Alternative Shelters

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ALTERNATIVE SHELTERS: IMMORTALIZING THE NEW YORK CITY SIDEWALK SHED

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INTRODUCTION + THESIS STATEMENT

“But at all times the neighborhood lends itself to the affluent and to the unhoused, to the Ph.D. and to the unschooled, on the same sidewalk at the same time.” – Mitchell Duneier

In the spring of 2018, a small group of homeless people took shelter underneath the scaffolding at 1441 Broadway in Times Square after a massive rainstorm made its way through New York City. They hung their wet clothes on the steel bracing and slept on unfolded cardboard boxes. This makeshift encampment lasted for a few days before the police officially kicked everyone out.1 Two years before that, homeless New Yorkers set up a similar camp underneath the scaffolding in NoHo. Residents of NoHo blamed a surge of local construction for the implementation of sheds under which people could hide out.2 Yet another encampment existed in the Financial District in 2016, underneath a shed that was eight years old at the time.3

These are only some of the many examples of New Yorkers using scaffolding as a form of shelter. In New York City, “sidewalk shed” is the vernacular term for a type of scaffolding that covers a sidewalk immediately adjacent to a site in order to protect pedestrians from falling debris during the construction or renovation of that site. The design portion of my thesis contends that the New York City sidewalk shed should engage with and address the needs of the public, particularly the City’s underserved population, by becoming an inhabitable architectural feature while still fulfilling its original purpose of protecting pedestrians from active construction sites. This multiple-site series of interventions follows a standard system but has varying “plug-ins” or alterations based on contextual elements such as architectural style and social conditions.

BACKGROUND

Currently, there are about 9,000 active sidewalk sheds in New York City, each with an average life span of about 300 days. In total, the sheds take up over 1,000,000 linear feet of space. While they are neither desirable nor attractive, one can argue that these sheds have unintentionally become a staple of the New York City identity, particularly over the last four decades. Their steel bracing and hunter green facades may have the same level of iconography as the yellow taxi or the gray skyscraper. Anyone who has walked through the streets of New York City at some point during the last decade or two has most likely seen or walked underneath a sidewalk shed. These sheds are exposed to the general public, and, therefore, can be experienced by any member of the general public. Most often, people simply walk underneath the sheds as they make their way toward a final destination. In less crowded areas, people sit on the steel railing or take shelter underneath the wooden planking. Children may climb up the metal structure, almost as though they are on a playground.

Unfortunately, the number of homeless encampments that have been established underneath these sidewalk sheds suggests that the homeless population in New York City has unintentionally become the one of the sidewalk shed’s primary user groups. It is underneath this shed that they live, sleep, and sometimes even use the bathroom. For those without a roof over their heads, the sidewalk shed can be beneficial as a means of protecting against harsh weather conditions, and even providing some amount of privacy as a result of the shadow created by the looming shed. Homelessness has become a crisis in New York City, and sightings of homeless sleepers are only becoming more routine as the City’s population, and the City’s homeless population, grows.
THE HOMELESSNESS CRISIS

There are several reasons for which the homeless population in New York City has nearly doubled in the last decade, making it the highest that it has been since the Great Depression. Simply put, there is an increasing demand for a shrinking amount of occupiable space. Modern homelessness in New York City began in the late 1970s following a decrease in the number of single room occupancy units (SROs), as well as the deinstitutionalization of thousands of mental health patients during this time. Single room occupancy units were a form of housing that accommodated one or two people. They were relatively small in size and, as a result, more affordable compared to larger housing options. However, in 1955 the housing code was changed so that conversion or construction of single room occupancy units was no longer allowed. By the 1970s, there were only a small number of single room occupancy units left. Since then, rent prices have only gone up, and, with stagnant minimum wages and cutbacks on assistance for low-income families, thousands of New Yorkers today have found themselves unable to afford the City’s high cost of living. In November 2019, 63,092 homeless people were recorded to be sleeping in the New York City municipal shelter system every night. Thousands more homeless were suspected to be sleeping on the streets.

Homeless shelters can be a temporary fix for those who need a place to live and sleep for the time being, and today there are more homeless people living in shelters now than ever before. However, many homeless people dislike the shelter for its crowdedness and lack of cleanliness, and many refuse to partake in the shelter system for reasons often relating to autonomy, safety, and pride. Homeless shelters have rules that can be seen as restrictive. There are curfews, visitation limits, schedules, and restrictions on alcohol, smoking, and outside food. These rules are enforced for safety reasons, but they can feel limiting. Those who live in shelters also dislike the idea of living amongst people that they do not know. People who apply to the shelter system do not have control over the shelter in which they end up. Those who are living on the streets are encouraged to join the shelter system and get help, but these attempts to encourage these rough sleepers can sometimes be unsuccessful. Roy Scott Jr, a homeless man in Harlem, said that he liked the sidewalk shed under which he slept because “the shed allowed him to stay out of homeless shelters. ‘It makes me feel like a roof, somewhat, is over my head.’”

Even if a homeless person who does not want to go to a shelter is able to find temporary refuge underneath a sidewalk shed, it is unlikely that they will be able to stay there for long. In almost every major city in the world, poverty is criminalized through both active and passive means. Police are called upon to remove homeless people from public areas and to break up makeshift shantytowns. Anti-loitering and vagrancy laws were passed in the United States about fifty years ago. The trespassing law, which restricts access to places for those who lack a “legitimate purpose,” is particularly difficult for those who do not have stable housing. Homeless people cannot obey exclusion laws if they are dependent upon the society from which they are being excluded.
Over the last decade, a less direct method of deterring the homeless has revealed itself in the form of “hostile architecture.” In 2014, metal studs were placed on the ground in London to prevent homeless people from sleeping in certain areas. Other examples of such anti-homeless structures include benches with armrests in the middle so that people cannot lie down on them, and metal protrusions that keep people from skating on ledges. Many homeless people and general critics of hostile architecture have openly retaliated through protest, while others have learned to navigate the system in more subtle ways. In Vancouver, for example, there is a library that homeless people go to when it opens. As long as these homeless people appear to be studying or working, they will not be kicked out.

According to the Coalition for the Homeless, stable and long-term housing is a proven solution to the issue of homelessness. “A five-year study tracking around 500 homeless families relocated from shelters to housing, conducted by New York University researchers and published in 1998, found that 80 percent of homeless families placed into subsidized housing remained stably housed (i.e., were still in their initial apartments one year later), and 92 percent were in their own apartments. In contrast, among families who left shelters but did not receive subsidized housing placements, only 18 percent were stably housed, and only 38 percent were in their own apartments.” Ironically, the Coalition for the Homeless’ headquarters is shrouded by a sidewalk shed, and that shed is also used as a shelter for many homeless folks who are under scrutiny by law enforcement. This is just one of many examples of attempts at the privatization of public space.

![Chart showing the increase in homelessness over the last four decades.](chart.png)

THE ORIGINAL SIDEWALK SHED

Homelessness has only been a major issue in New York City since the 1970s, which is a fraction of the City’s lifespan, as well as the lifespan of the infamous sidewalk shed. 1898 marked the formation of the modern city of New York.18 By the 1920s, New York City became the most populous and urbanized area in the world.19 The first mention of the modern sidewalk shed appeared in 1897, in which a bill was passed to add a “petticoat” to buildings.20 Today, there are several scaffold manufacturing companies in New York City. One of the oldest of these, York Scaffold, was established in 1928.21

In 1979, Barnard College student Grace Gold was killed by falling masonry while she was walking in the Upper West Side. Gold’s death resulted in the passage of Local Law 11 one year later. This law requires building owners to get their building facades inspected once every five years if their buildings are taller than six feet.22 All buildings that needed work were required to have a shed.23 That same year, Callahan vs. Carey was passed, ordering the city and state to provide shelter to everyone.24

Since 2008, there has been an increase in residential and commercial development, resulting in an increase in the number of active sidewalk sheds. From 2018 to 2019, the number of sidewalk sheds in New York City increased by 17%.25 On average, building construction in the City can take between two to four years. City building officials do not set a specific deadline for owners to make repairs and take down scaffolding.26 In 2013, the Department of Buildings issued 5,584 permits for sidewalk sheds.27 According to the New York City government building code 3307, property owners are required to install a shed for construction on buildings higher than forty feet and demolition of buildings higher than twenty-five feet. Sidewalk sheds are also required for alterations and partial remodeling or demolition. Sidewalk sheds can only be removed once construction, renovation, or demolition is complete.28 Sidewalks in New York City are the responsibility of the New York City Department of Transportation (NYC DOT) but the Department relies on property owners to maintain 99% of New York City sidewalks.29

409 Edgecombe Avenue, located in the Sugar Hill historic district of Harlem, was once home to famous tenants such as W.E.B. Dubois, Thurgood Marshall, and Aaron Douglas. Today, 409 Edgecombe Avenue is home to the oldest sidewalk shed in New York City.20 The shed was first set up in 2006 and has yet to be taken down. With the length of time for which some of these sidewalk sheds have been up, there has also been an issue with sidewalk sheds collapsing, hurting people, and failing to do their jobs. A new proposed law suggests that the sheds themselves should be inspected regularly by the building department. Building owners would be charged for this extra set of inspections.31

Clearly, the aesthetic appeal of the sidewalk shed was also a major issue, because in 2011, as part of a New York City Beautification initiative, the “Urban Umbrella” project was selected as a potential solution to the problem of dense, ugly sidewalk sheds. Literally resembling an open umbrella, this project was intended to be a modern, more aesthetically pleasing take on the sheds that currently occupy the city. Unlike the steel, aluminum, and wood of the original sidewalk

22. “A Law and the Face of the City”
26. “Why Is There So Much Scaffolding in NYC?”
27. Mueller, “10 Years On.”
29. NYC DOT, nyc.gov.
31. “7 On Your Side Investigates.”
of the normal light cages. As opposed to an opaque roof, the Urban Umbrella has a clear roof that allows light to pass through while still protecting from weather and debris.32 A homeless encampment underneath an Urban Umbrella shed would have less privacy, but the same amount of protection from the rain and snow.

While sidewalk sheds do offer protection and shelter from the rain, there is a darker side to sidewalk shed usage that goes beyond it simply being dense and unsightly. Due to the lack of amenities for those who are mentally ill or live in poverty, sidewalk sheds often become a place where people go to the bathroom or partake in violent crimes such as robbery. At the corner of Lenox Avenue and 123rd Street in Harlem, a sidewalk shed had been up for over ten years. As of 2014, construction on the building to which it was attached had yet to be completed, and the shed remained up for safety reasons. As a result, the shed began to serve a secondary purpose as a hangout space: “a jungle gym for strapping men and a hideaway for drug deals. Evenings feature camaraderie among street friends, occasional outdoor sex and the usual neighborhood drama…it can sometimes escalate into brawls.” Locals had been trying to get the shed removed, blaming the landlords and the government for the lack of progress on this front. Residents of this predominantly Black and Hispanic neighborhood argue that a sidewalk shed would never stand like this in a neighborhood with a White majority.33

The existence of the sidewalk shed also affects property values of adjacent buildings, as well as the popularity of local businesses.34 “Sheds aren’t just eyesores and claustrophobia triggers; they hurt some businesses by driving foot traffic across the street.” 40% of restaurants have lost up to 50% of their revenue when covered by sheds.35 In general, sidewalk sheds have a negative impact on the tenants and businesses whose facades they are blocking. Tourists are also unable to properly enjoy the tourist sites of the City because they have been covered by these notorious sheds.36

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32. Elstein, Aaron, “Let There Be Light.”
33. Mueller, “10 Years On.”
34. Ibid.
35. Elstein, Aaron, “Let There Be Light.”

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Carnegie Hall, partially shrouded in scaffolding for renovation purposes.

In order to create a modular intervention, the sidewalk shed needs to be understood as a system. According to the City of New York, sidewalk sheds are required to be constructed from steel or aluminum and wood. Steel columns are bolted into mud sills on the sidewalk. The columns are then braced horizontally and diagonally. Clamps are used to secure the columns to the steel beams, on top of which is a panel of corrugated steel and plywood planks. On the underside of the beams and panels, a row of electrical lighting is installed. Finally, brackets are used to attach the four-foot-tall plywood parapet, painted hunter green to demarcate the shed’s front. Sidewalk sheds need to be a minimum of five feet wide to allow for ample foot traffic, as well as a minimum of eight feet tall. There can be no gap between the shed and the building to which it is adjacent.
Typical Sidewalk Shed, Exploded and Annotated
Alternative Shelters: Immortalizing the New York City Sidewalk Shed

1. 409 Edgecombe Ave

2. Malcolm X Blvd and W 115th St
Alternative Shelters: Immortalizing the New York City Sidewalk Shed

6 1 York St Unit A

7 11-0 45th Road

8 1441 Broadway

*All plan wall thicknesses are 1"
Precedent Studies

   <https://www.archdaily.com/420787/schaustelle-j-mayer-h-architects/> ISSN 0719-8884

   <https://www.archdaily.com/875599/acola-store-vao/> ISSN 0719-8884
Alternative Shelters: Immortalizing the New York City Sidewalk Shed

3307.6 Sidewalk sheds. Sidewalk sheds shall be designed and constructed in accordance with Title 28 of the Administrative Code.

3307.6.1 Where required. A sidewalk shed shall be installed with or without a parapet in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 1 of Title 28 of the Administrative Code.

3307.6.2 Where required. A sidewalk shed shall be installed and maintained to protect all sidewalks, walkways, and walkway entrances in the public right-of-way adjacent to the property line of the property as follows:

1. When such sidewalk, walkway, or pathway is to be located immediately below a roof, mezzanine, or other similar structure.
2. Where the installation, adjustment, repair, or removal of sidewalk sheds shall be performed, or where there is no active work, by the building owner to verify:
   a. The design of the sidewalk shed; and
   b. Whether the sidewalk shed is equipped with high visibility marking.

3307.6.3 Area to be protected. The shading of the sidewalk shed shall extend the full length of the area that falls within the zone specified in Section 3307.6.2, plus an additional 5 feet (1524 mm) beyond such length, or to within 18 inches (457 mm) of any wall, where such wall is not a bearing wall.

3307.6.4 Design and construction of sidewalk sheds.

3307.6.4.1 Designer. All sidewalk sheds shall be designed by a registered design professional.

3307.6.4.2 Design load. All sidewalk sheds shall be designed for a 60 psi (3.96 kPa) dead load and a 10 lb/ft² (0.0057 kPa) live load. The dead load includes the weight of the sidewalk shed from the ground up to the roof. The live load includes the weight of personnel working on the sidewalk shed.

3307.6.4.3 Materials. Sidewalk sheds shall be constructed of wood, steel, or other material permitted by the Department of Buildings.

3307.6.4.4 Vertical members and beams. Vertical members and beams of the sidewalk shed shall conform with the following:

1. Vertical members and beams shall be adequately braced and connected to prevent displacement or distortion of the framework.
2. Vertical members and beams shall be placed on or adjacent to the sidewalk shed foundation, to be placed with a tolerance of 1/16 in (1.5 mm) on each side of the foundation.
3. Vertical members and beams shall not be placed closer than 18 inches (457 mm) from the face of the sidewalk shed.
4. Vertical members and beams shall be placed at least 7 ft (2134 mm) from the edge of a curb cut, or other similar structure.

3307.6.4.5 Deck. The deck of the sidewalk shed shall consist of 1/8 in (3.2 mm) wood planks or equivalent material and shall be capable of sustaining the loads required by Section 3307.6.4.2.

3307.6.5 Installation, adjustment, maintenance, repair, use, inspection, and removal of sidewalk sheds.

3307.6.5.1 Safe condition. Sidewalk sheds shall be maintained in a safe condition and used in a manner that is consistent with the intended use.

3307.6.5.2 Supervision of installation, adjustment, repair, and removal. The installation, adjustment, repair, or removal of a sidewalk shed shall be performed under the supervision of a competent person designated by the designer, the permit holder, or a third party acceptable to both the designer and the permit holder.

3307.6.5.3 Responsibility for maintenance and use. Sidewalk sheds shall be maintained and used by the holder of the permit for the sidewalk shed.

3307.6.5.4 Maintenance. Where such sidewalk shed is to be maintained and used by a person other than the designer or the permit holder, the holder for the shed shall be responsible for ensuring that the sidewalk shed is maintained and used in a manner that is consistent with the intended use.

3307.6.5.5 Cleaning. Sidewalk sheds shall be cleaned in accordance with the following:

1. The undersides of side sidewalk sheds shall be illuminated at all times either by daylight or electric light. The level of illumination shall be uniformly distributed along the entire length of the sidewalk shed.
2. Where such sidewalk sheds are required to be cleaned in accordance with Section 3307.6.5.5, the inspections for a scaffold suspended or supported above a sidewalk shed shall be in accordance with Section 3308.5.

3307.6.6 Parasol. A parasol or patio canopy shall be supported with the following:

1. Support members shall be placed in accordance with the requirements of the New York City Sidewalk Shed Building Code.
2. The parasol or patio canopy shall be supported with a minimum height of 8 feet (2438 mm) above the ground.

3307.6.7 Height. The parasol canopy shall be supported with a minimum height of 8 feet (2438 mm) above the ground.

3307.6.8 Material. Sidewalk shed materials shall be in compliance with the following:

1. Wood shall be approved by the commissioner or the Board of Standards and Appeals. No wood shall be exposed or applied to the underside of a sidewalk shed; and
2. Glass or other transparent material shall be used when a clear line of sight is required.

3307.6.9 Wind. Sidewalk sheds shall be designed and constructed in accordance with the requirements of Title 16 of the Administrative Code.

3307.6.10 Operating conditions. Sidewalk sheds shall be designed and constructed in accordance with the requirements of Title 16 of the Administrative Code.

3307.6.11 Roofing. Sidewalk sheds shall be designed and constructed in accordance with the requirements of Title 16 of the Administrative Code.

3307.6.12 Ventilation. Sidewalk sheds shall be designed and constructed in accordance with the requirements of Title 16 of the Administrative Code.

3307.6.13 Noise control. Sidewalk sheds shall be designed and constructed in accordance with the requirements of Title 16 of the Administrative Code.
EDITED BUILDING CODE
Below is the same building code, edited to reflect the requirements of the proposed design interventions.

3307.6 Sidewalk sheds. Sidewalk sheds shall be provided as required by this section with the primary purpose of protecting pedestrians from construction or demolition operations. As a secondary function, sidewalk sheds will serve as an occupiable space that engages with pedestrians and the immediate context. This may include the building to which the shed is attached.

3307.6.4.2 Storage. Storage on sidewalk sheds shall be as follows:
1. No item shall be stored or placed upon a sidewalk shed designed as a light duty sidewalk shed, under Section 3307.6.4.2.
2. No material shall be stored or placed upon a sidewalk shed designed as a heavy duty sidewalk shed under Section 3307.6.4.2 unless the shed is designed for such storage, with such areas of storage or placement clearly designated on the drawings. Where an item is to be stored or placed on a heavy duty sidewalk shed, and such storage or placement is not in excess of 150 pounds per square foot (732.3 kg/m²) on any square foot area of the sidewalk shed, the design live load of 300 pounds per square foot (1464.6 kg/m²) need not be increased. Where an item is to be stored or placed upon a heavy duty sidewalk shed, and such storage or placement is in excess of 150 pounds per square foot (732.3 kg/m²) on any square foot area of the sidewalk shed, such shed shall be designed to carry:

Seating below the shed. All sheds shall have embedded seating underneath the lower deck. All sheds will become occupiable, with multiple single-occupancy rooms that are free to the public.

3307.6.5 Deck. The deck of the sidewalk shed shall serve as a rainwater harvesting system for plumbing and heating purposes in accordance with Section 3314.

3307.6.4.11 Color. Sidewalk sheds erected on or after July 1, 2013, shall be painted the color of hunter green. Artwork. Sidewalk sheds shall display artwork by up and coming artists in the City.

3307.6.5 Installation, adjustment, maintenance, repair, use, inspection, and removal of sidewalk sheds. Sidewalk sheds shall be installed, adjusted, maintained, repaired, used, inspected, and removed in accordance with the following requirements.

3307.6.5.1 Safe condition. Sidewalk sheds shall be maintained in a safe condition and used in a manner that eliminates hazards to the public. Any hazardous conditions or defects discovered with the sidewalk shed shall immediately be brought to the attention of the permit holder for the shed.

3307.6.5.2 Supervision of installation, adjustment, repair, and removal. The installation, adjustment, repair, or removal of a sidewalk shed shall be performed under the supervision of a competent person designated by the permit holder for the sidewalk shed.

3307.6.5.3 Responsibility for maintenance and use. Sidewalk sheds shall be maintained and used by the general contractor, or where there is no general contractor, the contractor causing the work to be performed, or where there is no active work, the building owner.

3307.6.5.4 Storage or placement of items. No item shall be stored or placed upon a sidewalk shed unless such shed has been designed for such storage or placement in accordance with Section 3307.6.4.2. Where such shed has been so designed items shall be stored or placed only in the area designated on the drawings for storage. Any item placed or stored upon a sidewalk shed shall be secured in a manner to prevent dislodgement, displacement by wind, and shall be distributed so as not to exceed the design limits of the sidewalk shed.

3307.6.5.5 Cleaning and maintenance. The decks of sidewalk sheds shall be broom swept and cleaned of material daily while active work is occurring at the site. The roof shall be inspected daily, and the occupiable shed interior at least once per week.

3307.6.5.6 Sharp edges. Where located in an area that could pose a danger to the public, bolts and screws without a cap, and sharp edges, shall be protected to prevent injury to the public.
PROPOSED DESIGN INTERVENTION

My design proposes a modular system in which the shed becomes an occupiable space. The array of steel I-beams, corrugated steel, and wood planks are duplicated and offset vertically, creating a floor and a ceiling. The plywood panel extends vertically to become a wall with insulation and an underlying structure. The front wall of the module has a window that can be opened to allow for ventilation. This module uses the same primary materials and structures as that of the original shed, with a few adjustments to account for increased loads and accessibility. For example, the steel columns each have a diameter of 8" and each cross-bracing member has a diameter of 5". Underneath each shed is seating to allow for further engagement with the community. Pedestrians can walk or sit underneath the shed, and people can occupy the space within the shed. The modules can be connected by their side walls.

Each module will have a rainwater harvesting system for plumbing. The planks on the rooftop are angled at a one-degree slope so that rainwater is directed toward the gutter that is placed along the edge of the building façade. This water then goes through the pipe along the side of the building and is stored in the water tank underneath the seating area. When needed, the water can be pumped up from the tank, through the pipes, up through the floor of the module, to appliances such as toilets, sinks, and showers.

The sidewalk shed module can support both public space and residential programs. One example of such public programs is an alternative vendor space for locals and small businesses. In New York City, sidewalks are home to vendors selling all types of goods, from clothing to books to artwork. At surface level, their work may not seem as important or as official as that of their corporate, white collar counterparts. In reality, these shopkeepers are among the most important contributors to City life. The vendor is a “public character,” or anyone who is in constant contact with a lot of people. This includes local shopkeepers. These characters are trusted by other locals because they have eyes on the street. As with many types of public space, the functionality of sidewalks involves bringing a bunch of strangers together. Sidewalks can only exist successfully if the users of the sidewalk agree to mutually support one another. With an increased level of support, there is an increased level of safety. Giving these vendors an elevated space in which they may distribute their items is an opportunity to elevate those who are often overlooked in society. Large windows on the sheds allow these vendors to continue to have eyes on the street.

38. Ibid, 8.
40. Ibid, 8.
1. Mud sills are drilled into the sidewalk with anchor bolts, and HSS 8.625 x 0.625 columns are placed over the mud sills
2. Two sets of steel railings are drilled into the HSS columns
3. Wood slabs can be attached to the back HSS columns to create seating

9. Sliding door with hidden track is attached to exterior, requiring less space than a typical swinging door

15. Rainwater Harvesting System with drainage pipe, water tank storage, and pumps

16. Roof with 1% slope to allow for water to collect in gutter

18. Brackets used to support panel attachment to roof
Generic Rendered Module with mural on shed exterior

The artwork on this shed is by Nina Chanel Abney, and the mural is originally located on Coney Island. This piece is another example of the type of artwork that would be put on display with the new sidewalk sheds.
Generic Rendered Module with mural on shed exterior

The artwork on this shed is by Nina Chanel Abney, and the mural is originally located on Coney Island.
The artwork on this shed is a sample from "Legendary" by Amber Art and Design featuring Tatyana Fazlalizadeh. Completed in 2013, this street art is located on 512 S. Broad St in Philadelphia. This piece is another example of the type of artwork that would be put on display with the new sidewalk sheds.
Initial Sketches
LOCATION 1:
409 EDGECOMBE AVENUE

The sidewalk shed module can support both public space and residential programs. I’ve used three locations to represent three different examples of programs that can be created by the shed. This includes a residential space, vendor and exhibition space, and a public gathering space.
Lower Manhattan

Shed spans across multiple buildings with multiple styles and functions

Intervention: Vendor Space, Exhibition Space, open to all
LOCATION 2:

54 Franklin St

- Lower Manhattan
- Shed spans across multiple buildings with multiple styles and functions
- Intervention: Vendor Space, Exhibition Space, open to all
Alternative Shelters: Immortalizing the New York City Sidewalk Shed
Neo-Georgian Architecture

Harlem Neighborhood

Multi-purpose building

Intervention: Interior Public Space, open to all
LOCATION 3:
Malcolm X Blvd and W 115th St
- Neo-Georgian Architecture
- Harlem Neighborhood
- Multi-purpose building
- Intervention: Interior Public Space, open to all
CONCLUSION

This project is a contribution to a larger discourse regarding scaffold design; several architects and architecture firms, including Framlab and J. Mayer H. Architects, have made efforts to rethink and repurpose the scaffold as a means of benefiting the communities in which they design. Ultimately, this project advances the argument that scaffolding can be used for more than its original purpose, especially if it’s going to stay standing for as long as the sidewalk shed does, and that everyone deserves a comfortable space for all of their needs. Framlab has the right idea by using the unsightly scaffolding in New York City as an opportunity to create more occupiable space, specifically to address what has become a major problem in the City over the last few decades. Every human being should have access to basic necessities, including food, clean water, clean air, clothing, and shelter. The homeless people who are made to sleep on benches or sidewalks are not lazy or criminal as many members of the upper and middle class seem to believe, but rather victims of a system that has deeply failed them. There is a clear answer here: increase the minimum wage to a livable one and create more affordable housing. One way of doing the latter is to create more occupiable space, and one way of creating more occupiable space is by expanding upon construction that already exists and does not seem to be going away anytime soon. For decades, the sidewalk shed has protected New Yorkers, and now, it can engage them further.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


