with land and labor costs rising, communication costs declining, transportation hassles increasing, and demographic patterns changing, new forms of housing are being promoted by architects, developers, and social critics. One suggested form is *hybrid housing*, to accommodate those increasing number of individuals and households who live and work under the same roof.

Economic, occupational, technological and demographic trends of the last decade brought about a renewed type of living/working situation—home-based work. A recent estimate of the full-time, home-based workforce is 6.7 million, out of a total 26.6 million doing some occupational work at home.<sup>2</sup> Thirty-four percent of all small businesses are home-based. The desire to work at home seems especially strong among college-educated adults who grew up in the 1960s, entered corporate life and found it constraining. In addition, executive and professional women are setting up home offices in record numbers: in a recent survey, 60% of women who run their own businesses have home offices.<sup>3</sup>

Although largely hidden, home-based work is geographically widespread; involves a range of trades, industries, and services; includes people of different classes, races, and incomes; and involves both corporate-employed and entrepreneurial workers.<sup>4</sup> While the majority of growth in home-based work appears to be among the self-employed, a number of businesses as well as state (e.g. California, Washington) and federal government agencies<sup>5</sup> are instituting telecommuting programs.<sup>6</sup>

There is considerable debate in the policy and business arena about the advantages and disadvantages of home-based work.<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless, the size of this work force is predicted to increase as a result of the economy becoming more information and service oriented; information technology becoming less expensive, more widespread and easier to use; entrepreneurial business development continuing to grow at a rapid pace; and corporate downsizing bolstering a demand for subcontractors.<sup>8</sup>

Seminars and workshops on designing live/work spaces have taken place in Chicago (sponsored by the National Association of Cottage Industries), New York (sponsored by Workbench), and San Francisco (sponsored by California Lawyers for the Arts and other San Francisco organizations) in 1988 alone. A future market demand for such intentionally-built homes is not at all unlikely. In fact, a recent survey by Filford Publishing Company found that over half of the surveyed homeowners were moving to a new house to establish a home office. Of the 3000 respondents, 46% said they would use the home office to operate a business.<sup>9</sup>

While all of these trends indicate a growing demand for residences which provide for both residential and occupational activities, there is no systematic catalog, documentation or evaluation of existing hybrid houses. The hybrid house is the product of much futurist speculation but of no serious evaluation. This report takes the *initial* step in addressing the need for systematic documentation and evaluation of this re-emerging building type, by locating, describing and classifying a sample of such homes currently designed and developed for such purposes.