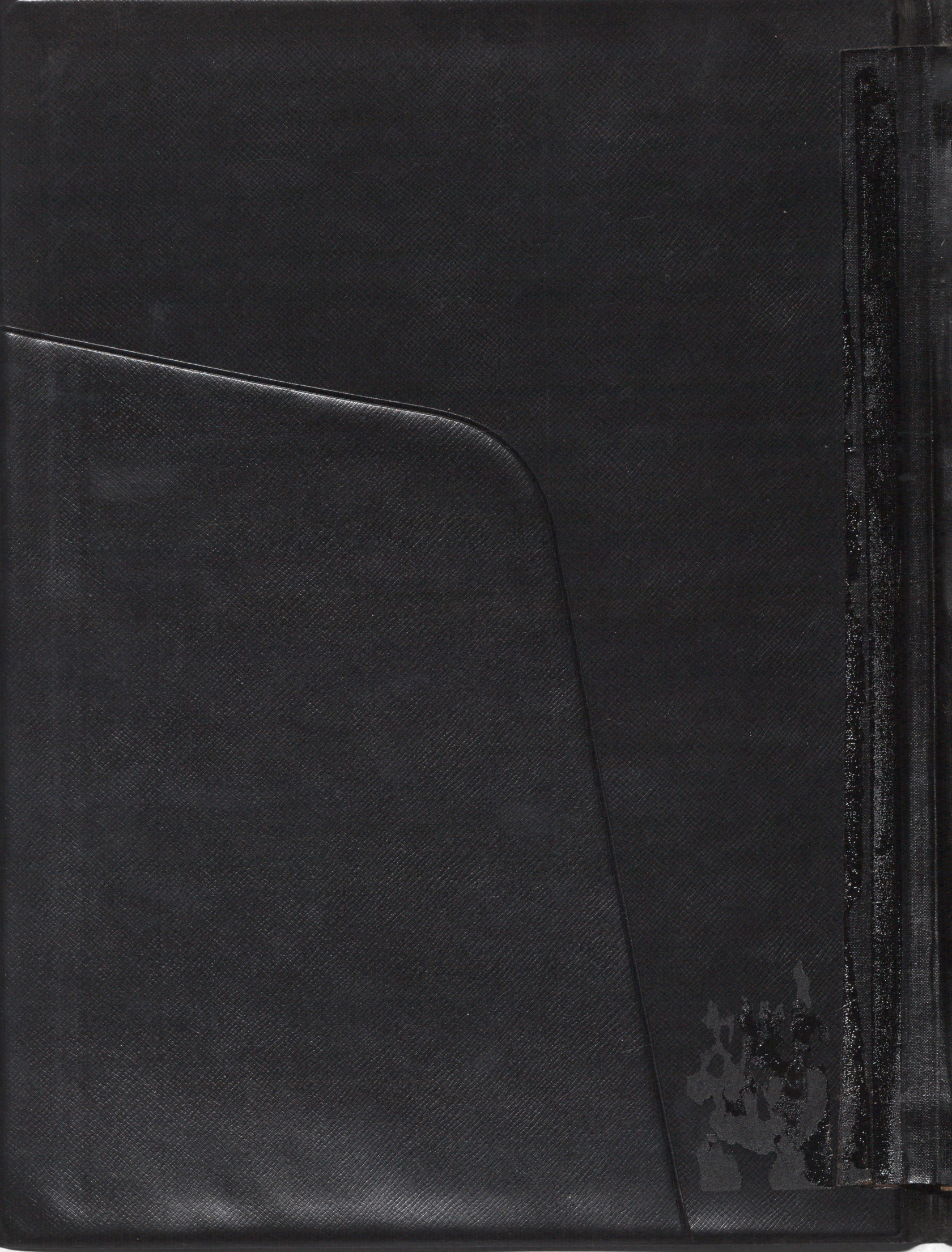
BIGFORK MASONIC PARK

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BIGFORK MASONIC PARK

DONALD H. MICKEN

AUGUST, 1961

"In all cases a due proportion
should be observed in the
several members of the fabric
wherever it is practicable,
that no unsightly appearance
may offend the eye, by disturbing
that general harmony of parts
which constitutes the beauty
and excellence of every
architectural production."

Dr. Oliver
Book of the Lodge

" The articulation of the purpose
of man, and his relation to life,
is the greatest goal to which
we may aspire."

d.h.m.

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THE DESIGN PROJECT

Statement of purpose

It is the intent of this thesis to seek a design solution. This paper renders only what cannot be effectively drawn. It presents a background to orient the reader to the project, a statement of the philosophy and principles which have guided me, and a narrative description of the buildings as I conceive they will be.

The subject of this thesis is the property belonging to Bigfork Lodge #150 AF-AM of Bigfork, Montana. The lodge received this land as a grant in 1956 from the "Ashram Trust, Inc.". This religious organization takes its name from the Hindu word for "model community". They gave this land with the stipulation that it be developed only for Masonic purposes. It follows, then, that my intention should be to develop this property as a total entity into a model community for the use of Masonry in general.

The land consists of 46 acres, located near Bigfork, Montana. It is a quarter of a mile from State Highway No. 35, and is separated from it by the brow of a hill. The access route is a county-maintained dirt road. The lot includes 2000 feet of frontage on the east shore of Flathead Lake. From north to south the property includes; a wooded hillside , a flat, cleared meadow, 1000 feet of granite bluffs overlooking the lake, wooded areas with glades and 1000 feet of beach about 100 feet wide.

At this time, the facilities existing on the property when the grant was made,

have been used to serve as a summer camp for DeMolay, Rainbow girls, and Job's Daughters. I wish to expand this camp to its ultimate form. My thesis will also include a master development plan and the location of all service facilities and buildings. I will also execute designs for all major buildings as they will ultimately be developed. It is not intended to create a commercial enterprise. My purpose is to strive to create an orderly development of the total site into a center of masonic activities.

My hope is that the results of this study will serve to impress on the owners the potential of this site and to inspire them to proceed with the further development of the property.

History

In October of 1956 Bigfork Masonic Lodge No. 150 of Bigfork, Montana, received a tract of land on Flathead Lake. This was presented by hte "Ashram Trust, Inc.", a religious organization incorporated under the laws of Montana as a non-profit society.

The land originally belonged to a group of sportsmen who used it as a hunting lodge . The leading man in the group was Henry Parchen of Helena. Parchen had come to Montana as an immigrant and had become a successful businessman and a philanthropist. He bought up the shares of the other sportsmen until he was the sole owner. Upon his death the property was inherited by his daughter, Adele, and his son Henry. Adele traded her share of the tract to Rev. Eugene Cosgrove for a nearby site he owned. Rev. Cosgrove and Henry Parchen, Jr. deeded the property to the "Ashram Trust, Inc."

The word "Ashram" is the Hindu word for "model community". The group maintained a summer retreat for a number of years in pursuit of this ideal, but when their leader, the Rev. Cosgrove, died several years ago their activities at the retreat almost ceased. In 1953 the Board of Trustees met in Chicago to dispose of its holdings. The members of the board resided all over the world; Brasil, Sweden, etc. Dr. Mercy Southwick, one of the trustees of the corporation, who is a member of Flathead Lake Chapter No. 128, Order of Eastern Star, of Bigfork, suggested to the other trustees that they give the property to the Masonic Lodge of Bigfork. After long discussion and the consideration of other organizations it was decided to transfer the title of the property to the Bigfork Masonic Lodge.

While the transfer was still under consideration, the Bigfork Masonic Lodge had voted to incorporate and had informed the Board of Trustees by mail that if the Lodge received title to the property that "We will use it for Masonic purposes only for at least fifty years and will not sell any part of it or permit its use for private end or profit." After voting unanimously to incorporate, the forms of incorporation were drawn up by the Lodge and notarized by E.M. Wright on December 13, 1955. These forms were sent to the Grand Secretary and the incorporation was completed on January 8, 1956. The deed to the property was dated September 28, 1956 and was recorded on October 8, 1956.

The deed provides that , "Said property's to be used solely for the purposes of the party of the second part as set forth in its Articles of Incorporation and not to be alienated during the period ending 2006 A.D." The Articles of Incorporation are as a non-profit organization.

The tract of land was named the "Bigfork Masonic Park". Plans for the development of the property were begun on November 7, 1956, under the guidance of the administration as was established in the Articles of Incorporation.

Administration

The administration of the Bigfork Masonic Park is stipulated in the Articles of Incorporation of the Lodge. The administering body consists of seven members of the Lodge. These seven are the five elective officers of the Bigfork Masonic Lodge, and two members elected from the membership at large. The latter two are selected at the regular time of the election of officers and serve for a period of one year.

Each of the seven trustees acts as a chairman of an area of the property. These areas are; the proposed temple, a tent ground, the picnic area, a retirement village and a youth camp.

The policy of the Board of Trustees was explained in a communication from the Board to the Flathead Lake Chapter No. 128, O.E.S.

> The Masonic Lodge and the Eastern Star Chapter are Brother and Sister organizations and have a mutual interest in all that is done by each other. The management of the newly aquired property is part of this mutual relationship. The Trustees have planned five projects for this property and they alone can authorize any major changes, but they are in turn responsible to the Lodge and Chapter.

> The Trustees have planned five projects for this property: a Temple, a tent ground, a picnic ground, a village for retired people and a youth camp. It is the plan of the Trustees to coordinate the work of the committees for the five projects and to aid in this there will be one member of the Board of Trustees on each committee. Through this the committees will be kept in touch with what is done on each project. The Chapter has representatives on all of the committees.

On November 21, 1956 the Eastern Star Chapter had voted to accept the responsibility for the planning and formulation of a youth camp on the property. The members of the committee appointed to plan the camp were; Juanita Hicken, E.T. Walker, Mercy Southwick, Bruce Milne, Katherine Barton and Irene Crohn.

The fore-mentioned communication, written February 6, 1956, also stated that:

> The youth camp is assigned as the special responsibility of the Chapter. The Trustees give the Chapter a free hand in making plans for the operation of the youth camp, and with going ahead with the matter in their own way. The dining room, the recreation hall and the dormitory are included in the sphere of the youth camp and the members will have access to the beach for swimming and boating.

The governing body of the youth camp is provided for by the by-laws of the Flathead Lake Chapter O.E.S. Each member of the committee is appointed to serve five years, one being appointed the first of each January. There are two other members who act in an advisory capacity. These are the Worthy Matron of the Flathead Lake Chapter O.E.S. and a member of the Board of Trustees who acts as a Liaison Officer.

The present chairman of the committee is Juanita Micken. The chairman is designated by the Worthy Matron. The committee has a completely free hand in running the affairs of the Masonic Youth Camp. They make an annual report to the Chapter. In the event that the camp ever reaches a paying basis, the committee will pay 40% of the net profits to the Trustees to assist in meeting the general expenses.

To expedite the building of a Masonic Temple on the property, the Worshipful Master of Bigfork Masonic Lodge No. 150 has appointed a special building committee. This committee was appointed in the autumn of 1960 and is separate from the Temple committee of the Board of Trustees. The members of this committee are: Robert Micken, Ewing Micken and Donald H. Micken. Their purpose is to investigate and to formulate plans for the construction of the new temple.

Original Facilities

At the time the Masonic Lodge acquired the property, there were several existing structures on it. The land had been used as a summer retreat for some years by the former owners, and they had constructed buildings from time to time to suit their needs. All of the buildings were built with the voluntary labor of the members of the religious organization. Consequently the structures are of a simple, unpretentious appearance. The strong accord which Dr. Cosgrove and his followers enjoyed with nature is seen in the use of the native building materials. Most of the buildings are built of stained, rough-sawed lumber which blends into the background.

Wherever possible the man-made improvements were not allowed to intrude on nature.

The entrance to the property was through a cedar pole gate. Traveling down the hill and parallel to the lake, the road goes through the remains of an orchard. The first buildings encountered are the caretaker's quarters. This cluster of residence, root cellar and garage, sits at the head of a meadow and controls the flow of traffic to the private portions of the property. The road passes between these buildings and the beach which is on the right, and immediately enters the woods. After several hundred feet, the road ends on an open area at the brow of a cliff directly above the lake. On the edge of the rocks and projecting out over them is the dining hall. From inside, the careful considerations which the builders gave to the view is apparent.

Behind the dining hall, on the highest outcropping in the area, is the main chapel. This white, clapboard structure is approached from below by stone steps so subtly placed that the are not noticeable among the other pieces of stone scattered in the grass. The chapel has a sharply pitched roof. On the south end is a rough stone fireplace, and on the north a large tall window. There is a full length balcony across the west side which looks out above the dining hall and across the lake. Behind the chapel the hill slopes downward and is given over again to woods.

About two hundred feet into the wood is the dormitory. This building faces a sheltered glade which is further down the hill.

The six separate rooms are rough finished and are entered from a porch which runs the length of the east side of the building. The entire area between the buildings was left natural. As the land was developed as a spiritual retreat, there are meditation benches set in isolated glades to encourage contemplation.

There is one structure which deserves special consideration here. This is the Rock Chapel, located on the granite cliffs directly above the lake. The back wall and floor are formed by the natural stone. The space is enclosed by walls of the same material, capped by a roof of steel, rusted deep red. Set into the back walls is a small fireplace of granite and mosaic tile. A large slab of rock forms a low bench along one side.

All of the habitable structures are serviced from a water supply system located below the dining hall and operated by an electric pressure pump. The source of water is the lake. Electricity is provided from the local utility company. The main parts of the property are served by dirt roads cleared through the woods.

Much of this development has been altered and even more shall be in the future. Though the original facilities and complex may disappear, the inherent sensitivity for nature which the builders expressed so well deserves to be preserved. This understanding shall be given careful consideration in future developments.

II. THE ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

An Approach to Design

The significance of architectonic space is determined by corresponding philosophical speculations. To create spatial relationship which is valuable to those who experience it, one must first understand the temper of the people for which it is created. Architecture must above all concern itself with the expression and articulation of the purpose of man and his contemporary society. Interpretation of the contemporary concept of the role of man as man, and of man as society, must be made only in the light and understanding of the underlying roots which have culminated themselves in the present phenomena.

Man as a spiritual creature, an animal with a brain, is every bit as much a product of evolutionary forces as man the animal, the physical being. Thus we must have an awareness of the historic forces which have molded the spiritual man which here concerns us if we are to attempt to work in a valid interpretative sphere. If we are to create a space which can enhance the spiritual existence of man, we must understand the philosophical concept of the individual unit, man, as he is represented by those who will use the architectural space as it will be created. The man is the point of reference of the entire design.

The individual unit which we shall here consider as a reference point has a double architectural heritage. This heritage includes both the European Renaissance tradition, which was imported by our ancestors, and the native tradition, indigenously American.

From the European Renaissance comes the tradition of exalted individualism. This tradition recognises the excellence which is the result of a powerful, self-motivated creative expression. This heritage was incorporated into our background by its rigorous practice and application by our ancestors.

The unique contribution of the American states is the application of the traditional European aristocratic individualism to the development of an atmosphere in which this individualism can find expression without recourse to a form of totalitarianism. Oddly enough, the concept of the importance of the individual unit being significant was developed on this continent before the advent of the migration from Europe. This tradition is found in its highest form in the city-state cultures of Mexico and the Yucatan Peninsula. It is possible that because individualism is found in two such unrelated backgrounds that it is a natural result of the particular demands of this continent. Whatever the correlation, we can gain much by attempting to recover the principles of creative architecture produced by these traditions.

As a result of the fusing on this continent of the European Renaissance and the native American influence, our point of reference must be man as an individual entity. Therefore, the life and well-being of each man is architecturally important to us. We must create an architectonic space which encourages the philosophic speculation of each man. Simultaneously, this man must be given a sufficient respect for his fellow creatures as to foment neither the rise of absolutism, nor the degeneration to democracy and anarchy.

The term 'idea' implies, according to Plato, the meaning of "essential form". This then is the problem: the idea of man in a state of enlightened individualism must be transformed into an architectural style which expresses this idea in its essential form. The essential nature of man and the essential nature of nature itself must be articulated in an architectural space.

The underlying purpose which I shall have in the development of my design thesis shall be an attempt to express and make real the philosophy I have just stated. I do not expect to fully succeed in this. Indeed, I will be disappointed if I reach the point where I can say that I have achieved it perfectly. The relative success or failure of the venture notwithstanding, the expression of this philosophy is above all that which I shall attempt.

Aesthetic Appropriateness and Economics

The success of any architectural venture depends on the proper relationship of aesthetic appropriateness and economics as achieved by the architect. The approach which the architect takes to the problem must be made with the proper understanding of these influencing factors.

The architect should always strive to be an integrating influence in his culture. The images of his design should harmonize with the existing constructions, and still be interpretative of his time and people. The design should complement the elements of nature which surround it. The buildings should be appropriate to their site and purpose

Because the project at hand is set in the natural wildness of the mountains, on a site broken by rock outcroppings and in close relation to the lake, it is essential that the buildings themselves should be expressive of an indigenous quality. Simultaneously, the atmosphere which I desire to create is one of contemplation and re-creation of the spirit. All of these shall be factors influencing the images of design. They shall be determinants by which the aesthetic appropriateness of the created atmosphere may be judged.

Any architectural creation must not only properly express the beauty of its purpose, but must be capable of being transformed into a reality. Drafting board dreams do not lend themselves to human habitation. The laws of economics are quite inescapable. While economics alone should never determine the architectural expression, it is nonetheless one of the concrete influences which the architect must consider. The proposed buildings must be capable of being built with the materials and processes which are the most economically available.

The design considerations which will be directly influenced by the factors of aesthetic appropriateness and economics are: the building materials, the structural and design detailing, and the time element in construction of the building complex. Each of these considerations must be dealt with in two distinctly different spheres, the one philosophic and the other concrete and practical.

Materials

The use of materials readily available and indigenous to the locale will be essential in order to express an organic structure. These materials should be employed in a manner which is expressive of their inherent qualities. The proper use of natural materials will serve to create a union between the site and the architecture, and still achieve a form of structure which will be within the economic restrictions of the program.

The site has two materials native to it which may be employed as building materials. These are wood and stone. The wood is Douglas Fir. The practical and structural qualities of this material have been carefully tested and recorded. This material has a suitable density and stability for structural purposes. It is a good material for tensile uses and is easily workable by semi-skilled craftsmen. It can be fabricated into structural members of a proportion which is suitable to this project.

The rock found in and on the site is a type known as gneiss. This metamorphic rock is a derivative of sandstone. Because it is of sedimentary origin, the rock has a well defined parallel shear plane. This, in combination with its hardness and stability make it an excellent building stone. Because the stone need not be cut, but can be easily split to size, it is fast and convenient to convert from its natural state to a usable form. Suitable amounts of this material are to be found on the surface of the ground in the area. It is economical and readily available.

The rough-sawed stained wood and blue-gray stone should lend a very pleasing appearance to the structures when employed by the architect in the proper manner.

Architectural Detailing

The detailing of the buildings of this project will be instrumental in determining the success of the venture, both esthetically and economically. The structural and design details must be made to express the organic quality of the structures while being easily understood and assembled by semi-skilled craftsmen.

The esthetic effect of the detailing will have a real influence on the total impression that one receives of the buildings. The manner in which the materials are joined must express the inherent qualities of the stone and wood. The images of designs created by the detailing must be interpretative of the natural elements.

The actual result of a study of detailing should produce a type of construction that is both economical and simple. The intersections of the component parts of construction are the vital points; strength and durability must be achieved here. As a result of this the buildings can be easily assembled and can stand with a minimum of maintenance for many years.

The types of structural and design detailing employed must articulate the essence of the environment while being simple and economical to fabricate. By achieving both of these goals, the ultimate success of the total design will be considerably enhanced.

Time Element

The proposed development of the Bigfork Masonic Park will probably occupy many years in its actual completion. To assume that the project will not be immediately and simultaneously constructed is but the acceptance of the most likely economic reality. The purpose in designing the entire complex at once is rather an attempt to develop a master development plan. Only by simultaneous creation and regarding the property as one coherent unity, can continuity be established. With such an approach to design, the property can be developed as time and the economic climate permits.

If the problem is viewed in its entirety during the design procedure, it is possible to relate the buildings and activities to one another. Thus there is continuity in relationship of space and design as well. In this manner, there is coherence in the design of buildings, the architectural detailing and the employment of the building elements.

Another serious consideration must be the relation of each part to the whole, during the time of construction of the project. Because one building may be completed several years before another, that building must be studied as it will relate to the property as a whole during the period in which it stands alone. Each building complex must be able to relate alone and in several instances to others. Also the complex itself must be capable of being built in stages.

Recognition of the fact that the property may be developed in stages will have an effect on the design of the buildings. The esthetic considerations will most definitely be influenced by the economic necessities.

Such an approach of relating the whole project as a completed entity and of relating the whole to the parts will achieve a pleasant relationship of functions both during the time of construction and after completion. With this approach the simultaneous development of the property as a whole is of course not precluded but rather enhanced.

III. THE IMAGES OF DESIGN

I have stated that the significance of architectonic space is determined by corresponding philosophic speculations. The resulting premise is that a spatial relationship must be achieved which has man, the individual unit, as the common denominator, which seeks to establish an identification to man himself and also to his society.

With this expression of purpose as a base, it is possible to enter the actual design process. The complex which I am developing must unify the private and public functions which will exist on the property. These are: the theater, the Temple, the community lodge, the chapel, the residential park and the youth camp.

The relationship of the areas to each other is so important that the first consideration must be the planning of urban space. Urban space is essentially the organization of exterior spaces. To humanize nature and to organize and interpret natural elements is one phase of urban space planning. The other is the transformation of social phenomena into a physical spectacle, while conserving and interpreting native environment. These two phases of urban planning must be considered simultaneously. The characteristics of each may be separately examined before the design process begins. The social phenomena and natural elements have already been considered, and it is now possible to employ both of these as assumed knowledge and to proceed with the actual design process.

General Relationship

The first phase of the design is to establish a general relationship of all areas to the whole. Through study, observation, and request it was determined that the property should serve basically two types of functions: the one private, the other public. The functions which are private in nature are the residential park and the youth camp. By private I mean that the areas are used by the people who reside on the property, whether permanently or more temporarily as in the case of the youth camp. The public areas are not necessarily "public" in the common sense but rather public in that they are used by persons who come to Bigfork Masonic Park to use one or another of the facilities there . These public areas are the center, the theater, the Masonic Temple and the picnic area. The chapel will serve both private and public demands.

The location of the youth camp falls naturally enough in the area presently utilized for that function. The other private area should be located on the opposite or east side of the property. There are several reasons for this choice. The most desirable and private area remaining on the east slope. The arrangement will also provide for a permanent buffer zone between the youth camp and other areas. The underdeveloped center of the property provides a location for the public functions.

It naturally follows that the public functions be in a centrally located area with each inter-relating to the others. After the general location of the structures is determined, the detailed location and design of the areas can proceed.

Service Facilities

The first problem which the owners will encounter in the development of this property will be installation of service facilities. The systems provide for the service of water, sewage and electricity to the areas of the property. These facilities must be installed in such a way that they can accomodate the ultimate needs of the project. These installations must be provided for in their entirety either before construction, or at the time of construction, regardless of the fact that some of the buildings themselves may not be completed for several years.

Water

There are two approaches available to providing a water supply to the property: the service from the local utility company, or a private, on-site development. In either case, the main would follow the approximate line of the road. This line has been formerly calculated as the shortest system of providing service to the various areas. In case of a private system, there should be a storage tank located in the common area of the residential park. The selection of the system to be preferred is dependent on further negotiation and a careful economic study.

Electricity

The electrical power will be provided by the local utility company. All electrical power lines in the youth camp, residential park and other structures shall be placed underground.

Any transformer stations or the like shall also be concealed from the eye. The community is to be kept free of utilitarian intrusions.

Sewage

The sewage disposal system is to be an above ground, completely closed and sealed unit. This system will be located at the approximate center of the property and will collect from the major areas. The processed waste, after being rendered harmless, will be carried under water to the bed of the Swan River and thus dispersed into the lake.

Traffic Patterns

The movement of human beings through the space with which I am dealing will be accomplished by both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. These two methods of travel are basically incompatible and must therefore be kept separated. Because of their different natures, the systems evolved must also express the essential characteristics and differences of each.

Vehicular Traffic

The system of vehicular traffic will be considered first as it is more restricted by geographic conditions. Its path will thus be determined in several instances by physical requirements such as slope and rock out-croppings.

The main consideration is to effect a distinct separation of vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Automobiles serve the function of giving relatively higher speed transportation and usually having a distinct destination.

Automobiles are not only dangerous to persons on foot, but their operation is neither visually pleasing, nor conducive to tranquility. It must also be remembered that the construction and maintenance of road surface is expensive, and therefore the total length of the roads should be kept to a minimum.

To resolve these determinants, the most logical solution is a road skirting the edge of the property and collecting traffic from within, while distributing that traffic originating outside the property. Because it would be primarily an access road, the parking, service, and other activities of vehicles should be located off the road itself. For example, all parking and service to the residential area will be on cul-de-sacs which will terminate at the youth camp parking lot. Because the traffic to the youth camp will be seasonal, the road on that end may be allowed to have a more severe grade than is practical in other parts of the system.

This system of a perimeter road with the access streets radiating from it to the central functions makes it possible to free the bulk of the property from obstruction by roads and automobiles. In this scheme the automobile is relegated to the one function for which it is suited: that of a rapid transit system. As such it must never be allowed to penetrate into the natural community any further than can be practically avoided. The automobile must be treated as a servant of man, never as a major ruling force in our lives.

Pedestrian Traffic

A collector road which follows the perimeter of the property has the considerable advantage of leaving the interior of the area free and safe for the use of pedestrian traffic. It is thus possible to relate the building complexes on the property to a truly human scale. This scale is that in space and time of the individual man traveling on foot thru a native environment. The buildings are visually separated from each other by the woods, with the exception of glimpses through the trees. In this atmosphere the timelessness of nature is impressed on the traveler as he passes through the forest from one building to the next. The foot paths are natural trails so far as possible. In the areas of heavier traffic they are framed by 2 X 8 's and filled with crushed rock. Steps are constructed of the flat rock picked on the site. In this manner, the atmosphere of the natural site is emphasized.

By the device of freeing the interior property of automobile traffic, the area is left in a relative natural seclusion. The area is intended to be one of physical and mental re-creation.

The Residential Park

Across the east side of the property will be 46 residential sites. These buildings are grouped into communities of seven and eight residences, each reserved by a cul-de-sac road connecting to the main collector road. The circle at the end of the road is large enough to provide parking around its perimeter. The building sites radiate from the center and have an average area of 16,500 square feet. The building sites created range from near level to quite steep.

There are sites on side hills, flat grass areas, and broken hill-tops. The variety gives a wide choice to the prospective holder and builder.

Between the communities there is land left free and undeveloped which will serve as common property for the residents. Most sites have direct access to these areas. The common land will be used for recreation, as picnic areas and simple natural glades. Each community stands private to itself, yet in direct relation to the whole, helping the residents to relate themselves on a truly human scale. The self-identification of each person is emphasized.

It is assumed that the residents will hold a fifty year inheritable lease on the property. The buildings will be constructed by the lessees to conform to specified building standards. These building standards will guarantee the quality of structure and conserve the value and natural beauty of the site. In adherence to the stipulations of the original grant, the lessee and his heir shall be of Masonic affiliation. The price of the lots will be set to provide for the economic feasibility of the residential park as a total development.

It is my intent that the residential park be economically self-sufficient. It will provide building sites for vacation houses, for seasonal residents and for persons who choose to live in the communities permanently. The arrangement insures tranquility and peaceful existence for all residents.

The Center

Located slightly east of the center of the property and at the brow of the cliff which runs north and south across the property is the complex which I have named 'The Center'. These buildings serve a multitude of functions and as such did not lend themselves to such titles as country club or recreation center. These buildings serve as a center of activities for the property. The Center is at the end of the top of the road which serves the residential area. The complex includes a swimming pool and ten small residences. These houses would be leased for a year or more, or might be rented by the week or month.

The central building is a lodge which would serve as a recreation area. It could serve as an area to be used for dances and social functions. The balcony floor is designed to serve as a lounge and as a meeting area for conventions. A part of the lodge is a dining room which can serve about 100 people.

On both sides of the lodge are small one and two bedroom apartments. These could also be leased or rented to families of individuals.

The entire area can serve as a recreation center, a community club and as a convention center. It would be used both by visitors and the residents of the area. The Center sits in an open meadow at the brow of the cliff and fits around the contours of the hill.

On the south and close to the lodge is the manager's headquarters. This building serves as an organizational center and residence. Its location gives it direct access to the entrance to the center.

Theater

Within easy walking distance is the Summer Theater. This building also has a direct public access road and parking area which is shared with the Masonic Temple.

The Theater is designed to accomodate summer stock productions. Because these productions are largely experimental the stage relationship is extremely flexible. To achieve economy with versatility there are two moveable elements which by their use allow any number of different stage and seating arrangements. These two elements are the inclined auditorium seats mounted on rollers an 4 X 8 X 1 plywood boxes. These boxes are easily moved and can be arranged in many combinations. They may be used to alter the stage or to serve as raised seating platforms.

The side lobby which wraps around the front of the Theater is designed to serve also as an art display area. The full length balcony with its sliding panels and the other outdoor patios make this building useful as an arts center as well as a theater. These areas could be used not only for display but for the creation of works of art as well.

The Theater is constructed of rough-sawed lumber on a modular design to achieve economy of construction and maintenance.

Chapel

Several hundred feet north of the Center, by the highest promontory of the property will be the chapel. This small, non-denominated church projects from the rocky hillside and forms a natural outdoor stadium for morning and evening services.

The north wall is constructed of the native rock. From this support there projects great wooden beams which open the south side to the natural panorama. This small place of worship serves the residents of the development as a center for spiritual contemplation. It is approached from below by a foot path and is isolated from the more public functions.

Masonic Temple

The new Masonic Temple for Bigfork Lodge #150 completes the core of buildings which form a center of activities for the area. Located near the edge of the property, directly above the lake, this building is permanently protected from future development on the adjacent property.

The nature of this structure demanded a high degree of simplicity and economy. Designed to be built by unskilled craftsmen it still attains the indigenous beauty which was the goal of the other buildings on the property. Once again using rough materials, this building recognizes that it is primarily for winter use and is designed accordingly.

This building will stand as the monument to the labor and unity of the organization which it serves.

Youth Camp

The youth camp should serve to allow the visitors to enjoy the untarnished splendor of its natural setting. Consequently it is recommended that the clearing and refinement of the site be kept to a minimum.

This area probably could not support more than 150 camp members and still retain its greatest attraction; the natural charm.

To allow for maximum versatility and the gradual development of the camp, it has been divided into five communities, each part of the camp accomodating 30 to 40 youngsters. With this arrangement any part or parts of the camp can be operated as the necessity demands. Forming a circular pattern around the central sports and congregating area each of these communities has direct access to the center.

A stretch of beach by the point has been exclusively reserved for the youth camp. A hedge of Russian Olive running around the water's edge will separate this beach from the picnic area.

The youth camp must be permanently protected from the encroachment by the rest of the property. Seclusion is one of the highest assets of the area. At the same time, the camp members have access to the theater and other social activities of the rest of the property.

Marina

The existence of the launching facilities available at Bigfork, only a few minutes by boat or car, make it possible to exclude the beach as a launching area. In this manner, the residents of the Bigfork Masonic Park can keep their boats on the property, while in use or storage, and still the picnic area is kept free of cars and trailors. Because the beach area is limited, the device of excluding automobiles from it adds to the available area, while promoting tranquility and allowing the visitors an escape from the creations of civilization.

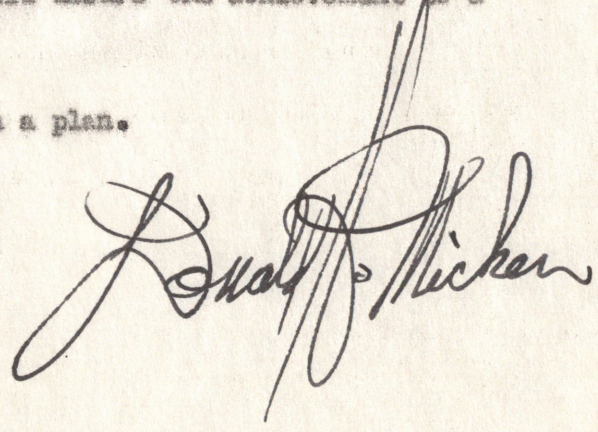
It cannot be overstressed that the beauty and tranquil harmony of the entire development is its greatest asset.

In Conclusion

It has been emphasized in this design that the Bigfork Masonic Park should be developed for Masonic purposes. That this area is one of the finest things of its kind even in its present undeveloped state is not generally realized. I have endeavored to present a solution which exploits the natural potential of the property and promotes the harmony and unity of each man with himself and his brothers. This area should remain one of peaceful living and re-creation of the spirit. It is not my intent to create a commercial enterprise, but rather to develop a center of Masonic activities.

My motive is simple. I wish only to express the potential of this property as it can be developed. A general, over-all, studied master development plan of the property is the only approach which can minimize duplications and will insure the achievement of a determined goal.

I have presented one such a plan.



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