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CASINO LAKESIDE PARK

Ashfield Lake, Massachusetts

Christopher E. Holm

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ASHFIELD LAKE, MASSACHUSETTS

A Pavilion, a Beach and some Cottages

by

Christopher Everett Holm

A professional paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

of

BACHELOR OF ARCHITECTURE

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Director, School of Architecture

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
Bozeman, Montana

7 June 1982

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Acknowledgements

I wish to dedicate this document to all who have known Ashfield Lake as I have, especially my mother and father.

To all my brothers, cousins, aunts, uncles and grand parents.

To all my neighbors in Buckland.

Special thanks to the following people for the information and photographs they provided that helped people in Montana understand this place in Ashfield.:

Doug & Cheryl Pease
Jean & Ed LaBelle
Pat Pollen
Eleanor Ward
Barbara Zalenski
John & Lucille Tatro



quote

"The architect has a responsibility toward the landscape, which he can subtly enhance or impair, for we see in perceptual wholes and the introduction of any new building will change the character of all other elements in the scene."

Robert Venturi

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THE CASINO LAKESIDE PARK - - ASHFIELD, MASS.

introduction

The intention of this document is to present the collection of data that has been gathered in order to pursue one architectural endeavor. In a general way, the categories of information represent steps taken in any architectural project. In a more specific sense, the data between these covers deals with the particulars of a certain place, and the enjoyment that coincides with the activities that occur there.

Part One

The Situation

This architectural project deals with a lakefront development in Ashfield, Massachusetts. The situation is real in the sense that this place has and still does exist, however this project is hypothetical and being used strictly for the educational purposes of a student of architecture.

The architectural components of this project include a pavilion, a beach, some cottages, and the site development of this place. This is a situation where the seasonal and year round facilities coexist along a lakefront in a traditional New England village. It is as though this place has the identities of both the village and the lakefront, and the architecture must link these two sets of existing conditions to present an appropriate totality in the landscape.



Reminiscing

The morning sun is high and bright. A cloudless sky reveals wondrous shades of blue. A light wind blows across the lake causing the lap of water meeting sand that is soothing as a mint. A lone figure rakes the beach erasing signs of activity from the previous day.

The cottage community is bustling with preparatory activity for another vacation day at the lake. A mother hangs clothes on a line and watches a boy and his dog searching for crayfish and snapping turtles under the rocks that keep the land firm at the waters edge.

Inside the Lakehouse, ice cream is restocked, napkins are inserted into little metal receptacles and the cook whistles while cutting cheese. The summer breeze in the trees outside joins in apparent harmony.

The lifeguard checks out the cash box and proceeds to his spot on the retaining wall at the top of the beach and oils up for another day of sun and responsibility. He visually checks the condition of the bouys and the floating platform 50 yards offshore. He moves off in disgust to retrieve a renegade row boat washed into the thumb to the east.

A carload of young women brimming with glee, are the first to pass by the geraniums that mark the entrance to the beach. The day is spent on the sand and enjoying this place by the lake.

That night a local rock band performs in the parking lot and teenagers are watched as they engage in adolescent mischief.

The Lakehouse closes at 10 PM and the people move away to other human activity under the brilliance of a full moon. Clouds are on the southern horizon, creating the illusion of earth and sky as one marked by an irregular line. This day has ended but the routine will continue.

The smell of rain is in the air today. The cottage people scurry about trying to organize a day in the shelter of their temporary accommodations.

The lifeguard dons an apron and works the counter serving everything from coffee to fruit slushes, french fries to pizza. The activity at this place moves inside and two lovers sit at a window seat watching sheets of rain across the lake. The boy and his dog have turned to pinball and other forms of coin-operated entertainment, their outside activity foiled by the rain.

The wooden stairs leading to the shower rooms are quiet today. An occasional squeak reveals their use and presence.

Pool tables are big on rainy days and provide the local shark an opportunity to "teach these kids a lesson."

The evening comes and the night holds little commercial activity with an occasional couple appearing from the weather seeking a haven of sorts, lured by the reputation of Lakehouse coffee.

Soon it will be September, and Labor Day will mark the point in time when the sign on the door reads: "Have a good winter, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Will open the first saturday in May." This is the way it was.

Clarification of Intent

The purpose of this process is as an investigation to realize the character of a place and respond with an appropriate architecture.

This place is in the Berkshire Hills of Massachusetts at which a very fine fresh water bathing facility has been developed. This development no longer provides services in an appropriate manner. The introduction of both a drinking and an eating establishment along with year round cottage tenants have changed the complexities of the place to span the year rather than just the summer. The spirit of the place is being dampened, and this design process offers itself as a partial solution to these new complexities of its existence.

The sand beach and a stone wall mark man's most significant contribution to the place. The buildings are faceless and aged and represent construction techniques rather than architecture. It is the intent of this investigation to involve architecture where it has not been involved before. It has the dual purpose of strengthening my foothold on architecture and amplifying my understanding of a particular built environment.

A clarification of the approach relative to this project can be said to recognize the spirit of the place, and chart a course of action dealing with the emotional and physical qualities that have come about through its development. In essence, a discriminating method of design, but none the less prudent. With this in mind, it becomes an architecture of familiarity and symbolism.

Enlargement of The Design Approach

An architecture of familiarity and symbolism is inherently illusive, for it is neither a literal architecture nor an abstract architecture. This approach is based on a combination of the two. It involves itself with metaphorical, symbolic and figurative architectural references.

These references concern themselves with the existing conditions (architectural, traditional, topological, cultural) of the place. As a means to this architecture of familiarity and symbolism, buildings and places of the region are considered as nourishment for this process, its roots are in history and precedence. This approach towards architecture is evolutionary rather than contrived, deliberate by means of analysis.

> When the materials are all prepared and
> ready, the architects shall appear.
> I swear to you the architects shall
> appear without fail,
> I swear to you they will understand you
> and justify you.
> The greatest among them shall be who best
> knows you and encloses all and is
> faithful to all,
> He and the rest shall not forget you,
> they shall not forget you are not an
> iota less than they,
> You shall be fully glorified in them.
>
> Walt Whitman
> Leaves of Grass, 1855

This then is an attempt to develop a new interpretation of a place relative to the present time using stimulus from the past. As in the words of Robert Venturi, it is "moving towards an Old Architecture."[1] It is then both high and low art, ordinary through traditional elements and construction; basically old notions with new applications.

What will result is an architecture with meaning. Enriched with symbolism and becoming representational of both a place and time. Its basis being in the indigenous development factors of a region.

This is by no means a timeless architecture but rather one that both embraces the past, addresses the present and recognizes the future.

The Region

The Appalachians are a range of mountains running from northern Georgia to southern Quebec. The glaciers of several ice ages have scoured away their sharp edges, reduced their height and filled their valleys with innumerable lakes and streams. The Appalachians comprise several mountain systems bearing different names - the Laurentians, the Adriondaks, the Berkshires, the Alleghenies and others.

In the naming of mountains, the first white settlers generally took their cue from local Indian usage.[2] The Berkshires are an exception; they bear a name that was taken from the Old World and has nothing to do with their appearance or with the natives that lived among them.[3] Still, the name has more legitimacy than one might think; for it evokes the tranquil English countryside, and the Berkshires are so gentle in nature that rarely are they described as mountains. To most of the people who live in this region, they are simply and modestly the Berkshire Hills.

It is in these hills that Ashfield, Massachusetts is located on a small plain between several hilltops the likes of Doug Hill, Peter Hill, Norton Hill and Ridge Hill.

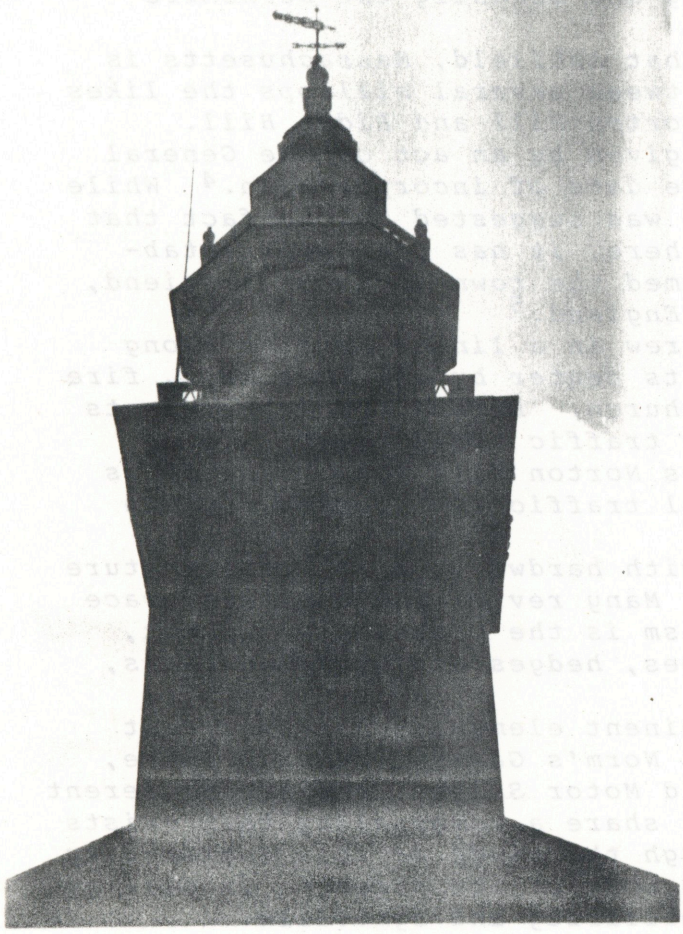
The name Ashfield was given by an act of the General Court in June of 1765 at the date of incorporation.[4] While legend has it that the name was suggested by the fact that ash trees thrive naturally here, it has been well established that Gov. Bernard named the town to honor a friend, Lord Thurlow, of Ashfield, England.[5]

The town of Ashfield grew in a linear fashion along its Main Street marked at its center by the town hall, fire station and the Episcopal church. Before the improvements to Route 112, all vehicular traffic moved to this point where Main Street intersects Norton Hill Road. Now it is routinely travelled by local traffic in a common routine day in and day out.

Main Street is lined with hardwoods of a mature nature between road and sidewalk. Many revivalistic houses grace this strip and traditionalism is the organizing element, with their porches, porticoes, hedges and attached barns, are many.

Some of the other prominent elements on Main Street include the Ashfield House, Norm's Garage, Elmer's Store, the Post Office and Ashfield Motor Sales. All are different architectural elements, but share a commonality that exists in the region. It is through the study of this commonality that this process will gain some of its strength in dealing with an architecture of familiarity and symbolism.





Spirit of Place

In achieving an architecture of familiarity and symbolism, a deep understanding of the actual physical environment must be attained. This issue has been addressed previously and the following data will help to bring this scrutiny into perspective. This will deal primarily with some indigenous development factors. Most pertain only to the New England region, and the setting for this project is quaintly typical.

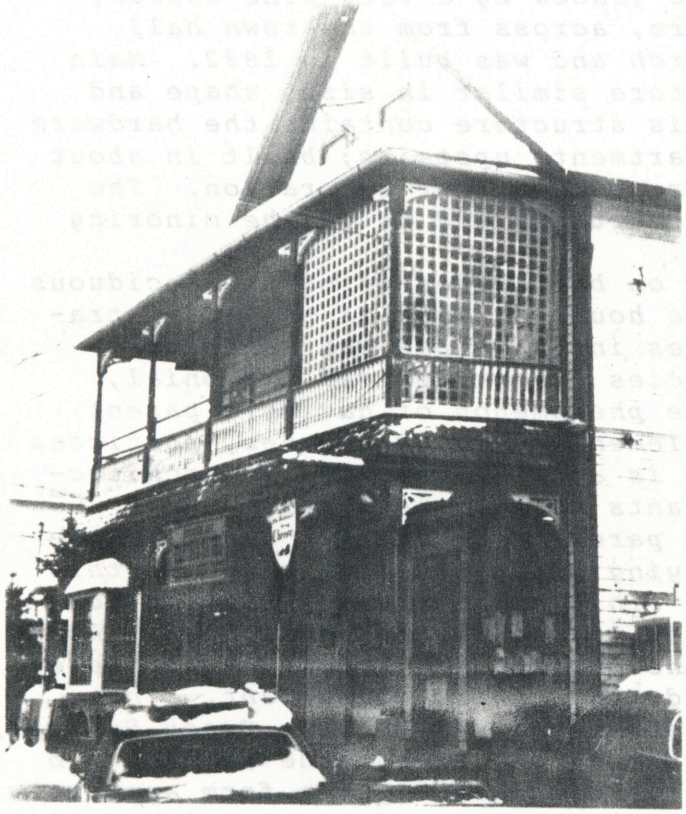
The town is organized along a line with its center marked simply and logically with the town hall. It is a magnificent structure built in 1820 with native timber, with detailing from a carpenter's manual. It has a tower of significance topped with a very classical lantern and eventually a weather vane.

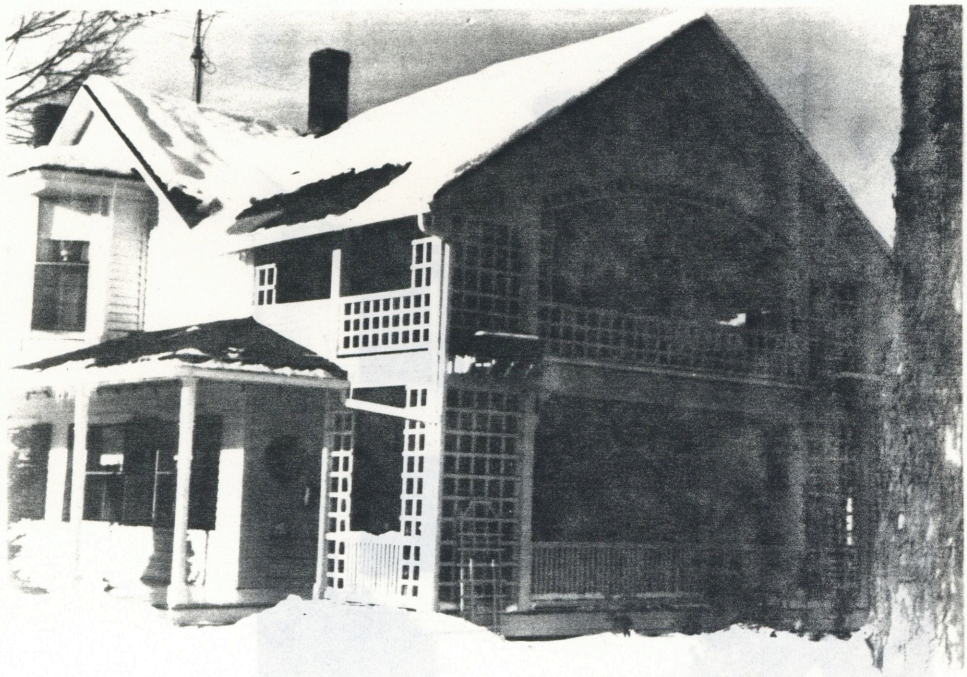
Elmer's Store was built near the town hall in 1835 and has been a steadfast fixture on Ashfield's Main Street ever since. Main Street is also graced by a very fine church, large and formal in stature, across from the town hall. This is the Church and was built in 1832. Main Street also has another store similar in size, shape and detailing to Elmer's. This structure contains the hardware store, post office and apartments upstairs; built in about 1880, it reflects much more concern for decoration. The structure has Queen Anne overtones and is in the minority of this built environment.

Main Street is lined on both sides by mature deciduous trees and a number of fine houses. Most of these are traditional New England houses in the sense that they have specific stylistic tendencies (Greek Revival, Colonial, Federal) and all share the phenomenon of having a parent form gathering tertiary elements such as porches, porticoes and attached barns. This is a primary source of architectural vocabulary and warrants more investigation.

It is this aspect of parent form and its significance that is one of the underlying constant denominator in this architectural vocabulary. This parent form has traditionally been a large rectangle topped with a gable roof. Along with this parent form, the stylistic overtones that these traditional houses are endowed with are important. The prevelant historical styles in the village are Greek Revival, Federal (classical proportions) and Queen Anne (decoration and ornament). In all cases the parent gable form appears as the dominant element of the whole, ordered by classical















Sanderson Academy






Gulf
OR SALES

proportions and occasionally adorned with cut shingles and brackets.

Formality is introduced into these houses usually by the treatment of entry. In most cases, the front door is a symbolic gesture and the utility of entry is accommodated elsewhere in the building. This symbolic entry is heralded by either an entry portico, a porch, or by its placement in a symmetrical wall composition.

The gabled form or entry, and sometimes both, are the devices by which these houses address the street, and consequently assert their presence and identify a domain.

A better understanding of this notion concerning symbolic entry may be seen by looking at Sanderson Academy in Ashfield. Symbol of entry is formalized and called out by the attenuated, classical portico. This entry is not an entry at all but rather a means of egress. Actual entry occurs at the intersection of the primary forms marked by the lantern. Although this porticoed entry is a symbol, its basis is not whimsical, but deep rooted in the building traditions of this area. It is somewhat an illusion, however serves to make the architecture richer with a legitimate reference to the past.

The parent form is also a symbol. It establishes a sense of sanctuary and is a means for the building to make an assertive gesture in reference to its presence, a symbol of a domain. It becomes the dominant element of a scene.

The symbolic reference of domain and building is well shown by the Ashfield Motor Sales structure. It was a car dealership so some of its significane can be attributed to its commercial nature, however the principle is the same. It makes a very strong architectural statement relative to its domain. This confronting gable is very prominant and effectively commands its attached ground; however its simplicity and reference makes it easily acceptable into this fragile situation.

An example that perhaps best explains the notions of symbolism and parent form is the Ashfield House on Main Street. It began as a hotel and was originally part of the Marriot Inn system. Economic conditions after World War II caused a transfer of utility and now the structure is a rest home for the aged. The form is gabled and three stories to the eave.

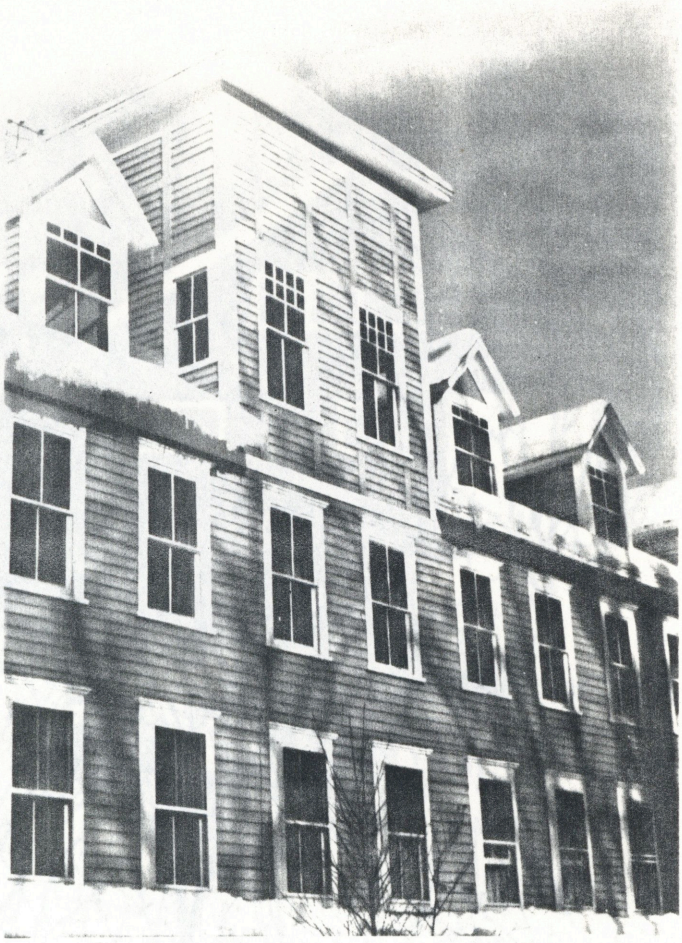
The primary entry is marked by a confronting gable in the roof plane, and by a doubling of columns in the porch arcade where one passes through to the door. The nature of the interior of this structure is so complex that this dual means of expression was used to call out the entry on an otherwise very long and assymetrical facade.

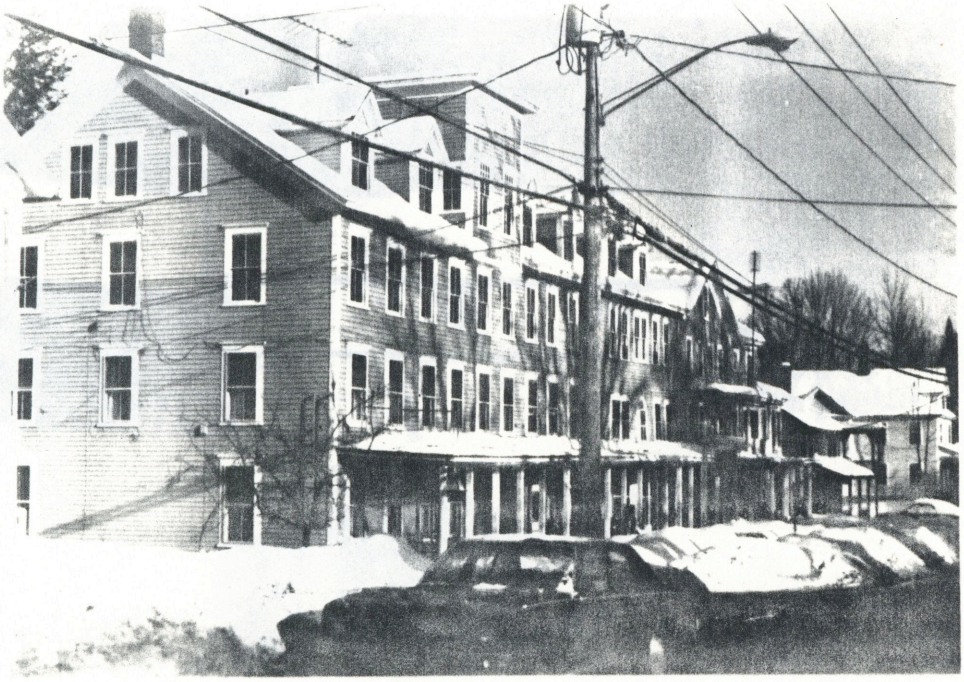
The roof plane is also broken by a rhythm of gabled dormers symbolizing its human occupancy and the need for light. Other buildings of this size are mills and barns and this symbolism is made invalid by their utilitarian uses and consequently not utilized.

Norm's Garage is another unique building on Main Street. Originally an automobile repair shop its basis of existence



porch at the Ashfield House







barns



was also commercialism. Rather than a true gable, its face is a false facade but its traditionalism is expressed through its symmetry. A complex contradiction in that the gable is hidden, yet its inherent symmetry is expressed in the facade. The false facade may in fact be an attempt to symbolize masonry construction and allude to a more amplified sense of permanence, as with the wood columns of the Presbyterian Church are representative of stone. It is not a lie for it has its legitimacy in its application as symbolism. It tends to give the architecture more meaning and consequently produce a richer environment.

With regards to the skin or surface of these buildings, the wood intensive environment is reflected in all but a few cases. The most traditional surface is clapboard spaced 4" (or so) to the weather. At the corners of this skin, symbolism is reintroduced. Usually wide trim boards are placed on the corners as pilasters to represent an architectural column and the transfer of load. This classical reference is sometimes strengthened by the use of an entablature and regimentation of the gable into a pediment.

Openings in the skin are generally grouped in symmetrical patterns on the facade and occasionally reveal an assymmetrical composition. Double hung windows are the rule, and the exception is the tracery in the fan lights. Doors too are predictable; paneled and sometimes making specific references as the cross and Bible.

Always, a larger component of solid is maintained in the solid/void relationship. This further symbolizes the parent form as a sanctuary, and its raw sense of mass portrays both as security and the marker of domain.

The notion of parent form has its roots in the barns of the region. These simple pieces in the landscape best portray the aspect of a simple parent form and its ability to become complex through the manipulation of openings in relationship to the walls. This action may lead to a better understanding of how to make the architecture of this project more complex, through the application of simple, logical thought following precedent.

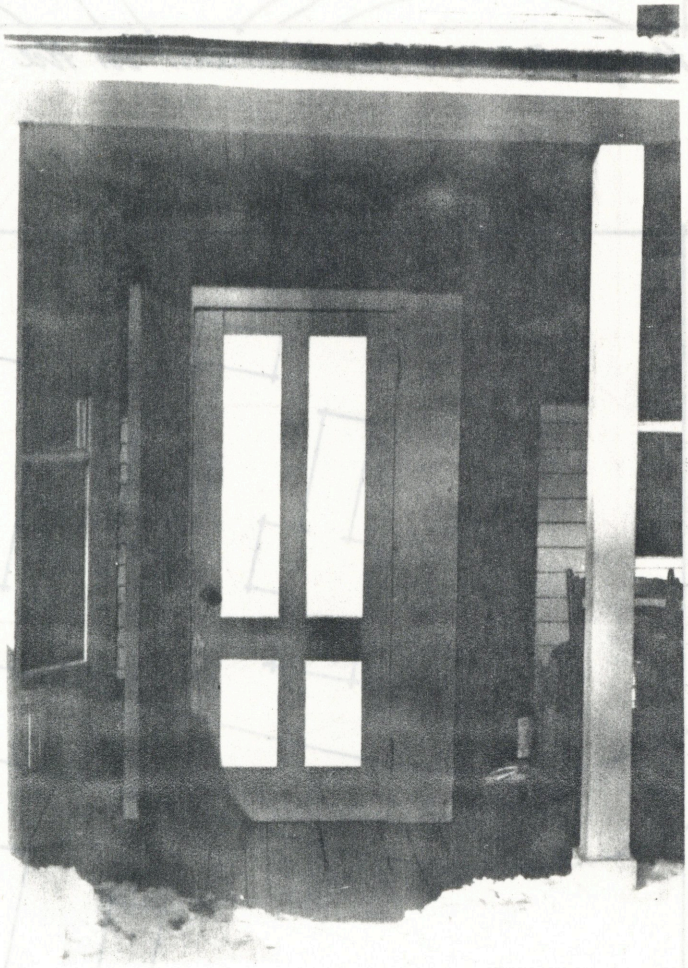
The openings in these buildings are placed with utility in mind but adhere to the basic proportioning principles of the region. These openings then bring a sense of intuition into architecture that can effectively complement a building.

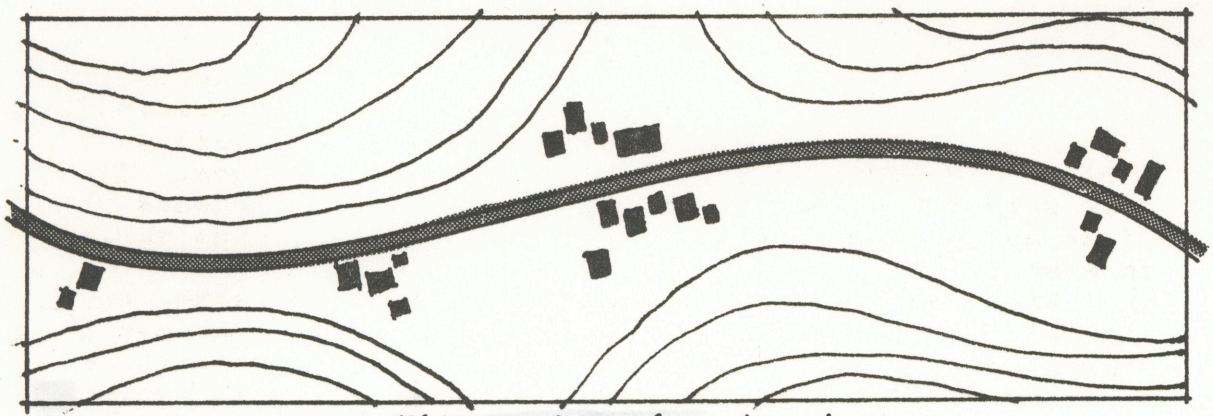
There are also instances of stark symmetry in building where the barn was treated with respect to its relationship to the house. This symmetry served to formalize the structure and make it more responsive to the house. This condition usually existed where the utility of the building was not as important as its aesthetic quality.

The manipulation of light is also a primary aspect of the appearance of buildings here. Deep shadows and shadows of a rhythm are prevalent visual stimulus. Whether it be clapboard siding, lattice work, roof edge detailing or whatever, there is a consistency to the play of light in this environment to create depth and rhythm. It is a means

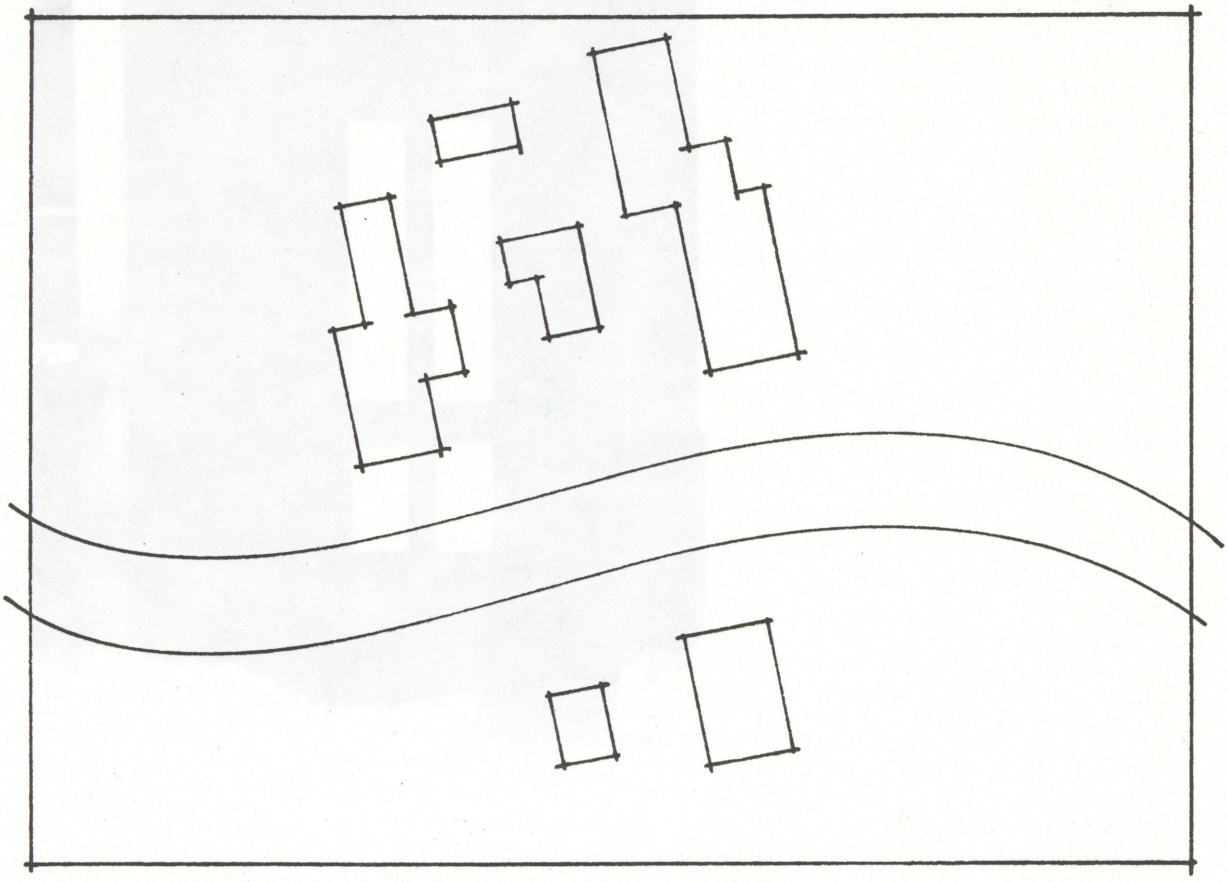

U.S. POST OFFICE
ASHFIELD MASS.







the path and settlement in the landscape



the path and neighborhood settlement

of scaling a building and serves to make it more approachable and in some cases more intimate.

It is this means of scaling by the use of shadows that appears as another indigenous design factor. Traditionally, planes are broken up by lines of shadow so the wall as a whole is revealed as a number of repetitive pieces. Lattice work too serves to break the sun into components of light and shadow so that pieces through the rhythm emerge in a whole.

When the shadows are cast by the primary forms, they are bold and uninterrupted. Components of the whole are broken down by rhythms of shadows thus maintaining the significance of the parent form.

It is as though the parent form is always present and that traditional detailing adds to its inherent simplicity, some complexity that inevitably gives the form richness and meaning.

The patterns of growth in this built environment are also an aspect of an architecture of familiarity and symboism. These patterns, like the architecture of this place, involve some phenomena typical to New England. They involve how villages and neighborhoods developed over time, and thusly are vital to understanding the existing conditions.

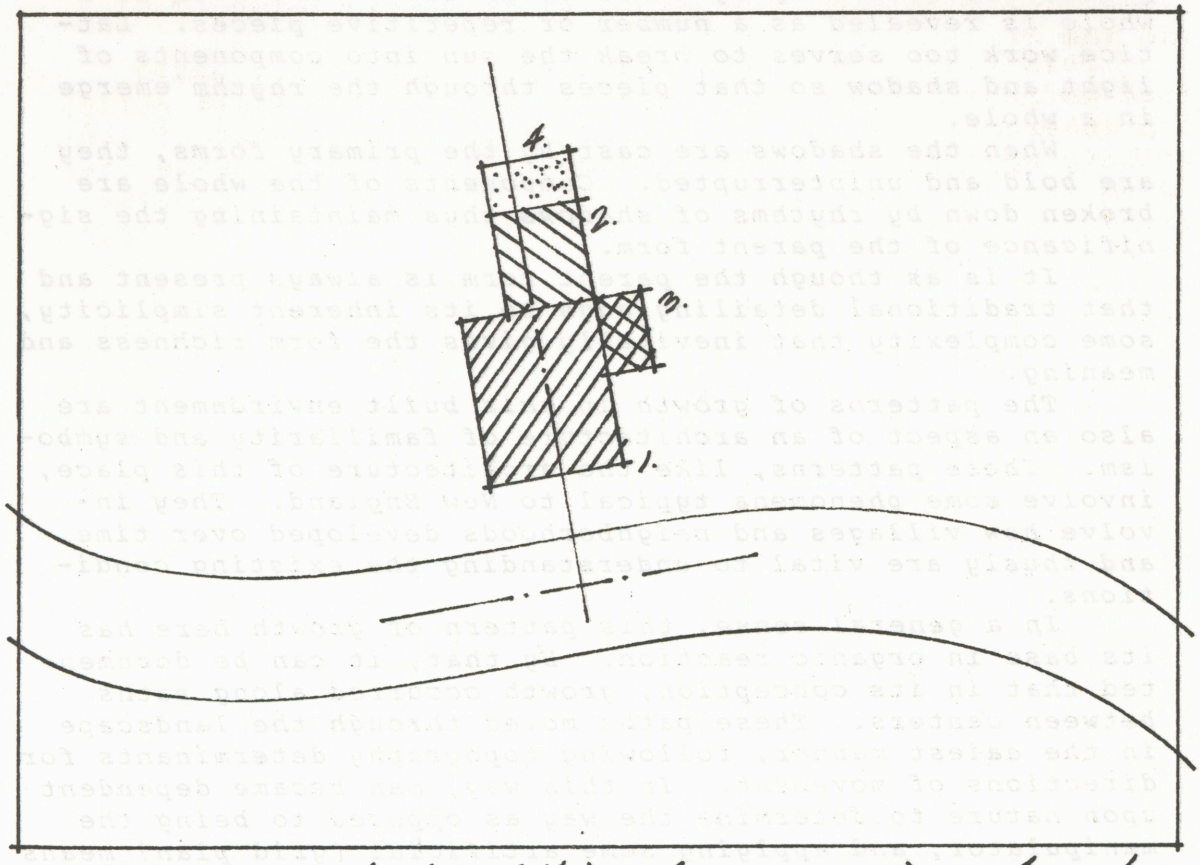
In a general sense, this pattern of growth here has its base in organic reaction. By that, it can be documented that in its conception, growth occurred along paths between centers. These paths moved through the landscape in the eaiest manner, following topography determinants for directions of movement. In this way, man became dependent upon nature to determine the way as opposed to being the manipulator, and applying some artificial (grid plan) means to establish direction.

However, the "built" growth along these paths is manifested in somewhat a contradictory way in that orthogonal relationships were developed. As a model for this explanation, the neighborhood in which I grew up will be used as a model.

The path, now a highway, became the base for the orthogonal relationships that became established.

With this base established, traditional architectural responses based on frontality and the primary form, percipitated a number of perpendicular axis to the base and thusly creating a number of geometrical relationships, all relative to the notion of orthogonal axis.

These relationships are somewhat confined to small zones of building but, remain constant as one moves along the path, however because the path is undulating, the relationship of one neighborhood to the next will change. This change is brought about because the organic nature of the base causes new relationships as one moves along it. Within this overall planning organization is another ordering system pertinent to each building. This second order-



the path and traditional expansion of a house

ing device has its roots in the orthogonal relationship and is based upon linear expansion.

Growth of a building happened along a line and traditionally along the perpendicular to the base, more precisely the path. As an example of this phenomenon, I will use the house I grew up in

This house began as a short rectangle with a gable roof addressing the path, built in 1835. This first building inherently became the primary form serving most of the utility appropriate at its conception. This component then added onto in subsequent builds along a line with another build to the side suggesting a recurrance of the clustering of the neighborhood.

With this inherent ordering of the plan, each form is realized in the hierarchy of the forms that exist and serve to strengthen the notion of primary form and its significance, which emerges to command the entire scheme.

The additive forms serve to introduce complexity into an otherwise very plain, simple geometric whole.

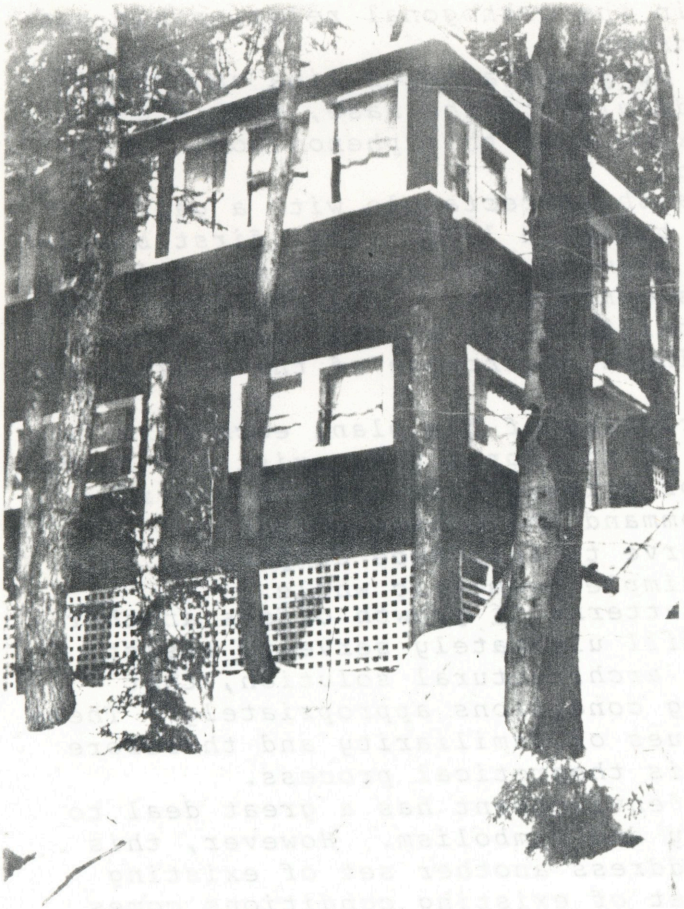
Understanding these patterns of growth offers another pool of information that will ultimately serve to assist in the manifestation of an architectural solution, that indeed responds to existing conditions appropriately. These patterns of growth are issues of familiarity and therefore cannot be overlooked by this theoretical process.

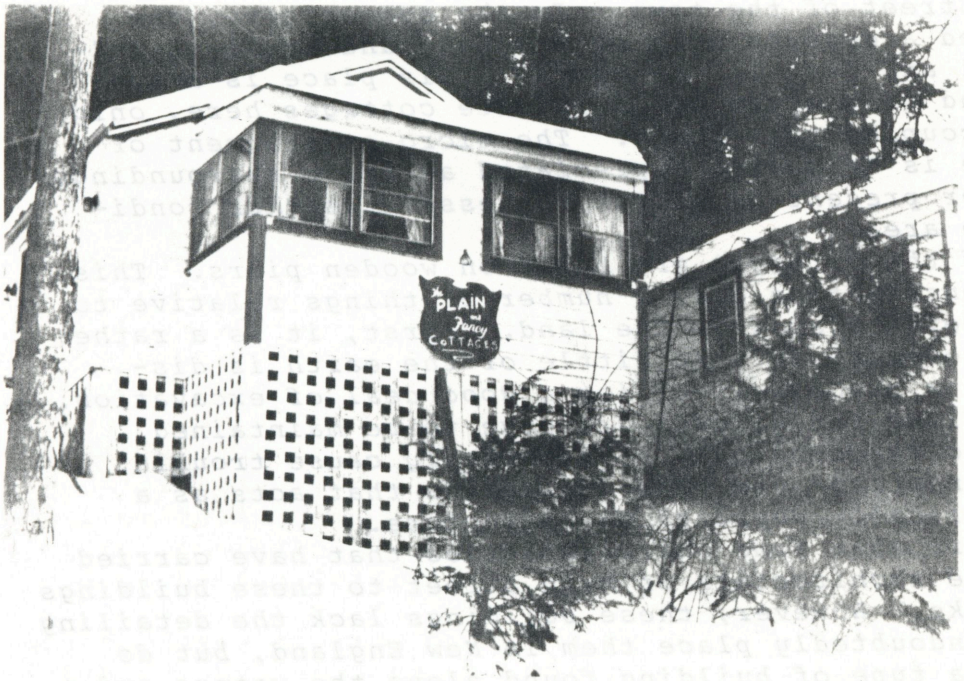
The New England built environment has a great deal to offer by way of familiarity and symbolism. However, this design problem must also address another set of existing conditions. This second set of existing conditions comes from the building and situations along the edge of Ashfield Lake.

The land along this northerly edge is steep and heavily wooded as opposed to the flat, relatively open terrain along Main Street of the town. In the summer time, the sun is denied access to much of the land and it stays relatively cool and damp in the woods. This place is a summer haven and of the two dozen private cottages here, only a few are occupied year round. The micro environment of the lakeside is very much appreciated as fresh surroundings from the ever present and often oppressive weather conditions of the area.

Most of the cottages are built on wooden piers. This method of construction does a number of things relative to a building being placed on the land. First, it is a rather sensitive procedure in that little of the earth is disturbed as in a process involving a good deal of excavation. This also allows for natural drainage to be maintained rather than obstructed only to eventually cause trouble. The post foundations are clad in lattice that acts as a screen and visually supports the structure.

There are also some characteristics that have carried over from the architecture of Main Street to these buildings along the lake. However, these buildings lack the detailing that would undoubtedly place them in New England, but do demonstrate a type of building found along the waters and




PLAIN
and
Fancy
COTTAGES

in the woods all across the Northern United States. These summer cottages have a sense of place in their position in the woods along the lake, but lack the connection to the region.

Some of the more prominent features of these cottages are the sleeping porches, and the number of window openings. Both of these features along with the latticed foundation increase the cooling effect on the structure; the utilization of natural forces helping to create a very comfortable shelter.

In virtually all cases, entries for these cottages occur on the side. In some cases, stairs mark the processional experience by the door, and onto the most private outdoor place, in the back of the cottage. Having entry on the side accommodates a freer use of the ends, one oriented to the lake, usually the sleeping porch, and as just described, an outdoor place to enjoy outdoor privacy.

The patterns of growth along the lake are quite similar to that in the village in that each uses the path, the Lake Road, as a base for organization. One might wonder why these cottages respond to the street rather than the lake. In actuality the cottages do respond to the lake; but it is the coincidence of how the growth of the path happened, respecting the edge of the lake, that allowed this to occur.

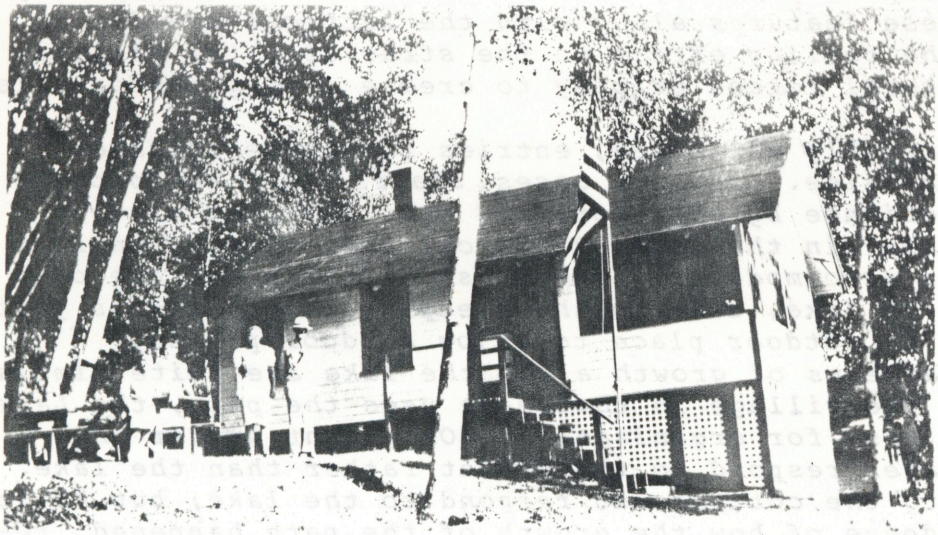
The cottages belonging with the lakehouse are an isolated exception in this environment. These cottages respond to the edges of the site rather than orthogonal relationships based upon the street. This pattern created a unique link between the Lakehouse and these cottages, as they are grouped to relate to the pavilion rather than to the lake or the beach.

The position of the Lakehouse itself is skewed against the base line created by the street. This probably has its roots in the nature of the Lakehouse as a commercial entity built at a time (c.1928) when the automobile was beginning to be popular as private transportation. In the words of Robert Venturi, it is a "building as bill board."[6]

The lakeside then is the second set of existing conditions that will effect the means to achieving an architecture of familiarity and symbolism.

It is as though in this project, there are two problems to coincide with the two sets of existing conditions. On the one hand, there is the Lakehouse which is the dominant element in this developmental scheme. This building is very large in scale with respect to the other lakeside structures, and is also the sole commercial venture there. Its dominance in the landscape has made it a landmark there. The identity of this building lies both with the town of Ashfield and the lake, denoted by the name it carries; the Ashfield Lakehouse. This pavilion is the first problem and needs to respond to both sets of existing conditions. This architectural piece is a Main Street building placed alongside the water's edge.

The cottages on the other hand are smaller parts of the whole. The identification to these comes from the lakeside



set of conditions and the Lakehouse. The linkage is both of the specific place and as a response to the Lakehouse in a commercial way.

This process towards an architecture of familiarity and symbolism then is an interpretation of the two sets of existing conditions. This will insure the character of the place with respect to its specifics and generalities of identity.

It is the intent of this investigation to wed the symbolism and aspects of familiarity that are within these existing conditions and subsequently capture a very definite sense of place and time. This new element in the landscape must convey a sense of conformity, seeming appropriate and proper as a replacement.



Michael J. Pollan

History of This Place.

Ashfield Lake was originally known as the Great Pond and covered approximately one third its present area. It is fed by an unnamed brook originating in what is now the spring generated lower reservoir, serving the town of Ashfield. In 1848, the water rights to the pond were deeded by Asa Sanderson to the Conway Manufacturing Company to raise the level of water by seven feet to accommodate manufacturing needs downstream. This was done by building an earthen dike along the southeast edge of the lake.

In December of 1878, a great freshet accurred causing the dike to burst, and a subsequent flood. Repairs were made including the control dam, to stabilize conditions along this edge. The town of Ashfield is presently the trustee of the lake and is responsible for water testing and weed control.

In 1923, Micheal J. Pollen purchased the property that is the site for this project and built a bathing resort including a very fine beach. The following is from an interview with Roger "Pat" Pollen conducted on 28 December 1981.[6]

This development began with a hot dog stand where the fire hydrant presently is. Where the pavilion was built, this little building was subsequently moved and converted into a rental cottage on the premises. Construction of the Lakehouse involved the primary, gabled structure in c. 1928 and a lean-to addition in c. 1937.

The original building was built upon a locust post foundation. Locust is impervious to rot, appropriate in dealing with the damp conditions of the lakefront. The natural landform was also preserved with the line of the lake actually being under the building.

This original structure was 2" x 3" stud construction with lap siding painted white. The stud walls were open on the interior reflecting the summer time nature of this building. The floors were oak strip flooring, the ceiling was exposed structure and windows were either double hung and screened, or, screened with a fixed sash that was hinged outside and operated from within by means of a string and a pulley. The roof was green asphalt shingles and all the trim was painted green.

The Lakehouse had a great soda fountain and sold other snack foods, mostly popcorn and ice cream. It was common



to sell 200 boxes on a Sunday afternoon. At this point in time, most of the quick food was bought through pass windows on the roadside of the pavilion.

Pollen and his family would live upstairs in the pavilion during the summer, and his son, Pat, can remember starting the day with a leap out the window into the lake.

There used to be a boardwalk that ran full from the front of the pavilion to the steps at the beach. This was a relatively comfortable surface to walk upon as it did not heat up like asphalt or cinders and had resiliency under foot.

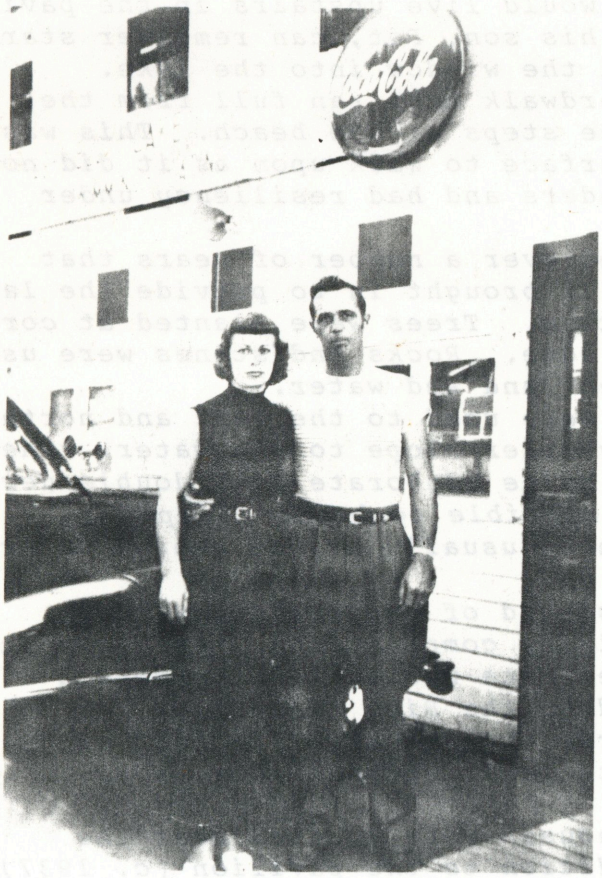
The beach was developed over a number of years that saw hundreds of yards of fill brought in to provide the land needed for picnics and parking. Trees were planted at corners and along the water's edge. Rocks and stones were used to shore up the line between land and water.

Stone retaining walls were used to the east and north of the beach to give it a gentler slope to the water. The diving platform used to be quite elaborate as a double decker. The raft was very susceptible to being flipped by crowds who felt the challenge, usually at the annual water carnival.

This annual event consisted of canoe tilting, boat races, plus swimming and diving competitions. The activity was perpetuated by a Mr. Rex Cate who in 1932, opened a boys camp in South Ashfield on the Bird Hill farm. He would host 25 or 30 boys from the Brooklyn district of New York City and coordinate their recreation with Mr. Pollen at the Lakehouse.

Originally, the bath houses were located near the beach, however with the addition to the pavilion (c. 1937), these changing and shower facilities were accommodated in the new basement. Pollen utilized the old bath houses by converting these to rental cottages. Another adaptive reuse was that Pollen bought the surviving home economic wing of Sanderson Academy after the main building burned down in 1938. All these buildings are still on site in varying degrees of decay.

Clientele was local and distant. The attraction was not limited to either. This place had become a proverbial melting pot for human liesure.


Coca-Cola







the beach











The Site and Its Significance

A parcel of land approximately 3.45 acres in area and bordering Ashfield Lake, is the site for this project. It is long and narrow with the scantist hint of a point in approximately the middle of its long dimension.

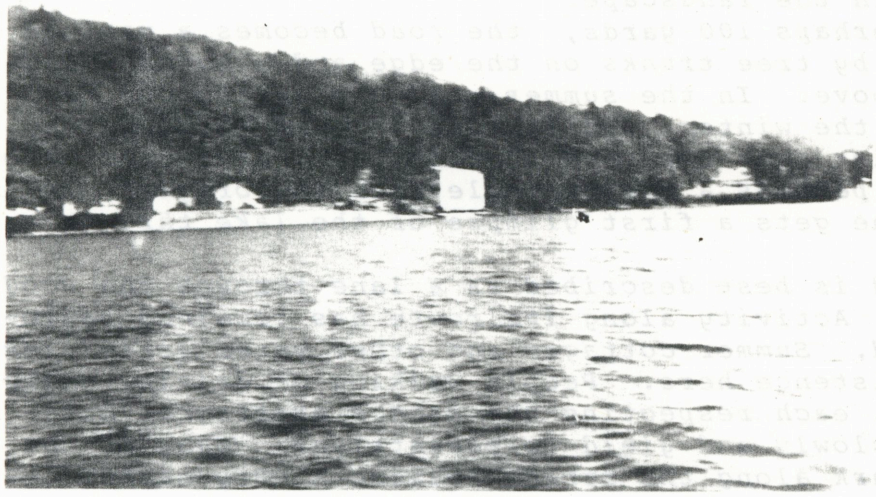
There are three approaches to this site with various modes of transportation (auto, bike, foot) sharing the same paths. The one that I am most charmed by is taking the Lake Road (Buckland Road) from where it intersects Route 112. This intersection forms a tee and neither the lake or the site can be seen from here. In fact, this intersection is visually open and there is no significance to accompany its presence in the landscape.

Within perhaps 100 yards, the road becomes a vaulted space bounded by tree trunks on the edge and a thick deciduous canopy above. In the summer, this is a fabulous experience. In the winter, sunlight is allowed through the bare tree bodies onto the road surface, now nature has made it sunny. In perhaps a quarter mile from the original intersection, one gets a first glimpse of the lake through the trees.

This road is best described as a lane through the woods along a lake. Activity along its route has remained basically unchanged. Summer cottages and other water activities mark man's existence here. People walking or driving share the same path, each respecting the others existence. Automobiles move slowly and yield to pedestrians. Many of the people here park along the street leaving a very narrow passage. Visibility also encourages a slower rate of speed, for the density of growth and frequent bends shield the seemingly ever present pedestrian and parked auto.

This co-existence exists all along the Lake Road. Sidewalks have not been put in and it would be somewhat insensitive to this place to consider their installation. It is a matter of tradition that these two modes of transportation co-exist and subdue foolishness, for this situation as it is will probably not change for the better or the worse. It is expected that it will simply stay the same and survive.

Further along the road, the lake comes right to the roadside and the tree cover is diminished. This opportunity provides a somewhat screened panorama of the lake. After this experience, a bend in the road touches the north end of the site and the land falls away to a small plain where the cottages are, and eventually to the lake. The



trees thin out considerably along the roadside of the site and create a colonnade that culminates with the Lakehouse that fills a natural void. It is as though the trees were placed in such a manner to create this specific effect. This is not the case, however, but it does express their inherent quality relative to approach.

From Main Street, approach is also on the Lake Road, again originating with a tee intersection. Here there are roadside recreation facilities hinting at the lake's existence, owned and operated by the town of Ashfield.

This approach has a more "in town" feel to it. One passes by some houses and Sanderson Academy, the town park and beach facility (town residents only) and then the Lakehouse and lake come into view simultaneously.

The view that perhaps best exemplifies the monumental nature of the Lakehouse is from the south side of the lake and from upon the lake itself. It is a very significant landmark in this specific environment. The Lakehouse is a firm marker for the settlement that is its domain.

The pavilion is a commercial center, and its past heraldry in the environment makes it somewhat a "building as billboard."[8] It is an attraction of significant proportion here and expresses this with its assertive yet appropriate statement of presence. And it also must be understood that this building is not a single entity, but rather a primary structure in a larger development scheme. A center for the activities of this place, the pavilion is a symbol of domain.

The site also has inherent qualities such as man-made and natural determinants (rational site influences) that must be understood to deal with an architecture of familiarity and symbolism.

The edges are perhaps of paramount concern. The edge along the north of the site is bounded by mature deciduous trees and Buckland Road. The land drops along this edge perhaps three feet to the site below the road. It is a profound edge because of its sense of containment.

The edge to the south is perhaps the most significant. The meeting of water and land as one edge turns into a series of zones combining the aquatic and the terrestial, sharing this line. This progression in turn suggests an architectural progression along its length.

The edge to the east is an imaginary line of little architectural consequence. It sets a limit concerned with the building process but has no physical presence.

The boundary to the west is another imaginary line. However in this case, the boundary has a physical presence in a group of trees. Again there is a sense of enclosure, a physical presence at this edge.

These edges and the lay of the land raise questions concerning the ordering of this architectural development. Concerning ordering, there are two obvious methods; one would be superimposition of an order (rational) or play off qualitative aspects of the site to in fact develope an inherent ordering system (irrational).

Another approach to ordering this development is to utilize the advantages of both the aforementioned methods. This combination of imposed and inherent might leave a more "effectionate" settlement with regards to familiarity and symbolism. By incorporating known qualities of this place and interlacing qualities from other situations, it is hoped that the settlement will maintain the pieces of itself that are important and special; and that the addition of new conditions will simply make the place better.

This place as an attraction is made more significant with the existing conditions. As documented, these existing conditions will be the mechanism for a process and design responsive to the specifics of this place.



Epilogue

As I have worked through this project, new concerns about aspects of familiarity and symbolism have come to light.

These new concerns deal with rituals and so called existential objects that are special to this project. Certain patterns are inherent to a project such as this that can in fact become design determinants and inevitably make the project much more responsive in terms of familiarity and symbolism. By the utilization of these rituals and existential objects, the project will become more correct as an exercise dealing with familiarity and symbolism. By becoming a manifestation that accounts for the special qualities of this place by the lake, the project can truly be familiar and symbolic.

With regards to the major portion of this document, the initial aspects of familiarity and symbolism dealt with only the "body" of an architecture. That is to say, it takes into account simply the architectural language of the area and is thusly only an aid in establishing an appropriate architectural vocabulary.

The intent of this epilogue is to speak of the "soul" of an architecture of familiarity and symbolism. Some of these concerns come inevitably from the architectural vocabulary, such as the gable form and its emotional ramifications. However, most of the "soul" of an architecture of familiarity and symbolism has a somewhat more emotional derivation, rather than physical.

The reference here is made to the special qualities that go with the activity that will occur at this place. These special activities range from going to the pavilion for an ice cream to moving by other cottages to that one that offers you temporary accommodation. Issues of community and privacy, movement from one station to the next, and a variety of opportunities for leisure generate particular circumstances that must be carefully interwoven to create an environment that is both familiar and symbolic. This environment must be rich yet expected; complex to establish meaning yet simple to convey a sense of compatability.

The richness of this project comes together by the heightening of some typical "things" (objects and rituals) to a point where each "thing" becomes special. Special in the sense that each typical "thing" has been paid attention to and actually becomes an integral component in a broader

scheme. In which case, these typical "things" become features, and add to the meaning of the whole. This will result in a real symbolic sense of a place that is based upon familiar objects and rituals.

Steps have been taken in the design process of this project to seek out familiar scenarios that one would encounter at this place. These scenarios deal with the passer-by, the person going to the pavilion, to the beach or staying in one of the cottages. In essence, the designer has become the user. There is much to this project that may seem eccentric (irrational), but in order to truly deal with aspects of familiarity and symbolism, this fantastical involvement by the designer was necessary to convey the importance of and ramifications of both the "body" and "soul" of an architecture that is familiar and symbolic.

To some, this personalized process might seem selfish. This will not be denied, but rather contended as an appropriate means to arrive at a point where the project does indeed become symbolic of a particular place and activity; by the use of familiarity both in the traditional and emotional sense of the word. The place will be an offering of some things worthwhile to physical and spiritual health. Through a process dealing with aspects of familiarity and symbolism there will ensue the creation of a special, memorable place. This project is an attempt to create an affinity and delight so often missing from our lives.

> *"The purpose of construction is to hold things together, of architecture to move us."*
>
> *LeCorbusier*

Because this place has existed in a pragmatically similar context, it is not unexpected that certain overtones will result from the involvement of architectural thought where it has not been involved before. Inevitably, architecture takes into account a broader range of concerns than say spontaneous, vernacular development. This leads to a much more substantial result both in terms of the "body" (building) and "soul" (spirit of place) of the architecture. This is not a contention that architecture is more appropriate than a folk solution, but rather that architecture can serve the existential needs of man in a more concrete fashion.

The process of design for this project has dealt with this notion of concretizing man and his relationship to this place. It has done so including the vernacular or folk methodology, but has not been confined by these traditional solutions. Certain aspects from the vernacular have been referred to in some way metaphorically or figuratively, while others have been totally rejected, inappropriate as means to some kind of end. Indeed the process may seem eccentric, but it was inevitable due to the design approach and one interpretation of familiarity and symbolism.



Program

The nature of this place deals with leisure. The services provided here had been primarily geared to serving summer clientele. However, recent economic conditions have sparked the addition of services that perpetuate year round cash flow. Therefore it should be a place where anyone can seek the essence of leisure, and the opportunity to enjoy fresh surroundings the year through.

The scope of this development is rather large for the region where it takes place. However, there are few inland beaches that can match this facility for services offered. The DAR State Forest is approximately 10 miles ~~to~~ south, but this place has only the beach. In essence, an isolated facility that does not attract the commercial bather. The commercial bather seeks an attraction of greater magnitude where the day can be spent on a variety of activities making a more substantial experience; this is the offering of the place for this project.

The project will involve site planning issues and the design of the pavilion and rental cottages, with much of what exists in reality as precedence.

The use of this facility will depend upon the season. By summer, activity on the entire site will be at a zenith. The seasonal cottages are booked, usually in advance, sometimes from the previous summer. The simple attractions of this place will draw relatively large numbers of people by day and night. For all the activities, the Lakehouse is the backdrop and major element in the scene.

The clientele is both local and distant, many of whom drive from Northampton and Greenfield. Cottages are taken by families from Holyoke to Brighton. This place has become an establishment in the truest sense of the word.

In the autumn, the brilliant colors of the foliage attract many to the highways for a drive. Often these rides culminate at attractions, such as the Lakehouse, to partake in traditional things like cider and donuts, fried dough and various other delights. The tourist market is still a legitimate source of capital in the fall, and although most of the amenities at this place are becoming dormant, the Lakehouse will still attract the traveler to wine and dine.

The winter is a dormant period for the Lakehouse at which time the patrons of this place will for the most part be local. The restaurant may attract people from a dis-

tance since there are few eating establishments within 20 miles or so. With additional functions, such as the restaurant and social hall, the Lakehouse will still be a hub of activity due to its attraction.

Spring at this place is the period of rejuvenation. The Lakehouse is still the primary attraction, but the site is now free of snow and the reemergence of activities on it introduce the coming summer.

It will also be attempted to establish a neighborhood, one that has come from the need to supply, or the market for, year round rental units. Presently, six of the cottages are year-round rentals. This situation would also perpetuate more activity. However, year round rental units are not to become the rule but rather the exception.

SPACE REQUIREMENTS:

Planned Facilities (Table 2)

Pavilion

1) Concession Stand.
   - a small space devoted to dispersing slush cones, milky ways, suntan lotion, etc.

requirements — 400 ft^2
- . window for beach passes
- . counter with pass windows (paper service)
- . grill for burgers, dogs, etc.
- . candy, chips other packaged goods
- . refrigerator and freezer
- . sink and ice machine
- . storage and trash
- . delivery by light duty trucks

2) Bath Houses (100 bathers) — 700 ft^2
   - little building where one can change, shower and use the toilet.

		Men	Women
. toilets	(women - 1 per 40)		
	(men - 1 per 60)	2	3
. urinals	(1 per 60)	2	
. showers	(1 per 40)	3	3
. lavs	(1 per 60)	2	2

- . benches
- . maintenance storage
- . mechanical

3) Public Vestibule — 750 ft^2
- . a commodious space to establish orientation and a sense of ceremony.
- . entrance into building, waiting
- . central hall as ordering device
- . ventical circulation
- . public telephone
- . public restrooms
- . vending machines
- . veranda: sense of grandeur

4) Restaurant (30) (2 waitresses, cook) — 540 ft^2
   - an establishment looking out over the lake serving a varied, yet traditional menu.
- . lunch counter (10) — 200 ft^2
- . booths
- . table settings (inside & outside)
- . coat rack
- . 40 meals per hour
  360 meals/day - 2520 meals/week
- . breakfast: daily in summer season
- . lunch: daily in summer season
- . dinner: daily year round
- . kitchen — 600 ft^2

production areas
. serving area ("the line"): vegetable sink, counter, steam table, etc. (beverages)
. waitress station and counterspace
. common storage
  walk-in cooler)
  walk-in freezer) 15-20 cf/100 complete
  dry goods) meals.
. reach-in cooler: desserts, salads
. receiving: 2 week storage.

sanitation areas
. dishwasher w/counter
. deep sink w/counter
. miscellaneous sanitation (hose-down)
. toilet and soap closet
. garbage disposal and trash
. cashier: right hand side of door when leaving

5) Bar (one bartender) 450 ft^2
- a small tavern to enjoy in conversation with local or tourist.
. bar seating for 12
. chair seating for 12
. view to lake
. terrace
. sandwich service (from kitchen)
. wet bar
. cooler for beer
. dry storage
. draft system
. rubbish

6) Social Hall (200) 3000 ft^2
- a big space for musical engagements, receptions, dinners, etc.
. dance floor
. storage for tables and chairs
. balcony
. public restrooms
. wet bar

7) Game Room
- a full room of electronic noise and pool cues.
. pinball
. electronic
. pool tables
. juke box

Cottages (lodging houses)
- small houses as temporary accommodation here by the lake.

Type #1 — *600 ft²*
kitchenette, bathroom, porch, loft.
6 units

Type #2 — *800 ft²*
kitchenette, bathroom, bedroom, porch, loft. . .
6 units.

With this aspect of the development:
docking facilities
housekeeping shed: laundry, linen, utilities, cleaning supplies.

Primary Site Considerations

A.) Parking

existing on-site parking

lakehouse	(sufficient)	10
beach	(sufficient)	20
cottages	(sufficient)	12*

*parking occurs on the lawn in front of the units.

Street side parking also occurs as a local phenomenon. This is not objected to since actual conditions necessitate this use for all who own facilities on the Lake Road to use this means of parking from time to time.

Proposed on-site parking:

Lakehouse -

existing occupancy: dining 15
bar 30
45

existing occupancy/existing parking
45/10 = 4.5/auto

new occupancy: dining 40
bar 30
70

70/4.5 = 16 autos

Beach - existing: 20
anticipated use increase perpetuated by revitalization of facilities: 50%
proposed: 30 autos

Social Hall -

. activities involving this will take priority in parking. (non concurrent)
previous total: 46 autos
. these spaces will accommodate patrons and any overflow will utilize the street.

Cottages -

Type #1: (one auto/unit) x 6 = 6
Type #2: (1 1/2 auto/unit) x 6 = 9
15 autos

B) The Beach

In the past, the beach required paid admission. This has some qualities that no longer meet existing conditions. There is a problem with proximity to entry for the cottage dwellers. The problem is one of flow and fees could be charged for parking rather than for beach use. The problem with this is, that maybe people would park on the street and use the beach paying no fee.

A closer look at the problems associated with any fee charged for the beach or the use of the parking lot will come as this process developes.

C) Public/Private

To achieve full utilization of the site, the public domain must complement the private domain. After all, the rental cottages require some degree of privacy within this community and within each unit. Coexisting with this, is the public domain of the Lakehouse and the beach. It is not an extremely tangible thing, this balance, but it can reveal itself better as this process developes.

Site Analysis

Climatic Conditions

1. -2°F to 80°F (T), 70% mean relative humidity.
2. 30% to 100% humidity (dew point phenomenon)
3. winter storm winds from the northeast to gale intensity.
4. summer breezes - constant from SW
5. annual precipitation: 45.14"
6. average snowfall: 60"
7. frostline @ 4'-0"
8. earthquake zone #2 (moderate damage)
9. May 20 (mean) last day of 32°F in spring.
10. freeze free period (mean) of 120 days from May 20
11. flood control of lake made possible by control dam at east end.
12. thunderstorms are a frequent natural occurrence, primarily in June, July and August with an occasional twister. Sometimes happens in the winter, which may result in a freshet.

Soil and Ground Conditions

1. Fill on site and natural soil are primarily a sandy gravel mix with good building and drainage capabilities.
2. Large area of site was actually created by hauling many cubic yards of fill.
3. The site has for the most part good drainage, however, suffers from a couple of erosion problems. This occurs along the Lake Road due to the lack of gutters and catch basins. This condition persists in the shoulder of the road, and causes excessive run off from the street onto the site.
4. One boggy area does exist at the lowest part of the site.
5. The site is bordered on one long side by about 1600' of lake. A stone retaining holds fast the area of fill along this edge. The other long side is bordered by the Lake Road and a row of mature hardwoods. The west end terminates where the land between the lake and road is narrow and steep. The east end terminates where the hydrant to the lake is.

Adjacent Structures

1. *None of the adjacent structures incorporate basements, but rather are built upon wooden posts. The original pavilion was built upon locust posts and suffered little structural deformation. However, the subsequent addition to the Lakehouse and its concrete basement did settle considerably causing the building to begin pulling apart. Steel cables and turn buckles were used to stabilize the building by carrying the addition on the original building.*
2. *The Lakehouse has always been the largest building near the site. The others are small summer cottages and garages.*
3. *The town swimming facility is located approximately 300 yards to the south of the site. This area includes picnic tables and tennis courts as well as bathhouses. The use of it is restricted to residents of Ashfield and their guests.*
4. *A public boat launch occurs south across the lake from the site, only needed if a boat requires a trailer launch. Hand launch can be done at a variety of places, including on site.*

Legal Considerations

1. *zoned rural residential and agricultural*
2. *project is classified under a "grandfather clause" in the by laws.*
3. *on site parking required*
4. *A3 occupancy: social hall*
5. *B2 occupancy: dining & bar*
6. *R3 occupancy: lodging houses -*
   UBC being used in lieu of Mass. State Code as use is not readily available. The UBC has been studied and there are no requirements worth redocumentation.
7. *no special codes or ordinances*

Movement: Circulation of Pedestrian & Auto

1. *Through traffic on Buckland Road two ways. Road is a light duty, improved surface from Rt. 112 to the Lakehouse, and medium duty (asphalt), improved surface from the Lakehouse to Main St. Street is 20' wide with a 5 foot shoulder (R.O.W.) on each side. There are no sidewalks or gutters. Parking does occur along the road.*
2. *Years ago there was a boardwalk leading from the pavilion to the beach. Later, automobiles were allowed to pull right up to the building face. I knew two people who drove right into the building for service.*
3. *There is no accommodations in even the slightest way to separate the pedestrian and automobile traffic.*
4. *On site parking also occurs on the fill area for the beach. Cottage autos use a single lane drive*

for access to the compound and then park on the lawn at their leisure.

Solar Orientation

1. Site has good solar exposure
   - 42°30' latitude
   - 25½° winter solstice
   - 47½° equinox
   - 71½° summer solstice
2. Natural shade areas occur along both long edges of the site. A pocket of shade occurs at the terrace level above the beach. In the past awnings have been used as shading devices for windows.
3. Ventilation is vital to the built environment here due to the high summer temperatures and humidity. This has been reflected in the summer buildings by shading, many windows, elevation off the ground, etc.

Fire and Safety

1. Town Volunteer Fire Station is located in the center of town maybe a mile from the site. The company is highly drilled and capable. Equipment includes an ambulance and EMT's.
2. There are no physicians in the town of Ashfield. Mark Purinton, M.D., practices in Buckland. Closest hospital: Greenfield 26 miles.
3. First aid (emergency) would be provided on site until qualified help arrived.
4. The lake is used as a fire pond. There is a hydrant on the east end of the site.

Utilities and Maintenance.

1. electric and phone lines on R.O.W.
2. town sewer and water under Lake Road
3. no gas lines, bottled gas is available and presently used in some of the cottages.
4. maintenance of area requires simple utility items and some sort of accommodation need to be made to store them.
5. Snow removal could pose a problem and should be considered.
6. A new load (3 C.Y.) of sand is brought in each spring as action of the water has transported some of the sand out into the swimming area. This is a pleasant occurrence, for not only is the beach sandy, but so is the bottom of the swimming area.
7. Garbage removal has been done by dumpster contract, presently it is done with barrels. Ashfield has no municiple collection, therefore it must be contracted out for removal.

Views

1. *There are no eyesores viewing out from the site.*
2. *The thumb to the east of the site has a tendancy to collect the floating debris of the lake.*
3. *Views from the Lake Road are glimpses at best with an occasional full exposure to the lake or the Lakehouse.*
4. *With the exception of its edges, the site is open to view.*
5. *Views out from the cottages are glimpses through the trees.*
6. *It is indeed a vista from the pavilion, the terraces and the beach. Most of the lake can be viewed from these stations.*

Vegetation/Landscape

1. *Site has both natural and man introduced trees. Primarily hardwoods (elm, ash, maple, birch) with an occasional spruce.*
2. *The importance of these trees is in their qualities of spatial definition and making shade.*
3. *Lilac bushes and geraniums are used to introduce color, scent and some elegance.*
4. *Lawn is a grass mix of unknown origin.*
5. *No aquadic plants in swimming area. Pieces of such sometimes float in to site's edge.*

Footnotes

[1] Denise Scott Brown, Steven Izenour, Robert Venturi; Learning from Las Vegas (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1977) p. 104.

[2] Brendon Grill, Dudley Whitney, Summer Places. (New York: Methren, Inc., 1978) p. 87.

[3] Ibid., p. 88.

[4] Frederick G. Howes, History of the Town of Ashfield Volume I. (Ashfield, Mass: By the Town of Ashfield, 1914), p. 2.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Interview with Roger "Pat" Pollen, Building Contractor, Ashfield, Massachusetts. Interview, 28 Dec. 1981.

[7] Denise Scott Brown, Steven Izenour, Robert Venturi; Learning from Las Vegas. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1977) p. 117.

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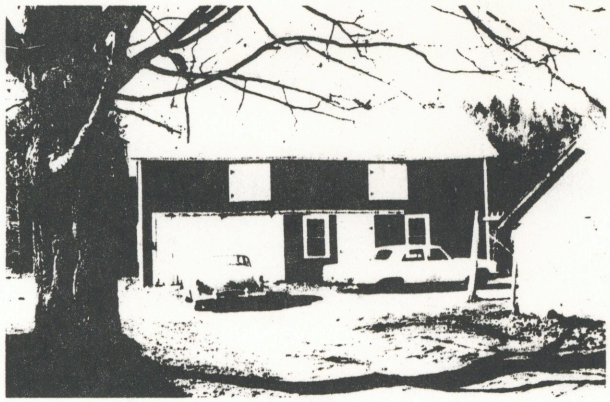
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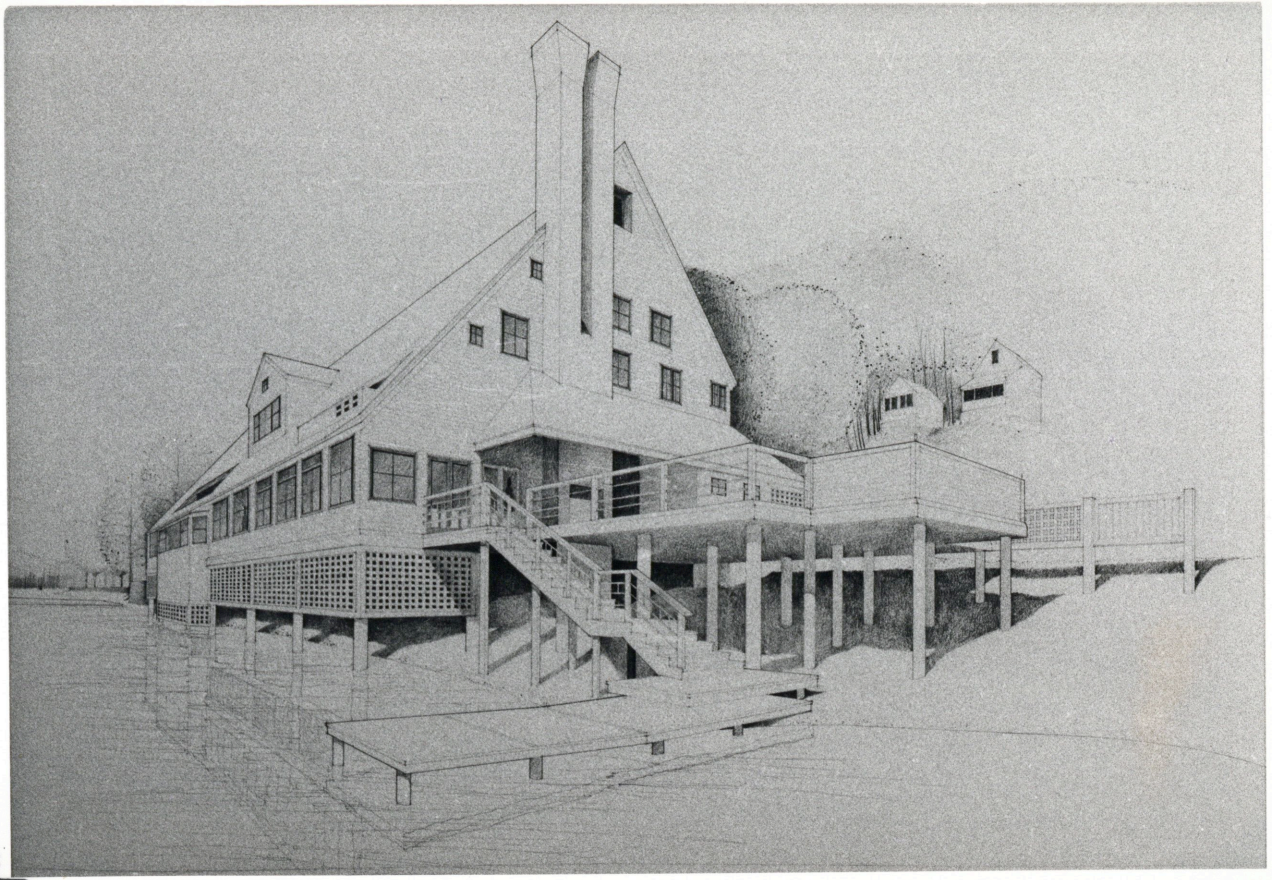
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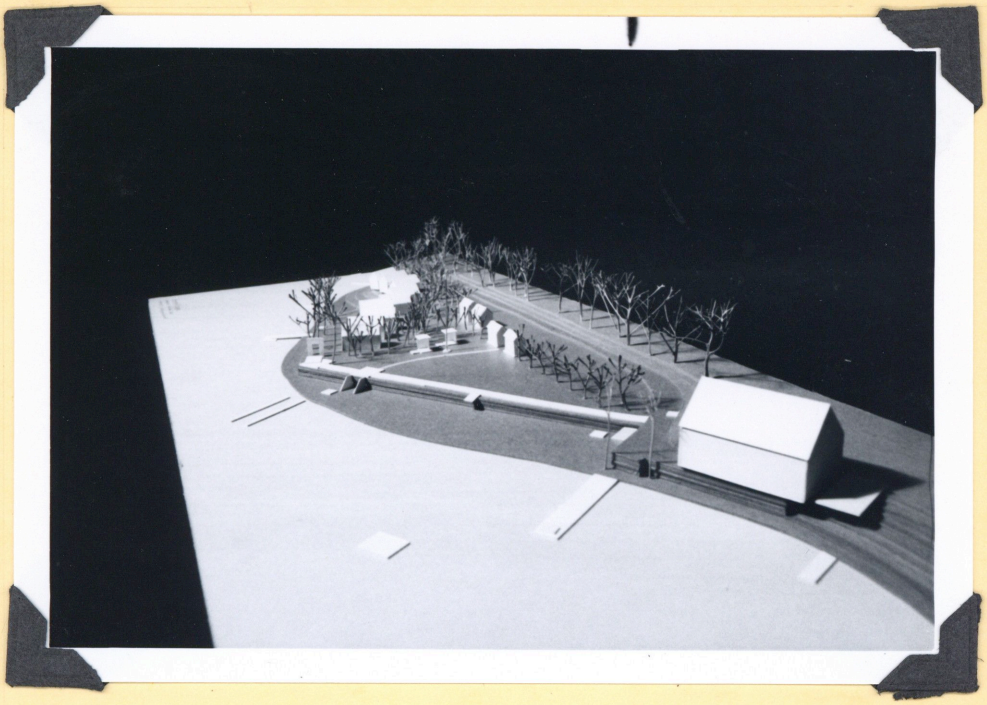
12. Venturi, Robert. Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1966.



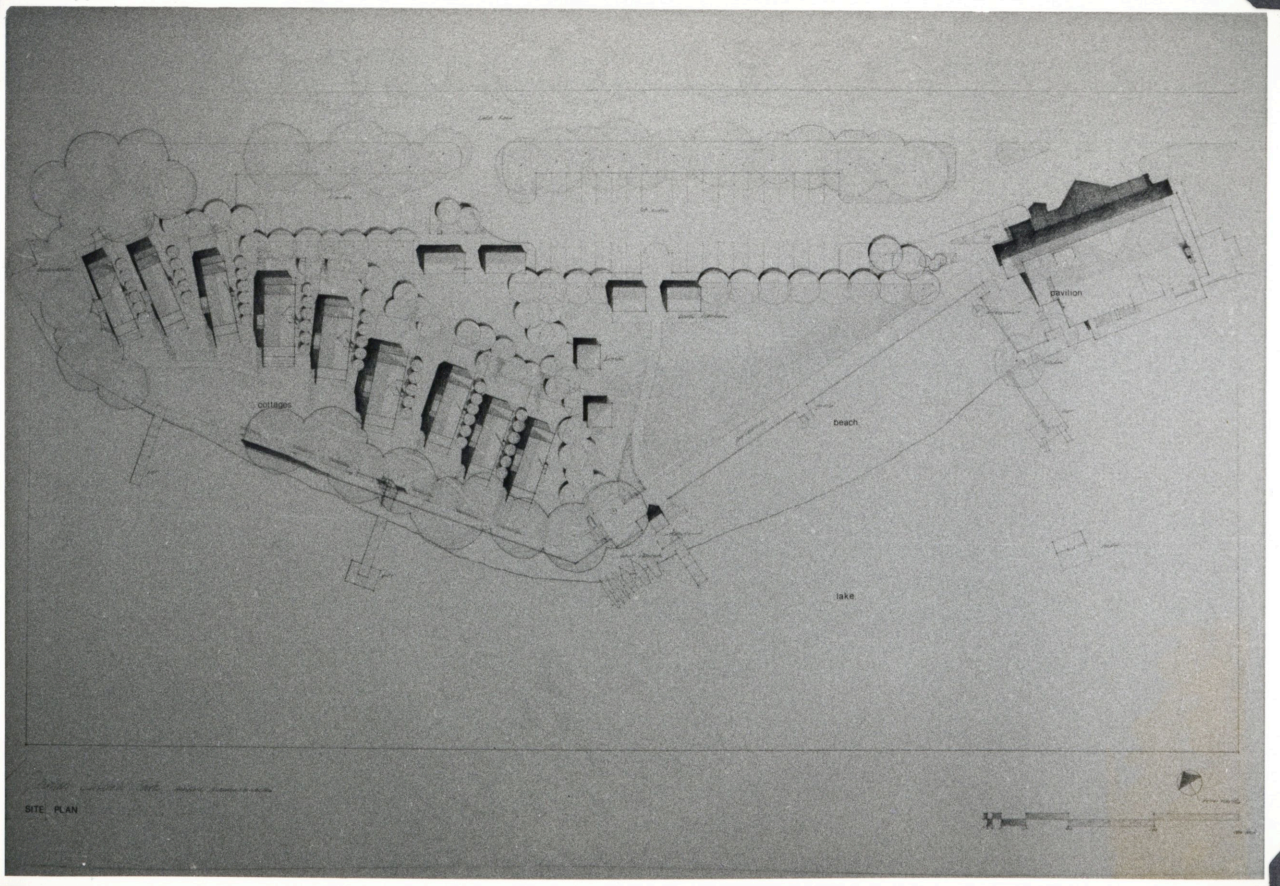
I hope all my friends here may someday get an opportunity to see the place that I have concerned myself with in this project. This page is for all of you, and may all of us enjoy the fruits of our profession. Good Luck and God bless.

C. Holm

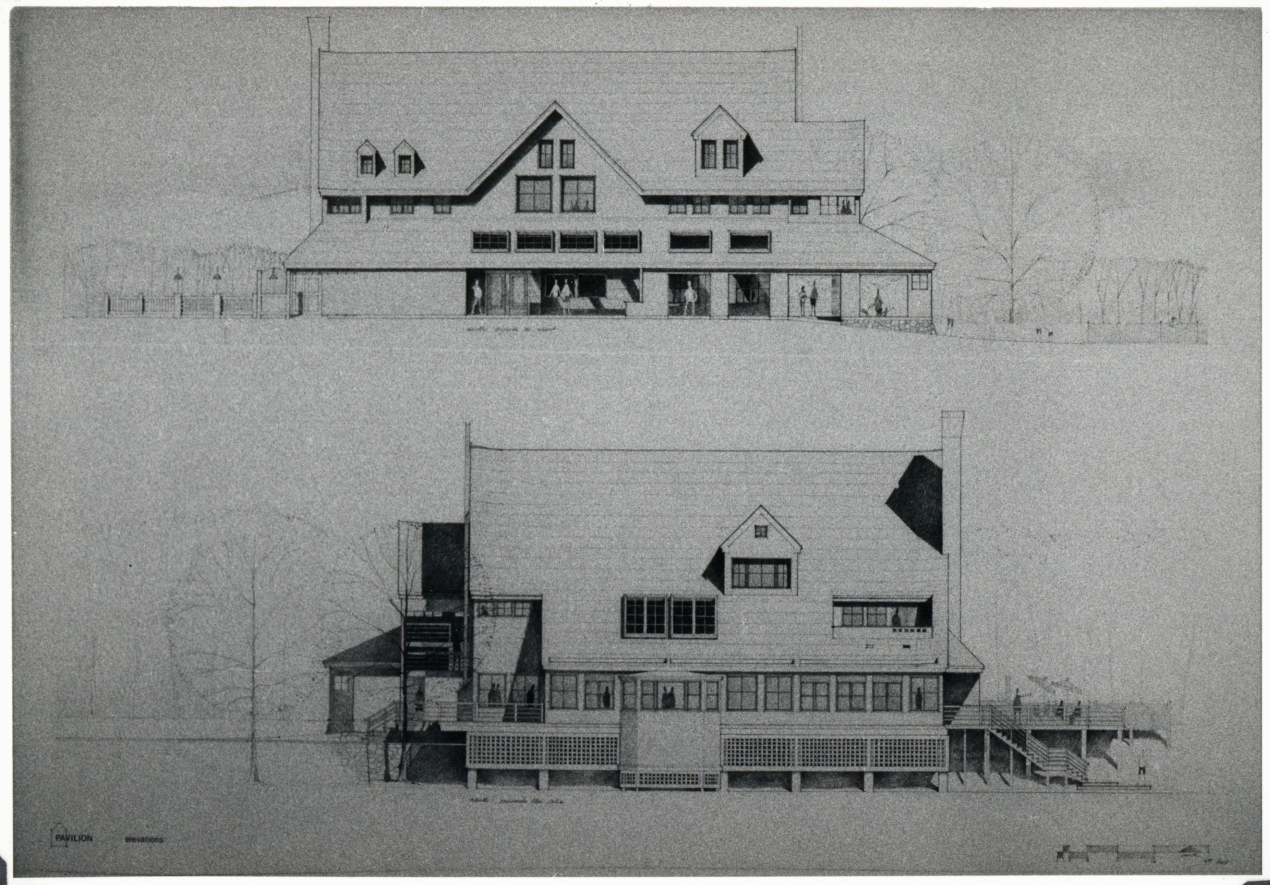


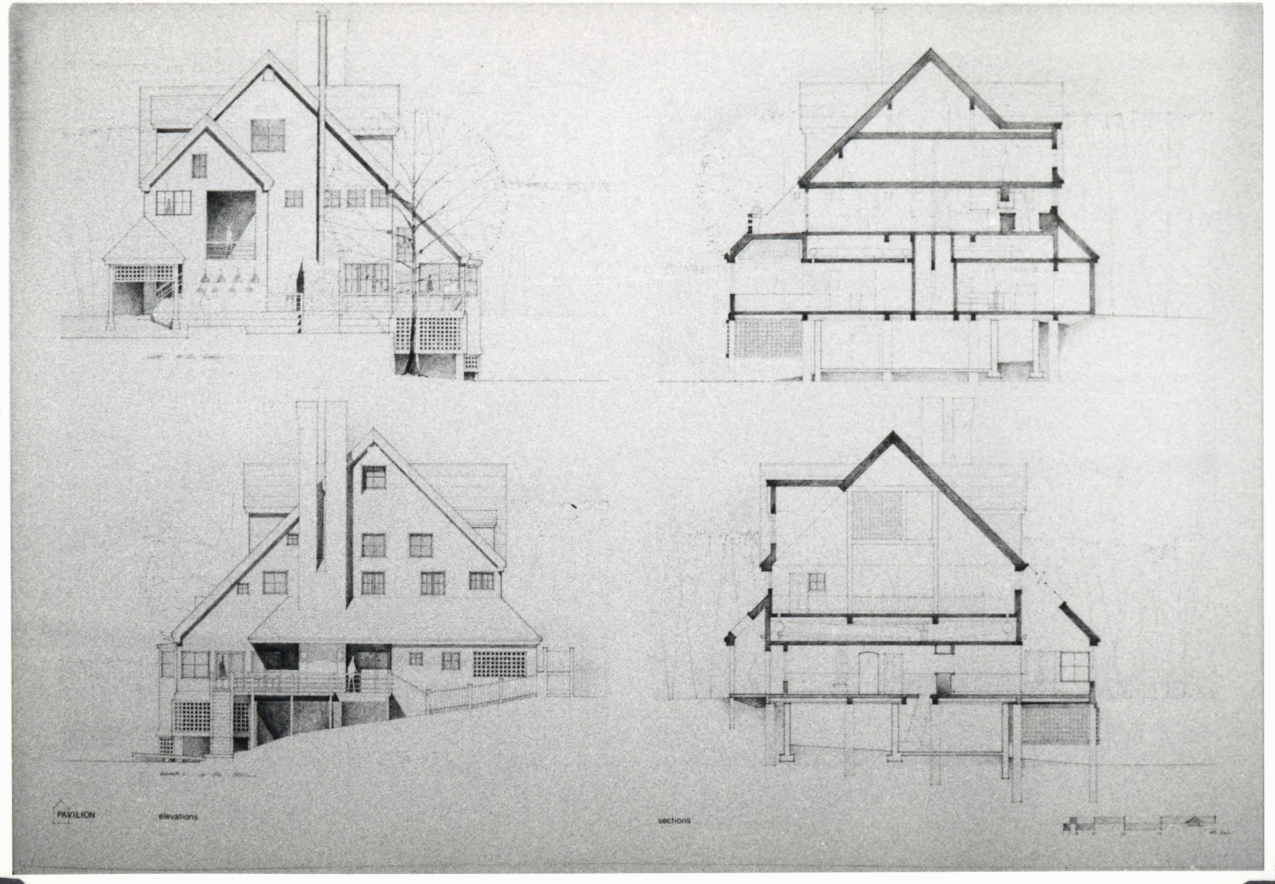


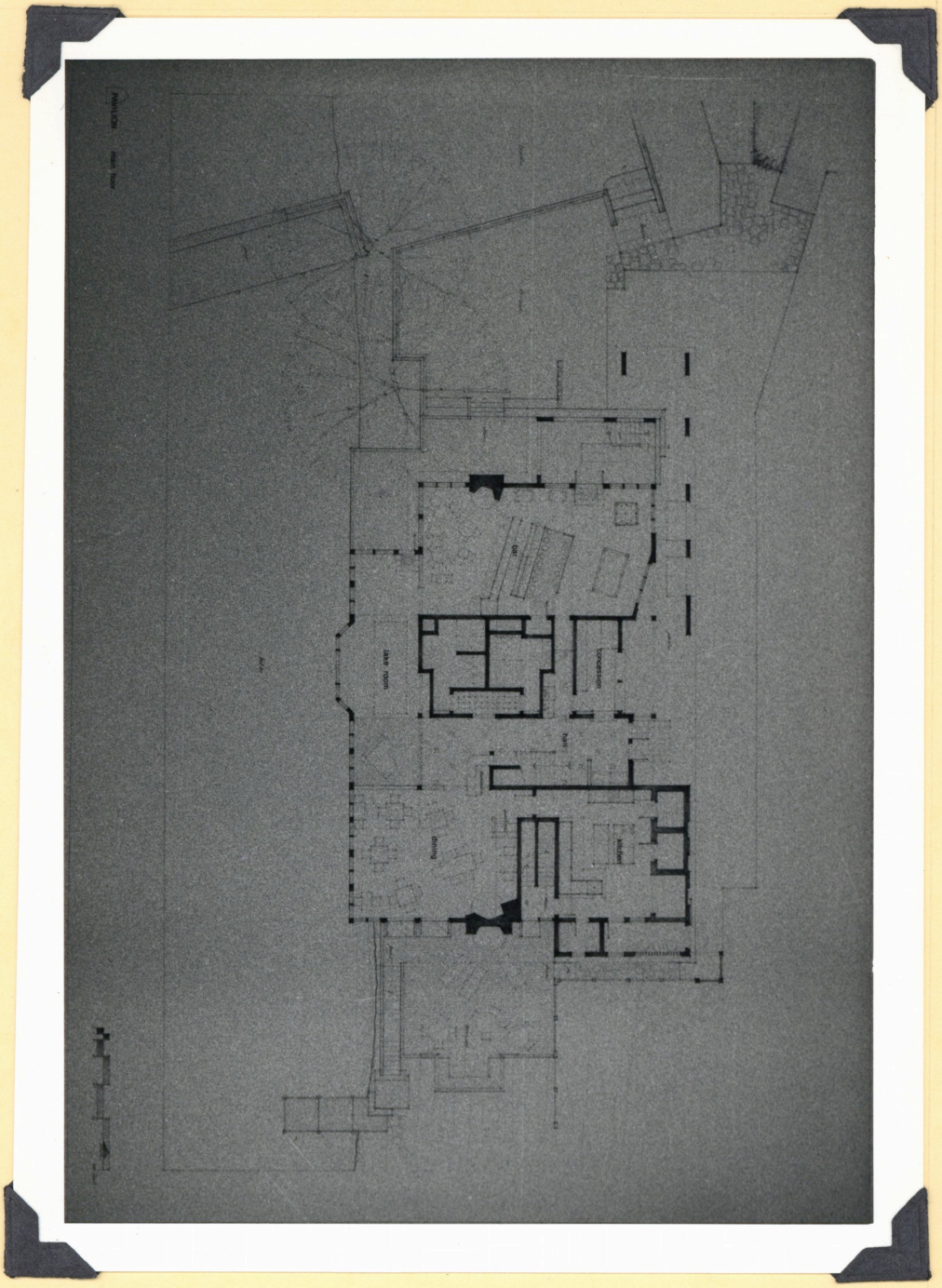


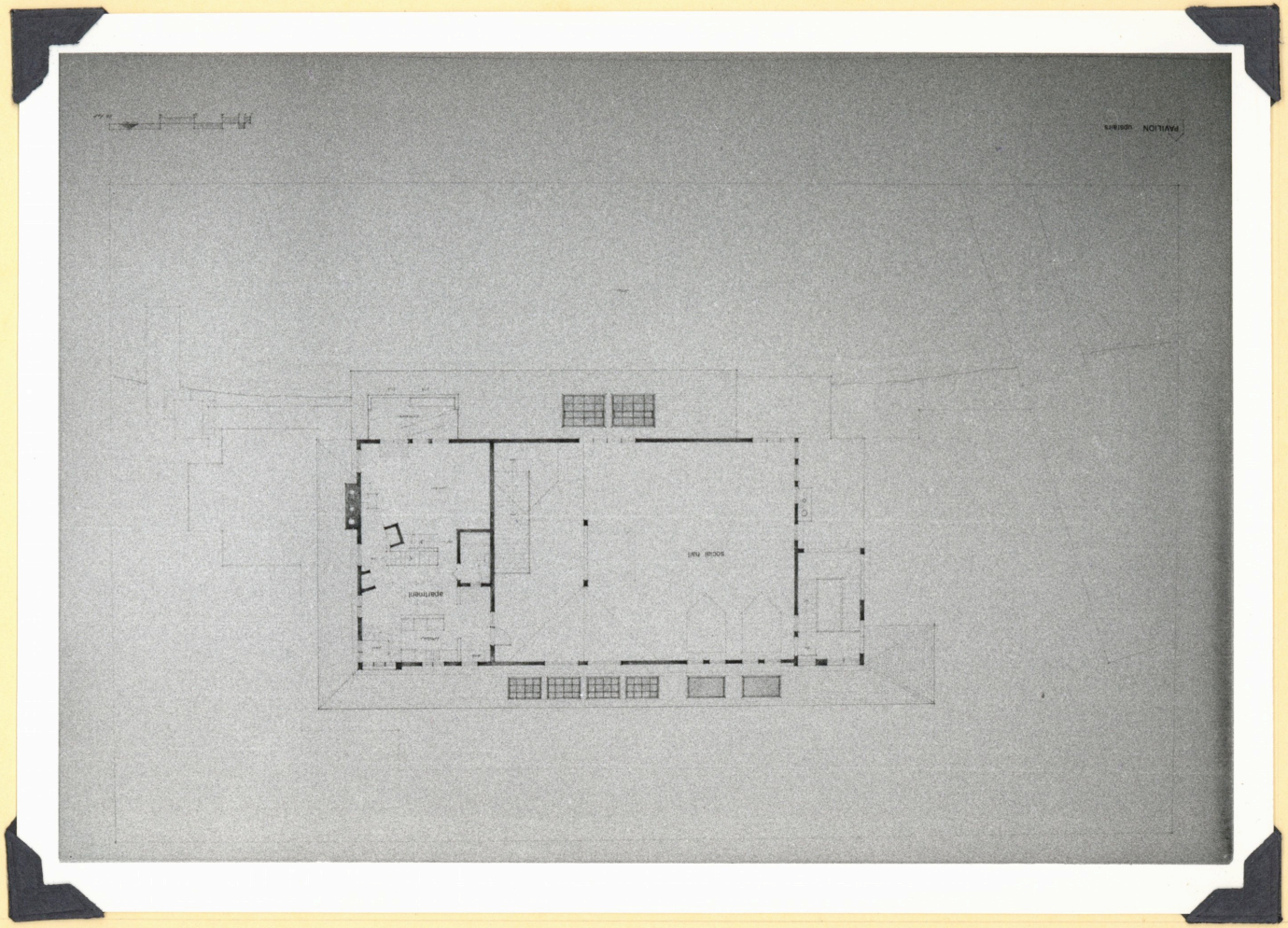


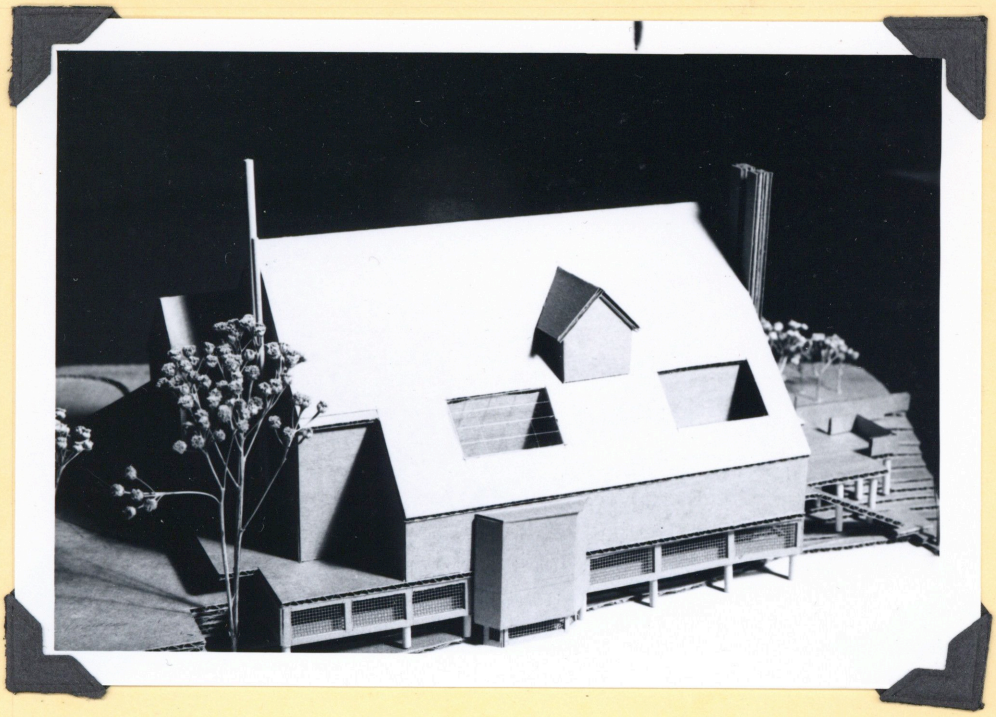
SITE PLAN


PAVILION
elevations

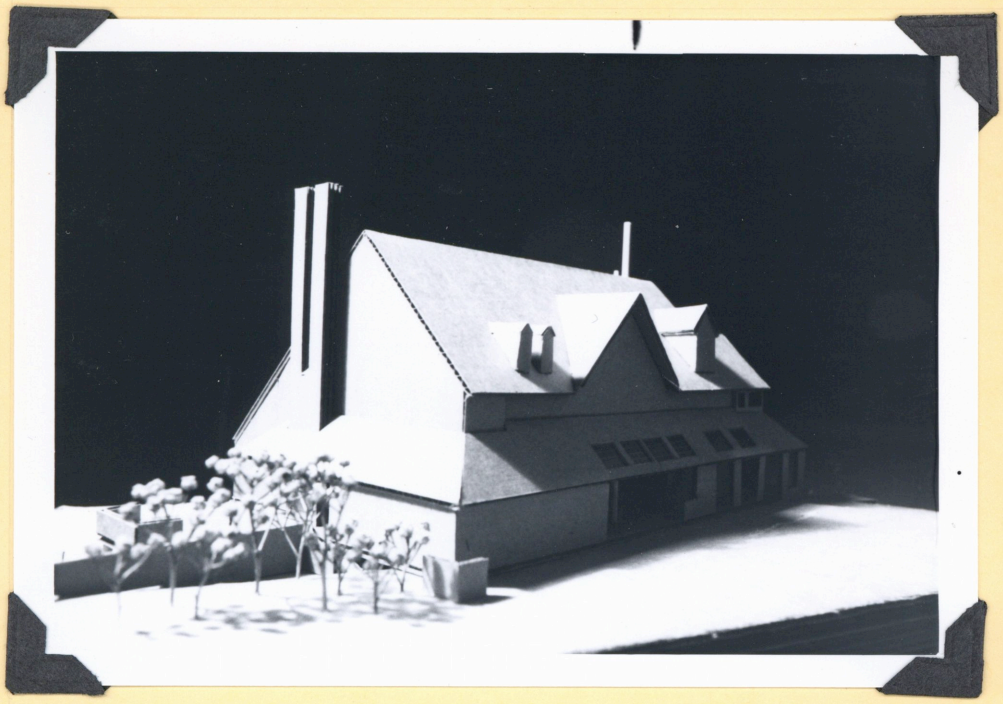

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elevations
sections

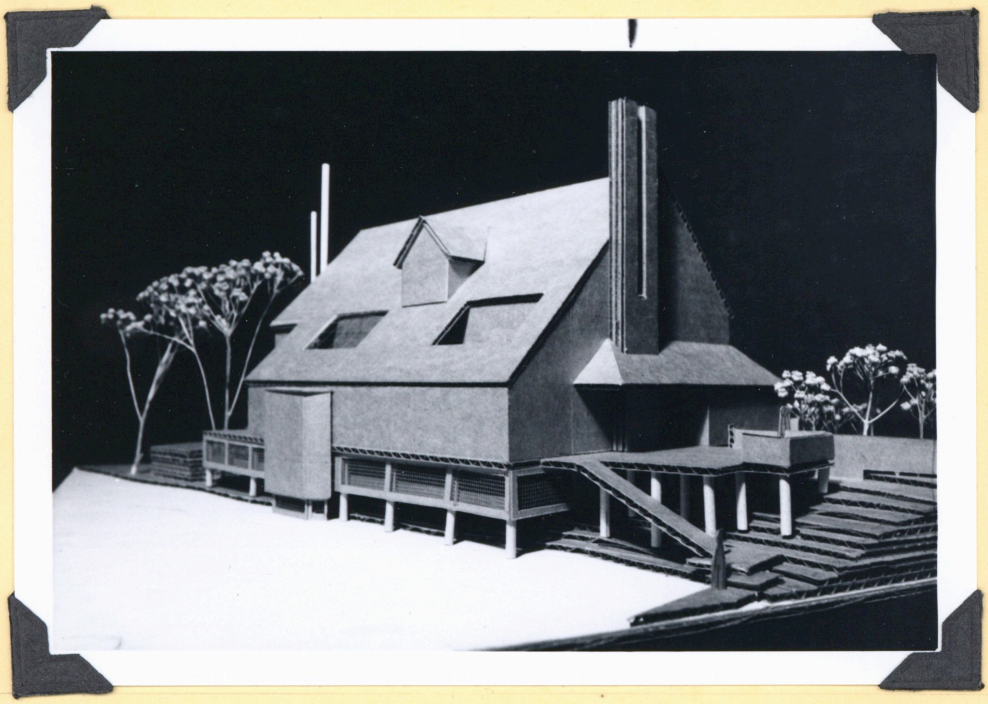



PAVILION
social hall
stair/shaft

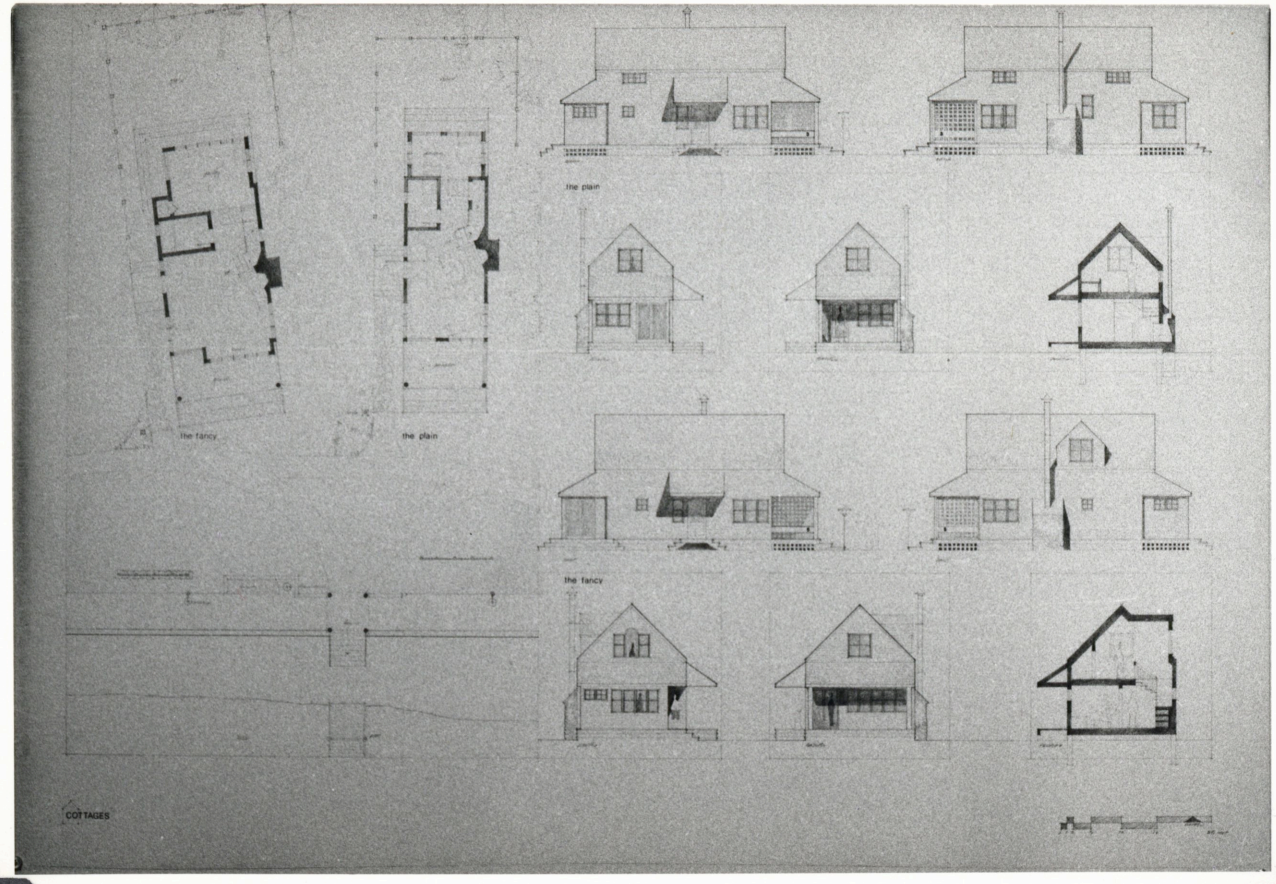


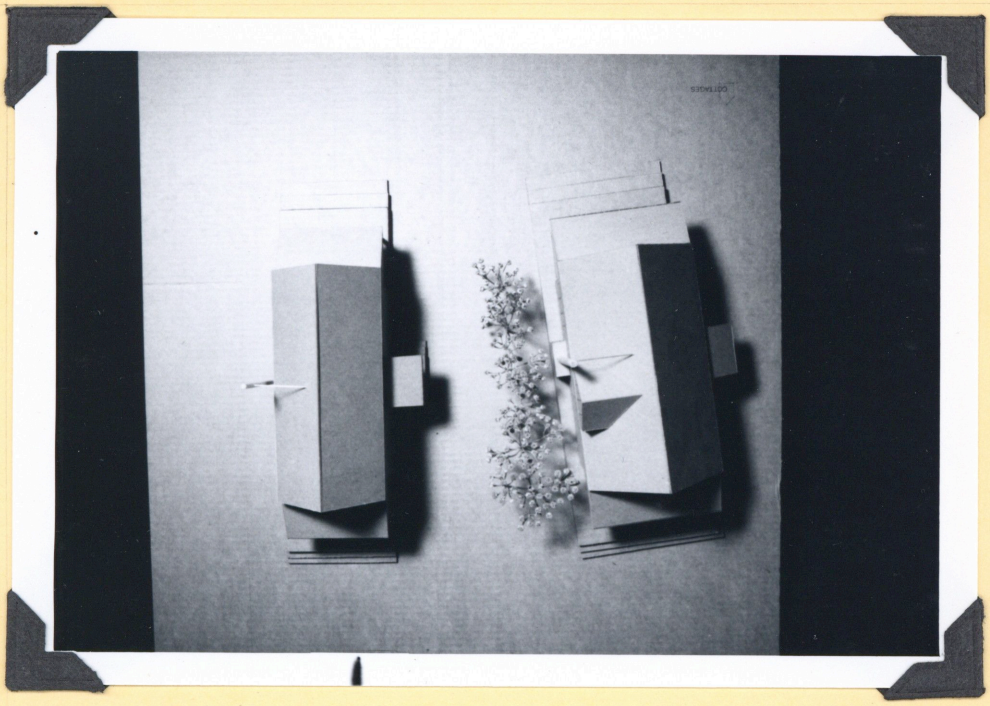




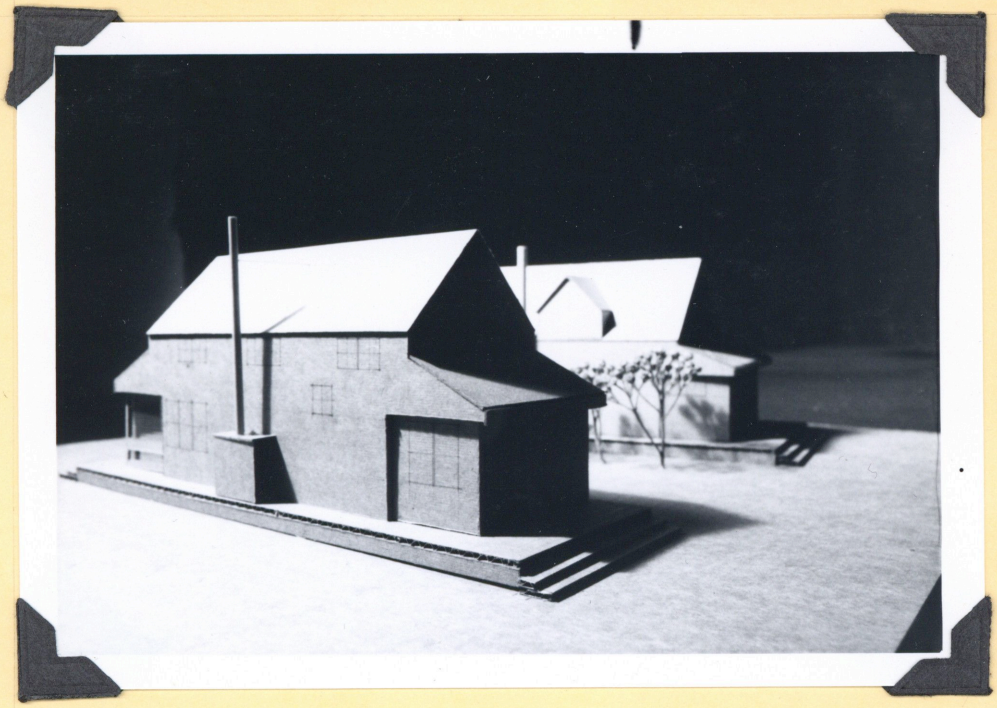


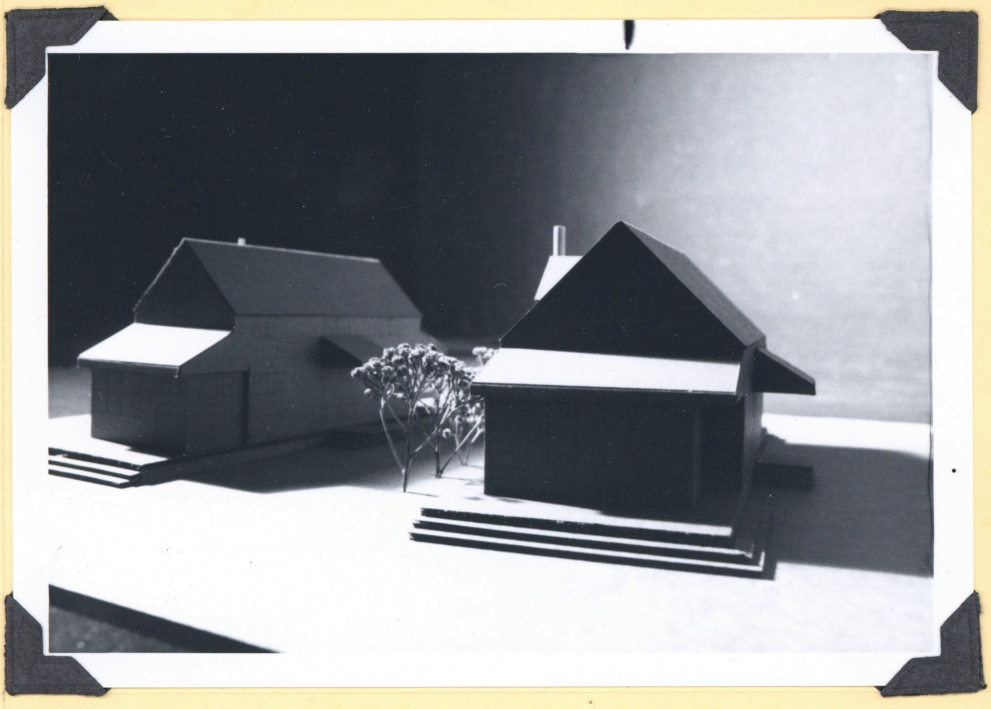



the fancy
the plain
the plain
the fancy
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