



Drawing adapted from various sources by Alix Verge

Figure 8.5 The Seaside, Florida plan.

liked provided it met the requirements of a stringent code. The Urban Code of Seaside specifies the requirements for eight types of buildings, explicitly enough to create a visual unity in the development, but flexibly enough to give architects creative freedom (see Figure 8.6). Type 1 is for those lots that define the central square or are located on the main streets throughout Seaside (see Figure 8.8). Similar specifications exist for the other seven types of buildings.

Each residential building must have a porch facing the street (see Figure 8.7a and b). The goal was to have residents using them and being aware of passers-by in the hope of establishing acquaintances. Each house must have a roof of wood shakes or be of metal. Most residential buildings must have white picket fences and on any given street the fence must be different from all the others. Garages must be in the rear of buildings. The gardens should contain no sod; only indigenous plants are allowed. In all, there are 19 general construction requirements that specify design

details from wall cladding to the location of house numbers. These specifications have not stopped houses from running the full range of present-day styles. Internationally renowned architects designed many of them. A sense of unity is, nevertheless, clearly achieved because the design guidelines were clearly written with that goal in mind.

Seaside has been a marketing success. It is increasingly a resort for wealthy people. Land prices have soared well above inflation levels. Lots purchased in 1982 for \$15,000 commanded \$300,000 in 2001. Beachfront lots go for as much as \$1.5 million. Home prices are approaching the \$1 million mark. As an urban design, it has become an icon of the New Urbanism, striking a balance between the needs of vehicle drivers and those of pedestrians. It demonstrates that an approach to design integrating planning, landscape architecture and architecture can result in fine living environments. Critics find the town 'too cute' but they are outsiders not residents. It is well loved by the latter.