

# FOSTERING HOMEFULNESS

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Shelby Marie Pollack  
Master in Architecture | May 2022

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Fostering Homefulness

Shelby Marie Pollack

Thesis submitted to the faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Architecture  
in  
Architecture

Susan Piedmont-Palladino  
Marcia Feurstein  
Selin Ozertugrul

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# FOSTERING HOMEFULNESS

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## Abstract

The mental health crisis is one of the many pandemics that the world is facing. For years it has been something that has been looked down upon as something that only people in mental institutions deal with, but in fact it is much more widespread than previously thought. The recent Covid-19 pandemic has brought to light the many struggles that people face and has led to a push for a focus on healing these invisible ailments.

Often we think of doctors as the people who are responsible for anything health related, but as people spend a vast majority of their time indoors, that responsibility really falls on architects. The design world seems to support this theory as trends have led towards the incorporation of more natural elements into buildings, often referred to as, 'biophilia' and 'wellness' principles. While we enjoy the views of nature and fresh air in our daily lives, there is also scientific evidence to prove that these elements are beneficial to the physical and mental health of living beings. Thus,

as architects we have the ability to go beyond creating a merely visually appealing and functionally operating spaces, and should use our skills to create environments that have a positive impact on the users' well-being.

For this thesis, I redesigned the way in which group homes are designed for teens in Foster Care with these principles in mind. Teens are often the hardest to place with families, as many foster parents don't want to deal with the effects that childhood trauma has had on these individuals, so many of them end up in group homes. These institutions often provide resources, but unfortunately lack the individualized attention and home-like feeling that living with a family does, in the best-case scenario. It has been my mission to design a place that provides the residents with the comforts of a home, as well as wellness and nature-based spaces to ensure that they have the time and space to heal and grow.



## FOSTERING HOMEFULNESS

Shelby Marie Pollack

### General Audience Abstract

Many teens in foster care end up in group housing. While these spaces provide shelter and the ability for social workers to stop by, they lack the consistent support and resources of living in a home with a family. My thesis dives into what makes a new space feel like home and how various methods of architecture and interior design can integrate therapeutic elements into living spaces used by teens to help them heal from childhood trauma. The existing building (Bundy School) contains an organization called Safe Shores,

which provides children with a safe space to report abuse; it gives them access to legal, forensic, and mental health resources to help them get justice and handle the trauma that they have been through. The existing building doesn't currently provide any housing resources for the victims. My thesis is a renovation of the existing office spaces, as well as the addition of a new building providing housing for teens in foster care, victims of abuse, or any teens who are in need of housing in a long or short term capacity.

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## Dedication

To everyone who has ever needed...  
a place to give them a chance,  
a place of love and care,  
a place to heal from the past,  
a place to have the opportunity to thrive,  
and a place to call home.

## Acknowledgements

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Figure o.1

THESIS STUDENT  
Shelby Pollack, Assoc. AIA, AIAS  
M.Arch, VT WAAC 2022



Figure o.2<sup>1</sup>

CHAIR OF THESIS COMMITTEE  
Susan Piedmont-Palladino, RA  
VT WAAC



Figure o.3<sup>2</sup>

MEMBER OF THESIS COMMITTEE  
Marcia Feuerstein, Ph.D., AIA  
VT WAAC



Figure o.4<sup>3</sup>

MEMBER OF THESIS COMMITTEE  
Selin Ozertugrul, AIA  
Gensler DC



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**Astha Bhavsar, AIA**  
VT WAAC, Student

**Desiree Hollar, AIA**  
ISTUDIO Architects

**Nupur Khadilkar, LEED GA**  
Hoffman Architects, Inc.

**Cedric LaLane**  
Cornell University, Student

**Anita McDonald**  
AZ Department of Child Safety

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WoodWorks

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Bonstra Haresign Architects

**Wandy Pascoal**  
The City of Boston, Housing  
Innovation Design

**Rick Schneider, FAIA, LEED AP**  
ISTUDIO Architects



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# 1 - INTRODUCTION

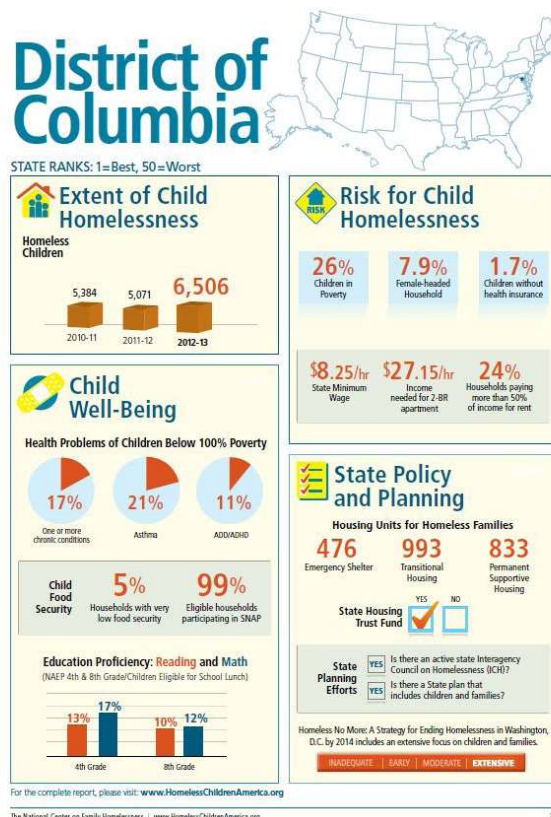
# Child Homelessness in the US

It seems that more often than not the people who we think about as homeless are adults, but believe it or not in 2013, "2.5 million children are now homeless each year in America".<sup>4</sup> That number is staggering. Notable reasons for child homelessness are, "(1) the nation's high poverty rate; (2) lack of affordable housing across the nation; (3) continuing impacts of the Great Recession; (4) racial disparities; (5) the challenges of single parenting; and (6) the ways in which traumatic experiences, especially domestic violence, precede and prolong homelessness for families."<sup>5</sup> Number 6 highlights how families escaping their abuser, who may be providing necessities to the victims, can feel that it's difficult to leave. Situations like this force the victims to move from one risky situation to the next and have to deal with another set of issues.

Thankfully, although the spacing is limited, there are quite a few womens' and family shelters as well as group homes out there that provide housing, food, and other life resources for single mothers and their children. But there need to be more and there needs to be more of a focus on healing and stopping the cycle so that it doesn't continue on for generations to come.

**Figure 1.12<sup>6</sup>** This figure depicts data on homeless children in Washington DC. It looks like the number of homeless children increased by 1500 children over the course of one year from when this data was taken. Based on the housing costs expressed here, it seems that the lack of affordability of housing is a big factor in homelessness in DC. On top of that, homelessness is limiting the success and opportunities for these children as their testing scores are significantly low and may not improve as they get older.

**Figure 1.11**  
1/2 were in foster care.<sup>7</sup>  
Half! That is quite a significant number and makes it clear that there is a foster care to homelessness pipeline that needs to be broken.



# Homing the Homeless

To many of us who have never lived a day without a roof over our head, the concept of not having that luxury can seem foreign. For many homeless people, basic resources like a hot meal, a place to rest one's head and even a place to use the rest room, become hard to come by and one must tailor every action to lead one to these resources. This puts these people into a survival state consistently can have profoundly negative affects on one's mental state. Any sort of housing for the homeless should allow for refuge and healing. As Esther Sternberg states in her TED talk, "we know that stress can make you sick. Chronic stress increases the frequency and severity of viral infections, decrease vaccine take rate so if you go out to get a vaccine you're less protected, slows wound healing, speeds growth and speeds chromosomal aging. So it doesn't make sense to take a person who's already anxious and already stressed and put them into a place where they're going to be more so".<sup>9</sup> Thus, if we want to put an end to homelessness and actually help these people who have had to live on the streets, we need to make sure that the spaces we are designing are not only readily available, but also are designed in such a way that they are actually beneficial to the residents. This is something that can be achieved by providing spaces that are beyond a bed for a night and a hot meal; but rather a place to call home for as long as it is needed, a hot and healthy meal, as well as resources and amenities that help the residents to prepare themselves to live independently, but also knowing that they still have the support of this community that was able to help them get back on their feet again.

## Housing First

"The 'Housing First' model...is a homeless assistance approach that prioritizes providing people experiencing homelessness with permanent housing as quickly as possible, and then providing voluntary supportive services as needed. Our overriding goal in service delivery at the site is to balance several objectives – the costs of operating and managing the housing, the safety and security of the entire tenant community, and the diverse needs of the individual tenants for housing stability"<sup>8</sup>

## Goals of Housing

- Providing housing stability
- Evoking a sense of belonging and homefulness
- Opportunities for community engagement
- Avoiding institutional materials and formats
- Continued support beyond stay duration
- Actually fostering healing, vs a temporary fix



thetriconic CW MH

Today is #WorldMentalHealthDay and I want to share something rly vulnerable. Here's a snippet from my diary at the start of the pandemic last year. At the time I was living in a recovery house that had a covid outbreak and within hours they put everyone into emergency housing who was homeless. I was one of those people. I had no belongings, no food, no adaptions, no carer and no medication. I also lost all medical care including my mental health support overnight due to redeployment. I'd gone from seeing the mental health team twice daily (as a high risk patient) with medication in lock boxes to no protective measures. I was stranded alone in inaccessible and dangerous accommodation on a motorway away from everything.

I'm sharing this because so many disabled and vulnerable ppl I've spoken to online have had similar experiences. We so often look at mental illness as this singular thing that has to be tackled – and whilst that's true in some cases, in many it's the result of socioeconomic factors or trauma. It's common knowledge that marginalised groups suffer the most at the hands of austerity, but we NEED to do more as a society to lobby and put pressure on local MPs / government to ensure that lives aren't lost to people living in substandard conditions and slipping through the net with support.

**Figure 1.13** An account of a young, recovering, and homeless woman who found herself without access to resources or mental healthcare at the beginning of the Covid-19 outbreak<sup>10</sup>

## Foster Care Now

“The foster care system is meant to provide a temporary arrangement in which trained caregivers, including kinship or relative caregivers, provide for the care of a child when their biological parent(s) are unable to care for them. While living with a foster family, children will go to school and receive medical care and social services.”<sup>11</sup>

**“THE AVERAGE TIME A YOUNG PERSON SPENDS IN CARE IS ALMOST 2 YEARS”<sup>15</sup>**

But what we think of as temporary could be a day or until they age out of the system; “the average time a young person spends in care is almost 2 years (20.1 months).”<sup>12</sup> The goal is for it to be short term and for the children to be reunited with their biological families, but this is not always possible. “If reunification is not possible the goal is changed to adoption and a permanent home is sought for the youth.”<sup>13</sup>

Foster care is not a single entity; it is made up of federal, state, and local organizations. They all work together to look out for the wellbeing of children, protecting them from maltreatment, such as abuse; working to strengthen and reunite families; and finding a home for children who need one.”<sup>14</sup>



**Figure 1.21**

A young teen stands on a sidewalk with a trash bag. These bags are what are typically used by Foster Youth to move from one home to the next. It lacks permanence.<sup>16</sup>



**Figure 1.22**

One Foster Care alum's account of the hardship that they were put through after deal with such a loss. Nonetheless they were able to overcome it all and create a happy life for themselves.<sup>17</sup>



**Figure 1.23**

Sisters hold signs to announce their excitement for their adoption, one of the outcomes of Foster Care. They were in the system for just over two years, roughly the overall average.<sup>18</sup>

## Foster Care Teens & Group Homes

“OVER  
**77%**  
OF ALL FOSTER  
CHILDREN ARE  
PLACED WITH  
RELATIVES OR  
NON-RELATIVE  
CAREGIVERS.”<sup>19</sup>

BUT WHAT HAPPENS TO THE OTHER 23%? MOST ARE ABLE TO BE PLACED WITH FAMILIES. **ONCE FOSTER YOUTH REACH THE AGES OF 13-18, THE LIKELIHOOD OF THEM BEING PLACED WITH A FAMILY DROPS FROM 95% TO 58%.** THAT MEANS THAT ALL OF THESE TEENS ARE PUT INTO GROUP HOMES. THESE PLACES ARE OFTEN INSTITUTIONAL AND LACK WHAT HELPS THEM TO THRIVE IN LOVING HOMES.<sup>20</sup>

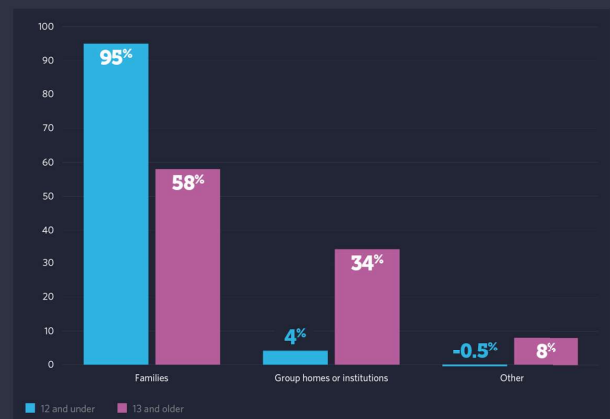
When it comes to teens in Foster Care, they are particularly hard to place. Many Foster Parents prefer not to host teens or completely refuse, as they, “don’t feel equipped to deal with a traumatized teen”.<sup>21</sup> A Foster Parent named Brittany (@foster-theteens), almost exclusively fosters teen girls. She has become quite popular on social media as an advocate for fostering teens.

When teens don’t have awesome Foster Parents like Brittany, they often end up in Group Homes, which tend to be more institutional than not. One teen, who lived in a group home, accounts that, “Group homes...aren’t a home. They’re a ‘holding facility’,” and he further elaborates that there is a strict schedule that they must follow.<sup>22</sup> His statement makes me feel like these places are run more like prisons and mental institutions than nurturing homes.

Because teens are put into group homes their lack of support is disproportionate to the younger children who are living with families and also have a higher chance of being adopted. There need to be more people in the world like Brittany who are look-

**Older Foster Kids Less Likely to Be Placed With Families**

Percentage of children in foster care by placement type and age in 2017.



Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% because of rounding.

Source: Annie E. Casey Foundation

© 2019 The Pew Charitable Trusts

**Figure 1.24**

The bar graph above showcases the data about placement with families versus In Group homes. The data shows that Foster Youth who are 12 and under are almost guaranteed to be placed with families, where as with youths over the age of 13 only have a 58% chance. The other 4.2% of teens are placed in Group homes, institutions, or another situation. The other situations have not been made clear by the associated article.<sup>23</sup>



# Childhood Trauma

When most people think of 'childhood trauma', they probably immediately think of physical abuse, but it is so much more than that. If we look at a list of the reason why children go into Foster Care, it is only then that we can begin to see the full extent of just how much those in Foster Care are potentially dealing with and need to heal from (See Figure 1.31).

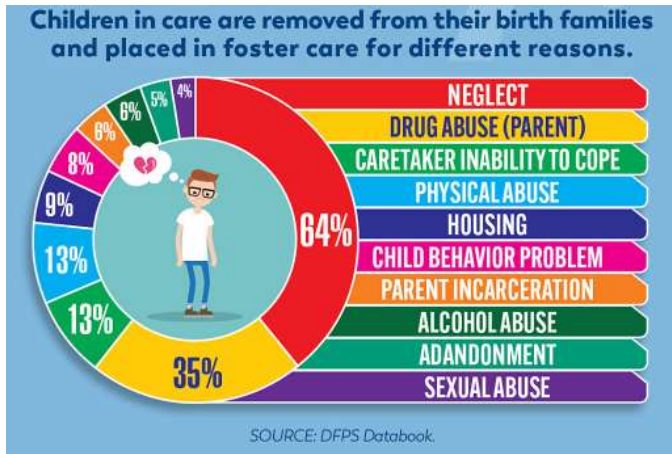


Figure 1.31

Sometimes in these situations of abuse, the children are unable to get away from it resulting in fatality (as graphed in Figure 1.32). There are also instances of this abuse in Foster Care; in Texas alone, 100 children died while in the childwelfare system since 2020.<sup>24</sup>

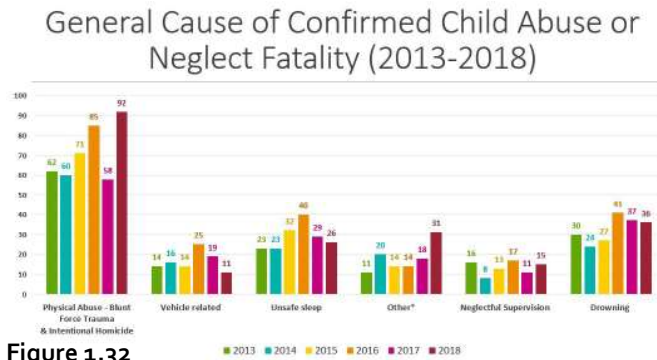


Figure 1.32



Figure 1.33

The cover of a multi-image post explaining that on top of physical abuse, there are other ways in which children can experience trauma growing up.<sup>25</sup>



Figure 1.34

Because of parental neglect among other reasons, some children are forced to 'grow up quickly' and figure out how to survive independently. This may also include the need to fight for one's life against the caregiver or just general protection from others.<sup>26</sup>

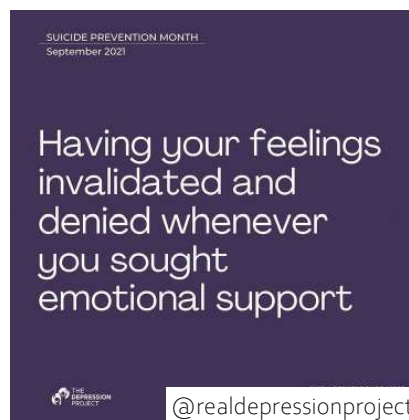


Figure 1.35

Part of a role of a parent or guardian is helping a child come to terms with the world. If they are not able to gain this support in childhood it is likely that they will lack emotional intelligence or an inability to cope with emotions into adulthood.<sup>27</sup>

## ...and the Mental Illness that Comes with it

Brains develop over the course of one's life, but the development that occurs in childhood creates the foundation for a person's mental future. This means that childhood trauma may create mental health issues for a person throughout their life if it is not dealt with at an early age.

These impacts are only heightened by the addition of homelessness, as, "Children experiencing homelessness face additional risks associated with residential instability, hunger insecurity, and often unremitting stress. These children commonly witnessed violence in their family and community, and are frequently separated from primary caregivers. Without the comfort, responsiveness, support, structure, and guidance from their caretakers during times of stress, these children are likely to feel less safe and to manifest more symptoms (Herbers et al., 2014) documented that "homeless children who experienced positive parenting were more likely to have fewer trauma symptoms and behavioral problems." Thus, a lot of these worries can be solved through the introduction of a previously homeless child to consistency of resources, thus breaking the mental need to fight for survival and escape the potentially dangerous environment that they were raised in.

On top of mental health issues, as we saw from previous data, there seems to be a correlation between lack of resources and low test scores, thus highlighting a potential lack of mental development. Thus providing access to education can help these children to continue their brain development in a positive way as well as education providing opportunities for the child to get out of the cycle.



**Figure 1.36**

*This post serves as a reminder that having access to basic needs is the foundation for mental health. We as a society need to make sure that every person has these basic human rights.<sup>28</sup>*

### "Brains are Built Over Time, From the Bottom Up"

Jack Shonkoff explains that the brain begins construction before birth and into adulthood, starting with simpler connections and moving into more complex ones. He notes that, "In the first few years of life, 700 to 1,000 new neural connections form every second. After this period of rapid proliferation, connections are reduced through a process called pruning, which allows brain circuits to become more efficient. The impact of experiences on brain development is greatest during these years—for better or for worse." Because of this, it is easier to form and heal these connections earlier on, "establishing a strong foundation for brain architecture. Research on traumatic life experiences and their impact on the child's developing brain make a strong case for the critical importance of prevention and early intervention in the lives of extremely poor and homeless children".<sup>29</sup>





2 - SITE

# Site Options

Figure 2.10<sup>30</sup>



① 770 M St SE  
Washington, DC 20003

Figure 2.11<sup>31</sup>

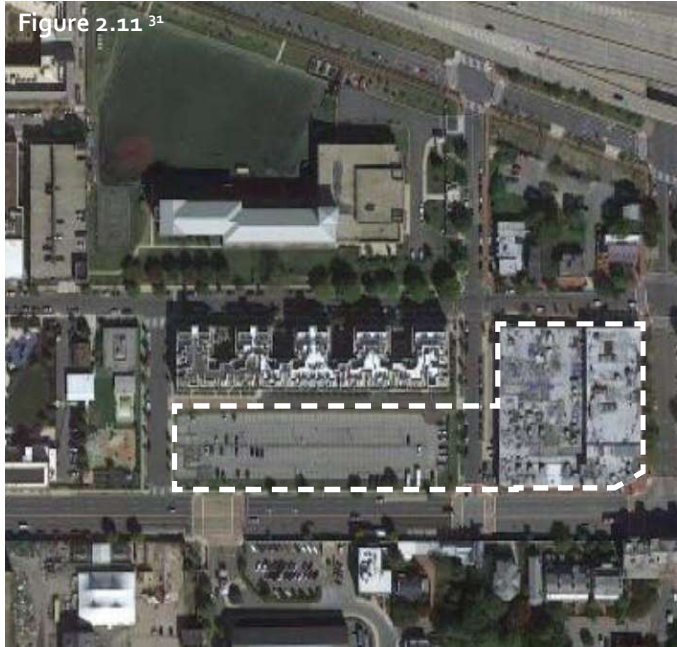


Figure 2.12<sup>32</sup>



② 601 15th St NE  
Washington, DC 20001

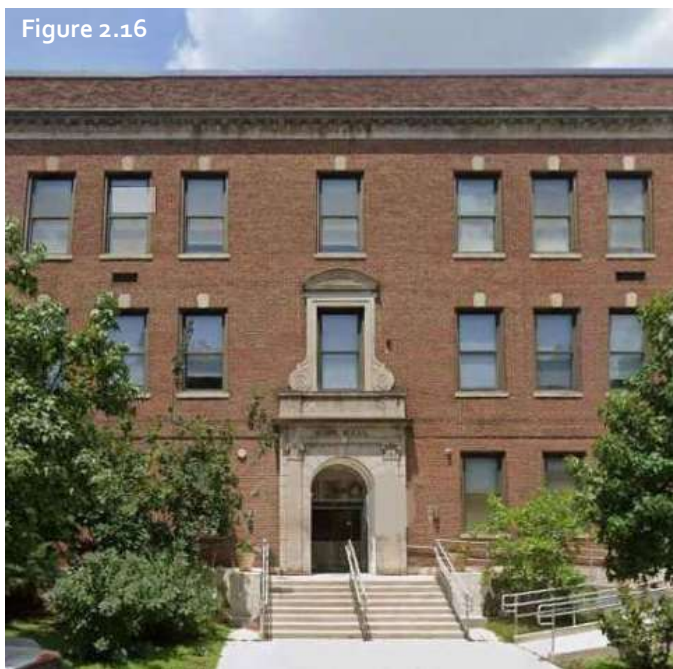
Figure 2.13<sup>33</sup>



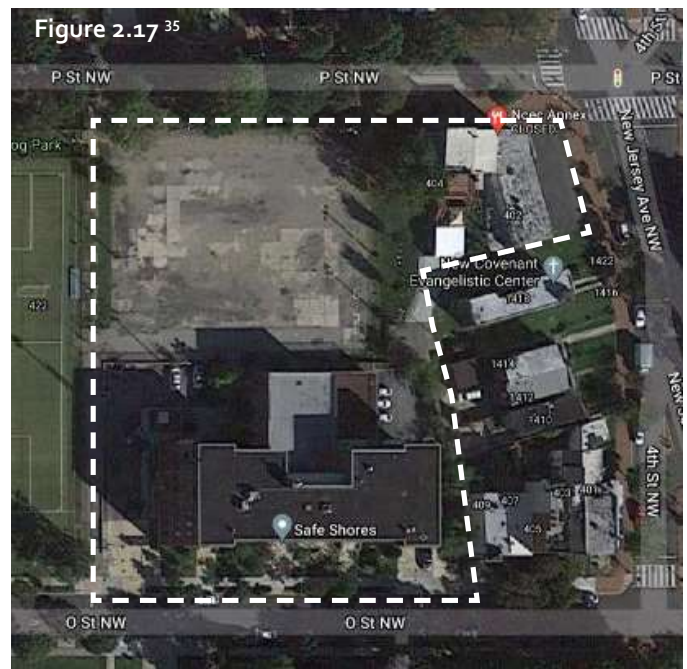




③ 117 S St Asaph St / 699 Prince St  
Alexandria, VA 22314



④ 429 O St NW / 402 P St NW  
Washington, DC 20001



# Site Comparison

	1	2	3	4
<b>GENERAL</b>				
<b>Address</b>	770 M St SE Washington, DC 20003	601 15th St NE Washington, DC 20001	117 S St Asaph St / 699 Prince St Alexandria, VA 22314	429 O St NW/ 402 P St NW Washington, DC 20001
<b>History</b>	Capitol Trolley Turn-around	Old school building	George Mason hotel in 1925 <sup>36</sup> Charles B Wang International Children's Building <sup>37</sup>	Now Safe Shores. As the Bundy School it specialized in helping, "children from poor environments, suffering physical limitations, or other problems" <sup>38</sup>
<b>Neighborhood</b>	Navy Yard	Kingman Park	Old town Alexandria	Shaw/Truxton Circle
<b>Vacancy</b>	No	Yes	No	Yes & no
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>				
<b>Train Stop</b>	0.5 mi	0.2 mi	0.8 mi	0.5 mi
<b>Bus Stop</b>	0.1 mi	0.1 mi	0.1 mi	427 ft
<b>Bike Share</b>	0.1 mi	0.1 mi	0.3 mi	0.2 mi
<b>Parking</b>	Street, Lot, Garage	Street, Lot	Street, Garage	Street, Lot
<b>EDUCATION</b>				
<b>Pre-Schools</b>	2	Many	Many	Many
<b>Elementary</b>	4	3	3	1
<b>Middle Schools</b>	0	3	1	3
<b>High Schools</b>	0	2	1	2
<b>Colleges</b>	0	1	2	1
<b>Educational and Cultural Centers</b>	Libraries, Museums, Theatres, Galleries, Art Workshops	Libraries, Museums, Performance Spaces, Gallery	Art Center, Libraries, Museums, Theatres, Historic buildings & Sites, Galleries	Libraries, Art Space, Galleries, Museums
<b>HEALTH</b>				
<b>Grocery Stores</b>	5	4	5	4
<b>Hospital</b>	1.1 mi	1 mi	1.4 mi	0.9 mi

For the purposes of analysis, I am considering places within a 15 minute walk of the site.

<b>Parks &amp; Rec</b>	Rec Center, Fields & Courts, Community Garden, Parks	Playground, Park, Fields & Courts, Rec Center, Community Garden	Plaza, Parks, Field & Courts, Trails	Fields & Courts, Parks, Rec Centers, Playgrounds, Aquatic Center, Boys & Girls Club, Garden, Community Garden
<b>OTHER</b>				
<b>Religions Supported</b>	Catholic, Christian, Baptist	Catholic, Christian, Baptist	Episcopal, Catholic, Baptist, Presbyterian	Evangelical, African Methodist, Islam, Mormonism, Baptist, Catholic, Zion Baptist
<b>Entertainment</b>	Sports, Shopping, Exercise, Military	Sports	N/A	Sports
<b>Relevant Resources</b>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little Wild Things City Farm</li> </ul>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe Shores (The DC Children's Advocacy Center)</li> <li>• SOME (So Others May Eat) HQ</li> <li>• Save the Children Action Network</li> </ul>
<b>PROS &amp; CONS</b>				
<b>Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide the area with an Upper Level School</li> <li>• Activate storefronts on 8th street to continue the retail street</li> <li>• Near the water - potential for water recreation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a residential area</li> <li>• In a lively area - H Street</li> <li>• Job opportunities for teens</li> <li>• Lots of nature over a 15 min walk</li> <li>• Near the water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close to the waterfront</li> <li>• Close to King Street</li> <li>• Close to natural settings</li> <li>• Job opportunities for teens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Near childrens' centers</li> <li>• Walking distance to many schools</li> <li>• Close to a Rec center, fields, and parks</li> <li>• Job opportunities for teens</li> <li>• In a residential area but close to downtown streets</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M Street is a busy street</li> <li>• Part of the site is currently game day parking</li> <li>• Very adult area (i.e. many bars nearby on 8th street)</li> <li>• Currently no Upper Level School</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Near a busy part of H street filled with bars</li> <li>• Small building and site</li> <li>• Unsure of building condition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not much access to public transit</li> <li>• Outside of DC</li> <li>• Minimal existing greenspace or opportunities for it</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homeless adults in the area</li> </ul>

Figure 2.2



Figure 2.30



Figure 2.31



Figure 2.32



Figure 2.33



Figure 2.34







Figure 2.35 <sup>39</sup>

## Final Site Decision

Based on all the information that I gathered, I believe that site 4, otherwise known as the Safe Shores/ NCEC Annex site, has the best opportunities to support my program. There are numerous educational facilities, outdoor activities, and public transit stops all within a 15 minute walk of the site. The soccer field adjacent to the site is already a hub in the community and building on that centrality will ensure engagement between the building residents and community members.

I chose to renovate an existing building because it seems like a great metaphor for the nonprofit that I have designed. Both in the case of the building and the lives of the residents, you can't change the past, but you can change it into something better. My design is a response to this fact of life.



Figure 2.36 <sup>40</sup>

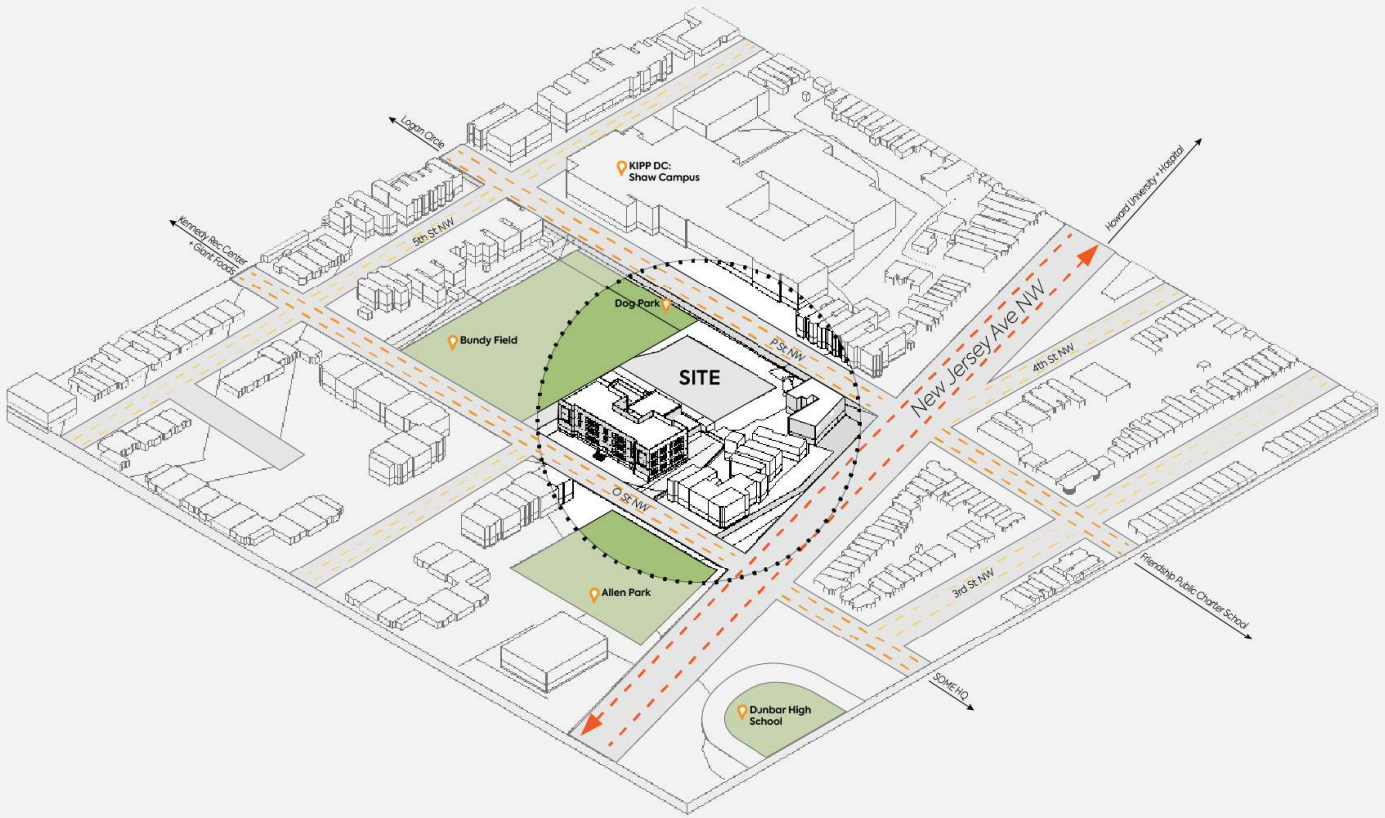


Figure 2.40

## Neighborhood Analysis

The Safe Shores building is located in the Truxton Circle neighborhood, and is most closely connected to the more well-known neighborhood of Shaw. Throughout the area there are quite a few resources that would benefit the residents of my building.



Figure 2.41

One of the main things that I looked for in my site search was a close proximity to school. Education is so important to the futures of the residents. It expands upon the opportunities that help them to have a successful future. In this area there are a few schools that are walkable within 5-10 minutes from the site. This allows the students to have the independence of being able to walk to school, as well as the ability to come back to the building at anytime throughout the day.

On the flip side, the proximity to the school also allows other students to walk across the street and take advantage of the resources that my building has to offer. They can go hang out in the cat cafe, do their homework in the library, or participate in an art class in the NCEC Annex building.

Other than a few local businesses, organizations, and educational facilities (as shown to the right), this area is primarily residential. Most of the buildings are historic, brick row houses.

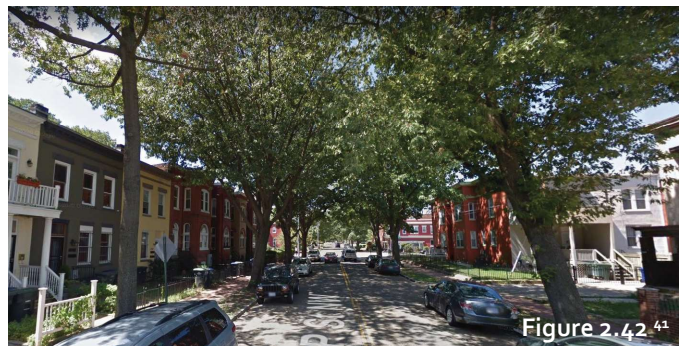


Figure 2.42<sup>41</sup>



# Local Resources



**Figure 2.43**  
*Safe Shores used to be Bundy School. The building has a history of helping people, including at one time housing the homeless<sup>42</sup>. It has since been renovated to accommodate office and therapy spaces for abused children in the DC area to advocate for child victims.*



**Figure 2.44**<sup>44</sup>  
*Dunbar High School is nearly across the street from the site. It is a historically black high school with a focus on STEM. My building will provide an additional place for students to go after school*



**Figure 2.45**  
*Bundy Field is a Hub in the area. Everytime I have been to the site there has been a soccer game going on. It seems like a great opportunity for residents to be active and also connect with the community.*



**Figure 2.46**<sup>45</sup>  
*Friendship Public Charter School is in the neighborhood. It is a K-12 school that supports high achieving students to pursue college and beyond.<sup>43</sup> The proximity of this school will help residents to succeed.*



**Figure 2.47**<sup>46</sup>  
*KIPP DC: Shaw Campus is an elementary school right next to my site. This site currently boasts a few community gardens. My building has a garden roof and could offer space to this school, as well as cooking classes.*



**Figure 2.48**<sup>47</sup>  
*Kennedy Recreation Center is a few blocks West of the site. It provides opportunities for recreation beyond the soccer field that Bundy Field Provides. It features a splash pad to cool off in during the summer.*



**Figure 2.49**<sup>48</sup>  
*Howard University is a college that is only about a 15 minute bike or bus ride away from my site. This proximity allows for residents to have greater involvement with the higher education community and potentially attend the college.*



**Figure 2.50**<sup>49</sup>  
*The SOME (So Others May Eat) Headquarters is a food advocacy network. Having food security allows for residents to shift their focus to other important things, such as school and mental wellness.*



## 3 - CONCEPT

---

# The Meaning of Homefulness

**HOMELESS** [ hohm-lis ]

adjective

without a home:

*a homeless child.*

noun (used with a plural verb)

the homeless, persons who lack permanent housing.<sup>50</sup>

*As stated on Dictionary.com*

**HOMELESS** adjective

home·less | \ hōm-les \

having no home or permanent place of residence<sup>51</sup>

*As stated by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary*

**No results found for homefulness**

**Figure 3.10** *The results when I searched 'homefulness' on dictionary.com.<sup>55</sup>*

## The Search for the meaning of Homefulness

Dictionaries describe homelessness as being without a home or a permanent residence. While that may be the case for some, for many others it is much more. Many homeless people are left to live on the street with a significant lack of resources that many of us take for granted, such as rest rooms, a bed, a hot meal, and the support of a community.

I looked up a definition for HOMEFULNESS - the opposite of homelessness; and it does not seem to have an official definition. To me, a homeful person is one who has love, support, and resources that give them the agency to be independent and well. It is to support a human's basic needs, as depicted by Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. They range from the bottom, being more basic and surrounding means of survival of the species; to more modern concepts at the top, which includes achievement and what I also consider to include mental health.

## What does a lack of basic resources have to do with housing previously homeless peoples?

Mental health issues are often connected to the lack of basic needs. When someone doesn't have these necessary survival resources, they spend their days foraging for things such as food and shelter.<sup>52</sup> This can lead to stresses of the hunter-gatherer era, that today's society are far past. This can effect brain development; "The impact of homelessness on the children, especially young children, is devastating and may lead to changes in brain architecture that can interfere with learning, emotional self-regulation, cognitive skills, and social relationships".<sup>53</sup>

There is an on-going issue with mental health around the world. Inpatient facilities used to "help" people with this, but many were shut down due to malpractice. Those that are still open are inaccessible as they are quite costly, and even if they were able to afford them, as of 2010, there were, "only 14 beds available per 100,000 people," while there are, "more than 8 million people [who] suffer from serious psychological problems." Often instead of getting the help that they need these people end up becoming homeless, become homeless again, or in prison. The lack of mental health care and access has lead to many crimes that have happened since, as a great deal of them have been caused by psychotic



**Figure 3.11** *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs<sup>56</sup>*

breaks; both resulting in prison time or, in worst case scenarios, death by law enforcement who are not educated properly on how to deal with mental health related events. People with serious mental illness is increasing in prisons; thus, this has led to a shift in the context of the care system. According to Dominic Sisti, the director of the Scattergood Program for Applied Ethics of Behavioral Health Care at the University of Pennsylvania, "Much of our mental health care now for individuals with serious mental illness has been shifted to correctional facilities."<sup>54</sup>

In order to stop this school-to-prison or even school-to-death pipeline, we need to look at the root cause of the issues, which tends to be this lack of resources and support from an early age.



**Figure 3.12**  
 "Gareth Hall, who is Black and Latino, and Fe Hall, who is Filipino, adopted [Christian] Hall from China in 2002 when he was a baby. They moved from New York City to the Poconos hoping to give him an idyllic childhood in an environment they thought would be safer."

As a child, Hall was diagnosed with reactive attachment disorder, a serious condition sometimes found in adopted children that makes it difficult for them to connect with their parents and interact with others. The disorder can be a result of not having basic needs met as early as infancy. Treatments include counseling for children and education for their parents, but experts say more research needs to be done.<sup>57</sup>

## HOME \ hōm \

1: the place (such as a house or apartment) where a person lives

*Right now his home is a small apartment.  
 People are concerned about protecting their homes.*

2: a family living together in one building, house, etc.  
*She made a good home for her husband and children.  
 She came from a troubled home. [=a family with many problems]*

3: a place where something normally or naturally lives or is located  
*Australia is the home [=habitat] of the kangaroo.  
 The islands are home to many species of birds.<sup>58</sup>*

## AT HOME

1: relaxed and comfortable : at ease  
*felt completely at home on the stage*

2: in harmony with the surroundings

3: on familiar ground : KNOWLEDGEABLE  
*teachers at home in their subject fields<sup>59</sup>*

## HOMEFULNESS

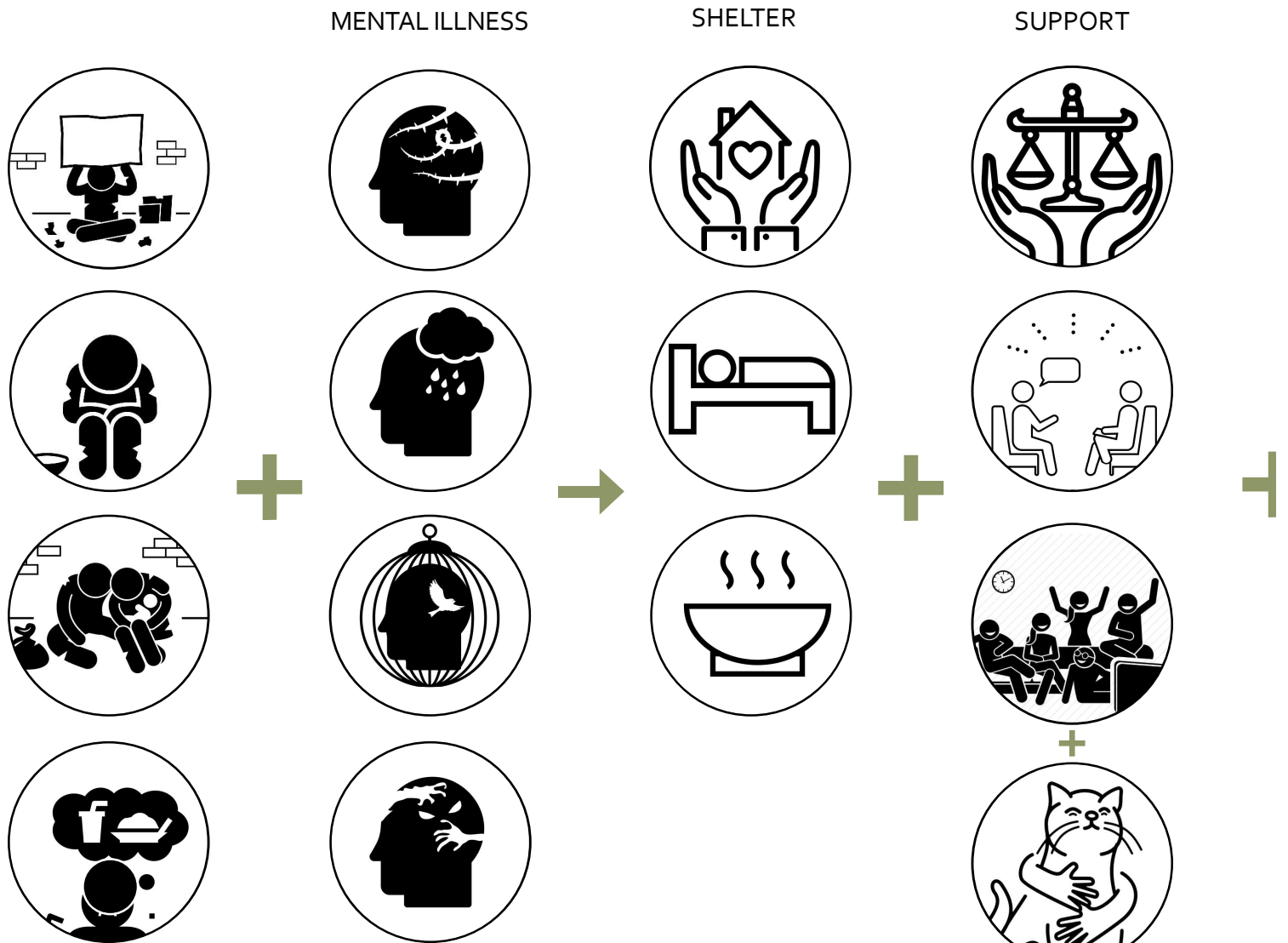
### adjective

with a home

*my goal is to make sure every child is homeful*

### noun

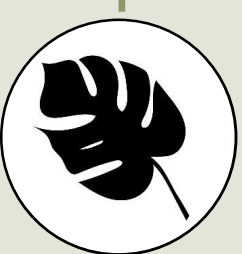
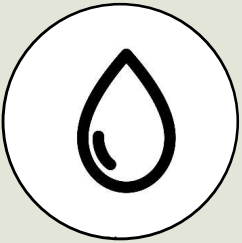
the feeling one gets when they are in a place where they feel at home in a place that offers permanence and allows one to make it their own  
*She had a bed of her own, a roof over her head, and a hot meal to eat; and thus she became overwhelmed by the feeling of homefulness for the first time in her life*



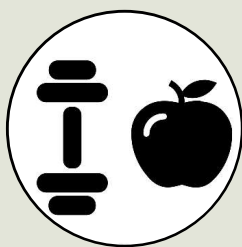
(L to R): Figure 3.20 Homeless icon<sup>60</sup>, Figure 3.21 Homeless icon B<sup>61</sup>, Figure 3.22 Homeless Family icon<sup>62</sup>, Figure 3.23 Starving icon<sup>63</sup>, Figure 3.24 Anxiety icon<sup>64</sup>, Figure 3.25 Depression icon<sup>65</sup>, Figure 3.26 Addition icon<sup>66</sup>, Figure 3.27 Schizophrenia icon<sup>67</sup>, Figure 3.28 Shelter icon<sup>68</sup>, Figure 3.29 Bed icon<sup>69</sup>, Figure 3.30 Hot Meal icon<sup>70</sup>, Figure 3.31 Legal icon<sup>71</sup>, Figure 3.32 Support icon<sup>72</sup>, Figure 3.33 Social icon<sup>73</sup>, Figure 3.34 Animal Therapy icon<sup>74</sup>, Figure 3.35 Child Care icon<sup>75</sup>, Figure 3.36 Tree icon<sup>76</sup>, Figure 3.37 Water icon<sup>77</sup>, Figure 3.38 Wood icon<sup>78</sup>, Figure 3.39 Plants icon<sup>79</sup>, Figure 3.40 Sports icon<sup>80</sup>, Figure 3.41 Gardening icon<sup>81</sup>, Figure 3.42 Cooking icon<sup>82</sup>, Figure 3.43 Healthy Food icon<sup>83</sup>, Figure 3.44 Health icon<sup>84</sup>, Figure 3.45 Happiness icon<sup>85</sup>, Figure 3.46 Accomplishment icon<sup>86</sup>, Figure 3.47 Education icon<sup>87</sup>, Figure 3.48 Drive icon<sup>88</sup>, Figure 3.49 Social Health icon<sup>89</sup>, Figure 3.50 Belonging icon<sup>90</sup>, Figure 3.51 Job Security icon<sup>91</sup>, Figure 3.52 Home Permanence icon<sup>92</sup>, Figure 3.53 Mental Peace icon<sup>93</sup>

# WELLNESS PRINCIPLES

BIOPHILIA



HEALTHY ACTIVITIES



MENTAL HEALTH





## Organization Structure



Figure 3.60 Safe Shores Logo<sup>96</sup>

Safe Shores is an advocacy center specifically for children in the city of DC. Their website describes best what they do as well as lists the services and connections that they provide:

### "About Safe Shores

Safe Shores—The DC Children's Advocacy Center is a direct service nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting and working directly with child victims of sexual and physical abuse in the District of Columbia.

Through its child-friendly facility and multidisciplinary team approach, Safe Shores coordinates the work of medical and mental health providers, social services professionals, victim advocates, law enforcement, and prosecution officials to reduce trauma and promote healing for child victims of abuse.

### Our Mission

Safe Shores provides intervention, hope and healing for children and families affected by abuse, trauma and violence in the District of Columbia, and prevents child abuse through education and training.

### Our Goals

- To minimize the trauma experienced by children and adolescents who have been identified as victims of sexual or physical abuse
- To improve the investigation and prosecution of sexual and physical abuse cases from the point of intervention through to treatment and healing
- To promote inter-agency collaboration for effective decision making and management of sexual and physical abuse cases
- To prevent further and/or future abuse of child victims

- To provide training professionals in the field of investigation, prosecution and provision of services for sexually and physically abused children, adolescents, and their non-offending caretakers.<sup>94</sup>

"Safe Shores—The DC Children's Advocacy Center is non-profit, public-private partnership that works in tandem with a multidisciplinary team (MDT) of law enforcement, legal, social service, and medical agencies. The MDT is comprised of:

- Child and Family Services Agency (Child Protective Services);
- Children's National Medical Center (The Freddie Mac Child and Adolescent Protection Center);
- Metropolitan Police Department (Youth Investigations Branch and Special Victims Unit);
- Office of the Attorney General (Child Protection Section, Juvenile Section and Neighborhood Victim Services);
- United States Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia (Sex Offense and Domestic Violence Unit and the Victim/Witness Assistance Unit); and,
- Safe Shores—The DC Children's Advocacy Center.

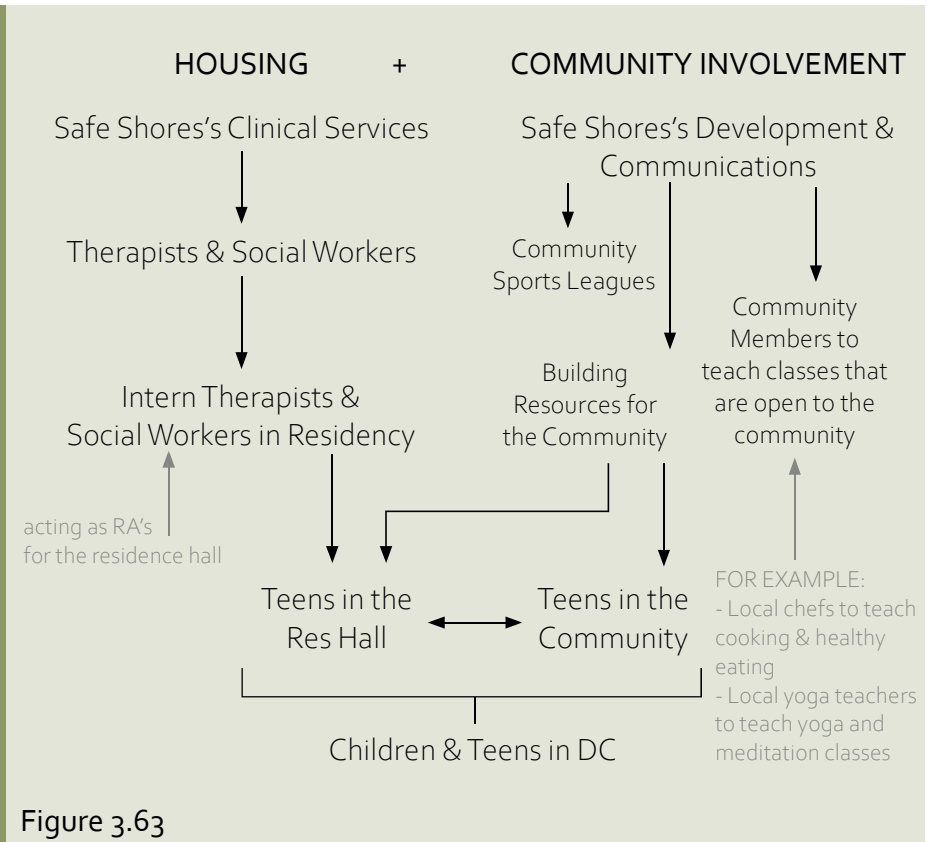
Safe Shores serves in a coordinating capacity in an effort to ensure that all Team agencies are working individually and collaboratively to provide the most comprehensive and child-friendly services for child and adolescent victims of abuse and neglect in the District of Columbia."<sup>95</sup>



Figure 3.61<sup>97</sup>

Safe Shores works actively and consistently to spread the word and educate people about ways to prevent abuse. Their mission is to stop child abuse from happening, and they also support those who have endured the abuse already.





**My Contribution**

Safe Shores already has a great program going and I don't want to change that. They provide connections to organizations that help so many children. My goal is to focus more on the housing aspects and allow for children both in Foster Care or in any situation where they are in need of housing to have access to it, as well as the amazing resources Safe Shores already provides and some more that I am providing.

For the housing component, I am proposing that the structure be set up similarly to dorms, where a certain number of residents are overseen by Resident Advisors or a camp where there are campers that are overseen by a camp counselor. In this particular situation, knowing that these residents wouldn't be typical, I believe that it makes sense for

them to be Social Work and Therapy students. This would allow the "RAs" a unique, live-in residency opportunity. By having college aged "counselors" it lessens the age gap between them and the residents, thus hypothetically allowing for the residents to open up and heal during their time here.

While the housing component is my main priority, a connection with the community is also high upon my list. Being connected to other people helps to build a support network that is so important to healing and growth. The retail portion of my design creates opportunities for residents and neighbors alike to participate in wellness activities. I would also love for local community members to get involved in the various programs and provide services that contribute to the greater community's wellness.



## 4 -FORM STUDY

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## Pod Evolution

Because the concept of this thesis is rooted in the more intimate interactions between the human and the building, I started the design from the inside out. The intention with the pod was to create a group of dorm rooms, bathrooms, and a common space that could be repeated throughout the building and create smaller knit communities within the greater space.

Drawing from the initial desire to make the building round to be more calming to the eye, I looked to Alvar Aalto's Paimio Sanatorium. This building, meant for Tuberculosis patients who would endure longer term stays than average hospital patients though more about the personal experience; thus "Each patient had their own specially designed cupboard, fixed to the wall," and the materials and placement of lights made the users feel as though Aalto thought about their needs and made their experiences there more pleasant. Throughout the

building there is an emphasis on natural light, fresh air, and views to nature.

Learning from these lessons learned, I aimed to create personalized spaces that incorporated the curve, have views to nature, and have operable awning windows to allow for fresh air.



**Figure 4.05**<sup>102</sup> Paimio Sanatorium patient bedroom photo. To the left are built-ins for the individuals.



**Figure 4.01**<sup>98</sup> Paimio Sanatorium exterior photo



**Figure 4.02**<sup>99</sup> Paimio Sanatorium reception desk photo



**Figure 4.03**<sup>100</sup> Paimio Sanatorium wellness room photo



**Figure 4.04**<sup>101</sup> Paimio Sanatorium waiting area photo

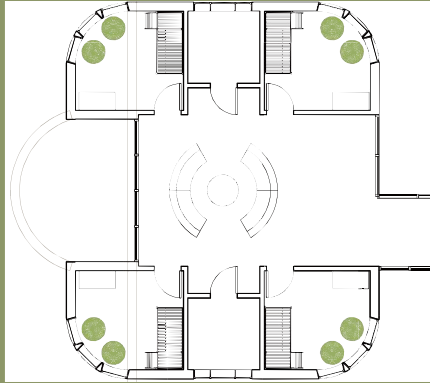


Figure 4.10

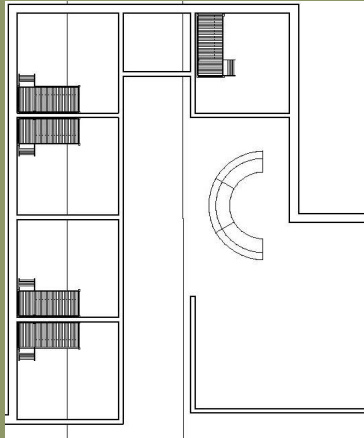


Figure 4.11

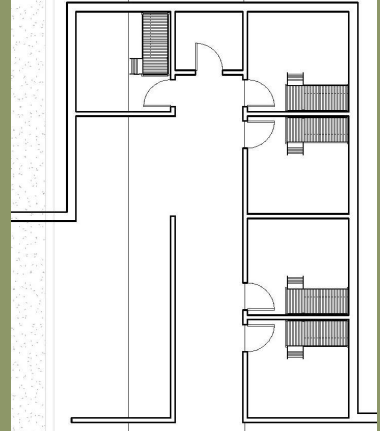


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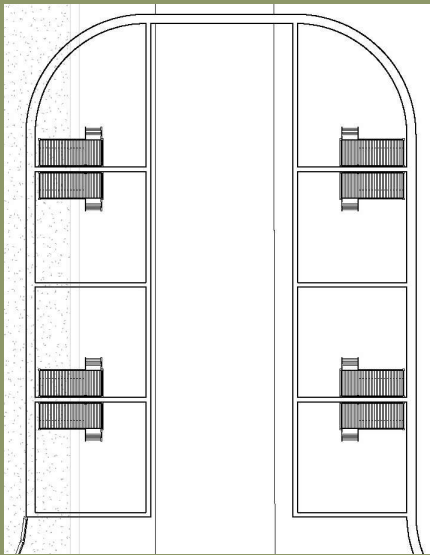


Figure 4.13

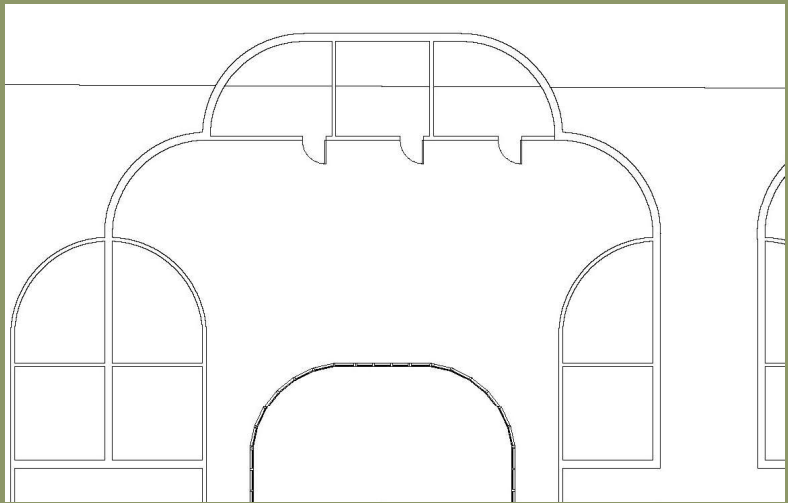


Figure 4.14

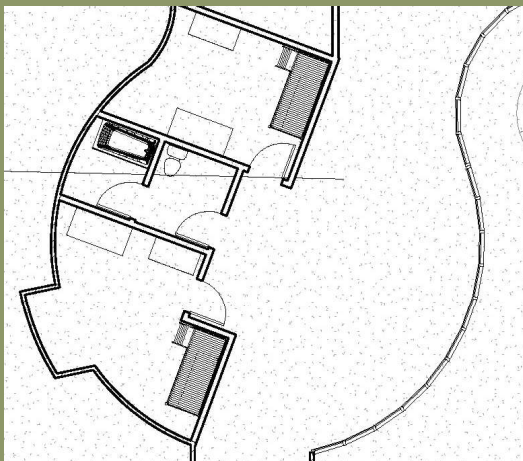


Figure 4.15

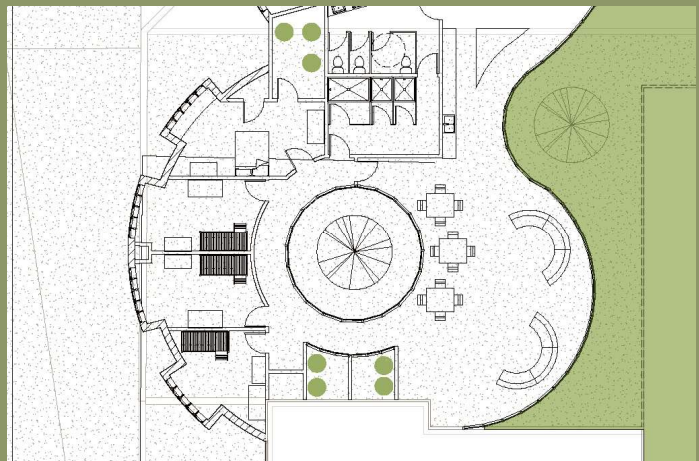


Figure 4.16

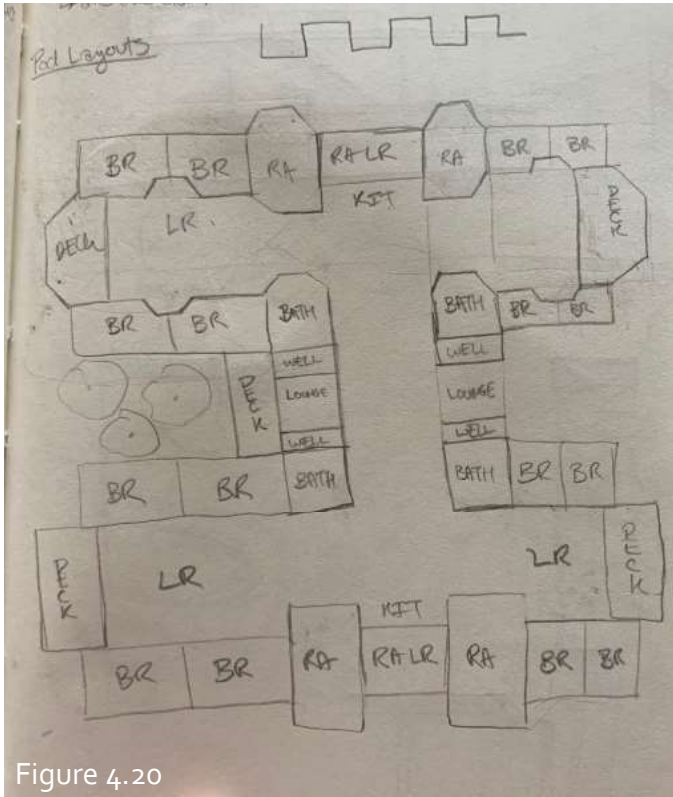


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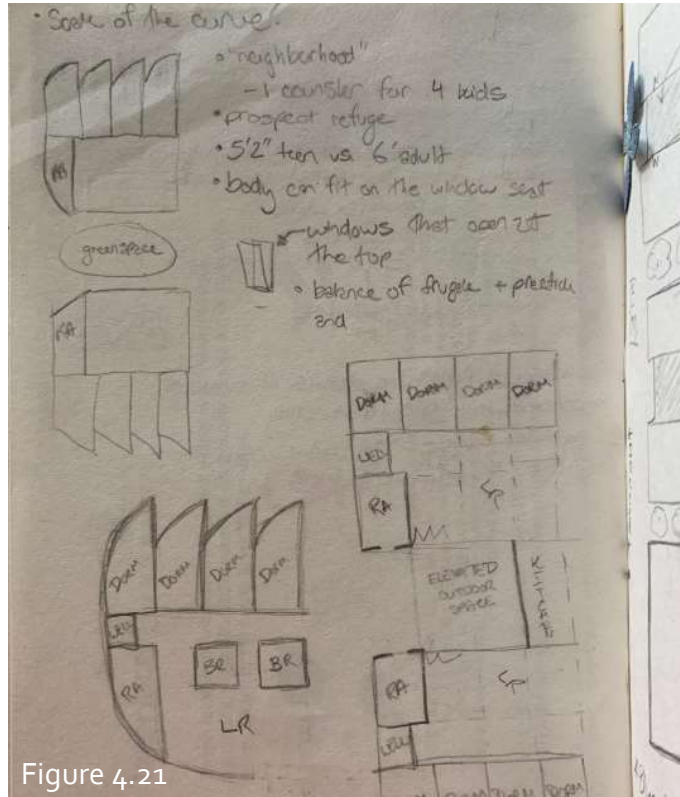


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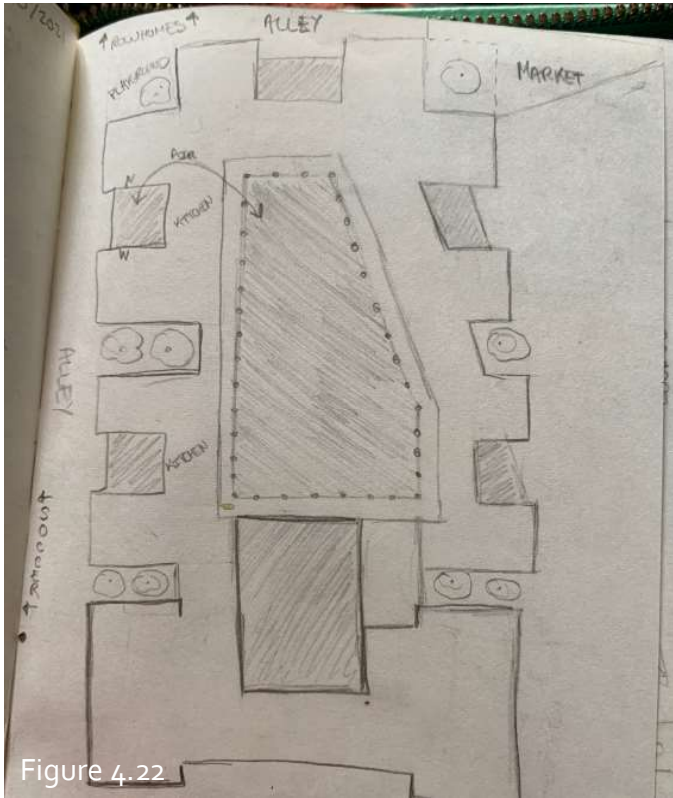


Figure 4.22

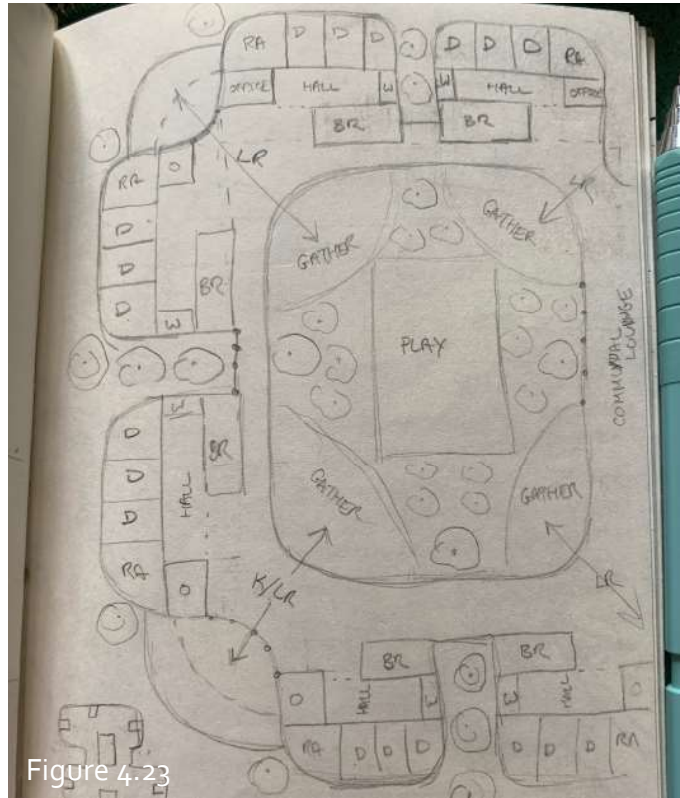


Figure 4.23





Figure 4.24

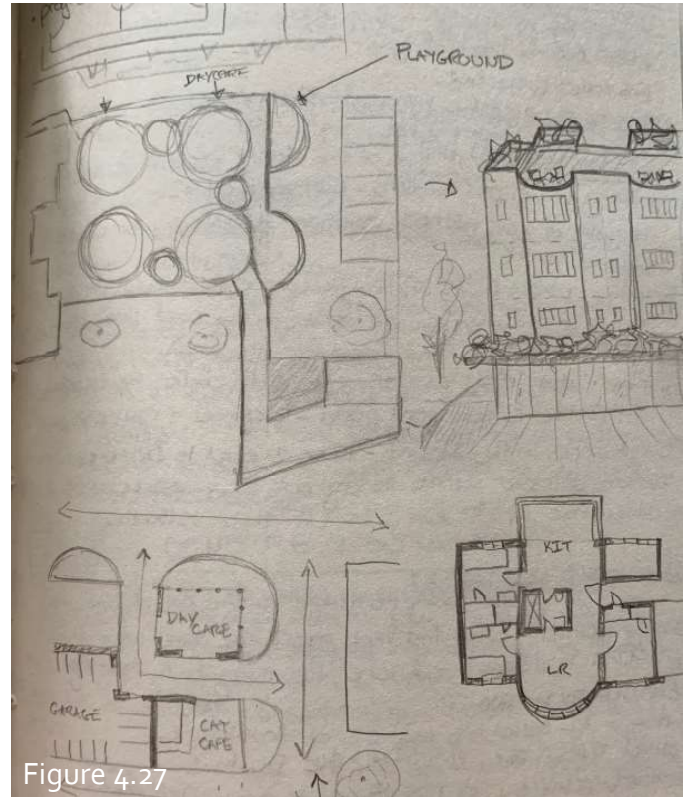


Figure 4.27

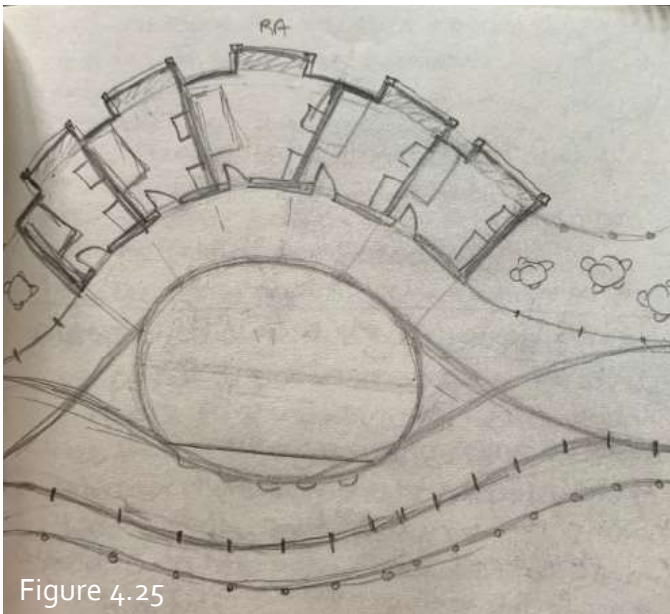


Figure 4.25

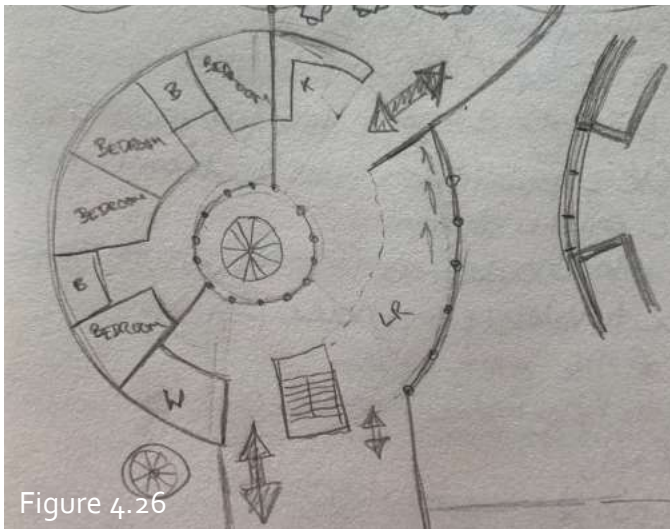


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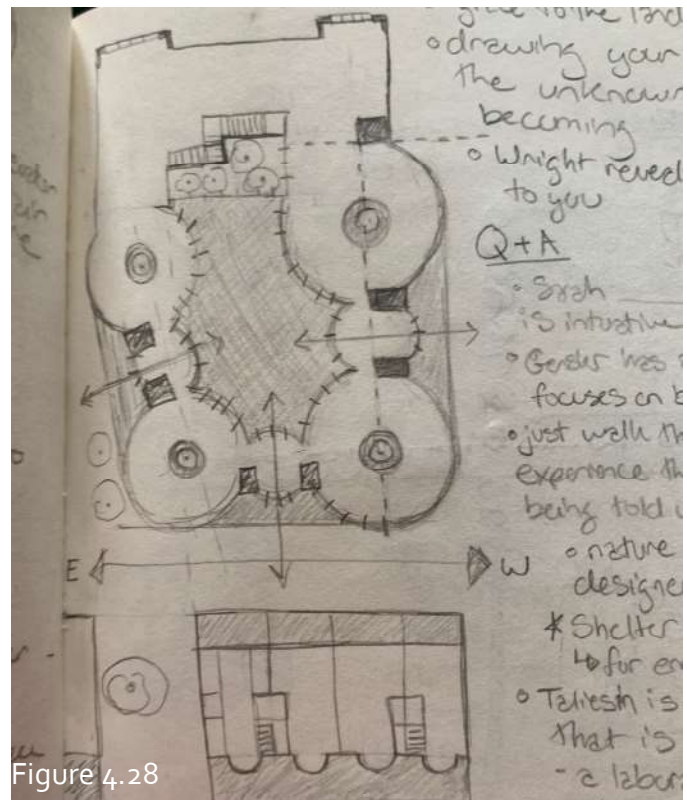
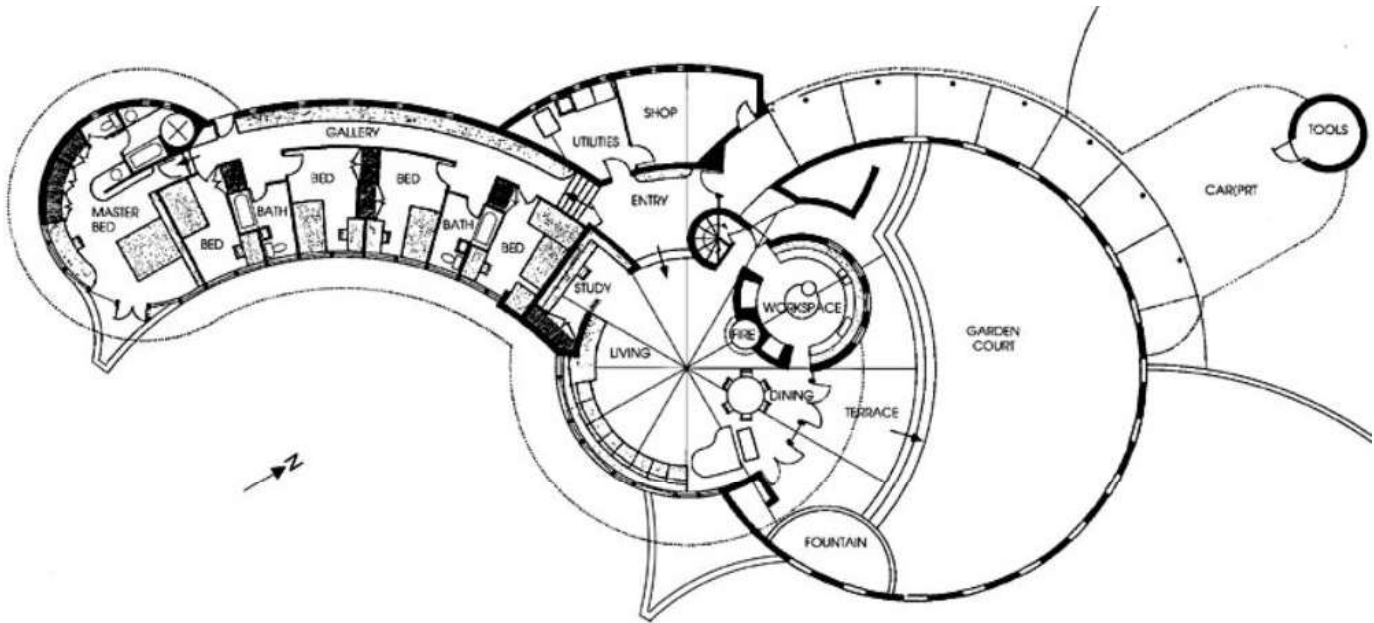


Figure 4.28

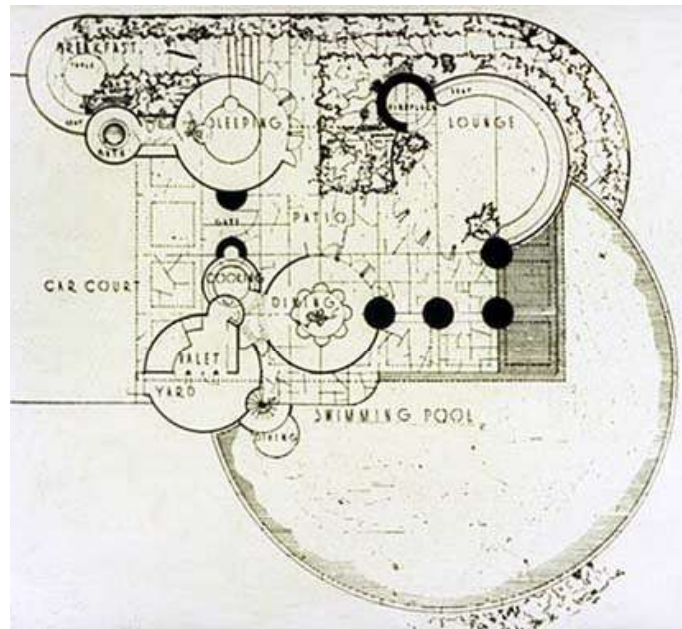
## Input from a Master



**Figure 4.30**<sup>103</sup>

*The floor plan of Frank Lloyd Wright's Norman Lykes house in Phoenix, AZ.*

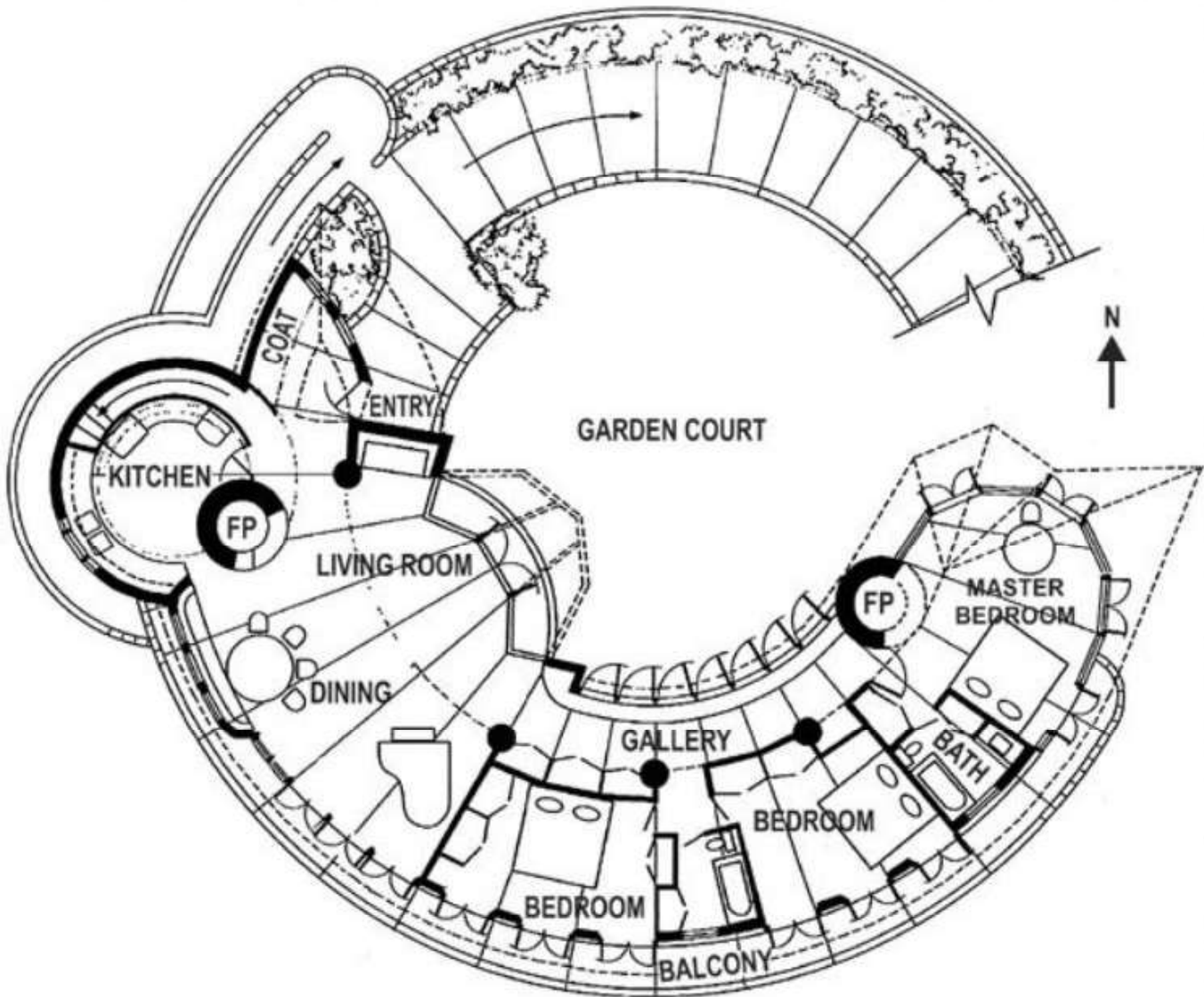
In the midst of the conception of my building I had a unique opportunity to travel to Arizona where I worked on the restoration of the Ling Po cottage at Frank Lloyd Wright's Talesin West World Heritage Site. While there, our group also had the chance to see some of the works of the master himself. Seeing these was quite the treat on its own, but as we went to more buildings I started to notice a unique trend: they were circles or made up of many circles. They embodied the form that I was after in my pods. Being in these spaces gave me the unique opportunity to experience what my spaces could be in a human scale and, as made clear in future drawings, had a significant influence on the form direction of my building.



**Figure 4.31**<sup>104</sup>

*The floor plan of Frank Lloyd Wright's Jester-Pfeiffer House in Scottsdale, AZ; on the Talesin West property, about a 5 minute walk South of the main building.*





**Figure 4.32**<sup>105</sup>

*The floor plan of Frank Lloyd Wright's David & Gladys Wright house in Phoenix, AZ. The group spent an extended amount of time at this property as the host of our trip recently purchased and restored the house, thus we were able to use it for our Christmas party. I was also allowed the unique opportunity of staying the night on the property in the adjacent guest house.*

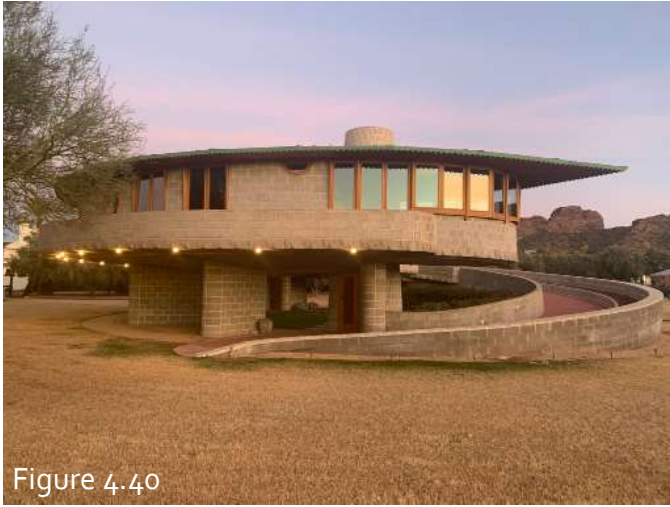


Figure 4.40



Figure 4.41

These images are from my visits to these building. They highlight elements that influenced the design of my thesis project, as well as transforming the aforementioned plans into a three-dimensional view. The curve and circular forms are present throughout each.



Figure 4.42

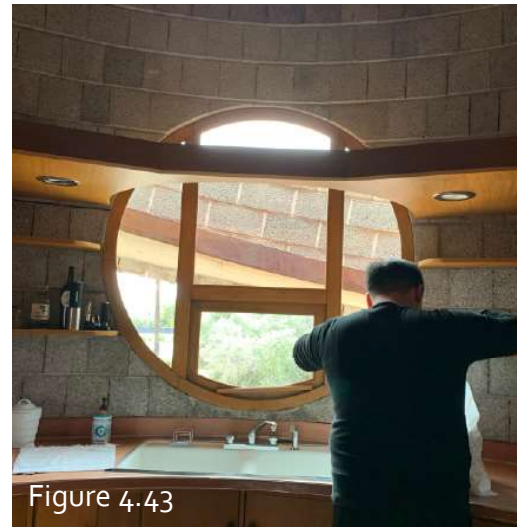


Figure 4.43

Figure 4.40 Exterior elevation from yard

Figure 4.41 4 students from the trip sitting on the built-in bench in the master bedroom, with views to the mountains behind.

Figure 4.42 The tower. This is the small



Figure 4.44



Figure 4.45





Figure 4.46



Figure 4.47



Figure 4.48

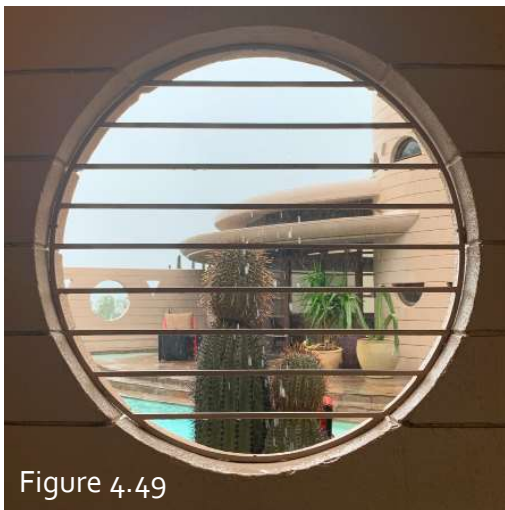


Figure 4.49

circle on the Main Level plan. On the Ground Level it is storage and on the Main Level it is the kitchen space. An exterior pathway continues around the form, from the entry promenade, and provides roof access.

**Figure 4.43** The circle window seen on the exterior from an interior viewpoint.

**Figure 4.44** The living room in the Jester-Pfeiffer House during a lecture on the trip

**Figure 4.45** The exterior of the living room space

**Figure 4.46** An exterior view of the Lykes House from the Master Bedroom porch

**Figure 4.47** From the living room, a view of the entry space, featuring clearstory glass windows above a light shelf that wraps around the room.

**Figure 4.48** Storage wraps the curved hallway. The windows lead out to nearly ground level, thus emphasizing the building's integration with the landscape.

**Figure 4.49** A view through a cutout in the pool wall offering views to the house.

**Figure 4.50** A panorama of the living room space emphasizing the continuation of the horizontal lines, views to the outdoors, natural light, and open concept plan.



Figure 4.50

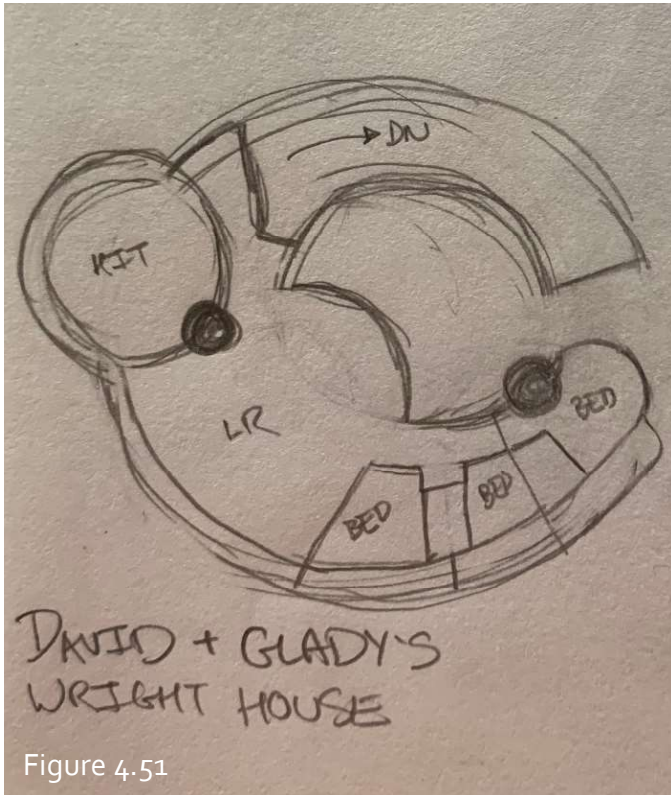


Figure 4.51



Figure 4.52

These sketches are my studies of the floor plans of the David & Gladys's Wright House for analysis.

**Figure 4.51** *Simplified Main Level Floor Plan sketch of the David and Gladys's Wright House*

**Figure 4.52** *A Parti Diagram sketch of the David and Gladys's Wright House Main Level Floor Plan*

**Figure 4.53** *An enlarged and simplified floor plan sketch at the intersection of the secondary bedrooms and secondary bathroom from the Main Level Floor plan of the David and Gladys's Wright House*



Figure 4.53



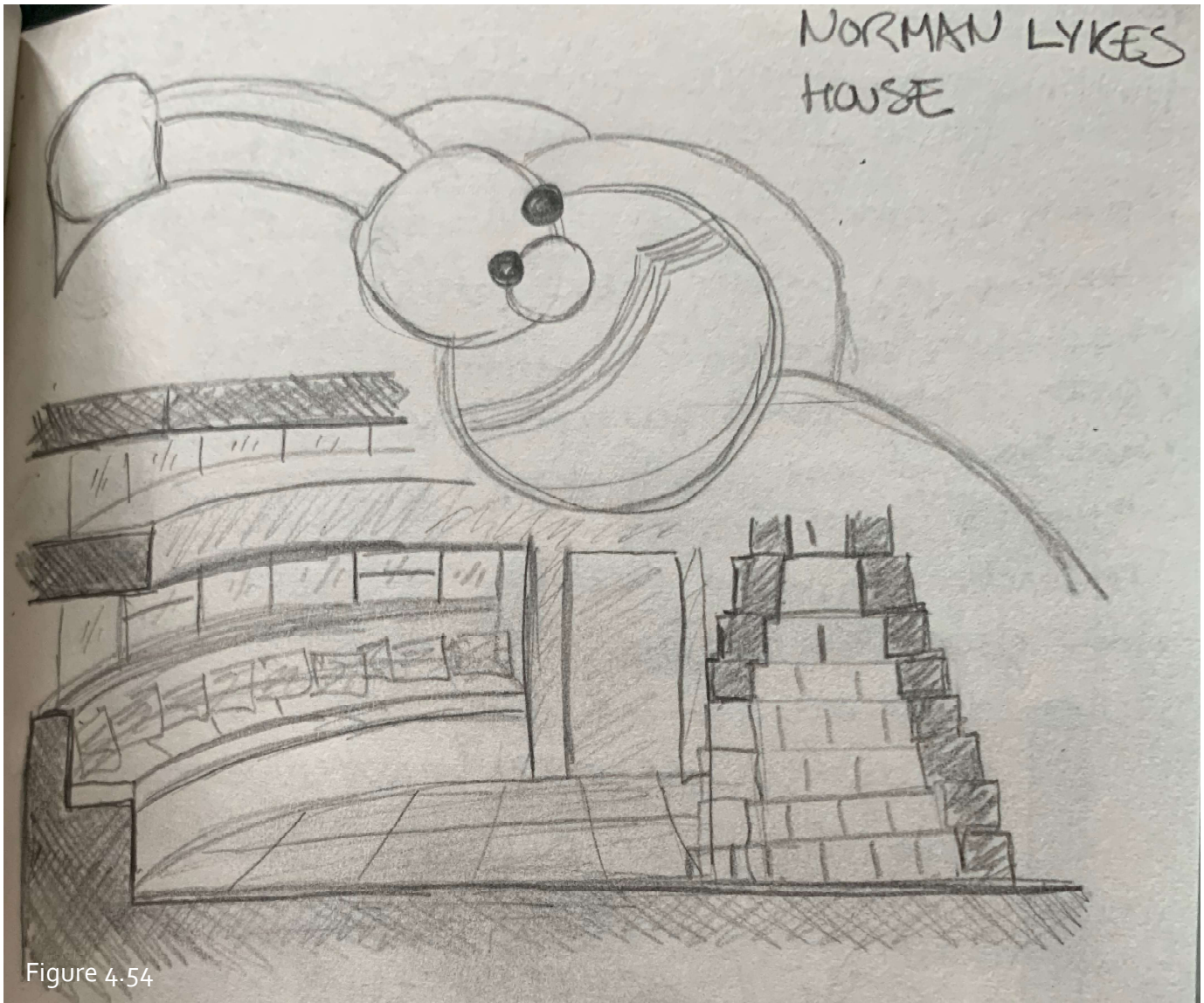


Figure 4.54

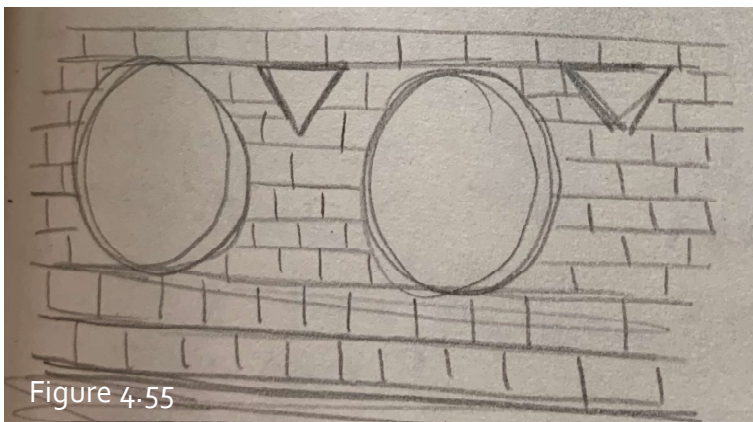


Figure 4.55

These sketches are my studies of the floor plans, my photographs, and observations of the Norman Lykes House for analysis.

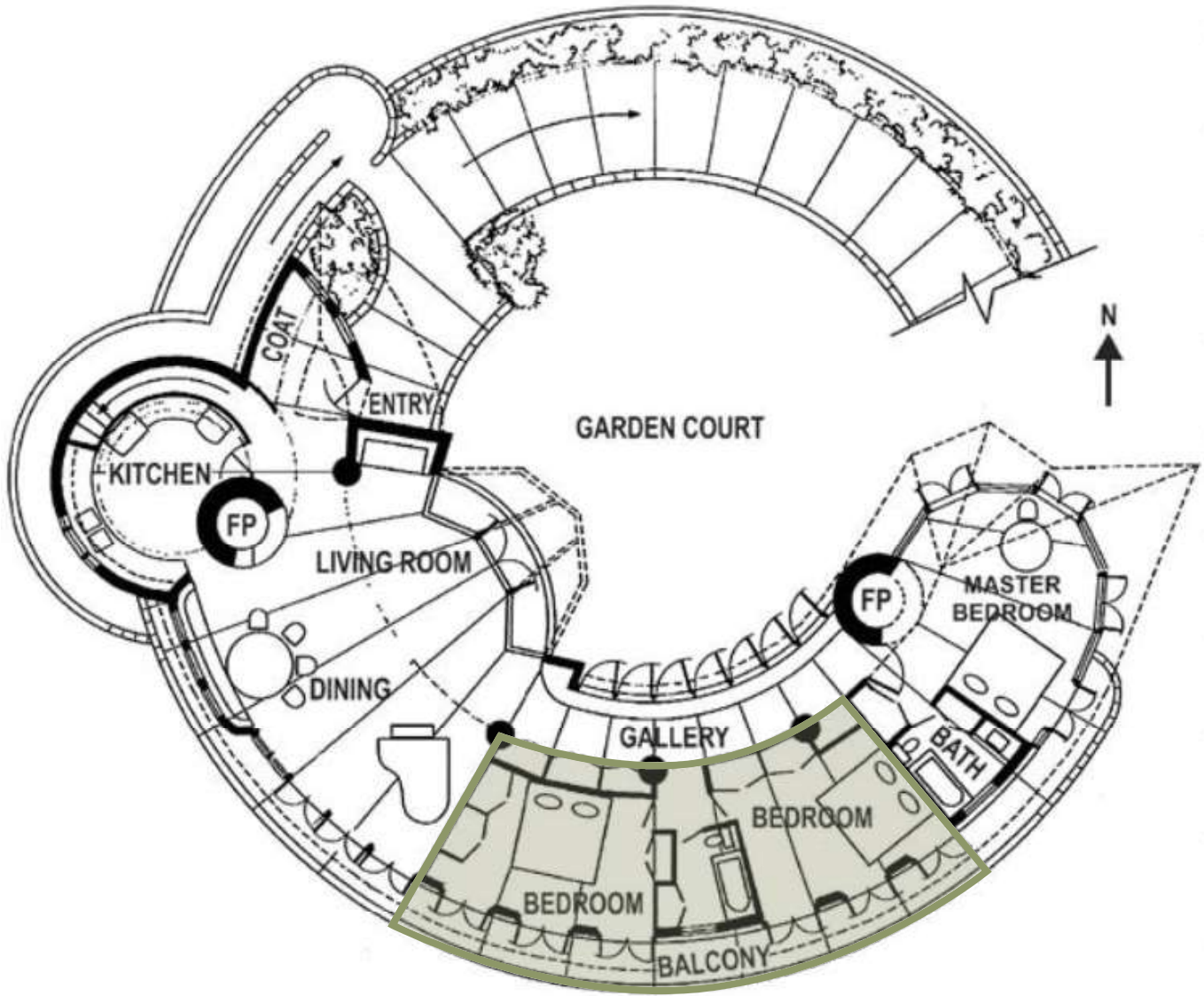
**Figure 4.54** A hybrid sketch of a simplified version of the floor plan, and a section perspective sketch of the built-in bench and light shelf in the living room that also cuts through the chimney.

**Figure 4.55** A sketch of an elevation of the pool yard wall including the materiality and forms cut out of the wall.

## From Wright to Washington

Seeing and experiencing Wright's round buildings in person helped me to realize the scale of the circle that works best in plan for the spaces I was working on designing. It was in the David & Gladys

Wright house where I saw the two bedrooms off a shared bathroom creating a wedge in the circle. I looked to this space for inspiration and found an effective and repetitive pod form for my building.



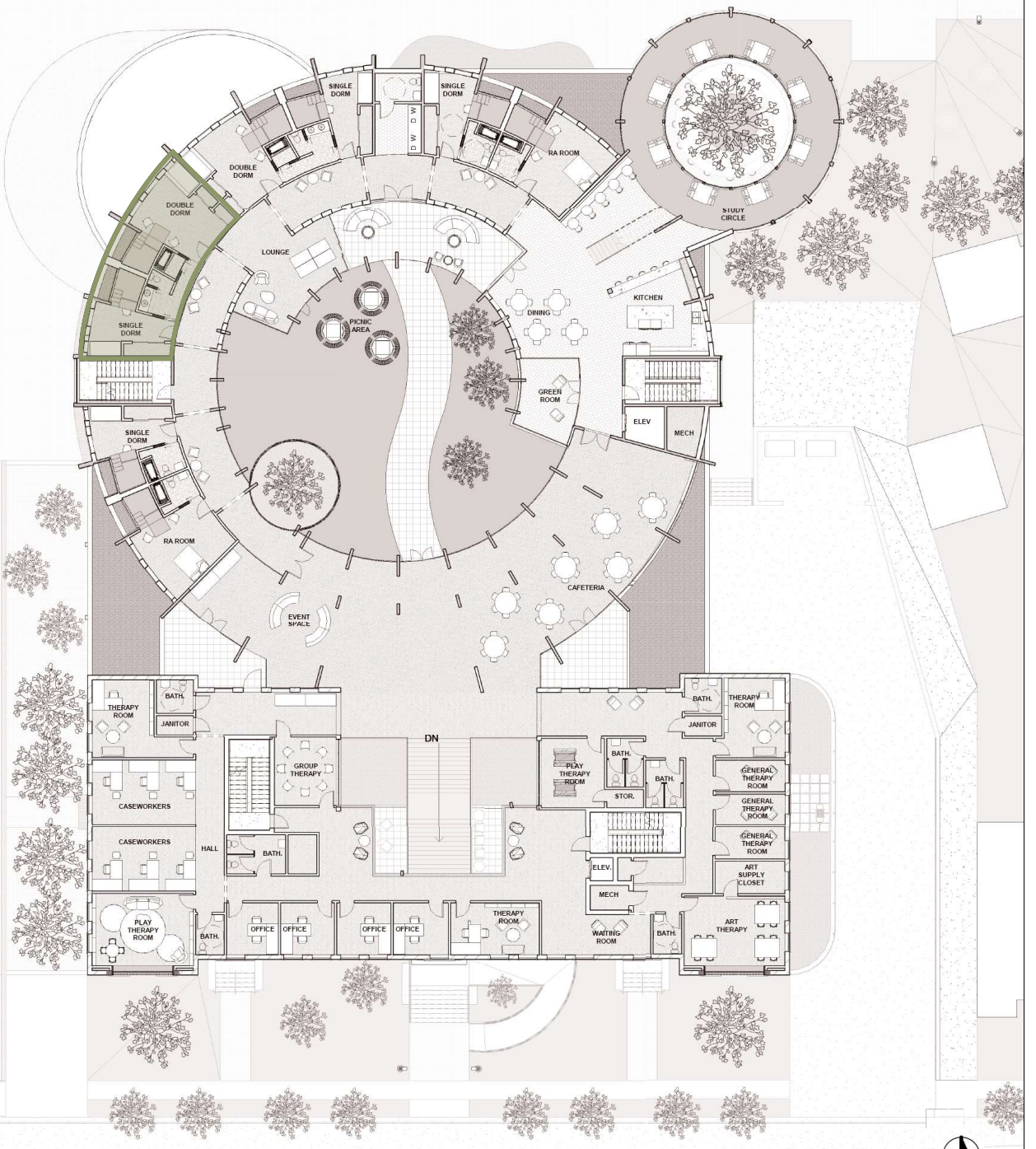
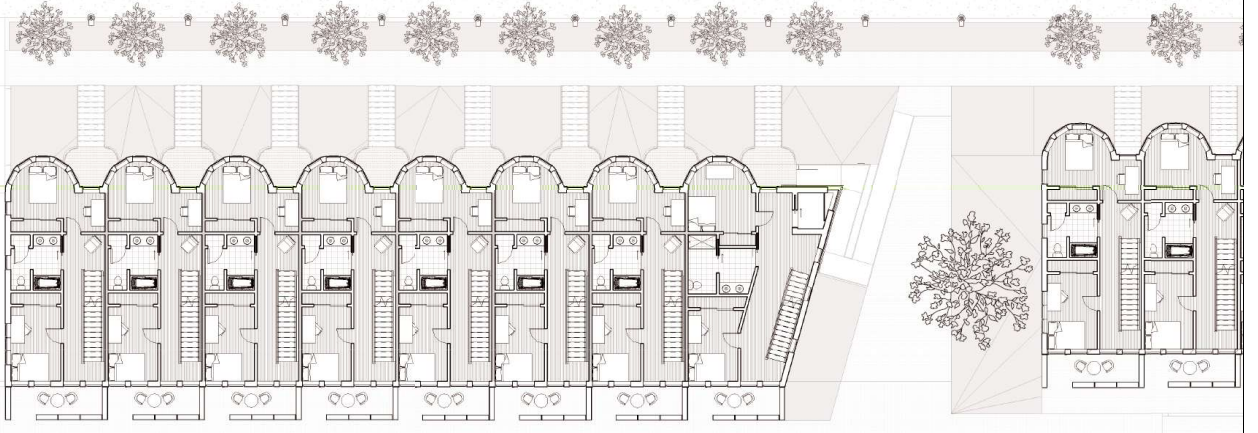
**Figure 4.60 (above)**<sup>106</sup>

*The same floor plan of Frank Lloyd Wright's David & Gladys Wright house with the bedroom wedge highlighted.*

**Figure 4.61 (right)**

*My second floor plan with a dorm pod wedge highlighted.*







# Enlarged Pod Plan at Second Floor Plan

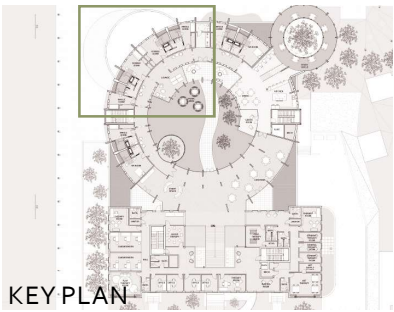
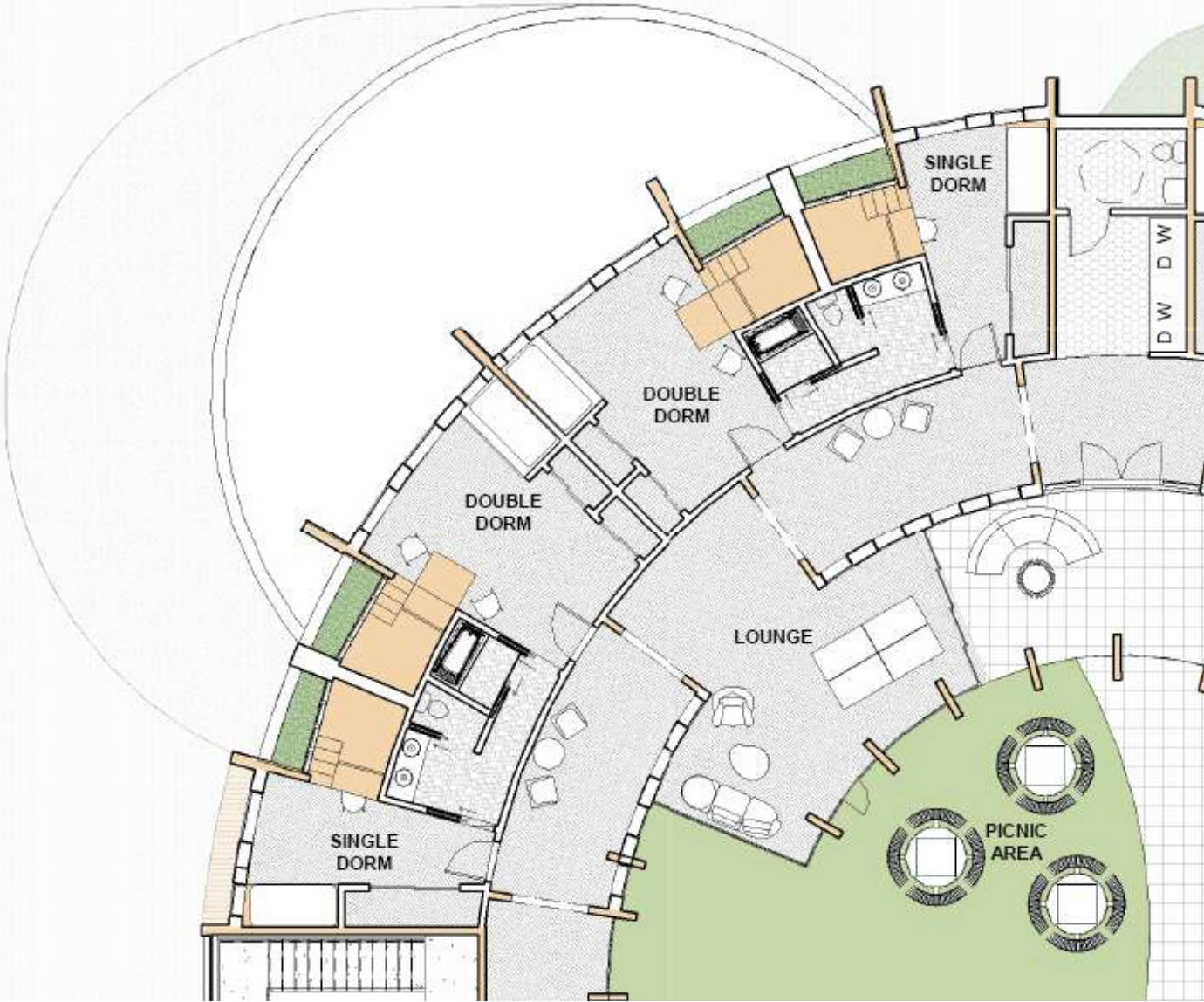


Figure 4.62 Enlarged floor plan at Second Floor Proposed Plan



# Pod Axon

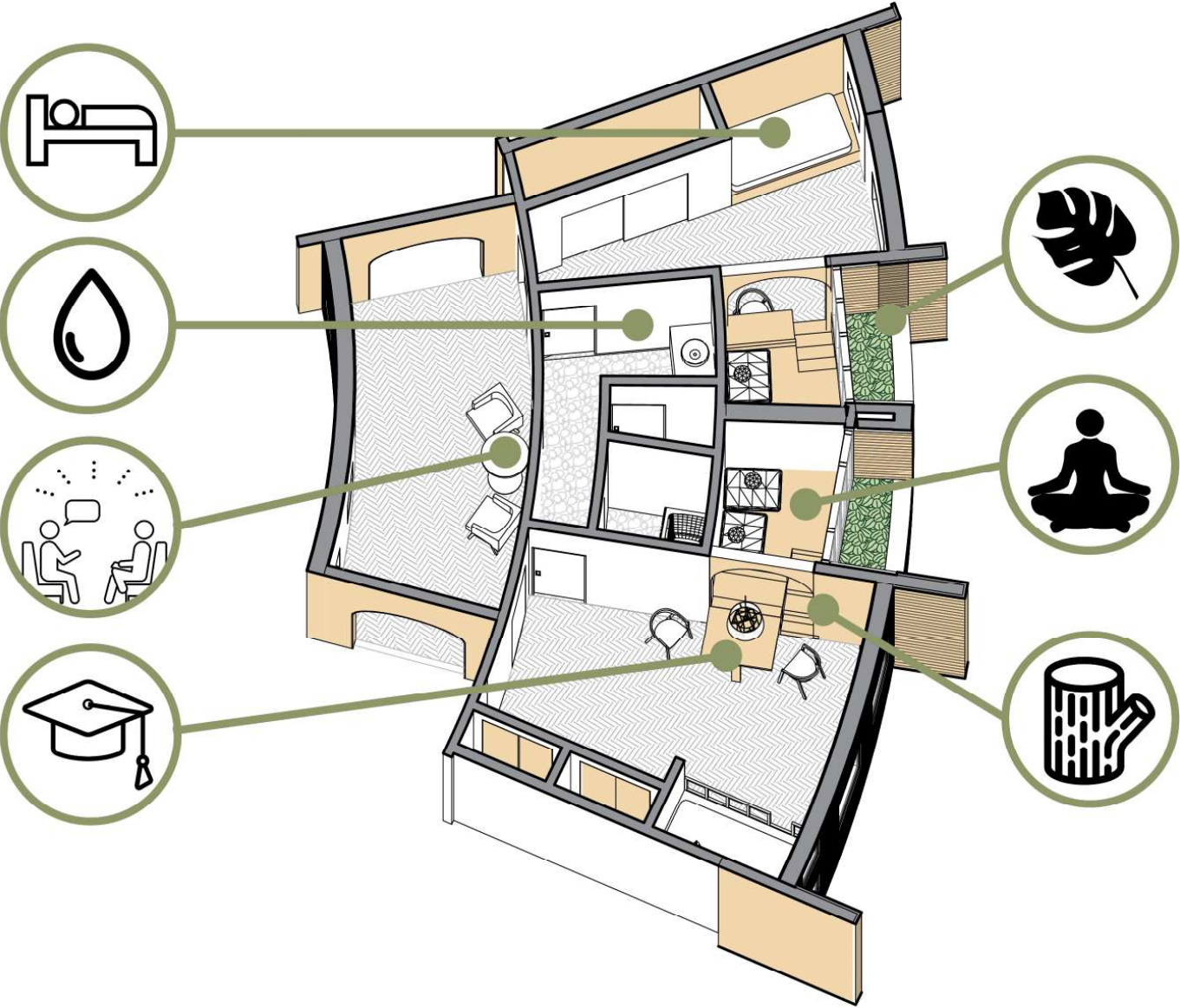


Figure 4.63 Axonometric showing the homeful and wellness features at the dorm pod scale.  
(Icons as read in columns: Bed icon<sup>107</sup>, Water icon<sup>108</sup>, Therapy icon<sup>109</sup>, Education icon<sup>110</sup>, Plants icon<sup>111</sup>, Wood icon<sup>112</sup>, Mental Peace icon<sup>113</sup>)



KEY PLAN

**Figure 4.70** This rendering is of the built-in components in a double dorm. Each dorm includes a built in bed and storage for the residents. The design of the spaces are intentionally minimal as to allow each resident to customize their space. The room also features an exposed CLT wall as



well as built-ins made of wood that incorporate biophilic elements into the space. The carpet is green as to emulate grass. Each bunk has its own window so each resident can look outside to the nature and buildings beyond their rooms. It was my intention for the residents to have personal spaces and moments such as this throughout their spaces.



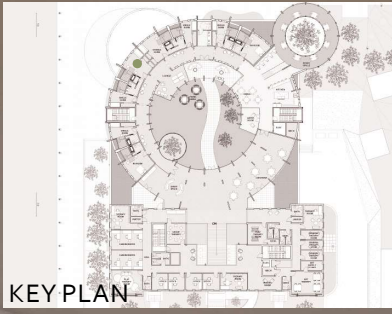


Figure 4.71 This rendering looks towards the additional amenities that each dorm room has. There is a jack-and-jill restroom, built-in desk, as well as a wellness nook. Surfaces throughout the space allow for plants and other objects. The green paint in the nook recognizes its importance.



Figure 4.71.1<sup>117</sup>

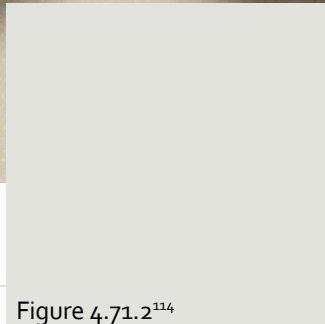


Figure 4.71.2<sup>114</sup>

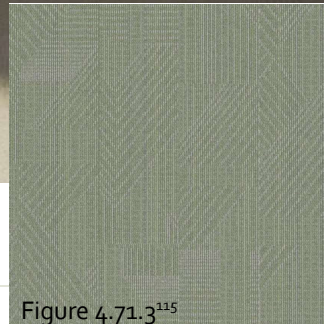


Figure 4.71.3<sup>115</sup>

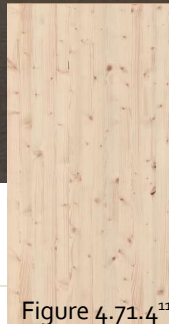


Figure 4.71.4<sup>11</sup>

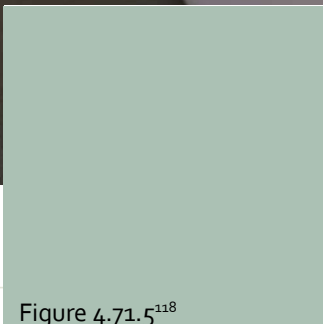
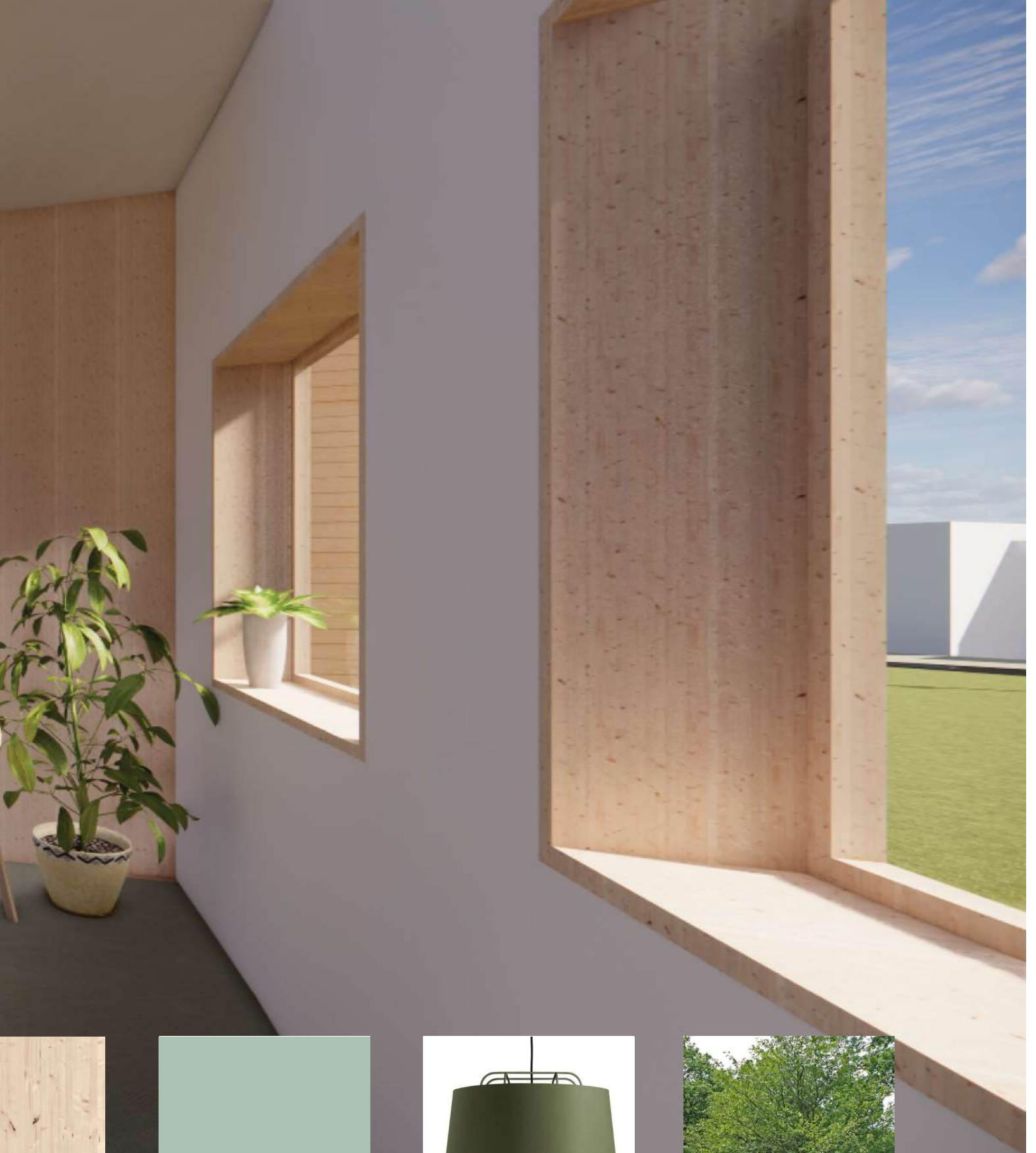


Figure 4.71.5<sup>118</sup>



Figure 4.71.6<sup>119</sup>

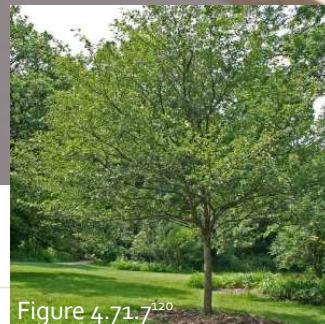


Figure 4.71.7<sup>120</sup>



## Wellness Nooks

Especially since the start of covid, Wellness rooms are being incorporated into offices everywhere. They are typically used as a place to step away from the work day and have a moment alone. I wanted to incorporate these spaces into the design of my building to give the residents moments of refuge. I started with this idea of creating almost "holodecks," such as in Star Trek; I interpreted this as interior spaces that make you feel like you are outside without actually being outside. I started with this idea because DC does have a cold winter, and I wanted to make sure that the residents could have year round access and views to greenery and nature. I realized though that one of the major components

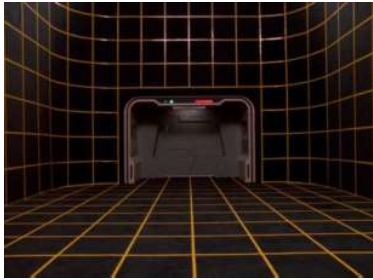


Figure 4.80<sup>1221</sup> *Star Trek holodeck before a scenario is loaded.*

is the sun's ability to regulate circadian rhythm, thus I felt that the rooms needed to provide natural light.

My thoughts on this design changed when I visited Paolo Solari's

Arcosanti. The way that the spaces were designed there created a sense of protection at your back as well as the vantage point to see sweeping views of the Arizona landscape beyond. As I returned back from my trip I researched Arcosanti more and found that the living spaces (as depicted in Figure 4.72) also held true to this concept, and eventually became the inspiration for my wellness nooks.



Figure 4.82<sup>1223</sup> *The Sky Suite at Arcosanti - Paolo Solari's 15 minute, off-the-grid city in Arizona that I visited on my trip.*

As my ideas evolved and eventually I landed on creating more individual spaces within the dorms, thus building on my concept of home and ones ability to have their own space. Through a series of iterations, as show in the sketches on the opposite page, I landed on a design that felt right for the space.

Each nook is built in to the space, as are the sleeping bunks. They feature built in desks that are adjacent to steps that lead you up to an elevated space meant for relaxation and refuge. The nooks features a large window where the user can see their individual green roof and experience prospect-refuge as they can see the expanse of the outdoors beyond the building, but be protected by this comfortable space.



Figure 4.81<sup>1222</sup> *A precedent that I found for what the active scenario spaces could look like.*



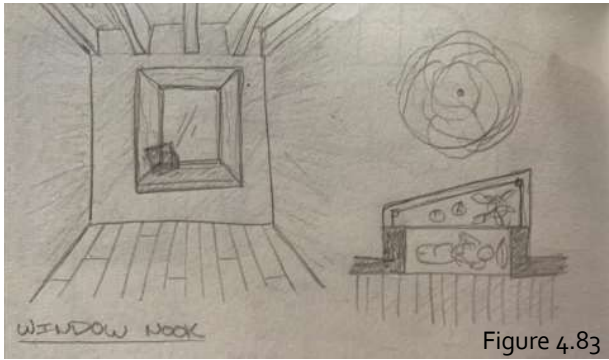


Figure 4.83

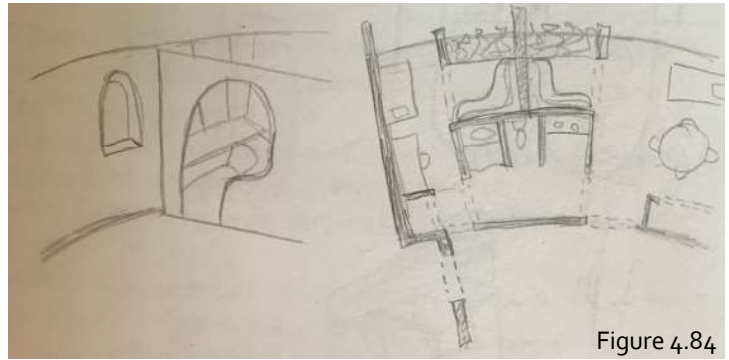


Figure 4.84

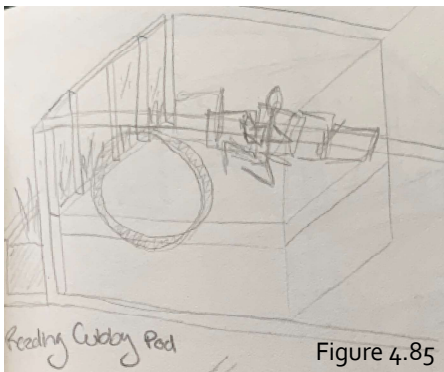


Figure 4.85

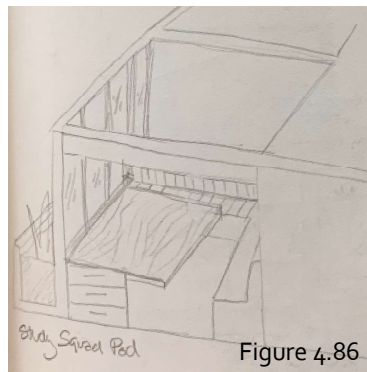


Figure 4.86

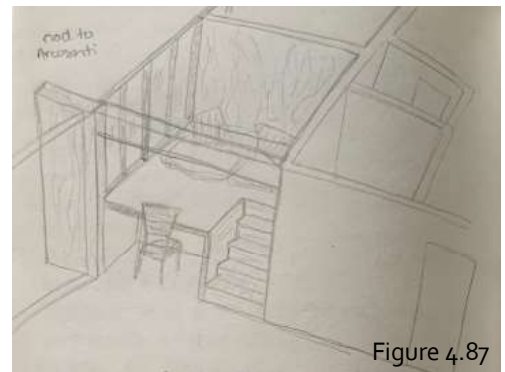


Figure 4.87

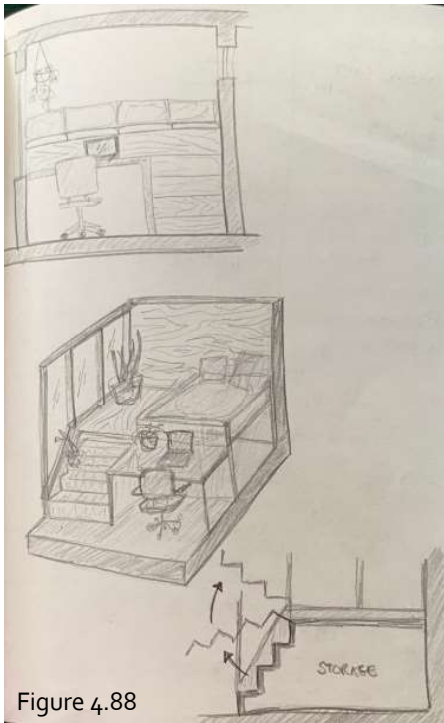


Figure 4.88

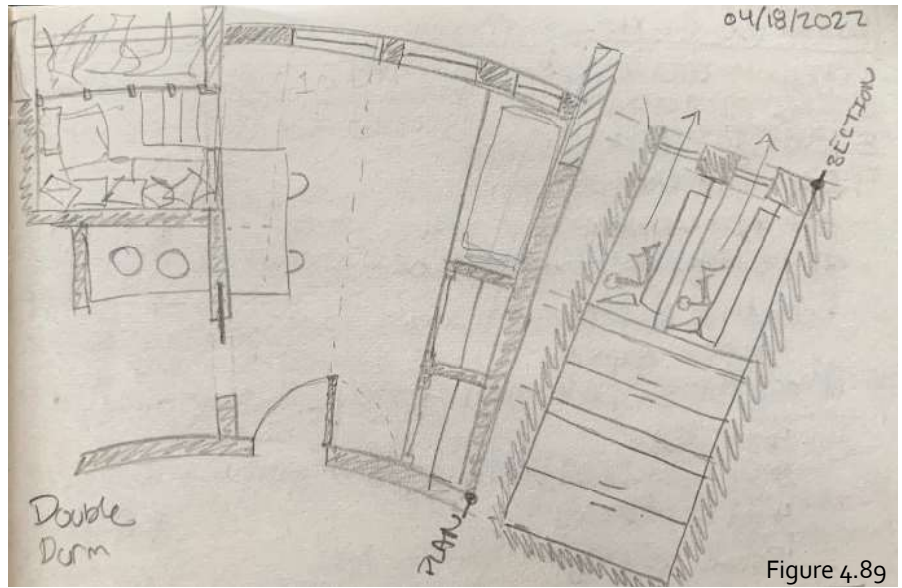
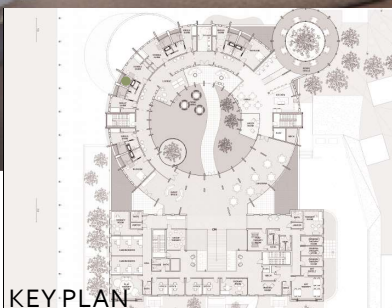
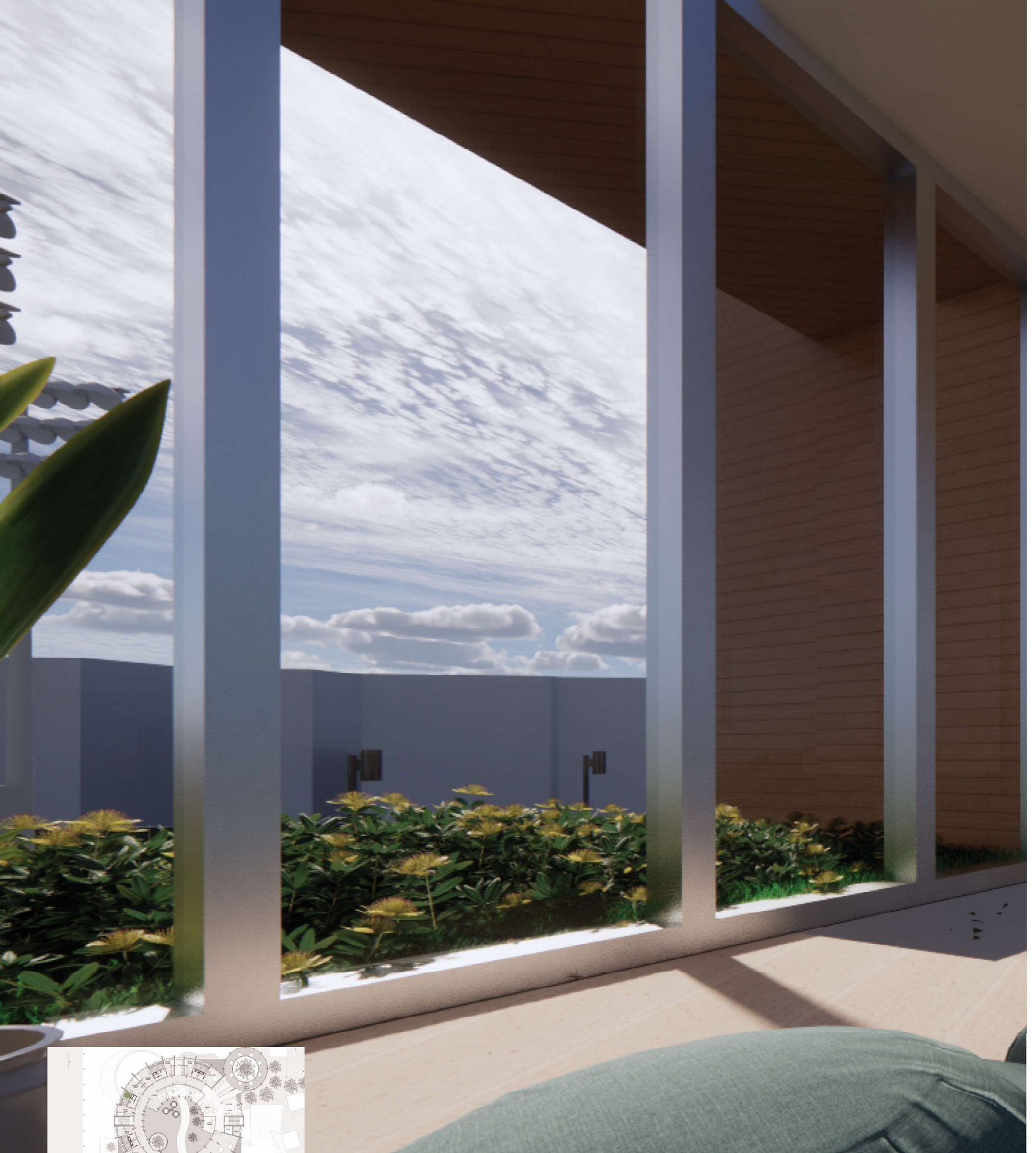


Figure 4.89

Figure 4.83 Window Nook sketch, Figure 4.84 Nook sketch 1, Figure 4.85 Nook sketch 2 - Reading Cubby Pod, Figure 4.86 Nook sketch 3 - Study Squad Pod, Figure 4.87 Nook sketch 4, Figure 4.88 Nook sketch 5, Figure 4.89 Double dorm sketch showing Wellness Nook integration.



**Figure 4.90** *This rendering is from the point of view of a person inside the wellness nook. The nook includes a large window to let in natural light, a personal planting bed, and views to the city beyond. Soothing and natural materials incorporate the healing aspects of nature into the space.*





## 5 - DRAWINGS

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# Second Floor Plan







The second floor and the floors above consist of dorm rooms as well as more public amenities for the residents. Public amenities on each floor include a kitchen, an interior and exterior lounge space, and the study circle. The second floor also features a large scale cafeteria space as well as direct access to the courtyard. These two spaces act as a transition between the old and new parts of the building, both programmatically and structurally.

From the public spaces one enters the residences from one of two of the doors at the ends of the circulation corridor. Each door features an ID lock that allows entry for only the residents and Resident Advisors. The RA dorms are closer to the more public spaces as to create a sense of security in the overall space and a sense of privacy and protection in the more private dorm spaces. Each RA is responsible for 4 residents.

As one walks throughout the circle of circulation, they pass through vestibules that differentiate between the more private and more public spaces. For example, when someone walks from a dorm room towards the kitchen, they first pass through this vestibule. This helps to soften one's experience between the two realms and create a more gradual sense of transition. The vestibules also each feature a table and two chairs as to offer a location for a smaller scale conversation or for a single resident to be out of their dorm, but not in a potentially overwhelming lounge space.

## Second Floor Plan Axon

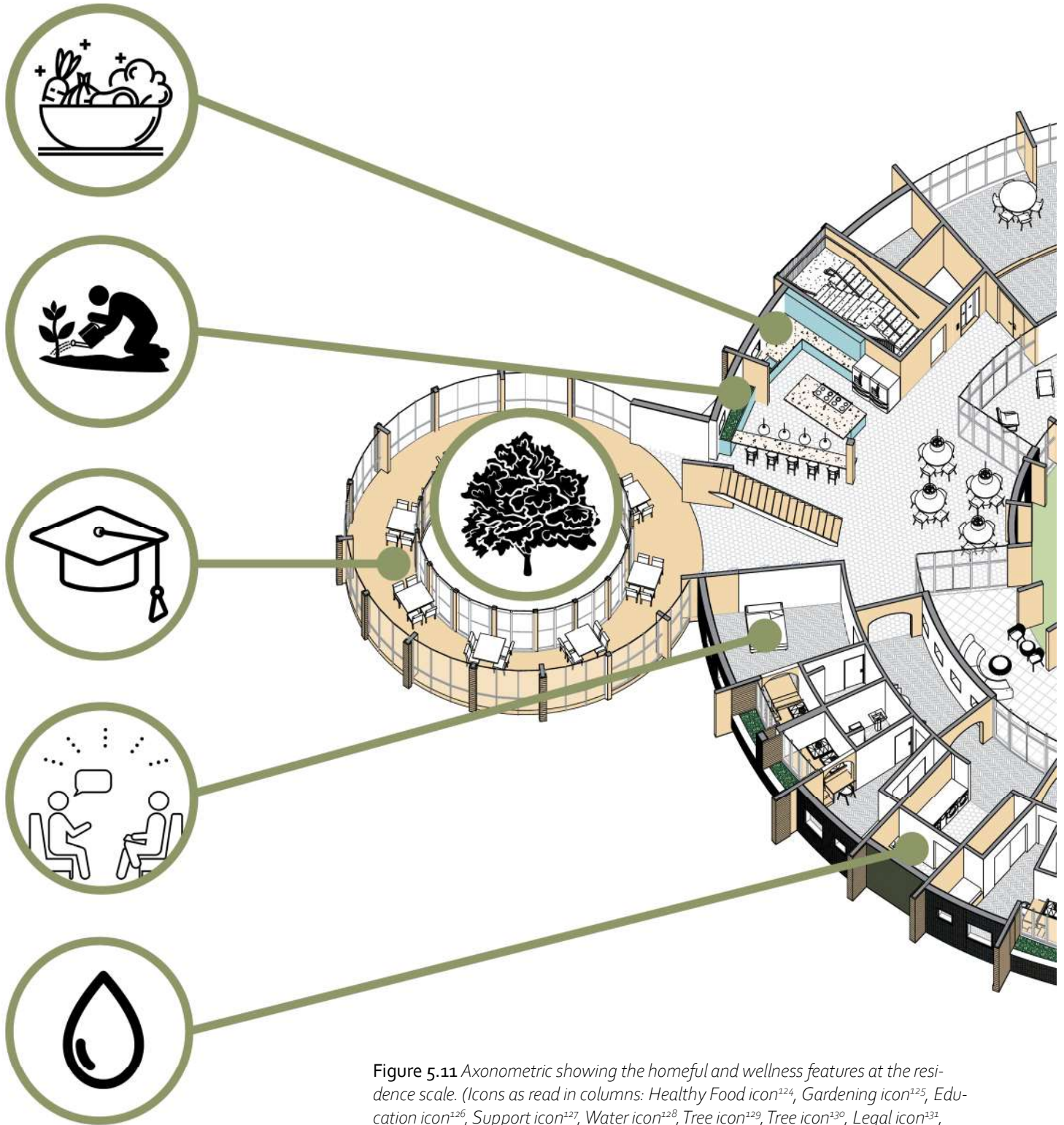
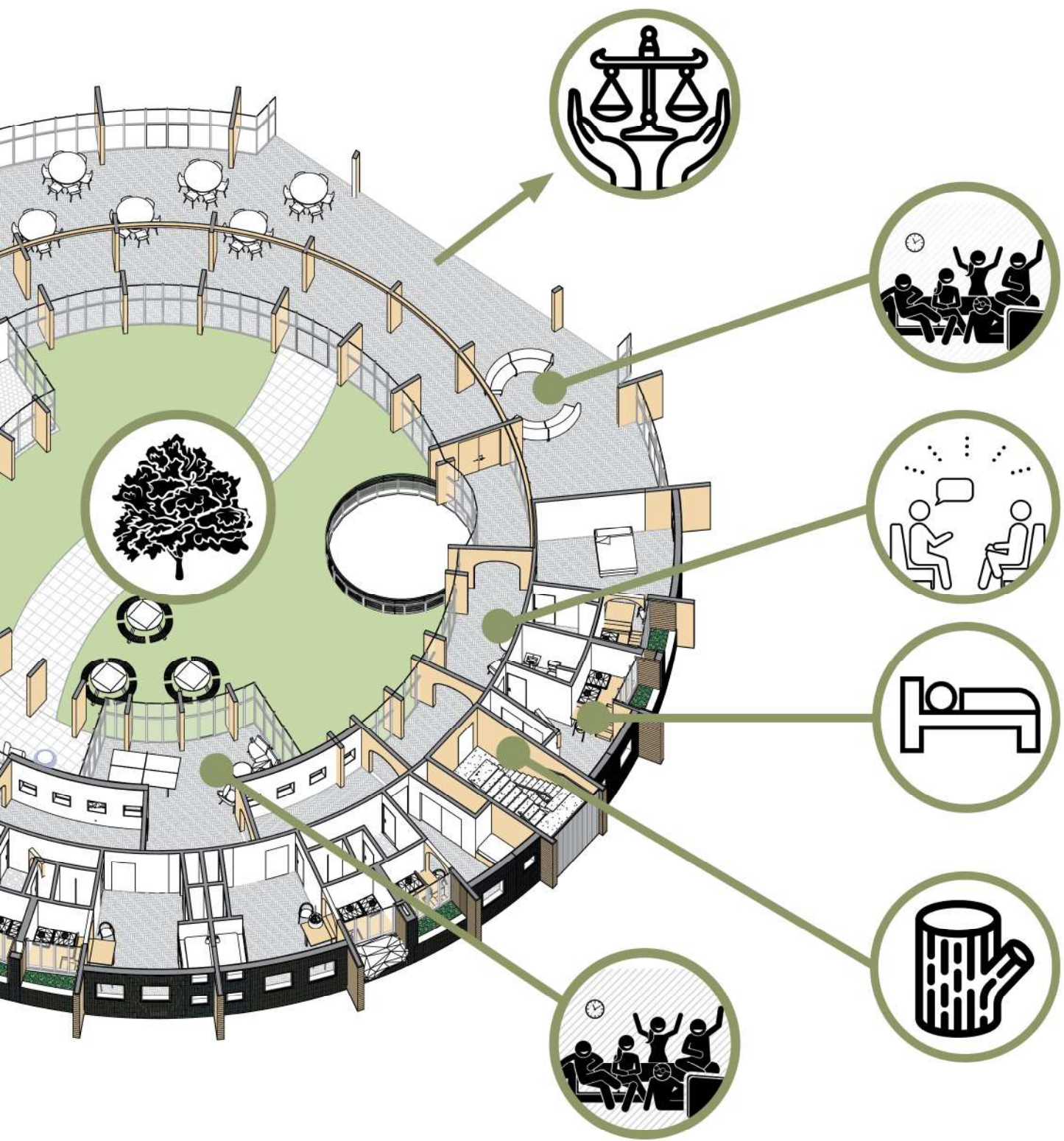


Figure 5.11 Axonometric showing the homeful and wellness features at the residence scale. (Icons as read in columns: Healthy Food icon<sup>124</sup>, Gardening icon<sup>125</sup>, Education icon<sup>126</sup>, Support icon<sup>127</sup>, Water icon<sup>128</sup>, Tree icon<sup>129</sup>, Tree icon<sup>130</sup>, Legal icon<sup>131</sup>, Social Health icon<sup>132</sup>, Support icon<sup>133</sup>, Bed icon<sup>134</sup>, Wood icon<sup>135</sup>, Social Health icon<sup>136</sup>)





# Third Floor Plan

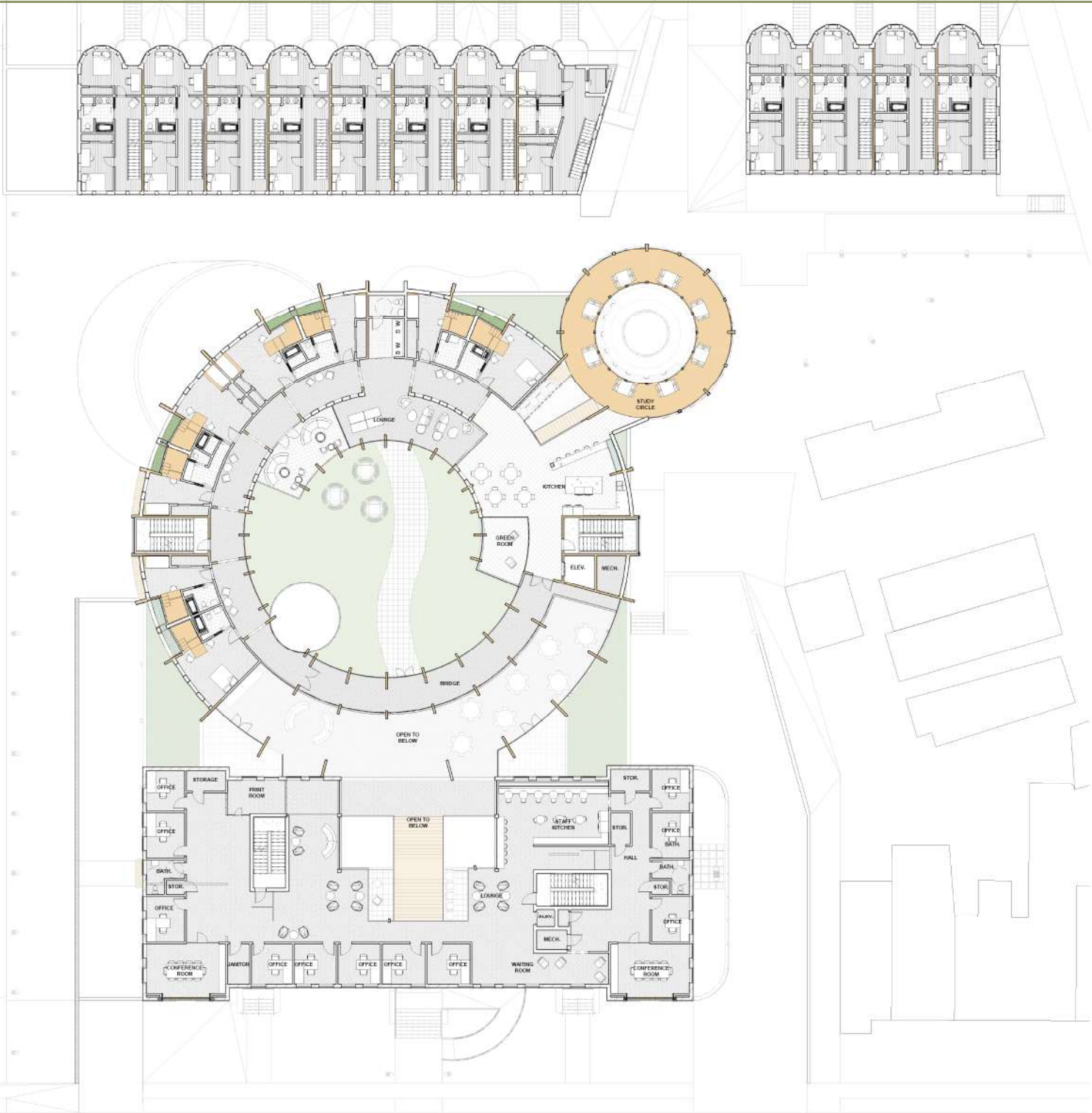


Figure 5.20

# Fourth Floor Plan

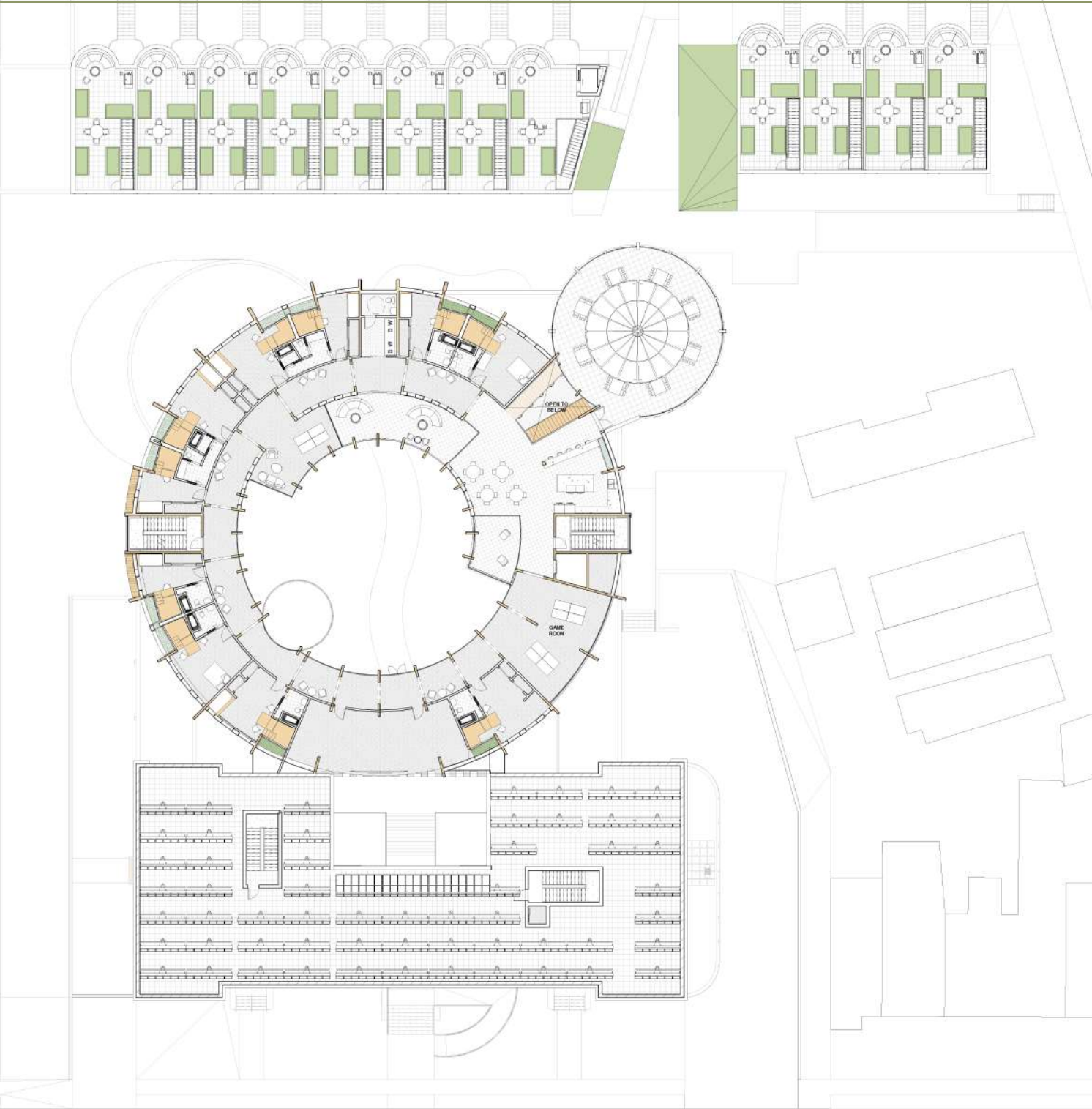


Figure 5.21





# Fifth Floor Plan

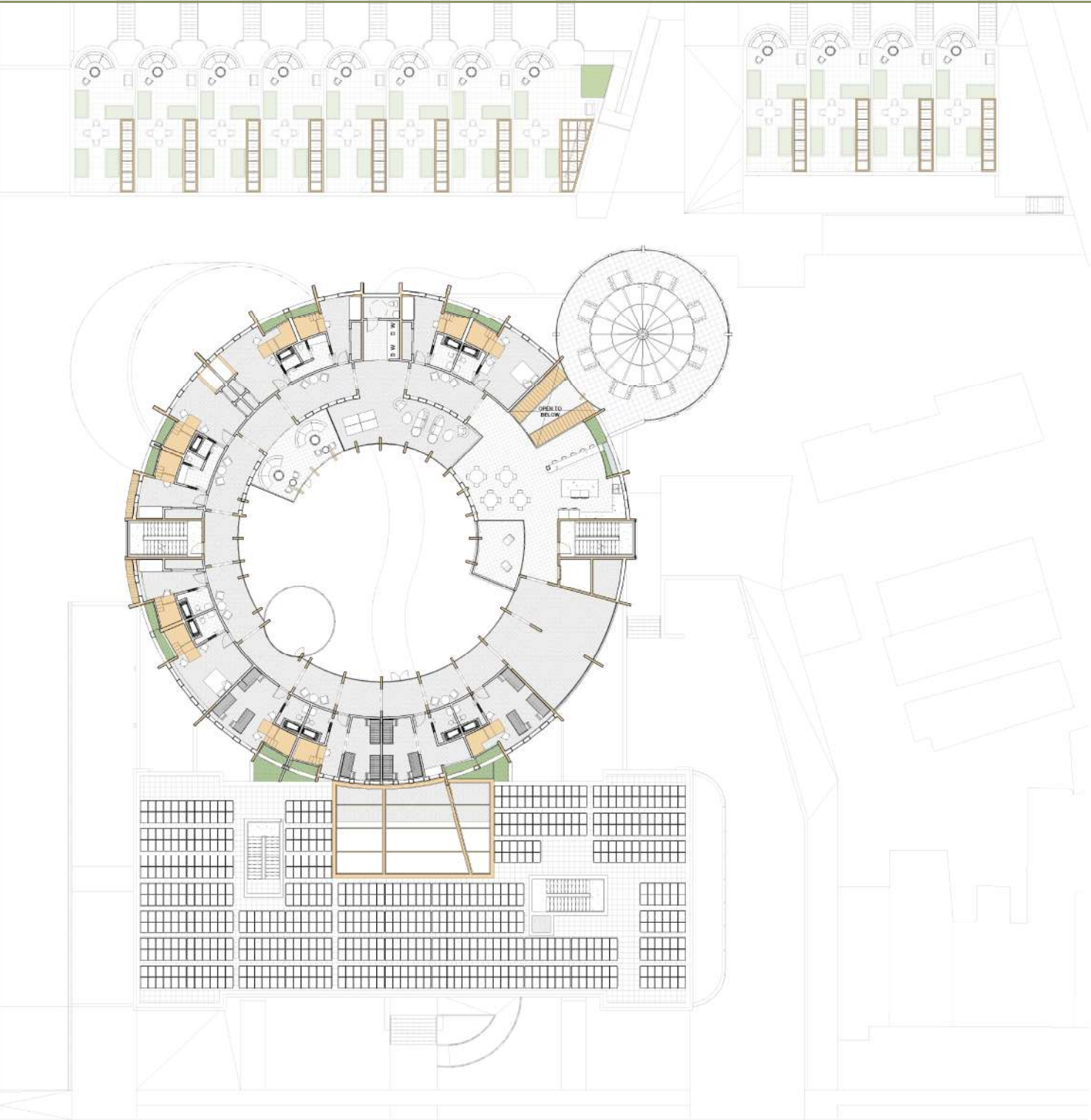


Figure 5.22

# Roof Plan

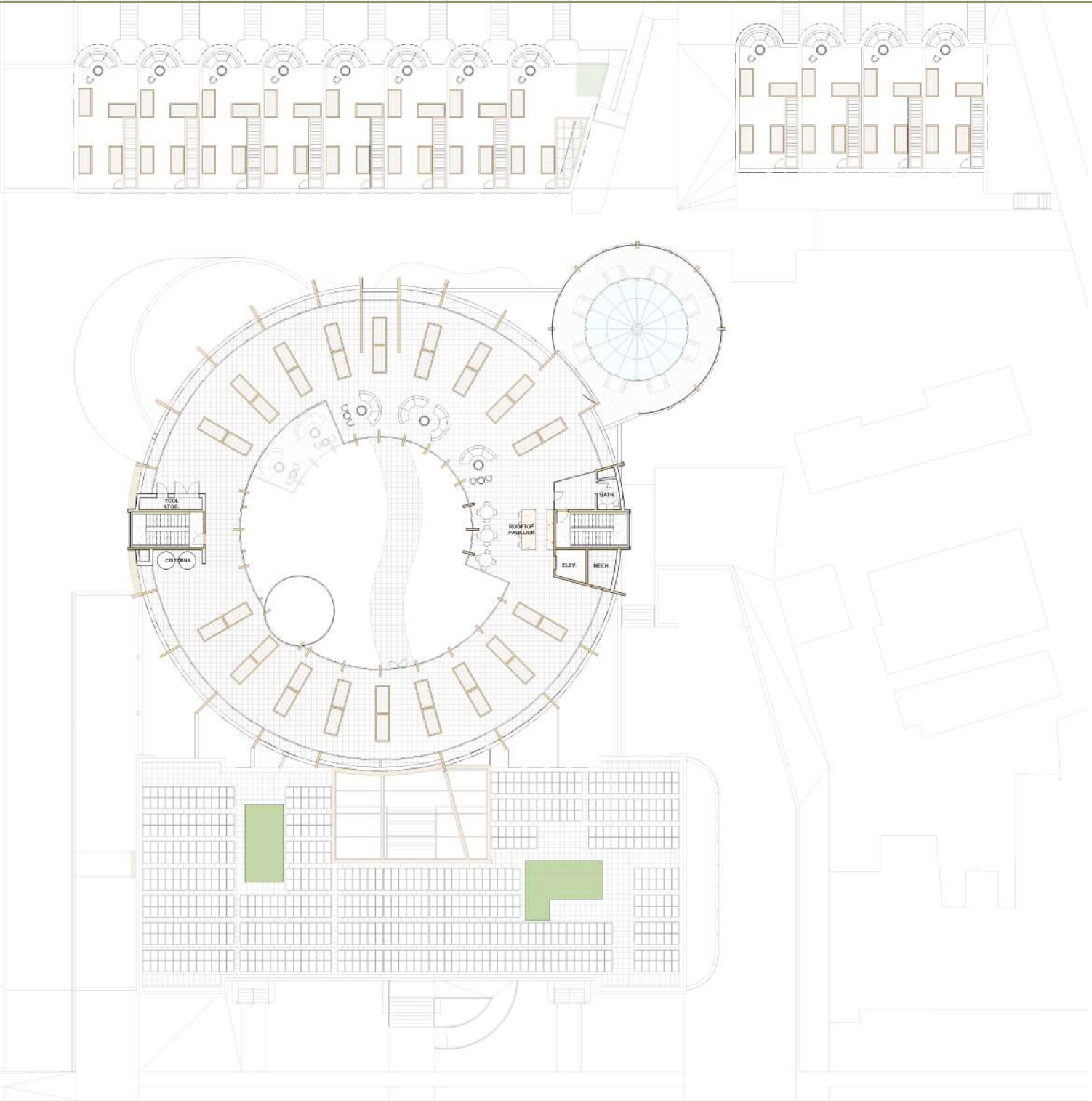
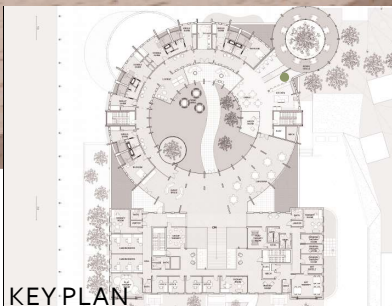


Figure 5.23





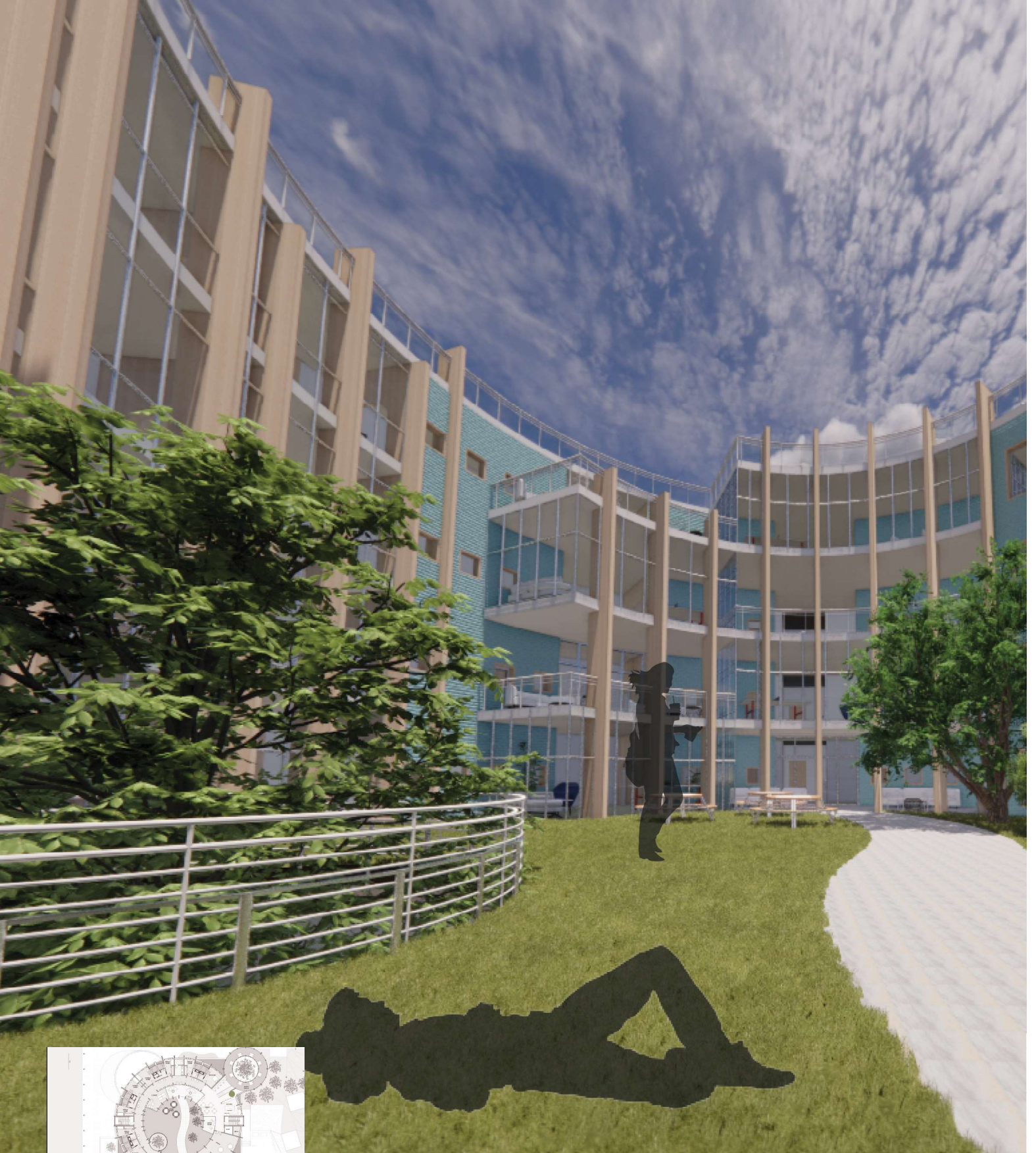
**Figure 5.30** This rendering shows the dining area as well as the teaching kitchen. This space is consistent on all the floors and allows flexibility for day to day use as well as potential events such as a cooking class. Beyond this space (as show on the left) is a 'Green Room' or greenhouse





*where residents can eat their lunch, do their homework, meditate, or whatever they would like in a semi-outdoor space. I wanted to provide a place like this as DC gets cold in the winter and sometimes one just need some plants and warmth to lift their spirits, especially in an instance where a resident experiences seasonal depression or perhaps had to uproot themselves from a warmer climate.*





KEY PLAN

**Figure 5.31** This rendering is of the central courtyard. The courtyard is at the second level and thus is a private place for the residents. I wanted the space to emulate a backyard in the sense of it being a private sanctuary away from the world. I wanted it to be a place where residents could es-





*cape the world around them and feel comfortable to use the space. Below the East (right) side of the courtyard is dirt that goes all the way to the ground as to allow for deeper dirt for trees as well as drainage from the space. This can be seen in Section drawings further into the book.*



# East-West Section looking North

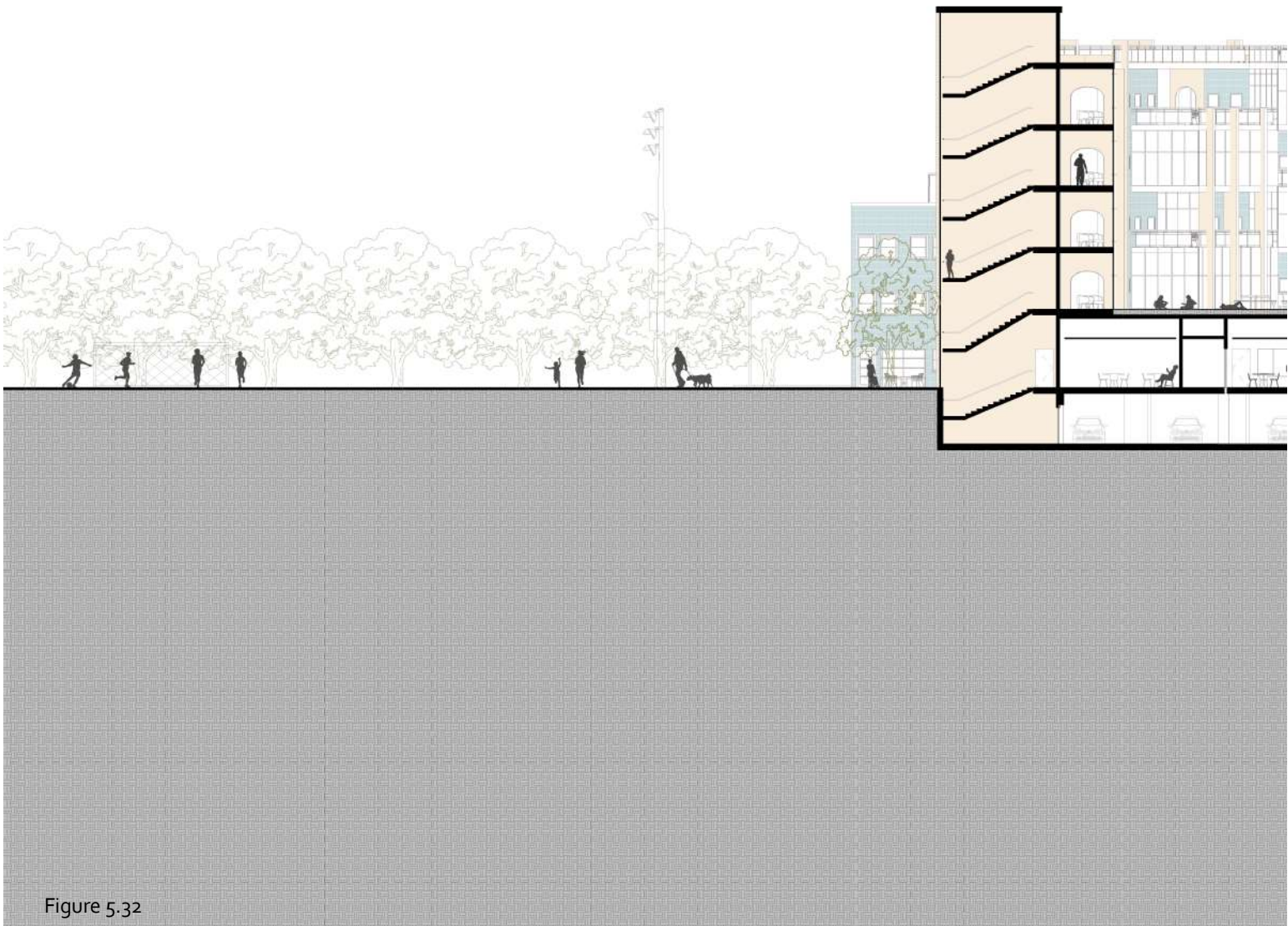
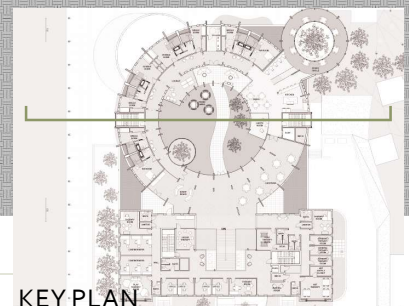


Figure 5.32



KEY PLAN



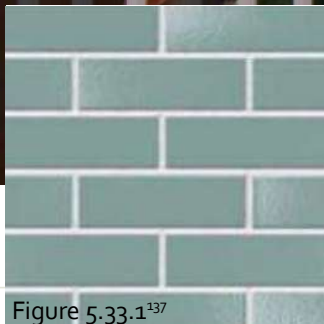


Figure 5.33.1<sup>137</sup>



Figure 5.33.2<sup>138</sup>

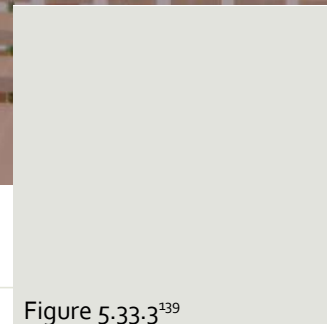


Figure 5.33.3<sup>139</sup>

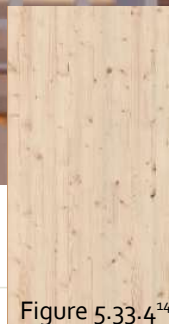
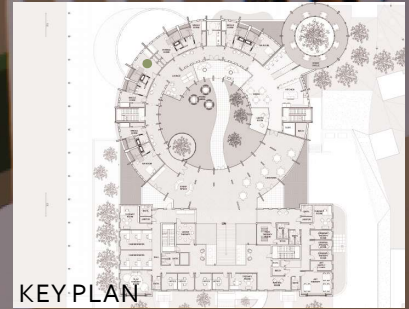
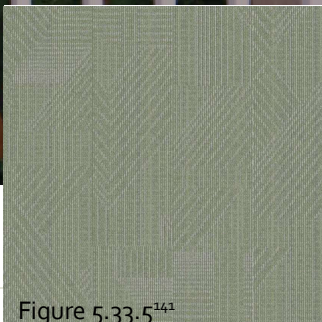


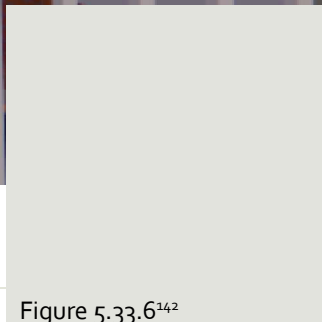
Figure 5.33.4<sup>144</sup>



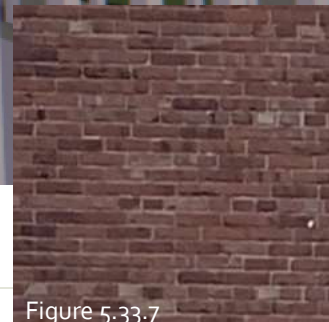
**Figure 5.33** This rendering is taken from a view of one of the balconies in the Bundy School building, and looks out into the atrium that serves as a transition between the old building and the new addition. Exposed red brick reveals which walls are existing, while new green and blue glazed brick highlights the new exterior walls of the addition in a contrast that shows the modernization of materials. The structure from the new addition reaches into the old building turning what was once mechanical rooftop into an atrium that allows light into the space, and also features two trees and a planted garden on the first level.



**Figure 5.33.5**<sup>141</sup>



**Figure 5.33.6**<sup>142</sup>



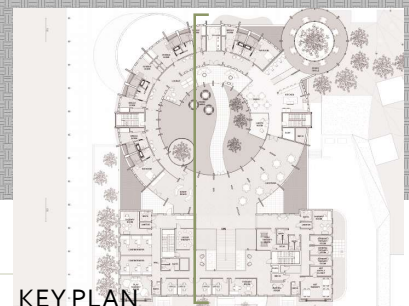
**Figure 5.33.7**



# North-South Section looking East



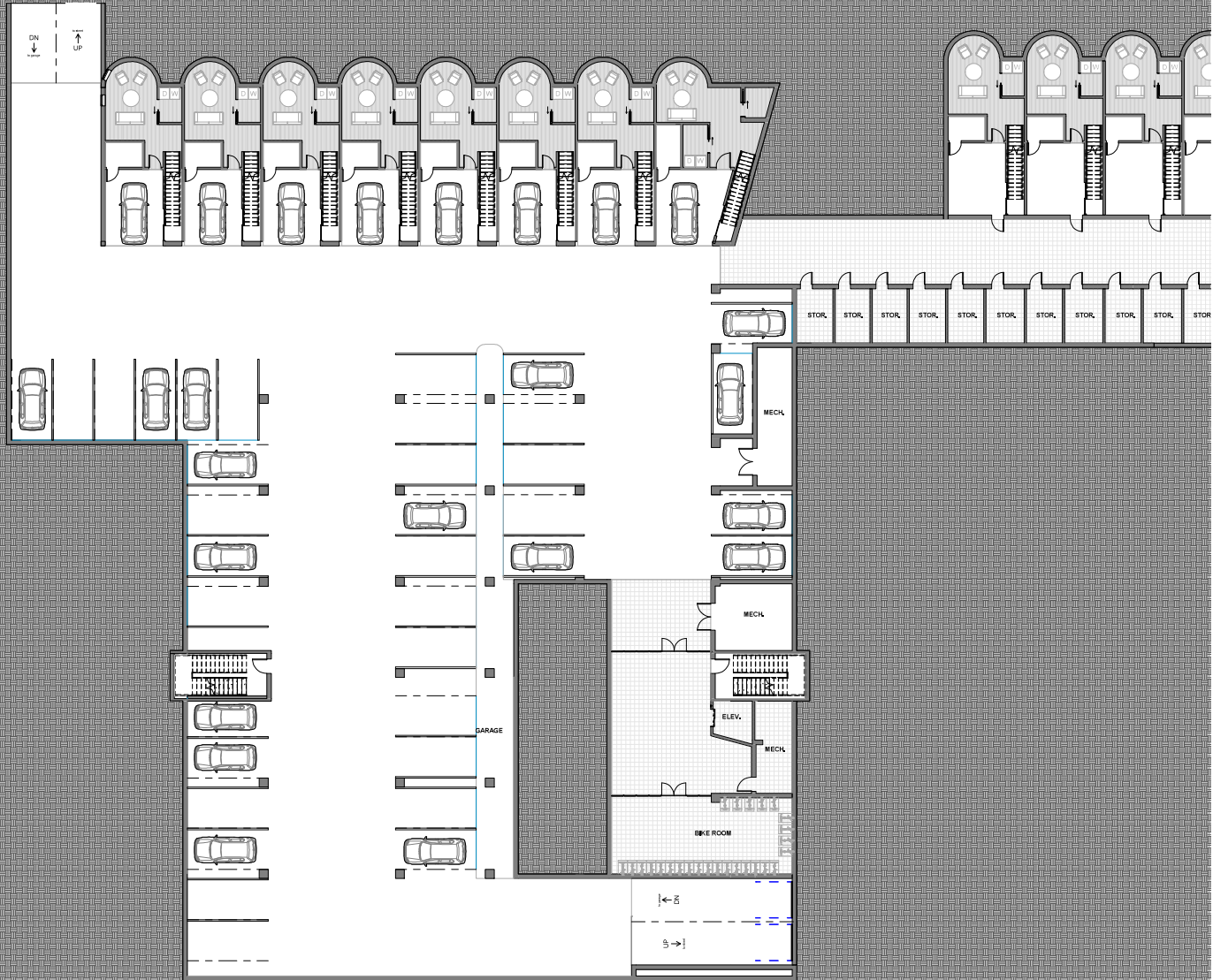
Figure 5.34



KEY PLAN



# Garage Floor Plan



## Vehicles on Site

The existing site is an under-used parking lot. Throughout the duration of my thesis I returned to the site quite a few times; most times there was maybe a car or two in the lot, and only once I saw it full. Based on what I observed it seems like the lot is used mainly for events and also potentially for teacher and administrative parking for the KIPP DC elementary school next door. It seemed like the cars that were in this lot that didn't have to do with the school were related to the soccer games that happen in the adjacent Bundy Field.

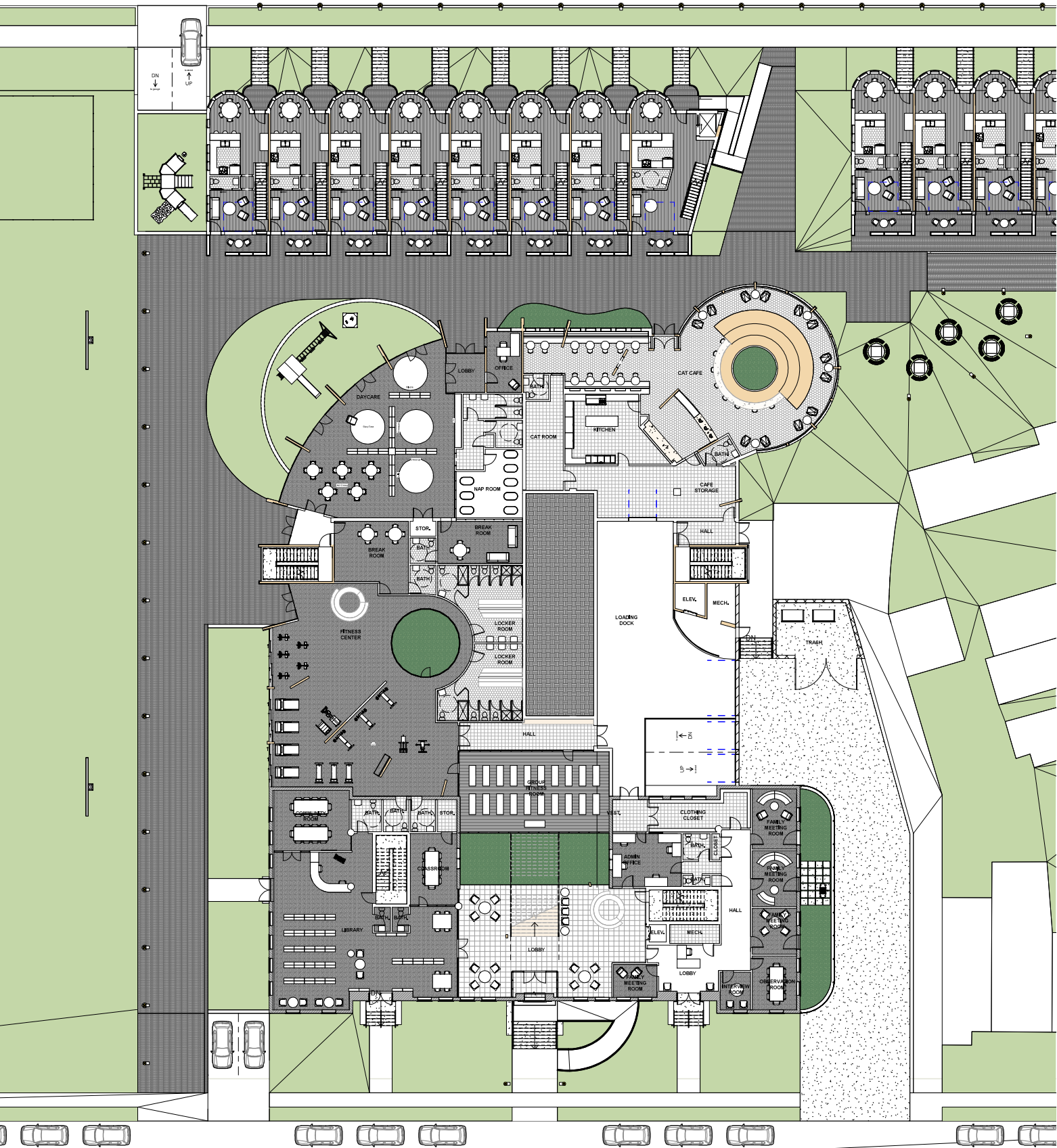
I went back and forth about how much parking was really needed on the site. I decided to provide some parking for those who work at Safe Shores, the adjacent schools, those attending local soccer games or other events, as well as for the residents. The garage provides zip cars on the 18+ housing end that can be used by residents of the buildings or anyone who lives in the neighborhood. This gives both residents and community members access to vehicles without having to pay for parking in the city or for the maintenance of the cars, which can get quite expensive. This option allows for more expansive access to opportunities that may be outside of public transit limits, as well as allowing the residents to learn how to drive thus increasing their independence.

Also, the parking is below the main level, thus allowing the alley ways that surround the building to be pedestrian. This increases their safety and allows for a more communal atmosphere.

Figure 5.40



# First Floor Plan



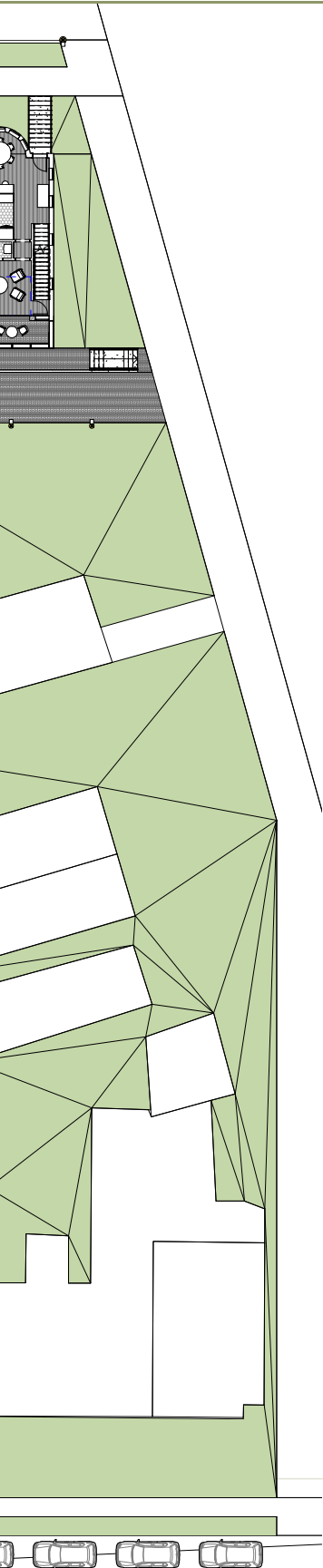
## Community Elements

The first floor is the more public realm of the building and thus contributes more communal elements. A social alley wraps throughout the site from the Southwest corner of the Bundy School Building, turns to head East between the dorms and the 18+ housing, and then turns North through some of the 18+ housing to connect back to P Street.

The amenities include (clockwise from the start of the Social Alley) a library, a fitness center, a daycare (with two playgrounds), and a cat cafe. Strategically including these spaces into the program of this building not only helps the health of the residents, but allows the community to experience the benefits as well. By removing the institutional setting of most therapy sessions as well as the need to schedule an appointment, users have the flexibility to experience these spaces and heal unknowingly.

The Cat Cafe is a great example of this; while it is an up and coming trend, they also have immense health benefits for the users. Animals are often used in therapy; they bring us joy in their presence<sup>143</sup>, and the ability to pet them taps into the sensory experience of touching natural material that releases serotonin in the mind<sup>144</sup>. They also have a beneficial role in mental healing. There are various types of animal therapy from equine therapy sessions to the ability to have emotional support animals. The Cat Cafe allows all of these benefits to be accessible to the residents and the community members, while enjoying petting cats and eating a yummy snack.

Figure 5.41





# Study Circle Section





Figure 5.42

### Study Circle Section

Above the cat cafe are three floors of study space that surround an atrium for the tree planted on the first floor. This allows the residents to experience the biophilic health benefits of nature, as well as observe the occasional cat who decides to climb the tree.

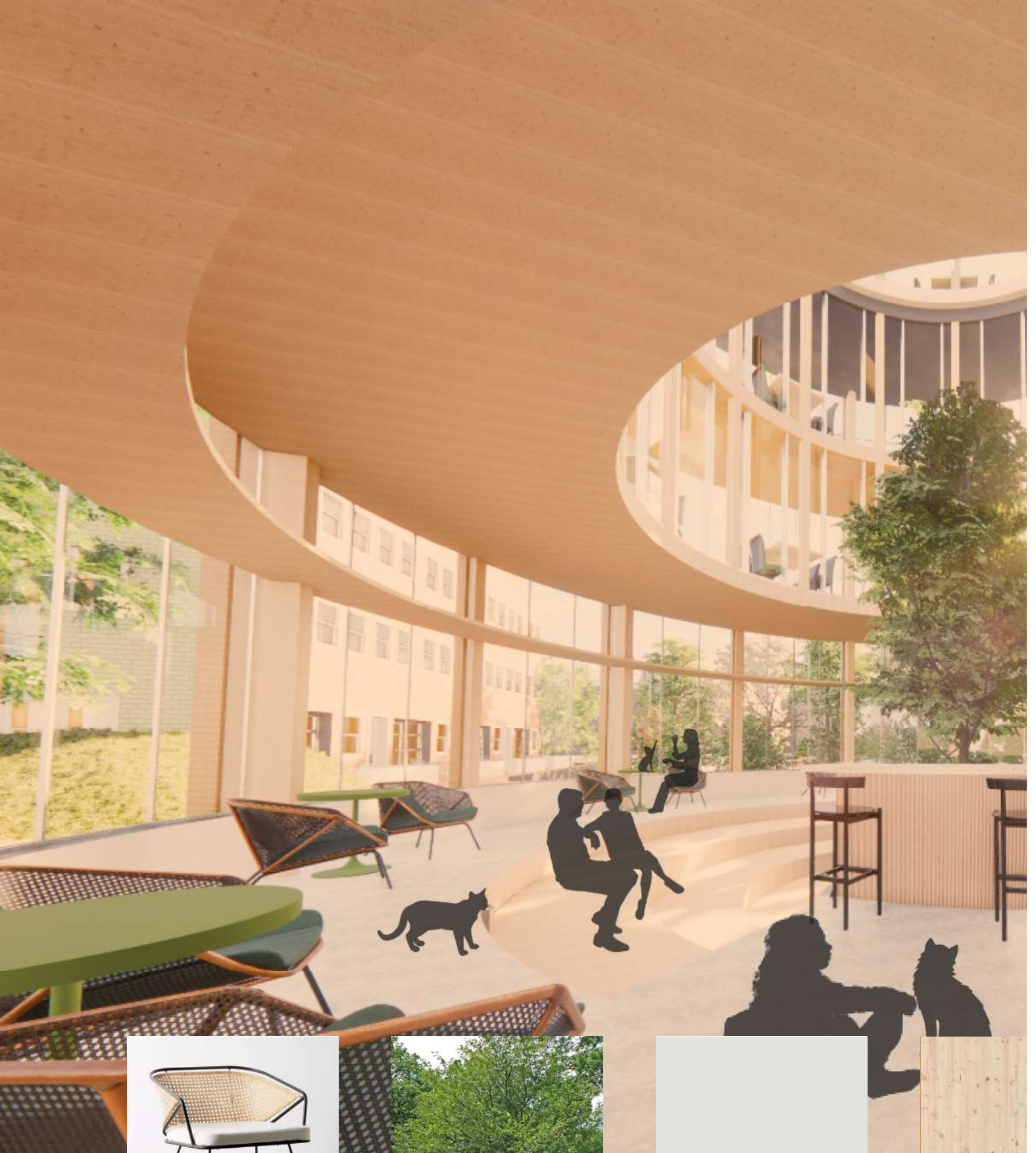


Figure 5.43.1<sup>147</sup>



Figure 5.43.2<sup>148</sup>

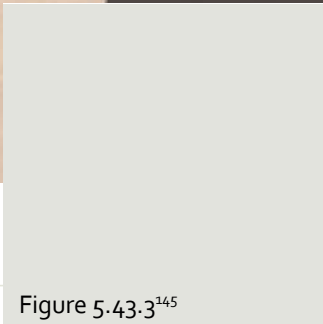


Figure 5.43.3<sup>145</sup>



Figure 5.43.4<sup>144</sup>





**KEY PLAN: 1ST FLOOR**

*Figure 5.43 This rendering is of the Cat Cafe below the Study Circle. As previously mentioned, the cafe features a tree that goes up into the study space. It adds a touch of the outdoors to an interior space that both cats and people can benefit from. I imagine that the cafe would serve things like Taiyaki, a Japanese pocket shaped like a fish that either has a sweet or savory filling.*

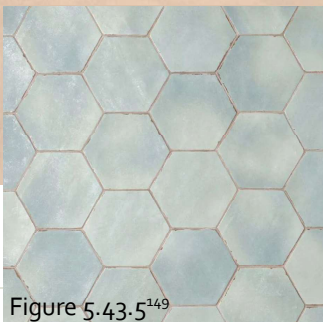


Figure 5.43.5<sup>149</sup>

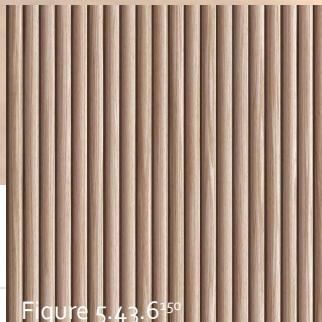


Figure 5.43.6<sup>150</sup>



Figure 5.43.7<sup>151</sup>



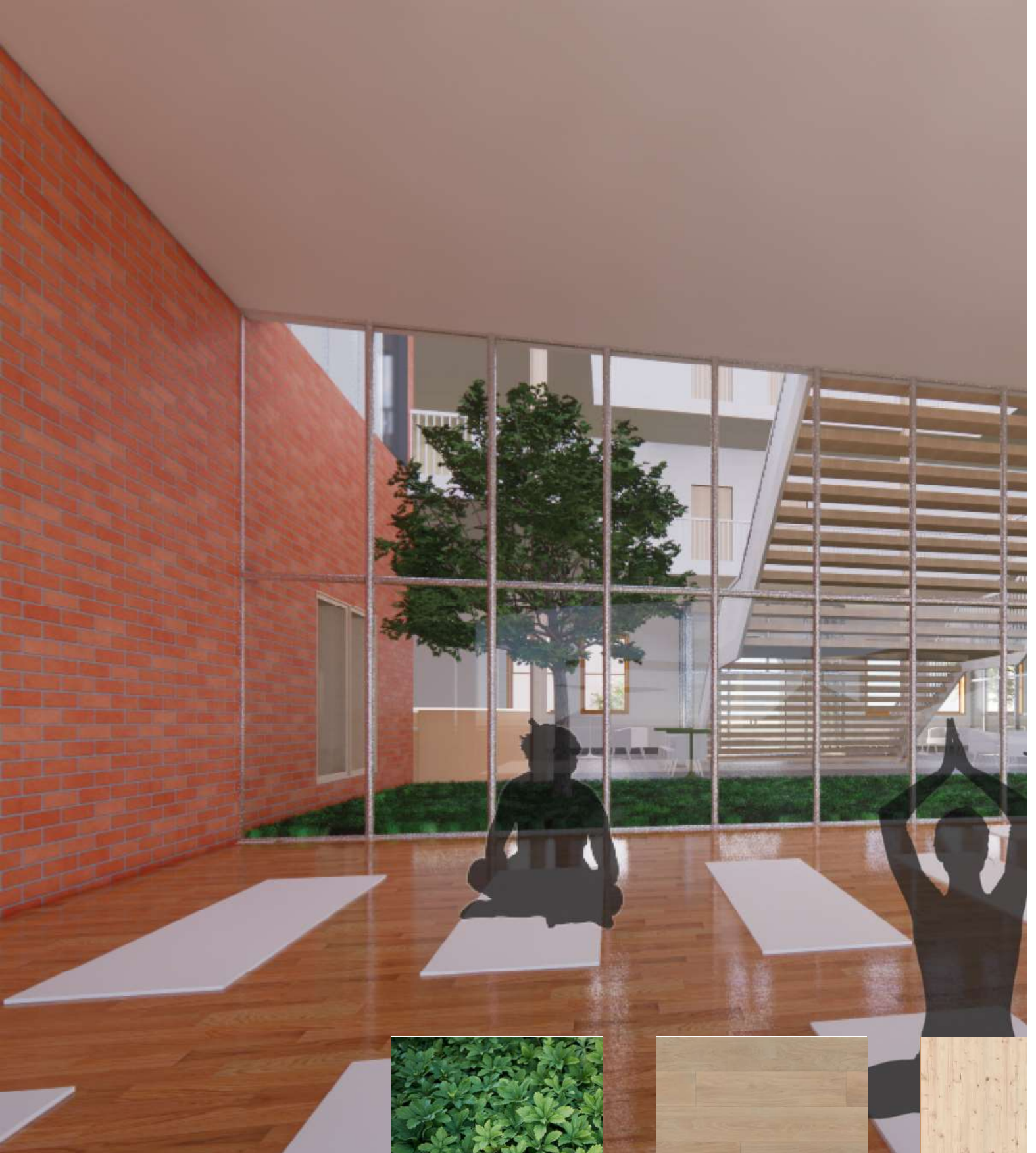


Figure 5.44.1<sup>156</sup>

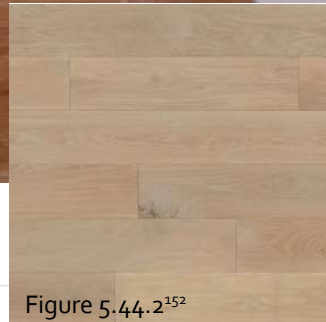


Figure 5.44.2<sup>152</sup>

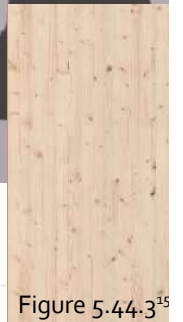


Figure 5.44.3<sup>155</sup>





Figure 5.44 This rendering is of the Group Fitness room. It is a space that can be used for various classes, such as yoga which I have shown here. Yoga is something that has brought me as well as many others mental peace so I know it has the potential to do so for the residents. The room also features a view into the Bundy atrium that features a planted space with trees. Although the room is physically in the middle of the building, this light-well and garden bring in natural light and the outdoors.

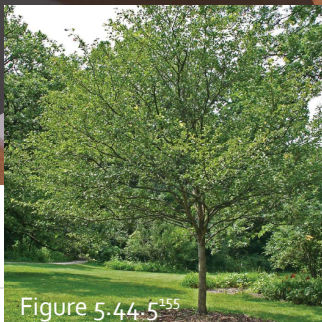
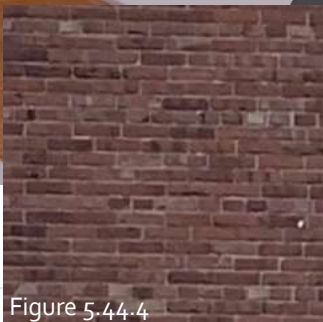
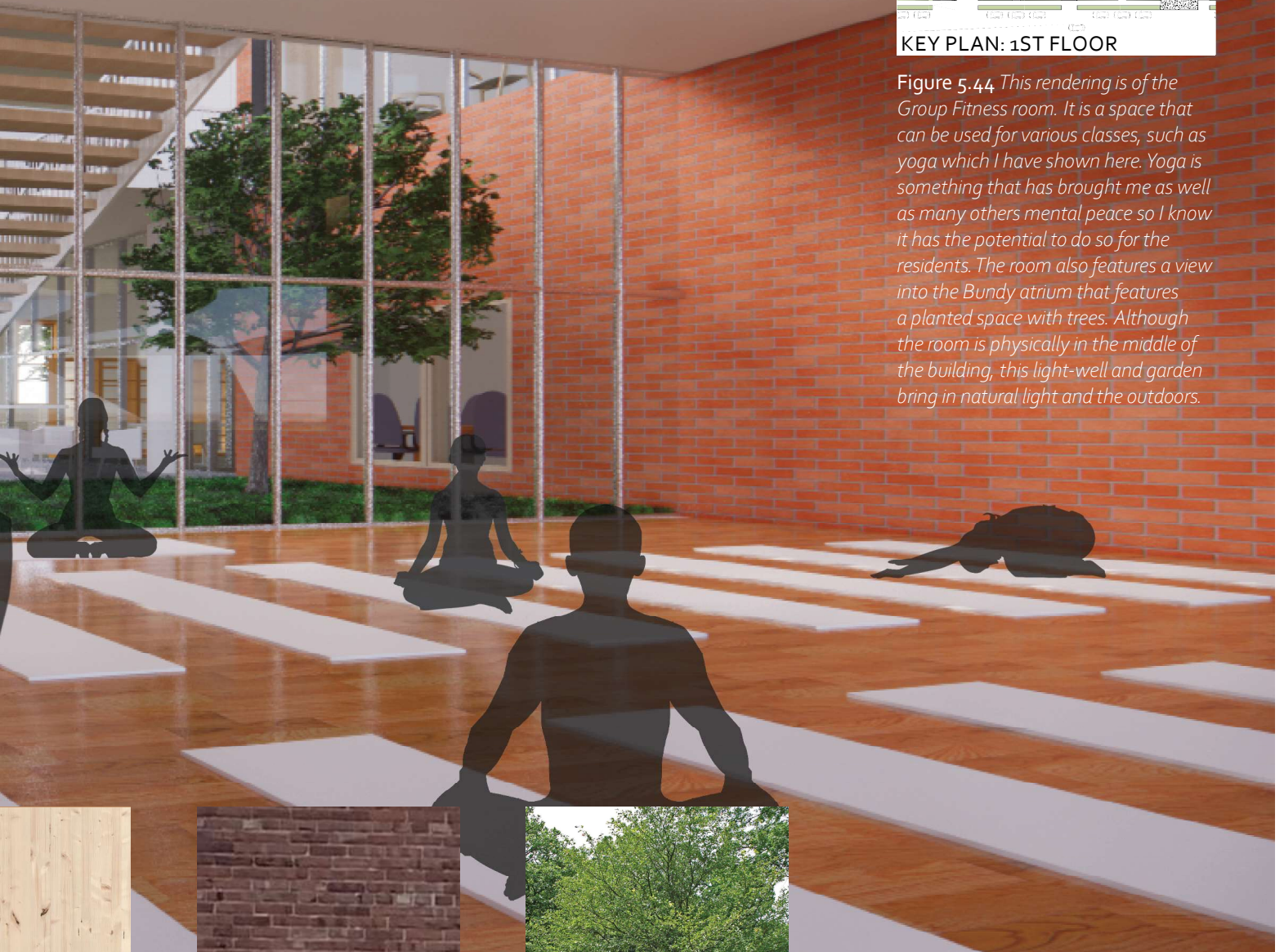
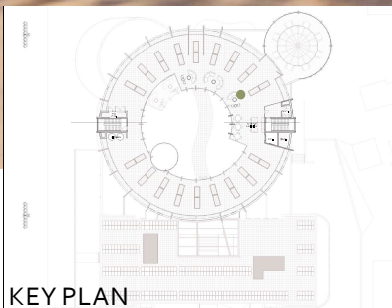


Figure 5.44.4

Figure 5.44.5<sup>255</sup>





**Figure 5.45** This rendering is of the Rooftop Pavilion. It features an outdoor teaching kitchen. This creates an opportunity for residents to learn about healthy cooking and eating, using the produce they've grown in the rooftop vegetable gardens.



Figure 5.45.1<sup>35</sup>

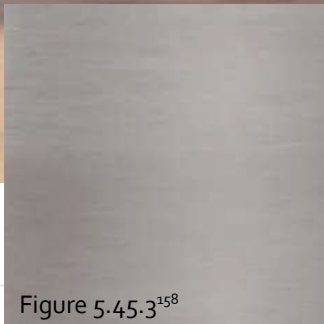


Figure 5.45.2<sup>157</sup>

Figure 5.45.3<sup>158</sup>

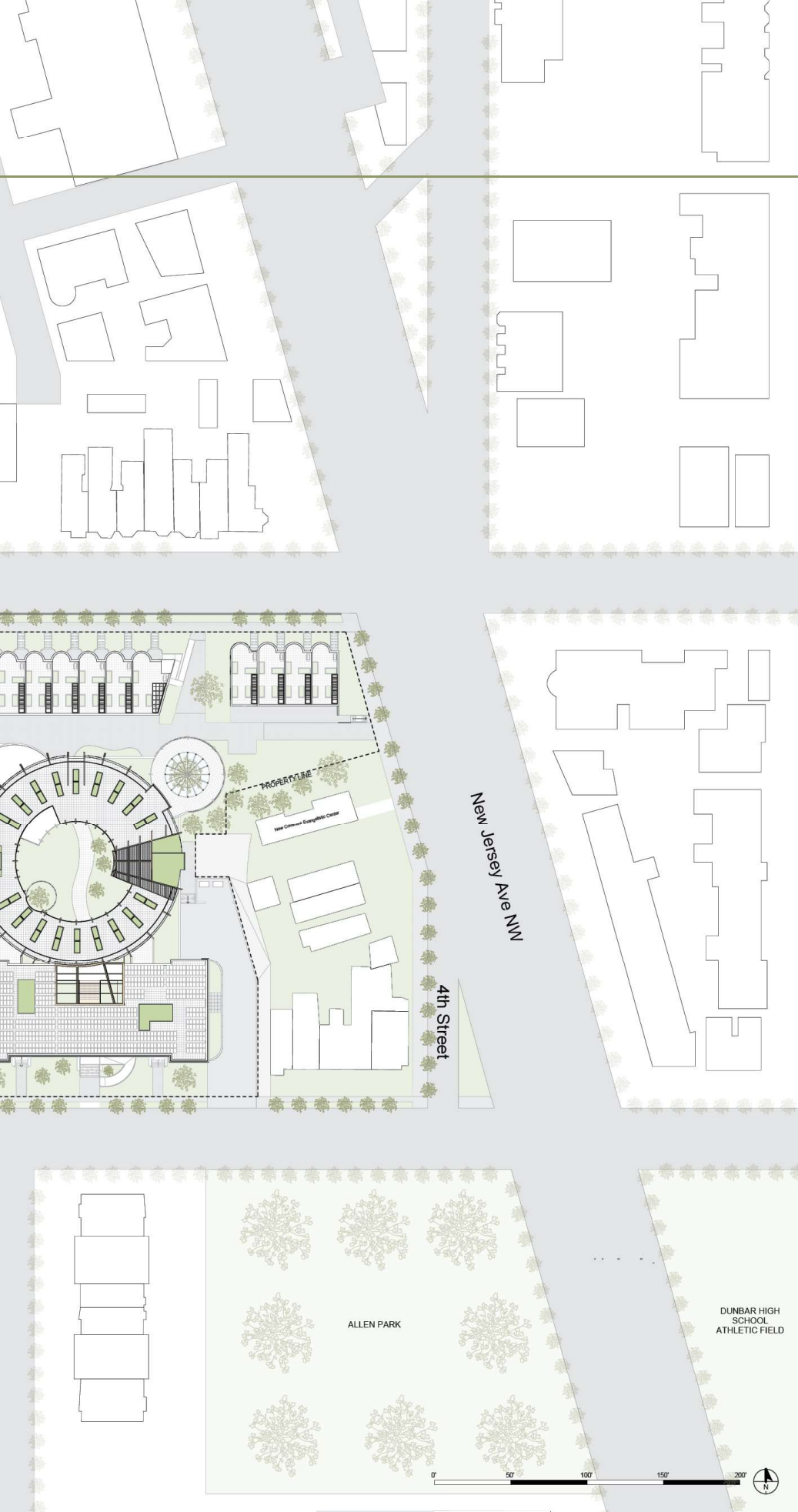
Figure 5.45.4<sup>159</sup>



# Site Plan



Figure 5.50







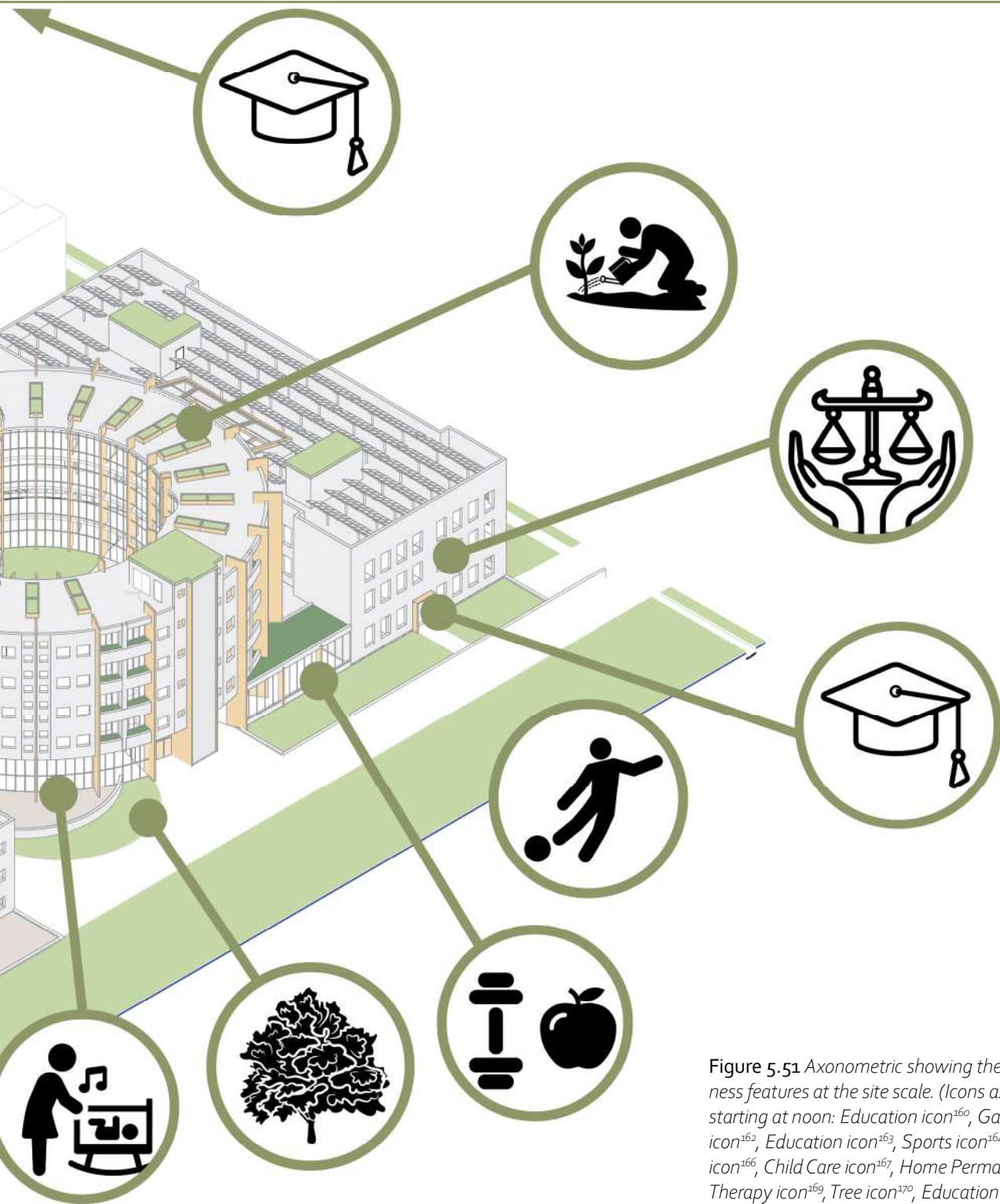


Figure 5.51 Axonometric showing the homeful and wellness features at the site scale. (Icons as read clockwise starting at noon: Education icon<sup>160</sup>, Gardening icon<sup>161</sup>, Legal icon<sup>162</sup>, Education icon<sup>163</sup>, Sports icon<sup>164</sup>, Health icon<sup>165</sup>, Tree icon<sup>166</sup>, Child Care icon<sup>167</sup>, Home Permanence icon<sup>168</sup>, Animal Therapy icon<sup>169</sup>, Tree icon<sup>170</sup>, Education icon<sup>171</sup>, Education icon<sup>172</sup>, Healthy Food icon<sup>173</sup>)



Figure 5.60  
**South Elevation**

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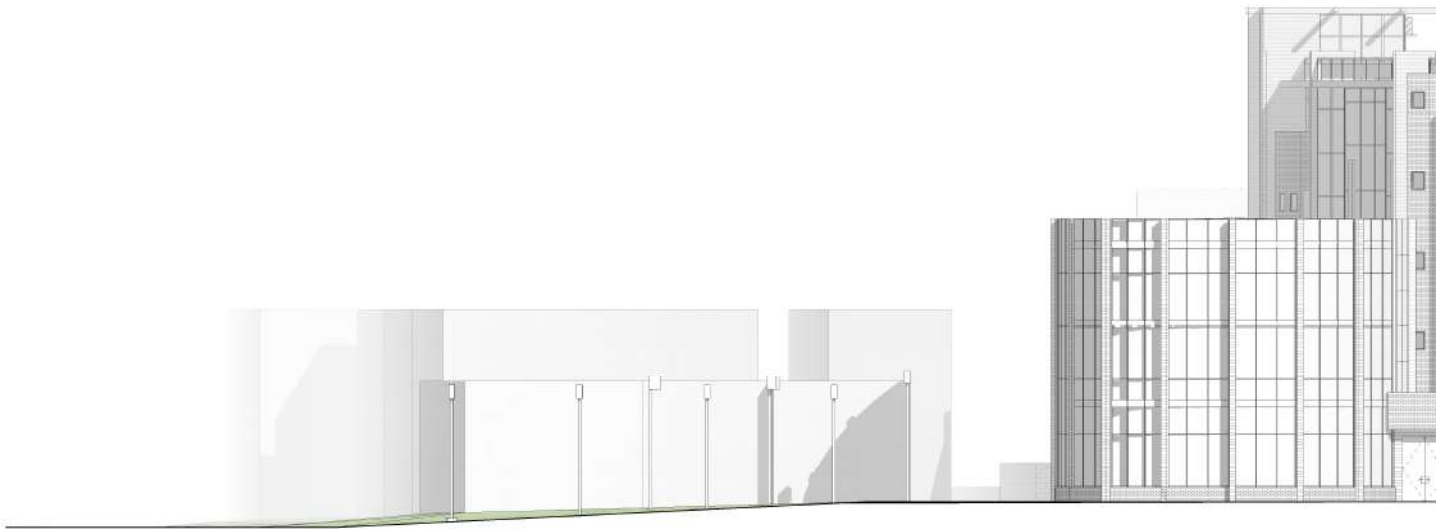


Figure 5.61  
**North Elevation**

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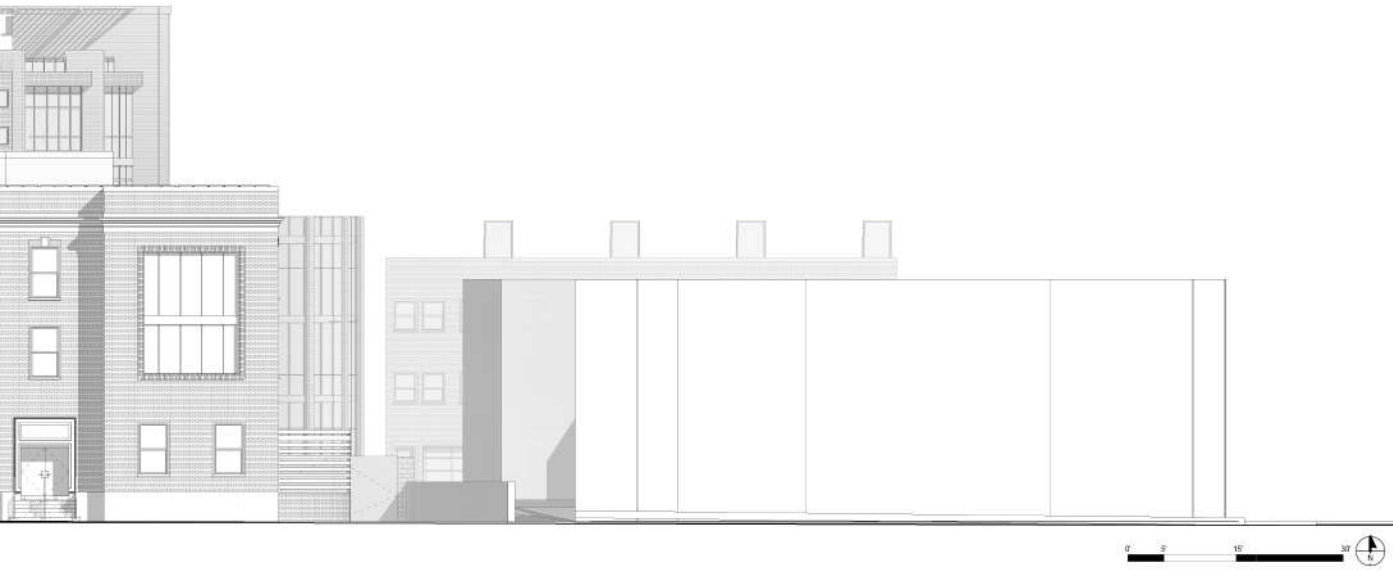










Figure 5.62 This rendering is of the front of the Bundy School building. I have added subtle interventions into the existing building, such as adding new windows in the bumped out area to provide light to all of the rooms. The addition is tucked behind this building as to maintain the historic character of the street, while also making the new building a "Hidden Gem" to be discovered.

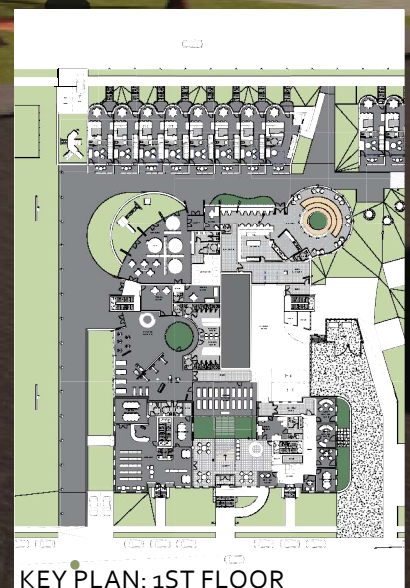




Figure 5.63  
East Elevation

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Figure 5.64  
West Elevation

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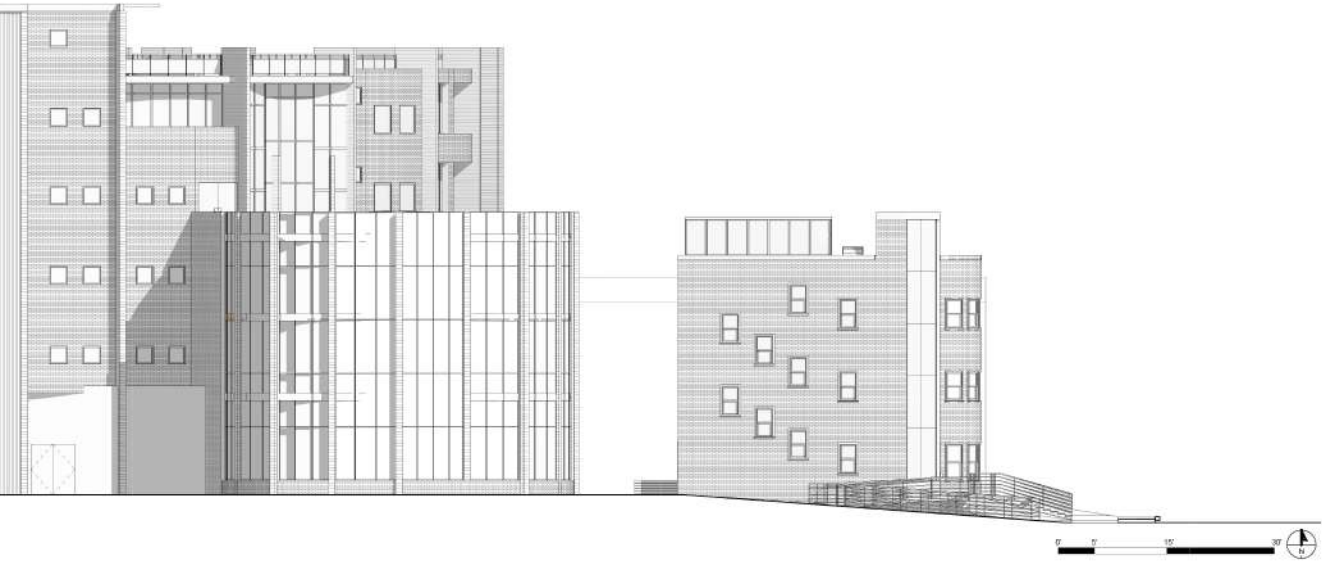






Figure 5.70 This rendering is of the West side of the building from the soccer field that exists currently. Although it is not the front of the building, it is the only side of the new addition that is revealed completely. From this view you can see at the Northern (left) most point are the 18+ row homes, in the middle is the addition, and the Southern (right) is the existing Bundy School building.







## 6 - CONCLUSIONS

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## What's Next?

One of the biggest questions when it comes to Foster Care and underage housing is what do they do once they age out? This was a question that I knew that I needed to address in my project because one of the major drivers was making sure that the building I created and the features that I included made sure to prepare these teens for adulthood, and prevent them from living on the streets or joining the Foster Care to jail pipeline that too many Foster Kids end up in.

Focusing on my initial idea of homefulness, I wanted to provide housing for those who have aged out of the system. Thus I created a series of row houses that line the North end of the site along P street. These buildings not only help to integrate my interventions into the surrounding neighborhood, but also provide housing for 18+ alumni of these dorms. The proximity of this housing to the site allows the residents to still have access to the resources that are helping them heal, while also gaining some independence and moving towards the freedoms of adulthood.

Speaking of which, the residents' lives beyond this group home is something that I was thinking about all the way back when I was choosing a site. Was the area a place where the residents could have opportunities after aging out of this housing? One resource that I find opens up doors for many young people is education. In my research, I found that this site is a 15 minute bike or bus ride to Howard University, and is accessible to other schools in the area by public transit. This way they can continue to learn and grow. Having the ability to maintain support as well as to further their studies can help more Foster Care alum to thrive in adulthood, and increase, "the 3% of Foster Youth who graduate college" to hopefully far beyond that number.<sup>174</sup>

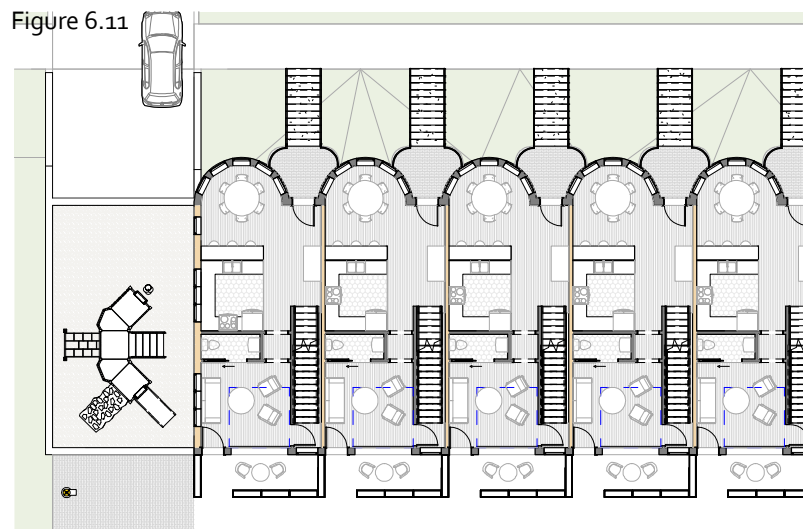
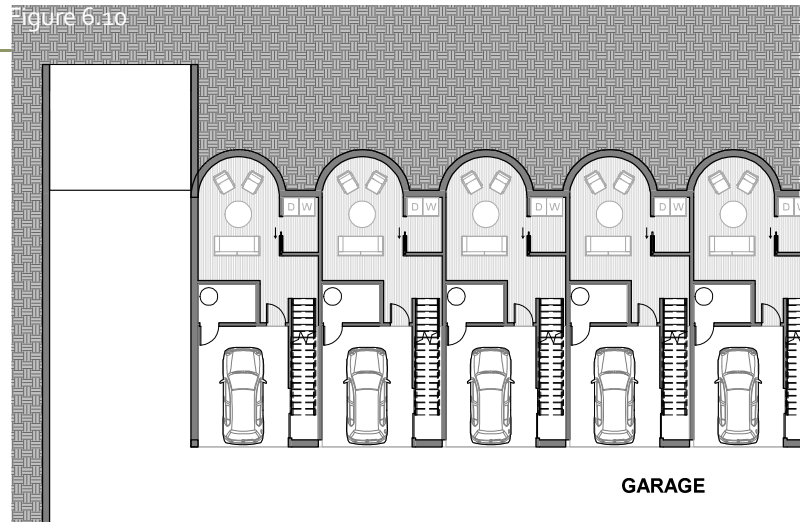
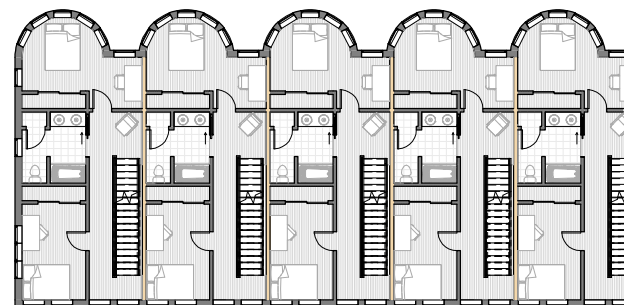


Figure 6.12





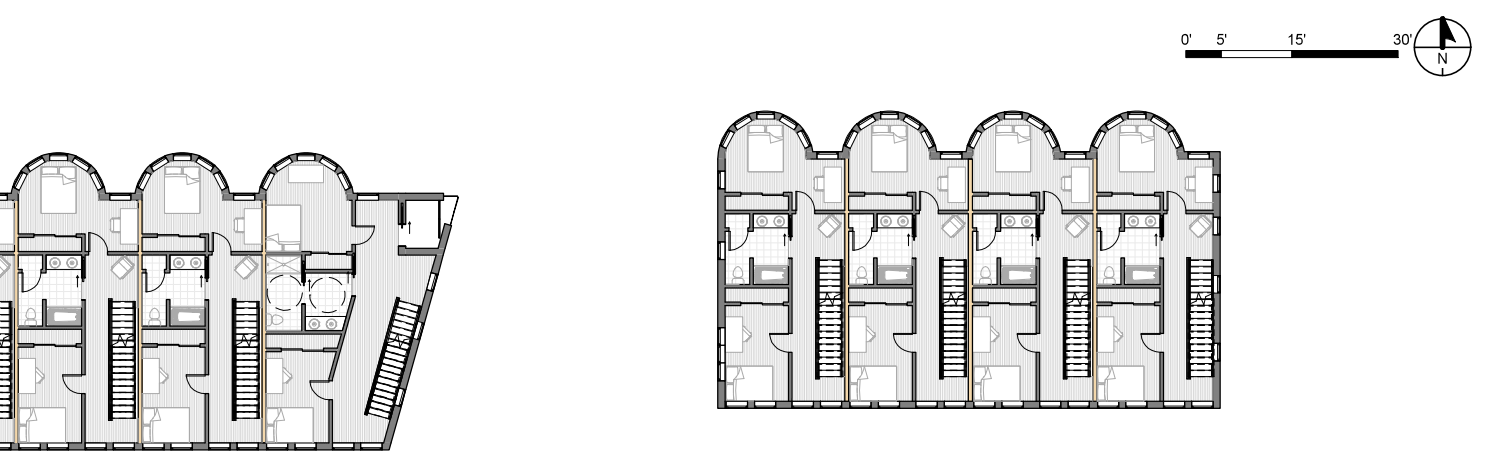
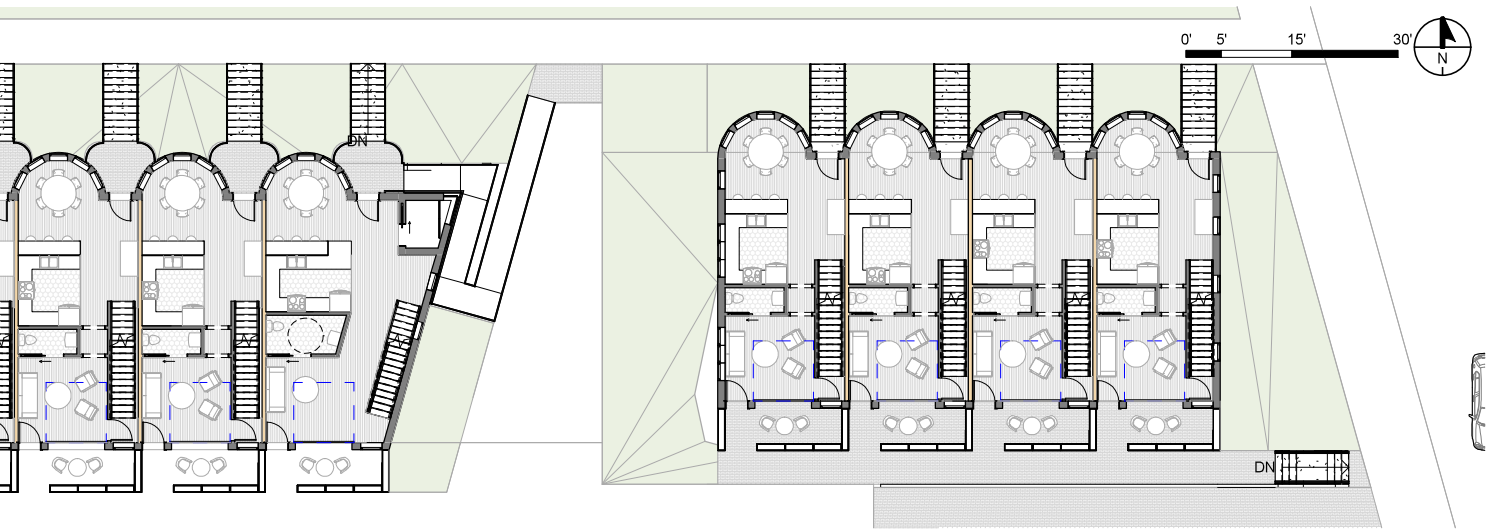
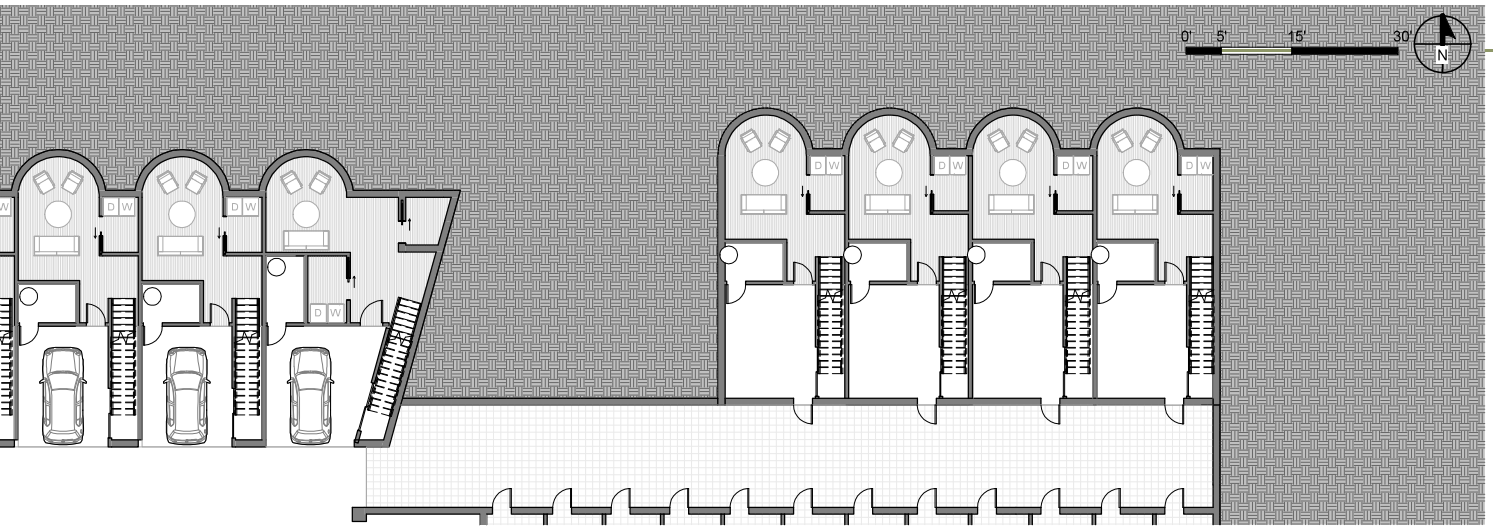


Figure 6.13

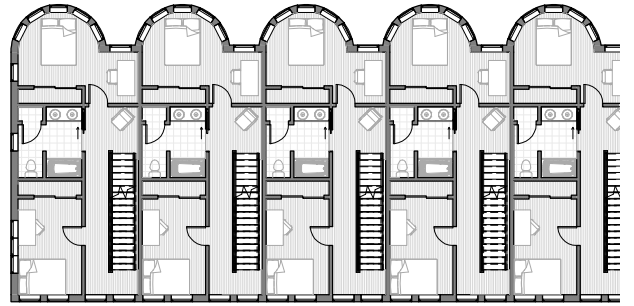
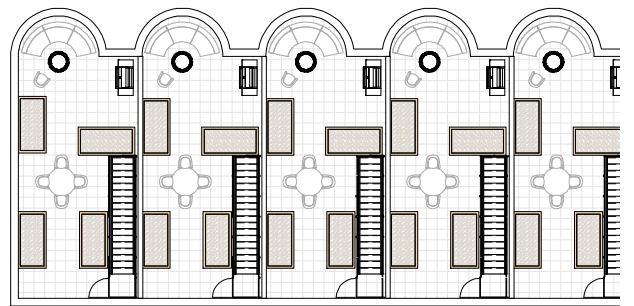
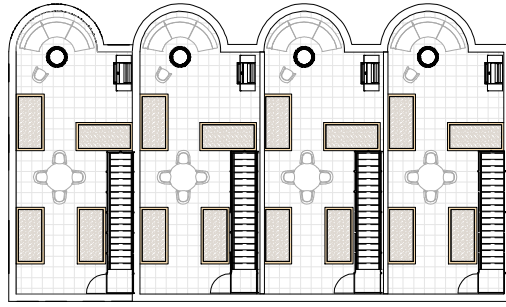
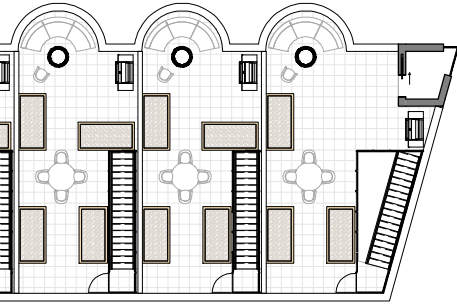
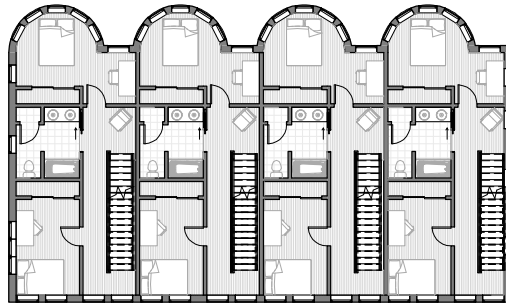
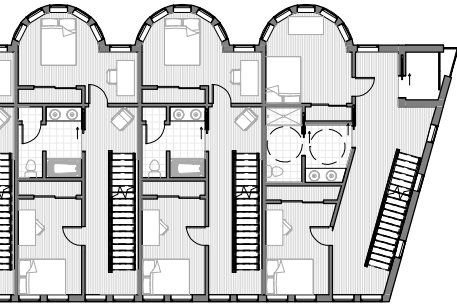
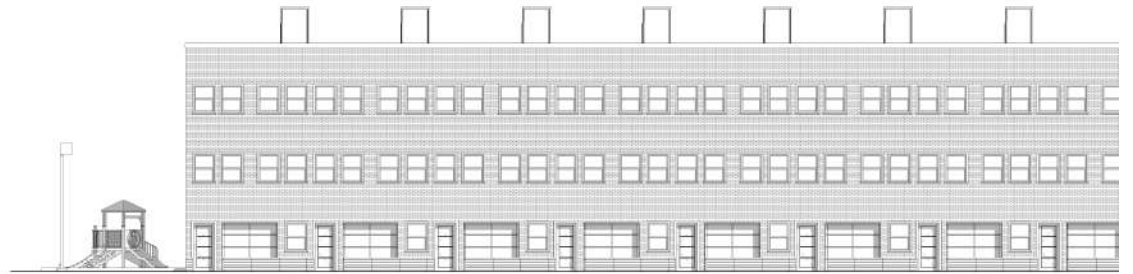


Figure 6.14









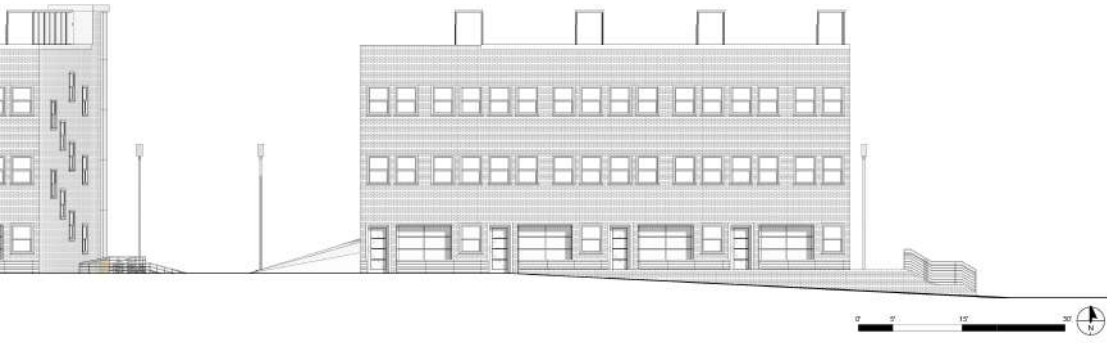
18+ Housing South Elevation

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18+ Housing North Elevation

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## Endnotes + Image Credits

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- 1 Susan's Headshot.
- 2 Marcia's Headshot.
- 3 Selin's Headshot.
- 4 Bassuk, Ellen L., et al. "America's Youngest Outcasts 2010." American Institutes for Research, Nov. 2014, <https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/Americas-Youngest-Outcasts-Child-Homelessness-Nov2014.pdf>.
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- 18 @togetherwerise. "One year ago our babies officially became part of the Brooks family!!" Instagram, 16 Nov. 2021. <https://www.instagram.com/p/>

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