

same amount of floor space that was contained in the towers can be arranged in another form. If this floor space is placed in buildings around the edges of our enlarged grid then the same quantity of floor space that was contained in the 21-storey towers now needs only 7-storey buildings. And large open spaces are left at the centre.

Let us be more specific. If the area bounded by Park Avenue and Eighth Avenue, and between 42nd and 57th Street is used as a base and the whole area were developed in the form of Seagram buildings 36 storeys high, this would certainly open up some ground space along the streets. If, however, the Seagram buildings were replaced by court forms (Fig. 8.8) then this type of development while using the same built volume would produce buildings only 8 storeys high. But the courts thus provided would be roughly equivalent in area to Washington

Square: and there could be 28 Washington Squares in this total area. Within squares of this size there could be large trees, perhaps some housing, and other buildings such as schools.

Of course no one may want this alternative. But it is important to know that the possibility exists, and that, when high buildings and their skyline are being described, the talk is precisely about this and not about the best way of putting built space on to ground space. The alternative form of courts, taken in this test, is not a universal panacea. It suggests an alternative which would at once raise far-reaching questions. For instance, the open space provided in the present block-by-block (or pavilion) form is simply a series of traffic corridors. In the court form, it could become traffic-free courts. In this situation the question which needs answering is: at what point do we cease to define a built area by streets and corridors? At

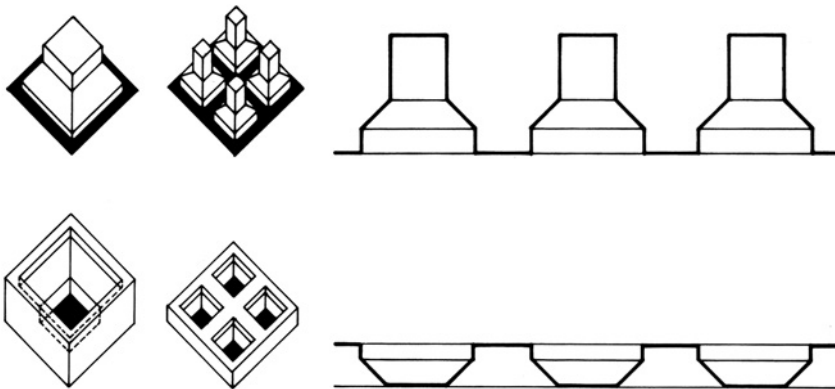


FIGURE 8.7

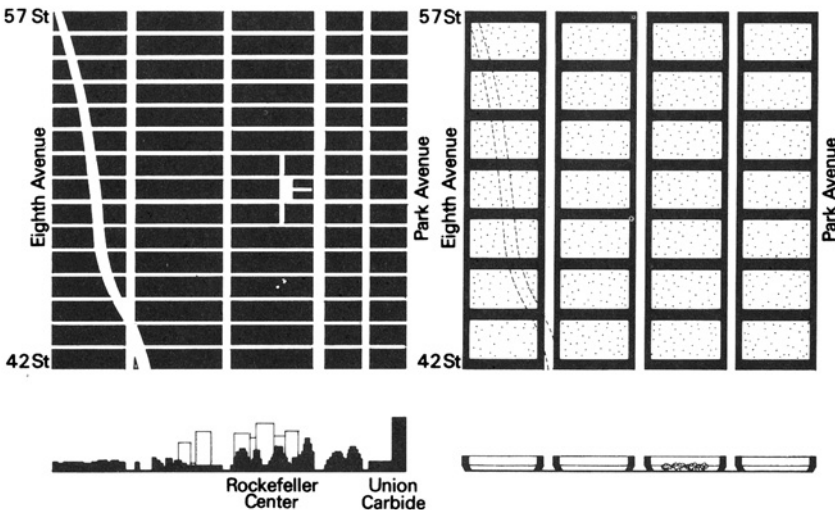


FIGURE 8.8  
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