To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Illabelle H. Lee entitled "Rebuilding Burlington." I have examined the final paper copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Architecture, with a major in Architecture.

David Fox, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

Acceptance for the Council:

Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies

Thesis
2003
.L434

REBUILDING BURLINGTON

A Thesis

Presented for the

Master of Architecture

Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Illabelle H. Lee

December 2003

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Mark Lee, Rita Lee, Isha Abbott, and Ben Maynard—a kind, patient, and supportive family.

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the extent to which architectural design contributes to the revitalization of a declining urban community. It contends that architecture is more than the building of shops and squares; it can be the building of community, pride, and hope. Buildings such as these are assembled from the visions of the local people, with respect for their history, their struggle, and their dreams.

The setting for this thesis investigation is the Burlington community of Knoxville, Tennessee. Racist policies expressed in earlier years by overcrowded slums, urban renewal, and disinvestment have left Burlington in distress. Its continued decline is a shameful waste of human potential.

Rebuilding Burlington cannot occur by architectural design alone—nor can it occur without it. This thesis proposes that the architectural components of a revitalization plan will create a new civic presence, a reoccupation of the public spaces, and a reinforcement of the community's defining elements. Specifically, it proposes a mixed-use building complex occupying an entire block of the business district. Included are retail shops to reestablish Burlington's main street, office space for non-profit agencies and private business, a police precinct, public library, public outdoor space and indoor public assembly space, emergency shelter, and permanent housing.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I the Argument	1
Statement of Thesis	2
Description and Scope	2
Goals	12
II the Issues	15
Primary Issues	16
Secondary Issues	19
Ethical Issues	23
III the Site	33
Site Conditions	34
Description	34
Analysis	44
IV the Program	51
Program Conditions	52
Description	53
Analysis	56
V the Studies	61
Case Studies	62
Parti Studies	66
VI the Design	73
Community	74
Block	75
Building and Public Space	76
References	79
Appendix	85
Vita	109

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE		PAGE
1.1	Palmanova	2
1.2	Medieval Walled City	2
1.3	Suburbia	3
1.4	High-rise District	4
1.5	City of Tomorrow	6
1.6	Broadacre City	6
1.7	Tilden House, Brooklyn	8
2.1	Occupancy in 1944	17
3.1	Burlington Within Knoxville	36
3.2	Burlington Defined	37
3.3	Distinguishing Burlington	38
3.4	Burlington Business District	39
3.5	Ku Klux Klan Concentration 1920s	40
3.6	Deteriorated Housing	40
3.7	Knoxville Civic Coliseum	40
3.8	East Knoxville Census Tracts	41
3.9	East Knoxville Population Change	41
3.10	Vacant Lots North Side of MLK	43
3.11	Vacant Buildings North Side of MLK	43
3.12	Unattractive Development South Side of MLK	43
3.13	Greater Warner Tabernacle	44
3.14	Linkages	45
3.15	Existing Structures	46
3.16	Platting and Alleyways	46
3.17	Community Entry	49
4.1	Commercial Zones	55
4.2	Zones of Transition	58

FIGURE		PAGE
5.1	The Orchard	62
5.2	Summerhill Projects	63
5.3	Neighborhood Grocery	64
5.4	New Communities	64
5.5	Historic Neighborhood	64
5.6	Commercial strip	65
5.7	High Street Signage	65
5.8	Dilapidated Student Housing	66
5.9	Revitalized Housing	66
5.10	Kirkwood Shopping Center	66
5.11	Plan/Axon Sketches	67
5.12	Open to MLK	68
5.13	Oval Path	68
5.14	Oval Courtyard	69
5.15	Nave Garden	69
5.16	Terminated Axes	70
5.17	Study Model	70
5.18	Parti Diagram	71
A-1	Model Photo #1	86
A-2	Model Photo #2	86
A-3	Model Photo #3	87
A-4	Model Photo #4	87
A-5	Context Model	88
A-6	Site Study Model	88
A-7	MLK Perspective	89
A-8	Kirkwood Perspective	90
A-9	Oval Courtyard Perspective	91
A-10	North Axon	92
A-11	MLK and Magnolia Elevations	93
A-12	Kirkwood and Prosser Elevations	94

FIGURE PAGE

A-13 Site Plan 95

A-14 Parking Plan 96

A-15 Building Sections 97

A-16 Library, Garage Level 98

A-17 Library, First Floor 99

A-18 Library, Second Floor 100

A-19 Library, Third Floor 101

A-20 Wall Section 102

A-21 Existing Figure/Ground 103

A-22 Proposed Figure/Ground with ¼ Mile Walking Radius 103

A-23 Site Diagrams 1-6 104

A-24 Site Diagrams 7-11 105

A-25 Building Diagrams 1-4 106

A-26 Building Diagrams 5-8 107

A-27 Speedway Park Scheme 108

I THE ARGUMENT

STATEMENT OF THESIS

Urban form is a reflection of social structure. The salient social characteristics of a community are mirrored in its physical characteristics. This thesis investigates how defects in the social fabric are embodied in the built environment, and how regenerative social forces may be nurtured by thoughtful architecture.



Figure 1.1: Palmanova
Source: Wodehouse, Lawrence and Moffett, Marian (228).

DESCRIPTION AND SCOPE

To say that "urban form is a reflection of social structure" is to state something that might seem rather obvious, or perhaps not. To ensure clarity, three examples (walled city, suburbia, central business district) may suffice to make the intent of the statement more clear. Each example describes a common urban form and its associated social characteristics. (The word "social" is intended here to encompass the social, economic, and political realms.)

Images of walled or fortified cities (Figures 1.1 and 1.2) imply small stable homogeneous populations, literally self-contained, with a high degree of distrust



Figure 1.2: Medieval Walled City
Source: Le Corbusier (26).

towards outsiders. Typical inhabitants are well acquainted with every square inch of both the physical and human landscape. Because of the population density within the wall, there are many opportunities for social interaction. Codes of conduct are well developed and well understood. Though the community is largely self-contained, there is yet opportunity for specialization of labor and a high degree of interdependence among its citizens.

The world outside is hostile territory, a no-man's-land of wild beasts and dangerous people. The city's inhabitants have rejected the privacy and independence of a life outside for the safety of membership in a large group. One might expect to find that there is a visibly strong ruler, perhaps some sort of warlord.



Figure 1.3: Suburbia
Source: Knox Co. Property Assessor's Office

In the case of modern suburbia (Figure 1.3), low density implies weak connections and minimal interaction among residents. The streets are the only places for public "assembly." There are no civic spaces within the neighborhood. Government belongs elsewhere, out of sight, out of reach. "The rise of the modern suburb is in part a manifestation of a deep cultural and political shift away

from public life...The suburbs have come to represent and facilitate the privatization of our lives in social form, in political priorities, and in physical character" (Calthorpe 37).

Suburbia's homogeneity of housing stock attracts a homogeneous population. Families, retirees, and singles cannot be comfortably housed on the same street. Low, middle, and upper-income households find appropriate housing in *separate* parts of suburbia. Doctors, teachers, and other professionals may live in communities that are very different from those they serve. Family and social relations are maintained across a much larger area.

Land uses are segregated. Few amenities and fewer jobs are within walking distance of residential streets, necessitating a car population nearly matching that of the people.

The third example is the phenomenon of the high rise zone of the large city (Figure 1.4). The central business district is a three-dimensional graph of property values, where distance from the center is inversely related to the price of real estate. Its distinctive form hints at a distinctive social form, a society



Figure 1.4: High-rise District
Source: Lynch, Kevin (34).

that is capital-conscious and globally connected.

Typical (or stereotypical?) urban populations are large, mobile, and diverse. Inhabitants are subjected to a high volume of interactions each day, but the connections formed between them may be of a loose nature.

Clearly then, specific urban forms can be associated with specific social forms. The walled city could not possibly nurture the skyscraper economy, nor could the suburbs provide the security needed by the medieval society. Where one social order is replaced by another, the built environment is simply adapted over time.

Urban form *does* reflect social structure. The important question that remains is whether or not urban design can contribute to, and possibly change or correct social structure. This question was amply answered by a number of Utopian thinkers. Each of their schemes was founded upon the belief that the built concept could generate the desired society.

Le Corbusier's vision of Utopia embraced the automobile as a vehicle for organizing urban space. He recognized in the streets of European cities patterns that had been generated by an earlier culture

whose modes of transportation did not include the car. "The Pack-Donkey's Way is responsible for the plan of every continental city; including Paris, unfortunately" (Le Corbusier 6). He found it absurd that the archaic forms, which were appropriate to an obsolete society, should continue to dictate the forms of modern development (255). His design for the "City of Tomorrow" (Figure 1.5) was a utopian scheme for modern living. His plan was founded on his assumptions about where and how people might work and live, and especially how they might move about in a modern city. The accommodation of the car in his design is evident in the forms of many modern cities[1].

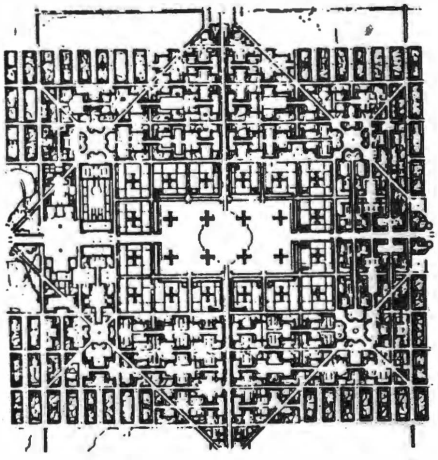


Figure 1.5: City of Tomorrow
Source: Calthorpe, Peter (33).

Frank Lloyd Wright's version of utopia, Broadacre City (Figure 1.6), was likewise generated from his beliefs about how people might live. He believed that people should live in contact with the agrarian roots of society—each family should have a small acreage. The social

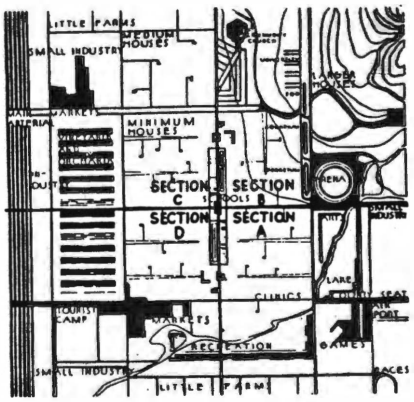


Figure 1.6: Broadacre City
Source: Calthorpe, Peter (33).

[1] For a discussion of three models of city form, the city-as-megaforum, the city functional, and the city-as-glass menagerie, see Larry Bennett, Fragments of Cities, Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1990.

conditions aimed at were embodied in the proposed built environment.

Modern architecture developed during a period of accelerating change. The Enlightenment, the Industrial Revolution, and the rise of American democracy were a few of its several driving forces. In addition, "the modern movement was a revolution in social purpose" (Curtis 15). "The commercial structures of capitalism may have produced daring new architectural forms, but they rested upon a grimy and exploitative base," he continues. "In the mid-nineteenth century squalid conditions were the source of both revolutionary fervor and reformist fantasy. . . For Utopian socialist visionaries with their ideal communities the problem was to release the working class from the alienation and exploitation of machine work and to rediscover the total personality split by the division of labour" (35, 36). Modern architecture has its roots in social reform, as stated by Peter Eisenman in his introduction to The Architecture of the City. "For the architects of the early twentieth century, the appropriateness of the act of intervening clinically in the

city's historical and natural evolution was beyond question" (Rossi 3).

Not all reformist architecture has been successful. Sometimes it has been imposed on a population by people who are too great a distance from the population. Their knowledge is limited. Urban Renewal and its attendant public housing in the United States (Figure 1.7) are widely regarded as a failure. It was promoted on the pretext that urban slums would be replaced with humane modern housing, and slum dwellers would be gradually transformed into something approximately like lower-middle-class citizens. Most often, urban renewal has had negative impacts on employment, business and enterprise, family, social organizations, and crime (Saunders and Shackelford 87-109). "The probability is great that if blacks had had anything close to substantial control over the situation, selective rehabilitation as opposed to total clearance would have been the ultimate consensus" (84).



Figure 1.7: Tilden House, Brooklyn
Source: Newman (20).

Is the failure of public housing due to bad architecture? No, the architecture was based on bad policy. The bad policy, which was rooted in paternalism, and corresponded to the beliefs and values of

the dominant social, political, and economic class, was simply expressed in architectural form. According to Rossi, those buildings "that are realized are always those of the dominant class" (113)[2].

In Detroit, racist attitudes prevalent in the society in 1949 became racist policies expressed in segregated warehousing of black citizens (Thomas 58, 59). Sorting people on the basis of income was strongly criticized as well by Jane Jacobs. "It is wrong," she wrote, to set one part of the population, segregated by income, apart in its own neighborhoods with its own different scheme of community" (324). She wrote that "cities grow the middle class" (282). "Slum dwellers," she argued, were "people capable of understanding and acting upon their own self-interests. . . We need to discern, respect, and build upon the forces for regeneration that exist in slums themselves" (271).

The notion that class segregation was unhealthy was stated even earlier by Henry S. Churchill in 1945. "If we turn back to the original concept it is clear that zoning as it is now carried on can hardly

---

[2] See Nezar AlSayyad, Forms of Dominance: On the Architecture and Urbanism of the Colonial Enterprise. Aldershot: Avebury, 1992.

be justified on the ground that, by and large, it serves the interest of the common welfare. It may be that the segregation of economic classes is quite the reverse" (92).

The failure of urban renewal projects to eliminate blight and substantially improve the lot of low-income populations was due to its foundation in faulty policy. It was a success in terms of an unstated objective—to cheaply obtain control of well-located urban land[3]. Did those in power employ urban designers to achieve their aims?

Just as urban decline results from the interplay of social, economic, and political forces, so too does revitalization result from these forces. Sean Zielenbach summarizes the physical and social conditions that are most often associated with successful neighborhood revitalization. "A neighborhood's location and physical amenities determine its potential for revitalization. Local leaders associated with and supported by stable institutions and community organizations take advantage of those physical attributes to design and implement revitalization strategies. The extent to which the leaders and their strategies can succeed ultimately

Architects just happen to be the handmaidens of the speculators . . . Unlike physicians, today's architects are not concerned with the general welfare; they are untroubled by scruples about strangling the cities sand the misery that this entails. Architects never felt the urge to establish ethic precepts for the performance of their profession, as did the medical fraternity . . . Criticism within the profession—the only conceivable way to spread a sense of responsibility among its members—is tabooed by their own codified standards of practice. To bolster their ego, architects hold their own beauty contests, award each other prizes, decorate each other with gold medals, and make light of the damning fact that they do not amount to any moral force in this country.

--Bernard Rudofsky
Streets for People (330).

depends on the level of social capital present in the community" (Zielenbach 19). The architects of urban design, as potential participants in revitalization, may choose whether to give voice to the forces of repression or the forces of regeneration.

"Rebuilding Burlington" is an inquiry into a neighborhood's decline. While the decline could be documented in several ways, this thesis tells the story of the old Burlington business district. It investigates the causes of economic, social, and physical decline, and seeks to convey the sadness of empty buildings. A review of relevant historical events and a critical assessment of current conditions reveal how Burlington has been shaped by social forces.

"Rebuilding Burlington" is also a proposal for a neighborhood's regeneration. This thesis describes the potential of the old business district as a revitalized economic and civic center, and a catalyst for improvements at a larger scale. By way of analogy, it compares the relationship of the individual neighborhood in the city to the relationship of the individual house on the street, and identifies ways in which the

[3] See Bennett, p. 105, 106.

neighborhood's conditions might be improved.

GOALS

The primary goal of this thesis investigation is to identify and strengthen those elements of Burlington's physical form that have the capacity to promote regeneration.

Specific objectives to be met through the analysis and subsequent design phase are as follows:

Strengthen connections between Burlington and the City of Knoxville. The physical presence in Burlington of a representative of the municipal government is symbolic of Burlington's return to health. It is a first step towards reinvestment by the public sector.

Provide safe public spaces. Safe streets, sidewalks, and public gathering places enable resident to reestablish ownership of the public realm.

Catalyze further redevelopment. Initial intervention in Burlington will signal its expected recovery to other interested parties. The task of the first

design project is to set the tone for those next steps.

Stimulate increased occupancy and use. By incorporating residential components in the proposal, the business district becomes occupied at all hours. The presence of people puts eyes on the street, contributing to a safe environment.

Strengthen character of business district. The business district is the defining element of Burlington as a place. Reinforcing and supplementing its unique character helps to create a positive image for the community.

Strengthen definition of Burlington as a neighborhood. Community pride is a form of social capital with which to rebuild a healthy neighborhood.

II THE ISSUES

PRIMARY ISSUES

Several issues have architectural implications for the design proposal. Primary issues are community definition, connectivity, density, and diversity.

Community definition, closely related to place making, forms the basis for the formation of an identity within the larger metropolitan context. Burlington is poorly defined. It has no gateway. Its existence is not well known to other Knoxville residents. Its boundaries are questioned. Its cohesiveness is in jeopardy. Its definition has been eroded by roadways and proximity of regional attractions, and diluted by the presence of adjacent neighborhoods of similar character, with which it is gradually being consolidated. Its current definition as a place stems from the existence of the remaining pieces of the old business district, an area that is avoided by new development, and struggles to maintain its identity. A solid definition allows the community to regain a sense of self in relation to the whole.

The individual resident often defines him/herself in relation to the community. If the community were more

McCALLA AV—Cont'd
3705 Buffat S T 2-2880
3706 Ogdin G L @ (1)
3708 Blickensderfer Alfred (2) 2-8961
3709 Clevenger T O @ 3-2451
3711 White J E @ 3-1783
nw cor Kirkwood Presby Church
ns Kirkwood begins
ss Oakland begins
3800 McCalla Ave Bapt Church 3-3737
3803 Neff G K Rev (1) 3-0297
3805 Cunningham N V Mrs @
Brown H P (1)
3809 Calloway-Farmer Co Inc hdw 3-0138
3811 Gay Theatre motion pictures 3-5212
3812 Greer N W Mrs @ 3-1929
3815 Lucke S S Mrs (1) 2-2028
3816 Burnette's Mrs Home Bake Kitchen 2-9564
3819 Hodges C M (1)
2d fl Turner W J 2-1871
3820 Vacant
3821 Burkhardt N L dentist 3-5332
3822 Vacant
3823 Lawson McGhee Library (branch)
3825 Williams Lydia Mapes Flower Shop 2-5616
3827 Burlington Milk Depot 3-9533
Repass N R
rear Vandergriff L V (2)
ss Fern begins
3900 Vaught Food Mkt 3-8432
3902 Burlington Barber Shop
3904 Lawson McGhee Library (branch)
3904½ Burlington Produce Co 4-3719
Petree I C (3) 2-2428
3905 Burlington Beauty Shop 2-3916
3906 Newman R A groc 3-2139
3907 Vacant
ns Prosser rd begins
3909 Easy Way 5, 10 & 25c Stores
3910 Vacant
3911 Greenlee's Drug Store 4-3035
3912 Brown's Drug Store 2-4733
3913 Catlett's Cafe
3915 Scott G R & Co household furnishings
3916 Electric Serv Co 2-6173
3916½ Burlington Council No. 98, Jr OUAM
3917 Roark L B Mrs 2-0081
Byrd A L
3921 Perfection Ldy & Clnrs (branch) 3-9018
3923 Walker's Cafe
3928 White Stores groc 2-9325
3929 Moulton Wheeler Serv Sta 2-9338
3934 Vacant
3936 Burlington Shoe Rebuilders
3938 Capps Cafe
3940 Royal Barber Shop
3942-44 Dart Oil Co serv sta 2-9464
3948 Burlington Billiard Hall
3950 Vacant
ns E Magnolia av ends
ns Shelby begins
ss Holston Drive begins
4003 Mixon K A (2) 4-3050
4004 McCarty W S Mortician 2-5109
4007 Shannon R H Repair Shop
4009 Harmon W M (2) 4-3467
4015 Vassar J S
4017 Atkins W R @ 3-5223
4027 Vacant

Figure 2.1: Occupancy in 1944
Source: 1944 Knoxville City Directory (259).

clearly defined as a distinct place, the resident's statement that "I live in Burlington" would be met with recognition and acknowledgment, instead of the blank expression of a fellow Knoxvillian who is unaware of its existence.

Burlington lacks safe, functional public space. Portions of the business district have the potential to function as informal gathering places, but this potential is unrealized.

Connectivity by road with the City of Knoxville is well established, Burlington being bounded on the north by the interstate highway, and intersected by a primary city artery. However, there is a sense of abandonment by the city and isolation from its resources. It is difficult to find evidence that the city has invested in the community. Its only presence is a fire station. Other civic institutions have either been eliminated or relocated.

Density is implied by the footprint of the business district, but vacancy is the reality. Burlington's residential areas are typical of low-density formerly suburban communities. But the business district, with its closely packed buildings, implies a concentration of activity and commerce. A 1944 Knoxville City Directory (Figure 2.1)

provides evidence that the implied activity did exist at one time, though not at present. What *does* exist is the opportunity to reinforce the urban qualities of the street and reestablish the business district as an economic and civic center. Such a move would strengthen Burlington's definition as a place.

Diversity, a positive attribute, especially in an urban setting, is in decline in Burlington. The racial composition is approximately equally balanced at the moment, but the trajectory is towards a predominantly black population. Economic diversity is restricted by the unavailability of appropriate housing options within Burlington. People who can afford to buy larger or nicer homes must go elsewhere to do so. Diversity signifies openness and inclusiveness. A street of homogeneous housing stimulates the unconscious thought, "Do I fit?" A street of heterogeneous housing elicits the very different question, "Where do I fit?" Diversity implies acceptance and accommodation of a broad range of personal, social, economic, and racial characteristics.

SECONDARY ISSUES

Secondary issues of importance in the development of this thesis include ownership, security, sprawl, gentrification, and sustainability.

*Ownership, i*n the legal sense, carries with it a set of rights—the right to build or to tear down, the right to plant or to dig up, the right to subdivide or to consolidate, the right to admit or to refuse admittance. These rights are ways in which the owner asserts control over his or her property. In addition, ownership brings a set of obligations—the obligation to pay property taxes, the obligation to maintain fences, and at one time, the obligation (or privilege) to vote. These obligations are a tacit acknowledgment of the subjugation of the rights of the individual owner to the power of a collective entity, usually the local government.

Ownership also refers to the extension of control of the individual (who may or may not be an owner in the legal sense) to collectively owned community territory. The public places—the streets, the parks, the malls—are "owned" by the users when those users exercise control

over the activities that occur in them. "Design can make it possible for both inhabitant and stranger to perceive that an area is under the undisputed influence of a particular group, that they dictate the activity taking place within it, and who its users will be. This can be made so clearly evident that residents will not only feel confident, but that it is incumbent upon them to question the comings and goings of people to ensure the continued safety of the defined areas" (Newman 2, 3).

If in some way, ownership can be equated with control, then one might expect those positive attributes associated with ownership to be weak among people with a low level of control. People who lack control of their lives often feel like victims of the larger community or society. Instead of owning, they may feel owned. In the struggle for personal power, it is no wonder that some individuals vandalize public places. Vandalism becomes a negative statement of control, and graffiti becomes a claim of ownership.

Security is closely related to ownership. Ownership, in its full sense, provides residents with the ability to control access and the determination to do so. Security can only be achieved if

residents have means to adequately monitor activities and movements in the spaces under their control. This is best achieved by ensuring the physical proximity of human monitors near spaces where security is needed. Security cameras cannot care the way people do. They cannot prevent entry by unauthorized persons. They can only record the event. The prevalence and success of Neighborhood Watch programs is a testament to the fact that security is best achieved by the "owners" of the space.

Physical barriers, even if permeable, signal a transition from a more public space to a more private space. The presence of these barriers affects the movements, speed, posture, and demeanor of those who pass through them. If the barrier is paired with a human attendant, the effect is more pronounced.

Sprawl has become the ugly issue of current urban design. The flight to the suburbs has diluted the city's cultural character and eroded its form. Suburbia nullifies the meaning and intent of the city limits, making it nothing more than a line on a map. Sprawl damages the cultural character of rural development as well,

fouling its landscape, and blurring its distinctive forms.

Suburban development is costly to current generations in financial and cultural terms. The installment of supportive infrastructure in suburbia robs urban communities of the funding for improvements and general maintenance. The continuing exodus (of the middle class) to suburbia additionally robs urban communities of vital leadership potential. Municipal governments find it difficult to solve pressing urban problems when faced with the distractions of suburban development.

Sprawl is perhaps even more costly to future generations, particularly in environmental terms. Human impacts on the health of plant and animal species are well documented, but largely unheeded. Like sprawl, unaltered consumption of natural resources, especially in the northern hemisphere, is a way of life.

Gentrification is the evil cousin of sprawl. If the bulldozer reducing woodlands to suburbia is fueled by physically, economically, and socially degraded conditions in the city, gentrification is fueled by incomplete solutions to those problems. When an area

From his research, [Philip] Clay identified two processes of neighborhood revitalization: gentrification and incumbent upgrading. . . Incumbent upgrading usually occurs in neighborhoods that are less physically and locationally attractive than gentrifying areas and that have been preserved by long-term residents. Demographically, upgraders can be distinguished from gentrifiers: they tend to be older and less affluent and to have larger families.

--Larry Bennett
Fragments of Cities: The New American Downtowns and Neighborhoods, 56.

begins to revitalize, property values go up, and low-income residents eventually sell out and move elsewhere. But they don't move economically. They transfer the problems of poverty and powerlessness to other neighborhoods. Gentrification is revitalization of the place without revitalization of the people that make the place into a community.

Sustainability implies a long-term balance between urban and rural needs and resources, equitable distribution of wealth and resources across class, racial, and cultural boundaries, and consideration of the needs of non-human occupants of the planet.

ETHICAL ISSUES

The ethical issues here presented are not less important than those listed as primary or secondary issues. The intention is to approach these issues from a different direction and in a different way. Questions are raised, but not necessarily answered.

Sensitivity to People is an issue that brings to the forefront the simple fact that buildings are for people. They should not be primarily art objects, or expressions, or

experiments. Buildings that fail to meet the needs of people fail fundamentally.

We might imagine that Burlington's failing business district is the no-man's-land between an advancing army and an army in retreat. How might the exodus be halted and the no-man's-land be redeveloped as a place of mediation, negotiation, and peace? How might the business district become a place of gathering, conversation, and exchange?

Business customers, whether or not from the neighborhood, need to shop in a place that is well defined and feels safe. Customers come in at least two colors, black and white, and each must be assured that he or she is not unwelcome, that he or she has not ventured onto forbidden turf. Buildings must be legible; they must communicate appropriate degrees of accessibility and types of function.

Interstate 40 carries 80,000 cars per day. Along a roughly parallel path, Magnolia Avenue carries about 18,000 cars per day, still a significant number. Many of these are commuters from neighborhoods further east, and from rural communities outside of Knoxville. They have no vested interest in Burlington, although they pass through it every day.

Because of the types of businesses (pawn shops, liquor stores, thrift stores, etc.) on this portion of Magnolia, the commuters receive a negative impression of Burlington. By redeveloping the site, which functions as the primary entry into the business district, it is possible to change Burlington's image to one of prosperity, activity, and interest. It is crucial that Burlington's image in the eyes of non-residents be improved for it to be seen as a desirable place to live.

Residents of Burlington have much to gain from the proposal. If successful, the development will dramatically improve property values, from which most personal wealth is derived. By reversing the exodus of white residents, it may be possible to escape the historically likely path towards an exclusively black neighborhood. It may be possible to achieve a sustained racial balance, an integrated neighborhood that respects diversity without retreating from it.

Sensitivity to Place is necessary for meaningful architecture. Burlington's small business district is a distinct place. The low-density residential and commercial developments on adjacent blocks contrast with the business district's

compact up-to-the-sidewalk party-wall construction. The compact nature of the existing buildings extends by implication onto the thesis proposal site, although it currently has few buildings on it. It is not difficult to identify this distinct district as the heart of Burlington. Physically, the place is well-defined, in spite of the fact that many building sites are vacant. It is clear to even the casual visitor, that this is a place that was meant to be significant.

An important goal of the thesis design proposal is to enhance Burlington's definition as a community. The greatest potential for such definition occurs in the business district. However, a mere physical definition of the business district falls short of this goal. Psychologically, the business district is a place of confusion, of uncertainty, of insecurity. Burlington's sense of place seems to be intimately tied to the critical question, *Whose place?*

First, a place with a concentration of building should have a concentration of people. It does not. It is unsettling to drive through, and more so to walk through. There is a contradiction between what is, and what evidently was. There is an obvious abandonment of the place and an accompanying sense of loss.

Second, a street named for Martin Luther King, Jr. is commonly recognized as black territory. But the reality is that in my visits to the area, there have been more white people on the street than black. I have been impressed that this street is neither white nor black, nor is it integrated. It is confused. People don't know what it is, or whose it is.

As an aspiring architect, I ask myself a number of questions. Is it my job to accept the current racial balance (and continuing white exodus) and build for what is? Or is it my job to arrive at some definition of the ideal community and build for what might be? And if I build for an ideal, whose ideal will it be? Who gets to participate in the definition process? Long-time residents? Newcomers? Homeowners? Renters? Non-residents? Me?

To some degree, the sense of place that exists in Burlington's business district results from the presence of older buildings. As noted earlier, even a visitor can see that this area has significance. These older buildings, however, hold memories for people who have lived in the community for decades. These older buildings form a physical link to the

history of the place, and perhaps, to its future. Their significance is derived from much more than their form and arrangement on the street.

Deeper questions begin to rise. The sense of place that I wish to strengthen or preserve—is it yesterday's sense of place? Am I driven by nothing more noble than nostalgia? How do I determine whether or how much an individual building contributes to the sense of place and whether it is acceptable to remove it? To what extent do the existing buildings influence the appearance of the new construction? Do the black residents who were forced into Burlington during the 1960s feel nostalgic about these old buildings? Or do they dream of new construction that somehow makes this into a place of their own? Is this a place of yesterday, today, or tomorrow?

The site for the thesis proposal is located between MLK, a secondary and local arterial street, and Magnolia, a primary artery used by an entire sector of the city and county. MLK, in some sense, belongs to Burlington. Magnolia passes through Burlington, but belongs to Knoxville. To be on Magnolia is to be in a very public place. To be on MLK is to be

in a much more private place. In different words, Magnolia is outside, MLK is inside. This sets up an *Us/Them* situation. From inside, it appears that *They* (other Knoxvillians) are collecting our property taxes and spending the money in their own communities, while *We* (Burlington residents) see our business district in need of intensive care, and no money coming our way. Where are the new buildings in Burlington? There are some on Asheville Highway where Burlington melts into Holston, but where is the evidence that the City of Knoxville values the heart of our community? Why does prosperity, like the commuter crowd, always pass us by?

Burlington's sense of place has been preserved precisely because the community has been left out of the economic development process. The distinctive character of the business district has not been diluted with new construction and new ideas and new people. A critical design challenge is how to both preserve the place, *and* enjoy economic revitalization. How can Burlington participate in economic and population growth, how can it absorb new people, how can it become like *Them*, and still retain its specialness?

Beauty is elusive and undefinable, but its impact is real. Does an architect have a responsibility to create beauty? Along MLK Avenue (in the business district) stands a row of old buildings. All of them are humble. One of them is "beautiful." Most are ordinary. Some are frankly ugly. But, as a group, all of them are significant. The thesis project proposes a building complex with a row of new buildings on MLK, and an interior courtyard open to MLK. The row of new buildings is meant to reinforce and extend the ideas presented by the row of old buildings. I believe it is reasonable to design elevations for these new buildings that use the same architectural language as the older ones. To do so, I believe, is a way of respecting the significance of what is currently there, and accepting it as valid, even beautiful, architecture instead of responding to it with a "reinterpretive" critique.

In matters of architectural taste, the public tends to be overwhelmingly conservative. Such conservatism is often equated with backwardness and old-fashioned values. Often the word *kitsch* crops up in a derogatory phrase. But I believe we need the inertia of conservatism

to keep us from losing our balance and sense of orientation. A conservative foundation helps to maintain our connections with the past, so that we have a sense of our place in history. Architecture generally outlives us. It should outlive our fads and whims as well. It should resonate with traditional cues that make it *intel-legible*, and therefore meaningful to a conservative public.

III THE SITE

SITE CONDITIONS

An appropriate site for this thesis investigation is an urban community in which economic decline is in progress. The decline will be manifested in the quality, condition, and occupancy status of buildings, and in the degree to which area businesses thrive or fail to thrive. The community will have a high percentage of rental housing, a high percentage of vacant buildings and vacant lots, and several properties in need of extensive repair. Additionally, the site will exhibit in its demography those characteristics that are associated with the aftermath of urban renewal—specifically, low income, a low level of education, a disproportionate number of minority residents, and an above average crime rate. Burlington fits the description very well.

DESCRIPTION

Burlington is a community in East Knoxville bounded on the north by I-40 and on the south by Skyline Drive. It extends eastward from Chilhowee Park to a little beyond where Magnolia Avenue

splits into Asheville Highway and Rutledge Pike (Figures 3.1 and 3.2).

Burlington lies to the northwest of Holston Hills, from which it is easily distinguished. Burlington terminates the gridded street pattern extending from central Knoxville along Magnolia, and is difficult to distinguish from the adjacent communities of Five Points and Park City (Figure 3.3). Magnolia Avenue, which parallels I-40, is a major traffic corridor in Knoxville and the primary commercial street in Burlington. Holston Drive and Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue (MLK) are secondary commercial streets that converge in the old Burlington business district (Figure 3.4). Behind the business district to the southeast is Speedway Circle, the former site of Knoxville's only horse racing track, now a residential development.

A brief history of Burlington begins with the incorporation of East Knoxville as a municipality in 1856. Thirteen years later, in 1868, East Knoxville was annexed by the City of Knoxville (Deaderick 626).

During the 1920s, central Knoxville's racial composition changed dramatically. The central city became a re-

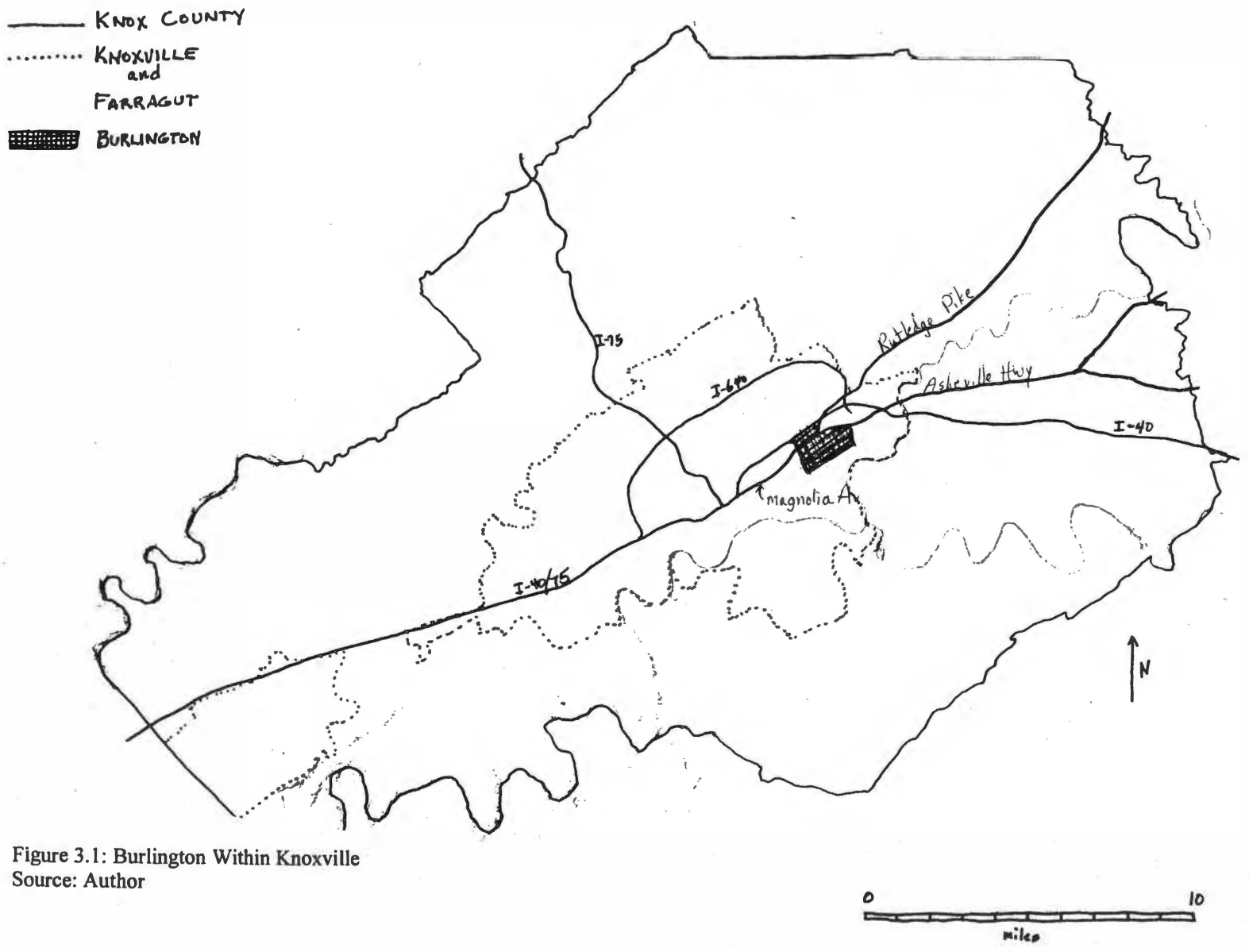


Figure 3.1: Burlington Within Knoxville
Source: Author



Figure 3.2: Burlington Defined
Source: Balloch

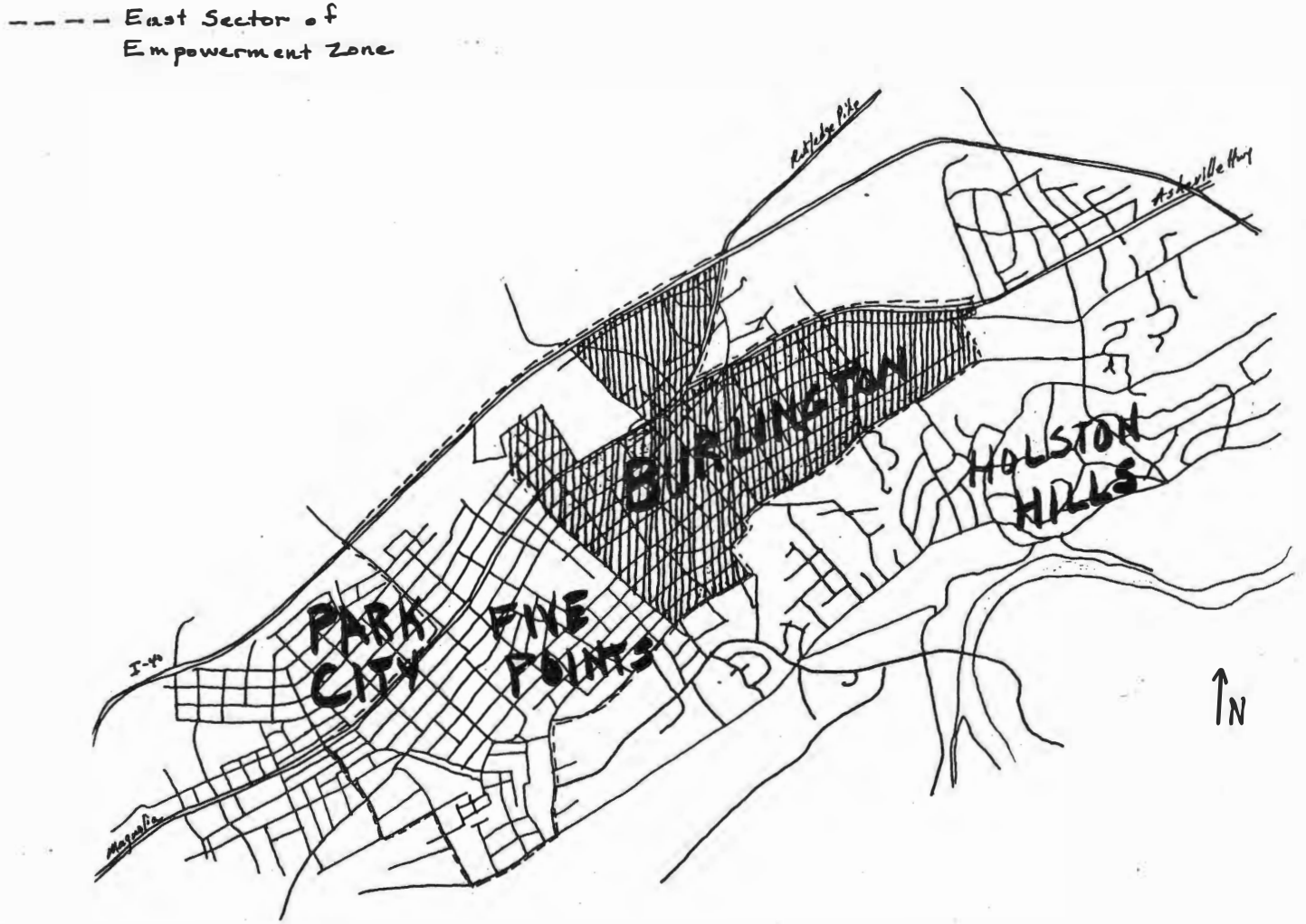


Figure 3.3: Distinguishing Burlington
Source: Author

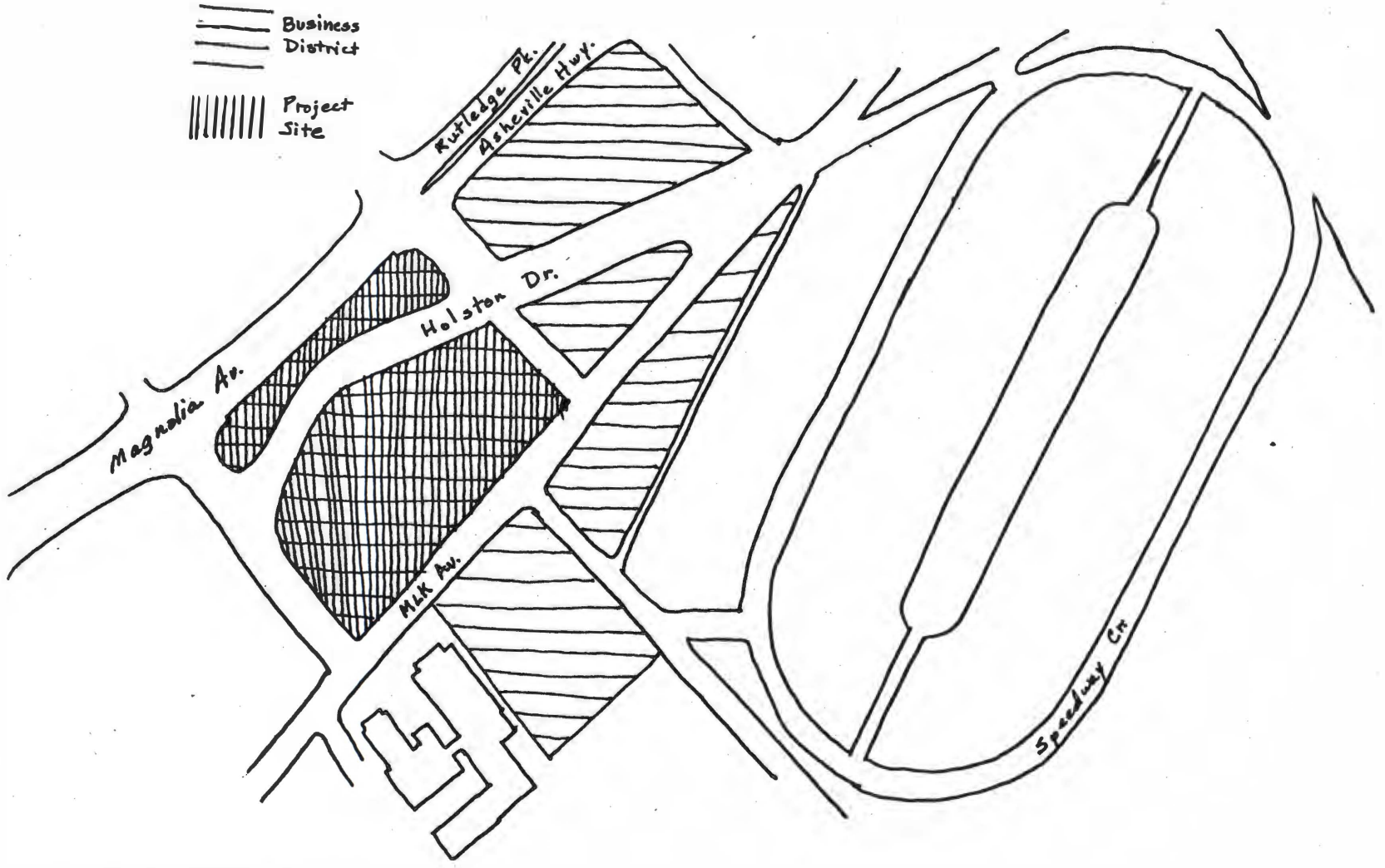


Figure 3.4: Burlington Business District
Source: Author

fuge—though a poor one—for blacks seeking relief from rural economic hardships and from racial tensions in other parts of the city (McDonald & Wheeler 51, 54). At that time, Burlington had a strong concentration of Ku Klux Klan members (Figure 3.5).

In 1939 the Knoxville Housing Authority noted "rapid deterioration" of housing in the central city [shaded area] (Figure 3.6). By 1960, one east central slum neighborhood (Mountain View) was ranked "20,875th of 20,915 urban census tracts in the entire nation in terms of housing stock" (McDonald & Wheeler 136). These facts set the stage for sweeping slum clearance and urban renewal. The Mountain View site was redeveloped for Knoxville's current Civic Coliseum (Figure 3.7), Hyatt-Regency Hotel, and the Safety Building (140).

Residents of the blighted areas were forced to leave. Many migrated to East Knoxville, including Burlington.

Burlington's public face is on Magnolia Avenue. From its origin just east of downtown Knoxville until it reaches Chilhowee Park, Magnolia Avenue is typical of a healthy older commercial corridor. Its eastern end, however,

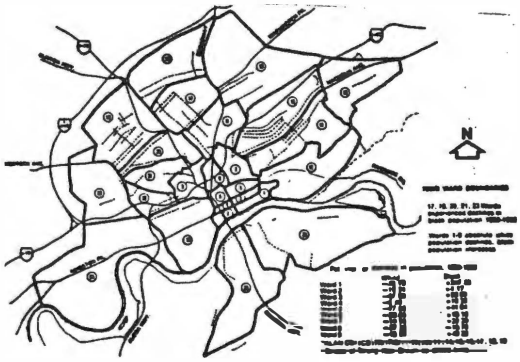


Figure 3.5: Ku Klux Klan Concentration 1920s
Source: McDonald and Wheeler (23).

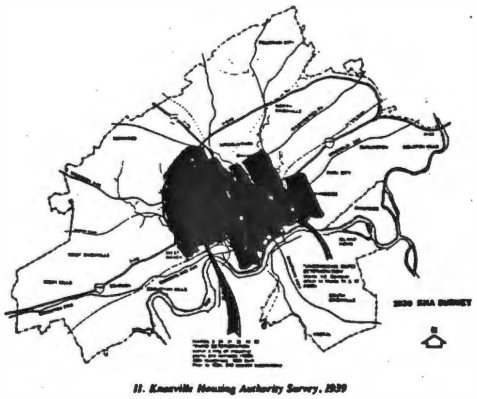


Figure 3.6: Deteriorated Housing
Source: McDonald and Wheeler (76).

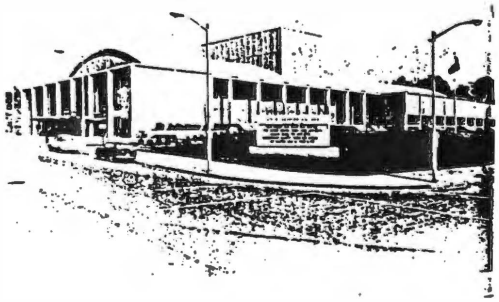


Figure 3.7: Knoxville Civic Coliseum
Source: Isenhour, Judith Clayton.

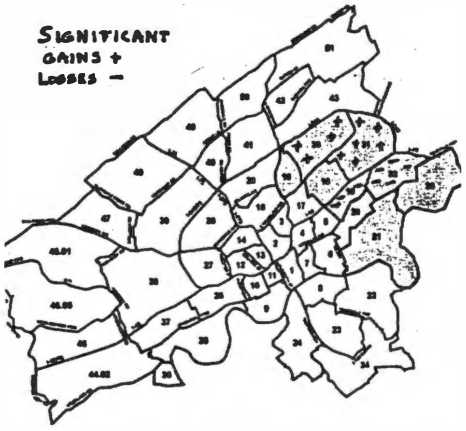


Figure 3.8: East Knoxville Census Tracts
Source: East City Sector Plan

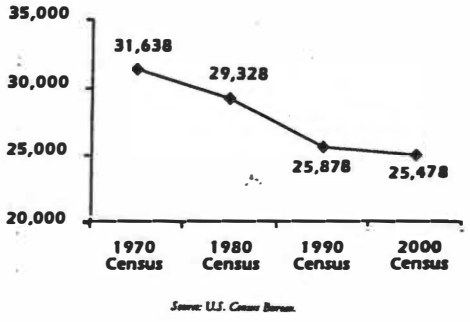


Figure 3.9: East Knoxville Population Change
Source: East City Sector Plan (9).

proliferates with business types that to suburban commuters signify blight. Thrift stores, junk markets, check cashing operations, and liquor stores seem to gather like scavengers around a dying creature.

Burlington's population has changed over the last fifty years from nearly all white to its current balance of 56% black to 41% white (Neely). While the overall population of East Knoxville has stabilized after declining nearly 12% in the 1980's, the census tract that includes Burlington continues to experience significant population losses (Figures 3.8 and 3.9) (East City Sector Plan 9). Housing in Burlington is typically small, typically older. The average list price for homes on the market in 1998 was $41,000. Vacant lots and empty houses are common (Balloch).

The 1944 Knoxville City Directory lists at least 31 non-residential occupancies on MLK (formerly McCalla Avenue) between Kirkwood Street and Holston Drive (See Figure 2.1). Currently active businesses in the same area number about ten. Several buildings are gone. Most of those remaining are vacant, some of them are boarded up. The businesses that

remain include a couple of barbers, a print shop, two bail bonding establishments, and a used furniture and appliance store (Figures 3.10, 3.11, 3.12). Two or three bus routes travel through the business district. A prominent church remains active, though its name and denomination have changed (Figure 3.13).

There has been occasional interest in rebuilding Burlington, but few concrete results. A $500,000 Burlington revitalization plan in the 1980's vanished after about $10,000 in improvements (Siler). A long-time resident and business owner heard that the money "went west" (Barnes).

Burlington is included in the eastern fringe of Knoxville's Empowerment Zone[4], making it eligible for federal funding for a variety of community development projects. The project site has the potential of strengthening a bond between Burlington and Knoxville. In addition, it has the potential of creating internal linkages in Burlington (Figure 3.14). The interior of Speedway Circle has

[4] Empowerment Zone funds, which originate with the Department of Housing and Urban Development, are administered at the local level by the non-profit agency, PNI, Partnership for Neighborhood Improvement.



Figure 3.10: Vacant Lots North Side of MLK
Source: Author

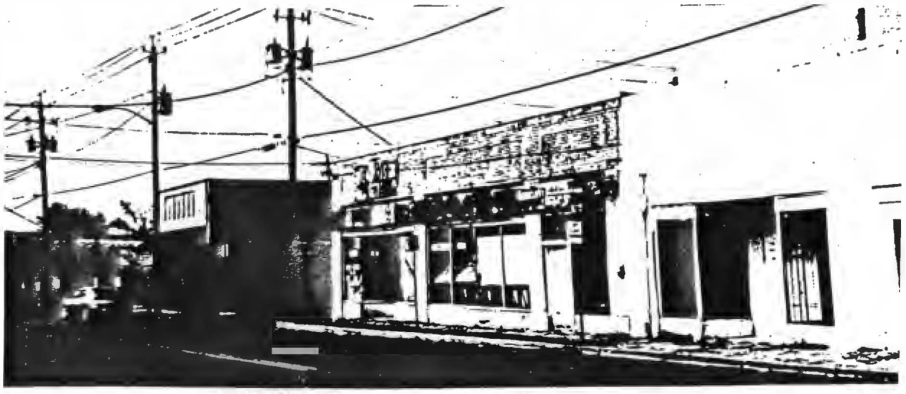


Figure 3.11: Vacant Buildings North Side of MLK
Source: Author



Figure 3.12: Unattractive Development South Side of MLK
Source: Author

historical and cultural value to the city and the community. It should be developed as a public greenway and historical marker. The business district portions of Holston Drive and MLK are pedestrian friendly. What is needed is a way to link the business district with the center of the Burlington Speedway, thereby connecting these two elements with a public network, and extending the civic realm to encompass both.

The project site is currently occupied by nine structures, three or four of them occupied, all but one of which are to be removed for the thesis project (Figure 3.15). The current occupants can be accommodated in the mixed-use project. Platting and alleyways on the site are indicated in Figure 3.16.



Figure 3.13: Greater Warner Tabernacle
Source: Author

ANALYSIS

To analyze Burlington, it is helpful to compare it to another Knoxville community, Fountain City. Fountain City was not annexed until 1962, under protest by its residents—it has a strong sense of

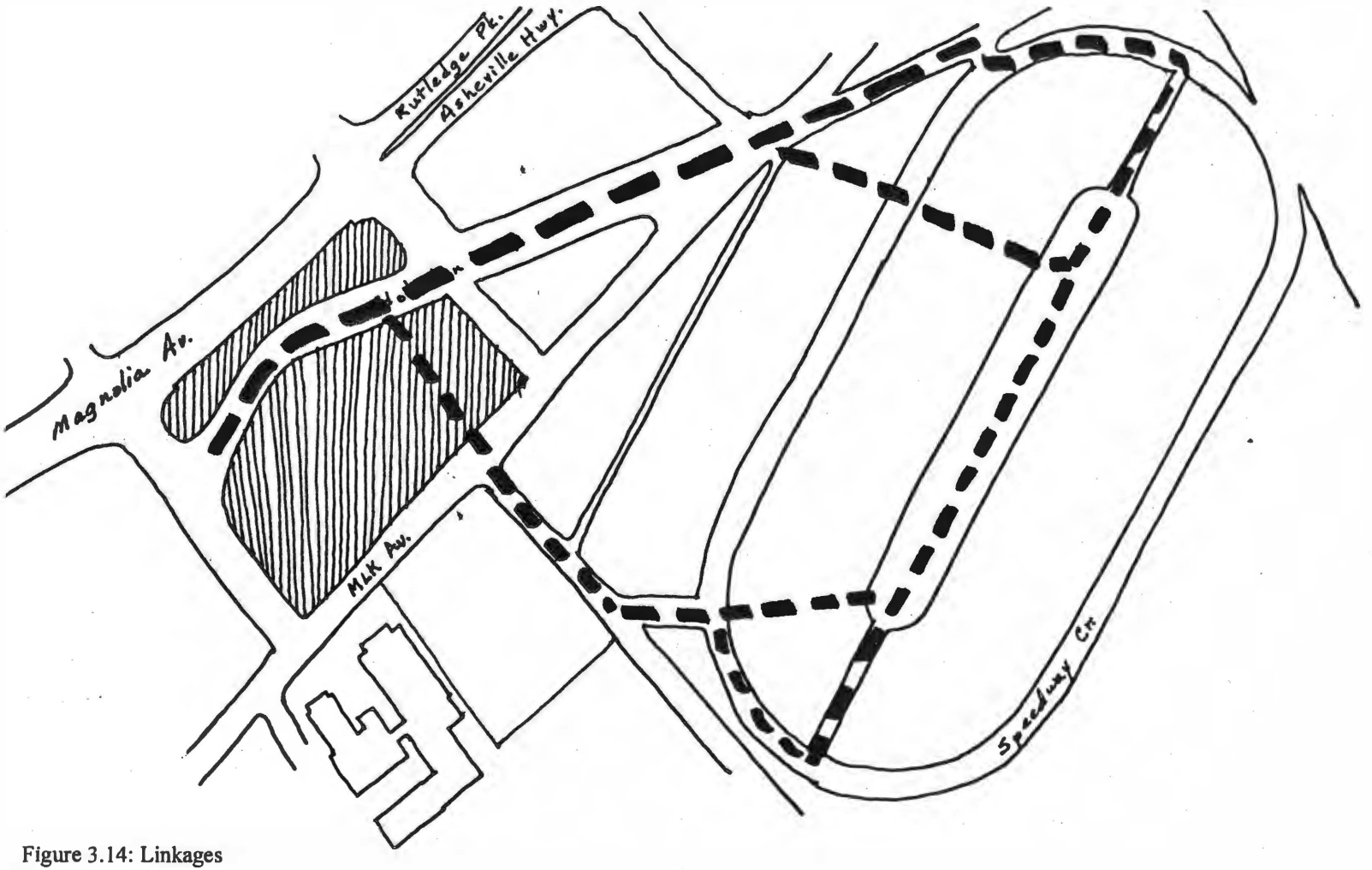


Figure 3.14: Linkages
Source: Author

identity[5]. The two communities have similar physical organization:

- Both are older Knoxville neighborhoods about the same distance from the central city.
- Both are partially bounded by a major interstate.
- Both are bisected by heavily traveled commercially developed arterial streets (Broadway Avenue and Magnolia Avenue).
- Both have a centrally located defining element. In Fountain City, this element is the Duck Pond. In Burlington, this element is the old business district.

The differences between Fountain City and Burlington are in quality or condition:

- Fountain City has a positive image; Burlington's is negative.
- Fountain City is fairly well defined with good name recognition; Burlington is poorly defined, unknown to many Knoxvillians.
- Broadway development is consistent with a healthy local economy; development on Magnolia (at its

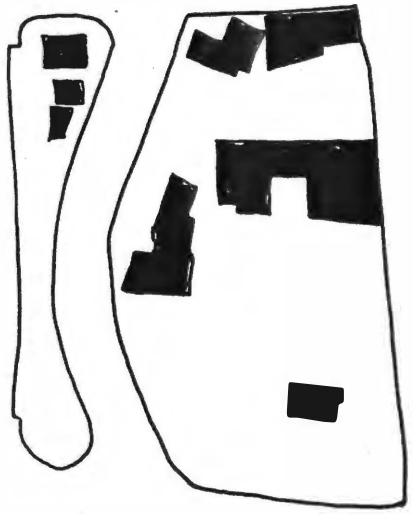


Figure 3.15 Existing Structures
Source: Author

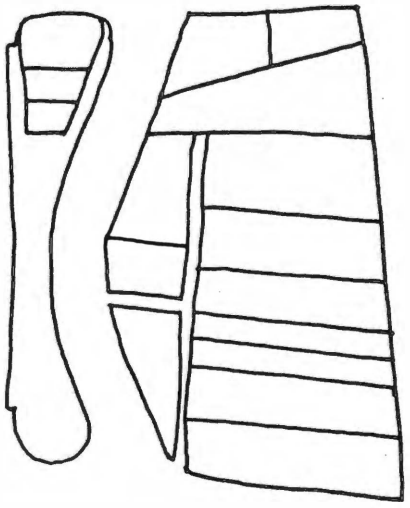


Figure 3.16: Platting and Alleyways
Source: Author

[5] To register their protest over being annexed, residents of Fountain City held a mock funeral service and presented the mayor with a "sword of surrender" (McDonald & Wheeler 141, 142).

terminus in Burlington) is consistent with an unhealthy local economy.

- Fountain City Duck Pond and the nearby Fountain City Park are accessible to residents; Chilhowee Park and Chilhowee Lake are inaccessible to Burlington residents.
- Fountain City's defining element (the Duck Pond) is attractive, maintained, and usually occupied; Burlington's defining element (the business district) is dilapidated and vacant.
- Fountain City Duck Pond and Fountain City Park provide pleasant places for informal outdoor and more formal indoor public assembly and recreation; Burlington has nothing comparable.
- Fountain City feels safe (personally and economically); Burlington feels unsafe.

Fountain City Duck Pond and Burlington's business district—especially in conjunction with the old racetrack, Speedway Circle—are unique cultural artifacts in Knoxville's urban fabric. They are locally significant *primary elements*. If either were threatened with demolition, Knoxvillians would protest loudly. People do care. People do remember Burlington as a vibrant, safe community. People do

Within the urban structure there are some primary elements of a particular nature which have the power to retard or accelerate the urban process.

--Aldo Rossi
The Architecture of the City, p. 63.

have visions for its future. Collectively, these are evidence of regenerative social forces existent in the community. These forces may be stimulated and nurtured through the development of a community center that occupies the front door of the neighborhood.

The shaded area of Figure 3.17 indicates an opportunity to establish a Burlington presence on Magnolia. It represents a taking of ownership and forms a public entry to the community.

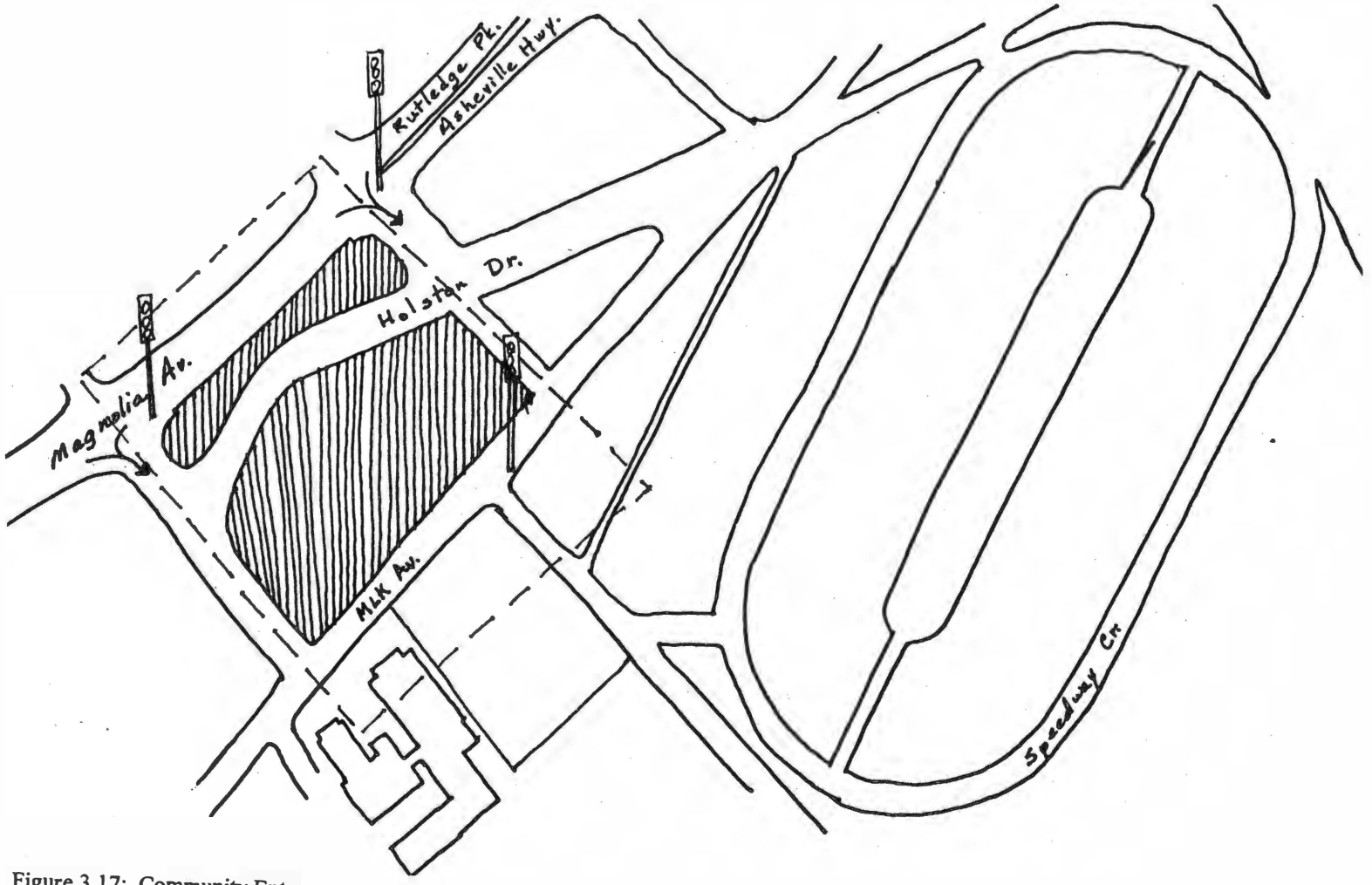


Figure 3.17: Community Entry
Source: Author.

IV THE PROGRAM

PROGRAM CONDITIONS

An appropriate program for the investigation of this thesis addresses revitalization on several fronts. It includes civic components at the local scale and at the scale of the city. It provides public gathering places and honors local cultural artifacts. The program brings a diversity of uses and a diversity of people and ideas into close proximity. The project is mixed in use, spatial quality, and type, but united in purpose—to concentrate, coordinate, and focus the energies of people who share a vision.

Burlington's business district can become a high-density pedestrian-friendly neighborhood shopping street. It can cultivate its unique local character, not duplicated elsewhere in the city. It can become the heart of the community, a valued treasure. Its successes can be an inspiration.

Such a vision implies internally fueled and therefore sustainable regeneration, not government-initiated pseudo-renewal. It is not the work of one person or one organization. It does not come about all at once or over a short time. It is the result of gradual restoration of

hope in the community. It is the work of scores of individuals and organizations who believe that Burlington has potential, that it already possesses the components necessary to restore it to health.

"Rebuilding Burlington" presents this vision as a framework or context within which to take a first step. As people other than the author add to it, the vision gains texture and becomes part of a collective community vision.

DESCRIPTION

The program to rebuild Burlington consists of almost 120,000 square feet of occupied space, most of it in two levels, over a layer of parking. Public use occurs in sixty percent of the space, half of that for commercial tenants, the other half for civic and non-profit use. The remaining forty percent of the available space, on the periphery and on the second floor, is reserved for residential use (Table 4.1).

On MLK, the inner surface of the block, the project votes firmly in favor of reestablishing the urbanity of the street. Its definition as a shopping street is reinforced by the provision of a row of buildings,

Table 4.1 Allocation of Space

Occupant Type	Area in Sq Ft
Civic/Non-Profit	
Library	8100
Assembly	3400
Computer Lab	2300
Financial Services	2300
Design Studio	2300
Legal Services	2300
Real Estate Dev.	2100
Police Precinct	2200
County Clerk	1300
Emergency Shelter	3500
Commercial	
Restaurant	5400
Coffee Shop	1300
Assorted Retail	23000
Residential	
Rowhouses	10200
Apartments	28400
NET SQ. FT.	98100
Circulation/Service	19620
GROSS SQ. FT.	117720

with retail at the ground floor and residential space above. The nature of the retail business on MLK is different from that on Magnolia (Figure 4.1). There are no corporate representatives on MLK; its products and services are local and distinctive. Tenants for which space is provided include a restaurant, coffee shop, print shop, electronics repair shop, pharmacy, card shop, and music store.

The office space is primarily intended to house a variety of nonprofit agencies who might play a part in rebuilding the community. Agencies specifically included in the program include a financial services office, a legal services office, a real estate development office, and a design studio. Assembly spaces are provided for classes and seminars offered by the nonprofit groups or by other organizations.

Nonprofit agencies are often reliant on volunteers. It is assumed that the University of Tennessee will provide opportunities for students to earn college credit while volunteering. Accordingly, the program also provides housing for students and others. Most of the second floor is divided into apartment space, while

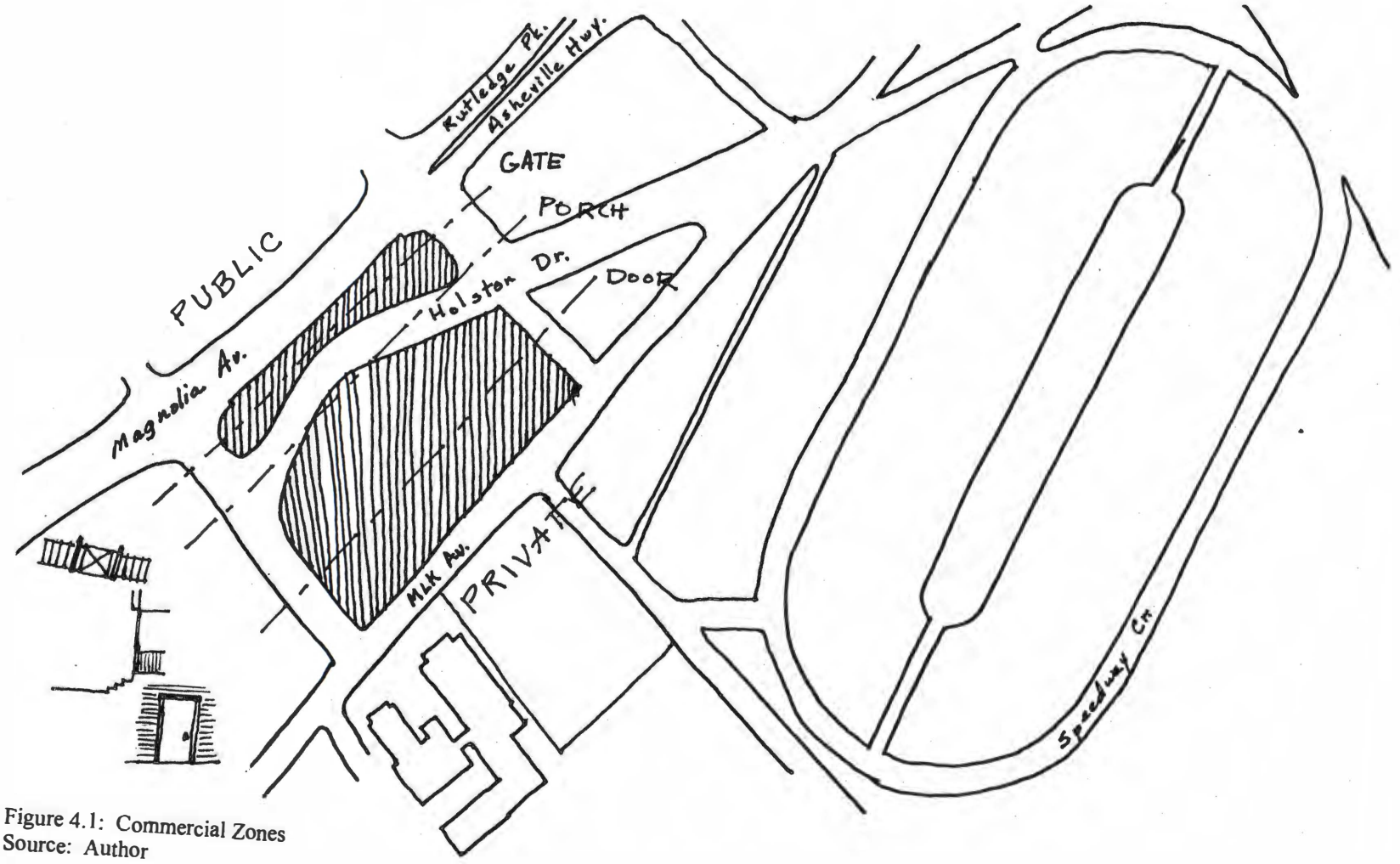


Figure 4.1: Commercial Zones
Source: Author

a segment of two-story rowhousing fronts one street.

The below-grade parking is intended to provide for the needs of shoppers during the workday, residents in the evening, and churchgoers on the weekend.

Lastly, the project participates in the formation of public spaces. In particular, the project functions as a link between the primary urban artifacts of the racetrack and the business district. The oval racetrack form is used to engage the attention of commuters on Magnolia, and bring honor to the community's history.

ANALYSIS

Consider a house without a front door. For the occupants, a feeling of insecurity dominates. Those who don't leave retreat to the bedrooms where locked doors provide them with privacy and safety. The common areas of the home—the living room, the kitchen, the hearth—are abandoned to human and animal intruders. The untended fire goes out. Objects of value disappear, windows are broken, and trash accumulates. The occupants no

longer associate and begin to distrust one another.

To some degree, Burlington is like a house without a door. Its common areas are abandoned by all but a few. The residents do not gather in the public spaces to mingle and build connections with one another. They retreat to the privacy and safety of their homes, leaving the heart of their neighborhood unoccupied, and the entry unmanned.

A "front door" for Burlington is one that defines zones of transition between the public thoroughfare and the private streets (Figure 4.2). It signals an attended entry, ownership, and safety. It re-establishes the hearth, and reoccupies the common spaces.

The program addresses the front door problem with a civic presence on Magnolia Avenue. The visible portion is the library building. Because it is a component of the city government, the library is a visible and meaningful expression of the city's reinvestment in the community.

Also present, but much less obvious is the police precinct. It is not intended to intimidate, but to reassure. To counter the tension that often exists between law

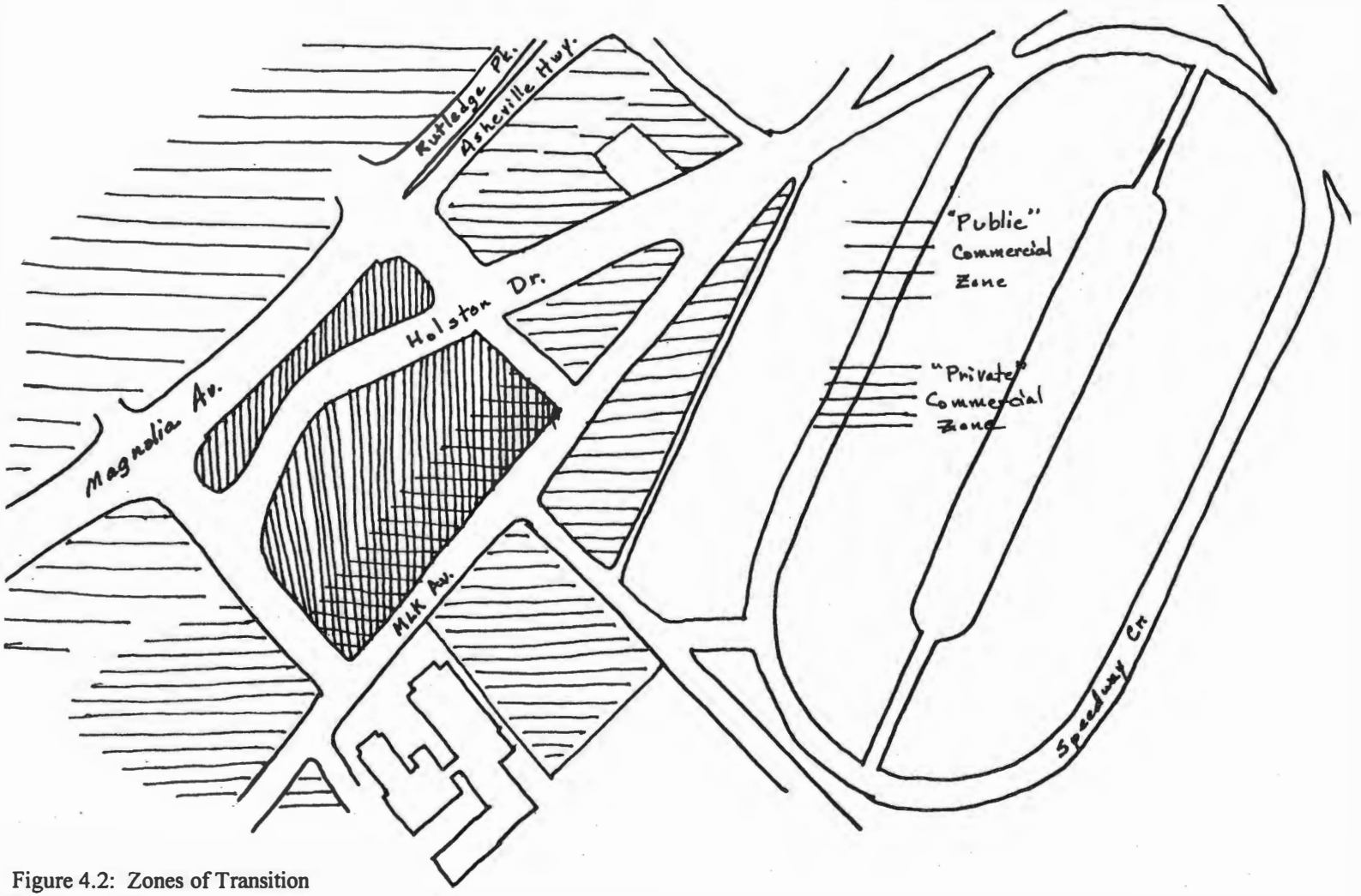


Figure 4.2: Zones of Transition
Source: Author

enforcement and minority citizens, the police building is redefined as a refuge. This is accomplished by including within the same building emergency housing for runaway teens and victims of domestic violence.

The second and third floors of the library building, which look out over Magnolia and into Burlington's heart, house those agencies whose purpose is to bring about the desired regeneration. They provide the physical and spiritual links between the city and an estranged community.

V THE STUDIES

Summerhill—Atlanta, Ga.

The characteristics of the Summerhill neighborhood were similar to those of Burlington, but the neighborhood was in a more advanced stage of decline. The reasons for the decline parallel those of Burlington.

The neighborhood was "characterized by deteriorated housing, blighted commercial areas, empty lots, and the array of social problems associated with poverty and despair" (Urban Land, September 1995, p. 48). As of the 1990 census, Summerhill's median per-capita income was only $5694. Over 700 of the 1200 residential lots were vacant, with forty percent of them beyond repair (48). In anticipation of the 1996 Olympic Games, Atlanta began the revitalization of this blighted inner city neighborhood. The strategies proposed and employed included both residential and commercial development.

Illustrated in Figure 5.1 is a subdivision of single-family housing (The Orchard) proposed as one of several projects in the redevelopment package. The design provides for a common green

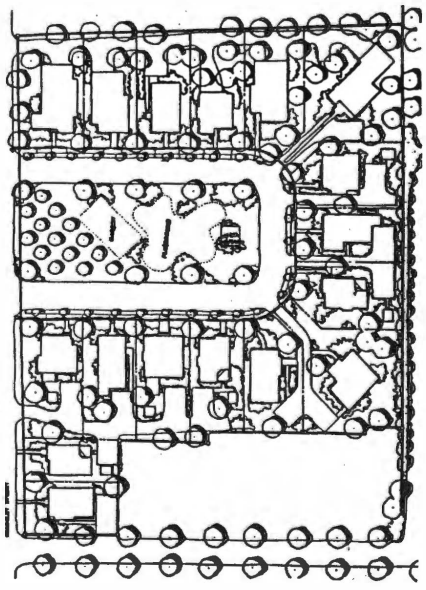


Figure 5.1: The Orchard
Source: Suchman (49).

space centrally located within the subdivision, providing a playground and the opportunity for a community garden. The streetscape is protected by a planting of trees and by placement of most driveway entrances at the back of the lots.

The Orchard is one of twenty projects planned for Summerhill's revitalization. Figure 5.2 indicates placement of The Orchard within the overall project, which includes provision of a public park, public plaza, street beautification, a supermarket, and a school.

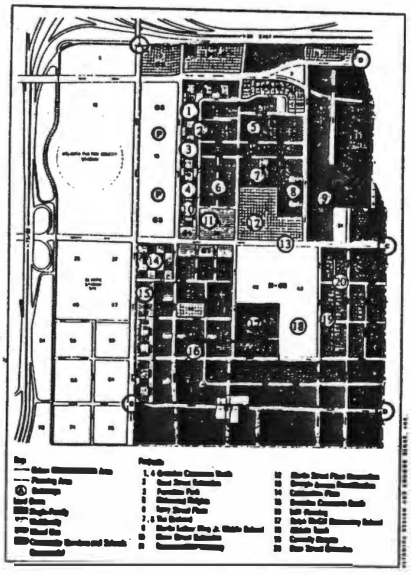


Figure 5.2: Summerhill Projects
Source: Suchman (51).

Rochester, NY.

Deteriorating economic conditions in Rochester have brought its neighborhoods and commercial areas into distress, not unlike the situation in Burlington. The sequence of events leading to the decline is different from that of Burlington, but the methods of revitalization employ applicable principles. The decline in Rochester is not confined to particular neighborhoods, racial groups, or social classes. A number of communities in upstate New York have been buffeted by several years of decline, much of it due to the loss of manufacturing jobs in the area, exacerbated by changes in the way

that the state government distributes tax revenue to municipalities. Several of these cities participated in a mayor's forum in the summer of 2000 to share information and develop strategies to turn their communities around (Urban Land, July 2001, p 81-82).

Like all successful revitalization efforts, Rochester's plan was implemented in diverse ways, including the provision of neighborhood grocery stores (Figure 5.3), new residential communities (Figure 5.4), rehabilitation of historic neighborhoods (Figure 5.5), and revitalization of neighborhood commercial strips (Figure 5.6).



Figure 5.3: Neighborhood Grocery
Source: Hudnut (84).

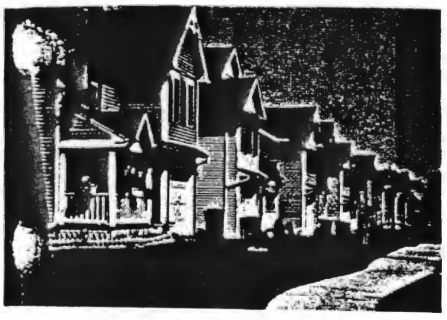


Figure 5.4: New Communities
Source: Hudnut (85).



Figure 5.5: Historic Neighborhood
Source: Hudnut (85).

University District—Columbus, Oh.

It is anticipated that revitalization in Burlington might come about under the leadership of the University of Tennessee. Success in Burlington could perhaps be replicated in other Knoxville neighborhoods, particularly Fort Sanders, which is adjacent to the university.

Ohio State University, like many urban universities, is situated in an area of town that has been transformed by the outward migration of homeowner families, and the influx of a transient student



Figure 5.6: Commercial strip
Source: Hudnut (85).

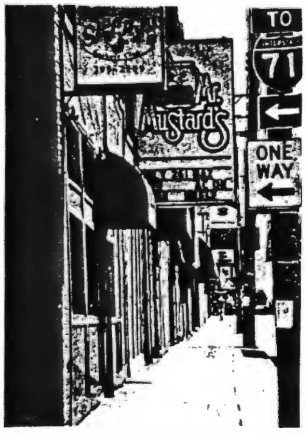


Figure 5.7: High Street Signage
Source: Berens (58).

population. Much of the student population is housed in poorly maintained, overcrowded single-family homes that have been converted into studio apartments. The University District's main street, High Street, is littered with fast food restaurants, bars, and an unattractive collection of signage (Figure 5.7) (Urban Land, April, 1996, p 58).

Redevelopment of High Street into a safe and attractive pedestrian-friendly entrance to the university became a top priority. Rehabilitation of dilapidated housing (Figure 5.8) was modeled after successful revitalization in a nearly neighborhood (Figure 5.9).

Meacham Park—Kirkwood, Mo.

Meacham Park is an example of a distressed neighborhood undergoing revitalization efforts. The goals of the project are to attract new residents through improvements to the housing stock and construction of new housing, and to increase the wealth of residents through homeownership opportunities.

Kirkwood is a recently annexed suburb of St. Louis. A major regional shopping center (Figure 5.10) to be located in Kirkwood is expected to generate the

economic climate to make the Meacham Park project feasible. Through tax increment financing, the shopping center will help to pay for housing rehabilitation in Meacham Park.



Figure 5.8: Dilapidated Student Housing
Source: Berens (59).

PARTI STUDIES

The site and program combination of this thesis initially suggested the possibility of a four or five-story crescent shaped block to house the police precinct and much of the residential spaces. The remainder of the block might best be developed through a courtyard plan, which allows for a public plaza adjacent to the assembly spaces.



Figure 5.9: Revitalized Housing
Source: Berens (59).

Early explorations of form and site are recorded in plan/axon sketches (Figure 5.11). These begin to reveal the possibilities and opportunities for design solutions. In one, a tall block terminates the Fern Street vista. In another, a tall round block completes the curve described by Holston Drive. In the third sketch, a tall crescent completes the curve while the Fern Street axis penetrates through the ground floor. In this drawing is the first indication of what later became rowhouses along one edge.

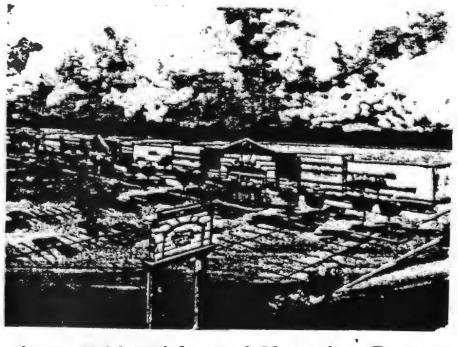


Figure 5.10: Kirkwood Shopping Center
Source: Maloney (12).

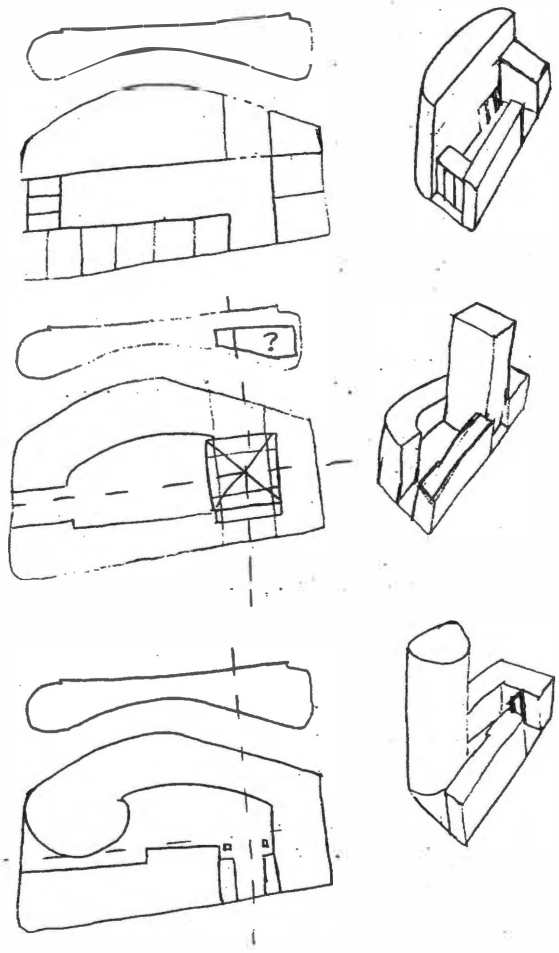


Figure 5.11: Plan/Axon Sketches
Source: Author

Further experimentation resulted in plan/elevation drawings, each of which contributed something of value to the final design. It is at this point that the site was enlarged to include the Magnolia frontage. Issues of permeability, scale, and distribution of mass were explored, along with the potential for including green space and optimizing the existing topographical condition.

The first of the plan/elevation drawings, "Open to MLK" (Figure 5.12), provided a sheltered outdoor space and a courtyard that opened onto MLK Av. In this scheme, building mass is dispersed, buildings are loosely assembled, and the public space is visually impermeable from Magnolia.

"Oval Path" (Figure 5.13) is the first drawing to show a formal link with Speedway Circle. It incorporates Holston Drive as a tangential path, provides the potential for a greener Prosser Avenue, and includes a covered pedestrian shopping street as a Fern Street extension. In addition, it makes use of south-facing glass in the primary building. In this scheme, building mass is concentrated to one side, and the complex is visually and physically permeable from Magnolia.

Like "Oval Path", "Oval Courtyard" (Figure 5.14) provides a formal link to the Speedway, but in this design, the link is strengthened by the extension of the oval across MLK, opening the possibility of a physical link as well. Sheltered outdoor spaces are provided, and a bus stop. This plan puts the primary building mass at the center, leaving the public space impermeable from Magnolia.

"Nave Garden" (Figure 5.15) projects the nave of the facing church onto the site. It also repeats the angle of Holston Drive as a strong diagonal, creating a trapezoidal tripartite primary building. In addition, a trapezoidal courtyard is formed. This scheme provides a view into the parking garage.

"Terminated Axes" (Figure 5.16) puts the building mass to one side as an object building in a rectangular courtyard. In this scheme, the entries from MLK are interpreted as portals, set back from the street, partially enclosed, and terminated by buildings across the courtyard. The plan is visually permeable from Magnolia.

One composition that attempts to knit together some of the ideas under consideration is shown by the model in Figure 5. 17. But more than anything else

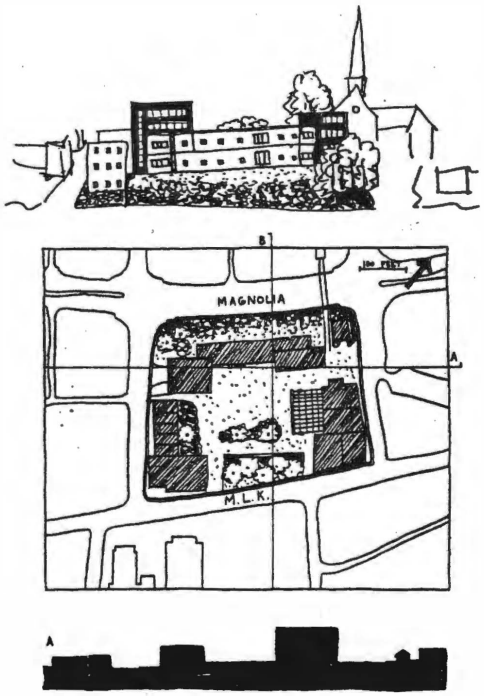


Figure 5.12: Open to MLK
Source: Author

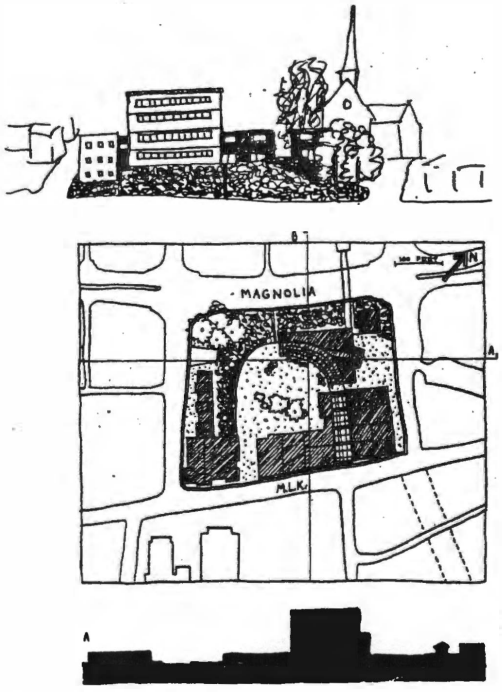


Figure 5.13: Oval Path
Source: Author

here presented, Figure 5.18 captures the essence of the intentions that informed the final design. With it we understand how the speedway becomes the means of linking Burlington with the larger community.

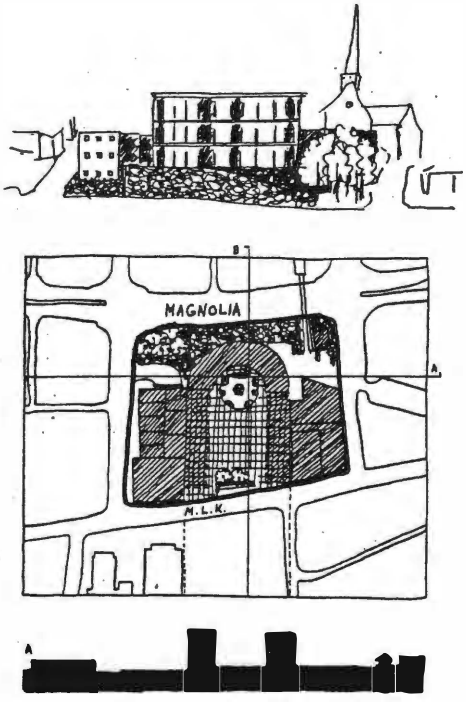


Figure 5.14: Oval Courtyard
Source: Author

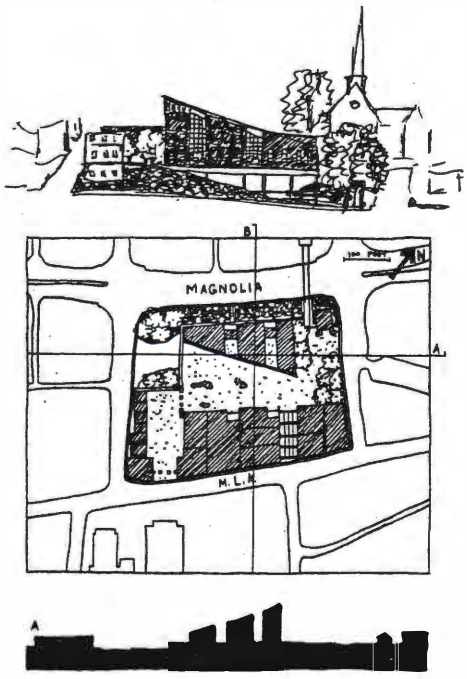


Figure 5.15: Nave Garden
Source: Author

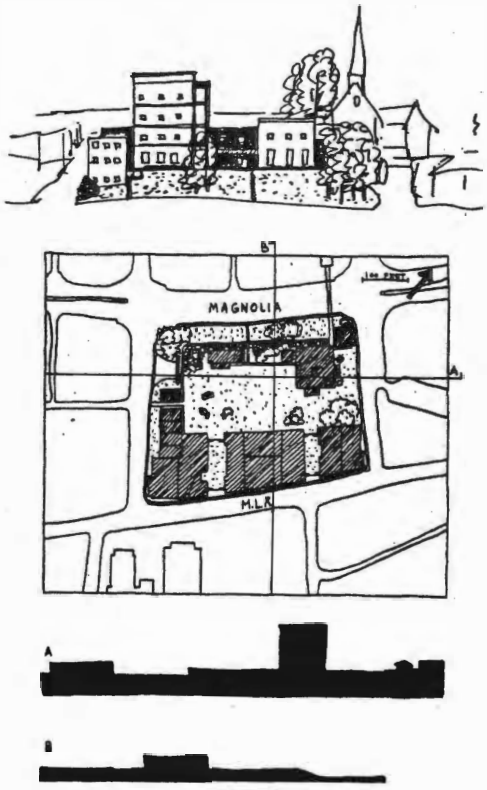


Figure 5.16: Terminated Axes
Source: Author



Figure 5.17: Study Model
Source: Author

Figure 5.18: Parti Diagram
Source: Author

VI THE DESIGN

COMMUNITY

This section defines a larger design context into which the thesis project must fit. The larger context does not exist, but is part of a vision of the community. (All remaining figures are located in the appendix).

In my vision, the entire area of the old racetrack is redefined as public land. No longer must a person trespass to walk across it. No longer will an unobservant driver complete the circuit with the impression that this is just another curving road. No longer will this special place be unknown in Knoxville.

In keeping with its former use, it is appropriate that the speedway area become a recreational park, full of children and adults, full of paths and benches, full of activity and repose. In this way, it becomes a destination, a playful center of the community, perfectly complementing the thesis project, which is a more formal center of the community.

Martin Luther King Jr. Av. is gradually remodeled, refurbished, and rebuilt. New construction respects the forms of the old without becoming trite. It leads into the future by establishing new traditions. New buildings are two-story,

incorporating residential space above in recognition of the importance of occupancy in keeping a street alive.

BLOCK

Preserving a sense of place and of culture and of history for Burlington requires that a certain attitude be cultivated, one in which the landscape is not erased. For example, the existing topography already tends towards a definition of space as Burlington/non-Burlington, also as pedestrian/vehicular. This definition is maintained in the thesis design. All of the Magnolia frontage is non-Burlington and vehicular. All of the Prosser and MLK frontage is Burlington and pedestrian. The Kirkwood frontage mediates between the two.

One building on the block is left undisturbed. It has no particular value, but its presence is indicative of the attitude described above. Since the building is not in the way, why not allow it to remain? Why not keep intact as many markers as practical to preserve the attachments of the people who live here?

Where trees exist on the site, they have been incorporated into the design as much as possible. It is simple to buy and plant a tree, but I contend that its value is diminished in comparison with the tree that is already part of the community.

The setbacks on MLK do not conform to current codes and common practice. The thesis project, however, conforms to those setbacks, in the belief that the relationships of building to street established by the buildings in the business district are significant, valuable, and worthy of not only preservation, but emulation.

The prominent church adjacent to the site is utilized as a geometric stabilizer and generator. From it are derived the orthogonal forty-eight foot grid that underlies the structure of the thesis design. In this way, it too becomes a part of the project.

BUILDING AND PUBLIC SPACE

The most significant building of the project is that which heads the axis and houses most of the civic components. It stands a little to one side and, at three stories, is appropriately shorter than the church

building. This building functions as a mediator between the city and the community. It houses city/county government functions, but must be entered from within the community. It interrupts the rectangular geometry on Magnolia, inviting passersby to pause for a closer look, perhaps a visit. It terminates the vista from MLK, and provides users of the building with a view of the city beyond. The building is a symbol of cooperation.

However significant the building, the oval public space on the site is primary. Instead of this space serving the buildings, in this project the buildings serve the public space. No building stands in it. Few objects are allowed to obstruct the view.

Serious circulation in the public space is directed to the perimeter, just as it was on the racetrack that preceded it. A series of gathering and activity areas are provided down the central axis of the oval's interior. These areas become destinations and attract cross-traffic, promoting more leisurely circulation and social interaction.

The perimeter path is marked by an arcade that serves that buildings and defines the space. To go beyond definition

and indicate the significance of the path, the inside columns are given special treatment, extending above the roof of the arcade and shaped to direct the view inward.

Borrowing the dignity of the columned church front, the four columns at the head of the oval are enlarged and heightened. This four-column pattern is then cut loose from the building and repeated on each side of MLK where it crosses the oval, and at the center of the oval's opposite end. Here the column row is rotated to face Calvin Street, the straight access to Speedway Circle and Speedway Park. From this point, we can feel and see the connection between Knoxville and the jewel of Burlington.

REFERENCES

Ahlbrandt, Roger S. Jr. and Brophy, Paul C. Neighborhood Revitalization: Theory and Practice. Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath and Company, 1975.

AlSayyad, Nezar, Ed. Forms of Dominance: On the Architecture and Urbanism of the Colonial Enterprise. Aldershot: Avebury, 1992.

Balloch, Jim. "On the Verge of a Rebirth." The Knoxville News Sentinel 15 Nov. 1998, sec. B6.

Barnes, Ernie. Personal Interview. 22 Oct. 2002.

Bennett, Larry. Fragments of Cities: The New American Downtowns and Neighborhoods. Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1990.

Berens, Gayle. "Campus Partners, Columbus." Urban Land 55.4 (1996): 57-60.

Brookwood Group. "A Neighborhood Master Plan" Pamphlet.

Calthorpe, Peter. The Next American Metropolis: Ecology, community, and the American Dream. NY: Princeton Architectural P, 1993.

Center for Neighborhood Development. "Knoxville's Empowerment Zone" Pamphlet.

Churchill, Henry S. The City is the People. Cornwall, NY: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1945.

Corbusier, Le. The City of To-morrow and it's Planning. NY: Dover, 1987.

Curtis, William J. R. Modern Architecture Since 1900. London: Phaidon P, 1996.

Deaderick, Lucile, Ed. Heart of the Valley: a History of Knoxville, Tennessee.

Knoxville: East Tennessee Historical Society, 1976.

Hudnut, William H. "Turning Communities Around." Urban Land 60.7 (2001): 81-90.

Isenhour, Judith Clayton. Knoxville: a Pictorial History. Norfolk, VA: Donning Co., 1978.

Jacobs, Jane. Death and Life of Great American Cities. New York: Random House, Inc., 1961.

Jacobs, Jane. Economy of Cities. New York: Random House, Inc., 1969.

"East City Sector Plan." Knox Co. Metropolitan Planning Commission. January 2002.

Knox. Co. Property Assessor's Office. "Suburbia."

Knoxville City Empowerment Zone. Pamphlet.

Knoxville City Directory. "Occupancy in 1944" p. 259. 1944.

Krier, Bob. Urban Space. London: Academy Editions, 1979.

Leccese, Michael and McCormick, Kathleen, Ed. Charter of the New Urbanism. New York: McGraw-Hill: 2000.

Lynch, Kevin. The Image of the City. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1960.

Malony, Joseph A. "Developments." Urban Land 56.4 (1997): 12.

McDonald, Michael J. and Wheeler, William Bruce. Knoxville, Tennessee: Continuity and Change in an Appalachian City. Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1983.

Neely, Jack. "A Moving Target." Metro Pulse. www.metropulse.com/dir_zine/ Dir_2001/1128/t_cover.html. 18 Nov 2002.

Newman, Oscar. Defensible Space. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1972.

Oliver, Melvin and Shapiro, Thomas M. Black Wealth/White Wealth: A New Perspective on Racial Inequality. New York: Routledge, 1997.

Rossi, Aldo. The Architecture of the City. New York: MIT Press, 1982.

Rudofsky, Bernard. Streets for People: A Primer for Americans. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1969.

Saunders, James Robert and Shackelford, Renae Nadine. Urban Renewal and the End of Black Culture in Charlottesville, Virginia. Jefferson, NC.: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 1998.

Siler, Charlie. "Burlington Changes to Begin in July." The Knoxville News Sentinel No Date Found.

Suchman, Diane R. "Meeting an Olympic Challenge in Summerhill." Urban Land . 54.9 (1995): 48-52.

Thomas, June Manning. Redevelopment and Race: Planning a Finer City in Postwar Detroit. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997.

Wodehouse, Lawrence and Moffett, Marian. A History of Western Architecture. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Co, 1989.

Zielenbach, Sean. The Art of Revitalization: Improving Conditions in Distressed Inner-City Neighborhoods. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 2000.

APPENDIX

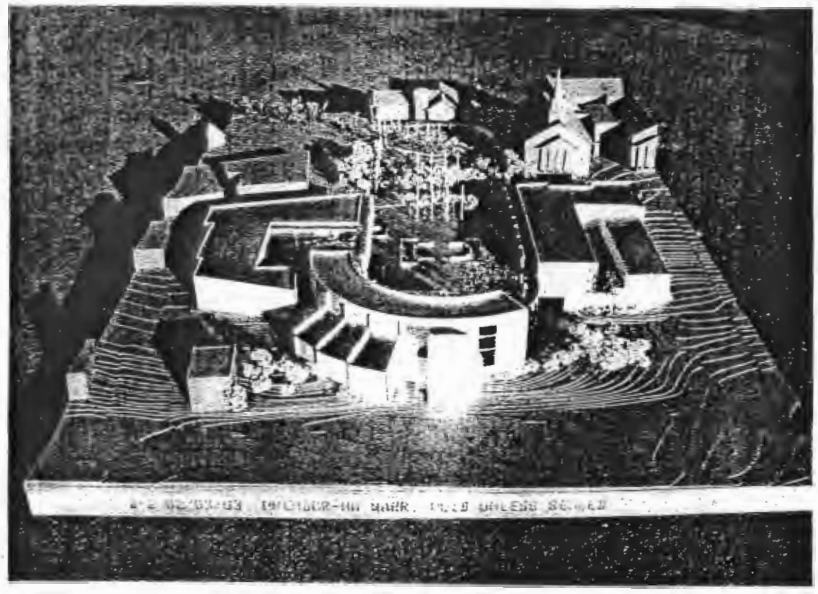


Figure A-1: Model Photo #1
Source: Author

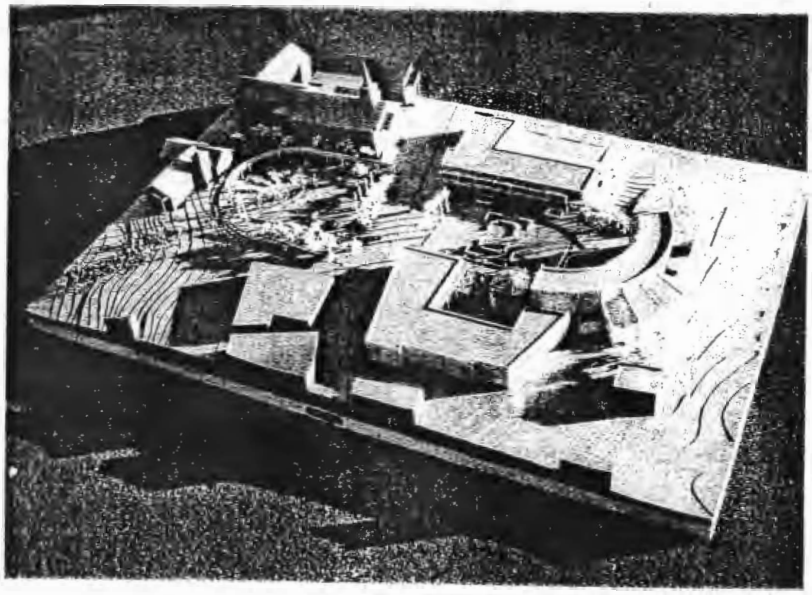


Figure A-2: Model Photo #2
Source: Author

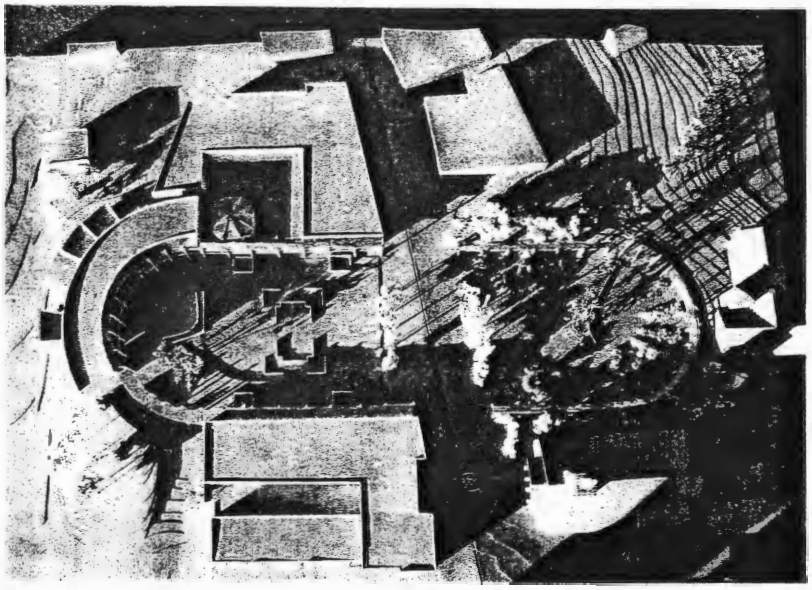


Figure A-3: Model Photo #3
Source: Author

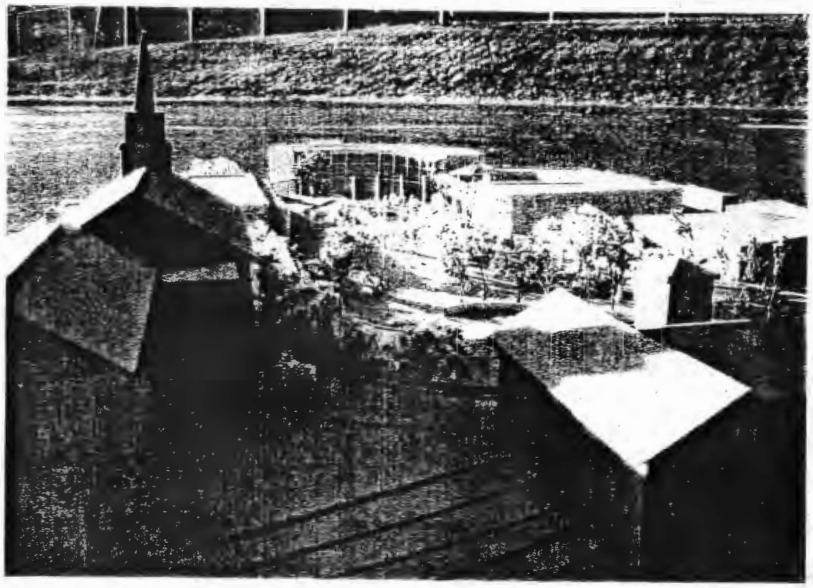


Figure A-4: Model Photo #4
Source: Author

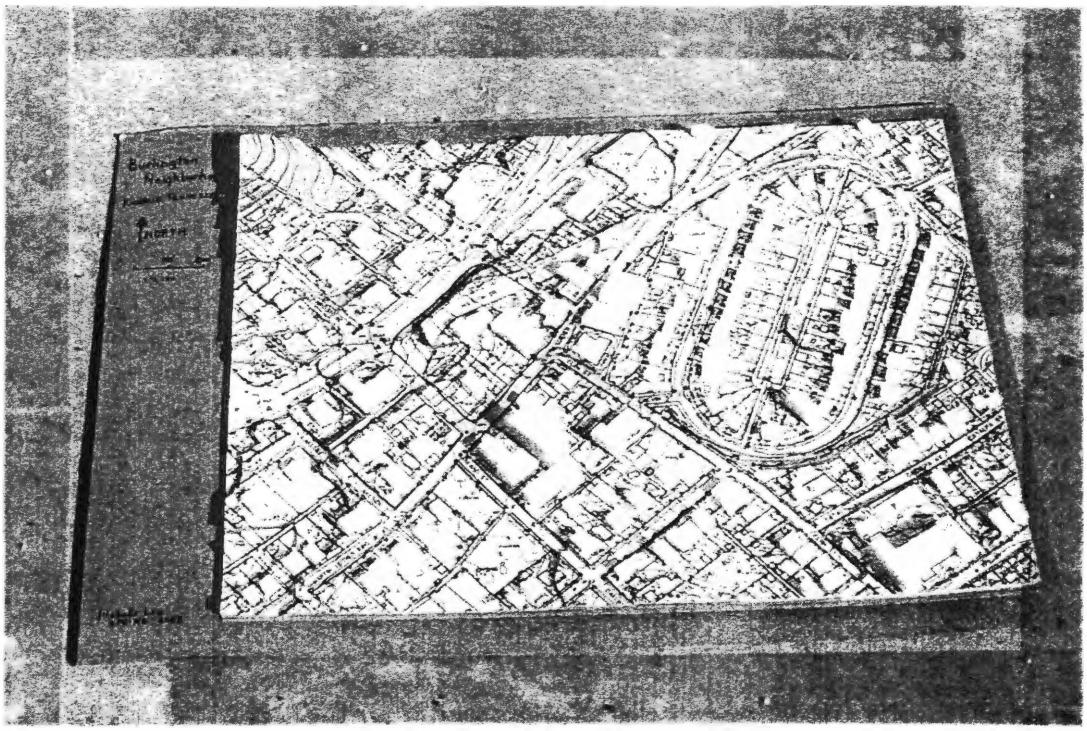


Figure A-5: Context Model
Source: Author

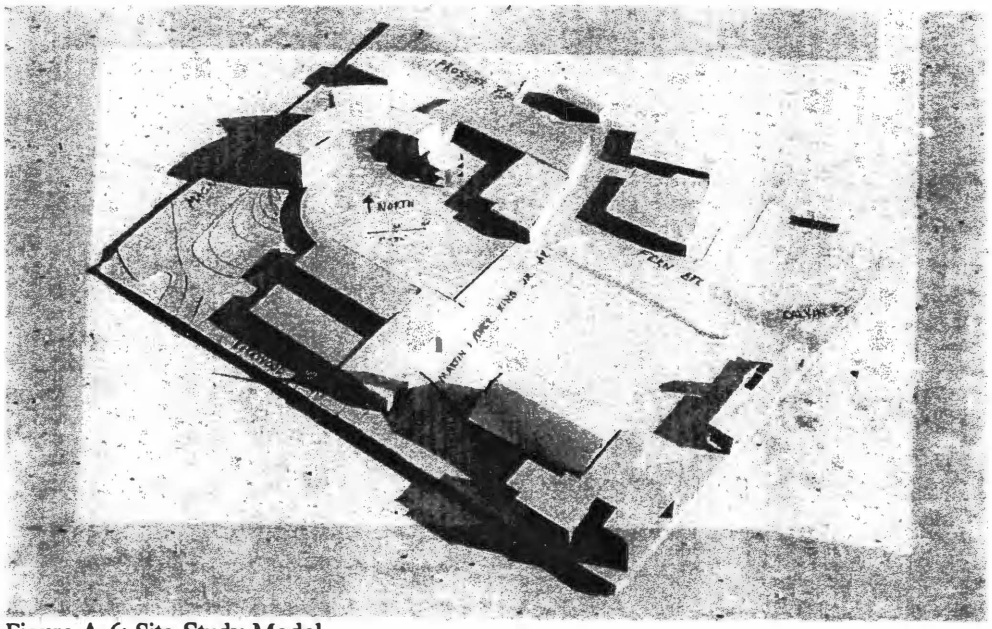


Figure A-6: Site Study Model
Source: Author

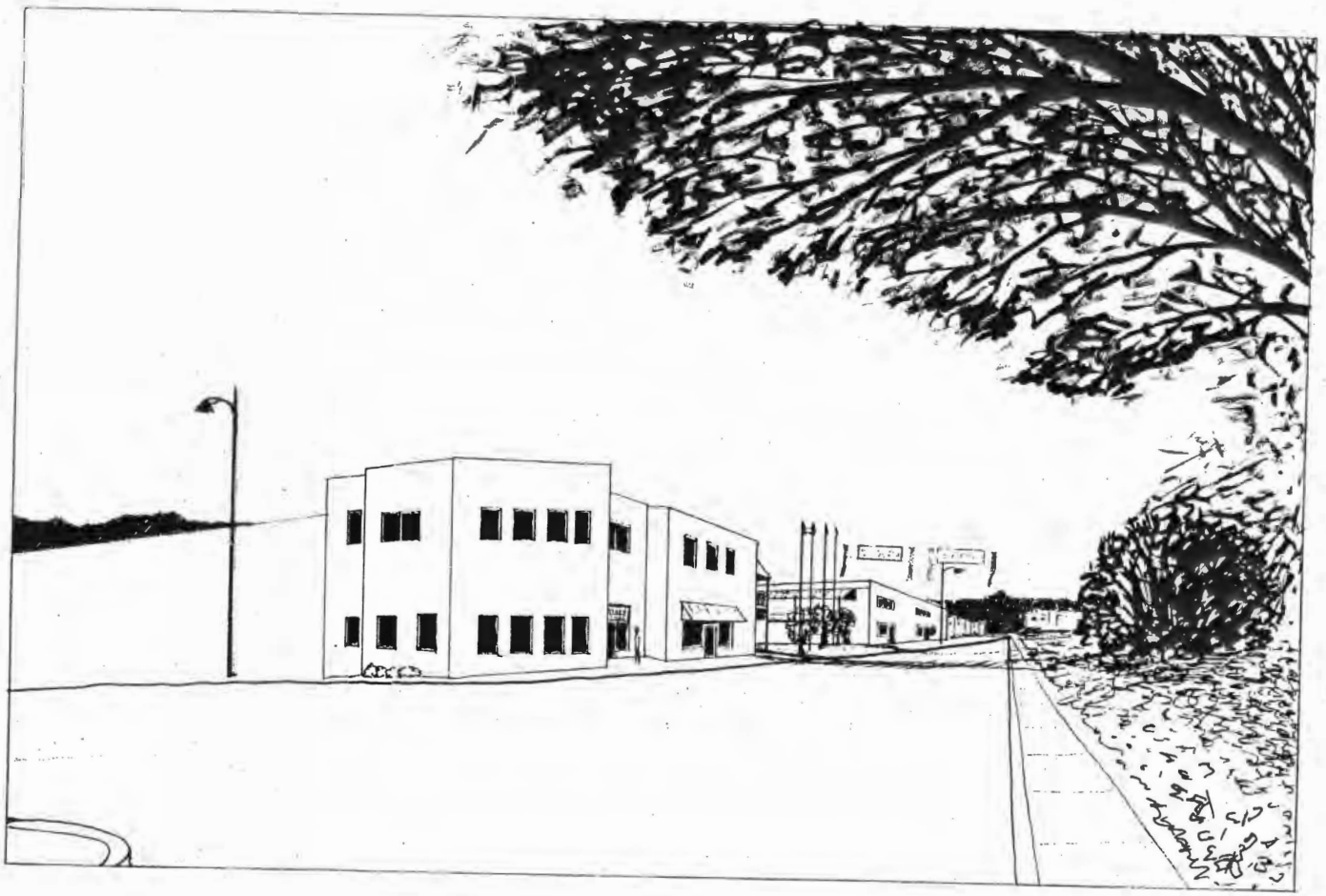


Figure A-7: MLK Perspective
Source: Author

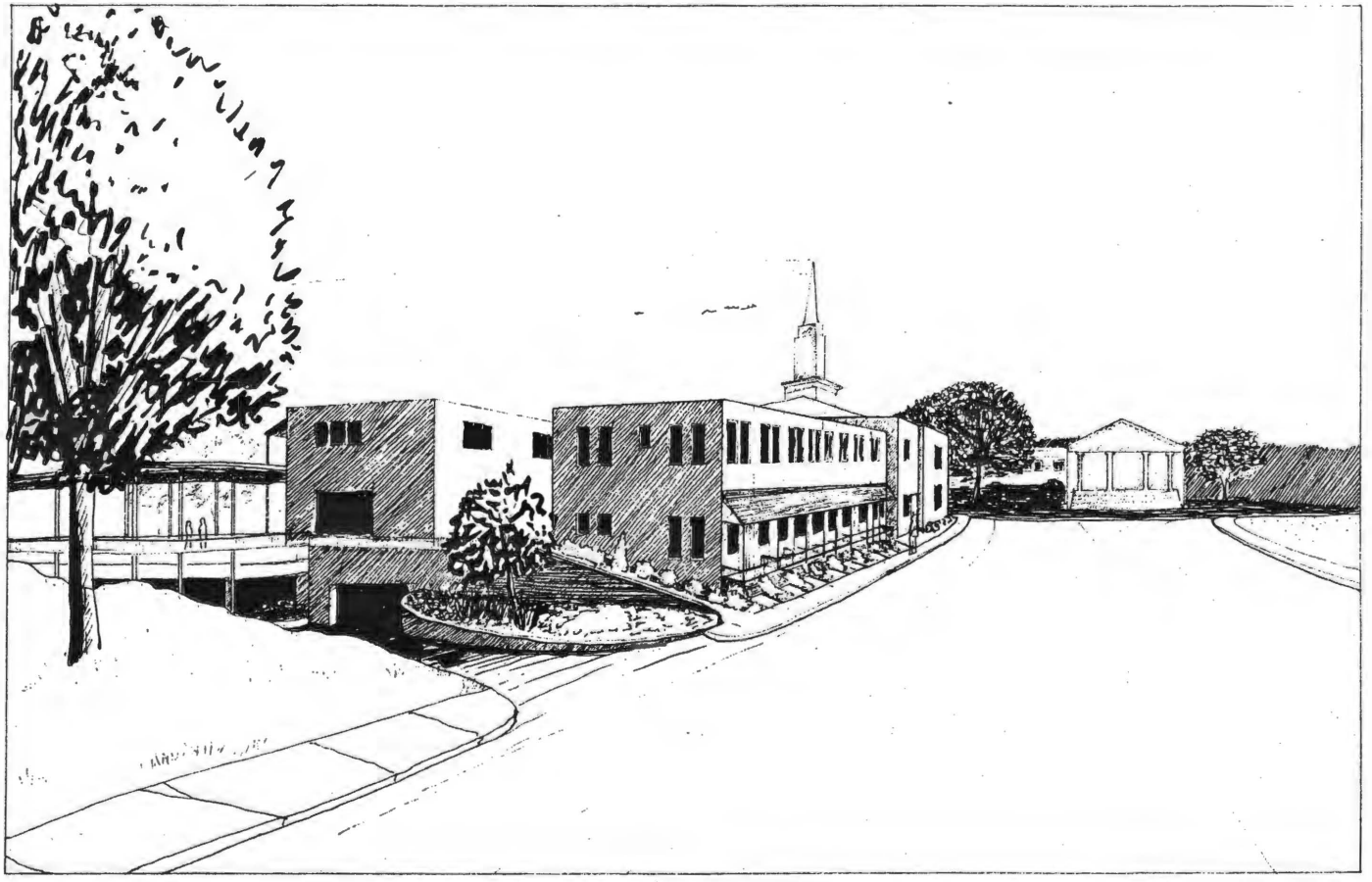


Figure A-8: Kirkwood Perspective
Source: Author

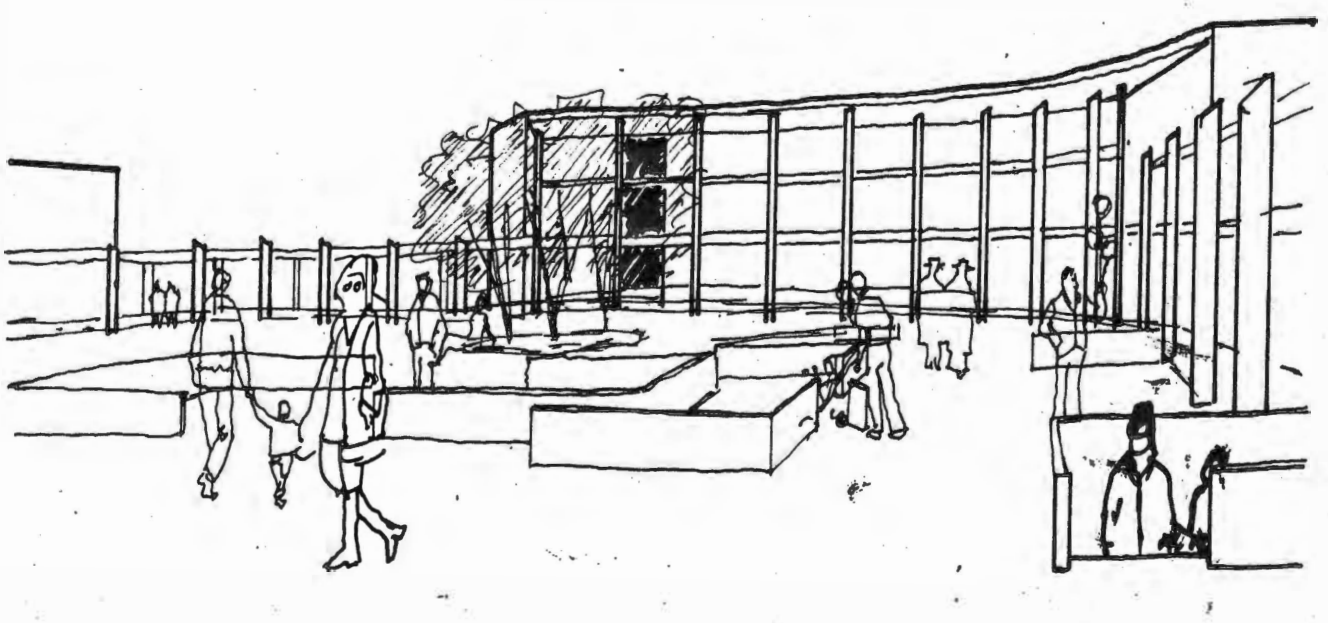


Figure A-9: Oval Courtyard Perspective
Source: Author

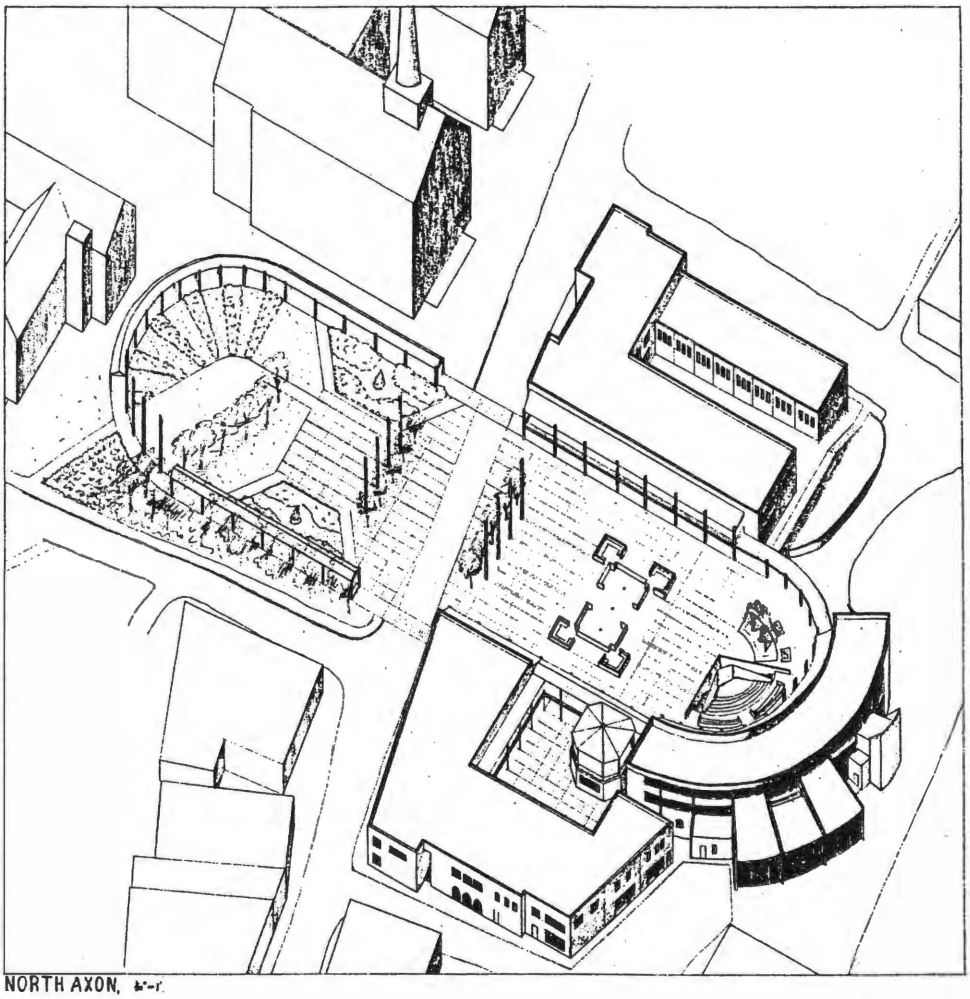


Figure A-10: North Axon
Source: Author

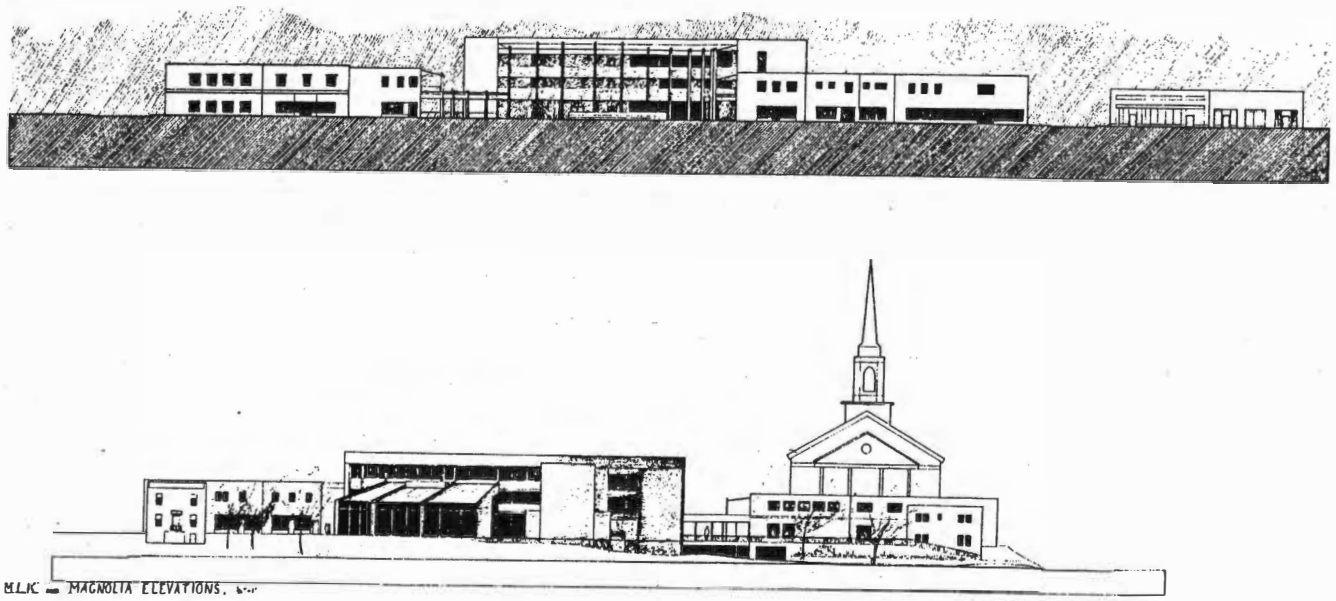


Figure A-11: MLK and Magnolia Elevations
Source: Author

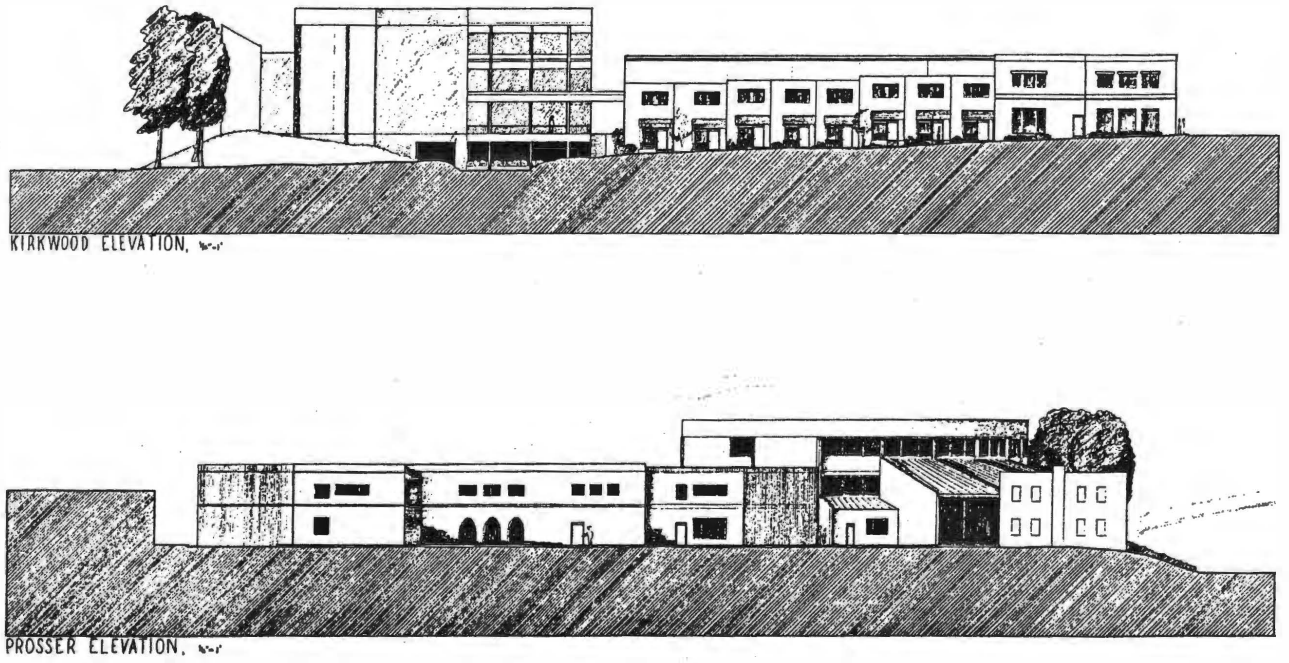


Figure A-12: Kirkwood and Prosser Elevations

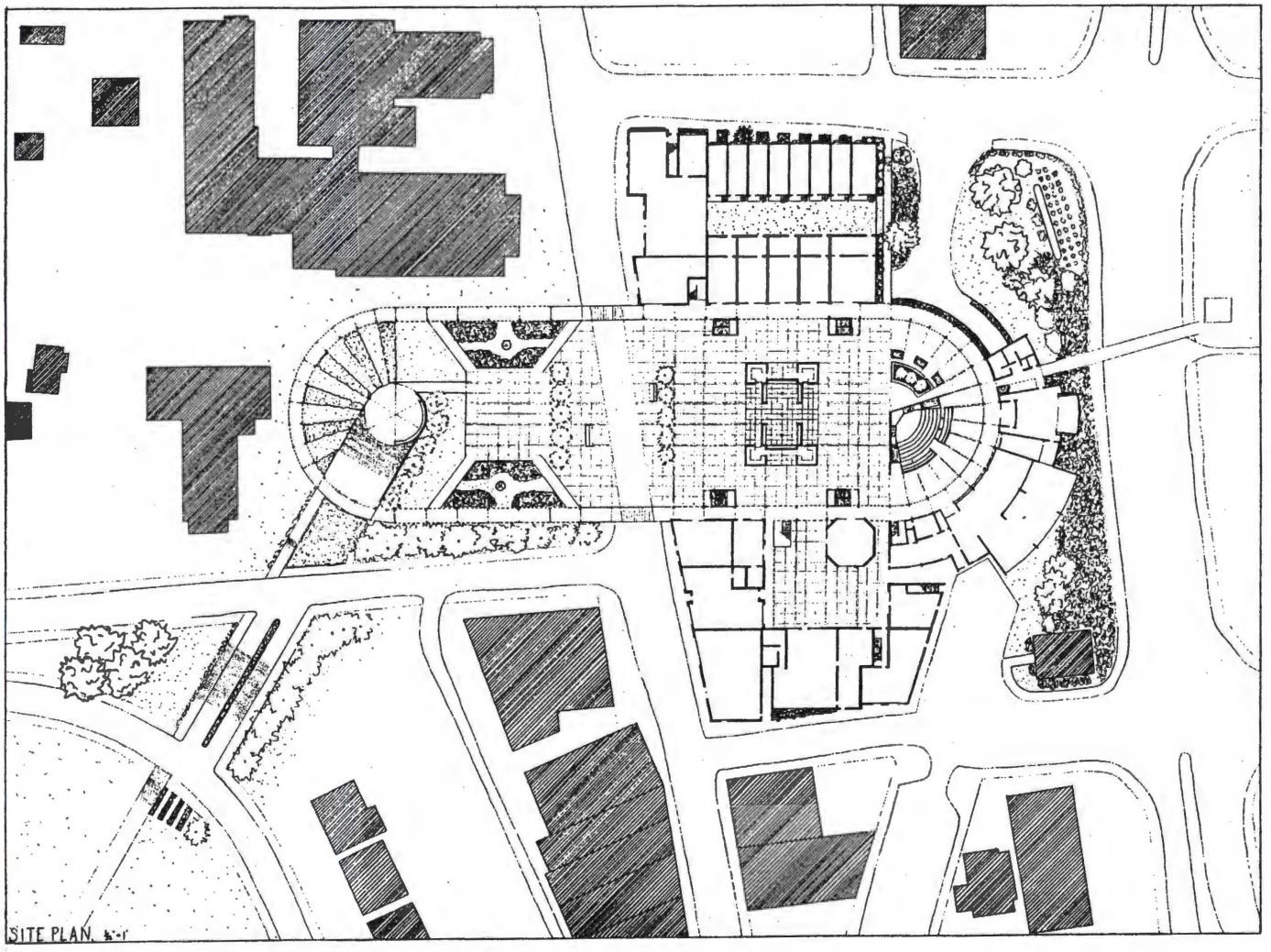


Figure A-13: Site Plan
Source: Author

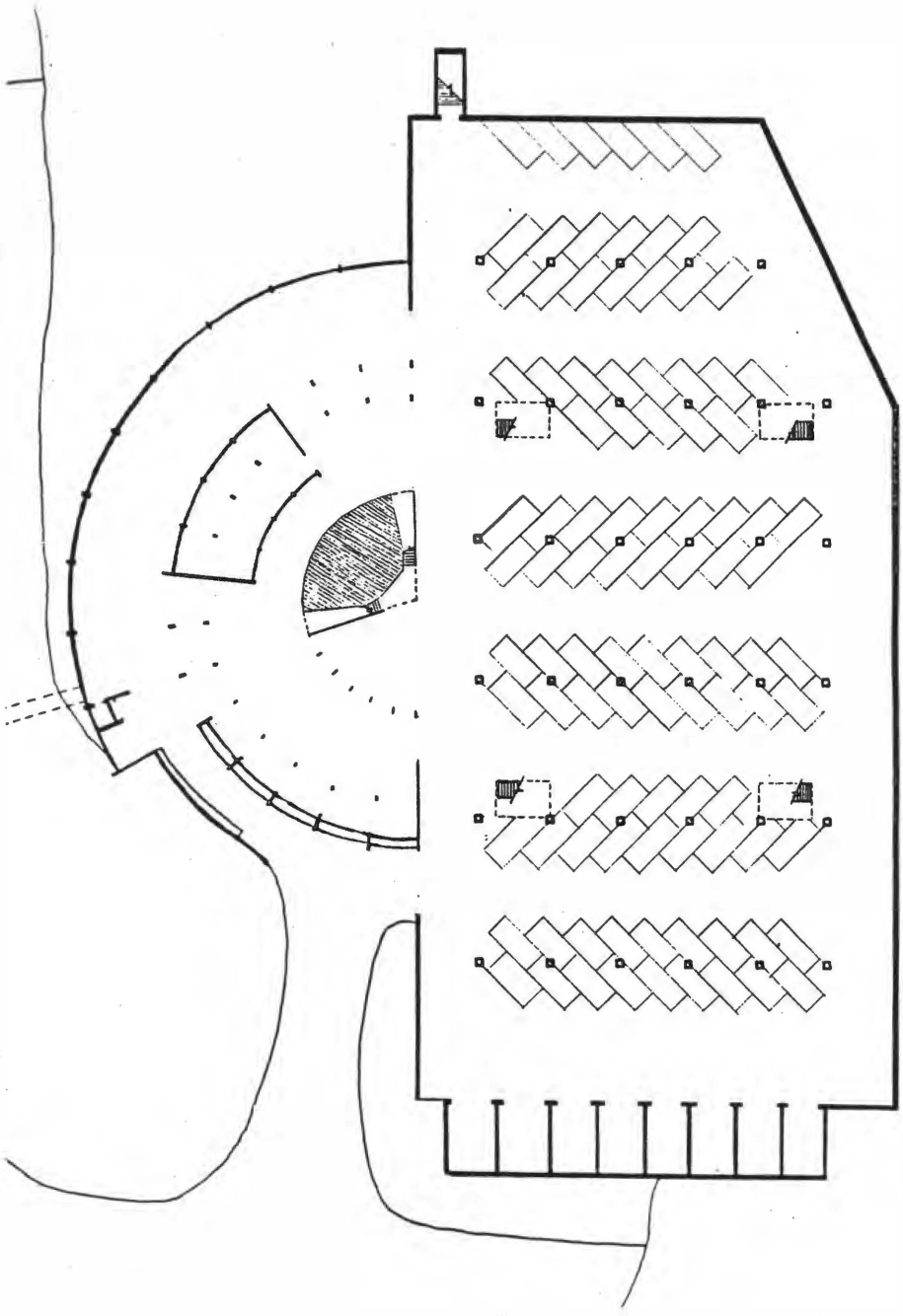


Figure A-14: Parking Plan
Source: Author

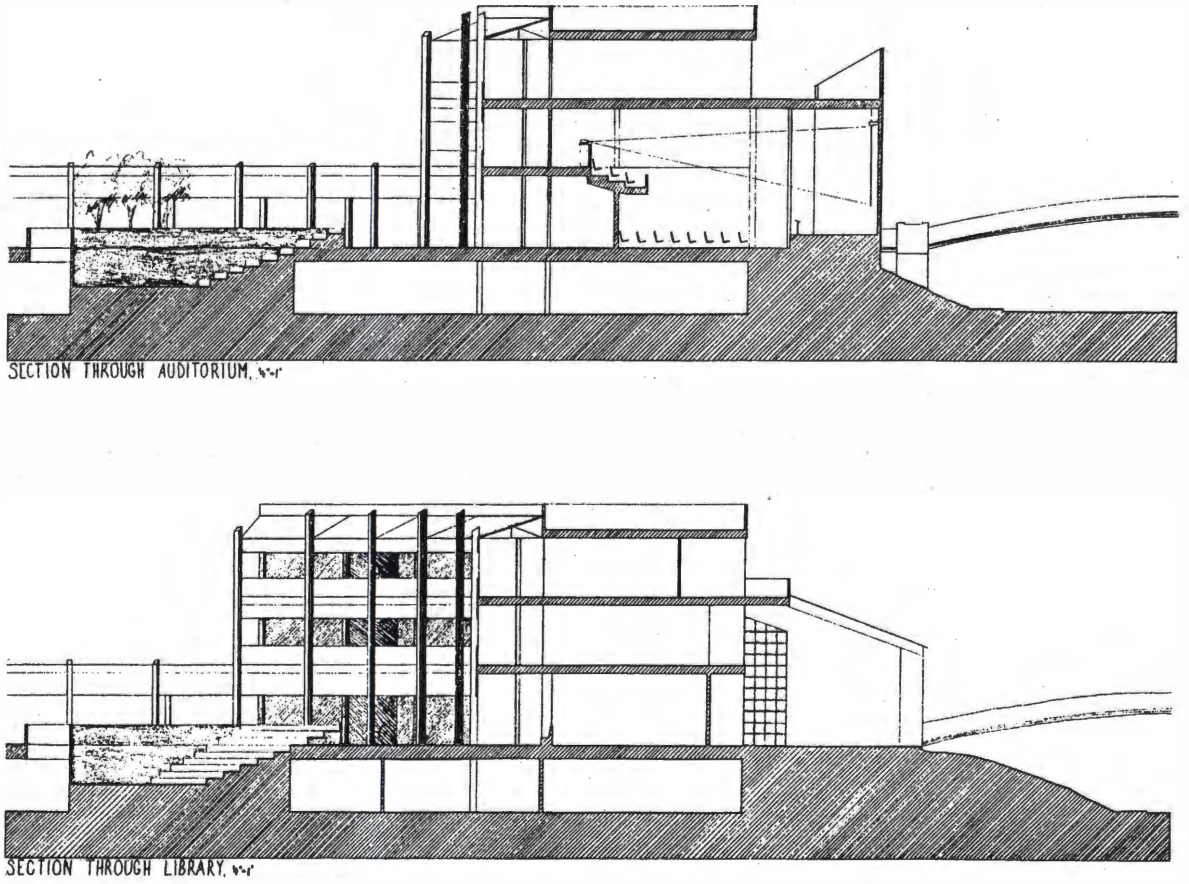


Figure A-15: Building Sections
Source: Author

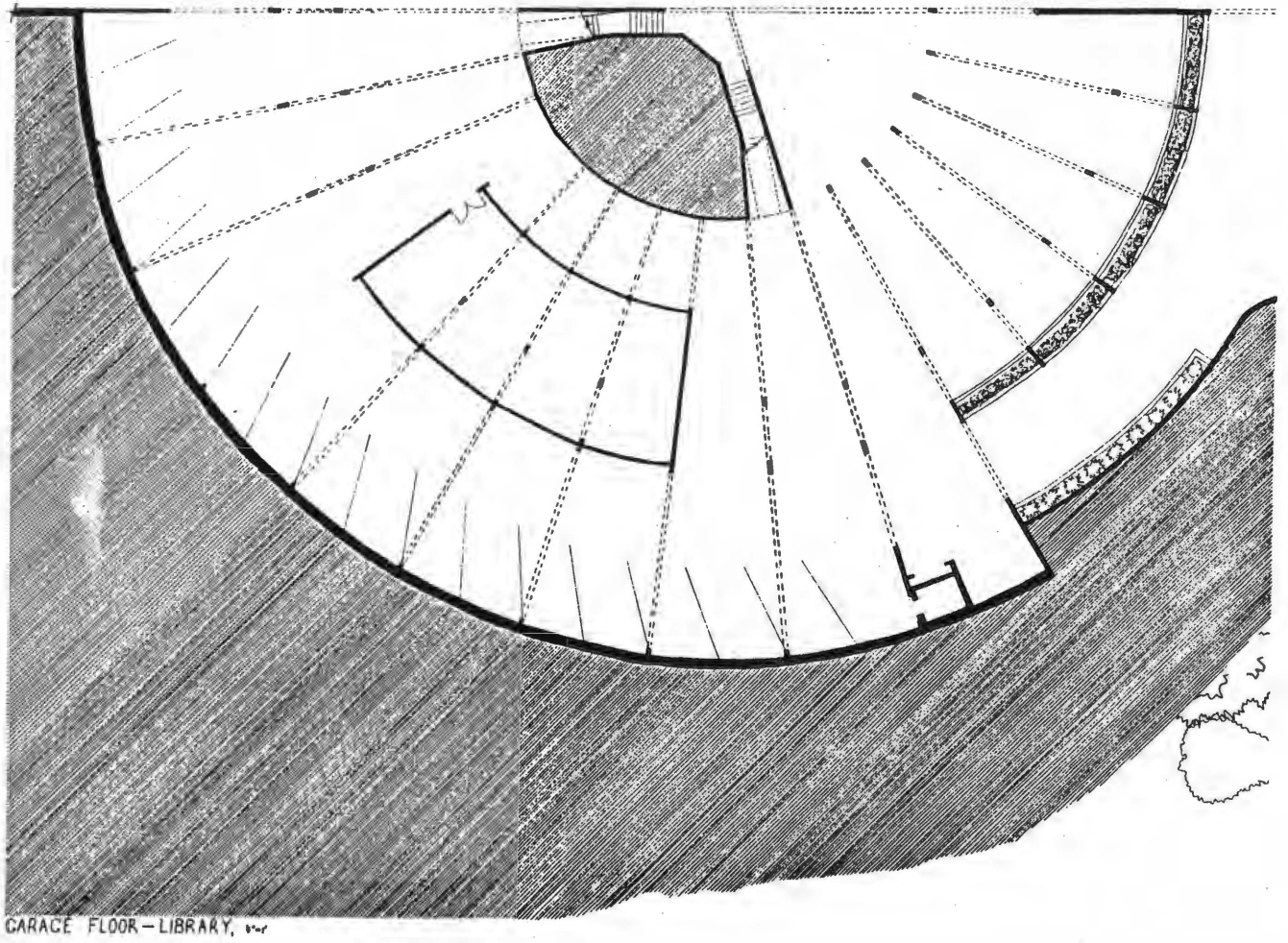


Figure A-16: Library, Garage Level
Source: Author

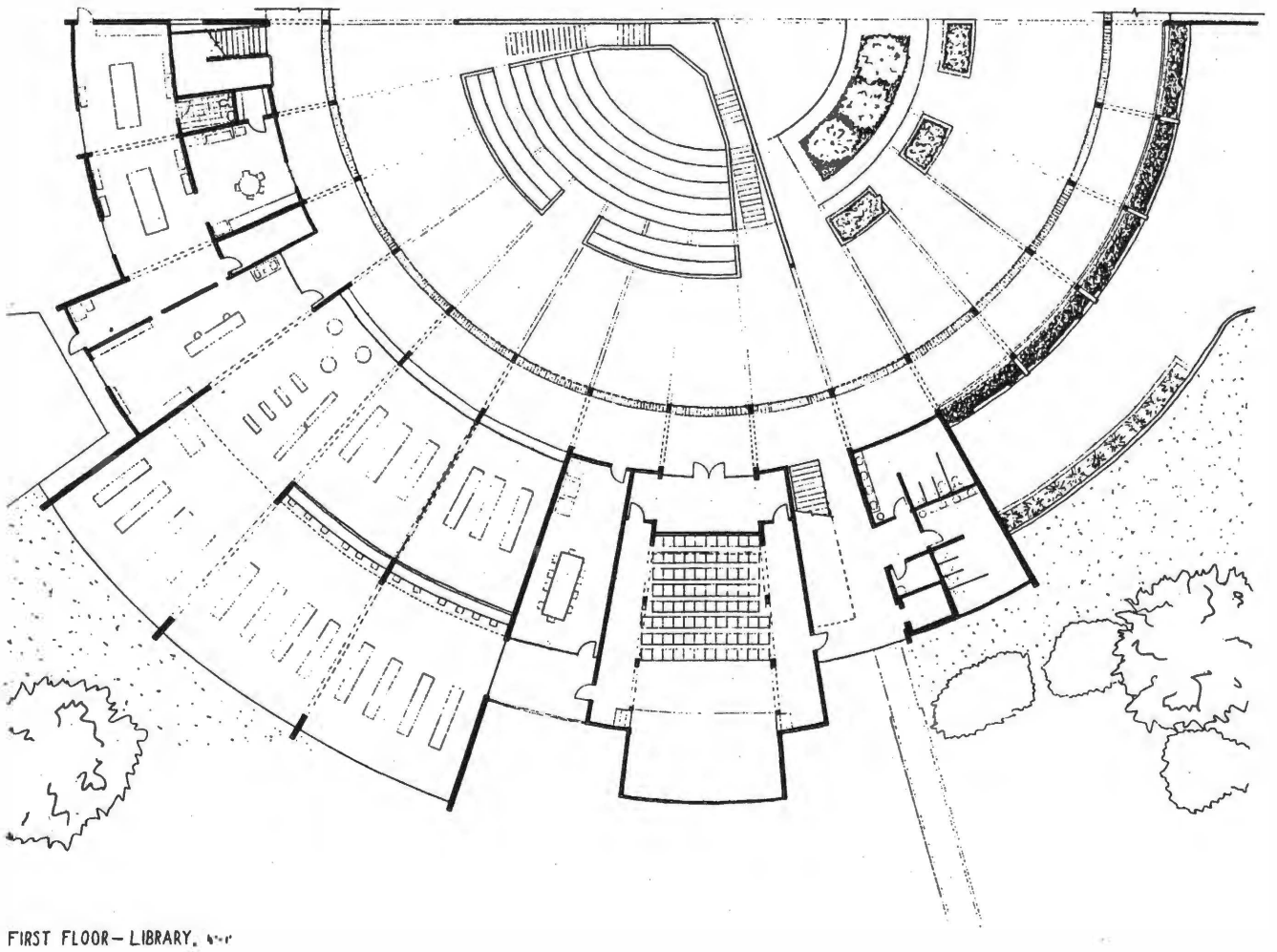


Figure A-17: Library, First Floor
Source: Author

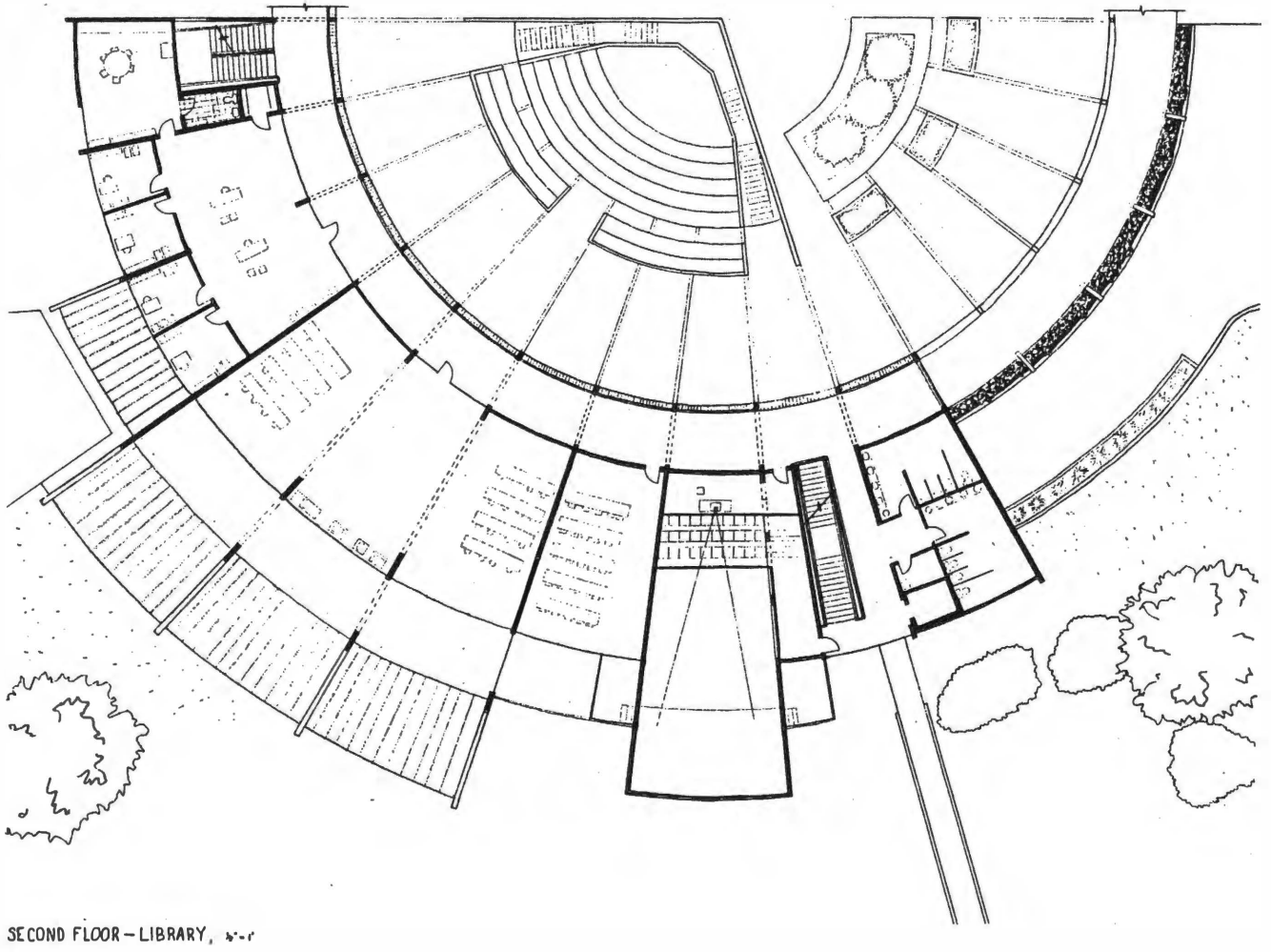


Figure A-18: Library, Second Floor
Source: Author

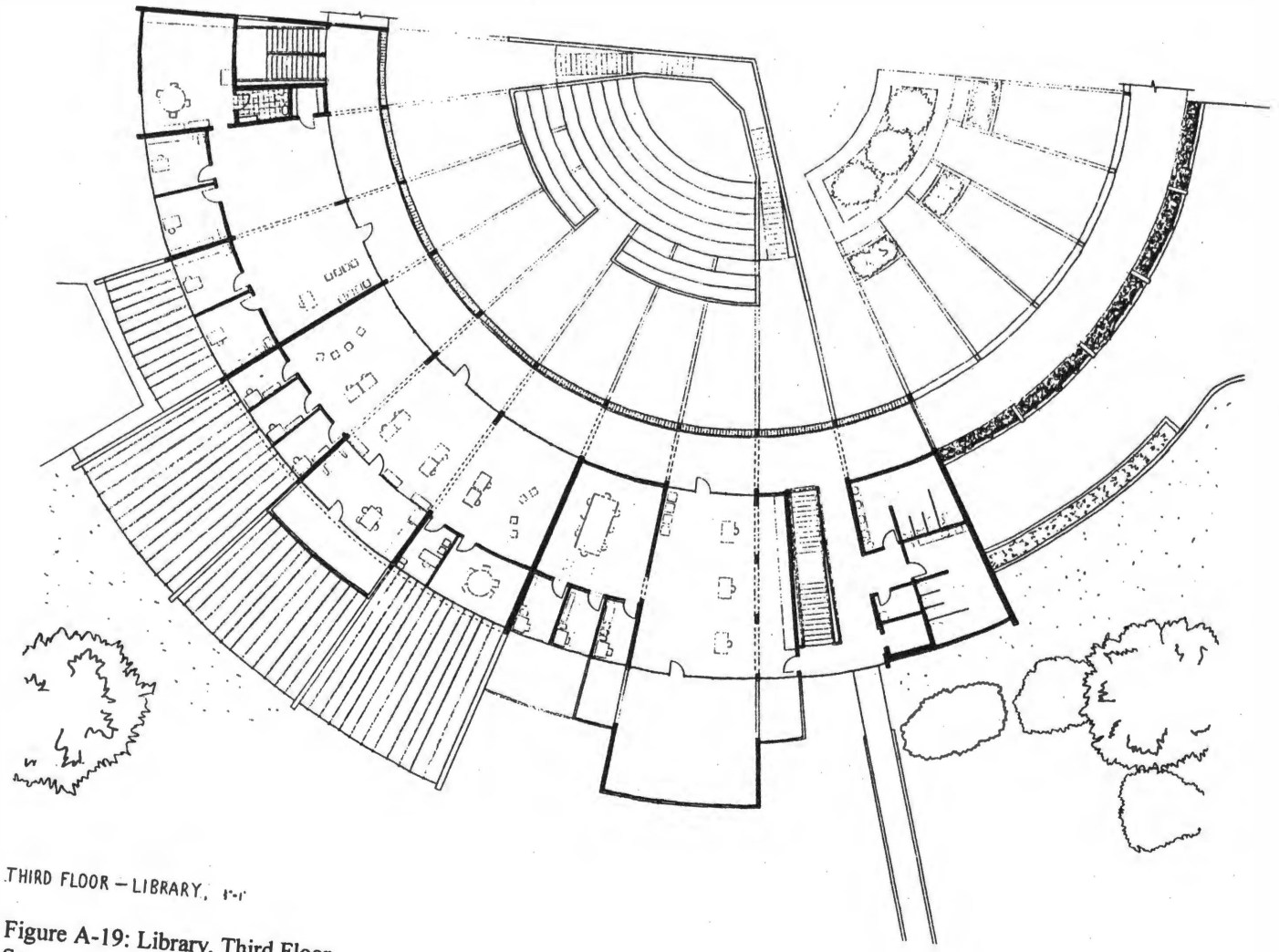


Figure A-19: Library, Third Floor
Source: Author

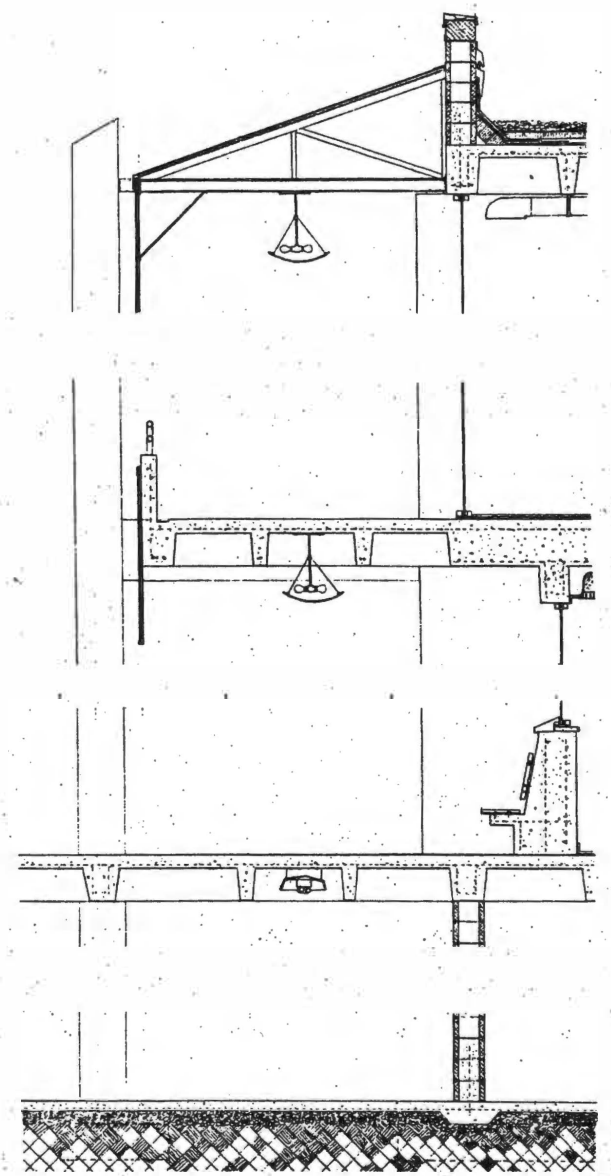


Figure A-20: Wall Section
Source: Author

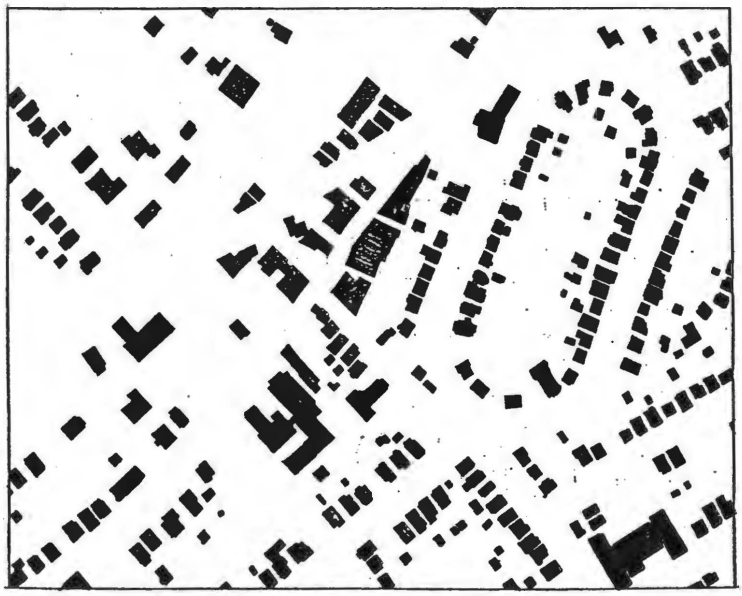


Figure A-21: Existing Figure/Ground
Source: Author



Figure A-22: Proposed Figure/Ground with ¼ Mile Walking Radius
Source: Author

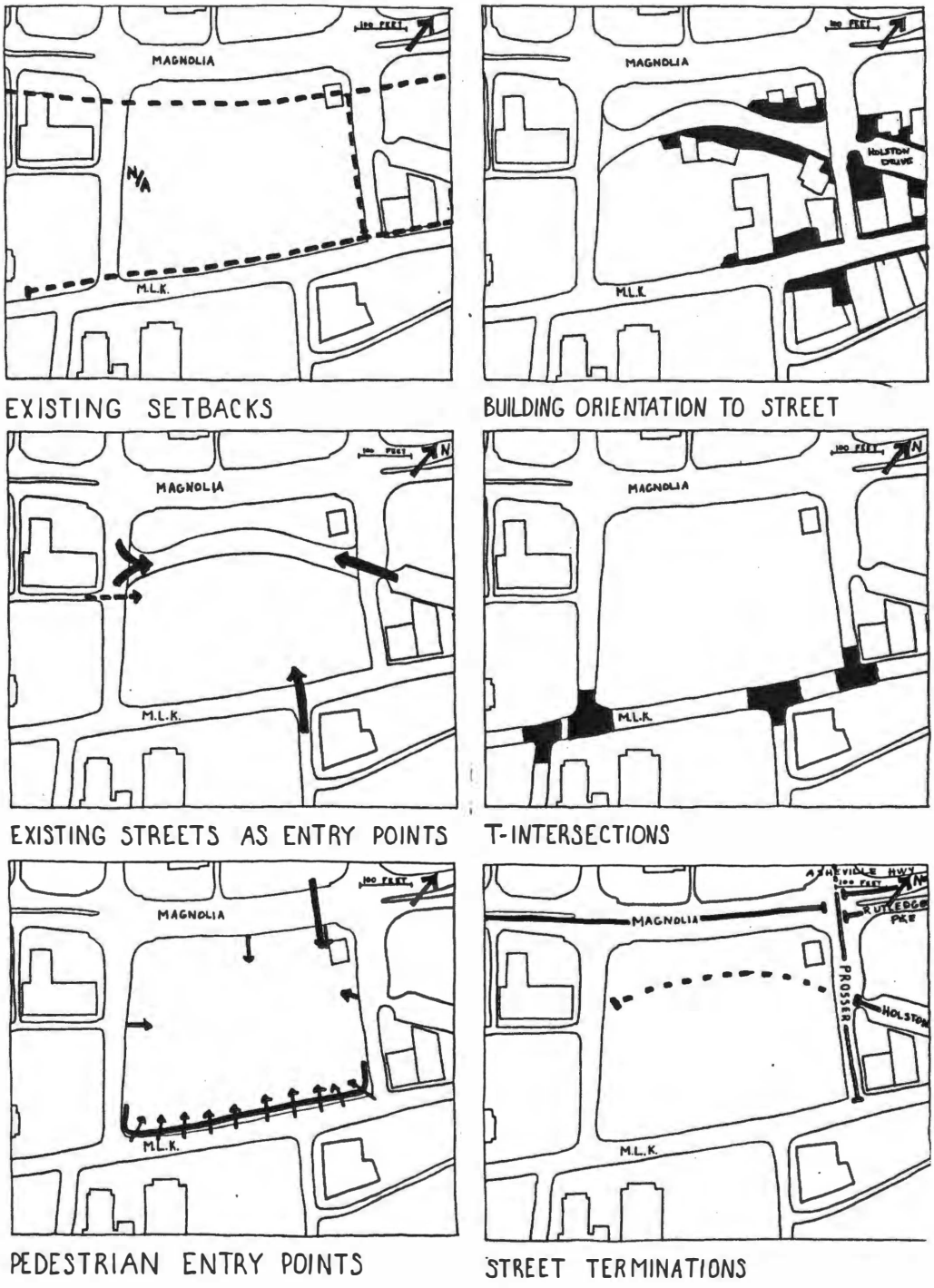
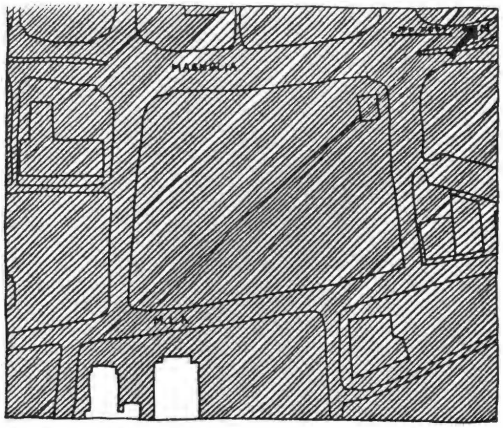
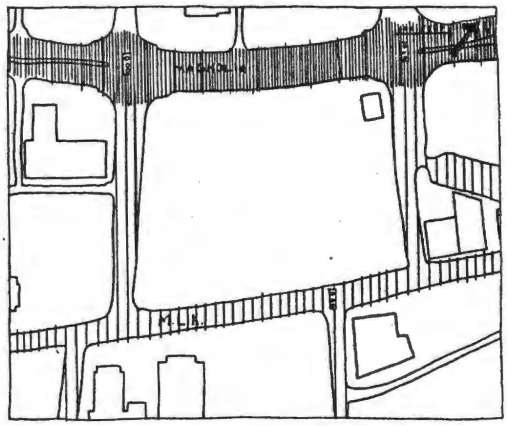


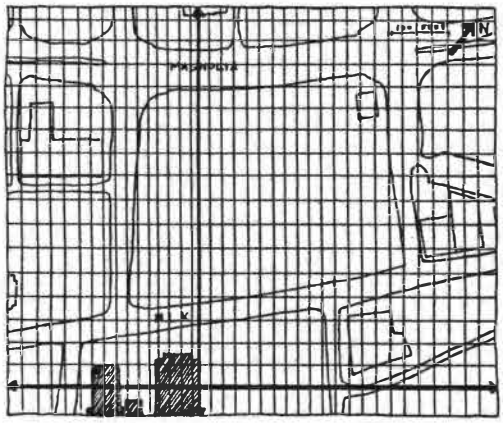
Figure A-23: Site Diagrams 1-6
Source: Author



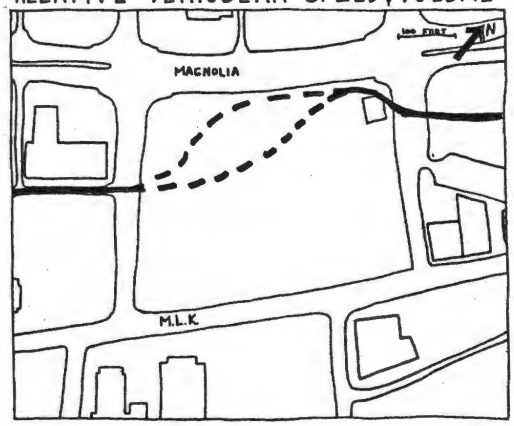
CHURCH AS DOMINANT BUILDING



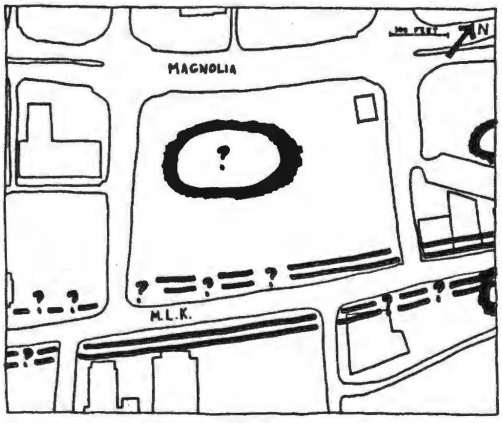
RELATIVE VEHICULAR SPEED & VOLUME



CHURCH AS GEOMETRIC STABILIZER



CITY/LOCAL, PUBLIC/PRIVATE
PEDESTRIAN/NON-PEDESTRIAN



RACIAL TERRITORIAL CLAIMS

Figure A-24: Site Diagrams 7-11
Source: Author

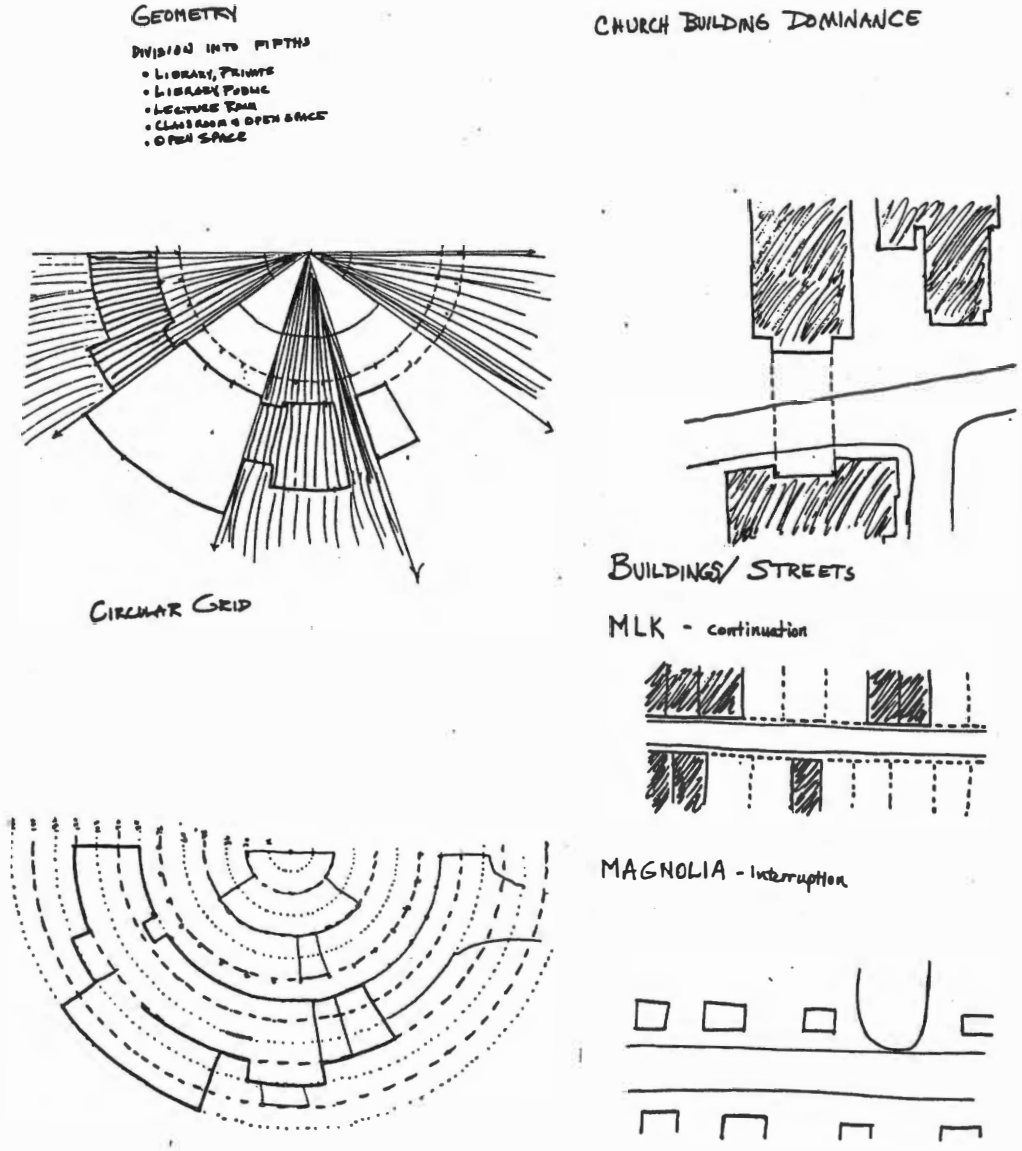


Figure A-25: Building Diagrams 1-4
Source: Author

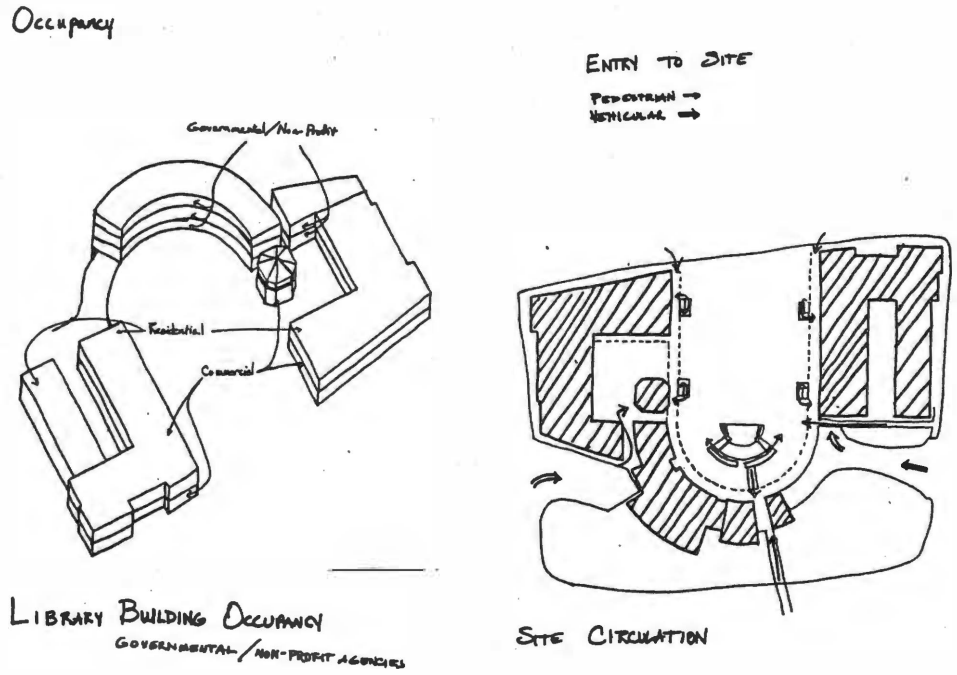


Figure A-26: Building Diagrams 5-8
Source: Author

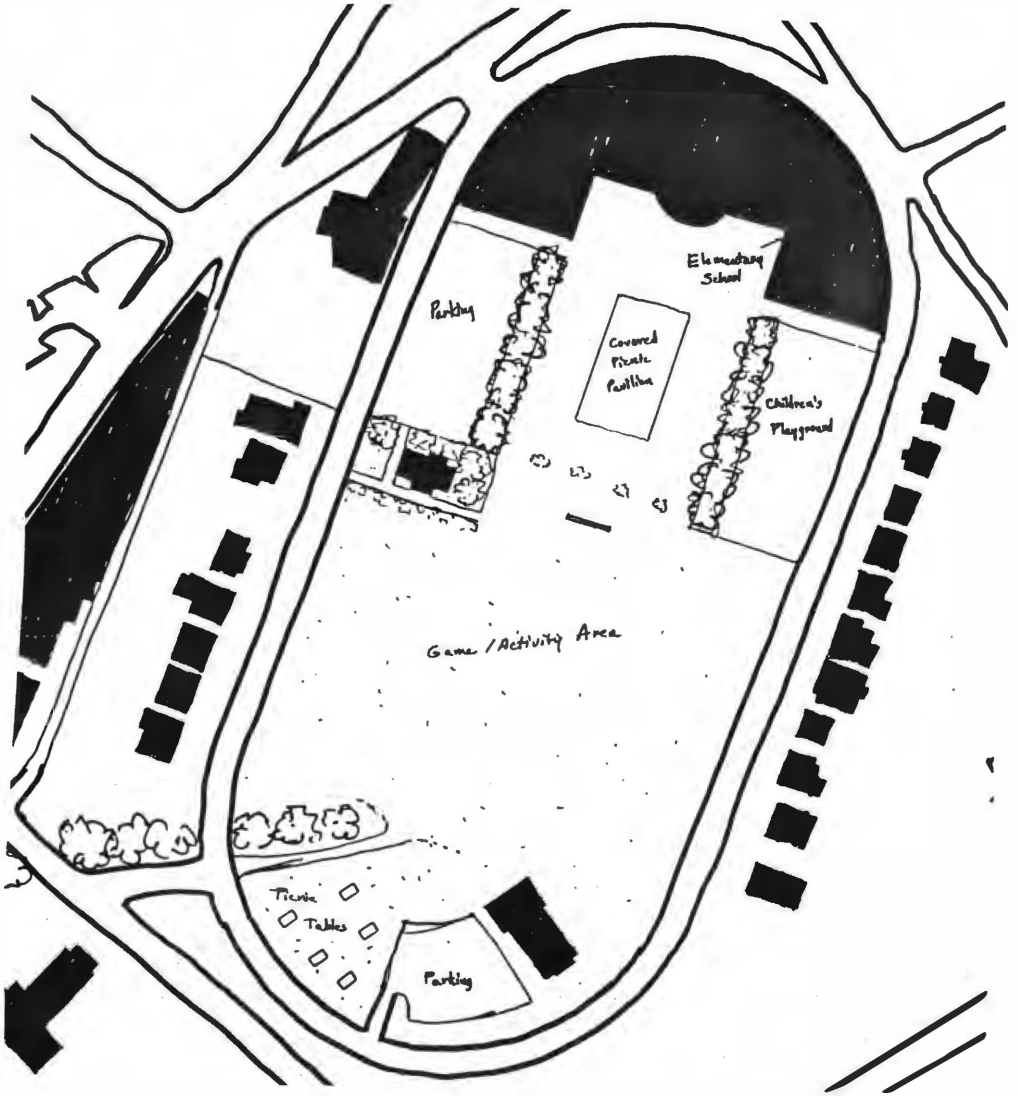


Figure A-27: Speedway Park Scheme
Source: Author

VITA

Illabelle Lee graduated from the University of Central Oklahoma (formerly Central State University) in 1985 with a bachelor's degree in Mathematics Education. After fifteen years of teaching in the Knox County school system in Knoxville, Tennessee, she entered the Master of Architecture program at the University of Tennessee in June, 2000. Upon graduation, she plans to specialize in sustainable design, and hopes to work in neighborhood revitalization, perhaps participating in the actual rebuilding of Burlington.