

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: RECLAIMING THE ANNAPOLIS WATERFRONT:
Towards an Architecture of Place

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Degree and Year: Master of Architecture, 2003

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Annapolis, Maryland is one of the nation's most important historic cities, and the character of its historic core remains much as it did over two hundred years ago. Despite this fact, the most unique amenity that Annapolis offers has suffered from the effects of the automobile and poor planning. The Annapolis waterfront has been developed over the past fifty years as a series of poorly designed buildings and parking lots that take little advantage of their location adjacent to the water. For a city known as "America's Sailing Capital," the Annapolis waterfront does not live up to expectations.

This thesis proposes to entirely redesign the Annapolis waterfront. A new Visitors Center will be a focal point in the City Dock area, providing a center for information, education, and entertainment. The new waterfront will also incorporate a hotel, retail, restaurants, offices, residential, and parking facilities, as well as landscaped parks and plazas.

The challenge of this thesis is to explore how contemporary architecture can blend effortlessly into a vernacular context of fifty, one hundred, and two hundred year old buildings. The true measure of success in this endeavor is not in creating buildings that stand out as objects, but rather in creating modern buildings that seem to be as much a part of the background fabric as the historical context.

RECLAIMING THE ANNAPOLIS WATERFRONT:

Towards an Architecture of Place

by

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Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of The University of Maryland in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Architecture
2003

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF FIGURES	iii
I. INTRODUCTION: LOCATIONS AND TIMES	1
II. AN ARCHITECTURE OF PLACE	5
Designing Places	6
Continuity and Contrast	9
A Sustainable Vernacular	10
An Architecture for Annapolis	12
III. SITE ANALYSIS	14
A Brief History of the City of Annapolis	15
Existing Conditions	21
Urban Situation	21
Topography and Landscape	25
The Intervention Site	27
Transportation	33
IV. PRECEDENT ANALYSIS	38
V. PROGRAM ANALYSIS	45
The Need for a Visitor Center	46
Annapolis Center Program	47
VI. PARTI DEVELOPMENT	50
Urban Schemes	53
Urban Scheme A	55
Urban Scheme B	56
Urban Scheme C	57
Urban Scheme D	58
Urban Scheme E	59
Urban Scheme F	60
Urban Scheme G	61
VI. FINAL DESIGN	62
BIBLIOGRAPHY	71
ENDNOTES	74

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1. View of City Dock looking towards Main Street.	2
Figure 1. Annapolis in the Mid-Atlantic region.	15
Figure 2. The Baltimore, Washington, Annapolis triangle.	15
Figure 3. The 1718 Plan of Annapolis from a drawing by James Stoddert [Miller 7].	16
Figure 4 Sands House - Miller 142	17
Figure 6. The Poe House has undergone at least six periods of alterations. The original frame structure occupied only the right front quadrant of the current house. [Miller, 118, 120].	18
Figure 7. Shiplap House [Miller, 152]	18
Figure 8. Existing Figure/Ground.	22
Figure 5. Figure/Ground.	23
Figure 10. View of State House and St. Anne's Church from Main Street.	23
Figure 11. Typical Main Street facades.	23
Figure 12. Land Use diagram	24
Figure 13. Topography	25
Figure 14. Typical site sections.	26
Figure 15. Project boundaries	27

Figure 16. Marriott Hotel (left) and Pusser's	28
Figure 17. Fleet Club	28
Figure 18. Fawcett	28
Figure 19. Main Street Facades	29
Figure 20. Main Street Facades	29
Figure 21. Market Space facades	30
Figure 22. Market Space facades	30
Figure 23. Market Space facades	31
Figure 24. Dock Street facades	31
Figure 25. Visitor Information Booth	32
Figure 26. Mini-mall on Dock Street	32
Figure 27. Phillips restaurant	32
Figure 28. Halsey Field House from P.G. Street	33
Figure 29. Street Hierarchy	33
Figure 30. Paved surfaces on waterfront site	34
Figure 31. Changes in waterfront over 200 years.	36
Figure 32. Buildable areas.	37

Figure 33. Dockside promenade in Helsinki	39
Figure 34. Section through waterfront in Turku	40
Figure 35. Nyhavn, Copenhagen	41
Figure 36. Nyhavn, Copenhagen	41
Figure 37. Waterfront in Bergen	42
Figure 38. Small square in Gamla Stan, Stockholm	43
Figure 39. Gamla Stan, Stockholm	43
Figure 40. Gamla Stan, Stockholm	43
Figure 41. Stadthuset (City Hall), Stockholm	44
Figure 42. Stadthuset, Stockholm	44
Figure 43. Building program – lower floor	48
Figure 44. Building program – upper floor	49
Figure 45. Figure ground –Scheme A	55
Figure 46. Figure ground –Scheme B	56
Figure 47. Figure ground –Scheme C	57
Figure 48. Figure ground –Scheme D	58
Figure 49. Figure ground –Scheme E	59

Figure 50. Figure ground –Scheme F	60
Figure 51. Figure ground –Scheme G	61
Figure 52. Proposed Siteplan	63
Figure 53. Proposed Siteplan – enlarged	64
Figure 54. Plan of second floor	65
Figure 55. Plan of first floor	65
Figure 56. Aerial perspective	66
Figure 57. East elevation/site section	67
Figure 58. Transverse building section	67
Figure 59. North elevation	68
Figure 60. South elevation	68
Figure 61. West elevation	68
Figure 62. Structural plans	69
Figure 63. Mechanical plans	69
Figure 64. Detail elevation	69
Figure 65. Wall section	69
Figure 66. Promenade vignette	70

I. INTRODUCTION: LOCATIONS AND TIMES

LOCATIONS and times – what is it in me that meets them all,
Whenever and wherever, and makes me at home?
Forms, colors, densities, odors –
what is it in me that corresponds with them?

Locations And Times
by Walt Whitman

The city of Annapolis is a place of great historical importance, as the home of the U.S. Naval Academy, the Maryland state capital, and briefly, between 1783 and 1784, the capital of the young United States. Situated adjacent to the Chesapeake Bay, with its own rich history of sailing and its legendary fishing and crabbing, the city is steeped in lure and tradition. For these reasons, and its strategic location less than thirty miles from both Baltimore and Washington D.C., the city of Annapolis is a major tourist destination for travelers from around the world. Thousands of people each year wander the quaint streets, marvel at the beautifully preserved architecture, shop, dine, and take cruises on one of several sightseeing vessels. Thousands more call Annapolis home, or at least home for their sailboats and yachts. The City Dock and Annapolis waterfront are more popular now than at any time in the city's history.

So why does the Annapolis waterfront need to be “reclaimed?” It is not a city whose harbor has been sitting and rotting since its days as an active port. There are no abandoned warehouses or industrial buildings at the water's edge waiting to be torn down. The city does not need to be revitalized; it is already perhaps more vital than it can manage. This is precisely the reason for this intervention, and what makes it such a unique and challenging proposition. The city is already beautiful and extremely popular, but it could be much better. A city of such history and beauty should take best advantage of its amenities, of which the waterfront is one of its greatest and most neglected.



Figure 6. View of City Dock looking towards Main Street.

Nearly all of the existing waterfront property in Annapolis is built on landfill that was reclaimed from the water more than a century ago. This land was acquired to create space for overcrowded industrial activities that had taken place around the dock since the 17th century. When local industry dried up or moved elsewhere in the middle of the 20th century, the fate of the dock was uncertain. In the 1960s and 70s waterfront properties were beginning to be seen as amenities rather than polluted ports, spurring businesses to return to the dock. The local sailing tradition strengthened and tourists began to discover the potential of the Annapolis waterfront. With the rebirth of the Dock, the city built a small plaza at the eastern tip, along with a couple of stores, a hotel, and, of course, plenty of parking in the remaining open space. This ad hoc method of urban revitalization resulted in the waterfront that Annapolis offers to this day; a waterfront quite devoid of the character and quality offered by its historic context.

An intervention for the Annapolis waterfront is challenging historically, architecturally, and socially for the very reason that it is already rich in history, architectural heritage, and social culture. This intervention will not be a return to the “glory days” of the dock. In its glory days, it was dirty, smelly and busy...and it thrived. Today it should once again be bustling with activity, but the filthiness of the active port will be replaced by the relative cleanliness and order of a thriving tourist destination. Instead of suggesting a literal recreation of the historic port city, the goal of this intervention is to bring to the waterfront the sense of “place” that permeates the rest of Annapolis. The City Dock should seem to be a seamless continuation of the unique characteristic fabric of the core city.

Architecturally, the buildings in the intervention will be “of the region.” This does not mean that styles, or even parts of buildings, will be copied. Rather, buildings will be derived from universal patterns and principles characteristic in buildings native to the Annapolis region. The patterns existent in vernacular architecture tell the story of the landscape, climate, and culture of a region. These patterns will be used to create a new architecture for the Annapolis waterfront; an architecture that is obviously modern, but intimately related to its historic context.

II. AN ARCHITECTURE OF PLACE

Architects, planners and researchers in environmental psychology should, by definition be concerned as much with the physical, as the experiential and behavioral characteristics of place patterns. The overriding concern should be with 'creating places' rather than 'designing spaces', even if this is difficult to achieve through the physical design alone.

from "Creating Places or Designing Spaces?"¹
by Jonathan D. Sime

Annapolis has a character and quality in its buildings, landscape, and culture that is unique to the city. There is a certain feeling that one gets when walking through the streets of the historic town that goes beyond words. Of course this is true of many great places around the world, and this is exactly the point. Each place feels unique and special, but at the same time has qualities that make it seem familiar and comfortable. What are the qualities that allow a place to take on a life of its own? How can these qualities be incorporated into contemporary design to give modern spaces the charm of well-established places? These are the questions that will be explored in the following sections.

Designing Places

Placemaking and the state of our cities has been for most of this century at the center of our struggles to define just what it is that we architects are supposed to do, and often, how dismally we have failed to achieve whatever these things are. The manifestoes that promised to make our cities exciting and prosperous and clean turned out to be mostly false, and led instead to the monotone that we now see everywhere. Just how we are to deal with technology and the automobile and the encroaching specter of our electronic society I don't think we've entirely accomplished, so that the distinctions between what should be private and public have been generally neglected.²

The idea of "place" has intrigued architects, historians, and sociologists alike for centuries. Seemingly disparate issues, such as space, time, culture, memory, materiality, security, and function are actually intricately interwoven and interdependent in the making of place. Debate continues about the literal definition of "place" and the ability or inability of architects and urban planners to physically design places.

On one side of the argument, a place is simply a volume of space in which one person or many people can occupy. The dimensions and materiality of the space can alter

one's perception of the place, leading to the assumption that place can be designed. On the other hand, most new spaces don't become true-to-form places for many years. Most memorable places are both dynamic and idiosyncratic, cultivating social, behavioral, and architectural patterns at many different overlapping scales. Cultural patterns develop over time and specific activities begin to define the role of the place in the region.

Places are not the same for everyone. In fact, one person's *place* may be a *nonplace* for another. Most people can remember a secret place in their childhood that was special – a treehouse, a closet, even the space under an old wooden desk. To their parents these places may have been just spaces without any additional meaning attached to them. To the child, however, these were places of shelter, mystery, joy, surprise, and fantasy. These are places they can recall much later in life with astounding detail.

How is it that certain spaces are able to extract so much emotion from us? In describing his views on places and placemaking, Charles Moore said "...the places we were meant to remember, the ones that appear on our postcards, were places that usually had a definite function in a religious or civic sense, or else had visual importance in the town, so that the making of places, helped often by pretty locations on a river or in a mountain valley or by the sea (places that had a defensive or some other purpose), was, in an extraordinary number of cases, successful in the terms that we enjoy being in them and looking at them, and often spend our vacations seeking them out."³ From an architectural point of view, one may conclude that a place has a very definite volume – a human-scale space that allows one to feel enclosed or enveloped within the perceived walls of the place. Likewise, the details that add interest to the space contribute to making a

memorable place. As valid as these perceptions are, they do not tell the whole story of why we remember certain places and not others.

In order to understand why places are memorable and spaces are not, we must expand our investigation to include a multi-disciplinary approach. Perception of place is not just architectural, but largely experiential, psychological, and sociological. We must discover how the brain chooses which memories to keep and which to discard. A good place to explore this is in places that treat memory disorders. In many new assisted living centers, special accommodations are made for patients with dementia. Dementia gardens are landscaped areas that are designed for multi-sensory stimulation. Plants are selected not only for visual impact, but also for fragrance and texture. Likewise, water fountains provide audible and tactile stimulation. The idea is that these sensory stimulants may trigger memories that visual stimulants alone cannot.

In creating places, this same principle may be used. In addition to creating spaces that are visually stimulating, multi-sensory experiences have a tremendous reinforcing effect on our memories. Everyone has experienced how certain sounds, smells, textures, and tastes can bring back extremely clear *visual* memories of a place, even decades after the memory was made. Even displeasing odors or sounds can bring back fond memories, as long as they were accompanied by positive experiences. The main goal in designing places of meaning is to create spaces that nurture the creation of memories. This does not guarantee that a space will be a place to everybody, but the coupling of visual stimulants with other sensory and emotional stimulants will foster the creation of memories for many people.

Continuity and Contrast

Life is a journey of consistency marked by periods of change. Consistency, permanence, and continuity are vital to human survival, conveying feelings of safety, comfort, and overall well-being. Without contrast and change, however, consistency dulls to monotony. In human life, contrasts take the form of holidays, tragedies, change of weather and seasons, dawn and dusk, first days and last days. Our most vivid memories are made up mostly of these contrasts, while the regularity of everyday life slips through our memories like stripes on a highway. If life were nothing but changes and contrasts, however, our minds would be overloaded with images and memories. Important events and landmarks would have to be much more acutely vivid to be noticed,

The fabric of cities follows this same pattern of continuity and contrast. A city is comprised of many diverse elements arranged. In any city or town, there is the need for both continuity and contrast in the urban fabric. In a great city like Rome, everybody remembers the major attractions – the Coliseum, Trevi Fountain, the Spanish Steps, the Pantheon. These structures make up only a very small percentage of the buildings in the city. The majority of Rome consists of background buildings with generally similar facades lining the streets. Each façade may be particularly well detailed and worthy of note, but on a whole they blend into the continuous fabric of the city. It may seem counterintuitive to create buildings that people do not notice, but this is necessary for the proper functioning of the city.

In his seminal work *The Image of the City*, Kevin Lynch breaks down the structure of a city into five elemental components: paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks. The urban structure of Annapolis follows these elements very closely, having

strong paths, well-defined edges, distinct districts, active nodes, and memorable landmarks. The baroque plan of the city creates several important nodes around important landmarks, namely Church Circle and State Circle. From these active nodes radiate a series of paths, some more dominant than others. The most notable path is Main Street, which leads from Church Circle to the waterfront, and visually continues out into the Chesapeake Bay. The retail and commercial establishments along this path contribute to the liveliness of the street, however no particular building stands out among the others. The facades along Main Street create continuity, deferring attention to St. Anne's Church. Annapolis is blessed with several fantastic landmarks; the State House, St. Anne's Episcopal Church, and the Market House, among others. These buildings are prominently located at nodes in the city and are easily recognizable as buildings of civic importance, even to newcomers. Their locations and unique architectural typologies make them stand out among the context of adjacent buildings, however they comprise the overwhelming minority of buildings in the historic district.

A Sustainable Vernacular

Before the term sustainability was coined, vernacular and regional architecture often fit many of the criteria of sustainable buildings, from an environmental standpoint. Buildings designed before the Industrial Revolution did not have the luxury of artificial heating and air-conditioning as we do today, and therefore had to be designed to naturally shield inhabitants from climatic extremes. In a hot, humid climate, vernacular structures often have large porches or overhangs to shade the south side of the building, as well as many windows to allow for natural cross ventilation. In northern climates, vernacular

structures often have steep pitched roofs to shed snow, as well as smaller windows to reduce heat loss.

Vernacular architecture is actually quite similar in principle to the current theories in sustainable architecture, where the site and climatic conditions determine much of the building's design. The major difference is that today, we are not at the mercy of the environment; we can use the regional environmental conditions to our advantage. The HVAC and lighting systems that we have used as a crutch for the past century, which are often highly inefficient and major consumers of energy, are being replaced by natural ventilation, thermal gain, and daylighting. Whereas vernacular structures depended solely upon these design elements for protection from the harsh environmental conditions, we can now supplement with efficient mechanical methods when the need arises.

A sustainable vernacular architecture uses unique regional patterns and architectonic devices to achieve sustainability. The patterns and forms that were created for functional purposes would be adopted and used for their original purposes. The use of these forms brings a familiarity to the buildings, without existing simply for aesthetic purposes. For sustainable issues, such as shading, traditional shading devices would be preferred, as long as they perform their function well. The proportion of openings in facades is a feature of vernacular architecture that varies with climate. Because of technological advances in window design, we can now design rooms with larger windows, while improving thermal efficiency. For the sake of continuity, the proportioning systems for the windows, however, would still be based on the proportions of windows in vernacular buildings. It is this flexibility in the "rules" of design, and the

cultivation of regional differences that will allow sustainable vernacular architecture to achieve rich variations, and to be sustainable as a design practice.

It is the position of this thesis is that historical building styles should not be directly copied. Instead, it will attempt to embrace the relatively recent approach to design, called Critical Regionalism – a design philosophy that is opposed to the blatant and reckless copying of traditional forms in the name of aesthetics. “As much as Critical Regionalists respect place, they should not be sentimental about it. There is no room for nostalgia.”⁴ Rather than nostalgia, Critical Regionalists stress the importance of finding the patterns and principles in regional architecture and using them in a way that reflects modern needs and ideals.

An Architecture for Annapolis

My thesis intervention in Annapolis entails a number of different building types and uses, from commercial to residential, civic to private. It also approaches the issues of the importance of landscape and promenade along the waterfront. In Annapolis, there are a number of climatic and site conditions that shaped the vernacular architecture of the area. Because of the range of temperature and weather conditions in the Mid-Atlantic region, a vernacular architecture would have to be quite complex to deal with all of the variations. Moderately cold winters and frequently hot summers call for elements from both southern and northern vernacular principles. Therefore, one will often see combinations, such as relatively steep roofed buildings with porches and moderately large windows.

The relationship of built form to the water has historically been one of the most important factors affecting the design of buildings in Annapolis. However, in the past half century, that relationship has become ambiguous and neglected. Annapolis, “America’s Sailing Capital,” lacks a compelling built relationship to water. The intervention for the City Dock area will examine the architectural relationship that once defined buildings near water. As the dock was used for the purpose of loading and unloading cargo, much of the original architecture was utilitarian or industrial in nature. Though the thesis will not include the same building uses, it does not preclude using the typology for different purposes.

“Typology is a good point of departure when designing. Enduring types can be creatively transformed to express and to accommodate both local contextual and new programmatic forces.”⁵ As we have all seen, many historic industrial buildings all over the world have been comfortably adapted to modern uses. This is primarily because historic industrial buildings were quite narrow to allow natural light and ventilation, which also makes them good candidates for many other uses. This feature alone demonstrates the superior sustainability of vernacular buildings to many modern ones; they are still widely in use hundreds of years after they were built.

III. SITE ANALYSIS

A city situate on a plain
Where scarce a house will keep out rain;
The buildings framed with cypress rare
Resemble much our Southwick fair;
But strangers there will scarcely meet
With market place, exchange, or street;
And if the truth I may report,
It's not so large as Tottenham Court.

-- An account of Annapolis from
The Sot-Weed Factor by Ebenezer Cooke, 1708.⁶

Annapolis, the capital of the state of Maryland, is located near the mouth of the Severn River, a tributary to the Chesapeake Bay. The city forms a triangle with Baltimore, 25 miles to the north, and Washington, 25 miles to the west. Today, Annapolis is linked to Baltimore by way of the six-lane highway I-97, and to Washington by way of the six-lane highway Route 50. The Chesapeake Bay Bridge, the major link to the Eastern Shore and Delaware, is located a few miles to the east. Annapolis is also home to the United States Naval Academy, as well as St. John's College, the third oldest college in the country. This strategic location, along with its unrivaled amenities makes Annapolis a popular destination for tourists and an attractive place to live.



Figure 7. Annapolis in the Mid-Atlantic region.

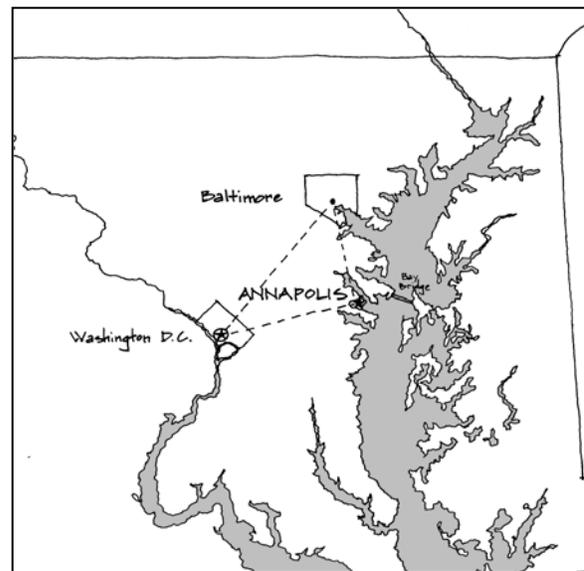


Figure 8. The Baltimore, Washington, Annapolis triangle.

A Brief History of Annapolis

Annapolis was first settled in December of 1649 by non-conformist Puritans from Virginia. Originally called “Providence” or “Severn,” the town was established as a port

of trade on the northern bank of the Severn River. The town center moved to a piece of land on the southern bank of the Severn that was purchased by Lord Baltimore in 1668. An Act for the Advancement of Trade in 1683 reconfirmed the newly surveyed town's

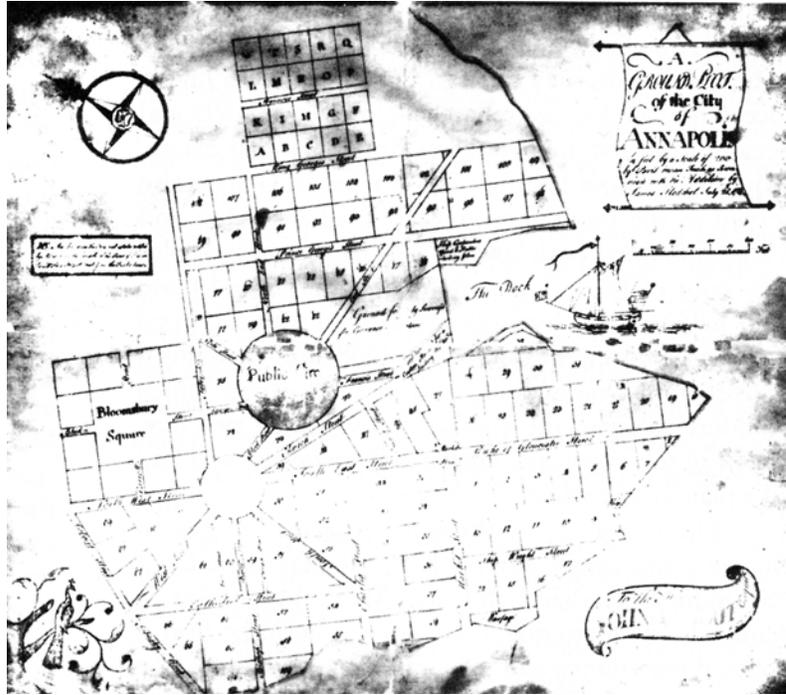


Figure 9. The 1718 Plan of Annapolis from a drawing by James Stoddert [Miller 7].

status, and it was renamed Ann Arundel Town, after Lord Baltimore's deceased wife. In 1695, governor Francis Nicholson moved the seat of local government from St. Mary's City to Ann Arundel Town. Changing its name to Annapolis, the name honored both Anne Arundel and Princess Anne. Surveyor Richard Beard was hired by the Governor to create a plan for the city, and charged with creating a complex plan different from traditional patterns of development in the Chesapeake region. Inspired by European Baroque city plans, Beard created a plan with two circles at the highest elevations for the State House and the Anglican church, emphasizing the importance of both Church and State. Streets radiating out from the circles connected the traditional city grid to the Church and State House both visually and physically.⁷

By the end of the seventeenth century, Annapolis was still a sleepy, quite undeveloped town. In 1707, Annapolis was designated as the port of entry for the upper

Chesapeake Bay, an action that brought a tremendous amount of traffic to the port. Ships from England and Scotland imported merchandise, while locally harvested tobacco was exported.⁸ When Lord Baltimore centralized all governmental activities in Annapolis in 1715, the town's character began to change radically. With the increased population and political importance, shipbuilding activities flourished around the dock, a space was set aside for a Market, and houses and commercial structures grew throughout the town. The major local industries, shipbuilding and tanning, were supported by minor industries, such as sail and rope making, currying, and shoemaking.⁹

The original commercial and residential structures would have been made of wood, a common, inexpensive building material requiring less skill than masonry. Wood structures do not last as long as masonry, accounting for the scarcity of 17th century buildings that remain standing. None of the original industrial or commercial buildings remain, and their existence is proven only through documentation and archaeological evidence. A small number of early residential structures survive, owing to frequent upkeep and alterations. The Sands House on Prince George Street is likely a relic from the late 17th century, while the Poe House on Market Street and the Shiplap House date from the early 18th century. The Poe House is a good example of the early regional vernacular – a one-story frame building with a hall-and-parlor plan, and a usable loft under a steeply pitched (fifty-two degrees) roof.



Figure 10 Sands House - Miller 142

The greatest period of building and prosperity occurred in the 1760s, with the construction of some of the greatest houses ever to be built in Annapolis. William Eddis, a newcomer from England, reported in 1769 that,

the buildings of Annapolis were formerly of small dimensions and of inelegant construction; but there are now several modern edifices which make a good appearance. There are few habitations without gardens, some of which are planted in a decent style and are well stocked. At present, this city has more the appearance of an agreeable village than a metropolis of an opulent province, as it contains within its limits a number of small fields which are intended for future erections.¹⁰

The small town was quickly becoming a very important city, both in trade and in politics. In November of 1783, the Continental Congress met in Annapolis for a nine-month session, briefly making it the capital of the United States. During this time, George Washington resigned his commission as Commander in Chief at the State House and the Treaty of Paris was ratified, bringing an end to the Revolutionary War.¹¹

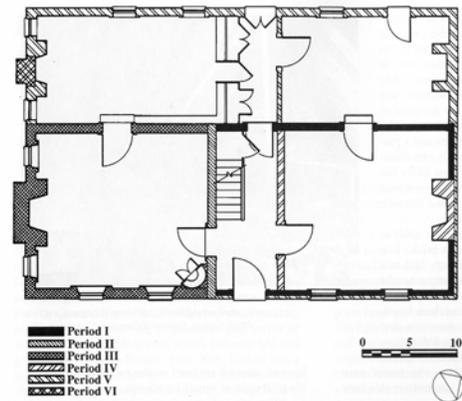


Figure 6. The Poe House has undergone at least six periods of alterations. The original frame structure occupied only the right front quadrant of the current house. [Miller, 118, 120].



Figure 7. Shiplap House [Miller, 152]

With the increase in population and prosperity in the mid-18th century, new houses were built larger and often with brick, a more permanent but costly material that was previously used only on public structures. Despite the increase in size and the change in materiality, these new buildings retained the character of the regional vernacular.

By the end of the eighteenth century, significant economic changes were taking place that would forever alter the future of the city. The port of Annapolis had given up its dominance to the larger, more easily accessible port of Baltimore. Major international trade waned in favor of the larger harbor to the north, and Annapolis became an important port only to the surrounding agricultural districts. Many powerful Annapolis families moved to Baltimore, shifting the social center of the state to the north. If it weren't for the city's important political history, even the capital would have likely moved to Baltimore.

The early nineteenth century was a slow time for Annapolis, however several important events occurred that significantly altered the city's future. The Maryland Assembly attempted to secure Annapolis as the site for the proposed United States Naval School in 1826. This effort was initially unproductive, however in 1845 the Naval Academy opened on the site of the old Fort Severn. The outbreak of the Civil War witnessed a definite southern sympathy among the residents of Annapolis. Despite this pro-southern attitude the city and the state remained loyal to the Union, electing not to join in the secession of the southern states. Though no battles occurred in the immediate vicinity of Annapolis, it was treated as an occupied city throughout the war. In 1864, slaves in the State of Maryland were freed, including approximately five hundred living

in Annapolis. The end of the war brought no hostile feelings for the north, but rather a sense of relief as the city returned to normalcy.¹²

In 1840, the Annapolis and Elkridge Railroad began serving the city with a station on West Street. It was joined in 1887 by the Shortline, which began operations in a station on Bladen Street. The advent of the railroad helped spur a new wave of prosperity in the 1870s and new streets and houses were erected on the sites of many once-treasured gardens. By the end of the 1890s, the city council authorized the paving of Main Street with Belgian blocks, followed soon after by other streets. Other public utilities, such as the water system, telephone and electric lines, were installed during this time, as well.¹³

By the beginning of the twentieth century, Annapolis had reached a level of urban development that has changed little to this day. In the early part of the century, the State House was greatly expanded and a new Court of Appeals building was erected. Between the 1940s and 1970s, a series of government office buildings was constructed on the land between College Avenue and College Creek. Overscaled in relation to the massing of the historic context, the Georgian Revival structures dominate the area. They create a singularity of land use, turning a once-thriving area into a ghost town at night.¹⁴

In reaction to the anti-urban and uncharacteristic buildings of the early to mid-1900s, historic preservation became a topic of great concern in Annapolis. The economic woes of the nineteenth century had in fact contributed to the preservation of the city. Because there was too little money to repair or erect new buildings, much of the eighteenth century city survived intact. By the twentieth century, this ancient city was in danger of being modernized and forever altered. Several attempts were made to remove historic buildings from Annapolis, such as Henry Ford's plan to move the Hammond-

Harwood House to his outdoor museum at Greenfield Village. This attempt was successfully halted by the formation of the Hammond-Harwood House Association. Another plan, by John D. Rockefeller, pushed the preservation angle in the other direction. He wished to completely preserve Annapolis, restricting its expansion and future building projects. This plan failed as it faced opposition in the Chamber of Commerce, however Rockefeller eventually saw his plan to fruition in Williamsburg, Virginia. A new preservation association, Historic Annapolis, Inc., was founded in 1952 to designate the downtown area as a registered National Historic Landmark. It achieved this goal in 1966, and continued through the following decades to save many historic buildings from demolition, as well as prevent encroachment by modern buildings. Thanks to the work of Historic Annapolis, Inc. and concerned residents and visitors, Annapolis retains much of the original character of the eighteenth and nineteenth century city.

Existing Conditions

Urban Situation

The design of the city of Annapolis was a very deliberate and decisive stroke of Baroque planning. In an examination of the figure/ground diagram (*figure 11*), the two great circles from which the plan emanates, Church Circle and State Circle, are clearly visible. From these circles, located at high points in the city, the principle streets radiate outward like the spokes of a wheel. From Church Circle, the principle arteries are Main Street, Duke of Gloucester Street, West Street, and College Avenue. Though not as heavily trafficked, State Circle sponsors several important streets, including East Street



and Maryland Avenue. These two prominent circles are not only important circulation nodes but also encircle the two great landmarks in the city, St. Anne's Church and the State House. Because the streets radiate out from these landmarks, the Church and State House terminate views from the opposite ends of those same streets. The sheer mass and height of the two buildings also makes them visible from other areas in the city, including

nearly all of the City Dock.
They serve as focal points
as well as objects of
orientation as one walks
through the town.

The highest density
of development is along
Main Street, the
commercial center of
Annapolis. A clear linear
organization can be
observed in the

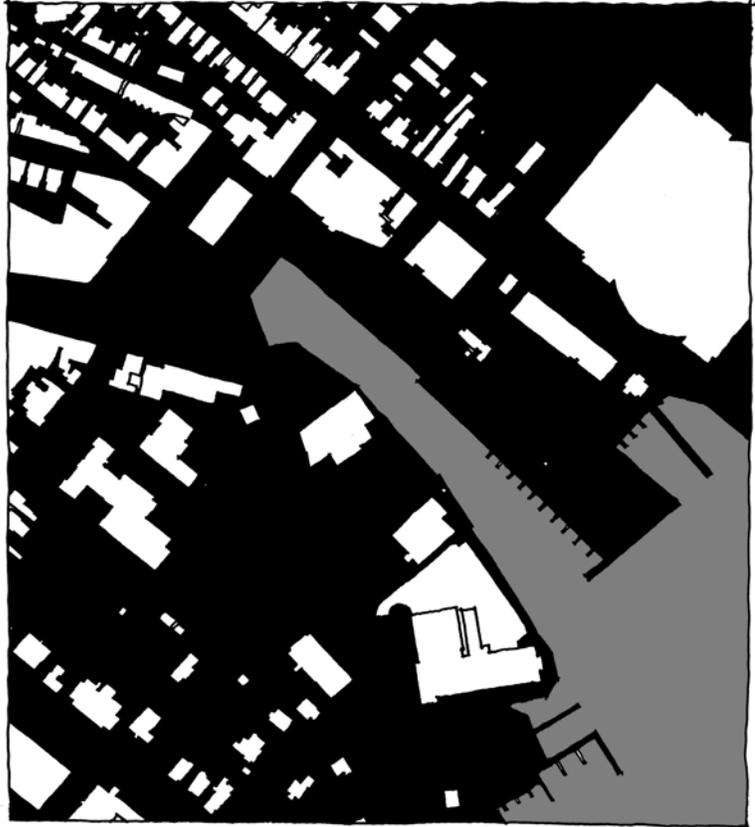


Figure 12. Figure/Ground.

figure/ground leading from Church Circle
to the Market Space. The buildings along
Main Street are predominantly two and
three stories in height and vary in width
from approximately 25 feet to upwards of
60 feet. The build-to line is quite constant
along the length of the street, however the
roof line is quite variable from one
building to the next. Looking at the land
use diagram, it is readily apparent that the
main commercial zones are organized



Figure 10. View of State House and St. Anne's Church from Main Street.



Figure 11. Typical Main Street facades.

around the two circles, along Main Street, and surrounding the harbor. Government offices and other civic buildings are localized mainly to two areas, one from the State House towards the northwest and the other on the southeast end of Duke of Gloucester Street. The remaining area of Annapolis is occupied by single and multi-family residential dwellings.



Figure 12. Land Use diagram

Topography and Landscape

The original layout of the city took utmost advantage of the topography. As previously mentioned, Church Circle and State Circle were built on the two high points. Main Street was built in a natural valley, while East Street was built on a natural ridge. The historic core of Annapolis is built on a gentle incline facing generally eastward. It is a sloped from a high point of 47 feet at Church Circle down to water level at the harbor. The majority of the property in the immediate vicinity of the City Dock is either landfill or built on piles. For this reason, this area is almost entirely flat and level. Because much of the land has been reclaimed from the water, it is not as permanent or solid as the natural water's edge. Though this edge has remained nearly the same for over fifty years, some of the piles and decking

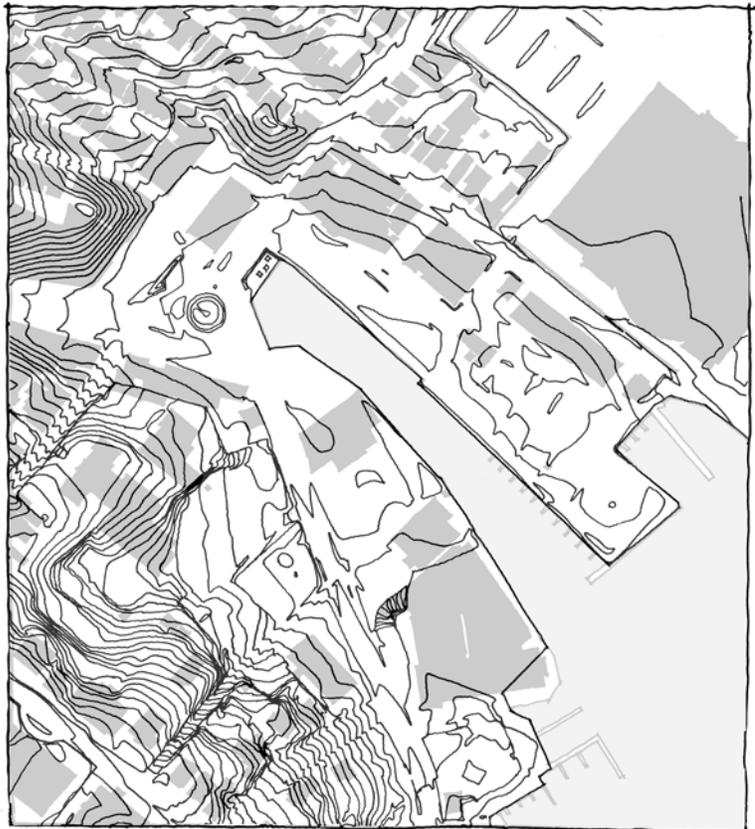


Figure 13. Topography

The Intervention Site

The specific site in Annapolis is a fifteen-acre plot of land fronting the water from Prince George Street, around the City Dock, and south to the bridge over Spa Creek. In addition, the project boundaries include the Market Space and an undeveloped lot behind the old Green Street School. These areas will play a vital role in bridging the gap between historic Annapolis and the new intervention. Much of this area is built on landfill that was reclaimed from the water nearly one hundred years ago. Because this land is relatively new with respect to the historic district, its development took place independent of the rest of the city. In addition, the land was originally reclaimed from the water to make more

room for the commercial and industrial activities that accompany a busy, active port. As activity in the port diminished and industry relocated to the larger port of Baltimore, the buildings that once lined the City Dock were abandoned. By the middle of the 1900s, they fell into disuse and



Figure 15. Project boundaries

disrepair and were torn down.

In their place, a series of unrelated and quite uncharacteristic buildings was constructed, along with acres of surface parking. Examination of the figure/ground reversal clearly shows where the historic fabric of the city ends and twentieth century development is introduced. The waterfront area has a completely different urban texture, compared to the tightly spaced buildings of the historic district.

On the south side of the City Dock, four buildings line the water: the Marriott Hotel, Pussers restaurant, the Fleet Reserve Club, and Fawcett boating supplies.

The development of these four waterfront properties appears to have been carried out by four independent developers without respect for the historic context or for each other. Fawcett and Pussers are each one-story buildings, while the Marriott Hotel is six stories. There are few, if any buildings in the historic district that are one story, and no buildings over four stories. The detailing of these buildings is also quite uncharacteristic, from the light beige brick of Fawcett to the fake mansard roof of the Marriott Hotel. They appear as four independent objects, rather than a cohesive urban fabric.



Figure 16. Marriott Hotel (left) and Pusser's



Figure 17. Fleet Club



Figure 18. Fawcett



Figure 19. Main Street Facades



Figure 20. Main Street Facades



Figure 23. Market Space facades



Figure 24. Dock Street facades

The north side of the City Dock is occupied by a large parking lot with a brick-paved plaza at the eastern tip. In the center of the parking lot is an object building housing the Harbormaster's Office, facilities for visitors and boaters, and a Visitor Information booth. A row of historic storefront buildings forms the northern edge of the City Dock area, along with a relatively modern one-story indoor mini-mall and Phillips restaurant. These recent additions to the City Dock are reasonably scaled to the existing historic fabric, however the proportions and detailing have no resemblance to traditional Annapolis architecture.

Prince George Street runs along the north edge of the City Dock behind the newer buildings and continues out to the water. It was once lined on both sides by houses and commercial establishments, but the annexation of the land on the north side of the street by the Naval Academy



Figure 25. Visitor Information Booth



Figure 26. Mini-mall on Dock Street



Figure 27. Phillips restaurant

wiped out much of the context. Today, the end of the street closest to the water is lined on the south by the backs of stores and restaurants. The north side is bordered by a parking lot around the Naval Academy's Halsey Field House and separated from the street by an eight foot



Figure 28. Halsey Field House from P.G. Street

high metal fence. Needless to say, this part of the street has completely lost all land use and is out of character with the rest of the historic fabric.

Transportation

The popularity of Annapolis as a tourist destination brings hundreds of visitors every day, but this renown comes with a price. Because of this tremendous popularity, the city's narrow streets are usually choked with tourists and their cars. Most of the city's traffic is local, as the main streets do not offer a

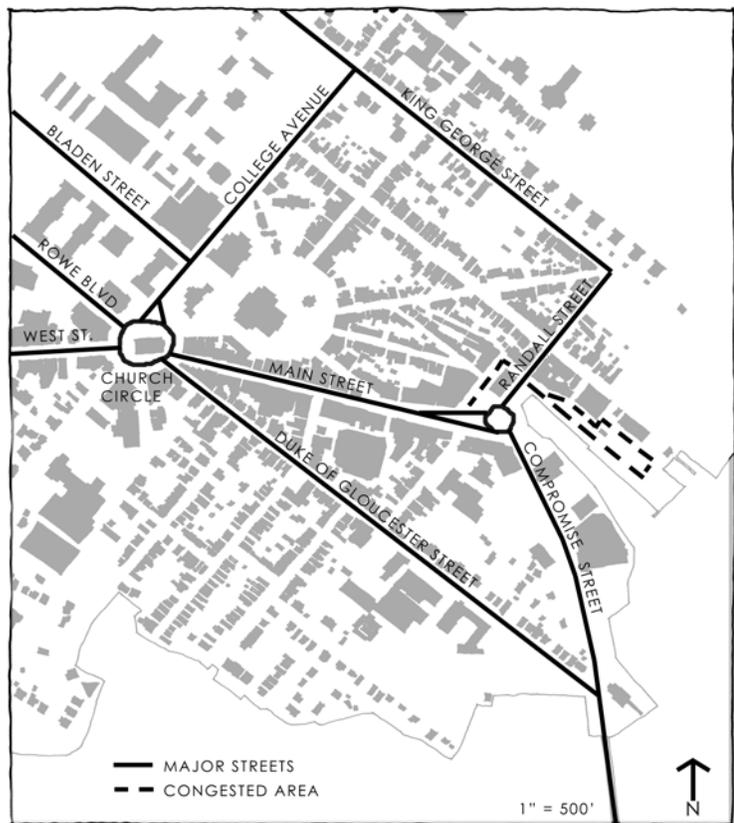


Figure 29. Street Hierarchy

direct through-route to anywhere except the adjacent town of Eastport. Therefore, most of these cars clogging the streets are also in need of parking spaces. A significant component of the masterplan for the city will be the handling of automobile traffic and parking requirements.

Alternative forms of transportation would help alleviate some of the congestion, but currently, there is no convenient form of public transportation to and from downtown



Figure 30. Paved surfaces on waterfront site

Annapolis. Earlier in the twentieth century, Annapolis was connected to Baltimore with the Baltimore and Annapolis Railway, an almost perfectly straight electrified rail line that shuttled commuters the 25 mile distance. The B&A Railway terminated at a station roughly one-half mile west of Church Circle, bringing passengers within walking distance of the historic core of the city. The right-of-way for that line is still quite clear in its current incarnation, the B&A Trail – a popular hiker-biker path. Though it will not be developed in this thesis, there exists a great potential for bringing rails back to the trail and connecting with the existing Baltimore Light Rail line. Possible connections to Washington would also warrant further investigation.

Because rail service would be a long time in coming, it is important to acknowledge that Annapolis will continue for many years to be accessed primarily by automobiles. Accessibility into, out of, and through the city will need to be addressed, as well as improved parking strategies. At the same time, the existing surface parking lots, which negligently monopolize the waterfront property, will be removed and replaced by more responsible development.

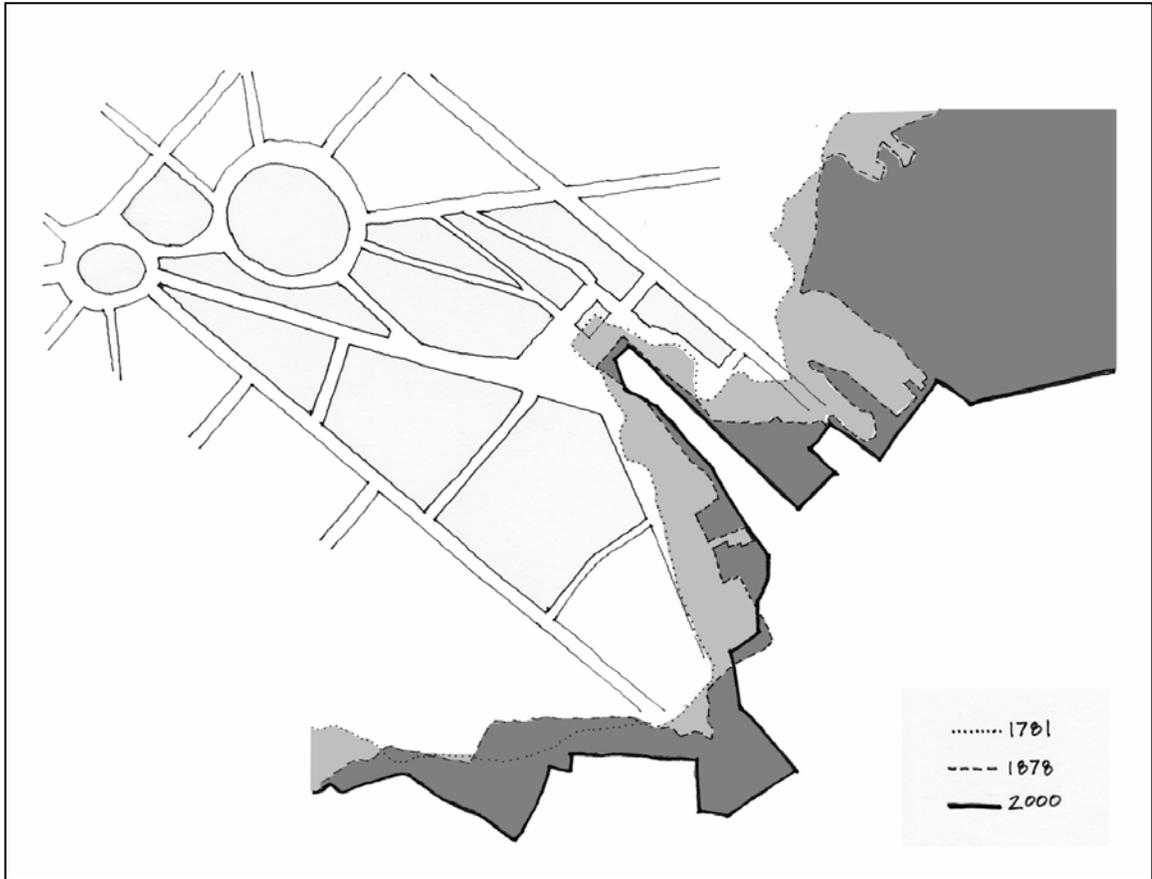


Figure 31. Changes in waterfront over 200 years.



Figure 32. Buildable areas.

This diagram takes into consideration the Baroque shaft of space, as well as some lesser views that should be maintained or reclaimed. Dark grey shaded areas are potential building sites that do not conflict with the preservation of the views.

IV. PRECEDENT ANALYSIS

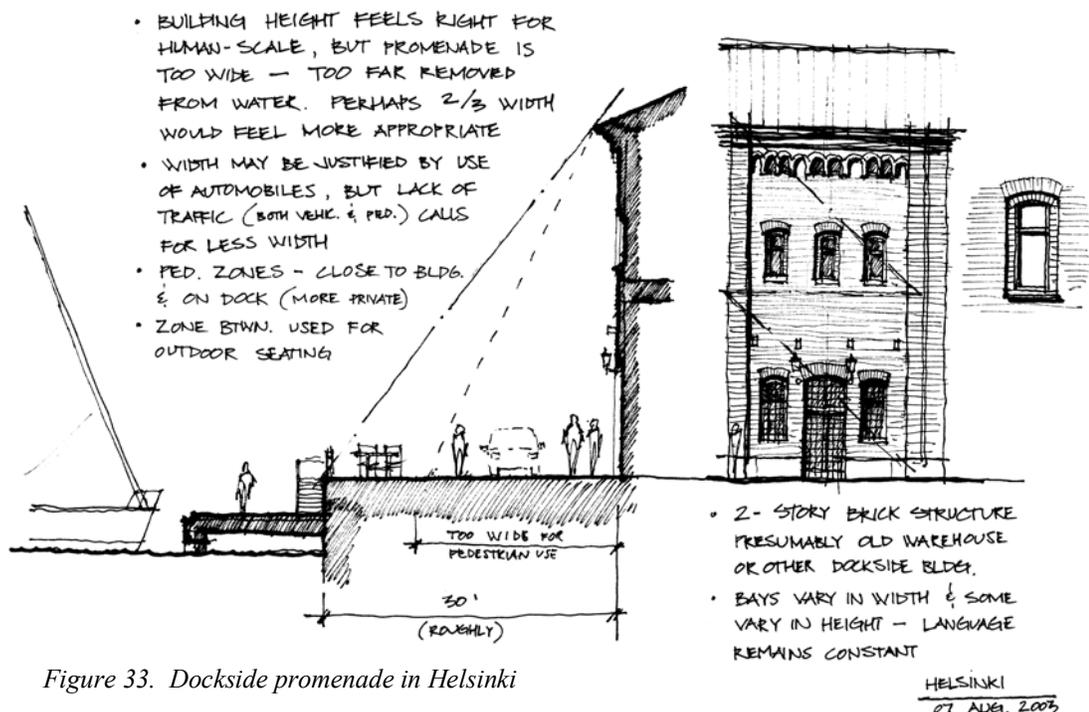


Figure 33. Dockside promenade in Helsinki

Helsinki, Finland is an active port city, yet many of the old industrial buildings around the harbor have been converted to commercial uses. One brick warehouse building is of particular interest, as it was converted to shops, restaurants, and offices. It varies between two and three stories in height and has a regular, yet varied bay structure. A promenade along the water's edge contains enough space for pedestrians, café tables, and light vehicle usage. There is also a wood pier that parallels about four feet below the promenade. One criticism of this promenade is that it is too wide for the amount of pedestrian traffic. Perhaps it is trying to accommodate too many forms of transportation, but its location just outside the city center does not attract enough people to comfortably fill the space.

Lined with dozens of restaurants, all with outdoor seating, Nyhavn, in Copenhagen, Denmark is an extremely popular waterfront street.

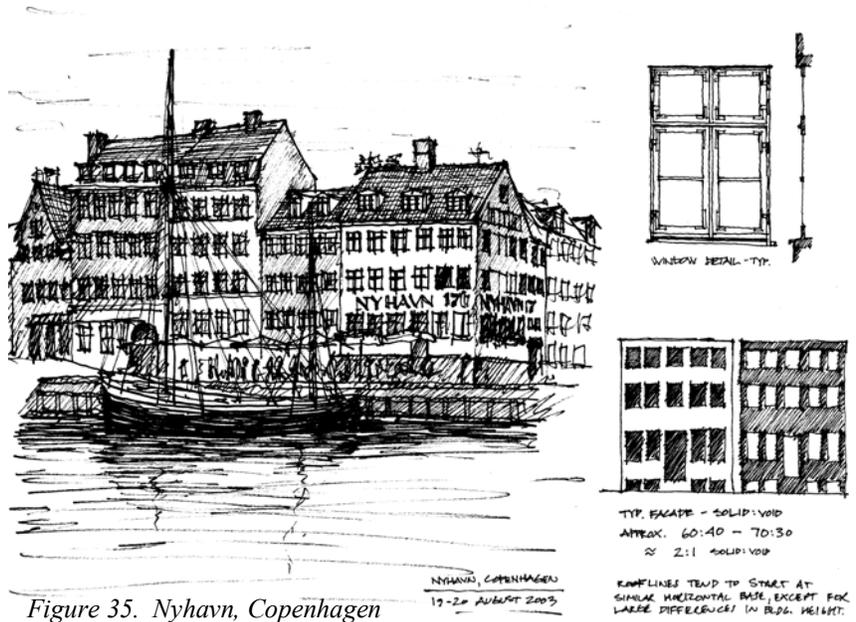


Figure 35. Nyhavn, Copenhagen

Despite its small-scale appearance, many of the buildings rise to six or more stories, although building height varies greatly from one to the next. There is a much narrower relationship in the proportion of promenade width to building height. This helps to make the space feel very intimate and lively. Nyhavn is a pedestrian only street, allowing pedestrians to move freely along the waterfront promenade. Building facades are individually very sparsely detailed, but the combination of dozens of slightly different facades creates a very satisfying visual pattern.

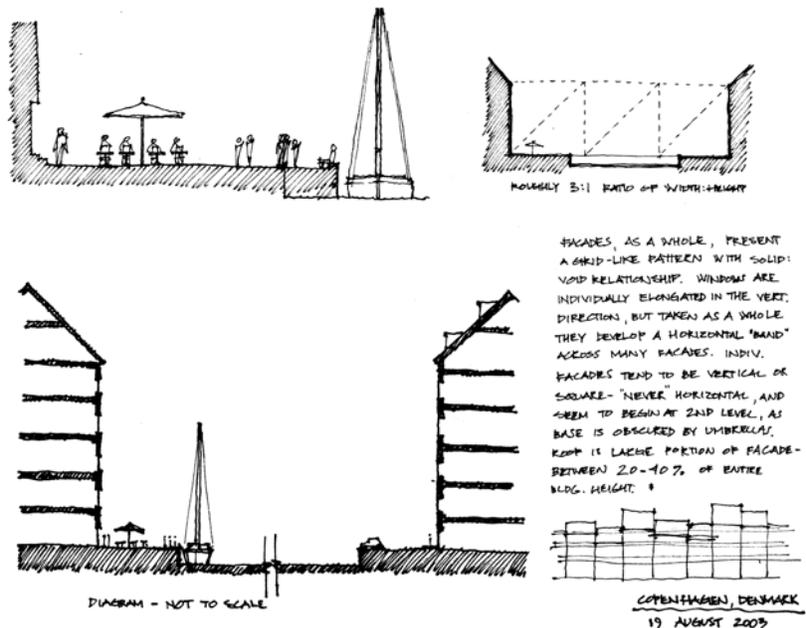


Figure 36. Nyhavn, Copenhagen

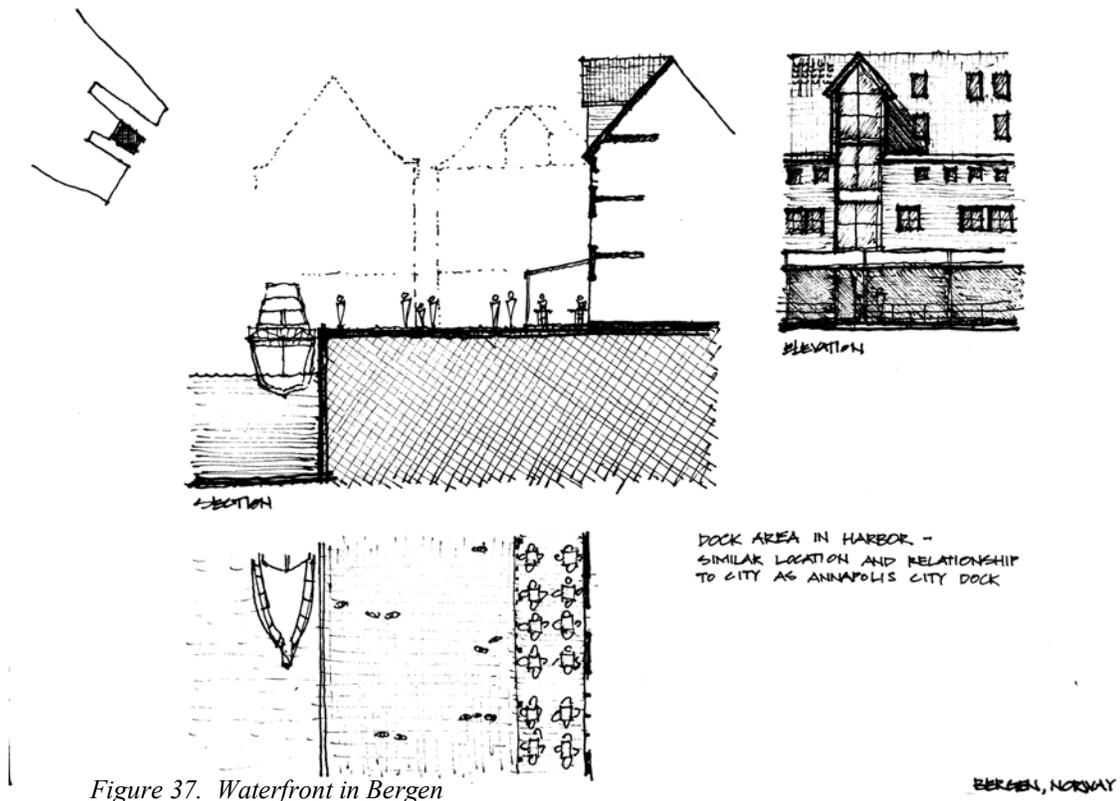


Figure 37. Waterfront in Bergen

The harbor in Bergen, Norway is similar in many ways to the Annapolis harbor. The scale of the harbor and the surrounding context is nearly the same, perhaps only slightly larger. Most notably, there is a city dock that juts into the harbor, closely resembling the City Dock in Annapolis. On the city side of this dock, a large open space hosts a temporary market in the mornings, where goods from fresh seafood to souvenirs are sold. At the base of the dock, three old maritime buildings have been converted into one public building containing restaurants and shops. The building serves as a central focus and a circulation pivot point for the rest of the downtown area. Despite being an object in the landscape, the buildings are architecturally quite simple and subtle. The side of the building has a large awning-covered seating area for restaurants, while the end of the dock is paved in stones and contains several, but perhaps too few benches.

In the Gamla Stan area of Stockholm, a small, triangular square exists where two streets meet. A building that once occupied the site burned down and was never rebuilt, leaving the void. The shelter created by a single shade tree helps make this unplanned, undesigned space one of the most charming, best remembered places in the city. Similarly, the scale, variations, and level of detail of the designed squares and streets in Gamla Stan make them just as inviting and deserving of being called places. Continuity and simplicity among repetitive elements, such as windows and materials, is balanced by the captivating diversity and variation in other elements, such as rooflines and façade proportions.

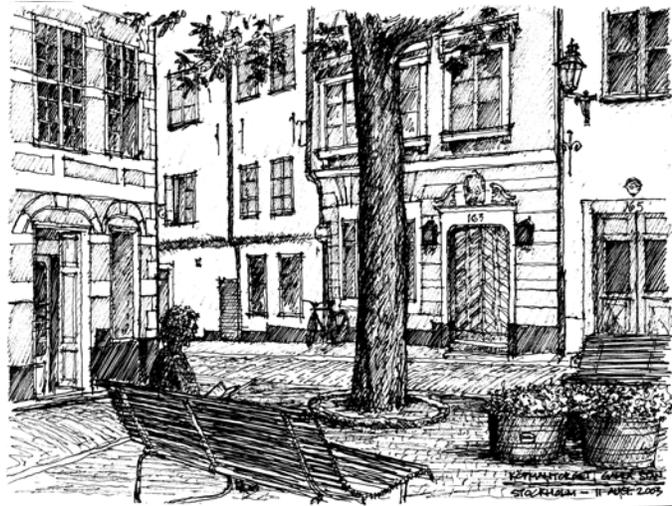


Figure 38. Small square in Gamla Stan, Stockholm

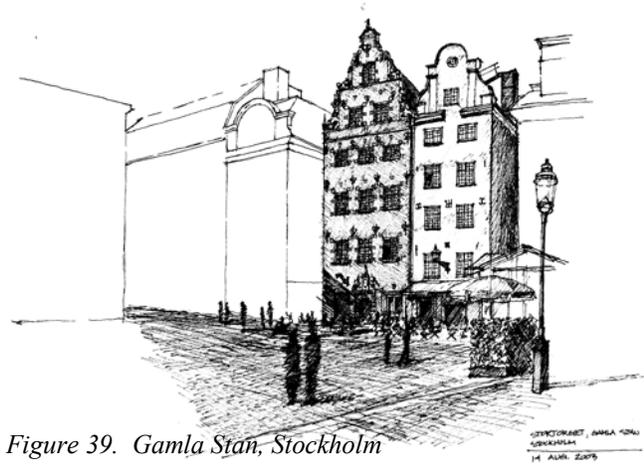


Figure 39. Gamla Stan, Stockholm

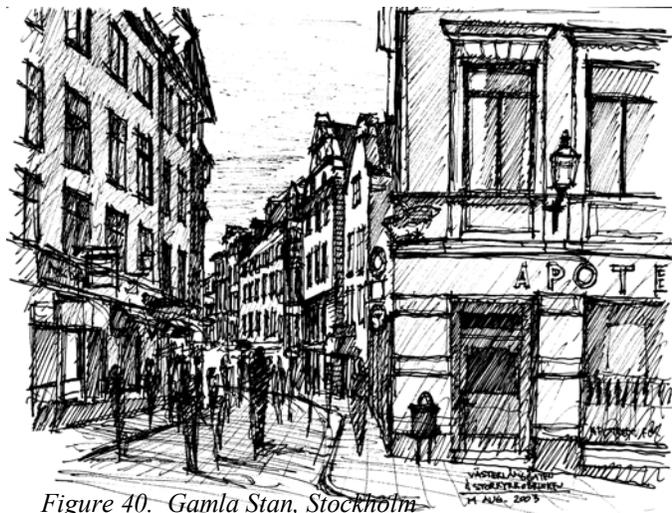


Figure 40. Gamla Stan, Stockholm

The play of deep and shallow space adds to the wonderfully chaotic, yet regular facades.

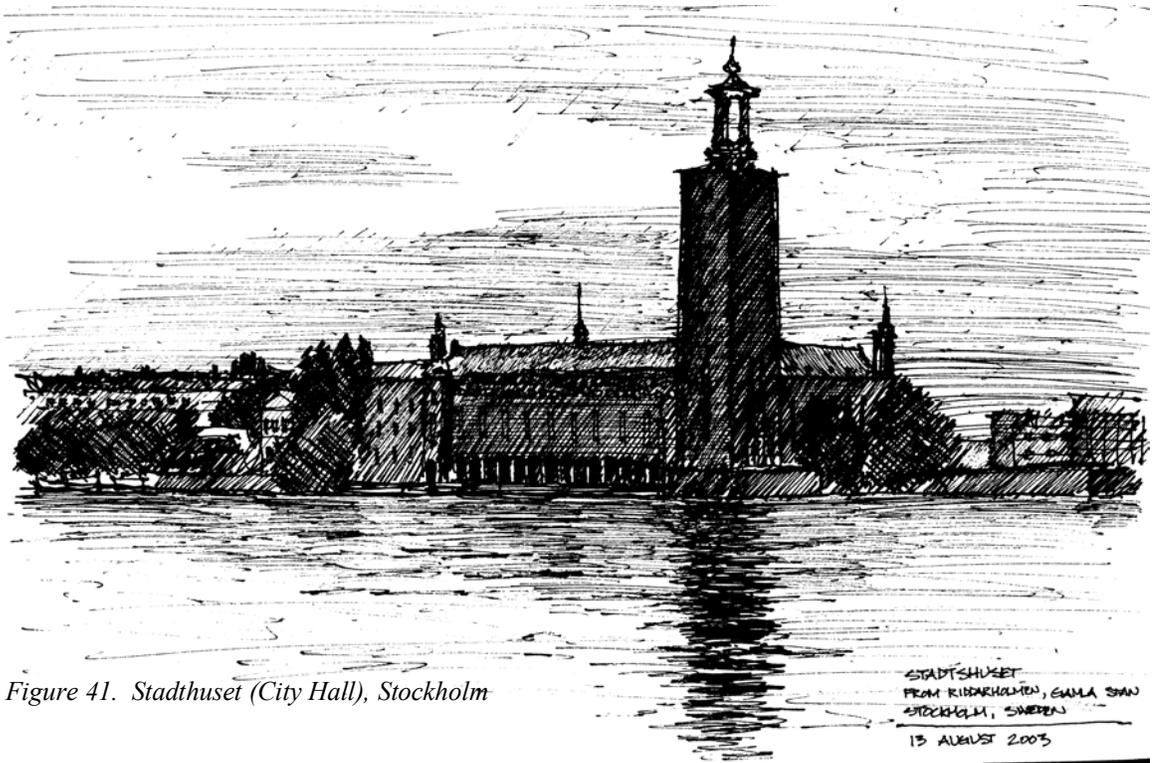


Figure 41. *Stadthuset (City Hall), Stockholm*

The Stockholm Town Hall, built by Ragnar Osteberg in 1923, is a civic structure located at the water's edge. The tower announces its presence as an important public building, while the transparency of the building on the ground level emphasizes the public nature of the local government. The central courtyard, while having definite boundaries, is visually and physically open to the water beyond.

This is an effective solution for placing a building in the path of a visual corridor without blocking the view.



Figure 42. *Stadthuset, Stockholm*

V. PROGRAM ANALYSIS

The Need for a Visitor Center

Each day, hundreds of people from all over the world come to enjoy the charms that Annapolis has to offer. For many, their first visit is met with confusion from the vehicular traffic and frustration from trying to find parking. Even after overcoming this obstacle, it may not be clear to visitors where to begin their tour or what sites to see. A clear, distinguishable landmark must be erected to attract visitors and guide them to what they wish to see.

Annapolis is a small city, but it offers more than enough amenities to warrant a prominent visitor's center. From the State House to the City Dock, St. John's College to the Naval Academy, the Paca House to the Market House, the historic features are many, but widely scattered throughout the city. Many of the best places are rarely seen by first time visitors. In addition, Annapolis lacks a public gathering room in which citizens and visitors can gather or hold events. Such a space would be well known among Annapolitans and would be an ideal meeting spot for out-of-towners.

Annapolis Center Program

<u>Public Spaces</u>	<u>Square Feet</u>
Entrance / Lobby	400
Atrium / Exhibition Hall	2000
Information Desk	300
Gift Shop	600
Public Restrooms – 2 @ 200 SF	400
Lecture Hall / Theater	2000
Classrooms – 2@ 600 SF	1200
Multi-Media Room	600
Observation Tower	225
Main Exhibition Gallery	2000
Small Galleries – 3 @ 600 SF	1800
Model Room	600
Archives / Library	600
Public Terrace	400
<u>Service Spaces</u>	<u>Square Feet</u>
Administrative Offices	600
Curator's Office	200
Director's Office	200
Conference Room	300
Staff Lounge	200
Curatorial Workroom	600
Storage	300

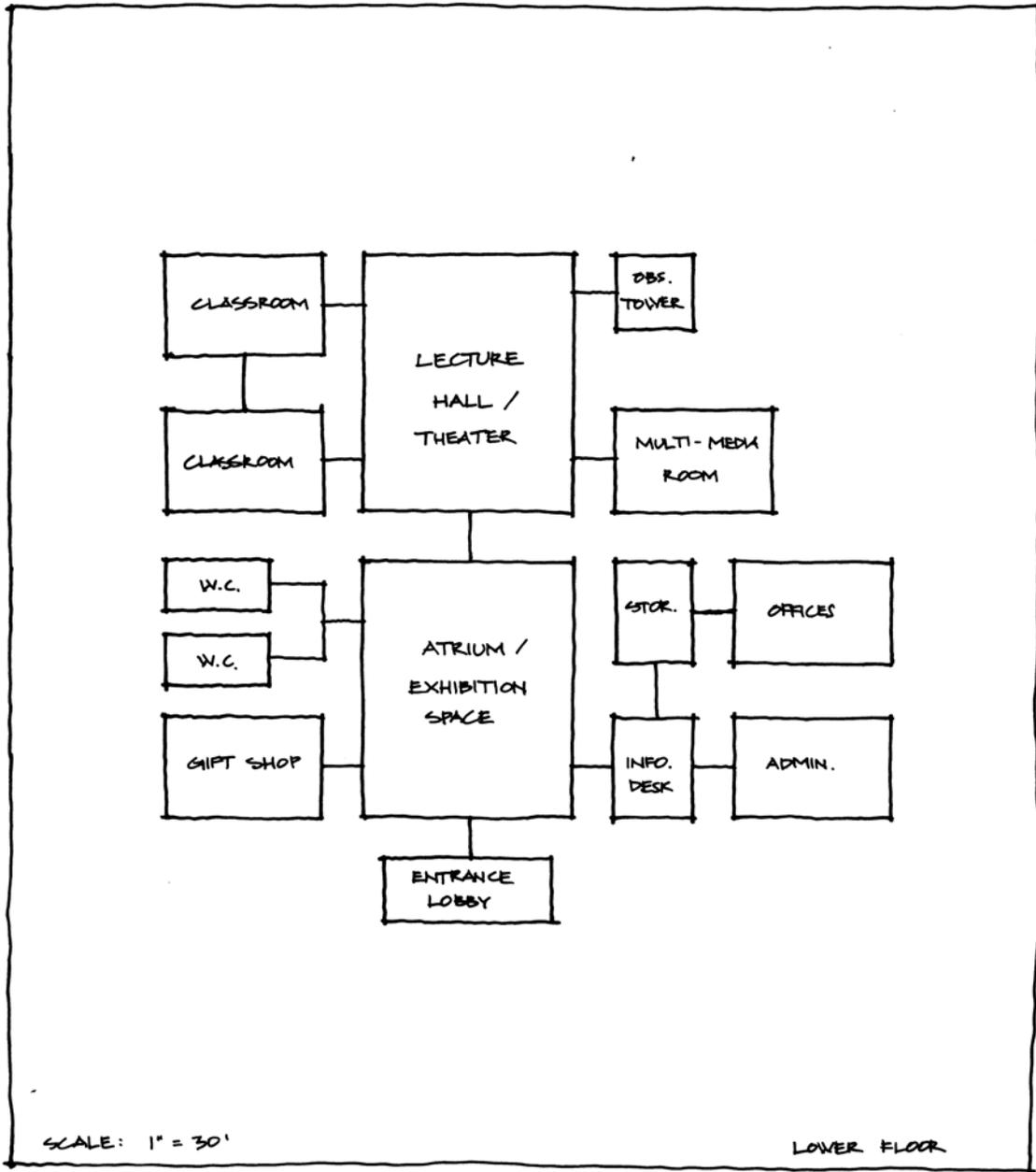


Figure 43. Building program – lower floor

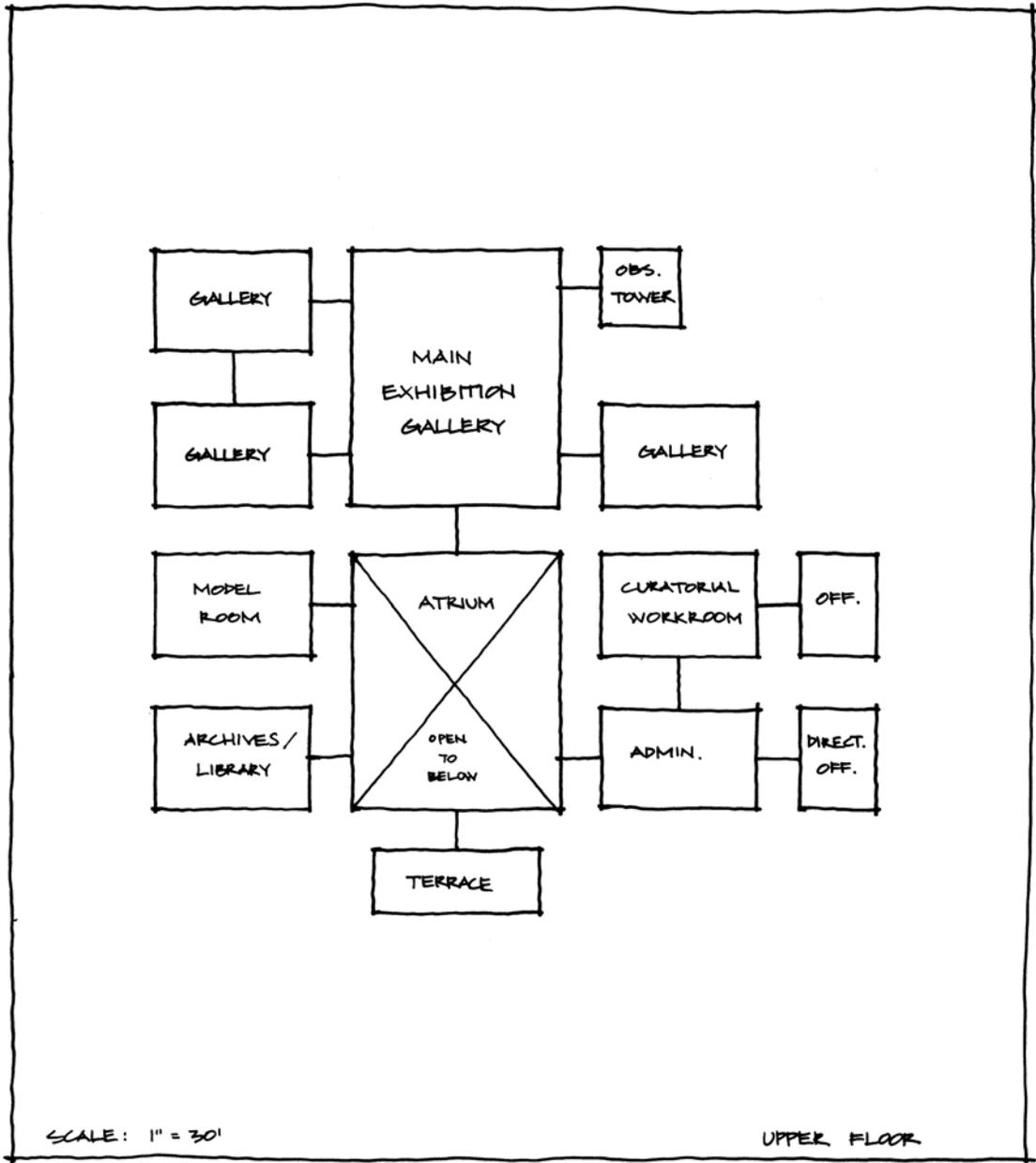


Figure 44. Building program – upper floor

VI. PARTI DEVELOPMENT

This thesis explores the reclamation of the Annapolis waterfront at a variety of scales. The parti development also reflects these various scales. While the urban parti will be presented first, it is important to be familiar with some of the more fine-grained details that will be consistent in each scheme. Most notably, the scope of the program and the intentions behind the proposed Annapolis Center will remain quite constant. It will be important to understand these intentions in order to understand the reasoning behind its multiple possible locations in the urban design.

The Annapolis Center is a new multi-use facility that will be located in a prominent position in the City Dock area. Its primary function is a visitor center, while it will also feature a museum and galleries containing photographs and artifacts describing the history and events that define the city of Annapolis. The museum and environmental center are not meant to take away from any existing museums or environmental centers in the Annapolis area, but rather will serve as an introduction to the city and provide a point of departure for visitors. The primary mission of the Annapolis Center is education – to be a metaphorical lighthouse, guiding visitors to the areas of the city that interest them the most. A portion of the building will also house the Harbor Master's Office, which will be displaced in each urban scheme.

The Annapolis Center is the focus of the urban design for several reasons. As the intended first stop for visitors, it must be prominent and easily accessible. It must be clear from the building typology that it is a public building, and it must draw visitors to it. This can be achieved in several ways. Architecturally, there could be a prominent feature, such as an observation tower, that lures visitors. The building could also be quite transparent so its function may be apparent to passersby. Nothing draws a crowd like a

crowd, and this natural curiosity should be used to its best advantage. The building should be designed so that outsiders can watch people entering, moving around, observing displays, laughing, chatting, sitting, and watching other people. All of these suggest a building that is more of an object than a background building. An object that mediates between several different environments is even better, as it will draw people who come to Annapolis for different reasons – walking, dining, sailing, sight-seeing, or just relaxing by the water. Of all the buildings that will be designed in this thesis, the Annapolis Center should be the most architecturally independent and playful, yet it must still be sensitive to the historic context.

Also consistent in each scheme is the intention to reduce the amount of surface parking as possible. Each scheme incorporates two major parking structures wrapped in either a mixed-use or residential liner. These garages will provide several times the automobile capacity of the surface lots they replace.

Another overriding theme in this thesis is the conscious making of places. As discussed in previous sections, the making of places is a challenging proposition, requiring more of a sociological approach than an architectural one. An architectural idea that can be relied upon, however, is the size of spaces that make up the places. Annapolis is a very intimate town made up mostly of small spaces, and occasionally large ones. The design of plazas, parks, and other spaces should be based on this general pattern. It would be quite appropriate to use buildings and landscape elements to help break-up large urban spaces and reduce them to more manageable sizes. The reduced size will increase the total number of spaces, increasing the variety in types of places.

Urban Schemes

Keeping in mind the design goals for the Annapolis Center, the urban schemes present various sites for the building, as well as layouts for the other components of the intervention. In the first scheme, all of the existing structures are preserved, while infilling and adding to them to create a more continuous urban fabric. Likewise, the bulkhead line at the water's edge is retained, requiring the least amount of disruption to the existing land.

Most of the existing structures on the site will be removed, owing to their ineffectual relationship to the water and historic context. The structures to be removed are the Marriott Hotel and its parking deck, Fawcett Boat Supplies, the Visitors Information Center/Harbor Master's Office, and the modern strip of stores adjacent to the Visitors Center. All displaced businesses will be relocated in new buildings, and there will be accommodations for many new businesses and residences. The site will be re-landscaped to create parks, plazas, and promenades, better connecting the waterfront to the historic district.

In the first variation on Scheme 1, the location of the Annapolis Center effectively mediates activities on the large area of land between the Market building and the end of the dock. It encloses a space on the west side, creating a plaza bounded by the Market building, the water, and a storefront block. On the east side of the Annapolis Center, the focus changes from an urban plaza to a landscaped park overlooking the Bay. The Center is also a highlight of the urban design as far as its programmatic uses. Being a Visitor's Center, it must be prominent and accessible for visitors unfamiliar with the area.

The siting of the Annapolis Center creates a partial enclosure of the Market Space area, creating a more defined plaza. At the same time, the building does not interfere with the Baroque shaft of space from Church Circle, down Main Street, and out to the Chesapeake Bay. The siting of the Center in this prominent location makes it easy to find and will likely be the starting point for many visitors to the city.

The main parking structure (3) is situated directly adjacent to the existing brick wall of the Naval Academy. The garage is pushed as close to the wall as possible, blocking part of the existing Prince George Street. This part of the street is currently a visually uninviting zone bounded on one side by a ten foot wall and the other by trash dumpsters and service entrances. An appropriately detailed building at the end of the street will allow for a visually appealing terminus, while directing pedestrian traffic towards the City Dock area.

Urban Scheme A

This first urban scheme retains all of the existing structures and bulkheads, while infilling and making additions to buildings to create a more continuous urban edge. The Annapolis Center is located on the north side of the harbor adjacent to the existing Harbormaster Office, while additional commercial establishments

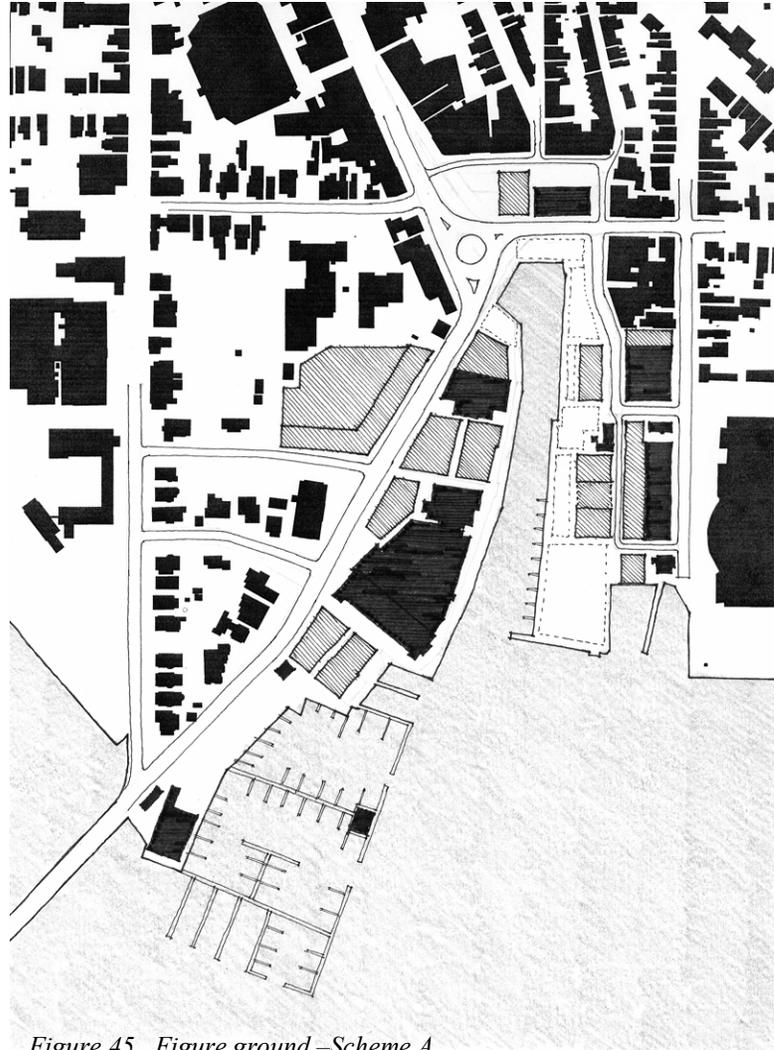


Figure 45. Figure ground –Scheme A

line the area on the east side. New mixed-use structures fill in the spaces between the existing Marriott Hotel, Pusser’s restaurant, Fleet Reserve Club, and Fawcett boat supply store. A parking structure on the south side of Compromise Street is lined with residential units. Though not ideal, the scheme is the most feasible and least intrusive option that would offer significant improvement to the waterfront area.

Urban Scheme B

This scheme takes a completely opposite approach from Scheme A, removing many existing structures and drastically altering the bulkhead line and street layout. By overlaying a grid over the existing city fabric, a new order is given to the development of the waterfront. The Annapolis Center is located

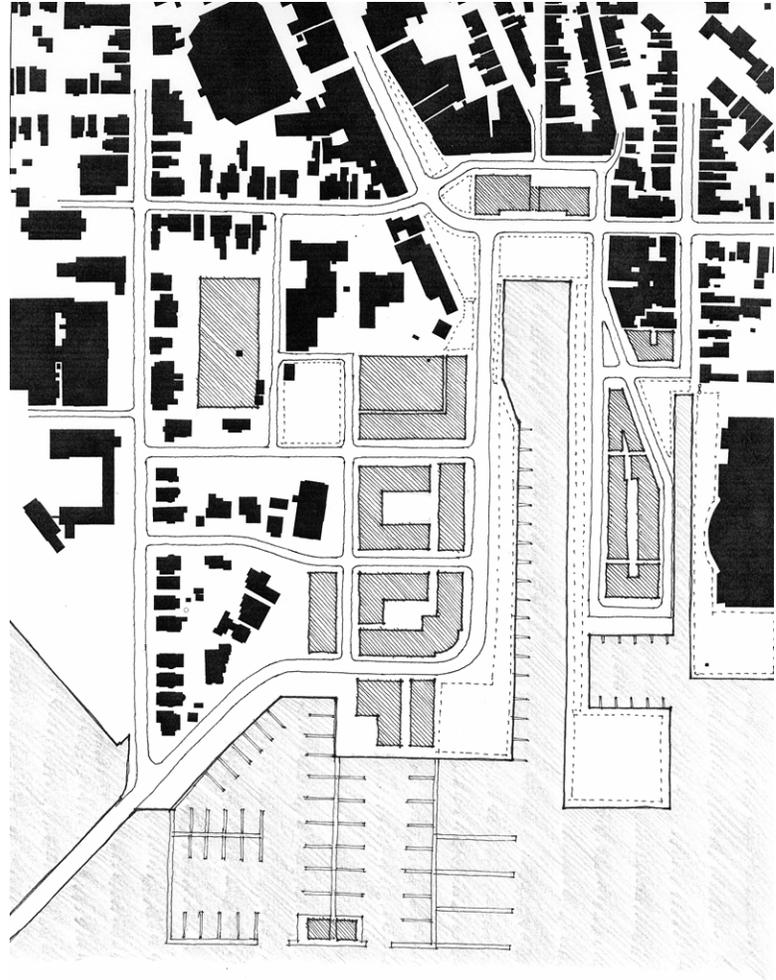


Figure 46. Figure ground –Scheme B

prominently at the end of the harbor inlet, while keeping open the visual axis up Main Street. On the north side of the inlet, new commercial/residential structures create an oblique connection to a new canal cutting into part of Prince George Street. On the opposite side, a second parking structure is built into the hillside on the interior of a residential block with a landscaped playground occupying its roof. Overall, this scheme provides more space and a greater sense of order, however it requires such a radical alteration of the existing urban fabric that it may destroy the genius loci of the Annapolis waterfront area.

Urban Scheme C

The Annapolis Center is located within a roundabout at the head of the City Dock, giving it a very prominent presence to visitors from automobile and boat alike. A new grid is overlaid on the site, however it is perpendicular to the existing Compromise Street and the new waterline. Compromise Street is straightened from

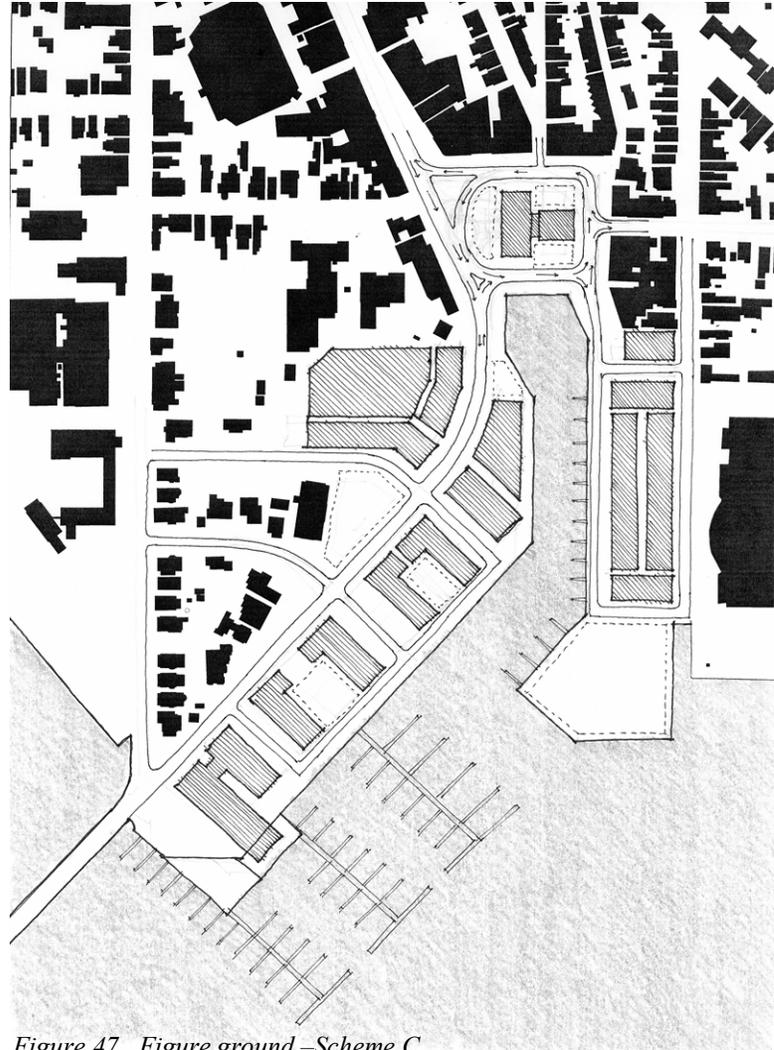


Figure 47. Figure ground - Scheme C

the Spa Creek Bridge towards the harbor, while a secondary street travels along the water's edge to bring more public activity to the waterfront. The buildings are sited perpendicular to the water to allow the greatest amount of visual porosity to and from the water. The perpendicular siting is also reminiscent of the industrial and commercial buildings that once fronted the waterfront. This scheme attempts to create more order for the waterfront buildings, but does so in a much more sensitive manner than the previous scheme.

Urban Scheme D

Similar to Scheme C, this intervention incorporates several modifications to the Annapolis Center site and the waterfront buildings. The form of the Annapolis Center is a direct continuation of the urban fabric along Main Street and Randall Street, while a public space is carved out of the northwest corner of

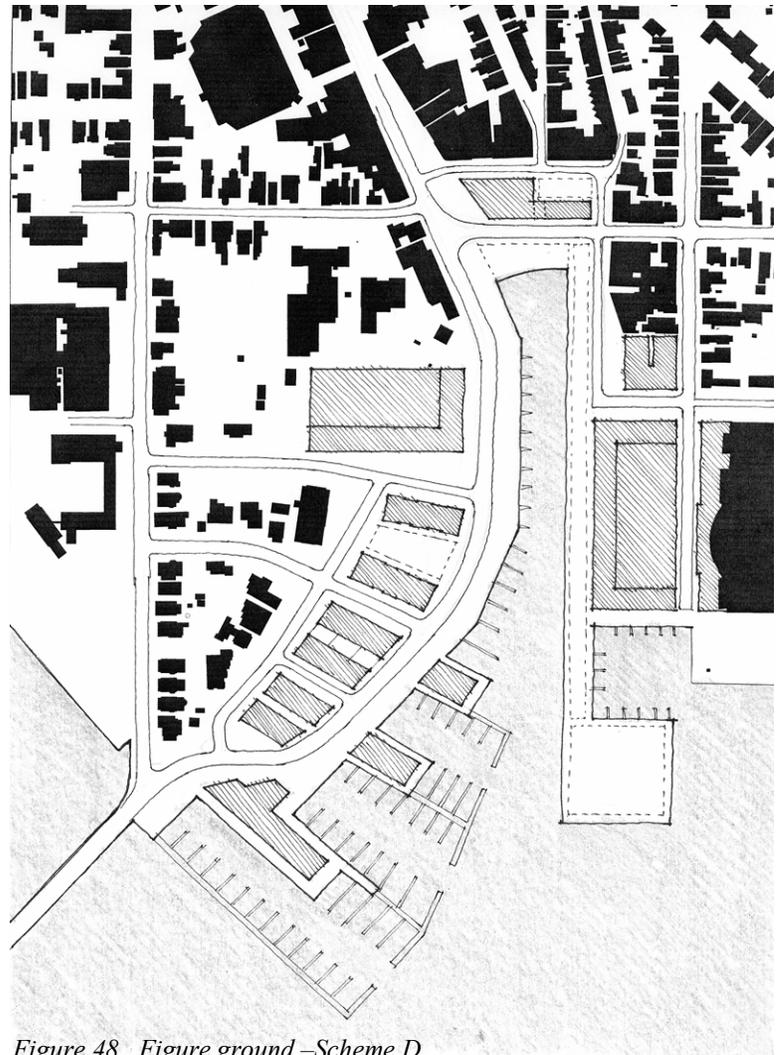


Figure 48. Figure ground –Scheme D

the building. On the north side of Dock Street, a parking structure is buried within a wrapper of commercial and office spaces. The intervention on the south side is less angular than in previous schemes, incorporating a gently curved street along the water's edge with waterfront structures built on piers jutting out into the water. This scheme was based loosely on Asplund's plan for Stockholm, where the long fingers of buildings fan out to make a transition from a parallel to a perpendicular orientation.

Urban Scheme E

This scheme smoothes the curve from the previous scheme to create a more continuous edge along the water. It also emphasizes the fanning out of the boat slips as they approach the Spa Creek Bridge. This effect would multiply the number of boats and masts seen in the distance as one travels around the bend in the

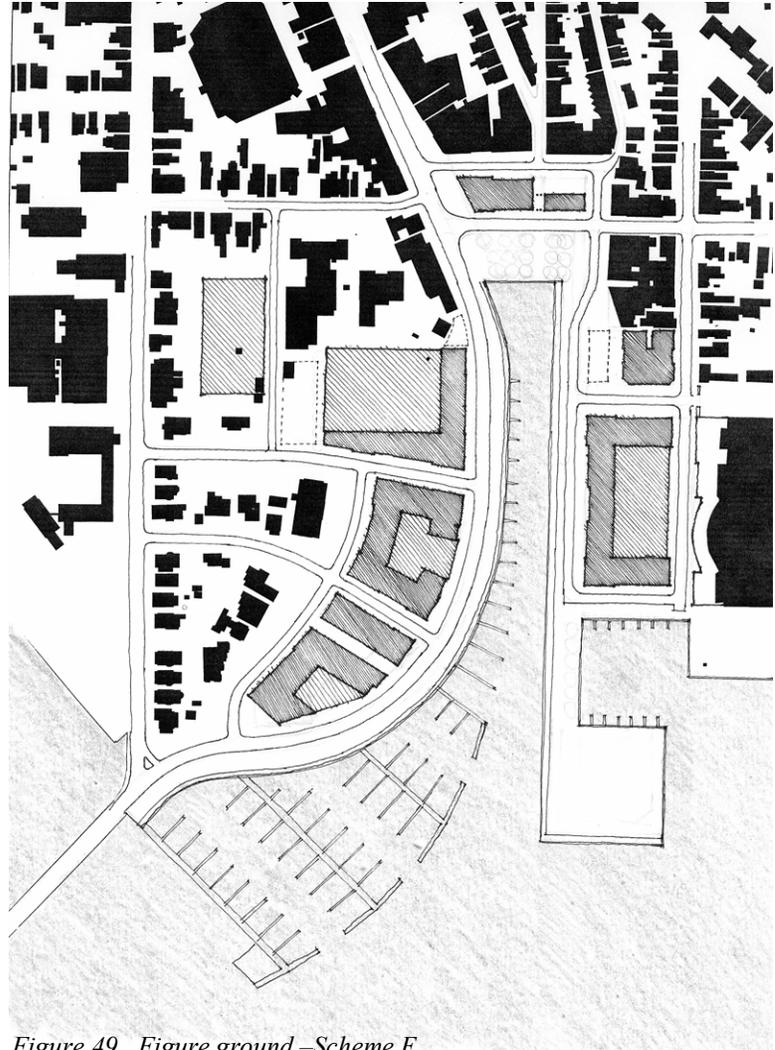


Figure 49. Figure ground –Scheme E

pedestrian promenade. Being the life blood of the city, the sailboats would play a primary, rather than a secondary role in defining the form of the city.

Urban Scheme F

Combining several of the past schemes, this intervention brings back the angle along Compromise Street, but now has a more linear orientation of buildings along the water's edge. The plaza at the east end of the City Dock has been modified in shape to reflect the line of sight from Main Street out to the water. A new amphitheater

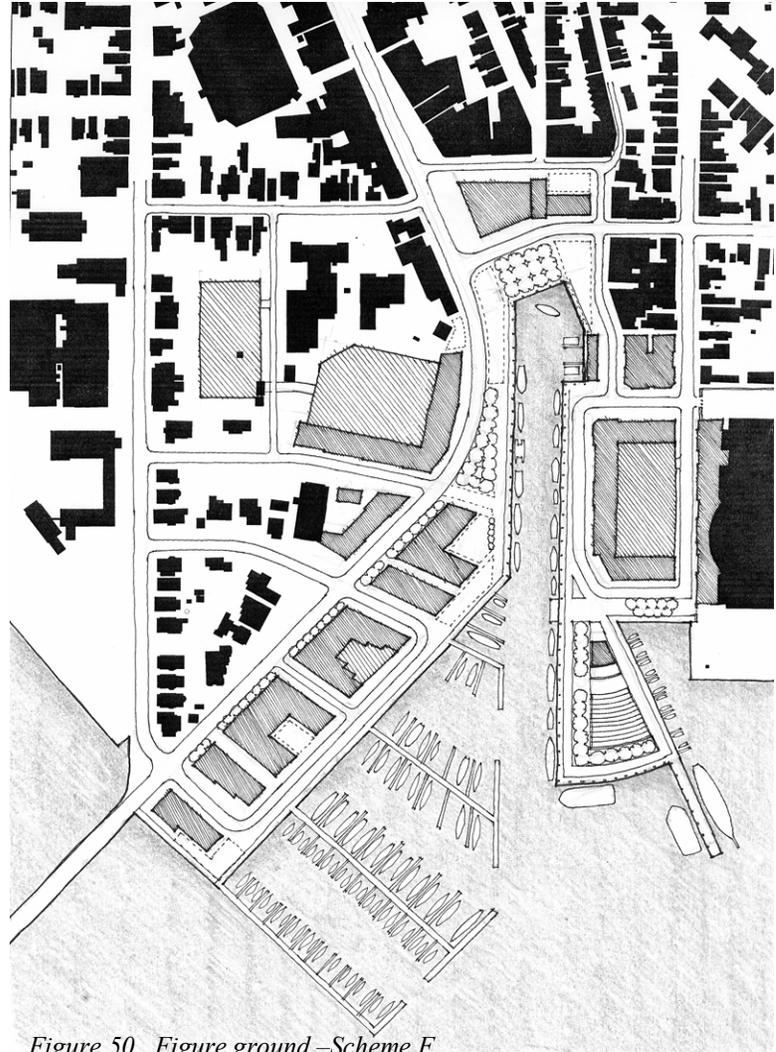


Figure 50. Figure ground—Scheme F

occupies the space in the wedge created by this angle and the orthogonal pedestrian walkway. It faces toward the city so that spectators get a view of the city while enjoying the show that is being held there. Overall, this scheme begins to create the varied, intimate spaces that could eventually become “places,” given the proper land uses.

Urban Scheme G

Nearly identical to the previous scheme, this scheme adds a traffic circle at the southern end of Compromise Street to better regulate vehicular circulation to and from the bridge over Spa Creek.

The new outer street which parallels Compromise Street continues into Market Square and becomes Main Street, while

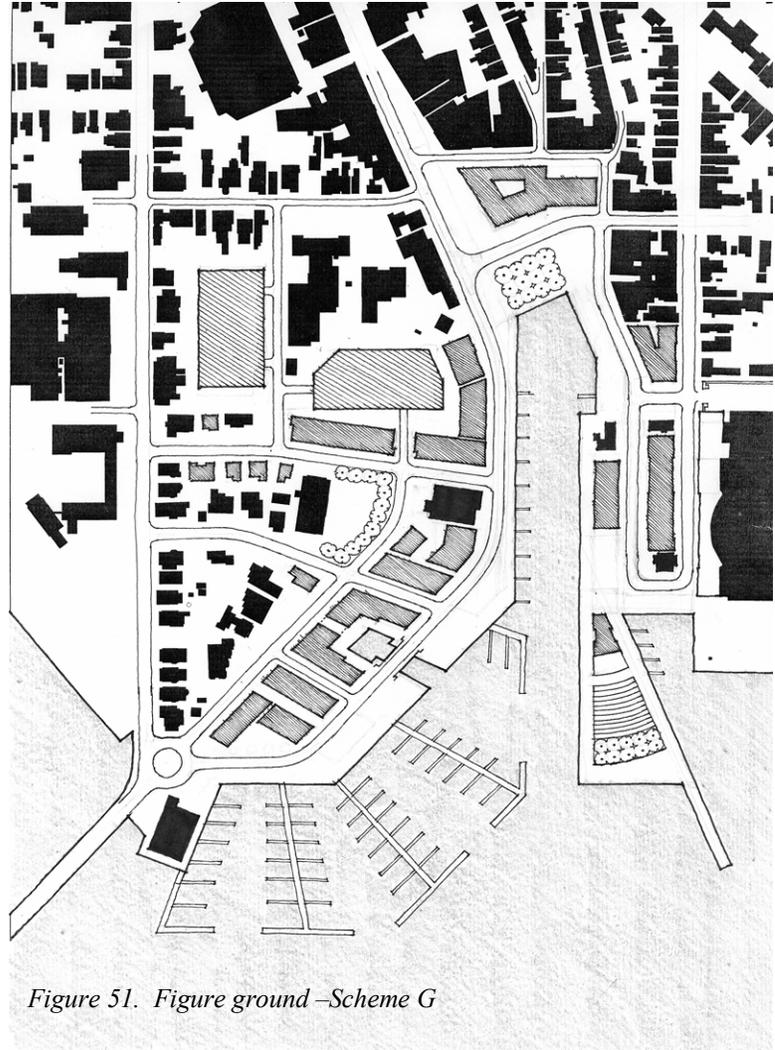


Figure 51. Figure ground - Scheme G

Compromise Street terminates at the new parking garage. On the other side of Ego Alley, Dock Street continues the angle of the existing buildings and wraps around to connect to Prince George Street. This scheme also keeps as many existing buildings as possible in the intervention area, including the Yacht Club, Fleet Club, Harbormaster's Office, and two residential buildings along Prince George Street.

VII. FINAL DESIGN

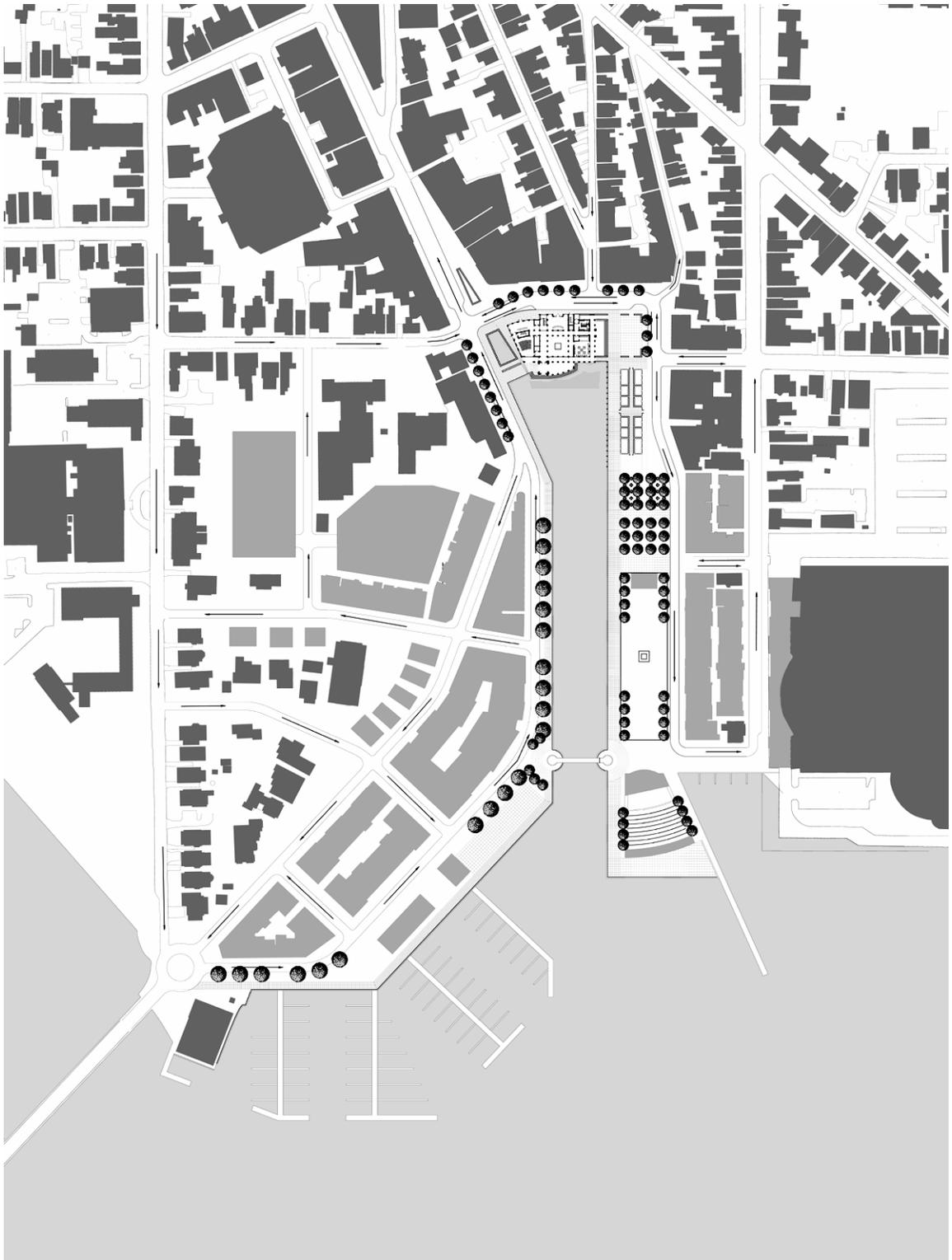


Figure 52. Proposed Siteplan

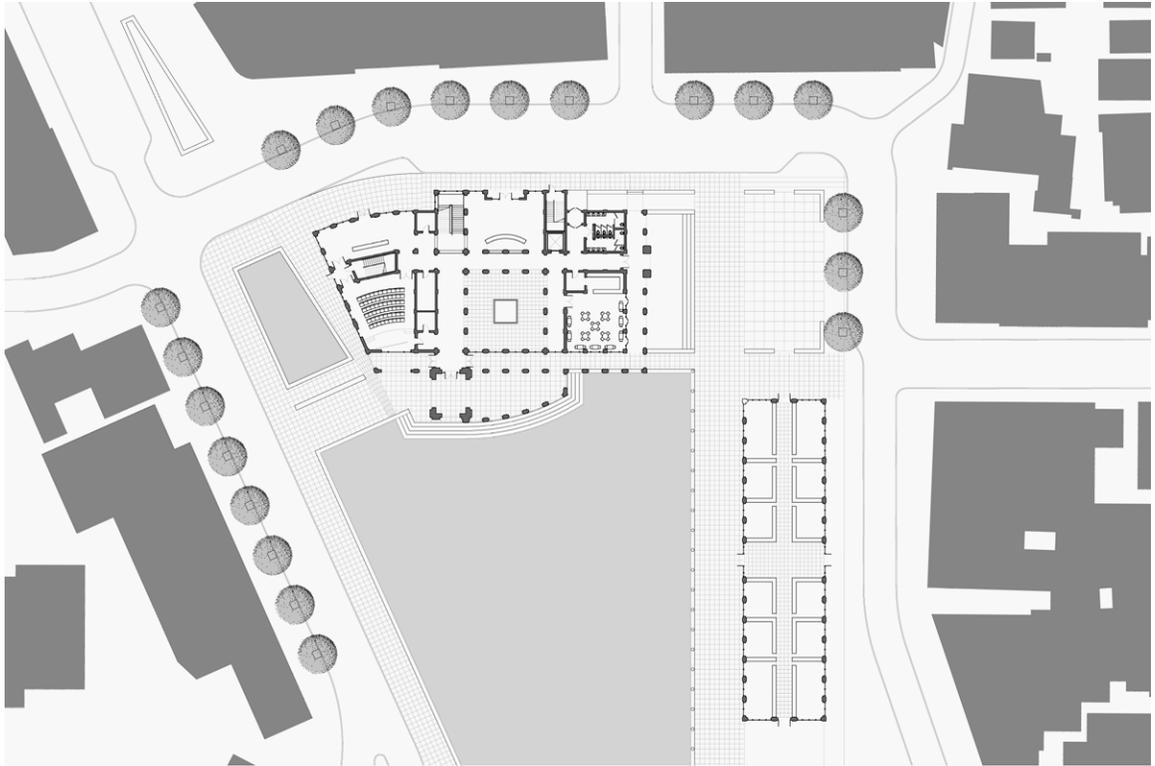


Figure 53. Proposed Siteplan - enlarged

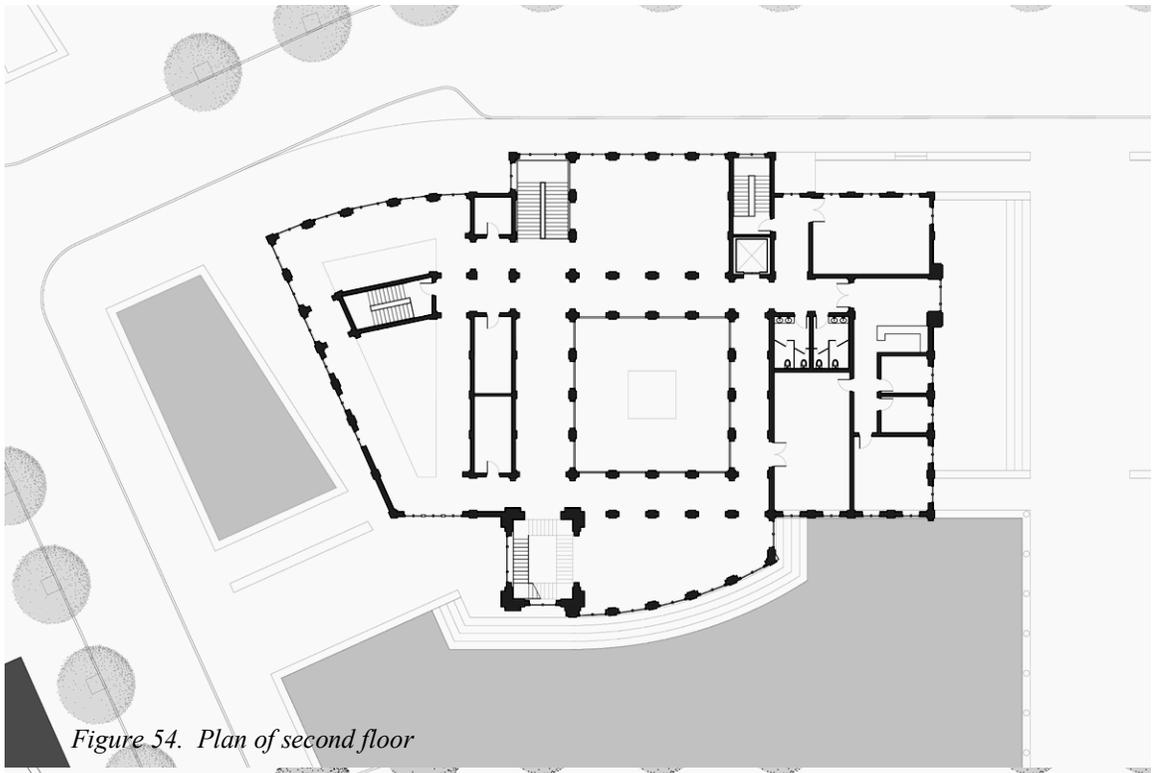


Figure 54. Plan of second floor

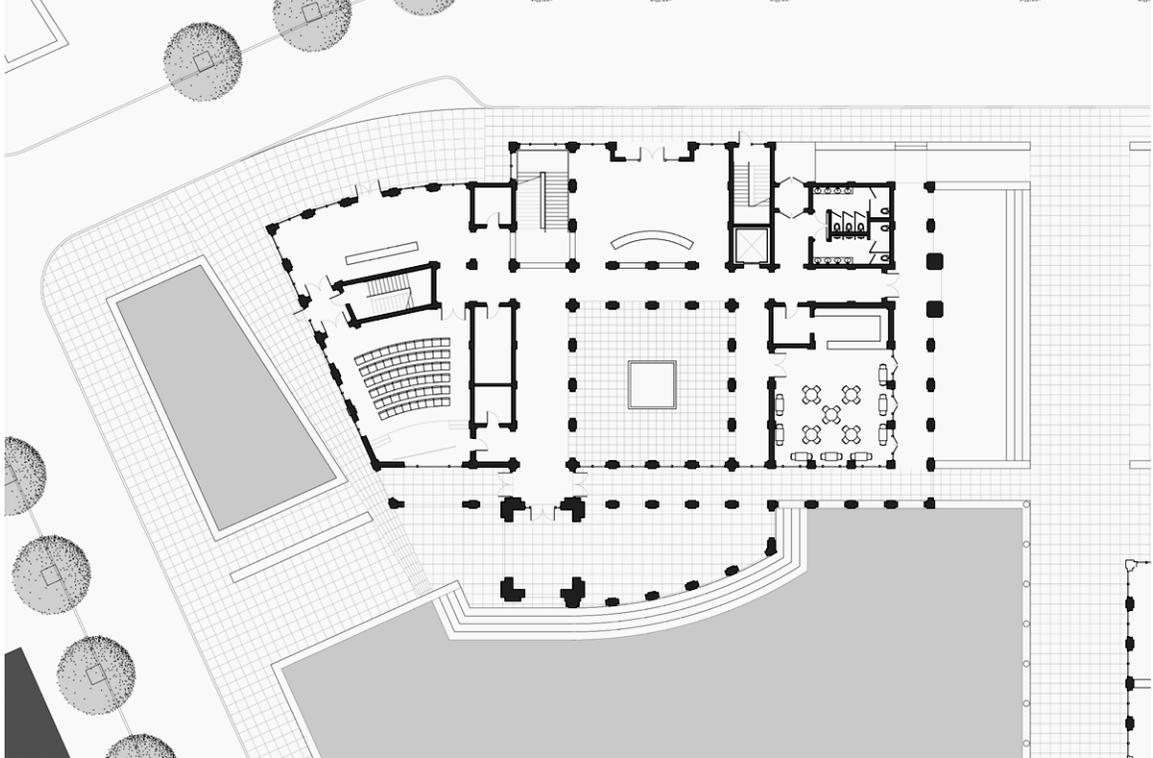


Figure 55. Plan of first floor

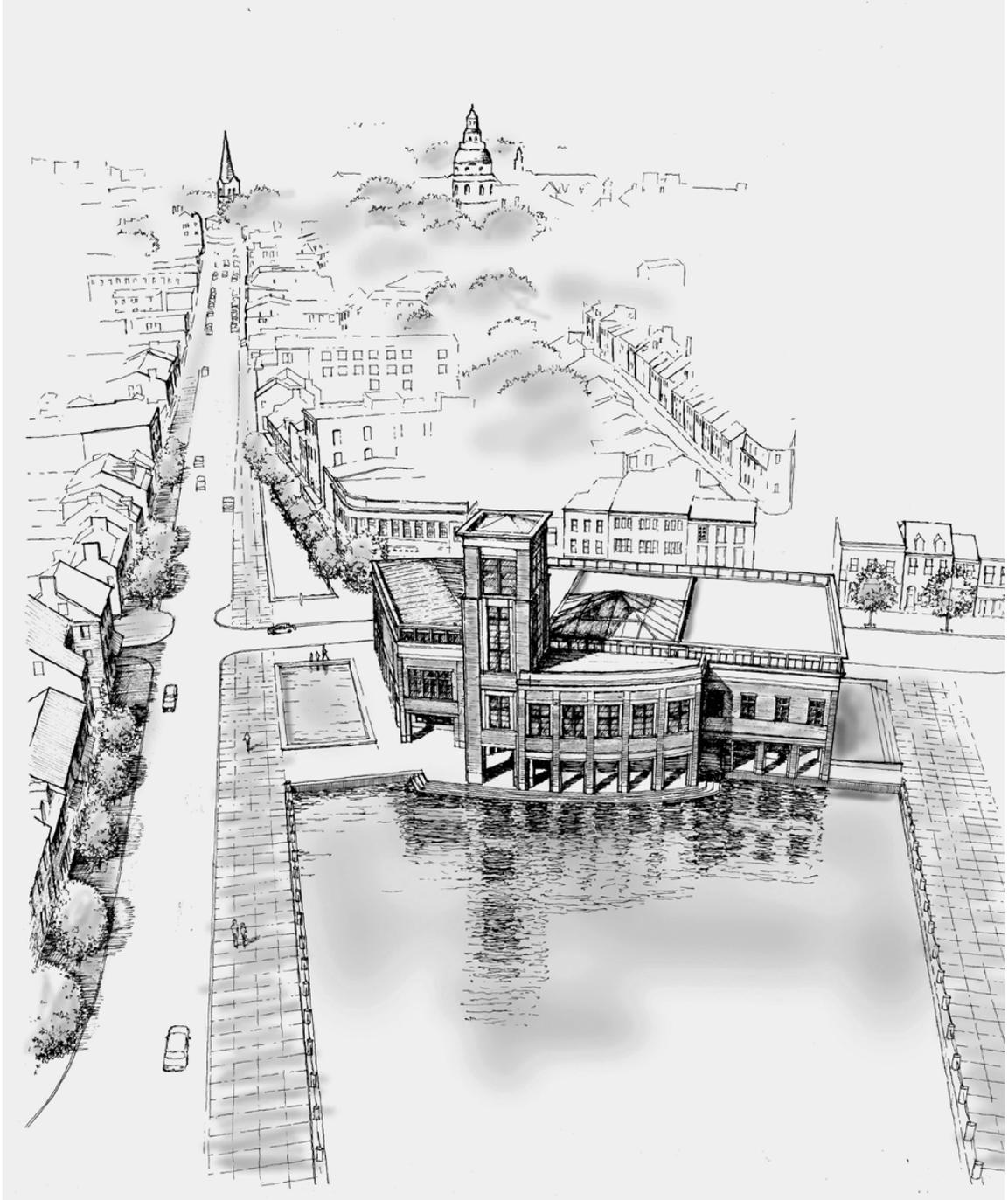


Figure 56. Aerial perspective



Figure 57. East elevation/site section

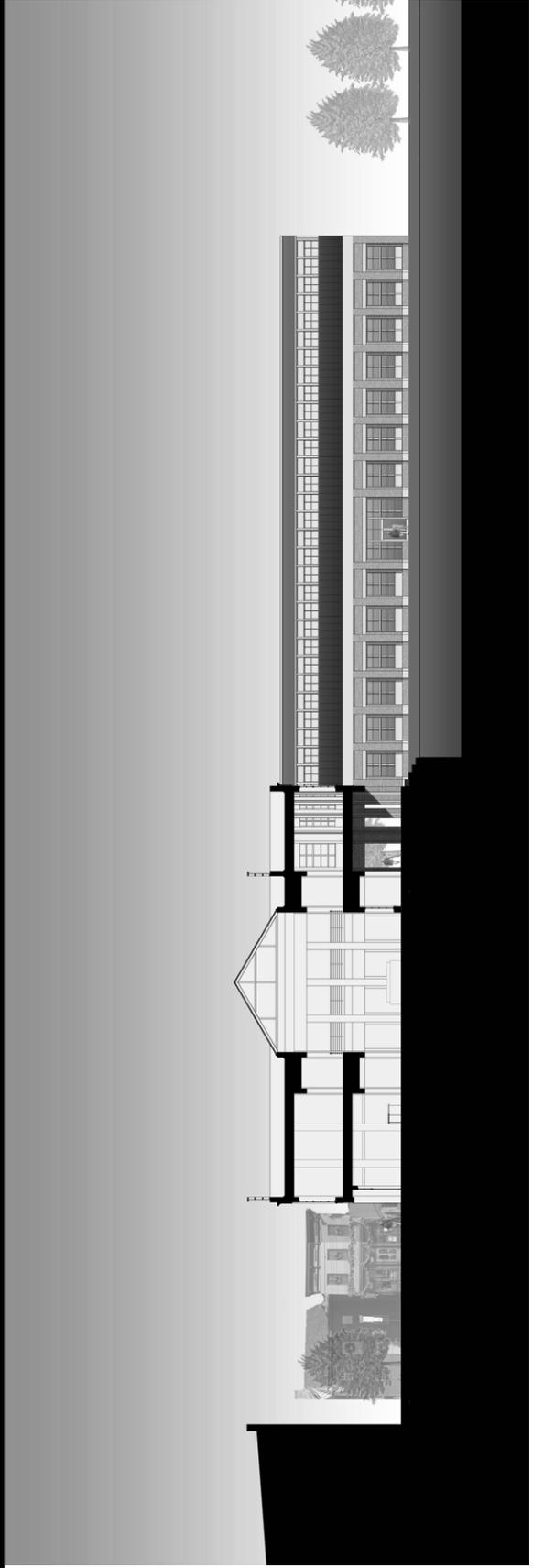


Figure 58. Transverse building section

Figure 59. North elevation



Figure 60. South elevation



Figure 61. West elevation



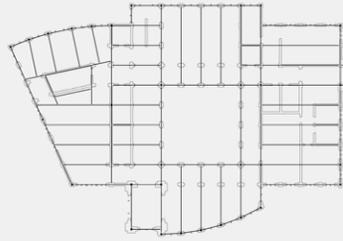


Figure 62. Structural plans

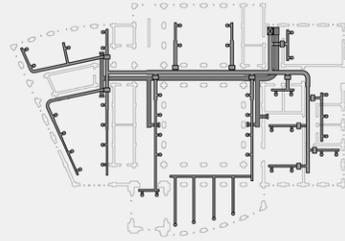
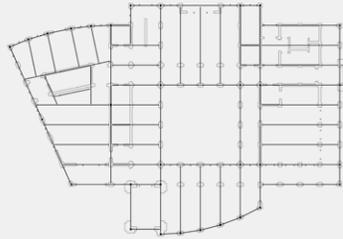


Figure 63. Mechanical plans

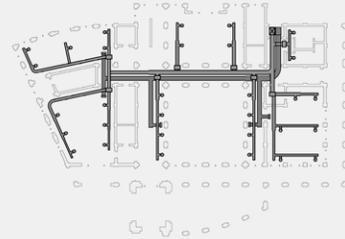


Figure 64. Detail elevation

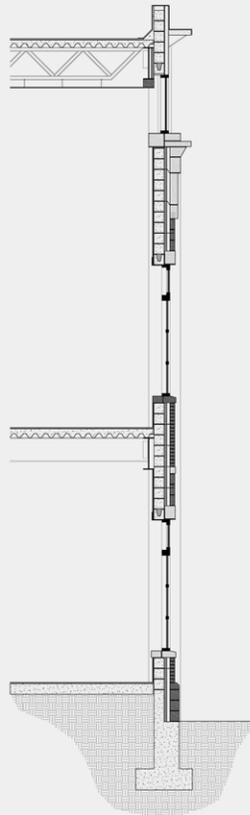


Figure 65. Wall section



Figure 66. Promenade vignette

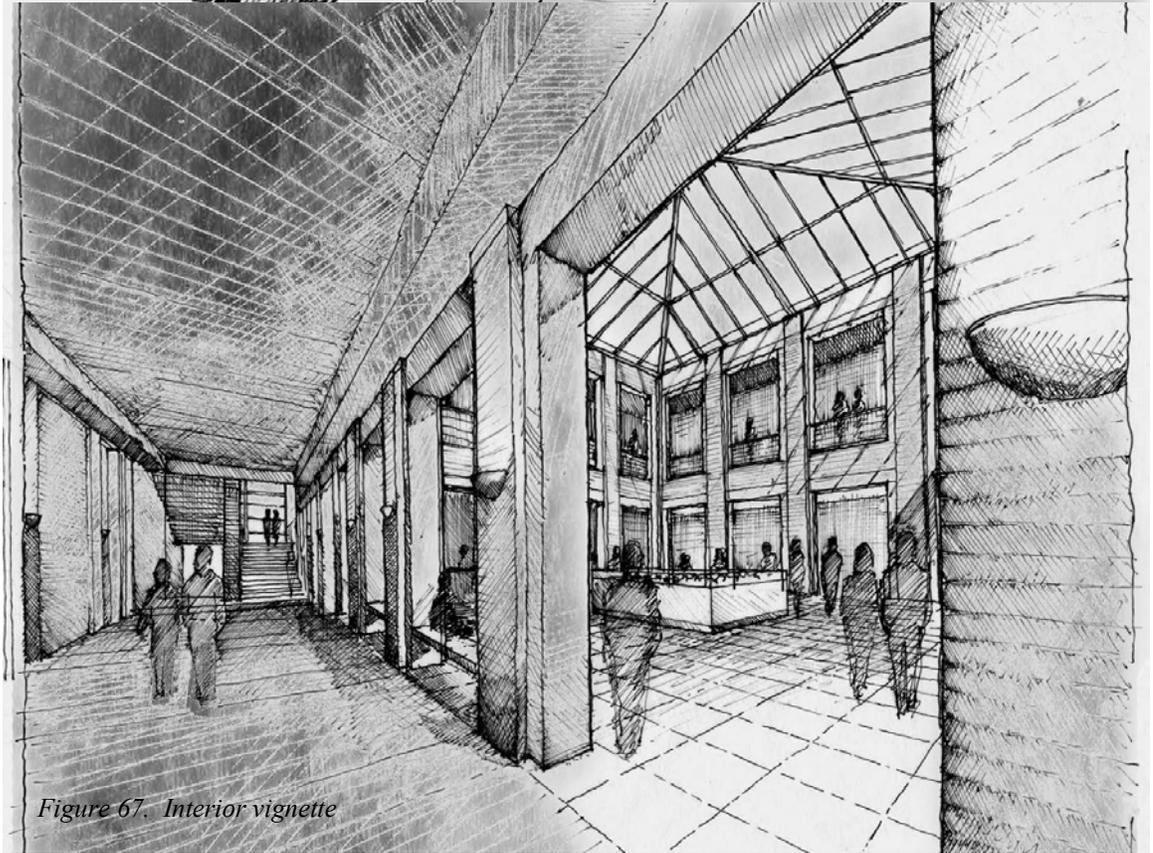


Figure 67. Interior vignette

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ENDNOTES

¹ Groat, Linda, editor. Giving Places Meaning. London: Harcourt Brace & Company, Publishers, 1995, p. 39.

² Keim, Kevin P. An Architectural Life: Memoirs & Memories of Charles W. Moore. Boston: Bulfinch Press, 1996, p. 101.

³ Ibid, pp. 100-101.

⁴ Groat, p.

⁵ Ibid, p.

⁶ Anderson, Elizabeth B. Annapolis: A Walk Through History. Centreville, MD: Tidewater Publishers, 1984, p. 15.

⁷ Miller, Marcia M. and Orlando Ridout V. Architecture in Annapolis: A Field Guide. Crownsville, MD: Maryland Historical Trust Press, 1998, p. 7.

⁸ Anderson, pp. 16-17.

⁹ Miller, p. 8.

¹⁰ Anderson, p. 17.

¹¹ Ibid, p. 19.

¹² Anderson, pp. 20-21.

¹³ Ibid, p. 21.

¹⁴ Ibid, pp. 22-23.