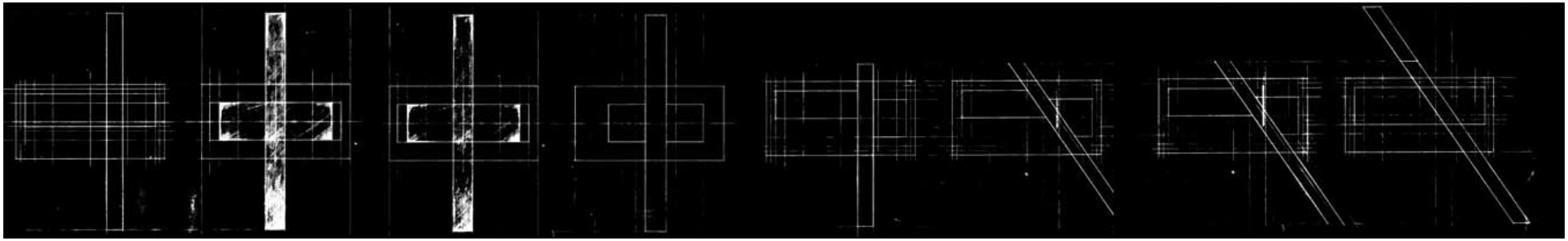
A Biedermeier Cabin



A Biedermeier Cabin

Submitted by
Nicole Szlatenyi

To the faculty of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Architecture

Hans Rott
Committee Chair

Bill Galloway
Committee Member

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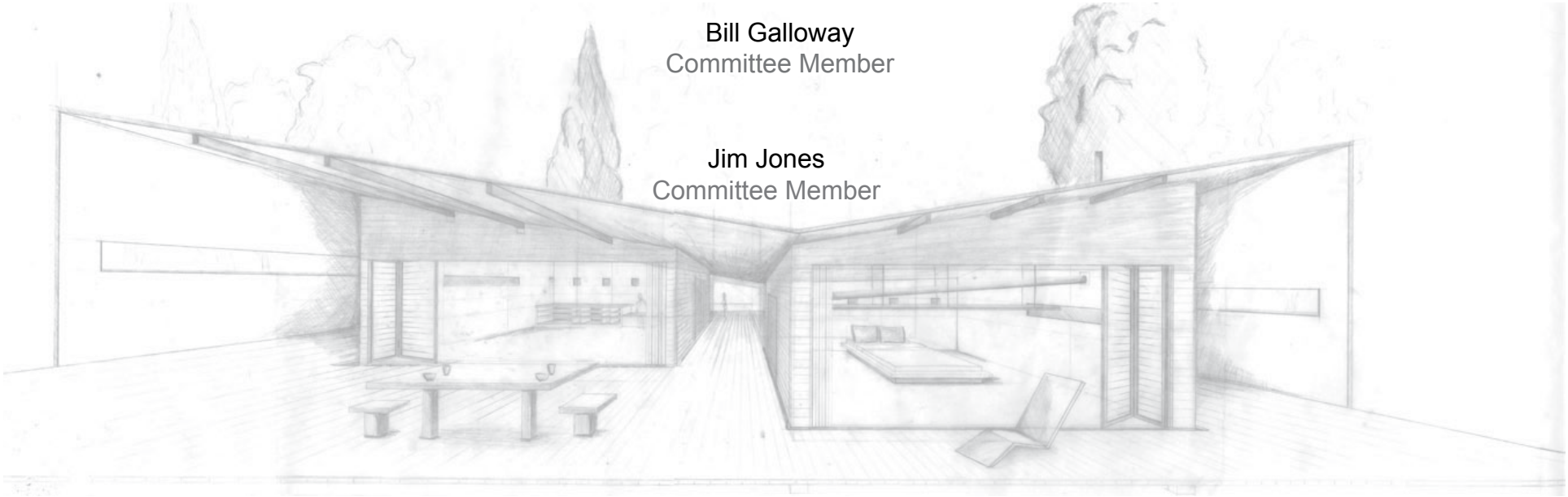
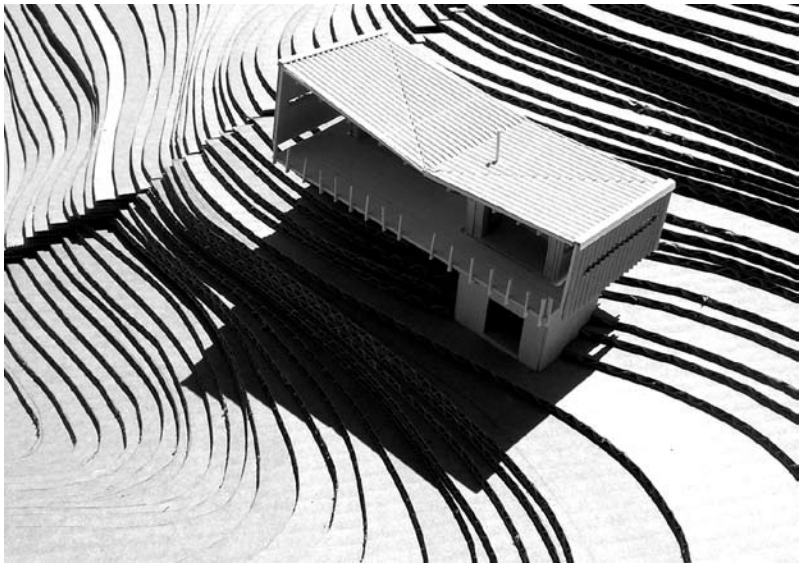
Committee Member



Thesis defended on May 3rd, 2007 Cowgill Hall on the campus of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia.



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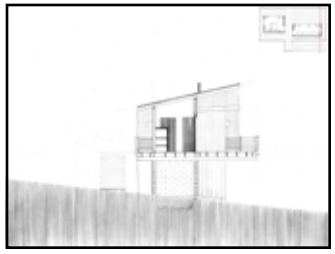
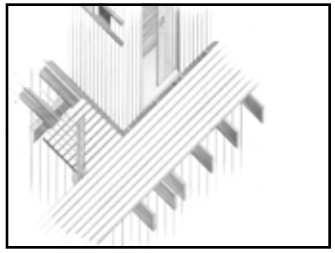




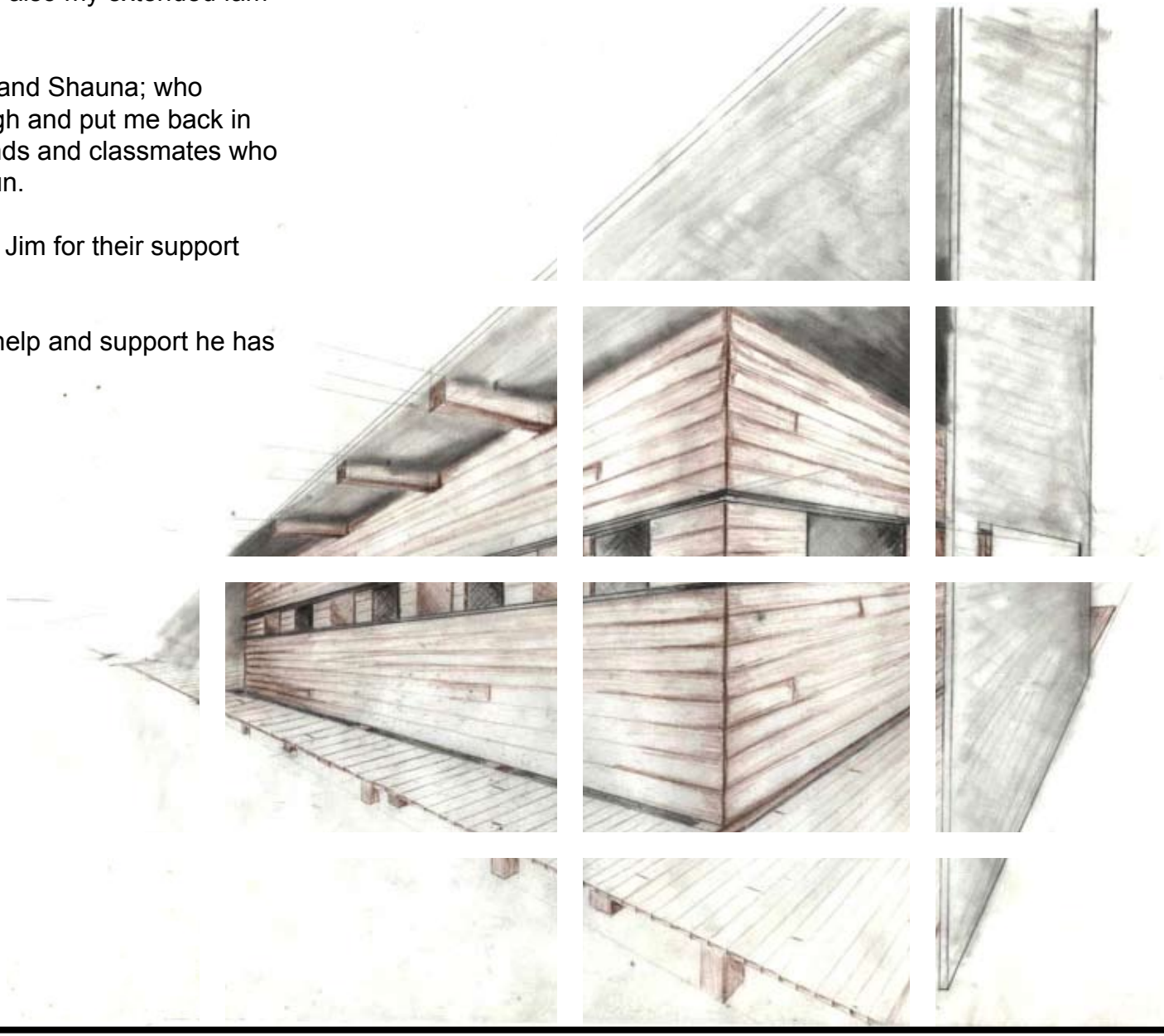
Acknowledgments:

Family: Thanks to Dad for his advice. Thanks to Mom who could always make me feel better. Thanks to Karl whom I could always count on and also my extended family for all of there love and support.

Friends: Thanks to Angela, Craig, and Shauna; who always know how to make me laugh and put me back in my place. Thanks to my Riva friends and classmates who always made studio a little more fun.

Faculty: Thanks to Hans, Bill, and Jim for their support and productive criticism.

A special thanks to Will for all the help and support he has given me throughout the years.

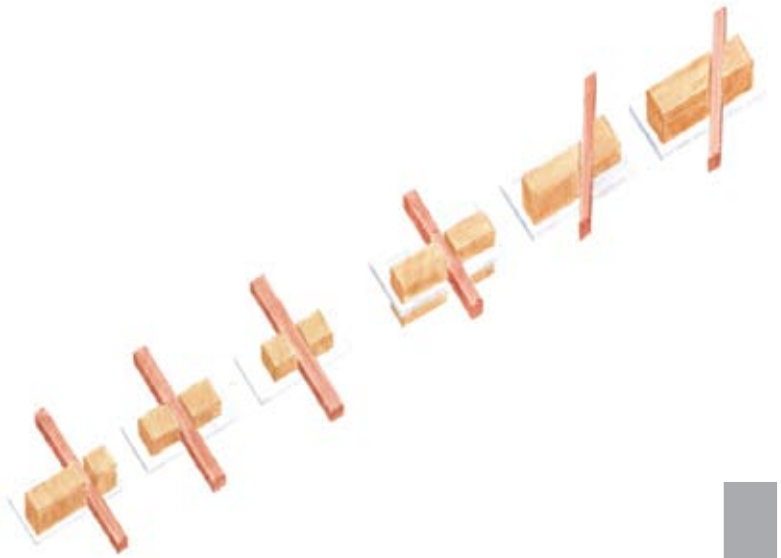


Abstract:

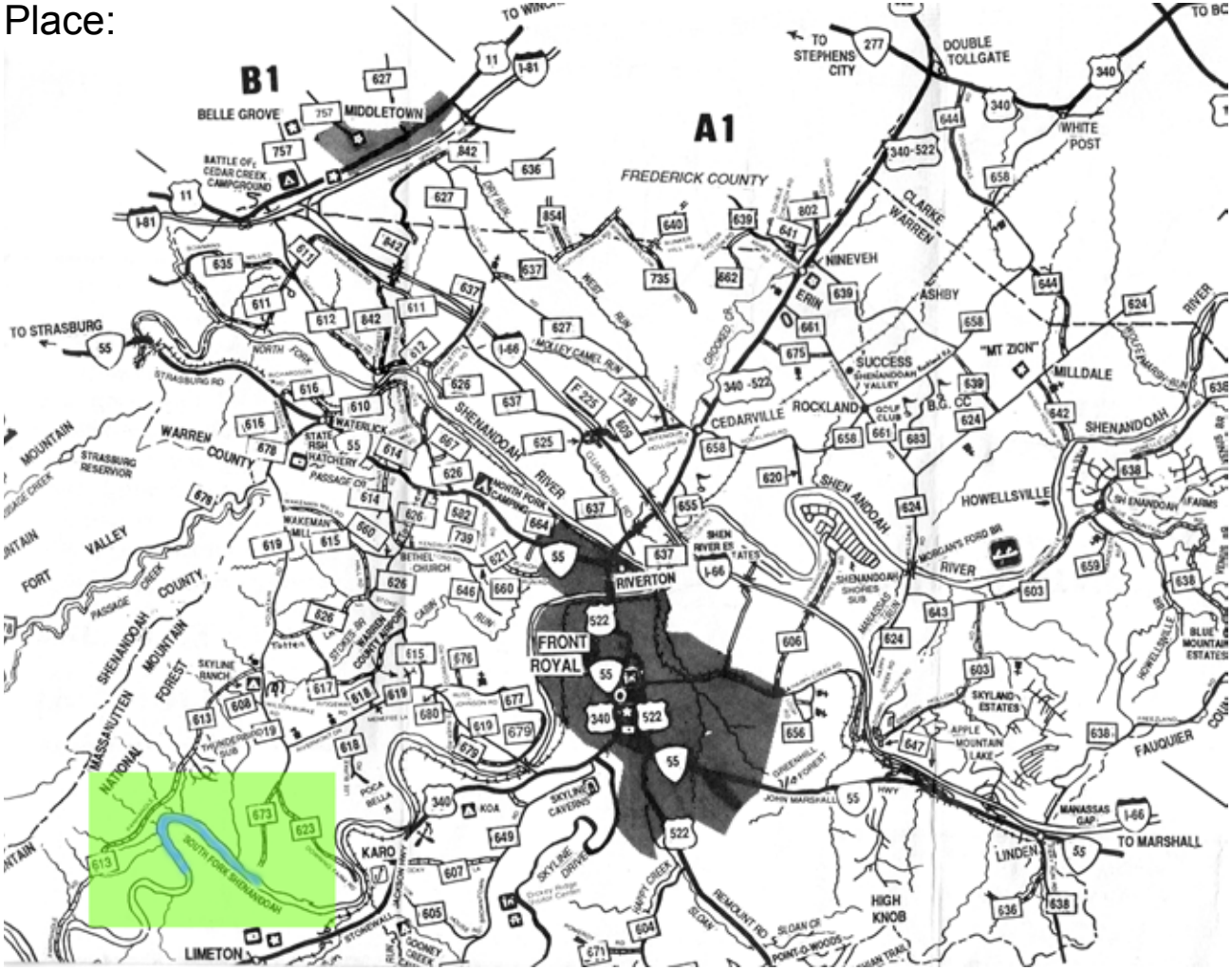
A Biedermeier Cabin was designed with attention to detail and stylistic simplicity in mind. This cabin, located along the banks of the Shenandoah River, is mainly used during the Summer months. The cabin's folding doors open up completely for the Summer months to let the breezes flow through. During the Winter months, when the cabin is not in use, all the windows and doors are folded or slid closed to protect the cabin from harsh weather. This seasonal transformation was a main focus in designing the cabin.

The appearance of floating was also incorporated within the design. The intent was for the structure to protrude out of the earth and have a "floating" deck that cantilevers above the treetops overlooking the river.

The roof folds around the structure, providing a feeling of privacy and intimacy. The roof's slope opens up toward the river, the intended primary vista.

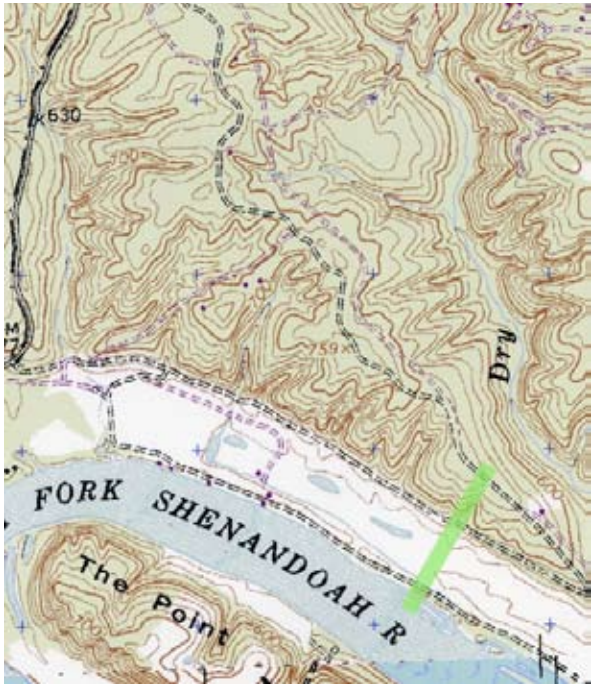


Place:



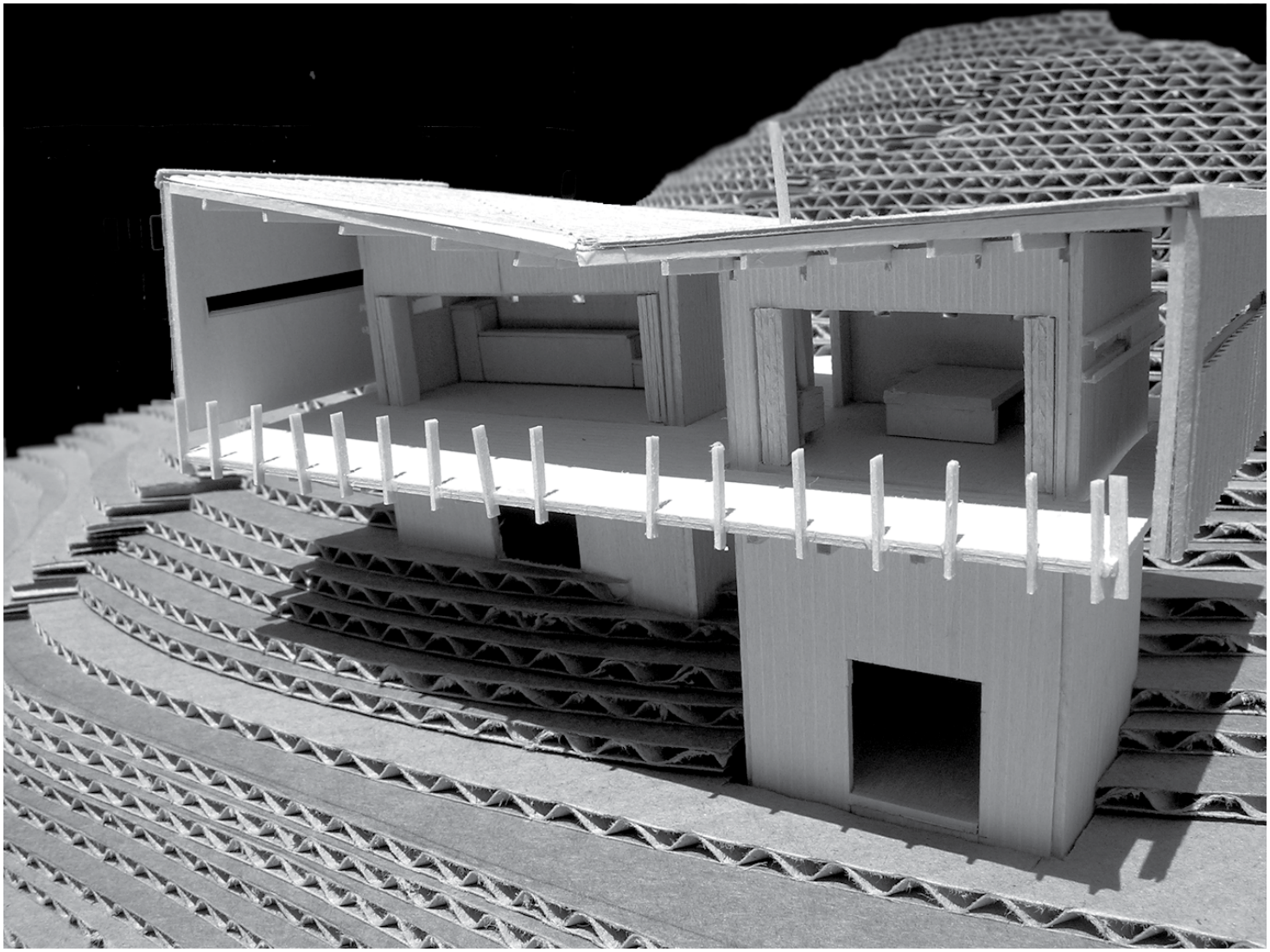
The lot is located just outside of Front Royal, Virginia just past the area shown above which is called The Point on the Shenandoah River. The river is fairly shallow in this area, which prohibits motorized boats from screaming by. The sounds of nature are even more alive because of this reason.

Plot number: 10
Section: 4
Place: Thunderbird Farms
Shenandoah River
Front Royal, Virginia
Lot size: 200 ft. x 1,000 ft

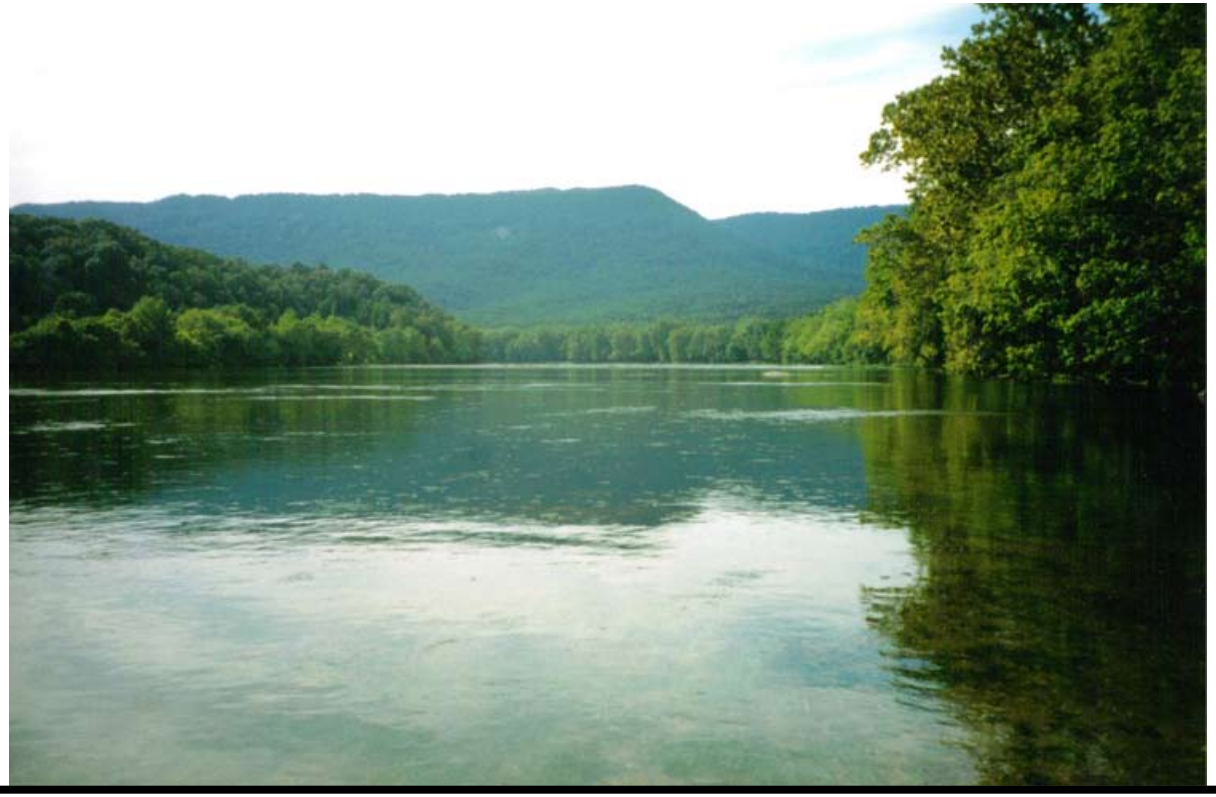


The site, being steep and narrow, provided a challenge, but it gave me some rules and limits to follow. The steep grade demanded particular construction methods. All of the construction materials would have to be brought in by a 4 wheel drive vehicle. This limitation determined the construction methods I chose.

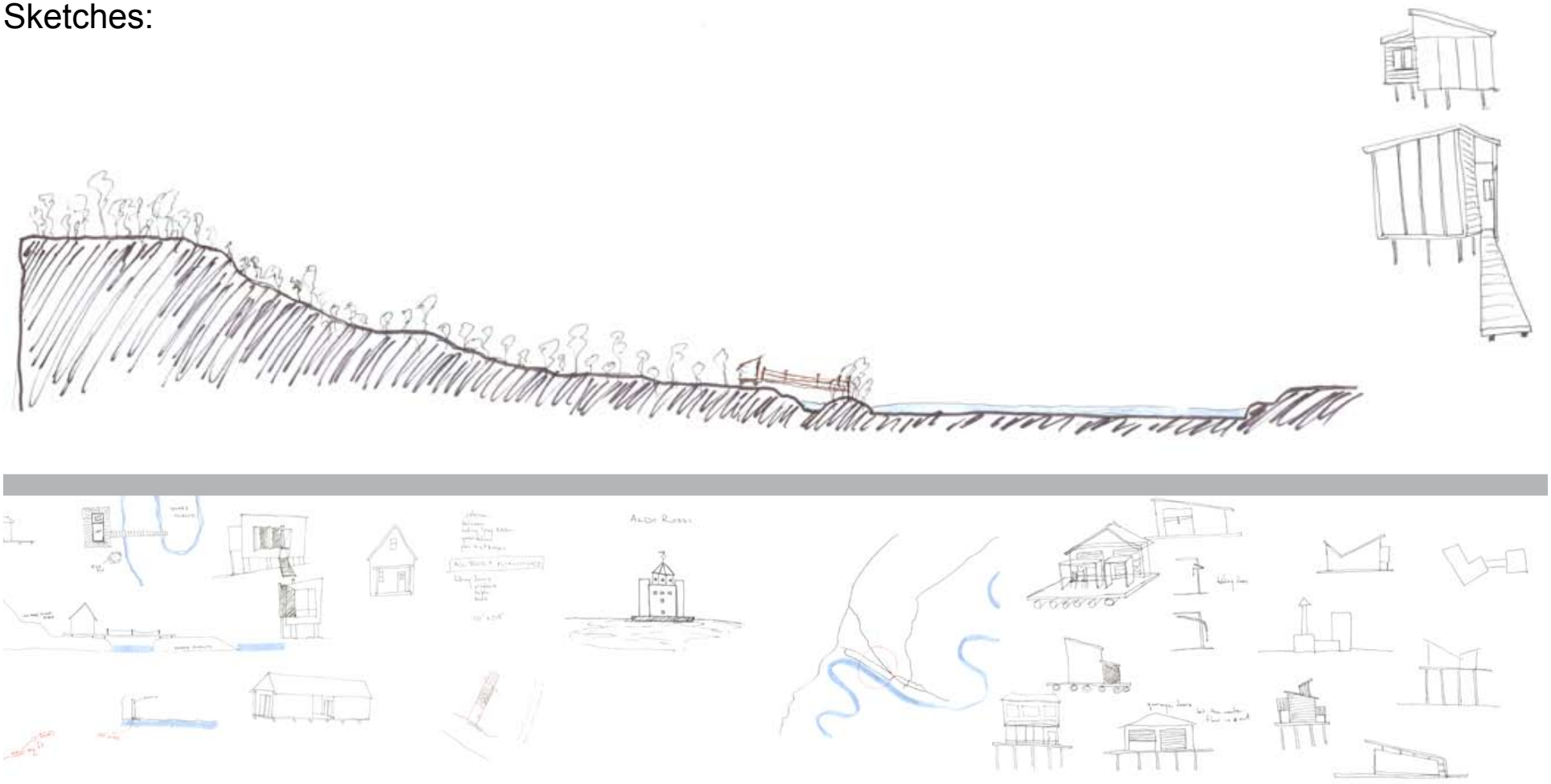
Several factors came into play in choosing the building site. The main factor in choosing the site was to capture the view of the river, which presented a challenge since I needed to locate the building on the site out of the flood plane.



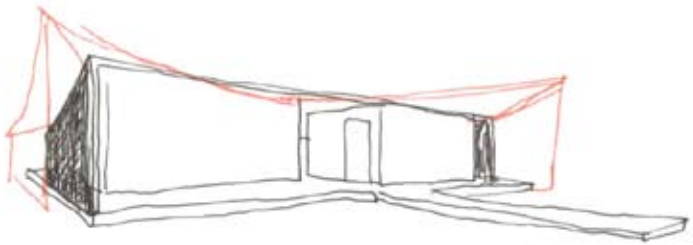
Many kayakers and canoes crowd the river during the summer months with people fishing or just paddling down the river enjoying the view.

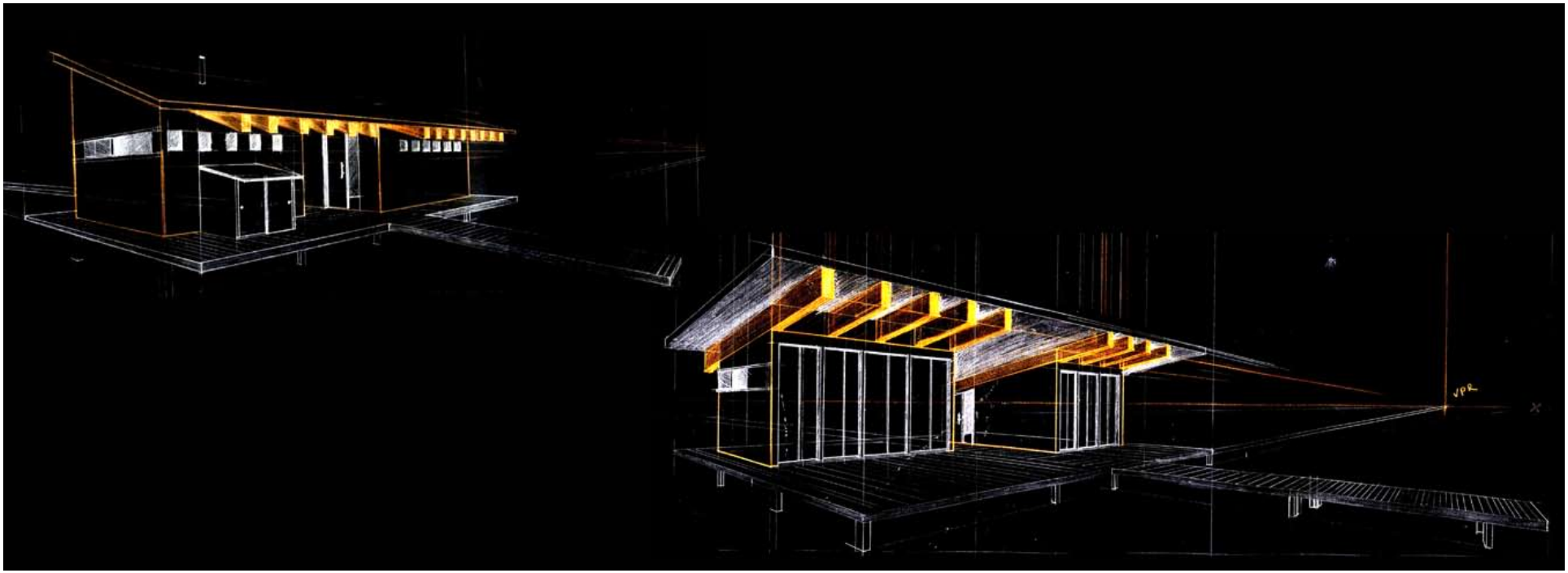


Sketches:

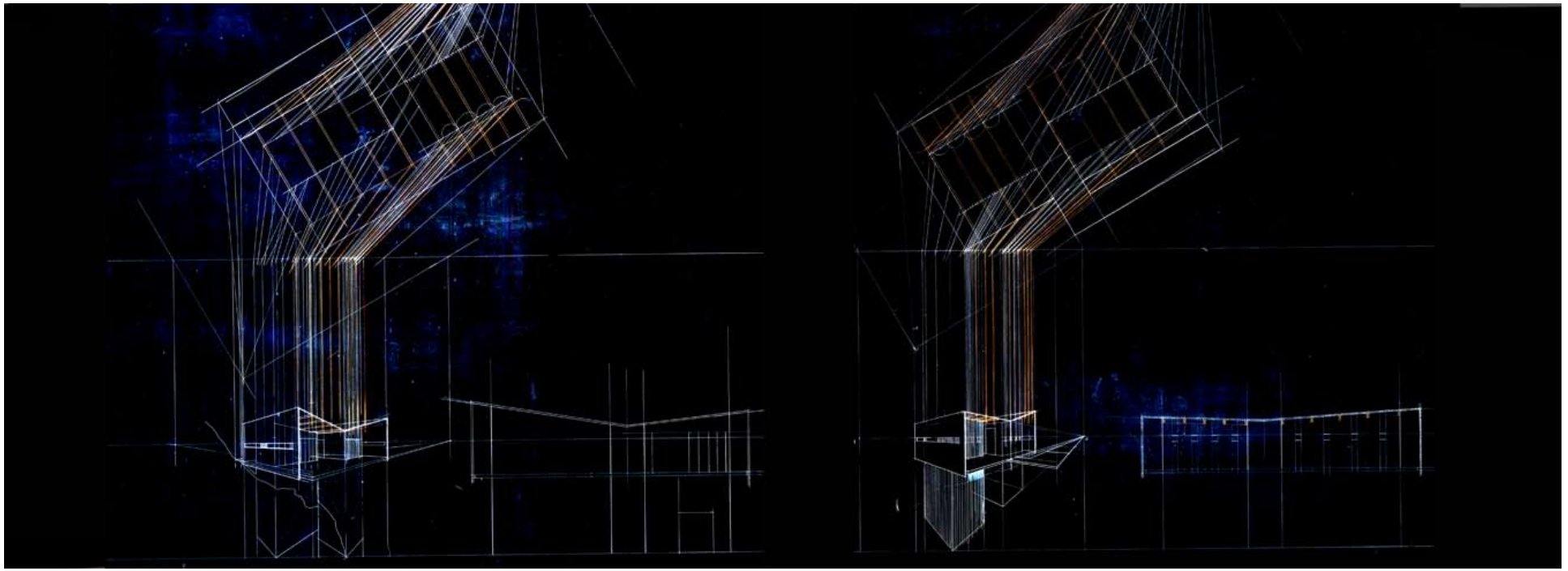


These early sketches show the cabin closer to the river. Originally the cabin was to rest on pontoons that would literally float in high water. The concept of floating remained the same as I moved the cabin to higher ground. However, it would no longer literally float. Conceptually the cantilevered deck would give the feeling that you were floating above the river.

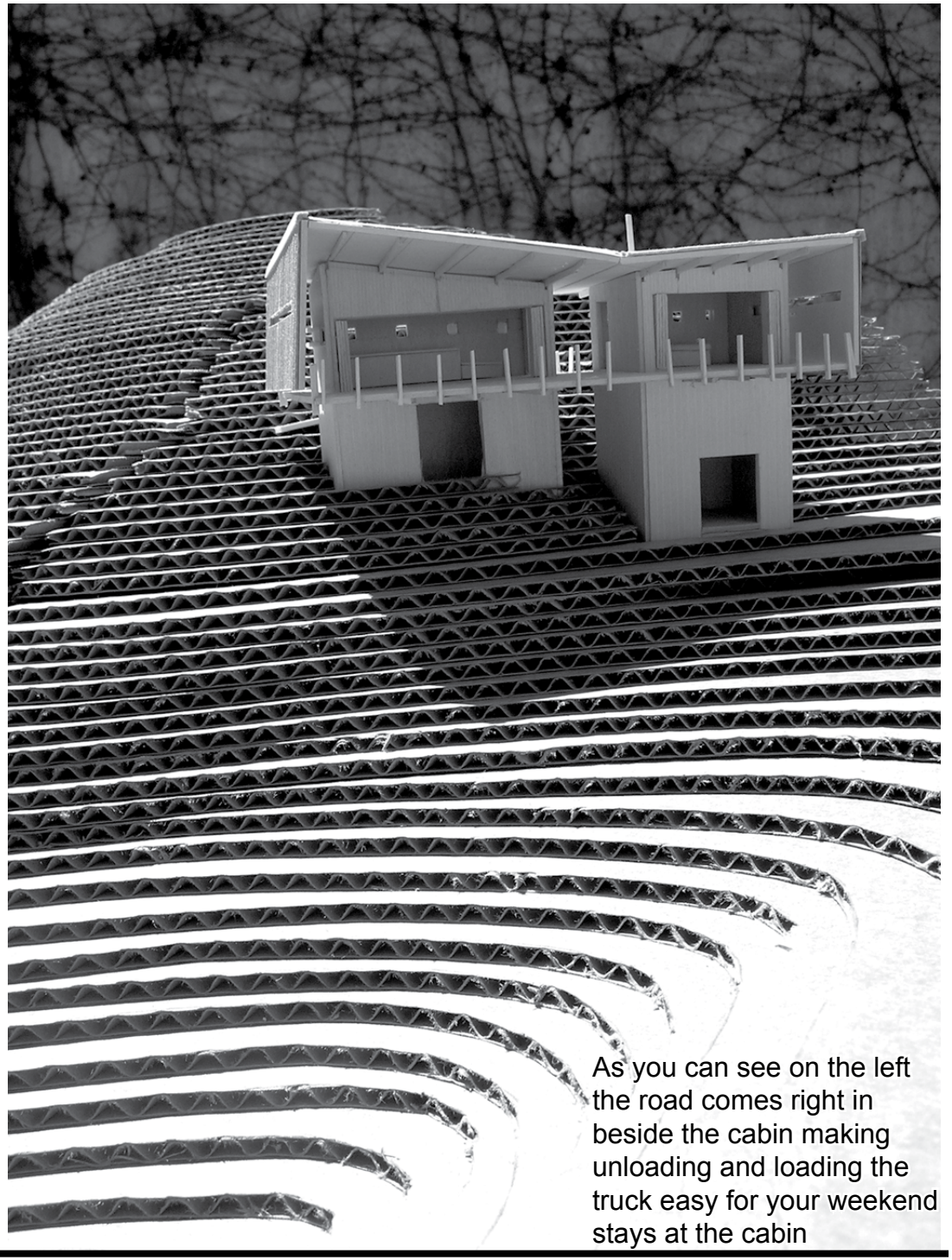




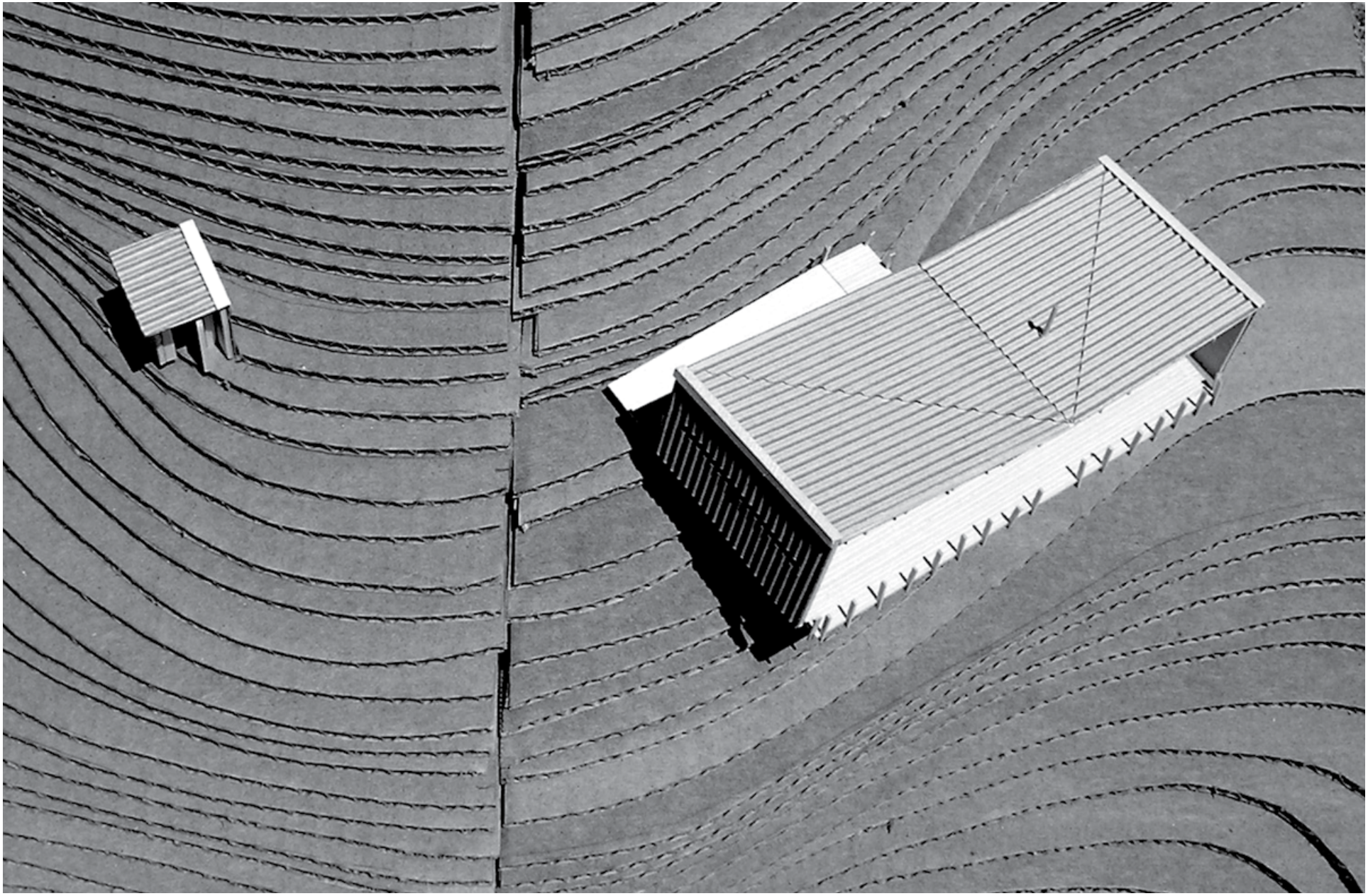
Early Perspective Drawings



Site:

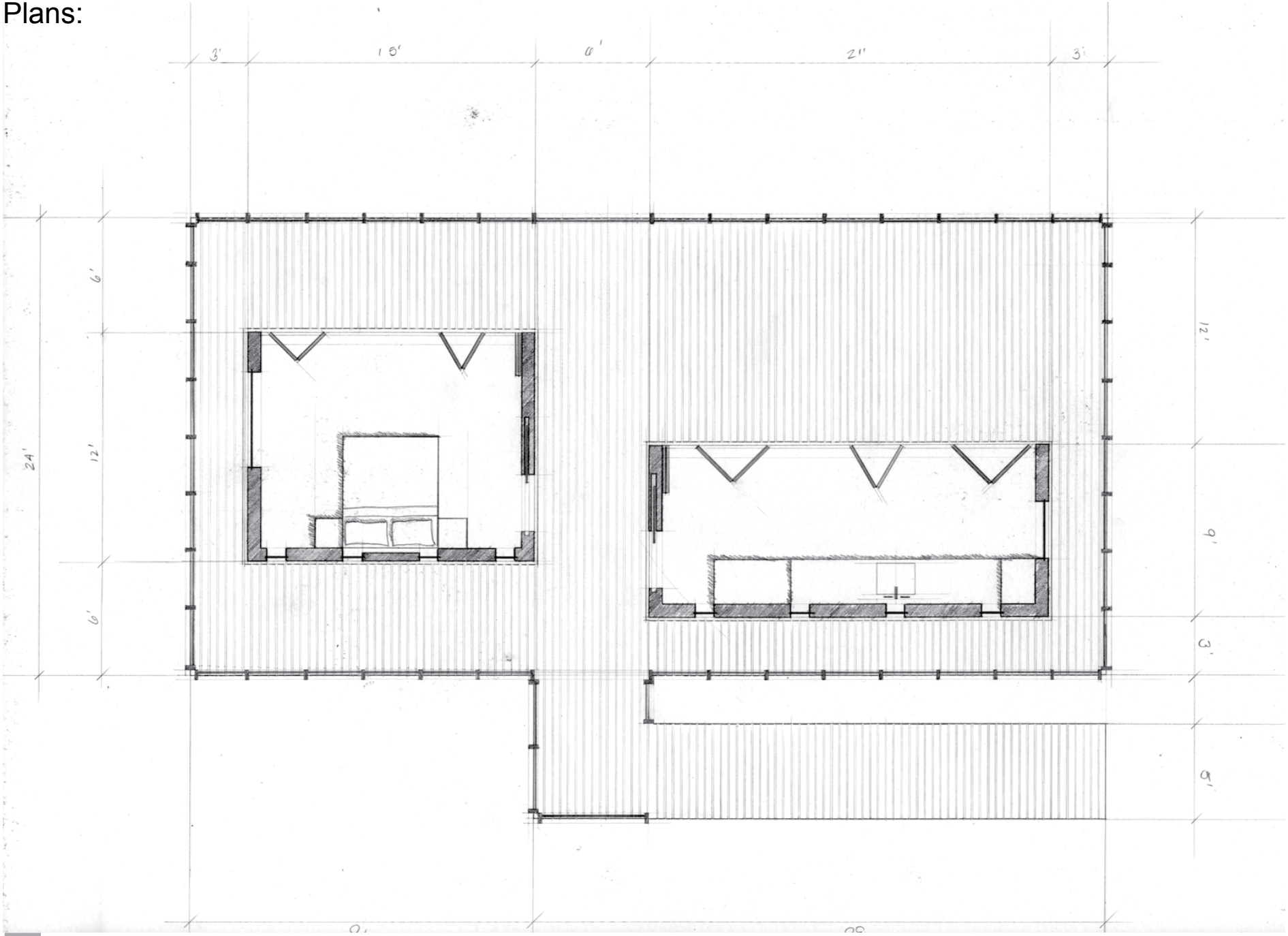


As you can see on the left the road comes right in beside the cabin making unloading and loading the truck easy for your weekend stays at the cabin



The small building to the left of the cabin is the outhouse. Because this is a place where you are coming from the city and might stay for only 2-3 nights I didn't feel that was necessary to have all of the commodities of everyday living. I wanted this to be a place to appreciate nature

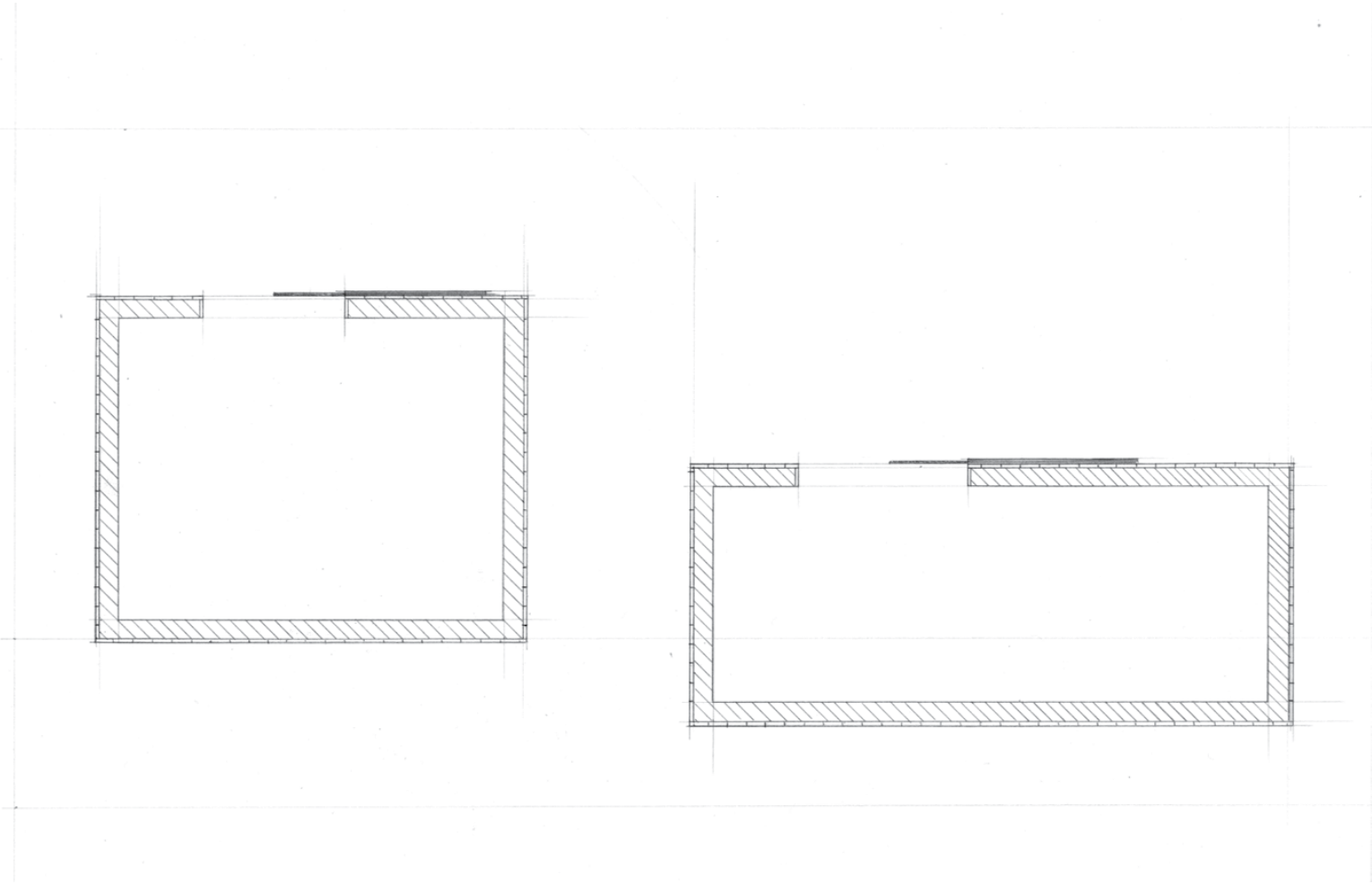
Plans:



Top Floor Plan

In the plan to the left the cabin has two separate rooms. The cabin is designed to be used mainly during the Summer months and maybe early Fall for one couple. The bedroom is on the left and the kitchen / food preparation room is on the right. These two spaces are surrounded by a large deck.

The ground floor is used for storage space. For things such as kayaks, canoes, fishing poles, outdoor chairs, anything you might need for any sort of outdoor activities while you are there. The storage space can also be used for any landscaping equipment.

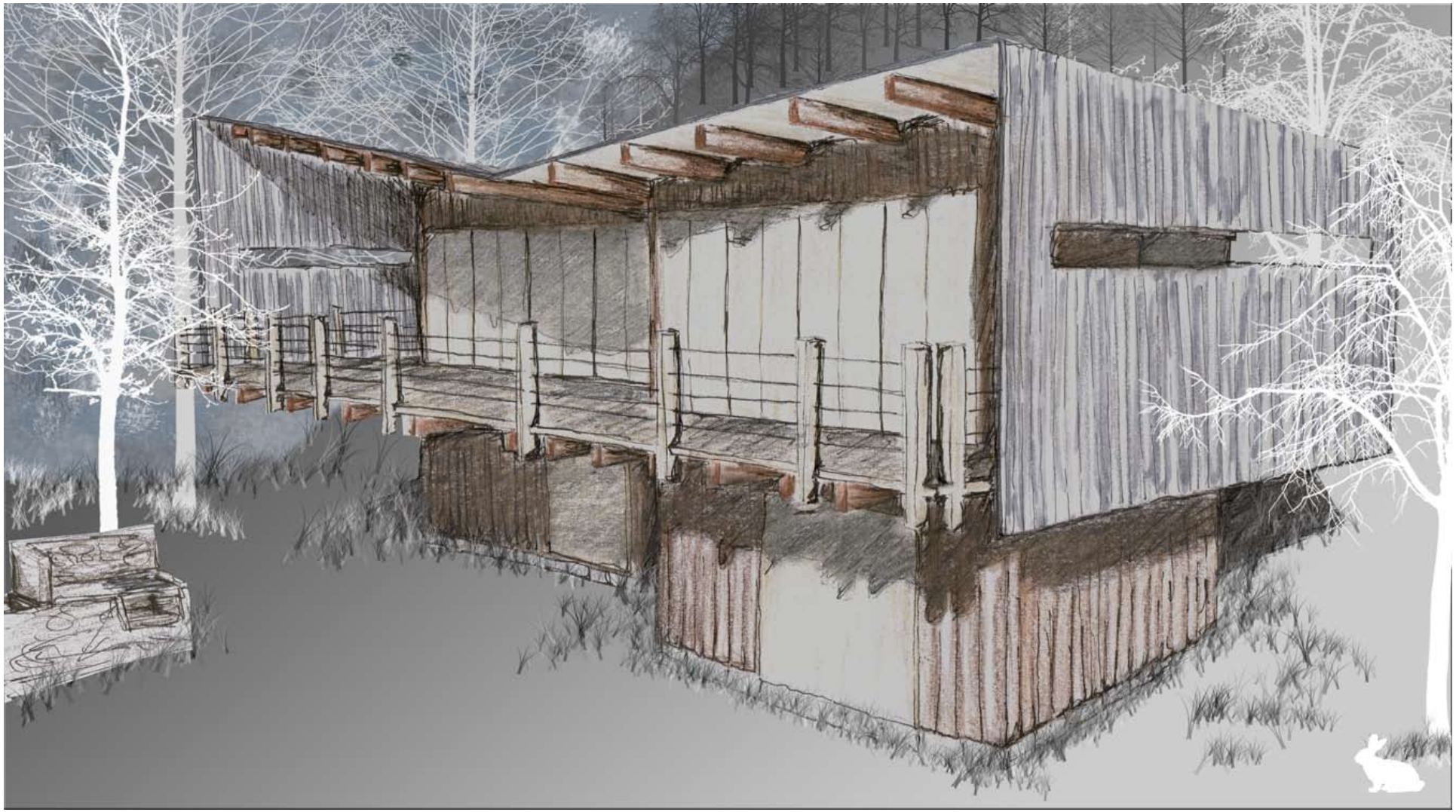


Ground Floor Plan

Project:

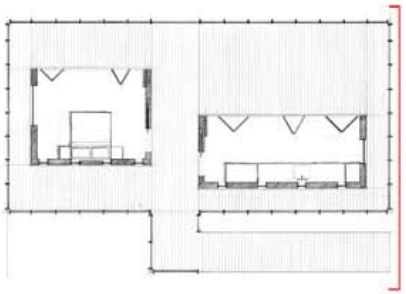
Biedermeier was a period between 1796 and 1848. It was a time of an emerging bugeoisie, which, for supporting the war against the French revolution and Napoleon, was granted major privileges by the Austrian crown. The Biedermeier style is expressive of an attitude of renunciation of Imperial excess and of noble restraint; best characterized as simple and elegant. With that being said, A Biedermeier Cabin was designed with attention to detail and stylistic simplicity in mind.

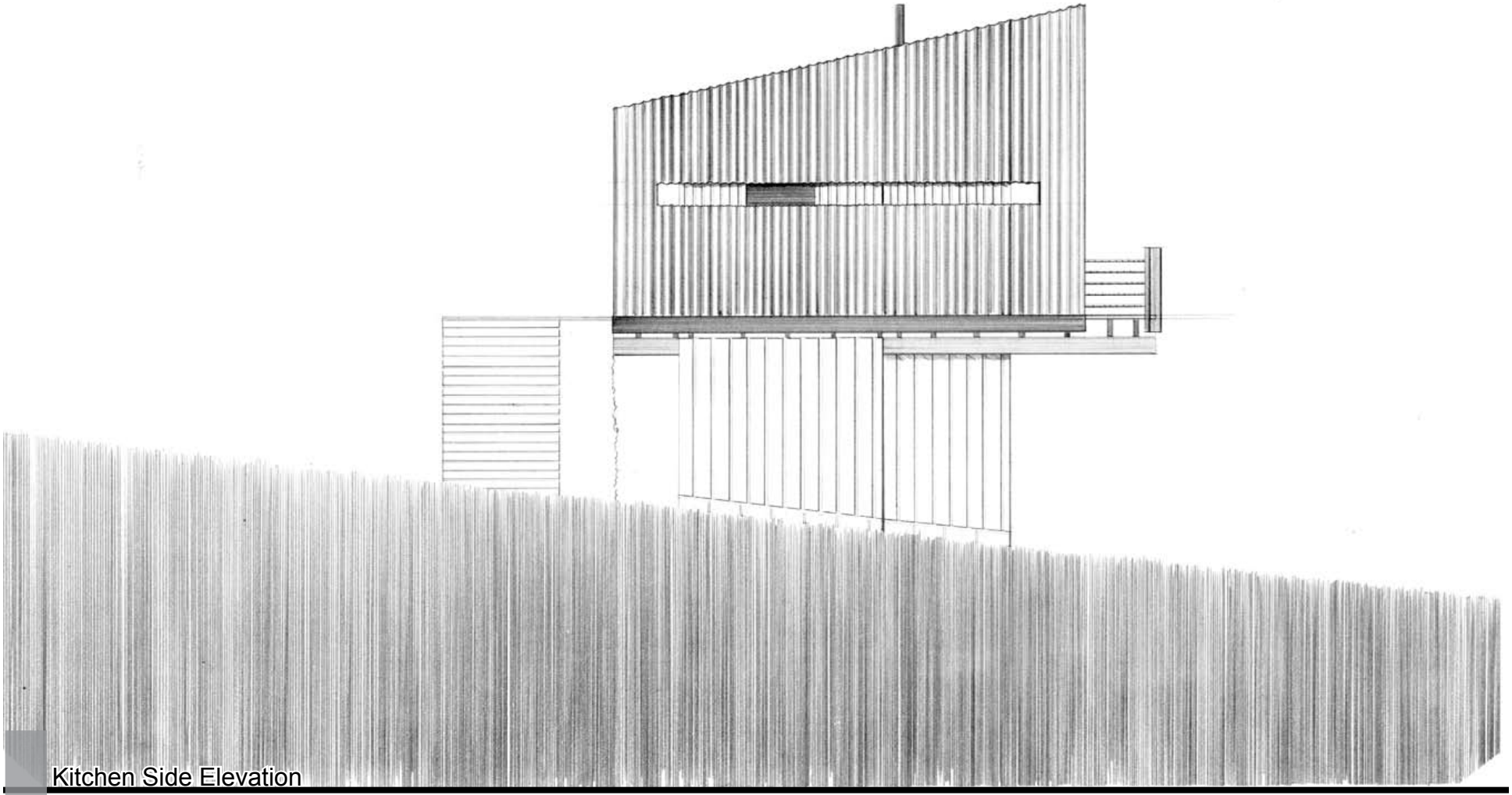
During the winter months,
when the cabin is not in use, all the windows
and doors are folded or slid closed to protect
the cabin from harsh winters. These seasonal
transformations were one of the main factors in
designing the cabin.



Elevations:

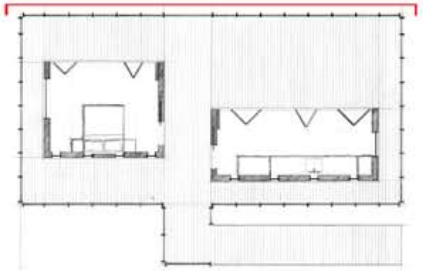
An appearance of floating was a primary intention within the design.

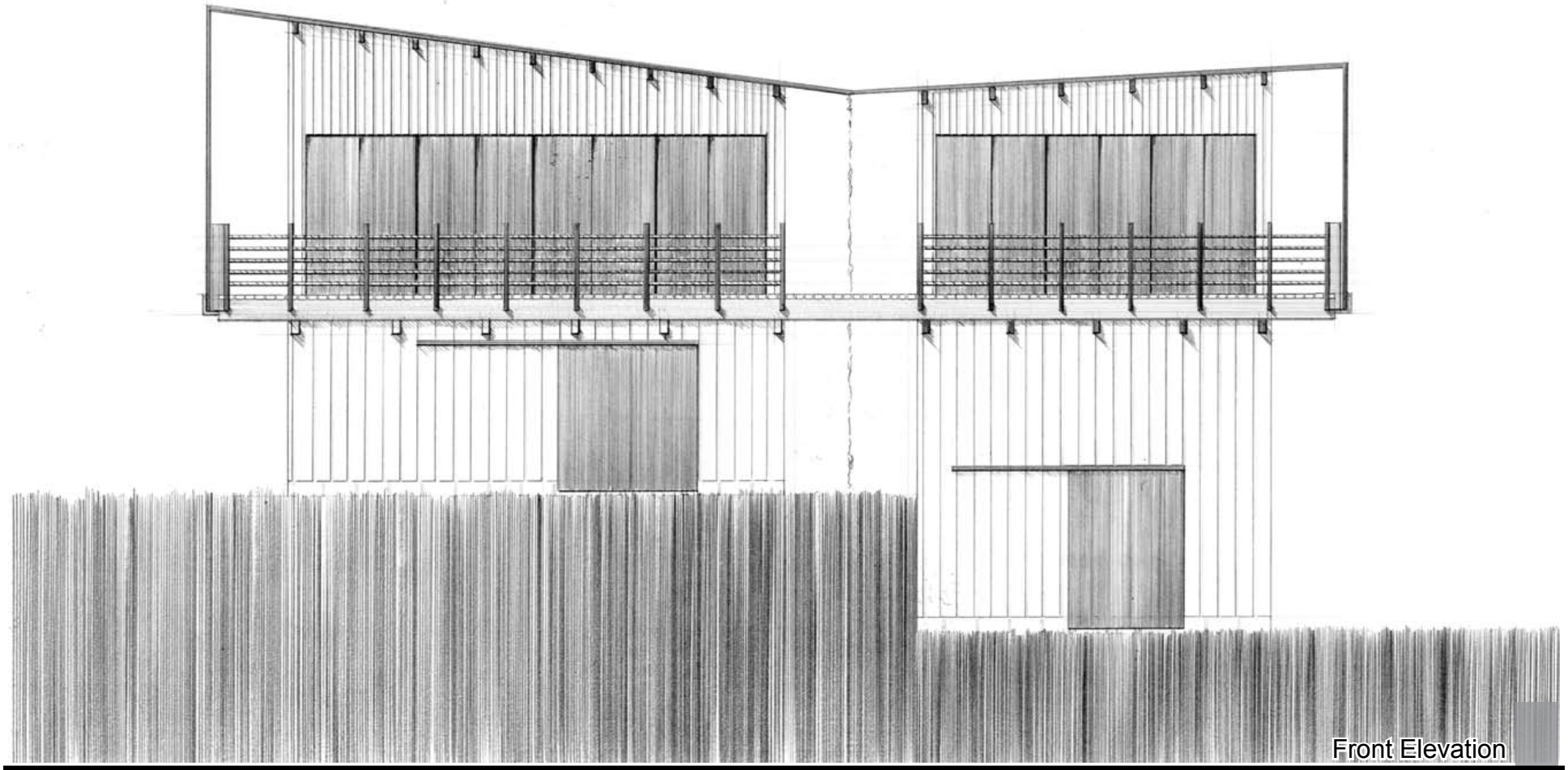




Kitchen Side Elevation

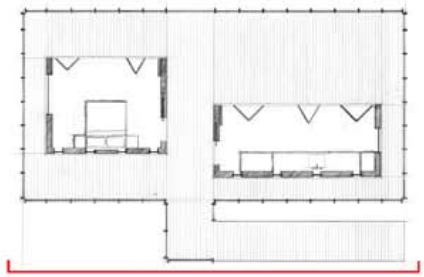
The intent was for the structure to protrude out of the earth and have a floating deck that cantilevered above the treetops over looking the river.

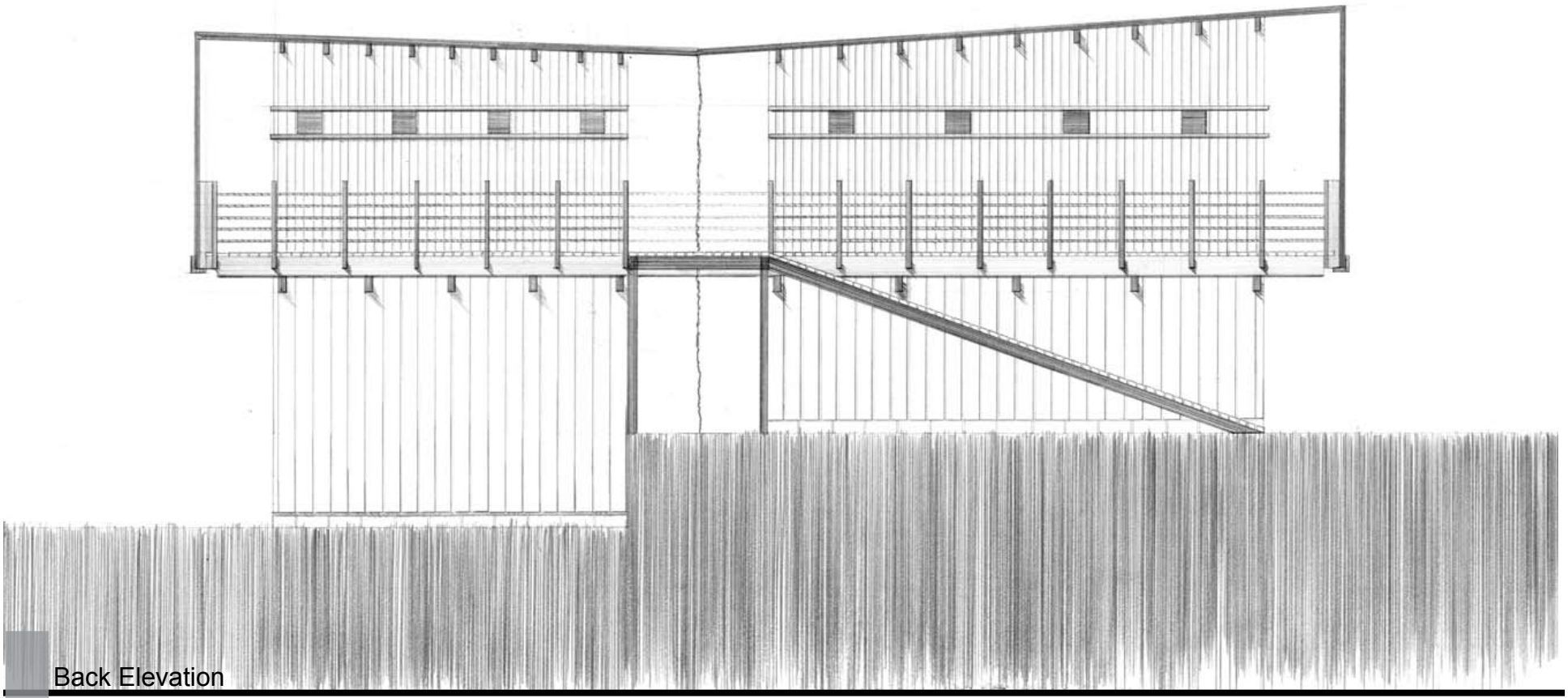




Front Elevation

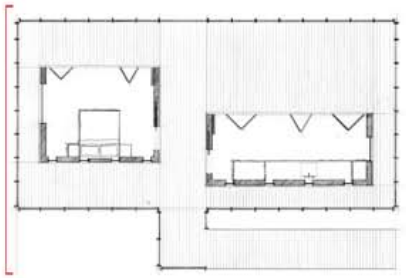
The roof folds around the structure, providing a feeling of privacy and intimacy.

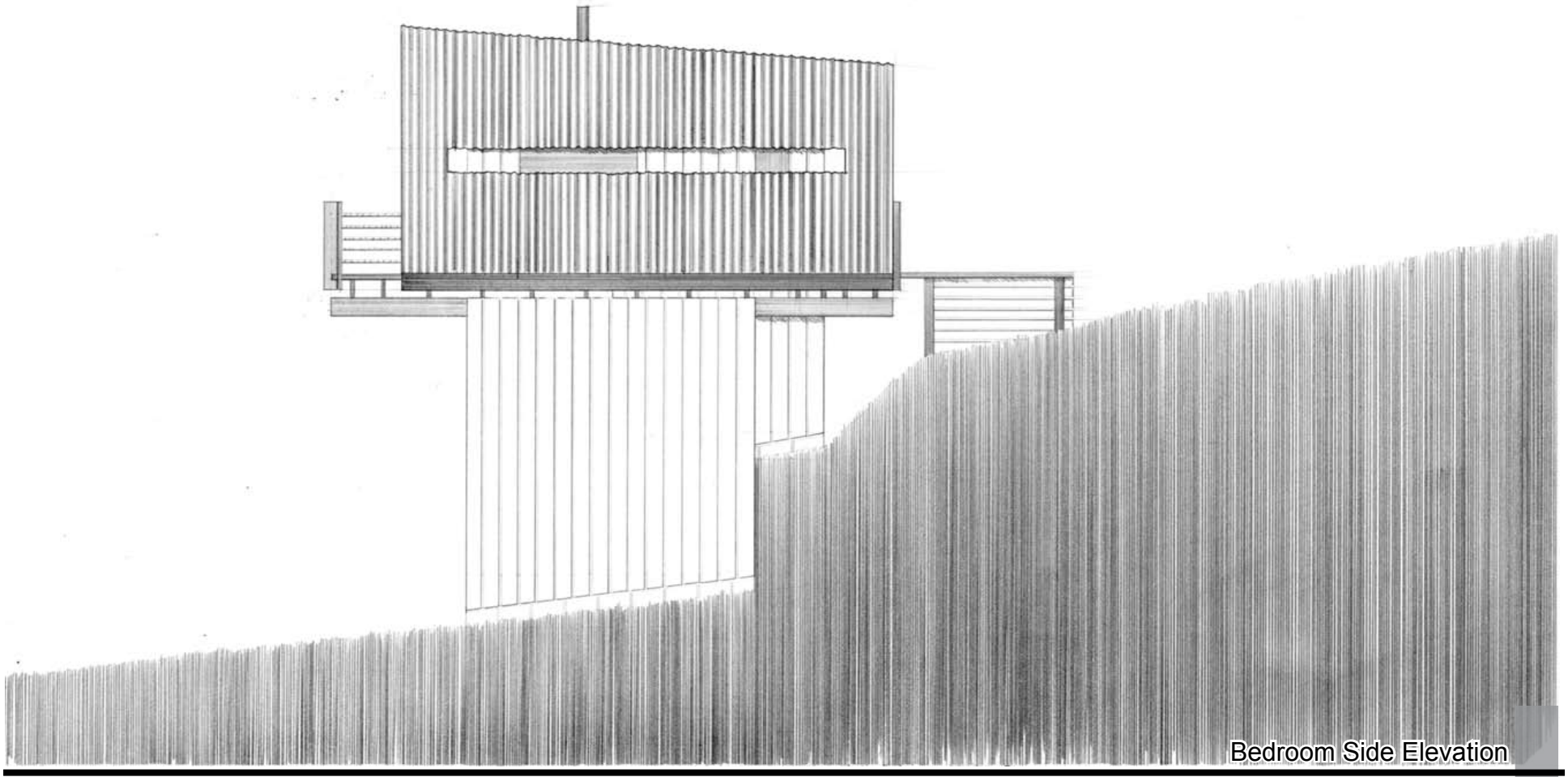




Back Elevation

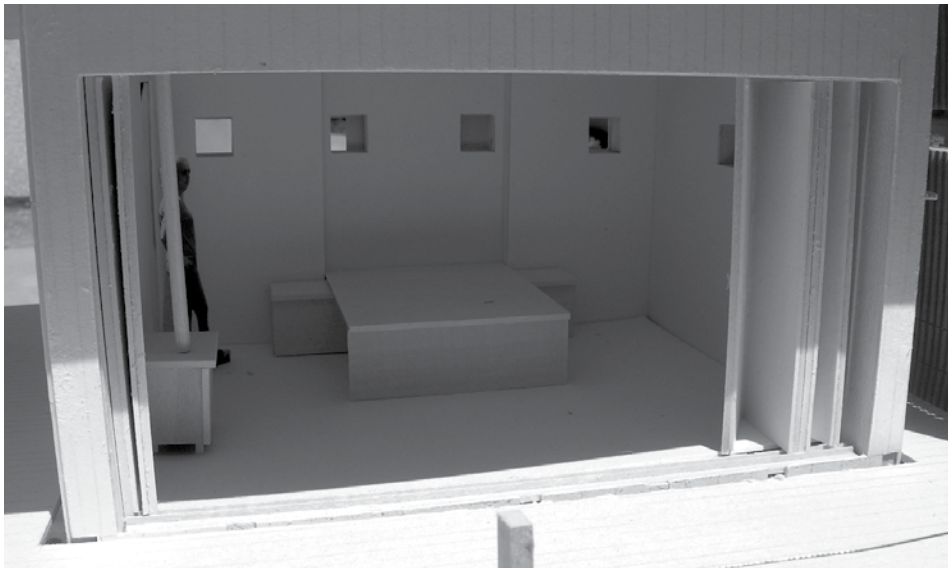
The roof's slope opens up toward the river, the intended primary vista.



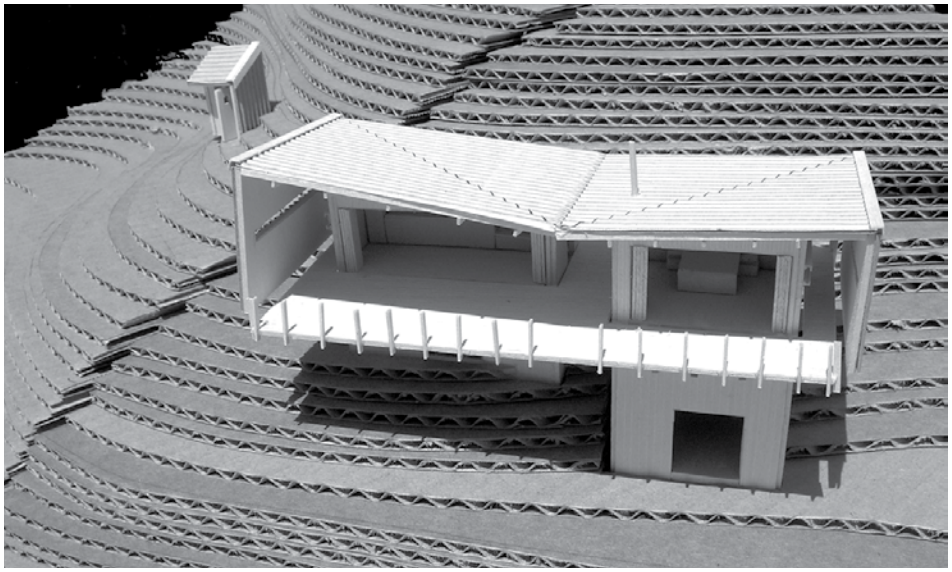


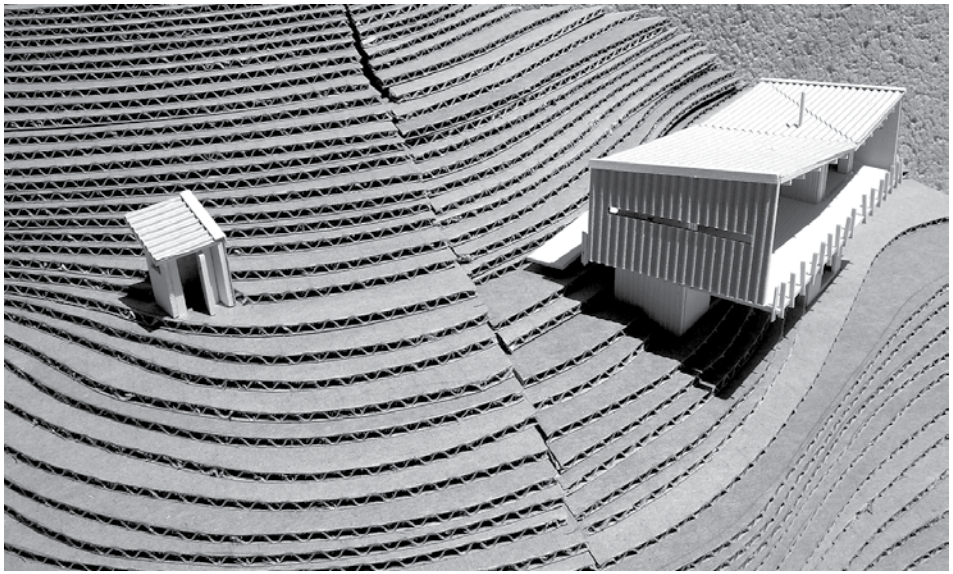
Bedroom Side Elevation

Photos:

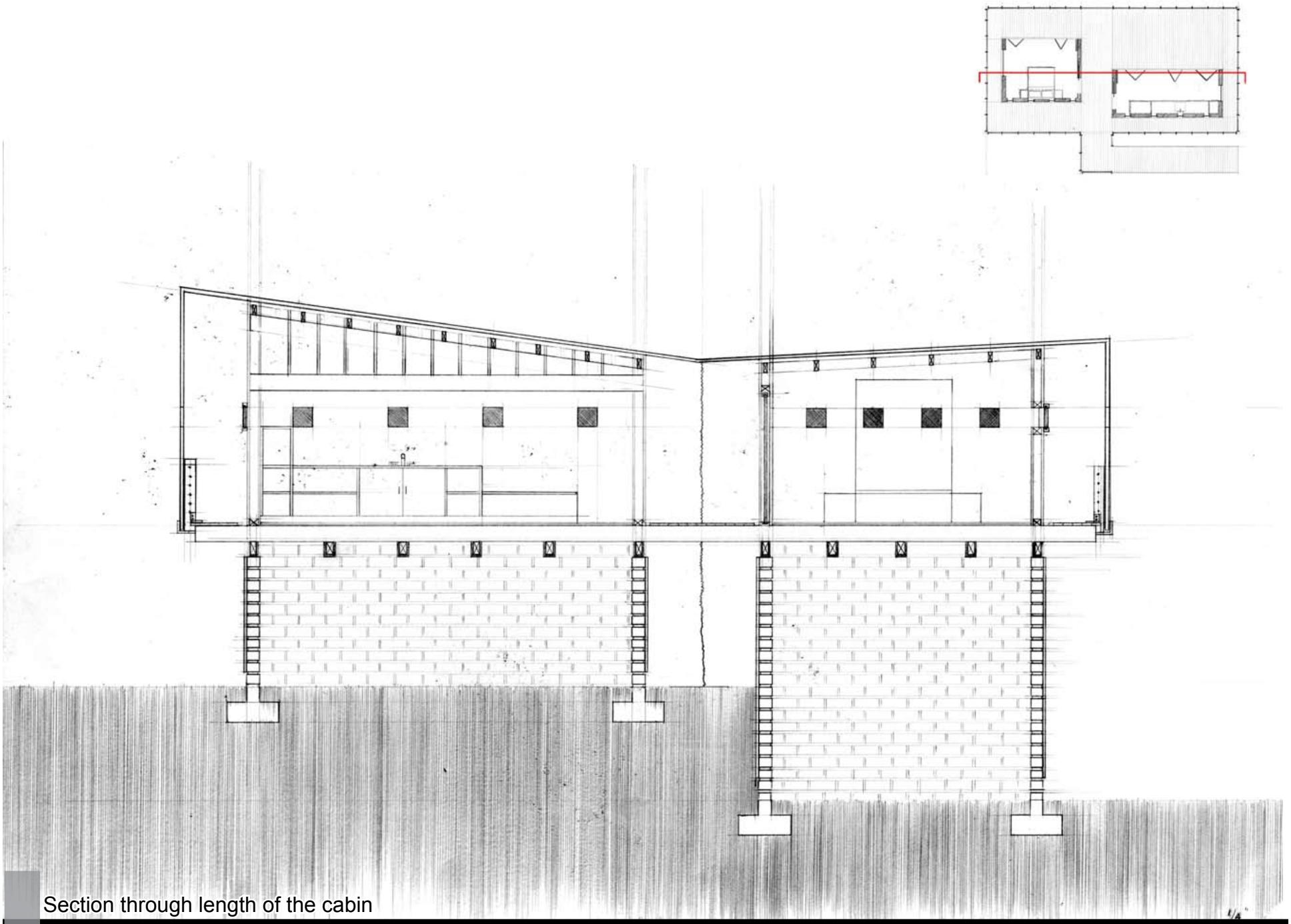


The cabin's folding doors open up completely so that the wall almost disappears and so your view is not obstructed. This leaves you completely open to the outdoors for the summer months to let the breezes flow through.





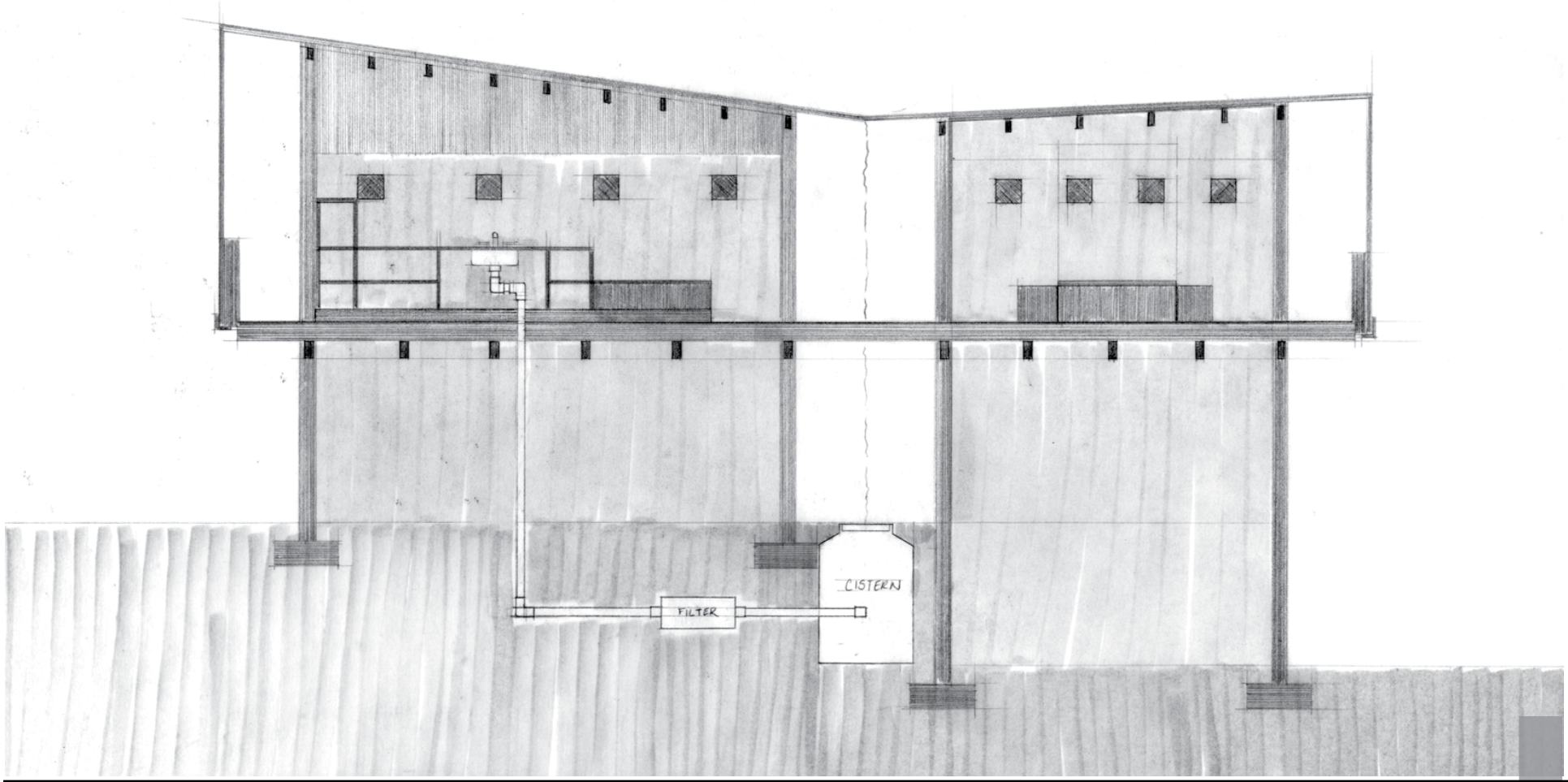
Sections:



Section through length of the cabin

The storage space is constructed out of concrete block and above is light wood construction. I wanted to somehow express the difference of these two construction material with the cladding on the exterior. So I chose to do narrower cypress wood planks above and wider wood planks below to reiterate the lightness and heaviness of the light wood construction above and concrete block below.

This image shows the harvesting of the rainwater. The only use for water in the cabin would be for washing dishes so this is a grey water system. You would bring your own drinking water to the cabin.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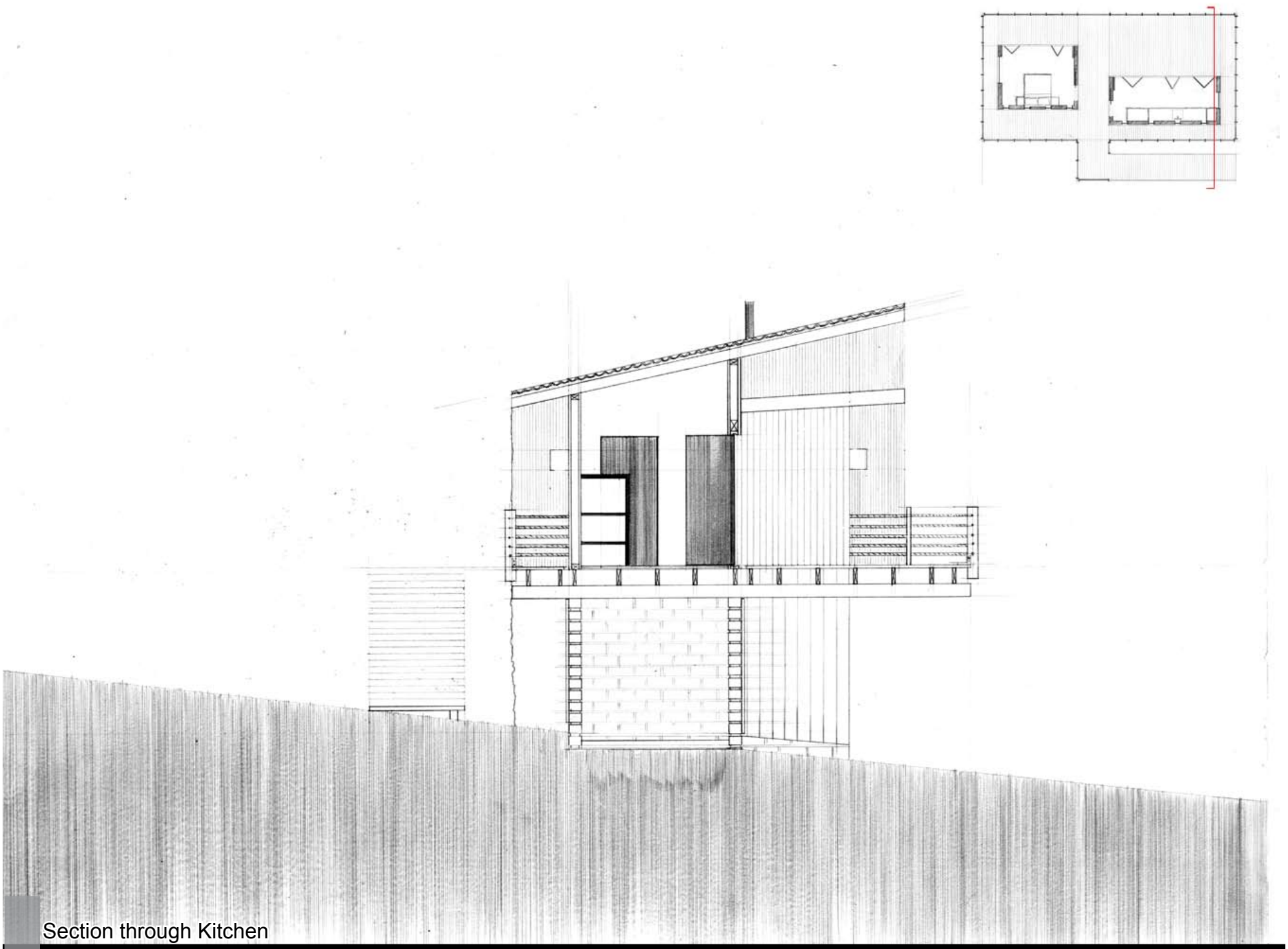
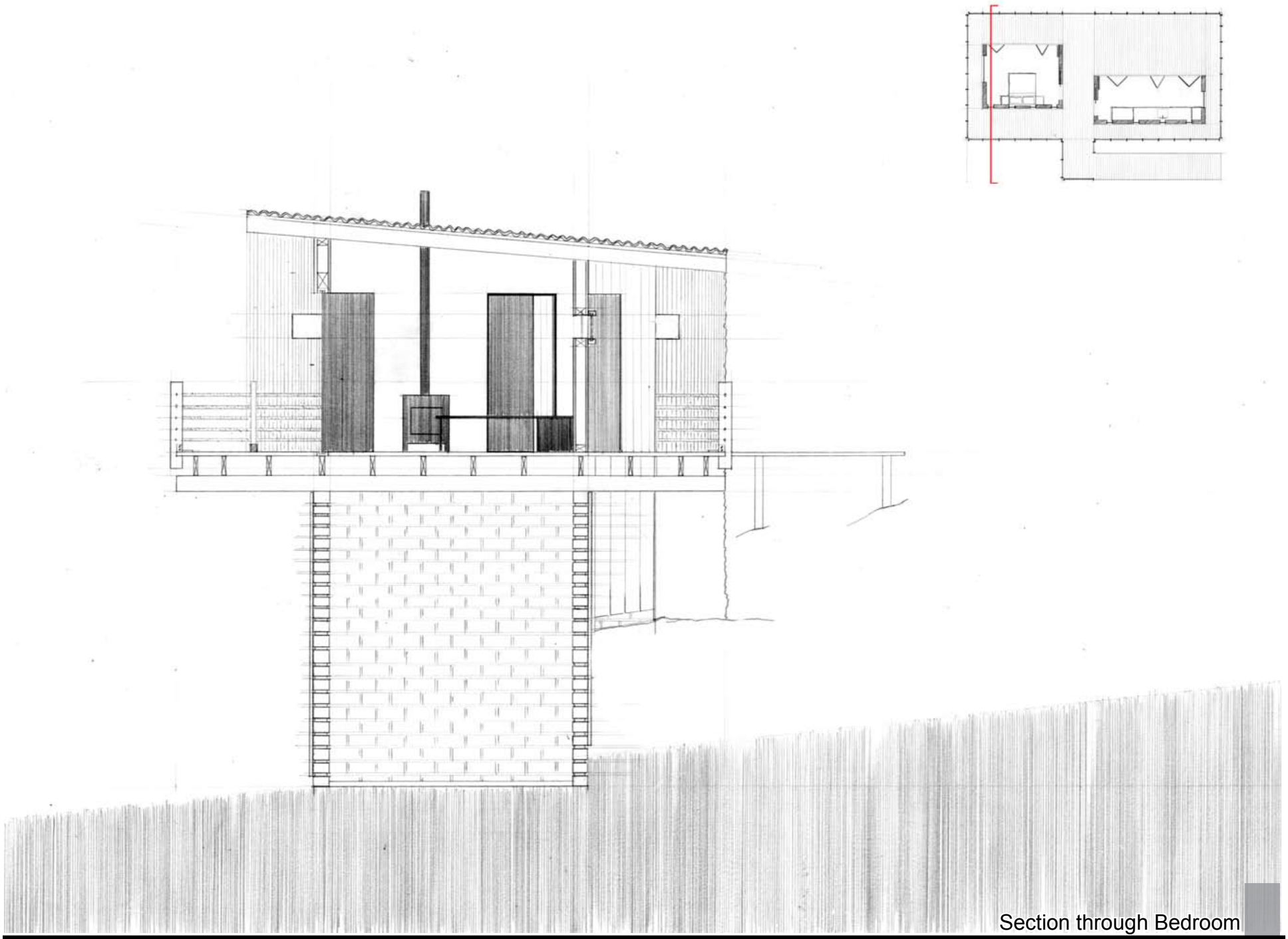


Section through Kitchen

This is the view of the kitchen as if you are walking into it through the sliding door.

This photo shows the bedroom. The bed in there is built in and actually folds up into a cut-out in the wall for easy storage.



Section through Bedroom

Materials:

Light wood construction

Glu-lam beams

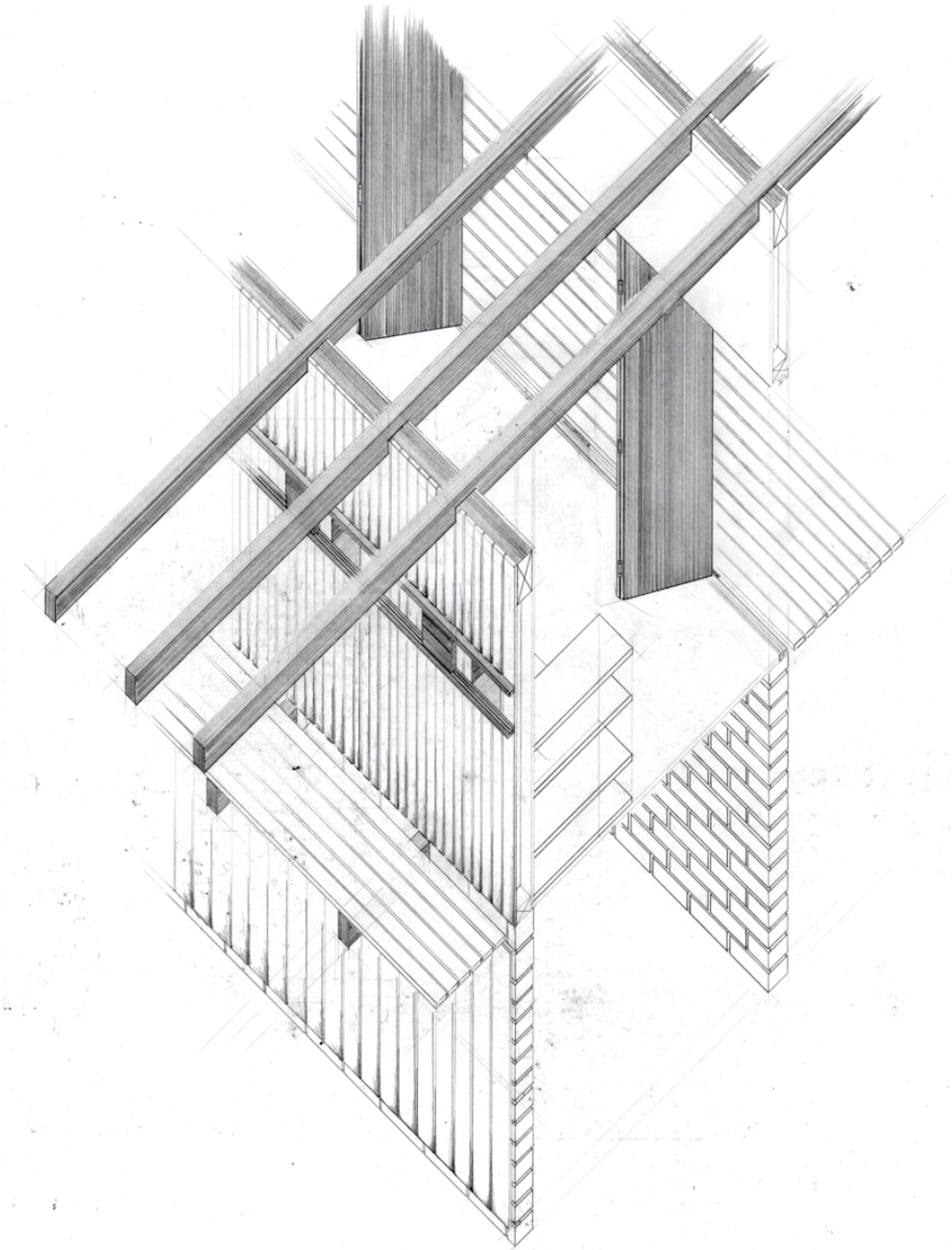
8x8x16 concrete block

Cypress siding for the exterior

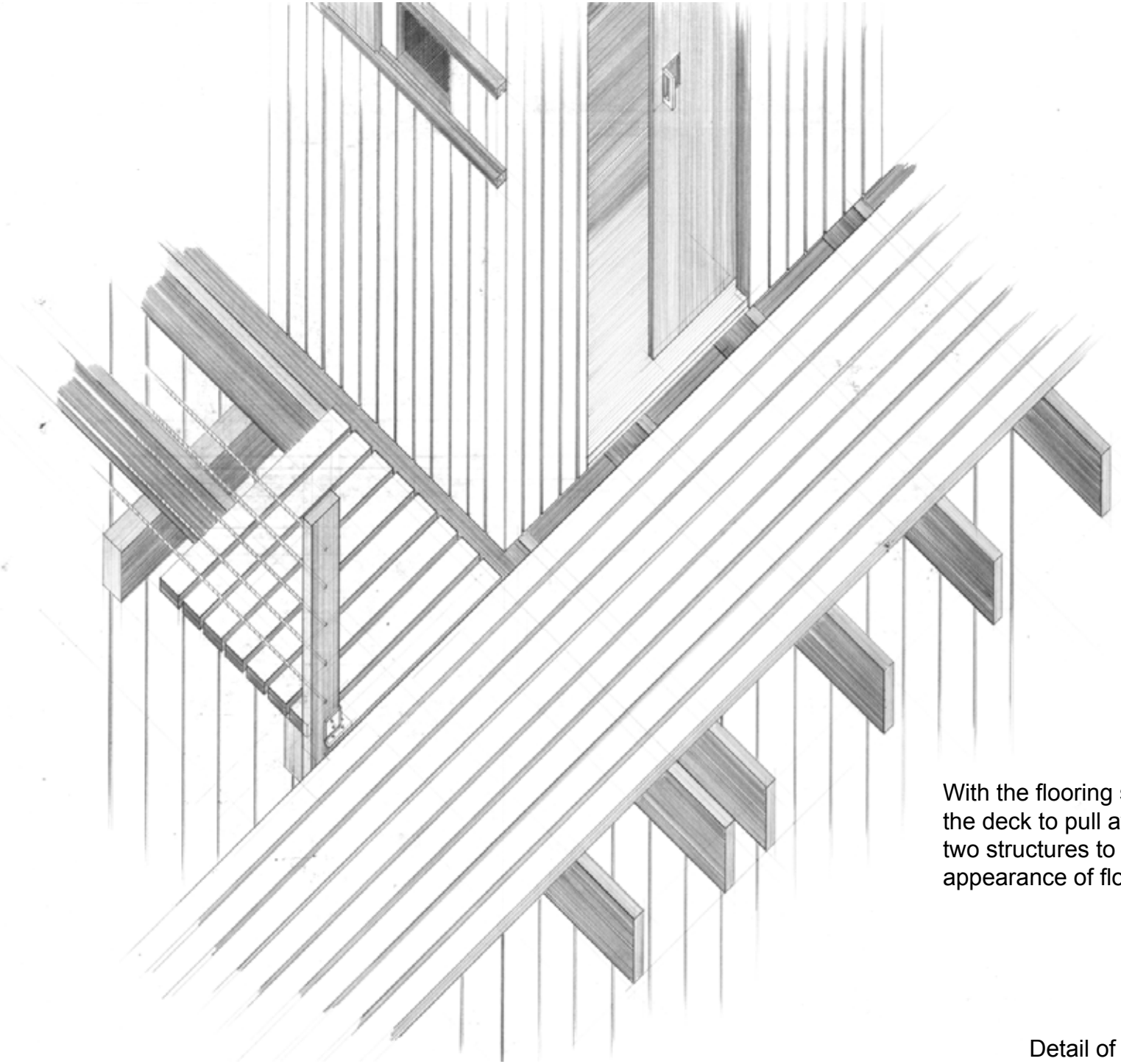
Corrugated metal for the roof

Plywood panels for the interior

Details:

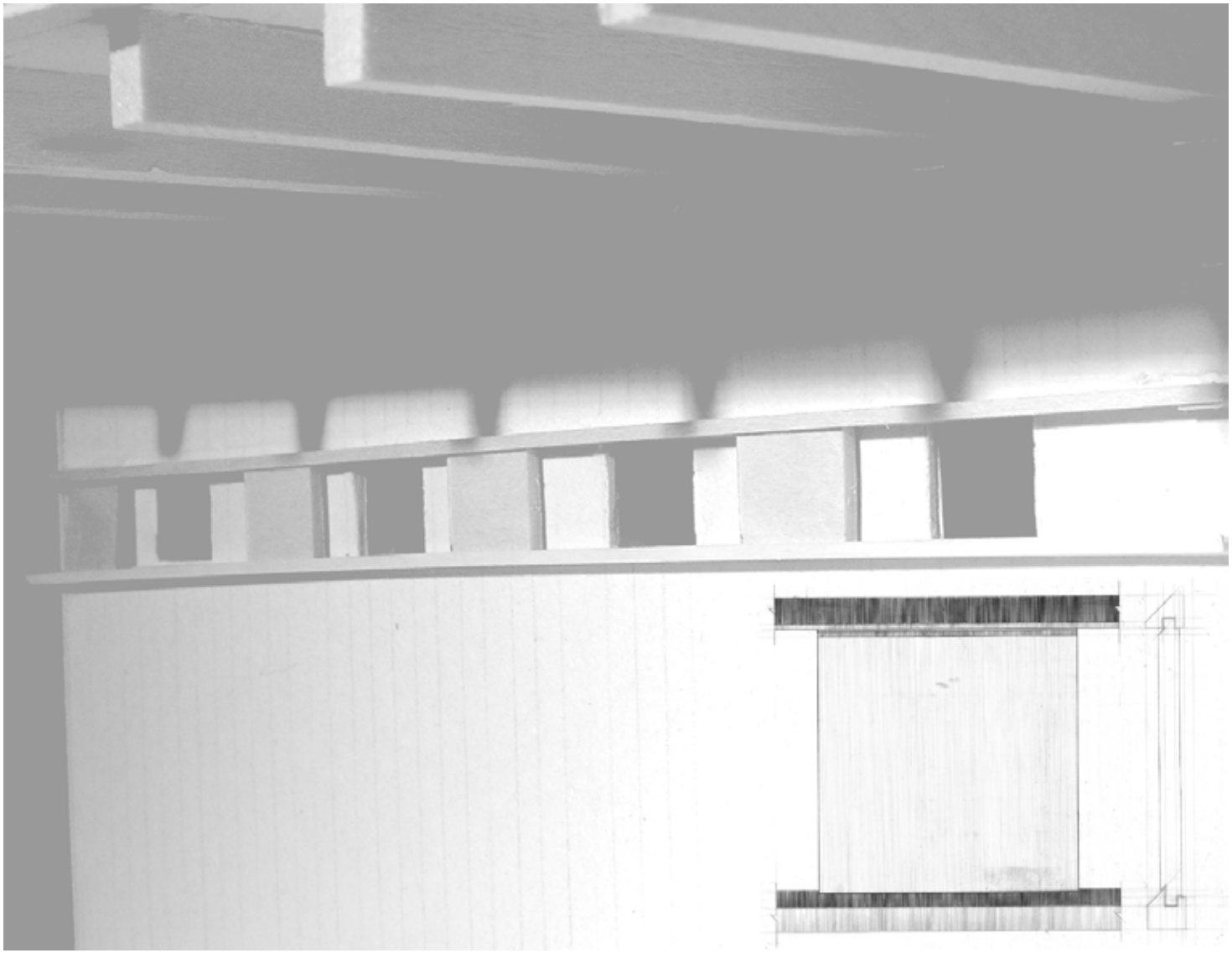


Isometric Section of Kitchen



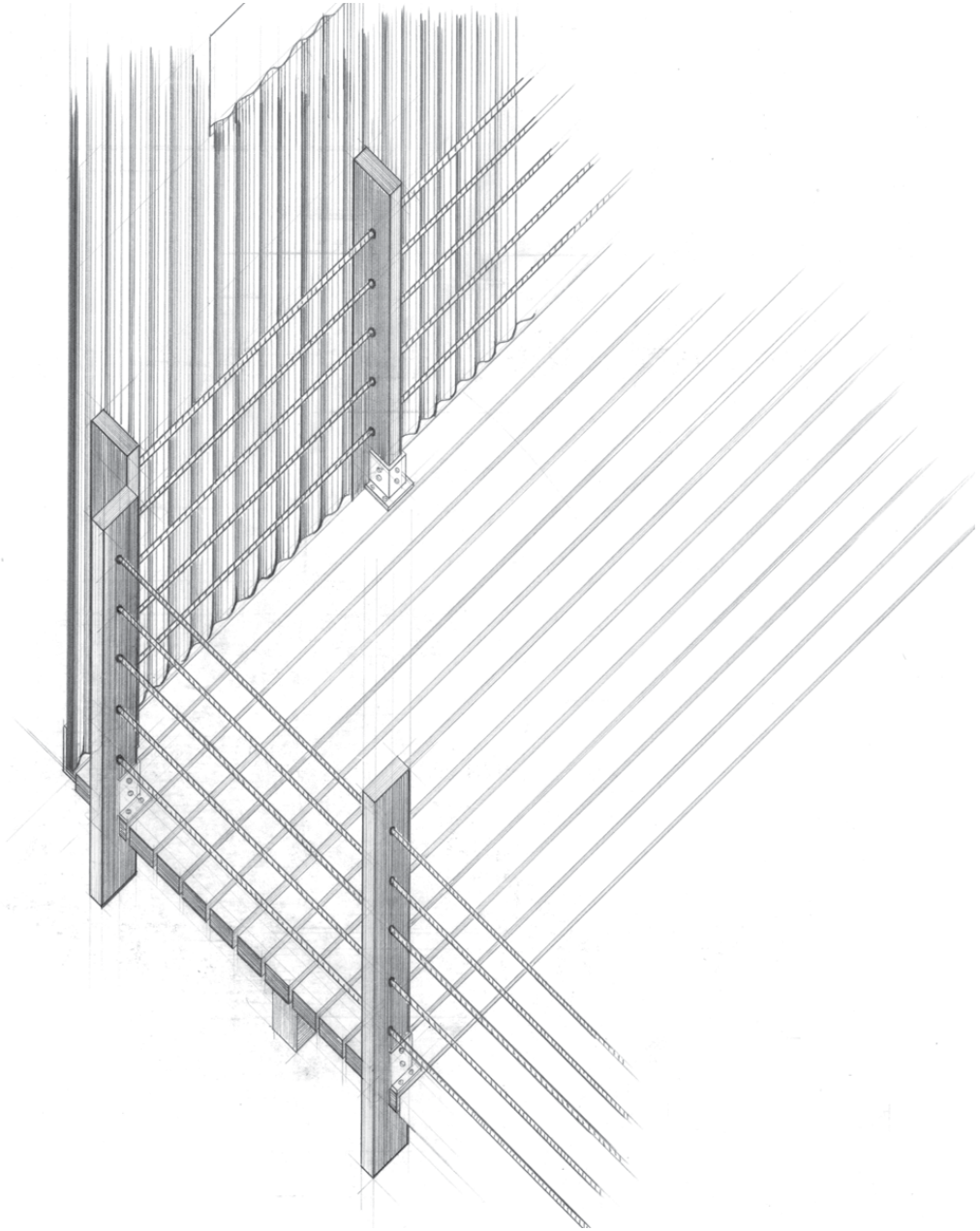
With the flooring system I wanted the deck to pull away from the two structures to emphasize the appearance of floating.

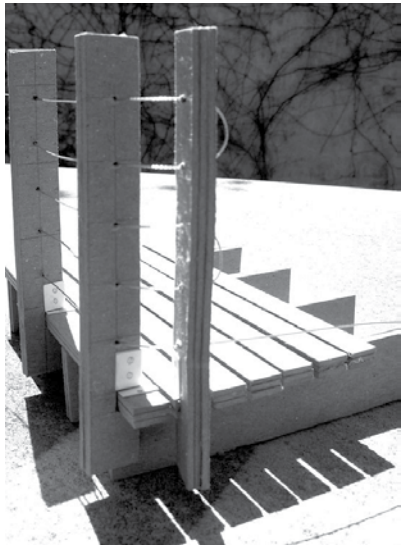
Detail of Floor Layers

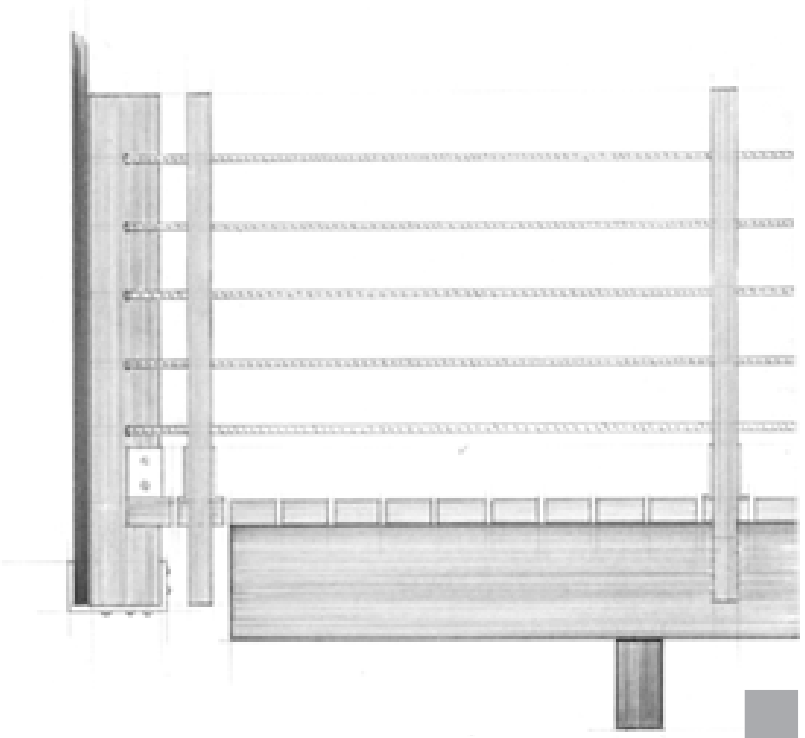


This image is the sliding window detail. My main focus for this detail was that it would shed any rain water that might get to it.

The railing was something that I felt didn't want to be added but I knew it had to be. The railing not only acts as the railing but it also braces the part of the roof that folds down. You can see in the elevation on the right there is a bracket that cups the folded roof, holding it in place so it doesn't rack in the wind.







Detail & Elevation of Railing

Vita:

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Gainesville, VA

Education

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA
Master of Architecture, 3 Year Program, 2007
Thesis: A Biedermeier Cabin

Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA
Bachelor of Fine Arts – Interior Design, 2004

Design Experience

- Semester abroad with Center for European Studies and Architect Program at Virginia Tech, traveling to Italy, Switzerland, Spain, France, and Germany.
- Design and exhibit collaboration featuring collective projects in Riva San Vitale, Switzerland.
- VCU Interior Design project for Richmond Symphony Designer House: coordinated colors, finishes, and mural in sitting room.
- Residential Design Intern, Hunter & Company, Whitefish, MT,