

Prospect and Refuge:

Shelter in Roxbury

by Jane Elizabeth Lee.

Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy and Mathematics.
Wellesley College, Wellesley, Massachusetts, 1986.

Submitted to the Department of Architecture on January 15, 1993 in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Architecture, at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

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Abstract

This thesis attempts to use the concept of juxtaposed prospect and refuge to design shelter on a large urban site (92,000 square feet). The broad range of scales stretches the applicability of prospect and refuge as a design tool, yet also forges a varied understanding of related (and sometimes synonymous) architectural principles such as back-front directionality, contrast, threshold, mystery, life-affirmation.

The selection of a 'healing' shelter for program intensified the exploration of prospect and refuge, as the given user group compelled a particular attention to architectural elements and dimensions at an intimate scale. This precision, coupled with the demands of community space on such a large site, brought into play intermediate issues of continuity and adjacencies and, thus, more incidents of prospect and refuge.

Thesis supervisor: Renee Y. Chow

Title: Assistant Professor of Architecture

Thanks To

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Pam: for giving a helping brain as well as hand

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Michael: for always coming through

Zsuzsanna: for offering perfectionist help

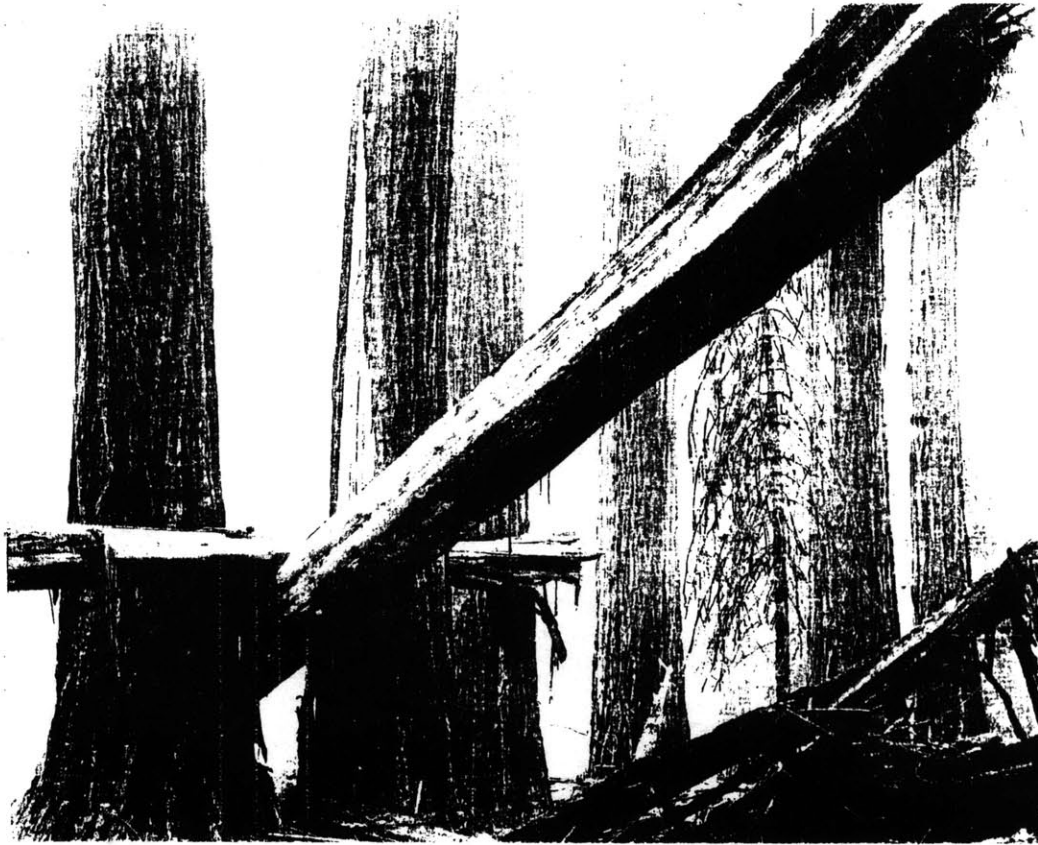
Paul: for being Paul

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Fallen Sequoias, 1977, Photograph by
Bruce Bambaum.

The Nature of Shelter

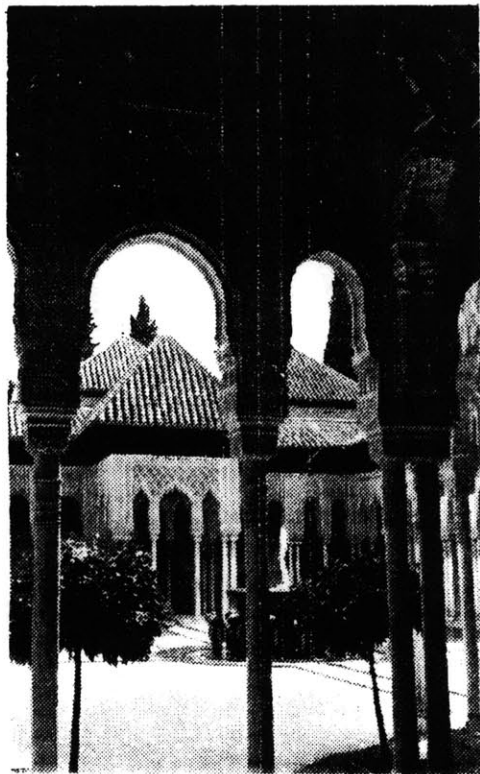
“You put two sticks together and you have created a significance...,”¹ Frank Lloyd Wright once noted. But imagine that these sticks are trees, and you are peering through them at a clear expanse. Maybe you’re at the edge of a wood:

We had one favourite spot, deep in moss and last year’s leaves, where there were some felled trees from which the bark was all stripped off. Seated among these, we looked through a green vista supported by thousands of natural columns, the whitened stems of trees, upon a distant prospect made so radiant by contrast with the shade in which we sat, and made so precious by the arched perspective through which we saw it, that it was like a glimpse of the better land. --Charles Dickens in *Bleak House*.²

The physical basis of refuge and haven begins in this richness of contrast.



Opposite: "Somebody's House,"
Baltimore,
1987. Photograph by William Clift



Above: The Alhambra, Spain
Photograph by Norman J. Johnston.

Caves are often cited as primordial shelters, but I would like to put forth that a 'cave' per se falls short of being a shelter. When Wendell Lovett invoked the cave for shelter, he also mentioned 'meadow,'³ that is, the idea of prospect. Jay Appleton theorized in *The Experience of Landscape* that human beings have a genetically driven predilection for conditions of prospect and refuge in landscape settings, and it is these two definitions that propel Grant Hildebrand's premises in *The Wright Space: Pattern and Meaning in Frank Lloyd Wright's Houses*:

Prospect: a condition in which one can see over a considerable distance.

Refuge: a place where one can hide.⁴

To have both is to see without being seen. This juxtaposition would take us to the edge of the wood, where, in fact, ecologists will find the richest array of life forms.⁵

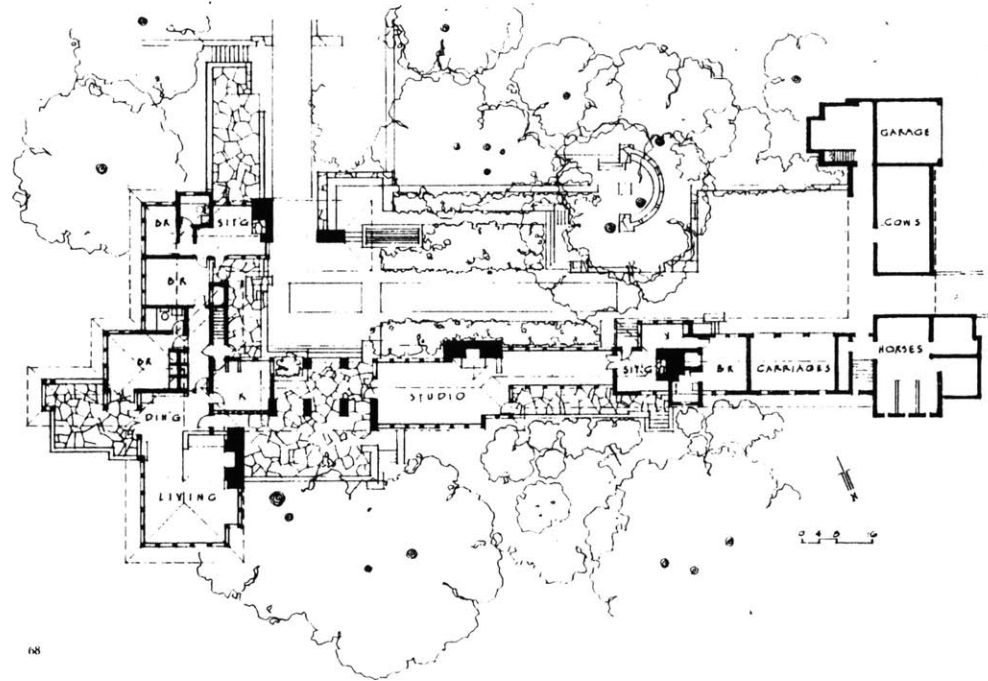
Intuitively, a simultaneous experience of prospect and refuge would seem to provide a way to inhabit the world: refuge fosters a sense of rootedness, while prospect turns refuge into a vantage point upon the larger world—continuity, if you will.

When Wright explained that he built early Taliesin as a way "to get my back against the wall"⁶ he conjures up an elemental sensibility of place—which, I submit, begins in refuge. A physical element like a wall starts to define your sphere of space. Then, you can better inhabit your immediate environment because you can 'fill' it more completely.

Thus, places of refuge tend to have lower ceilings and smaller overall dimensions. You 'take' refuge. In filling a place you become it—in that you gain an "existential foothold," a term that Heidegger links to the concept of dwelling.⁷ Glen Robert Lym attributes a "spatial feel" to our most intense states of awareness.⁸ Christopher Alexander goes so far as to claim that

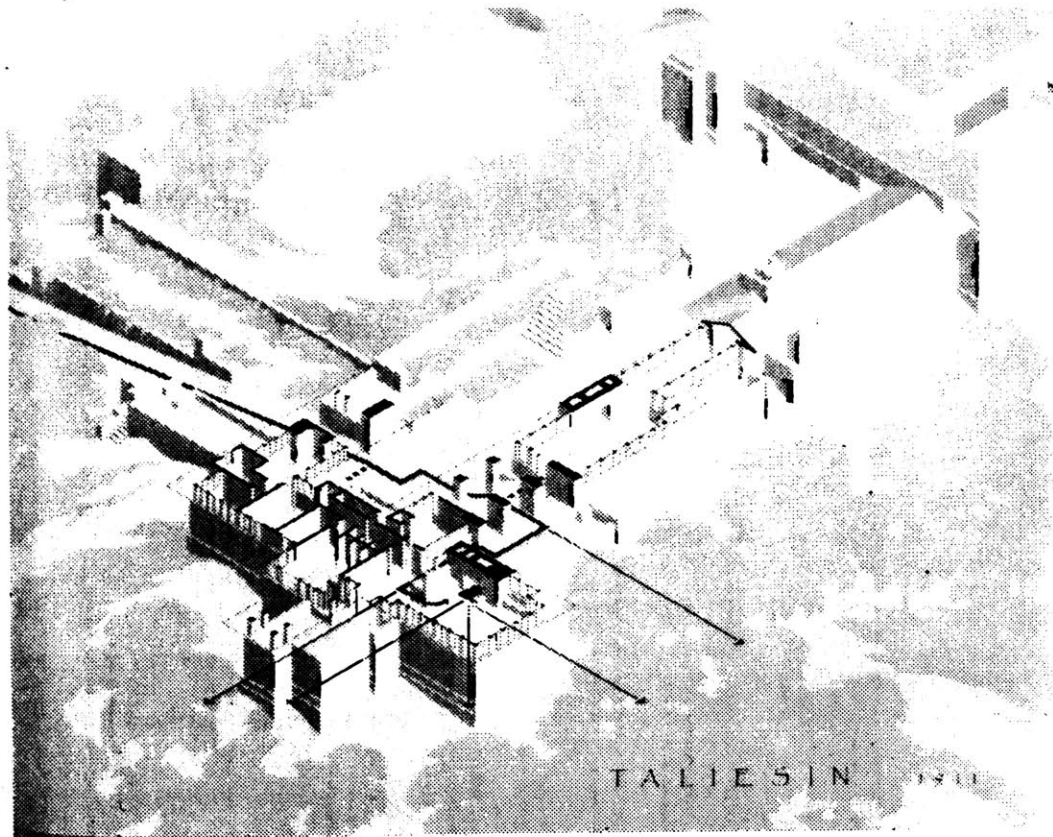
certain forms of spatial organization are so closely, and so deeply allied to our own nature, that any object (building, door, window, plate, weaving, tile, carving) which contains this spatial structure, seems to us to be a mirror of the self.⁹

Rather literally, Edward Lutyens put faces on his houses (two windows, gaping door...).



Plan of early Taliesin
by Frank Lloyd Wright

Opposite: Early Taliesin, by Frank Lloyd Wright. Photograph by Henricus T. Vijdeveld



Axonometric of early Taliesin
Diagrammatic drawing by William Hook

Obviously, if you are filling a place, then, conversely, the place is containing you. The extreme refuge of early Taliesin, in fact, features dominant sheltering roofs and rooms that are essentially self-contained boxes.

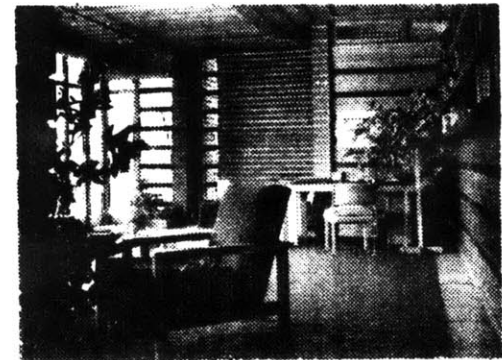
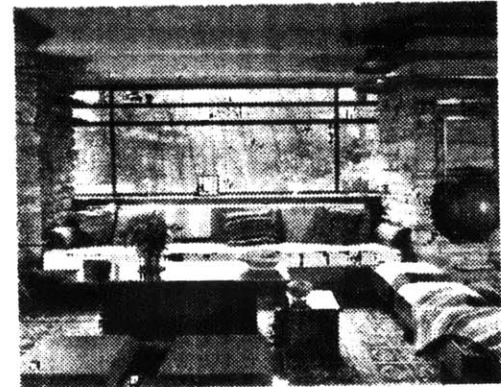
But while Wright wanted his *back* against the wall, the front was something else. The architect well known for expansive balconies and stretches of French doors made sure even in the early Taliesin to include dramatic vistas. He never isolated prospect.

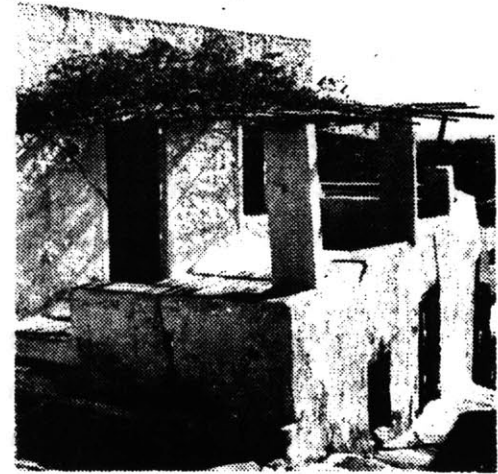
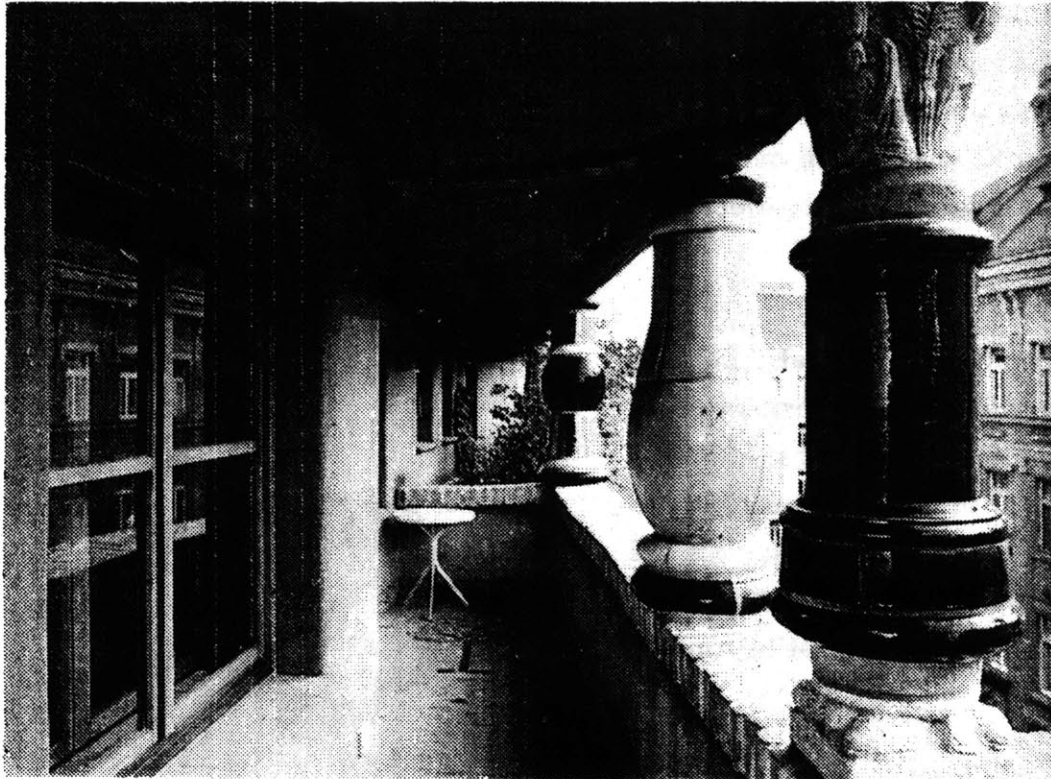


Schwartz House by Frank Lloyd Wright. Photograph by Ellen Nibbelink.

Below top: Fallingwater, by Frank Lloyd Wright. Window seat south of fire, looking west. Photograph by Scott Leff.

Below bottom: Jacobs House, by Frank Lloyd Wright. Photograph by Pedro Guerrero.

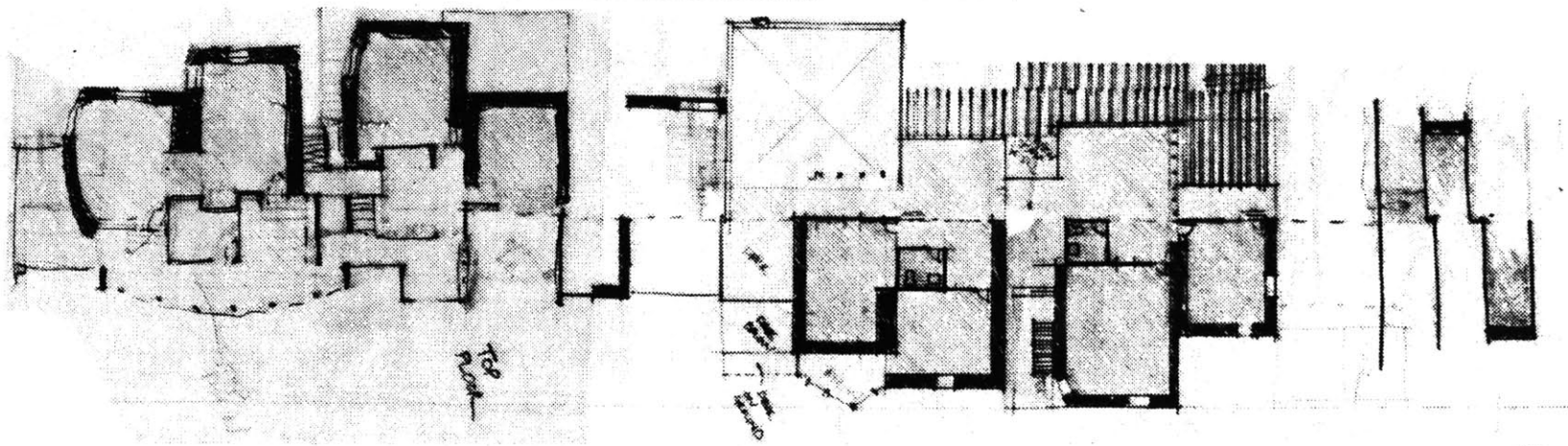




Top: balcony in Greece. Photograph by I. Ioannidou.

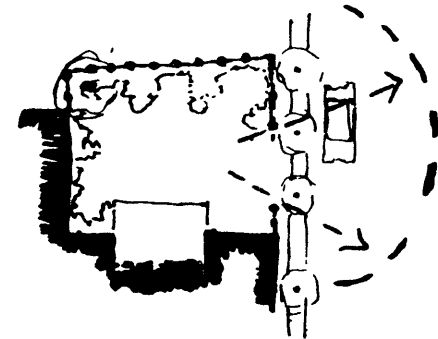
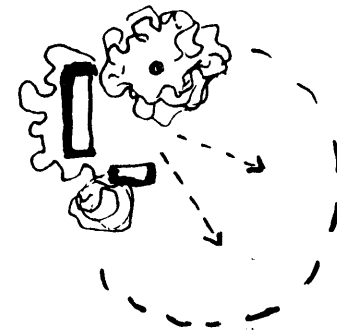
Left: balcony of Hundertwasser House. Photograph by Kristina Hametner.

Below: Early scheme for top floor of my shelter design.



In architecture, front-back directionality determines arrangements of privacies at the building level, but I would like to use this directionality—interpreted as prospect and refuge—as a tool for design at other levels, as well. I found from working all over a 92,000-square-foot site for this thesis project that incidents of prospect and refuge could be built at larger as well as smaller scales.

Interestingly, the 'existential foothold' adjusts itself. Even a large valley feels vaguely claustrophobic without the prospect of a visible way out. A courtyard seems improved if the walls do not solidly enclose. A bed nook can be smaller than an elevator if a window *right there* overlooks the street. Frank Miller describes the monk's cell in which he once spent the night as very small, plain and boxy but still wonderful because of the vista shooting out beyond the door, the courtyard, the church beyond.



Opposite Top to bottom: Seat and garden, Terrace and street or square,, Square and vista. Drawings from Pattern 114 in *A Pattern Language*, by Christopher Alexander.

Christopher Alexander does not define his motives in prospect and refuge terms, but his "Hierarchy of Open Space" precept suggests the same intuitions:

Whatever space you are shaping—whether it is a garden, terrace, street, park, public outdoor room, or courtyard, make sure of two things. First make at least one smaller space, which looks into it and forms a natural back for it. Second, place it, and its openings, so that it looks into at least one larger space.¹⁰

Moreover, an eye on prospect and refuge keeps the design at human scale because your very body is in it—your front and back. Your body may feel the refuge—of the bed nook, the courtyard, the valley—but your eyes look for the prospect, the continuities beyond. Continuity with the urban fabric, for example, is not felt from a birdseye perspective. It may, in fact, "flicker," as Bill Hubbard once described the sense of place in a forest.¹¹ Varying the degree of prospect and refuge accommodates the modes of awareness that Hubbard delineates:

1. This is all there is.
2. This is all I'll think about right now.
3. This relates to that.
4. There is both this and that (as in the dichotomy experienced when straddling a border)
5. This is a part of that.

The first mode suggests a complete lack of prospect (though the mind may roam), while the last mode suggests the most compelling prospect. Still, refuge remains in the here versus there.

The classic tree bower framing a sweeping hilltown view serves to mark one's sense of place as much as do the columns enfronting the broad vista beyond the platform of a Greek amphitheatre. Fernando Domeyko would say that the columns "reveal" the landscape.

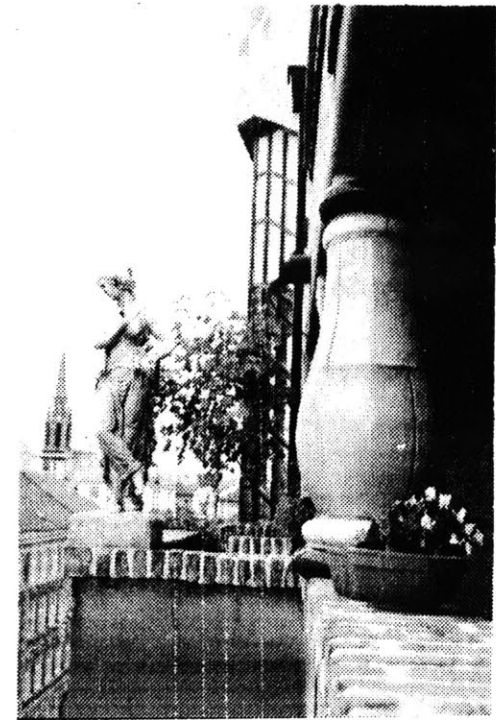
The importance of the branch and column implies that the presence of contrast figures largely in a rich experience of place. In fact, the architectural situation closest to ideal may be in the dichotomy of "there is both this and that." Accepting that this ideal situation can be a masterpiece, we can look to the description of Colin St. John Wilson:

It is uniquely the role of the masterpiece to make possible the simultaneous experience of these two polar modes; enjoyment at the same time of intense sensations of being inside and outside, of envelopment and detachment, of oneness and separateness.¹²

By intensifying contrast, the branch and column resonate as physical facts. As things, they "gather," or "concretize," according to Norberg-Shultz. In representing a meeting of forces, they effect an experience of intense localness, of threshold.



Left: Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi.
Photograph by Christian Norberg-
Shultz Below: Hundertwasser House.
Photograph by Kristina Hametner.



Threshold

When I first began to think about designing a shelter so ideal as to foster healing, a rather warmed-over list of requisite qualities accrued. The place must not look 'institutional.' And let there be seclusion (for self-identity) and also outlook (for continuity with the outside world). The metaphor of the butterfly seemed most apt. But I was uncertain of possible claims that inhabitants could emerge from my architecture in healed condition. Of course, there is always the wand of architectural determinism, but I wanted to minimize any leaps in faith by analyzing the empirical instincts I recognized with my own body. These instincts would surely give clues to imagining the very sensation of healing, which must begin at a semi-conscious level.



"Sunlight," Capitol Park, Sacramento, 1979. Photograph by Bruce Barnbaum.



I imagined that I was in a cozy room lit by several windows. The reveals are deep so that I feel the thickness of the walls protecting me from the unknowns of the world out there. The street scene down below is an interesting stage set. But then to gain a better vantage point, I climb into the window itself. After all, I want a wall behind me, not blocking the front of me, so long as I can see without being seen. Comfortably seated on the wide ledge, I inhabit a threshold between prospect and refuge.

Above and right: Windows by Christopher Day. Photograph by Christopher Day.



What is so fetching about this set-up? Perhaps we return to the forest edge, where forces of life meet, interact and flourish. Lively light, for instance, has a shifting, interactive, linking quality. Christopher Day puts forth that to heal, we must cross an inner threshold. Architecture can not force this inner move, but as he explains,

Medical, psychological and spiritual healing involve processes by which something outer is brought to the patient so that he or she can make an inner step. It is a process of enabling, not of manipulating.¹³

Then, as something outer, life-filled architecture can touch us like a contagious good mood.

The importance of threshold lies in the fostered "preparatory experiences" that, Day asserts,

...change our inner state which can both enhance our receptiveness to health-giving qualities in our surroundings, and trigger transformative processes in our inmost being.¹⁴



Above: Passageway in Greece.
Photograph by I. Ioannidou.

For a more specific recollection of this preparatory experience, let us take an entrance scenario by Christopher Alexander, who seems to mean 'life-filled' when he describes "whole" therefore 'good' architecture:

...for [the entrance] to be whole, it must contain at least these elements: the arch, or beam, which brings the loads down from above; a certain heaviness perhaps, in the members which bring these forces down, and mark the edges of the entrance way; a certain depth, or penetration, which takes the entrance a distance in, deep enough, so that the light is changing on the way through the entry way; some ornament, around the archway, or the opening, which marks the entrance as distinct, and gives it lightness; and, in some form, thing that I would somehow see as 'feet'—things sticking out, at the bases of the sides—they might be seats, the feet of columns, something anyway which connects the sides to the ground, and makes them one.¹⁵

Note that he employs the forementioned qualities of depth (as in the thick wall), changing light, contrast, and linking. These features enhance the feeling of threshold (and not just through the sense of sight) and convey powerful signals: Alexander asserts that

The transition must, in effect, destroy the momentum of the closedness, tension and 'distance' which are appropriate to street behavior, before people can relax completely.¹⁶

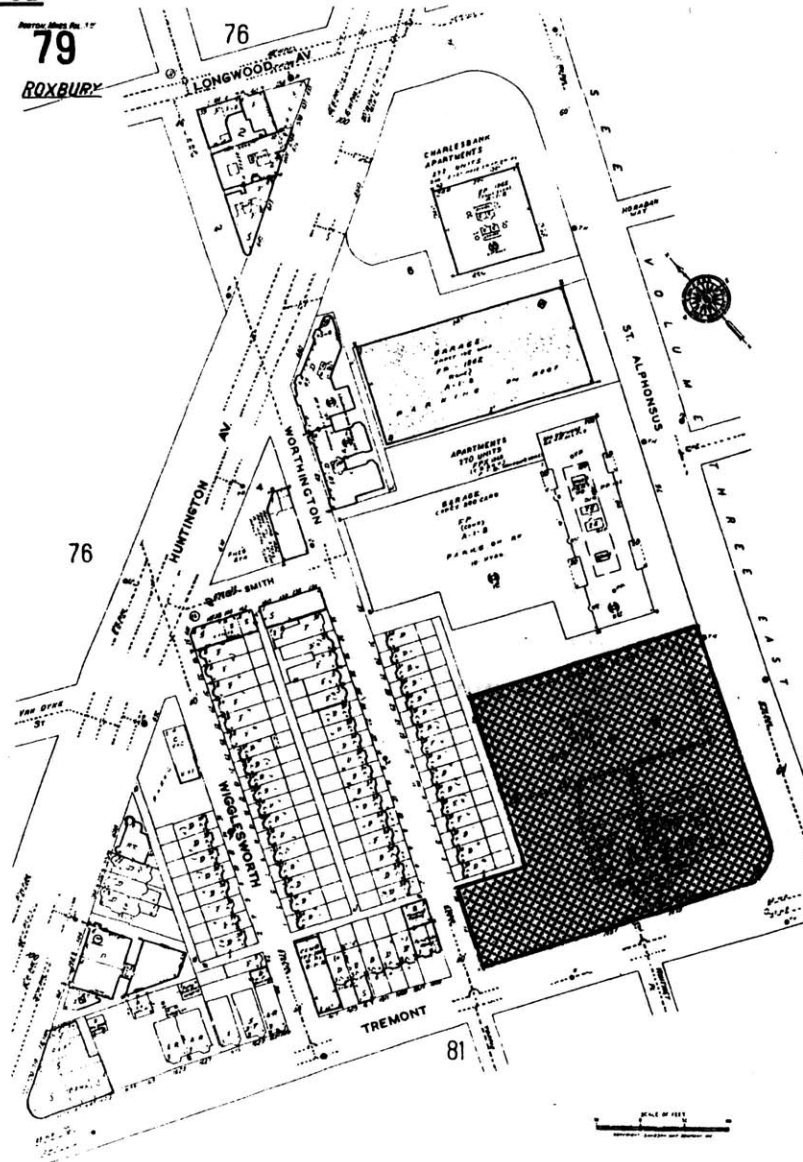
Discussing threshold more generally, the authors of *The Good House* point out that

...linked contrasts offer the opportunity for change and growth. The child on the front porch (the link between home and the outside world) can either retreat into the house for safety or venture out into the world beyond for adventure and learning. The good house, then, by providing simultaneous security and opportunity, encourages the full experience of life.¹⁷

Again, we have the allusion to Life-embracing architecture.

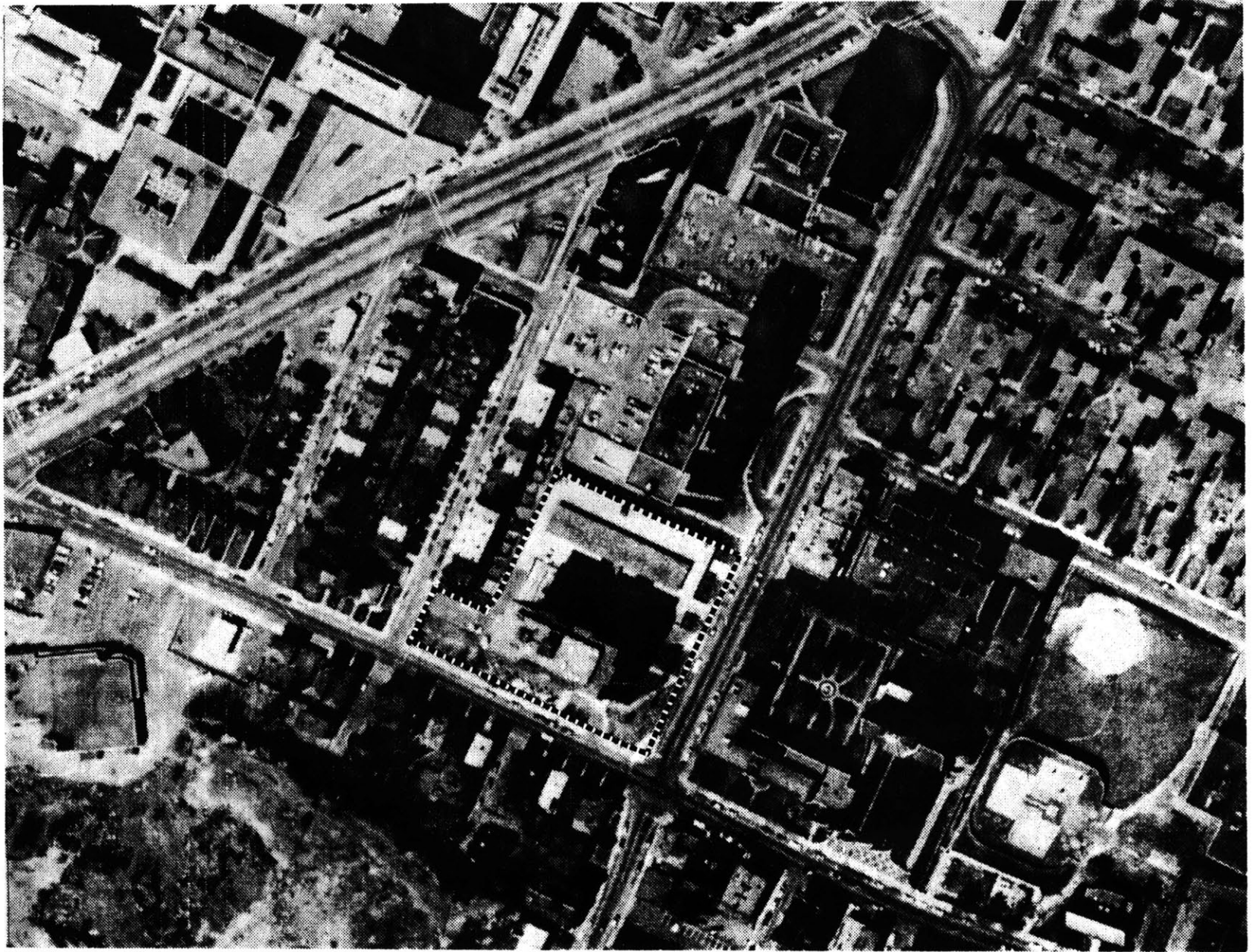
Thus, in my thesis project, I strove to make a place within the city that is filled with life and "renewing rhythms,"—rich with the sense of threshold between various incidents of prospect and refuge. I hoped that by seeking relations *between* incidents, I could make a totality of life-filled architecture, whereby every inner force finds expression in the varied menu of meaningful adjacencies.

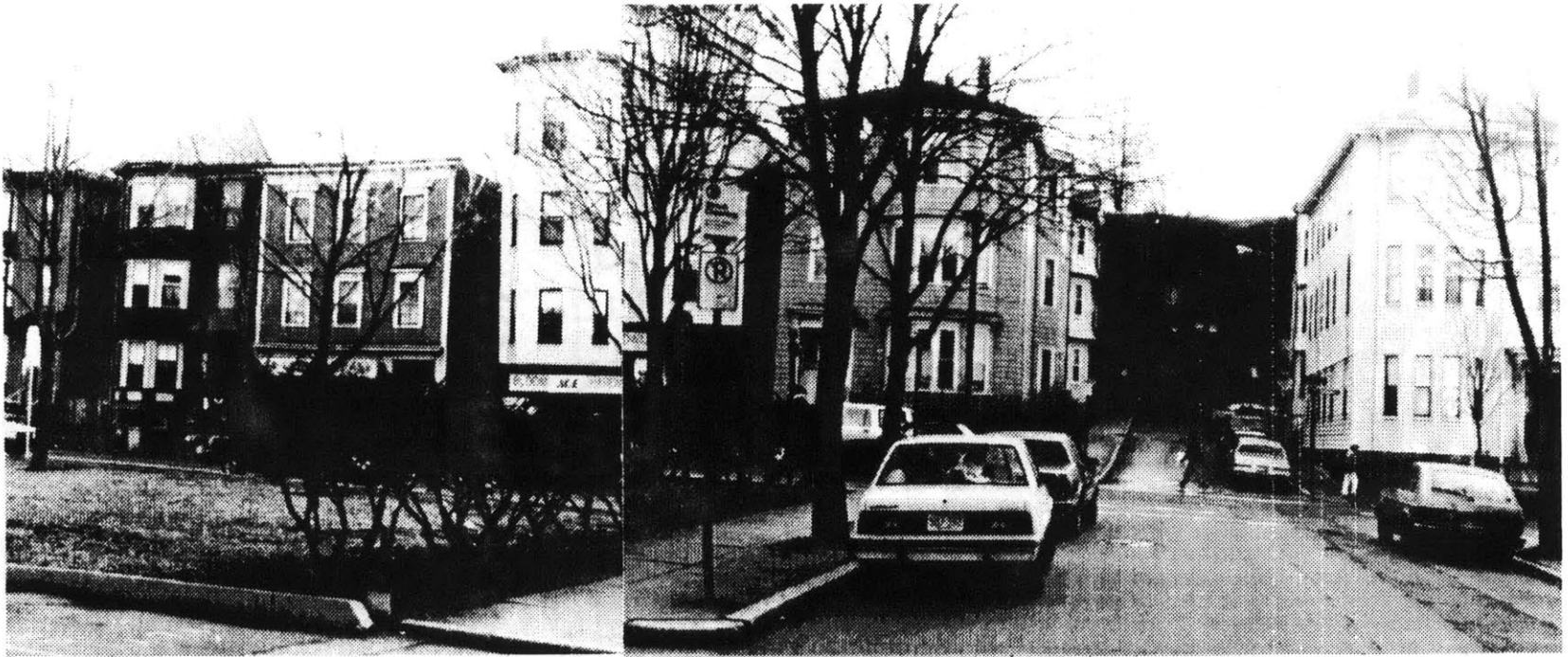
Site Moves



The site is a 92,000 square foot plot in Roxbury on the corner of Tremont Street and St. Alphonse Street. Huntington Avenue joins the two streets toward the northwest end of the site.

Opposite: Aerial view of site (triangle).





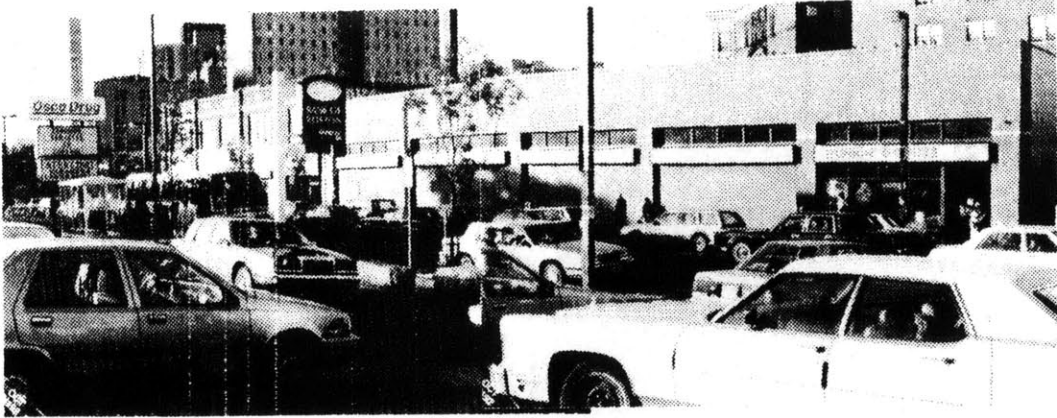
Tremont Street facing site on south border: lively, "mom and pop" shops. A three-story rock ledge pervades behind the units.



Left: looking east toward intersection with St. Alphonsus Street (site is to left)

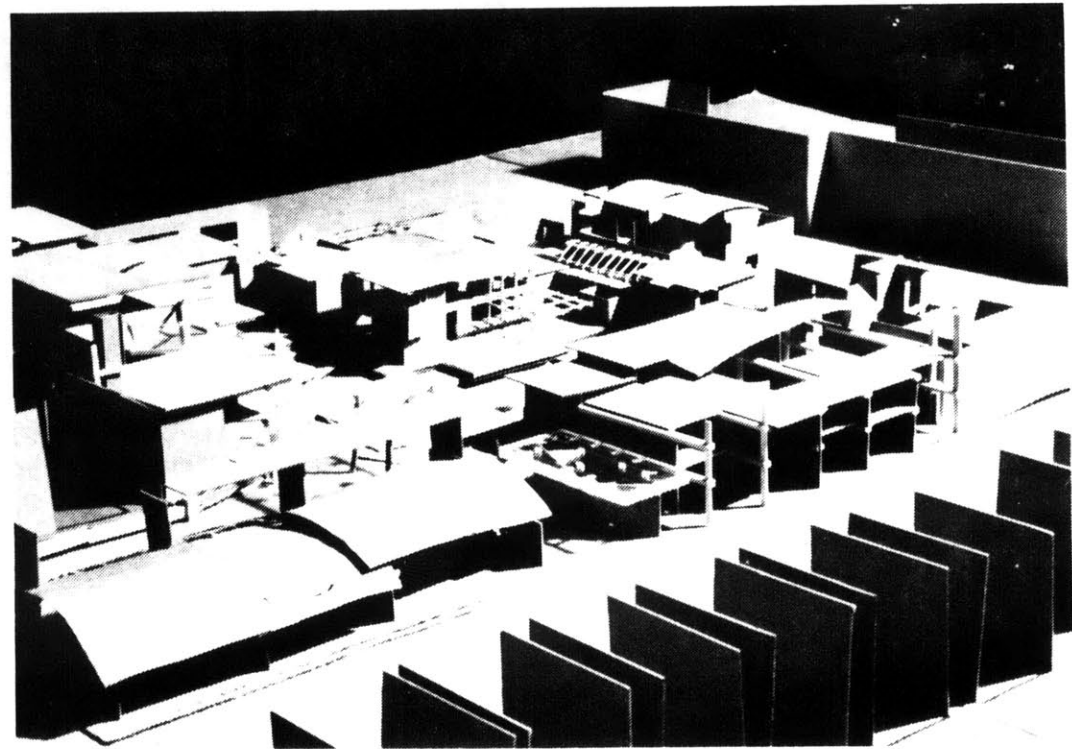
Right: looking west toward intersection with Huntington Avenue.





Left: Tremont Street near Huntington intersection.

Response of design scheme to the Tremont edge: a similar urban fabric and density: daycare is to the left (curved roofs), while retail is to the right. Entry to the site is through the two glass roofs in the middle.



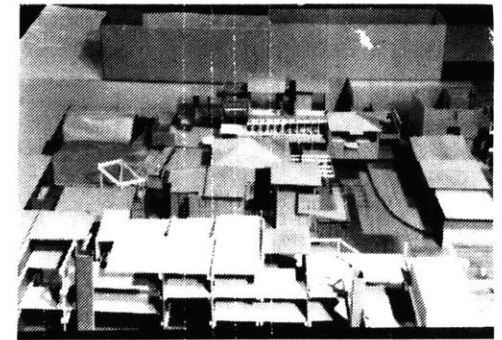


Worthington Street adjacent to site on west. Quiet, well-kept. "There's no weirdies here," said one resident interviewed.

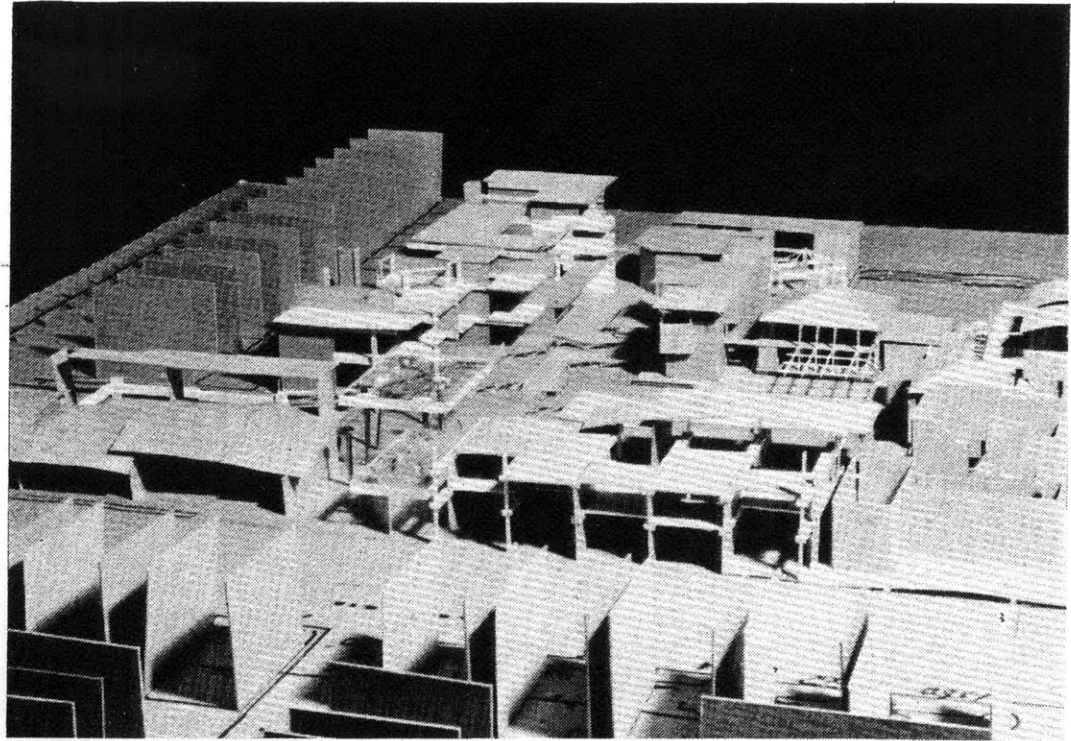
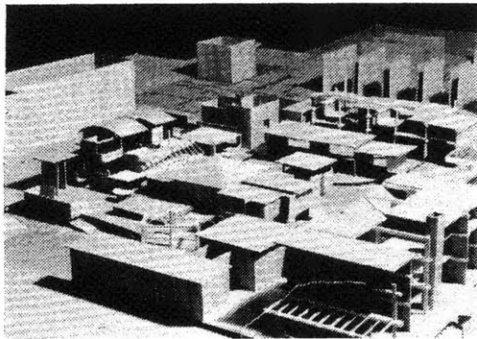
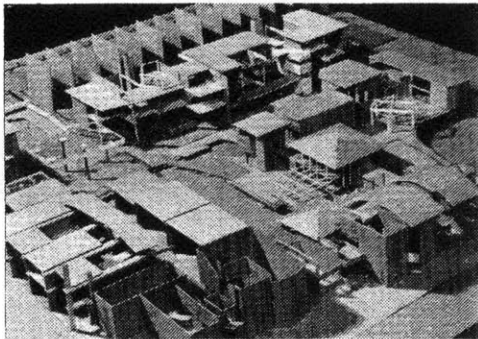


Right top: back of Worthington row houses.

Right bottom in foreground, back of row of housing directly bordering the back of the Worthington rowhouses—privacies back to back.



The left edge of the row of housing parallel to Worthington Avenue helps to form an internal street beginning at the glass-roofed entry . This created street responds to the direction of Whitney Street, which lies across Tremont (slightly displaced to the right).



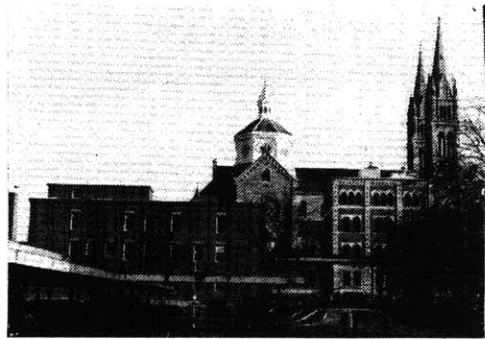
A four foot dip forming a sort of valley alongside the created street responds to the pervasive rock ledge ('Nature') peering through the houses on Tremont Street.

To accentuate this dip, the ground of the houses toward the back of the created street rises in elevation—so that pedestrians gain a vantage point of prospect over the refuge of the valley that continues to the rock ledge.

Left top: view of valley and 'street.
Left bottom: back of site (Worthington edge) looking toward Tremont.



St. Alphonsus Street (toward intersection with Tremont): the fine neighbor of a school (left) and Italianate church (right).

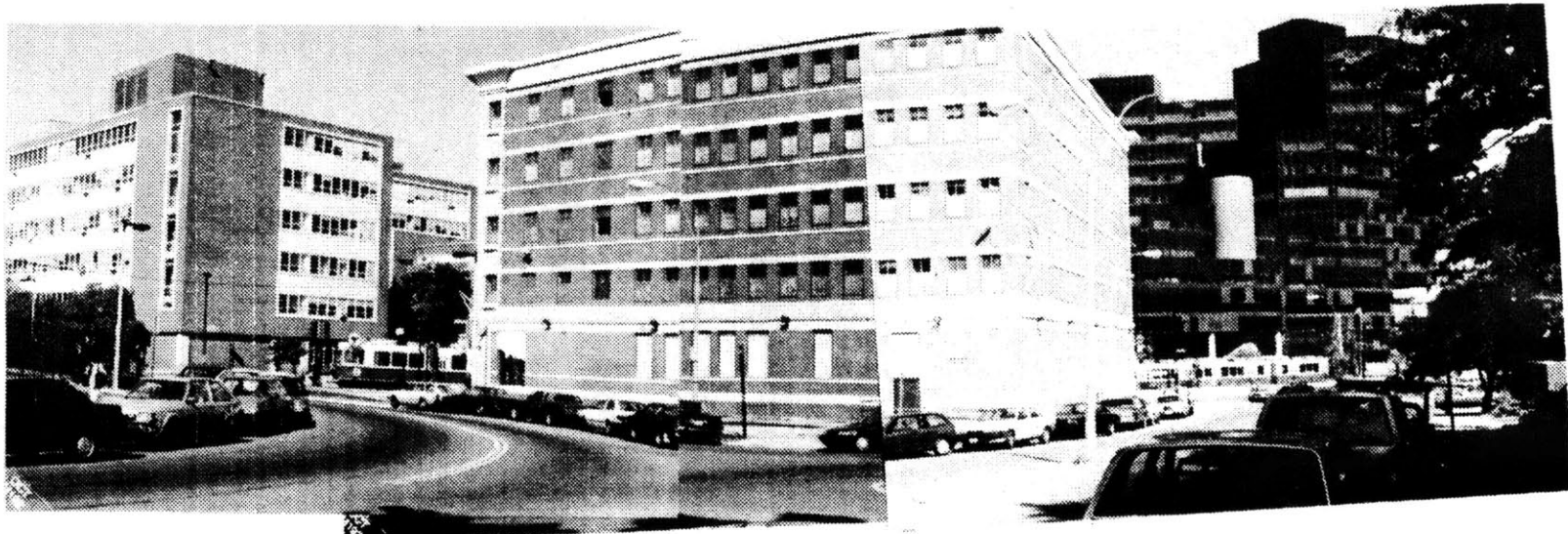
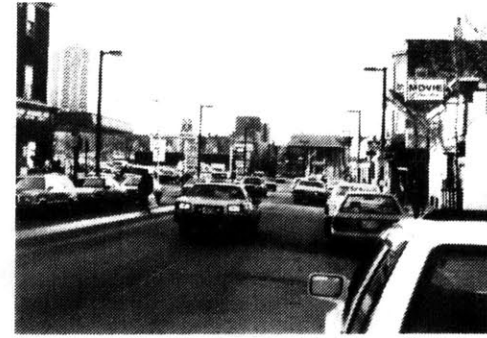


Left: view across site from west to east. The covered parking lot is existing.
Right: view of St. Alphonsus from north toward intersection with Tremont.

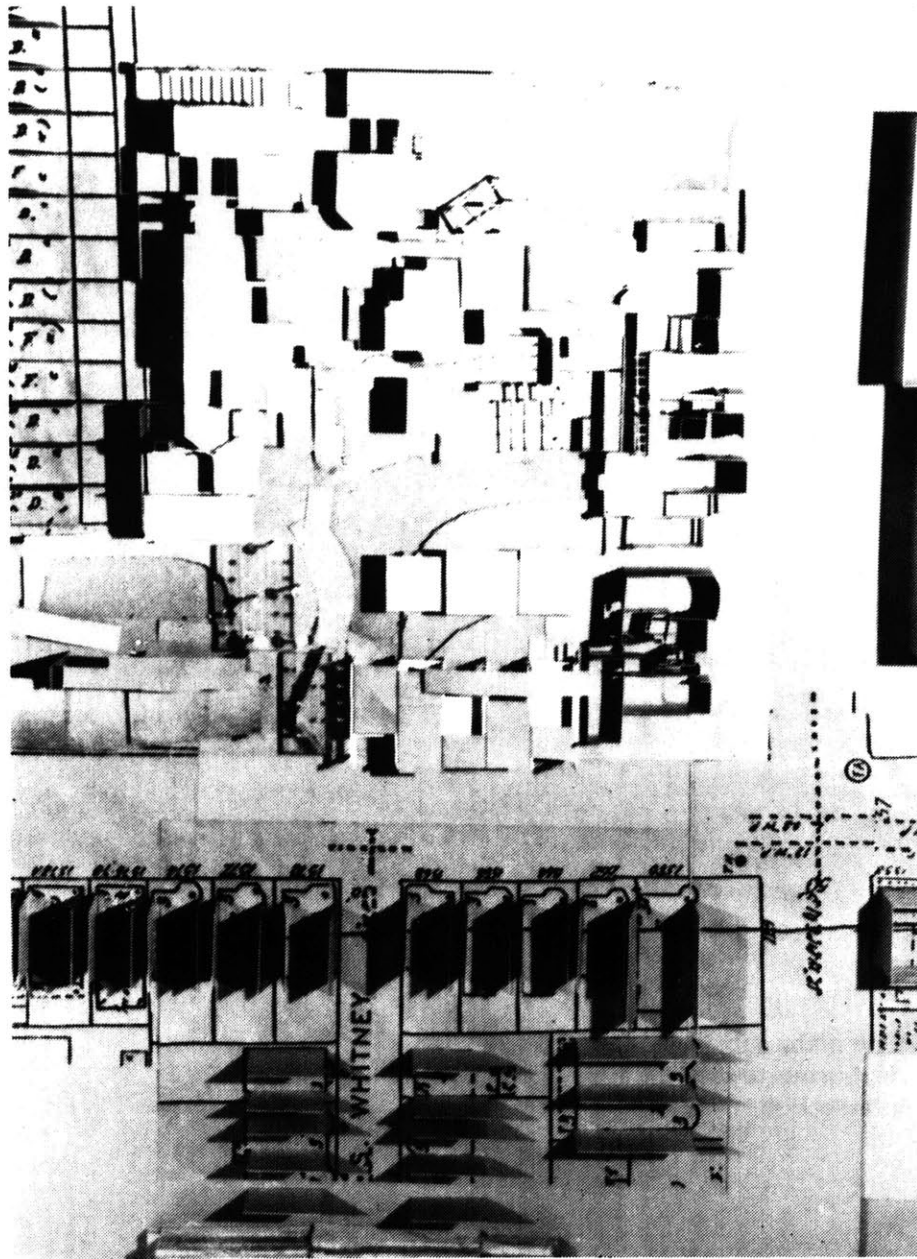




Left: the intersection with Tremont.
Right: St. Alphonsus toward
Huntington intersection. The
Massachusetts College of Art (or
"MassArt") is the dark glass building
in the background.
Below: the forked intersection with
Huntington.



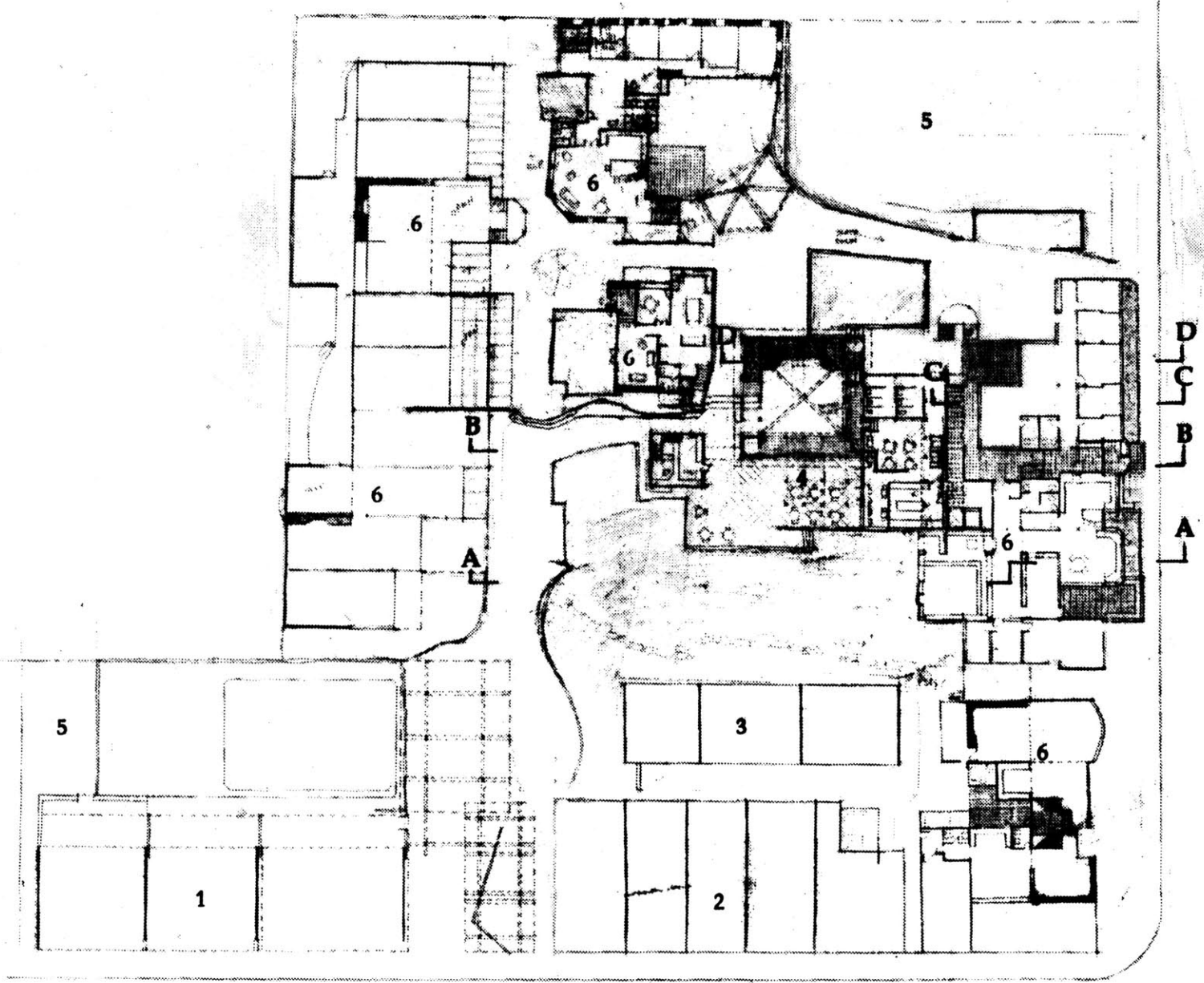
One of the subsidized units fronting St.
Alphonsus toward the Huntington
intersection.

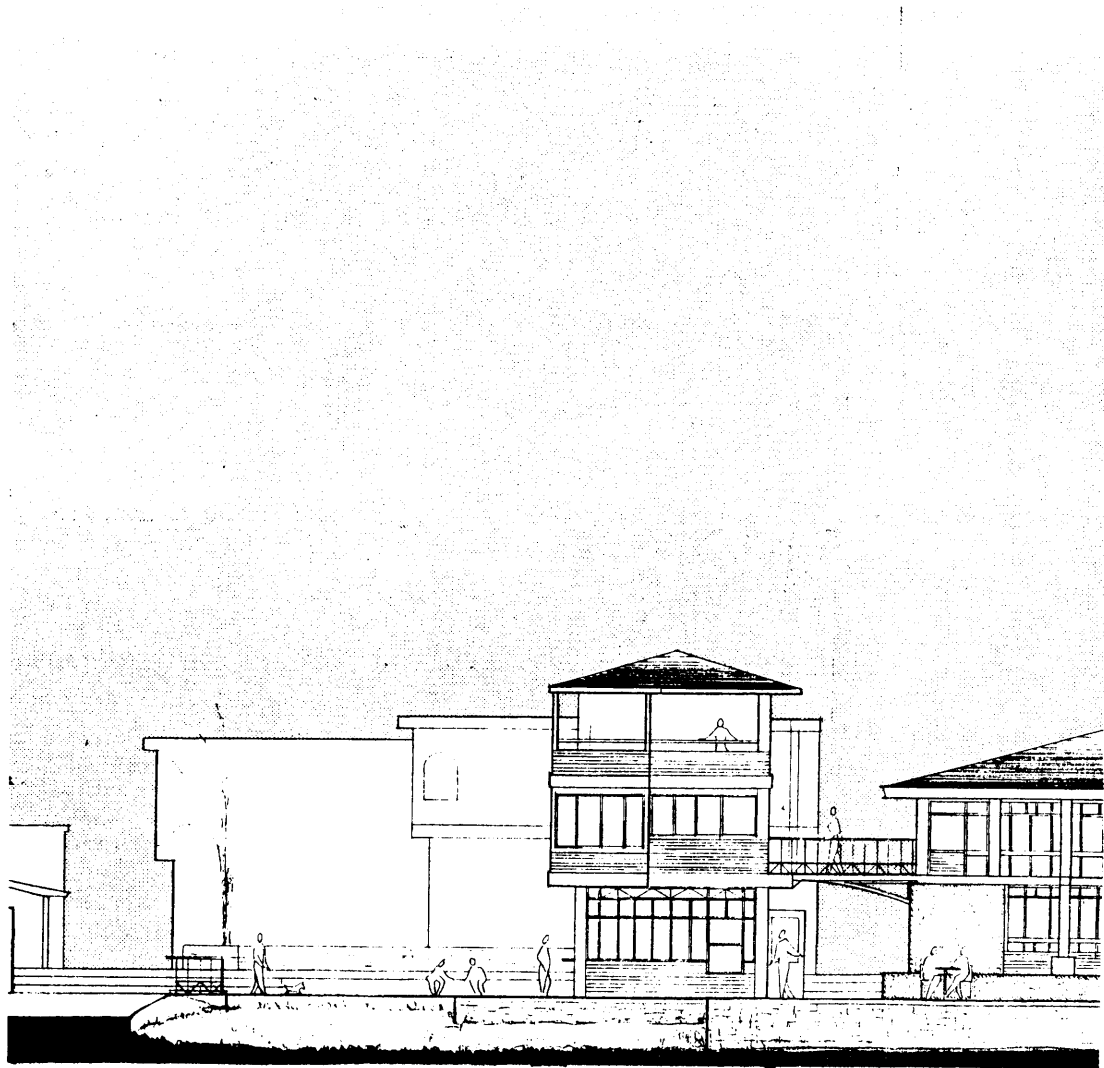


Left: the site model (used for the photographs above, but not the final design scheme). The top of the edge of housing on the right (bordering St. Alphonsus Street) was developed further in section and plan below.

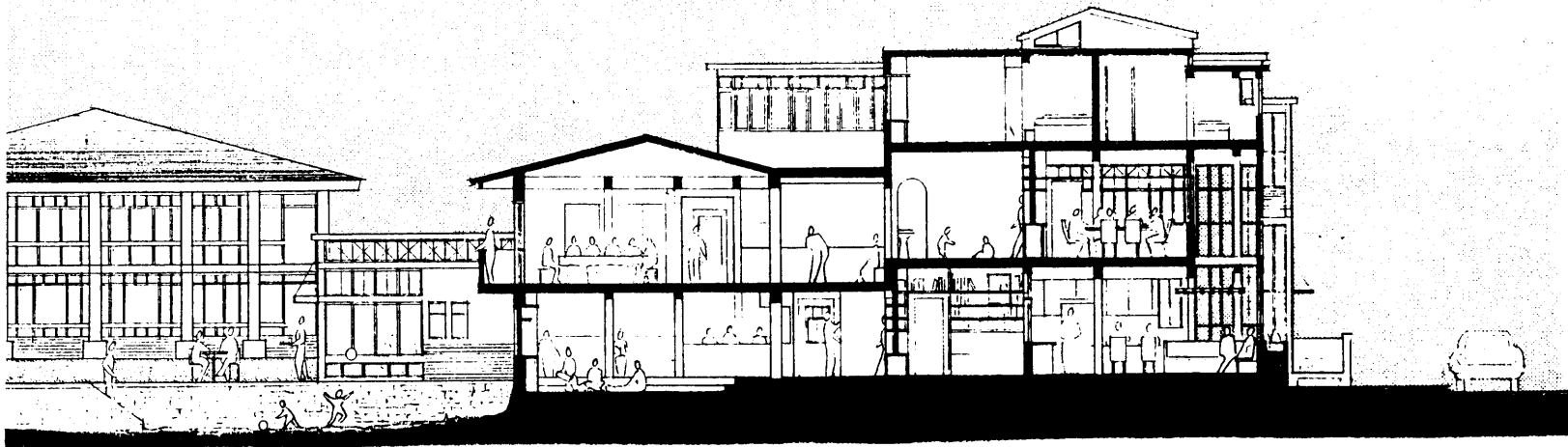
Right: the site plan.

1. Daycare
2. Retail
3. Housing for Retail Owners
4. Community Center and Cafe
5. Parking
6. Housing

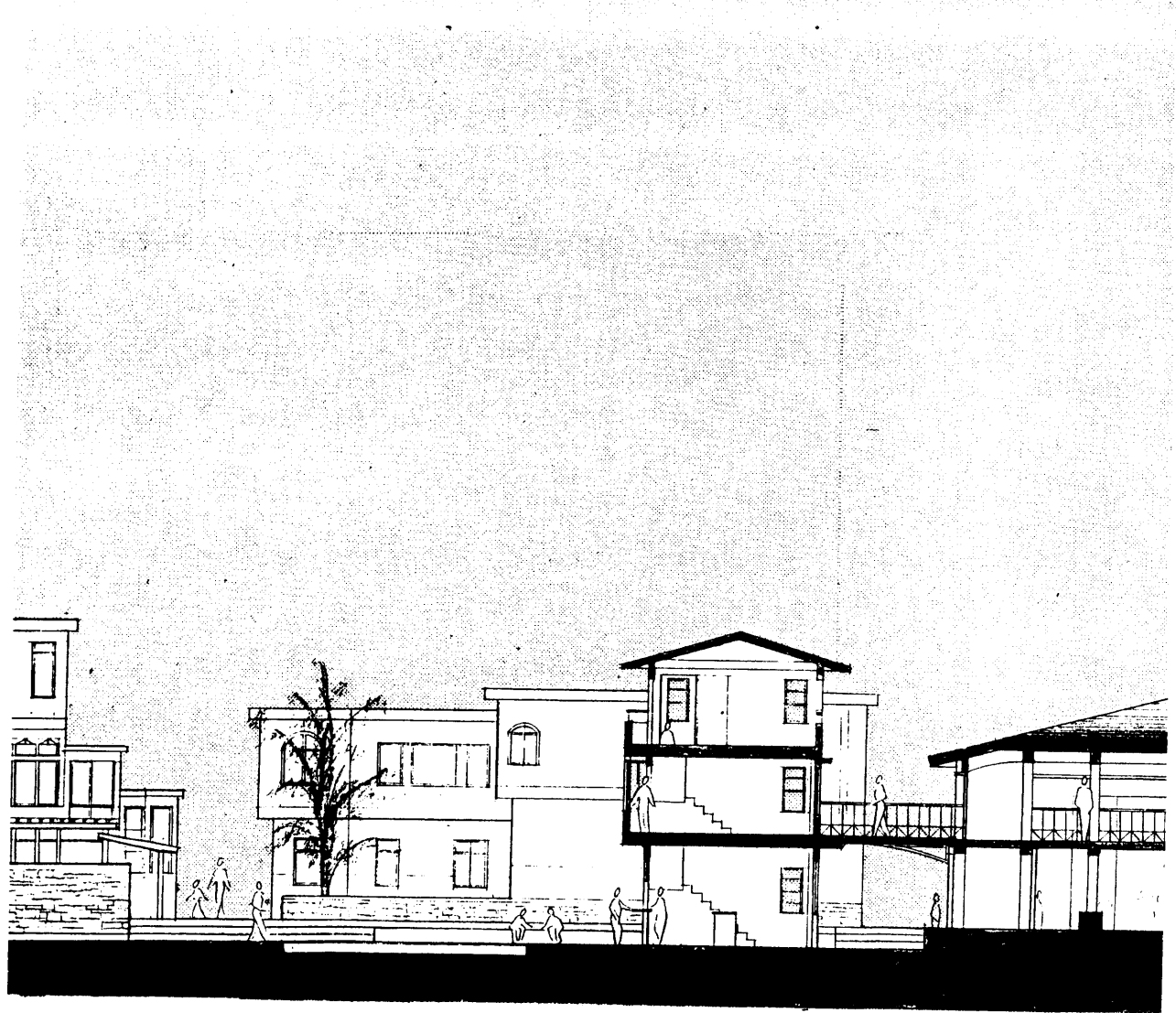




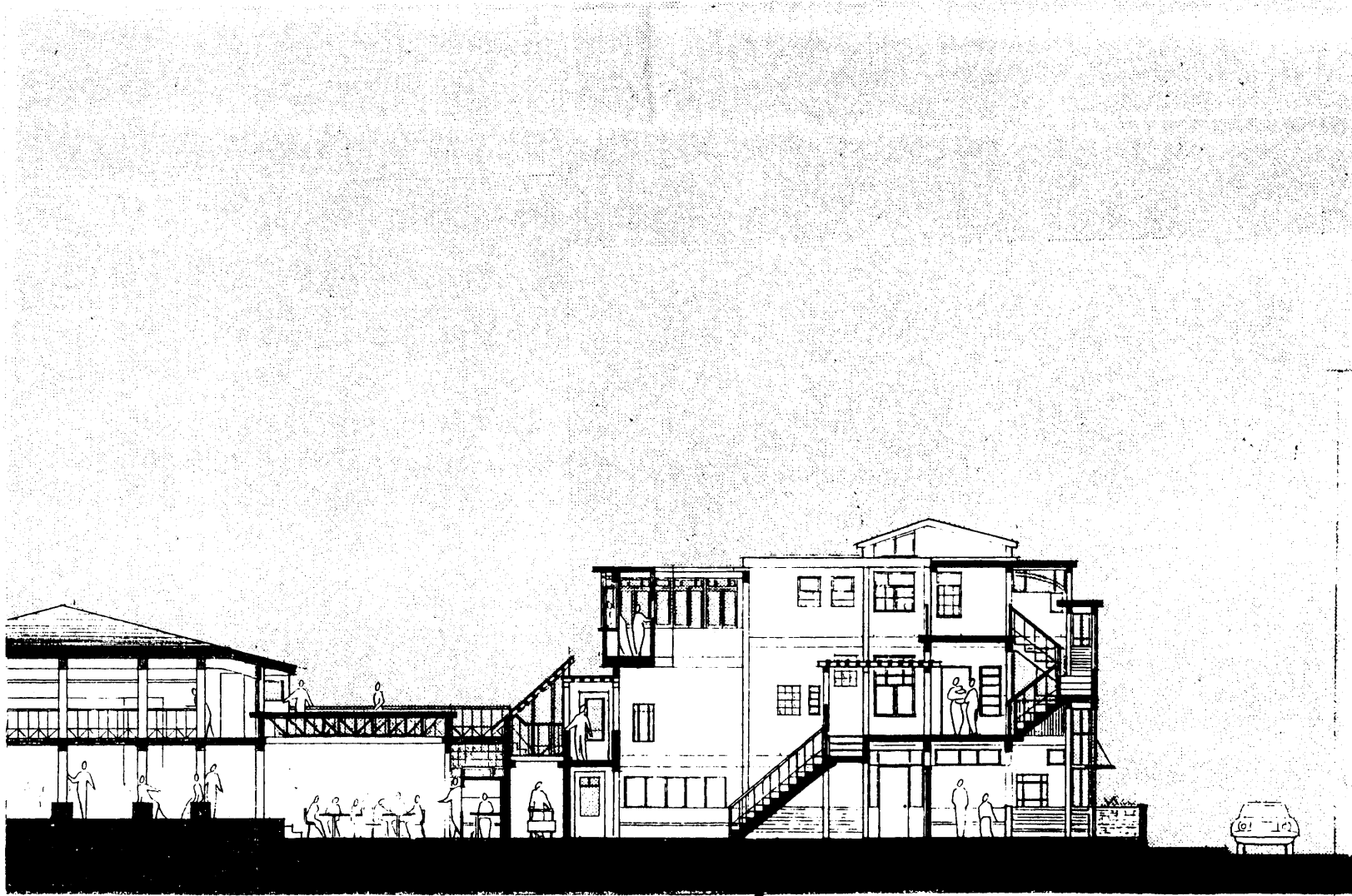
Section AA



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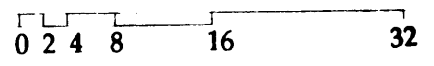
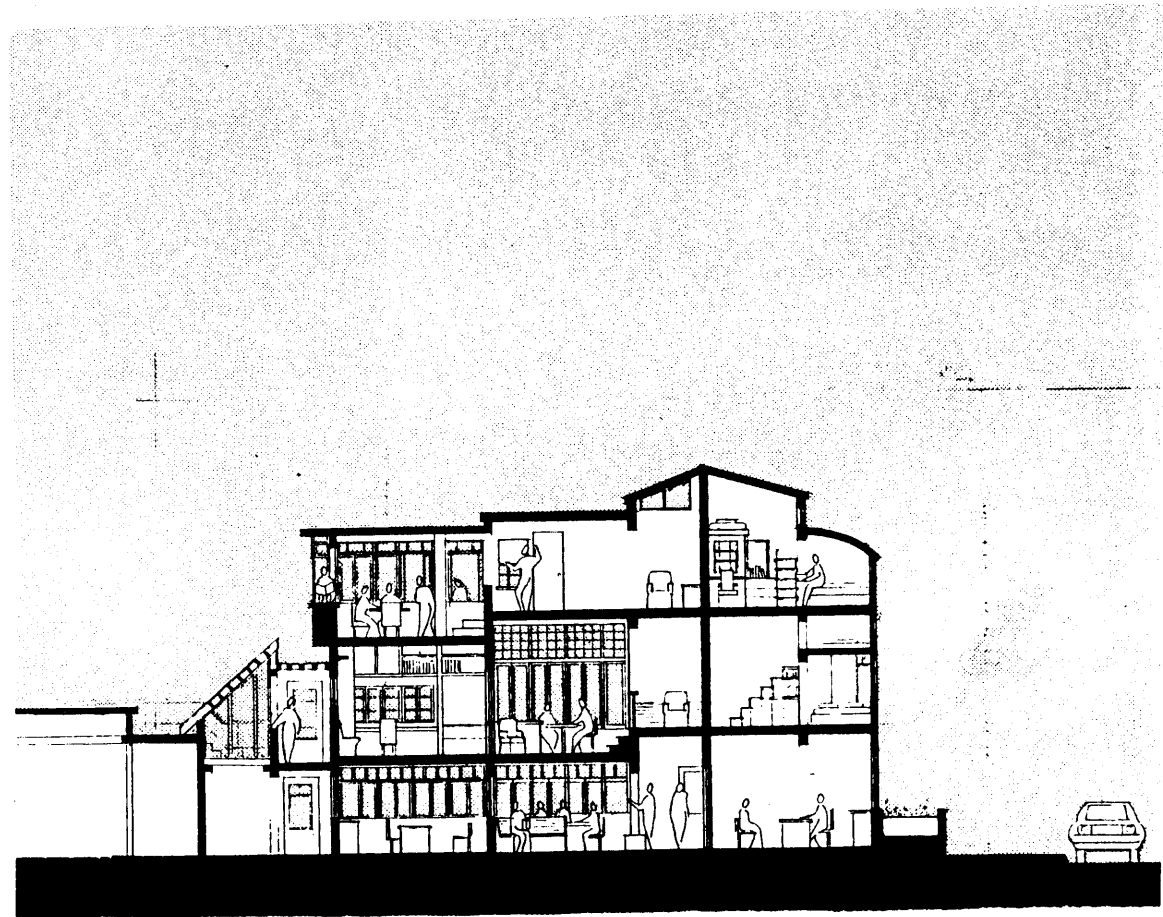


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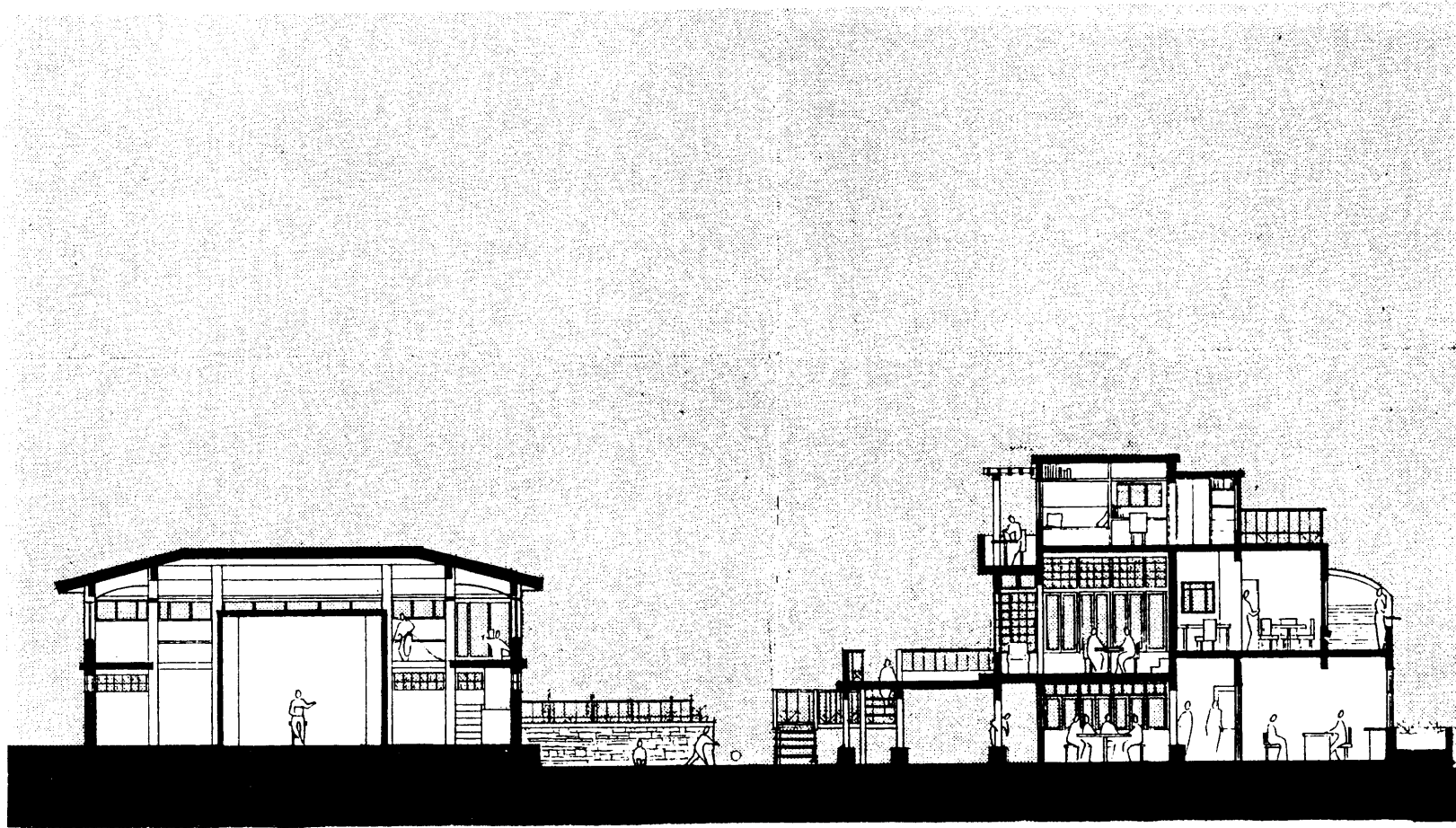


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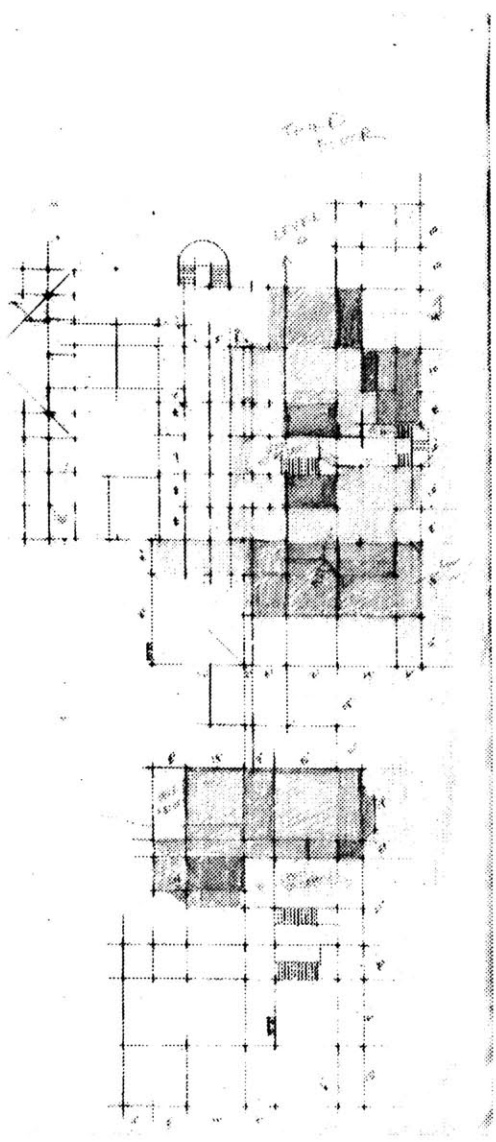
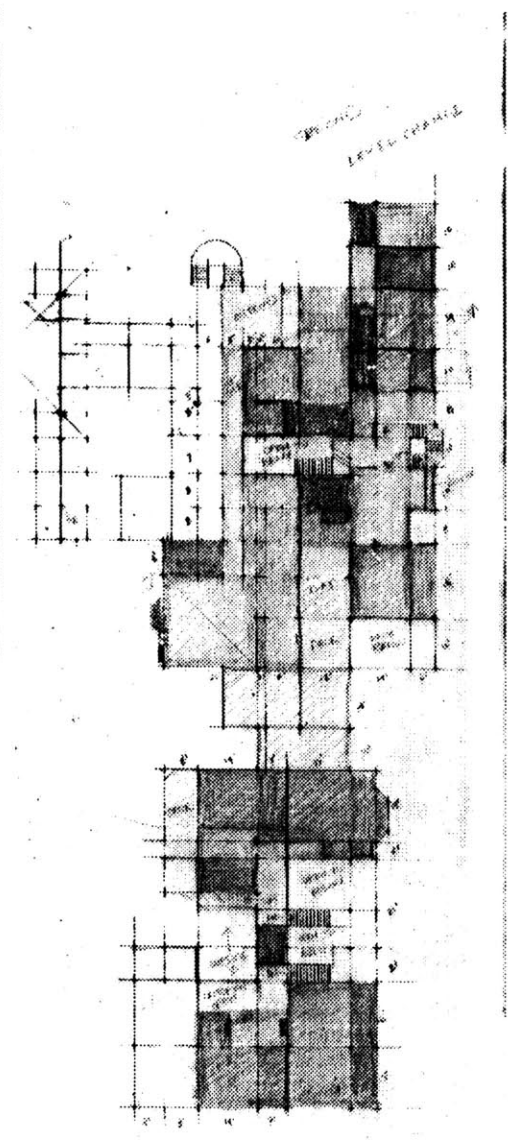
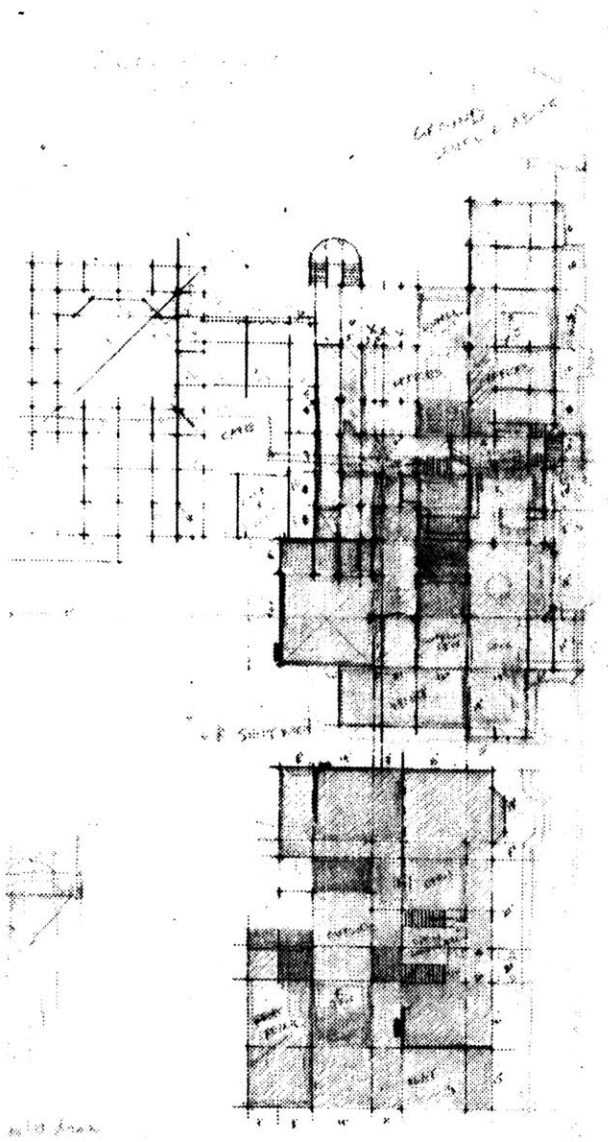
Section CC



Section DD



0 2 4 8 16 32



Development of housing on St. Alphonsus Street: Prospect and Refuge diagramming of bays. Darker shading denotes a sense of more refuge. The bay sizes shown here were not the final version.

After thinking through the whole site, I thought that the housing strip on St. Alphonsus Street would prove the most interesting to design because of its adjacencies: a community center in 'back' and a busy street in front, a courtyard one side and a valley on the other. Furthermore, the prospect of this complex could extend across the site, as shown in the sections above, via a second-floor promenade ending in the tower beyond the community center.

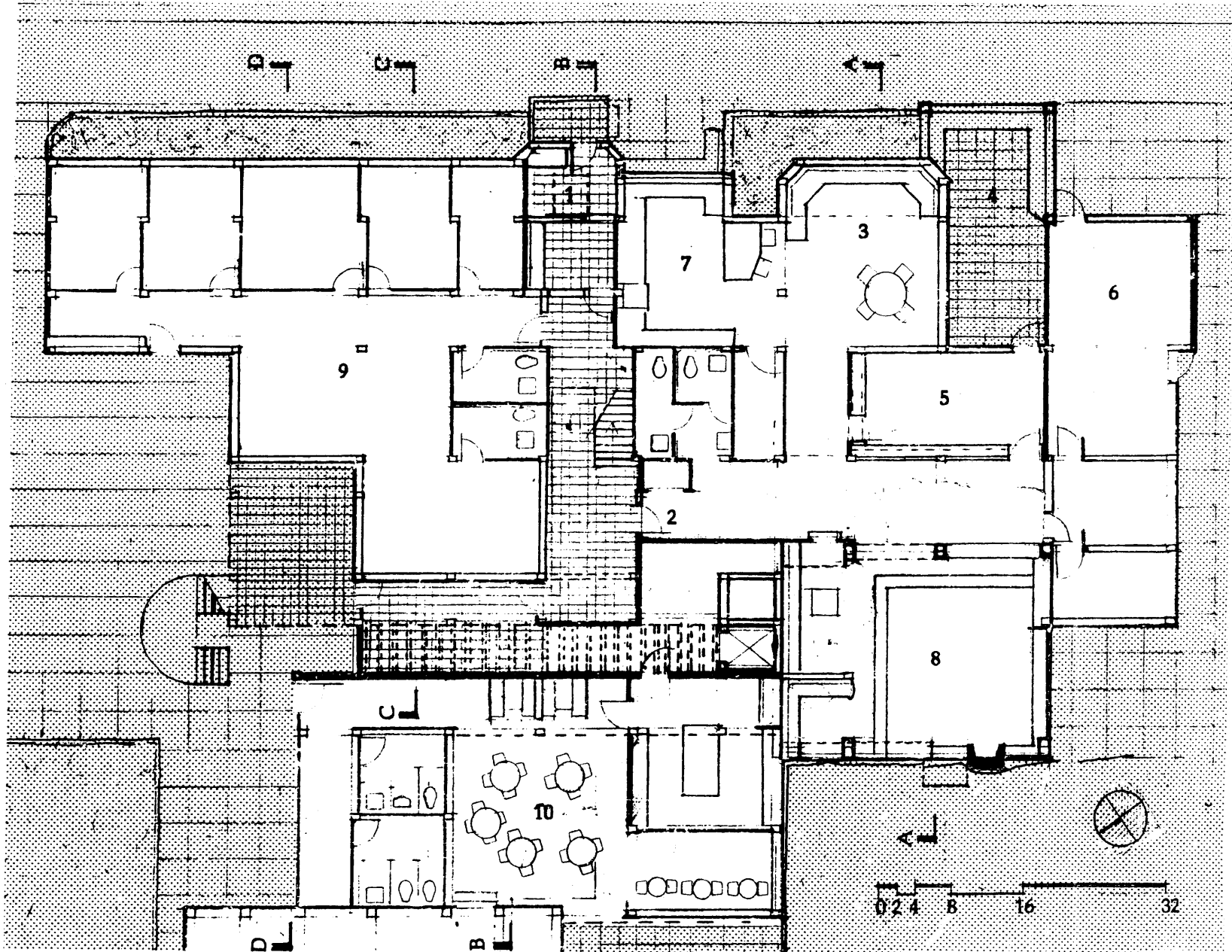
Building Moves

Until this point of designing, I had used the notion of 'thick walls' rather diagrammatically. Now, thick walls became not only walls thickened with shelving and cabinets but also bay sizes which defined more intimate zones such as seating and bed alcoves. A bay size which defined access on one floor could become a refuge zone on the next floor.

The room dimensions of my initial plans for this housing segment appeared a little random because I did not design the structure first. The only dimension I took from without was that of surrounding rowhouses, but even this general measurement quickly lost priority as I arranged the

social spaces. For corroboration I looked to Christopher Alexander, who proclaimed that structure should follow social spaces, especially as we tend to understand the boundaries of a room by its corners.

But in the end, the structure had to become more regularized, just as the design itself needed norms. I chose east-to-west spanning of the bays so as to accommodate front-to-back level changes more logically.



Left: The Ground Floor Plan of the housing adjacent to the north courtyard

Key

1. Entry to Building
2. Entry to Shelter
3. Living room in front.
4. Outdoor terrace
5. Library
6. Studio
7. Kitchen
8. Living room in back
9. Offices
10. Cafe.

1. **Entry to the Building.** A waist-high alcove allows for seating off the sidewalk. A right-angle turn (with step up) brings you into a small glassed-in, floor area made dramatic by the vertical spaciousness accommodating the U-shaped second-to-third-floor stair overhead. Occupants on the floors above can peek at you through the stair opening. In turn, you enjoy prospect through the obtuse-angled glass faces of the entry.

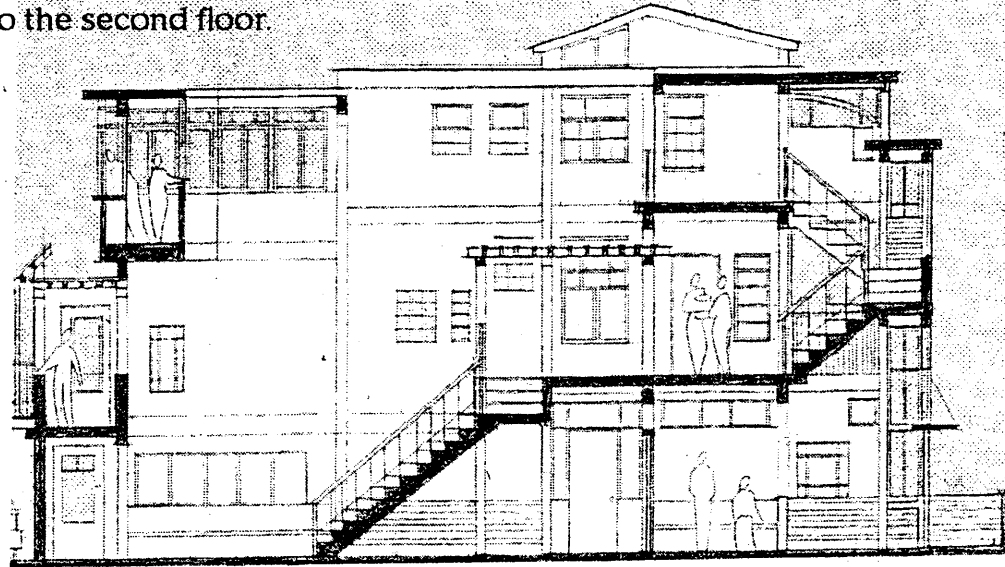
While waiting to be buzzed in, you can rest your bags on the table directly to the right or sit on the bench beyond the low wall. This adjacent area feels more refuge-like because of the comparatively lower ceiling formed by the landing above and because of the low wall further separating you from the street.

You're buzzed in: Beyond the door, the entry to the offices is directly to the left. You continue under the low ceiling toward the atrium space. You see the back contour of the stair to the second floor.

Up and across are points of overlook from the two floors above, and the sky beyond.

The entry to the shelter comes up on the left. You can peer through the glazing of the door.

If you happen to be curious, you can keep going toward the back and discover the door to the right. This door opens under a one-story-high ceiling and reveals bright daylight beyond on the left. Another door straight ahead leads to a covered deck, which in turn borders an open courtyard.

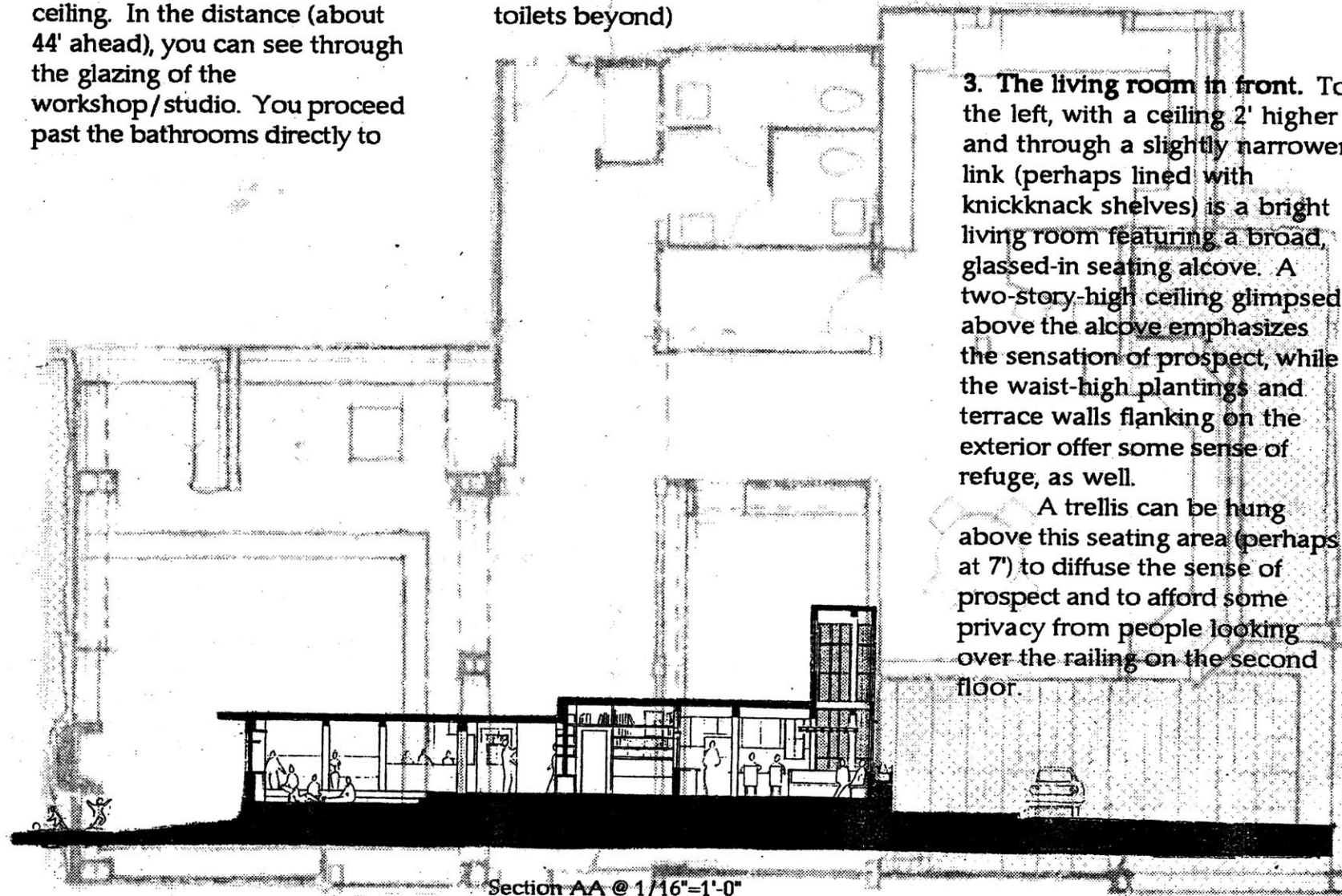


2. Entry to Shelter If you made the left turn into the shelter, you come under a low (8') ceiling. In the distance (about 44' ahead), you can see through the glazing of the workshop/studio. You proceed past the bathrooms directly to

the left (the entry to which has no door so that you can see the sink and then doors to the toilets beyond)

3. The living room in front. To the left, with a ceiling 2' higher and through a slightly narrower link (perhaps lined with knickknack shelves) is a bright living room featuring a broad, glassed-in seating alcove. A two-story-high ceiling glimpsed above the alcove emphasizes the sensation of prospect, while the waist-high plantings and terrace walls flanking on the exterior offer some sense of refuge, as well.

A trellis can be hung above this seating area (perhaps at 7') to diffuse the sense of prospect and to afford some privacy from people looking over the railing on the second floor.



Section AA @ 1/16"=1'-0"

4. The outdoor terrace. The terrace walls diagonally outside are thick (1') but seem even thicker because of the built-in masonry seating lining the perimeter. A delicate iron fence on top of the concrete wall helps to protect the patio while still offering prospect. Eight-foot-high columns punctuate the corners.

Toward the body of the building, the solid wall of the workshop/studio offers protective enclosure to the back of the deck.

5. Library retreat. You enter this patio from the library that is pulled in toward the middle of the building. The transparent front wall spans both the bright living room and the outdoor patio. But the three other walls—thick with shelves to the left and back and solid on the right—forms a protective U. The prospect of the outstretching patio emphasizes the contrast of refuge.

6. The studio forms an outside 'wall' for the shelter complex. This building has a more public front, being directly accessible from the street, but is still pulled back twelve feet from the sidewalk. A covered way into the 'valley' passes on the left of the workshop

7. The kitchen overlooks the entry space to the left (through an interior window with deep reveals) and the street in front and diagonally to the right. Through the planes of glazing and across the waist-high planting to the right, you can see the seating alcove in the next room over. A built-in dining table helps to define the transition between these two major spaces. The bay size of this transition is narrower. Pantry storage, also, lies in this bay zone—toward the middle of the building and adjacent to the bathrooms core..

8. The living room in the back, marked with pylons at the corners of the still more interior square features a fireplace and sunken floor with steps to sit on. Alcoves with waist-high

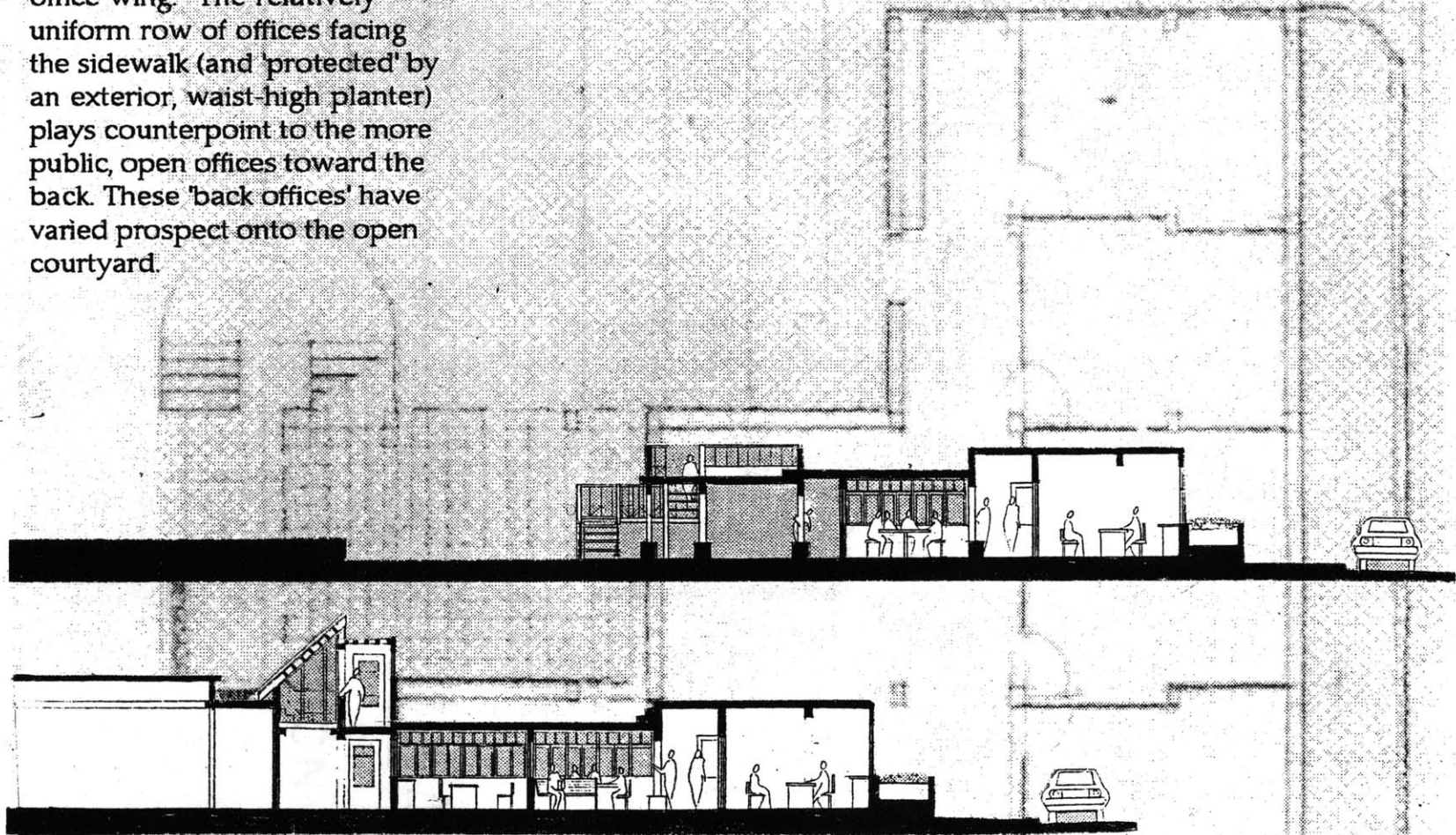
walls overlook the sunken area—the square. From these raised seats, controlled prospect comes from the view out to the valley at the site's interior through a single large window with deep reveals and also from the view toward the glazed front of the building through an unglazed interior window.

Shelves and cabinets thicken the two walls forming the southwest corner.



Wall niche, designed by Max Jacobson.
Photograph by Max Jacobson.....

9. Offices. A 'spine' of narrow bays acts as access through the office wing. The relatively uniform row of offices facing the sidewalk (and 'protected' by an exterior, waist-high planter) plays counterpoint to the more public, open offices toward the back. These 'back offices' have varied prospect onto the open courtyard.

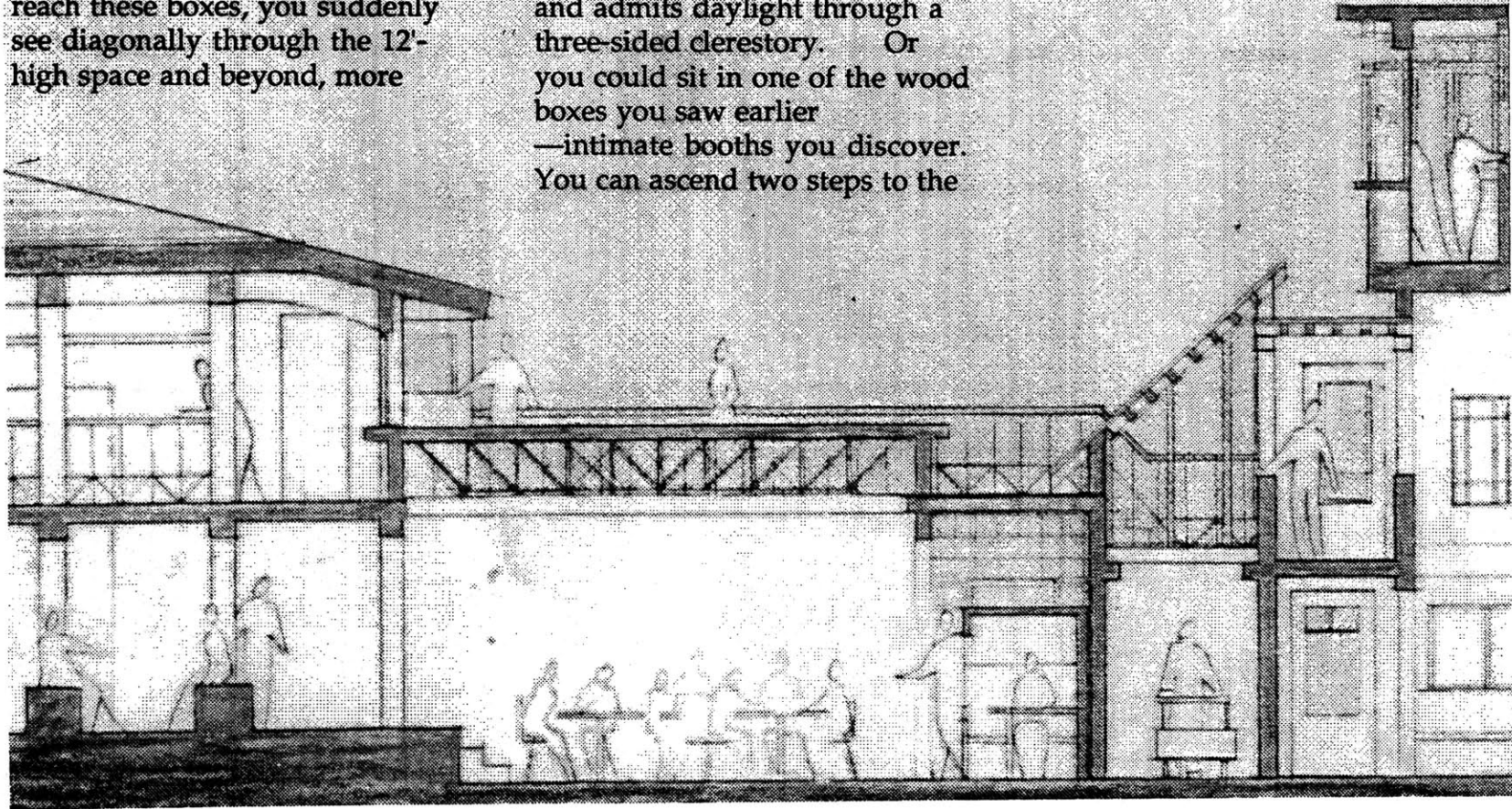


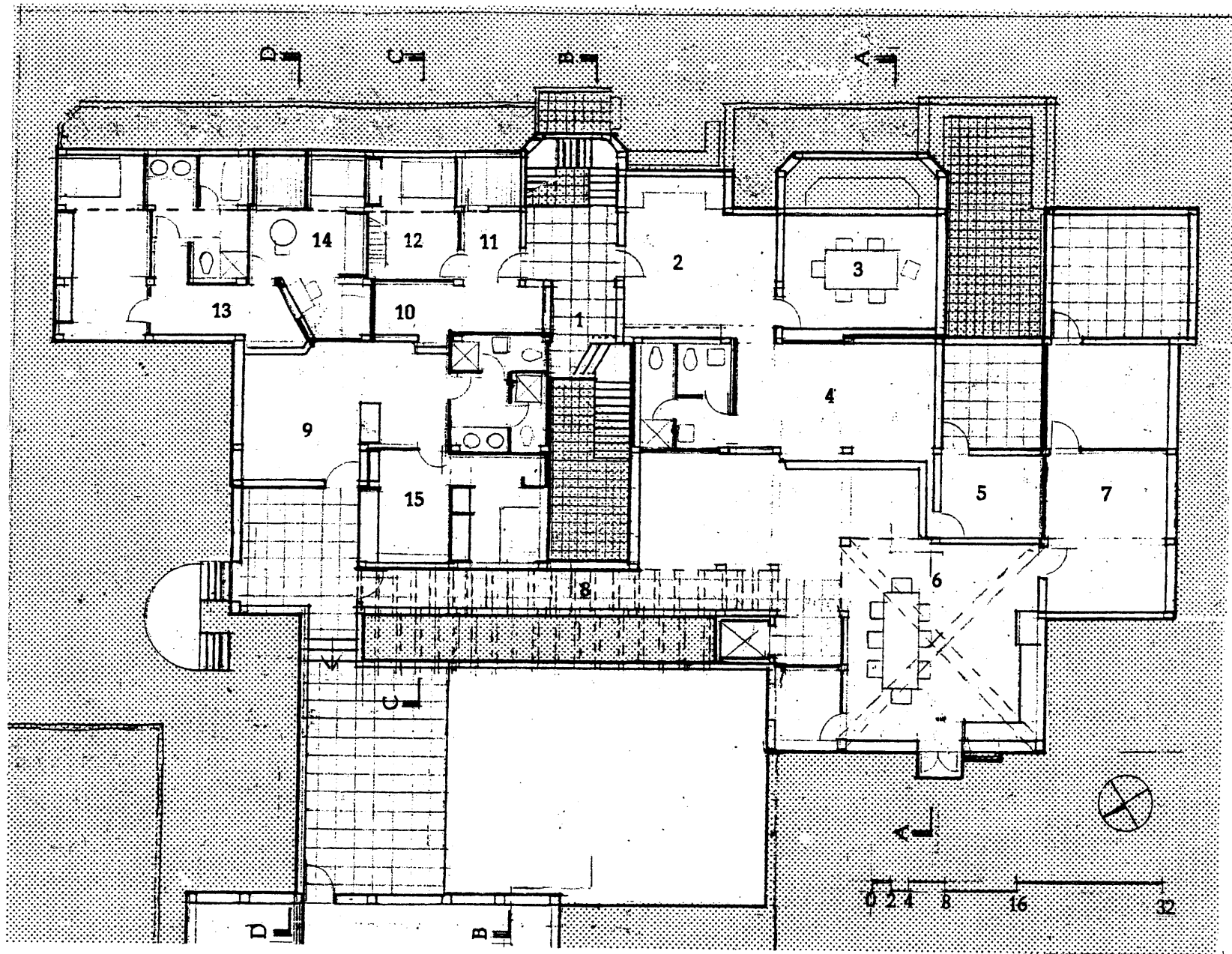
Sections DD and CC (top to bottom)
@ 1/16"=1'-0"

10. Cafe. You enter through the glazed door (heightened by the glass block topping the lintel) into a narrow passage with a 10' ceiling. Light from a higher-ceilinged space draws you forward, though you can't see the cafe proper yet because of the 7'-high wooden boxes directly ahead. Then, when you reach these boxes, you suddenly see diagonally through the 12'-high space and beyond, more

cafe tables outside and then the spread of the valley below, the internal street bordering beyond, the floating glass roofs of the Tremont Street entry. You can sit at one of the tables outside and watch the children playing in the grass. You can sit under the 12' ceiling, which rests upon Howe trusses and admits daylight through a three-sided clerestory. Or you could sit in one of the wood boxes you saw earlier —intimate booths you discover. You can ascend two steps to the

raised walking platform forming a U on the west, south and east sides of the square assembly building and from there observe the proceedings of a community meeting that involves people "from the outside" as well as inside (community prospect...).





Left: **The Second Floor Plan** of the housing adjacent to the north courtyard

Key

1. Street-side Entry Platform
2. Street-side Entry Parlor—public
3. Conference Room
4. Play Area
5. Dining Platform
6. Kitchen Pavilion
7. Workshop/Studio
8. Access from Courtyard
9. Courtyard Entry Parlor
10. Intermediate Refuge
11. Street-side Entry Parlor—private
12. Bedroom with mezzanine
13. Entry Platform for Two Bedrooms
14. Bedroom with private deck
15. Nested Bedroom



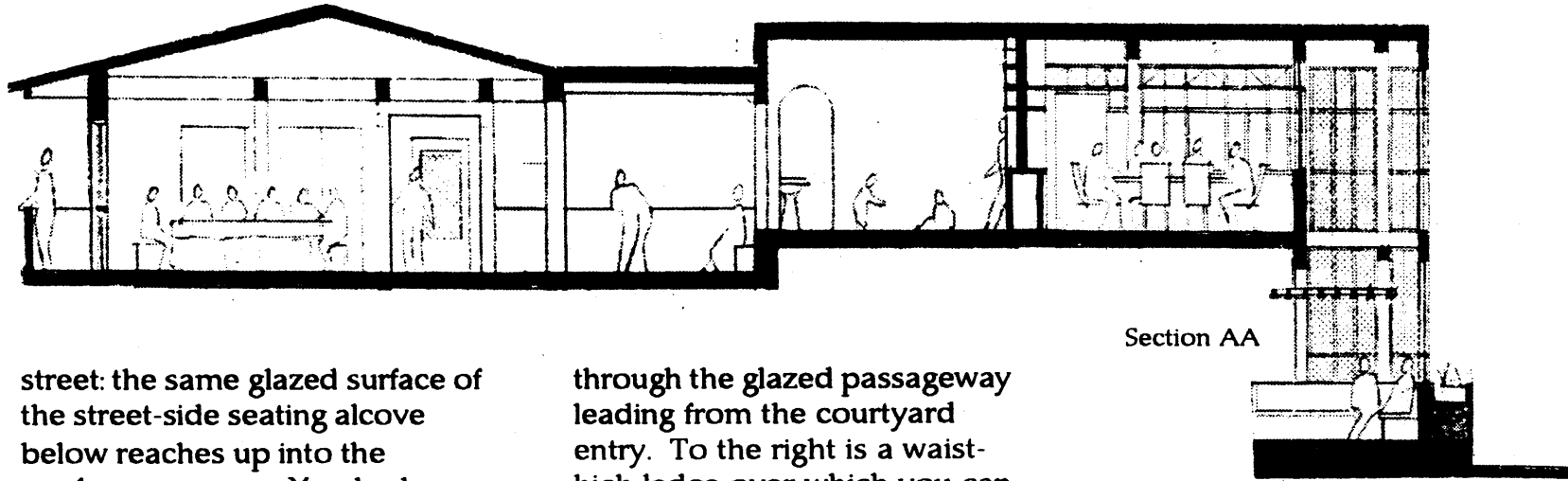
Stair by Christopher Alexander.
Photograph by Christopher Alexander.

1. Street-side Entry Platform. You ascend the stairs to the platform linking the two wings of the second floor. A landing marks the not-quite-90-degree turn preceding the last two steps to the platform. A trellis diffuses the verticality of the atrium space directly overhead. And from this intermediate landing you can see between the walls into the entry parlor of the more public wing. 'Round the bend is bright light from the street. Vertically spanning this

tripartite glazed face is the stair leading to the third floor. A railing defines the edge of the platform. You sense that the door to the right is more public than the door set back on the left. Just overhead this space between the two entries is an opaque ceiling that lends a room-like quality to the entry zone.

2. Street-side Entry Parlor—public. Just inside the right-hand door is an open space featuring a seating alcove that appears to project outside because of its triple exposure: the stairwell can be seen through glazing on the left, the street lies straight ahead, and the next room over can be seen through an outdoor lightwell on the right.

3. Conference Room. The room directly ahead of the entry door has glazed walls on two sides. An opaque wall thickened with shelving and a waist-high cabinet forms a back to the room. This back is to the play area and dining pavilion beyond. The front addresses the



street: the same glazed surface of the street-side seating alcove below reaches up into the conference room. You look down over the railing upon the alcove's floating trellis and then farther down onto the sidewalk. The prospect is stepped. To the right, you can look down onto the deep outdoor patio.

4. Play Area. Back to back with the conference room is an 18x20 play area with steps descending to an even broader area that adjoins the kitchen pavilion diagonally in back. People sit on these steps with their snacks and enjoy daylight filtered

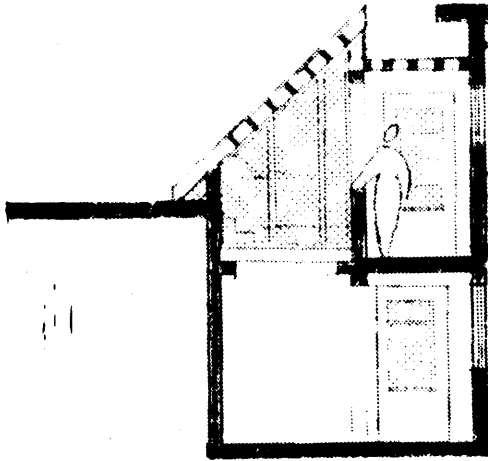
through the glazed passageway leading from the courtyard entry. To the right is a waist-high ledge over which you can see the atrium space of the street entry.

5. Dining Platform To the left (as you face the kitchen pavilion) is a raised and covered dining/conference/play platform which in turn leads to an outdoor deck overlooking the street and patio below. The opaque wall of the workshop, again, protects this outdoor deck on one side.

6. Kitchen Pavilion This large 'farmhouse kitchen' has a pitched roof echoing that of the

community center across the way. The fireplace refuge is 'juxtaposed' below. Where there were alcoves in the living room, there is now a naturally lit pantry and also an elevator entry (for those heavy groceries). You can step out from under the roof onto a platform and take in the valley. The chimney tower rises up within touching distance of this deck.

7. Workshop/Studio You can enter the studio workshop from along the back wall of the kitchen pavilion.



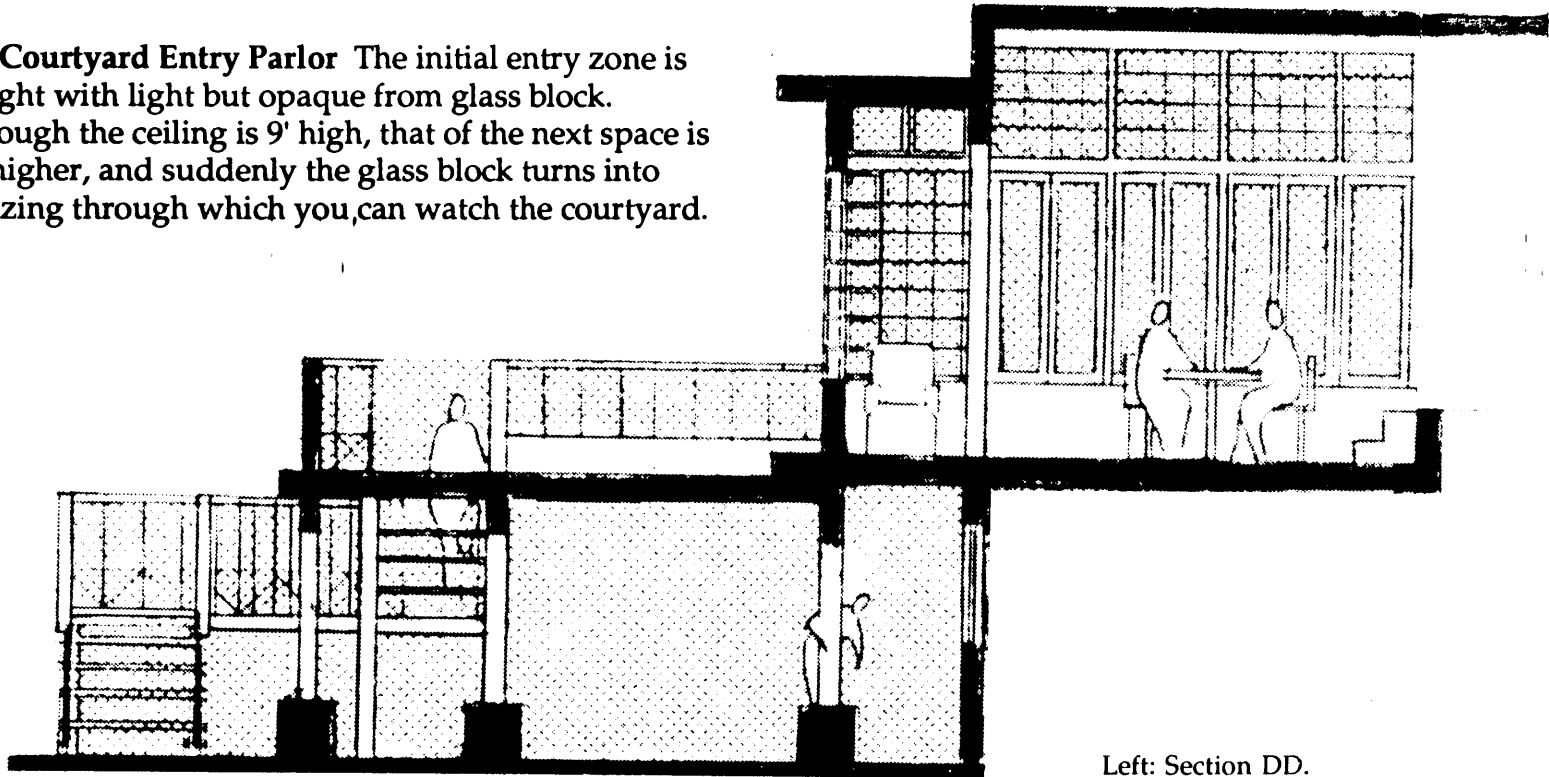
8. Access from Courtyard The glazed passage from the courtyard seems to point to the kitchen pavilion, and, indeed, you can look past the structural columns of the kitchen's 'square' down the bright path to the courtyard entry door.

If you proceed down this passage, you can overlook the service corridor below to the left and see the delivery man on his

way. In the middle of the promenade, you can take in the atrium space of the street entry, look across to the other 'link' between the two wings.

At the end of this path and through the door, you are now outdoors on a deck. From this deck you can continue down to the courtyard; you can turn right and knock on the door; or you can make a left up onto the platform of the community center (on top of the cafe). This last path continues through the second-floor arcade of the assembly area, over an outdoor bridge, and into a tower which terminates in a third-floor outdoor overlook. This prospective journey must be discovered, though, because the promenade displaces left and right, inside and outside, across the site. [See Section BB @ 1/16" scale above.]

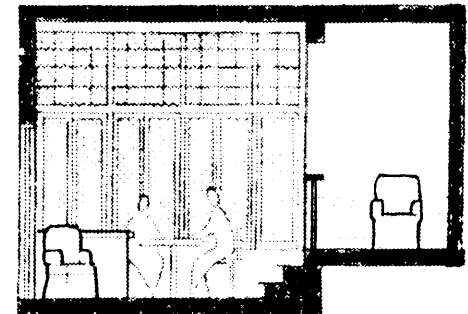
9. Courtyard Entry Parlor The initial entry zone is bright with light but opaque from glass block. Though the ceiling is 9' high, that of the next space is 2' higher, and suddenly the glass block turns into glazing through which you can watch the courtyard.



Left: Section DD.
Below: Section CC

10. Intermediate Refuge Diagonally to the right, you can see two steps leading up to the entry zone of the street-side entry. Ascending to this space you find a darker, intermediate space on higher ground—6' wide, with a back carved out

from the adjoining rooms and looking straight across through glazing to the atrium space. This darker zone contrasts with the bright zones in front and back. People may come here to watch TV or read by a table lamp as they feel the collective activity around them.



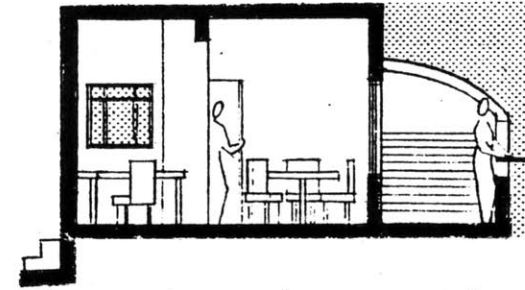
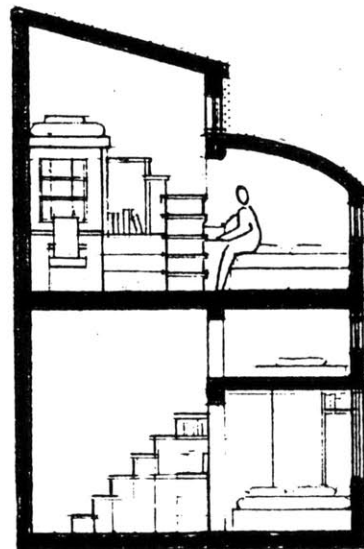
11. Street-side Entry Parlor—private Continuing to the door, you see through glazing to the left a small, covered outdoor deck and right next to it the stairs rising to the third floor. Most likely, this deck and entry area is privatized by the adjoining bedroom.

Below left: bed closet designed by East Wind, Nevada City, California. Photograph by Jeffrey Westman/Metro Image Group.
Below right: Section CC @ 1/8" = 1'-0"



12. Bedroom with mezzanine Inside this adjoining bedroom, the ceiling is high enough that there can be a second bed over the low-ceilinged space of the first. Both beds face east. A window looking into the covered deck gives the room a second exposure to daylight.

13. Entry Platform for Two Bedrooms A raised 6'-wide platform defines entry to two other bedrooms. From here, prospect is to both the entry parlor and to the courtyard.



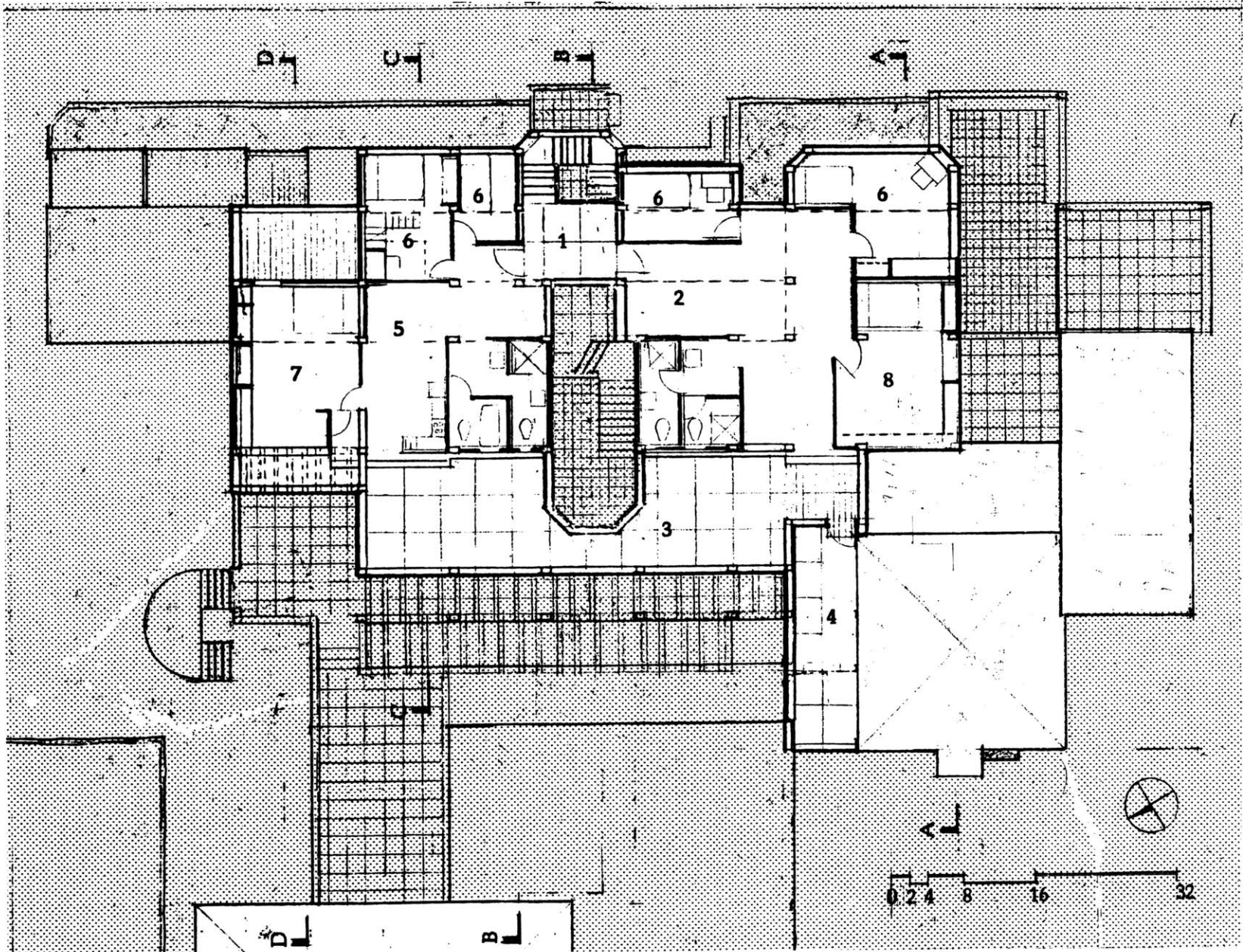
Above top: Bedroom with private deck (14 below).

Above bottom: view of St. Alphonsus Street similar to that from balcony of Bedroom (14)

14. Bedroom with private deck. In fact, a window in one of the bedrooms looks through this generously glazed space into the courtyard, while also admitting western light to the 'back' of this two-bed room. A private deck to the east furthers prospect for the whole room. The roof over the street side bed

is low and curved to form a distinct space within a space.

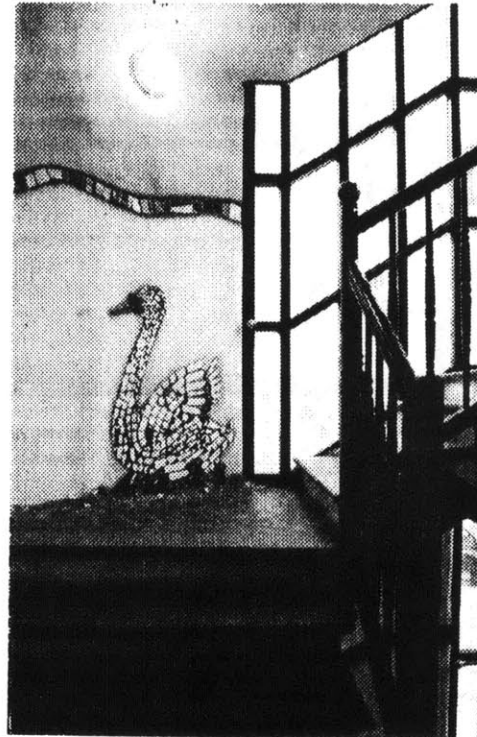
15. Nested Bedroom This bedroom stands apart from the others. A second, more private room in back lends a feeling of privacies more nested than in the rooms with only alcoves for the beds. The collective space just outside the door can be more or less privatized by those in this room.



Left: **The Third Floor Plan** of the housing adjacent to the north courtyard

Key

1. Street-side Entry Platform
2. Major collective space for three bedrooms
3. Covered, indoor balcony
4. Outdoor deck
5. Major collective space for three bedrooms
6. Street-side Bedroom
7. Bedroom with two balconies
8. Bedroom with raised platform



Above: Stair in Hundertwasser House.
Photograph by Kristina Hametner.

1. Street-side Entry Platform

The roof overhead is opaque, so that the prospect becomes horizontal—front and back—though you can still see through the stair opening clear to the ground entry.

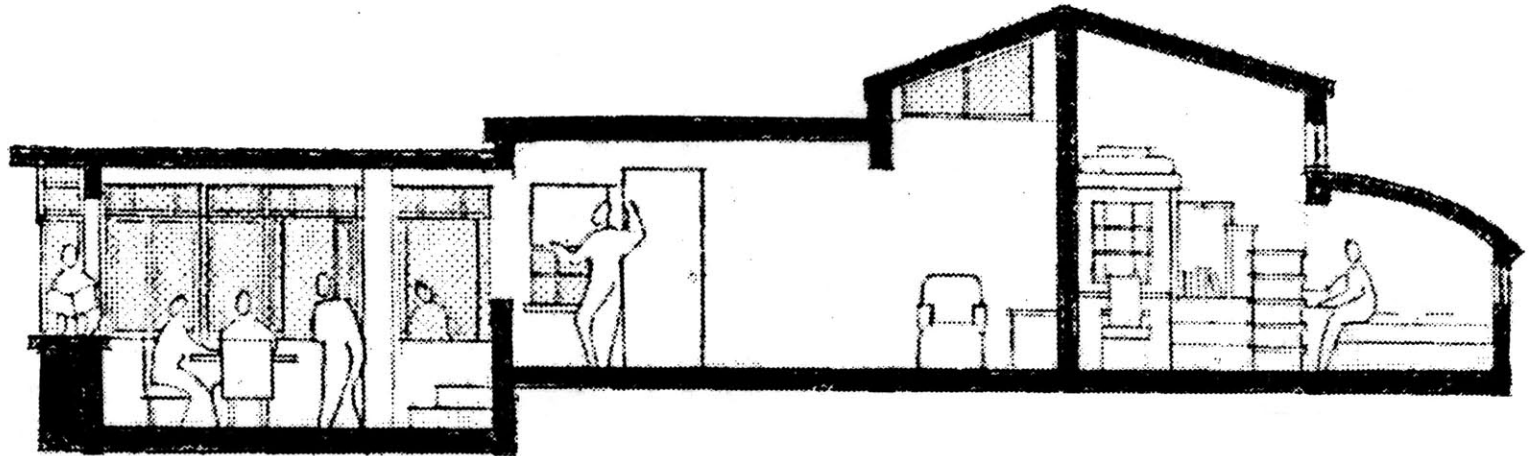
2. Collective space for three bedrooms

Just inside to the right of the entry, you can see through the displaced walls to the atrium space. The roof over the major space is pitched and then becomes flat beyond the two columns supporting the pitched roof.

The flat-ceilinged zone defines entry for the two adjacent bedrooms, as well as access to the back balcony. Just before the balcony and next to the bathrooms is space for a kitchenette.

3. Covered, indoor balcony

This bright zone is shared by bedrooms on both sides of the 'link,' though an opening around the atrium bisects the floor area. The steps leading down to the balcony are broad enough to serve as seating. The perimeter wall can be widened into a seating ledge (not shown



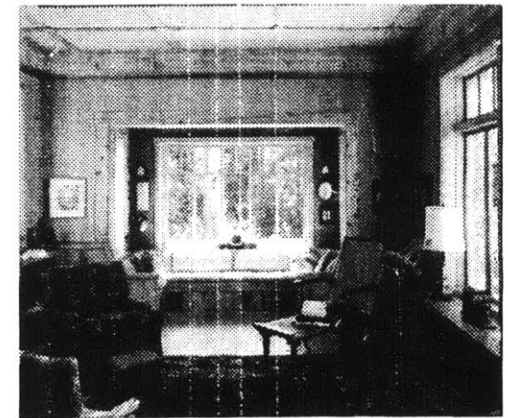
Section CC

here in plan but in section) so that the balcony feels more like a terrace than a deck. The exposed corner overlooks the courtyard, while the long edge overlooks both the second-floor and first-floor passageways, as well as the interior of the whole site..

4. Outdoor deck. The direction of access in the southern cluster of the 'link' (see #2) leads past the short dimension of the balcony to an outdoor deck. This deck, in turn, stretches right to the edge of the building alongside the kitchen

pavilion—the roof of which you can sunbathe upon. From the end of this deck, you can observe the people sitting at tables outside the cafe or watch the children playing in the valley.

5. Collective space for three bedrooms Most of the pitched roof can be felt in the middle of the building. (Some of the roof comes down in the two street-side bedrooms.) Under the rising pitch, light comes through high windows in the non-bearing walls, so that this interior zone enjoys its own

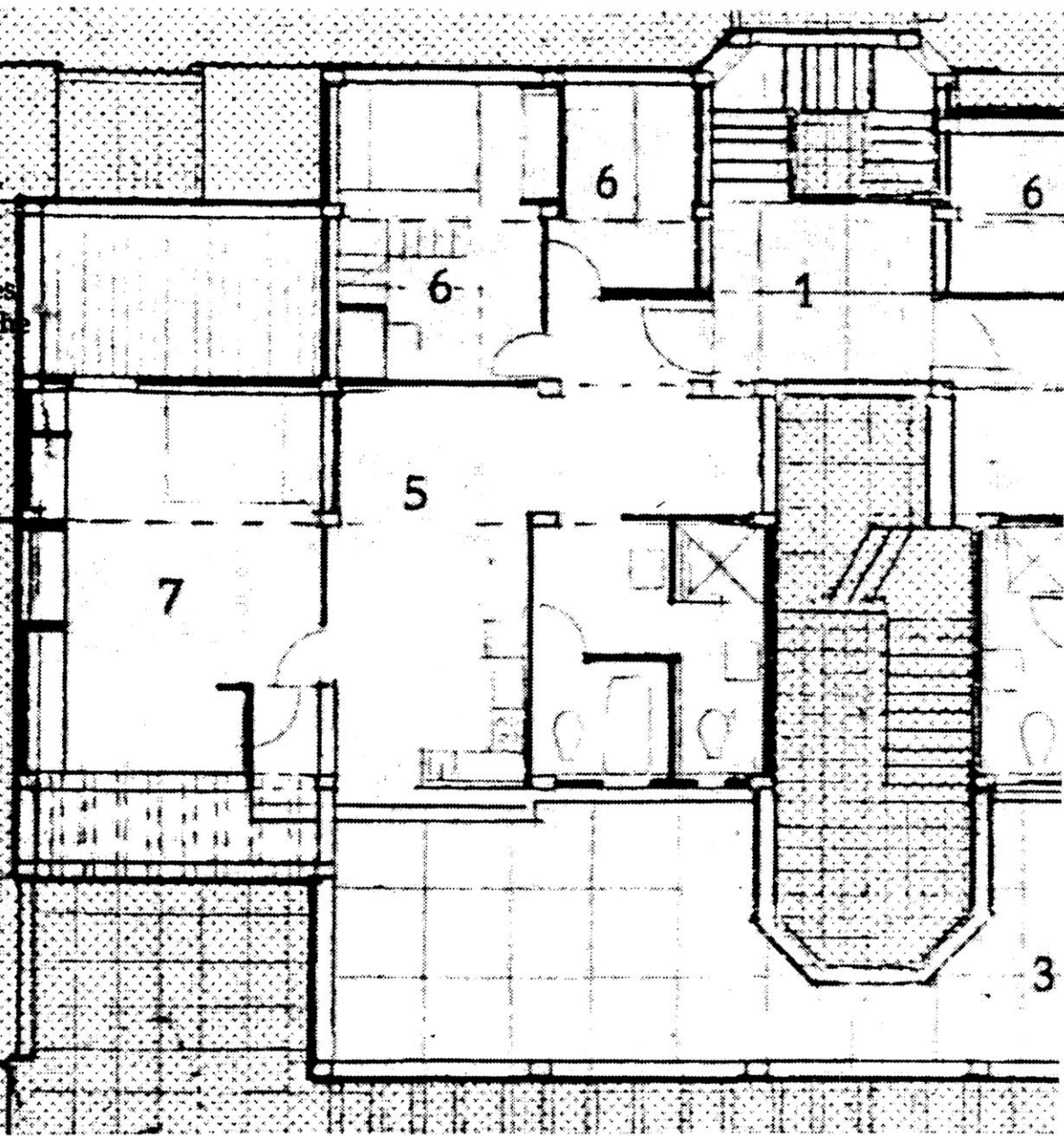


Alcove by Christopher Alexander.
Photograph by Christopher Alexander.

light from both the atrium
across and the sky above.

The two street-side
bedrooms have a shared entry
zone off the main space and
under the descending pitch.

A kitchenette space lies
under the flat ceiling next to the
indoor balcony.

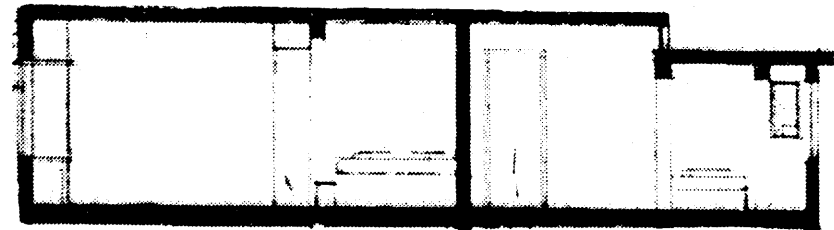
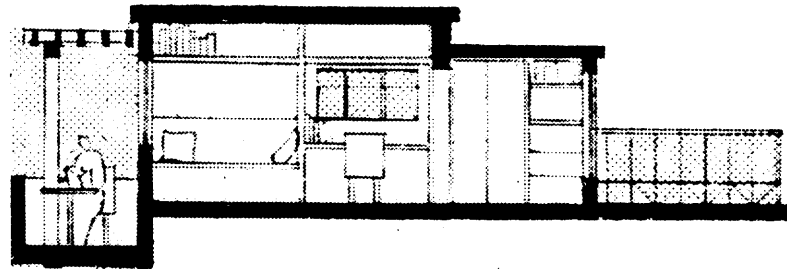


6. Street-side Bedroom. Each of the four street-side bedrooms have a lowered roof over the bed alcove. The roofs over the two on the north are curved. A narrow internal stair leads to a mezzanine in one of these two bedrooms. A clerestory formed by the difference in height admits light into the back of all the street-side rooms.

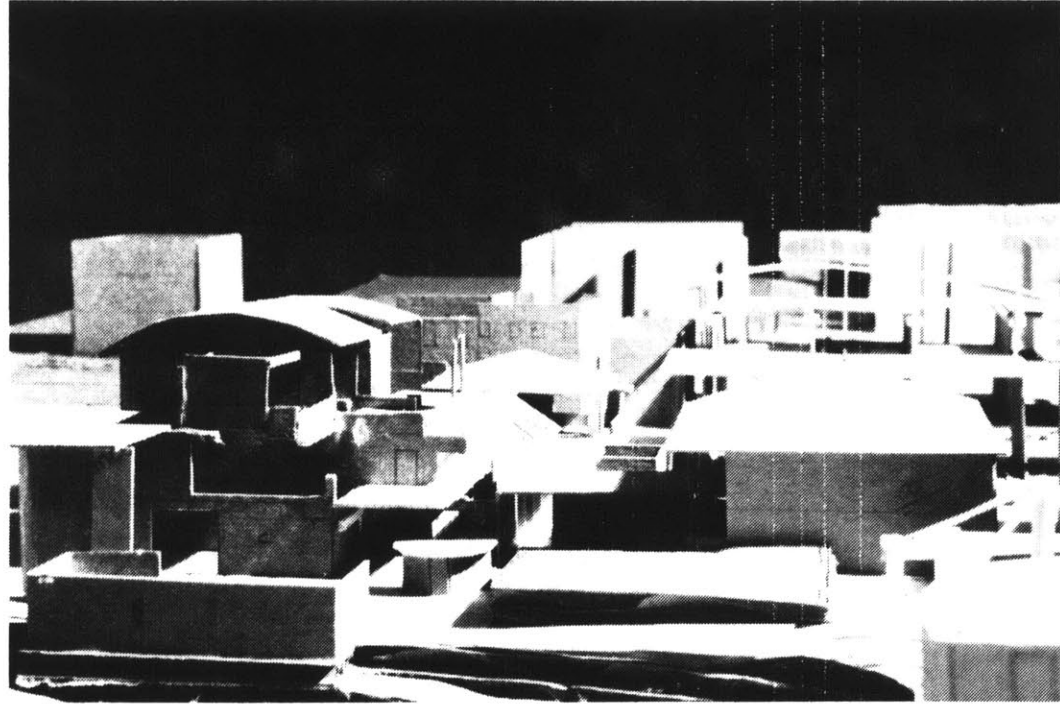
7. Bedroom with two balconies

The bedroom to the north has its own outdoor deck overlooking the courtyard and also a private deck just outside the bed alcove. To reach this second deck you must climb through the low-silled window (1-1/2'). The northeast wall, thickened with shelves and cabinets, is at one point penetrated by a desk alcove with deep reveals.

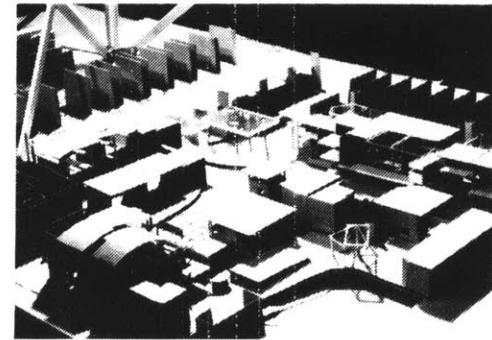
8. Bedroom with raised platform. The bed alcove in this room is defined by the narrower bay dimension and raised floor (for storage underneath). The north wall displaces into the access zone beyond so that a window of prospect can look straight down the outdoor deck.



Top: Section DD @ 1/8" = 1'-0"
Bottom: Section AA @ 1/8" = 1'-0"



Above: view of shelter from north.
Note that the curved roofs are not in the final design. The back of the cafe is in the middle; the community center (with raised garden in the foreground) is to the right. The open courtyard is in the left foreground.
Right: View of site from northeast.



Endnotes

¹Olgivanna Lloyd Wright, The Roots of Life (New York: Horizon Press, 1963), 31.

²Charles Dickens, Bleak House (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1977), 228; quoted in Grant Hildebrand, The Wright Space: Pattern and Meaning in Frank Lloyd Wright's Houses (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991), 31, n.24.

³Hildebrand, The Wright Space, 156.

⁴Jay Appleton, The Experience of Landscape (London: John Wiley and Sons, 1975); cited in Hildebrand, 16, n.9.

⁵Stephen Kaplan, "Aesthetics, Affect, and Cognition: Environmental Preference from an Evolutionary Perspective," Environment and Behavior 19:1 (January, 1987), 3; cited in Hildebrand, 44, n.23.

⁶Frank Lloyd Wright, An Autobiography (New York: Duell, Sloane, and Pearce, 1943); cited in Hildebrand, 64, n.6.

⁷Christian Norberg-Schulz, Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc, 1980), 5.

⁸Glenn Robert Lym, A Psychology of Building: How We Shape and Experience Our Structured Spaces (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1980), 25.

⁹Christopher Alexander, The Linz Cafe (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 87.

¹⁰Christopher Alexander, Sara Ishikawa, and Murray Silverstein, A Pattern Language: Towns, Buildings, Construction (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), Pattern 114, 87.

¹¹Bill Hubbard, MIT architectural faculty seminar, May 1, 1992.

¹²Colin St. John Wilson paraphrasing Adrian Stokes, "The Natural Imagination," The Architectural Review January, 1989), 66, quoted in Hildebrand, 44, n.21.

¹³Christopher Day, Places of the Soul: Architecture and Environmental Design as a Healing Art (Northamptonshire, England: Thorsons Publishing Group, The Aquarian Press, 1990), 25.

¹⁴Day, 23.

¹⁵Christopher Alexander, The Timeless Way of Building (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 132-133.

¹⁶Alexander, A Pattern Language, 550.

¹⁷Max Jacobson, Murray Silverstein and Barbara Winslow, The Good House: Contrast as a design tool (Newtown, CT: The Taunton Press, Inc., 1990), 7.

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