

# *Rue de Fleurus*

by Bluebird, August 2016

It's been a beautiful summer in New York and the garden at [Peridot Green](#) is full of life, but not caterpillars, which is important. We've been tending to it lovingly since the first signs of spring, and it's been nurturing our conversations and meditations in return. At night, we've been developing a digital otherworld in Minecraft, called Cyborgia. In tending both environments we adhere to the principals of Christopher Alexander's [A Pattern Language](#) – a handbook for building better structures by understanding human, animal, plant, and machine behavior. Here are images from Peridot Green and Cyborgia, accompanied by excerpts from Alexander.



It is not possible to avoid the need for high speed roads in modern society; but it is essential to place them and build them in such a way that they do not destroy communities or countryside. (17 RING ROADS)



Make certain that each piece of the environment – each building, open space, neighborhood, and work community – is made with a blend of both men's and women's instincts. Keep this balance of masculine and feminine in mind for every project at every scale, from the kitchen to the steel mill. (27 MEN AND WOMEN)



Old people need old people, but they also need the young, and young people need contact with the old. (40 OLD PEOPLE EVERYWHERE)



The instinct to climb up to some high place, from which you can look down and survey your world, seems to be a fundamental human instinct. (62 HIGH PLACES)



Preserve natural pools and streams and allow them to run through the city; make paths for people to walk along them and footbridges to cross them. Let the streams form natural barriers in the city, with traffic crossing them only infrequently on bridges. (64 POOLS AND STREAMS)



In each community and neighborhood, identify some sacred site as consecrated ground, and form a series of nested precincts, each marked by a gateway, each progressively more private, and more sacred than the last, the innermost a final sanctum that can only be reached by passing through all the outer ones. (66 HOLY GROUNDS)



Animals are as important a part of nature as the trees and grass and flowers. There is some evidence, in addition, which suggests that contact with animals may play a vital role in a child's emotional development. (74 ANIMALS)



Buildings, and especially houses, with a graceful transition between the street and the inside, are more tranquil than those which open directly to the street. (112 ENTRANCE TRANSITION)





No social group – whether a family, a work group, or a school group – can survive without constant informal contact among its members. (129 COMMON AREAS AT THE HEART)



Create alternating areas of light and dark throughout the building, in such a way that people naturally walk toward the light, whenever they are going to important places: seats, entrances, stairs, passages, places of special beauty, and make other areas darker, to increase the contrast. (135 TAPESTRY OF LIGHT AND DARK)



No one can be close to others, without also having frequent opportunities to be alone.  
(141 A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN)



The sight of action is an incentive for action. When people can see into spaces from the street their world is enlarged and made richer, there is more understanding; and there is the possibility for communication, learning. (165 OPENING TO THE STREET)



When trees are planted or pruned without regard for the special places they can create, they are as good as dead for the people who need them. (171 TREE PLACES)



A garden which grows true to its own laws is not a wilderness, yet not entirely artificial either. (172 GARDEN GROWING WILD)



Somewhere in every garden, there must be at least one spot, a quiet garden seat, in which a person – or two people – can reach into themselves and be in touch with nothing else but nature. (176 GARDEN SEAT)



There is no substitute for fire. (181 THE FIRE)





A building finally becomes a part of its surroundings when the plants grow over parts of it as freely as they grow along the ground. (246 CLIMBING PLANTS)