The background features a soft watercolor wash in shades of light green and pale blue. A dotted line in a muted orange or terracotta color starts at the top center, curves down and to the right, then turns sharply down and to the left, ending near the bottom right corner. The overall aesthetic is gentle and artistic.

# Healing Through Movement

A Support Center for Bereaved Parents

# Healing Through Movement

A Support Center for Bereaved Parents

**Guadalupe Tassara**

Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Virginia Polytechnic Institute  
and State University in partial fulfillment to the Degree of

Master of Architecture  
in Architecture

Marcia Feuerstein  
Paul Emmons  
Susan Piedmont - Palladino

February 17, 2014  
Alexandria, Virginia

Path, Edge, Threshold, Balance, Movement, Healing, Support Center, Bereaved Parents

Guadalupe Tassara ©



“A bridge of silver wings  
stretches from the dead ashes  
of an unforgiving nightmare to the  
jeweled vision of a life started anew”

Aberjhani, *The River of Winged Dreams*



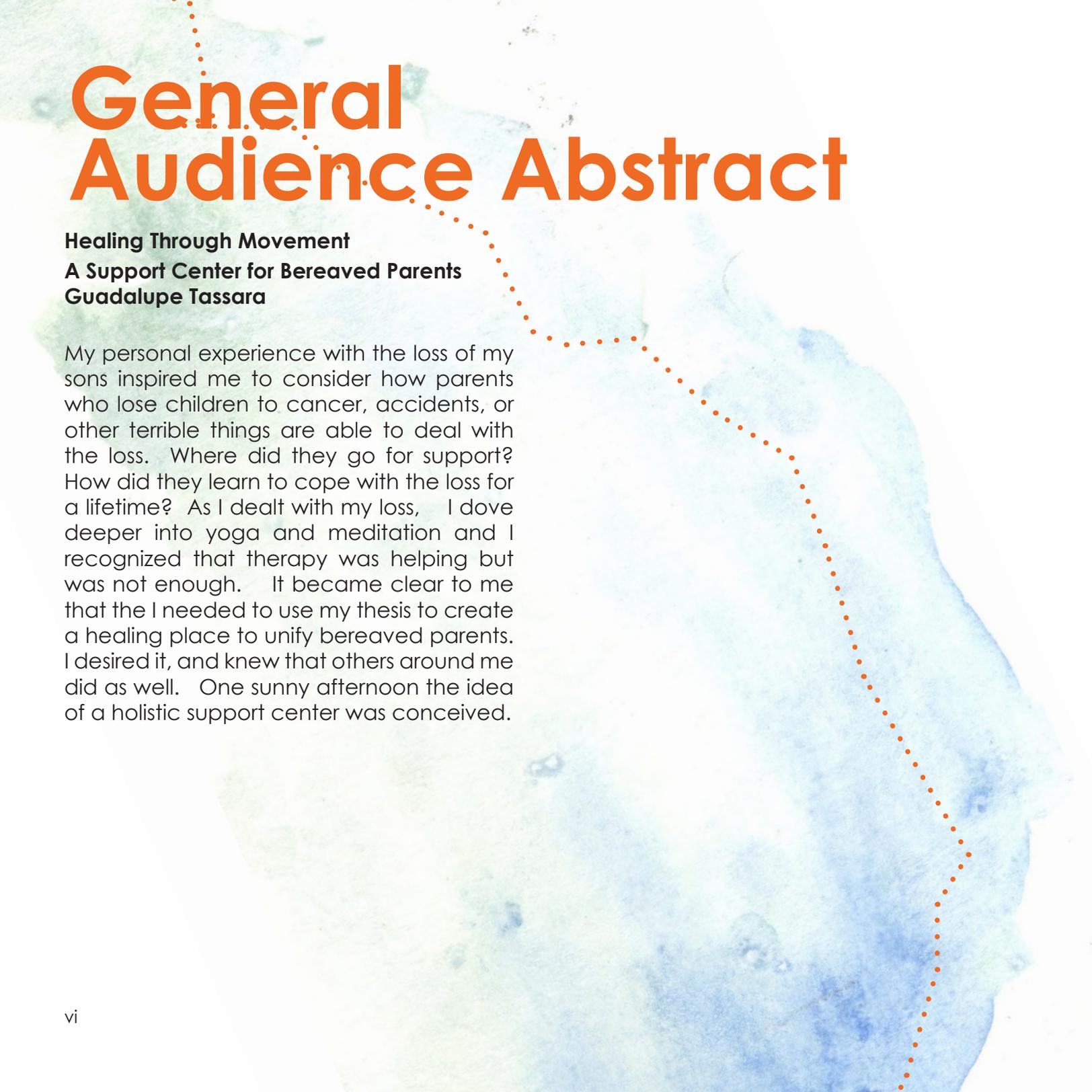
The background features a soft-focus photograph of a beach with gentle waves lapping onto the shore. A decorative graphic of small orange dots forms a curved path that starts from the bottom left and extends towards the top right, passing behind the text.

Part I

# Abstract

**Healing Through Movement**  
**A Support Center for Bereaved Parents**  
**Guadalupe Tassara**

My personal experience with the loss of my sons -inspired me to consider how parents who lose children to cancer, accidents, or other terrible things are able to deal with the loss. Where did they go for support? How did they learn to cope with the loss for a lifetime? As I dealt with my loss, I went to therapy and opted for a prescription free treatment. I dove deeper into yoga and meditation and I recognized that therapy was helping but was not enough. The only thing that truly made me feel better was by physically moving my body. I felt some satisfaction from recognizing this, yet I felt alone on my journey. Time passed and one afternoon during my weekly practice of yoga, I had a pivotal Matsyasana (fish pose) with the crown of my head submerged in the shoreline of St. Augustine Beach. It became clear to me that I needed to use my thesis to create a healing place to unify bereaved parents. I desired it, and knew that others around me did as well. That sunny afternoon the idea of a holistic support center was conceived.

The background of the page is a soft watercolor wash in shades of light blue and green. A decorative dotted line in a vibrant orange color starts at the top left, curves around the title, and then descends vertically on the right side of the page.

# General Audience Abstract

## Healing Through Movement

### A Support Center for Bereaved Parents Guadalupe Tassara

My personal experience with the loss of my sons inspired me to consider how parents who lose children to cancer, accidents, or other terrible things are able to deal with the loss. Where did they go for support? How did they learn to cope with the loss for a lifetime? As I dealt with my loss, I dove deeper into yoga and meditation and I recognized that therapy was helping but was not enough. It became clear to me that the I needed to use my thesis to create a healing place to unify bereaved parents. I desired it, and knew that others around me did as well. One sunny afternoon the idea of a holistic support center was conceived.

# Table of Contents

## **Part I**

Abstract .....	vii
General Audience Abstract.....	viii
Table of Contents .....	ix
Special Note .....	x
Folding Diagram .....	xi
Acknowledgements .....	xii
Bibliography .....	xiv
Image Credits.....	xv

## **Part II**

Conceptual Ideas .....	1
------------------------	---

## **Part III - a & b**

Site Analysis .....	10
---------------------	----

## **Part IV - a & b**

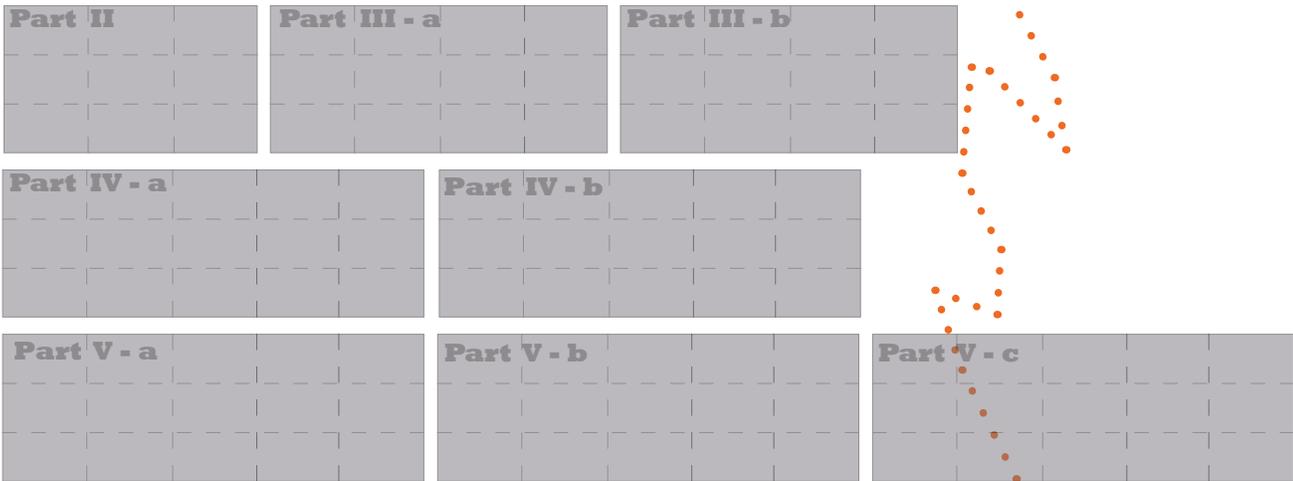
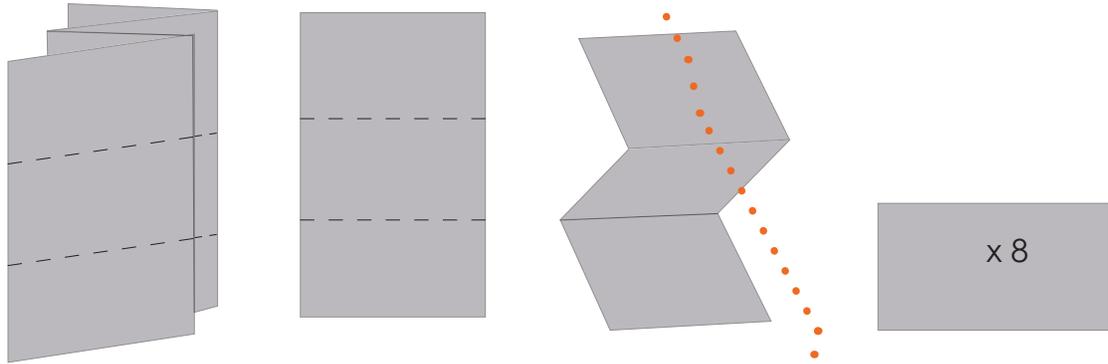
Exploration of Movement & Building Anatomy .....	23
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## **Part V - a, b, c**

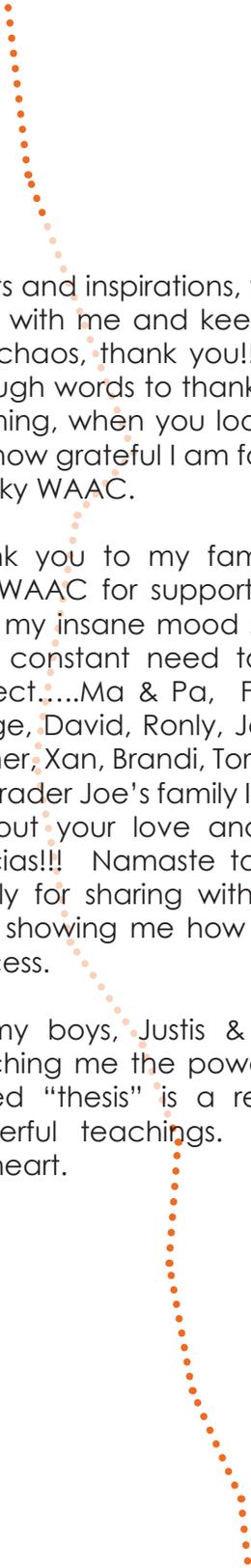
Support Center .....	53
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# Folding & Display Diagram



# Acknowledgements



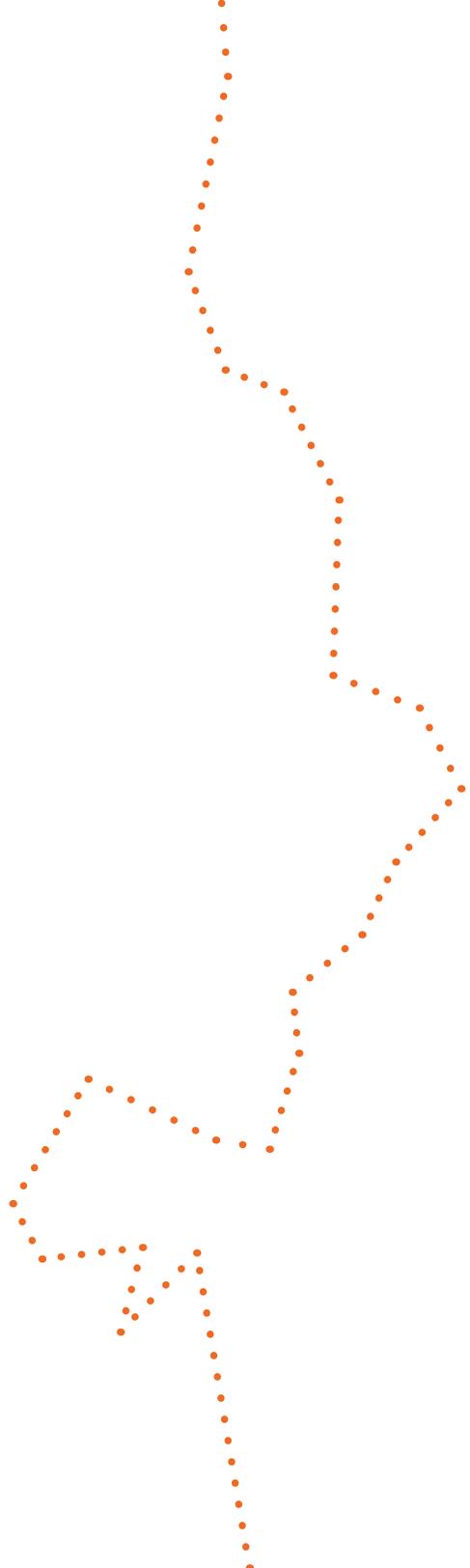
The WAAC transformed me, it healed me, it was the place where I escaped from my realities and dove into the ideas in my head about what architecture could and should be for people. For this opportunity, I am eternally grateful. I want to express my deepest appreciation to the WAAC, specifically to my committee for having the grace, patience, and knowledge to help guide me on my path. Marcia, your openness and ability to always give me inspiration even when I was going in endless circles. Paul, your wealth of knowledge and sensitivity on the subject was something I always looked forward to. Susan, thank you for always pushing and demanding. At times, I asked myself; "why did I add this woman?" but I knew that without your challenging questions my thesis would have never resulted the way it did. Jaan, although we took a break from our conversations, in the end it was as if you had lived in my building and knew where the weakness was, solving them at a moment's glance, you are truly amazing. Many thanks to all of you.

Thank you to my WAAC family and friends, Caro, Lola, Nico, Heba, Alanna, Allie, John, Mili, Navid, Ani, Azar for giving a place to sleep, shower, putting me back together, for sharing with me a plethora of ideas, for late night

chats and inspirations, for sharing your precious time with me and keeping me centered in all the chaos, thank you!!! Antonio, there aren't enough words to thank you. I hope that every morning, when you look in my eyes, you know just how grateful I am for having met you at the wacky WAAC.

Thank you to my family and friends outside the WAAC for supporting me and putting up with my insane mood swings, crazy schedules, and constant need to be talking about this project.....Ma & Pa, Facundo, Andy, Kendra, Bridge, David, Ronly, Jen, Jackie, Oscar, John, Archer, Xan, Brandi, Torry, Pete, Alicea, Alli, and my Trader Joe's family I could not have survived without your love and support. Muchisimas gracias!!! Namaste to my spiritual and yoga family for sharing with me invaluable asanas and showing me how to trust my body in the process.

To my boys, Justis & Mateo, thank you for teaching me the power of love. This chapter called "thesis" is a result of your short and powerful teachings. You both live forever in my heart.



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# Image Credits



image 14, page 7 - photograph, Tim Bermingham

image 16, page 7 - photograph, Tim Bermingham

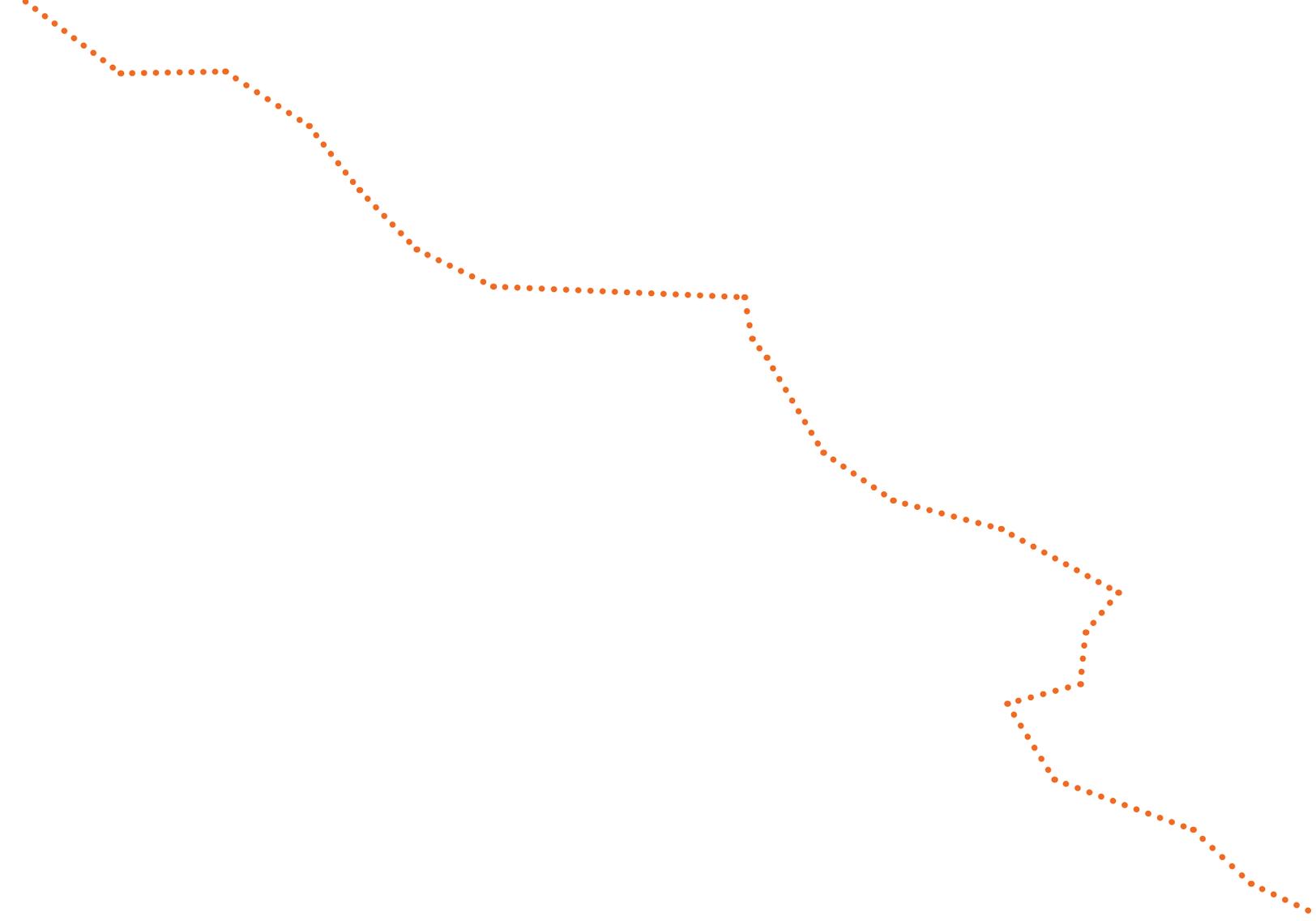
image 25, page 11 & 12 - Exploring the Mt. Vernon Trail, Experience your America, National Park Service <https://www.nps.gov/gwmp/planyourvisit/upload/Mt-Vernon-Trail-map.pdf>

image 31, page 17 - google maps underlay, <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Jones+Point+Park/@38.7959635,-77.0351242,15z/>

image 62, page 35 - Woodrow Wilson Bridge Project. Jones Point Park, Alternative 4A. National Park Service. Potomac Crossins Consultants. February 22, 2007

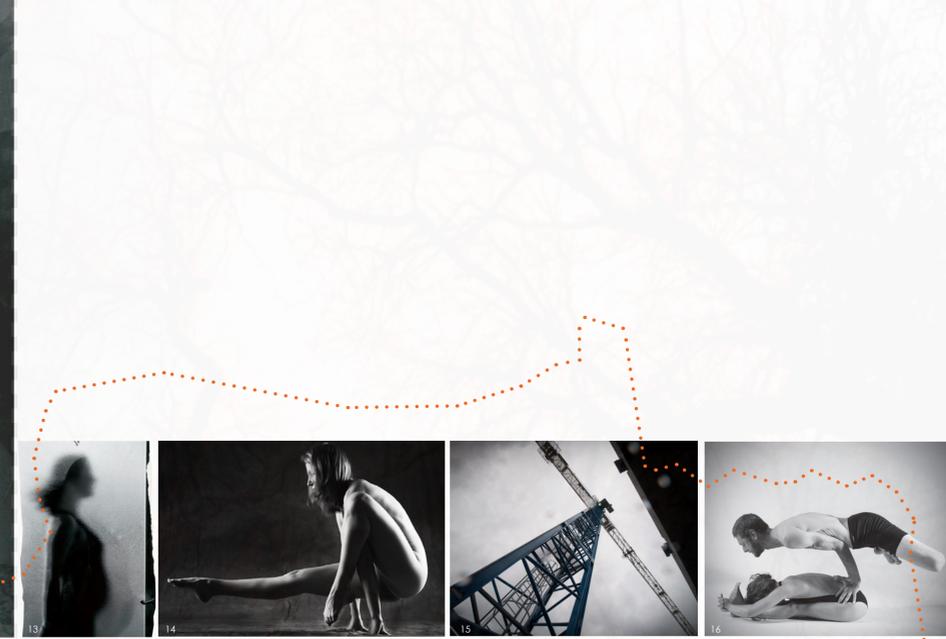
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## Part II Conceptual Ideas



### Path

### Edge / Threshold

### Balance & Movement

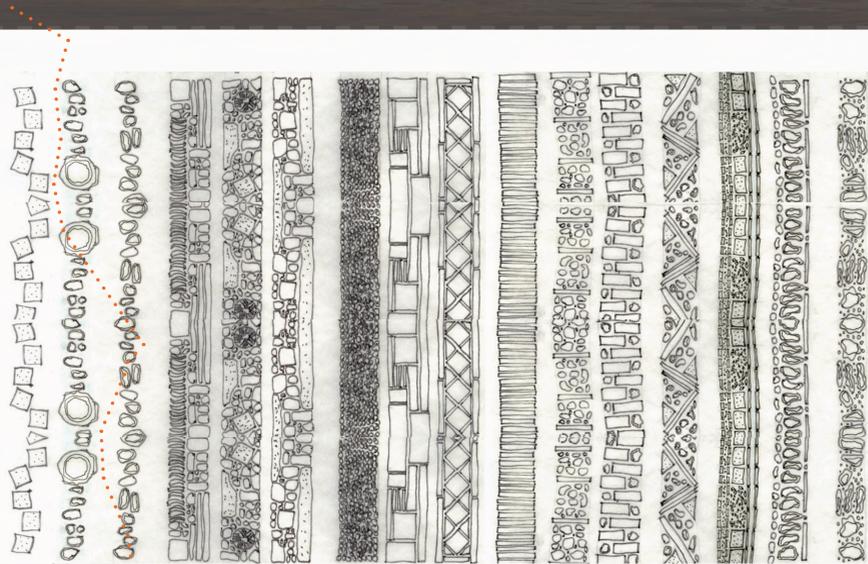


image 1, page 6 - collage of Eka Hasta Bhujasana & a building crane - exploring similarities of the leg & crane in cantilever, both require great strength at the core.

image 2, page 7 - sketch of different material combinations for a path

image 8, page 9, above - View of the parking lot looking west under the Woodrow Wilson Bridge, "the threshold"

image 9, page 10 - Study sections of edge conditions to illustrate various relationships between people, building edge, earth's edge, water's edge, nature's edge, etc. all at various heights and distances

image 13-16, page 12 above - from left to right, a still body in movement & growth - Eka Hasta Bhujasana, a crane, and partner yoga.

image 17, page 14 - various yoga positions with an emphasis on "utthita hasta padangusthasana" or extended hand-toe pose because of asymmetrical balancing position.

As my exploration began, it became clear that I needed to define a set of rules to follow and break as necessary. I came up with three main conceptual ideas: path, edge / threshold and balance & movement. I used these three main concepts to define and organize my building throughout the process.

I started by asking, "can the path's material influence your train of thought?" I quickly realized it can. Through the study of traditional Japanese Gardens and their use of many different material combinations with all types of shapes, sizes and textures (image 2), I learned how to better understand the user's journey on a path and how the journey is affected by the material. For example, you must consider your next step if you are walking on a cobble stone surface (image 4). Conversely, little thought is necessary while walking on an even natural trail (image 5).

It was therefore important to consider the physical material of the path but equally important to ponder the emotional and spiritual idea of a path. I reflected on how the materiality could relate to the spiritual idea of path in regards to the human journey. Sometimes our chosen path and our destined path do not coincide and it is difficult to get back on track. Therefore, it was important that the paths, walkways, trails, etc. have different widths and materials to allow variable levels of connection to the body, spirit and to others, ranging anywhere from easy contemplation to refined physical focus (images 6 & 7). Beyond the physical path and on a larger scale, the ability to connect to a larger system of trails for extended walks or vigorous exercise was also important.

Upon my first visit to the site at Jones Point Park located in Alexandria, Virginia, the space under the Woodrow Wilson Bridge spoke to me. Although it is now mostly a parking lot, it somehow produces a euphoric and peaceful feeling. I equated it to a result of the echo from the cars above sounding like ocean waves, the view of the Potomac in the distance, and even possibly the people moving around the trail. For whatever reason, this simple parking lot transforms to a serene place between two worlds. This became the threshold and gateway into my building (image 9). I considered that this euphoric feeling was one that would be welcomed by bereaved parents when taking their first steps towards life as a childless parent.

The bridge became a representation of the emotional threshold these parents must

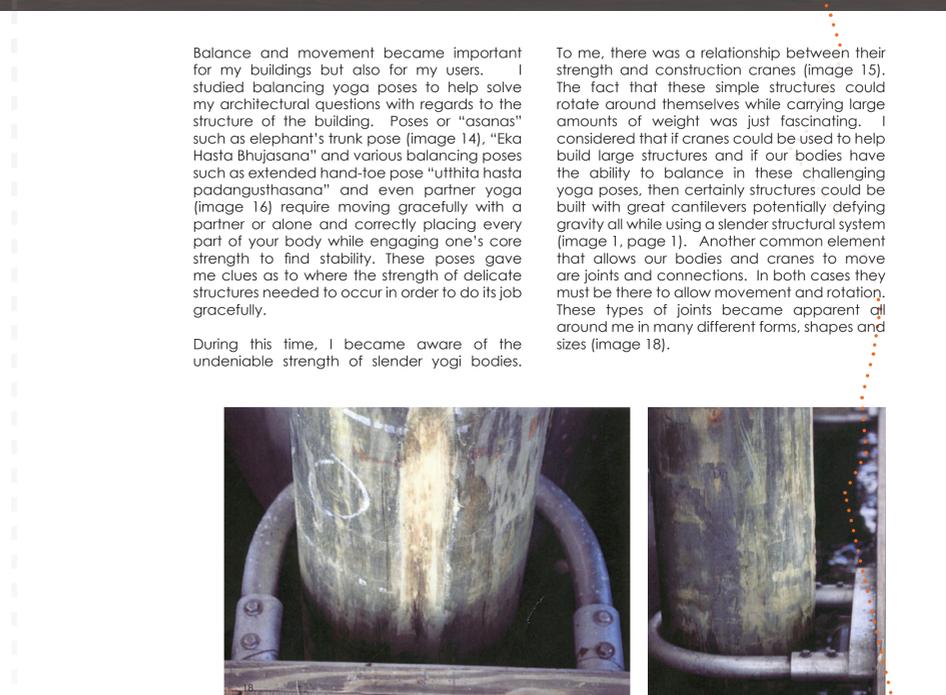
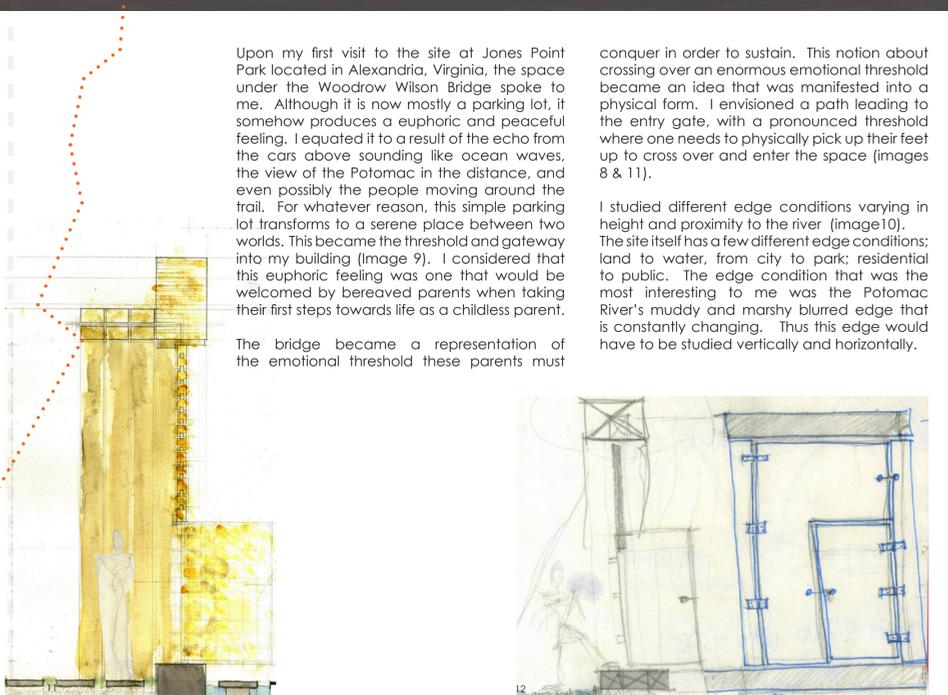
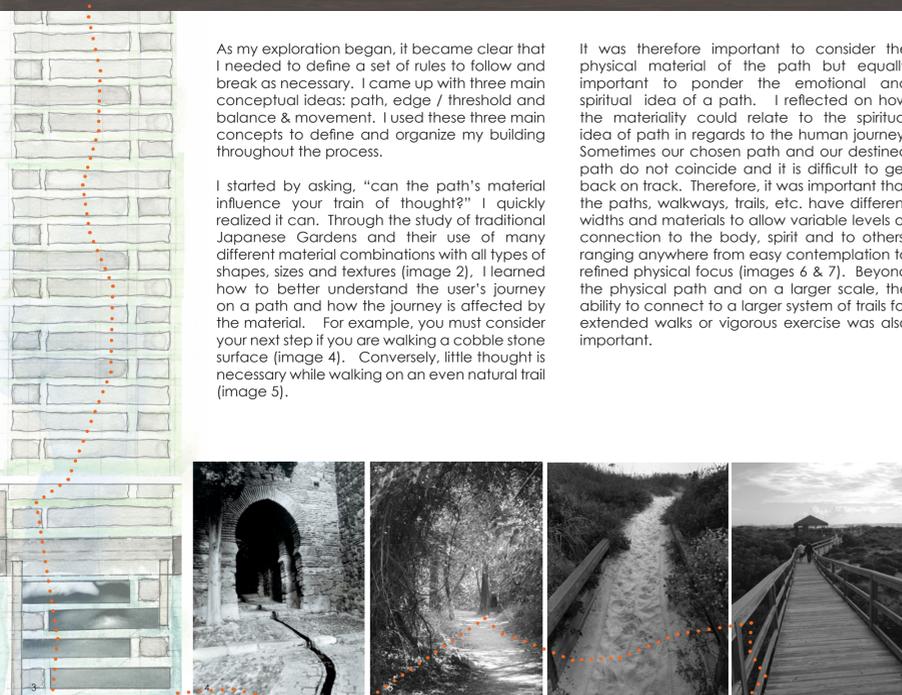
conquer in order to sustain. This notion about crossing over an enormous emotional threshold became an idea that was manifested into a physical form. I envisioned a path leading to the entry gate, with a pronounced threshold where one needs to physically pick up their feet up to cross over and enter the space (images 8 & 11).

I studied different edge conditions varying in height and proximity to the river (image 10). The site itself has a few different edge conditions: land to water, from city to park; residential to public. The edge condition that was the most interesting to me was the Potomac River's muddy and marshy blurred edge that is constantly changing. Thus this edge would have to be studied vertically and horizontally.

Balance and movement became important for my buildings but also for my users. I studied balancing yoga poses to help solve my architectural questions with regards to the structure of the building. Poses or "asanas" such as elephant's trunk pose (image 14), "Eka Hasta Bhujasana" and various balancing poses such as extended hand-toe pose "utthita hasta padangusthasana" and even partner yoga (image 16) require moving gracefully with a partner or alone and correctly placing every part of your body while engaging one's core strength to find stability. These poses gave me clues as to where the strength of delicate structures needed to occur in order to do its job gracefully.

During this time, I became aware of the undeniable strength of slender yogi bodies.

To me, there was a relationship between their strength and construction cranes (image 15). The fact that these simple structures could rotate around themselves while carrying large amounts of weight was just fascinating. I considered that if cranes could be used to help build large structures and if our bodies have the ability to balance in these challenging yoga poses, then certainly structures could be built with great cantilevers potentially defying gravity all while using a slender structural system (image 1, page 1). Another common element that allows our bodies and cranes to move are joints and connections. In both cases they must be there to allow movement and rotation. These types of joints became apparent all around me in many different forms, shapes and sizes (image 18).



images 3-7 - plan view sketch of a path & threshold with stone, grass & water combination & photos of paths

images 11 - section of gate with a threshold

image 12 - sketch section of a gate with a threshold and elevation of a gate

image 18 - connections at floating dock which allow for movement of the dock.



# Part III - Site Analysis

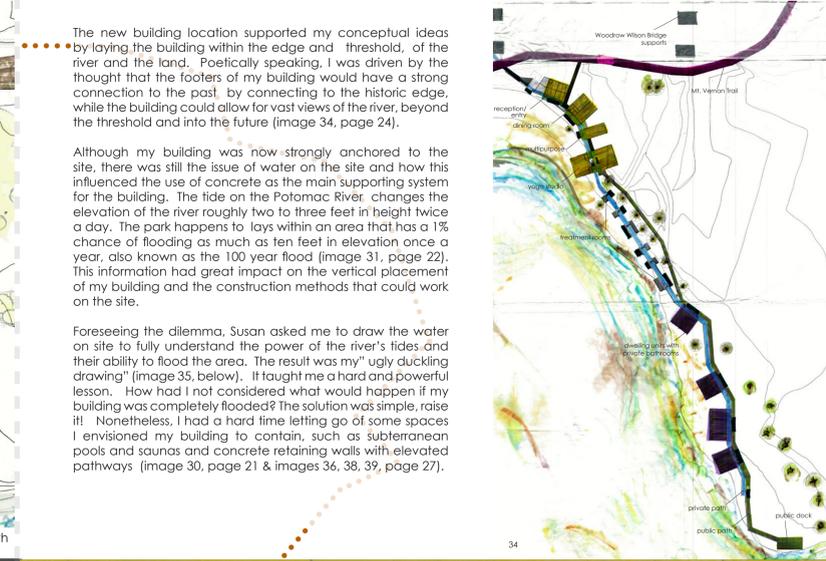
Image 19, pg. 15 - collage layering historic map, 100 year flood, current conditions, historic creeks & one of DC's cornerstones p.10



Image 26 - Multimedia collage of a water feature in Theodore Roosevelt Island. Exploring the idea of copper element weaving itself on the trail creating moments of rest. This particular feature is a wall of memories. p.13



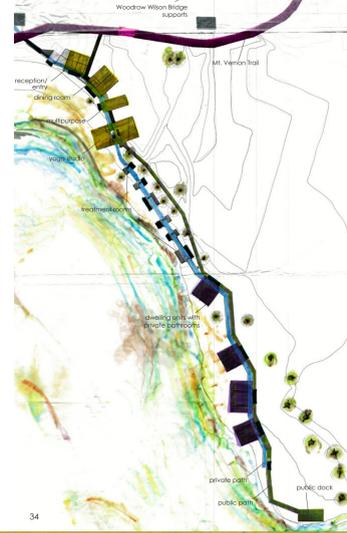
Image 30 - Early study for a site plan - consisting of three buildings (Multipurpose, Yoga Studio & Dwelling) located in the middle of the marshland. p.16



The new building location supported my conceptual ideas by laying the building within the edge and threshold of the river and the land. Poetically speaking, I was driven by the thought that the footers of my building would have a strong connection to the past by connecting to the historic edge, while the building could allow for vast views of the river, beyond the threshold and into the future (image 34, page 24).

Although my building was now strongly anchored to the site, there was still the issue of water on the site and how this influenced the use of concrete as the main supporting system for the building. The tide on the Potomac River changes the elevation of the river roughly two to three feet in height twice a day. The park happens to lay within an area that has a 1% chance of flooding as much as ten feet in elevation once a year, also known as the 100 year flood (image 31, page 22). This information had great impact on the vertical placement of my building and the construction methods that could work on the site.

Foreseeing the dilemma, Susan asked me to draw the water on site to fully understand the power of the river's tides and their ability to flood the area. The result was my "ugly ducking drawing" (image 35, below). It taught me a hard and powerful lesson. How had I not considered what would happen if my building was completely flooded? The solution was simple, raise it! Nonetheless, I had a hard time letting go of some spaces I envisioned my building to contain, such as subterranean pools and saunas and concrete retaining walls with elevated pathways (image 30, page 21 & images 36, 38, 39, page 27).



Once Jones Point Park in Old Town Alexandria was selected as my site, it was important to analyze what I saw as key elements about the place. First, I wanted to understand the connection of the Mount Vernon Trail to other regional trails (image 25, below). Secondly, I researched the park's history (image 19). Lastly, I studied the water table of the park, since the area frequently floods it was very important to understand the park's propensity for flooding (image 19 & 26).

The Mount Vernon trail cuts across the park and spans 18 miles along the Potomac River from Theodore Roosevelt Island to the Mount Vernon estate. It connects to the Custis, Potomac Heritage, Rock Creek, and Four Mile Run trails which extend for miles all over Virginia. It was important that my building somehow connected to the trails without disturbing them, giving my visitors the option to go on a leisurely walk or set out for a day's hike (image 25).

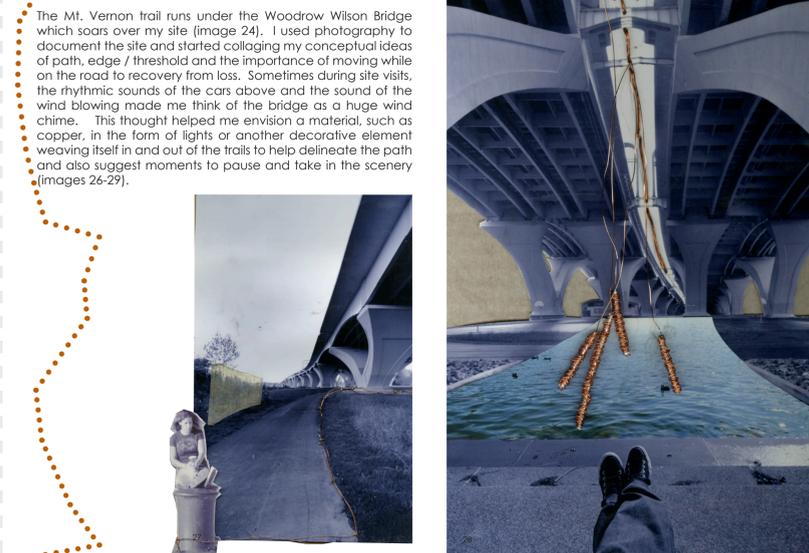
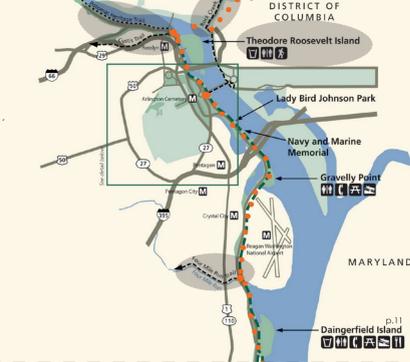


Image 27 - Multimedia collage of Mt. Vernon trail, looking east towards Maryland with copper lighting, a decorative wall and a bench. p.14

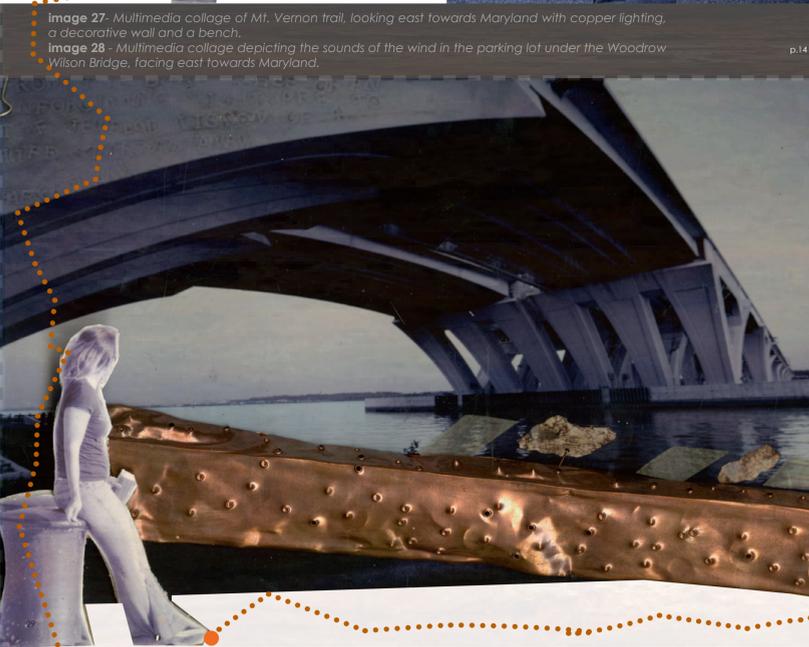


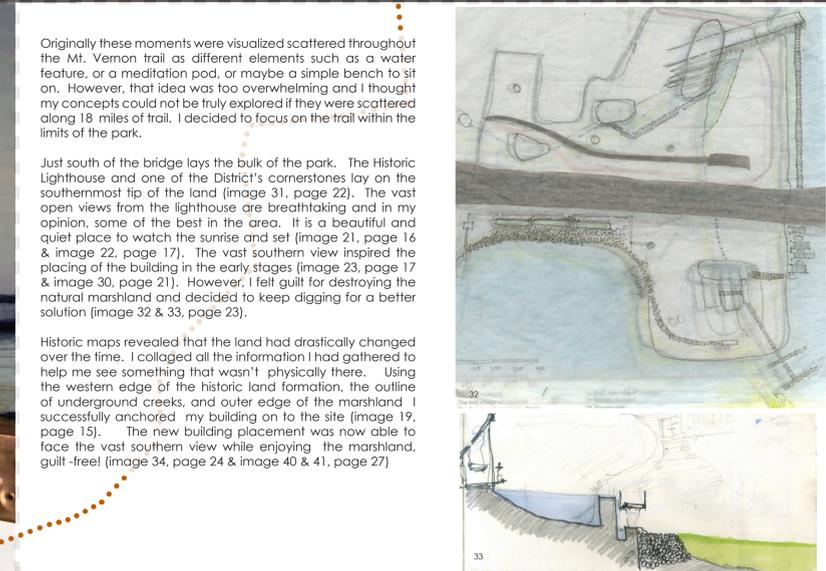
Image 29 - Multimedia collage of floating individual docks with a large bench, facing towards Maryland and DC. p.15



Image 31 - area plan & 100 year flood zone. Zone AE - Base flood elevations determined. Special flood hazard areas subject to inundation by the 1% annual chance, (1% annual chance flood = 100-year flood). p.17



Image 20, pg. 16 - looking south from Lighthouse at Jones Point Park. Image 21 - storage shed looking south at Jones Point. Image 22, pg. 17 - looking west at sunset from Lighthouse. Image 23, looking south from north side of marsh. Image 24, pg. 17 - looking east towards Maryland on Mt. Vernon Trail. Image 25 - Mt. Vernon Trail Map. p.12



Originally these moments were visualized scattered throughout the Mt. Vernon trail as different elements such as a water feature, or a meditation pod, or maybe a simple bench to sit on. However, that idea was too overwhelming and I thought my concepts could not be truly explored if they were scattered along 18 miles of trail. I decided to focus on the trail within the limits of the park.

Just south of the bridge lays the bulk of the park. The Historic Lighthouse and one of the District's cornerstones lay on the southernmost tip of the land (image 31, page 22). The vast open views from the lighthouse are breathtaking and in my opinion, some of the best in the area. It is a beautiful and quiet place to watch the sunrise and set (image 21, page 16 & image 22, page 17). The vast southern view inspired the placing of the building in the early stages (image 23, page 17 & image 30, page 21). However, I felt guilt for destroying the natural marshland and decided to keep digging for a better solution (image 32 & 33, page 23).

Historic maps revealed that the land had drastically changed over the time. I collaged all the information I had gathered to help me see something that wasn't physically there. Using the western edge of the historic land formation, the outline of underground creeks, and outer edge of the marshland I successfully anchored my building on to the site (image 19, page 15). The new building placement was now able to face the vast southern view while enjoying the marshland, guilt-free (image 34, page 24 & image 40 & 41, page 27).

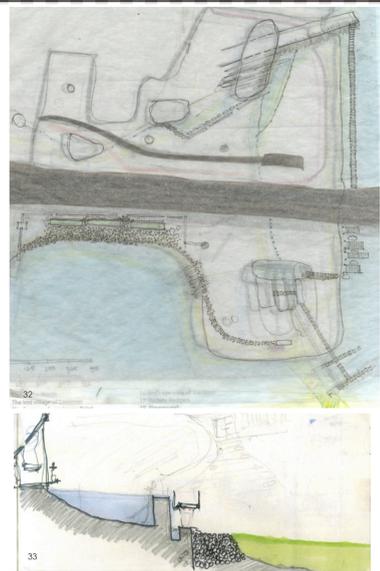


Image 32 - site study searching for new locations for building. Image 33 - study of site section illustrating the idea of a bathing pool on site. Image 34, page 24 - Floor plan of new building placement along historic edge. p.18



white out used to show retaining walls that need to be removed to allow water to flow through the building.

dwelling with window bathroom

yoga studio

public dock

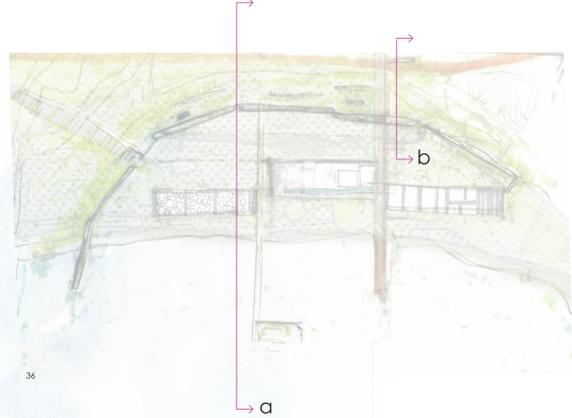
public dock

Image 20, pg. 16 - looking south from Lighthouse at Jones Point Park. Image 21 - storage shed looking south at Jones Point. Image 22, pg. 17 - looking west at sunset from Lighthouse. Image 23, looking south from north side of marsh. Image 24, pg. 17 - looking east towards Maryland on Mt. Vernon Trail. Image 25 - Mt. Vernon Trail Map. p.12

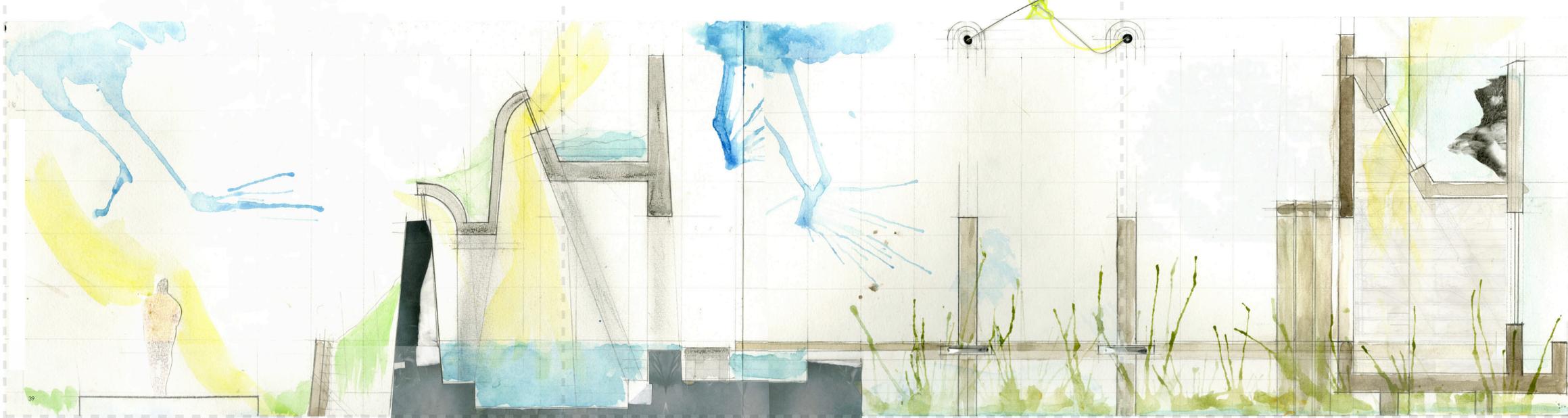
Image 29 - Multimedia collage of floating individual docks with a large bench, facing towards Maryland and DC. p.15

Image 32 - site study searching for new locations for building. Image 33 - study of site section illustrating the idea of a bathing pool on site. Image 34, page 24 - Floor plan of new building placement along historic edge. p.18

Image 34, page 24 - Floor plan of new building placement along historic edge. p.21



# Part III - b Site Analysis



Site Section a

And I wished for so long... Cannot stay,  
All the precious moments... Cannot stay,  
It's not the vinyl have fallen... Cannot stay,  
But still something's missing... Cannot stay.

Will I walk the long road? Cannot stay...  
There's no need to say goodbye...

All the friends and family,  
All the memories going round,  
I have wished for so long,  
Flow I wish for you today.

And the wind keeps whistling!  
And the sky keeps turning grey,  
And the sun is so...  
The sun will rise another day.

I have wished for so long...  
Flow I wish for you today,  
I have wished for so long...  
Flow I wish for you today.

Will I walk the long road?  
We all walk the long road...

Long Road,  
Eddie Vedder

You picked up your heart  
And made straight for the hills  
And that day I've not forgot  
All the while I've loved you still

And I won't stop  
Till my heart from my chest drops  
And you leave me no choice  
But to wait for the water to rise

In streets of stone you stand  
Like a light in darker times  
And we all did what we could  
But our futures closed our eyes

And I won't stop  
Till my heart from my chest drops  
And you leave me no choice  
But to wait for the water  
To wait for the water to rise

And I won't stop  
Till my heart from my chest drops  
And you leave me no choice  
But to wait for the water  
To wait for the water to rise

I won't stop  
Till my heart from my chest drops  
And you leave me no choice  
But to wait for the water  
To wait for the water to rise

Time tick us  
To where the water was  
That's what the water gave me  
And time goes quicker  
Between the two of us  
Oh, my love, don't forsake me  
Take what the water gave me

'Cause they took your loved ones  
But returned them in exchange for you  
But would you have it any other way?  
Would you have it any other way?  
You could have it any other way

'Cause she's a cruel mistress  
And the longer you're made  
But oh, my love, don't forsake me  
When I let the water take me

Lay me down  
Let the only sound  
Be the overflow  
Pockets full of stones

So, lay me down  
Let the only sound  
Be the overflow  
Pockets full of stones

Lay me down  
Let the only sound  
Be the overflow  
Pockets full of stones

And oh, poor Atlas  
The world's a beast of a long time  
And all this longing  
And the dips are left to rust  
That's what the water gave us

Lay me down  
Let the only sound  
Be the overflow  
Pockets full of stones

So, lay me down  
Let the only sound  
Be the overflow  
Pockets full of stones

Lay me down  
Let the only sound  
Be the overflow  
Pockets full of stones

What the Water Gave Me,  
Florence & The Machine



Section b

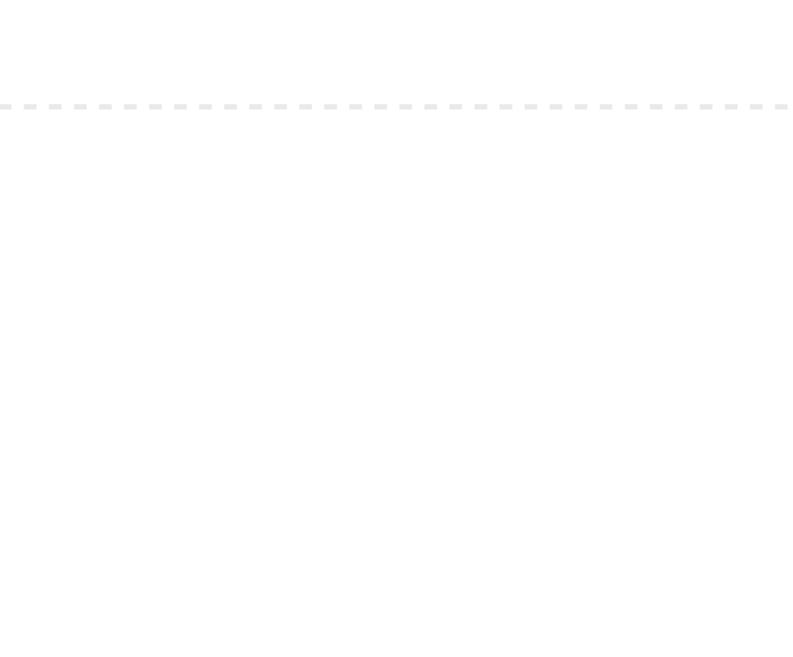
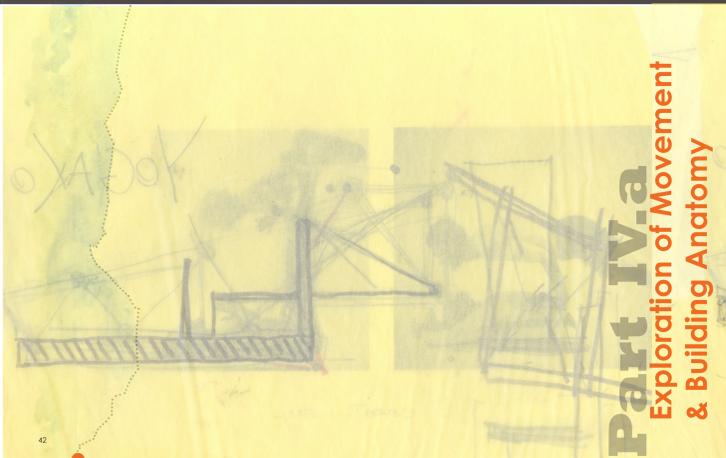


image 39 - site section a - through site (image 30, page 21) depicting Mt. Vernon Trail, subterranean jacuzzi, a deck cutting across the marshland leading to a private dwelling unit set in the river.

image 40 - Section through water treatment room - personal sized pool for floating

image 41 - section through air treatment room - with a swing and open to the elements

image 36 - key plan, image 37, above - collage of influential songs: Long Road by Eddie Vedder, Wait for the Water by Ballroom Thieves, What the Water Gave Me by Florence & The Machine, image 38 - section b - cutting through a wood retaining wall next to Mt. Vernon Trail & a subterranean sauna.



# Part IV.a

## Exploration of Movement & Building Anatomy

Image 42 - collage depicting the structure of the building being influenced by the human body in yoga poses.

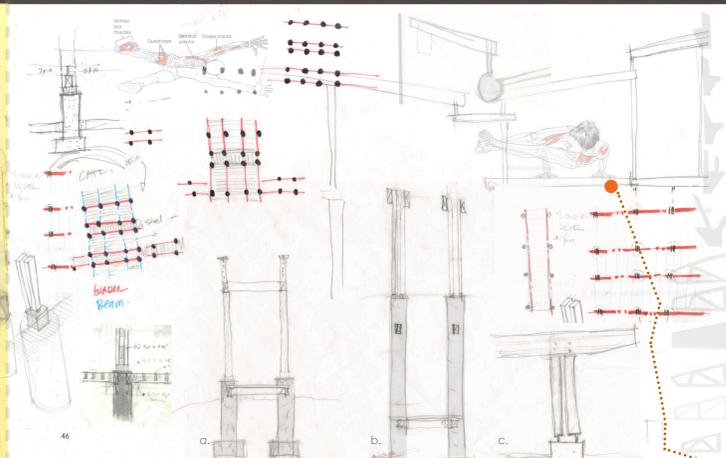


Image 46 - sketch of various structural systems. a. round concrete columns, glue laminated post and cable railing at open path between pods. b. round concrete columns, glue laminated post and beam inside pods. c. tapered glue lam at overhangs.

Once I surrendered to the fact that my subterranean ideas could not live in marshy land or handle the amount of water that comes and goes with the tides, I realized that my building needed to be elevated above the flood zone. It had to be light on its feet, and be open enough for water to run freely around it. The building became a series of smaller structures or "pods" connected by a single raised path to ensure that it would never flood.

The pods were laid out in such a fashion that the private path was uninterrupted for its entire length. This clarified the ambiguity between the public and private path. The private path was now within the raised portion, and the public path was on the ground plane running between the pods, closer to the water and open to the public at all times (image 43).

The elevated private path served two purposes, to connect one pod to the next and to create a space to safely practice a walking meditation along its four hundred and eighty-nine feet which is a bit over the length of a football field. The public path on the ground is a total of eight hundred seventy-two feet (two and half football fields). It is connected to the



Image 43 - aerial view from the northeast side of the site, showing the public path on the ground level, the private path on the first level, and all the pods that make up the building complex.

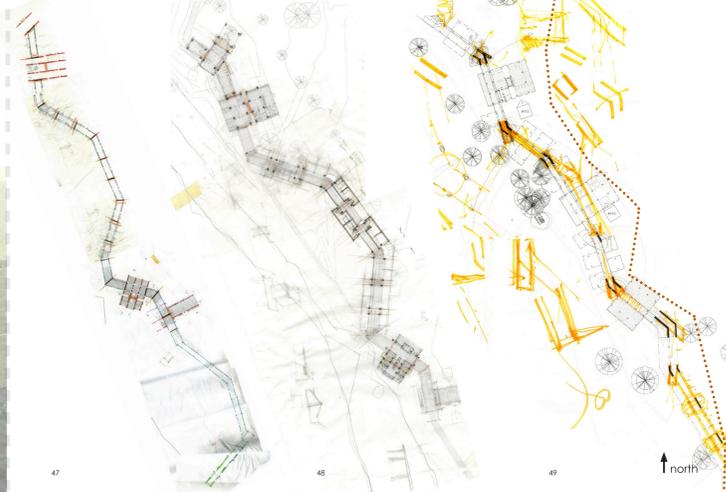


Image 47 - structural diagram - combination of load bearing walls for path and column grid for pods. Image 48 - structural diagram - column grid throughout, creating strange corners where path turns. Image 49 - structural diagram - load bearing walls on corners where path turns in combination with column grid at pods.

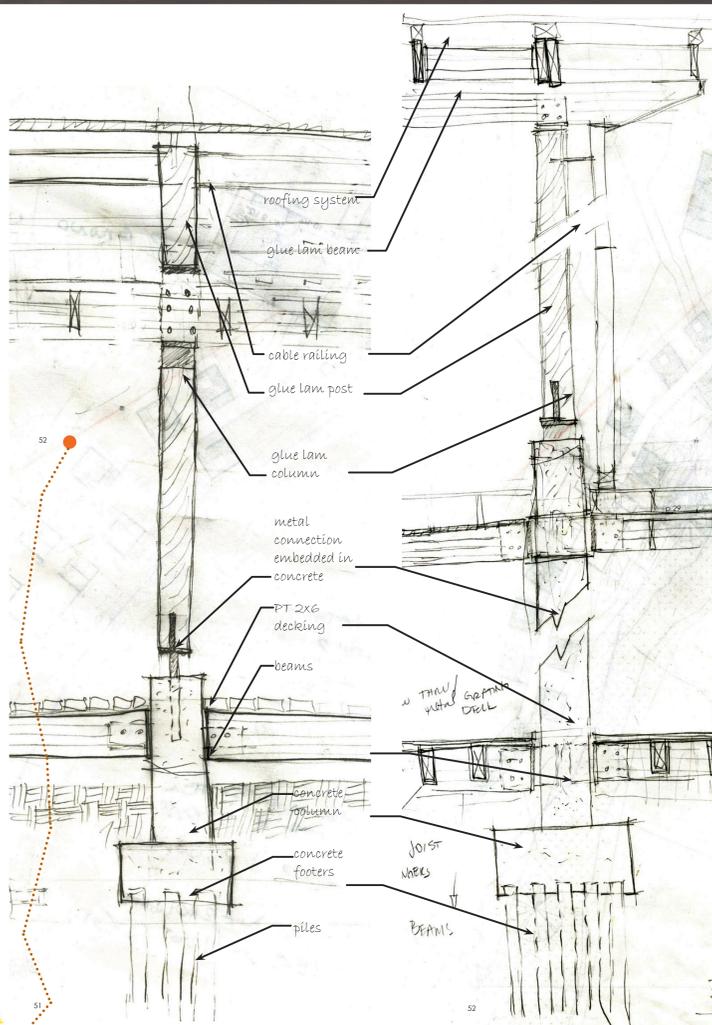


Image 51 - detail of column on path. Image 52 - detail of column inside a pod.

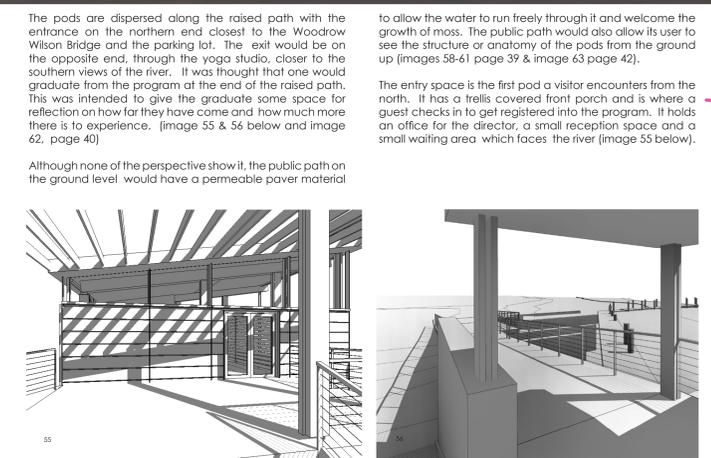


Image 55 - view of entrance, looking south. Image 56 - end of the public path outside the yoga pod, facing south towards the river.



Image 62 - site plan showing system of trails and path connected to building complex.

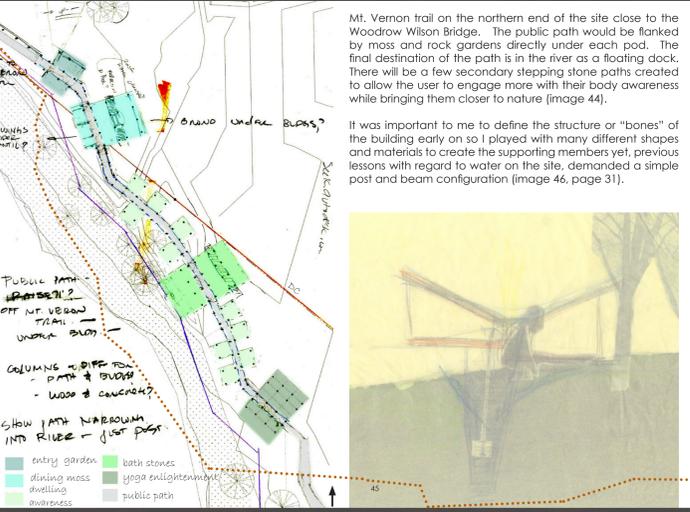


Image 44 - ground level plan showing the rock & moss garden under each pod, the round concrete column grid, the water collection basin, proximity to marshland, and one of the anchor points for the District's boundary line. Image 45 - sketch of yoga pose and building structure becoming one.

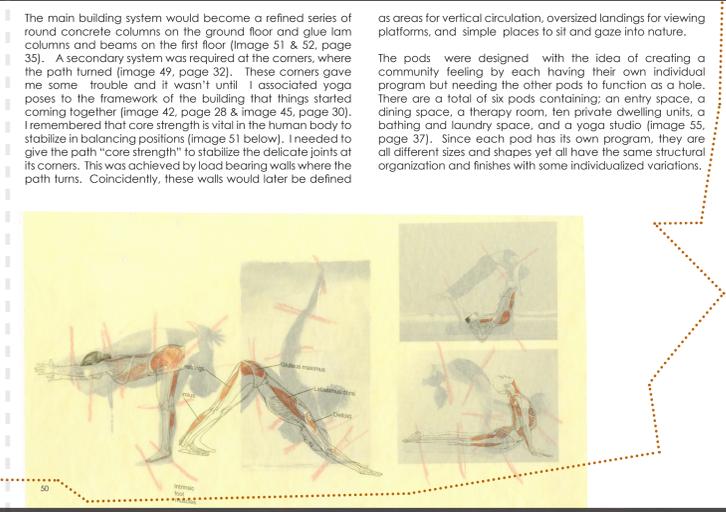


Image 50 - collage depicting specific muscles and joints that are engaged to balance and stabilize in various poses.

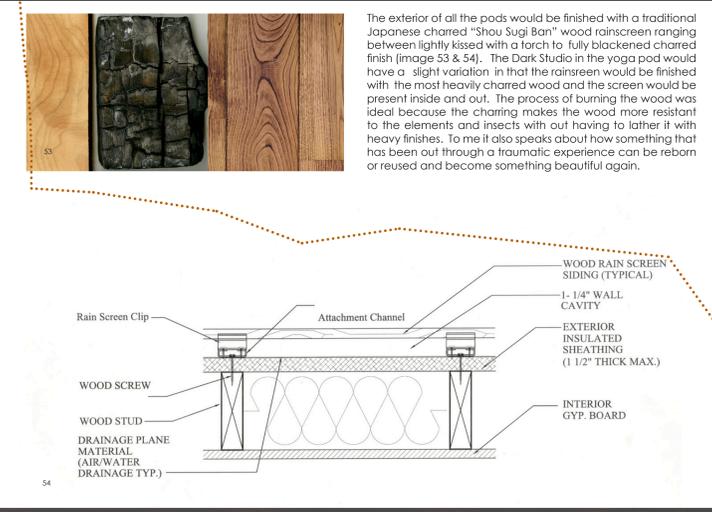


Image 53 - sample of Cedar in its natural state and charred. Sample of concrete. Image 54 - typical rainscreen detail.

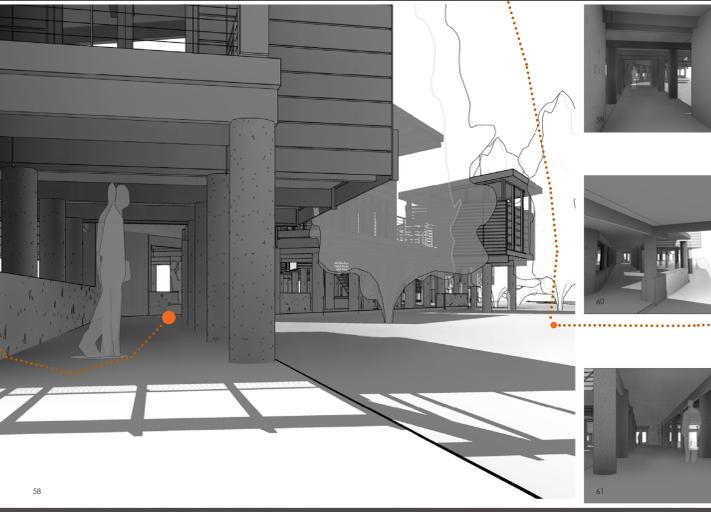


Image 58 - public path under the entry space in the first pod, looking south with the Potomac river on the east. Image 59 & 60 - public path under dwelling pods, looking south. Image 61 - public path under bathing pod, looking south.

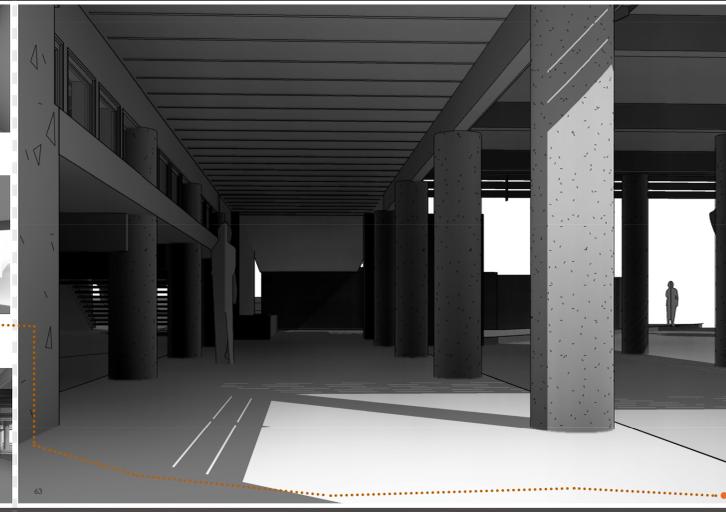
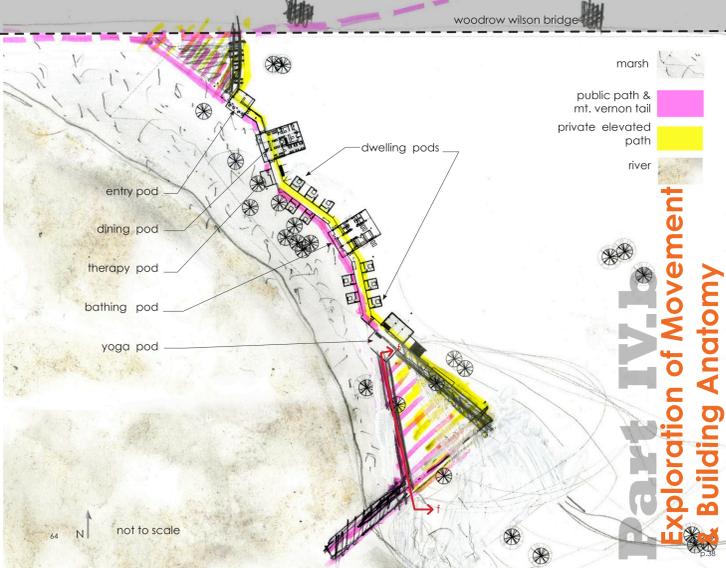


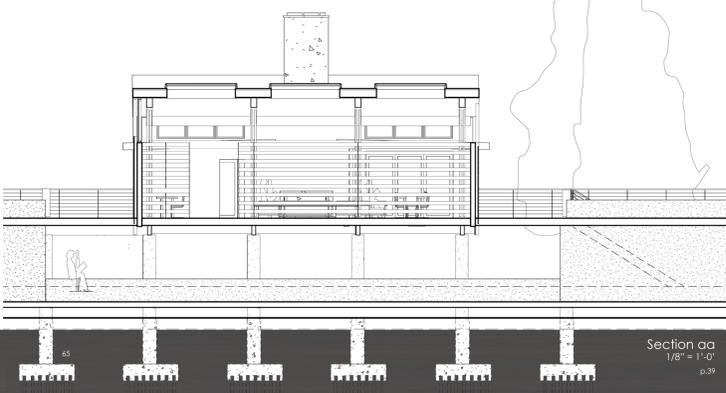
Image 63 - public path under yoga pod, looking south. The dark studio is on the east side with windows directly above the floorline to view yoga hands and feet grounded on their mats during their practice.



**Part IV.1**  
Exploration of Movement  
& Building Anatomy

**bathing pod**

The second pod contains the dining space. It is intended to encourage family style dining with a large community table that is adjacent to the private path. It is equipped with a fireplace and lounge area to encourage its visitors to socialize with one another. The is also an outdoor eating area that faces the park on the east and a viewing platform that has open views to the west. The viewing platform is an ideal place to watch the sun set on the river from oversized swings that hang from the beams overhead (image 65 & 66 below)



1. viewing platform
2. swing (from beam)
3. private path
4. fireplace in lounge
5. community table
6. outdoor dining
7. kitchen
8. walk in freezer
9. pantry
10. kitchen office
11. bathroom

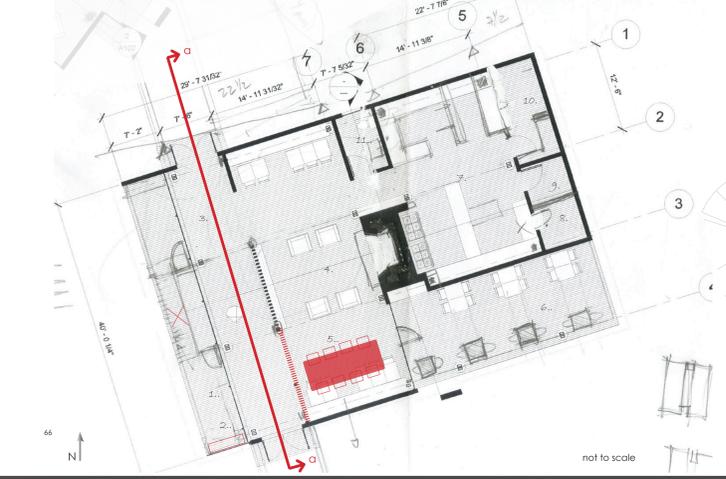
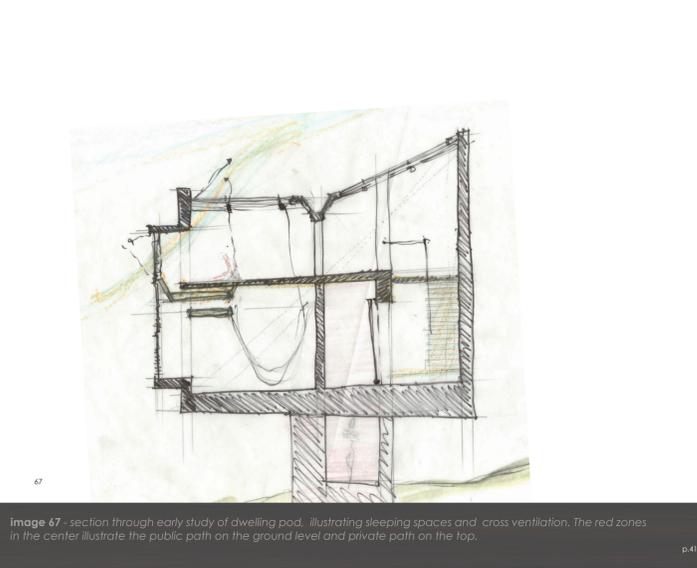


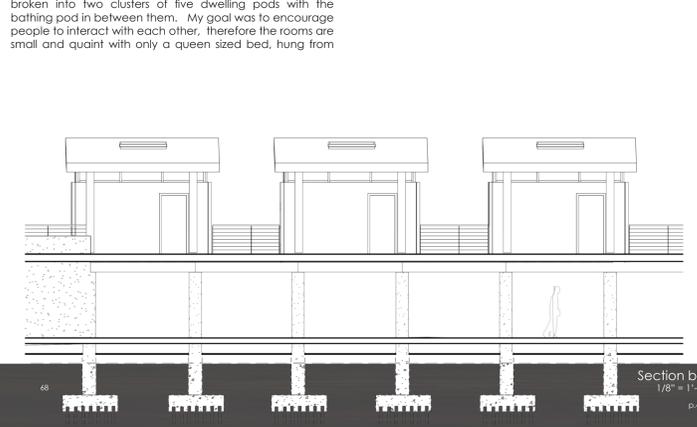
image 64, page 43 - First floor plan showing relationship to complex path's & park trails. image 65, page 44 - section aa - through private path in dining pod looking east. image 66 - enlarged dining pod. p.43



**dwelling pod**

Just beyond the dining space is a single therapy room intended to be used by the therapist for one-on-one sessions or for group therapy. When the therapy room is not in use, it can also be used as a common living room or reading space for the guest (image 69, page 48).

Past the therapy room, are the dwelling pods which are broken into two clusters of five dwelling pods with the bathing pod in between them. My goal was to encourage people to interact with each other, therefore the rooms are small and quaint with only a queen sized bed, hung from the pod's structure. There are no direct views to the outside, only clerestory windows and a skylight positioned at the foot of the bed. There is no seating in the room other than the bed. This again was intentional to encourage guest interact with one another in one of the other five pods. All the necessary storage for the guest's belongings is built into the walls (image 70, page 49).



1. typical dwelling pod
2. built-in storage shelving & rack
3. pod structural column grid & beam used to hang bed
4. queen bed
5. front porch
6. private path
7. observation platform
8. therapy pod

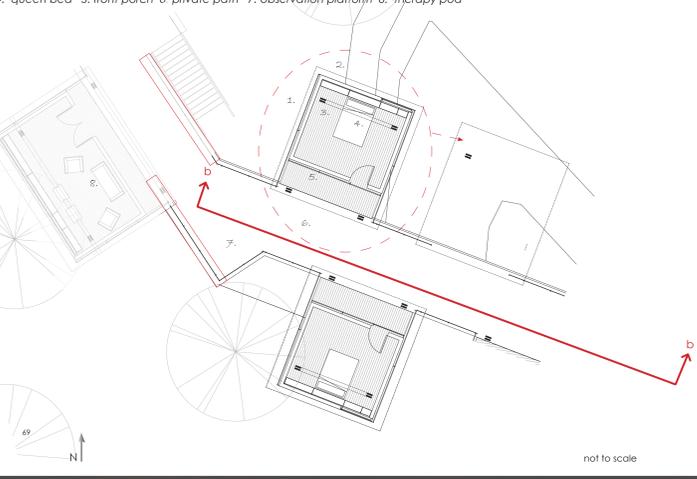


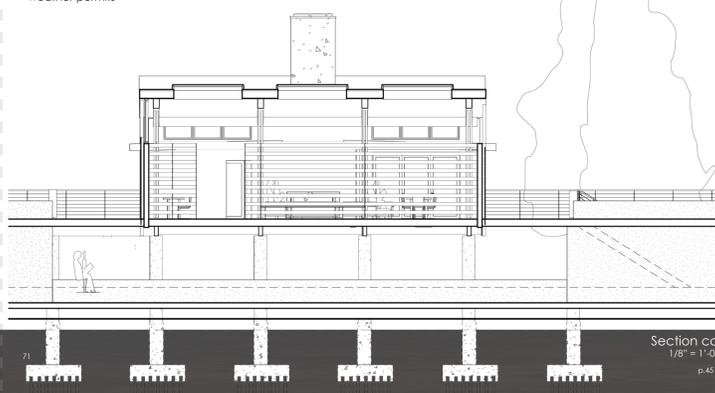
image 68, page 47 - section bb- through outdoor private path in first cluster of dwelling pods. image 69 - enlarged floor plan of dwelling pods & therapy space. p.43



**bathing pod**

The bathing and laundry pod is placed in the middle of all the dwelling units for easy accessibility for all its visitors. The bathrooms were designed to contain everything related to cleaning oneself, the building and any items we use when we travel. The laundry room and housekeeping are contained within the bathing space and are adjacent to the private path for easy accessibility. The deck on the western side is intended to be used for drying and folding laundry when the weather permits.

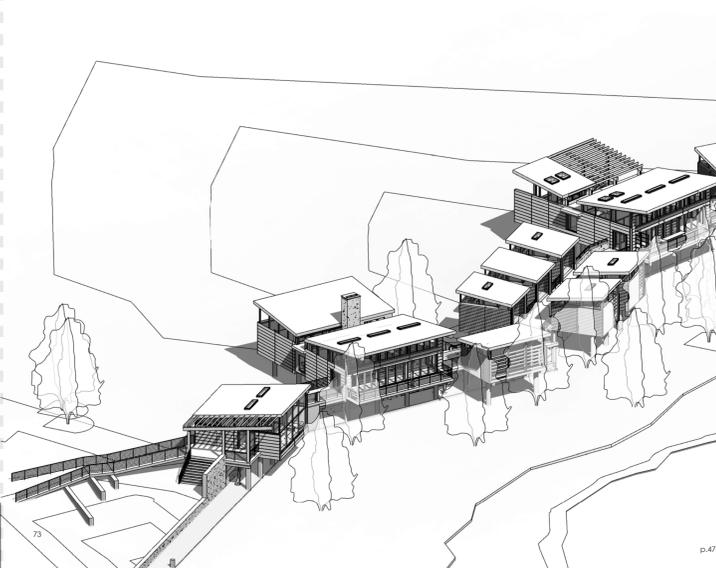
The bathrooms are co-ed and have an open feeling with shared water basins in the center of the space but have four private toilet and shower rooms. It was important to create a bathing experience. The bathroom is similar to traditional Japanese baths and is all finished in wood with some copper accents in the shower. There is an indoor sauna and outdoor soaking tub with a sunning deck on the eastern side (image 71 & 72, page 50 & 51).



1. laundry room
2. typical private toilet & shower
3. solarium (later to be a sun deck)
4. soaking tub
5. sauna
6. lavatories
7. housekeeping / janitorial
8. private path
9. viewing deck & laundry folding / drying rack.



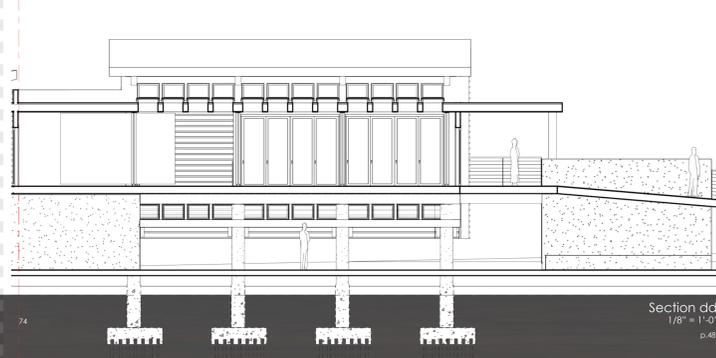
image 71 - section cc through private path in bathing pod, looking east. image 72 - enlarged floor plan of bathing pod. p.46



**yoga pod**

The last and largest pod is the yoga studio. It contains two separate yoga studios, a dark and a light yoga studio, intended to encourage two very different yoga practice experiences. The Dark Studio lays to the east of the private path and would be finished inside and outside with heavily charred wood rainscreen that looks almost like alligator skin, the boards are also wider and turned ninety degrees along their horizontal axis, to create a deep shadow on the exterior elevation emphasizing the darkness of the space. This dark space is intended to inspire an inward, grounding and self-reflective practice. There are windows into the dark studio right above the floor to give the yogi a direct view into the marsh while in positions that place their heads close to or directly on the floor. These windows also give pedestrians on the public path a peak into the studio (image 74, below).

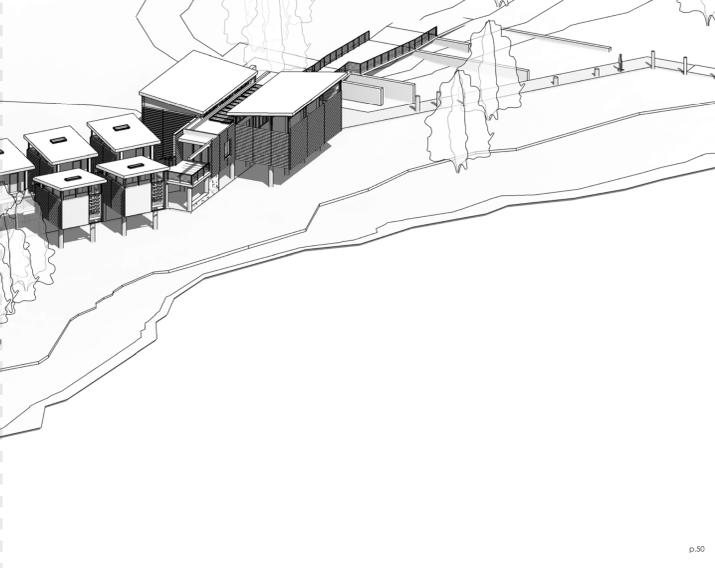
In contrast, the Light Studio, is to be full of sunlight to encourage the user to connect to the scenery outside and intended to connect the visitor to the river views, to the outside world and maybe to a fellow visitor practicing next to them. While the studios lay on either side of the path, they can be combined to create a large gathering space for presentations, movies, or any large event by opening the operable glass door system. (image 75, page 54).



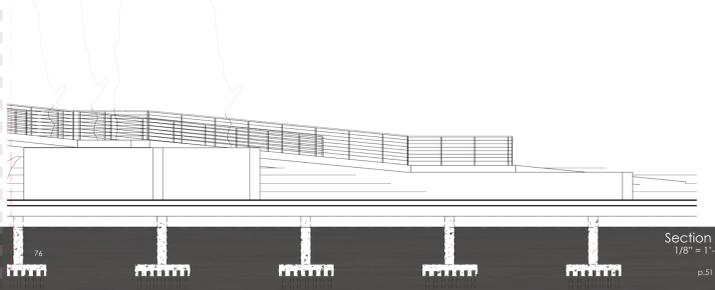
1. viewing platform
2. swing (from beam)
3. private path
4. fireplace in lounge
5. community table
6. outdoor dining
7. kitchen
8. walk in freezer
9. pantry
10. kitchen office
11. bathroom



image 73 - aerial view of building complex from northwestern side. image 74 - section dd - through private path in yoga pod. image 75 - enlarged yoga pod floor plan. p.47



The original three concepts of path, edge/threshold and balance & movement helped me define and prove my intentions for my thesis. I learned that a simple path has great power. A path not only connects us from one space to the next, it can dictate the type of activity we chose to perform on it. It can lead and support us to surpass difficult times and push us to be healthier both physically and emotionally. The material of the path, and how our body engages it, has the ability to connect or disconnect us from our environment. A path can in fact make us more aware if we allow it. My intention for my thesis was to design a building for people who have been pushed to a limit none of us wish to encounter. My understanding of this state of mind, helped me recognize that the building itself should also be pushed to an unimaginable edge and be able to withstand the conditions this edge has to offer. The center's position within the blurry edge of stillness and movement of the river became a representation of the emotional state of its occupants. You could say this location makes the building vulnerable. I would say, the building became so deeply rooted on the site, that it became part of the site. It buried itself deeply into the land to stand up straight and support the needs of its visitors, stretching itself long across the Potomac's shoreline for people to experience the joy of moving. I feel completely fulfilled with my understanding that architecture has the power to do these things for us. My center proved that its paths and architecture can teach an individual the power of physical movement while creating a place where a community of people can come together, and learn how to heal holistically by connecting to the environment, to themselves and to each other.



1. typical dwelling pod
2. built-in storage shelving & rack
3. pod structural column grid & beam used to hang bed
4. queen bed
5. front porch
6. private path
7. observation platform
8. therapy pod



image 77 - section ee - through yoga pod depicting the dark yoga studio on the west and light yoga studio on the east side of the private path. p.52

# Part V - a

## A Support Center for Bereaved Parents



Image a - entry ramp  
Image b - entry pod looking south  
Image c - glue lam column and exterior rainscreen

### Entry Pod

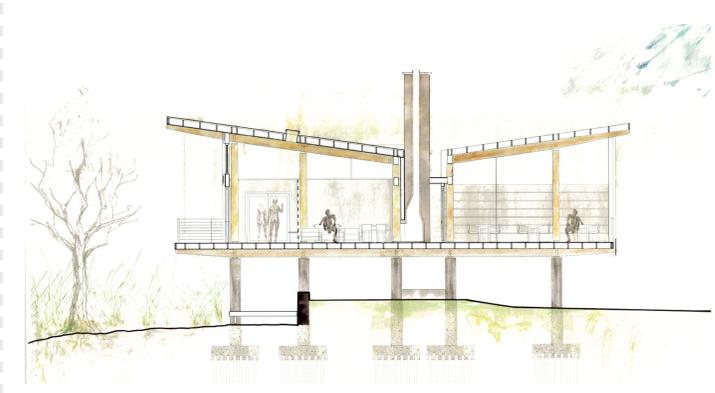


Section j  
not to scale



Image a - north entry of dining pod  
Image b - glue lam column & stone veneer at fireplace  
Image c - dining pod exterior dining terrace

### Dining Pod



Section ii  
not to scale



Image a - load bearing wall at corner, across from therapy room, dwelling pods beyond  
Image b - load bearing wall / railing connection  
Image c - interior of dwelling pod

### Dwelling Pod



Section hh  
not to scale



Image a - glue lam column, copper used in shower, and interior screen  
Image b - looking west from lavatories  
Image c - sun deck

### Bathing Pod



Section gg  
not to scale



Image a - looking south from private path in yoga pod  
Image b - charred wood for yoga pod screens  
Image c - Dark yoga studio looking west towards private path  
Image d - exit ramp at the end of yoga pod, looking south

### Yoga Pod



Section ee  
not to scale



1. viewing deck 2. registration 3. director's office 4. waiting area 5. Private path



1. viewing deck 2. dining / living space 3. kitchen 4. bathroom 5. office 6. food storage 7. dining deck 8. Private Path



1. Therapy room 2. Viewing deck 3. Dwelling unit 4. porch 5. Private Path



1. viewing deck 2. laundry folding 3. laundry drying 4. laundry room 5. storage / janitor's closet 6. lavatories 7. private shower & toilets 8. Sauna 9. Soaking Tub 10. Sun Deck 11. Private Path

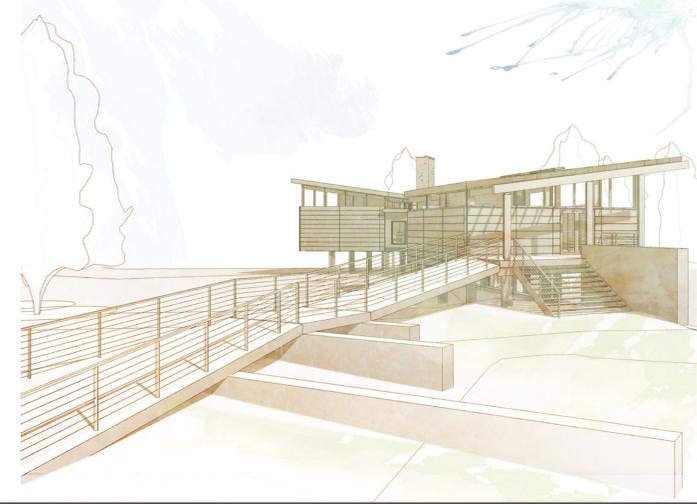


1. Light Yoga Studio 2. Dark Yoga Studio 3. Private path

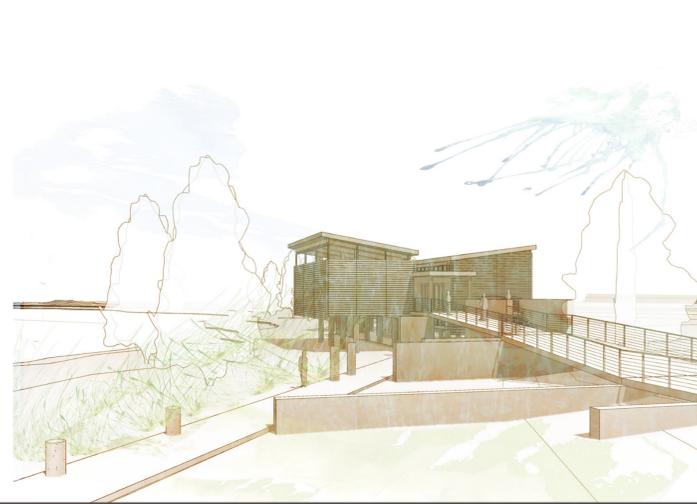
Part V - b



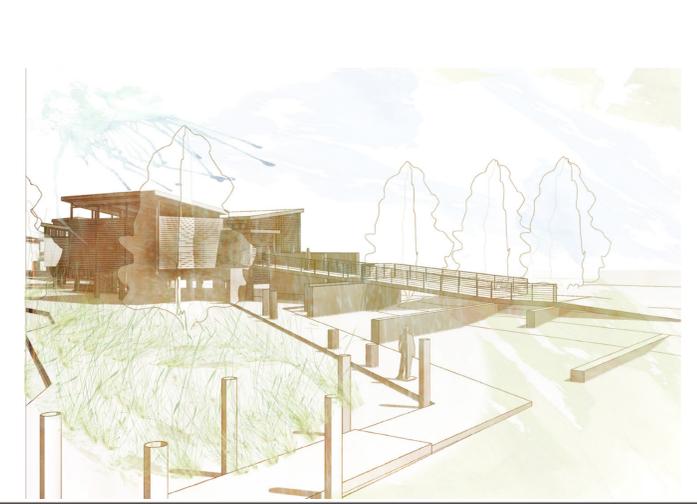
Looking South from public path of Entry pod p.68



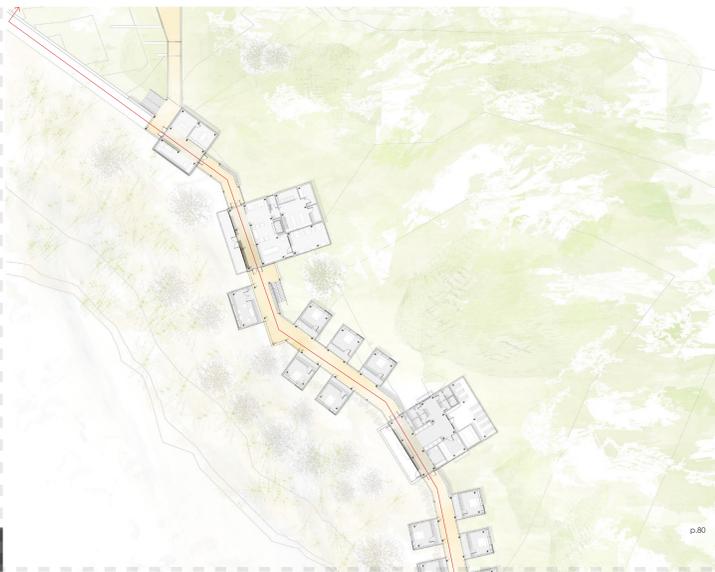
Looking Southeast at entry ramp p.71



Looking north of Yoga pod p.74



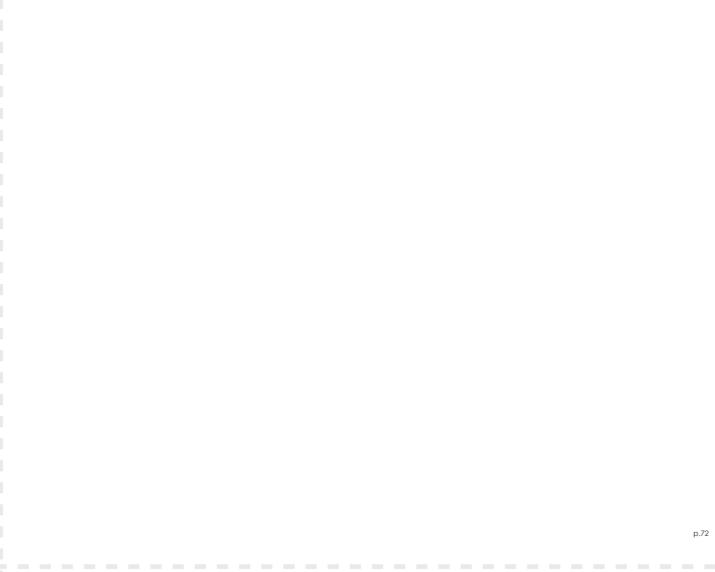
Looking Northwest from public dock p.77



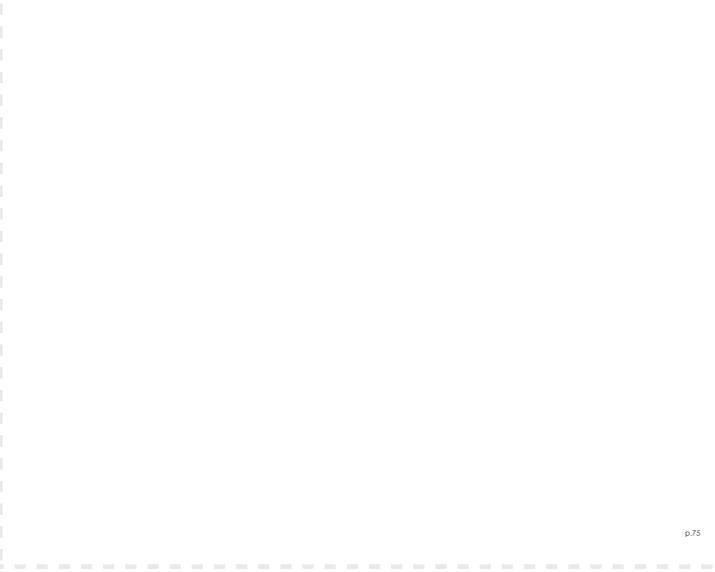
First Floor Plan p.80



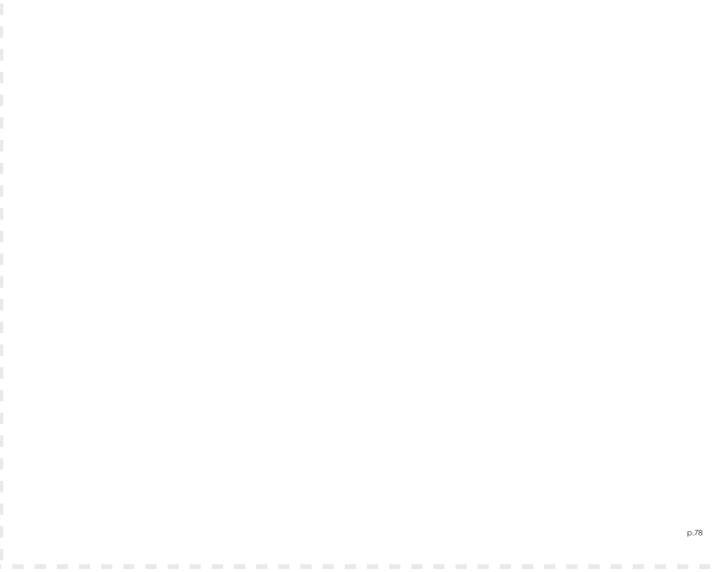
Ground Floor Plan p.70



p.72



p.75



p.78



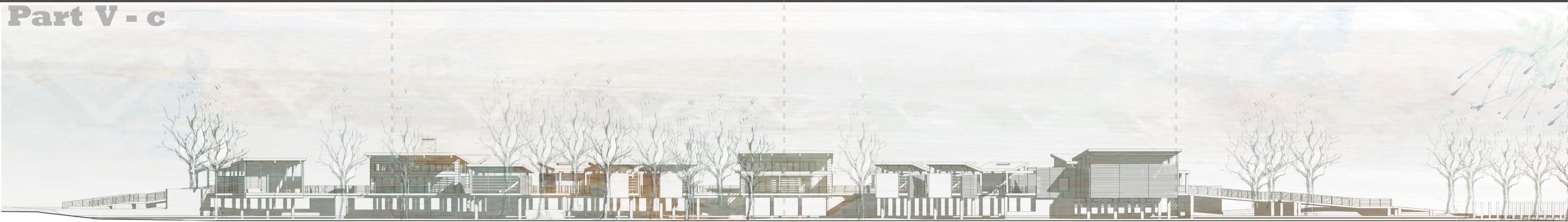
East Elevation p.73

p.76

p.79

p.82

# Part V - c



West Elevation

p.83

p.84

p.87

p.92

p.95

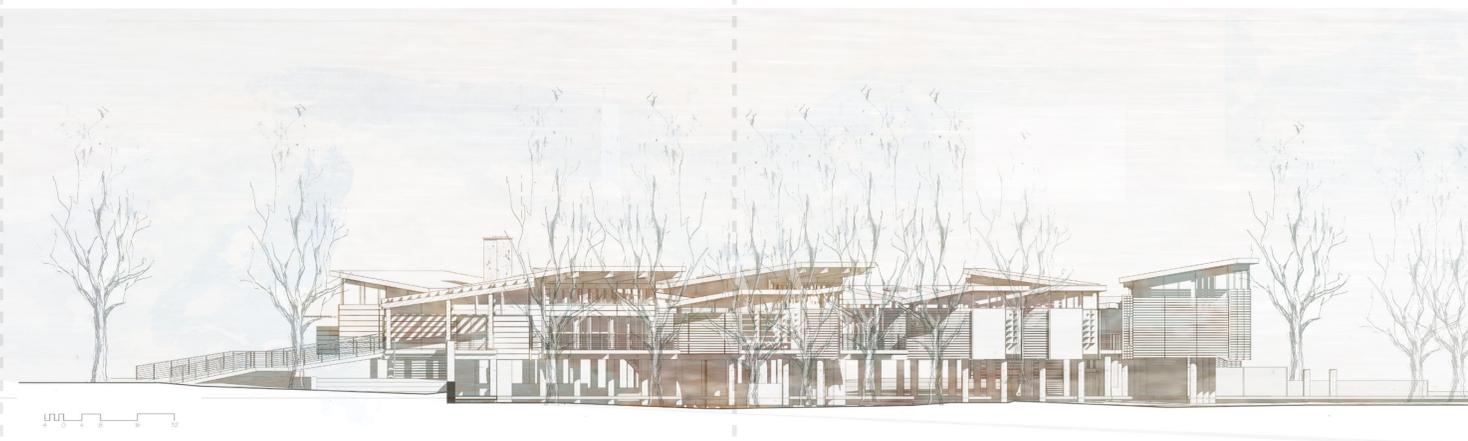


North Elevation

p.84

p.87

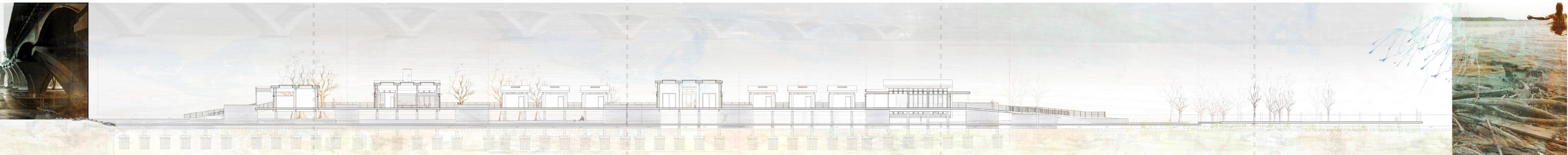
p.90



South Elevation

p.93

p.96



Section aa, bb, cc, dd, ee, ff through paths

p.85

p.88

p.91

p.94

p.97