THE [RE] DEVELOPMENT OF PLACE:
ADAPTIVE REUSE IN THE NARRATIVE OF DETROIT

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The [Re] Development of Place: Adaptive Reuse in the Narrative of Detroit

My relationship with Detroit has always been at the downtown level; with the level of density inherent in a city created by proximity to both people and place. In Detroit, however, the negative spaces and their relationships with life and community are just as intense as that of any built construct here.

The city seems to be growing despite the negative press and ongoing criticism. The vacancy in many places has been replaced by small business ventures. Urban gardens have overtaken abandoned lots and created quiet sanctuaries within the central business district. New housing abounds and my favorite hole in the wall music venue is now a swanky tavern. There is now a Whole Foods. But who are these developments really for?

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Cities are growing at an unprecedented speed. Built-up urban areas will increase by 1.2 million square kilometers, nearly tripling the global urban land area in 2000 by 2030 while adding 2 billion more people.[1]

The industrialization of America in the early-to-mid twentieth century lead to unprecedented growth through capitalism and labor exploitation across the country. Henry Ford's deployment of the assembly line and $5 workday created a working class that was able, for the first time, to purchase the products that they produced. The more they made the further Ford Motor Company needed to expand its operation horizontally.[2]

Detroit became ground zero for generations of this Fordism, and as Charles Waldheim suggests of many American cities, mass-production and its economy continually lead to "utter abandonment of traditional European models of urban density in favor of impermanent, ad hoc arrangements of temporary utility and steadily decreasing density"[3] that could fuel an insatiable economic engine.

The space between the core and the new periphery was soon forgotten by the emergence of Alan Berger's 'drosscape'.[4] The infrastructural challenges of designing the reclaimed landscape of post-industrial Detroit is what allows for the chance of its remediation and reintegration into the urban condition.

Like any dynamic system, evolution was, and is, inevitable. As a result of socio-economic conditions and political climates, Detroit has seen its population of

approximately two million falter to around 700,000.[5] Detroit's unique history offers many challenges related to education, transportation, racial inequality and unemployment. Because of these inherent challenges, the speculative development model systematically employed focuses not on embracing the power of the civic identity, but instead looks to ignore this landscape in an effort to start over.

> There is an established pathology for American postindustrial cities…(they) follow a well-documented pattern: loss of industrial jobs…out-migration and population loss…neglect and disinvestment in infrastructure and public services…and finally, loss of hope...[6]

As post-industrial cities look to reinterpret themselves, they face the potential of erasing large tracts of cultural heritage and civic identity. This leads not only to gentrification of physical space but also to the erosion of a social fabric entrenched in its relationship with place.

Attempting to erase the past, however, does not make the future easier. How can development tactics embrace Detroit's storied past while repositioning it within its current context and contributing to the ongoing narrative of urban place? This paper investigates the importance of social responsibility and community in creating a stable yet flexible Detroit of the future. It considers an architectural framework of adaptive-reuse as a possible strategy to engage the city's storied history while forging a new and evolving identity.

METHODOLOGY

Whatever happened to Urbanism?

> Now we are left with a world without urbanism, only architecture, even more architecture. The neatness of architecture is its seduction; it defines, excludes, limits, separates from the "rest"- but it also consumes. It exploits and exhausts the potentials that can be generated finally only by urbanism, and that only the specific imagination of urbanism can invent and renew.[7]

The etymological foundation of 'urbanism' is urban life or character.[8] The assertion by Koolhaas that these fundamental requirements of urbanism have been replaced by moments of architecture can be seen in current development strategies within Detroit.

Within Detroit, existing development tactics seem to reinforce a separation between people and their environment. This strategy is focused on producing buildings as products over supporting networks of people, the antithetical methodology of Rowe's contextualism that is 'built' around people; freedom from objects and the dispensability of the built environment,[9] a transcendence of geography and chronology.

Social and environmental responsibilities have taken a back seat to financial gains. By reasserting the importance of cultural networks and civic identity in defining place, a development strategy focusing on the (re) connection of cultural and environmental responsibilities through community-centered interventions emerges.

Through comparisons of development as a hedging of architectural commodity and development as a socially and environmentally responsible, localized intervention, a framework for Detroit's urban development will be established.

This architectural framework will be supplemented by strategies of landscape

urbanism and community engagement as it defines a possible narrative for an evolving Detroit.

Case studies of various program insertions within Detroit focus on the eradication of Detroit as a viable memory while repositioning it as a city of temporary destination. The maintenance of civic identity relies on the participation of those who define it. The emergence of small-scale, grassroots projects within Detroit, along with the larger city-sponsored 'right-sizing' Detroit Future City project, are examined as an alternative to these traditional development methods. A 'Detroit Future City'[10] "that does not depend on economic growth but instead centers on creating high-quality places for people and nature."[11]

This methodology addresses the relationships between the ideal and the rational, resolving disparities between issues of economy and memory, the environment and infrastructural needs, and the present and future conditions of communities. The redevelopment of Detroit requires a focus on a socially and environmentally responsible development strategy that supports the narrative of urban place with an impetus on the synthesis of urban conditions with community.

DISCUSSION | CONTEXT

> … it is increasingly the case that vast developer-engineering corporations are constructing today's world with such pace, efficiency, and profit that all of the traditional design disciplines…are marginalized as mere decorative practices, literally disenfranchised from the work of spatial formation.[12]

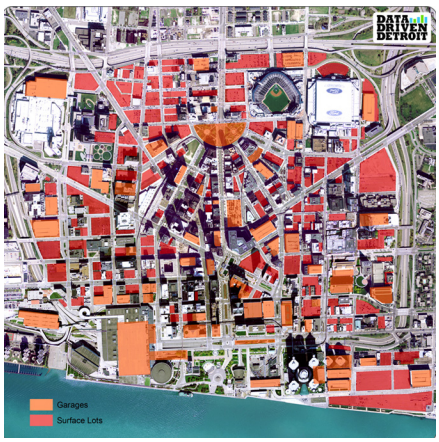
THE CIVIC SCALE

The development of large-scale, privately owned projects such as sports stadia and casinos as a revitalization effort have, for decades, "effectively committed the city to a future as a destination entertainment theme park..."[13] With a commercial market dominated by local real estate moguls and foreign interests, investors looking to capitalize on the future of Detroit have been slowly buying up the city.

Mike Ilitch, for example, currently owns an estimated 100+ acres of land in the downtown area. As the owner of both the Detroit Red Wings and Detroit Tigers one would expect a certain amount of understanding, sensitivity and respect of Detroit's urban fabric. However, his collection of existing infrastructure and buildings has been cast aside as less important than the land, much of which has been razed to create parking for his nearby stadia. Detroit architecture critic Kelly Ellsworth refers to this as land hoarding, where there is less interest in the small scale good of individual interventions than a perceived city saving potential of big projects.[14]

Large-scale project typologies often lead to insularity and self-promotion, the architecture-only world of Koolhaas.[15] Projects that encompass multiple blocks are being under-utilized by focusing on a small minority of people. Instead of supporting the neighborhood, they become a microcosm of Detroit's larger issues.

Even government-sponsored projects are guilty of producing destinations. The recent transformation of the Globe Building into an adventure and education center was recently opened by the Department of Natural Resources.[16] The reuse of the iconic riverfront building in relation to its immediate context seems confused. Accessible by the river walk trail, it is easy to reach by car or by



1

Figure 1: Figure 1: Map of Downtown highlighting parking lots and garages.

Image: http://datadrivendetroit.org

walking, but from where? Its proximity to downtown makes it seem like a commodity for the commuting class, but yet is geared toward children. Surrounded by an empty field, it seems to embody what Detroit has become.

Not all large-scale investment developments remain insular, though. Projects like the Barclay Center in Brooklyn, New York are attempting to interject non-traditional program elements within the larger arena typology as a way to address the potential impacts of temporary vitalities at the neighborhood level. By inserting opportunities within this block, the center attempts a more engaging dialectic with its neighborhood. The ability for the arena to interact on a neighborhood level on a more consistent basis allows it to establish itself as a more invested part of the community.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD SCALE

Civic scale developments and neighborhood interventions should share a vision. Common values that give direction without implicit solutions. A socially responsible lens used to understand political and financial climates in an ongoing discussion of shifting contexts.

Looking at development through the lens of community, it seems that vibrancy and vitality cannot be achieved by secular and demographically base projects. Housing developments like Brush Park provide a suburban condition within the city by relocating certain demographics to the city's core. An isolated residential development provides no engagement, no interaction beyond that of its residents.



2

Figure 2: Insularity of Brush Park townhome development.

Image: http://citylivingdetroit.com

The Children's Memorial Hospital redevelopment project in Lincoln Park, Chicago set out to provide a fitness center, an assisted living facility, rental units and mixed income housing including 540 affordable housing units. The program seems responsible, promoting interaction between generations and social classes within the mixed-use project itself, and the community in general; a vertical heterogeneity reminiscent of Jane Jacob's arguments for urban diversity. Implied social responsibility notwithstanding, the project has been met by Lincoln Park community groups who challenge the implications of the project based on fears of congestion and overcrowding. While the project has been making concessions to keep moving forward, it is the initial lack of community engagement that seems to be forcing the development towards a stalemate.[17]

The proposed $60-million mixed-use development by developer McCormack Baron Salazar of St. Louis east of the Renaissance Center will focus on town houses and apartment buildings designed to attract a downtown workforce short

on housing. Additional rentals and condos are slated for a second phase along with retail and restaurant venues.[18]

Like so many segregated areas within Detroit, this runs the risk of yet another stand-alone neighborhood, independent from the city at large. The project is expected to be partially funded by various governmental and foundation sources, yet does not appear to engage the public nature of the riverfront or the existing conditions of the East Jefferson community. According to columnist Paul Beshouri, "it could very well be awful."[19]

Instead, it becomes a riverfront oasis for the young professional or empty nester(s). The result of an anti-bricolage, economically driven planning mentality, this urban place becomes as ubiquitous as its suburban counterparts.

This type of generic development is a continuation of the "techniques of optimizing profit from speculative capital through industrialized production"[20] that was developed in Detroit.

Conversely, Thalia Hall, located in the Pilsen neighborhood of Chicago, has taken on a new life through a reinterpretation of the architect's original community-centric vision showing that development can focus on supporting place. John Dušek originally created the project based on an interest in bringing community together. Apartments and retail spaces were conceived as a way to engage the central theater space. After years of neglect, two restaurateurs venturing out as developers have renovated the theater and introduced a new restaurant and bar. It was more than reinstating the architecture as something once again relevant, it was about bringing back the importance of the Pilsen community by using the building as a meeting place and by hosting events that support the Pilsen culture.[21]



3

Another developer-lead project ultimately lead to great success by focusing on the impact of the project beyond the economics of development. Lafayette Park was a planned community of the late 50's that was part of a larger urban redevelopment project. Spearheaded by developer Herbert Greenwald of Chicago and designed by Mies van der Rohe, Ludwig Hilberseimer and Alfred Caldwell, this series of high-rises, townhomes and parks continue to function as one of Detroit's most integrated and stable neighborhoods. Located just across the I75 downtown business loop, it provides "convenience to downtown, security, cleanliness and sense of community…"[22]

Figure 3: Aerial view of Lafayette Park showing housing diversity.

Image: http://freep.com

The success of this project within a larger context can be seen by the introduction

of a shopping plaza, elementary school, and public park space that acts as a coordinator of activity as the in-between space of programmatic elements. By introducing varied program and demographic diversity, the project's success did not have to rely on apartment rentals alone. This diversity, beyond the development proper, also participates in a daily narrative with its neighbors by engaging in retail, education and leisure interactions that lead to a sense of community pride and the generation of place. Beyond the visual connection with the city provided, residents remain engaged with a project that has over the years reinterpreted itself in response to shifting demographics both within the property itself and the city. The emergence of an ideological "middle ground between socialism and capitalism."[23]

THE GRASS-ROOTS SCALE

In an effort to address more specific needs, Detroit locals have over the last decade or so been intervening on behalf of their neighborhoods. With projects looking to give back and engage with community, new partnerships, organizations and businesses have begun to emerge. Projects like Back Alley Bikes,[24] the Eastern Market revitalization project,[25] Youthville Detroit,[26] the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit (M.O.C.A.D.),[27] and the Russell Industrial Center,[28] among many others, have focused not on capitalizing as destination products but on the part that they played in the identity of Detroit and its community networks. The philosophy behind the projects superseded the space that they came to inhabit. These varied adaptive reuse projects utilize what was available to them spatially and physically represented how they came to be.

> Scale and cost are not the defining elements of a public, urban language. Rather it is shared process leading to shared public meanings that contributes most to an American sense of place.[29]

These grassroots-type approaches are primarily focused on support of community. They are not the result of social programming or uber-liberal political agendas, they are simply models built on supporting the networks within which they operate.

Similar responses can be found in Cincinnati, OH, where the former Jackson Brewery is being given new life by architect-developer Scott Hand, AIA and Adjunct Instructor of Jazz Studies at CCM, Dominic Marino. The project, besides being an adaptive reuse interpretation of what Cincinnati's brewing culture is, will be home of a 192 live seat theatre and 300-person music venue.



4

Figure 4: Future home of Grayscale Cincinnati.

Image: http://globalsiteplans.com

As a nod to its beginnings, a craft brewery is also planned to inhabit the space. Additional spaces have been allocated to serving the immediate Cincinnati

business community. This mixed-use development is unique in that Hand's vision was rooted in a passion for both brewing and music, with 'Grayscale' being a carryover from his record label.[30] The on-site support of the brewing and music networks are hoped to play a large part in the revitalization of the neighboring community as a whole.

AN ALL-NEW SCALE

In 2012, the Detroit Strategic Framework Plan was officially released, revealing planning and development focuses and strategies dealing with 'right-sizing' the city. Termed Detroit Future City, the report is extensive and attempts to address the concerns of "decision making that is not exclusively for one entity or one mayor or one generation, but for each of us––and those who come after us–– in our roles as citizens, philanthropists, developers, business people, neighborhood champions, parents, and beyond."[31]

The focus on the plan is not the creation of destinations and spectacles in an effort to reposition Detroit as a city of 2 million people again, but of understanding where the city is now and the impact that has on the people that live within its boundaries. The steering committee of the plan was focused on the celebration of Detroiters rather than the (re) moving of people from their homes. Unlike the reliance of eminent domain powers by the city in carrying out the Master Plan of 1946, Detroit Future City attempts to maintain services and provide for the people of the in-between.[32]

A Detroit for the people can look at projects like The Vassar Swiss Underwear Company in Chicago, Il which has supported many things in its 95-year history, only recently becoming home of the Chicago Green Exchange and recipient of a LEED Platinum sustainability rating.[33] The environmental sustainability of the building itself is only a portion of its impact.



5

As a green business incubator, it affords Chicago residents the opportunity to participate in the development and sale of sustainable products and processes that go beyond the geographic boundary of Chicago. Access to not only physical resources within an incubator environment, but the shared knowledge and community interaction that results, is what pushes this flexible business model beyond.

Programming is obviously a huge driver of what a project can, or chooses not to, give back to the community. Not all housing will be able to integrate multiple factions of the surrounding context, and some projects will be economically focused

Figure 5:Public space within Chicago's Green Exchange.

Image: http://aiachicago.org

on a single solution. The stated civic mission of the developer of the Green Exchange highlights the importance of social and environmental responsibility within a developer-as-business methodology:

> Baum focuses not only on the financial return on investment, but also takes great pride in contributing positively to the communities in which it works and protecting the environment through sustainable development. Baum is dedicated to making progressive environmentally and socially responsible decisions in future development projects.[34]

This developmental framework, for the first time in Detroit, is focused on the places that support people and nature rather than a reliance on economic growth. The very same people that are driving the current grassroots projects discussed earlier. This development relies on addressing the ongoing ebbs and flows of growth through infrastructure and services coordination and an attempt at creating stable community networks.

CONCLUSION | SOLUTION

A city is a strange thing. It is simultaneously organic and controlled in its growth. It is fueled by the interrelationships of economics, politics and people, commodity and space. Infrastructure springs up as temporary solutions to potentially long-term problems. There is a continuous focus on space.

Today, series of fractured neighborhoods are slowly being developed through business growth, speculative real estate and community development groups.[35] But what happens in the forgotten space between 'neighborhoods'? What do these communities need to create a more positive environment and how can they start to communicate not only internally but also with each other?

By leveraging the existing buildings and spaces within these voids, neighborhood connections can begin to take place. Given their relatively close proximities, these connections become walkable. A forgotten void becomes the connective social and programmatic tissue that connects neighborhoods. It becomes the generator of social interaction and a platform by which new identities can be created.

These developments become guided by an awareness of their impact on the block, neighborhood and city levels. They remain conscious of their context and represent an embodied identity that informs specific cultural, industrial and natural heritages in their attempt to support urban homeostasis through community.

> Landscapes and buildings…are not permanent structures but transitional manifestations.[36]

The notion that architecture or urban design alone within Detroit can be leveraged to "forestall an apocalyptic end or maintain an historical continuity through spatial order,"[37] is, according to Jason Young, a media-perpetuated myth.

> In a certain sense, the mission of the media in Detroit has been to maintain a perception of order through constructing a nostalgic gloss…there is control in broadcasting nostalgia. It blunts the possibility of a serious rethinking of the city itself, and this blunting conserves.[38]

MOVING ON

Detroit exists in a free market economy that is often reliant on the financial impetus of the few. If politicians and developers are seen to control urban growth, then it is time for architects and planners to take on responsibilities beyond the creation of objects.

> …as architects we exist at this extraordinary intersection between the cultural and the technological. Our skill sets involve the synthesis of quite complex and contradictory elements- social, technical, cultural, political and environmental scenarios- which we draw from to propose alternative scenarios.[39]

This new Detroit requires a teamwork as never before seen. Social and environmental responsibilities must be at the forefront of discussions. The community at large must become involved, not only in politics and social issues, but in the shaping of their city and its future. The distinctions between community, architect, and developer must become less distinct and more transparent.

By recognizing the limited reach of socio-economic and political influence through architecture we can begin to frame interventions as nodes within a much larger framework. The built environment becomes a support mechanism that allows for community to flourish. "Buildings are not why cities exist, they are simply a side effect of cities."[40]

With a shift from an automotive past, a new identity begins to emerge from the rubble of a retired industrial heritage. It is not the same memory of race riots and exodus. It is the beginning of a new era, an era springing forth alongside a city rich in history and cultural networks.

Hidden amongst the fissures of desperation and bankruptcy proceedings, there seem to be glimmers of hope. New tech and investment start-ups are starting to appear, bringing with them young professionals from around not just the region but also the country. Businesses are slowly moving back to the core from the suburbs in an effort to attract young talent.[41]

An urban homeostasis in Detroit is reliant on the creation of flexible conditions and connections. Responsive and adaptable frameworks of landscape and architectural infrastructures that can be employed at a range of scales: building, block, neighborhood and community. This state of flux can't be allowed to focus solely on perceptions of abandonment or nostalgic monuments. It is about the transformation of the old into the new while it simultaneously "maintains the potential of the old without committing to a predetermined solution."[42]

Detroit's existing building stock is part of its civic identity and should be used to engage its communities. Adaptive reuse should give back to the community, not just its developer or investors. It is entitled to a social component of building, of construing.[43] These projects should reinforce the connection between people and their city, the interjection of social components into current relationships between physical space and social fabric.

The potential for other layers, those of the environment, of memory and identity, are best understood through adaptive reuse. It is a development tool that looks to the reuse the industrial past of Detroit in a non-nostalgic way. It acts as a medium through which an ongoing dialogue is encouraged, the synthesizer of an ever-evolving dialogue between old and new.

NOTES

1. "Urban Development," *The World Bank*, accessed April 25, 2014, http://data.worldbank.org/topic/urban-development.
2. *The Titans: Henry Ford*, Television series, written/directed/produced by Sarah Colt (PBS; 2013), Television.
3. Charles Waldheim, "Motor City" in *Shrinking Cities: Detroit*, ed. Kulturstiftung des Bundes (Berlin: Office Philipp Oswalt, 2004), 56.
4. Alan Berger, "Drosscape" in *The Landscape Urbanism Reader*, ed. Charles Waldheim (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2006), 209.
5. Detroit's estimated population as of 2012 according to www.quickfacts.census.gov.
6. Donald Carter, "Hope for the Future of the Postindustrial City" in *Synergicity: Reinventing the Postindustrial City*, ed. Kapp, Paul Hardin, and Paul J. Armstrong (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 4.
7. Rem Koolhaas, "Whatever Happened to Urbanism?" in *S,M,L,XL* ed. Rem Koolhaas (New York : Monacelli Press, 1995), 967.
8. "Urbanism," *Oxford English Dictionary*, accessed June 18, 2014, www.OED.com
9. Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter, "Collage City," in *Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture: An Anthology of Architectural Theory 1965-1995* ed. Kate Nesbitt (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996), 269.
10. Detroit Future City is the name of the 2012 report generated by the Detroit Works Project Long Term Planning Steering Committee, www.detroitfuturecity.com.
11. Justin Hollander, "A Plan to Shrink Detroit (Well)," *Planetizen*, accessed May 5, 2014, www.planetizen.com
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13. Charles Waldheim, "Motor City," 60.
14. Kelly Ellsworth, "Ilitch Has Turned Swaths of Downtown into a Wasteland," *Curbed Detroit*, accessed May 5, 2014, http://detroit.curbed.
15. Rem Koolhaas, "Whatever Happened to Urbanism?," 967.
16. Kirk Pinho, "On Detroit River waterfront, Globe Building Transforms into DNR Playground," *Crain's Detroit Business*, March 11, 2014, www.crainsdetroit.com
17. "Children's Memorial Hospital," *Curbed Chicago*, accessed July 14, 2014, www.chicago.curbed.com.
18. JC Reindl, "$60M East Riverfront Development in Detroit to Bring Housing, Streetscape," *Detroit Free Press*, May 5, 2014, www.freep.com.
19. Paul Beshouri, "New $60M Neighborhood Planned for Five Riverfront Blocks", *Detroit Curbed*, July 23, 2013, detroit.curbed.com.
20. George Daskalakis, "Introduction: Committee Work" in *Stalking Detroit*, ed. Georgia Daskalakis, Charles Waldheim, and Jason Young (Barcelona: Actar, 2001), 10.
21. Bill Motchan, "Adaptive reuse goes Bohemian at Thalia Hall," *The Chicago Architecture Blog*, Oct 15, 2013, www.chicagoarchitecture.org.

As a solution relies upon the integration of infrastructure, planning, building, design and socioeconomics to be successful, it highlights the shortcomings of the traditional model of urban development.[44] Detroit's future success is contingent on the proliferation of a healthy community. This macro approach to understanding the complexities of an urban condition can be deployed as a way to understand and address the building and infrastructural-level relationships between the existing fabric of Detroit and the ongoing narrative which is currently shaping its future.

The void becomes a viable in-between space and creates a flexible buffer between business and community, resident and commuter, architecture and landscape. It is these interrelationships that are missing from the current narrative of Detroit. It is business, as usual.

It all starts with understanding community. And that means an ongoing relationship with the people who call it home.

22. Daniele Aubert, “Introduction: Yesterday’s Future Today,” in *Thanks for the View, Mr. Mies: Lafayette Park, Detroit*, ed. Danielle Aubert, Lana Cavar, Natasha Chandani (New York: Metropolis Books, 2012), 18-22.

23. Caroline Constant, “Hilberseimer and Caldwell: Merging Ideologies in the Lafayette Park Landscape,” in *CASE: Hilberseimer/Mies van der Rohe Lafayette Park Detroit*, ed. Charles Waldheim, (New York: Prestel Books, 2004), 96.

24. Back Alley Bikes is a non-profit bicycle repair shop located in the heart of Cass Corridor that focuses on education programing. http://thehubofdetroit.org.

25. Eastern Market is a six square block public market that opened in 1891. Today, 250 vendors support thousands of visitors every Saturday,” http://easternmarketdetroit.com.

26. Youthville Detroit “is a destination point for youth needing an infusion of ‘belongingness’ and a safe and nurturing place to have fun, dream, learn, and participate,” http://youthvilledetroit.org.

27. The mission of the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit is to present art at the forefront of contemporary culture. As a non-collecting institution, MOCAD is responsive to the cultural content of our time, fueling crucial dialogue, collaboration, and public engagement. It is located in a renovated automotive dealership. http://mocadetroit.org.

28. The Russel Industrial Center is one of the largest artistic and small business communities in the Midwest United States housed in the former Albert Kahn-designed Murray Auto Body complex. http://russellindustrialcenter.com.

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30. Global Site Plans-The Grid, “Urban Placemaking: Grascale Cincinnati Seeks to Reactivate Former Brewery,” *Sustainable Cities Collective*, June 23, 2013, http://sustainablecitiescollective.com.

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35. Community development groups such as the Community Development Advocates of Detroit (CDAC) and the Detroit Works Project.

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38. Ibid, 132.

39. Liam Young, “The Educator of Excess” in *Future Practice*, ed. Rory Hyde (New York: Routledge, 2012), 225.

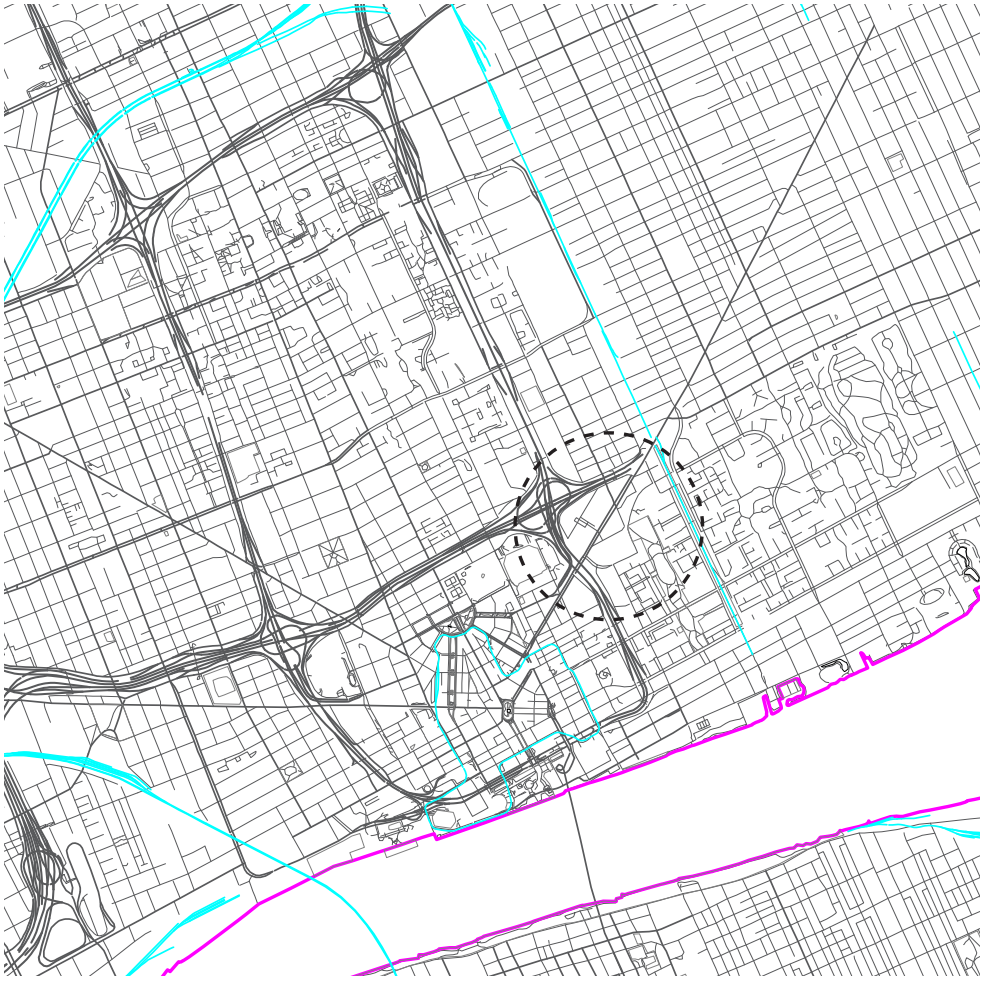
40. Dan Hill, “The Disruptive Power of an Edge,” in *Future Practice*, ed. Rory Hyde (New York: Routledge, 2012), 7-15.

41. Jon Zemke, “Conduit to College Grads,” *Crain’s Detroit Business*, accessed November 11, 2013, http://crainsdetroit.com.

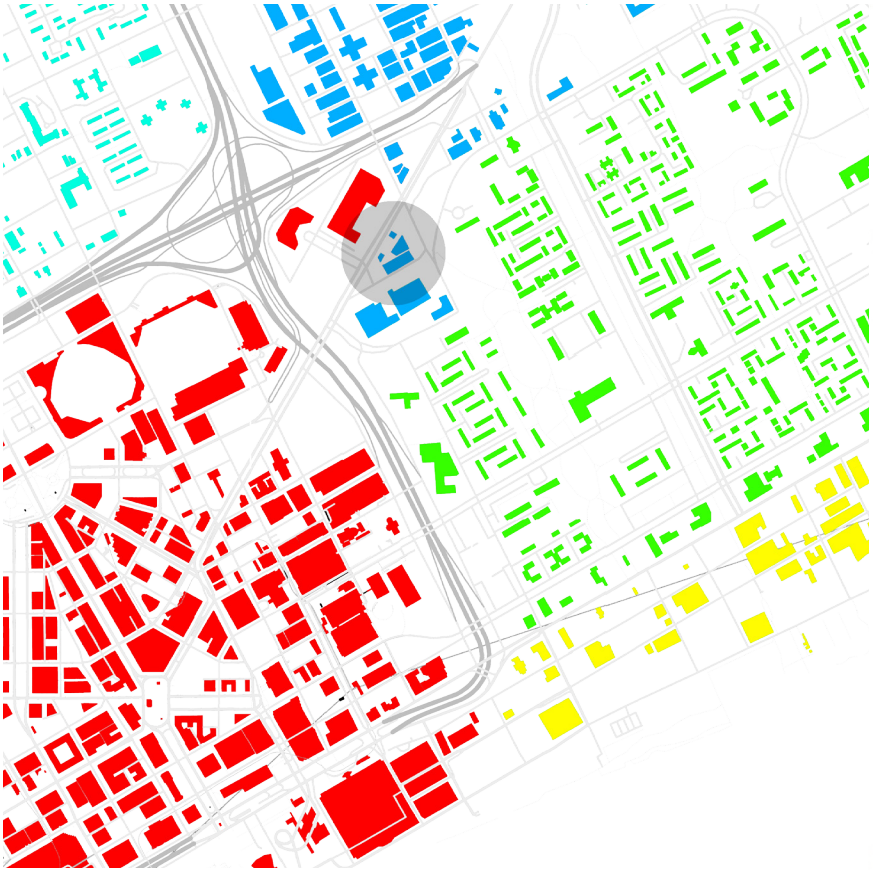
42. Irene Curulli, “Reuse or Abuse? Ethics in Requialification Design,” *Places* 19, no. 1 (2007): 18.

43. Marco Frascari, “The Tell-the-Tale Detail,” in *Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture: An Anthology of Architectural Theory 1965-1995* ed. Kate Nesbitt (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996), 500.

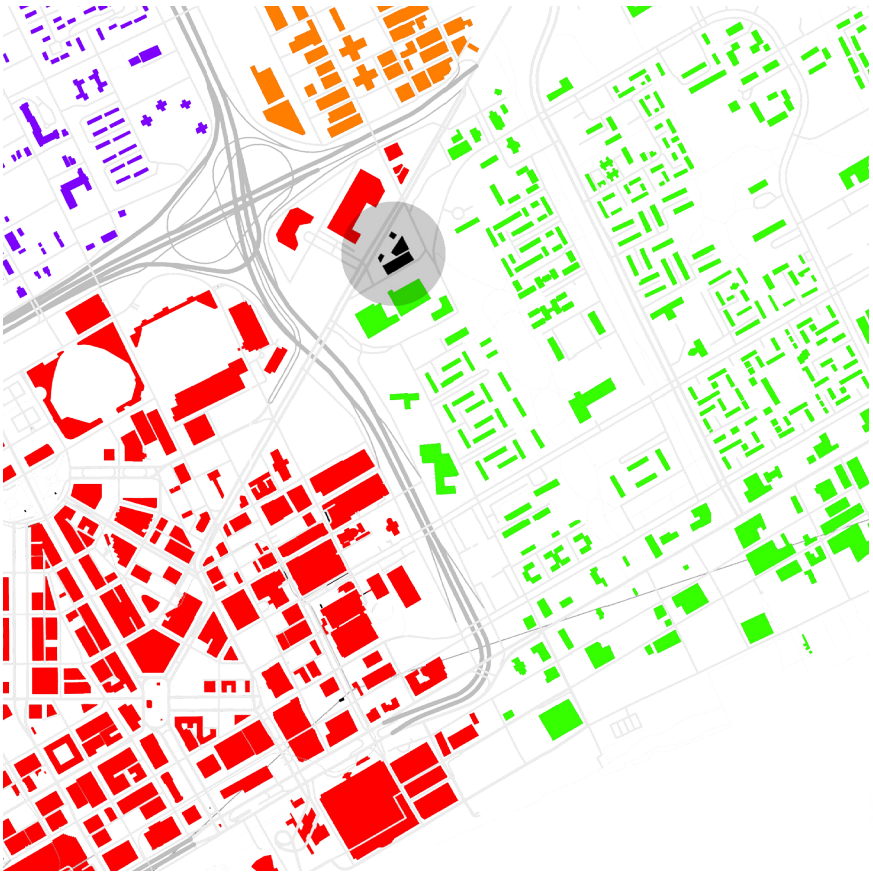
44. James Corner discusses the dynamism in the relationship of form and process in “Terra Fluxus,” 30.



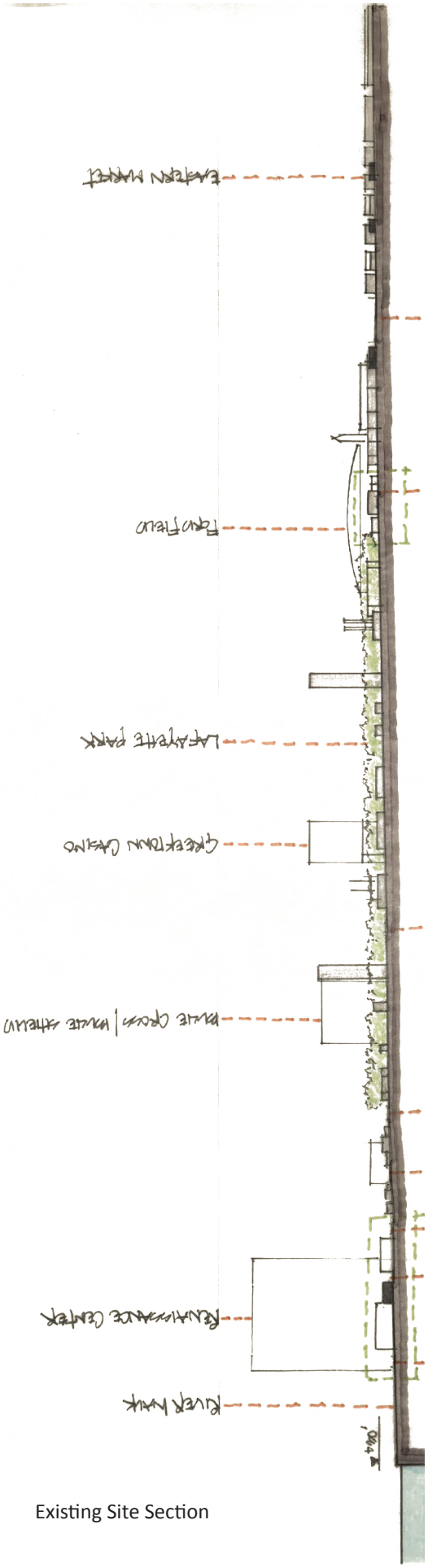
Site Analysis + Conceptual Design



Land Use Typologies



Land Use Typologies | 30-Year Plan



Existing Site Section


MILLIKEN STATE PARK AND HARBOR
DETROIT RIVERWALK




GREENING OF DETROIT PARK
RIVERWALK PARK
LAFAYETTE CENTRAL PARK
DETROIT HOUSING DEPT.
YMCA OF METRO DETROIT
CAMPUS MARTIUS PARK

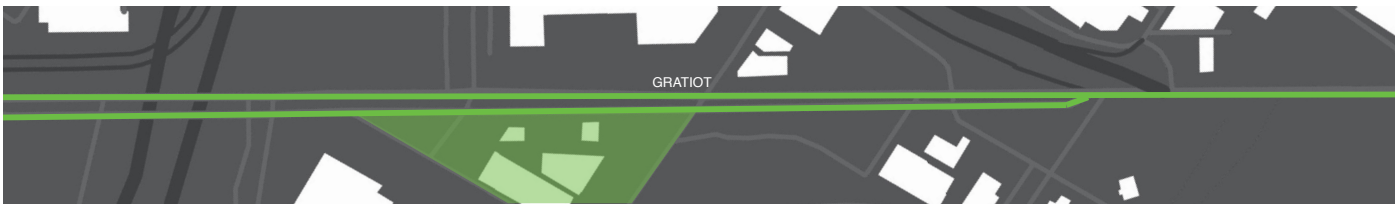



-GRATIOT CORRIDOR PILOT (GSNDC)
-EAST JEFFERSON RENAISSANCE



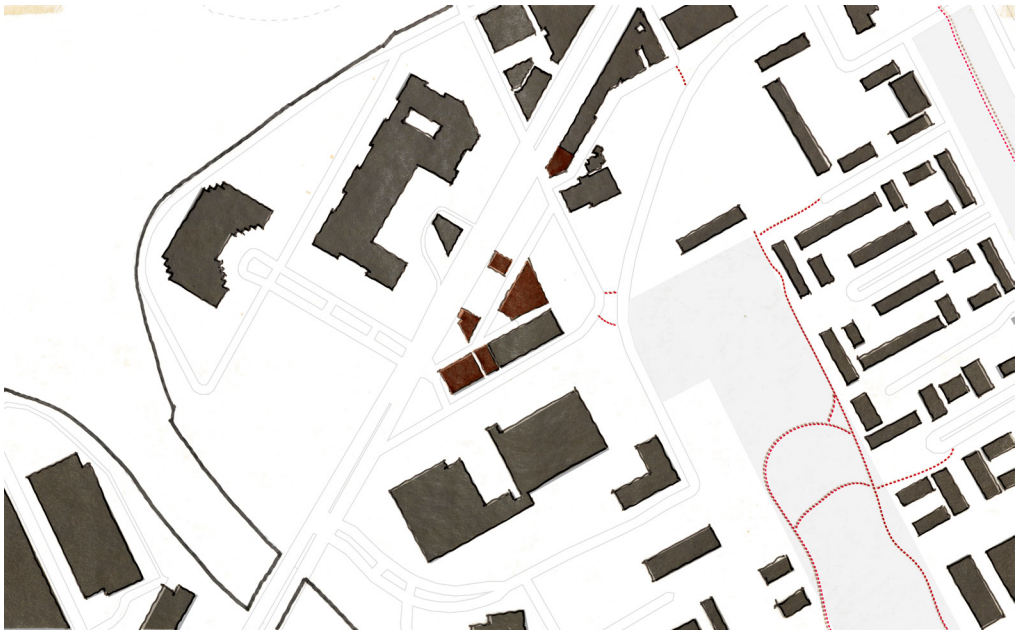




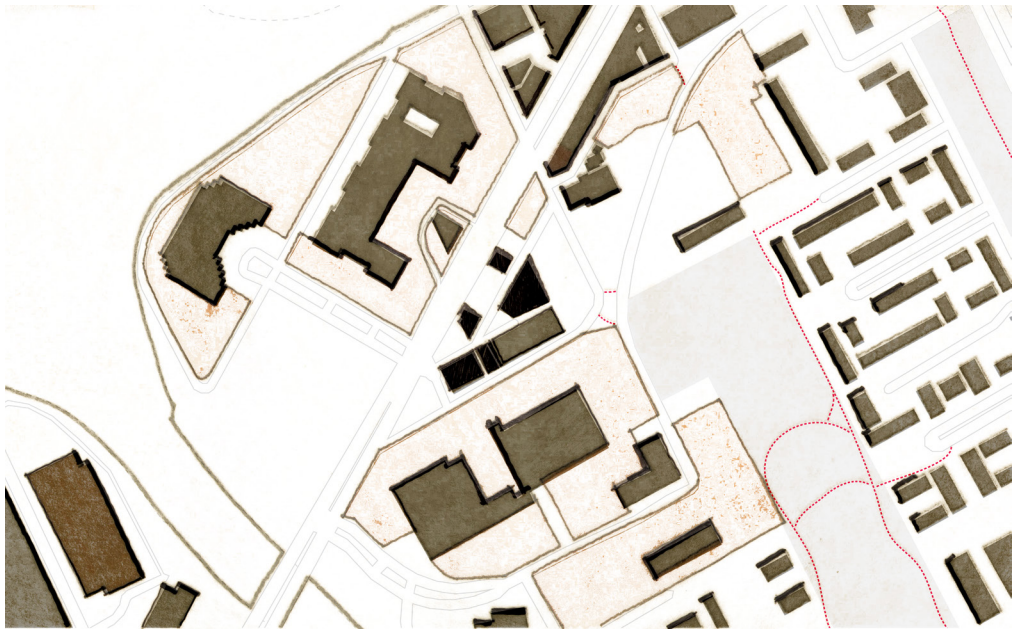




Existing Street Elevation

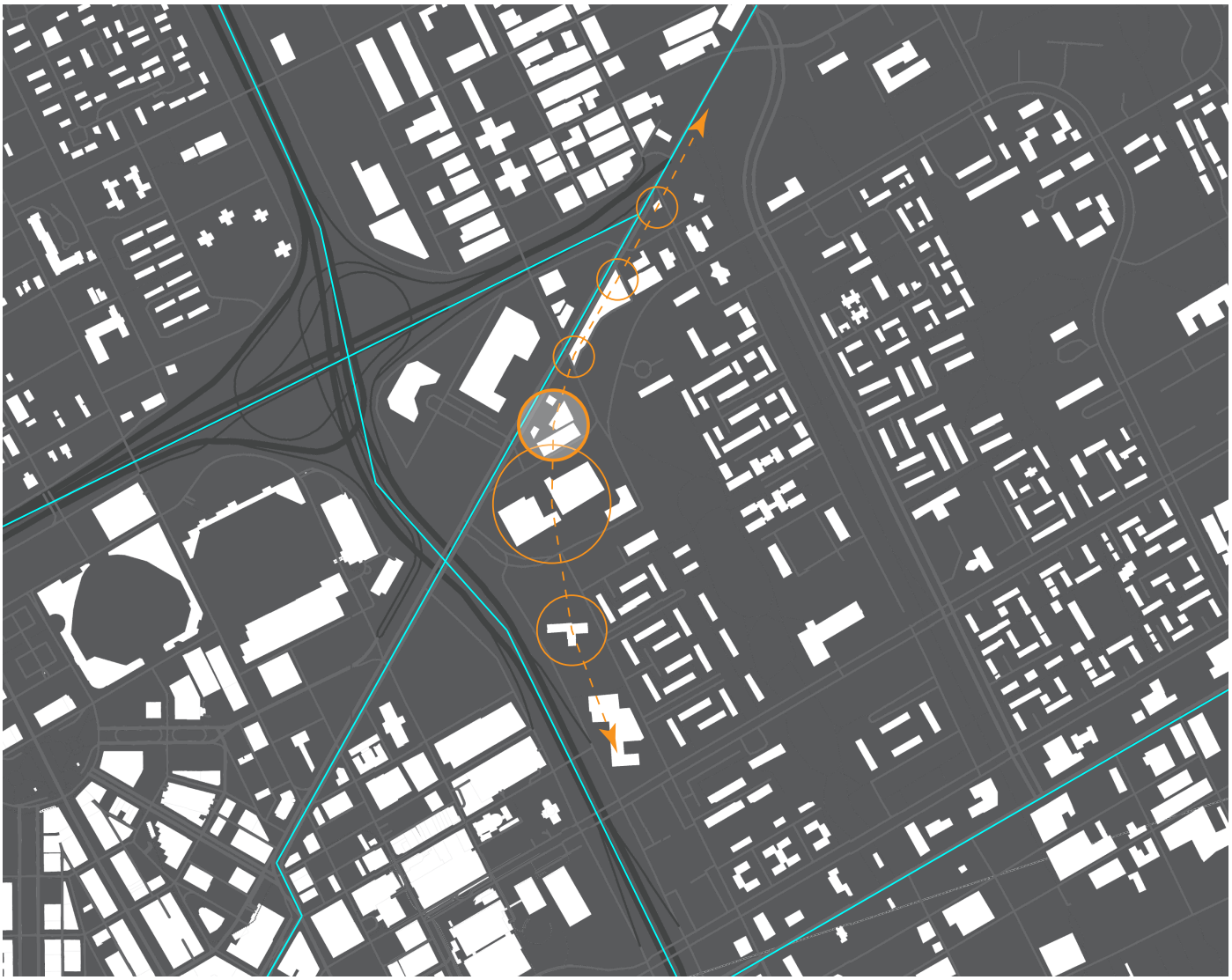






Site Analysis Diagrams


WELCOME TO
EASTERN MARKET
BUSY BEE





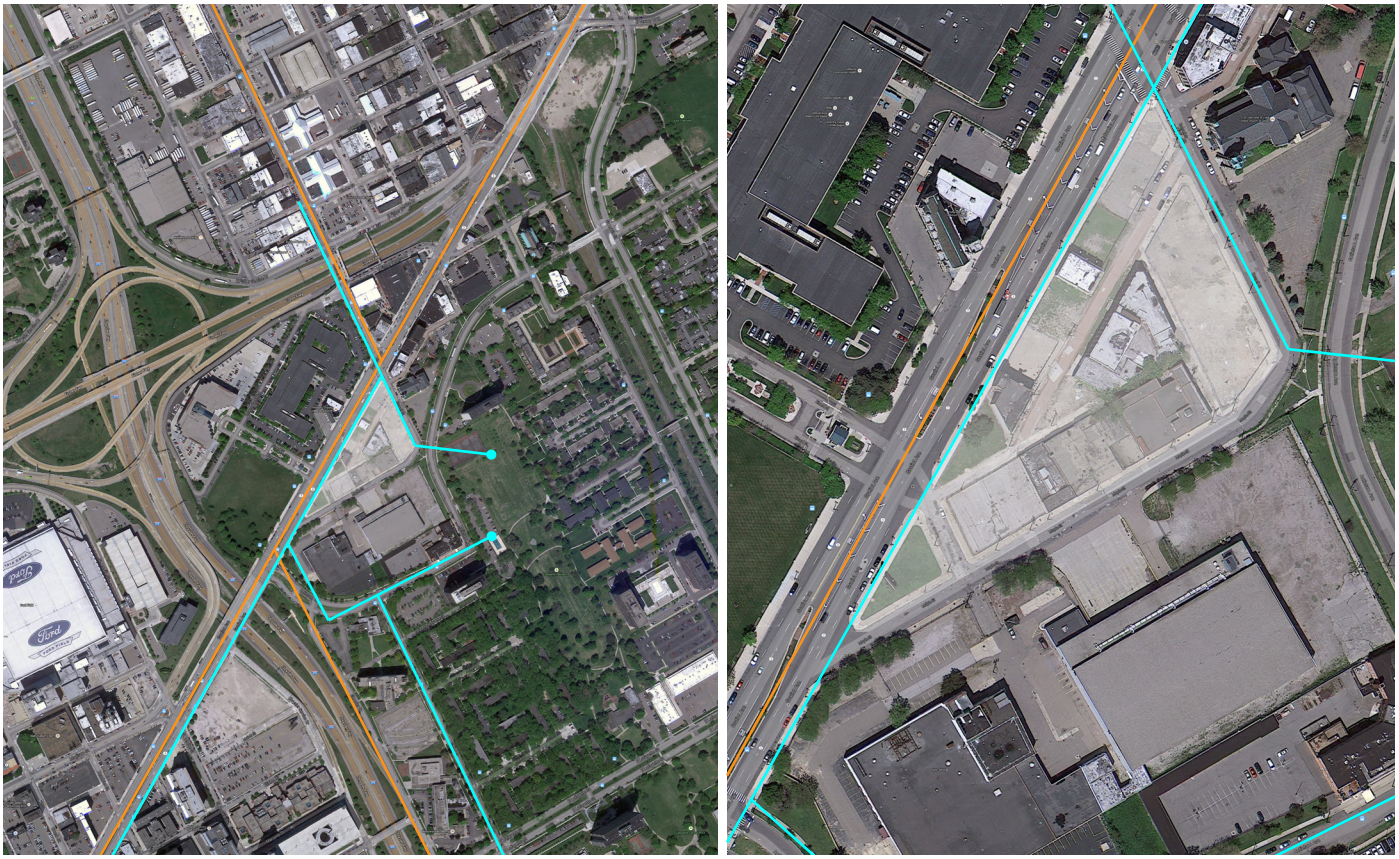



460
LOVE

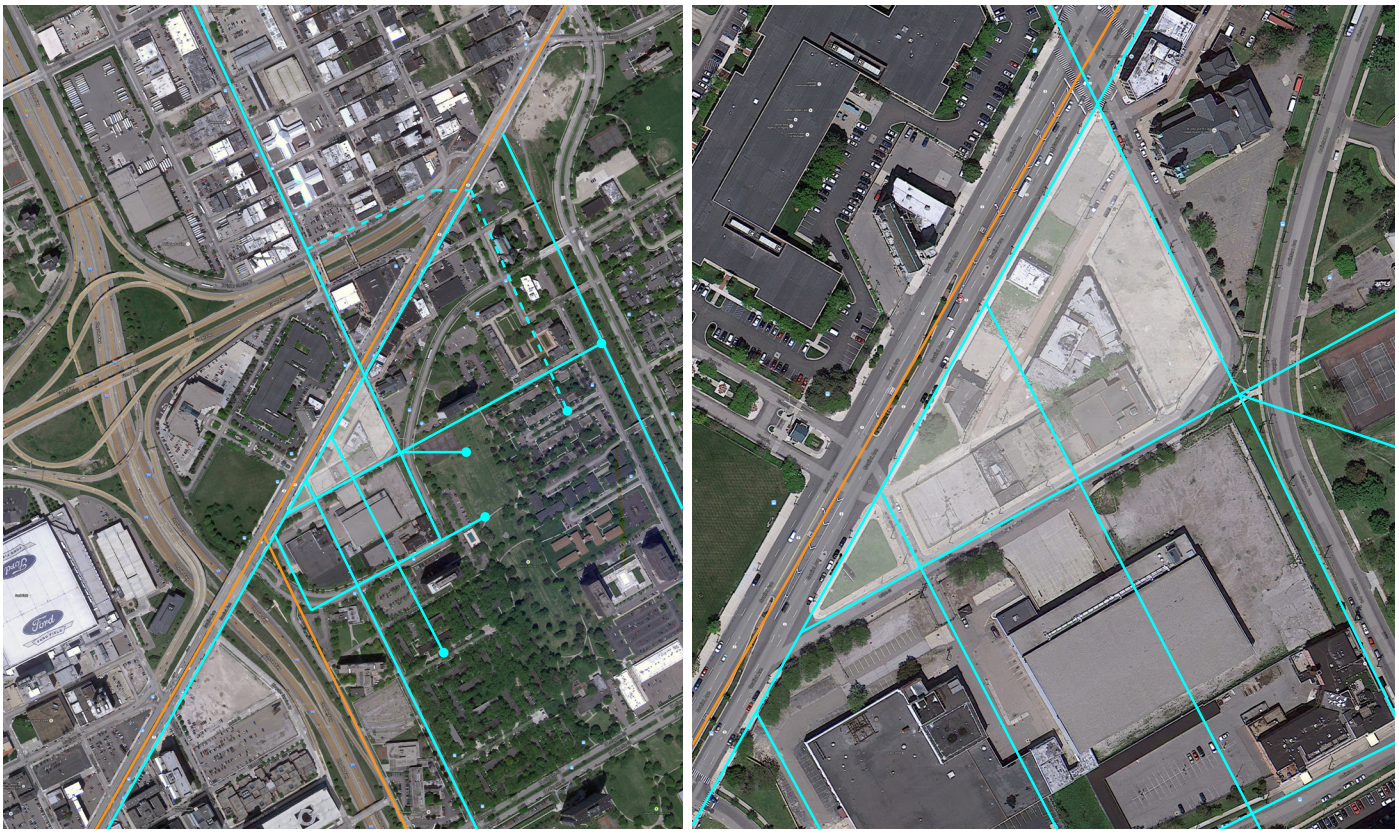




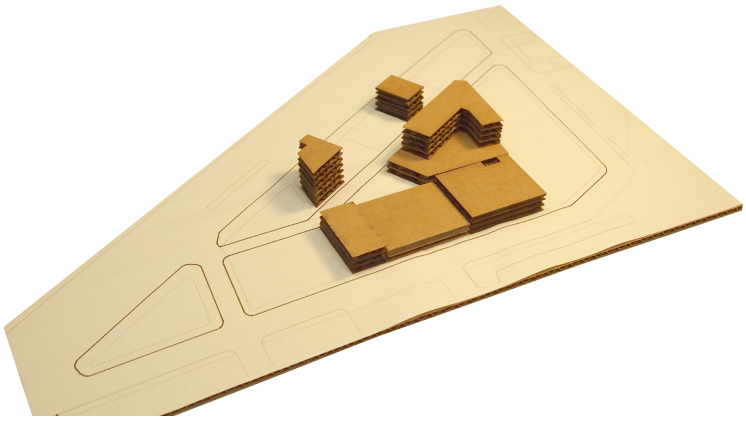

CALL

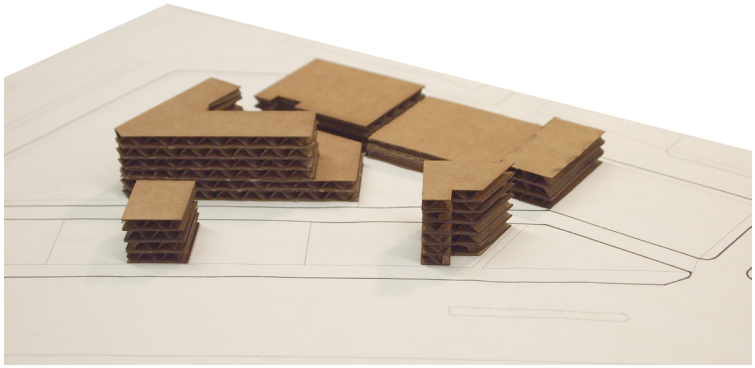


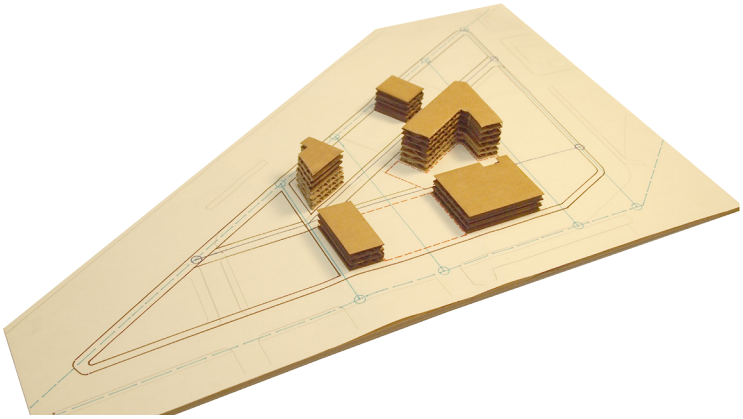
Existing Site Circulation

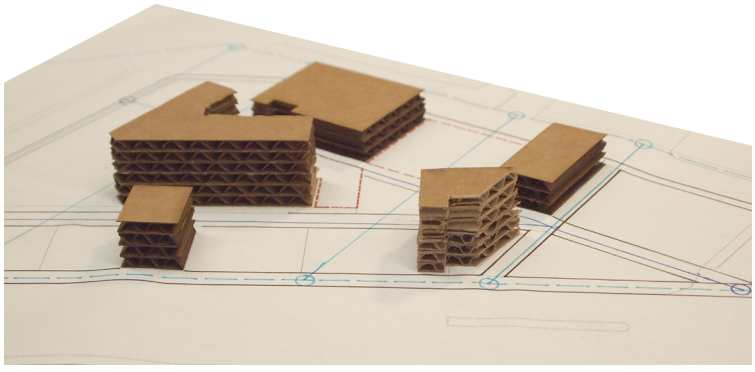


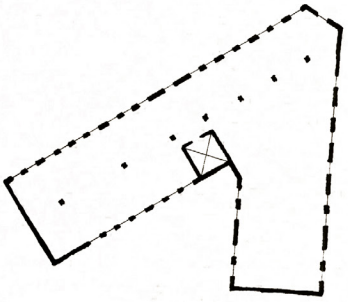
Proposed Site Circulation



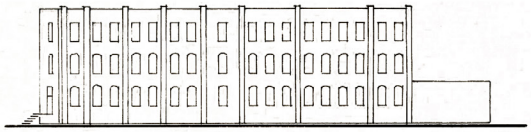




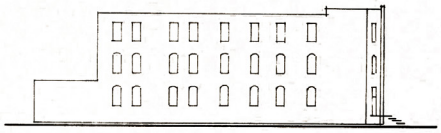




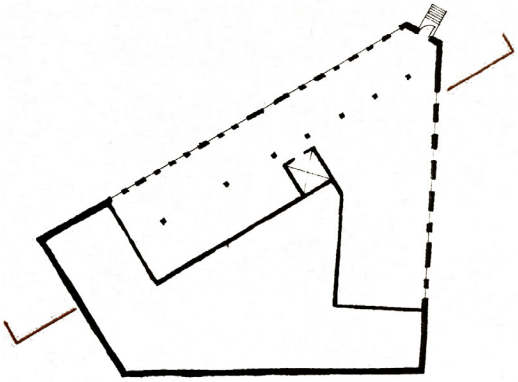
Upper Floor Plan



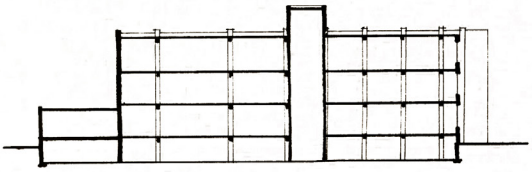
Elevation 1



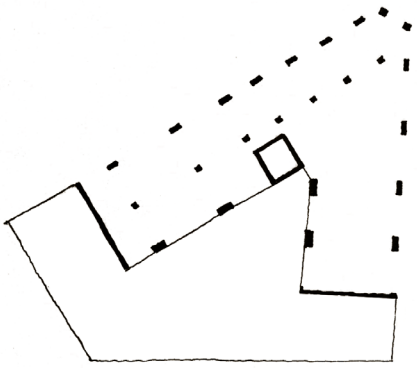
Elevation 2



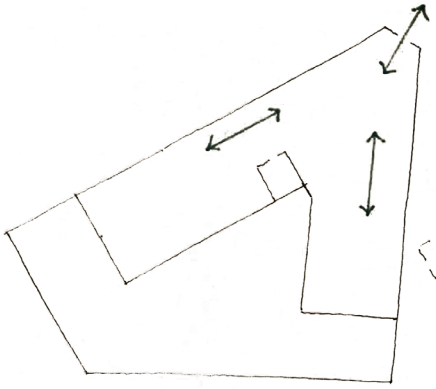
Main Level Floor Plan



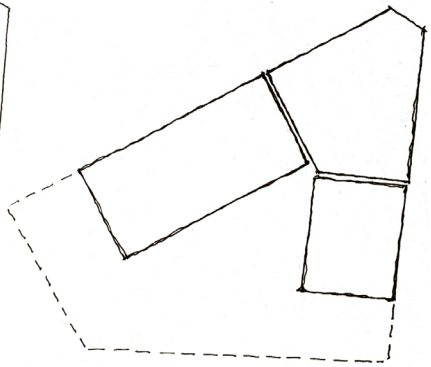
Section A



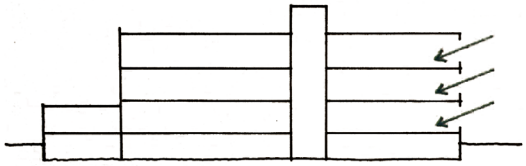
Structure



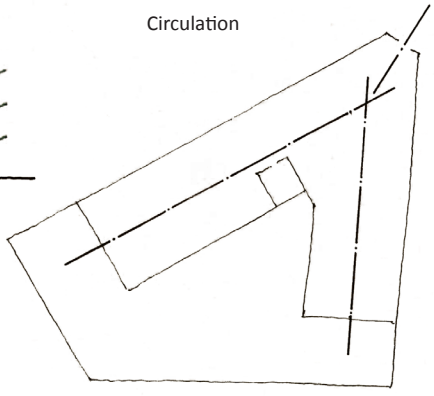
Circulation



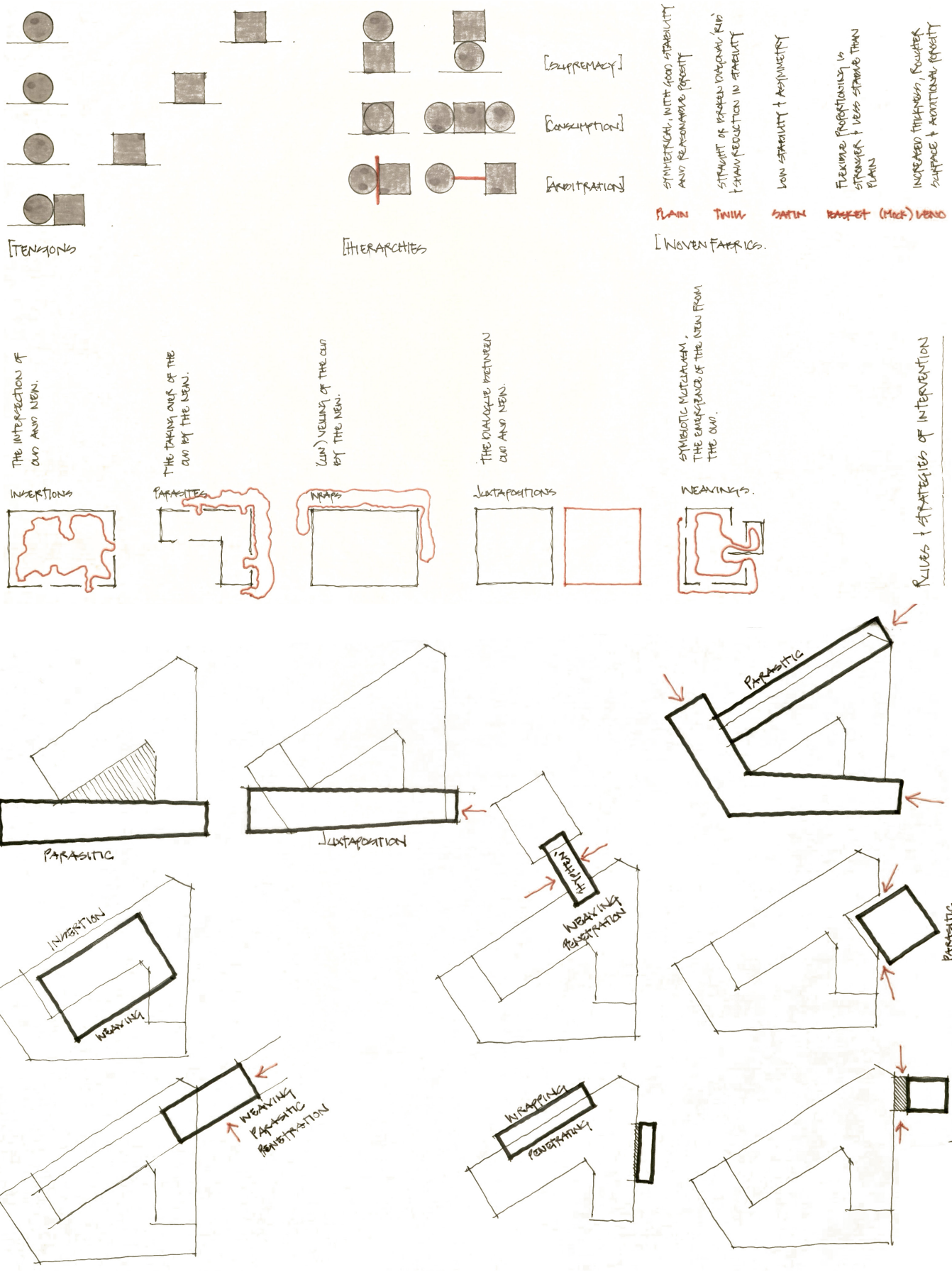
Unit to Whole

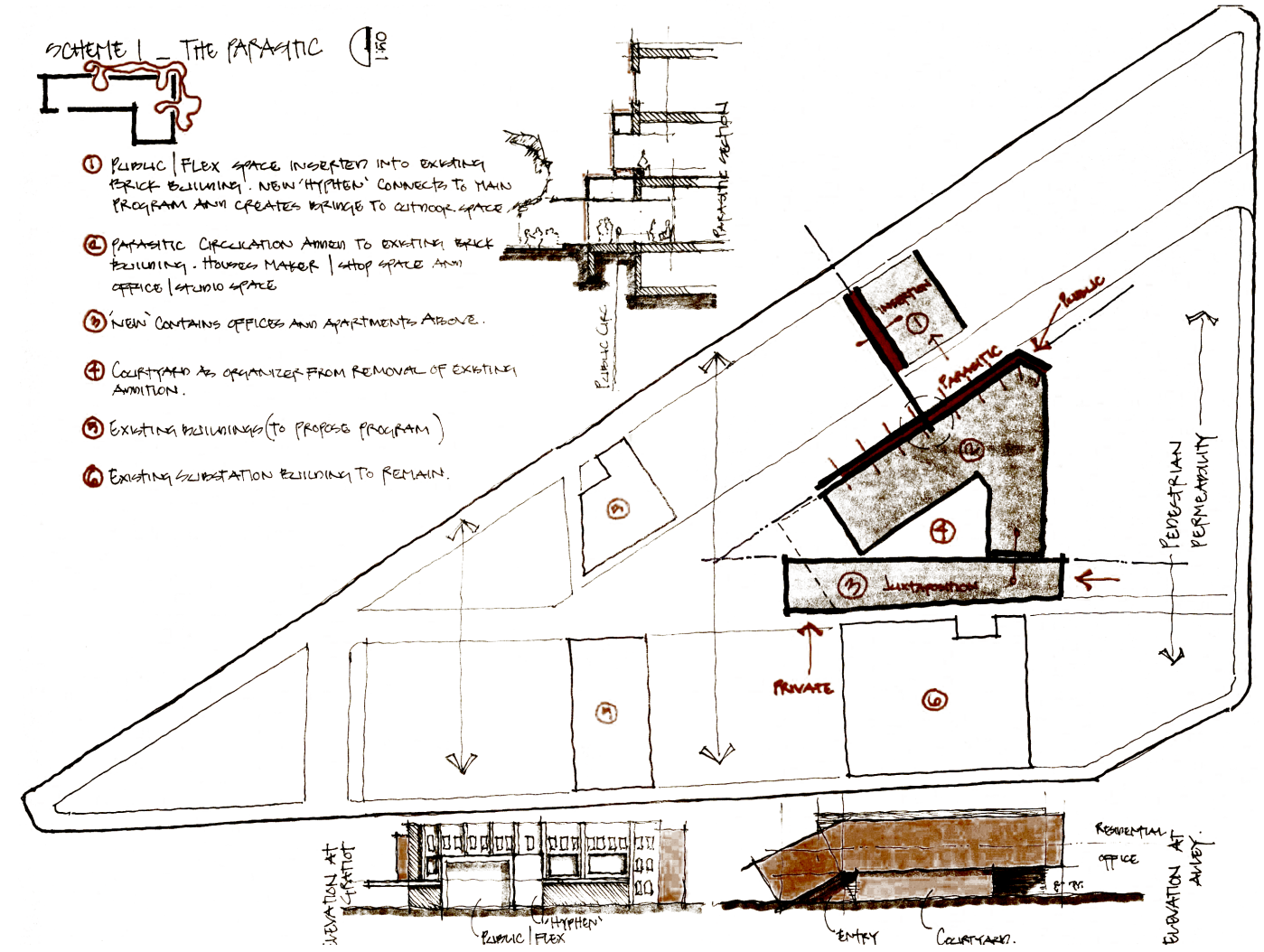


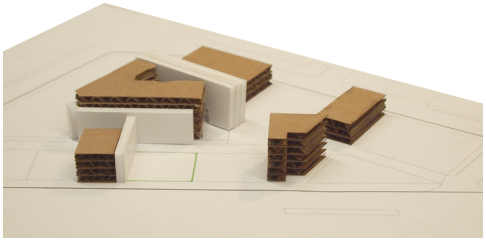
Natural Light

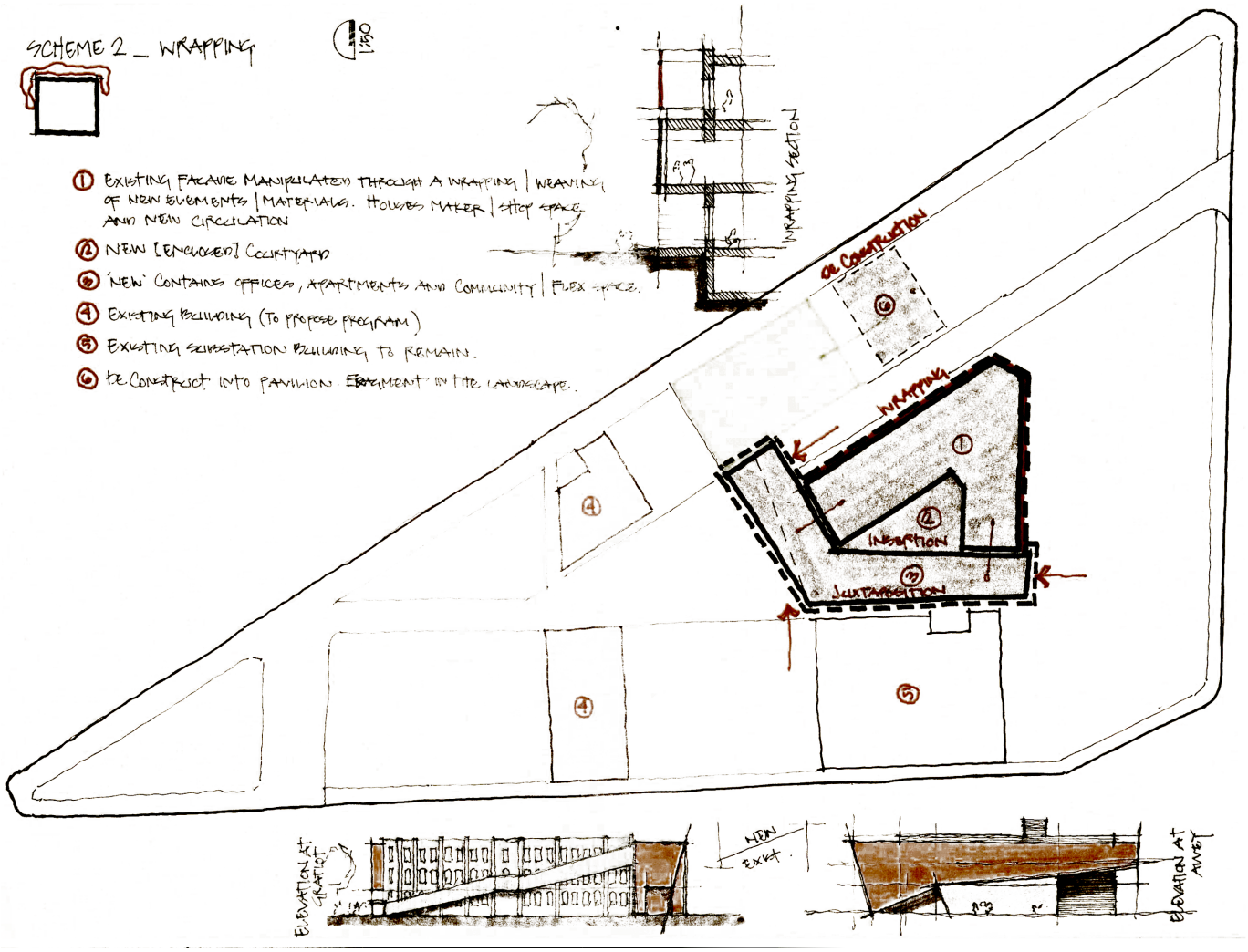


Symmetry and Balance

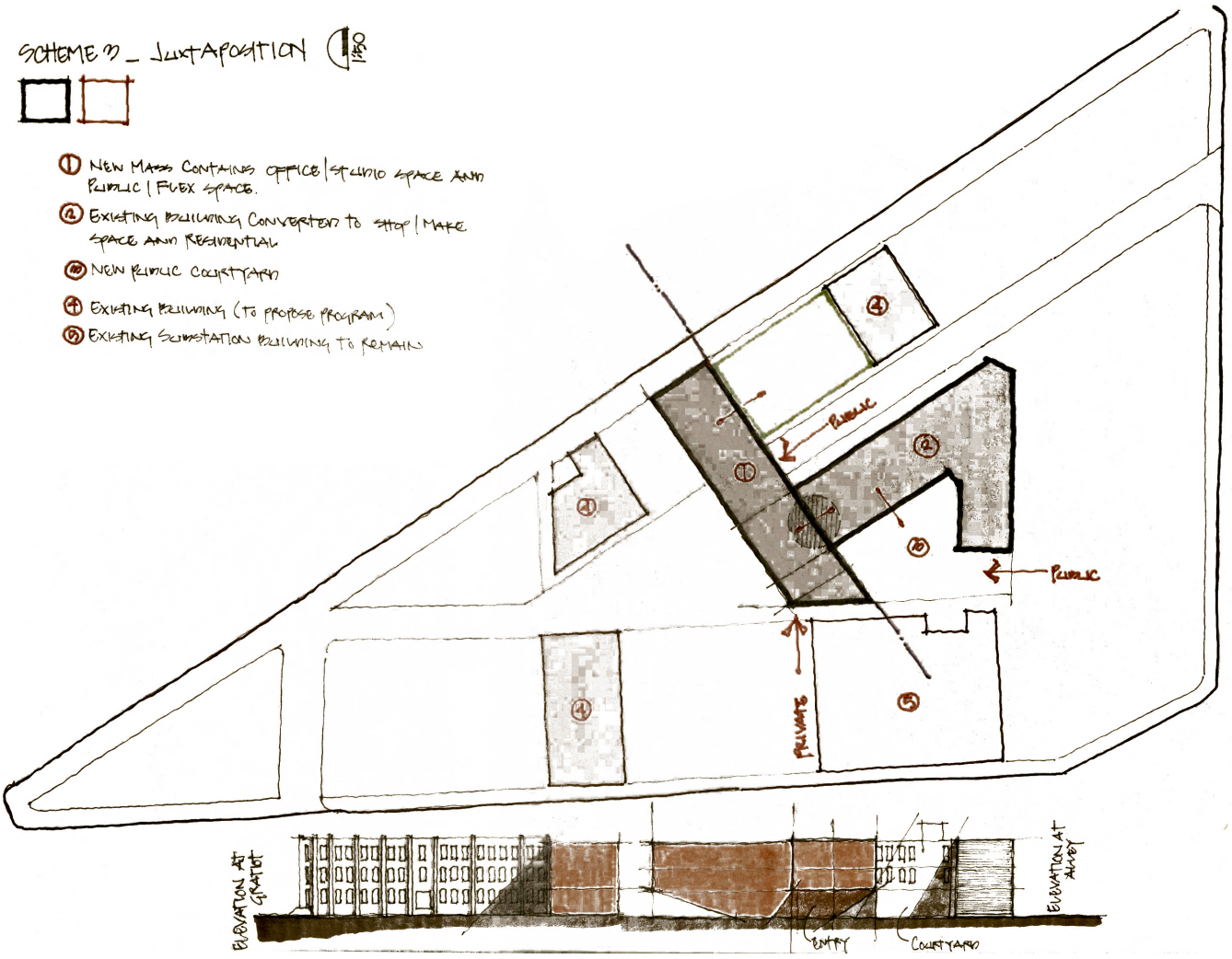

TENSIONS
HIERARCHIES
[SUPREMACY]
[CONSUMPTION]
[ARBITRATION]
SYMMETRICAL, WITH GOOD STABILITY AND REASONABLE POROSITY
STRAIGHT OR PROPER DIAGONAL RIBS & SOME REDUCTION IN STABILITY
LOW STABILITY & ASYMMETRY
FLEXIBLE PROPORTIONS IS STRONGER & LESS STRONG THAN PLAIN
INCREASED THICKNESS, ROUGHER SURFACE & ADDITIONAL POROSITY
PLAIN
TWILL
SATIN
BASKET
(MOCK) LENO
WOVEN FABRICS.
RULES & STRATEGIES OF INTERVENTION
THE INTERSECTION OF OLD AND NEW.
INSERTIONS
THE TAKING OVER OF THE OLD BY THE NEW.
PARASITES
(UN) VEILING OF THE OLD BY THE NEW.
WRAPS
THE DIALOGUE INBETWEEN OLD AND NEW.
JUXTAPOSITIONS
SYMBIOTIC MUTUALISM, THE EMERGENCE OF THE NEW FROM THE OLD.
MEANINGS.
PARASITIC
JUXTAPOSITION
PARASITIC
INSERTION
MEANING
WEAVING PENETRATION
WEAVING PARASITIC PENETRATION
WRAPPING
PENETRATING
PARASITIC INSERTION
JUXTAPOSITION

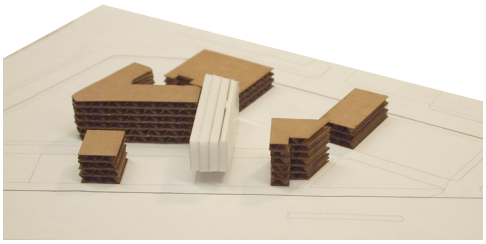

SCHEME 1 – THE PARASITIC
1:50
① PUBLIC | FLEX SPACE INSERTED INTO EXISTING BRICK BUILDING. NEW 'HYPHEN' CONNECTS TO MAIN PROGRAM AND CREATES BRIDGE TO OUTDOOR SPACE.
② PARASITIC CIRCULATION ADDED TO EXISTING BRICK BUILDING. HOUSES MAKER | SHOP SPACE AND OFFICE | STUDIO SPACE
③ 'NEW' CONTAINS OFFICES AND APARTMENTS ABOVE.
④ COURTYARD AS ORGANIZER FROM REMOVAL OF EXISTING ADDITION.
⑤ EXISTING BUILDINGS (TO PROPOSE PROGRAM)
⑥ EXISTING SUBSTATION BUILDING TO REMAIN.
PUBLIC CAFE
PARASITIC CIRCULATION
HYPHEN
①
PUBLIC
PARASITIC
②
④
③ LIVE/WORK UNITS
PEDESTRIAN PERMEABILITY
PRIVATE
⑤
⑥
ELEVATION AT CHESTNUT
PUBLIC | FLEX
'HYPHEN'
RESIDENTIAL
OFFICE
ENTRY
COURTYARD
ELEVATION AT ALLEY

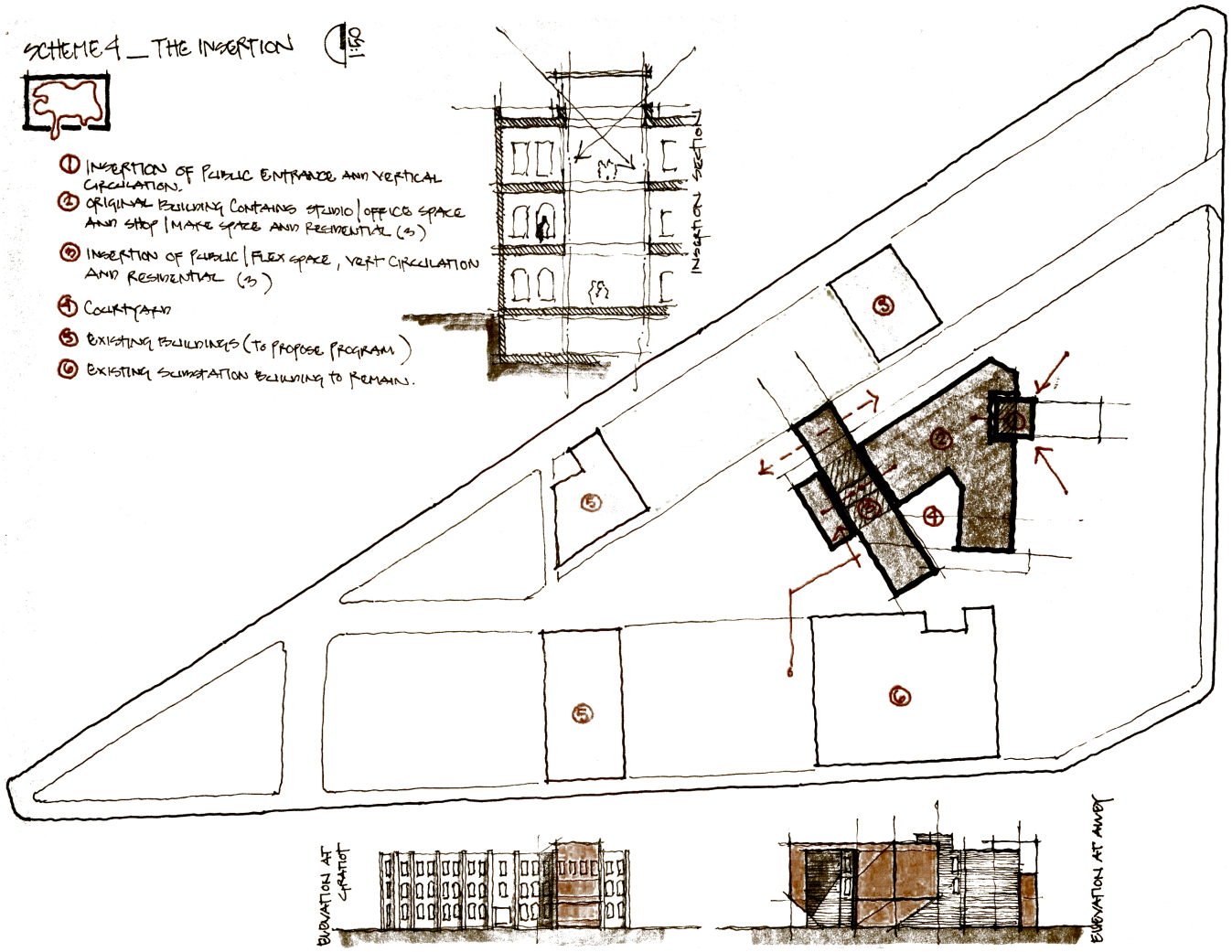


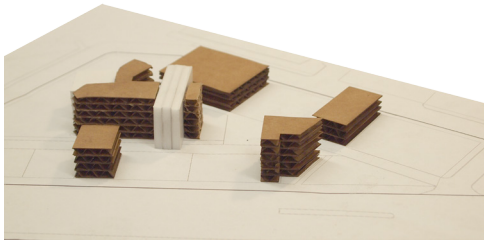

SCHEME 2 _ WRAPPING
1:150
① EXISTING FACADE MANIPULATED THROUGH A WRAPPING | WEAVING OF NEW ELEMENTS | MATERIALS. HOUSES MAKER | ETHOS SPACE AND NEW CIRCULATION
② NEW [ENCLOSED] COURTYARD
③ 'NEW' CONTAINS OFFICES, APARTMENTS AND COMMUNITY | FLEX SPACE.
④ EXISTING BUILDING (TO PROPOSE PROGRAM)
⑤ EXISTING SUBSTATION BUILDING TO REMAIN.
⑥ RE-CONSTRUCT INTO PAVILION. EMBEDMENT IN THE LANDSCAPE.
WRAPPING SECTION
OR CONSTRUCTION
WRAPPING
INSERTION
JUXTAPOSITION
NEW EXIT
ELEVATION AT
ELEVATION AT

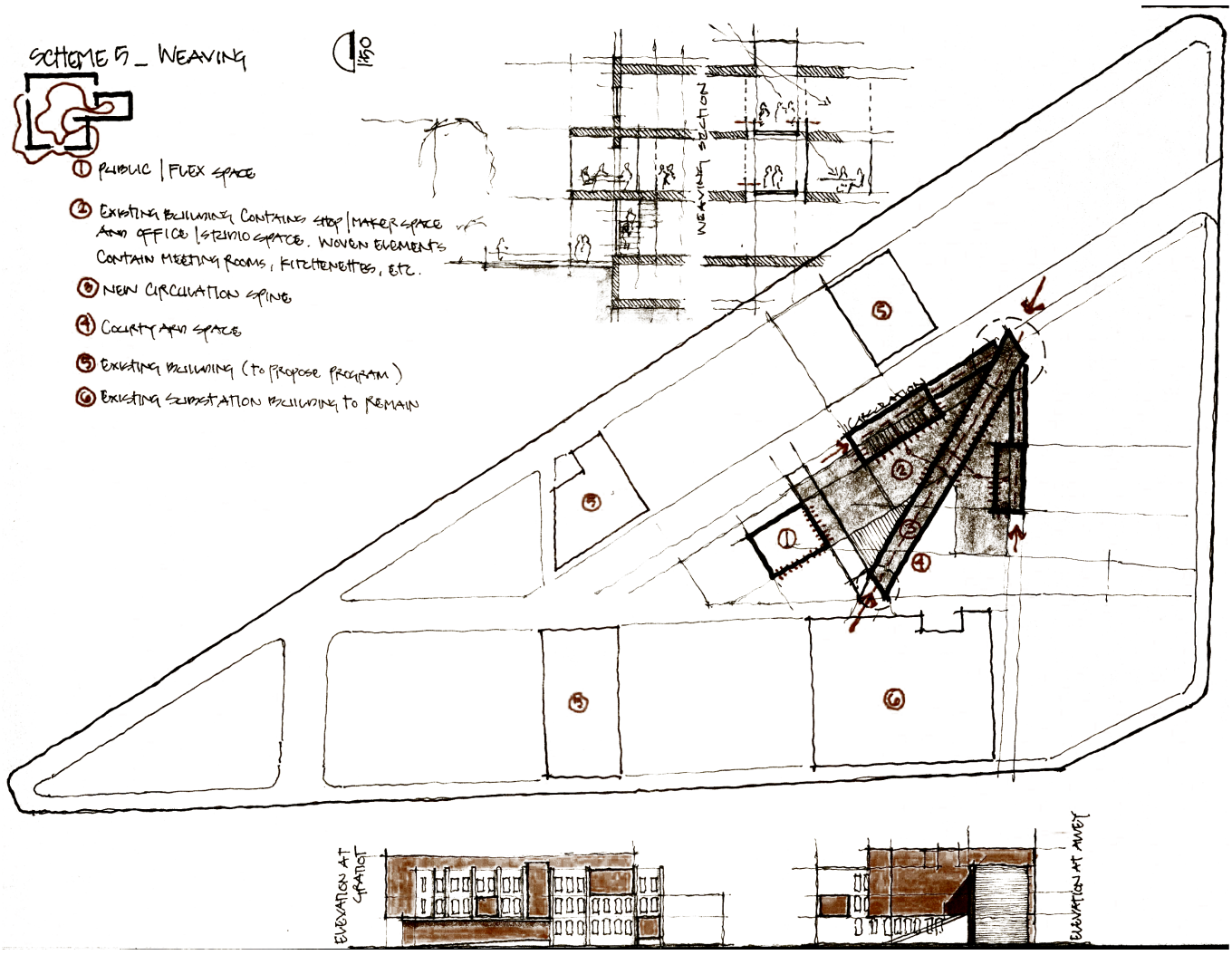


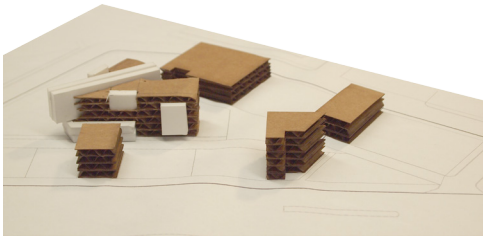

SCHEME 2 _ JUXTAPOSITION
1:150
① NEW MASS CONTAINS OFFICE/STUDIO SPACE AND PUBLIC/FLEX SPACE.
④ EXISTING BUILDING CONVERTED TO SHOP/MAKE SPACE AND RESIDENTIAL
⑩ NEW PUBLIC COURTYARD
④ EXISTING BUILDING (TO PROPOSE PROGRAM)
⑤ EXISTING SUBSTATION BUILDING TO REMAIN
PUBLIC
PUBLIC
PRIVATE
ELEVATION AT GRATTOIR
ELEVATION AT AVERY
EMPTY
COURTYARD

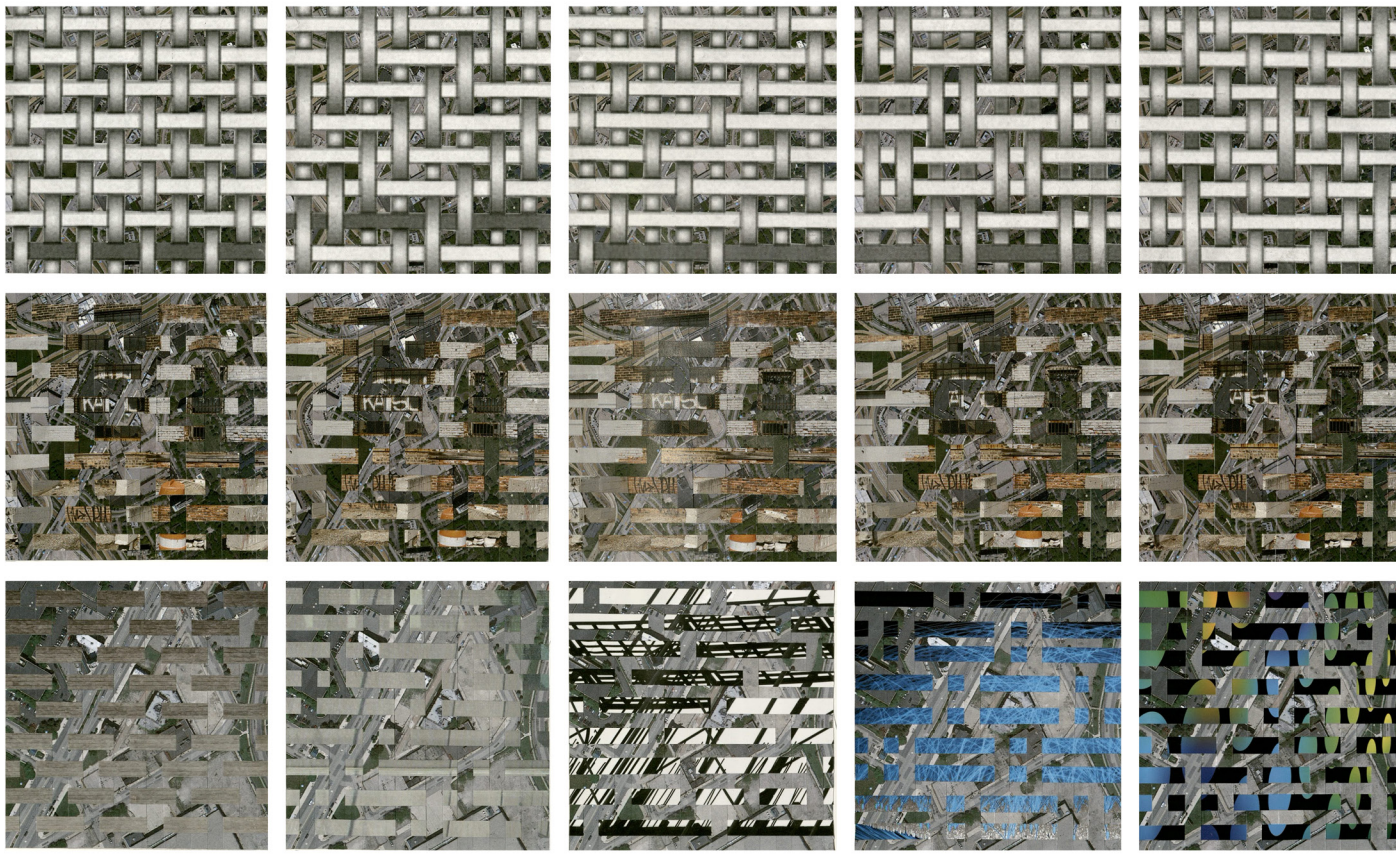



SCHEME 4 _ THE INSERTION
1 INSERTION OF PUBLIC ENTRANCE AND VERTICAL CIRCULATION.
2 ORIGINAL BUILDING CONTAINS STUDIO | OFFICES SPACE AND SHOP | MAKE SPACE AND RESIDENTIAL (3)
3 INSERTION OF PUBLIC | FLEX SPACE, VERT CIRCULATION AND RESIDENTIAL (3)
4 COURTYARD
5 EXISTING BUILDINGS (TO PROPOSE PROGRAM)
6 EXISTING SUBSTATION BUILDING TO REMAIN.
INSERTION SECTION
ELEVATION AT GRANBY
ELEVATION AT AMBY



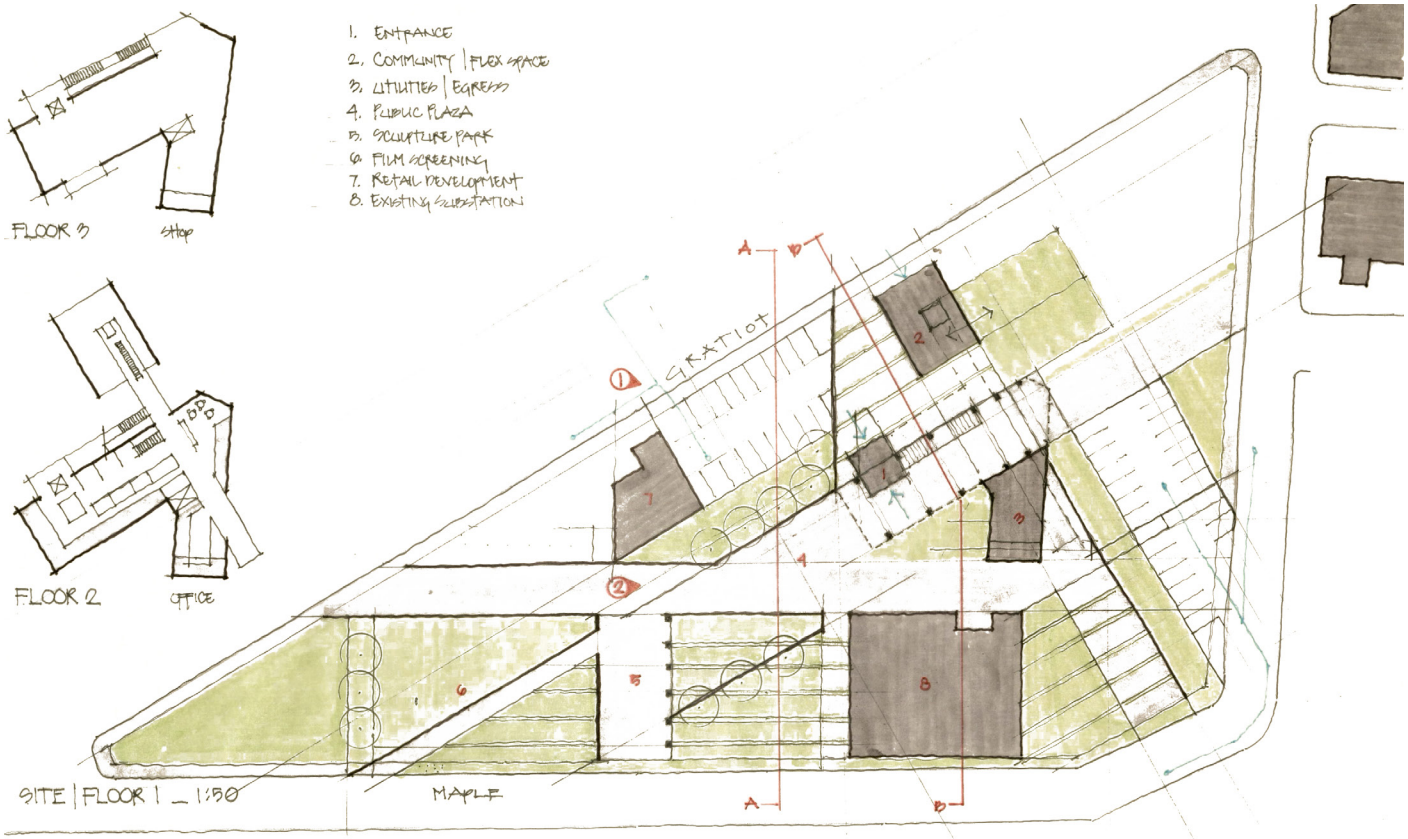

SCHEME 5 _ WEAVING
1:150
① PUBLIC | FLEX SPACE
② EXISTING BUILDING, CONTAINS SHOP | MAKER SPACE AND OFFICE | STUDIO SPACE. WOVEN ELEMENTS CONTAIN MEETING ROOMS, KITCHENETTES, ETC.
③ NEW CIRCULATION SPINE
④ COURTYARD SPACE
⑤ EXISTING BUILDING (TO PROPOSE PROGRAM)
⑥ EXISTING SUBSTATION BUILDING TO REMAIN
WEAVING SECTION
ELEVATION AT GRANBY
ELEVATION AT ANNEX

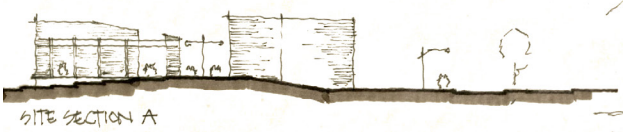


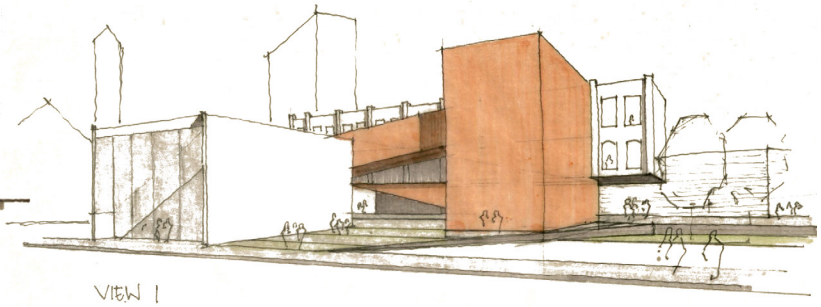


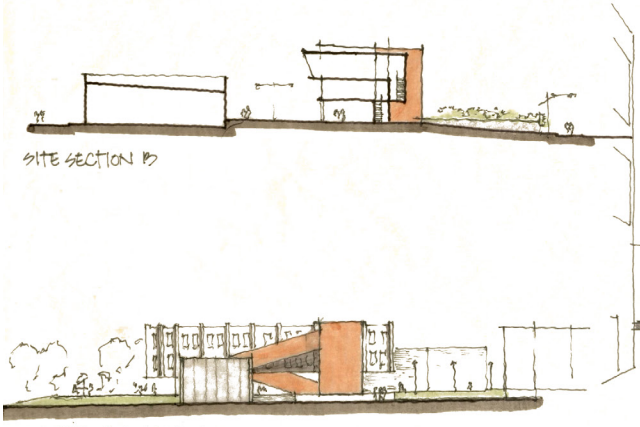


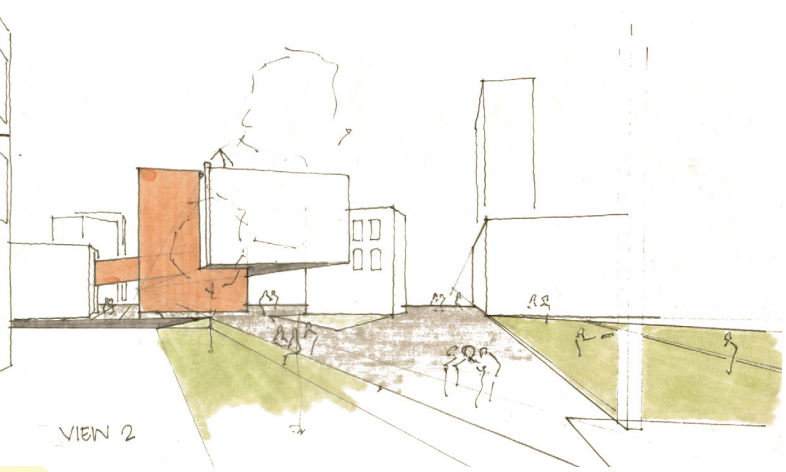
Site Context and Circulation Plan

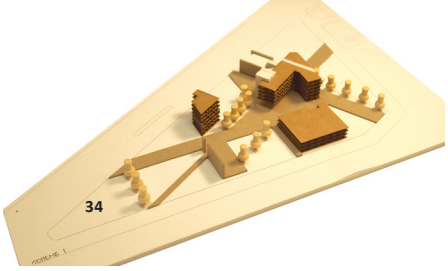

1. ENTRANCE
2. COMMUNITY | FLEX SPACE
3. UTILITIES | EGRESS
4. PUBLIC PLAZA
5. SCULPTURE PARK
6. FILM SCREENING
7. RETAIL DEVELOPMENT
8. EXISTING SUBSTATION
FLOOR 3
shop
FLOOR 2
OFFICE
GRATIOT
MAPLE
A
B
SITE | FLOOR 1 _ 1:50

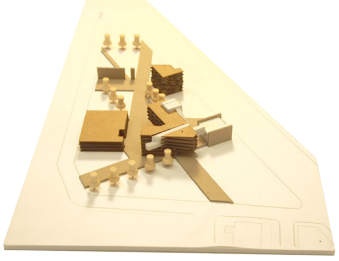

SITE SECTION A

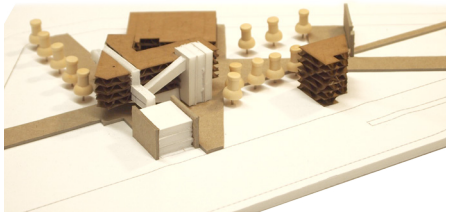

VIEW 1

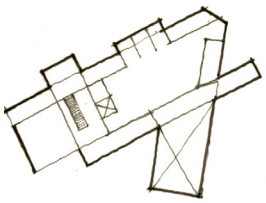

SITE SECTION B
ELEVATION AT GRATIOT


VIEW 2



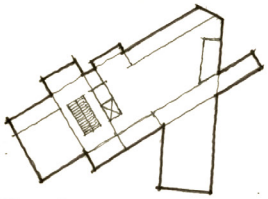






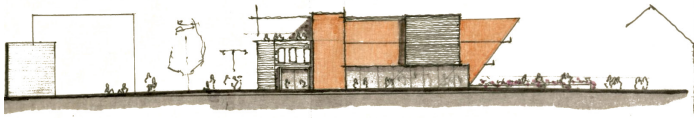
FLOOR 3 OFFICE

1. ENTRANCE
2. COMMUNITY | FLEX SPACE
3. EXHIBIT SPACE
4. PUBLIC PLAZA
5. SCULPTURE PARK
6. FILM SCREENING
7. RETAIL DEVELOPMENT
8. EXISTING SUBSTATION



FLOOR 2 SHOP

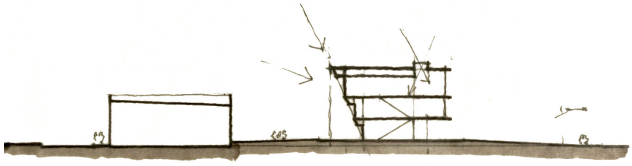
SITE | FLOOR 1 _ 1:50



SITE SECTION A



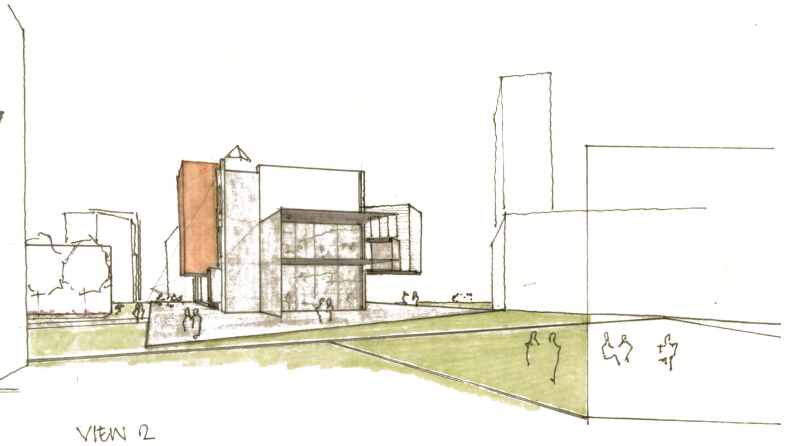
VIEW 1



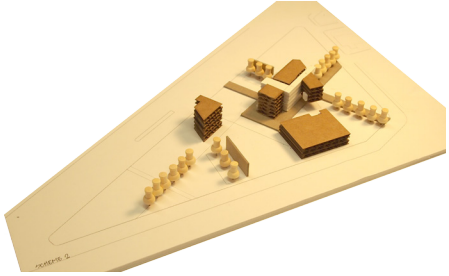
SITE SECTION B

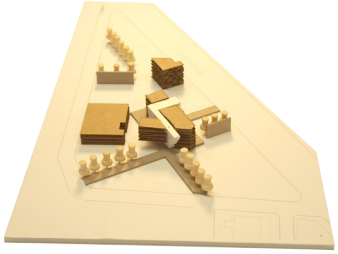


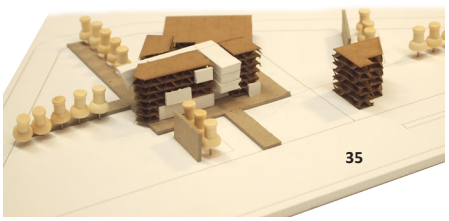
ELEVATION AT GRATIOT

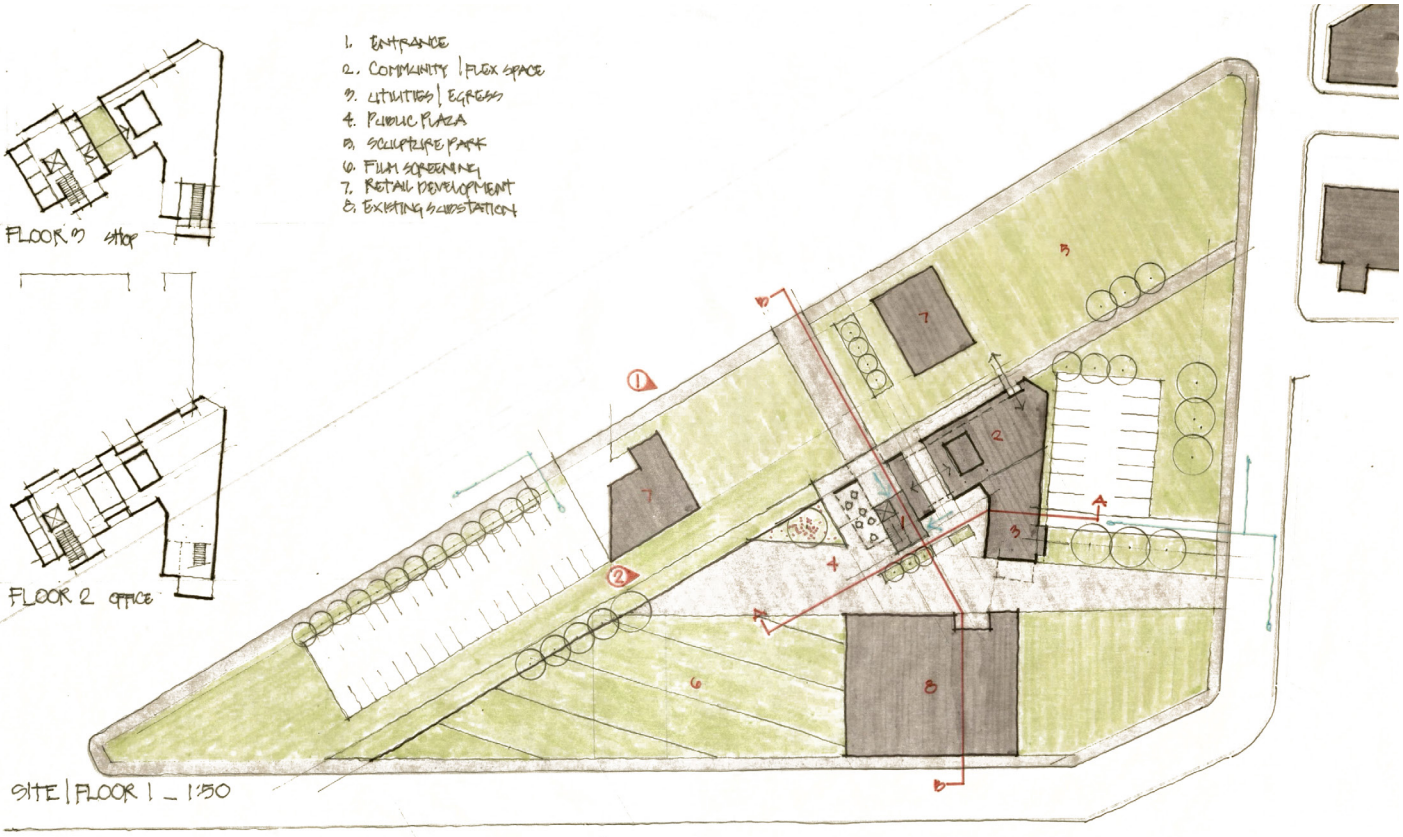


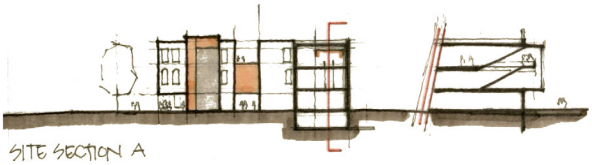
VIEW 2







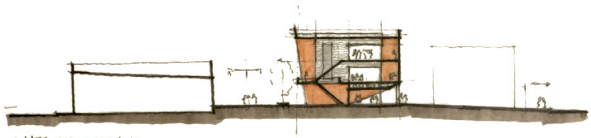




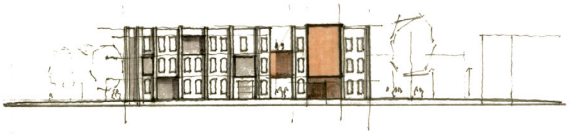
SITE SECTION A



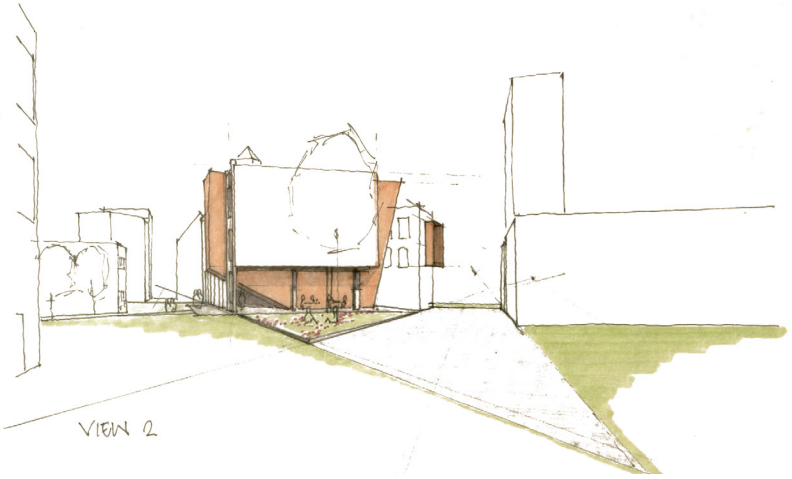
VIEW 1



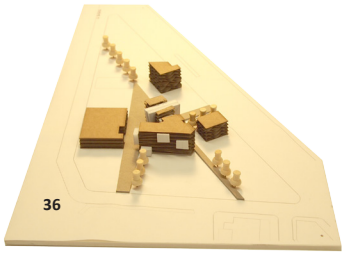
SITE SECTION B

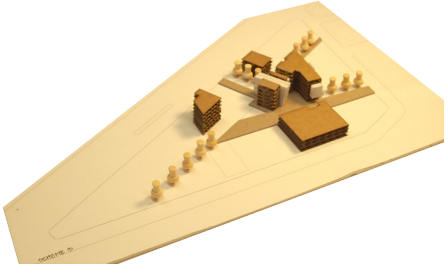


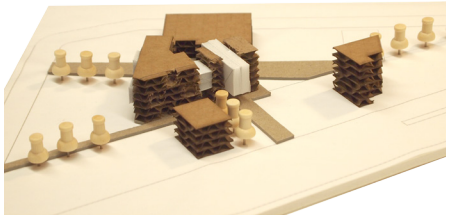
ELEVATION AT GRATIOT

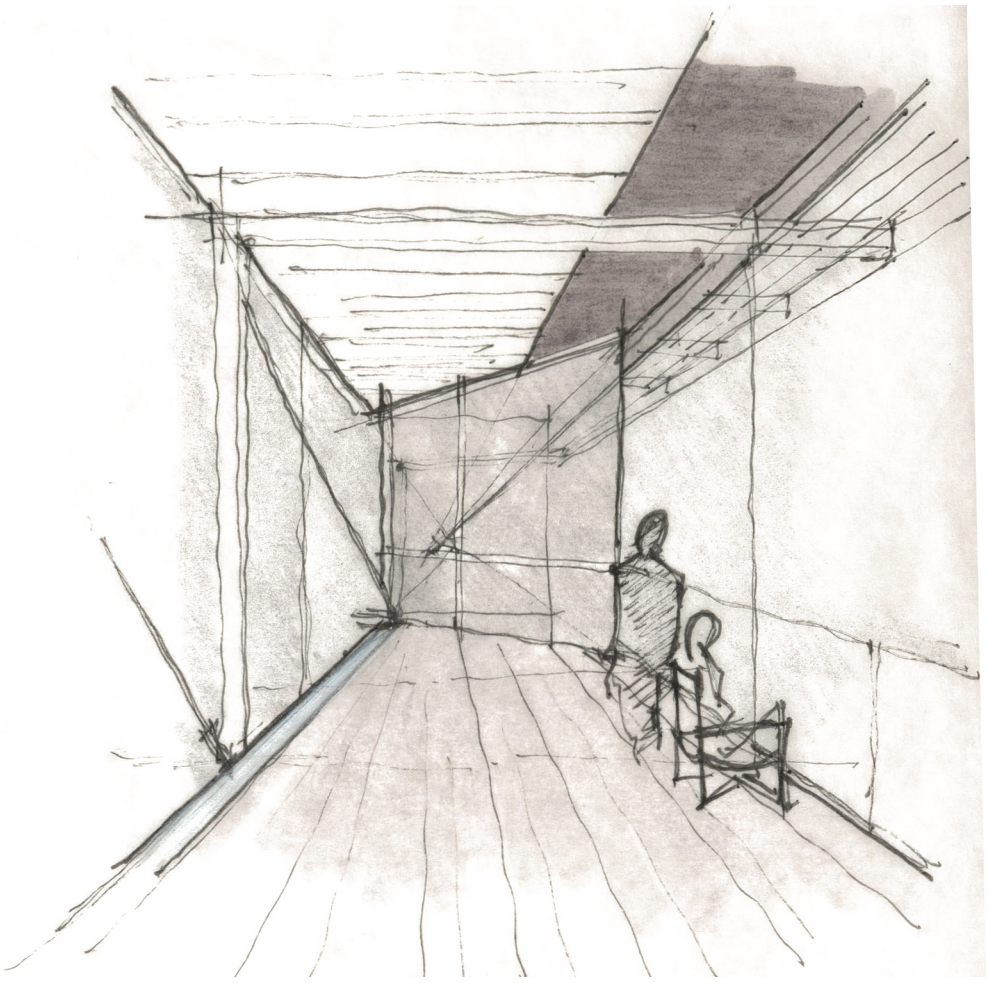


VIEW 2

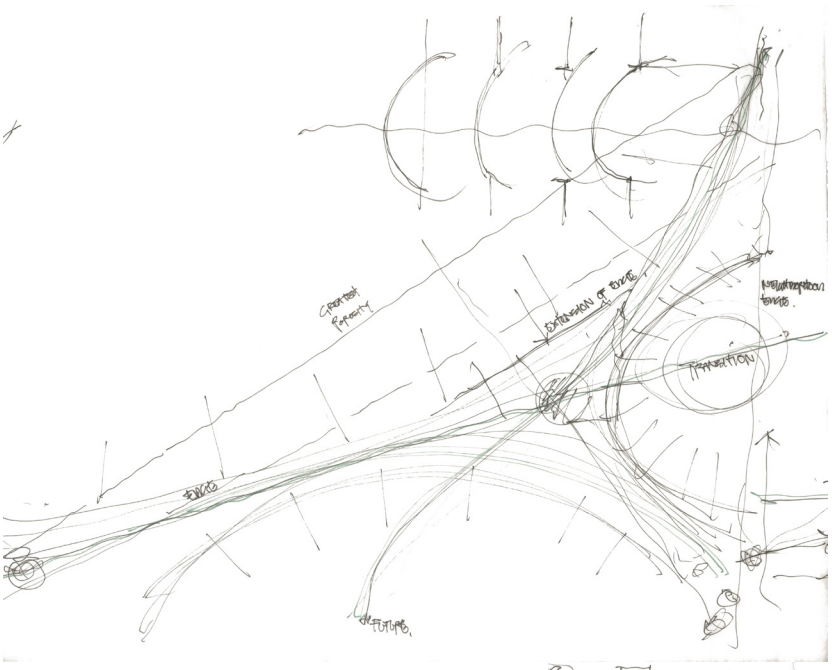


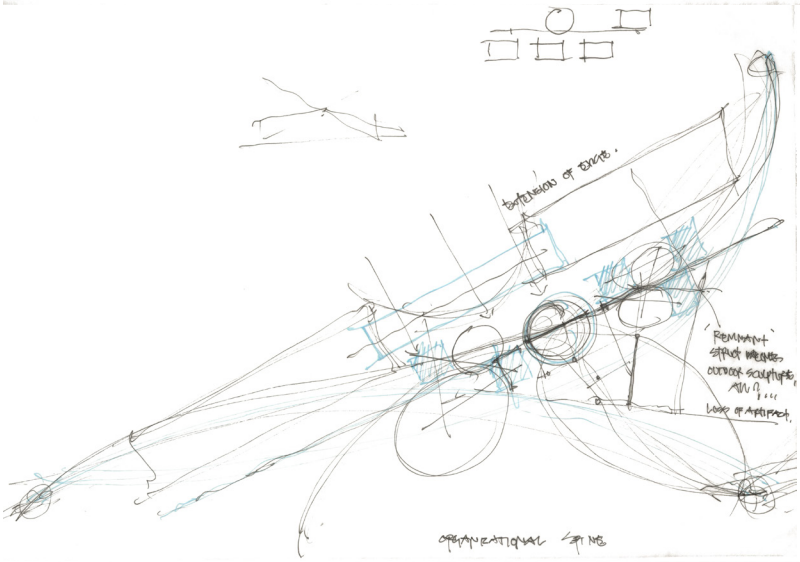


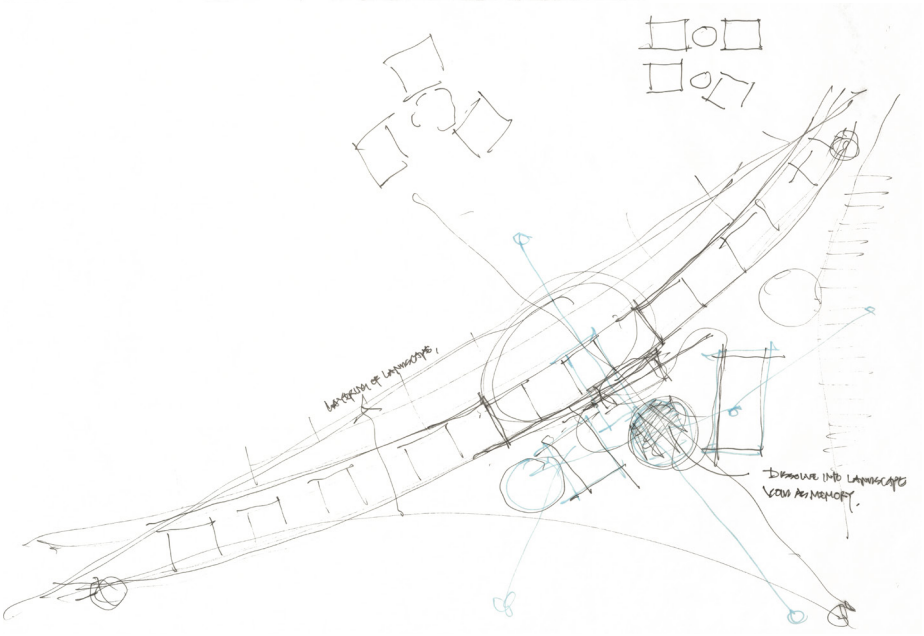


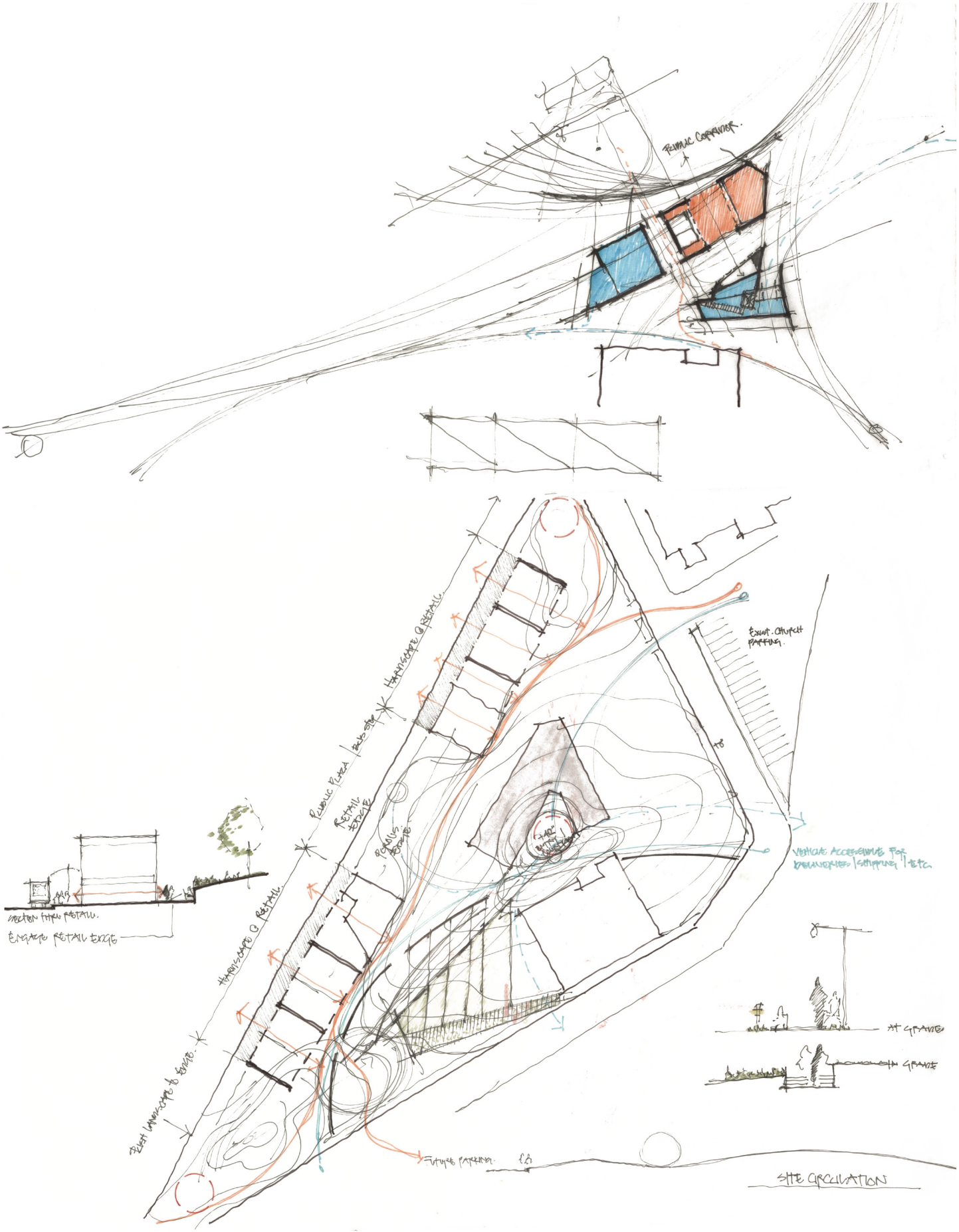


Landscape + Building Design

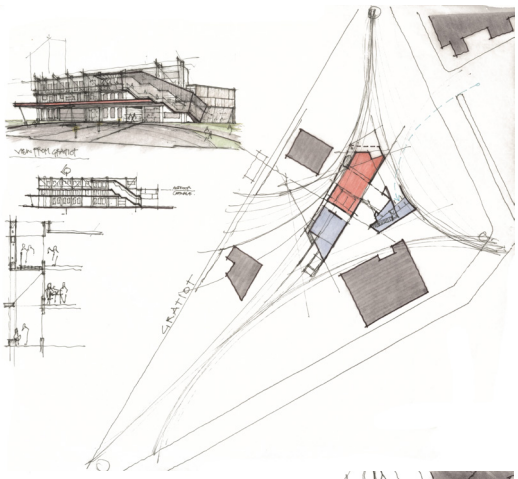

EXTENSION OF EXISTS.
TRANSITION

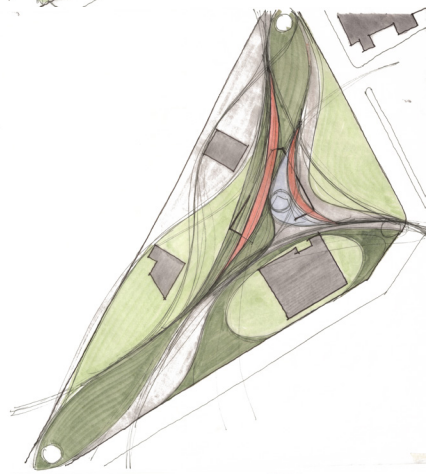

EXTENSION OF EXISTS.
REMNANT
OUTDOOR SCULPTURE
ORGANIZATIONAL

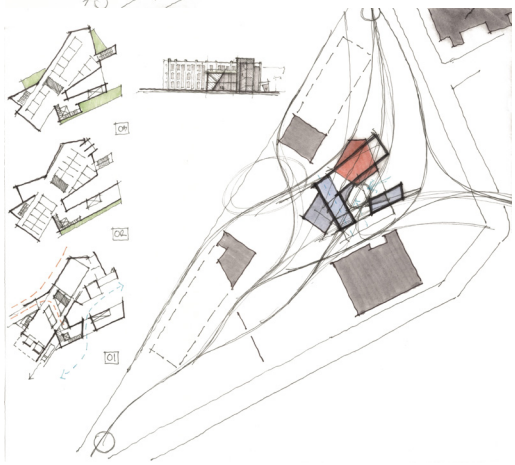

DISSOLVE INTO LANDSCAPE
VOID AS MEMORY.

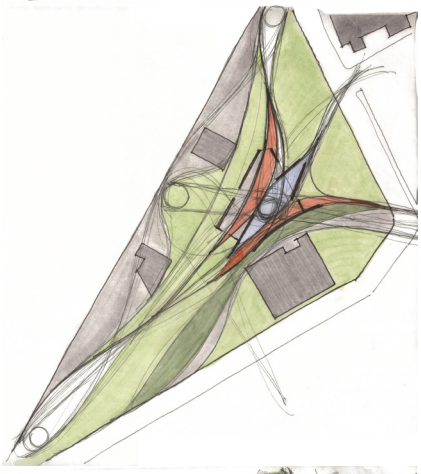

FEMALE CARRIVER.
EXIST. CHURCH PARKING.
VEHICLE ACCESSWAY FOR DELIVERIES / SHIPPING / ETC.
AT GRADE
BELOW GRADE
FUTURE PARKING
SITE CIRCULATION

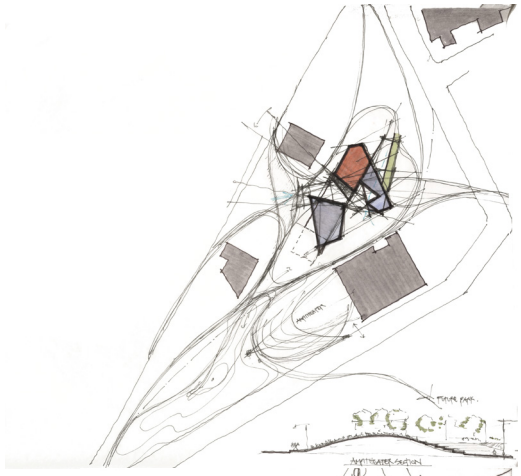




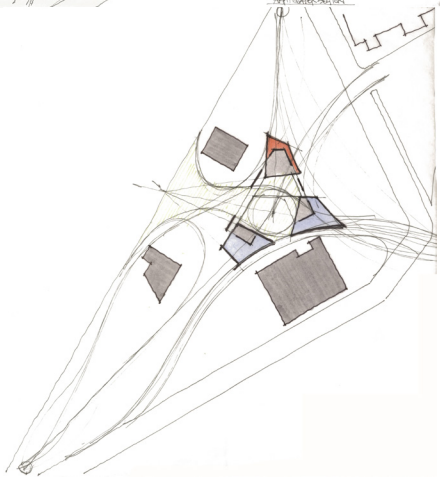






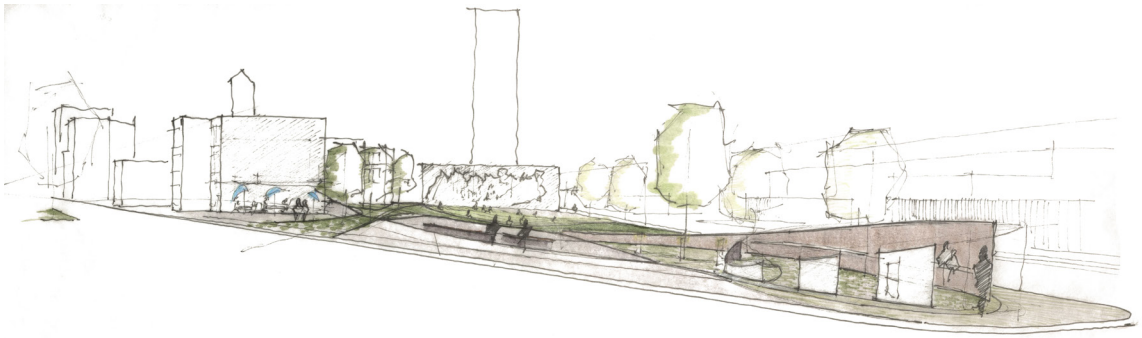


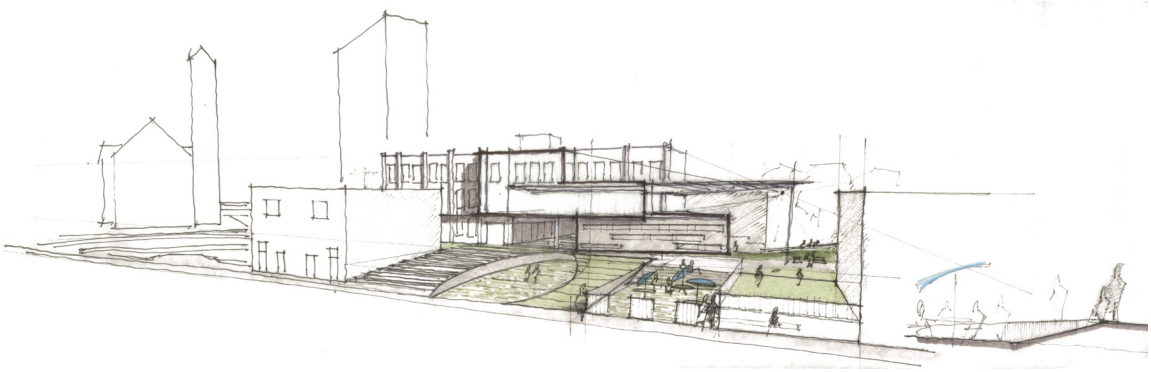


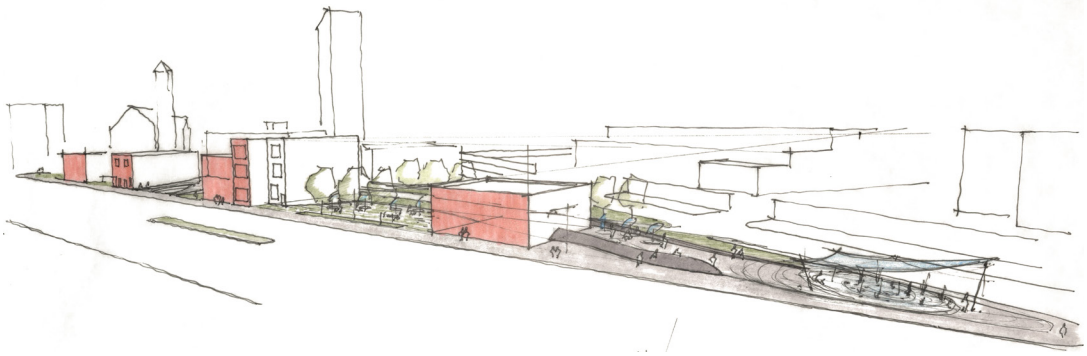


Schematic Site Plan Study



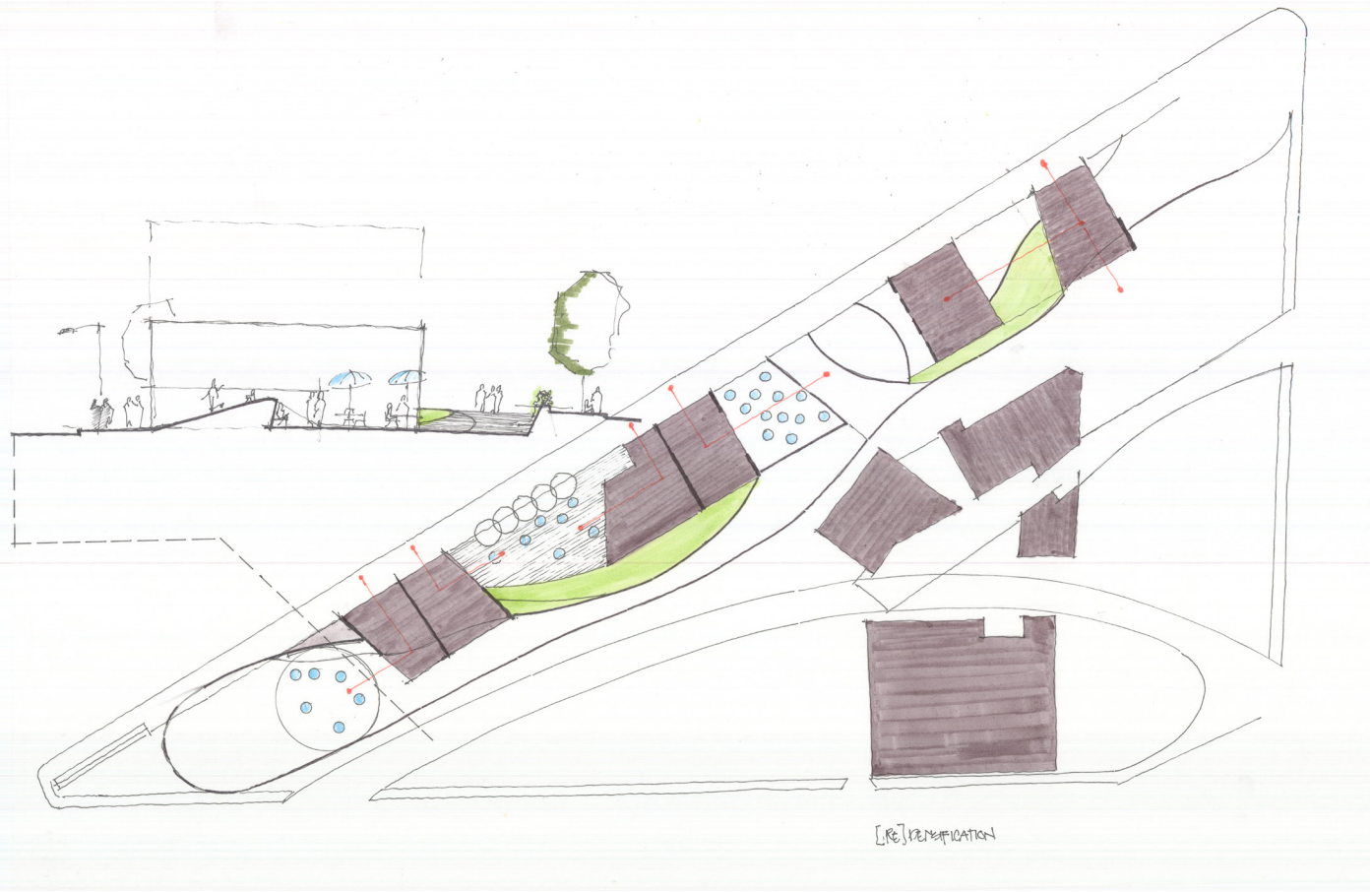




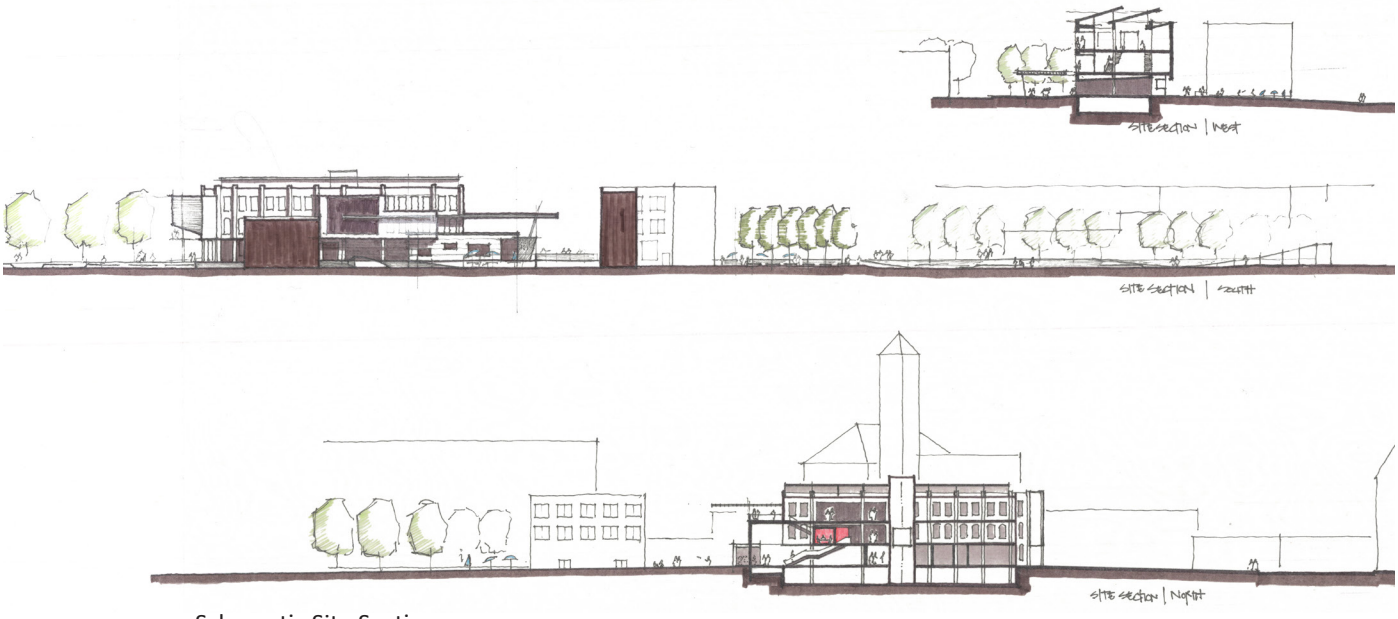




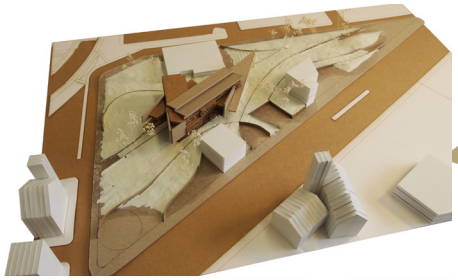
Schematic Site Perspectives

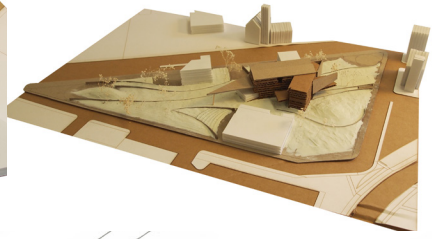


Future Densification Study

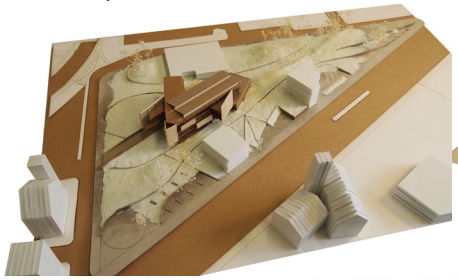


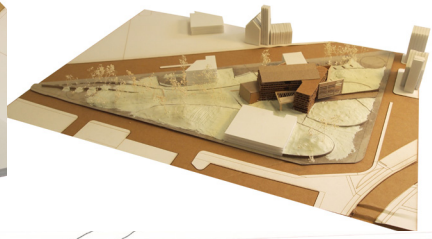
Schematic Site Sections





Site Plan | Scheme 1

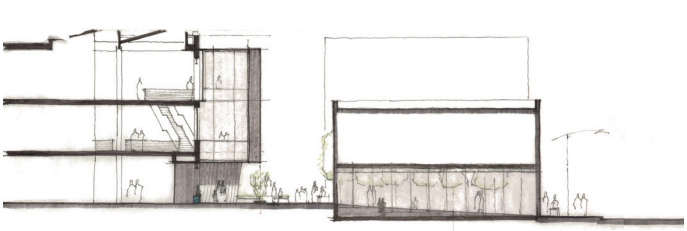


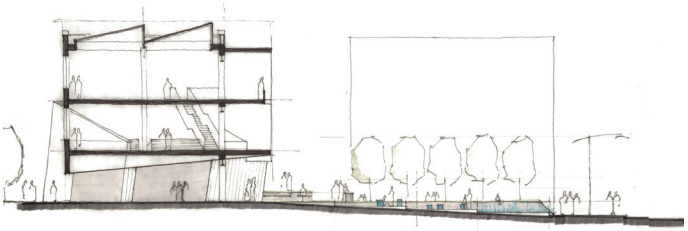


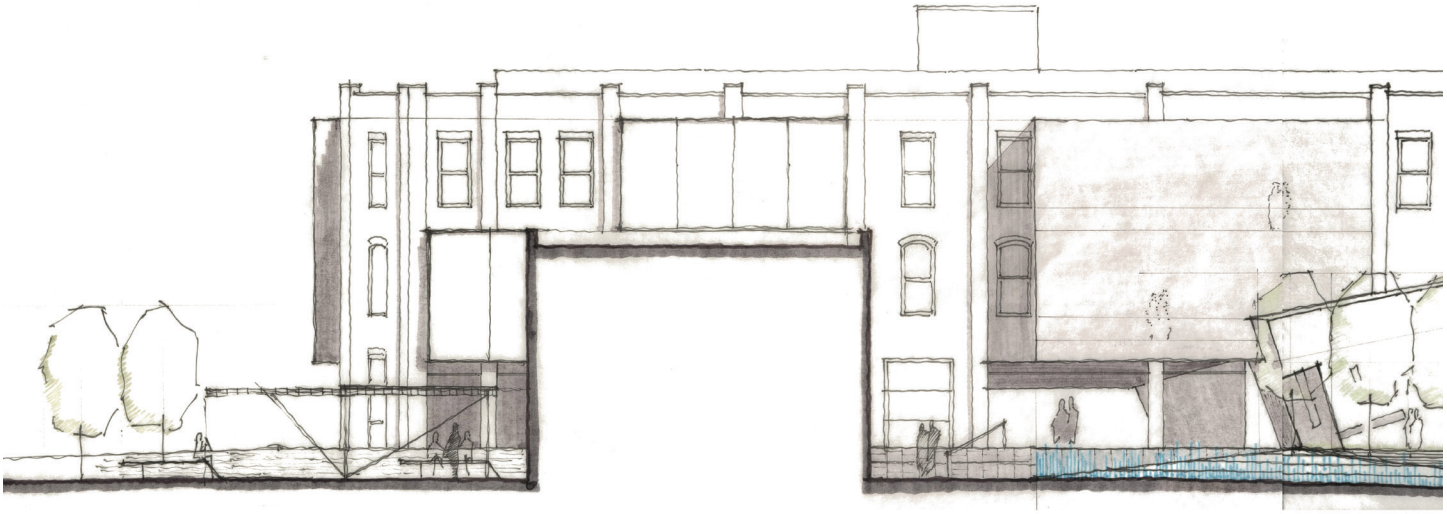
Site Plan | Scheme 2



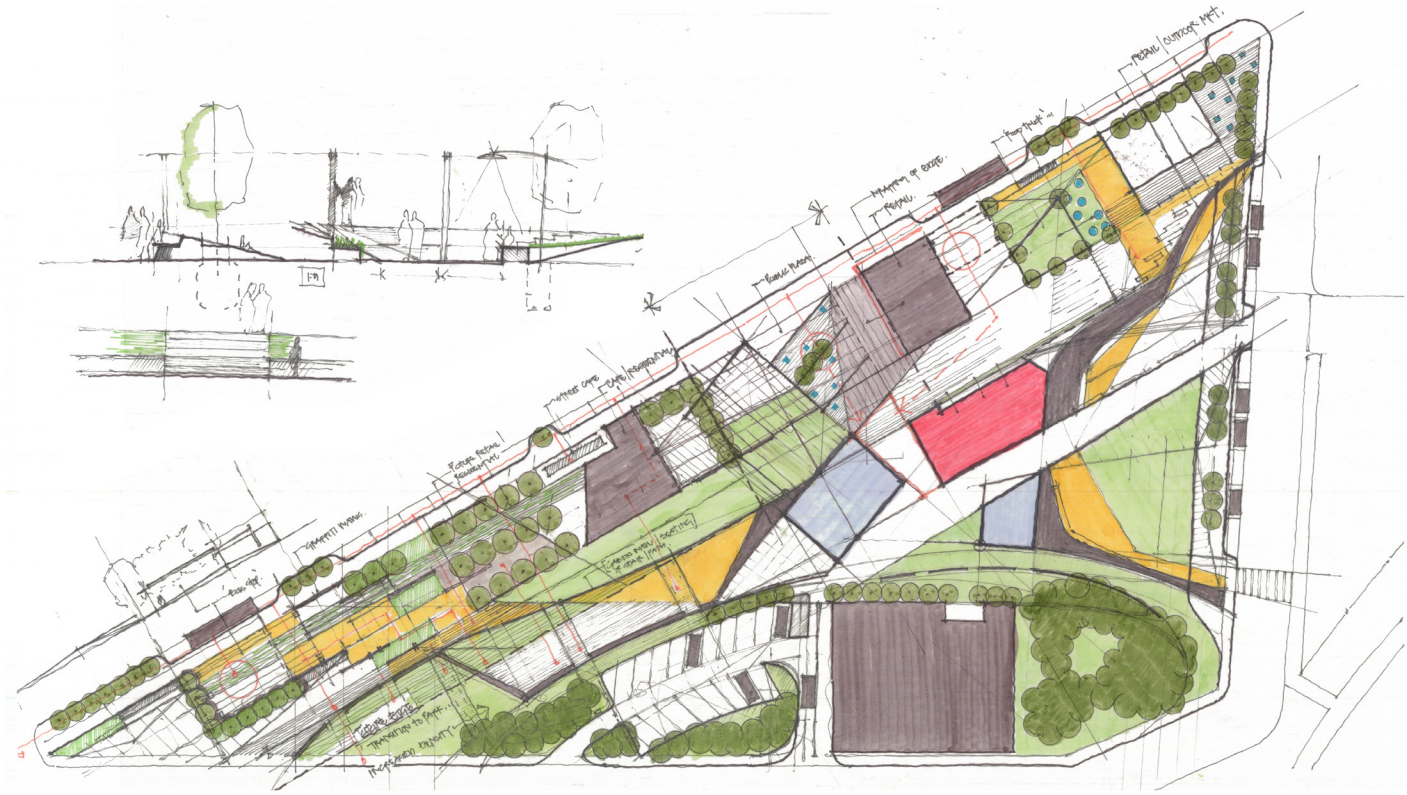
Future Densification Study



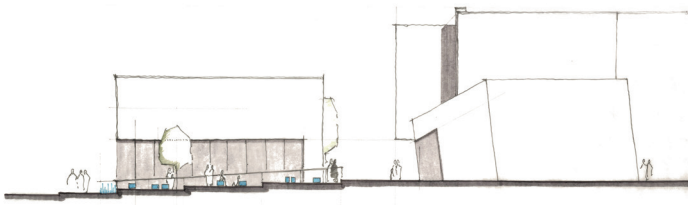


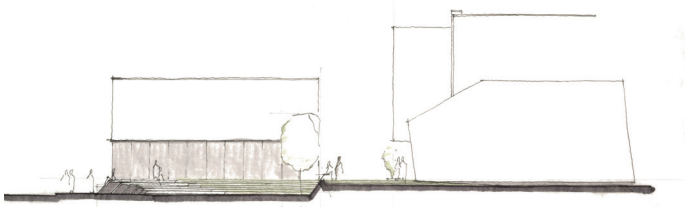


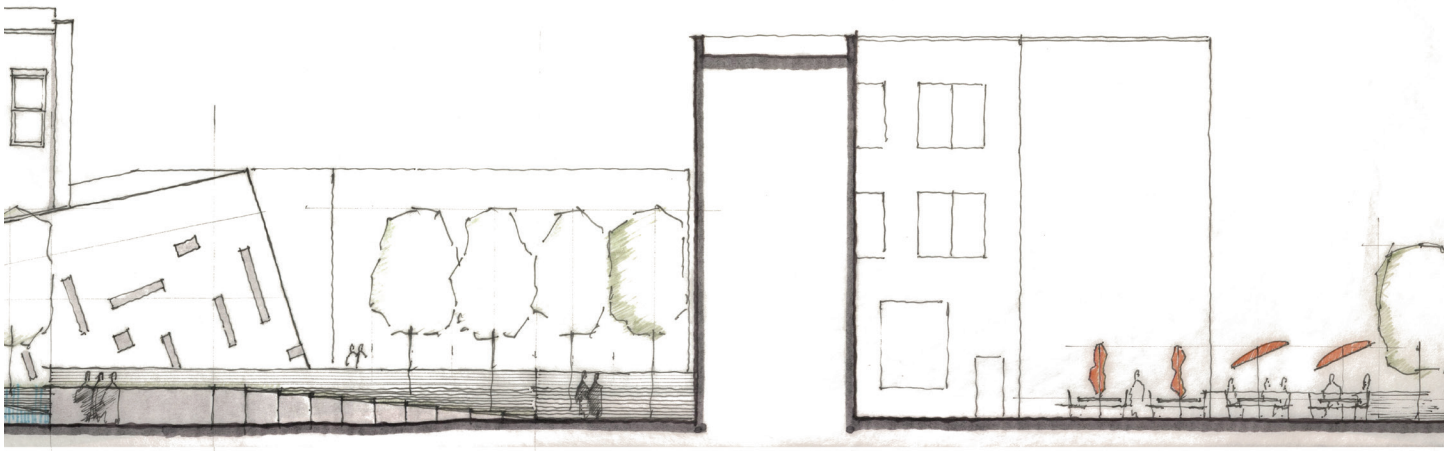
Site Sections

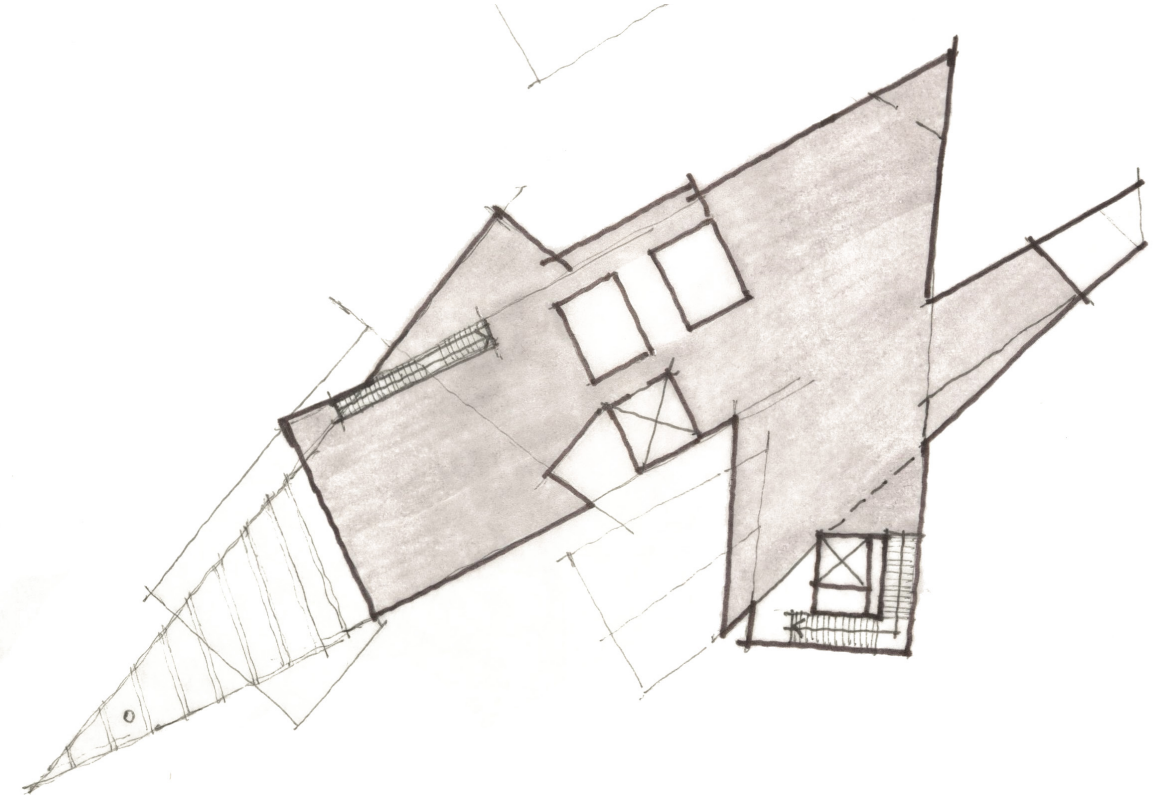


Site Plan





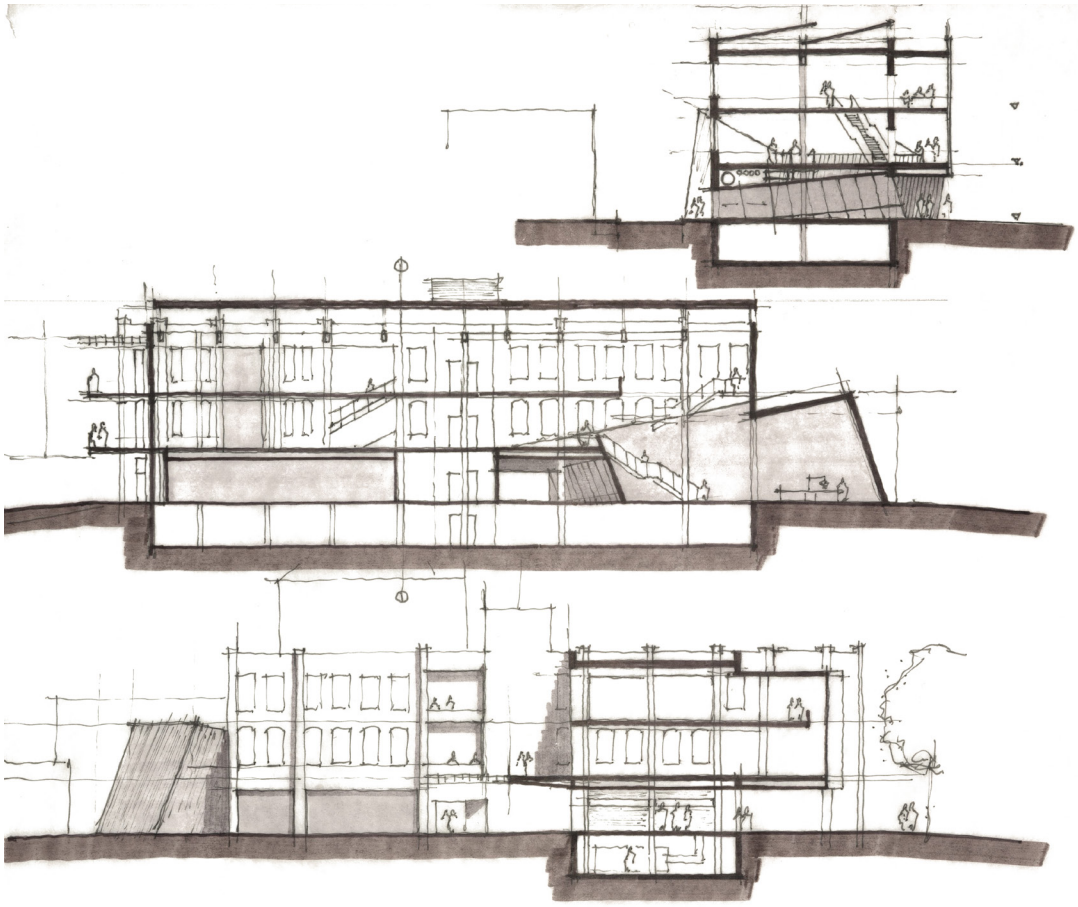




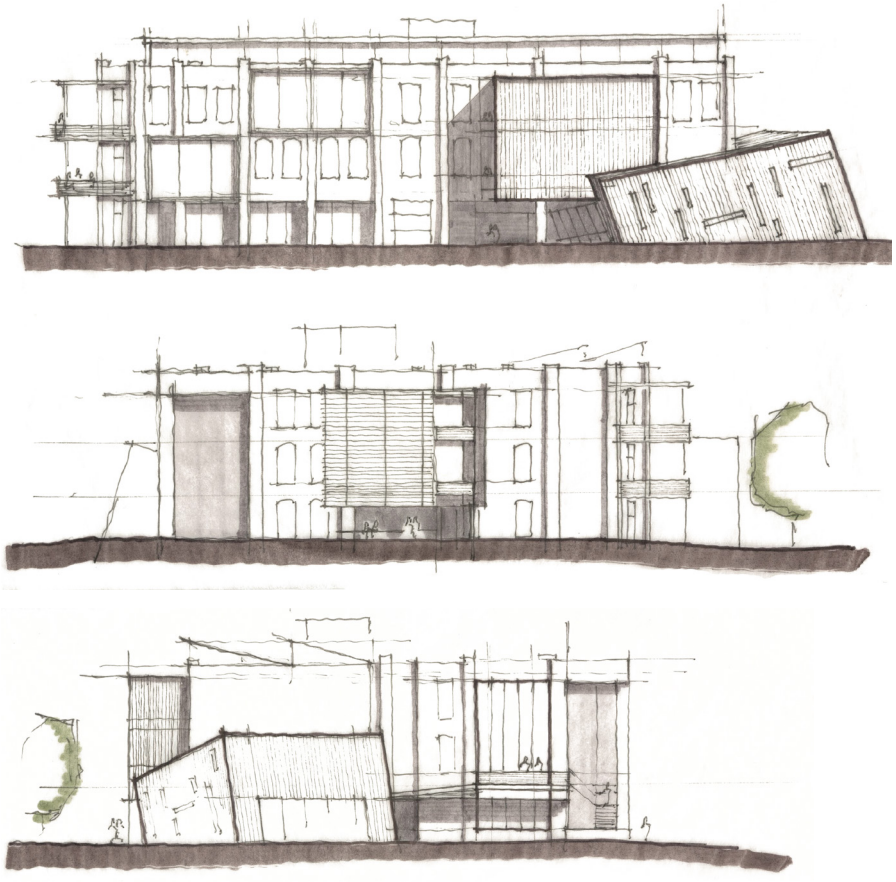
Floor 03



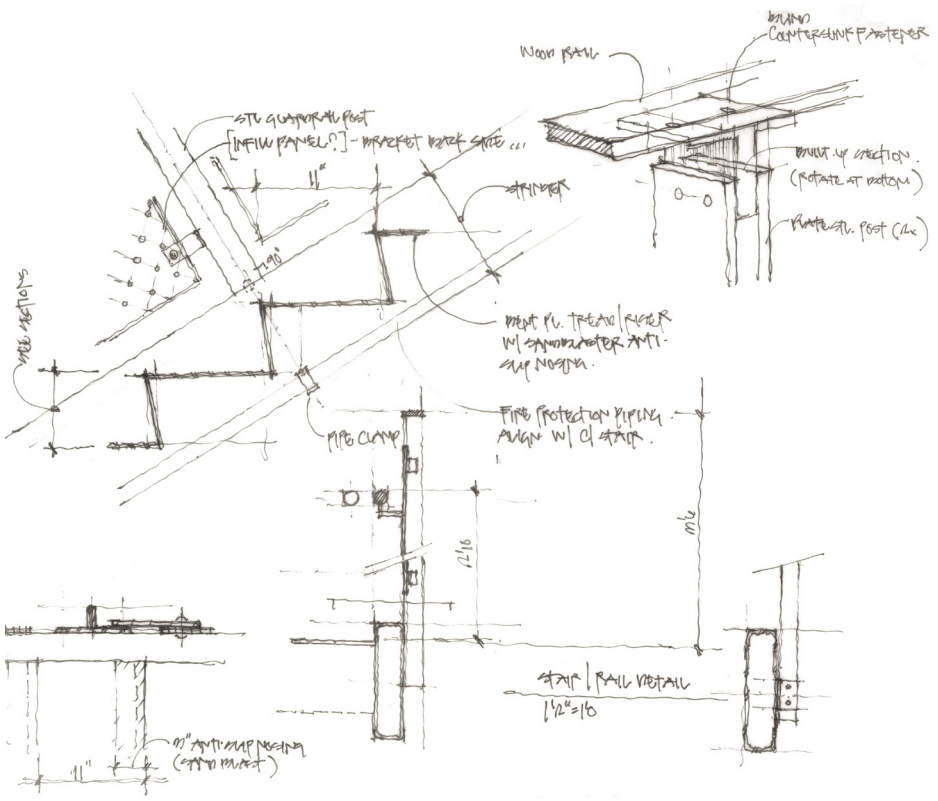
Floor 02

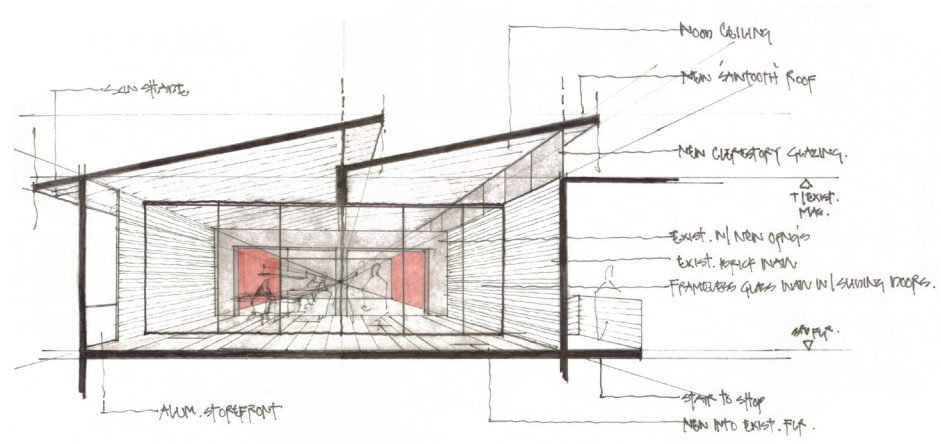


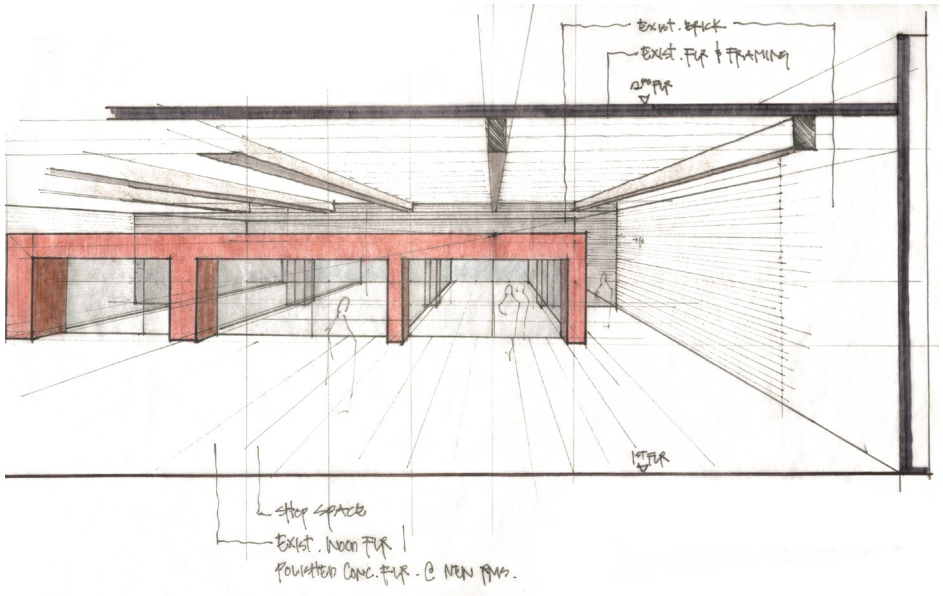
Building Sections

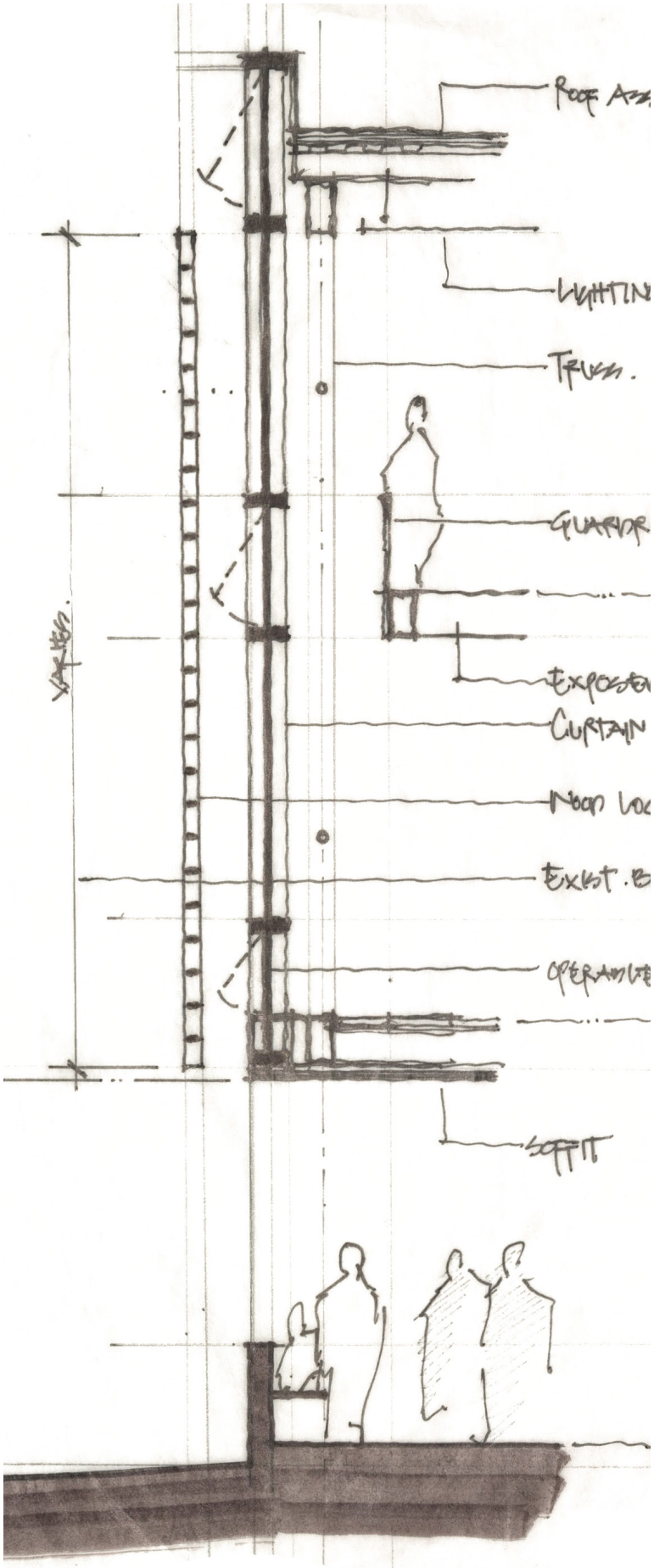


Exterior Elevations

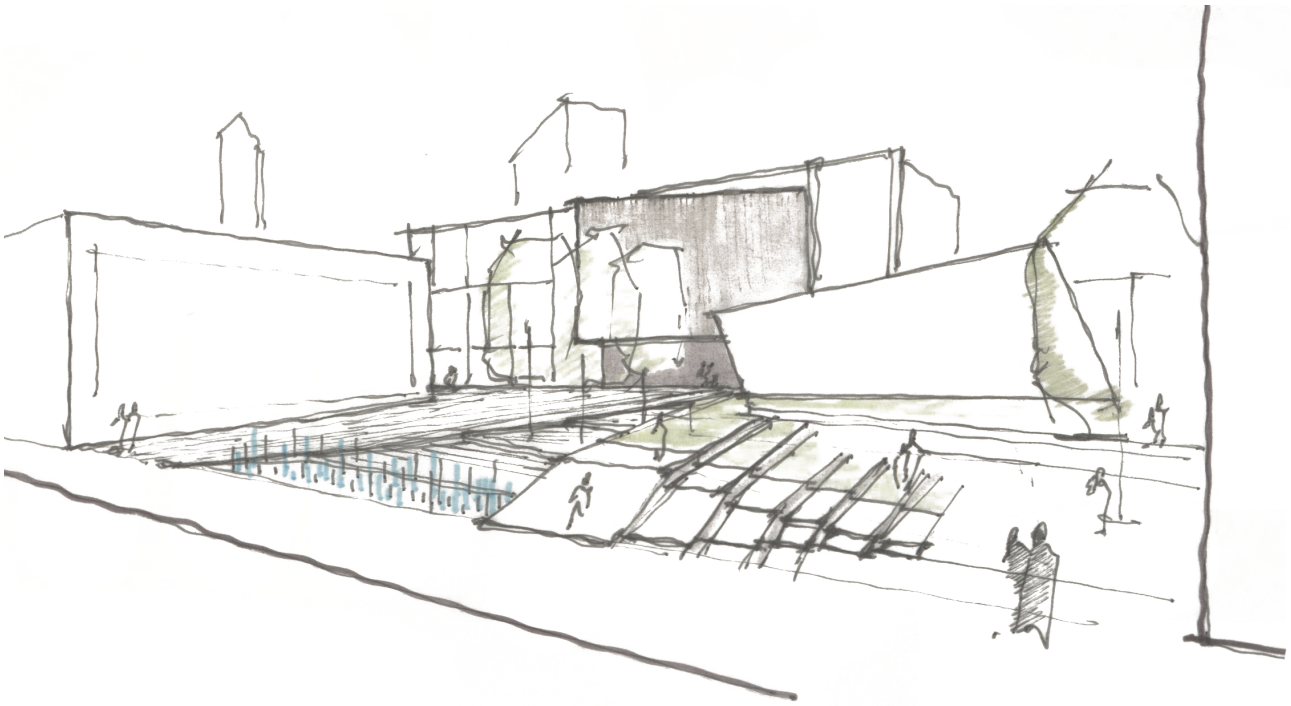

WOOD RAIL
STL CLAMPORAL POST
[INFILL PANEL?] - BRACKET BACK SIDE
11"
STIFFNER
MTL RAILINGS
MTL PL. TREAD | RISER W| SANDBLASTED ANTI-SLIP FINISH.
FIRE PROTECTION PIPING ALIGN W| C| STAIR.
PIPE CLAMP
12'10
m/u
STAIR | RAIL DETAIL
1'12"=1'0
3/4" ANTI-SLIP NOSING (EPOXY MORTAR)
11"


WOOD CEILING
NEW SAWTOOTH ROOF
NEW CLERESTORY GLAZING.
T| EXIST. MAS.
EXIST. W| NEW OPNGS
EXIST. BRICK WALL
FRAMELESS GLASS WALL W| SLIDING DOORS.
ALUM. STOREFRONT
STAIR TO SHOP
NEW INTO EXIST. FLR.

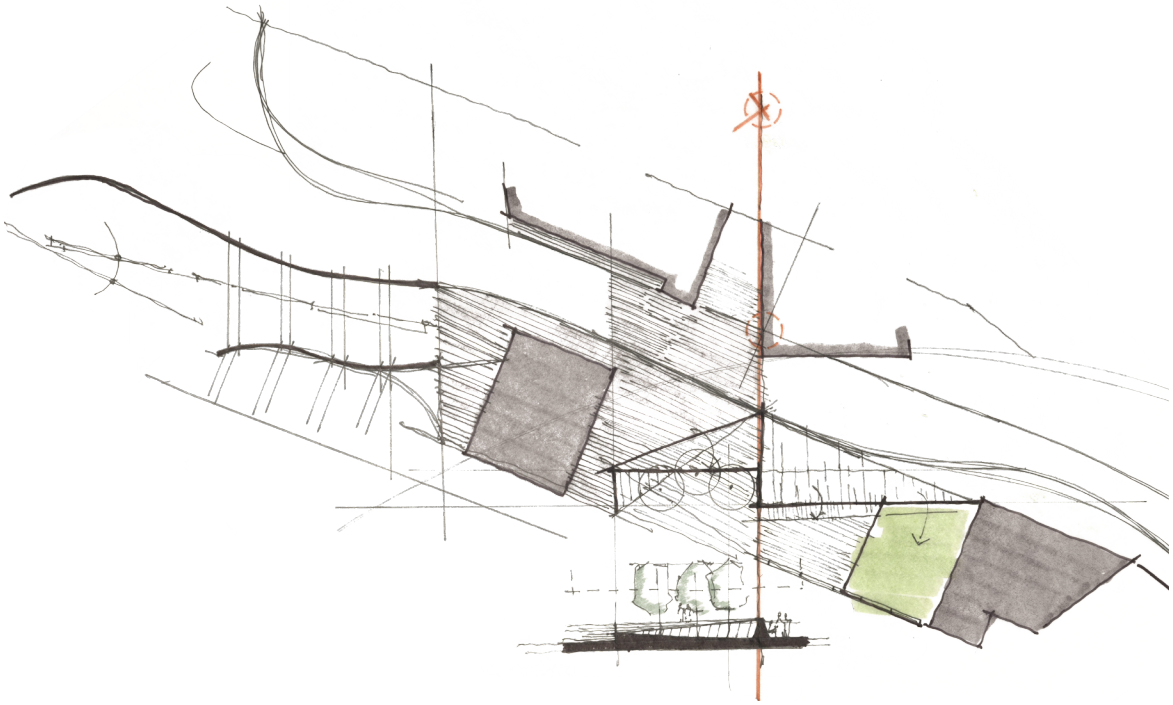

EXIST. BRICK
EXIST. FLR & FRAMING
2ND FLR
1ST FLR
SHOP SPACE
EXIST. WOOD FLR
POLISHED CONC. FLR. @ NEW WALLS.


ROOF AS
LIGHTIN
TRUSS.
GUARDR
EXPOSED
CURTAIN
EXIST. B
SOFFIT

Final Presentation







[re] integration

adaptive reuse in the narrative of detroit

A future homeostasis of detroit's urban conditions and civic identities relies on a development strategy that responds first at a neighborhood level.

As retaliation against the perceived densification of enclaves, the gentrification of physical space, and the erosion of an established social fabric, adaptive reuse acts as a medium through which an ongoing dialogue is encouraged.

The moderator of a dialectic between old and new, adaptive reuse becomes the theoretical and physical foundation from which the future is able to reveal itself.



site context | detroit michigan

[re] integration

adaptive reuse in the narrative of detroit

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As retaliation against the perceived densification of enclaves, the gentrification of physical space, and the erosion of an established social fabric, adaptive reuse acts as a medium through which an ongoing dialogue is encouraged.
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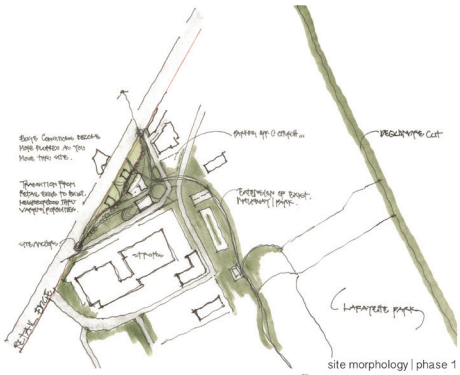
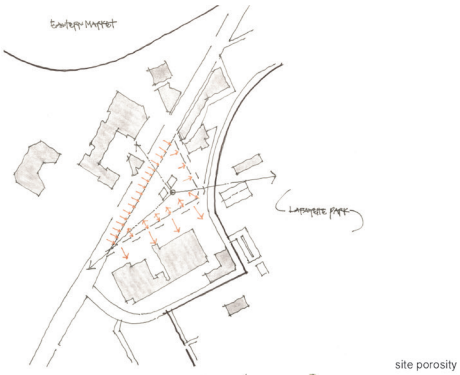


site morphology | phase 1



site porosity



site morphology | phase 2



site parti | circulation

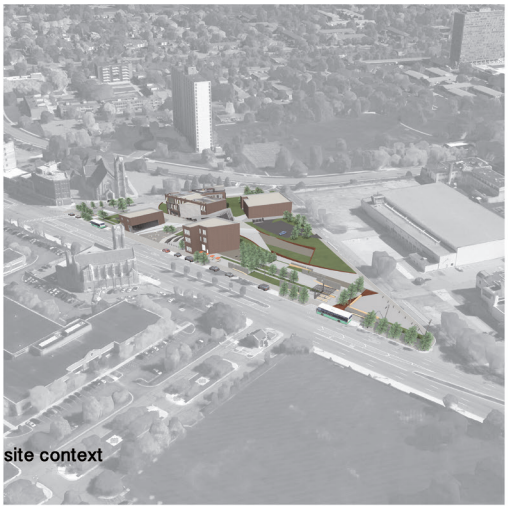


site morphology | phase 3

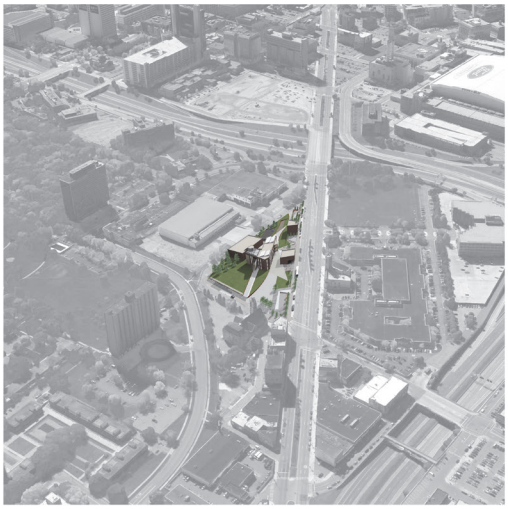


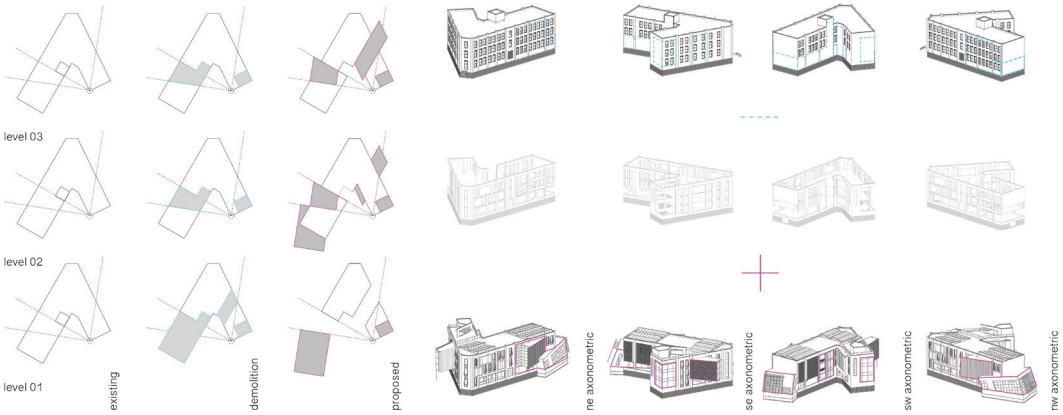
site forces | edge conditions





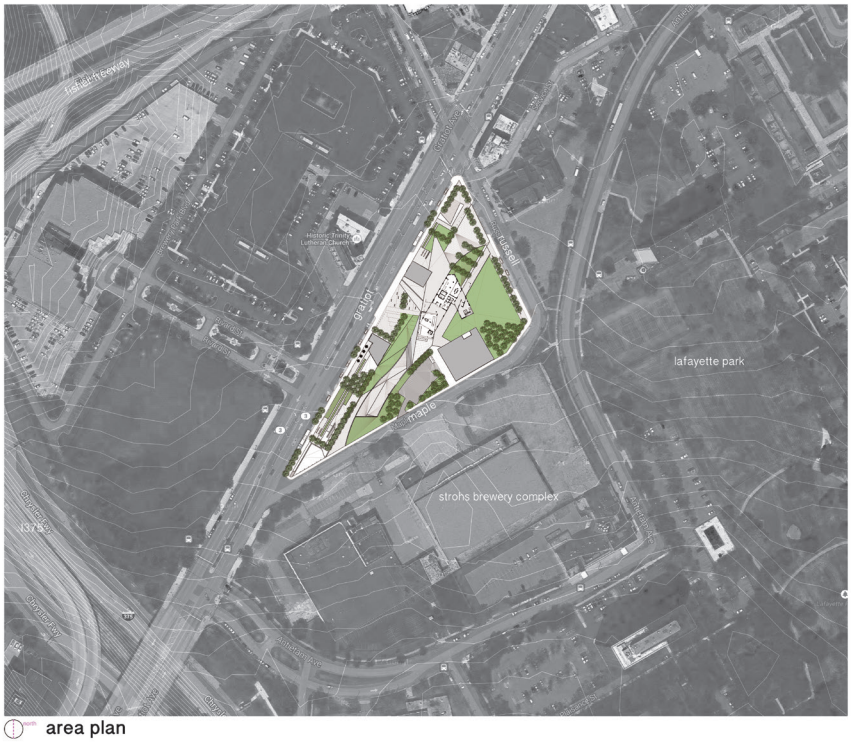
site context





building morphology diagrams | past to present





area plan

[re] experiencing site

by establishing symbiotic relationships between the past and the present, the building and site, the people and place



01 graffiti park



02 street cafe



03 public garden provides buffer between retail edge and public park



04 public park connecting opposite ends of the site





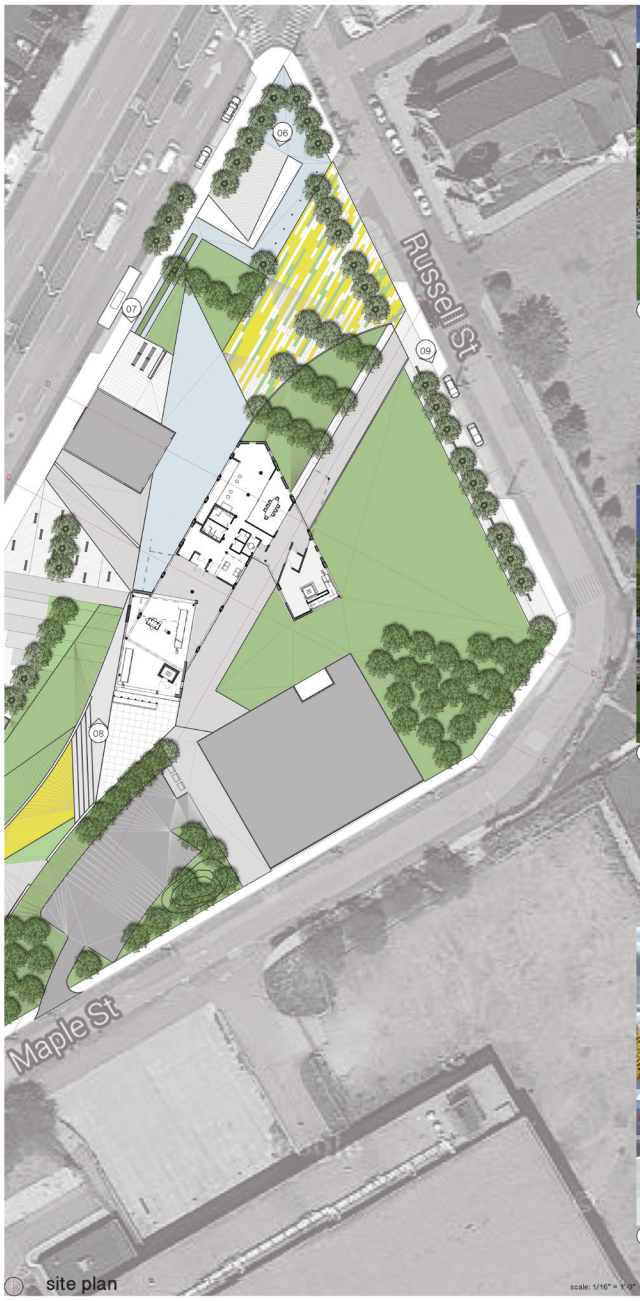
05 public plaza anchoring site



06 public plaza connecting site to eastern market

[re] experiencing site

by establishing symbiotic relationships between the past and the present, the building and site, the people and place



site plan

scale: 1/16" = 1'-0"



07 relocated bus stop along retail edge



08 outdoor exhibition space and public park



09 neighborhood edge condition between site and lafayette park

the detroit design incubator

fostering the growth of design-centric startups and supporting the continuing development of place through community engagement

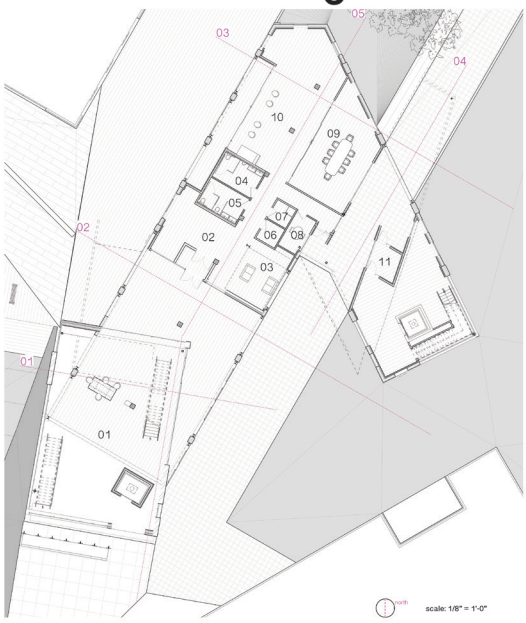


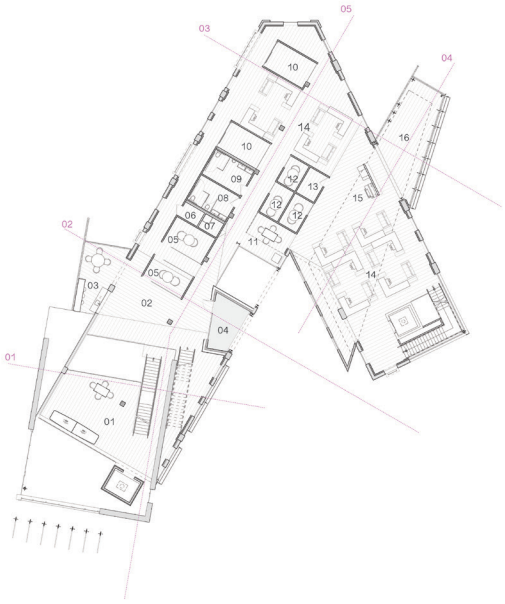
shop



lounge

the detroit design incubator





level 01

01	shop	08	meeting room		
02	visitor entrance	09	conference room		
03	lounge	10	exhibition		
04	mens room	11	employee entrance		
05	womens room				
06	storage				
07	janitor				

level 02

01	model and prototyping	08	womens room	15	print
02	lounge	09	mens room	16	lounge
03	kitchenette	10	office		
04	patio	11	meeting room		
05	break out room	12	break out room		
06	electrical | data	13	storage		
07	janitor	14	open office		



01



02



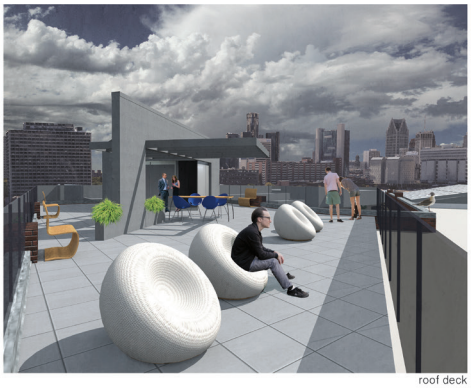
03



site section a

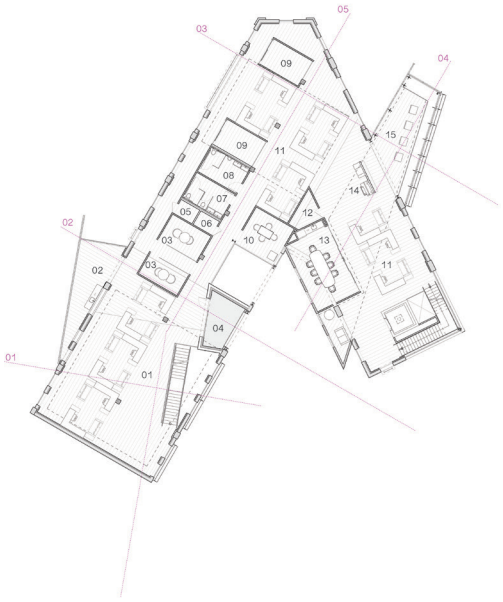


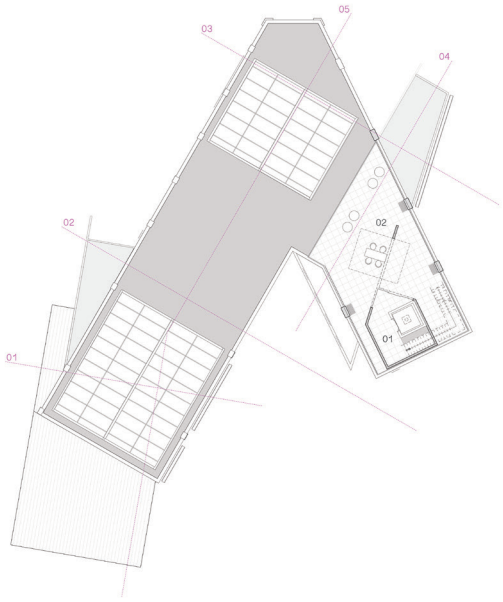
open office



roof deck

fostering the growth of design-centric startups and supporting the continuing development of place through community engagement



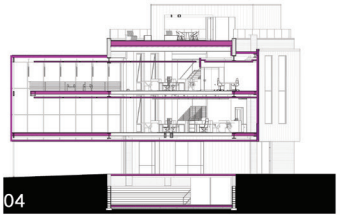


level 03

01	open office	08	mens room	15	lounge
02	kitchenette	09	office		
03	break out room	10	meeting room		
04	patio	11	open office		
05	electrical | data	12	storage		
06	janitor	13	conference room		
07	womens room	14	print		

level 04

01	vestibule
02	roof deck



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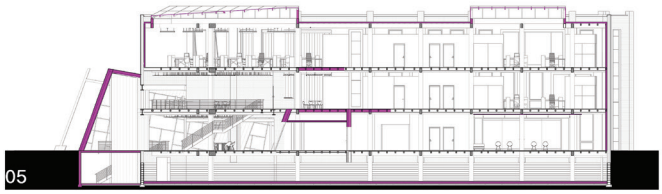

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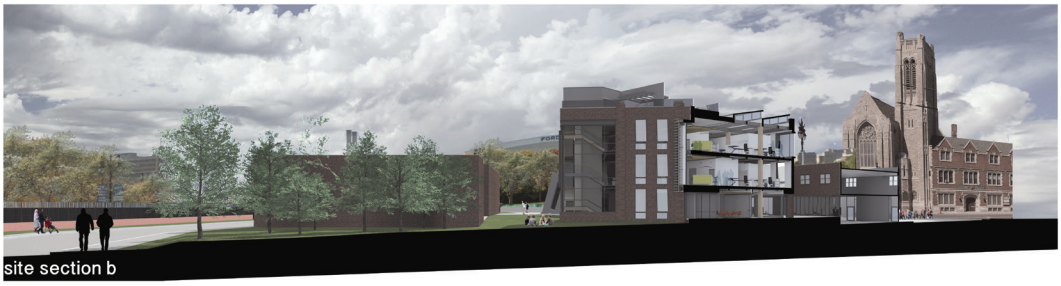


site section b



public plaza



employee entrance



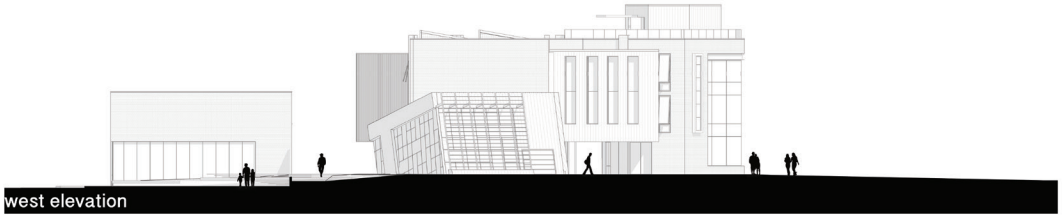
north elevation



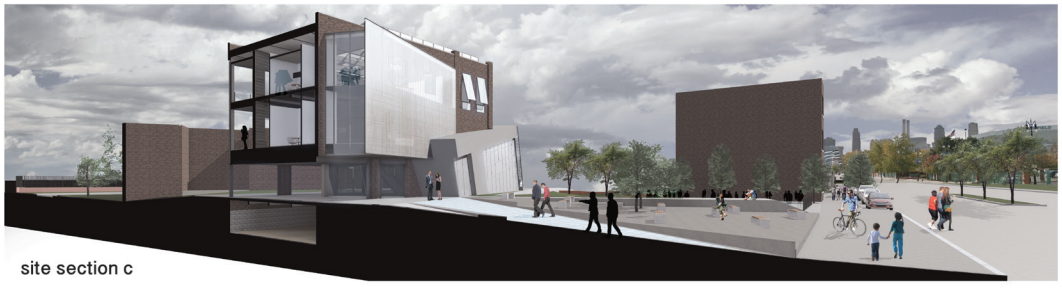
east elevation



south elevation



west elevation



site section c



visitor entrance



level 03 lounge



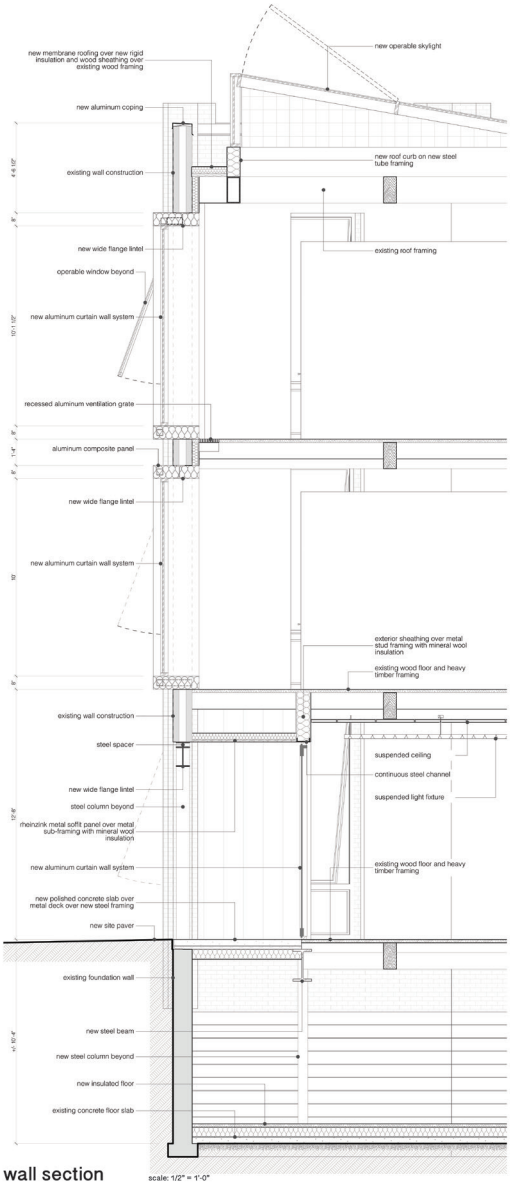
level 02 meeting room



level 02 lounge | kitchenette

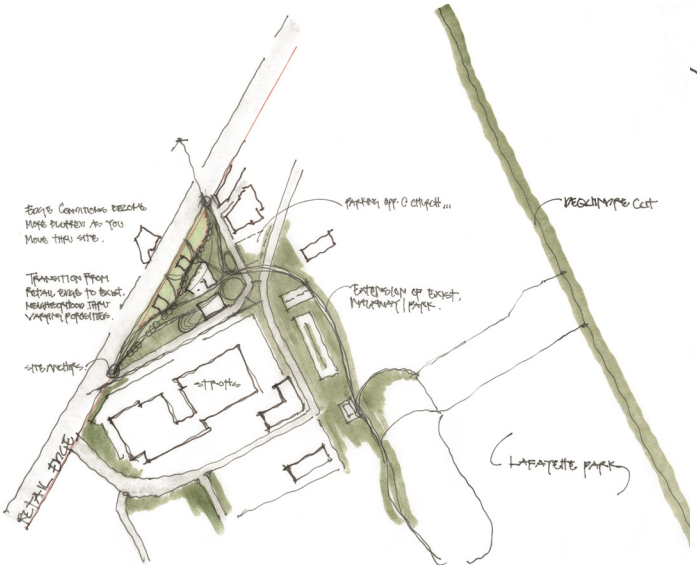


level 03 open office

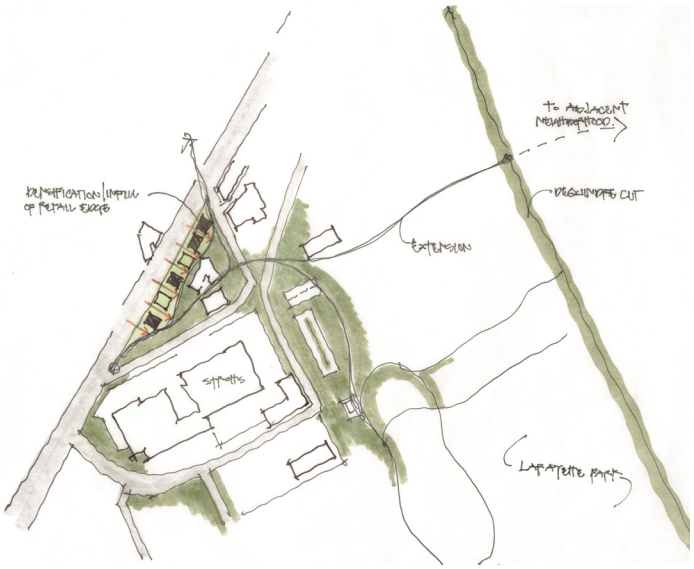


wall section

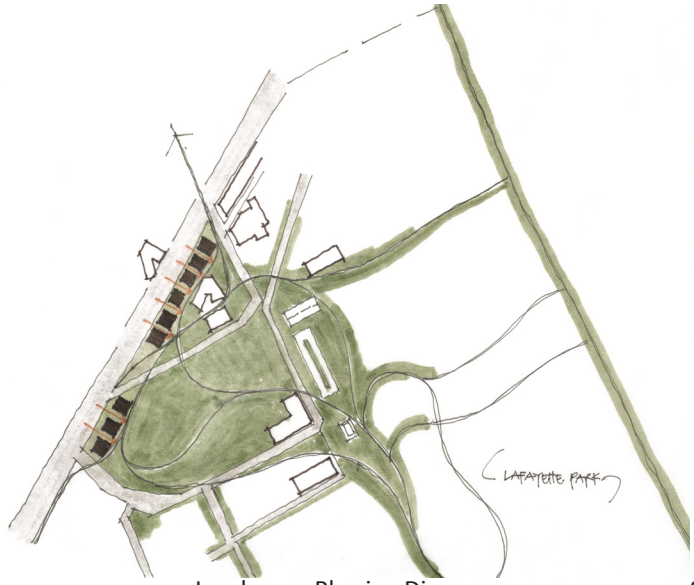
scale: 1/2" = 1'-0"













Landscape Phasing Diagrams

Site Parti and Circulation Diagrams

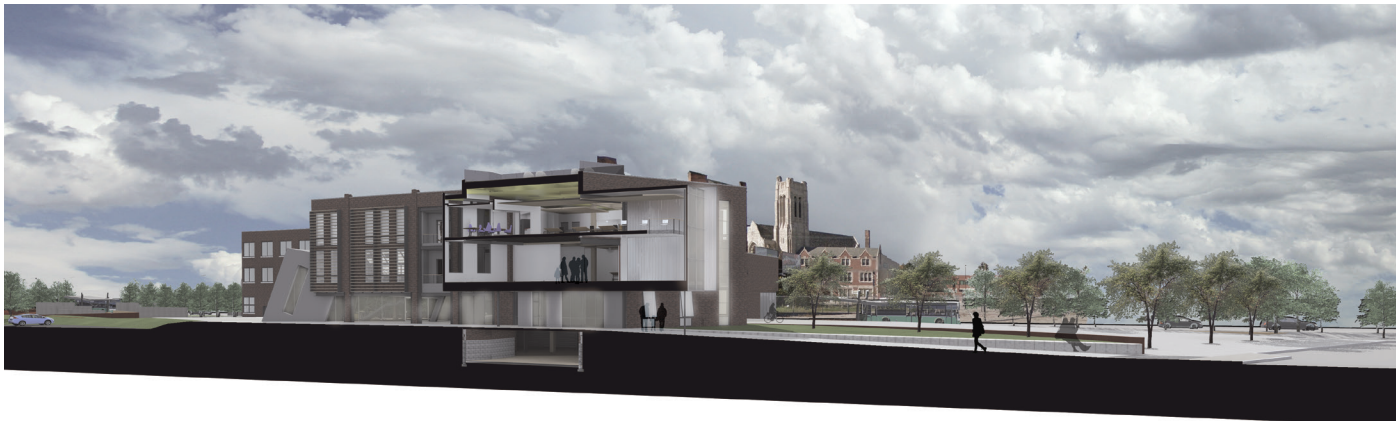




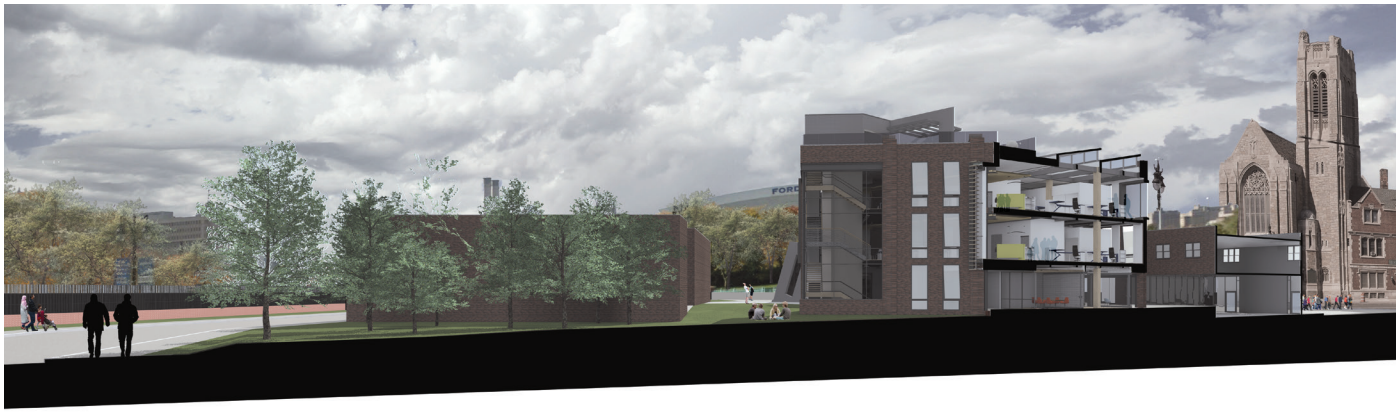
Aerial Perspectives of Site Context


Gratiot Ave
Historic Trinity
Lutheran Church
Russell St
Maple St
3
3

Site Plan N|



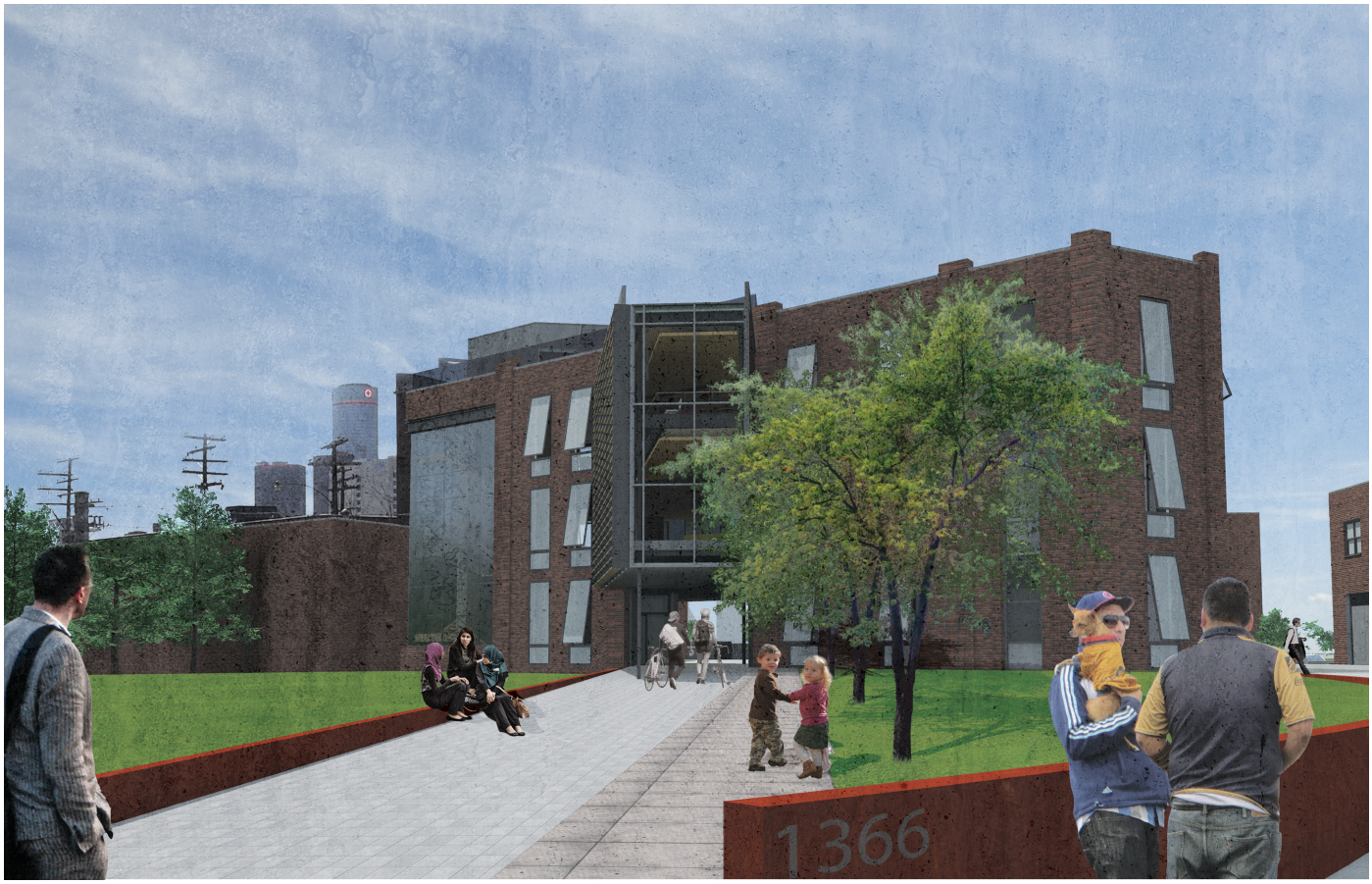




Site Section Perspectives



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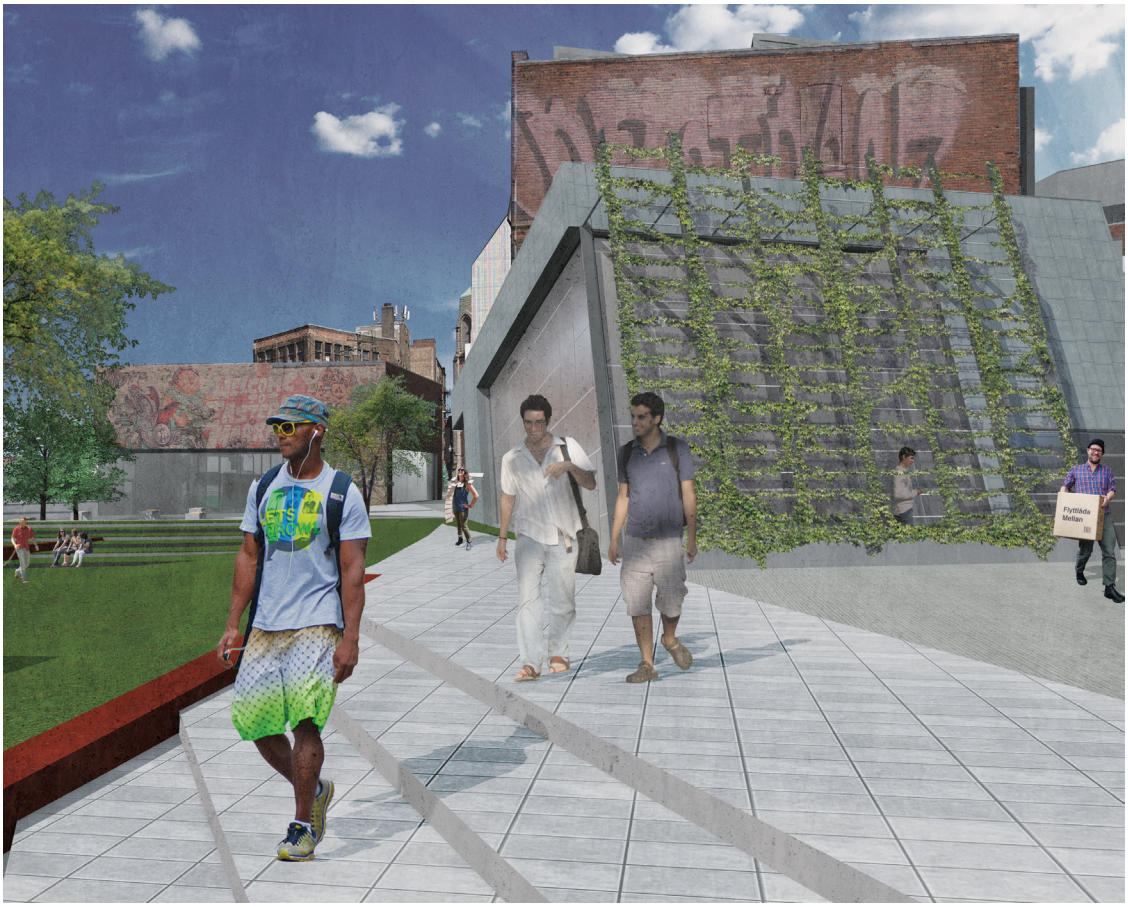
Enjoy


WELCOME TO
EASTERN MARKET


Flyttlåda
Mellan


FORD FIELD

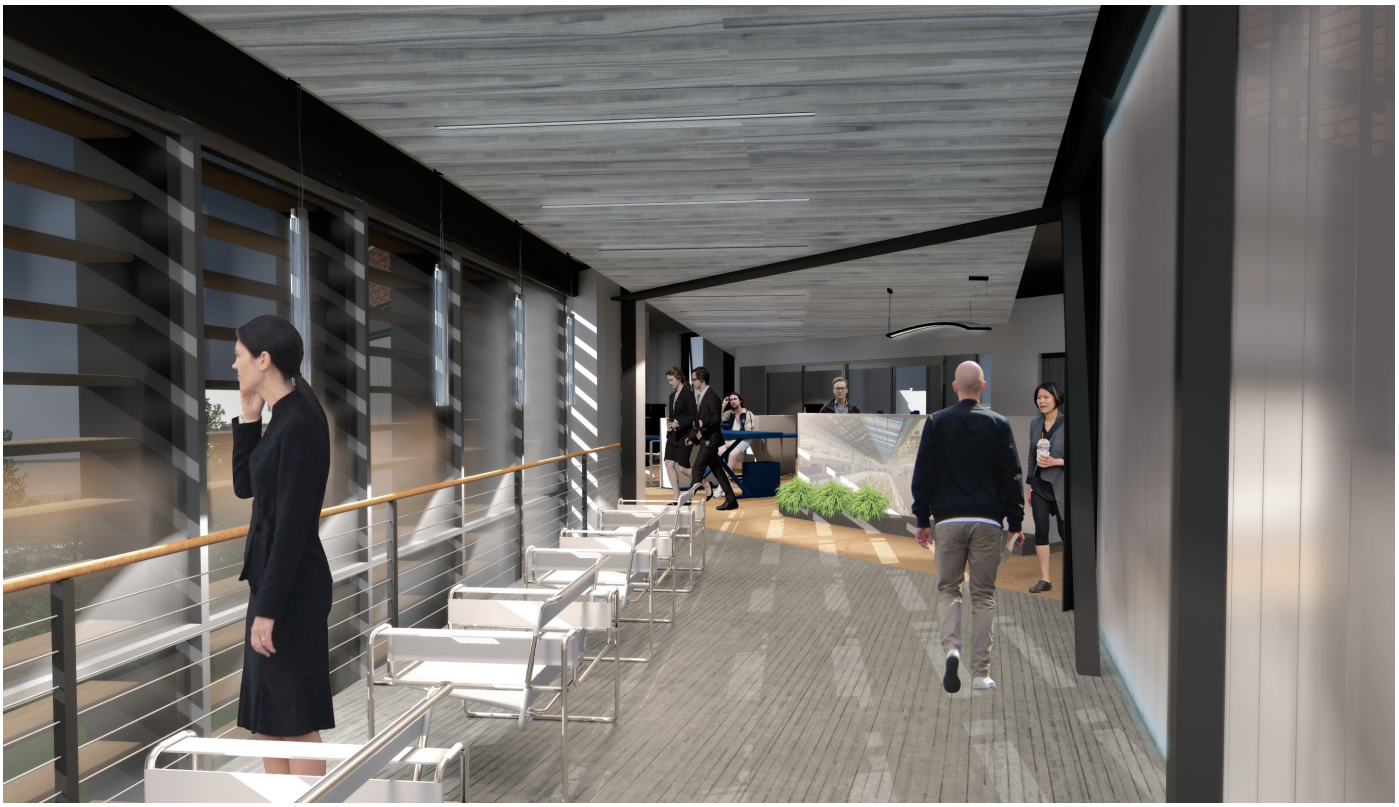

DETRO





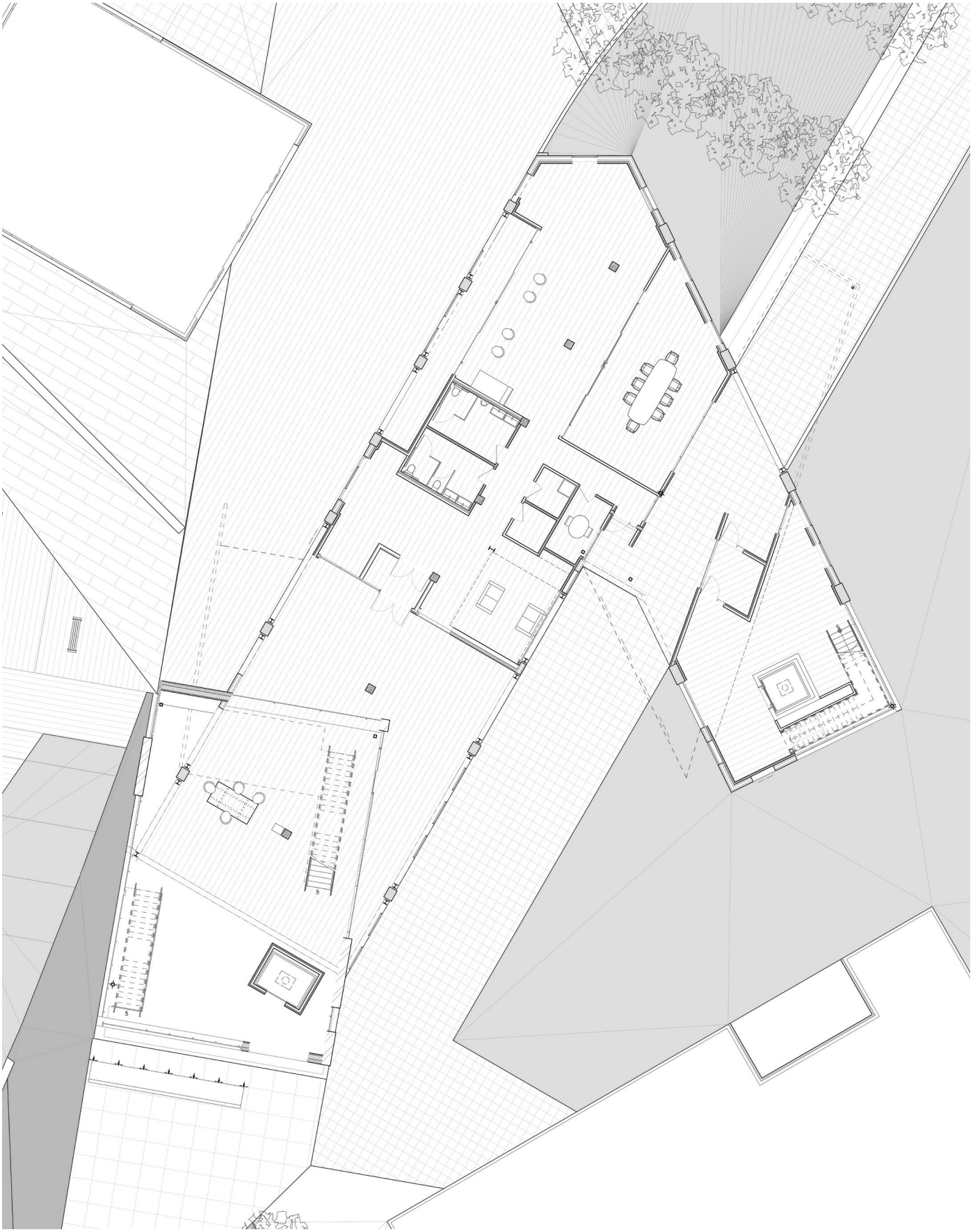




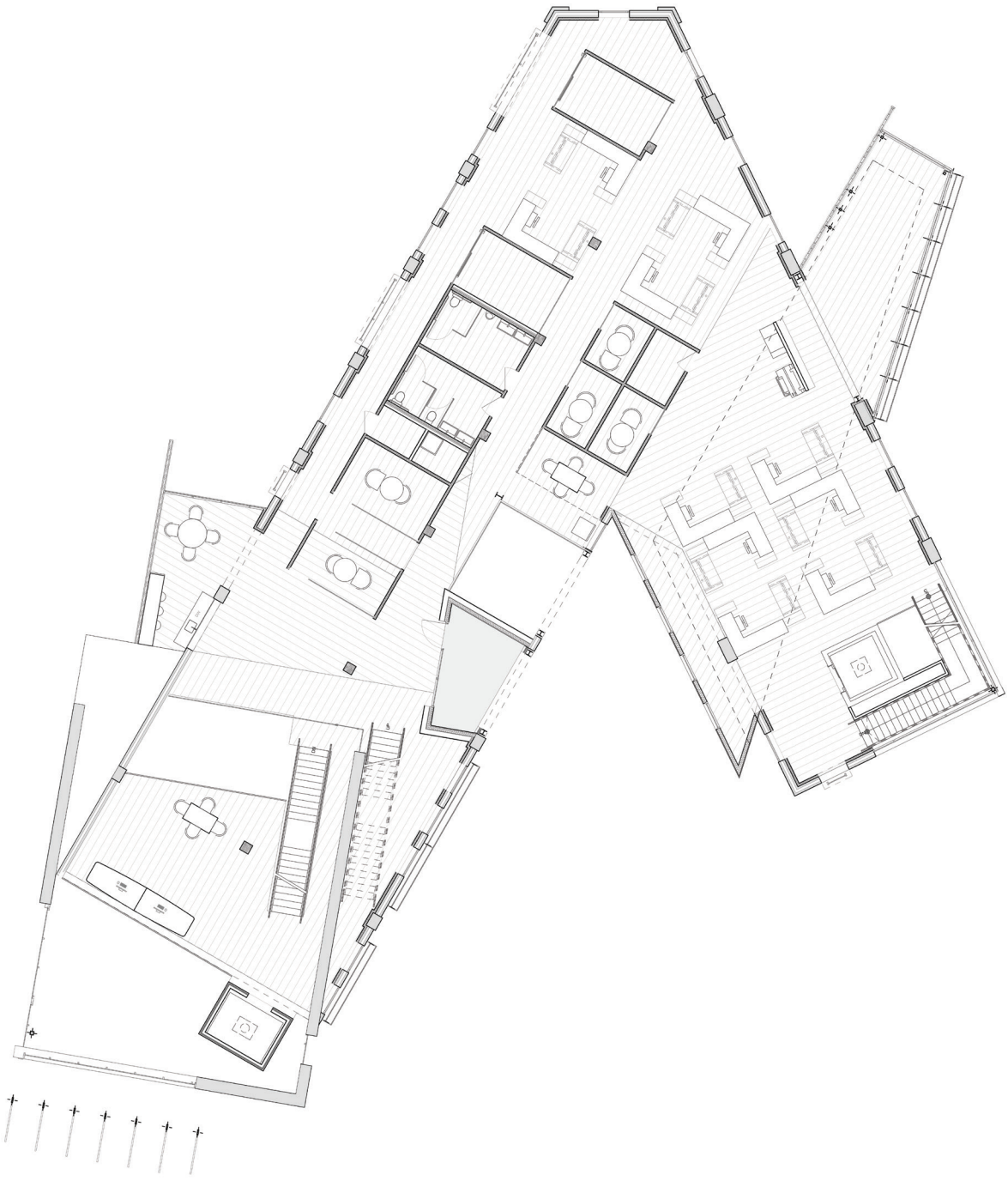








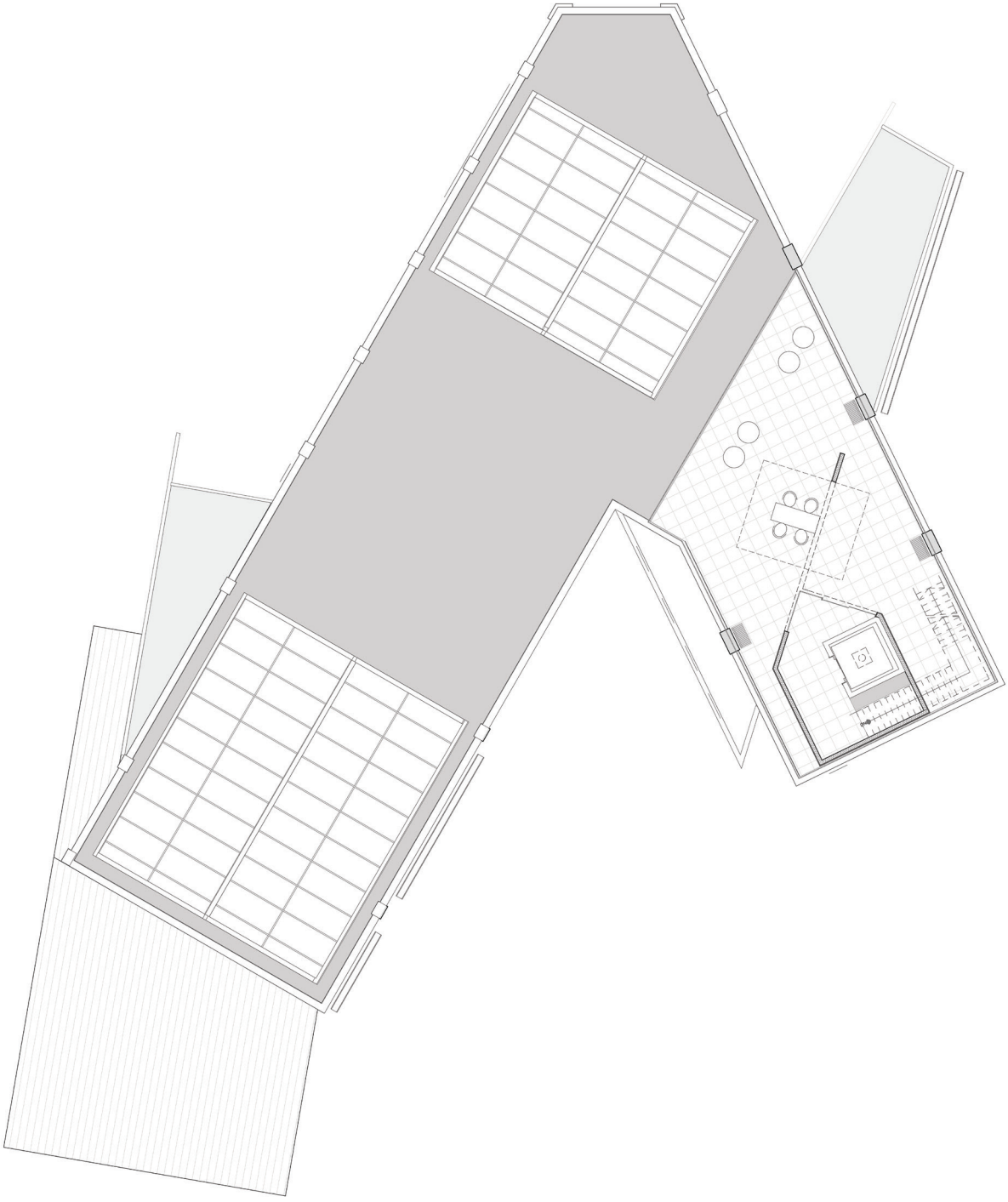
First Floor Plan



Second Floor Plan



Third Floor Plan



Roof Plan

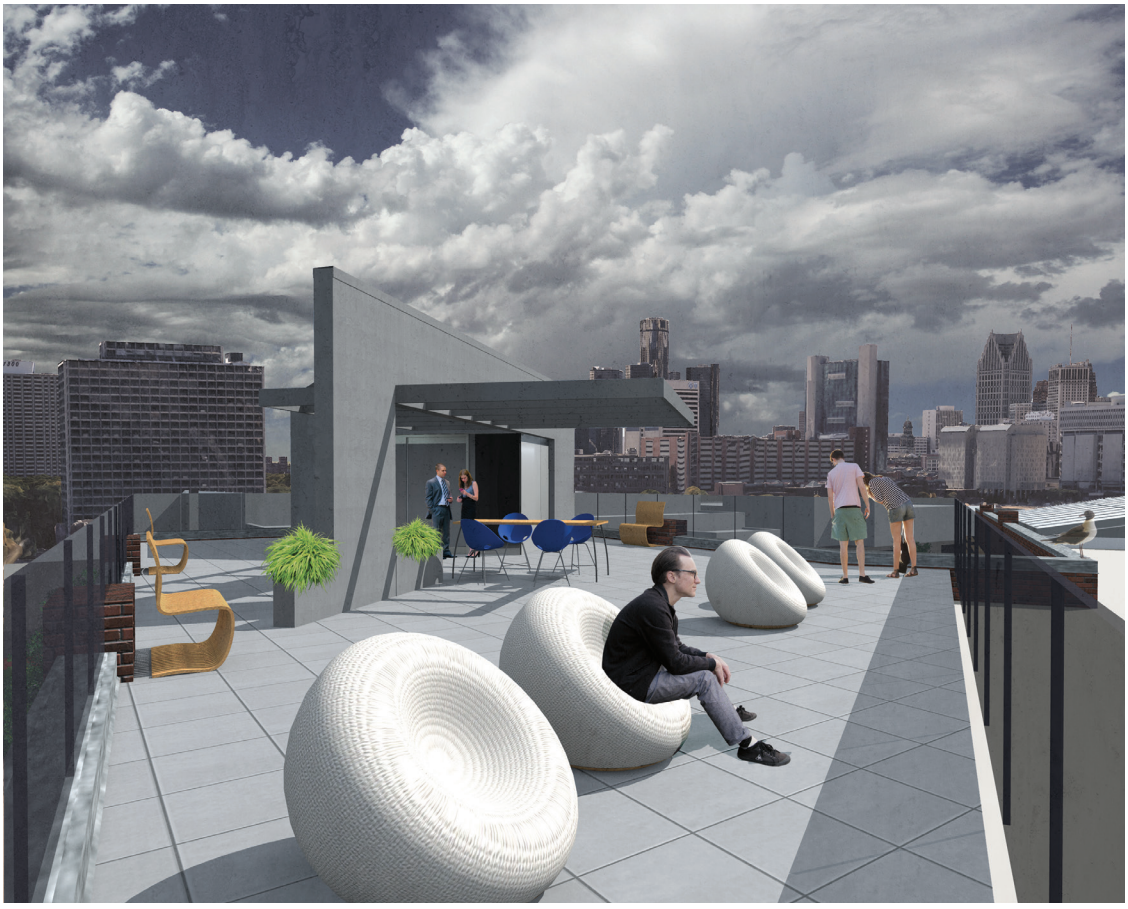

DETROIT

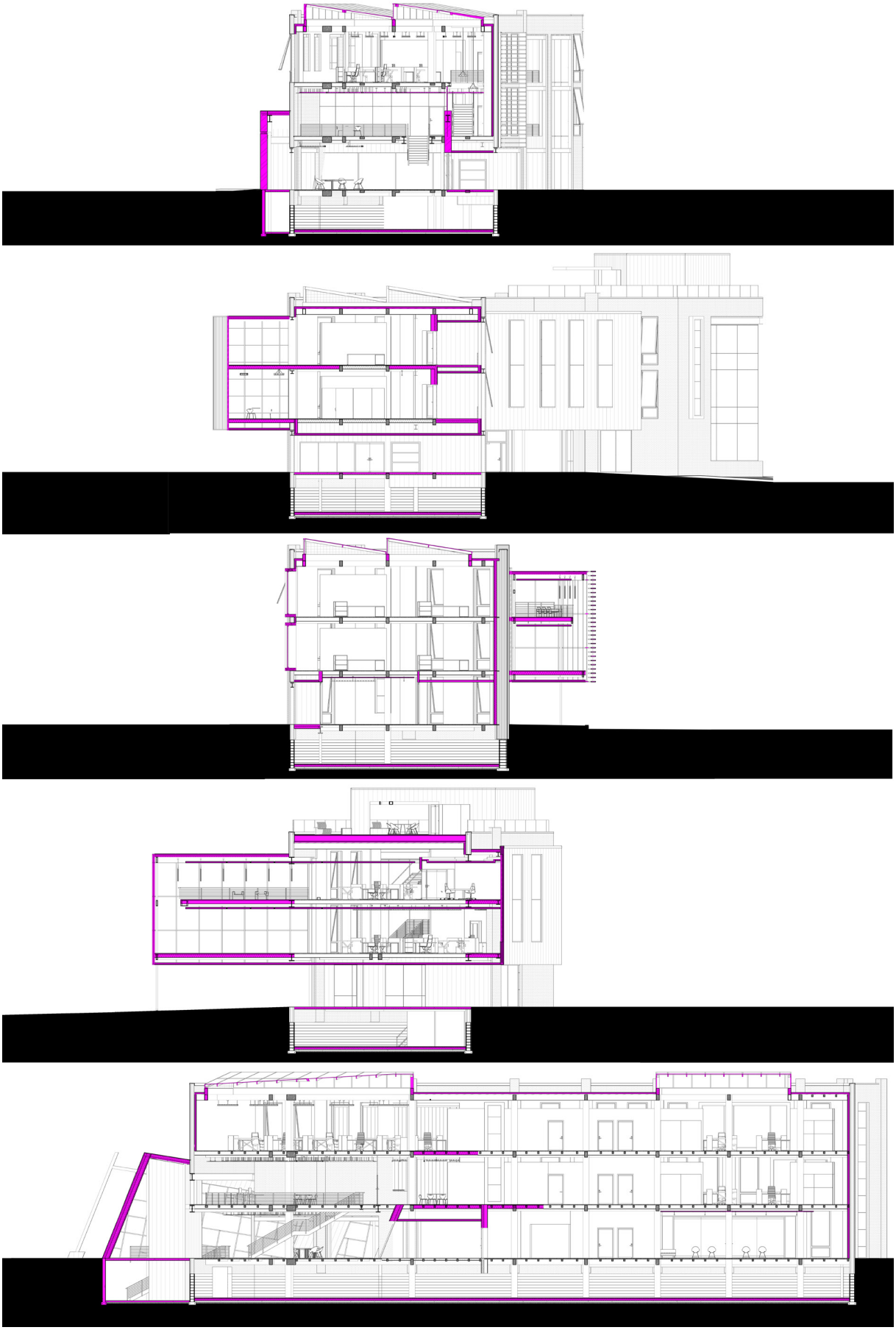




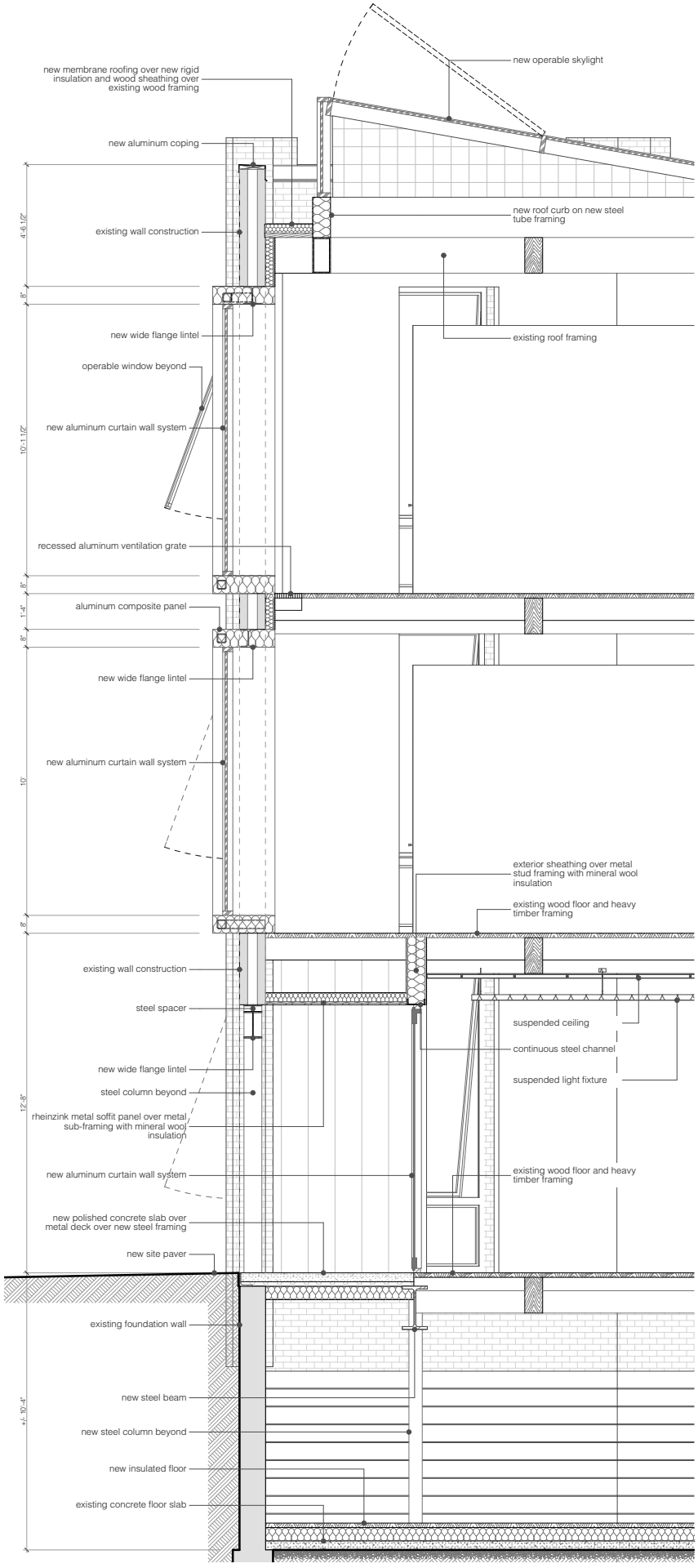








Building Sections

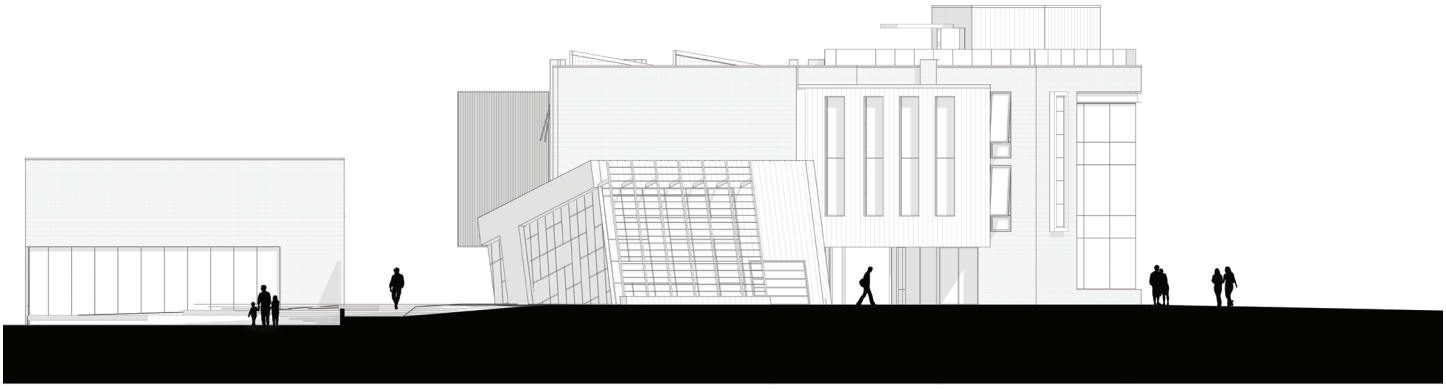


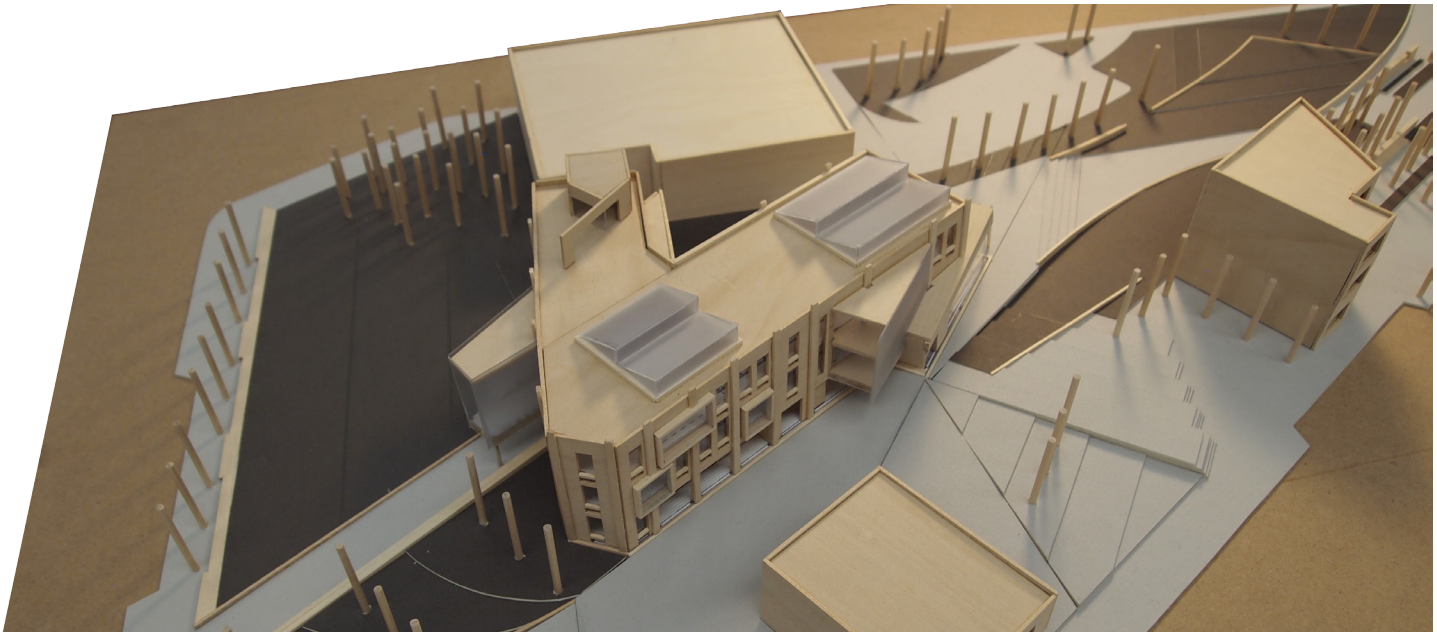
Wall Section

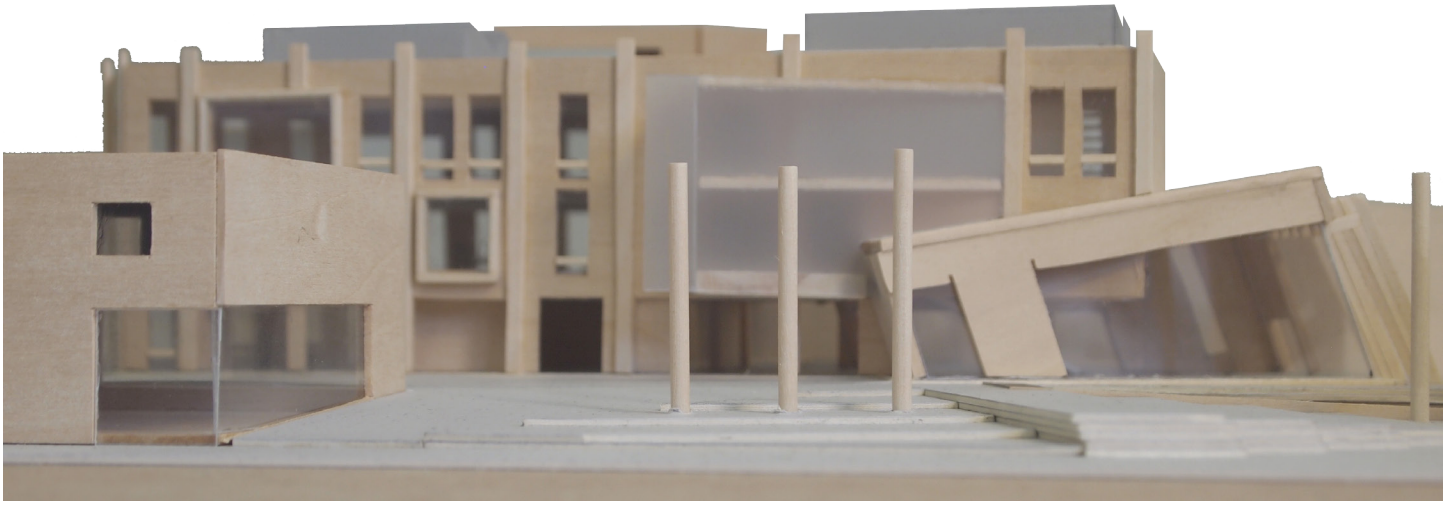


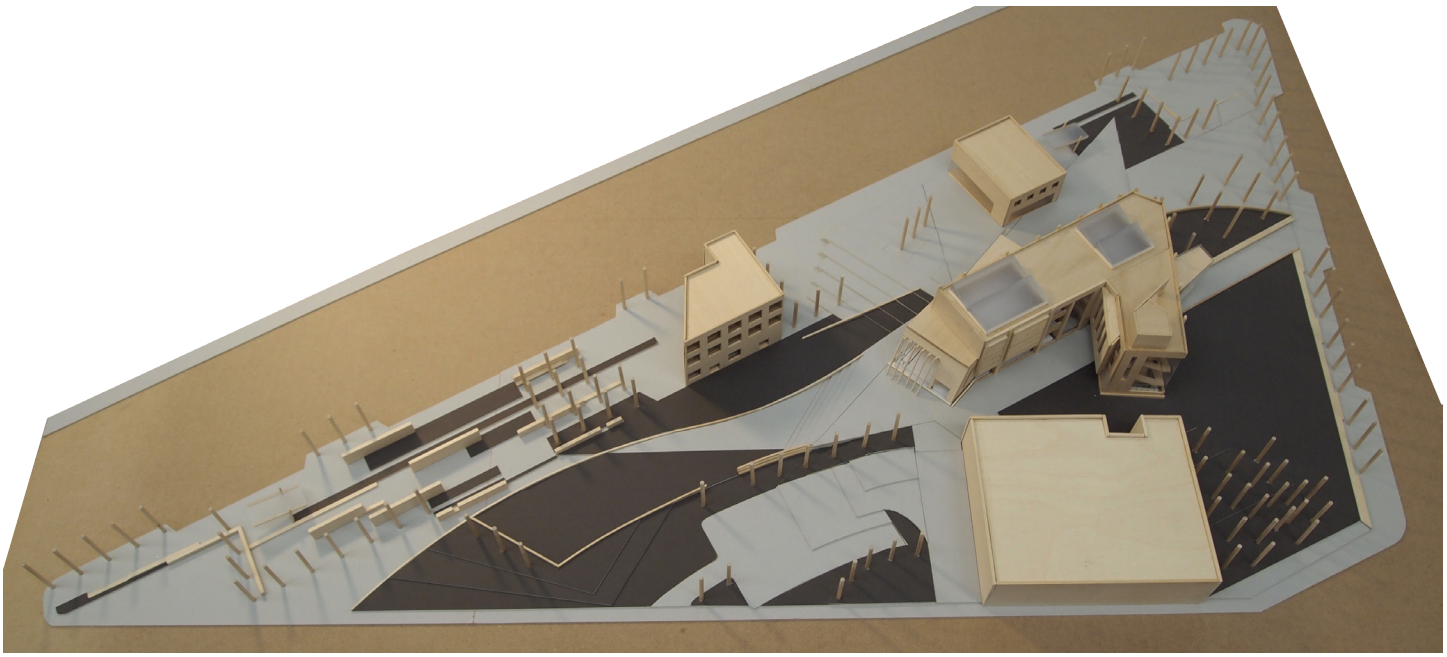












Final Site and Building Model

Addendum

BEGINNINGS

The roots of this process have existed simultaneously in a love for Detroit and a desire to push my architectural career beyond traditional notions of urban interventions since before starting graduate school. It was, in essence, an exploration into what I was attempting to define as responsible development. On a fundamental level, it was simply a reaction to the way that Detroit had been attempting to reestablish its relevance over the past thirty or so years through urban planning and development practices. Many of these strategies, in my view, were either ignoring Detroit as a viable place, or choosing to erase the foundations from which it had come forth.

The dimensions and limits of this 'responsible development' were the biggest unknowns at the beginning. Many of the ideas that lie beneath its surface are either massive in scope, like the socio-political climates of Detroit, or simply elusive in terms of containing a framework by which to qualify them, such as the individual and collective memory that begins to give definition to place. Not only were these ideas difficult to distill, but also understanding them in terms of being parts of a dynamic urban system becomes more difficult.

My investigation began with trying to understand Detroit holistically from an historical perspective. Where did it come from, and how did it end up where it is today, became important in understanding and mapping the current fabric of the city.

PROCESSES

As my written work began to engage case studies on a more neighborhood level, I began to realize that this was really where the sustainable community existed. The macro level of Detroit was simply too interrelated with the socio-political trajectory of the city, its focus on autonomous projects ignoring the very people who make up its civic identity.

Instead of attempting to create another city-saving project through commoditization of an architectural product by way of destination, I began to look at the idea of nodes as catalysts. As current conditions suggested, the former continues to be ineffective, while the latter can be seen in grass-roots campaigns across the city.

Choosing a site became critical in that beyond supporting my program, it would need to be positioned in a way that would allow it to engage the existing context immediately, as well as allowing for future densification and development.

The design focus eventually turned toward the development of the site as I looked to use this opportunity as a way to suggest an engagement between Lafayette Park and Eastern Market. Without defaulting to the nostalgia of what Detroit was, the existing buildings on the site were evaluated based on their relationship with contemporary conditions. Some were removed, as they had already become ruins, while others were saved in an attempt to establish a new relevance within their community.

Adaptive reuse became a sustainable strategy in terms of defining 'responsible development' as it related to symbiotic relationships between the past and the present, as well as people and place. The fragments found on this site maintained a presence, not through inherent architectural grandeur, but instead through their innate ability to not be forgotten. They had been, for better or worse, part of the finer grain within the city's urban fabric.

The program for the project became an incubator space for designers, with the intent being that overlapping spaces and programs would begin to engage the community as it moved forward through workshops and design support. The courtyard parti began to reinforce these public and private relationships by creating a sense of transparency and a series of porosities that began to mediate the neighborhood and the architectural intervention.

MUSINGS

There seemed to be two parallel yet interwoven trajectories embedded within the final project review. One being the site level, with a concern about the individual strategies for the treatment of edge conditions as opposed to a more holistic approach; the second being the building level which became unclear architecturally as the parti gave way to over-design and a need for more rigorous editing.

The integration of the site into the existing neighborhood context was the fundamental driver at the landscape level. The site, as outlined in my analyses, was attempting to mediate the intersection of three, distinct edge conditions that I believed to warrant three somewhat varied strategies for engagement. This strategy also began to reinforce notions of porosity and community at multiple levels, and at multiple scales.

As the building morphology grew out of an organic parti response to site forces, I agree that it did begin to lose its clarity. At some point, it became focused more on the programmatic relationships with the site than it did with engaging in its own dialectic with the old and the new. Conceptually, the intent was to engage the neighborhood through a public plaza that would continue by way of circulation through a series of interconnected public and private spaces. Formally, these intents were not as legible.

Regardless of the outcome as a 'product', the process is what I was, and continue to be, interested in. The opportunity to work at multiple scales with such detail was, at best, challenging, and, at worst, frustrating. However, what I gained in the process really was a personal, working definition of 'responsible development,' which had been my focus from the beginning.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This is in no way the end of this investigation. Instead, I see it as the beginning of something new, yet unknown, in terms of my future architectural work. I am ultimately interested in deploying the strategies that I have begun to define as a way to ground my professional work as I look for opportunities to engage with both the past and the present through adaptive reuse development projects at a neighborhood level.

Whether in Detroit, or some other place, I take the definitions, concepts, theories and experiences that I have developed through this graduate investigation with me into the future.