

A CHRISTIAN CENTER
for
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

by

M. Lindsey Hagood

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Virginia Polytechnic Institute
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APPROVED:

Director of Graduate Studies
Louis A. Pardue

APPROVED:

Head of Architectural Department
Clinton H. Cowgill

Dean of Engineering
John W. Whittemore

Chief Critic
Charles S. Worley

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Blacksburg, Virginia

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SECTION I

Introduction

Introduction

A. Thesis Objectives:

The program of this thesis is divided into four parts; Investigation, Analysis, Design and Presentation. It is the objective of the thesis to investigate the conditions which have lead the Ministry of the Central Baptist Church to feel a great need for a Christian Center in connection with the church building to supplement the present neighborhood facilities in an attempt to create a better environment for the inhabitants of the neighborhood. An investigation of these causes has enabled the ministry to set up a program and list of physical elements needed for such an undertaking. More directly, this thesis will attempt to organize and relate the various elements of such a program, on the proposed site, in such a way that these elements will become a unity and will benefit the inhabitants and the church in its attempt to carry out the teachings of the Christian Doctrine.

B. History of Religious Architecture:

Over the centuries of accumulated human knowledge, Man has striven to express his varied emotions and experiences; the more successful expressions have attained a level of creative effort called Art. The painter, the poet, and the musician; they all attempt expression in their particular idioms, using the tools and materials applicable to their art forms which are available at their particular time of existence. The more successful expressions are contemporary in spirit with the best of human creation for their age; philosophically, physically, and temporally.

Architecture, being a developed and refined expression of building,

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has become an art. Architects, as artists, have tried to express themselves and their times by carefully composing contemporary materials in an expressive manner, pleasing to the aesthetic sense of the age. Architecture, unlike other arts, has a dual purpose: not only must it express the contemporary aesthetic standards, but it must also serve the primary function for which it was intended: shelter. Thus, to be a sincere and honest expression, Architecture must first convey this representation of protection from the elements, and then the quality of aesthetic delight.

From the beginnings of architecture, the building of religious structures has been the highest form of architectural expression. The great buildings of Egypt and Greece were temples; those of the Middle Ages, cathedrals. The Egyptians made their temples big, both widespread and tall. The Greeks on the Mediterranean and Mayans in the Americas exalted their temples by building them atop eminences. The earlier the era, the more limited was technical knowledge and the more blocky were architectural shapes and ornament. The Greek place of worship benefited from improved technical understanding; the wooden beam spanning between posts became a stone lintel supported by columns, yet the architecture retained many characteristics of wood, even to standardized carved ornament that was developed first for the earlier material. The Roman arch, developing into barrel, multiple, and penetrating vaults and domes, was again primarily a means of spanning large spaces with small units of masonry. The early basilica with wood trusses and lean-to structure served the same purpose. The Gothic Cathedral grew materially out of these forebears, via

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massive Romanesque developments, as engineering ingenuity was applied to familiar masonry and wood construction. During the Middle Ages the church became very high, thus expressing the loftiness of religious concepts as opposed to more earthy practicalities. It came to be realized that the arch need not be circular, that forces produced by weight of structure could be concentrated upon isolated columns and counteracted by buttresses. The decorative accouterments of Gothic evolved from and remain visibly related to the problem solved by the Gothic engineer: how to enclose a large space built to an unusual height to express literally the concept of exaltation. The most beautiful buildings of our own colonial and early Republican days were churches. Through nearly five millenia, ecclesiastical architecture has set the pace and pioneered the developments of architectural styles, forms, and expressions which were later borrowed and adapted to secular architecture.

C. The Invalidity of Historic Form Today:

Excepting only such elements as the cross and orientation to the east, the architectural forms now synonymous with reverence and worship were once no more than very practical solutions of very practical problems. To say this is not to belittle, but to say that in the past, the greatest amount of technical ingenuity and the most sincere creative expression has been expended on religious structures. In the best of these historical expressions, the techniques, modified and harmonized by an aesthetic perception seldom equalled today, and realized with craftsmanship which we can no longer afford, still elicit admiration and have attained the highest

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level of creation. The circumstances of the development of historic form, however, have changed greatly; labor is scarce and expensive, complex materials and structural systems are available, the kind of protection offered by massive masonry is no longer needed. Tremendous amounts of time, money and energy were expended on religious structures in the past; this effort is usurped today by the powerful moneyman, who builds monuments to his achievements in finance. In the great creative eras of the past the practical spheres of economics, politics, science, and certainly sociology, had only begun to produce results capable of challenging the universal appeal of theological ideas and ideals. The Church had been the center of all human activity of any consequence. The religious structure was the one to which all other buildings were subservient and secondary. The focal point and activity center of the town of the Middle Ages was the Church. Here great drama unfolded; here the market place spread itself in the shadow of the benevolent and protecting tower; here the townspeople gathered to celebrate festivities and holidays. No other building competed in height, form, beauty or significance. Today the religious structure has been dwarfed by skyscrapers; other buildings have increased in importance to the extent that the church has become almost "another building". That it has not lost its identity entirely, is one proof of its validity. To copy the expression of other ages, to mimic in steel and concrete the fervent ideals that were valid in the Middle Ages, to do less than we can with the materials at hand, has always produced inferior work; it is scarcely building to the glory of God. From this point of view, copying historic forms in today's materials can be

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called anti-traditional, perhaps irreligious. Only in recent generations has religious architecture broken away from the present. About the time that secular architecture began reaching for a new and truly contemporary idiom to replace the eclecticism of the turn of the century, church architecture in America took the opposite path toward the past. Some architects blame the backward march of church design on the congregations. They assert that rigid traditionalism is almost universal in both clergy and parishioners. But the churchmen in all past generations have shown such a willingness to seek new architectural expression for their religious aspirations that this rigid traditionalism, if true, is in itself a surprising new phenomenon. Perhaps a better explanation is that so far our best contemporary architects have offered churchmen so little as an alternative to a safe return to the tried and true architectural beauties achieved in other times. More than half the leading contemporary architects have done no recent church work whatsoever, and consequently have played no part in the development of a contemporary church architecture. Religious architecture has become a symbol, a fetish rather than a true expression. "We architects and not the clergy are to blame for the notion of architectural style as symbolic. We are prone to evangelize our clients, to indoctrinate them in some architectural creed. We tell them unblushingly what is and what is not Christian architecture - as if it were not their business to tell us. As I remember it, Pugin was the first architect to undertake the education of the Church:

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'The Roman Church who...never knew
 'Till Mr. Pugin taught her
 That orthodoxy had to do
 At all with bricks and mortar.'

Ruskin....then converted the Anglican Church, and...Upjohn and Cram read the lesson and illustrated it....The clergy proved to be apt pupils..."¹ and the architects to be poor teachers. Among all the thousands of churches, protestant and catholic, on which so many millions of dollars have been, and are continuing to be, lavished in the past three decades, not more than a few dozen have made any attempt to take advantage of present day building techniques to develop a religious architecture in keeping with our times. What kept religious architecture of the past great and vital through many centuries was its constant quest for new means of architectural expression, its unceasing use of new knowledge, new resources, new devices, new materials. In our generation, more new tools, new materials, new techniques have been placed at the disposal of church architects than the past ever dreamed of. But the adventure-some spirit, the contact with the people, has somewhere been lost. The best that can be said of our religious architecture is that most of our recent churches could have been built 700 years ago. In part, this failure of the Church to keep abreast of the times and to hold the same position of prestige and close contact with the people which it held in the past. Its function must change to suit the changing needs of the people

¹Hudnut, Joseph Picture, Sentiment, and Symbol. Architectural Record September 1944.

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it serves. Some would say the return of the church to earlier models expresses the turning back of Christianity itself to an earlier spirit. But that spirit is no longer with the people. The Church has separated itself and turned its back on the increased need of the people for spiritual help and guidance in our times.

SECTION II

Investigation

Investigation

A. New Trends in Religious Programs

Despite the Church's apparent reluctance to accept contemporary architectural forms, its cognizance of today's trends and values is demonstrated by the new emphasis being put on ambitious parish programs requiring expensive up-to-date recreational and educational facilities. This is the Church's obvious but intelligent bid to recapture some of its dynamic influence in community life. The Church's role in the future will no longer be that of an austere and aloof monument. It will be regarded more and more as an active integral part of the community, with an active meaning and influence in community life.

Crowded cities are changing the outlooks of their inhabitants; they create the need and desire to preserve one's identity; they bring about a renewed but hardly acknowledged interest in human relations. The programs of many churches are changing to satisfy these needs by expanding social programs and recreational activities. The broadening concept of faith embracing all men, welcoming all; the concept of the close relation of faith to earth, water, sunlight, growing things; the concept of the necessity for a more intimate integration of religious activity with social affairs; these all leave discernible imprints upon ecclesiastical design. If a building is to welcome all, it cannot forbid or overawe; if it is related to nature, it may open its walls to admit light and air, to permit a view of nature. Integration with its community may mean increased emphasis on social, recreational, athletic, and educational activity. The task of the Central Baptist Church of Hartford, Connecticut is to initiate a vital, dynamic renaissance. The task of the architect is to satisfy the

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building needs of this movement.

B. History of Hartford Connecticut

Hartford is a capital city with a population of 177,000. The early agricultural base of the community's economy has changed with the passing of time. Leaf tobacco is the one facet of agriculture which has gained in importance to the community. A long tradition of precision manufacturing, particularly in the metal trades, has made the city a recognized center for this type of work. A third basic element of the local economy is the large number of insurance companies with home offices in Hartford. Under these influences, the city has developed into a financial center for much of the New England area.

Bounded on the east by the Connecticut River, the City of Hartford extends some three and a half miles west from the river bank to the town of West Hartford. It is approximately five miles from the town of Wethersfield to the south, to the towns of Bloomfield and Windsor, to the north. An area of almost eighteen square miles is contained within the city limits. Nearly two-thirds of the city's 8,500 acres, excluding streets, parks, and waterways, are developed for uses that are predominantly residential in character. However, all of the remaining land is not used for commercial or industrial purposes, as the non-residential areas include an airport in the southeastern section of the city, as well as large tracts of undeveloped land along the river to the north.

Previous to the erection of large dikes along the river front, the entire eastern section of the city was subject to periodic flooding. A peak

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of thirty eight and one half feet was reached in the 1936 flood. It was during this flood that the waters crossed Main Street and inundated low land to the west. As a direct result, several residential structures in the affected areas were abandoned. If they are used at all today, it is only for storage purposes. Although the forty seven foot high dikes should prevent a similar occurrence in the future, the memory of the flood remains a significant factor in the minds of those concerned with the area.

Because of their low level and proximity to the river, these lands are hot and humid in the summer, and cold and damp in the winter. This most unpleasant combination makes them ill suited for residential development. Any future development in this section would most probably be non-residential in character.

The central business district of Hartford, in which the Central Baptist Church is located, is truly the "core" of the city. Refer to map, page a. In addition to the department stores, surrounded by complementary smaller shops, the financial and municipal centers of the city are found here. Museums, libraries, theatres, and hotels are to be found in this area. Major roads from all sections of Hartford lead to the district, bringing persons from nearby communities for shopping, work, and recreation. At present there are demands for additional space for business expansion; some firms have hesitated to increase their investments in the area and have sought locations in the adjacent towns, while other firms have sought additional space outside the downtown district.

Historically, the central district of Hartford has been compact. This

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composition has served to attract and retain business. Development that will maintain a relative compactness of the central district, while allowing adequate space for necessary expansion, will aid greatly in contributing to the future social-economic well being of Hartford.

C. Problems of Urban Redevelopment

Because of the rapid growth of population in the towns surrounding Hartford, whose inhabitants find their work and recreation in the city, problems of traffic congestion, blighted areas, unplanned decentralization, relocation of industry, education, welfare and health have increased abnormally. To cope with these problems, a redevelopment agency of the city government has been established. After preliminary studies and surveys, based on the relative contribution that the project might make to general community growth, the displacement of as few families as possible, the availability of investment and redevelopment capital, five areas in the near proximity of the Central Baptist Church have been named as areas most in need of redevelopment. Located in the central business district, it is hoped that the redevelopment of these areas, in accordance with a master plan and new zoning regulations, will alleviate the physical problems of the city.

Intensive study has been started on one of these areas, and it will serve as a guide for the redevelopment of the other four, since their character is essentially the same at present.

Land use at present, in these areas, is heterogeneous in character, It is the site of the early settlement of the city of Hartford, and the

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multiplicity of land uses found there today may be regarded as typical of the unplanned, haphazard growth often associated with the older cities of the eastern seaboard. Residential, commercial, and industrial uses abound in the area. There is little reason for the relative location of present land uses. The area, in its development, has reflected in its land use pattern, the shifting, changing form of a city in flux. Single family residences, high density multiple-family residential development, local and general retail activity, office buildings, parking lots, service stations, wholesaling activities, gas storage works, and a wide variety of industry are all to be found in haphazard juxtaposition. Into an area, at one time predominately residential in its entirety, commercial and industrial uses have gradually intruded. This intursion has been accompanied by a steady lowering of the residential population, as families have voluntarily or involuntarily sought more adequate housing in more desirable locations. However, some 1200 families are, without alternative, presently residing in the area. The housing shortage, due to the influx of war-plant workers, and the inability of approximately 55.2% of these families to pay the rents charged outside of the blighted area in private housing projects, compose one of the major problems to be solved by the redevelopment plan. The section of the area under intense study at present is being planned for redevelopment for retail, wholesale, commercial, and industrial use. It is assumed that further study of the whole project area will point out the need for redevelopment of at least part of the area for residential use, not only for the purpose of relocating the families displaced, but also as possible apartment and multiple-dwelling unit sites

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to house business men and women who desire accommodations in the proximity of their work. Realizing the long-term nature of the plan, it is necessary to consider the facilities available to the families who are at present living in the area, and those who may be brought into the area with each stage of its redevelopment.

Within the study area there are ten or twelve local churches. Three fire stations, and several fraternal clubs serve a population that is not limited to the immediate area. The existing school is soon to be converted into the new headquarters building of the Hartford Police Department. Existing streets have underground water, gas, electricity, and sewer facilities. Objectionable odors are created by a large gas plant south of the area. Objectionable noises and odors are also created by a small foundry and, to a lesser degree, by a large woodworking plant. With the conversion of the existing school, no recreational facilities will remain within the area. The rate of repeaters among juvenile delinquents during a period of four years was two and two-tenths times that of the entire city. Arrests of all types were at the rate of ten times that of the city as a whole. General public assistance cases for a three year period were twice that of the city-wide rate, while the resident tuberculosis death rate was two and a half times that of the city-wide rate.

This is the condition of an area which supports twelve churches. Here is the challenge and opportunity for the church to recapture some of its dynamic influence in community life, for its integration with its community on the basis of serving where the need exists with emphasis on all facets of human life: religious, social, recreational, athletic, and educational. The Central Baptist Church is located in the center of this area.

SECTION III

Analysis

Analysis

A. The Christian Center

To cope with situations similar to those existing in the area described, church groups in other sections of the country have experimented with institutions called Christian Centers. These are more than the ordinary community centers which organize and direct recreational and civic activity. The Christian Center has been organized to help underprivileged people develop in areas where there is no recreational facility, no civic awareness, no community spirit or responsibility, where poverty, filth, sickness, disease and vice abound; to help recreate these areas as healthy, democratic sections of the civic whole. Working with people who have had little or no opportunity to "belong" to a community group, the church has an opportunity to become a dynamic institution, ministering to the people in any facet of life in which a need exists, on a plane they can understand and appreciate. The Christian Center is established to help resist and overcome the evils of slums and blighted areas, to inform and educate the people of these and all areas for community life and responsibility, to perform a service no civic agency can perform so effectively. The problem is to help people prepare themselves to cope with their own problems and become healthy, responsible, respectable citizens of the community. The Christian Center works toward the enhancement of every phase of human life, individual and social, by meeting the social, recreational and religious needs of the community.

Although sponsored by a particular church or group of churches, the center has no eligibility restrictions. People with a need, of any age, race, or creed, are welcomed. The Church, by offering opportunity, and

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setting examples through its consecrated Christian workers, opens its doors to the possibility of regained stature, influence, and leadership in the role of creating a better community, and thus a better world.

B. The Central Baptist Church

The Central Baptist Church is a large city church, located on Main Street in the central business district of Hartford. Originally two separate institutions, a merger was completed twenty-five years ago, and the consolidated church built on its present site. Today this church offers a diversified and appealing program, using its large physical facilities and staff to the full extent of their capabilities. The present plant includes adequate room for Sunday School classes for all ages, several large rooms for youth group meetings, a large sanctuary, dining and kitchen facilities, a gymnasium, and bowling alleys. These accommodations serve the present congregation admirably. However, the church has not appealed, with program or facilities, to its potential membership which lives in the area immediately surrounding the church. Most of the present membership comes from other sections of the city and surrounding towns. The ministers of the church feel that the church has failed to meet the need of those who live in the vicinity, and that the tremendous opportunity of extending its service in the true Christian manner to the underprivileged populace of the area has been neglected. To accomplish this task and accept this responsibility, they feel the need of a much larger physical plant.

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C. Needed Facilities

After several discussions and planning meetings, based on the anticipated needs as compared with existing programs in comparable cities, it was concluded that the following additional facilities would be needed to successfully carry out an expanded program to meet the community, religious, and recreational needs of the area:

1. Welfare Activities:

The immediate neighborhood is at present classified as that area most in need of redevelopment in the city of Hartford. Rebuilding and redevelopment of the area presents problems of new standards of living for the present inhabitants. Lacking the proper facilities for education to a new way of life as well as the funds and facilities for the practice of this philosophy, a major part of the problem remains unsolved after the slums are razed. These less fortunate citizens are unable to obtain for themselves the necessities of life. How then interest them in keeping their homes neat and orderly, their lawns trimmed, their fingernails clean, their hair combed? Here is the opportunity the church seeks, to minister to the needy, to put into practice the principles of the Christian religion.

Because of the vast need of these human beings, it is impossible for any single organization to supply all their wants. However, the Christian Center can be the spearhead of a movement in which other churches, individuals and organizations may join and cooperate. We, therefore, must look to basic needs to begin this work.

Investigation and experience of the church and its workers shows

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that those needs not satisfied by purely charitable organizations might begin to be reached and helped materially if the facilities of a small clinic were made available to the populace. The basic facilities of such a clinic would be the services of a physician and psychiatrist. The services would be available to expectant mothers, to those who need advice and help in bringing up their children, to the old and aged with illnesses peculiar to age, to the younger generations for annual check-ups and minor illnesses; psychiatric service might help stem the tide of growing delinquency, wanton destruction and wasted lives characteristic of this neighborhood, and re-direct energies into more useful activities, possibly available at the Center. These facilities of the clinic would also be used by a lawyer, making legal advice available to those who might otherwise fall victim to less scrupulous practitioners.

2. Educational Activities:

As a necessary adjunct to the services and advice of the welfare activities an attempt must be made to supply educational facilities for the redevelopment of the individual. Many cities in the United States and abroad have found it necessary to open nursery schools and child care centers as part of the public educational system. Because of the low standards of living prevalent in this area, and the demands of modern life which make it necessary for mothers to seek employment in order to feed and clothe their children, a nursery school is considered a necessary addition to the facilities mentioned above. To give the child a healthy and happy beginning is as worthy a cause as mending the adult who has not had the benefit of these services.

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As a complement to the public school system and to provide facilities for the practice of worthwhile activities, the following facilities are felt to be necessary:

- a. Woodworking Shop and Hobby Center
- b. Sewing Room
- c. Arts and Crafts Room

3. Recreational and Social Activities:

It is the additional purpose of the Center to provide a community gathering place, where people of common interests can assemble to rebuild and develop their minds and bodies. Activities must be available for all age groups, the very old as well as the young, to make life a healthy and happy experience and to establish the feeling of security and belonging which a community activity provides. To meet these needs, the following facilities are recommended:

- a. Lounge and Game room for relaxation, table games and informal group activity.
- b. A large meeting room, to serve for community gatherings.
- c. A Boy and Girl Scout room.
- d. A swimming pool, with locker and shower facilities.
- e. A small kitchen, to be used jointly for the community and the nursery school.

SECTION IV

Design

Design

A. Site Conditions and Relationship of Building Areas to Site

The site chosen by the ministry of the Central Baptist Church for the proposed Christian Center extends 272 feet from the present building in a northwesterly direction. This property is currently occupied by three condemned apartment buildings. Two more buildings of the same type, which occupied another portion of the plot have recently been torn down and the land cleared. Because of the high value of business district real estate, it is desirable to develop and use this property to its highest potential. The plot plan (see page 1 of Section V) exposes the difficulties of orientation and slope involved in such development. The Church desires playground area and outside recreation space as much as it wants enclosed building area because of the scarcity of such facilities in the immediate area. Because of the contour of the site, excavation seems a necessity in order to reclaim the land for use. At present a twelve foot retaining wall is built from the church to a point where the land slopes gradually to a low point of elevation thirty four feet. Behind this wall, immediately adjoining the present Church, is an oil receptacle and former coal bin sunk below the ground. This area is now used as a parking area for the Church staff who desire that this convenience be retained if possible. Because of the difficulty involved in moving this utility, and the desirability of this parking area, the writer decided against relocating this unit. The aim of the final decision placing the proposed building on the plot is to disturb the existing desirable conditions as little as possible, and to utilize the present obstacles to best advantage. The twelve foot drop of the retaining wall immediately suggests a two level building. This suggestion

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is reinforced when one realizes that the proposed building would, as a one level scheme, monopolize most of the site. The gradual slope to the northwest also suggests the possibility of a split level scheme in this direction.

The desirability of southern exposure on the playgrounds and in the nursery school especially, suggested terracing the site to the south of the building to admit sunlight. In the finished design these terraces are developed as play areas for various age groups; with the nursery school on the higher level opening onto the most level part of the site. The terraces have opened a desirable and beneficial lightwell for such areas as the swimming pool and woodworking shop. The writer feels this use of the site and the necessary excavation entailed, is justified by the benefits received by those using the building.

B. Space Requirements, Organization and Relationship of Recommended Facilities

1. Welfare Activity Areas

a. The Clinic

The ministers of the Central Baptist Church have uncovered a dire need for medical and psychiatric advice and care among the inhabitants of the neighborhood. Financial difficulties seem to demand outside help. This function is usually performed by other agencies. However, inadequate physical accommodations make such a program impossible. By supplying the space, and cooperation with these agencies, the Church clinic might be able to alleviate this physical need. The agencies and Church feel that two examination rooms, to be used alternately by a doctor and

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psychiatrist, a small waiting room, rest room and toilet facilities will sufficiently meet the needs of the proposed program. Legal advice will also be available from a lawyer who will use these facilities at times when the clinic is not in use, or one of the offices of the administrative area. Because of the nature of this element of the Center, it is located on the upper level with the nursery school and administrative unit, with access from a street on that level. These facilities have been provided with adequate light and ventilation. Entrance to this element is through the administrative area which provides an adequate control.

2. Educational Activity Areas

a. The Nursery School

The population of some 1200 families with 360 children over the age of one and under the age of four would indicate the need for neighborhood nursery schools in this area, since most of the married women find it necessary to find employment. The need would indicate, at the average of thirty square feet per child, a minimum desirable area of 900 square feet for indoor activities and training.¹ Educators have found it advisable to separate this age group from the older children, in play as well as school, for psychological and physical reasons. Because of this attitude, a separate outdoor play area of approximately one hundred square feet per child is recommended. Both the rooms and play-yard require a warm, cheerful exposure, and for this reason have been located on the upper level,

¹Pg. 25, Design of Nursery and Elementary Schools, Wright & Gardner.

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accessible to a fairly level area, with southern exposure.

b. Woodworking Shop

This element is located in the basement. Because some excavation was necessary, enough earth will be removed to provide this area and the adjacent swimming pool with good light, air and an outdoor area for summer activities. Additional ceiling height is required in both areas. The shop is to accommodate machinery, benches, vises and storage space for twelve people. One hundred forty square feet per person is an acceptable average for this type of accommodation.¹

c. Sewing Room

A relatively medium noisy area, this room is located over the woodworking shop, acting as a buffer between the scout room and the more quiet social areas of the game and art rooms. Light is important in this area, and a relatively constant supply is received through the north windows. Approximately thirty to forty square feet per person is required for this activity to accommodate machines and cutting tables.² The capacity use is estimated to be twelve persons at one time.

d. Arts and Crafts Room

This facility is located at the mezzanine level. Because of the comparative quiet of this activity, the writer thought it not undesirable to locate it near the lounge and game room where accessibility is no problem and adequate light is had through the window wall. This area is

¹Pg. 97, Architectural Record, 8/39

²Pg. 94, Architectural Record, 8/39

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to be used for such activities as weaving, painting, sculpture, and design, accomodating as many as twenty five persons at one time. All research materials indicate that an area of twenty to thirty square feet per person should be adequate for these activities.¹ The close connection between this room and the lounge allows the connecting wall to become an exhibition space for work done in these classes.

3. Recreational and Social Activity Areas

a. Lounge and Game Room

To allow sufficient height in the basement accomodations, part of the main floor is elevated to a mezzanine level, four feet above entrance grade. This change in level, while providing interest, variety and additional height below, does not make access to this area difficult. This is particularly important because a portion of the Center program is designed to attract elderly people who might find a steep or long climb uninviting. This level includes most of the medium noise intensity activities. The walls of the lounge and game room open out to the upper part of the lobby to gain light, air and a feeling of spaciousness. This area will be used for card and table games, lounging, and other leisure activities. Because of its relation to the kitchen facilities, it will also be used as a refreshment area for receptions and similar gatherings.

¹Pg. 253, Planning Elementary School Buildings, Engelhardt, Engelhardt and Leggett.

Design

b. A Meeting Room

The main public area, the meeting room, is located at street level for easy accessibility, and will accommodate 250 people seated at community gatherings, recreation, movies and small plays. The entrance lobby and vestibule are immediately adjacent. This room is supplied with a simple stage, as required by the program, a projection booth for movies and slides, and storage space for chairs and other possible equipment. Because of the multi-purpose of the space, permanent seating is not considered appropriate. An area of approximately 2800 square feet is adequate seating area.¹ The ceiling is acoustically treated to produce good sound reproduction and eliminate echo effect. An adequate lobby and vestibule space are provided to accommodate community gatherings. A corridor providing indoor access to the facilities in the existing building at this level, also provides another means of egress from the meeting room. An office located at the entrance provides good control over the lower two floors.

c. A Boy and Girl Scout Room

To be used alternately by the two groups, this room is required to accommodate forty scouts with running room. This area is well lighted and has direct access to the outside areas to be used for summer activities and programs. A storage area is immediately accessible to serve this purpose.

¹Pg. 256, Planning Elementary School Buildings, Engelhardt, Engelhardt and Leggett.

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d. A Swimming Pool

Because of its potential noise, the pool is located at the basement level along with shower and locker facilities and the woodworking shop. The high ceiling required in the pool is used to advantage in the shower and locker areas to accommodate ducts for mechanical forced air ventilation. These areas have been designed to accommodate fifty girls and fifty boys. A regulation pool, thirty five feet by seventy five feet, has been supplied in anticipation of possible competitive swimming events with comparable neighborhood teams.

e. Kitchen

Only a small kitchen is required by the program. Located near the scout room, lounge and game room, meeting room, and connected by dumbwaiter to the nursery school, this facility makes the preparation and delivery of food to all areas quite simple. Because of the relative unimportance of this room in number of hours used by number of people, the writer thought it not inconsistent to relegate this room to an interior position with mechanical ventilation and light.

4. The Administrative Area

The Church has asked for offices for the Directors of the Center activities, and space for two general workers and two secretaries. An adequate Board and Committee room is also required. These facilities are provided at the upper level. This arrangement allows adequate control at the alternate entrance to the Center, and allows a degree of quiet, isolation, ventilation and light not to be had in closer connection with

Design

other elements of the Center. Since the nursery school and administrative unit are not usually in use at night, these elements are grouped together with the clinic so that its usual evening activities will not conflict. This entire unit may be isolated from the more active areas if this is desired.

C. Conclusion

This thesis has not been an attempt to express religion in architectural style, but an attempt to produce a plan which will serve religion as a tool. It is hoped the various elements of the building are arranged and organized in a useful and pleasing manner; useful to those who need help and pleasing to them in their use of the facilities. It is hoped the facilities suggested by this thesis will serve to strengthen the work of the Church and improve the living habits and conditions of those served. The program, and consequently the building, is geared to appeal to those people living in the vicinity of the central business district of Hartford who have little opportunity and few facilities to break the bonds of circumstance and overcome the barriers of tradition. The writer feels the physical facilities to accomplish this task are presented in this thesis. However, only with understanding and cooperative help in the actual process of programming is such a task determined successful.

SECTION V

Presentation Illustrations

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT - HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT



- PROJECT AREA - CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH
- ▨ RESIDENTIAL AREA
- ▧ PUBLIC AREA
- COMMERCIAL AREA

SCALE IN FEET
0 500 1000 1500

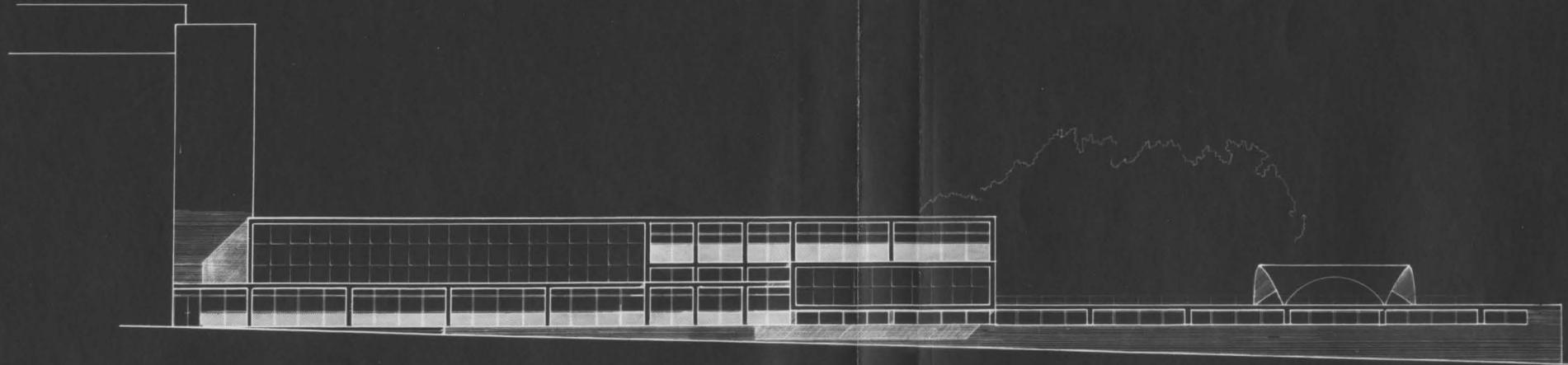
PRESENT PLOT CONDITIONS



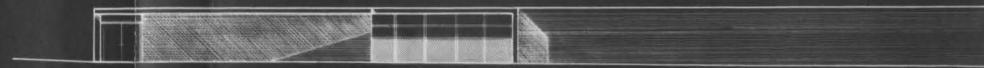
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CONTOURS AT ONE FOOT INTERVALS

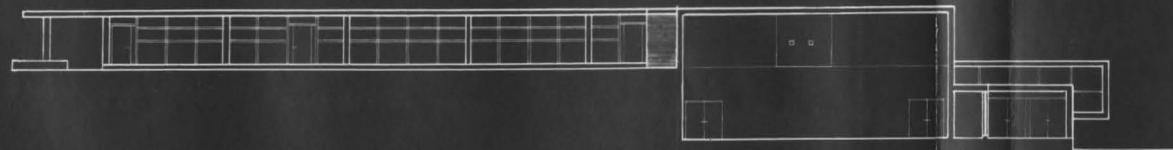
ELEVATIONS



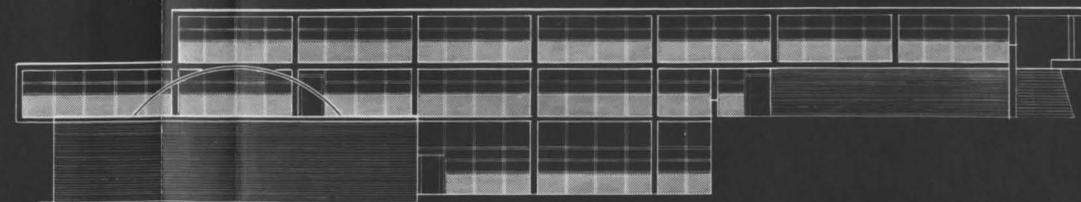
NORTHEAST ELEVATION



SOUTHWEST ELEVATION



SOUTHEAST ELEVATION



NORTHWEST ELEVATION

SCALE IN FEET
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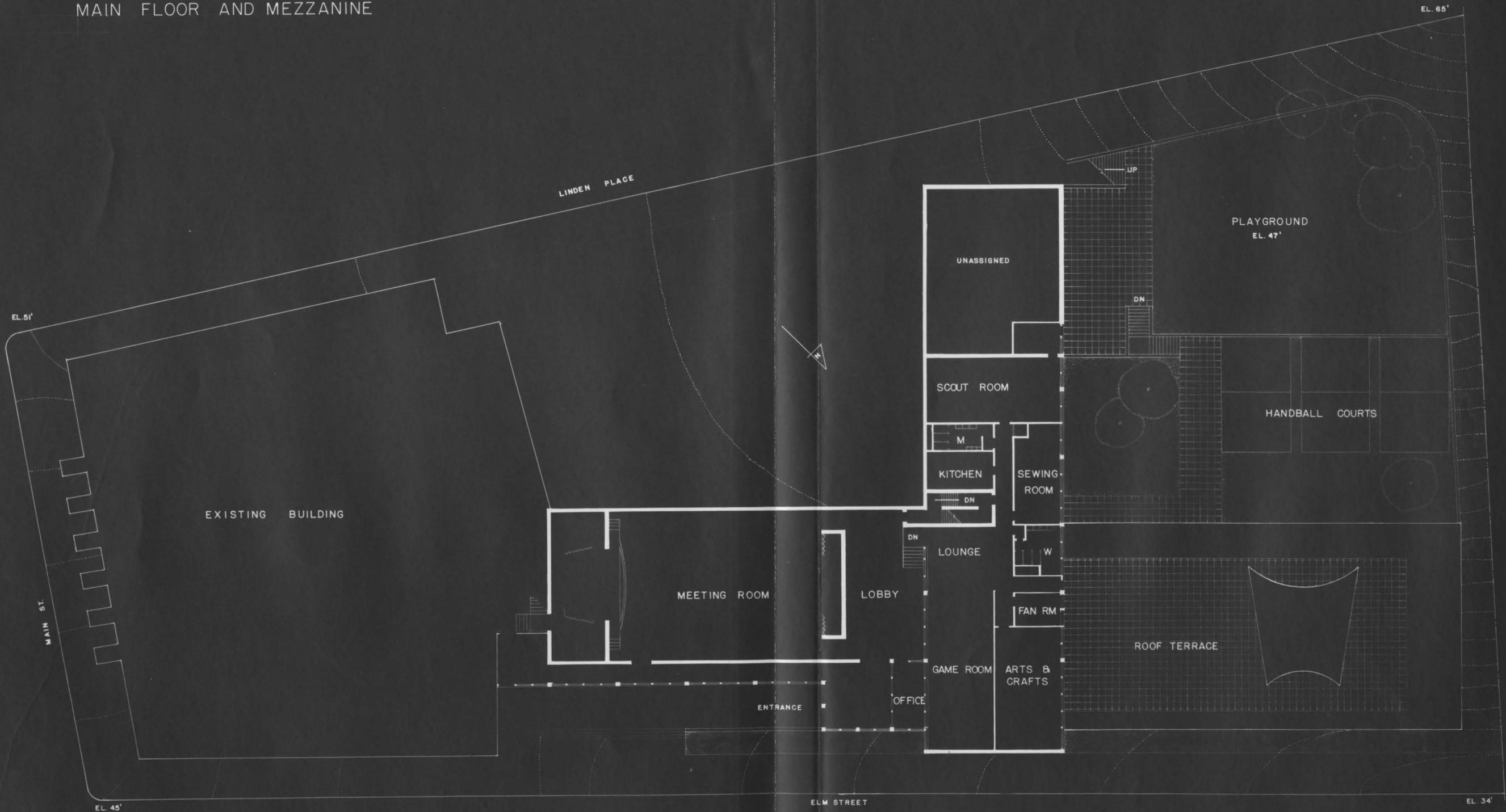
FIRST FLOOR PLAN
LINDEN PLACE ENTRANCE



SCALE IN FEET
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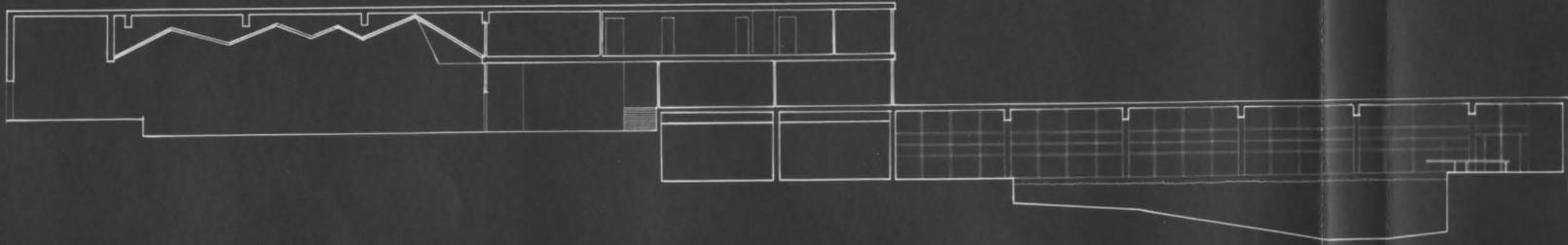
MAIN FLOOR AND MEZZANINE

EL. 65'

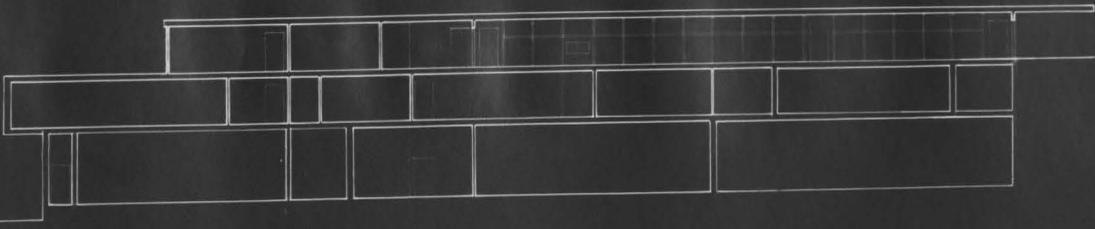


SCALE IN FEET
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BASEMENT PLAN AND SECTIONS

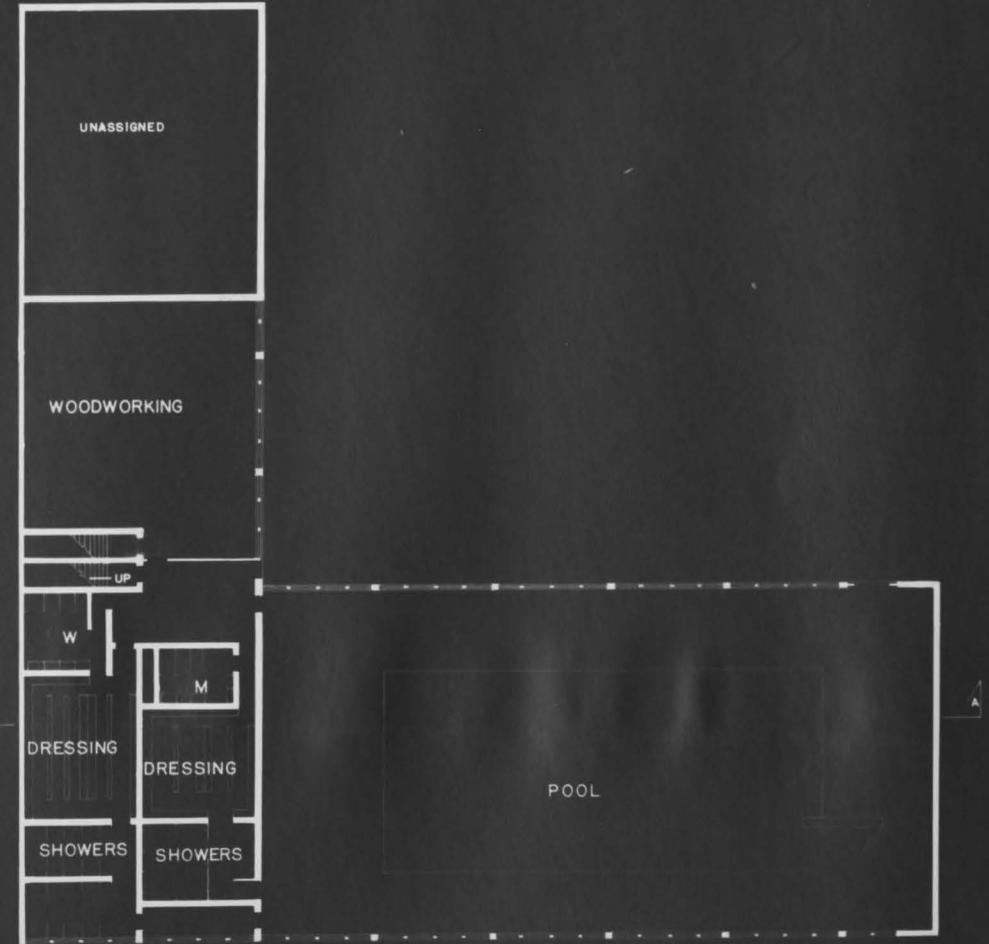


SECTION A-A

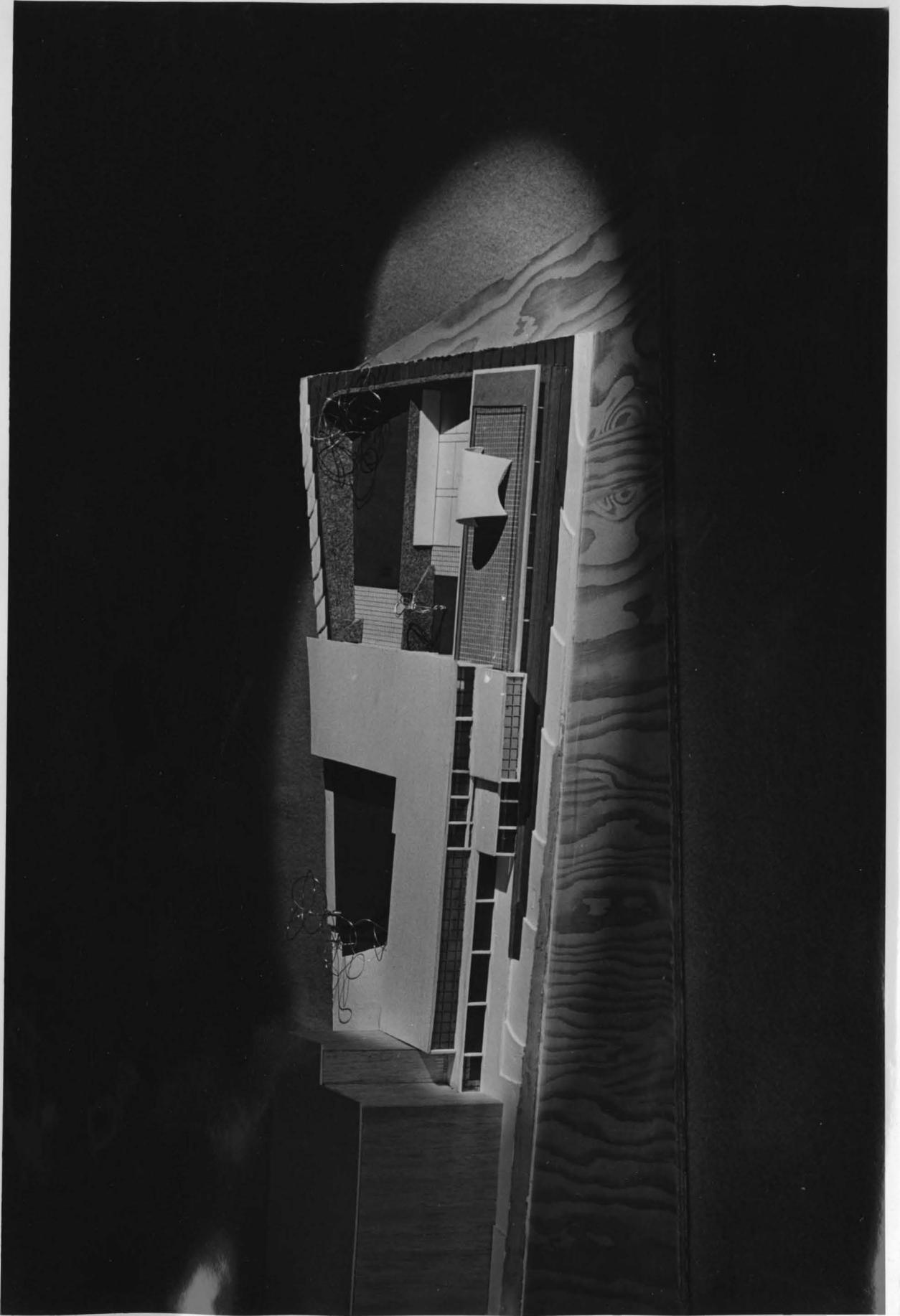


SECTION B-B

SCALE IN FEET
0 5 10 15 20



NORTHEAST VIEW



NORTH VIEW



SOUTHWEST VIEW



SOUTH VIEW



SECTION VI

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SECTION VII

Vita

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