The American dream of home ownership has created a drivable suburban model for living. As larger numbers start to reach retirement age, a new problem is arising; age segregation. The search for independent living that pushed so many into the suburbs far from the reaches of public transit, will soon be hindering ones ability for independent living. Many will slowly slip into a life of separation confined to their homes, unable to acquire necessities, get needed healthcare and continue to participate in community activities.

While starting to come to fruition via the baby boomers with over 5.4 million people over the age off 55 currently, it is thought that this trend will not just be a one time occurrence. With predictions of this number rising 55 percent in 30 years. This means that we should be thinking about what it means to create an age integrated environment through public policy and urban planning. We all can benefit from life long neighborhoods; with a greater sense of community, better connections to schools and healthcare, and easy access to public transit.

This proposal looks to the future in two ways. How can we make the “single family” home not only a life long home but also a multi-generational home; currently difficult with strict single use zoning. Secondly it hinges on the idea of community centered transit. The form retains a traditional “home” image but has a module which can be added or subtracted per the needs of the occupants. The form becomes a subtle reflection of the interior divisions, it also creates openings and expanses of glazing for connections to the public spaces. The landscape interlocks with the structure creating views and shaping space for gathering.

Generational life cycle diagram:

1-10 years

primary: young family first or second home

secondary: young professional with minimal space needs

11-25 years

primary: growing family with expanding activities

secondary: extra/expandable space for teenage children or grandpa and grandma

25+ years

primary: empty nesters, retired

secondary: young family looking for first place
floor plan notes:
1 | living
2 | resting
3 | community

perspective | multi generational community