

Housing and Community – School and Practice  
1983-2011  
Jackson Ward  
Richmond, Virginia

Mark Bernard Brandfass

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

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August 3, 1988  
Blacksburg, Virginia

Keywords:  
Housing, Community, Energy, Practice, Time

Housing and Community – School and Practice  
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ABSTRACT

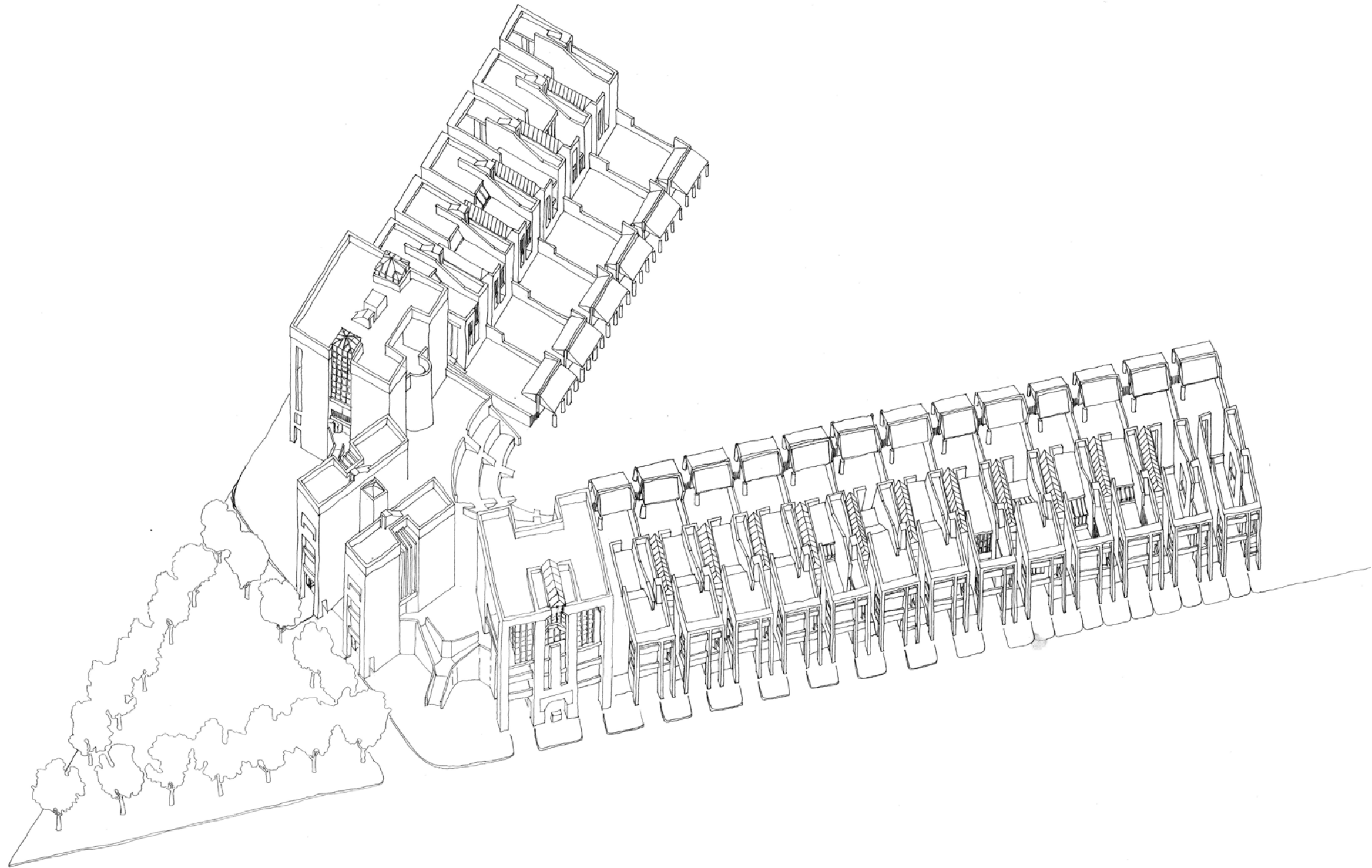
If books have a life of their own, oftentimes very different from what their authors might have imagined, how about buildings? How about buildings that only exist on paper, or pixels?

Do Time, Tools, Practice, deform or inform the work of years ago?

Finally, where have the intentions, the meanings, the hopes, of those years at this University lived these past twenty plus years? Were they released only when I unrolled those drawings, or have they lived with this student as he practiced his profession each day?

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Project Title  
*Housing and Community  
Jackson Ward,  
Richmond Virginia*  
Sheet Title  
Chapter One *Site Drawing  
August 1988*

Date  
*05/31/2011*

**NARRATIVE**

I originally chose this site, Abner Clay Park, Jackson Ward, in Richmond, Virginia for an Urban Design project in Walter Butke's Studio in September 1985. There was no Program for this project, only the triangular shaped site with a small playground and 2 tennis courts. The Site is bounded by West Leigh Street on the North, West Clay Street on the South, with Brook Road slicing an angle between on the West. The Eastern edge of the site is taken by Richmond Public Schools Adult Career Development Center.

At the end of the Quarter I had produced little work but had decided to develop what I had into my Thesis project. Walter Butke agreed to Chair my Committee in April, 1986.



Arthur Ashe Monument

The Arthur Ashe Monument was dedicated on July 10, 1996, Arthur Ashe's 53rd birthday; three years after his death.

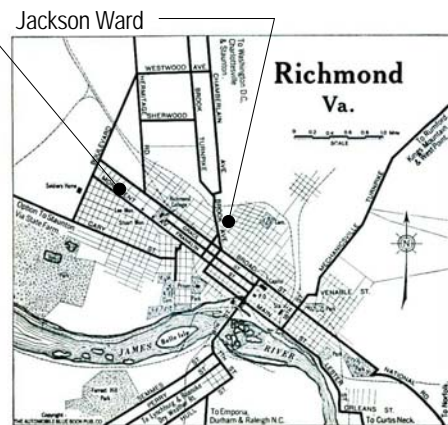
I once saw Arthur Ashe play tennis. In 1967, the Western Open, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Arthur Ashe was an Army Lieutenant then, before he turned professional. He wasn't difficult to pick out that day, and he played like no other.

Arthur Ashe grew up in a house in Brook Field, a short distance up Brook Road.

"Brook Field was just an athletic paradise, a dream world for a kid who likes to play sports." (John McPhee, Levels of the Game)

The house was torn down, and Brook Field was developed for the Richmond Post Office.

All photos by author.



1919 Automobile Blue Book Map  
Perry-Casteneda Library Map Collection



Ebenezer Baptist Church



Armory



Leigh Street Houses



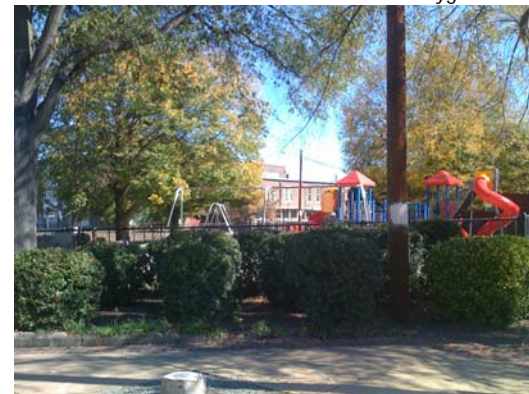
Playground



West Clay/Prentis - looking into site



Richmond Public Schools Adult Career Development Center



**JACKSON WARD NARRATIVE**

Jackson Ward has many narratives. According to the National Park Service it is a "fine 19th Century Residential District." The entire ward was designated a National Historic Landmark in May, 1978.

Google's Top Ten for Jackson Ward May, 2011

**Search Results**

1. [Jackson Ward - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](#)  
Jackson Ward is a historically African-American neighborhood in Richmond, Virginia, USA. It is located less than a mile from the Virginia State Capitol. ...  
Center of black commerce ... - Decline, renewal - See also - References  
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jackson\_Ward - Cached - Similar
2. [Historic Jackson Ward](#)  
Jackson Ward Revitalization Assistance Packages provide several different avenues and incentive packages for affordable financing to potential homebuyers ...  
www.jacksonward.com/ - Cached - Similar
3. [HJWA - Historic Jackson Ward Association](#)  
Historic Jackson Ward Association.  
www.hjwa.org/ - Cached - Similar
4. [Home - Greater Jackson Ward News](#)  
May 24, 2011 ... Covering news and events in Carver, Jackson Ward, Newtowne West, Gilpin, Downtown, MCV and Court End in Richmond, Virginia.  
gjn.net/ - Cached - Similar
5. [Venture Richmond - Jackson Ward](#)  
Jun 28, 2010 ... In the heart of Downtown is Jackson Ward, a neighborhood that is historically, architecturally and culturally significant to Richmond and ...  
www.venturerichmond.com/\_projects-jacksonward.html - Cached - Similar
6. [Jackson Ward Historic District](#)  
Jackson Ward Historic District is a fine 19th-century residential district. The entire Jackson Ward Historic District is only one of two districts that are ...  
www.nps.gov/travel/richmond/JacksonWardHD.html - Cached
7. [Images for Jackson Ward](#)  
- Report images
8. [Son of Jackson Ward | Cover Story | Style Weekly - Richmond, VA...](#)  
Jan 12, 2011 ... Since he and his family inherited more than 100 Jackson Ward parcels from his father, developer Ron Stallings has led some \$30 million worth ...  
www.styleweekly.com/styleweekly/son-of-jackson-ward/Content? ... - Cached
9. [America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places 2001: Jackson Ward](#)  
Nov 8, 2009 ... Founded by free blacks and immigrants, Jackson Ward became a gerrymandered voting district in the 1870s that kept those groups voting in one ...  
www.preservationnation.org/travel-and-jackson-ward.html - Cached - Similar
10. [Ward Jackson at Metaphor Contemporary Art](#)  
Metaphor contemporary art gallery has work available by artist Ward Jackson.  
www.metaphorcontemporaryart.com/AP\_WarJac.html - Cached - Similar

The Adult Career Development Center is a multifaceted facility funded as a public alternative school by Richmond City Public Schools in Richmond, Virginia. The purpose of the school is to assist students 16 years and older in obtaining either a General Equivalency Diploma (GED) or a high school diploma.

Students have the option of earning a high school diploma by completing the requirements of the Performance Learning Center (PLC) or of the General Achievement Diploma (GAD). Also, ACDC houses the federally funded programs Early Head Start and Head Start. The center provides classes for adults through the Office of Adult Basic Education. It also serves as a center for ESOL classes and for Certified Nursing Assistant classes. In addition, ACDC provides the opportunity for career counseling and work study experiences. We are a partner with the City Lights Initiative; which includes Capital One, The Black History Museum, The Historic Jackson Ward Association, The Technology Resource Connections and The Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority.

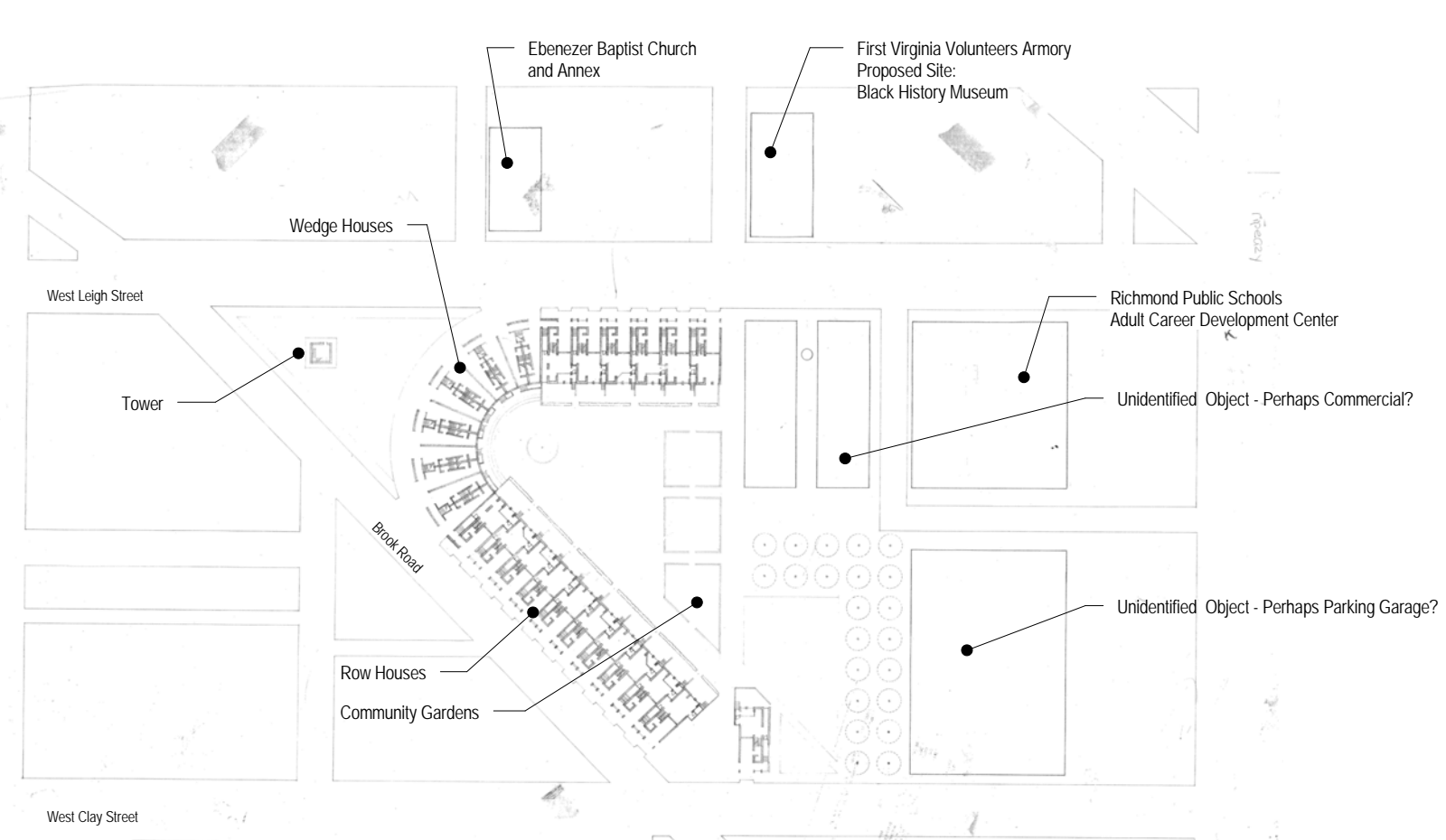
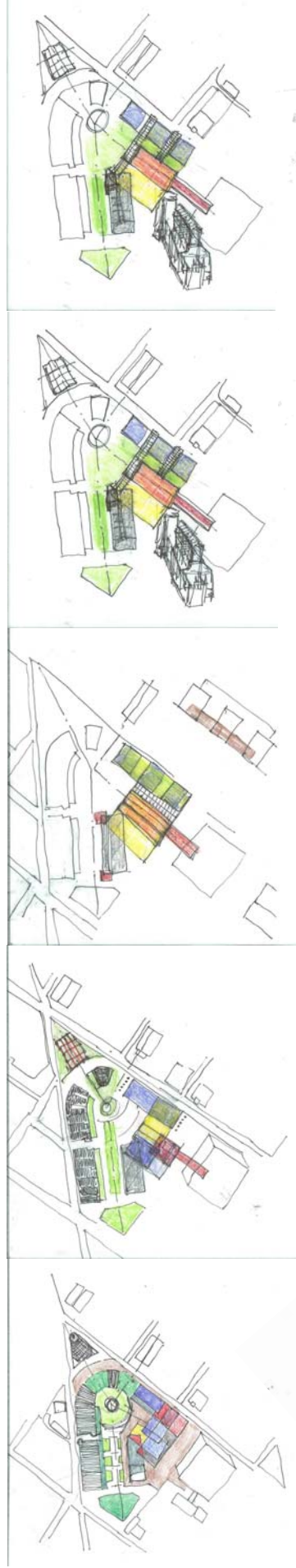
We invite you to visit us and to become partners with us in serving the proud citizens of Richmond. We are passionate about our mission as we help students to graduate and to move on in their quest to have a better life through education and to become productive citizens of our society.

Dr. Clara Scott, Principal ACDC

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Chapter Two *Site Photos*

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**Site Plan: August 1988**

The 2011 Plan opens up the Site at the point. This Northern entrance to Jackson Ward, which was once a flourishing center of African-American capitalism is now anchored in this plan by a group of commercial spaces.

The raised plinth of the plaza here is a stage for the site as well as the neighborhood.



The development of the 2011 Site Plan makes a context for the houses by paying attention to certain existing and historic conditions of the site. No acknowledgement to the existing conditions of the site, other than its shape, is present in the 1988 plan.

The site has not changed a bit since 1980. The Armory is still shuttered. The main Commercial on Broad Street is still plagued by crime:

**Steady Sounds Robbed – Again!**

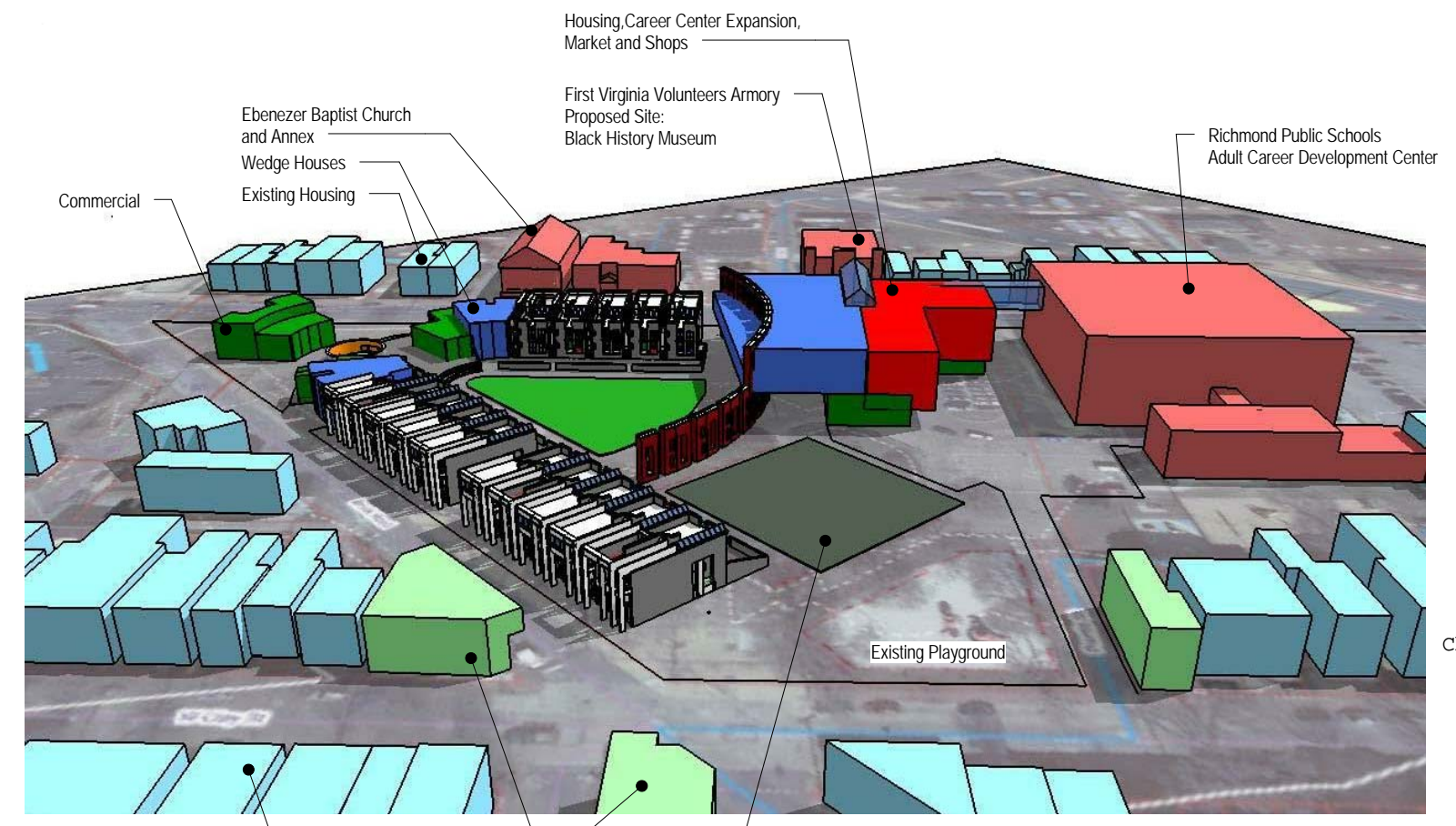
The RTD reports Steady Sounds Record Store was robbed again in another daylight robbery yesterday at 2:39 pm. Bear with me while I rant.

This is unacceptable. Broad Street needs to be safe. We will never have a vibrant downtown until it is. Shoppers will (and do) avoid it. Stores that should will never open and the ones we have will consider leaving. The city needs to make some kind of statement. Thugs are not welcome. I'm sick and tired of reporting assaults, robberies, shootings and murders.

You might say, bitching and moaning won't change things, but if enough people get mad it will. Sometimes it takes something bad for people to take action. I say that time is now. Here's some contact information if you want to make a statement.

Charles R. Samuels Councilman, 2nd District  
 Office: (804)646-6532  
 Email Address: [Charles.Samuels@Richmondgov.com](mailto:Charles.Samuels@Richmondgov.com)

Jackson Ward News  
 April 1, 2011



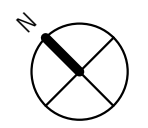
**Site Plan: May, 2011**

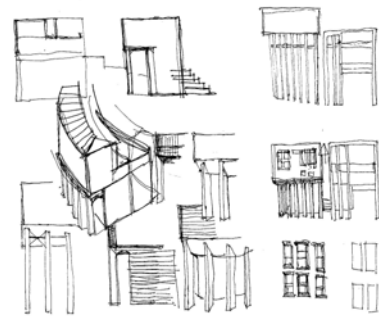
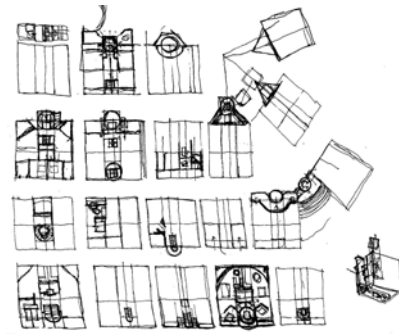
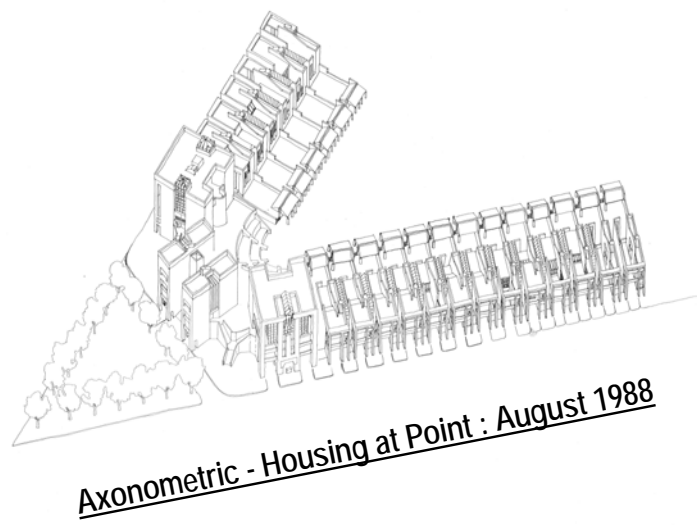


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**Housing and Community**  
*Jackson Ward,*  
*Richmond Virginia*  
 Sheet Title  
 Chapter Three **Site Plans**  
*Compared*

Date  
 5.31.2011





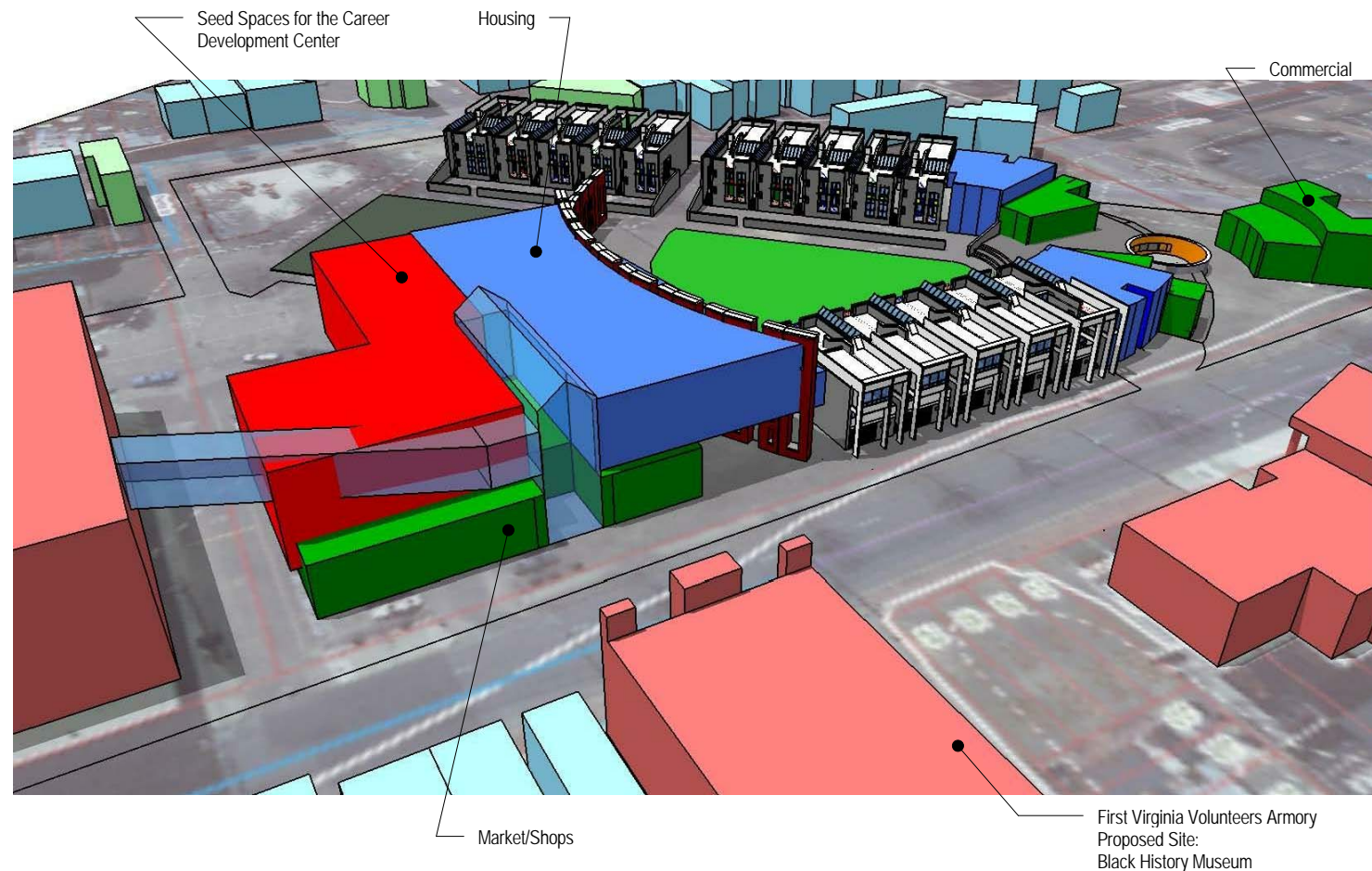
Ebenezer Baptist Church and Annex  
 First Virginia Volunteers Army Proposed Site: Black History Museum  
 Housing, Career Center Expansion, Market and Shops Below  
 Richmond Public Schools Adult Career Development Center



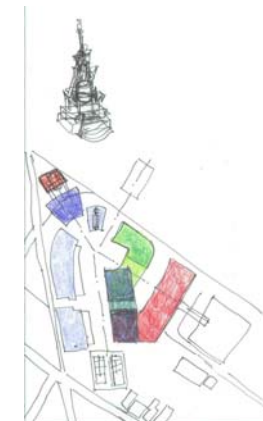
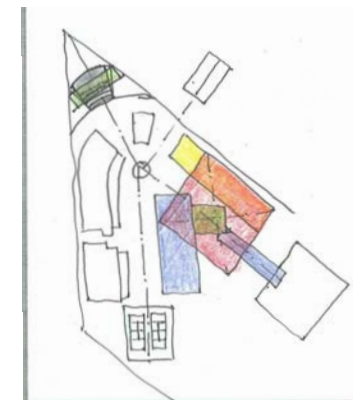
Commercial  
 Cooling Tower Sunk Below Street Level  
 Wedge Houses

The Mechanical Systems for heating and cooling the project are located beneath the raised plinth/plaza at the point.

The Cooling Tower is sunken beneath street level and is a focus for the plaza. The rising mist from the tower will be a welcome attraction on Richmond's hot days, and, when illuminated at night, be a marker in the neighborhood for the Commercial activities of the site.



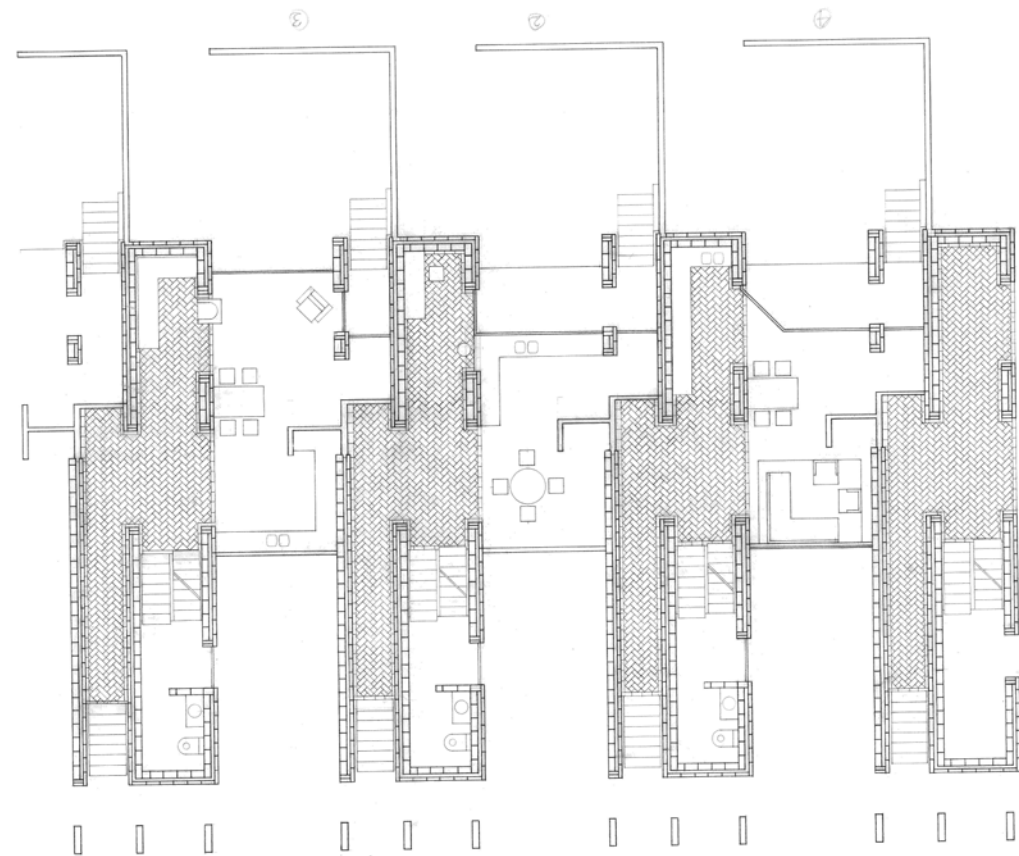
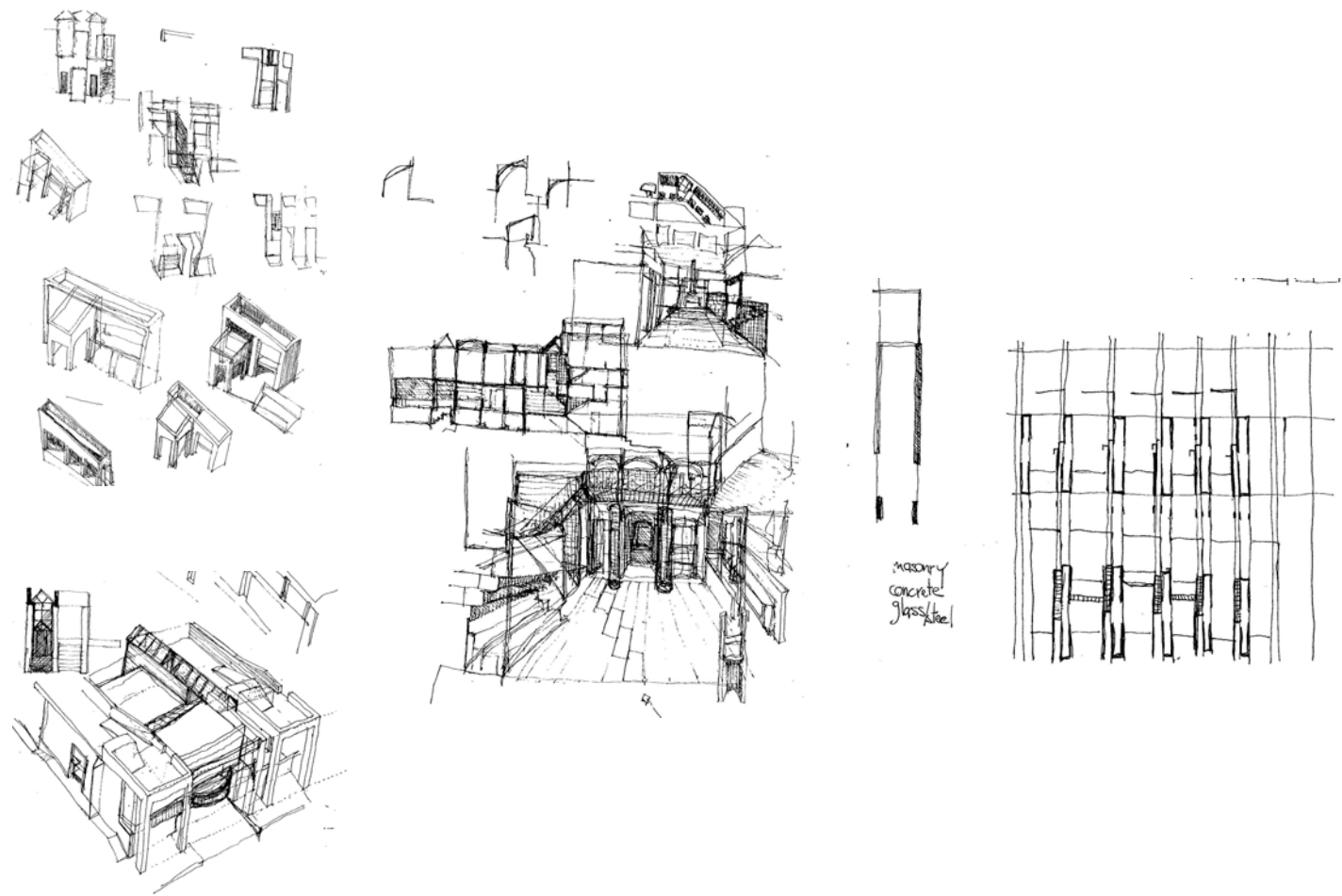
A bridge connects the Adult Career Development Center with additional 'Seed Spaces.' These spaces give the students at the Center the opportunity to learn about and work with those involved in the workaday activities in the market and shops below.



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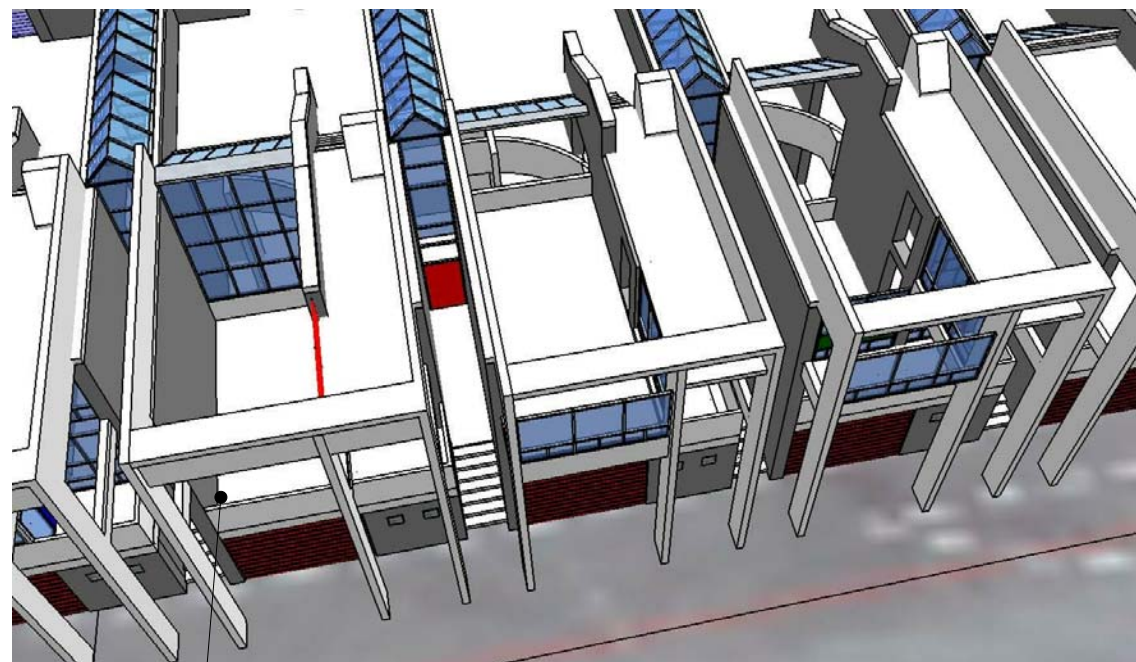
Project Title  
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 Jackson Ward,  
 Richmond Virginia*  
 Sheet Title  
 Chapter Four *Site Plans*

Date  
 05/31/2011

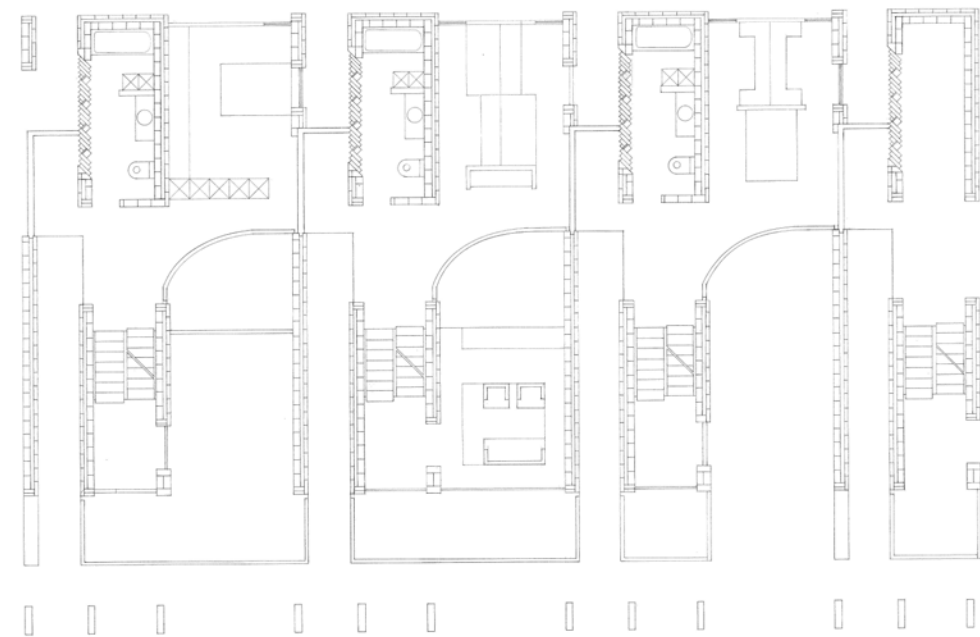


GREEN HOUSE    BLUE HOUSE    RED HOUSE

LEVEL ONE



Green House  
2nd Floor Courtyard



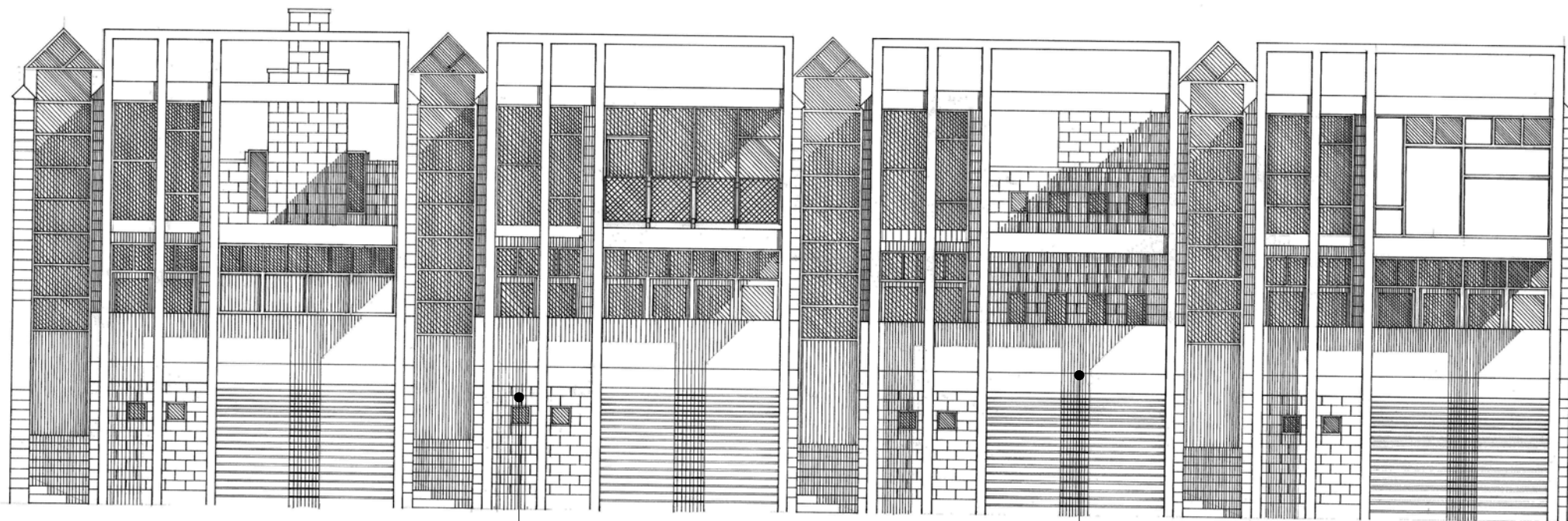
LEVEL TWO



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Sheet Title  
Chapter Five *Row Houses*  
*1st Floor Plan*  
*2nd Floor*  
*Plan*  
Date  
*05/31/2011*





Blue House

Green House

Front Elevations: August 1988



Front Elevations: MAY, 2011



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*Jackson Ward,*  
*Richmond Virginia*  
Sheet Title  
Chapter Six *Row Houses*  
*Front*  
*Elevation*

Date  
05/31/2011



Front Elevations:August 1988



Front Elevations:MAY, 2011

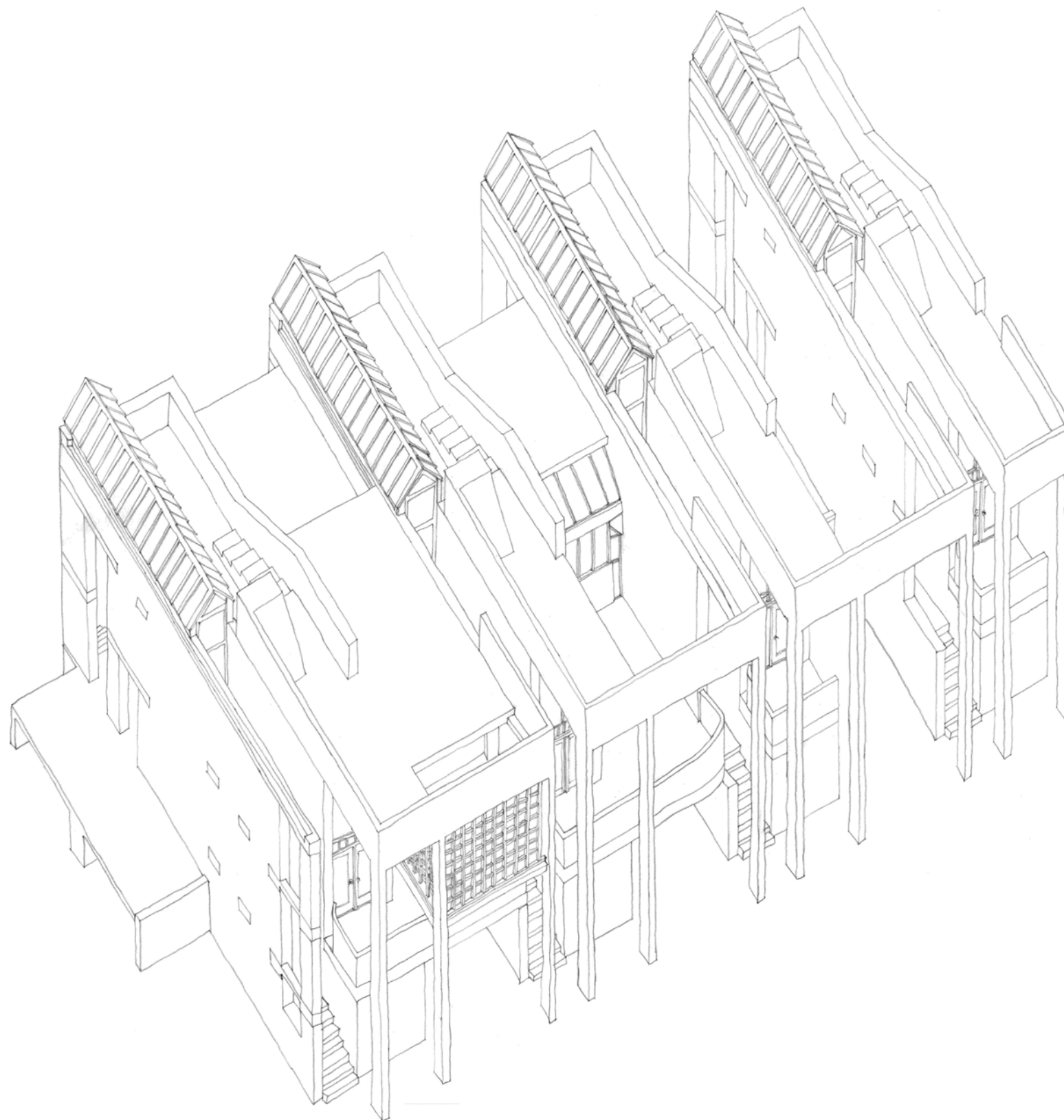


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Jackson Ward,  
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Sheet Title  
Chapter Seven *Row Houses  
Rear  
Elevation*

Date  
*05/31/2011*



August 1988

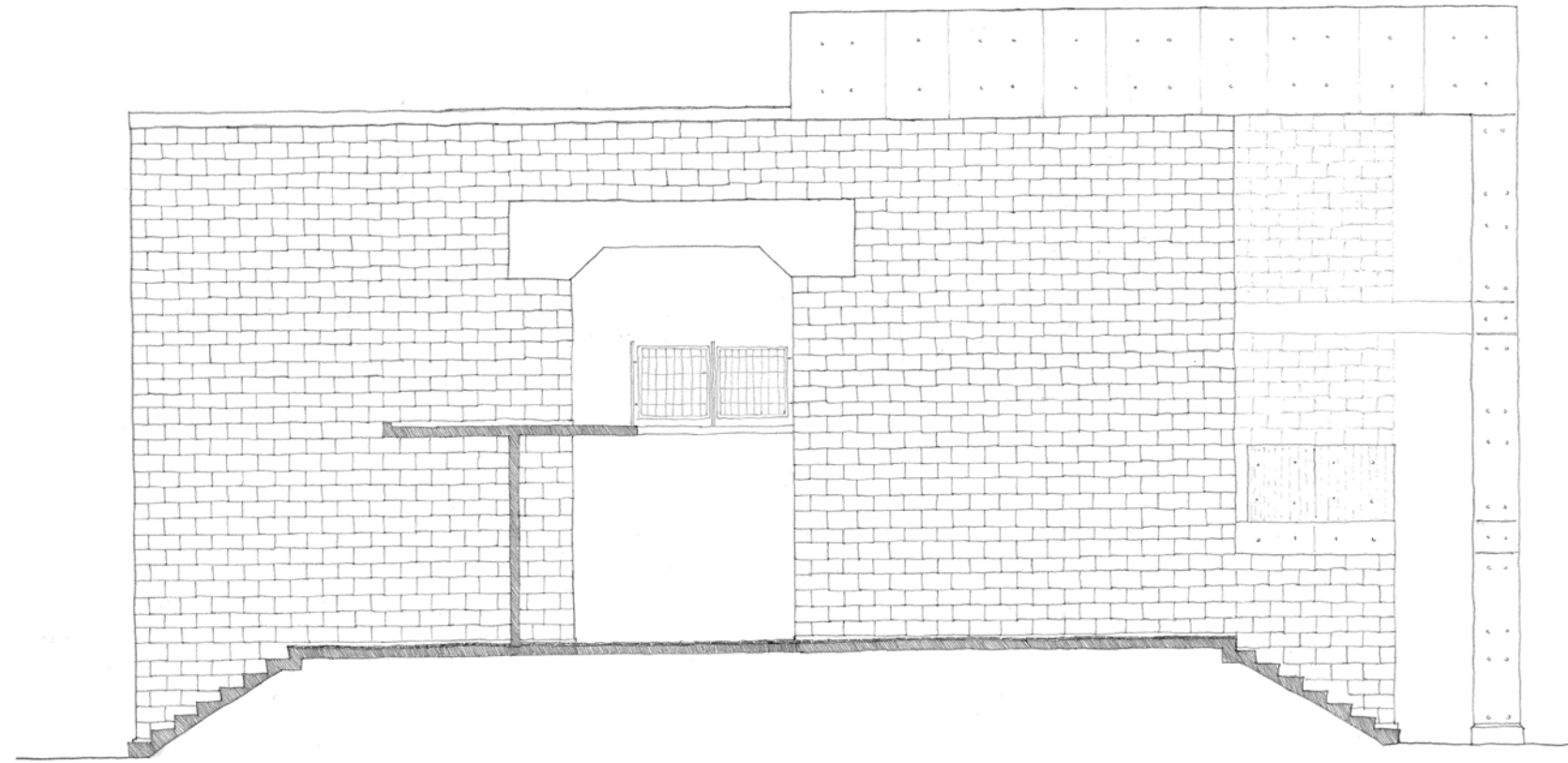


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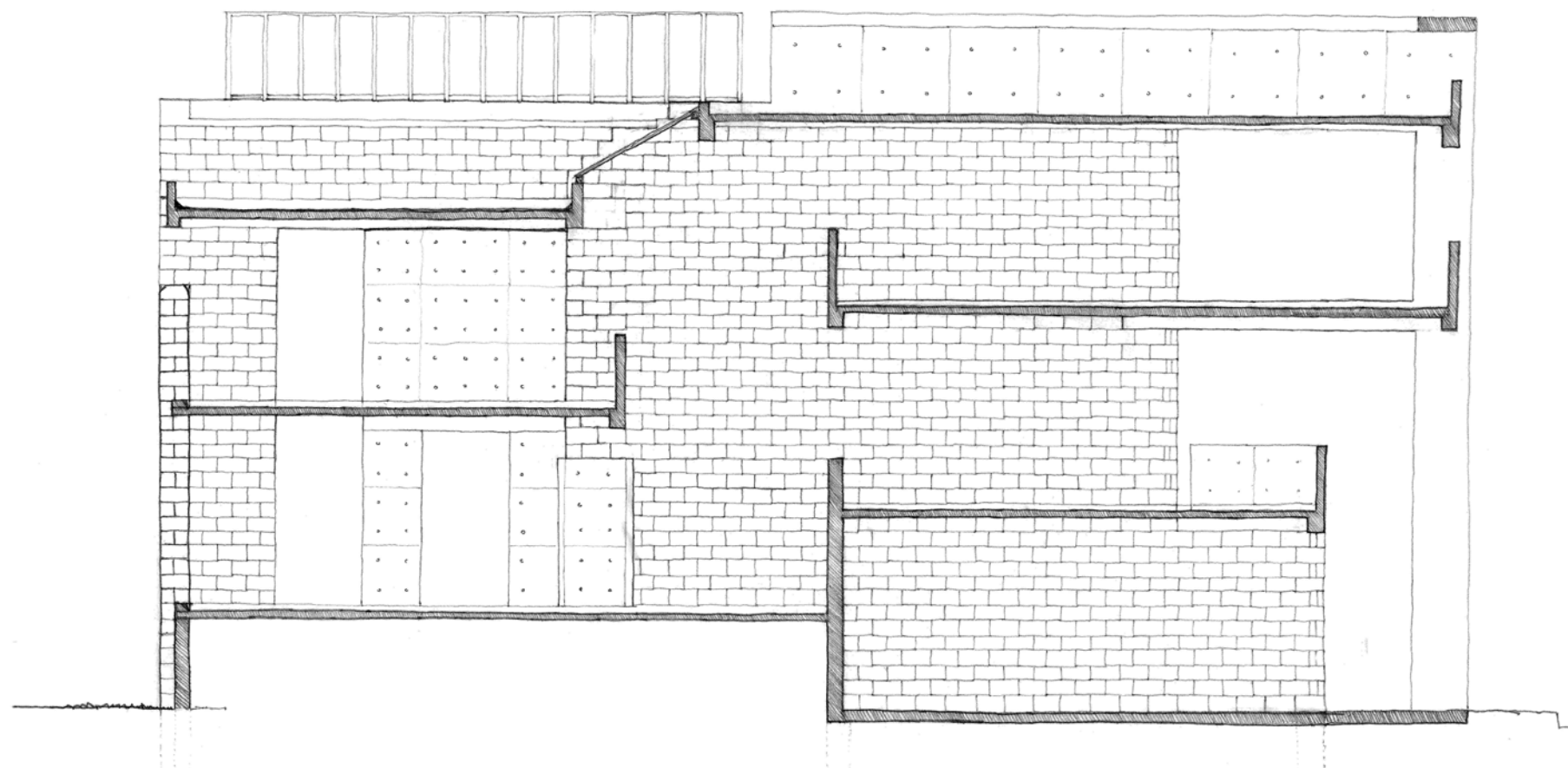
Project Title  
*Housing and Community*  
*Jackson Ward,*  
*Richmond Virginia*

Sheet Title  
Chapter Eight *Row Houses*  
*Axonometric*

Date  
*05/31/2011*



August 1988



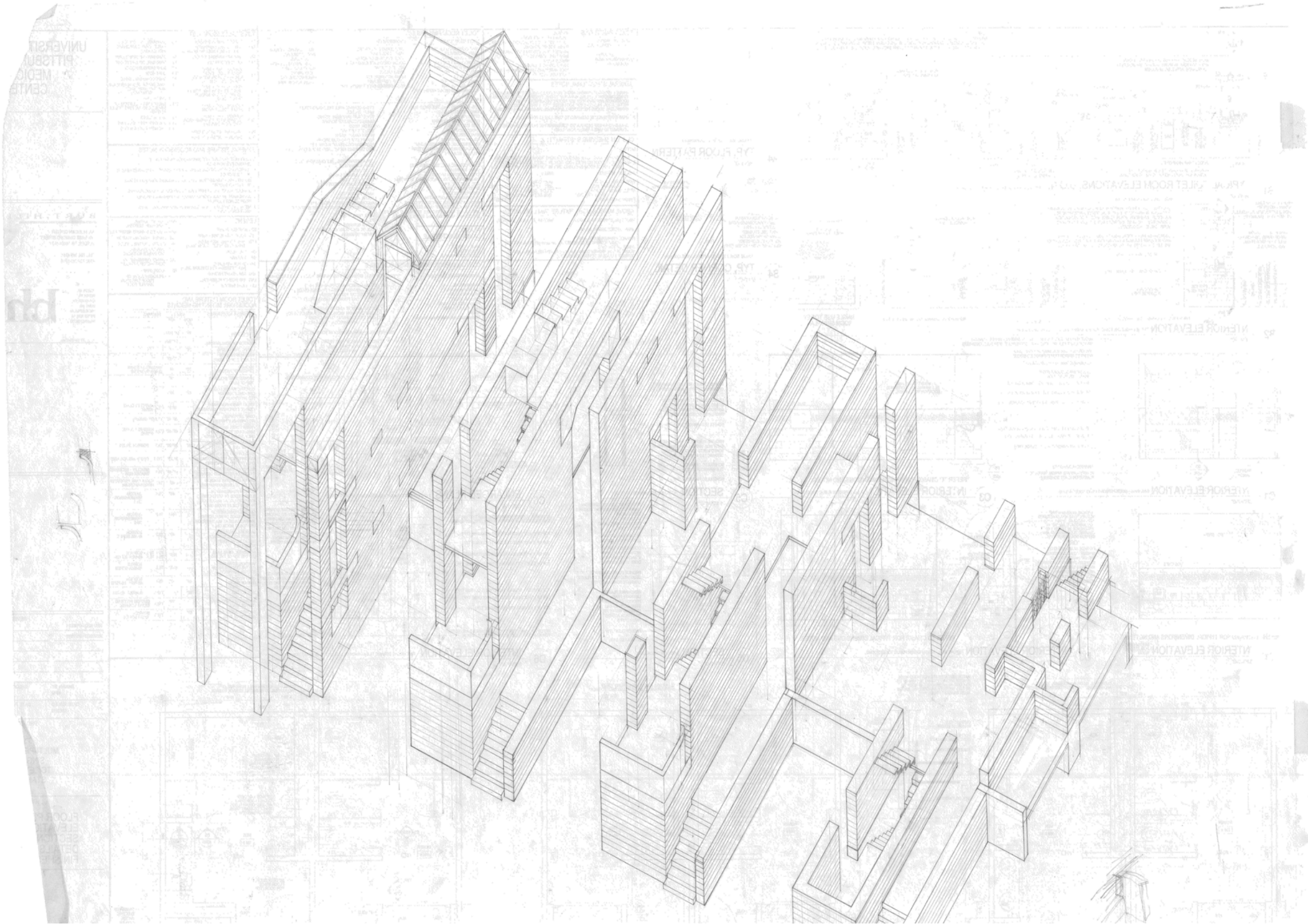
August 1988



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*Housing and Community  
Jackson Ward,  
Richmond Virginia*  
Sheet Title  
Chapter Nine *Building  
Sections*

Date  
*05/31/2011*

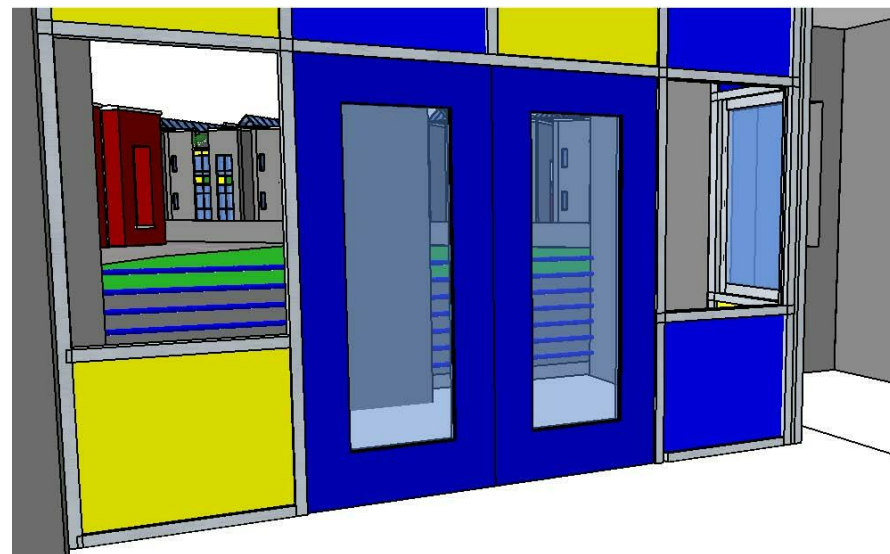
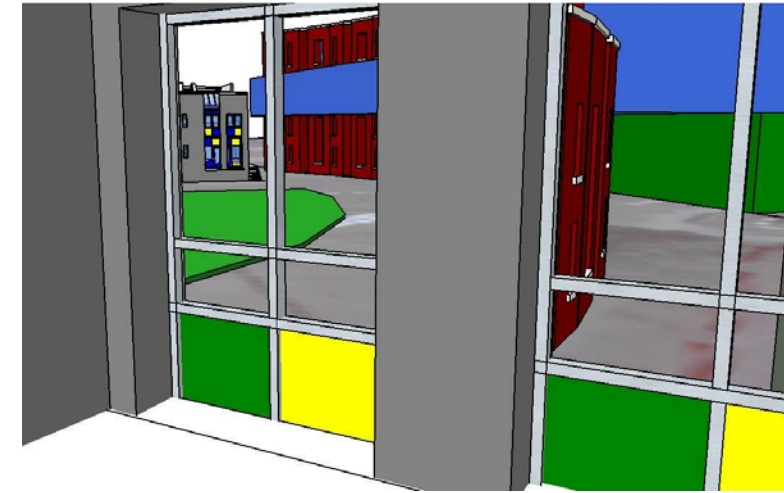
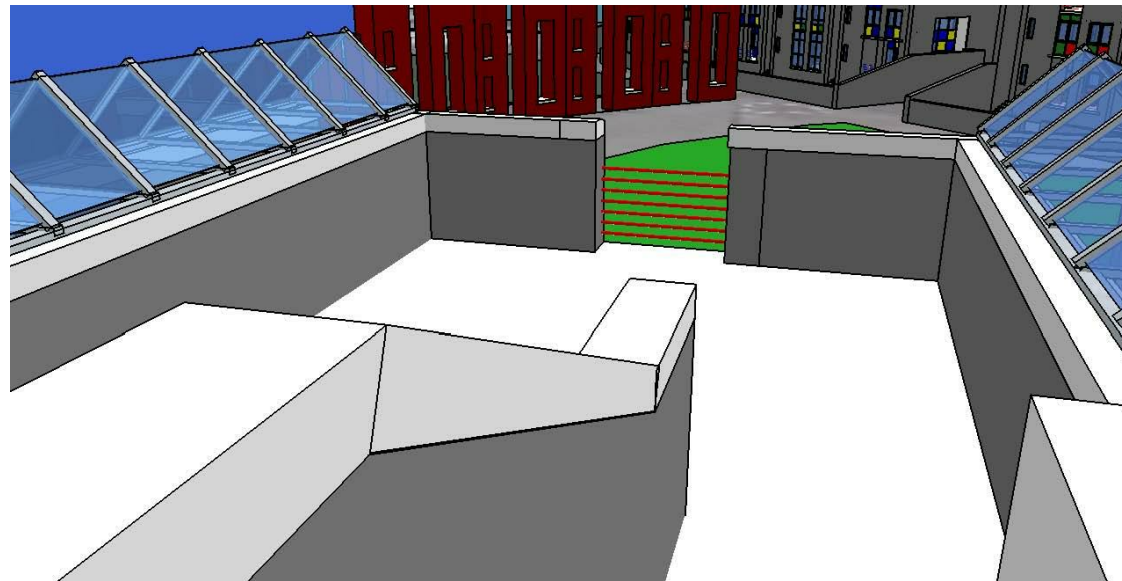
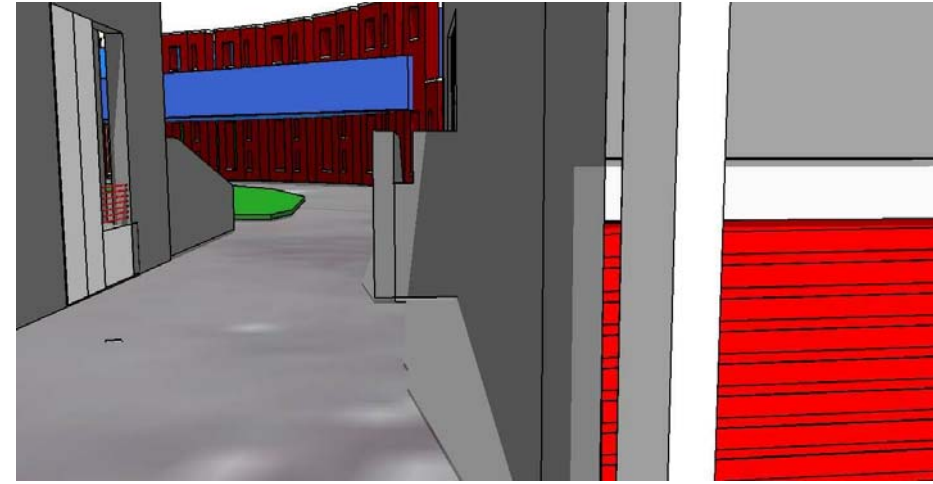
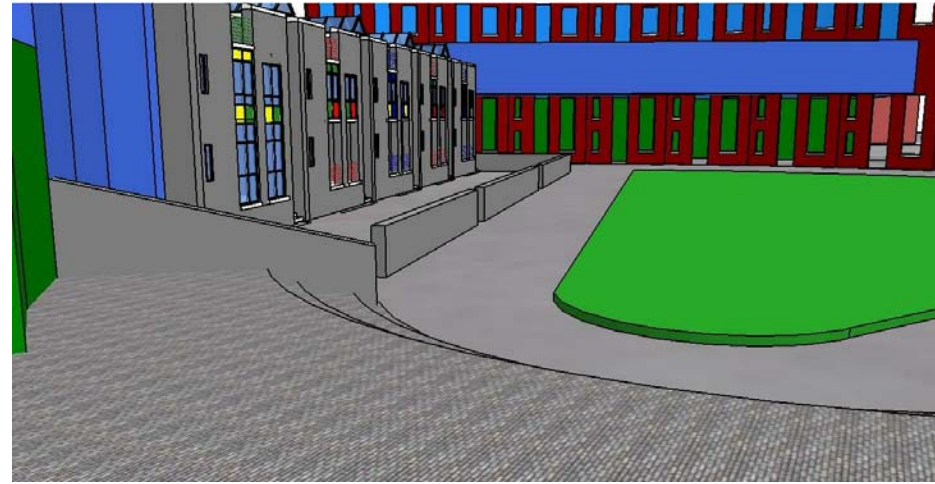
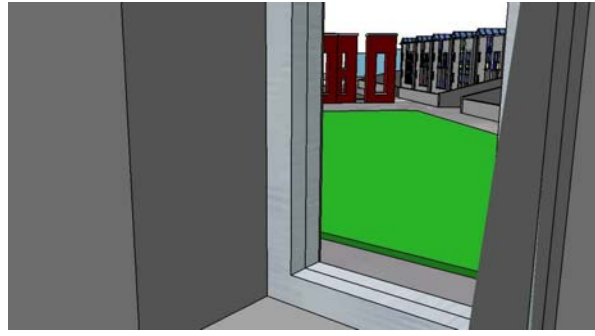


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Project Title  
*Housing and Community  
Jackson Ward,  
Richmond Virginia*  
Sheet Title  
Chapter Ten *Row Houses  
Ruins*

August 1988

Date  
05/31/2011



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Project Title  
*Housing and Community  
Jackson Ward,  
Richmond Virginia*  
Sheet Title  
Chapter Eleven *Views Into  
the Yard*

Date  
*05/31/2011*



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Project Title  
*Housing and Community  
Jackson Ward,  
Richmond Virginia*  
Sheet Title  
Chapter Twelve *Site Model*  
May, 2011

Date  
06/02/11