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creating social networks:
resettlement center for burmese refugees

creating social networks: resettlement center for burmese refugees

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Master of Architecture

School of Architecture, Art, and Historic Preservation

Roger Williams University

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creating social networks: resettlement center for burmese refugees

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Any student of architecture will tell you that the assistance and advice of fellow students is invaluable to the process of completing any studio project. I wish to thank all of my friends for listening, assisting, advising, and pushing me to be my best.

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The UNHCR estimates that there are ten million refugees of concern worldwide, although many organizations estimate much higher numbers. Eventually, about one percent of these refugees will be resettled in a third country, while the majority return to their home country or settle in the country of first asylum. The United States accepts about half of resettled refugees worldwide, and has resettled 1.8 million refugees since 1980. Unfortunately, many of these refugees fail to become a part of their new home. For example, many teenage Cambodian men on the west coast become members of gangs and are deported because of armed crimes. Another common issue occurs when middle aged women from communal cultures become lethargic and never leave their homes because of fear and an inability to speak English.

The refugee resettlement program in the United States must encourage both the formation of refugee communities and integration within the larger community. I propose a multiuse building to strengthen refugee communities [bonding social networks] and connect refugees to the larger community [bridging social networks]. Both of these connections are essential for refugees to become integrated in a community. The building will be run by Lutheran Social Services who currently assists in the resettlement of refugees in the Springfield, Massachusetts area, with assistance in funding from the Wilson-Fish Discretionary Grant Program which provides financial support for alternative models of resettlement.

In order to encourage the formation of bonding social networks, the building includes temporary refugee housing [20 units from one to four bedrooms] and communal spaces [community room and kitchen, cultivation areas, small religious space]. In order to build bridging social networks with the outside community, the program includes a small school for language and vocational training, Lutheran Social Services offices, retail spaces, a rentable event hall, and an exterior event space/market.

Refugee Resettlement:

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has the international mandate to provide refugee assistance throughout the world. There are three durable solutions for refugee displacement: repatriation, local integration, and resettlement. Resettlement is considered a last resort and less than 1% of refugees will be resettled in a third country. However, the United States accepts more than half the refugees resettled through the UNHCR, including resettling nearly 75,000 refugees in 2009. (<http://www.state.gov/g/prm>)

The UNHCR's 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol are the worldwide standards for the rights of refugees. The Convention defined the term refugee and the legal protections, assistance, and social rights of refugees. Refugees have the right to freedom of religion and movement; the right to work; the right to an education; and the right to accessibility to travel documents. They also have a right to non-refoulment, which means that a refugee can not be involuntarily returned to a country where his or her life or freedom would be threatened. In addition, a refugee has certain obligations to the host country: they must respect the laws and regulations of their host country.

Refugees are fleeing their homes because of political, religious, or ethnic persecution. When refugees move to a country of asylum, they lose their homes, jobs, social networks, and community. Often, they arrive in the host country with little more than the clothes on their back and a few personal items. Refugees most likely have no social ties in their new countries and most will never return to their country of origin. These people need a place to stay, but they need much more. They need the

resources to make a new home and a new community.

While the US government has good intentions, its process of resettlement falls short of providing refugees with everything they need to make a new home. It provides monetary and residential assistance, and access to resources, but fails to recognize the importance of establishing ties with both a community of similar refugees and the greater community. It emphasizes economic independence but fails to recognize cultural interdependence and the fact that resettlement is a process that continues beyond the first month.

Terms and Government Agencies:

refugee:

a person who is outside of his or her country of nationality or habitual residence; has well-founded fear of persecution because of his or her race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion; and is unable or unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country, or to return there, for fear of persecution; people who have committed a crime against peace, a war crime, a crime against humanity, or a serious non-political crime outside of the country of asylum or those who are currently serving as soldiers do not qualify for refugee status

repatriation:

voluntary return of a refugee to his or her country of origin when conditions permit; this is considered the best option

local integration:

a refugee settles into the country of first asylum with full legal rights

resettlement:

the process of relocating a refugee from the country of first asylum to a third country; this is considered a last resort, only to

be used when the refugee will not be able to return to his or her home country and cannot be integrated into the country to which he or she has fled; fewer than 1% of cases result in resettlement

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR):

leads and coordinates international action to protect refugees and resolve refugee problems worldwide; refers refugees to the United States and other host nations

US Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP):

a cooperative public-private program made up of several organizations (PRM, USCIS, ORR, ten domestic resettlement agencies) that coordinates the admission and resettlement of refugees

US Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM):

provides aid and sustainable solutions for refugees, victims of conflict, and stateless people around the world

US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS):

part of the Department of Homeland Security; approves or denies refugee resettlement applications

Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR):

provides refugees with critical resources to assist them in becoming integrated members of American society

ten domestic resettlement agencies:

Church World Service, Domestic & Foreign Missionary Society, Ethiopian Community Development Council, Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, Bureau of Refugee Programs, International Rescue Committee, Lutheran Immigration & Refugee Service, U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants., U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, World Relief

Resettlement Application Process:

Refugees must participate in a rigid application process after registering as an official refugee (which has its own difficulties.) This process can take eight months to a year, during which time refugees may have to continue living in unsafe conditions. The process is as follows: [1] The UNHCR or a US Embassy refers a refugee applicant to the US for resettlement. Refugees with a close relative already living in the US or members of specific groups can apply without referral. [2] The case is processed by an Overseas Processing Entity (OPE) which is guided by the U.S. Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM). The OPE collects biographic and other information for a security screening. [3] Officers from the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) review information and have a face-to-face interview with the applicant, then approve or deny resettlement. [4] The refugee undergoes medical screening to ensure contagious diseases do not enter the US. [5] The OPE secures “sponsorship assurance” from a US-based resettlement agency that is experienced in providing assistance to new refugees. [6] There is an optional brief US cultural orientation course prior to departure.

Resettlement Process:

There is also a standard process for the resettlement of a refugee. After all that is required for the application process, the resettlement protocol is comparatively basic and unregulated. [1] Representatives from the ten domestic resettlement agencies meet to review the information sent by the OPEs to determine where a refugee will be resettled. [2] The decision is sent to the OPE that works with the International Organization for Migration to transport the refugee. The cost of transportation is a loan which the refugee must pay back. [3] A representative from the sponsoring resettlement agency meets the refugee at the airport and takes him or her to an apartment stocked with furnishings, appliances, clothing, and food. [4] Shortly after arriving, someone from the agency helps the refugee apply for a social security card, register children in school, learn how to reach and use shopping facilities, arranges medical appointments, and connects him or her to social or language services.

The third and fourth steps are entirely in the hands of the nongovernmental organization given the job of resettling each refugee. Guidelines as to what resources and assistance must be provided are vague and often assistance is not adequate.

Resettlement agencies are not entirely at fault, however. The agencies are given a mere \$1,800 per refugee to cover operational costs and the refugee's first month in the US. From then on, refugees are a part of the welfare system, with The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) sometimes providing longer term assistance in the form of cash, medical, language, and social services. Often, other charitable organizations, such as the Islamic Circle of North American Relief (ICNA Relief), must pick up the slack. After one year, refugees are expected to apply for permanent residence.

Resettlement Center for Refugees:

In order to address the lack of structure in the resettlement process, I propose a resettlement center for refugees which will provide assistance to these new residents of the United States throughout the first year and as long as needed afterwards. The project will emphasize the necessity of both bonding social networks and bridging social networks. (Korac) Bonding social networks occur between individuals of a similar status; in this case, bonding networks refer to ties between refugees. Bridging social networks occur between individuals of differing status; in this case, bridging networks refer to the ties between refugees and members of the larger community. Both types of social ties are essential for refugees to become a part of their new home.

The client for the project is Lutheran Social Services of New England located in West Springfield, Massachusetts. This organization currently provides assistance to refugees resettling in the Springfield area and free language courses to many immigrants; however, I believe their efficacy could be greatly improved with a new resettlement center. The project will be partially funded by the Wilson-Fish Discretionary Grant Program run by the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement. This grant program was established to test alternative methods of refugee integration. The Wilson-Fish Program enables “applicants to implement alternative projects...in order to provide interim financial assistance, social services and case management to refugees in a manner that encourages self-sufficiency, reduces the likelihood of welfare dependency and fosters greater coordination among resettlement agencies and service providers in a community... An integrated system of assistance and services is an essential characteristic of a Wilson-Fish project.” (Office of Refugee Resettlement; Wilson-Fish Discretionary Grant Program).

Burmese Refugees:

The resettlement center will be designed to house refugees from southeast Asia. While only a single nationality will be hosted at the center at any given point in time, should political circumstances change, the center could be easily adapted to another group from the same region of the world. This follows the assumption that people from a similar climate will have relatively similar styles of living even though social and cultural norms may vary widely.

Refugees from the nation of Burma* will serve as the case study group. Burmese refugees are currently being resettled in the Springfield, Massachusetts area and given the severity of the conflict in Burma, it is likely that this will continue for many years. A study of the political history and culture of Burma has guided my programmatic priorities and architectural themes. I have also read several autobiographies of refugees from Burma; these stories have given me insight into not only this nation's refugees, but the struggles and emotional conflicts of refugees from many nations.

Please view the next few sections as a general overview of the Burmese culture meant to help the reader understand the basis for the goals and design choices made. It should not be viewed as an attempt to create an anthropological study of the culture although I have done my best to create an accurate representation.

*Throughout this book, I will use the name Burma instead of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (commonly, Myanmar) because of the controversy surrounding the 1989 Adaptation of Expressions Law issued by the ruling government in Burma which changed the name of the country. Burma is the title preferred by the U.S. government and many political activists who do not recognize the legitimacy of the ruling government who made that choice.



Aung San Suu Kyi: Leader of the National League for Democracy. She was elected in 1990 by the people but never allowed in power and has been under house arrest by order of the SLORC ever since. Aung San Suu Kyi was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991. "No matter the regime's physical power, in the end they can't stop the people; they can't stop freedom. We shall have our time." Quote: www.bbc.co.uk; Photo: www.time.com



Protestors during the 8888 uprising. Photo: democracyforburma.wordpress.com



Burmese generals of the SLORC. Photo: news.bbc.co.uk

Concise Political History of Burma:

For more than a millennium, great civilizations have fought for the land now known as Burma. Up until the 19th century, peoples such as the Pyu, Mon, and Burmans have waged war and conquered inhabitants. This history of warfare has resulted in the incredible diversity which is cherished today by many. In order to take advantage of Burma's vast resources, the British colonized the region between 1824 and 1886 in the three Anglo-Burmese Wars. It was the British who created the boundaries of present day Burma, combining many ethnic groups that had struggled to coexist peacefully. As in other British colonies, favoritism of certain groups inflamed historic ethnic tensions.

In 1948, the nation became an independent country under democratic rule. However, in 1962 General Ne Win led a military coup and for twelve years Burma was led by a council headed by the General. In 1974, Ne Win and many other generals resigned and began to rule Burma through the Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) within a single-party system. Under the rule of the BSPP, Burma became one of the most impoverished countries in world. This political oppression and the disastrous economic situation led to a series of protests in 1988 called the 8888 Uprising. The protests became very violent, and General Saw Maung "staged a coup" and the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), described as an "interim" government, came into power. In reality, Saw Maung had been a loyal general under Ne Win and this was barely a shift in power.¹

The SLORC had promised to hold a multiparty election and on May 27, 1990, free elections were held. The National League for Democracy and its Leader Mrs. Aung San Suu Kyi won by astonishing numbers, winning 392 of the 425 seats it contested. However, the SLORC found excuse after excuse to delay handing over power. Eventually, it became clear that it never would. Instead, the SLORC announced it, instead, would institutionalize "disciplined democracy" within the country. "Indeed, the junta held a National Convention in 1992, and its actions indicated that the leaders did not intend to surrender power in the near future. The junta artfully manipulated the convention, creating a constitution that secured a strategic role in Burmese politics for the military for many years to come..."²

¹ Smith, Martin. *Burma: Insurgency and the Politics of Ethnicity*. London: Zed Books Ltd, 1991.

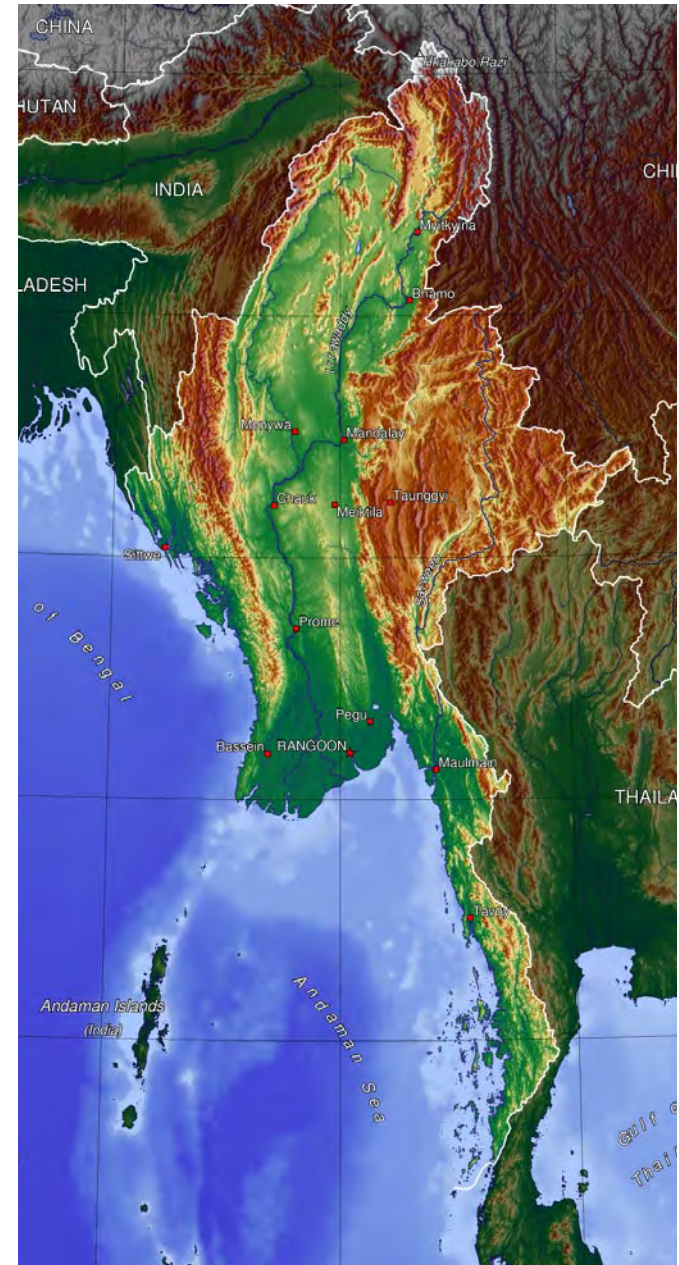
² Kyaw Wyin Hlaing. "Challenging the Authoritarian State: Buddhist Monks and Peaceful Protests in Burma." *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs Journal*. Winter 2008. <http://www.lexisnexis.com> (accessed 2 May 2010).



Rice fields in Kengtung; Photo: Pascal Boegli, 2006



Intha fishermen on Inle Lake; Photo: Pascal Boegli, 2006



Burma; Irrawaddy River, plains, and delta; Map: Wikipedia.org

Culture and Creative Traditions of Burmese People:

Burma is considered by some to be the most ethnically diverse country in the world. While there may only be ten major ethnic groups, each of these has many subgroups. There may be as many as 100 distinct groups. Each of these groups has their own traditions, livelihoods, art forms, houses, styles of dress, and dialects. In order to study people from Burma without studying different ethnic groups, generalizations must be drawn. The information below may not apply to every group and may even be an example from a single tradition.

Agriculture

Burma's Irrawaddy Delta is literally the heart of the nation. Not only is it geographically central, but in a country where two-thirds of the citizens are farmers, fertile land is the most prized possession. A quarter of the land is considered arable, about 43 million acres. About 23 million of those acres are currently cultivated, mostly by small family farms. The average size of a farm is 5.6 acres and 86% of farms are less than 10 acres in size. Rice occupies about half of the farmed land, with pulses, sesame, and sugarcane being the next largest crops.¹ In fact, Burma was once known as "The Rice Bowl of Asia," supplying much of Southeast Asia with its rice during the years of British rule (1824-1948). Unfortunately, the policies of the military government have systematically ruined the rice industry. Journalist Tony Broadmoor aptly states, "Farmers, human rights workers, and diplomats say the government's incoherent policy making – such as the government's drive to boost exports and increase the quota system requiring farmers to sell rice at a subsidized rate – as well as the lack of infrastructure, has created an army of disenfranchised rice farmers and scores of hungry citizens."²

Diet

The typical Burmese diet consists of rice, vegetables, and fish.

¹ Peter G. Warr. "The Failure of Myanmar's Agricultural Policies." Southeast Asian Affairs. 2000. P219-239. <http://0-web.ebscohost.com> (accessed 2 May 2010).

² Tony Broadmoor. "Empty Bowl: Rice in Burma." The Irrawaddy News Magazine . March 2003. <http://www.irrawaddy.org> (accessed 21 April 2010).



Bagan mother and daughters; Photo: Pascal Boegli, 2006



Akha woman and child; Photo: Pascal Boegli, 2006



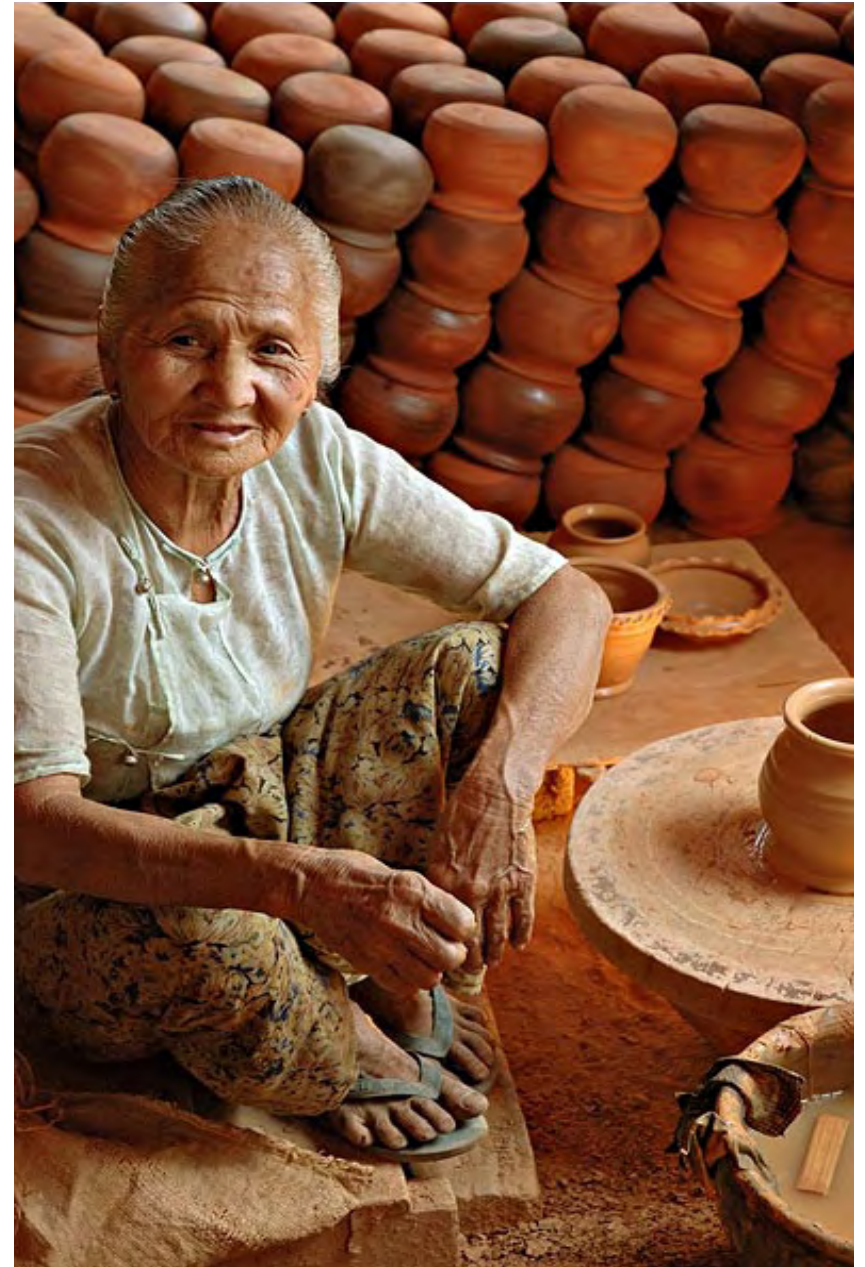
Woman of the Loi tribe; Photo: Pascal Boegli, 2006



Pa-O women; Photo: Pascal Boegli, 2005



Woman from the Palaung tribe weaving; Photo: Pascal Boegli, 2006



Woman making pottery; Photo: Pascal Boegli, 2006



Novice monks; Photo: Pascal Boegli, 2006



Praying to a Buddha at Mahamuni Pagoda in Mandalay; Photo: Pascal Boegli, 2005

Textiles and Dress

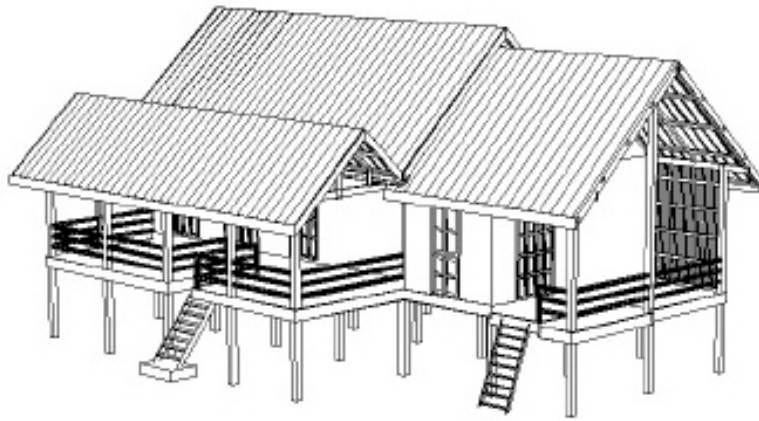
The creation of textiles is an important tradition for Burmese groups. For centuries, Westerners have been fascinated by the bold, bright blues, pinks, and reds and intricate patterns in native textiles from this region. Each ethnic group has distinct textiles patterns and colors filled with significance and a weaver could spend as long as a year creating a special garment. In current times, most people wear simple manufactured clothing, but traditional dress is still an important part of holidays, ceremonies, and special occasions. For more pictures and information on Burmese textiles, please see *Textiles from Burma: Featuring the James Henry Green Collection* edited by Elizabeth Dell and Sandra Dudley.¹

Religion

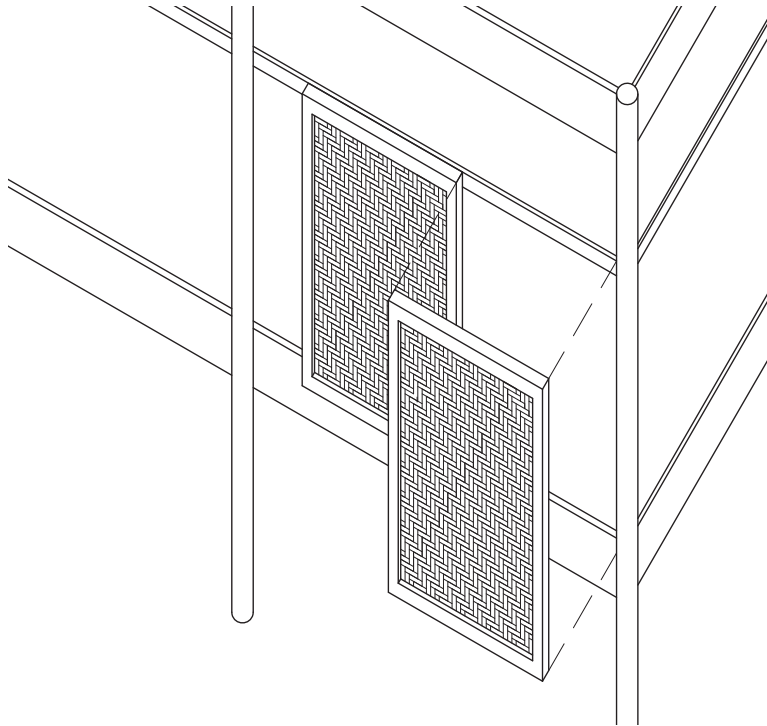
The official religion of Burma is Theravada Buddhism with about 90% practicing. Buddhism permeates life for most people in Burma. Aside from religious practices and holidays, children are educated in monasteries and monks are important public figures. Every male child spends some time as a monk for as long as they wish. Monks assist their community by filling any role necessary. They educate children, feed the hungry, perform countless charitable acts, and even act as political figures when necessary. Throughout Burmese history, monks have stood up for the people they serve in peaceful protest against the government and military. Until the past decade, the military would not act in violence towards monks.

While Buddhism is undoubtedly the most prevalent religion, many Burmese secretly practice other religions for fear of discrimination by others and the government, which does not tolerate other religions. The second most prevalent religion is Christianity due to the many Christian missionaries that have visited the country.

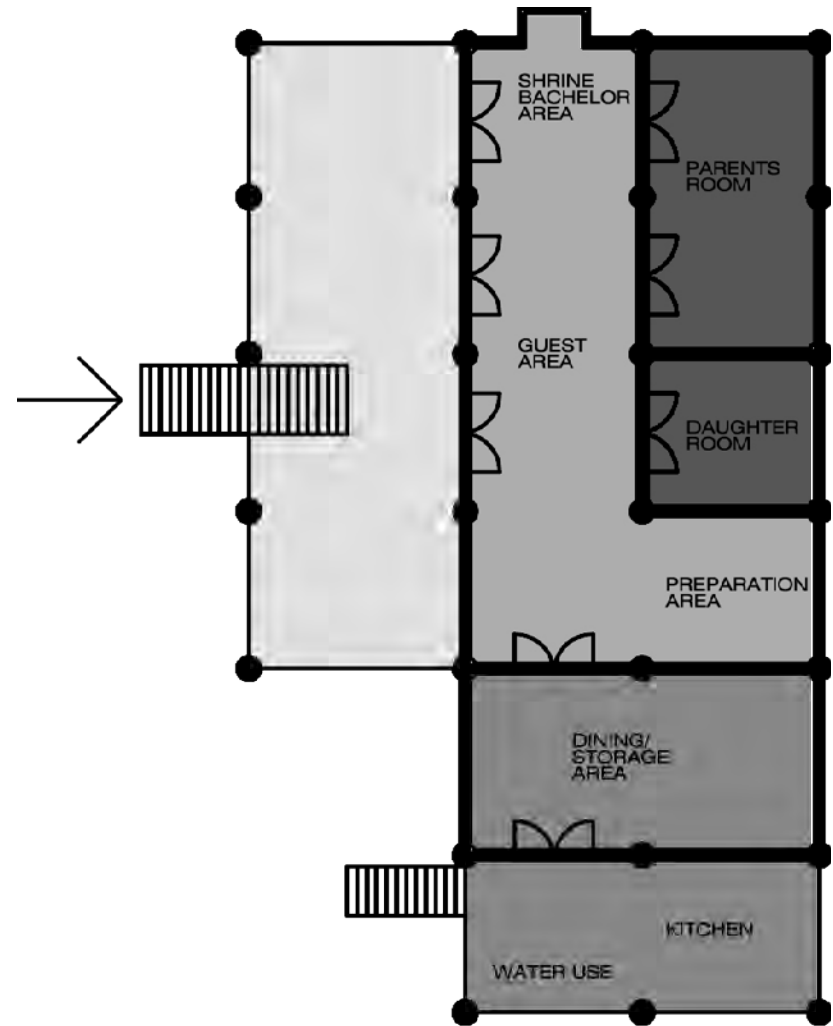
¹ Textiles from Burma: Featuring the James Henry Green Collection. Edited by Elizabeth Dell & Sandra Dudley. London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 2003.



Typical Mon house; Image: Yin Min Paik



Typical construction method: stick frame and panel in-fill



Mon house plan: use of areas and degrees of privacy. The front porch is the most public area while the rear bedrooms are the most private; Adapted from Yin Min Paik

Traditional Burmese Architecture:

Burma is famous for its golden and pointed domed temples occurring in cities and throughout the country side. There are also some Chinese-style palaces. However, by studying rural housing we can learn much more about the everyday life of Burmese people.

Just like other forms of art, different ethnic groups have their own architectural traditions. Here I have used the structure of a traditional Mon house as an example. The basic structure consists of a wooden frame with round poles for columns and smaller wooden pieces acting as beams. There is a shallow pitched roof with a thatch covering. The walls are composed of woven grass panels that in fill this frame or in some cases, wooden planks. The windows in the house have no glass but are covered with shutters. Most importantly, the house is raised always raised off the ground for safety from animals, flooding, and intruders.

The layout of the house tells us much about social structure in Burmese society. Up the flight of stairs from the ground is an open porch. This is the main entertaining space for visitors. Off the front porch is a multifunction, semi-public living area. This is a social area, the place where guests and unmarried sons would sleep, a preparation area, and also serves as a shrine. To the rear of this room are private sleeping areas for the parents and for the daughters. To the side of the main structure is a secondary structure that houses a dining and storage area. Off of this is a second porch for cooking and water use. Notably absent is a bathroom which would be located in a secondary structure away from the house.

Because the Burmese climate is tropical, outdoor living is preferred. Walls serve the sole purposes of privacy and security.

All information on the traditional Mon house from:

Min Paik, Yin. "Traditional Houses as a Complement in Built Environment." Ph. D. Candidate, Department of Architecture, Mandalay Technology University, Mandalay, Myanmar.



Shwezigon Pagoda, Bagan; Pascal Boegli, 2006



Stupas on the plain of Bagan; Photo: Pascal Boegli, 2006



Monastery on Inle Lake; Photo: Pascal Boegli, 2006



Intha house on Inle Lake; Photo: Pascal Boegli, 2005



Palaung house; Photo: worldisround.com



Thanboddhay Temple, Monywa; Photo: Pascal Boegli, 2005



A Karen refugee watches Thai soldiers at a refugee camp; Photo: PRX.org



Refugees at the Huay Nam Khao refugee camp in Thailand; Photo: The New York Times, 2009

Burmese Refugee Experiences:

The political conflict in Burma has been occurring for twenty to sixty years, depending on the viewpoint. There is government sanctioned ethnic persecution, including a 1982 citizenship law that denies citizenship to particular ethnic groups, who are now stateless. There are an incredible number of Burmese refugees in Southeast Asia; registered and unregistered refugees are estimated to be in the millions. Thailand hosts the majority of these refugees, with 190,000 registered and as many as two million unregistered refugees. The government of Thailand treats these refugees very poorly, confining them to fenced camps with little to no supplies or services. Refugees must build their own housing from whatever they can find and must run their own schools. Women in these camps live in fear of rape from the Thai soldiers guarding them. Refugees are not permitted into the cities, even for medical care, and it is illegal for doctors to treat them without approval.¹ In addition, there have been reports of the Thai military forcing refugees back across the border into Burma, which is a clear violation of the UNHCR Refugee Convention of 1951 which prohibits refoulement.

Of the 75,000 refugees resettled in the United States in 2009, 18,275 were from Burma. This a new development; before 2004, there were only 2,700 Burmese refugees in the United States. However, between 2004 and 2008, 64,000 Burmese refugees were resettled. One of the locations where these refugees are currently being resettled is Massachusetts, which accepted 358 refugees in 2009.² It is clear that Burmese refugees are a priority for the US Refugee Admissions Program. However, Burmese people have less tools to acclimate to life in the United States than many other refugees. They come from a radically different lifestyle, climate, and culture. However, more importantly, because Burmese migration to the United States is a recent occurrence, Burmese refugees will arrive in the United States with no social networks to help them transition to their new lives.

¹ Victoria Armour-Hileman, *Singing to the Dead: A Missioner's Life among Refugees from Burma*. Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 2002.

² United States Office of Refugee Resettlement web site

Bonding Social Networks:

One of the greatest shortcomings of the United States refugee resettlement program is the denial of the importance of and lack of support for refugee communities. The program stresses self sufficiency but does not recognize that no human is truly self sufficient. We are social animals and without social support we cannot function. More importantly, we need to be around people who have similar experiences, ideologies, and goals as ourselves. Thus, half of the program for the resettlement center will focus on creating bonding social networks among refugees. These social networks are essential to the resettlement process. Migrants will often learn the language and culture of a new place much more quickly when a person of similar background explains it to them. Previous migrants become cultural ambassadors with whom to discuss new experiences. The resettlement center will become a place where refugees can help each other and learn together.

Temporary refugee housing:

Refugee housing is a complex issue. Should rental prices or location quality take precedence? Should refugees be housed together or in standard housing? Will refugees understand American apartments, furniture, and appliances? Currently, the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) provides resettlement agencies \$1,800 per refugee for housing and supplies for the first month of residence. Resettlement agencies use this money to place refugees in normal apartments and to provide refugees with the bare essentials for survival. Then they are left in the apartment in a way that can only feel isolating.

Instead, I propose temporary, community housing for refugees. The building will include twenty rental units of varying sizes.

These units will be furnished with standard furniture and new refugees will be surrounded by others from the same place and culture who will help them adjust to these new American-style apartments. Additionally, all units are handicapped accessible, with at least one bedroom sized for accessibility, because of the high rate of injuries amongst Burmese refugees.

These units would be free for the first month, with a reduced rent subsequent months to be calculated based on income. The residency would be limited to one year, although residents could move out as soon as they desire. This will ensure and space and opportunities are available for new refugees while maintaining a mixture of experience levels. The desire is not to create an enclave, but a transitional community. Once refugees are more comfortable and confident, they should move into private housing. For more on design principles, see the chapter on unit design.

Communal spaces:

There will also be larger scaled gathering places for members of the refugee community. First, there is a large community room which includes a larger kitchen, a dining area, and a living room area. Because units are compact, this space can be used whenever gatherings exceed the ability of individual units. This can also serve as a learning space where refugees can be taught how to use, for example, American kitchen appliances with the assistance of center employees. There is a large covered patio to the south of the community room, which can be used in nice weather and serves as a link between the community and the second floor of the school.

In addition, most rooftops have been designed as agricultural cultivation areas. The planters located on the roof can be allocated to individual families, or used as a community resource. Included are tool storage areas and refrigerated storage for crops. Refugees may be able to grow vegetables native to Burma that they would not be able to find in a grocery store. Farming is a very important communal activity in many rural areas and the results can not only supplement diets but also the household income.

Finally, I have designed a small, nondenominational religious space. This is intended as a place for quiet reflection rather than organized services. It is located on the roof, surrounded by a wall for privacy. There is a small nook facing east which could hold religious iconography if desired. The design would be suitable for Buddhist meditation as well as other forms of prayer.

Maintenance:

For the general maintenance of the community, there is a mail area, a garbage room, and facility storage. Also included is an office for the housing manager who will be in charge of the property.

Bridging Social Networks:

Equally important to the success of refugees are the ties they will form with native people in their new neighborhood. These people will explain the culture of the United States to refugees, help them find places to shop and work, make sure they do not get taken advantage of, and provide friendship and any other assistance needed. It is essential that refugees are not isolated, but interwoven with the existing neighborhood. However, it may be difficult for many refugees to find such a person that is willing to help and mentor them. To foster these connections, I have created program elements that will bring refugees and American natives or long-time residents together to encourage the creation of bridging social networks.

Small Language and Vocational School

Lutheran Social Services of Springfield currently provides free English classes to immigrants and refugees, however, they do so in a subpar building. The new school will provide a more advanced and appropriate building for teaching English and vocational classes, as well as other amenities that are essential in a school. In the Springfield area, there are 15,000 people who are foreign born and 45,000 people who speak a language other than English at home. The school will be open to all members of the community fulfilling a need in the Springfield area. Burmese refugees will be taking classes alongside other immigrants and in this way will connect to the greater community.

There are four medium classrooms with removable dividers to create larger classrooms, a large classroom on the ground floor that will serve as a multipurpose space, and a library. The library will include a computer area, an administrative area, shared teacher offices, and a meeting room that doubles as a job placement center. The school would strive to find employers to meet with refugees and set up appropriate jobs.

Lutheran Social Services Offices

It is very important to bring the Lutheran Social Services of Springfield offices on site. Not only will it provide the Lutheran employees and volunteers with a nicer space, but it will also confirm the legitimacy of their work. These employees will serve as the gatekeepers of the center and the protectors of the refugees. Moving the offices to the center will give refugees more constant access to the social workers and will hopefully help them do their job more effectively and efficiently. Hopefully this will create more powerful bonds between workers and refugees. This area includes nine offices for employees, a conference room, a lounge, a waiting area, and a donation storage area.

Rentable Public Areas

Perhaps most importantly, various rentable public areas will bring the residents of the neighborhood into the Resettlement Center as well as provide assets to the entire community. This second function is incredibly important because the Refugee Resettlement Center cannot function without community support for the center and refugees. Neighborhood residents must see how the center will help improve the lives of not only refugees, but everyone living in the community. They must want to participate in the life of the center.

Along Union Street are four small retail spaces. These retail spaces will give refugees and community members the opportunity to open small businesses on one of the busy retail streets of West Springfield and provide a reason for many people to visit the center. Hopefully these small shops will help enliven Union Street as a pleasant place to shop.

A large event hall will be available for rent to the community as well. This place can serve as a setting for not only fund raising events related to the center, but also for the special occasions in the community. It will serve as a possible venue for dances, bar and bat mitzvahs, birthday parties, anniversaries, large meetings and dinners.

Adjoining the event hall is an exterior event space which has the potential to house similar functions. These two event spaces can work as one or independently. The exterior event space has the added use as the site of a weekly market in the summer months. Simple folding tables will transform this plaza into a place where both Center residents and neighbors can sell their goods and crafts, side by side.

Bonding Social Networks

ties and relationships between people that are similar to each other in situation: ties between refugees living at the center together

housing units

community areas (including agricultural space)

maintenance

Bridging Social Networks

ties and relationships between people that are different to each other in situation: ties between refugees and members of the larger community

language and vocational school

Lutheran Social Services offices

rentable areas (retail and event spaces)

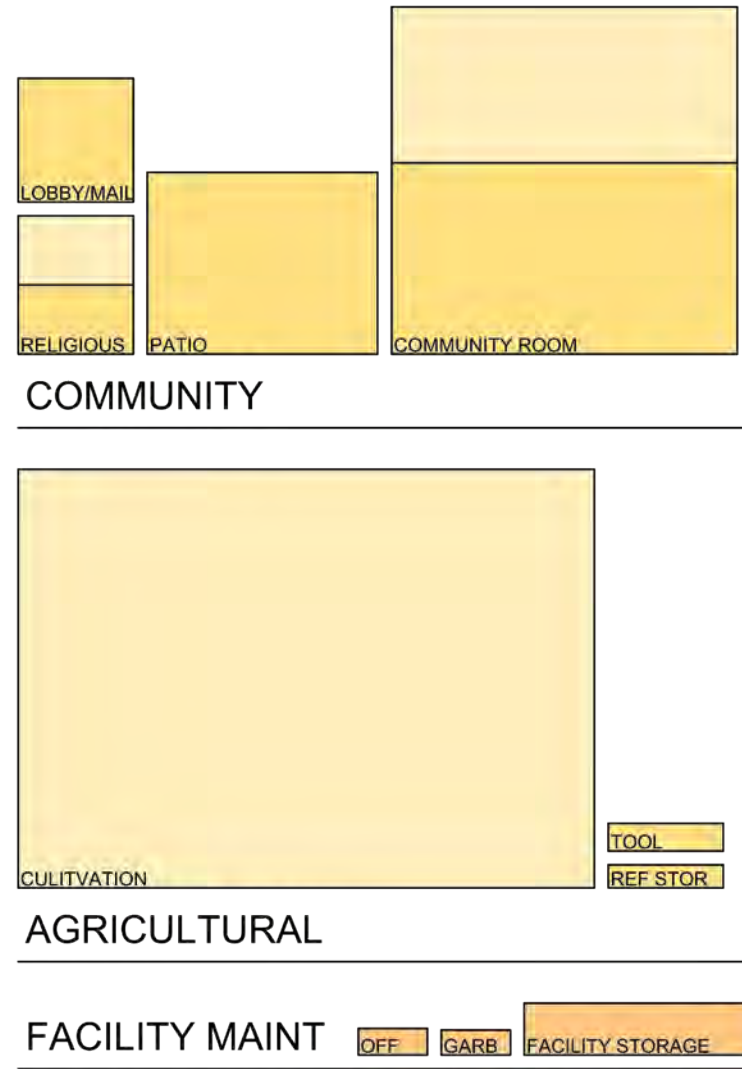
Program and Parking:

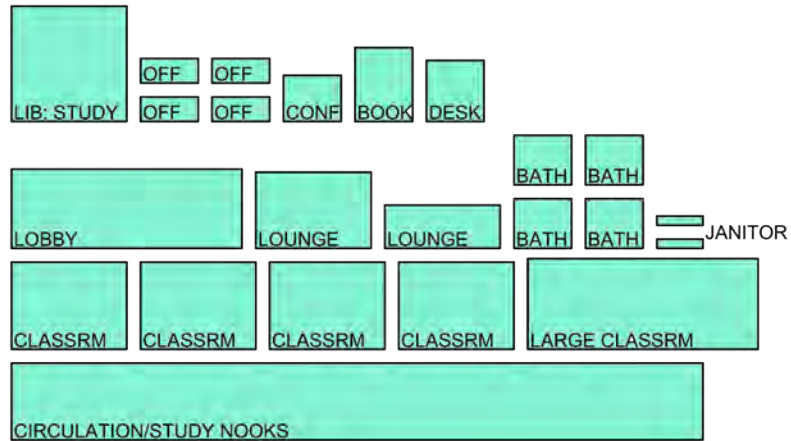
Bonding (Refugee)						
Units	Level	SF per unit	No. Units	Total Interior Space	Total Exterior Space	No. Parking Spaces
1 BR unit	2	466 int/150 ext	3	1,398	450	3
2 BR unit	1	685 int/320 ext	6	4,110	1,920	6
3 BR unit	2	870 int/365 ext	5	4,350	1,825	5
4 BR unit	2,3	1313 int/418 ext	6	7,878	2,508	6
Community Areas				4,157	4,883	0
lobby/mailroom	1	670	1	670		
community room	2	3112 int/2536 ext	1	3,112	2,536	
[kitchen, dining, living, patio]						
covered patio	1	1970	1		1,970	
religious space	3	375 int/377 ext	1	375	377	
Agricultural				150	11,342	0
cultivation areas	3,4	1673/4305/5364	1		11342	
tool storage	3	150	1	150		
crop storage [see refrig. stor.]						
Facility Maintenance				869		1
housing manager office	1	86	1	86		1
garbage room	1	81	1	81		
general storage	1	576	1	576		
refrigerated storage	1	126	1	126		
Bridging (Public)				8,863		46
Language and Vocational School						
lobby	1	860	1	860		
lounge	1,2	413/234	2	647		
large classroom	1	983	1	983		13
classroom	1,2	472	4	1888		24
bathroom	1,2	134	4	536		
janitor closet	1,2	18	2	36		
library	2	1411	1	1411		
book area		[200]	[1]			
desk/secretary		[128]	[1]			
copy room/storage		[38]	[1]			
conference room/job placement		[125]	[1]			
computer/study space/circulation		[62]	[1]			
teacher office		[67]	[4]			
study nooks/circulation/other				2,502		8
						1/employee

A diagram showing a collection of yellow rectangular blocks arranged in a grid-like pattern. The blocks are organized into four rows:

- Row 1: Three blocks, each labeled "1 BR UNIT".
- Row 2: Six blocks, each labeled "2 BR UNIT".
- Row 3: Five blocks, each labeled "3 BR UNIT".
- Row 4: Six blocks, each labeled "4 BR UNIT".

The total number of blocks is 20.





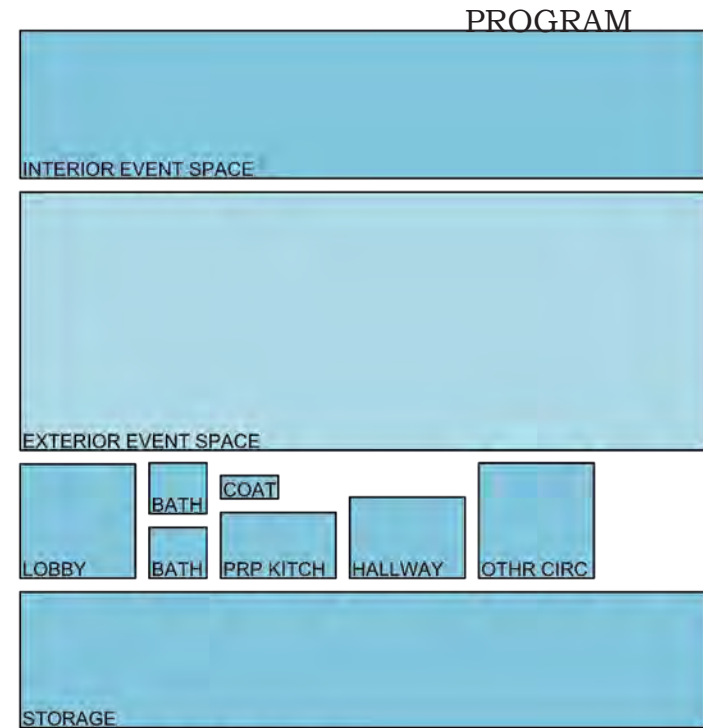
SCHOOL



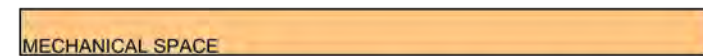
LUTHERAN



RETAIL



EVENT SPACE



GARAGE LEVEL + 50,000 SF GARAGE SPACE

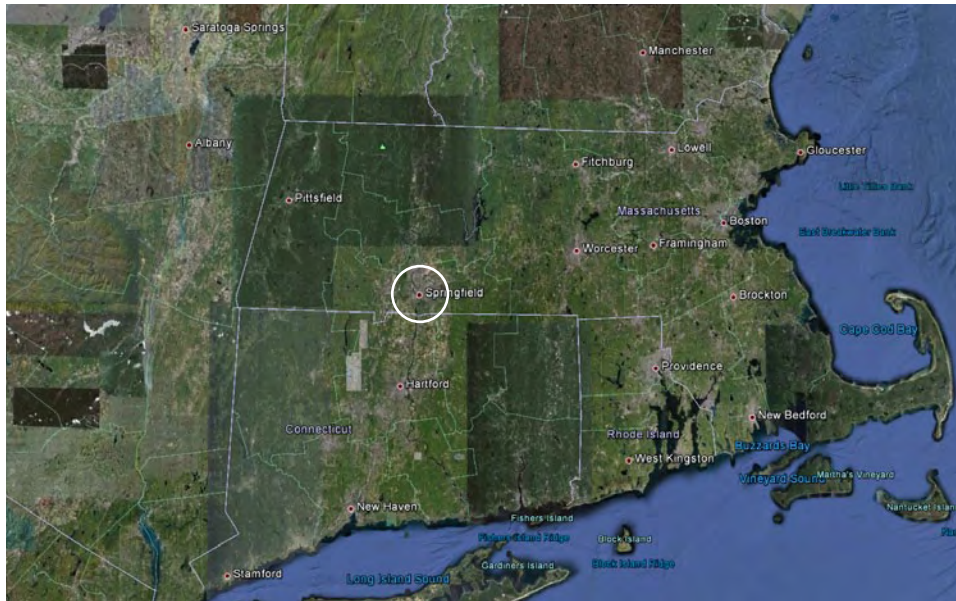
West Springfield, MA:

In 2009, 18,275 Burmese refugees were relocated to the United States. Massachusetts hosted 358 of these refugees.¹ According to a news article ², more than one hundred refugees were settled in the Springfield area with the help of Jewish Family Services of Springfield and Lutheran Social Services of West Springfield. Settling in the Springfield area has some benefits for refugees. Large cities have amenities such as public transportation, employment, hospitals, cultural centers, schools, shopping, etc, which would be very helpful in adapting to their new home. At the same time, it would be difficult for refugees to settle in a city like Springfield. Many of them are used to a rural lifestyle. Refugees may suffer as the victims of crime and air pollution and may feel uncomfortable with the density and congestion of the city.

I have chosen the town of West Springfield for the resettlement center due to the proximity to Springfield just across the Connecticut River and the suburban, neighborhood feel. Proximity to Springfield is essential for access to both jobs and public transportation. Less dense West Springfield will be an easier adjustment for refugees and will be a good place for children. West Springfield is also a diverse neighborhood with 15.6% of residents born in a foreign country and 22% speaking a language other than English at home. Because of these demographics, there will be many residents to benefit from the small school in the program.

¹ United States Office of Refugee Resettlement web site; Numbers for 2010 are not yet available.

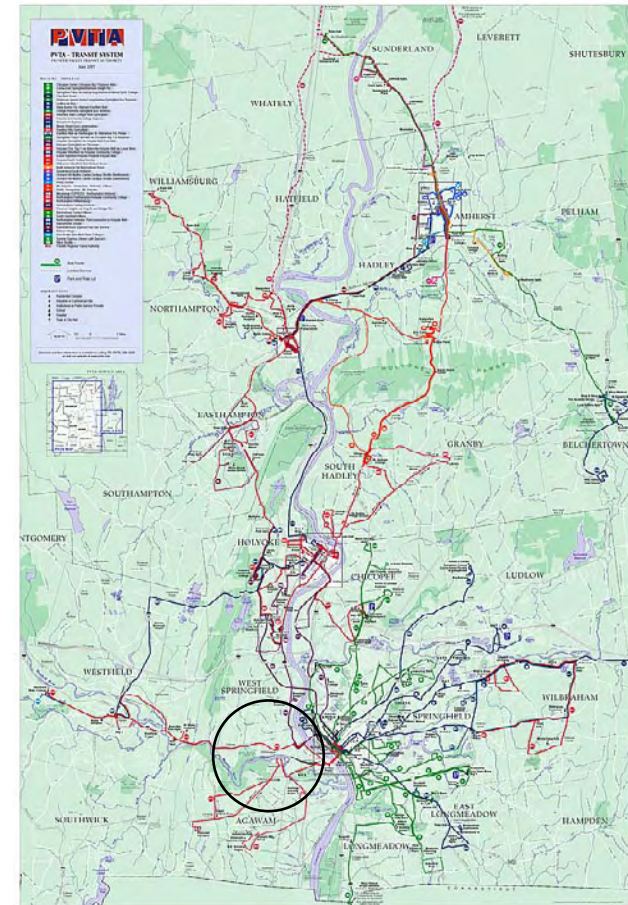
² Elizabeth Roman. "More than 100 Burmese refugees relocated to Western Mass. to escape reported abuse in Myanmar." *Masslive.com*. 01 November 2009. http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2009/11/more_than_100_burmese_refugees.html



Springfield, MA



West Springfield, MA



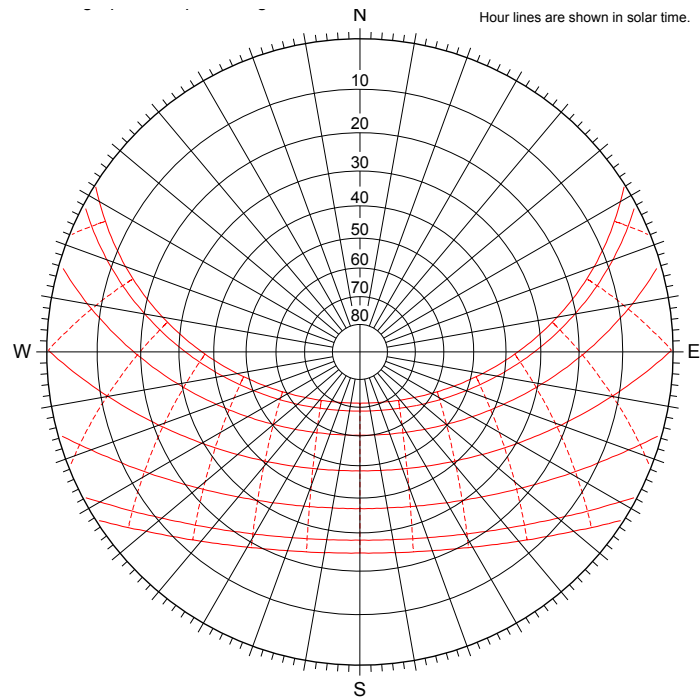
PTVA Bus Map showing all routes in the Springfield area

Statistics and Climate:

Springfield, MA

Population: 156,000 people
 Area: 33.2 sq mi
 Density: 4,693 people/sq mi
 Median household income: \$34,113
 Individuals below the poverty line: 27.4%
 Foreign born: 15,062, 9.8%
 Individuals that speak a language other than English at home: 44,748, 32%

Sun Path Diagram



West Springfield, MA

Population: 28,000 people
 Area: 17.5 sq mi
 Density: 1,665 people/sq mi
 Median household income: \$51,099
 Individuals below the poverty line: 11.5%
 Foreign born: 4,412, 15.6%
 Individuals that speak a language other than English at home: 5,947, 22%

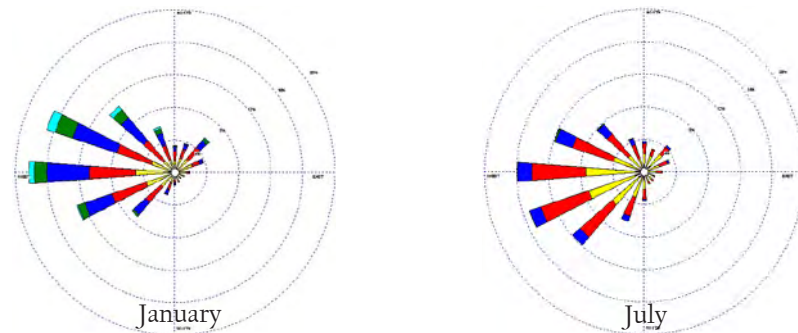
Average Temperatures

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
Max °F	34.1	37.7	47.7	59.9	71.7	80.0	84.9	82.5	74.3	63.1	50.9	39.0	60.5
Mean °F	25.7	28.8	38.0	48.9	59.9	68.5	73.7	71.6	63.2	51.9	41.8	30.8	50.2
Min °F	17.2	19.9	28.3	37.9	48.1	57.0	62.4	60.7	52.1	40.6	32.6	22.6	40.0

Average Rain

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
Inch	3.46	2.98	4.09	4.33	4.01	4.11	4.15	3.46	3.79	3.88	3.81	3.61	45.68

Wind Rose





Site and surrounding area

Bliss Street and Union Street:

I focused the site search on areas within a ten minute walk to the nearest bus stop. I was also limited to plots with either multifamily residential or business zoning. Luckily I found a great open plot on the corner of busy, commercial Union Street and quiet residential Bliss Street. While multifamily residential zoning is essential for my temporary housing, it was also really important to have public visibility. This site has the best of both worlds. The site is also only a five minute walk from both bus routes that run through West Springfield and a five to ten minute walk from the central town green, schools, and shopping areas.

Originally, the site included parcels 107-002-004 through 008, totalling 49,700 square feet or 1.14 acres. The four smaller, residential plots were unbuilt. Lot 004 was commercial, with a small building containing a rugby shop that would be removed. However, after some site planning it became clear that the program would have to be reduced or the site would have to be increased. Lot 107-002-003 was added to the site. That plot also contained a building housing a car parts store. It was decided that these two businesses had plenty of other options for rental retail space along Union Street and the resettlement center would contribute more to the community. The final site totals 87,200 square feet or about 2 acres.



The site in the town center



Aerial view of the site

Bliss Street



Union Street



Around town





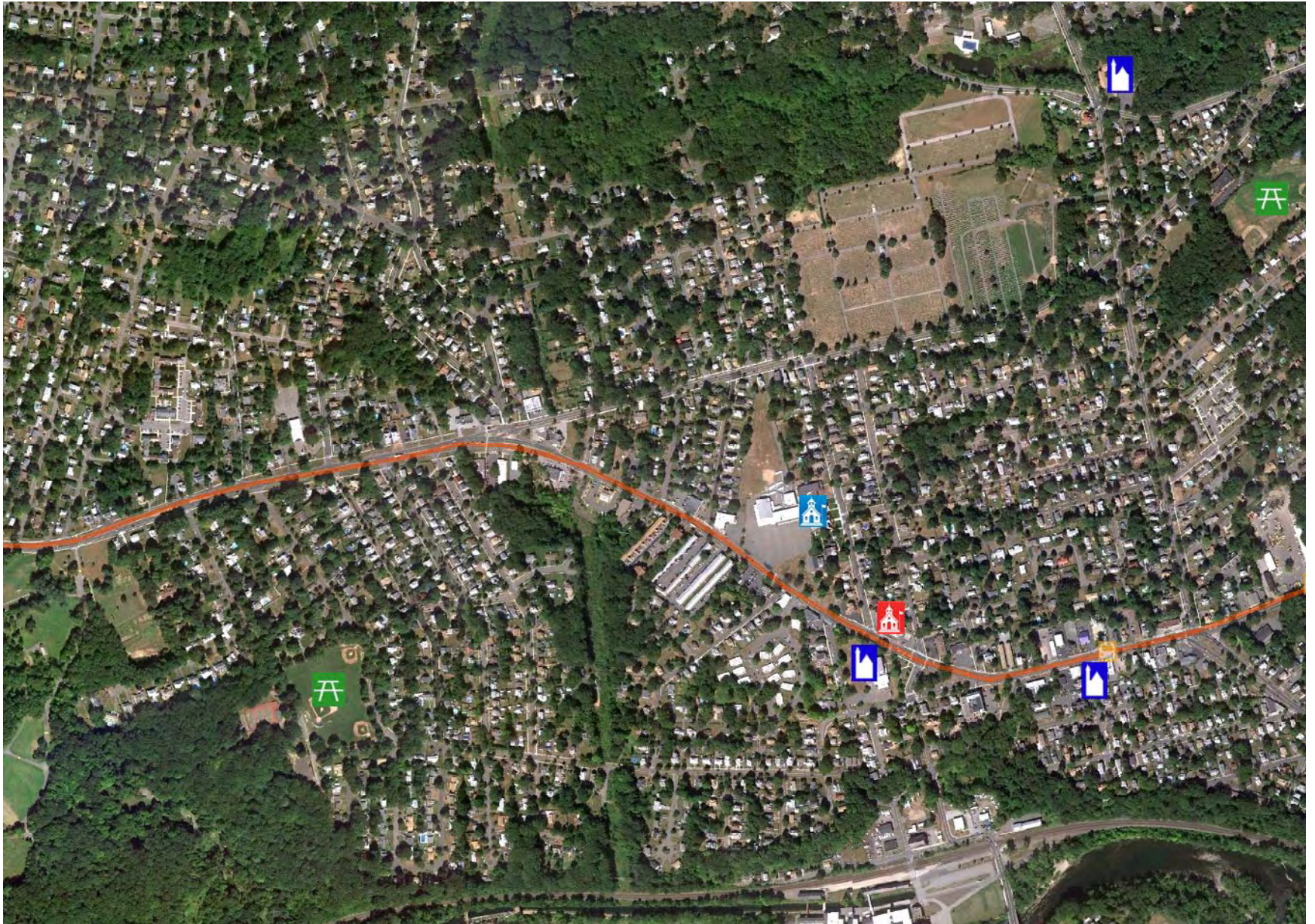
Western Corner of Site from Union St

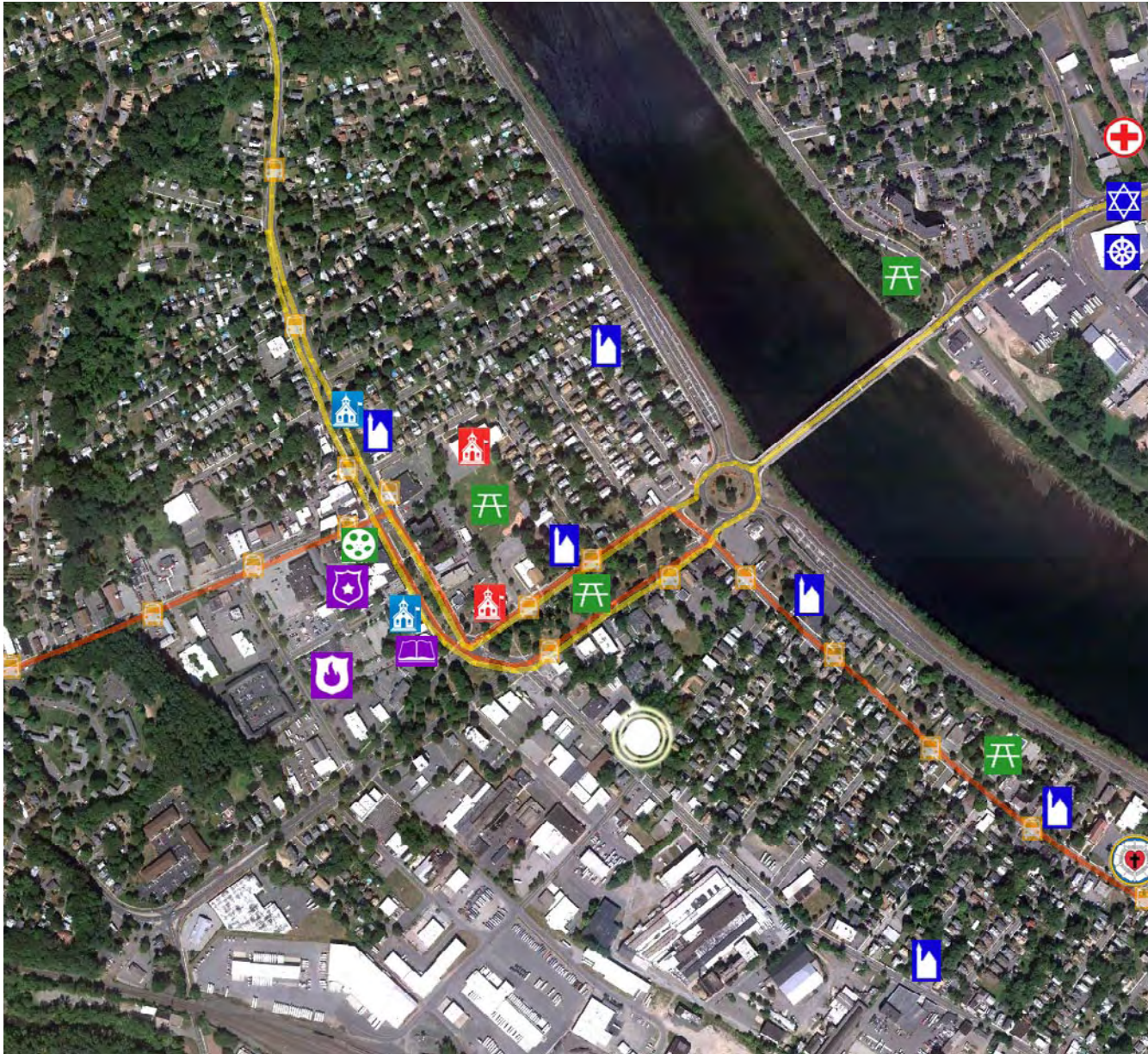


Front of site along Union St



Southern corner of site parallel to Union St

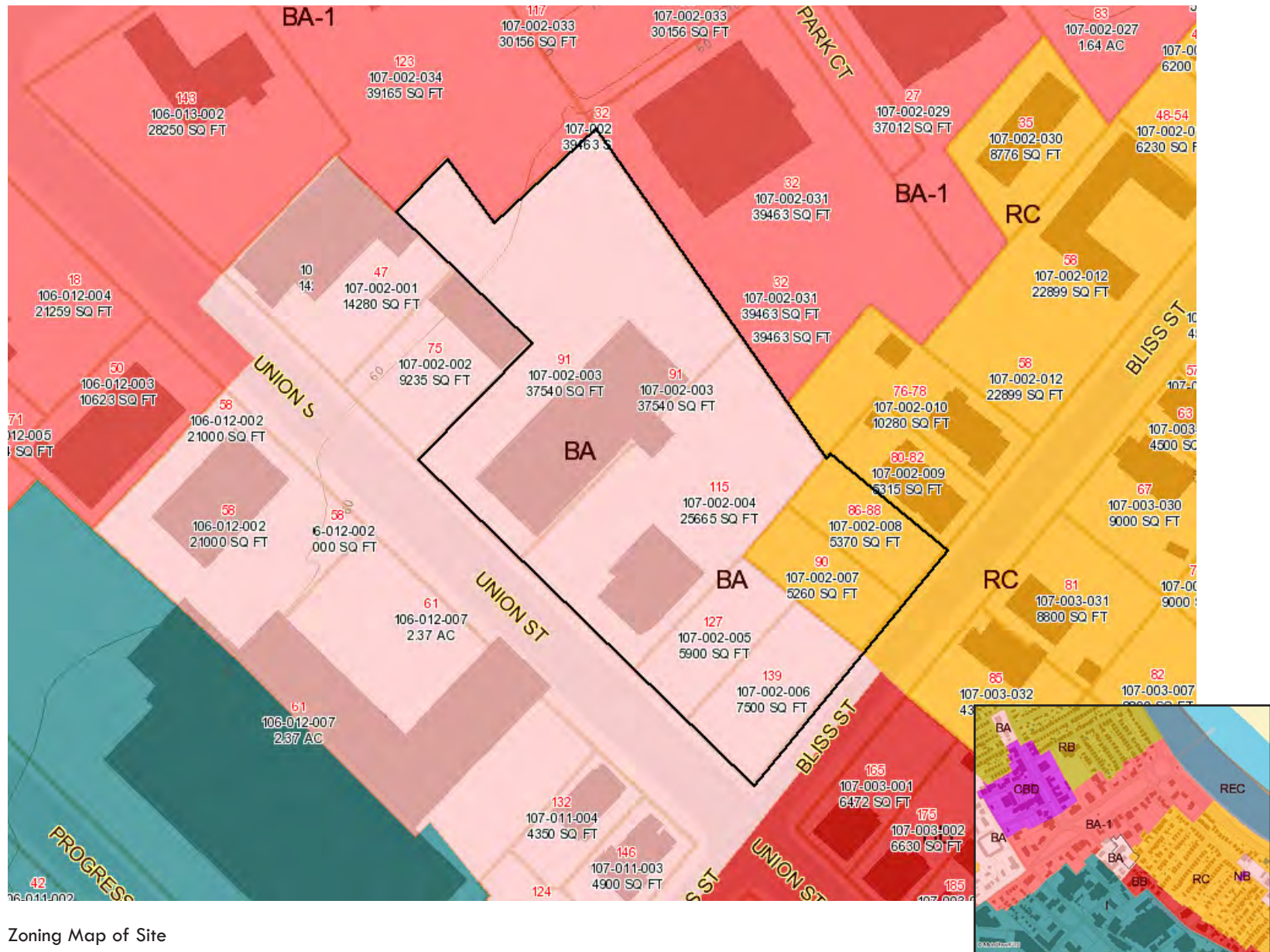




Local Amenities:

- Site
- Lutheran
- Social Services
- Public School
- Private School
- Library
- Bus Stop
- Police Station
- Fire Station
- Medical
- Park/Recreation
- Theater
- Church
- Synagogue
- Buddhist Temple





West Springfield Zoning Laws:

Business A Zoning (BA-pink)

The purpose of the BA District is to provide areas for a wide range of retail uses/services and commercial activities, of higher densities, along primary roads to serve as business highway corridors within West Springfield. BA Districts are especially capable of accommodating high-volume traffic generating uses.

Residence C Zoning (RC-orange)

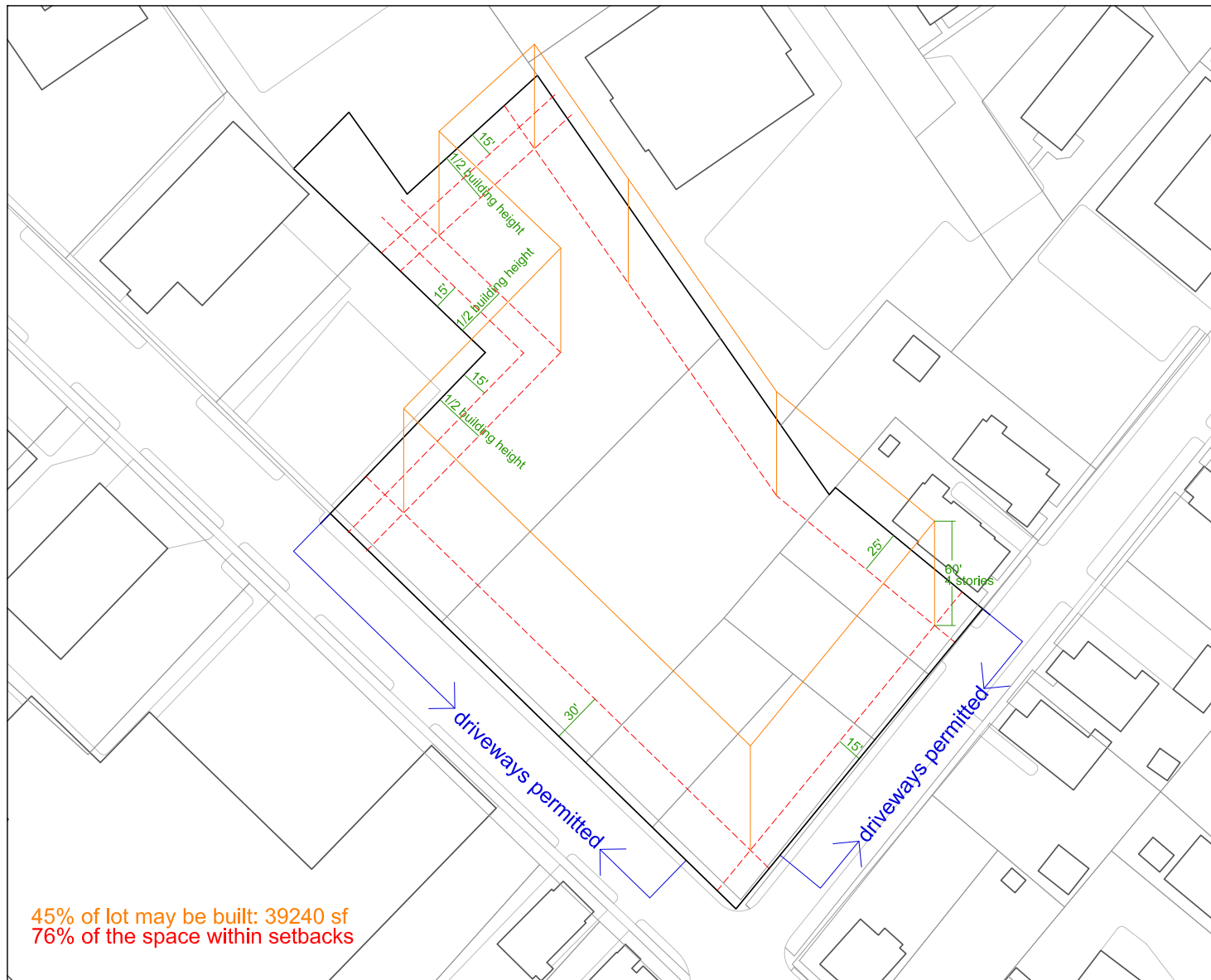
The purpose of the RC District is to provide residential neighborhoods of higher density that allow for a mix of residential and professional office uses.

Combined Zoning Use

For the site, mostly RC dense residential zoning requirements will be taken into consideration since these are designed to protect residents and tend to be more strict. However, the BA zoning allows for many more functions on the site which is essential to the program of the project.

Table 5-1 (p. 150) tells which uses are permitted in certain zoning districts. All of the program elements are permitted (P) or permitted upon site plan review (SPR) in a RC district. These uses may include multi-family dwellings (SPR), religious spaces (P), profit and non-profit education (P), recreation community center (SPR), professional and business offices (SPR), agriculture (P), accessory structures (P), and storage (P). The BA district permits all these uses, either P or SPR as well as allowing retail shops and food establishments.

In order to determine how large the site must be for a given building, Table 6-1B (p. 154) must be consulted. For multiple family dwellings of more than six units, the minimum lot size is 43,000 sq ft plus 3,000 sq ft for every unit over six. This rule would limit the of 87,200 sq ft to 20 units. If needed, these area requirements may be waived with a Special Permit by submitting a site plan to the Board of Appeals, so additional units would be a possibility in the case of future expansion.



Setbacks diagram

Section 8.3 (p. 156) describes the conditions for a Special Permit multi-family dwelling. If a building is to be one story, there can be 10 units per acre; two stories allows 20 units per acre; three stories allows 25 units per acre, and four stories allows 30 units per acre. Since the site is 2 acres, as many as 40 units would be allowed in a two story building, or 50 units in a three story building. However, this doesn't take into account the space that will be occupied by other program elements.

Table 6-1B (p. 154) also specifies a minimum lot width and depth of 150 ft, while the building site averages 230 feet deep and 325 feet wide. It specifies 100 ft of street frontage, while the site has 552 ft. Finally, it specifies a front yard of 30 ft, side yard of 15 ft, and rear yard of 25 ft. Special Permit indicates that the setback should be 1.2 times the max height of the building and that the distance of the buildings from the property line must be half the height of the building or 15 feet. However, Section 6.37 (p. 155) states that a building may follow the average setback of the buildings on either side if they are in the same zoning district. The front setback will be set at the average setback along the street, which is must less than 30 feet.

Table 6-2 (p. 155) states that the maximum allowed height of the building is four stories and 60 feet. It also states that the building can only cover 45% of the lot. However, by Special Permit as much as 52% of the lot could be covered according to Section 8.332.

Finally, Section 9 (p. 159) describes the requirements for parking. Parking spaces shall be sized 9 feet by 18 feet. No more than two access drives are allowed per parcel and they can be up to 24 feet in width. Off street parking is not permitted in the required front yard. Access drives cannot be located within 40 feet of the intersection of two streets and not within 30 feet of another access drive. Parking areas shall be screened from abutting streets by a four foot high, five foot wide landscaping buffer. No paved parking area can extend more than 80 feet in width.

The number of required parking spaces is determined by Table 9-1 (p. 159). In multiple family housing, a one room efficiency unit must have one and a half spaces, and a unit with two or more bedrooms must have two spaces. This is not practical for refugee housing, as few of them will have cars. I see no reason to provide more than one space per unit. Retail establishments require one space per 200 sq ft. Professional and business offices require one space per 300 sq ft. An indoor place of assembly without fixed seats requires one space per 250 square feet. The required number of accessible spaces is one per 25 total spaces (up to 100 spaces).

Massachusetts State Building Code, 8th Edition:

The Massachusetts State Building Code consists of the International Building Code 2009 plus a package of Massachusetts Amendments. According to the IBC, the program elements fall into three categories of occupancy: A-3, B, and R-2.

A-3: Assembly uses intended for worship, recreation, or amusement and other assembly uses not classified elsewhere in Group A, including but not limited to: art galleries, community halls, dance halls, libraries, places of religious worship, etc. Note: no fixed seating in this group. Note: Areas with an occupant load of less than 50 people are classified as Group B.

B: Business Group B occupancy includes the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof, for office, professional, or service-type transactions, including the storage of records and accounts; includes: barber and beauty shops, dry cleaning and laundries, educational above grade 12, print shops, professional services, etc

R-2: Residential occupancies containing sleeping units or more than two dwelling units where the occupants are primarily permanent in nature including: apartment houses, boarding houses (nontransient), convents, dormitories, fraternities and sororities, hotels (nontransient), live/work units, monasteries, motels (nontransient) vacation timeshare properties. (Transient applies to occupancy of a dwelling unit or sleeping unit for not more than 30 days.)

Construction Type

Type IIIA Construction: Exterior walls are made of noncombustible materials and interior elements are made of any material permitted by code. The height limit is 4 stories and 65 feet and the area limit is 24,000 square feet per story. Installation of an automatic sprinkler system does not increase height or area limits for residential construction above 4 stories or 60 feet, however the allowable building area is doubled.

Exterior Wall Openings

If the building is 15-20 ft from adjacent property lines, 25% of the wall may be open/glazed if unprotected and unsprinklered, 75% if unprotected and sprinklered, and 75% if protected. If the building is more than 25 ft from the property lines, there is no limit on the openings.

Fire Resistance Ratings

primary structural frame: 1 hour	roof construction and secondary members: 1 hour
exterior bearing walls: 2 hours	stairs and shafts: 3 hours
interior bearing walls: 1 hour	elevators: 3 hours
exterior nonbearing walls and partitions: 1 hour	corridors and exits: 3 hours
interior nonbearing walls and partitions: 0 hours	fire walls: 3 hours
floor construction and secondary members: 1 hour	

Interior Finishes

A-3 (sprinklered): Exits - Class B; Corridors - Class B; Rooms and Enclosed Spaces - Class C
A-3 (non-sprinklered): Exits - Class A; Corridors - Class A; Rooms and Enclosed Spaces - Class C
B (sprinklered): Exits - Class B; Corridors - Class C; Rooms and Enclosed Spaces - Class C
B(non-sprinklered): Exits - Class A; Corridors - Class B; Rooms and Enclosed Spaces - Class C
R-2 (sprinklered): Exits - Class C; Corridors - Class C; Rooms and Enclosed Spaces - Class C
R-2 (non-sprinklered): Exits - Class B; Corridors - Class B; Rooms and Enclosed Spaces - Class C

Means of Egress

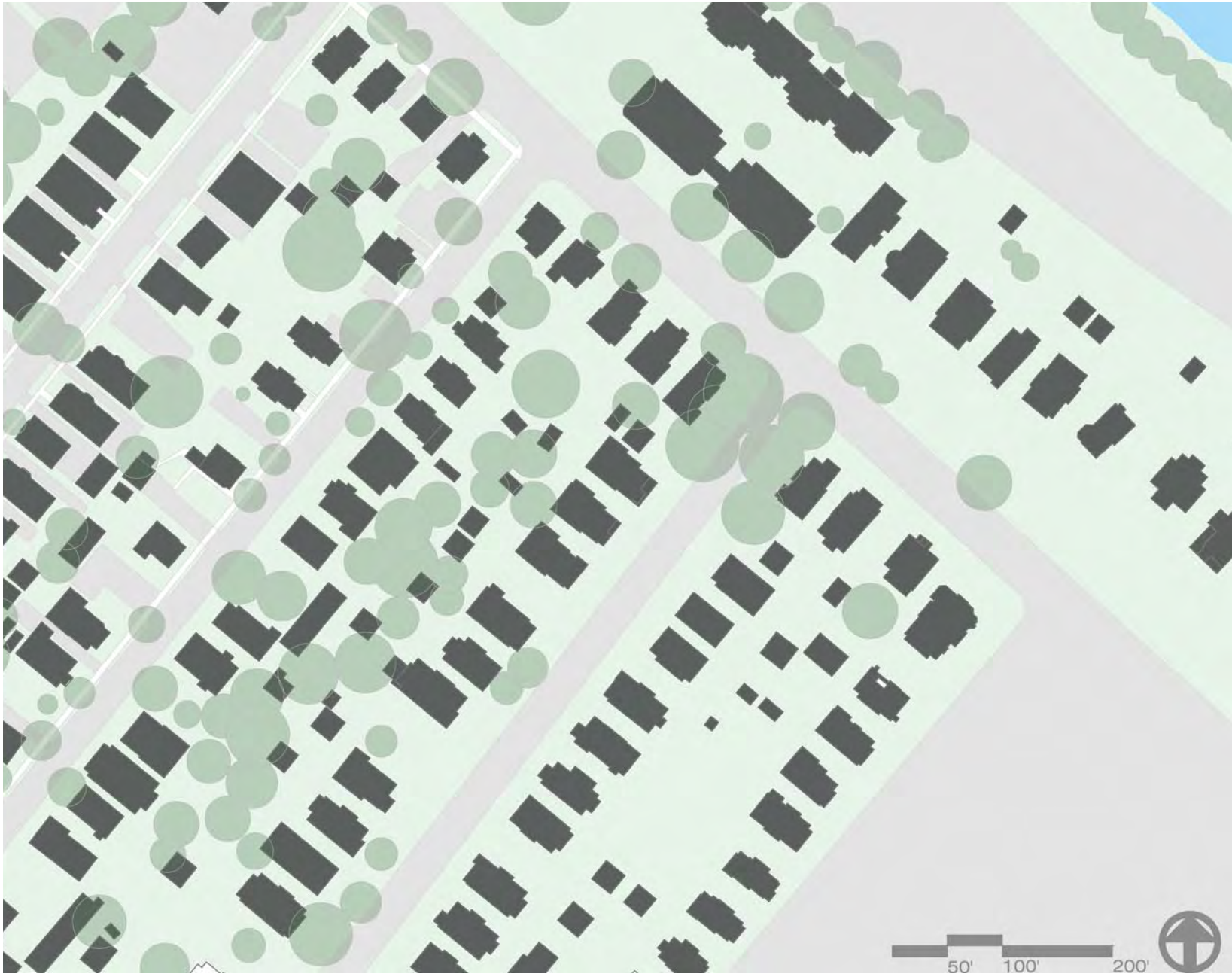
Stair width, exit width, number of exits will be determined for each portion of the building. Stair width is occupancy times .3 inches; Other exit widths are occupancy times .2 inches. Required exits for A and B: one door per 49 occupant load; for R: one door per 10 occupant load. The maximum travel distance: A/R-2 nonsprinklered 200 ft, sprinklered 250 ft; B nonsprinklered 200 ft, sprinklered 300 ft. There can be no dead ends more than 20 ft long; 50 ft if sprinklered in B or R-2. A story with 1-500 occupants requires a minimum of 2 exits.

Accessibility

For buildings with 1-25 units, there must be one accessible unit. Every pedestrian portion of the building must have one accessible route. Parking spaces: 1-25 - 1 accessible space; 26-50 - 2 accessible spaces



Site Plan



Site Strategy:

The layout of program elements on site required a large amount of experimentation and study. It was very important to secure a prime and visible location for public elements while ensuring privacy and security for the refugee housing.

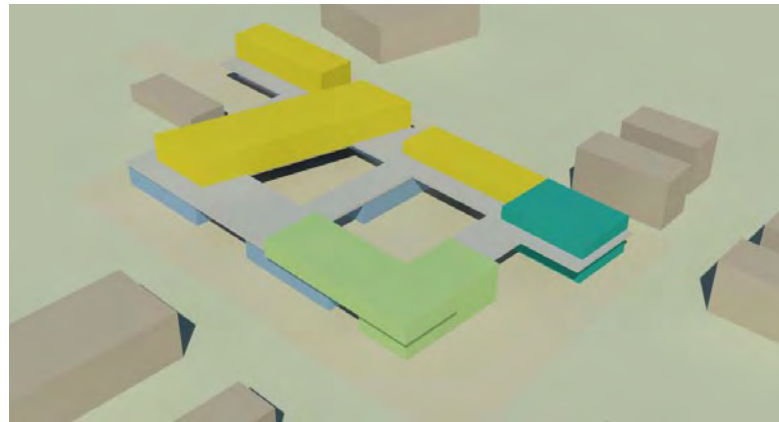
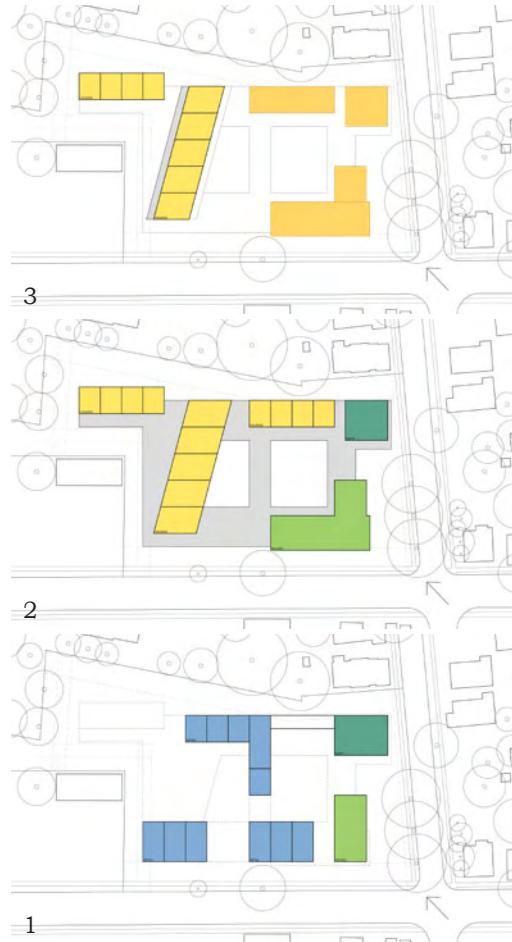
First Review

At the initial review in February, I proposed three alternative schemes for organizing the program. At this point, the program was more simple than the final program. In addition, there were some size increases to fill out the larger site.

PROGRAM ELEMENT	ORIGINAL SIZE	FINAL SIZE
Housing	15,000 sf	22,000 sf
Agricultural	unspecified	11,000 sf
School	4,000 sf	9,000 sf
Rentable Retail	4,000 sf	4,000 sf
Rentable Office (later Lutheran offices)	4,000 sf	3,000 sf
Event Hall	3,000 sf	5,000 sf
Exterior Event Space	4,000 sf	8,000 sf

It is also worth noting that I decided to organize housing in bars, so that each unit would have access to natural light from two ends. This arrangement ensured that each unit could get lots of natural sunlight.

plan 1: vertical division



Refugee Housing

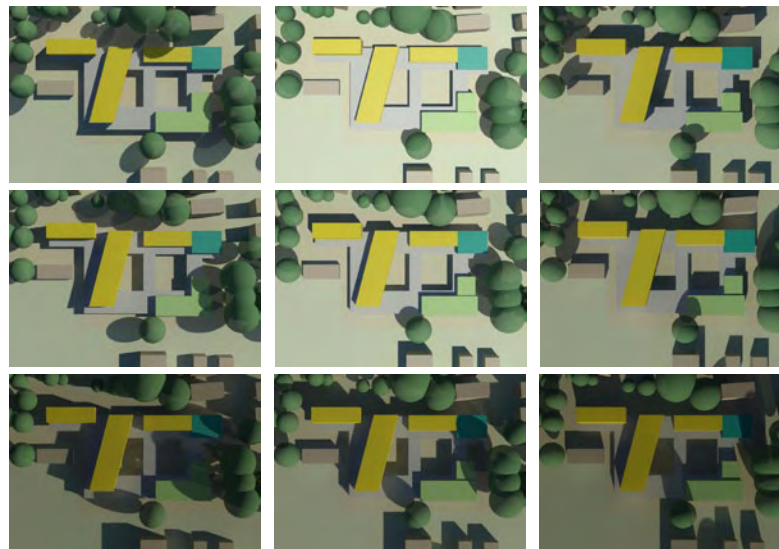
Agricultural

School

Retail/Office

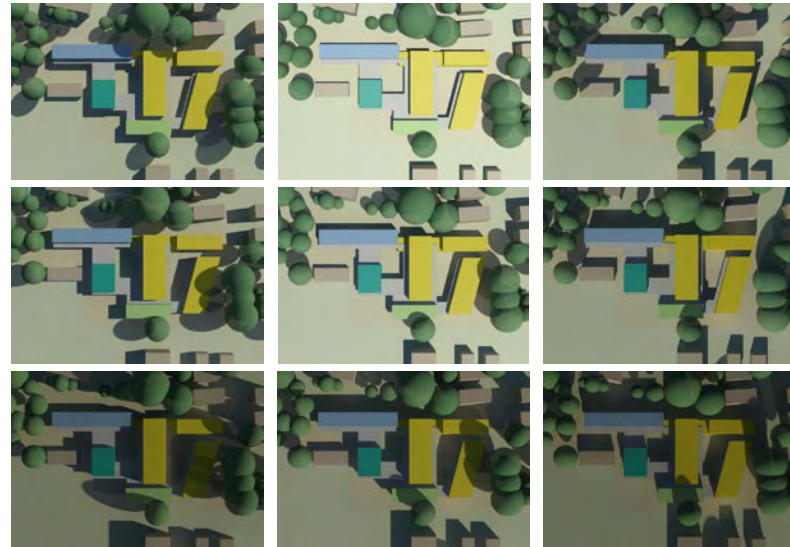
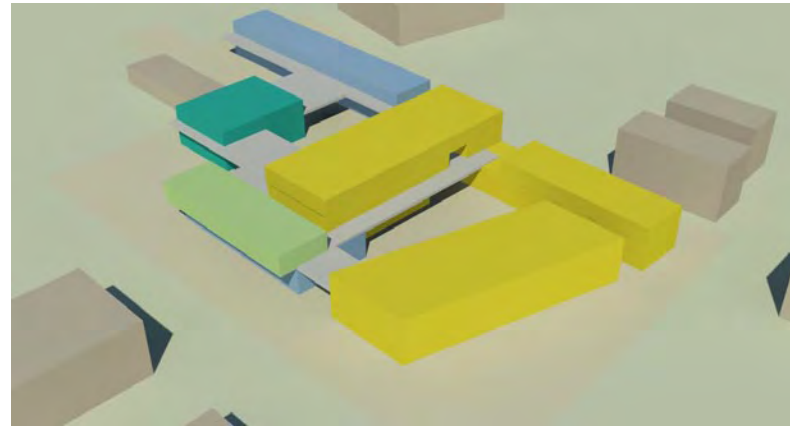
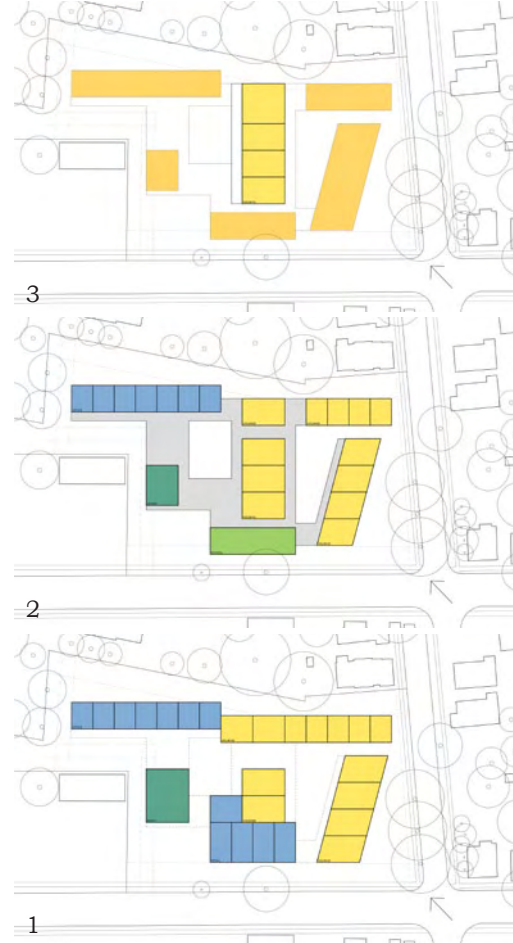
Event Hall

Maintenance



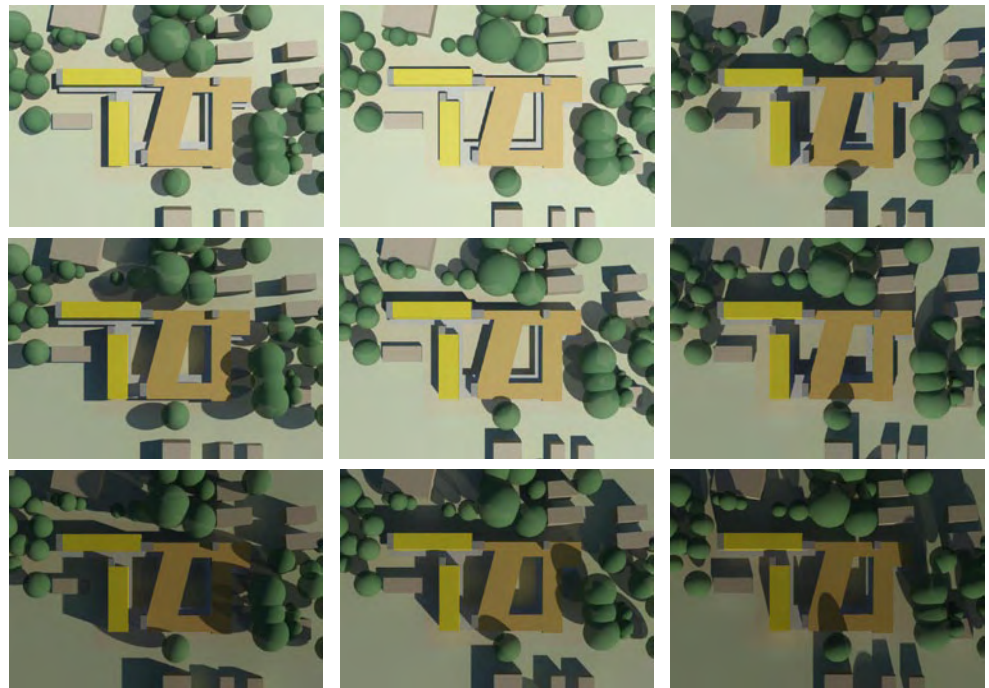
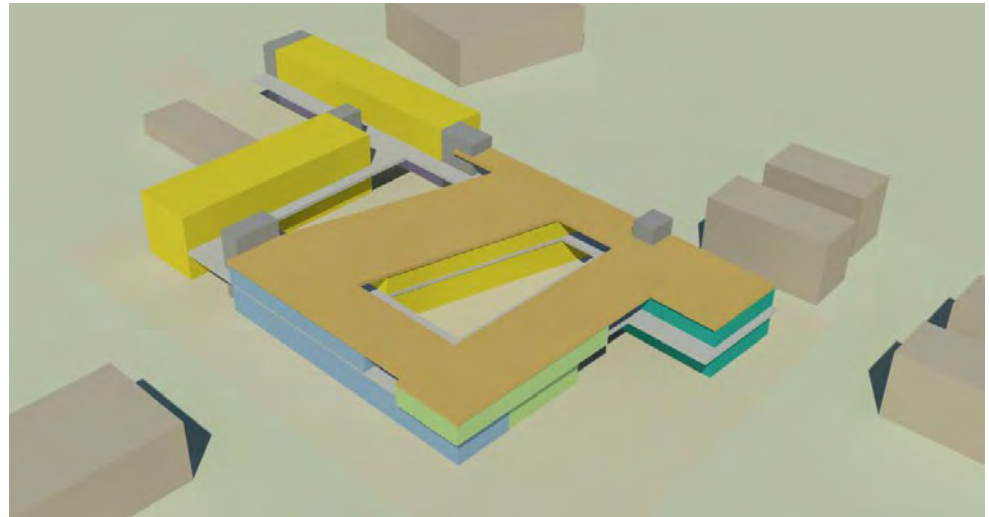
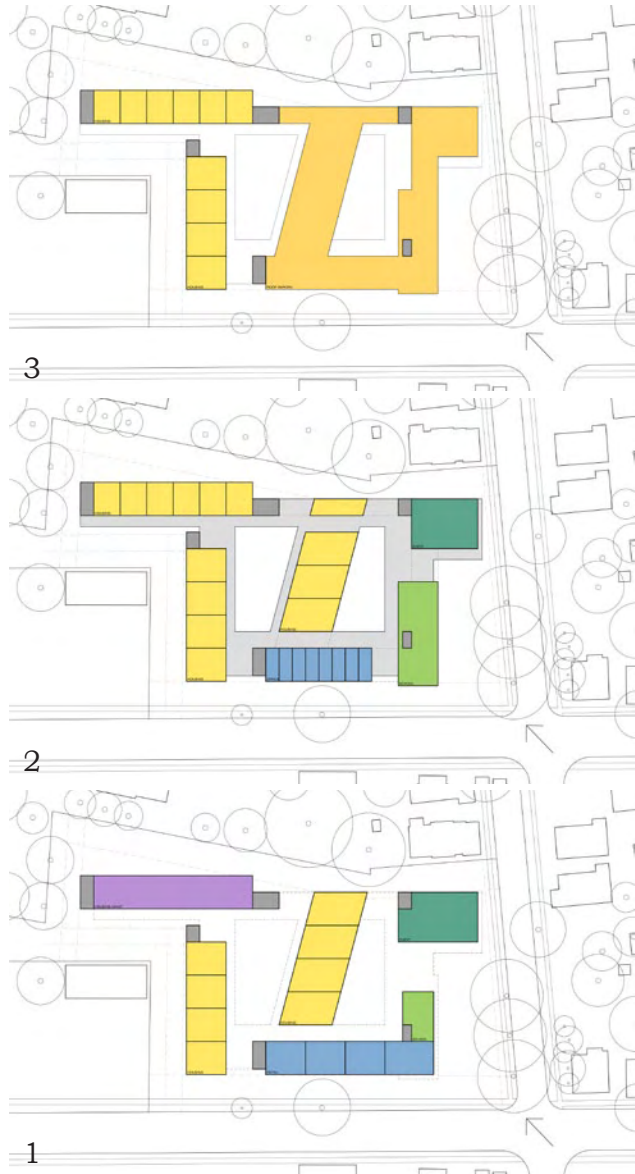
The first scheme was organized through a vertical division of the program: public elements occupy the ground floor, while private, housing program occupies the upper floors. The strengths of this organizational scheme are that the privacy of residents is assured and the public program gets access to both street fronts. However, residents are denied access to the ground floor which would deny children play space and some program elements are pushed to the rear northern corner where they receive no street front or natural sunlight.

plan 2: residential east, public west



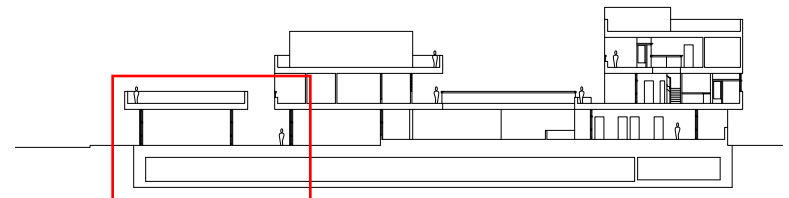
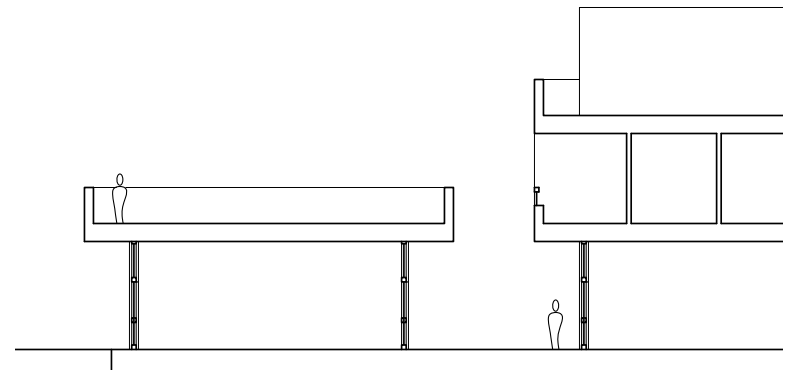
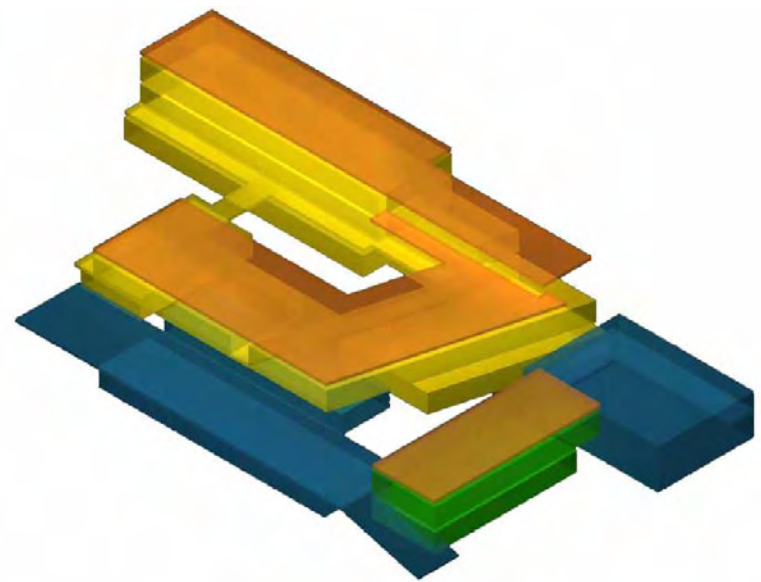
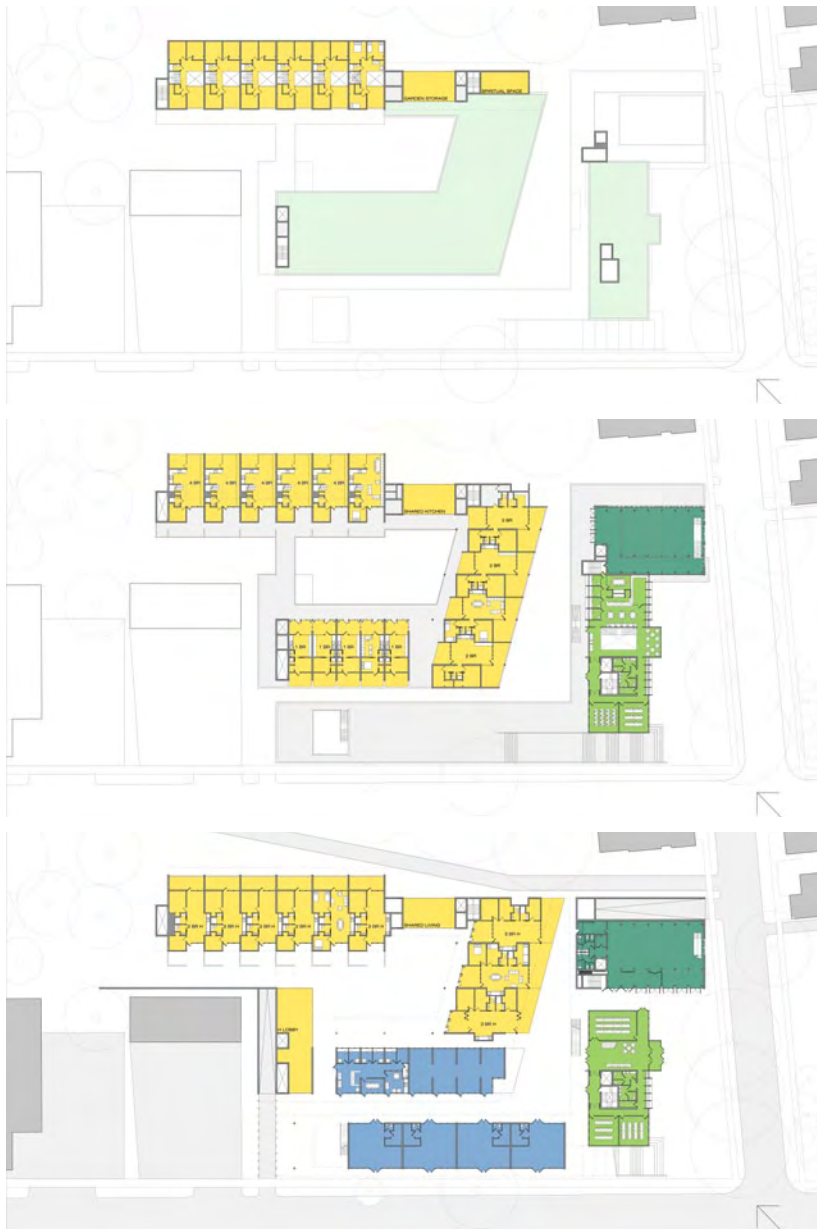
The second scheme places the housing program along the southeast half of the site and the public program in the northwestern half of the site. At first, this scheme makes sense because the residential program can become a part of the residential fabric along Bliss Street. However, in this location privacy and security would be an issue and some of the housing units would receive little natural sunlight due to the three large trees along Bliss Street. In addition, there is limited street front for the public program and much of it must be pushed to the back of the site where it would be dark and difficult to find.

plan 3: residential west, public east



The final scheme does the unexpected and places the residential program at the northwestern half of the site, with the public program on the southeastern portion of the site. In this organization, the units have both privacy and security and each unit receives plenty of natural sunlight. In addition, all public elements have street front visibility and are easy to locate.

This is the scheme that will be developed throughout the design process. Each program element seems to have a near perfect location on site. The housing is located around a central refugee community courtyard, has easy but secure access along the western end of the site, and has sunlight for each unit. One questionable area is the first floor units near the center, and privacy may be an issue. I had intended to solve this problem by raising the units a few feet off the ground so they could not be seen into from the event courtyard, however, they were later moved. The agricultural space is located above the public elements towards the east of the site, getting plenty of sunlight. The learning center takes the prime location on the corner of the two streets, highlighting its importance by making it the most prominent element. This also gives it access to a public courtyard shaded by the existing large trees, acting as the front lawn of the school, while also having access to the exterior event courtyard. The retail is located along Union street with easy access and high visibility. The exterior event space (middle courtyard) is somewhat private. At this point in time, the intention was to use the courtyard along Bliss Street for the marketplace, and the event space only for private functions, so this privacy is not an issue. The event hall is easily accessed by the street, but also has an element of privacy near the rear of the site. It is also attached to the school so they can be used together if necessary. The maintenance is located at the rear of the site, out of the way, but can be accessed by a rear drive. Only the rentable offices have a less than ideal location. They are located above the retail, on the second level along Union Street. This may be a difficult place for clients to find the offices, and they infringe on the refugee housing some. This suite of offices will eventually become the Lutheran Social Services offices and will be moved to a better location.



Problem area within design

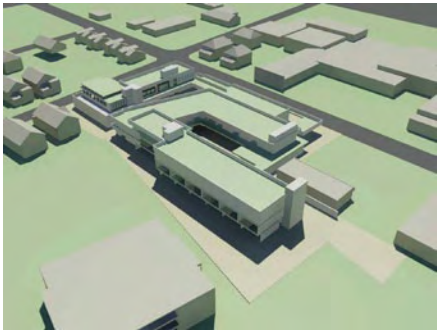
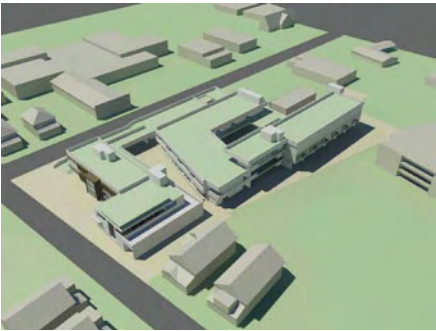
Mid-Review

The site organization at the mid-review in March is an updated version of the third scheme from the initial review with a few changes. One of the three bars of apartment units has been rotated and drawn away from the road for increased privacy. The office space has been moved from the second floor above the retail to the ground floor underneath this rotated bar of units. This creates a small “street” between the retail and the office space. This move was made with the thought that it would make the office easier to locate by clients. Half of this office space is now designated for the new Lutheran Social Services offices and these offices overlook the refugee community courtyard. Above the retail is a new elevated public garden.

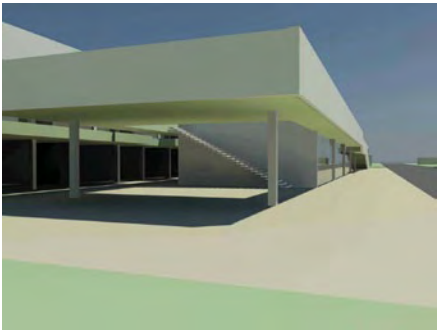
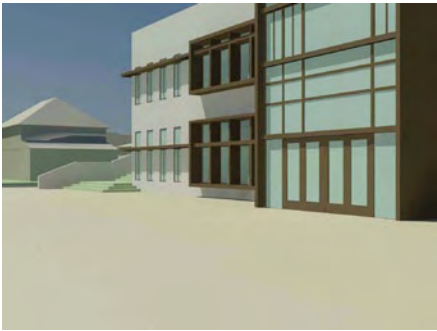
While there were many positive comments at the review, there was also some criticism that helped shape the final form of the building. Reviewers found the space between the retail and the office space to be awkward and gloomy. This proximity also created an awkward relationship between the elevated public garden and the rear balcony of the units on the second floor (see section, opposite). In addition, the middle courtyard has lost its shape and become a through space rather than a celebrated courtyard. It is unlikely to fulfill its requirements in this state. The final criticism from the critics is that the building, as of yet, has no character or visual attitude. It is unclear from the drawings what the style of the building will be and I am encouraged to look into traditional Burmese architecture to develop the visual style.

There were also some concerns of my own with this design. Sunlight was an important design consideration from the beginning and the shift in form has closed in the refugee community courtyard and much of it will now be shaded through the day (see sun studies, next page). In addition, the community spaces attached to the refugee housing are not as large or important as they should be. Finally, there is a lack of maintenance space allocated. All of these issues would be addressed and solved in the final design.

ABOVE



PERSPECTIVES



SUN STUDIES



JUNE 9 AM



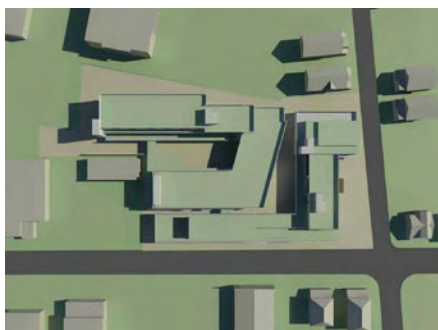
JUNE 11 AM



JUNE 1 PM



JUNE 3 PM



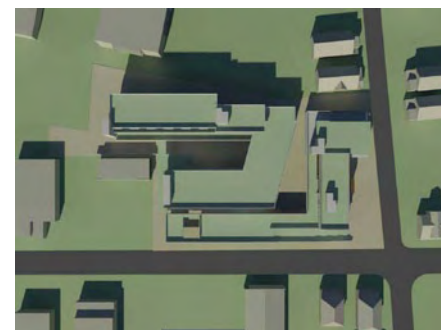
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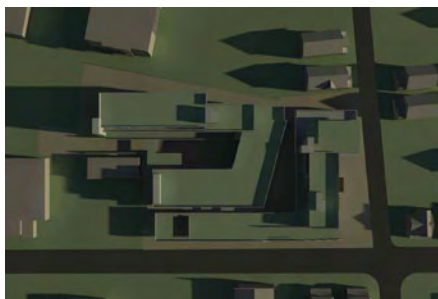
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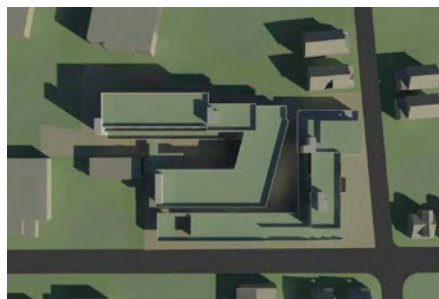
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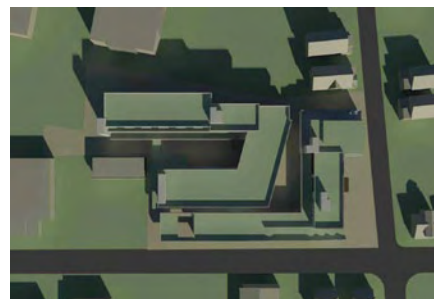
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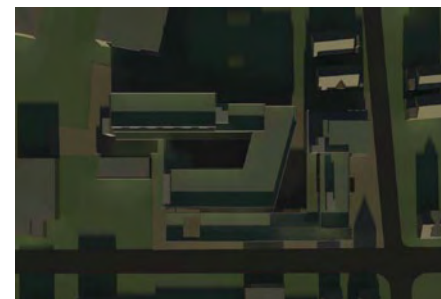
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Building use diagram: red-commercial, blue-residential, green-institutional



Aerial view of final building

Final Design:

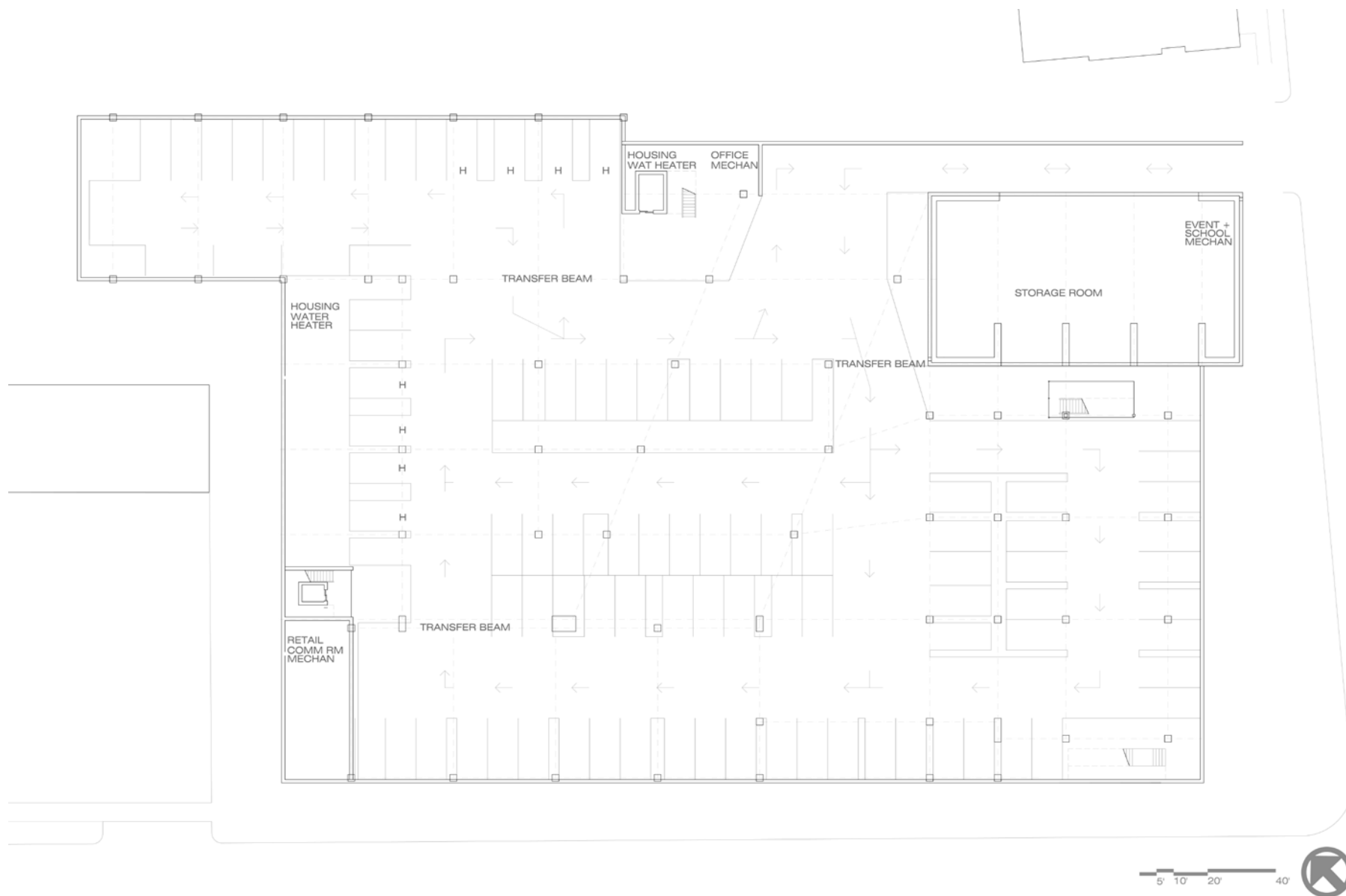
The final design brings back the best aspects of the initial design, the two strong courtyards, by modifying the design from the mid-review. The retail and event space stay in the same positions and the school has slid closer to Bliss Street, reducing the street-side courtyard to a front lawn. This opens up the public courtyard and creates an open entrance to it from Union Street, with the retail no longer in the way. The secondary bar behind the retail containing the office space has been removed. The offices are now entirely for Lutheran Social Services and are located on the first floor of the diagonal bar with units above. The removal of that secondary bar has opened up the refugee community courtyard. The elevated public garden is eliminated and in its place is a simple walkway that creates a gateway to the public courtyard and a spacious community room, above the retail, for the housing. The entry lobby for the housing has slid adjacent to the retail and behind it is a covered patio for the refugees. Agricultural space is located above each bar of units.

The building has also developed a blend of stylistic languages. For the public functions, three large rectangular masses house the event hall, school and retail/community room. The community room and event space have slanted roofs to indicate their similarity as gathering social spaces. The school has a flat roof to indicate its institutional nature. These three masses are connected through a series of covered walkways. These walkways have a highly articulated and repetitive frame structure. This is to add a feeling of intimacy by reducing the scale of building elements and referencing the frame structure of traditional Burmese housing. Only the walkway above the entrance to the courtyard is uncovered, to indicate that it is a gateway.

The housing portion of the building has a different language. The scale of the housing bars were reduced by staggering the units. This helps give each unit and individual identity. Units are indicated using a weave-pattern wooden railing. In contrast, public areas within the housing use a metal railing with the same woven pattern. The walkways in this area are not covered to help create the feeling of an open street. The visual design of units will be elaborated in the Unit Design chapter.

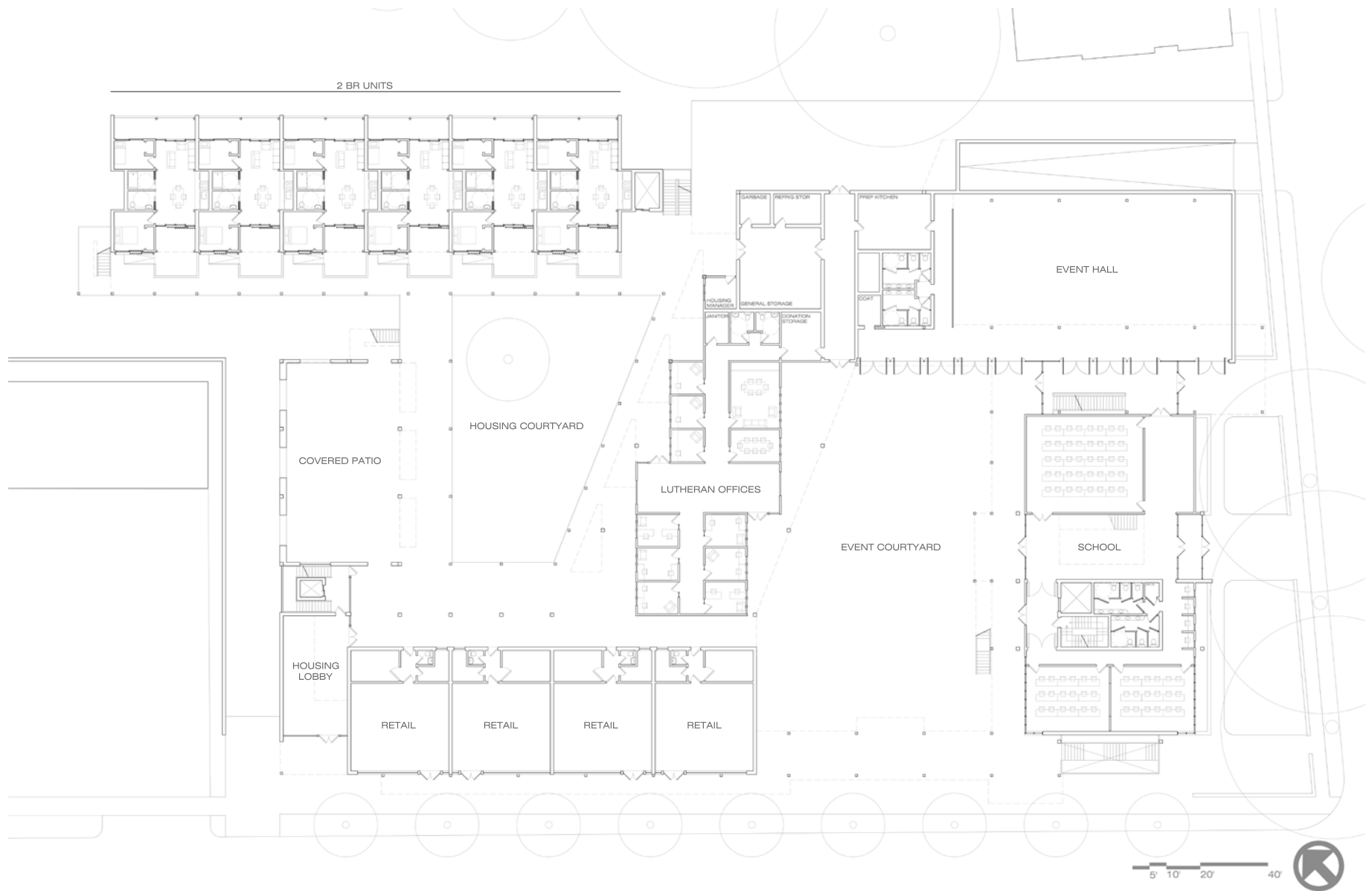


Basement Plan



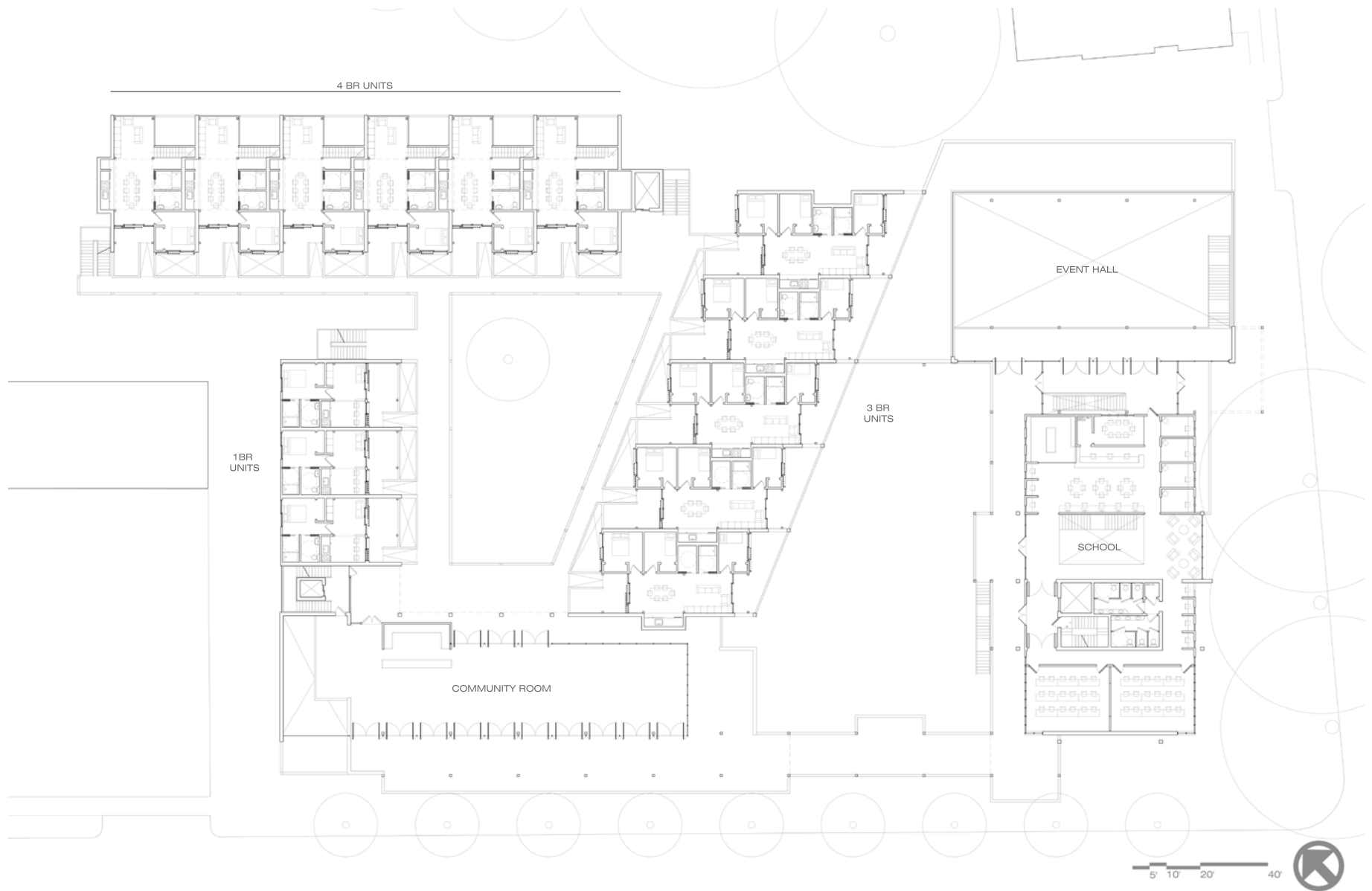


Ground Floor Plan





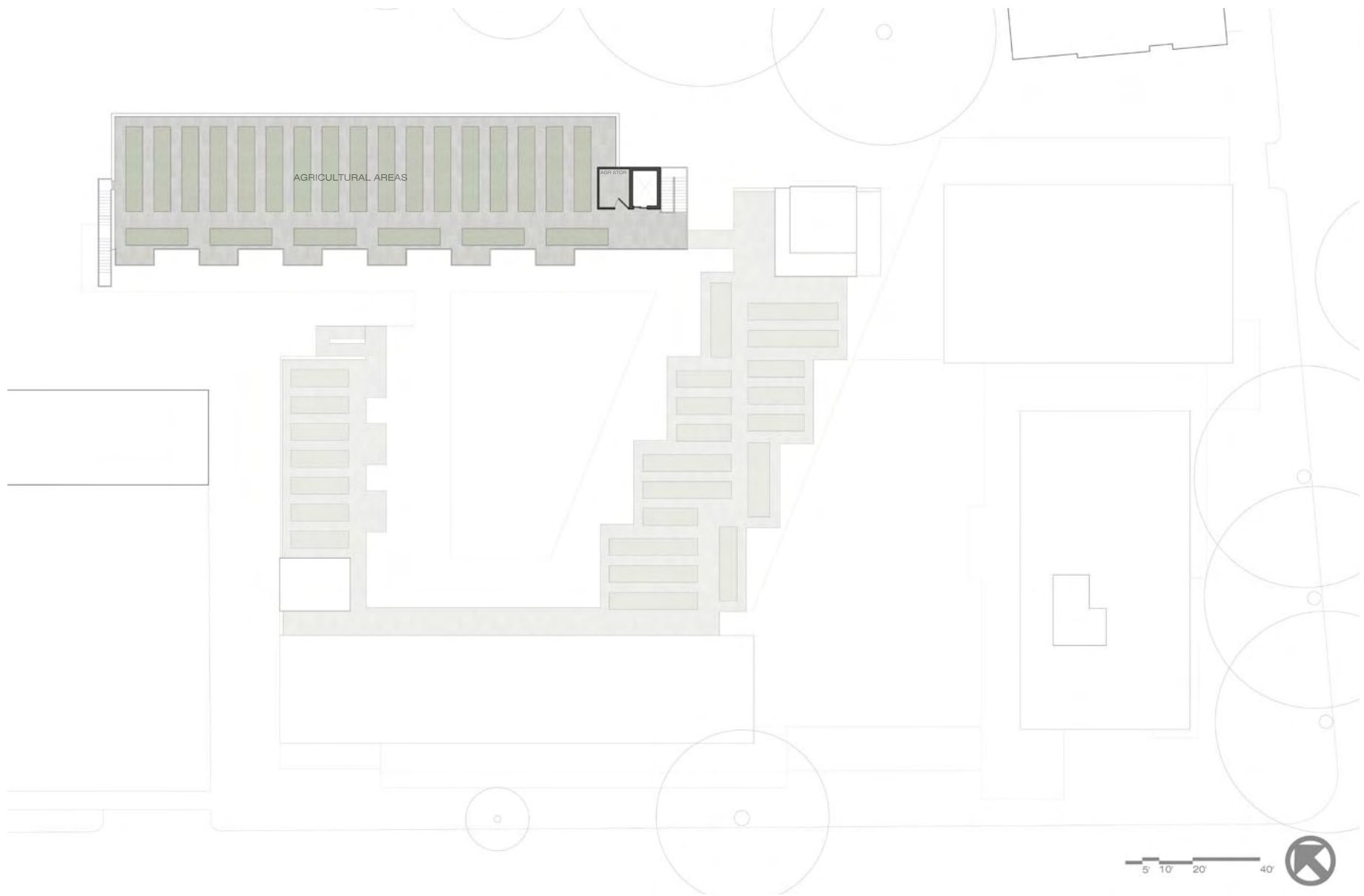
Second Floor Plan



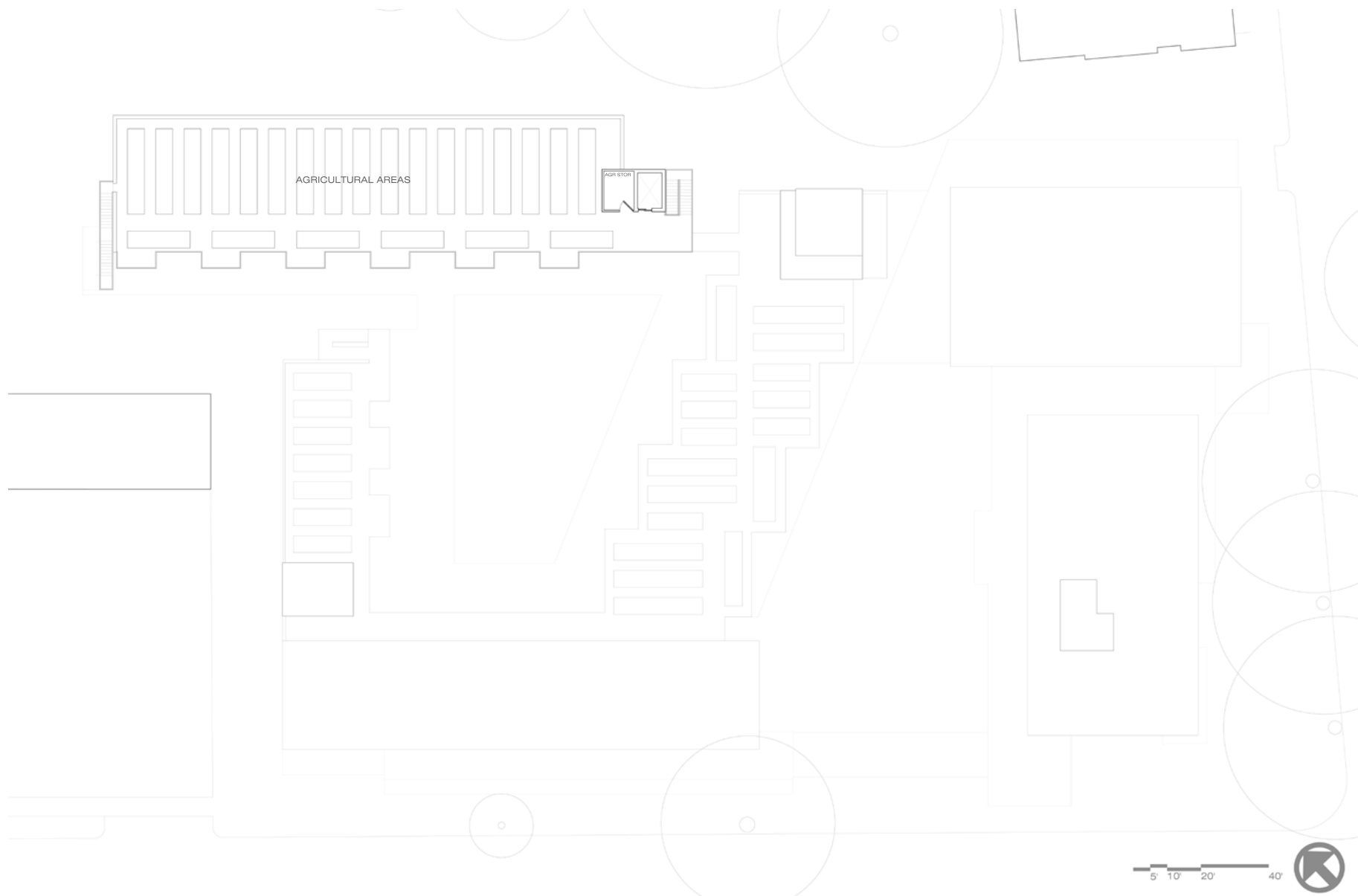


Third Floor Plan





Fourth Floor Plan





June 21, 9:00



June 21, 11:00



June 21, 13:00



June 21, 15:00



September 21, 9:00



September 21, 11:00



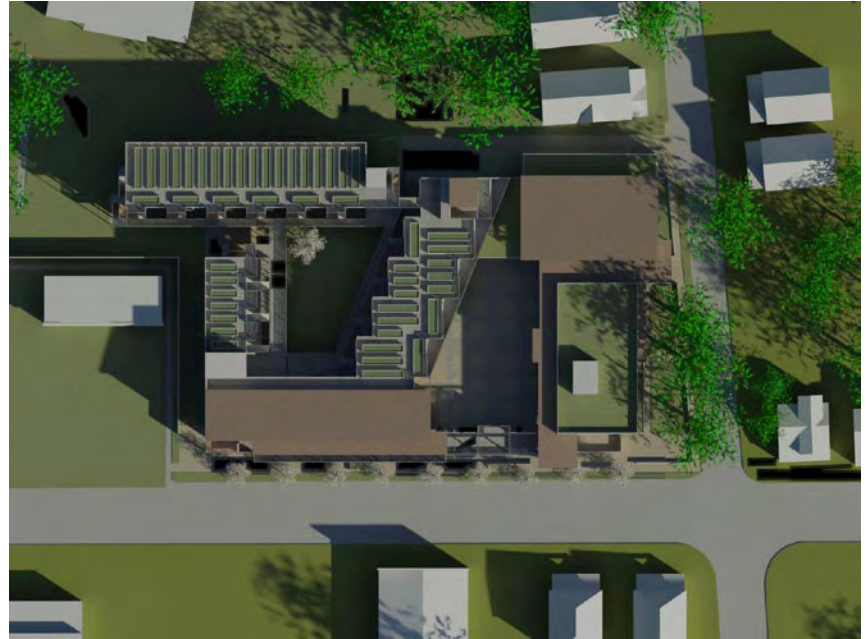
September 21, 13:00



September 21, 15:00



December 21, 9:00



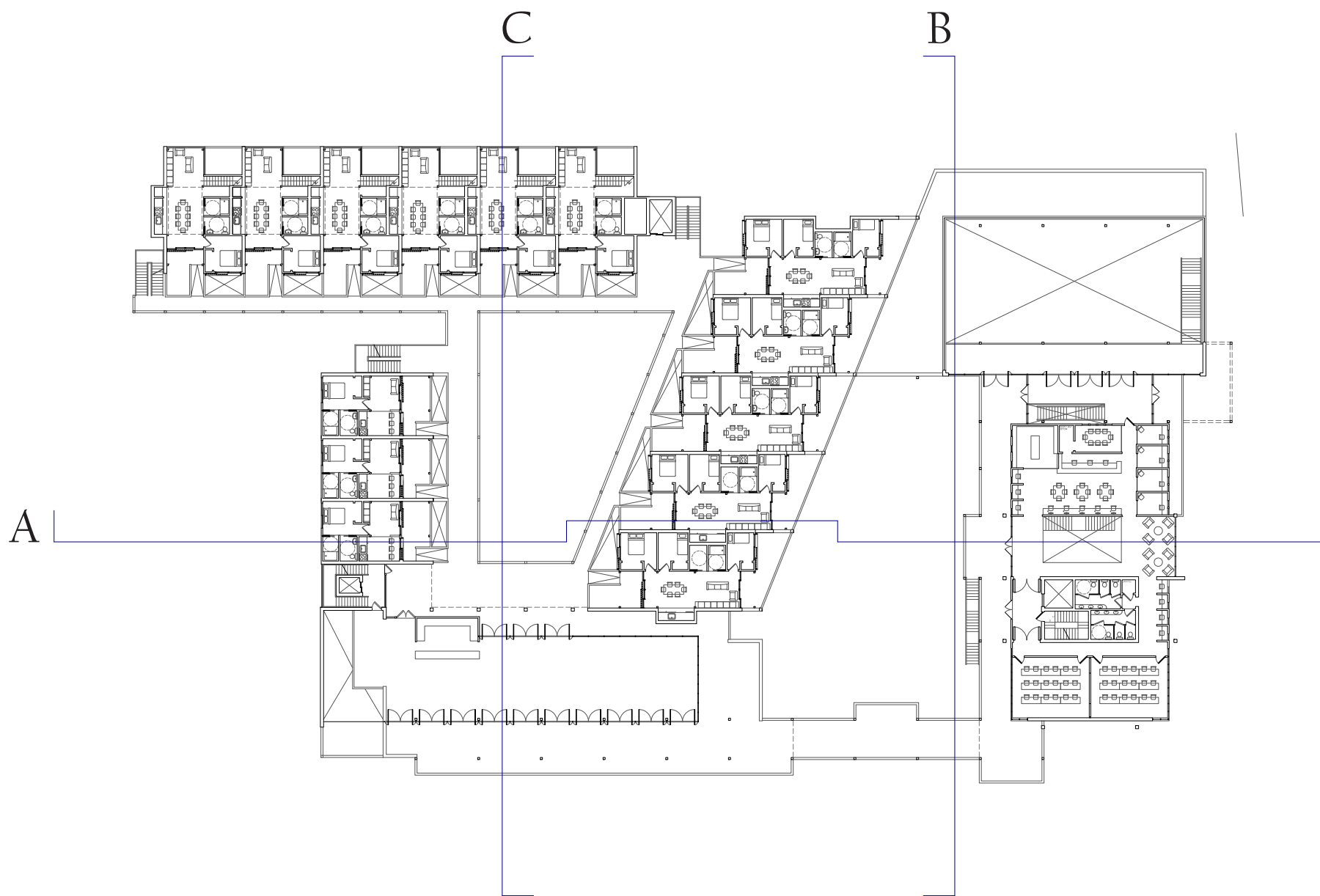
December 21, 11:00



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December 21, 15:00

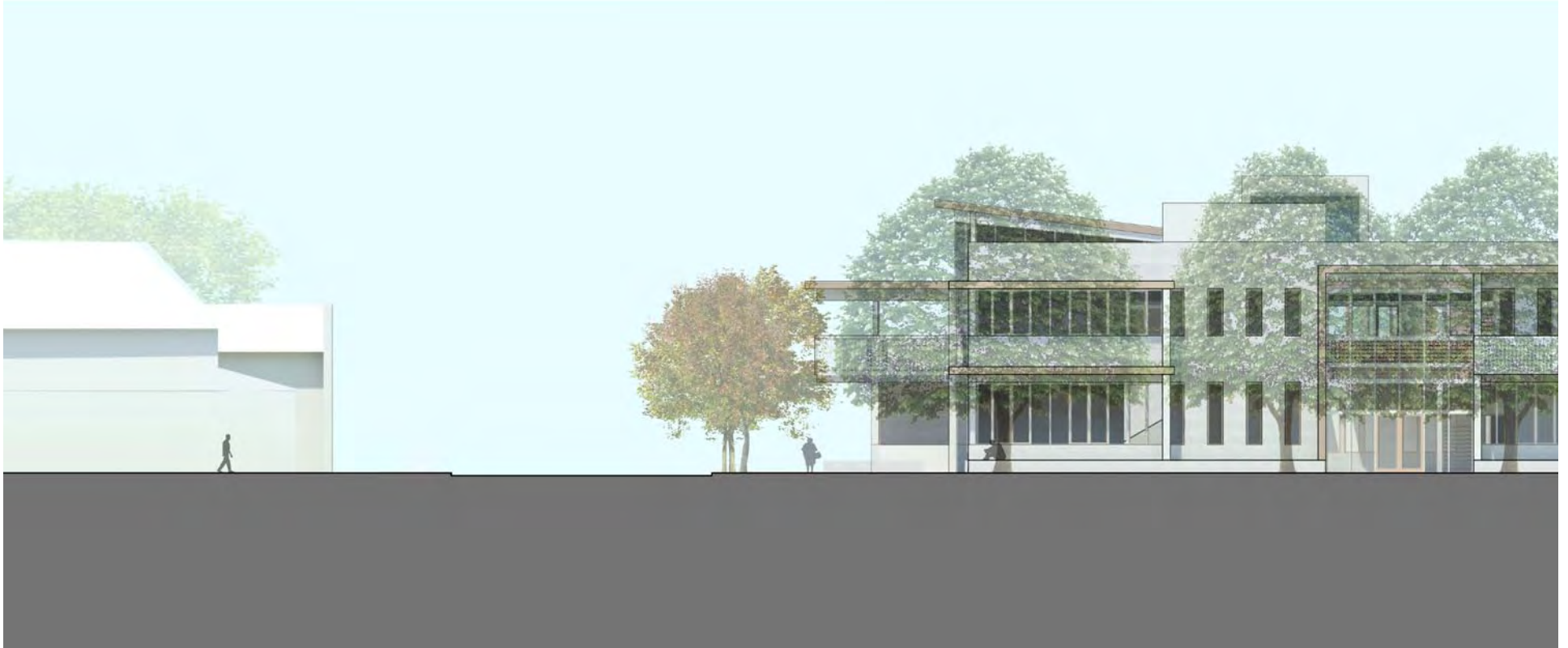


Section Key



Union Street Elevation





Bliss Street Elevation



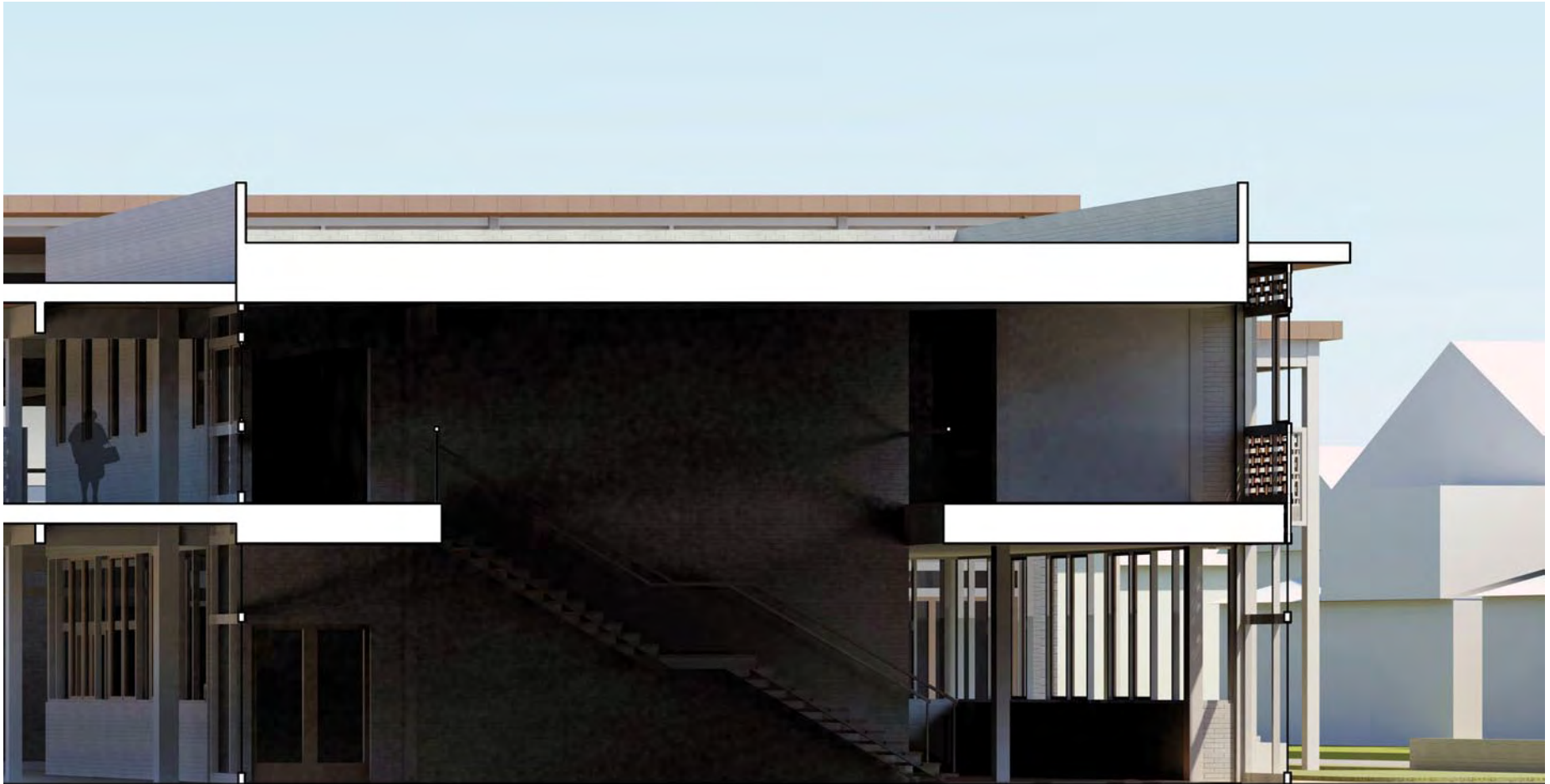


Section A





←
Section A cont.





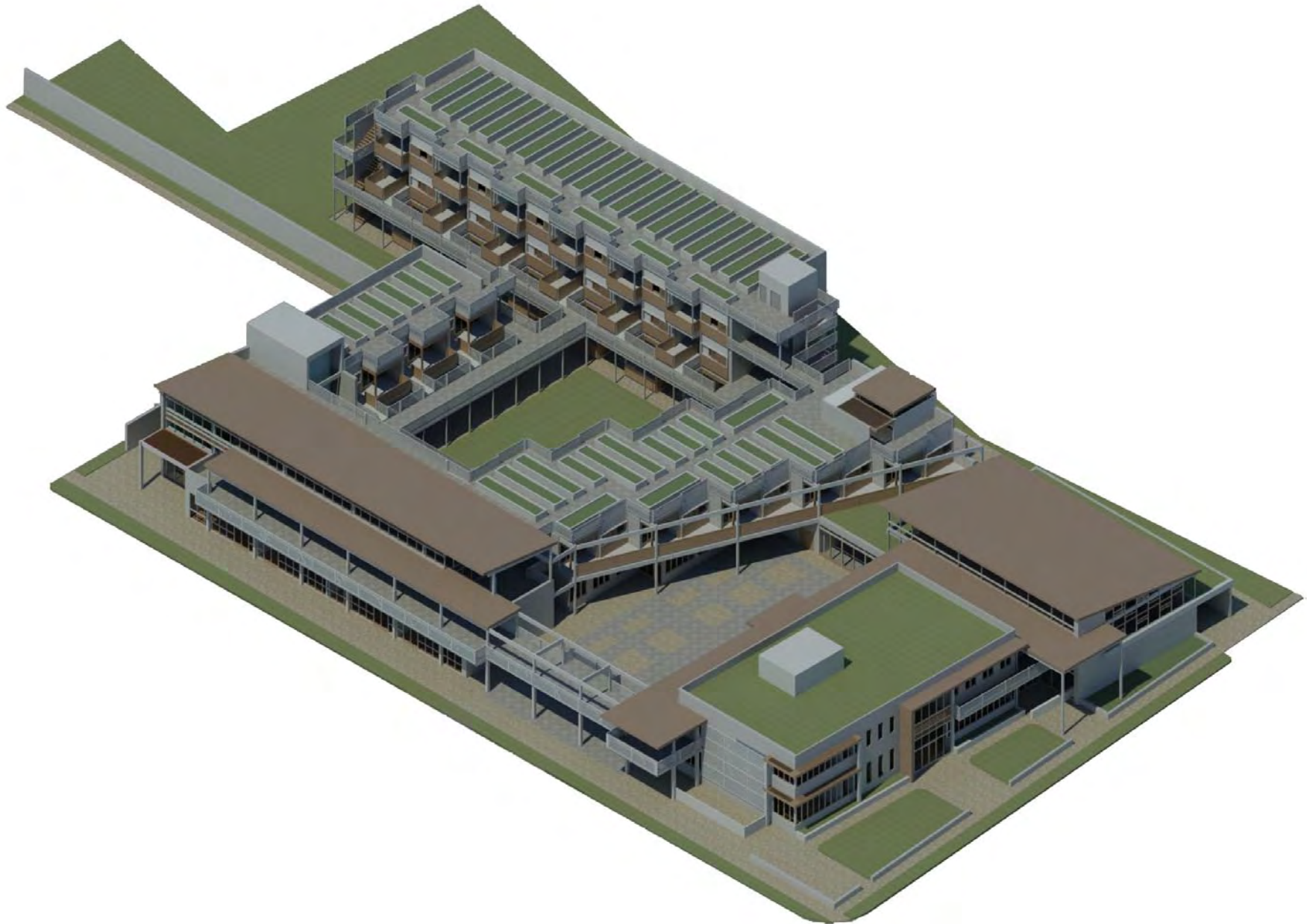
Section B





Section C

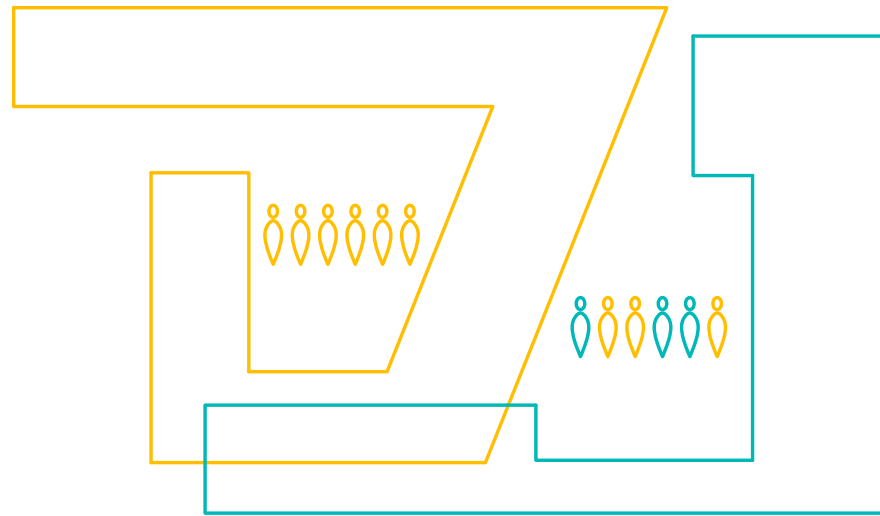




Axonometric of Building



Building in the site



Parti:

In order to successfully resettle refugees, we must encourage the formation of both bonding social networks between refugees and bridging social networks between refugees and members of the larger community. This is a concept that has been used to organize the program since the beginning, however, these contrasting program groups have distinct priorities and needs. Establishing a clear and appropriate relationship between bonding and bridging program has been a priority throughout the design process.

Since choosing the third option from the first review, a few program elements may have shifted, but the overall organization remains the same. The bonding program exists in the northwestern portion of the site, protected and private. The refugee courtyard is the heart of this area, highlighting the importance of community. The bridging program wraps itself around the bonding program as the public face of the Resettlement Center and a protective barrier. Between the bonding and bridging program is another courtyard, this one for both refugees and outside community members.

Circulation and Access:

Ground Floor

Since much of the ground floor is a paved plaza, circulation is relatively free. On the circulation and access diagram, main entry points are indicated in green arrows. The larger the arrow, the more important the entrance. Service entries are indicated in red and access to vertical circulation is indicated in blue.

Second Floor

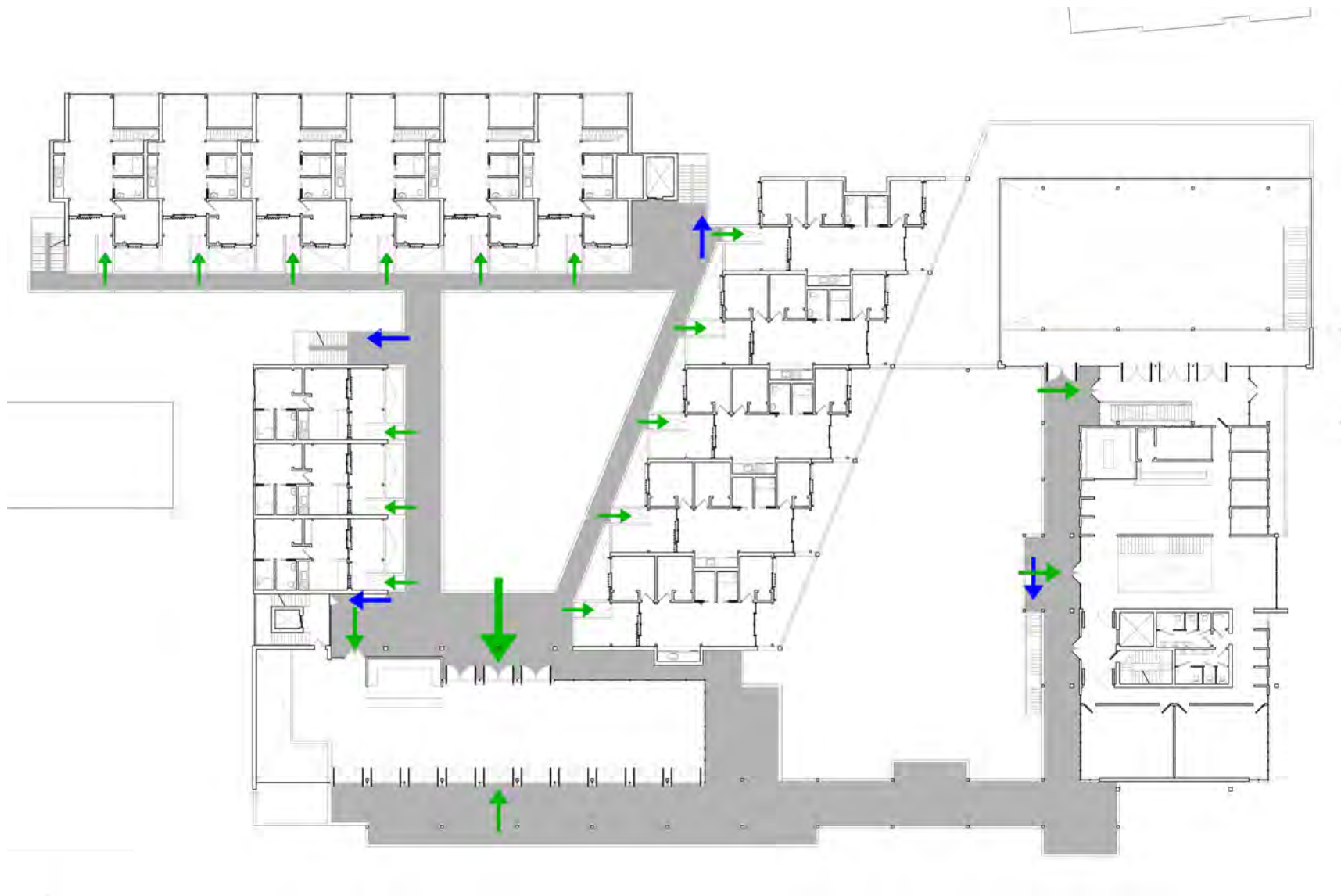
The circulation on the second level is composed of raised exterior walkways. Walkways on the public portion of the building are covered, while the walkways around the refugee courtyard are uncovered to improve sunlight penetration.

Vehicular

Entry to the garage is located behind the event hall at the rear of the site, from Bliss Street. This entry point will make entering and exiting easier, because it is on a quiet street rather than busy Union Street. Behind the entrance to the garage, is the service drive which extends through to the housing courtyard. This drive provides access to the garbage room, facility storage, event hall kitchen, and both courtyards. It can also act as a fire drive. There is an additional access/fire drive from Union Street which passes along the refugee housing.



Circulation and access, ground floor



Circulation and access, ground floor

Unit Design:

The design of the units is of utmost importance. How do you design a home for someone that has been homeless for years? Someone who is being introduced to an entirely different culture for the first time? The strategy was to use social patterns from Burmese housing with modern American construction and amenities. Every effort was made to provide spaces for activities that would have been an important part of life prior to becoming a refugee. Units sizes range from one to four bedrooms to accommodate different family sizes and structures.

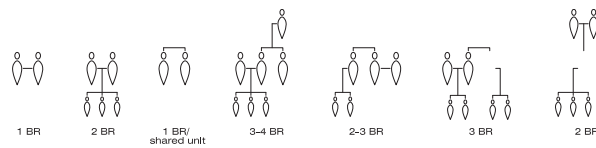
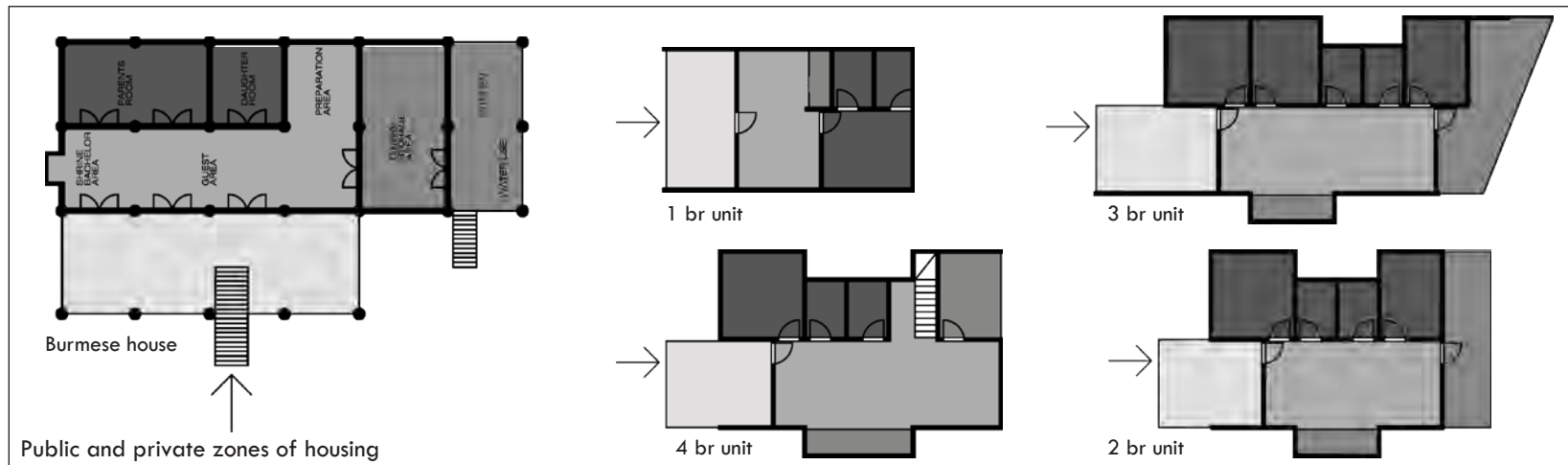
American Design Points

[1] All units were designed to be accessible due to the large rate of disabling injuries among refugees. To accommodate these needs, bathrooms allow a wheelchair's turning radius and have a galley kitchen located along a single wall so turning around in a wheelchair will not be an issue. In addition, there is at least one bedroom sized so that a wheelchair can move along the edge of a full sized bed and access the closet as well.

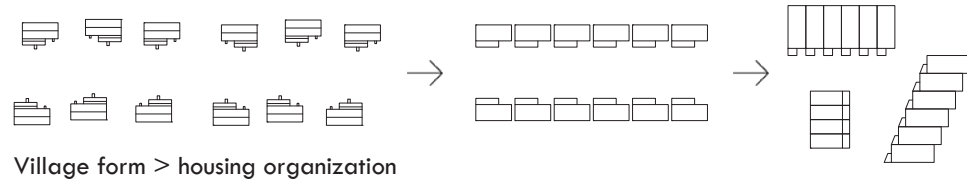
[2] Typical American steel construction is used in order to perform well in the northeastern climate.

[3] Bathrooms contain modern plumbing and kitchens contain modern appliances. It is important for refugees to learn how to use these amenities within the safe setting of the Resettlement Center.

[4] Standard furniture is included in the units so refugees will not need to buy anything for the units.



Potential family structures



Burmese Design Points

I have incorporated important elements of life in Burma in ways that make sense with northeastern climate and styles of construction. These eleven design points are explained below.

[1] Units are accessed via outdoor walkways, in a single loaded fashion, wrapping around a central courtyard. This mimics traditional village organization in Burma where individual houses are aligned along a central, wide street that is the main social space.

[2] Each unit is reached via a ramp rising one foot in height. This separates the units from the walkways for privacy reasons and mimics the raised fashion of Burmese houses.

[3] The ramp leads to a partially covered, large exterior patio. In traditional houses, the main entertainment area is a large covered porch at the front of the house. Outdoor living is prevalent in tropical climates.

[4] Between the front patio and main living/dining space is a sliding glass wall. Traditional houses are porous in nature and there is no clear distinction between inside and out. The glass wall mimics this continuity, while allowing closure in winter and merging in summer. It also makes the efficiently sized living areas seem more spacious.

[5] The galley kitchen occupies a nook in the wall of the living space. In traditional houses, kitchens are unimportant and located off to the side. The gallery kitchen off the main living area provides an efficient solution.

[6] All units have a south-facing patio for the ability to grow vegetables and spices. This may or may not double as the front patio. Most Burmese families living in the country would have a small vegetable garden.

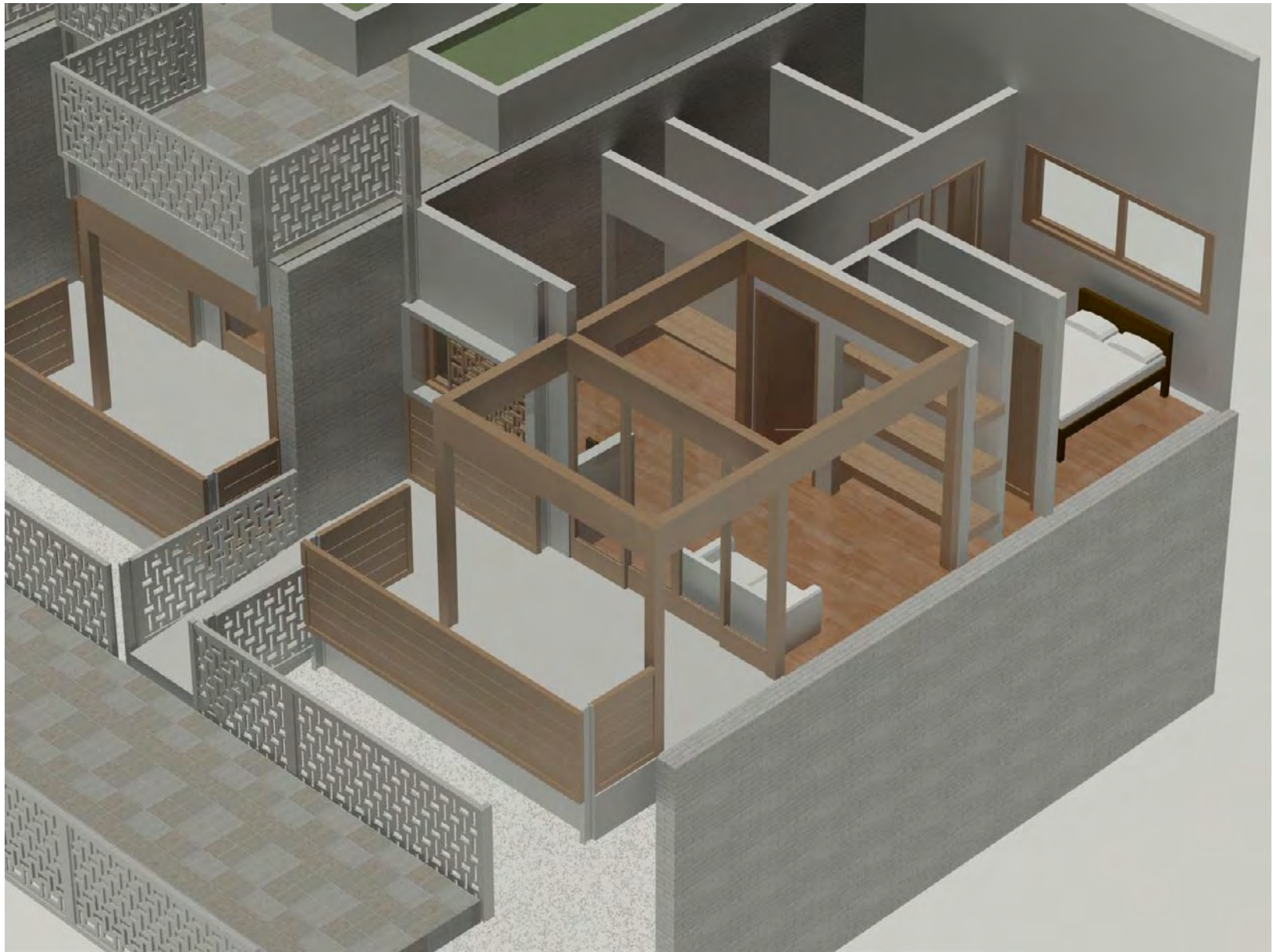
[7] Bedrooms and bathrooms are much more private and located in a bar to the side of the main living space. In traditional houses, the bedrooms would be located at the rear, however, the rotation allows for a living area with windows in two directions.

[8] Bedrooms are compact with space for a bed or two and an open closet. While slightly below American norms, the bedrooms are efficient and provide the necessary space for a refugee who will have few personal possessions.

[9] Bathrooms are split between a toilet room and a shower room. In many Asian cultures, one would not bathe and use a toilet in the same place. Once living in a typical apartment, these two functions would have to be combined, however refugees can get used to American fixtures before making that adjustment.

[10] Various wooden screens on doors and windows ensure the desired level of privacy and light. These screens mimic traditional wall construction which consists of woven grass matts.

[11] Finishes and colors are left intentionally plain to allow inhabitants to make the place their own. Burma has a rich history of textile production. I imagine these textiles and other elements from home covering the plain walls and infusing the living spaces with the colors and textures of Burma.

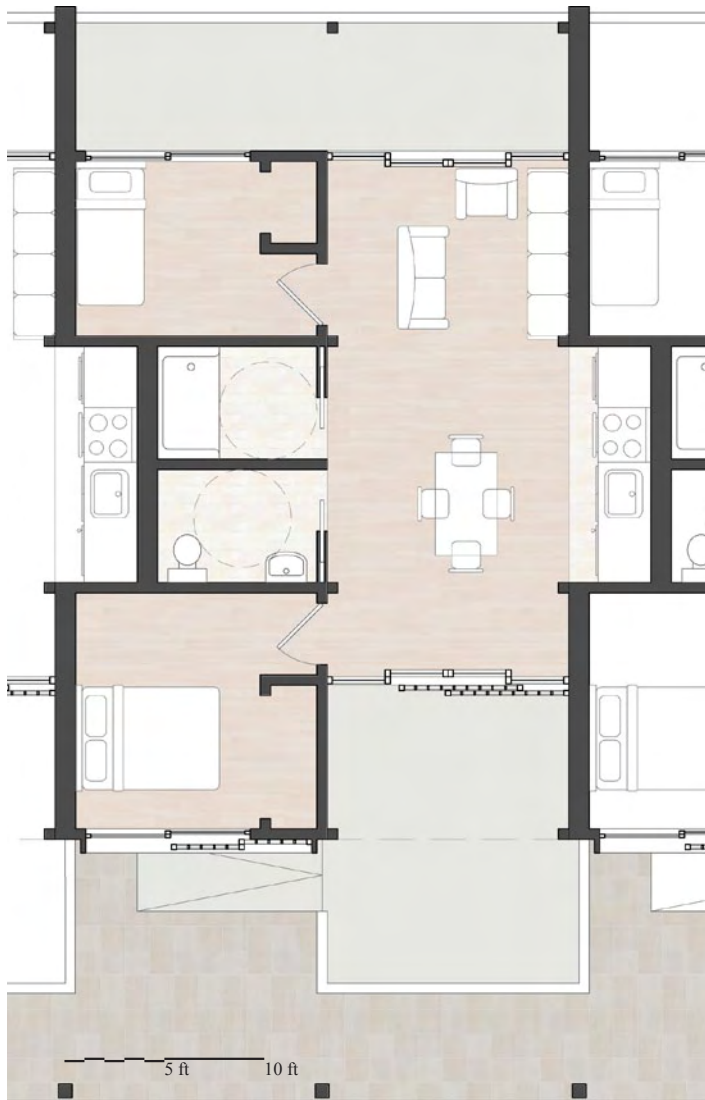




One Bedroom Unit

There are three one-bedroom units at 470 interior square feet to house one to two people. These units are less efficient than others, but are intended for those who may not be able to live with others because of traumatic experiences. These units are on the second floor and include a single, southeast facing patio. The front room consists of a small galley kitchen, a bar for eating, and a small living room. Although there is only room for a single couch, built in shelving can function as additional seating or as display space. At the rear is a bedroom, toilet room, and shower room. These units are tiny, but would only be assigned to refugees with very special situations.

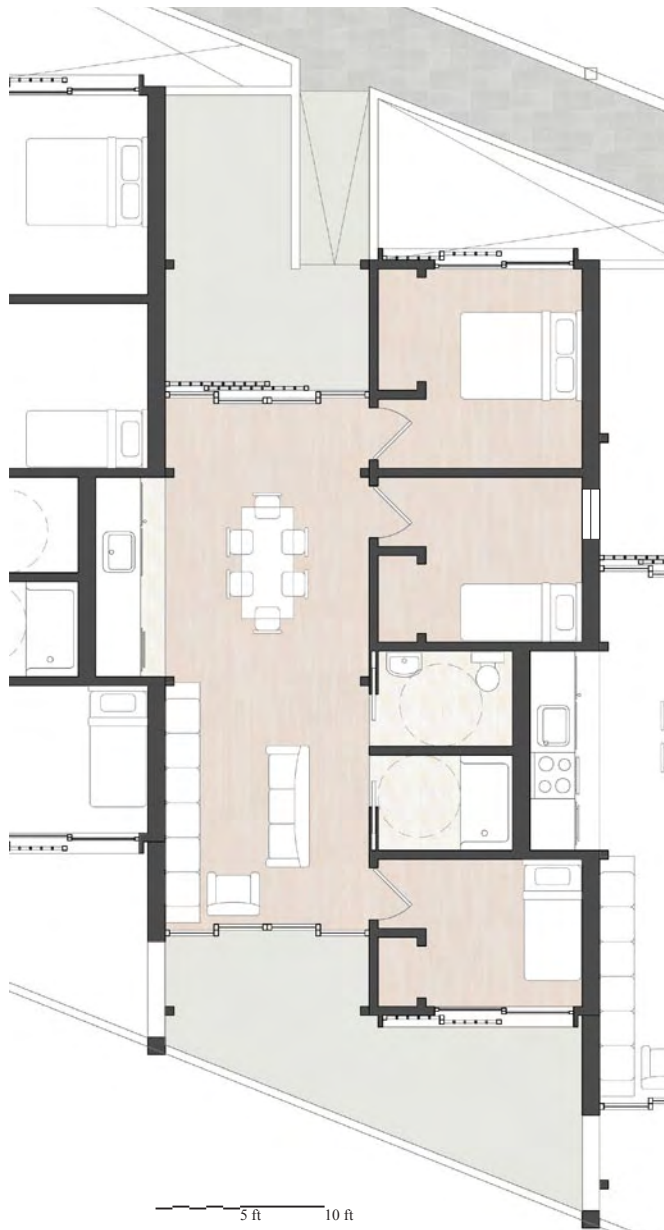




Two Bedroom Unit

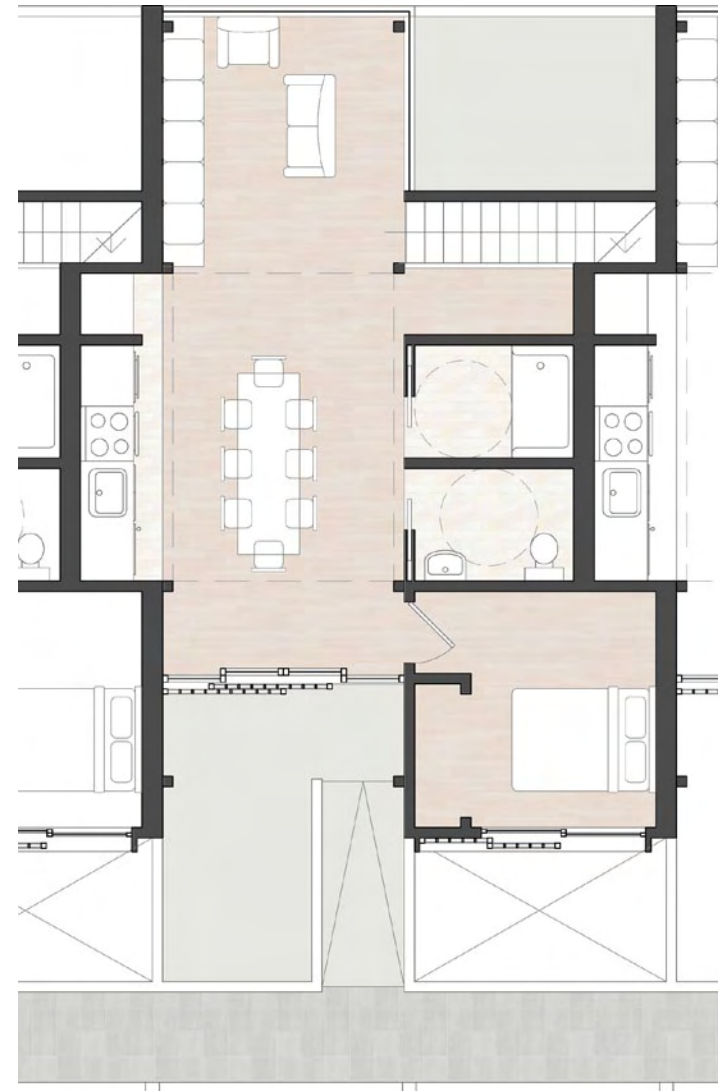
The six two-bedroom units total 670 square feet interior and are intended to house three to four people. They are located at the rear of the site, on the ground floor. The unit begins with a front, southwest facing patio. The walkway above this patio is cutout to allow more light to filter down to the unit. Once entering through the glass doors, there is space for a dining room with the kitchen to the right in a recess. Beyond the dining area is space for a living room. Past the living room is a private patio facing north. The left half of the unit consists of two bedrooms flanking a toilet room and shower room. The front room is sized for wheelchair accessibility if used with a full size bed.

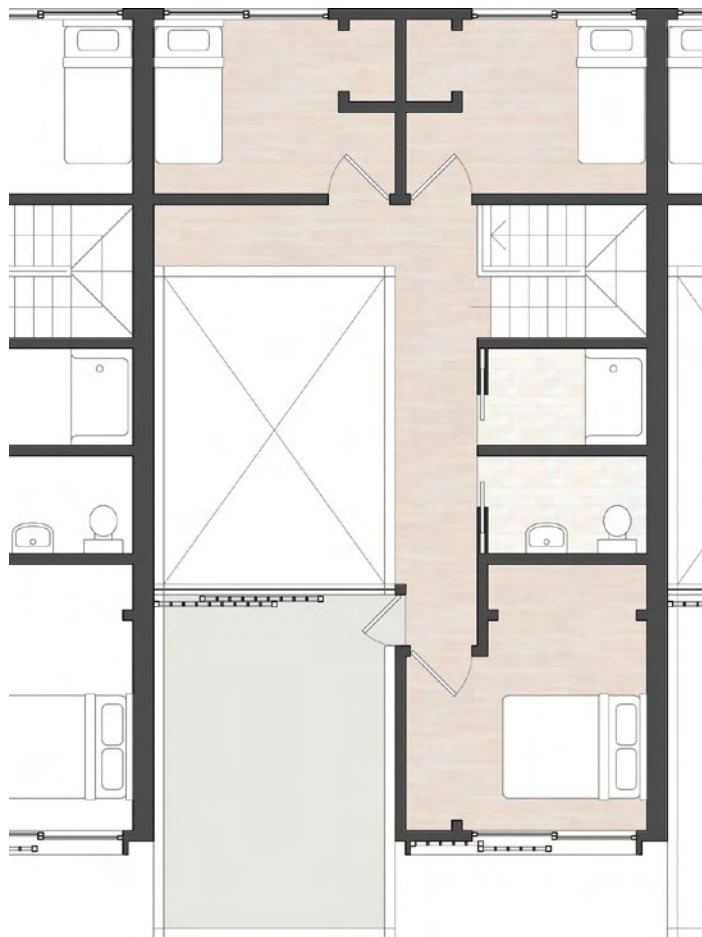




Three Bedroom Unit

The five three-bedroom units occupy 870 interior square feet and house five to six people. The units are located on the second floor and begin with a north facing public patio. The main room consists of a dining area, kitchen recess, and living room. This area ends in a large, south facing patio. The enclosed bar of the unit consists of three bedrooms, a toilet room, and a shower room. Because maintaining the open feeling of the living area was a priority, gaining a window for the third bedroom was a challenge because it had to be located in the middle of the unit. By shifting the units, I was able to create a window for this bedroom facing sideways onto the adjacent patio, a less than perfect but acceptable solution.





Four Bedroom Unit

The four bedroom units are located above the two bedroom units on the second floor, at the rear of the site. These units are 1350 interior square feet and house six to eight people. The large size jump for this unit is due to an extra set of bathrooms, space taken by stairwell, and an additional patio. The lower floor consists of a living/dining/kitchen area, a wheelchair accessible bedroom, a toilet room, a shower room, the front public patio, and a small rear private patio. The second floor houses three bedrooms, a shower room, a toilet room, and a large patio. This unit is designed for an extended family with the first floor bedroom for an elderly relative, or for a group of non-related individuals.



Entry to a two bedroom unit, looking towards the refugee courtyard



Dining area of a four bedroom unit, looking out to the front patio and courtyard



Front patio of a three bedroom unit, looking towards the refugee courtyard



Dining and living area of a three bedroom unit, looking towards the rear patio



The refugee courtyard from the south

Refugee Courtyard:

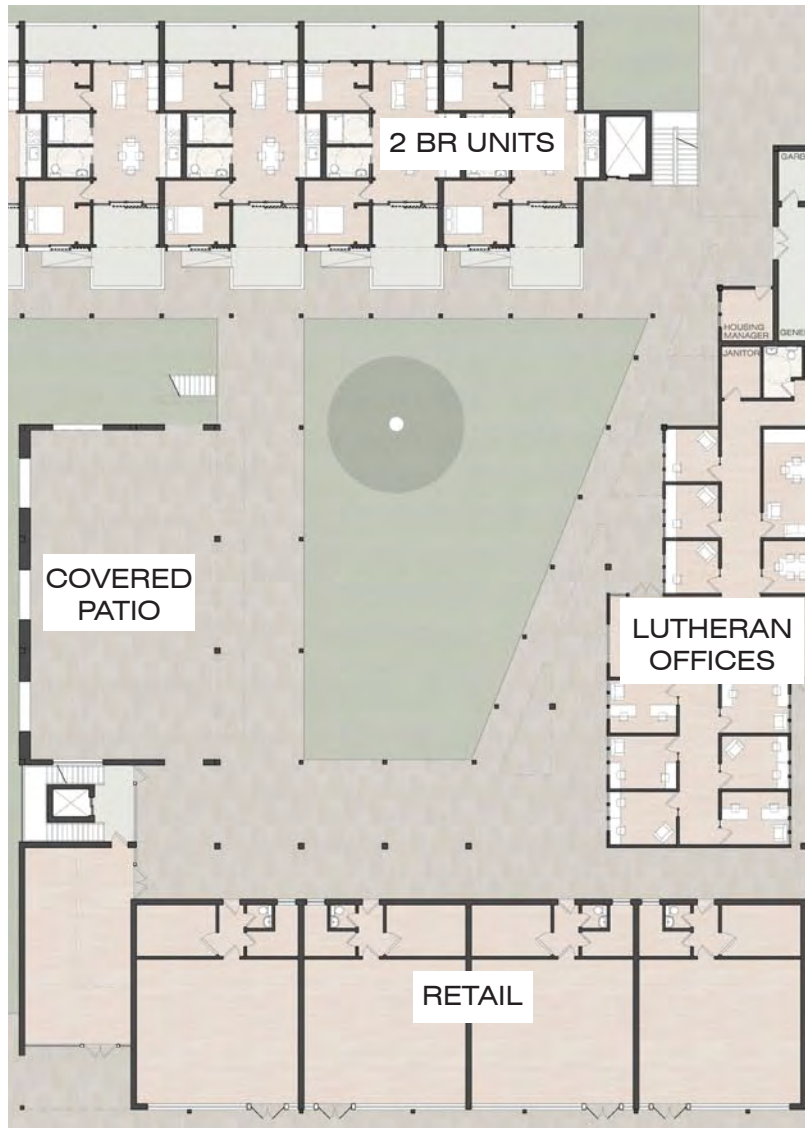
The refugee courtyard is a two level space in the midst of the housing units. The ground is left as a simple lawn for children to play on, within easy sight of eighty percent of the units' front patios. The lawn is ringed in paved walkways for access to ground floor program elements. To the northwest underneath the one bedroom units is a covered patio. This patio would be a great place for ping-pong tables or for adults to sit and watch children playing. The other three sides house the rear of the retail, the Lutheran Social Services offices, and the two bedroom units.

On the second floor, another level of walkways ring the courtyard. These, too, will be important social spaces as they pass by front patios of the units and look down upon the grass. To improve privacy, there is a void between the units and the walkways that is bridged by a short ramp. This will prevent a public space from directly abutting the units. These walkways are uncovered to improve sunlight penetration. Walkways lead to the community room at the southwest edge. The other three edges are formed by the remaining units.

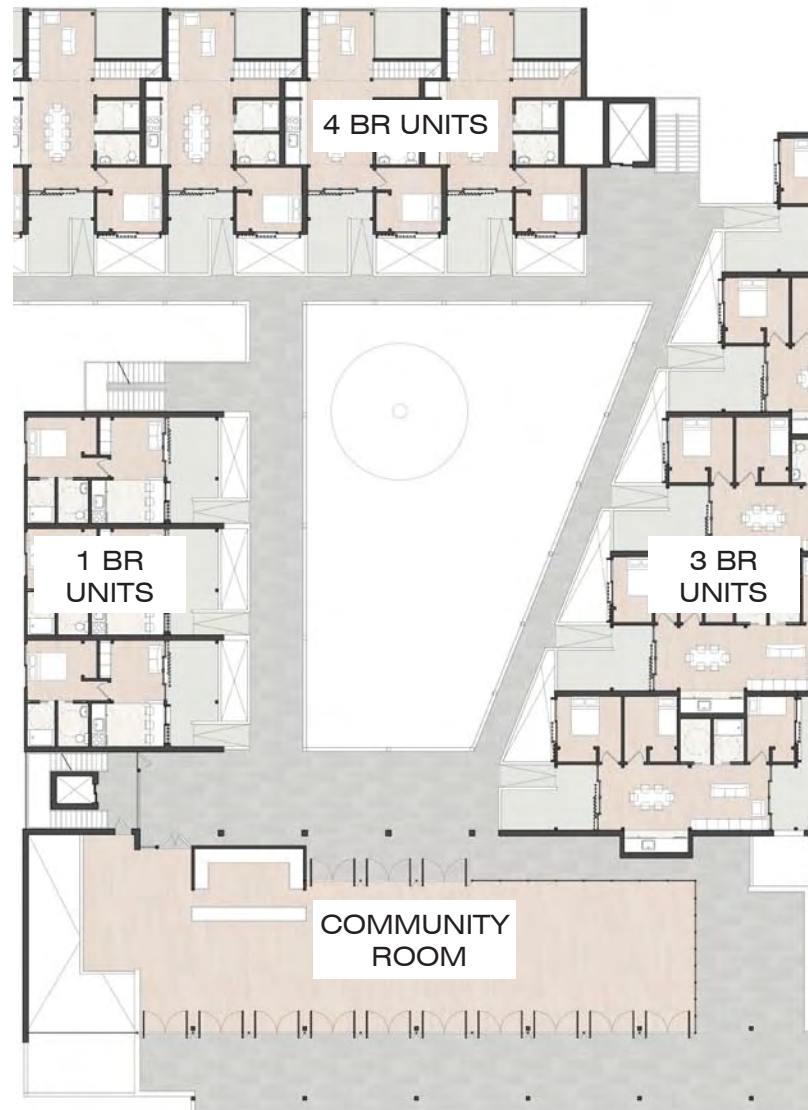
The proportions of the courtyard were designed to allow sunlight throughout much of the day. Most of the building is two levels, and the only three level portion is to the north so it will not interfere with sunlight. The railings are another important design point. Railings along the walkway are made of metal sheets cut in a woven pattern. This railing will be safe for children with no chance to fall between bars. The railings along the unit are made of wooden boards and also make a solid surface for both safety and privacy. For more privacy, there are wooden screens on all windows and sliding doors that face the courtyard.



The refugee courtyard, looking down from the third floor towards the community room



First floor plan of the refugee courtyard



Second floor plan of the refugee courtyard



The housing community room

Refugee Community Room:

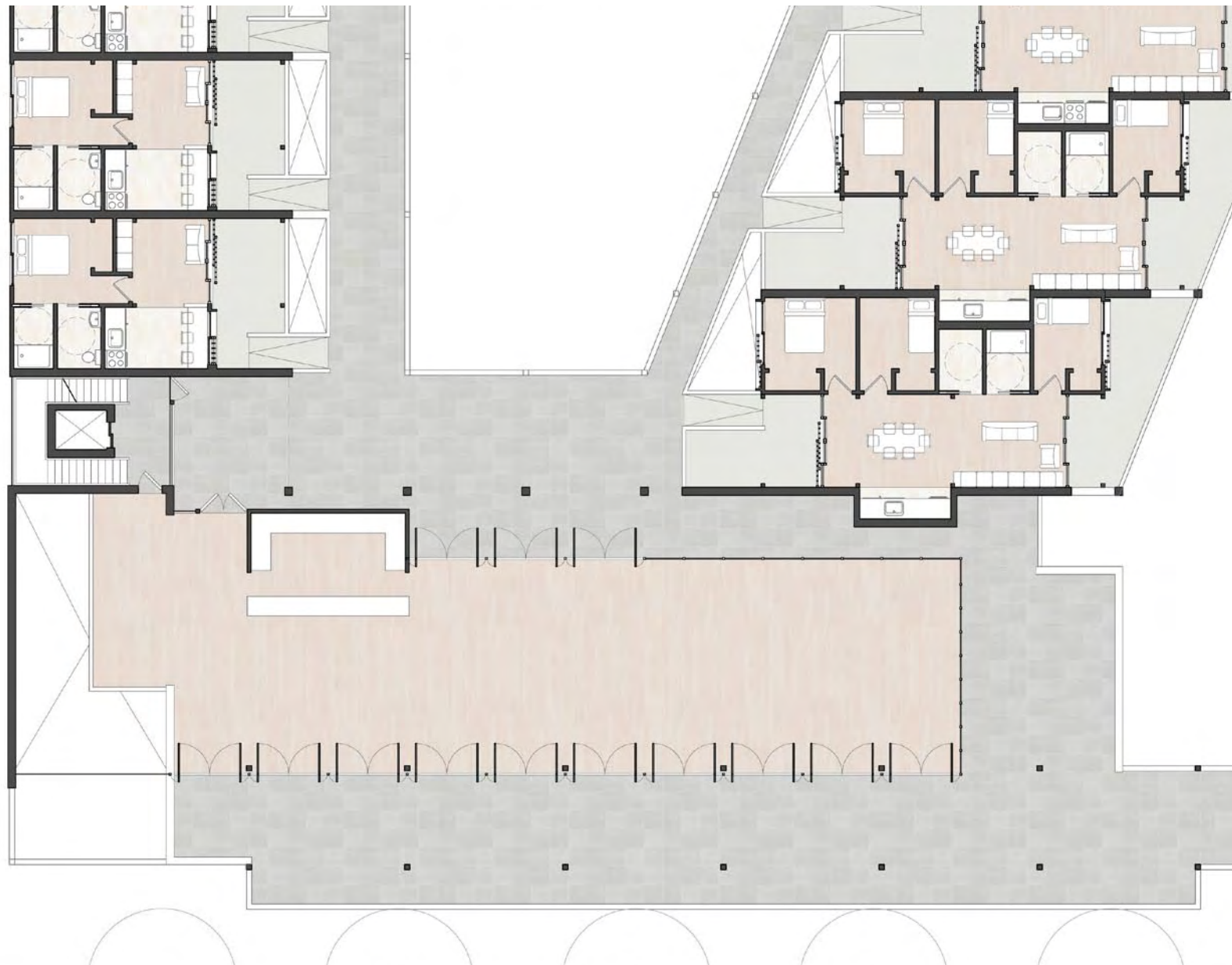
The community room is a formal gathering place for the refugees. This large room supplements individual units with a living area, dining area, and kitchen. This room fulfills any needs that the small units cannot accommodate, such as parties, group dinners, etc. The kitchen fulfills an additional use as a teaching kitchen where social workers can teach new groups of refugees to operate American appliances. The room is a simple rectangular space that overlooks the housing lobby. It is located on the shortest end of the courtyard towards the southwest. There is a patio to the south and a full wall of doors, so the room can become open air in the summer. Refugees can use this patio to look down on the activity of Union Street. This southern patio connects to the second level of the school to allow easy access for refugees. Three of the walls are glass, because this is an open, public space. The roof of the patio to the south helps block direct sunlight to keep the room from becoming too bright and overheated. The slanted roof adds interest and indicates a large gathering space. The refugee community room is a simple space, but essential to the housing and a pleasant place to be.



The patio to the south of the housing community room



The housing community room



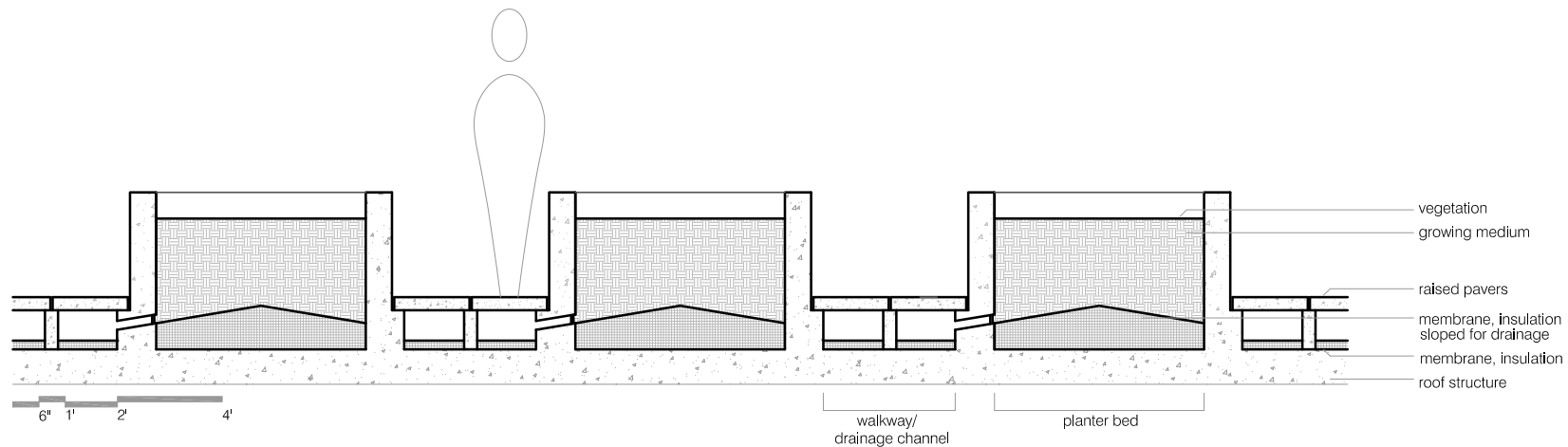
Plan of the housing community room



Third floor rooftop agricultural areas

Agricultural Areas:

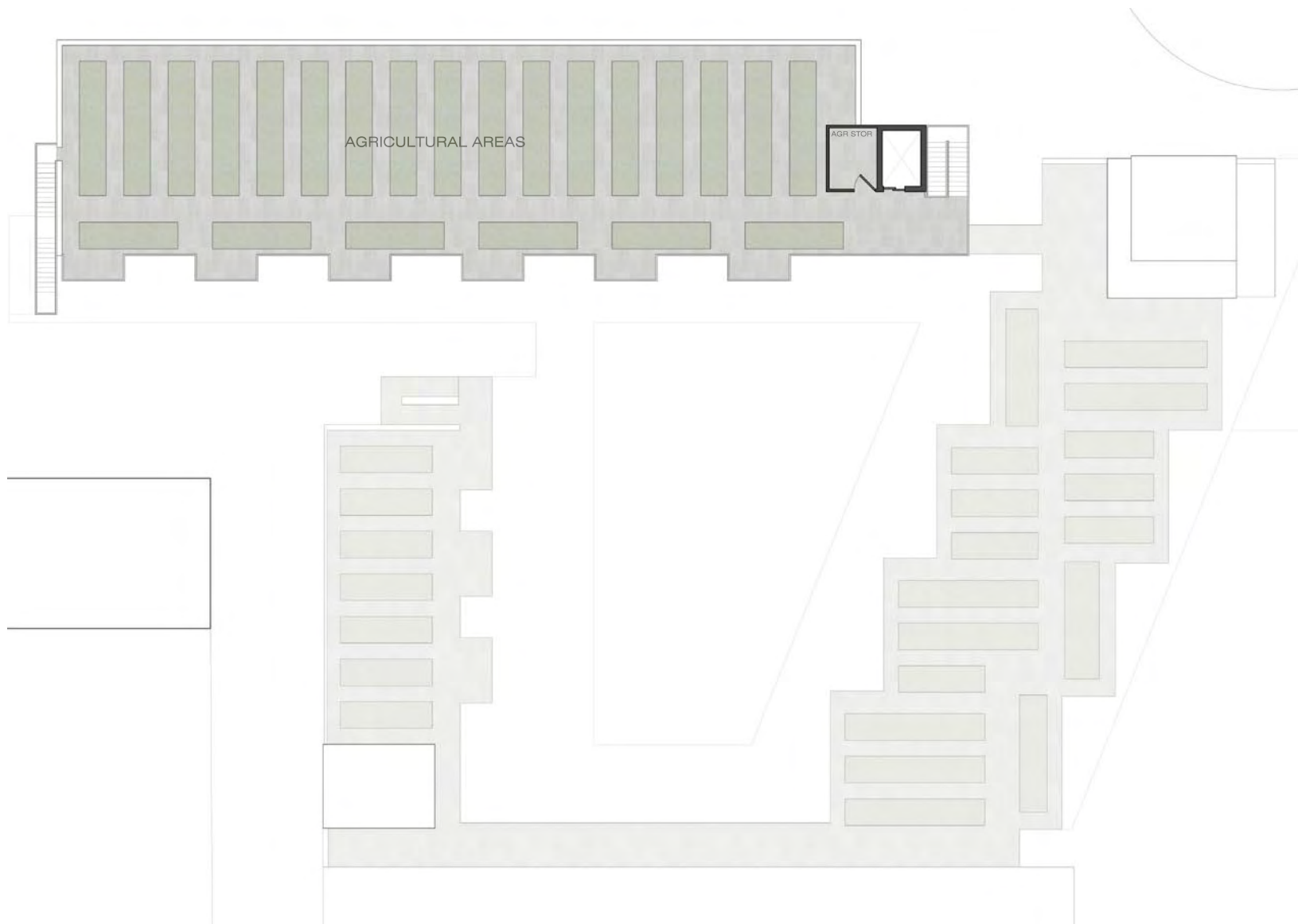
It was decided that ground floor area should be preserved for social needs, so the agricultural areas were moved to the rooftop where they would be safe and have access to plenty of sunlight. Since the roof has to be accessible, it is clad in raised pavers. These pavers will be durable and will allow drainage to pass underneath. Covering the entire roof in soil was considered, but would be heavy and require high maintenance. It is much more efficient to have raised concrete planters. The planters would drain directly below the raised pavers, which could be lifted for maintenance of the drainage holes. The planters have a wide wall so the gardener can sit while tending the plants.



Section of rooftop planters



Fourth floor rooftop agricultural areas



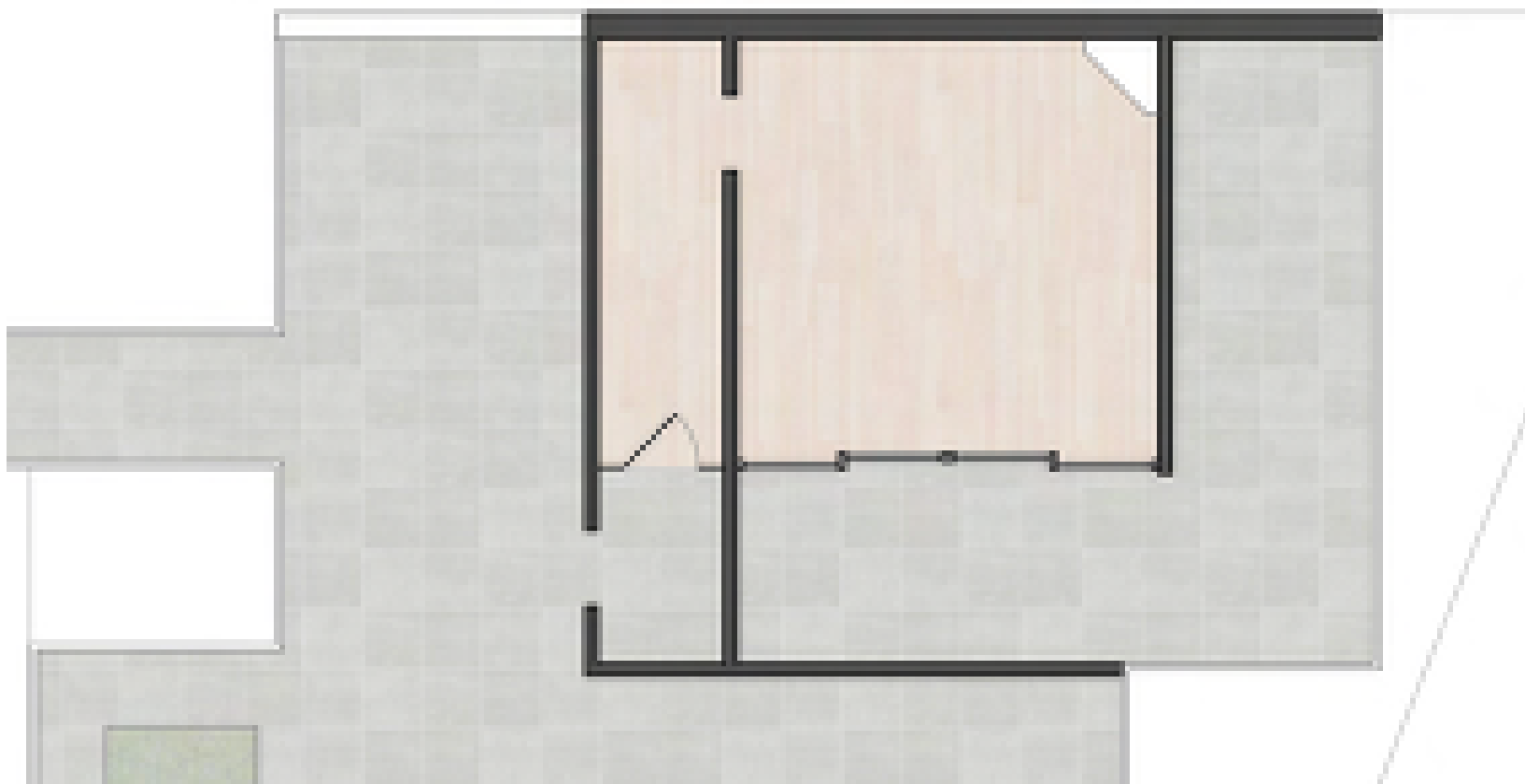
Plan of the rooftop agricultural areas



Religious space

Religious Space:

The religious space is a simple, square room on the third floor roof deck. When entering, the user passes down a short hallway; this is to help emotionally remove the user from the commotion of the community. Then, the user turns and enters the square room. In the eastern corner is a small ledge which can be used to hold religious iconography. Towards the southwest is a wall of glass doors which leads onto a small, L-shaped patio. The roof is raised, with a glass clerestory to let in light, however, no other part of the building can be seen from the room. It is a simple, private, contemplative space.



Plan of the religious space

Language and Vocational School:

The school is perhaps the most important aspect of the bridging program. Refugees starting their lives over face two major issues when entering the job market. First, most refugees do not speak proficient English, and second, their work credentials from their home country are not recognized. This school hopes to help address these two issues. It will offer classes to both refugees and the larger community in English. In addition, there will be job training available. Unfortunately, a refugee who was a professional in their home country must earn American degrees and licenses and this is not within the scope of the school. However, refugees will be able to take classes on technology, American business practices, and other vocational skills.

The school is located in the prime location on the corner of the site. At the front of the building along Bliss Street is a lawn shaded by the three existing trees. The entrance is in the center of the facade with a slightly protruding vestibule. The building is composed of four bays. On the first floor, the top bay houses the largest classroom. This large classroom can serve multiple functions such as a lecture hall or presentation room and can seat forty or more people. There is also a small lounge with a door to the vestibule of the event hall. This is so the event hall and school can function as one in the case of special events. The second bay houses the two story lobby and main stairwell. The third bay contains the elevator, fire stair, and bathrooms. There are also four study nooks looking out on the lawn. These are places where students can study in between classes. The final bay houses two classrooms that can each hold eighteen students. This is a maximum size for a language class as it is important that each student can participate in discussions. There is also a removable wall between these classrooms to allow larger classes to take place.

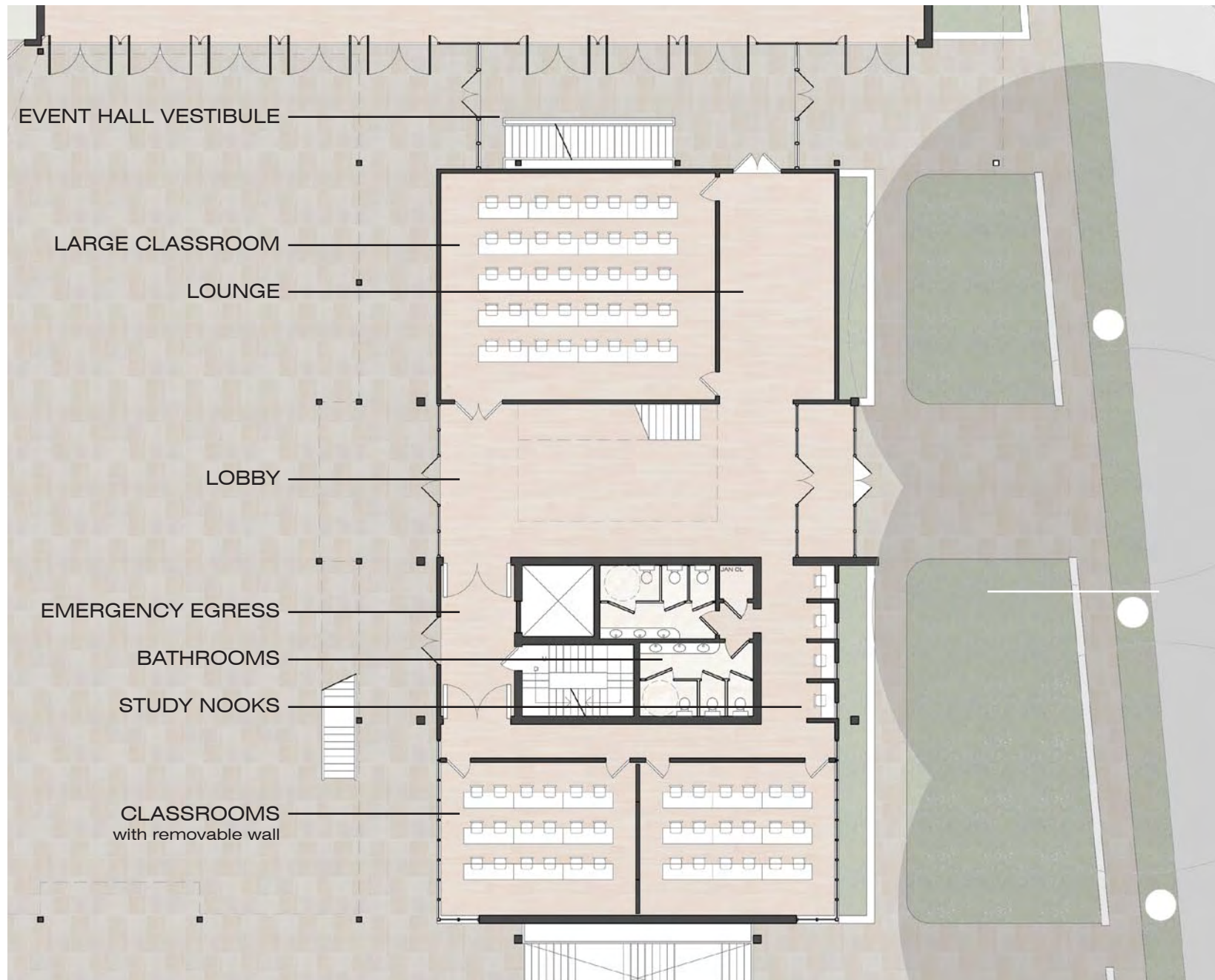


The front lawn of the language and vocational school

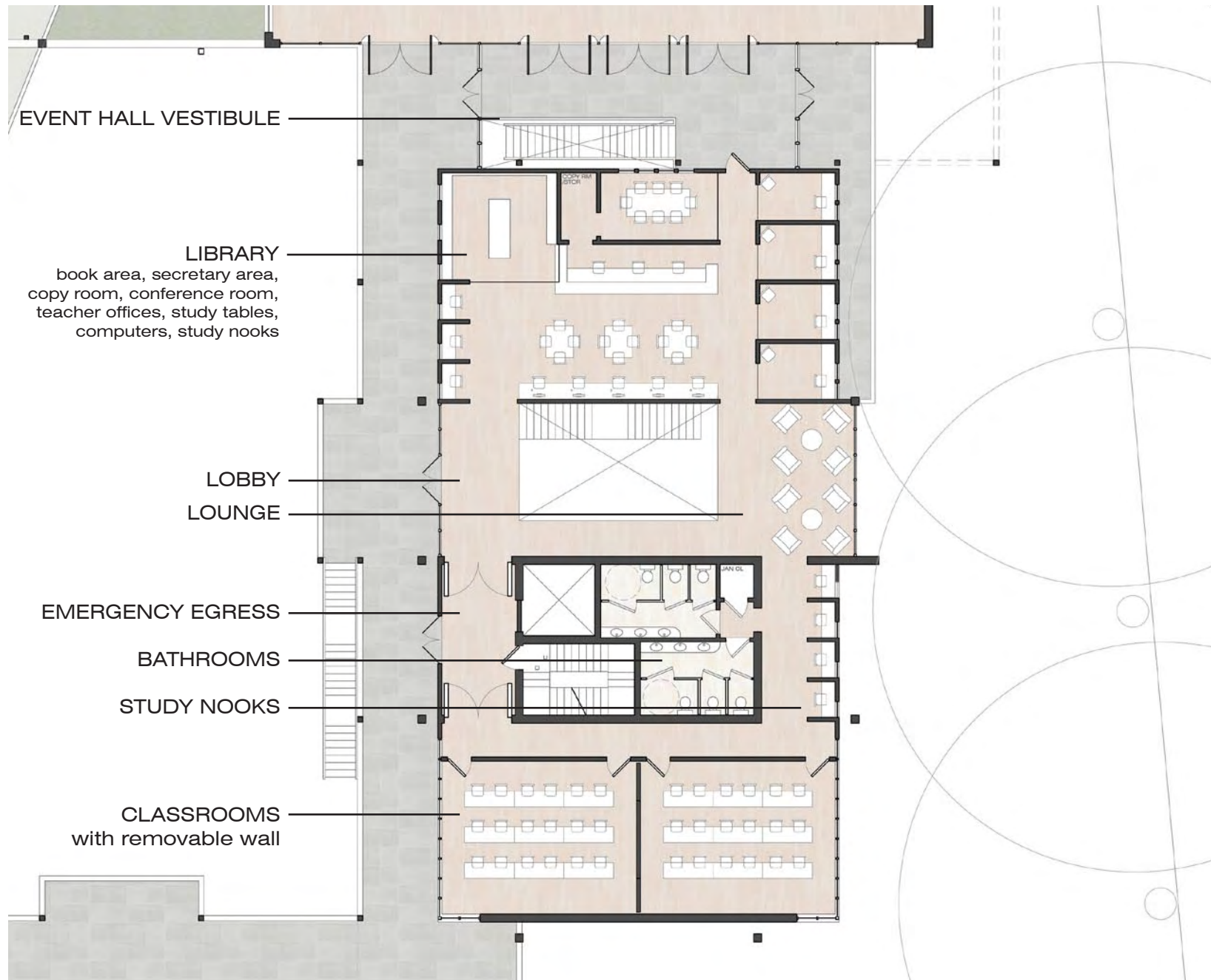
The second level is similar to the first. In the place of the large classroom is the library. The library houses many functions as not only a study area but the administrative center. There is a book area controlled by the main desk where the administrative staff will sit. Behind the desk are a storage and copy room and a small meeting room. This meeting room will double as a place for students to meet with prospective employers as job placement is an important function of the school. There are also four teacher offices that will be shared by the staff, who are likely to be part time. In addition, there are five computers, tables for group study, and three additional study nooks. The second bay again houses the lobby and a small student lounge. Finally, the third and fourth bays are the same as on the first floor with more circulation, bathrooms, study nooks, and classrooms.



Front elevation of the language and vocational school



First floor plan of the language and vocational school



Second floor plan of the language and vocational school



Lobby of the school



First floor study nooks



Second floor classroom



Lutheran Social Services offices waiting room

Lutheran Social Services Offices:

The Lutheran Social Services Offices had to be easily accessed by both refugees and the larger community. For this reason, they were placed in between the two courtyards. The office is relatively simple. In the center is a lobby that can be accessed from either courtyard. Towards the south is a wing of six shared offices for lower level employees. Towards the north is a wing with other rooms. There are three individual offices for leaders, a small meeting room, a lounge and kitchen, a janitor closet, a donation storage room, and two bathrooms. The donation storage can be accessed by the service hallway that leads to the loading area at the rear of the site.



Entrance to the Lutheran Social Services office from the public courtyard



Plan of the Lutheran office



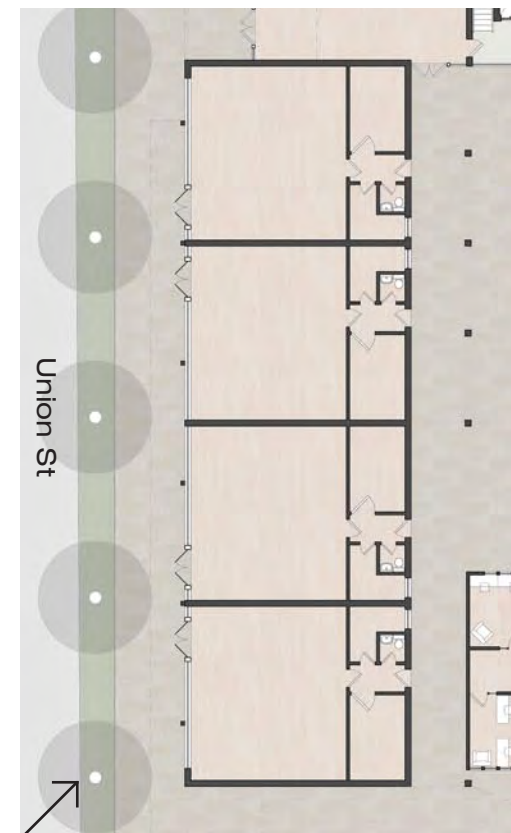
Entrances to the small retail shops along Union Street

Rentable Retail:

There are four small retail spaces along Union Street. These spaces are an opportunity for refugees and other local community members to open a small business in addition to generating income for the Refugee Center. They have high visibility and easy access from bus routes. Hopefully, these stores will help introduce locals to the Refugee Center and pique their interest. About 750 square feet are taken by the storefront. To the rear is a 150 square foot storage area, a small office with a window to the rear, and a bathroom. There is access to this rear storage area from the refugee courtyard, which has access to the loading area behind the event hall.



Retail shops along Union Street



Plan of the retail spaces



Event hall entrance/vestibule

Event Hall:

The event hall is a place for various events for both the Refugee Center and the larger community. It is an ideal location to hold fundraisers, dances, birthdays or anniversaries, receptions, and any other celebratory event. Proximity and connection to the school is important so they can be used together. The school and the hall are connected with a glass lobby that is the main entrance to the event hall. This lobby acts as additional egress for the school.

It is also important that the event hall and public courtyard can work as one, because the courtyard can be additionally used as an exterior event space. This is accomplished by a wall of glass doors to the south that allows the interior and exterior spaces to flow as one when needed.

The interior hall is a simple rectangular space with a slanted roof. The east, north, and west walls of the event hall are solid brick for privacy on the first level, but after twelve feet, they switch to glass to allow for natural light and views of trees. The glass to the west extends to the ground to act as a wall between the main space and service spaces. This glass wall is composed of stripes of colored glass as a reference to the colors of traditional Burmese textiles. To the south is a second floor balcony. This

balcony connects to the second floor of the lobby, school, and the upper walkways.

The service area is composed of a coat room, two bathrooms, and a prep kitchen. The prep kitchen accesses the service hallway with access to the loading area in the rear. A storage area for tables, chairs, and other items is located directly below the event hall on the garage level.



Transition between the event hall and event courtyard



Event hall with stained glass wall to the west



First floor plan of the event hall



Entrance to the event courtyard

Event Courtyard:

The public courtyard/exterior event space connects the bonding program elements. Towards the east is the school and the event hall is to the north. The Lutheran Social Services offices and retail spaces are to the west. The courtyard is entered by passing underneath the second floor walkway. This creates a “gateway” to the courtyard and defines the southern edge. This method of defining the courtyard leaves it open when the public is welcome. At the same time, this structure offers the opportunity to close off the courtyard in the case of a private event. For example, panels of fabric could be hung from the structure to create a visual barrier.

There is one event that the courtyard will regularly house: the weekly market in warmer months. This market is a place for refugees and local community members to sell things such as crops they have grown and craft items they have produced. The stalls will be simple folding tables for ease of setting up. The paving pattern outlines a plan for the various stalls. Brown squares mark the locations of the tables. The tables will measure about five feet by two feet. The central brown squares are ten feet by ten feet, meaning as many as four tables could be placed there. The edge brown squares are ten feet by five feet to allow two tables.

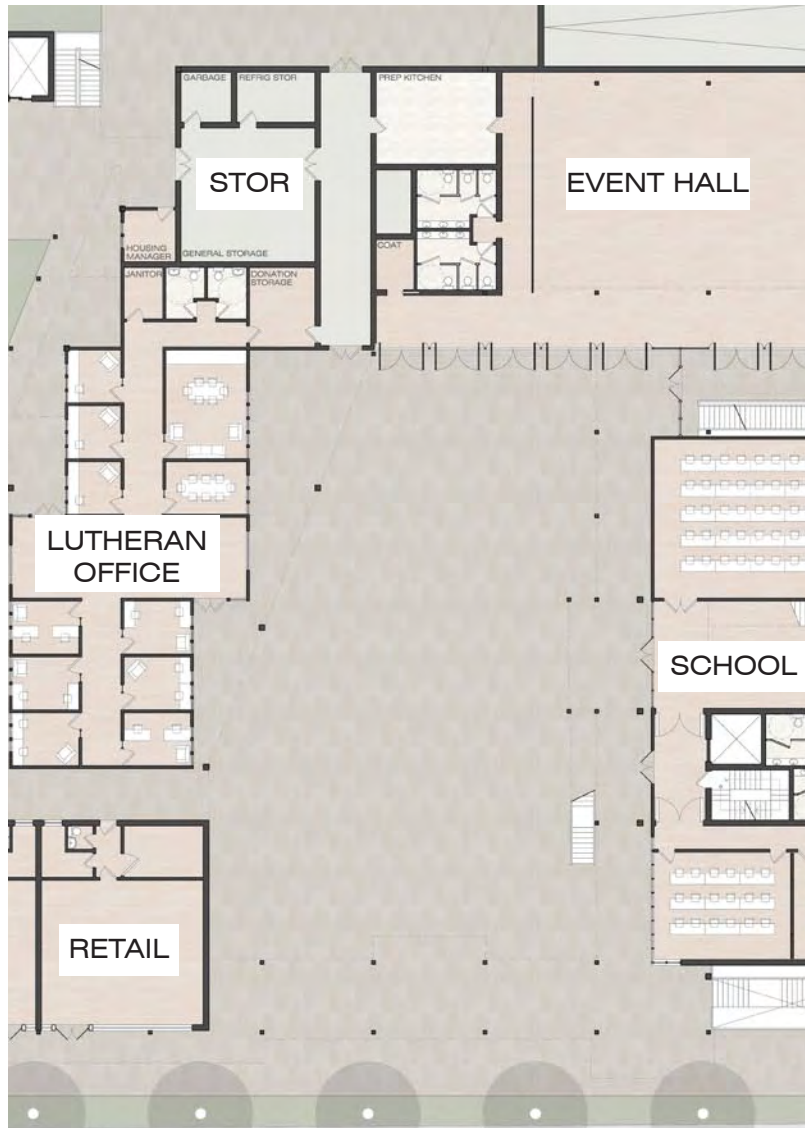
During the summer months, the court will be shaded and cooled by four overhead canopies.



Market Layout



Event courtyard on market day



First floor plan of the event courtyard



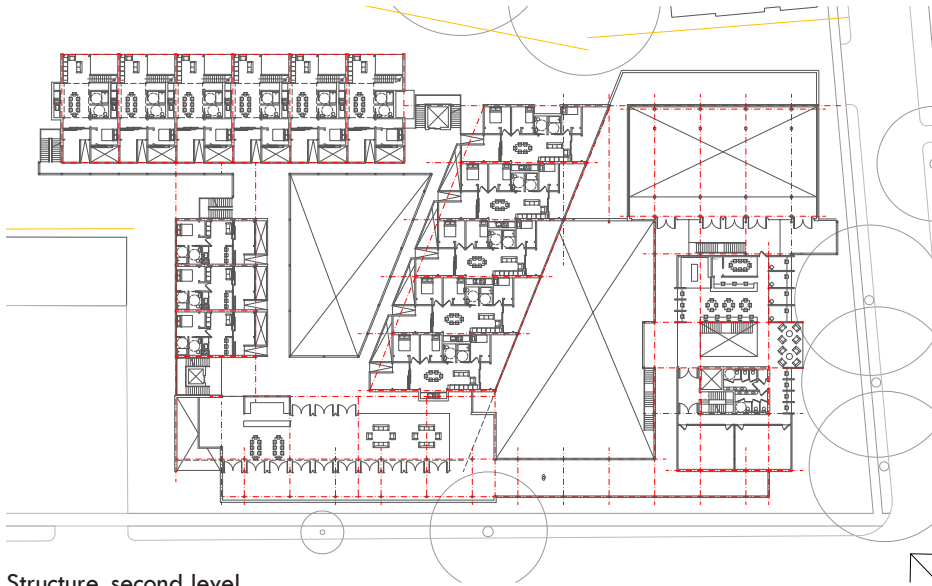
Second floor plan of the event courtyard

Structural System:

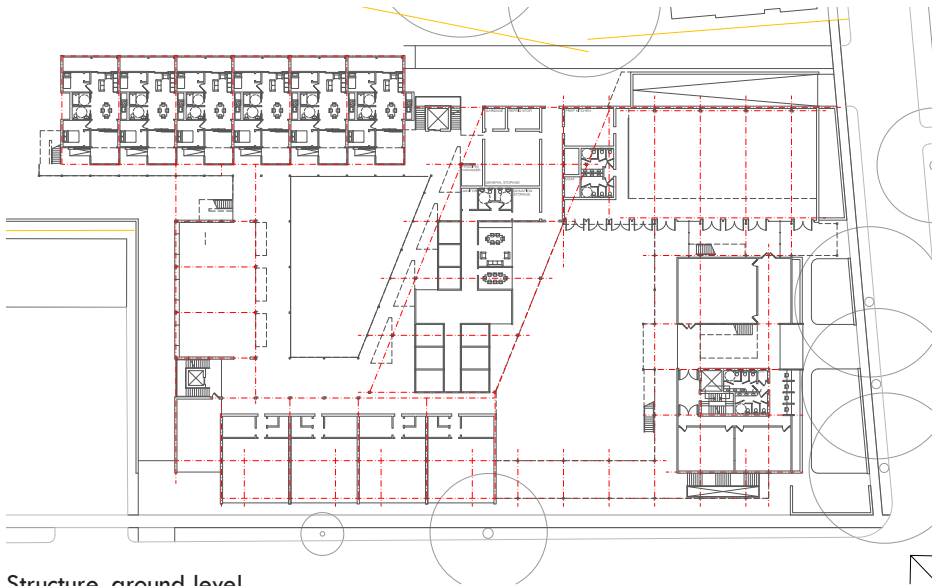
The building was designed along a simple grid, so although the form seems complex, the structural grid is relatively regular and simple. The above-ground floors use a steel grid with spans between twenty and thirty feet. These small spans ensure a shallow structural depth and floor to ceiling depth. The most complex areas are where rows of grids come together.

The garage level below grade is supported by a concrete structural system because of its innate adaptability. This level is more complex because it supports the entire ground floor, including the courtyards, and there is parking throughout underneath. Because of the needs for parking, certain columns had to be eliminated. The concrete system allows the removal of occasional columns with the use of a deeper transfer beam where indicated on the basement level plan. Above the beams is a concrete slab to support the courtyards and rooms above.

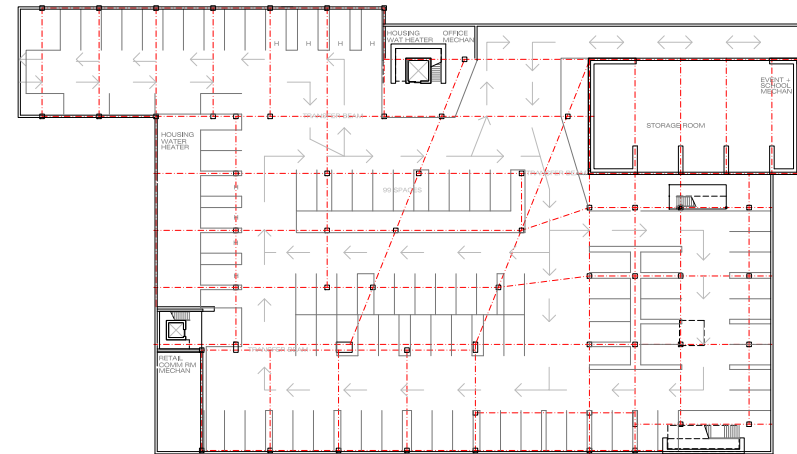
The steel structure serves important aesthetic functions in addition to the structural ones. Circulation paths are indicated by exposed steel columns and beams. These exposed members are reminiscent of the wooden construction of traditional Burmese architecture and add a more intimate scale to the elevations of the building.



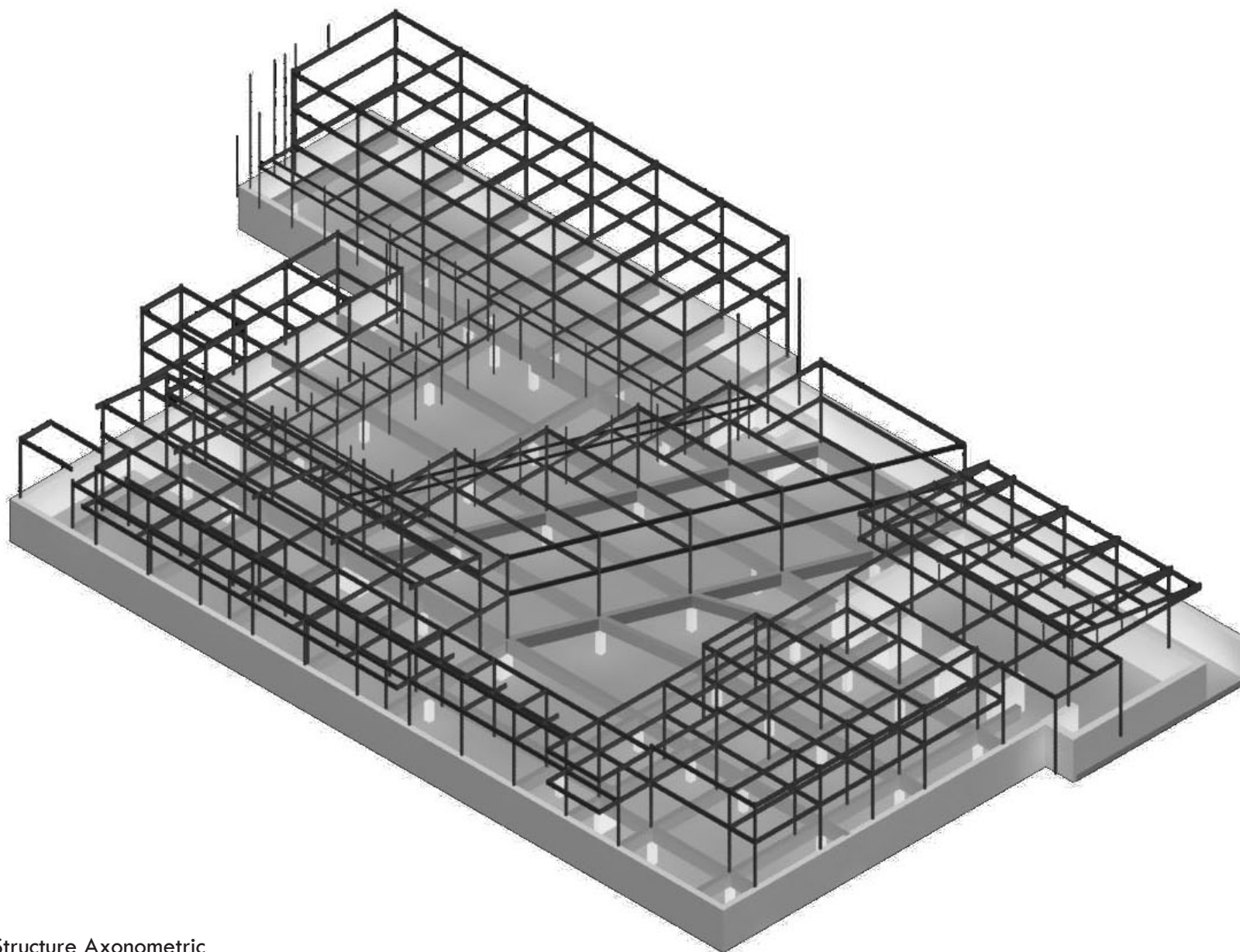
Structure, second level



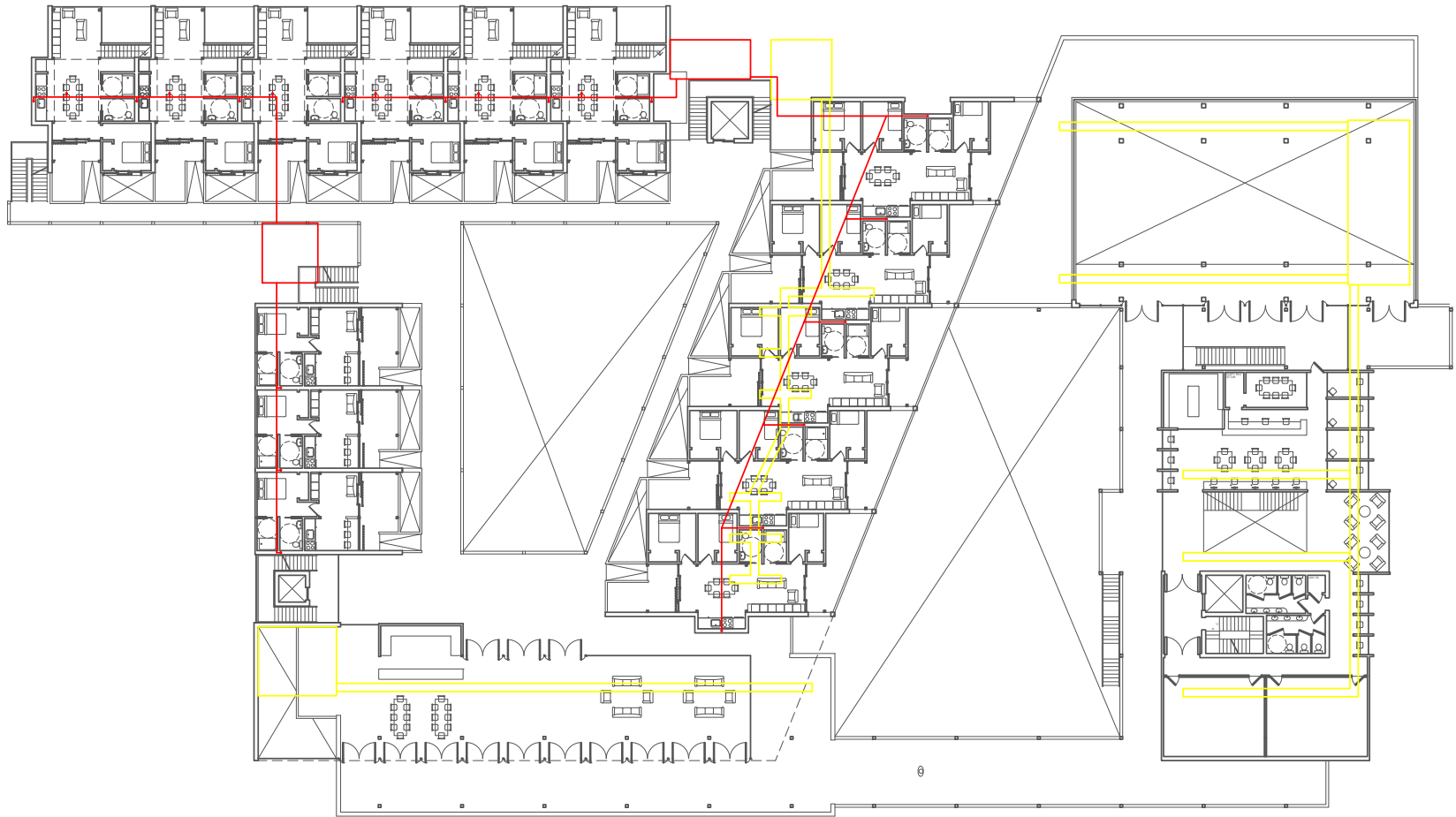
Structure, ground level



Structure, basement level



Structure Axonometric

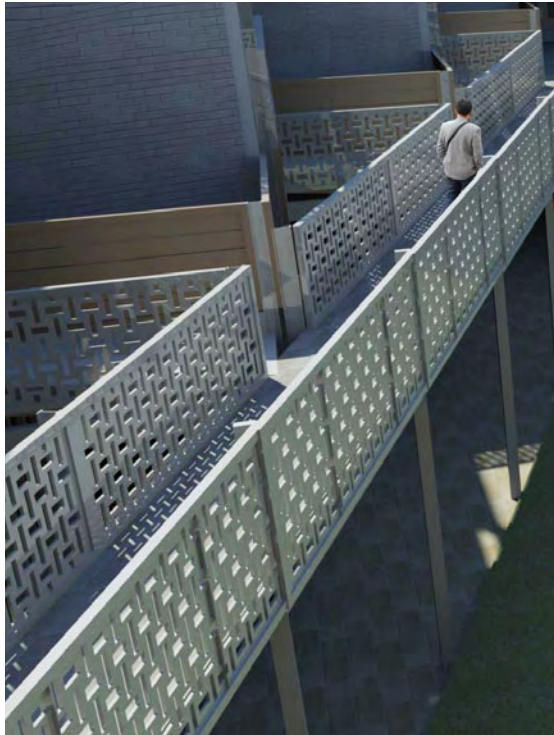
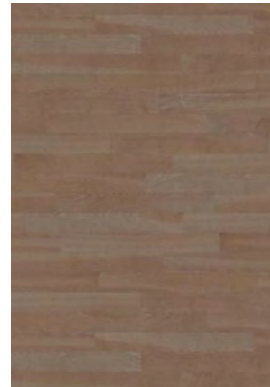
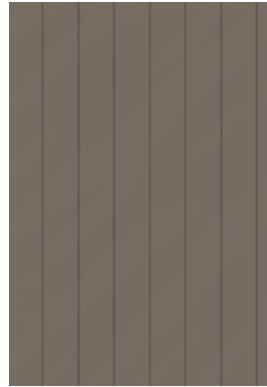


Mechanical Plan

Mechanical System:

There are two major HVAC systems used in the building. The housing units have a simple hydronic heating system. It was decided that cooling the units would be an unnecessary expense because the Massachusetts climate is uncomfortably hot for only a few days each year. In July and August, temperatures average only 60-85 degrees. Most low-income housing that refugees will live in once they leave the center will not have central air conditioning. In addition, all units have cross ventilation for improved comfort on hot days. The two water heaters are located in the garage level as indicated on the structural plan. The heater near the rear stairwell will supply the three bedroom units and the three eastern two bedroom and four bedroom units. A heater located below the one bedroom units will supply those units and the three western two and four bedroom units. Water rises through pipes via the structural walls between each unit which are sized to accommodate the plumbing. Simple fin tube convectors heat the units. This is an inexpensive and low maintenance system which is common in the housing that refugees will eventually move to.

The other program elements, including the school, Lutheran Social Services offices, the retail, the event space, and the community room, will benefit from forced-air HVAC systems that will provide heating, cooling, and air quality control. The retail and community room share a mechanical room and equipment near the front western stairwell. The office mechanical room is located near the rear housing stairwell. Finally, the event space and school share a mechanical room in the storage area of the event space. All five mechanical spaces are located along an exterior wall of the building where ventilation and outdoor elements would be possible.



Building Materials:

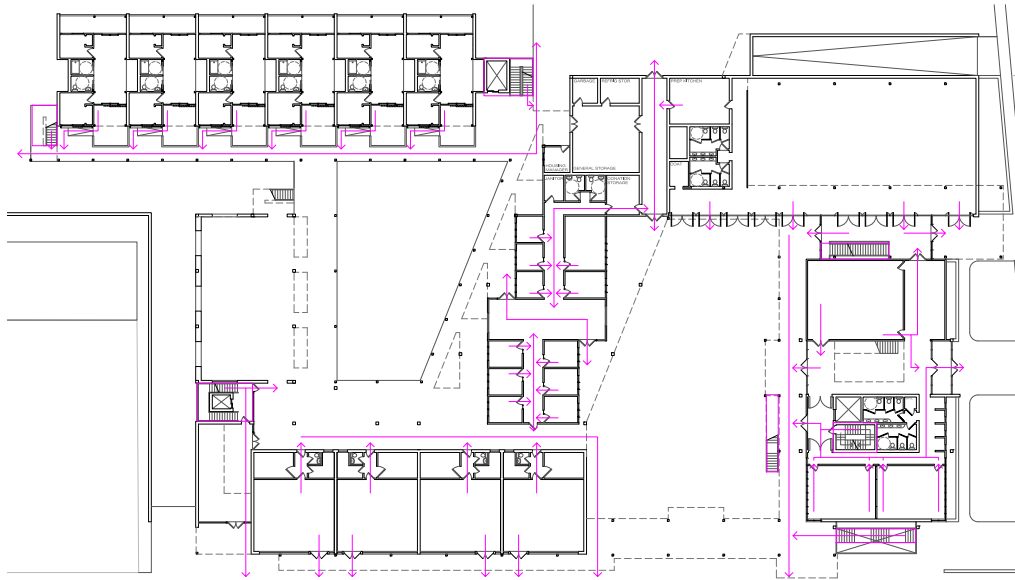
The building has a simple palette of materials. Most of the walls are clad in a simple gray brick. I chose brick for its symbolism as a strong, lasting material. At the same time, brick has an intimate, human scale that enriches the facade. There is also a lot of glass on the facade. Windows in the private portion of the building have wooden frames to indicate a residential nature while windows in the public portion of the building have aluminum frames. Some walls, such as those on the front of the units, have a light gray plaster finish. Some interior walls leave the brick exposed, while others are simply painted white.

The floor on the exterior is covered in a simple brown paver system for durability, easy maintenance, and texture. Interior floors are typically wooden for visual warmth except for the use of tiles in bathrooms and kitchens.

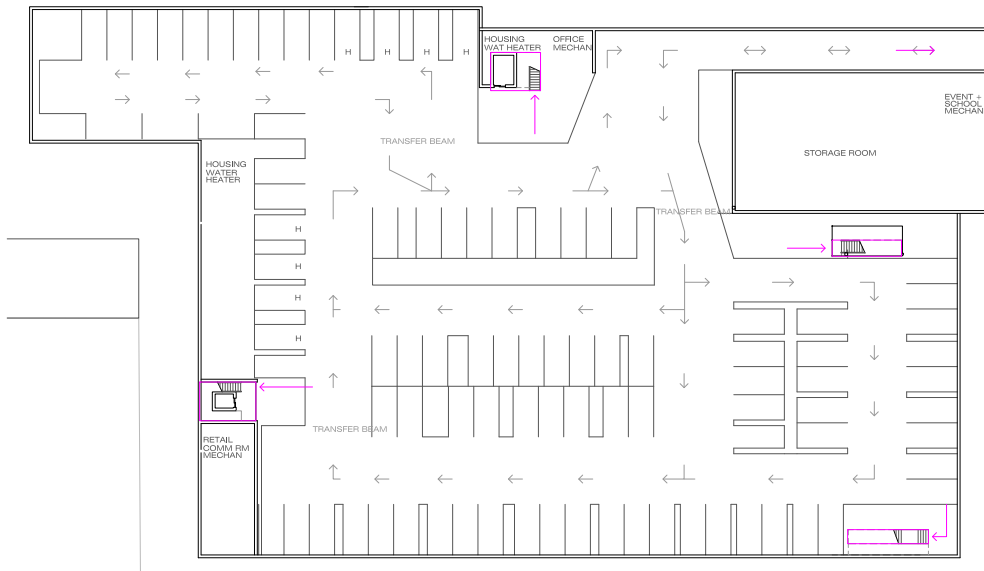
The two slanted roofs are covered in a brown standing seam metal roof. This is an effective and attractive roof covering that ties into the colors of the wooden details on the facade. The flat roofs function as gardening areas, and so must be walked upon. These roofs are finished in raised concrete pavers that allow drainage beneath.

In addition, there is the system of walkways throughout the building. These are floored in the same material as the ground-level walkways and are covered in the standing seam roof. The railing material and color indicate their programmatic function. Railings in the public portion of the building are made of metal and have a white finish. Railings in the housing but community areas of the program are made of metal and finished in gray. Both of these railings use a woven pattern meant to represent the woven texture of Burmese houses and textiles. Finally, railings on units are made of wooden slats to portray a residential nature.

Finally, a number of screens are used for privacy in the residential portion of the building. Windows and sliding glass doors are fitted with wooden screens cut in the weave pattern. These are movable to adjust for privacy while still allowing light to enter.



Egress diagram, first level



Egress diagram, garage level

Egress:

Language and Vocational School

The school has four exit points on its ground floor: the main entry, a set of doors across from the main entry leading to the courtyard, a door leading to the event hall vestibule, and the fire-rated doorways at the circulation core. At this last exit point, the fire stairs and elevator exit into a fire-rated corridor containing doors to the outside. From the second floor of the school, there are four points of exit. The first is the fire stairs and corridor discussed earlier. There are also exits into the fire-rated event hall vestibule which has a stair and two sets of doors leading to the above ground walkway. This walkway also has a stair to the ground floor.

Event Space

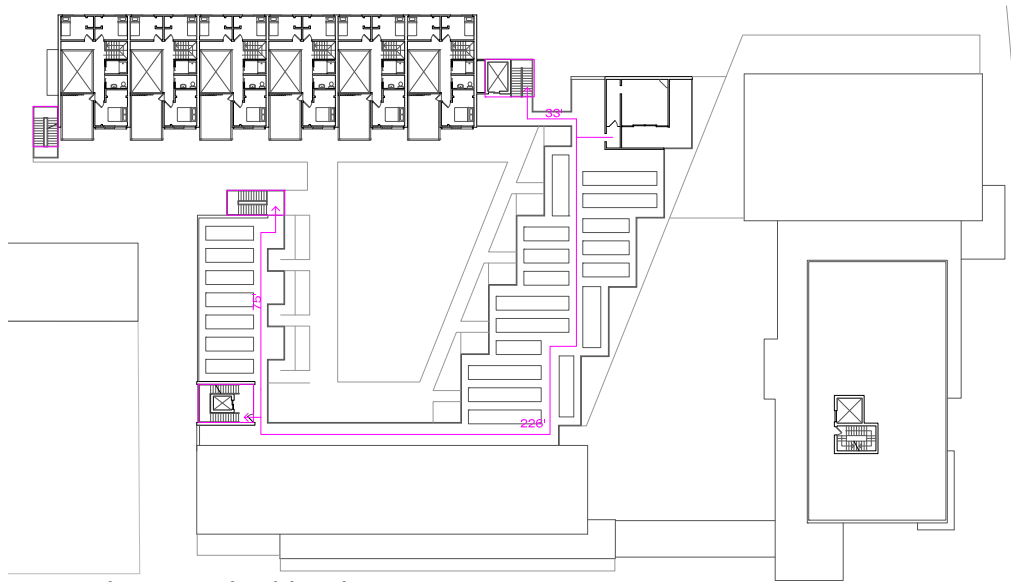
The ground floor of the event space has a long wall of doors providing ample egress. The second floor can be evacuated via the second floor walkway or the fire-rated vestibule which also has a staircase. There is an additional exit via the kitchen, which enters into the service hallway which then ends in an exterior doorway on either end.

Retail

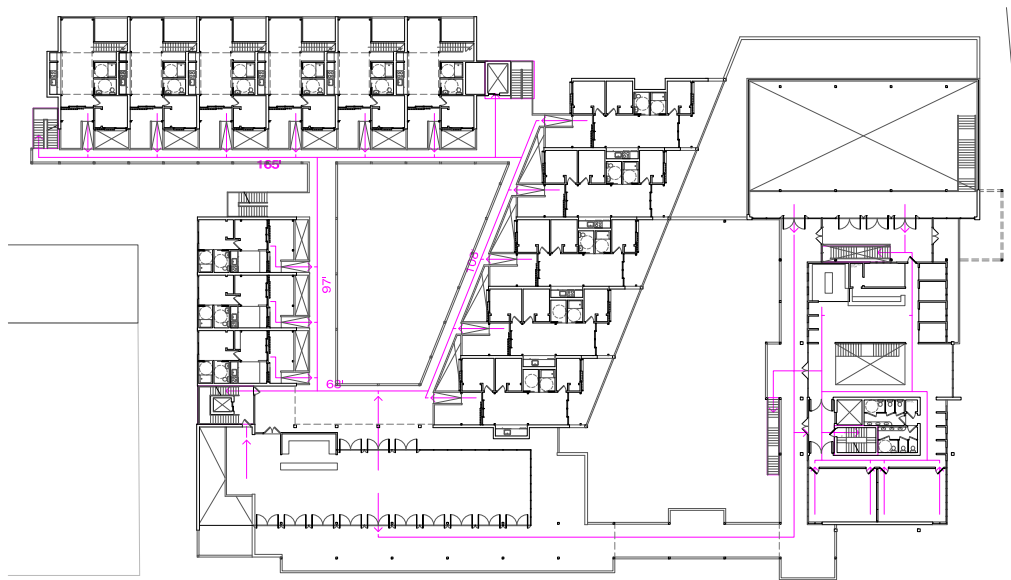
Each retail space has two points of exit: the front door and the rear service door. This rear door is a clear, straight exit path that can be used without entering any private spaces.

Lutheran Social Services Offices

The offices have four points of egress. First, there are doors located on either end of the waiting room. There is also a doorway at the end of the southern hallway and finally, users can exit through the donation room and service hallway. This way, each hallway ends in a door leading to the exterior.



Egress diagram, third level



Egress diagram, second level

Housing Units

Ground floor units can simply exit into the courtyard. Units that enter on the second floor must exit onto the walkway and proceed to one of three stairwells: the enclosed stairwell at the housing lobby and the two stairwells flanking the four bedroom units. In multiple family housing, covered exterior stairwells are considered safe egress as long as any walls they share with the interior are fire-rated. The maximum travel distance is 200 feet, and from the diagram at the left, you can see that each unit has two stairwells located easily within this distance. People in the community room can use any of the same stairwells to exit the building.

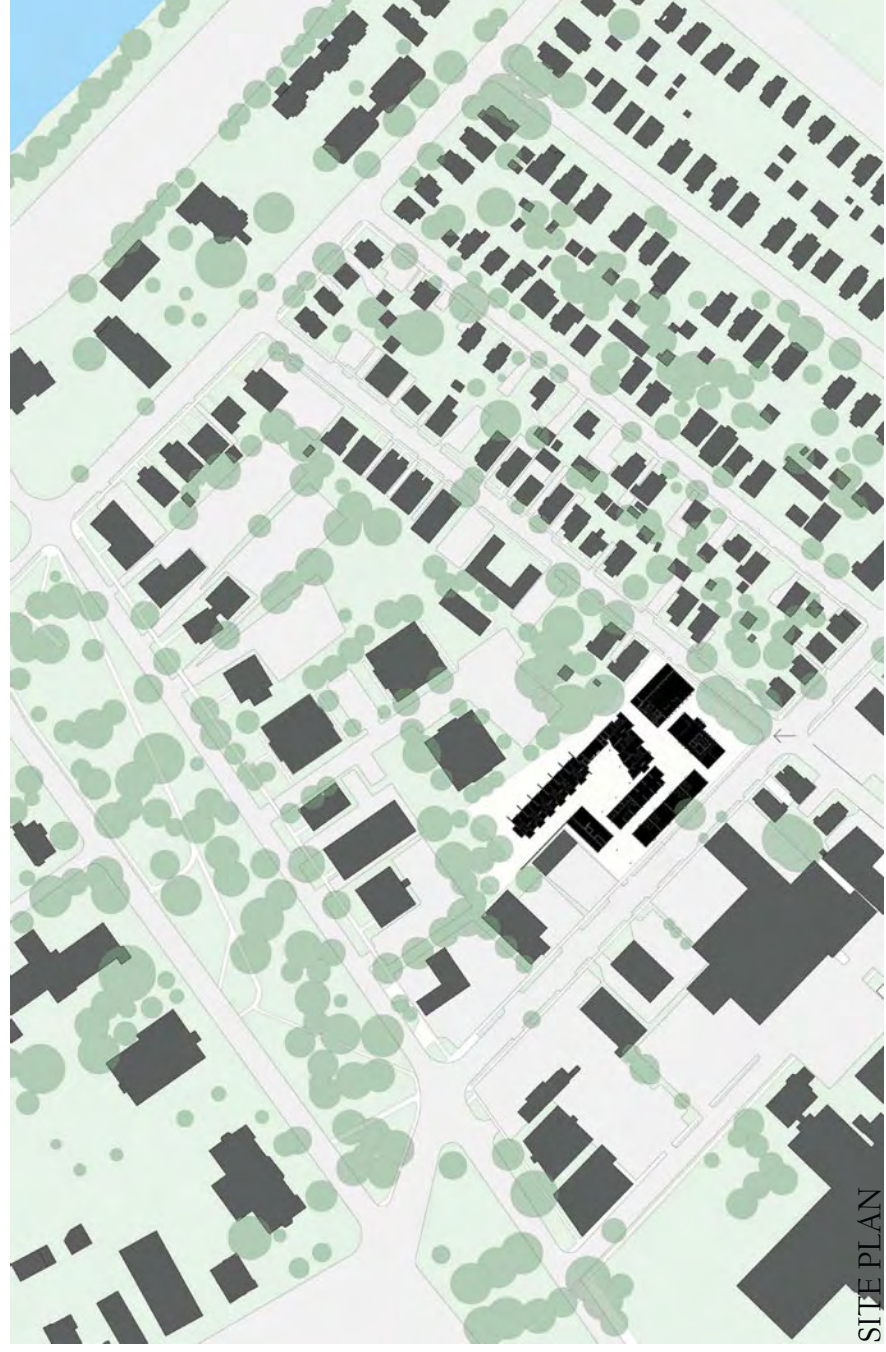
Religious Space

The religious space is the only interior function entered from the third level. This room is in close proximity to the rear stairwell. In the event this stairwell is compromised, users can cross the agricultural roof deck to the housing lobby stairwell.

Agricultural Areas

On the third floor roof deck, users can exit via the rear stairwell or the housing lobby stairwell. A third, uncovered stairwell allows for additional egress although this is not technically “fire safe” egress. For the agricultural areas located on the fourth floor roof deck, there is a stairwell on either end to allow for safe exit.

RESETTLEMENT CENTER FOR BURMESE REFUGEES SPRINGFIELD, MA



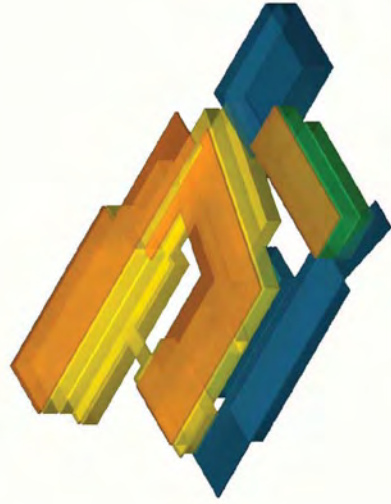


bonding social networks:

networks between individuals of a similar status
project goal: foster the growth of an immigrant community

bridging social networks:

networks between individuals who are very different from each other
project goal: foster a connection between refugees and members of the larger community



refugee housing (23,400 sf + 11,500 ext sf)

5	400 sf	1 br units (+ 250 sf exterior)
4	850 sf	2 br units (+ 500 sf exterior)
6	8500 sf	2 br units accessible (+ 500 sf exterior)
3	1050 sf	3 br units accessible (+ 550 sf exterior)
4	1550 sf	4 br units (+ 600 sf exterior)
1	600 sf	religious space
		informal interior and exterior gathering spaces

agricultural areas (900+ sf)

unknown		cultivation areas
1	300 sf	tool storage
1	600 sf	crop storage

learning center (7,000 sf)

1	1100 sf	library, computer area, secretary
1	150 sf	job placement center/meeting room
3	400 sf	classrooms
1	600 sf	large classroom
1	400 sf	computer classroom
4	60 sf	shared translator and teacher offices
1	300 sf	lounge
4	120 sf	bathrooms
	2,900 sf	atrium/circulation

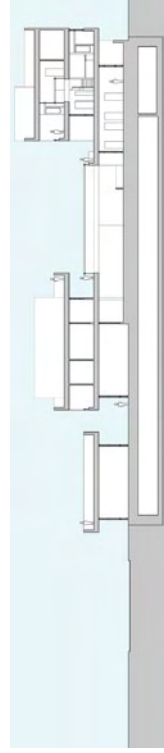
rentable public areas (11,300 sf + ext spaces)

4	1000 sf	ground floor retail
7	450 sf	office space
1	4000 sf	interior event space
1	5000 sf	exterior event space (and marketplace)
1	300 sf	event storage
		additional public courtyards/gardens

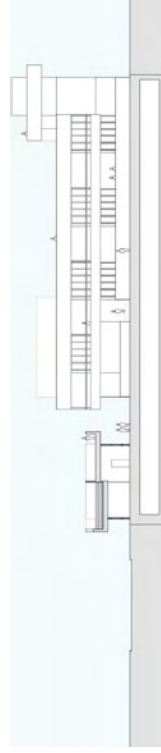
maintenance (1,400 sf)

1	100 sf	garbage room
1	80 sf	mail room
1	80 sf	housing manager office
3	60 sf	janitor closets
1	1000 sf	facility storage

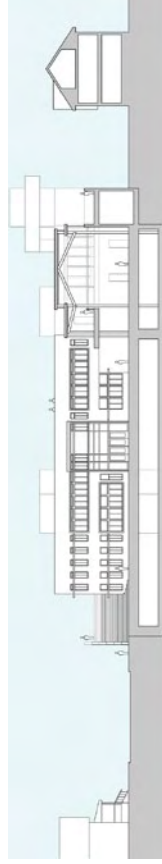
total: 40,000 sf



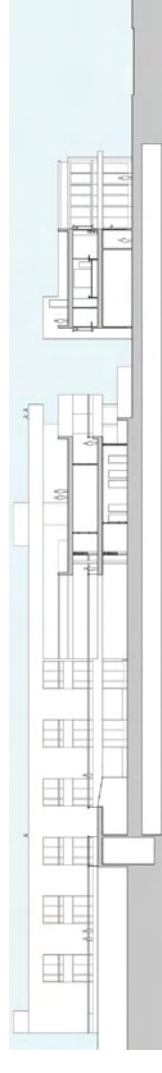
SECTION A



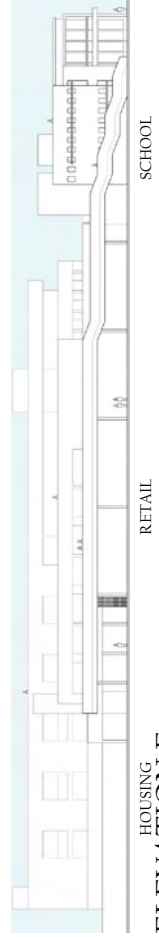
SECTION B



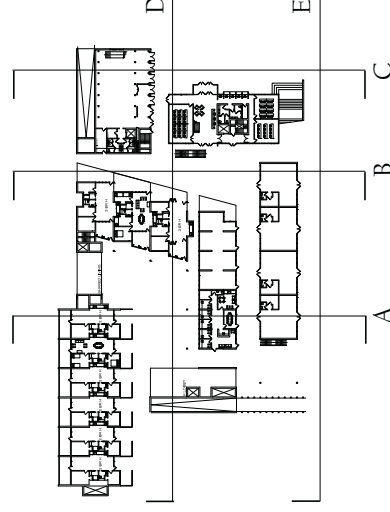
SECTION C

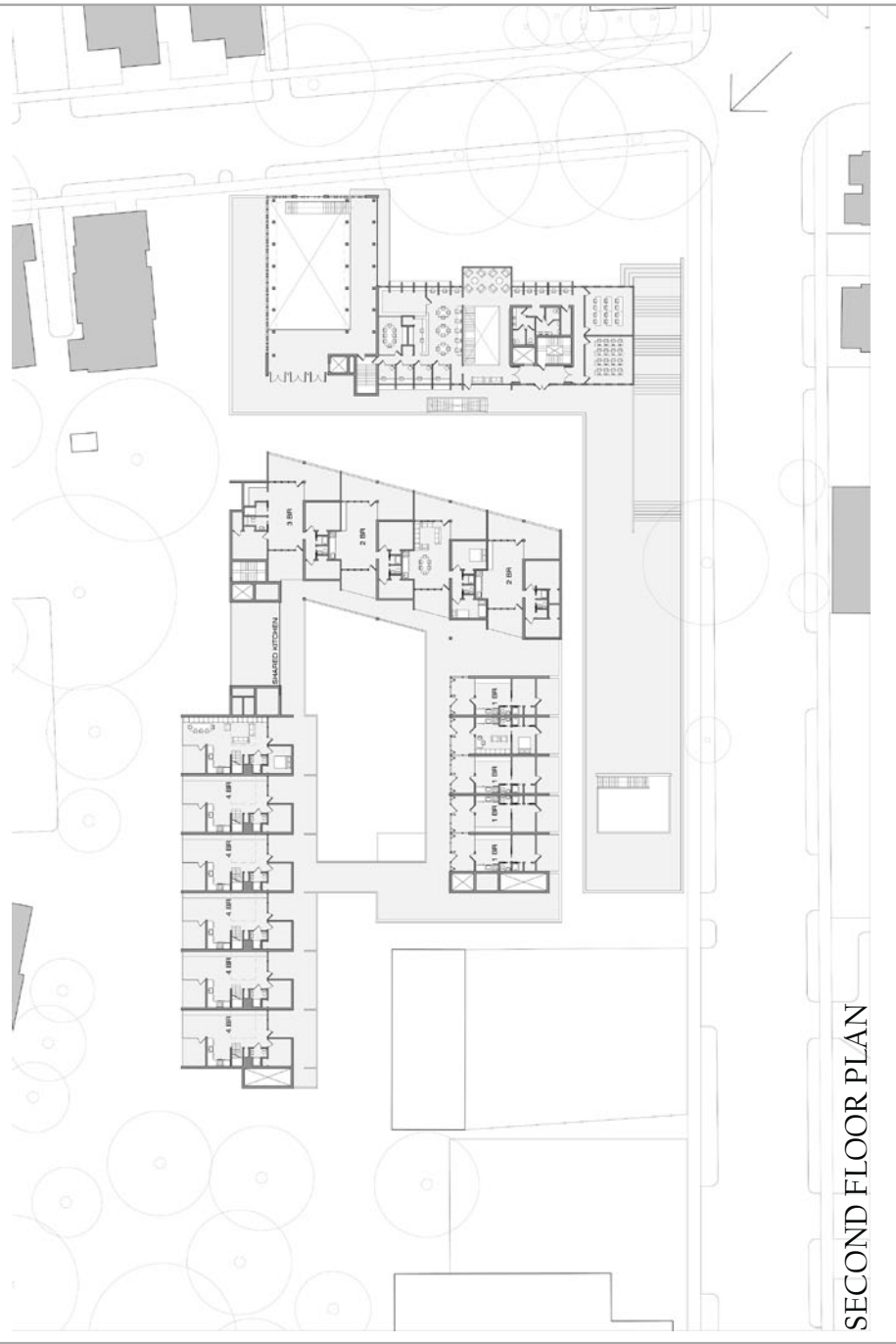
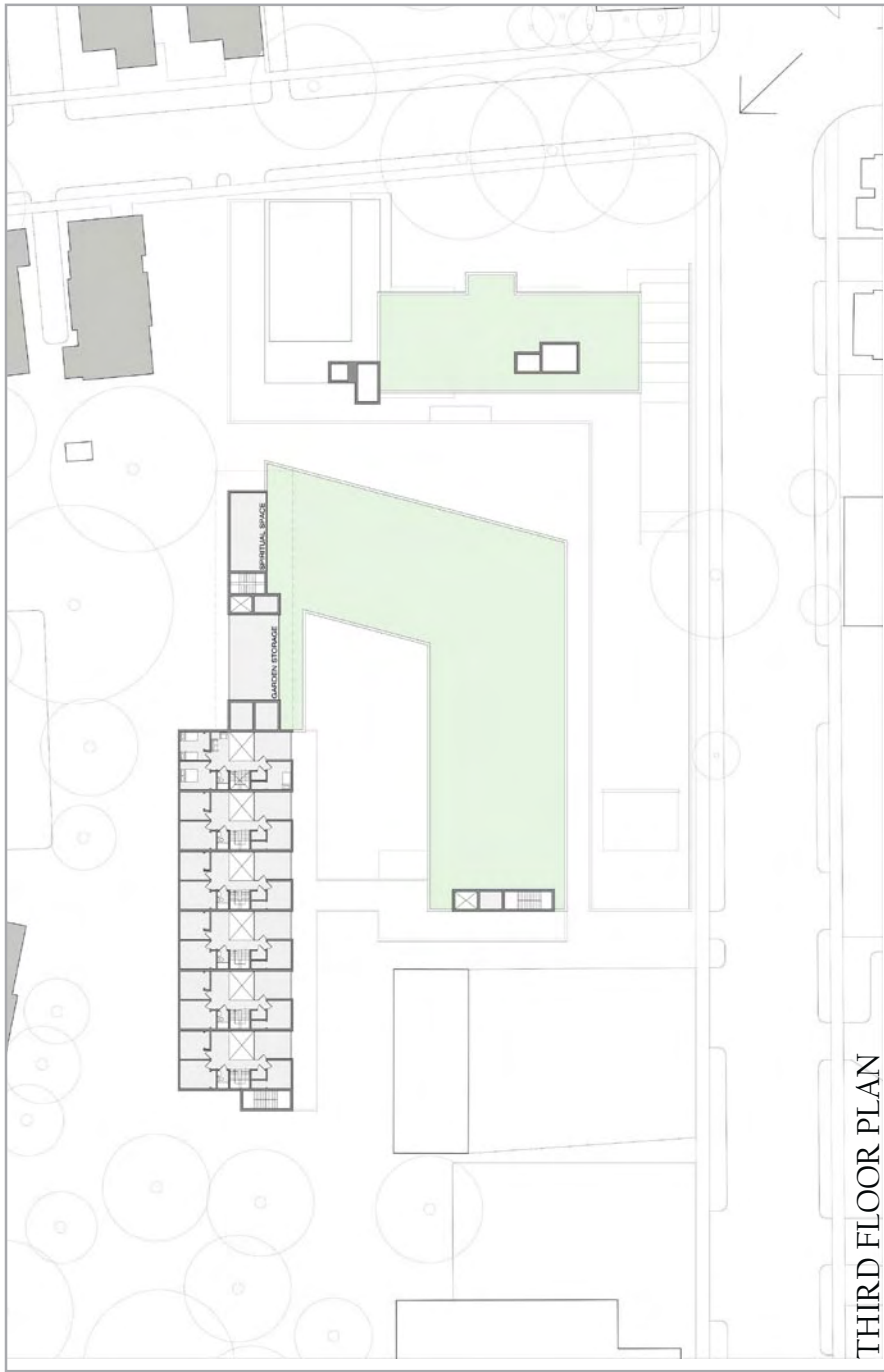


SECTION D



ELEVATION E



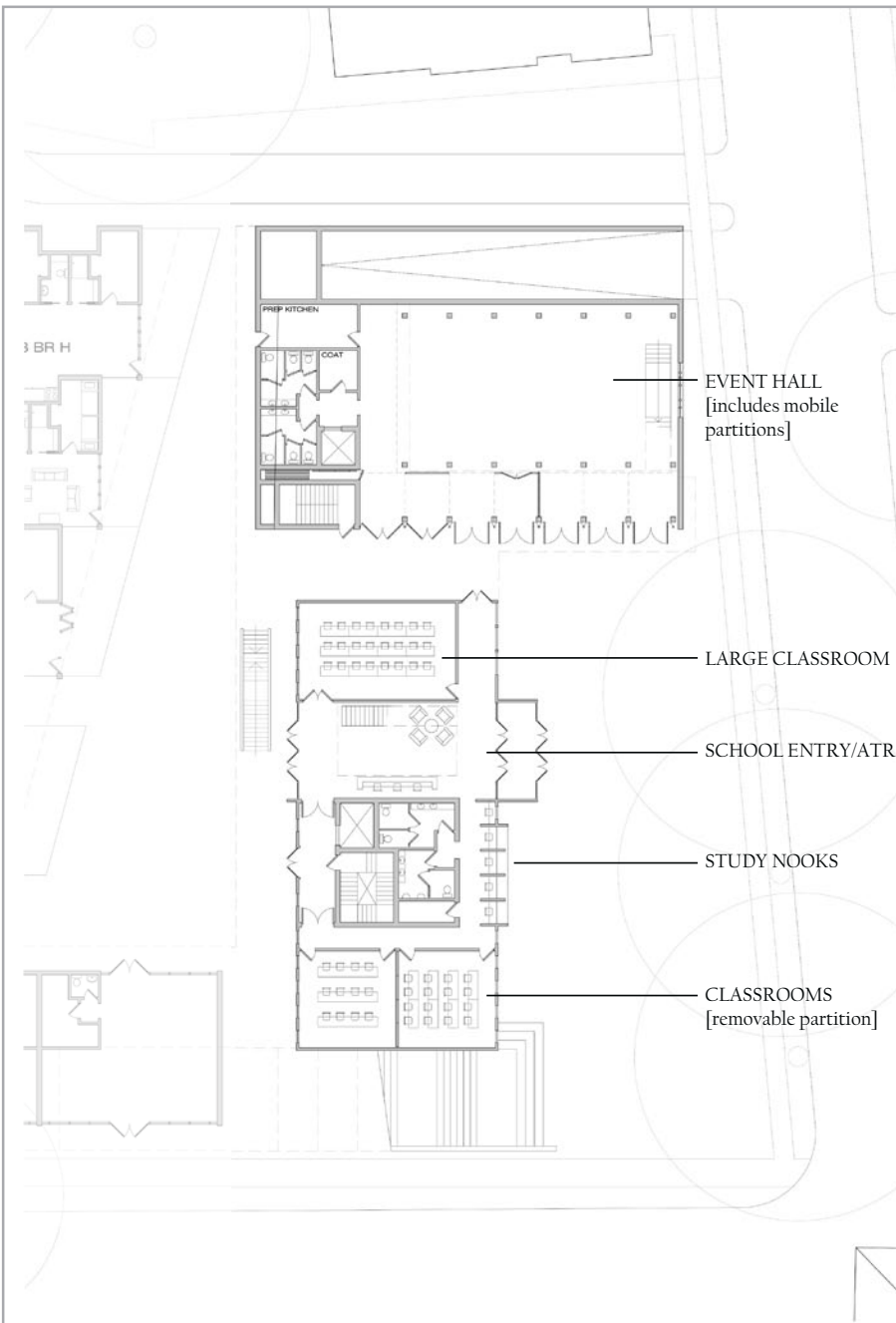




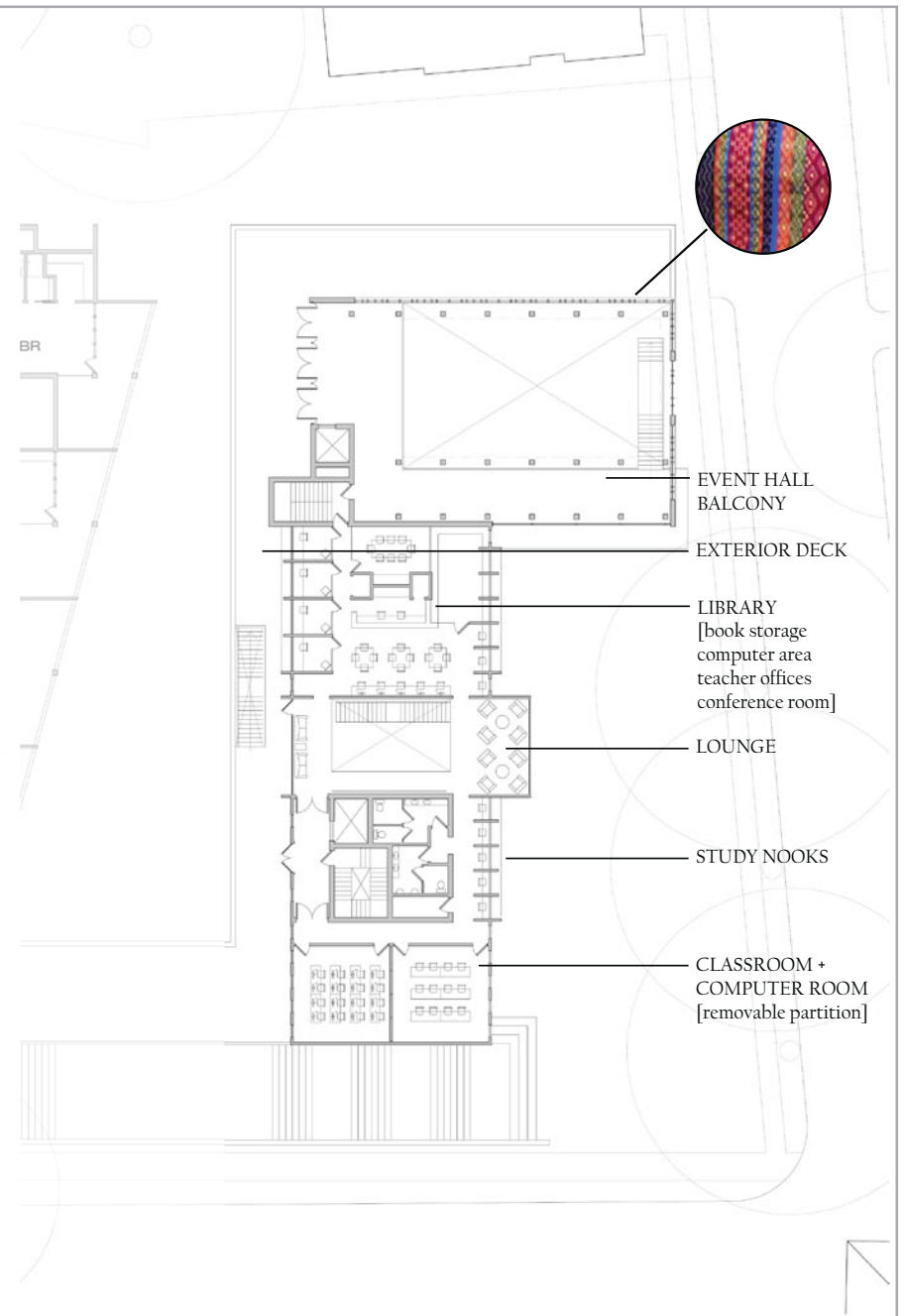
GROUND FLOOR PLAN



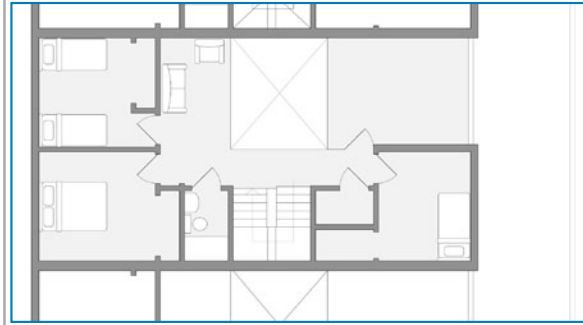
BASEMENT GARAGE PLAN



SCHOOL/EVENT HALL GROUND FLOOR



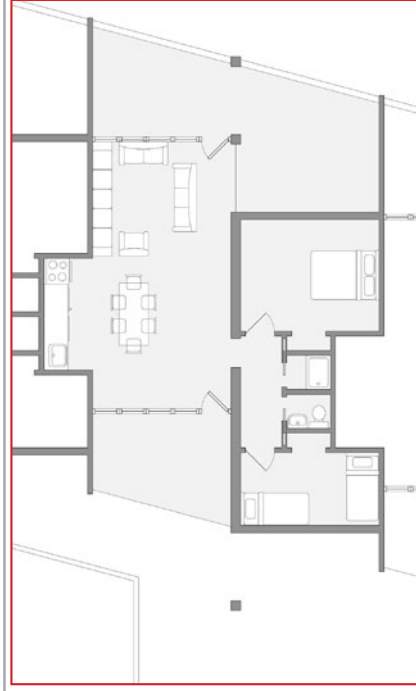
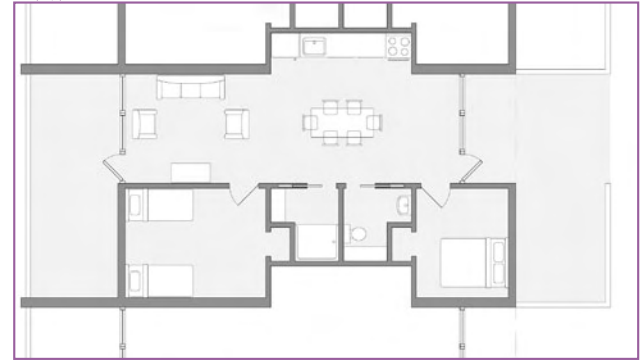
SCHOOL/EVENT HALL SECOND FLOOR



[6] 4 BR UNIT
2 floor unit
for extendend family
first floor br for elderly



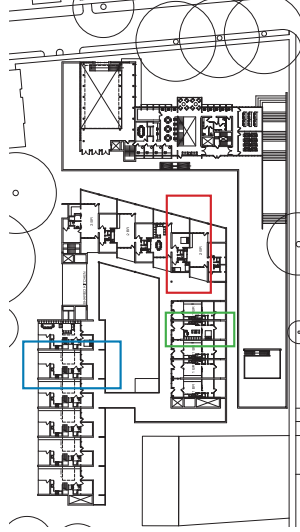
[6] 2 BR
ACCESSIBLE
flat unit



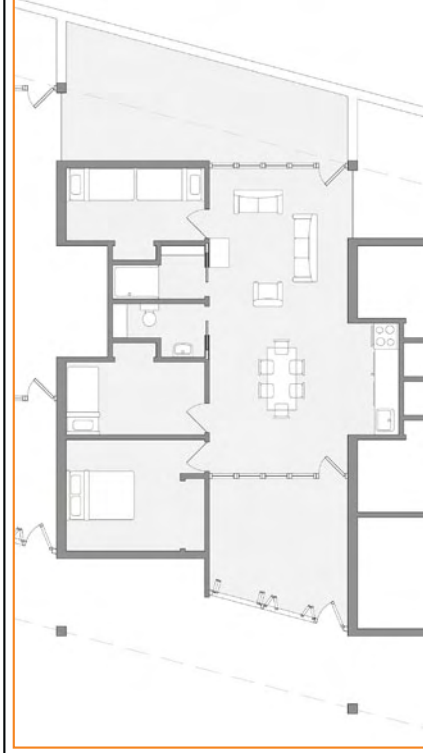
[4] 2 BR UNIT
flat unit



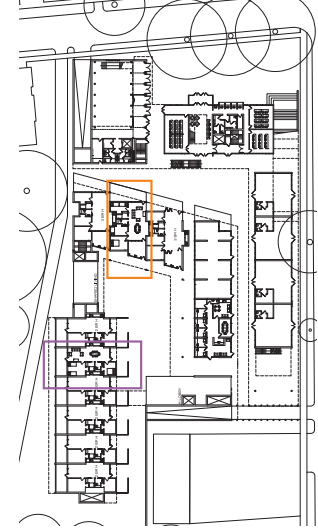
[5] 1 BR UNIT
for an individual
or couple



SECOND + THIRD FLOOR UNITS

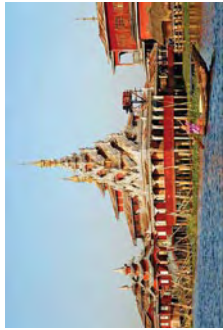
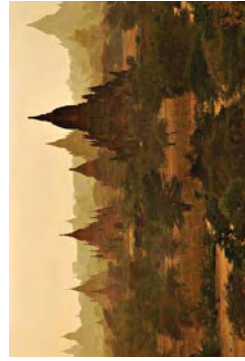


[3] 3 BR ACCESSIBLE
flat unit

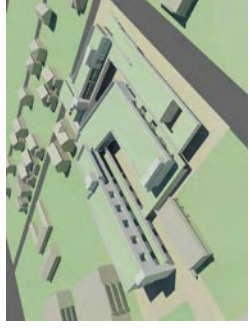
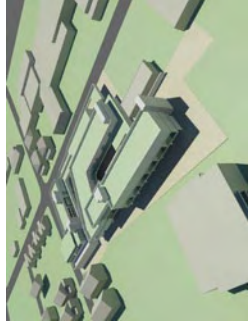
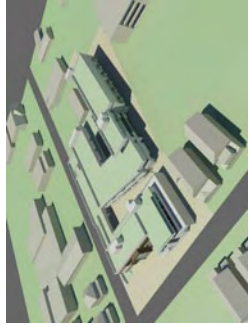


GROUND FLOOR UNITS

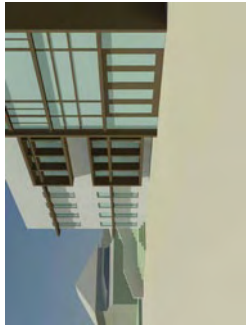
ALL UNITS CONTAIN:
a public patio at the entry
a private patio at the rear
one of these patios is south
facing with room for plants



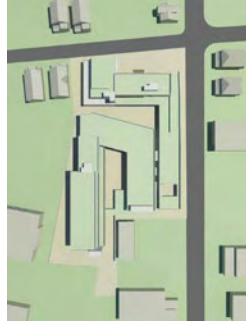
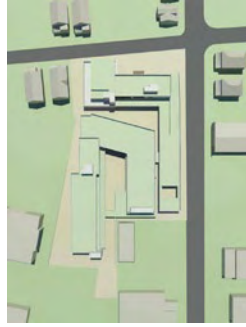
ABOVE



PERSPECTIVES



SUN STUDIES



JUNE 9 AM

JUNE 11 AM

JUNE 1 PM

JUNE 3 PM



SEPT 9 AM

SEPT 11 AM

SEPT 1 PM

SEPT 3 PM

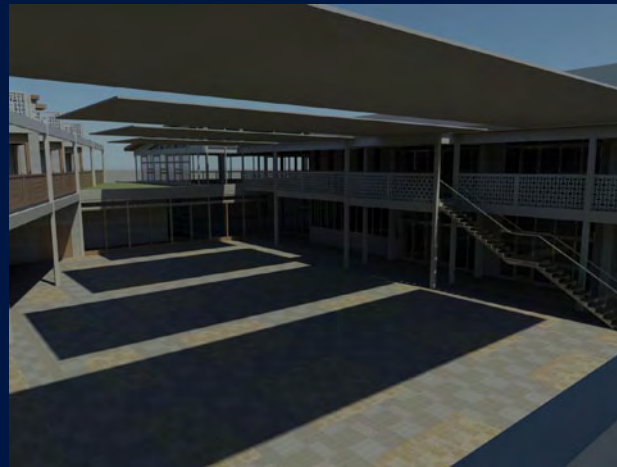


DEC 9 AM

DEC 11 AM

DEC 1 PM

DEC 3 PM



creating social networks: resettlement center for



for burmese refugees

kelly lynne clarke

graduate architectural thesis, spring 2011
school of architecture, art, and historic preservation
roger williams university

refugee

a person who is outside his or her country of nationality or habitual residence), has a well-founded fear of persecution because of his or her race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion) and is unable or unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country, or to return there, for fear of persecution. People who have committed non-political crime outside of the country of asylum or those who are currently serving as soldiers do not qualify for refugee status.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees estimates there are:

- 10.4 million refugees of concern
- 4.7 million additional refugees in camps
- 1 million asylum-seekers
- 1.2 million stateless people

Half of all refugees of concern are located in Asia.

Three durable solutions for displaced refugees:

- repatriation: voluntary return of a refugee to his or her country of origin when conditions permit - considered the best solution
- local integration: a refugee settles into the country of first asylum with full legal rights
- resettlement: the process of relocating a refugee from the country of first asylum to a third country - a last resort only when the refugee will not be able to return to his or her home country and cannot be integrated into the country to which he or she has fled - fewer than 1% of refugees are resettled

The United States accepts the most resettled refugees world wide, about half

The United States has resettled:

- 1.5 million refugees since 1980
- 75,000 in 2008
- 18,275 Burmese refugees in 2009
- 3,358 Burmese refugees in Massachusetts in 2009
- 40% of resettled refugees are children

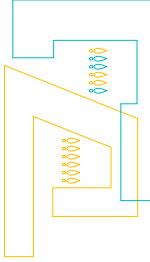
The resettlement application process takes about a year
The process of resettlement may take an additional several months

resettlement in the US

- The current political conflict has been going on for 20 (or 60) years
- It is the largest conflict in the world
- The number of registered and unregistered Burmese refugees in Southeast Asia are estimated to be in the millions
- Thailand hosts 200,000 registered refugees and an estimated 2 million unregistered refugees; refugees in Thailand are treated poorly, confined to camps, and have even been forced back into Burma at times
- Between 2004 and 2008 the United States resettled 64,000 Burmese refugees
- The US government has recently been resettling Burmese refugees in New York and Massachusetts, among other places

Because there are so few Burmese refugees in the United States, they are likely to arrive with no existing social networks to help in the transition to life in the United States

Burmese refugees



an architectural response to refugee resettlement we must provide the means for refugees to create both bonding and bridging social networks
bonding social networks occur between individuals of a similar status; these are the bonds between refugees and are an essential component of resettlement

parti

bonding program

Temporary Refugee Housing:

- [3] 1 br units
- [6] 2 br units
- [5] 3 br units
- [6] 7 br units

Commonal Spaces:

- agricultural cultivation areas (incl. tool storage, refrigerated storage)
- community room (incl. large kitchen, dining, and living room spaces)
- small religious space

Maintenance:

- mail room
- housing manager office
- garbage room
- facility storage

Small Language and Vocational School:

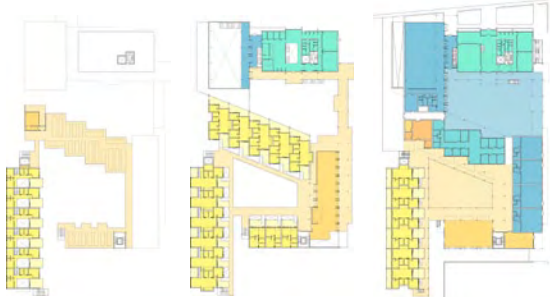
- [4] medium classrooms
- [1] large classroom
- [1] computer lab
- [1] reception area, secretary, copy room
- job placement center/meeting room
- [4] shared teacher offices
- [4] bathrooms
- [2] janitor closets

Urban Social Services Offices:

- waiting area
- [1] offices
- conference room
- copy room
- lounge
- [2] bathrooms

Resettlable Public Areas:

- [4] retail spaces
- event hall
- exterior event space (incl. exterior market)
- event storage



bridging program

INTRODUCTION

creating social networks: resettlement center for burmese refugees

help young adults graduate to independent lives
refugee education university



Between 2009 and 2010, more than 100 Burmese refugees were relocated to the Springfield area, with the assistance of Lutheran Social Services

- Suburban atmosphere with parks and amenities

springfield

Population: 156,000 people
Area: 33.2 sq mi
Density: 4,693 people/sq mi
Speak a language other than English at home: 44,748 - 32%

- Just across the river from downtown Springfield
- Public transportation available
- Suburban atmosphere with parks and amenities

west

springfield

Population: 28,000 people
Area: 17.5 sq mi
Density: 1,605 people/sq mi
Speak a language other than English at home: 5,947 - 22%

- Central location, walking distance to amenities
- Public transportation route close
- At the corner of a main commercial road and a residential road

bliss st +

union st

Size: 87,200 sq ft - 2 acres
Zoning: B-1 and Residential C (high density)
Max height: 4 stories - 60 ft
Lot coverage allowance: 4.5%
Unit allowances: 40 in two stories, 50 in three stories



context



plan + use

SITE

creating social networks: resettlement center for burmese refugees
school of architecture, art, and historic preservation
major williams university
by lyne clarkie
graduate architectural thesis



union st
elevation

3/32" = 1'0



bliss st
elevation

3/32" = 1'0



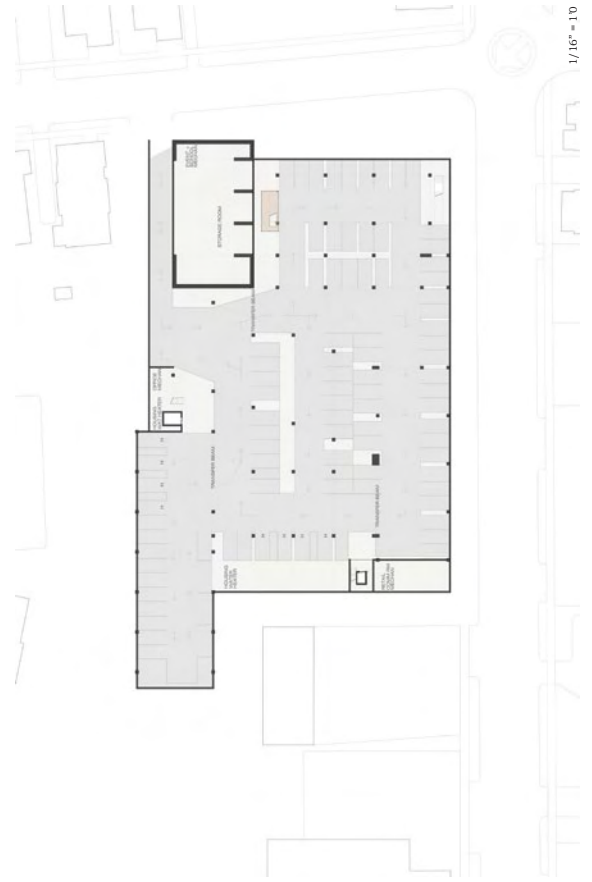
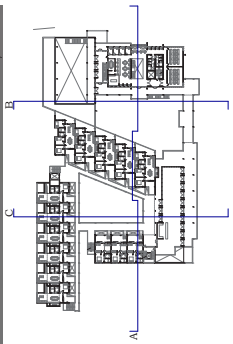
section b

3/32" = 1'0



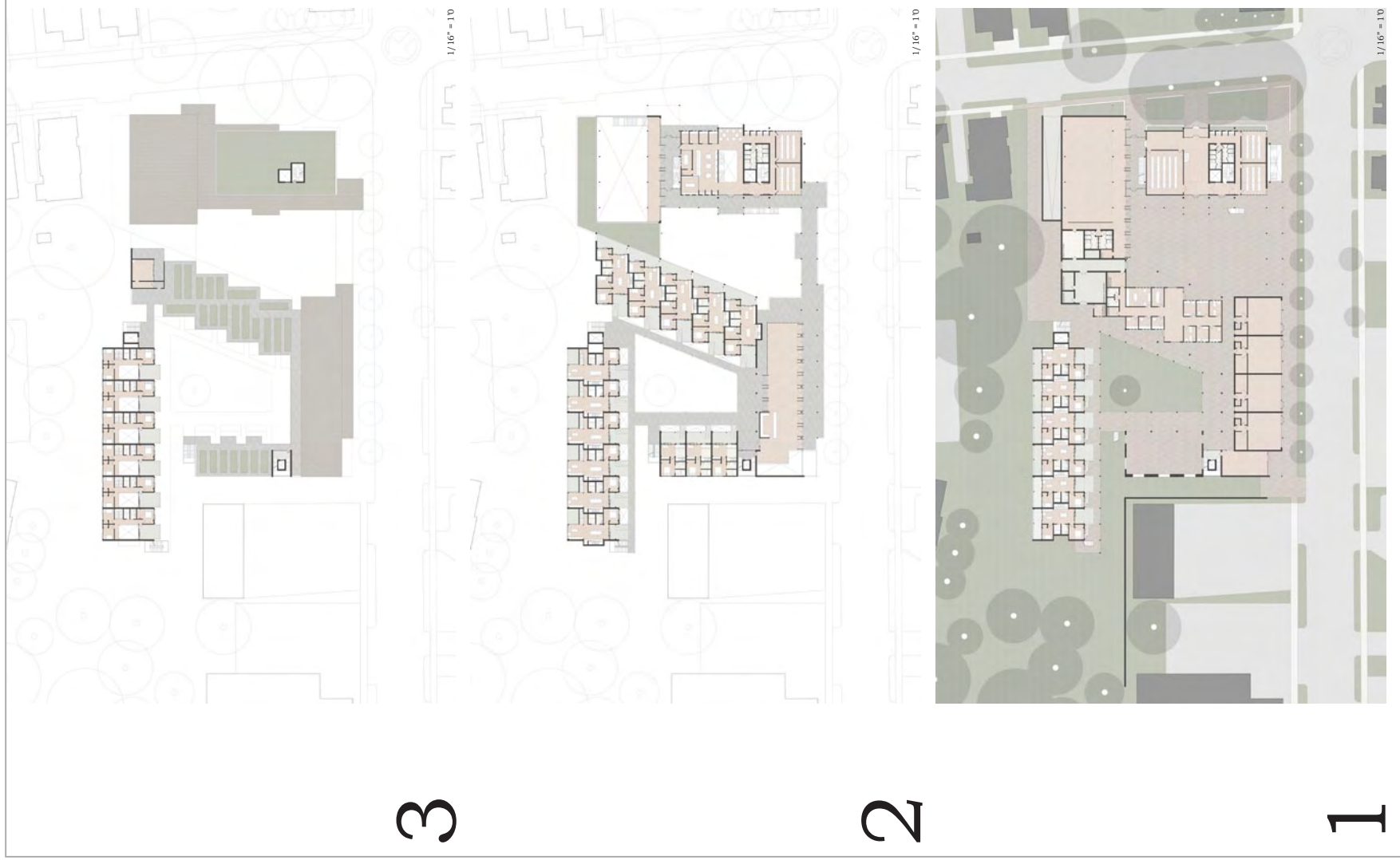
section c

3/32" = 1'0



1/16" = 1'0

O

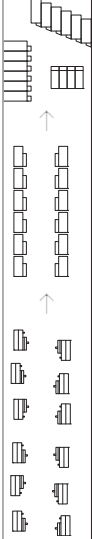


PLANS

creating social networks: resettlement center for burmese refugees
 school of architecture, art, and historic preservation
 roger williams university
 billy yoon darwin
 graduate architectural thesis

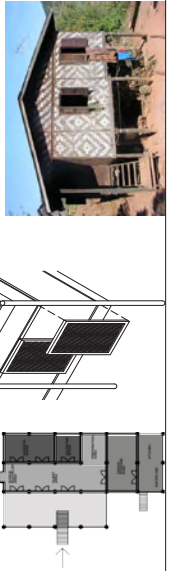
traditional village

- single family dwellings
- loosely aligned on central road

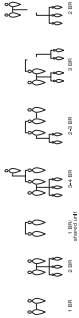


traditional house

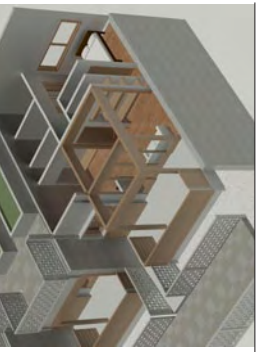
- front social porch
- semi-public living space
- service spaces to the site - including service porch
- private bedrooms to the rear
- entrance separate from house



- From Burmese precedent:
- raised 1' off common walkway, to allow rain and to follow Burmese tradition of raised floor
 - front patio as space for entertaining guests
 - kitchen as a side, unimportant nook
 - separate bathing and toilet rooms
 - rear service patio
 - glass doors to replicate outdoor lifestyle
- Often:
- small, efficient units
 - front porch and service porch
 - bathroom and one bedroom because of refugee health problems
 - open, clear living/dining area to create the illusion of space
 - south-facing patio to grow vegetables
 - wooden screens for privacy

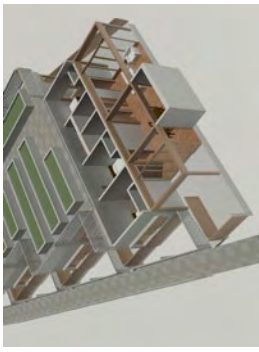


design principles



- 470 sf interior
- entered on 2nd floor
 - houses 2 people - for those who have no family
 - front social patio
 - one south-facing patio

[3] 1 br



- 870 sf interior
- entered on 2nd floor
 - houses 5-6 people
 - front social patio
 - rear south-facing private patio

[5] 3 br



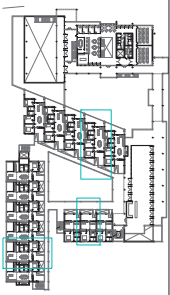
- 1350 sf interior
- entered on 2nd floor
 - houses 6-8 people - for an extended family
 - front south-facing social patio
 - rear private patio
 - 2nd fl south-facing priv. patio

[6] 4 br



- 670 sf interior
- entered on 1st floor
 - houses 3-4 people
 - front social patio
 - rear private patio

[6] 2 br

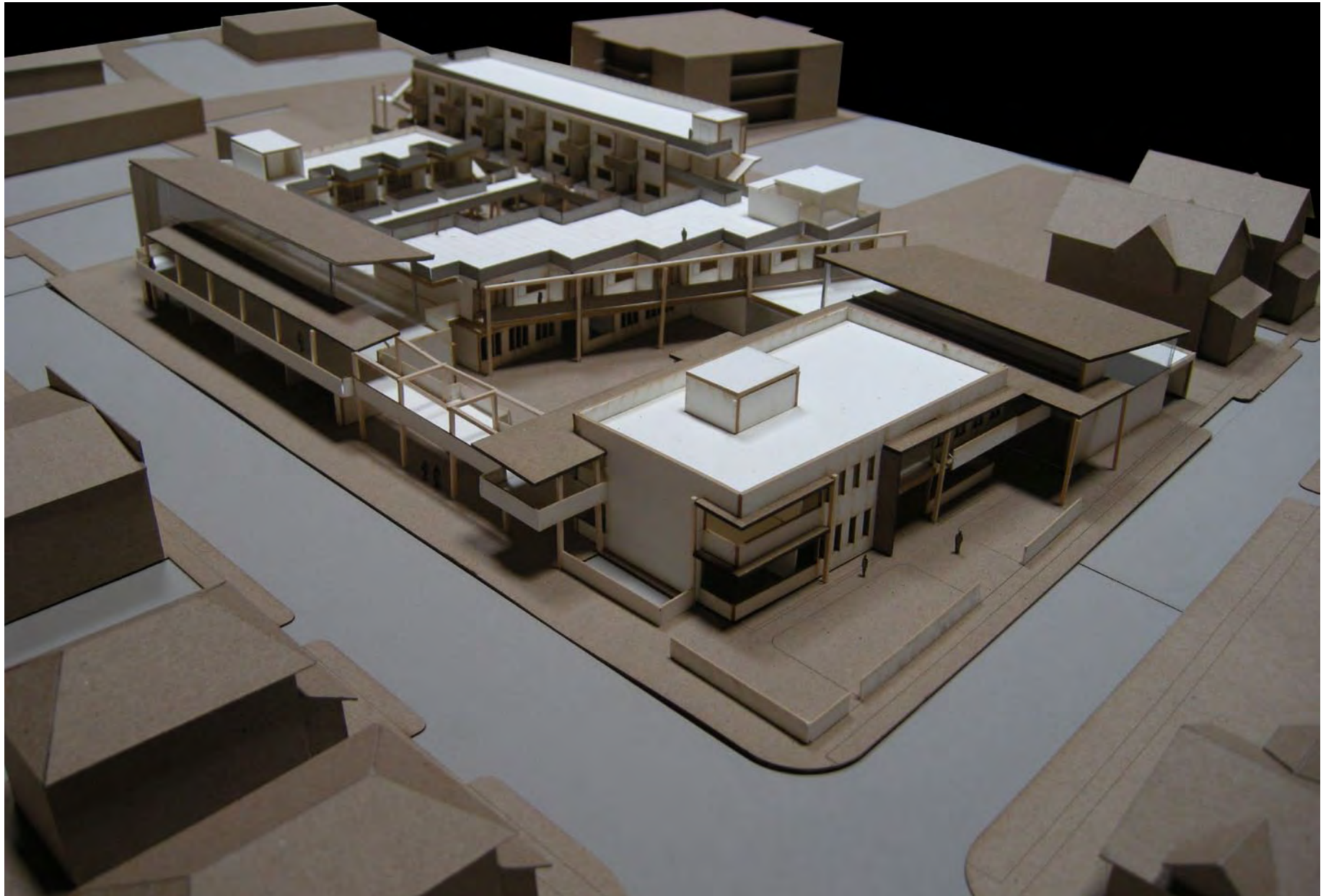


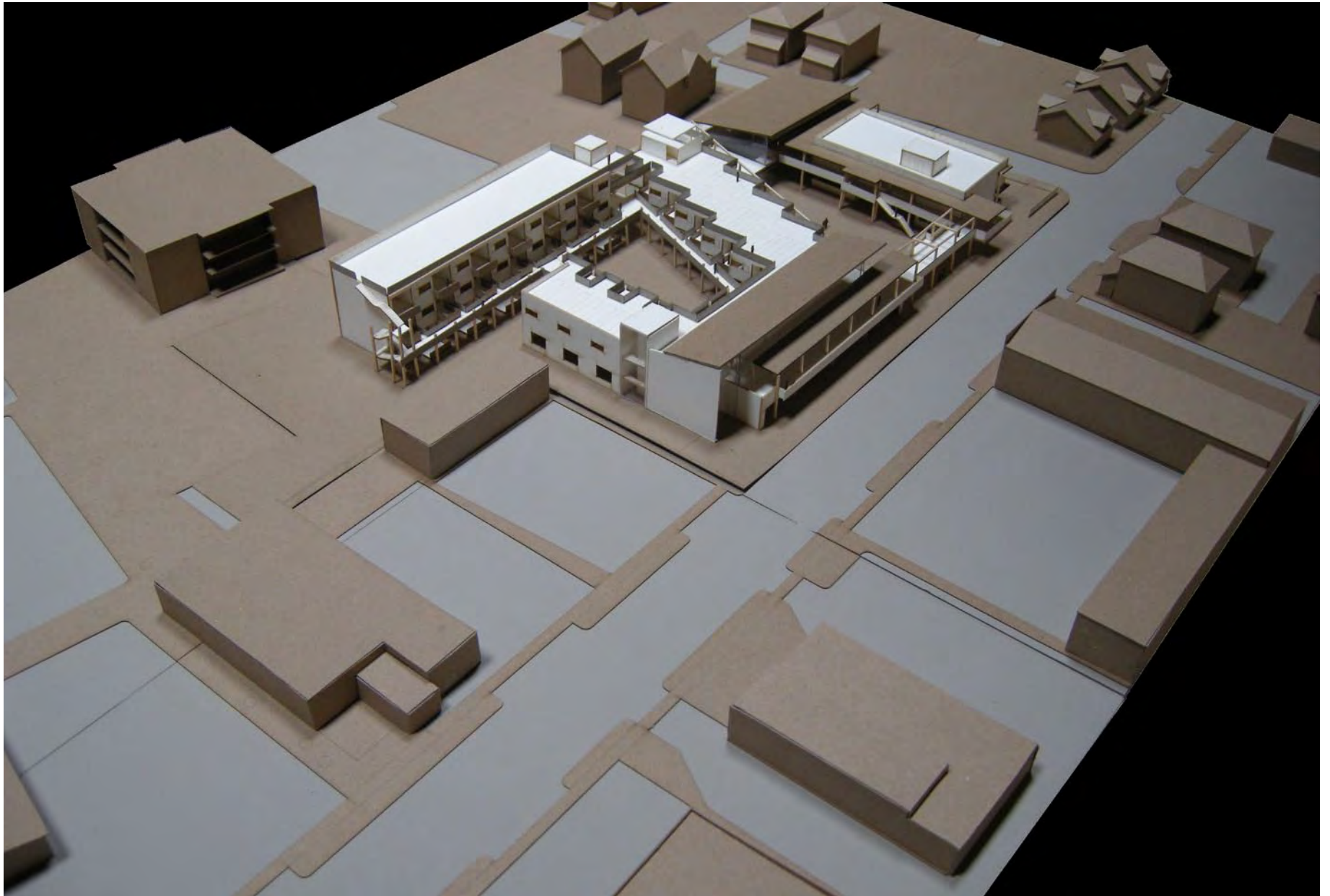
unit key

UNITS

creating social networks: resettlement center for burmese refugees
 bely yone dlathe
 school of architecture, art, and historic preservation
 roger williams university







Architecture:

Traditional Burmese House (see p. 20)
27 Social Dwellings for Young People

Refugee Integration Programs:

Contrasting Italy and the Netherlands
Refugee Employment in Canada

Narrative:

Infidel, Ayaan Hirsi Ali
Singing to the Dead, Victoria Armour-Hileman
Undaunted, Zoya Phan
The Middle of Everywhere, Mary Pipher
Outcasts United, Warren St. John
From Every End of this Earth, Steven Roberts



PROPUESTA DEL CONCURSO / COMPETITION ENTRY

Architecture: 27 Social Dwellings for Young People

Emiliano Lopez and Monica Rivera

Barcelona, Spain

2003-2007

Competition First Prize, FAD Architecture Award 2008

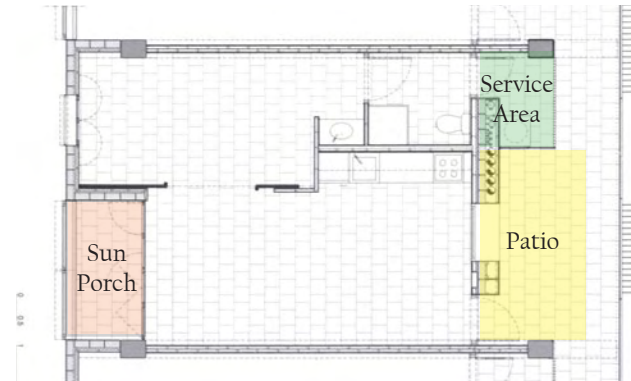
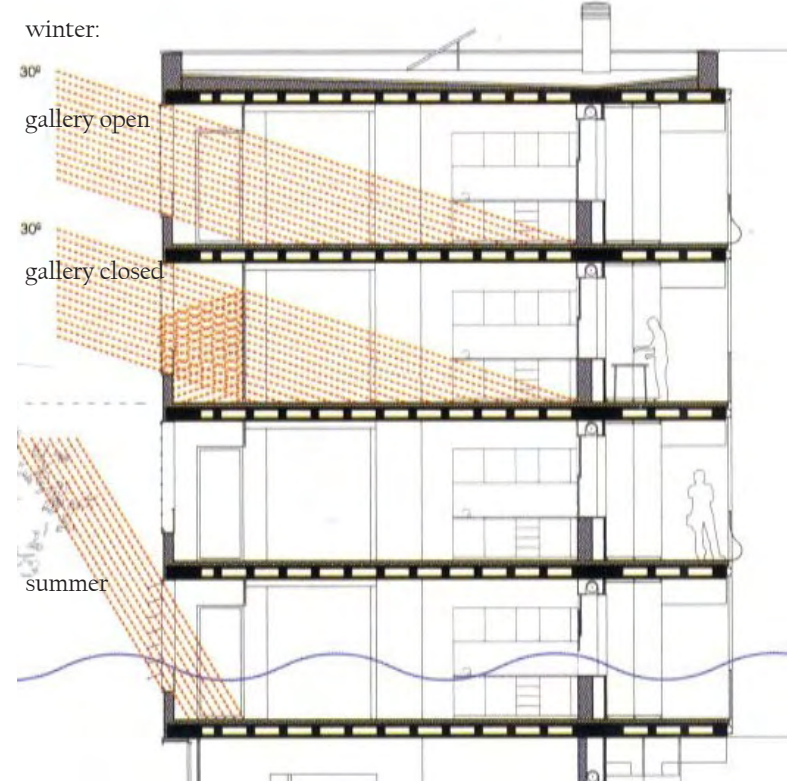
This five-story apartment building in Barcelona contains 27 low-rent apartments for young people. Every floor except the ground floor has five 44 sq meter apartments (475 sq feet) for one or two people and one 51 sq meter apartment (550 sq feet) for two or three people. The building focuses on flexible floor plans, exterior spaces, and social interaction.

Exterior Spaces

An exterior service area for each apartment extrudes onto the common walkway. This creates a small front patio for each apartment. Because this patio is along the main walkway, it encourages social interaction.

Each apartment also includes a sun porch facing south. This sun porch acts as a climatic and acoustic buffer, since this faces the main street. In the winter, the porch windows and doors can be closed to capture solar heat. In the summer, the windows can be opened to make the sun porch act as a balcony.

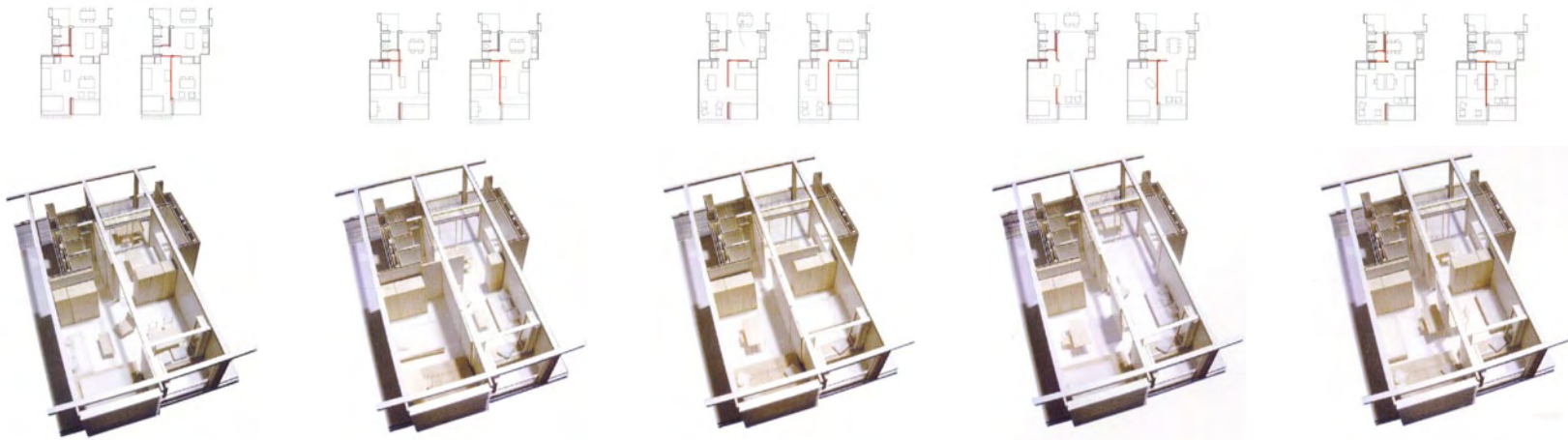
Application: Because Burma has such a mild climate, people from Burma live much of their lives outside and traditional houses consist of about half exterior porches. Therefore, I will make an effort to create both exterior social porches and service porches. It was important to study how to make an effective porch for both the winter and summer New England weather.



Flexible Plan

The 44 sq meter apartments need to fit two people in a rather small space, either a couple or two individuals. For more efficient usage, the architects designed a series of movable walls that can accommodate a number of different arrangements. In the diagrams, the left column shows various daytime arrangements where walls are more open to provide a bigger living space. At night, the walls are more closed to provide private sleeping space as shown in the right column.

Application: I designed four different sized units and they will have to accommodate a number of situations including individuals, couples, and entire families. Therefore, it is important to have a flexible arrangement for the units. Studying these floor plans helped me come up with efficient and flexible layouts for my own design.



Refugee Integration Programs: Contrasting Italy and the Netherlands

Korac found that refugees in the Netherlands appear to be more integrated with Dutch culture, for example having a good job and becoming a citizen. However, this is all part of the Dutch integration model. “The Dutch model of reception and integration of refugees is based on a number of state interventions intended to meet the immediate needs of refugees and to facilitate their gradual integration into Dutch society.” (Korac, 30) The government provides assistance with housing and money, but offers no practical help like language or job training. At the end of their “integration” experience, many refugees in the Netherlands will still have no ties to native Dutch.

The Italian system for receiving refugees offers no housing or money help. Refugees have a very difficult time providing for themselves and they may never find a good job. However, refugees are forced to make contacts with Italians in order to get by. Although many refugees in Italy will never become citizens, they end up knowing many more native people than the refugees in the Netherlands.

This comparison shows that there are good and bad things about both systems; the Dutch system emphasizes formal indicators of success while the Italian system emphasizes independence.

Application: I believe the best model would fall in the middle of these, assisting refugees to meet certain goals such as employment and citizenship, while encouraging refugees to befriend native citizens.

Korac, Maja. “The role of the state in refugee integration and settlement: Italy and the Netherlands compared.” *Forced Migration Review*. No. 14, June 2002, 30-32.

Refugee Integration Programs: Refugee Employment in Canada

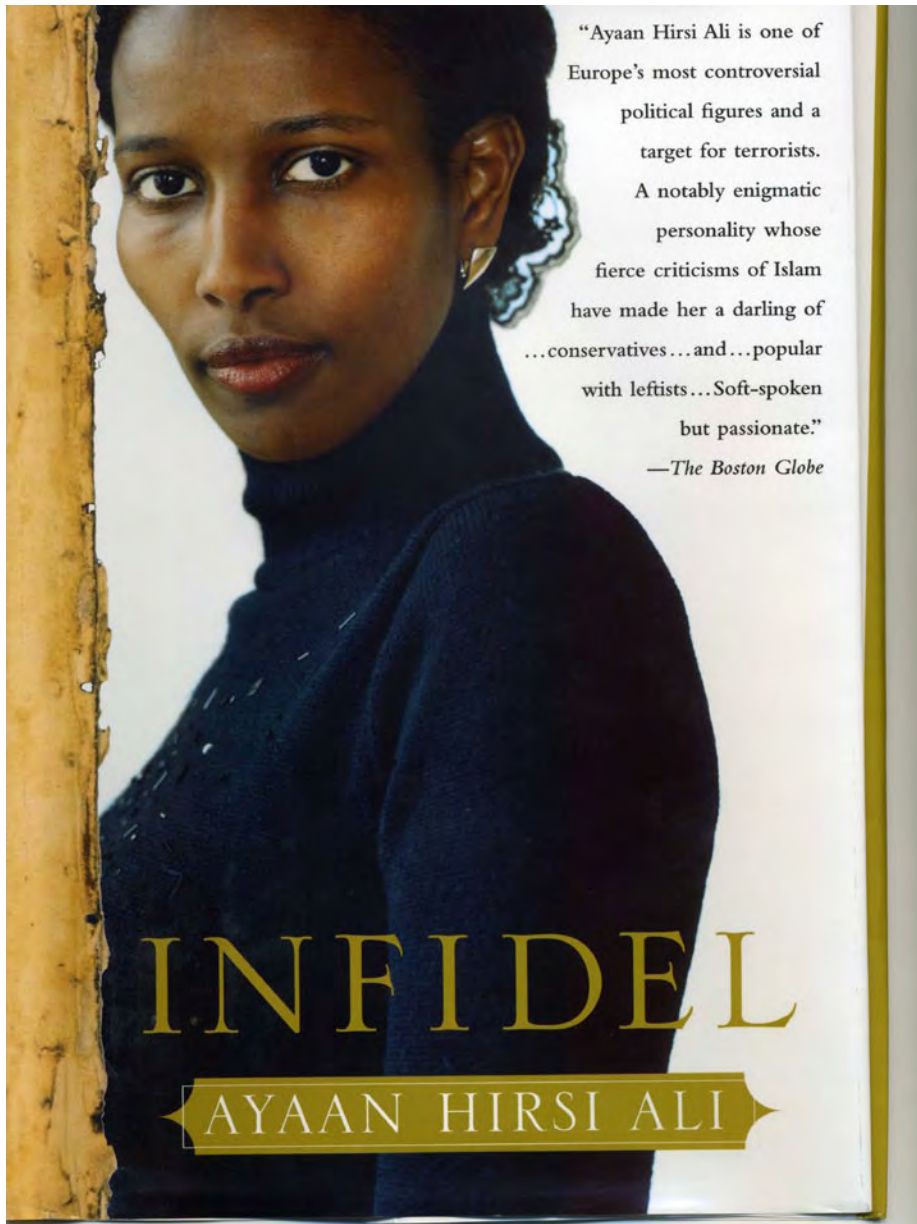
A study conducted from 1992-1998 in Alberta, Canada finds that refugees experience higher rates of unemployment and underemployment than native Canadians. While this is not surprising, it is important to know why this occurs. The study found that refugees see their lack of fluency in English as the major disadvantage. Study participants said that one year of English was not sufficient and that language classes catered to different professions would be much more beneficial. In addition, refugees felt that native Canadians were given preference over them, and there is some indication of racism because refugees from the region of Yugoslavia were more successful than refugees from Africa or Asia.

Another issue faced by refugees is that their credentials and job experience in their home country usually do not mean anything in Canada. Canadian accreditation agencies are not familiar with schools from other countries and may expect refugees to return to school for a Canadian degree. This would be impossible for most refugees, who cannot find jobs above minimum wage. Canadian employers also do not recognize work experience in other countries, because they want experience in the Canadian labor market. For these reasons, refugees find themselves downwardly mobile. Former doctors find themselves working as nurses, lawyers working in human resources, civil engineers working as computer analysts.

This study highlights the issues that refugees face finding good jobs in their new countries, and gives us clues for increasing their success.

Application: There are two major issues facing refugees trying to enter the labor market in their new home. The first issue is not speaking the language. The school in the program will help address this issue. Unfortunately, the lack of recognition for foreign education and experience is more difficult to solve. We cannot change the practices of accrediting boards, but perhaps a scholarship program could assist refugees in earning American degrees.

Krahn, Harvey, et. al. "Educated and Underemployed: Refugee Integration into the Canadian Labour Market." *JIMI/RIMI*. Vol. 1 No. 1, Winter 2000, 59-84.



"Ayaan Hirsi Ali is one of Europe's most controversial political figures and a target for terrorists. A notably enigmatic personality whose fierce criticisms of Islam have made her a darling of ...conservatives...and...popular with leftists...Soft-spoken but passionate."

—*The Boston Globe*

INFIDEL

AYAAN HIRSI ALI

Narrative: Ayaan Hirsi Ali, *Infidel*

International figure Ayaan Hirsi Ali tells the story of her life beginning in childhood. Hirsi Ali grew up in Somalia with a sister, brother, mother, and grandmother. Her father was an active political figure and was imprisoned by the Somali government when she was young. For safety, the family left Somalia, living in Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia, and Kenya. Throughout the book, Hirsi Ali explains the process by which she began to reject the ideas of Islam.

When Hirsi Ali's family forces her to marry a Somali man living in Canada, she runs away to the Netherlands where she applies for and is granted refugee status in 1992. In the Netherlands, Hirsi Ali attends school and becomes a translator for the government. While translating she encounters many Islamic women who are mistreated and abused by their husbands but the police turn their heads the other way because they want to respect the religion of Islam. Hirsi Ali begins to speak out against this and the refugee system in the Netherlands.

In 2003, Hirsi Ali was elected to the Dutch House of Representatives where she was influential in the area of refugee and immigration politics. Hirsi Ali teamed up with filmmaker Theo van Gogh to create the film *Submission* in 2004. Later that year, van Gogh was killed by an Islamic extremist and Hirsi Ali was forced into hiding. In 2005 she was named one of the 100 most influential people in the world by *Time* magazine. Unfortunately Hirsi Ali had to resign from the House of Representatives in 2006 when her Dutch citizenship was revoked for lying on her refugee application. Hirsi Ali now lives and works in the United States.

Hirsi Ali, Ayaan. *Infidel*. New York, NY: Free Press, 2007.

Singing to the Dead

A Missioner's
Life among
Refugees
from Burma



VICTORIA ARMOUR-HILEMAN

Narrative: Victoria Armour-Hileman, *Singing to the Dead*

Victoria Armour-Hileman is a Catholic missionary who first worked with Vietnamese boat people in Hong Kong and then with Burmese refugees of the Mon ethnicity in Thailand. She was placed in a small Mon Buddhist temple in Bangkok in 1992 and worked there for two and a half years. During her stay, Armour-Hileman learned first hand about Mon culture, Buddhist culture, Burmese politics, Thai Politics, refugee experiences, refugee camps, and how the law affects refugees.

Refugees are not allowed to live in the city of Bangkok without official papers. However, Bangkok is the only place in Thailand where refugees can receive medical treatment for serious ailments and is the only place they can apply for official refugee status with the UNHCR. This leads to many difficulties and refugees are forced to live in hiding. The Buddhist temple where Armour-Hileman worked took the role of housing these “illegal” refugees and was often subject to police raids. However, they had no option but to do the best they could to help these people.

Throughout the book Armour-Hileman tells the stories of the refugees that she meets. There is a monk who had to leave Burma suddenly; his father was in prison and has heard no word of his family since. There is the man who lost both arms and was blinded because he was used as a human land mine detector by the Burmese army. There is the old man who was shot in the abdomen, which never healed correctly without medical treatment, who must bind his stomach to hold his intestines in. At the same time, the book conveys a message of hope, that if we can help one refugee at a time, we will be making a difference.

Amour-Hileman, Victoria. *Singing to the Dead: A Missioner's Life among Refugees from Burma*. Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 2002.

Undaunted



MY STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM
AND SURVIVAL IN BURMA

Zoya Phan

with Damien Lewis

Narrative: Zoya Phan, Undaunted

Zoya's parents met as young people working for the Karen resistance movement, the Karen National Union. The KNU has been in existence since 1947 and fighting for Karen rights. Eventually they were married and had children. Zoya grew up in the jungles of Burma as a member of the Karen tribe with an idyllic childhood. This childhood was haunted by dark moments, however. When Zoya was six, she and her friends discovered the body of a dead man in the river alongside their village. The violent 8888 Uprising occurred when Zoya was six. During the uprising, many peacefully protesting students and monks were beaten and killed. Throughout her childhood, many people who had been resistance fighters were killed and many of her friends were orphaned.

In 1993 when Zoya was thirteen, her village was attacked by the Burmese army for harboring resistance fighters. However, after hiding in the forest, they were able to return to the village. However, Zoya's mother had each of the children pack a bag with clothing and important possessions to keep just incase they had to flee. When she was fourteen her village was attacked by the Burmese army and this time they left for good. After trekking through the jungle for weeks, the family eventually arrived at a refugee camp in Thailand. She describes this camp as a prison as it is fenced all around and the refugees are not allowed to leave. The refugees must make their own shelter, run their own school, and live on measly portions. Girls and women live in constant fear of rape from the Thai soldiers.

Over the next few years, Zoya lived in four different refugee camps. She still held on to a hope for an education and a bright future. Eventually, she was able to win a scholarship and attend Bangkok University. Since then, she has become a political activist. The Burmese government has attempted to assassinate her several times, but she continues to fight for a democratic Burma.

Phan, Zoya. *Undaunted: My struggle for freedom and survival in Burma*. New York, NY: Free Press, 2010.

MARY PIPHER

bestselling author of *REVIVING OPHELIA*

The MIDDLE *of* EVERYWHERE



THE WORLD'S
REFUGEES
COME TO
OUR TOWN

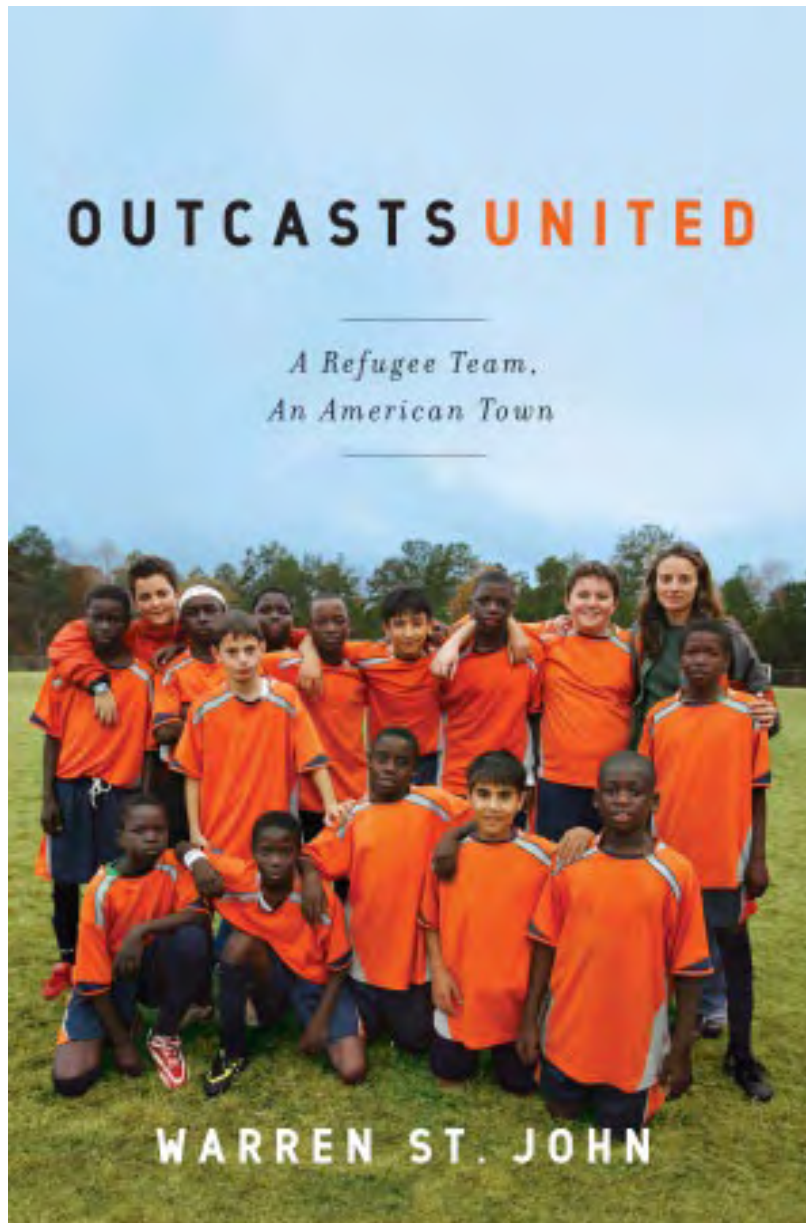
Narrative: Mary Pipher, the Middle of Everywhere

Mary Pipher is an author who researched immigrants and refugees living in her neighborhood. Her insights are enlightening because she befriended these refugees, visiting them many times to try to understand their point of view. In one instance she befriended a Kurdish family. The five daughters were all successful in learning English and were making attempts to create new lives. Their mother, however, had a hard time learning English, stayed at home all day, and became very depressed. This supports the idea that immigrants should live near other immigrant families of their nationality. Pipher went one step further and became a “cultural ambassador” to the family, helping them understand American culture and make important connections.

The thought that immigrants need to live near other immigrants is reiterated several times. Pipher writes, “When I asked a man from Sudan what the Kakuma refugees needed most in our town, he said they needed to live near other Sudanese people. He was absolutely right. New comers need people from their own culture to orient them to America. The first family to come has the hardest time. The second family has an easier situation.” (70) This was confirmed by her study of Bosnians in her town. She found that they shared meals and threw parties together. “The men help each other find jobs and the women help each other learn English and shop for bargains.” (81)

I also want to share Pipher’s summary of refugee reactions to American culture. She found that they [1] fight it because it is threatening; [2] avoid it because it is overwhelming; [3] assimilate as fast as possible by making all American choices; or [4] tolerate discomfort and confusion while slowly making intentional choices about what to accept and reject. This last option is the most beneficial reaction and Pipher calls it “selective acculturation.”

Pipher, Mary. *The Middle of Everywhere: The World’s Refugees Come to Our Town*. New York, NY: Mariner Books, 2003.



Narrative: Outcasts United

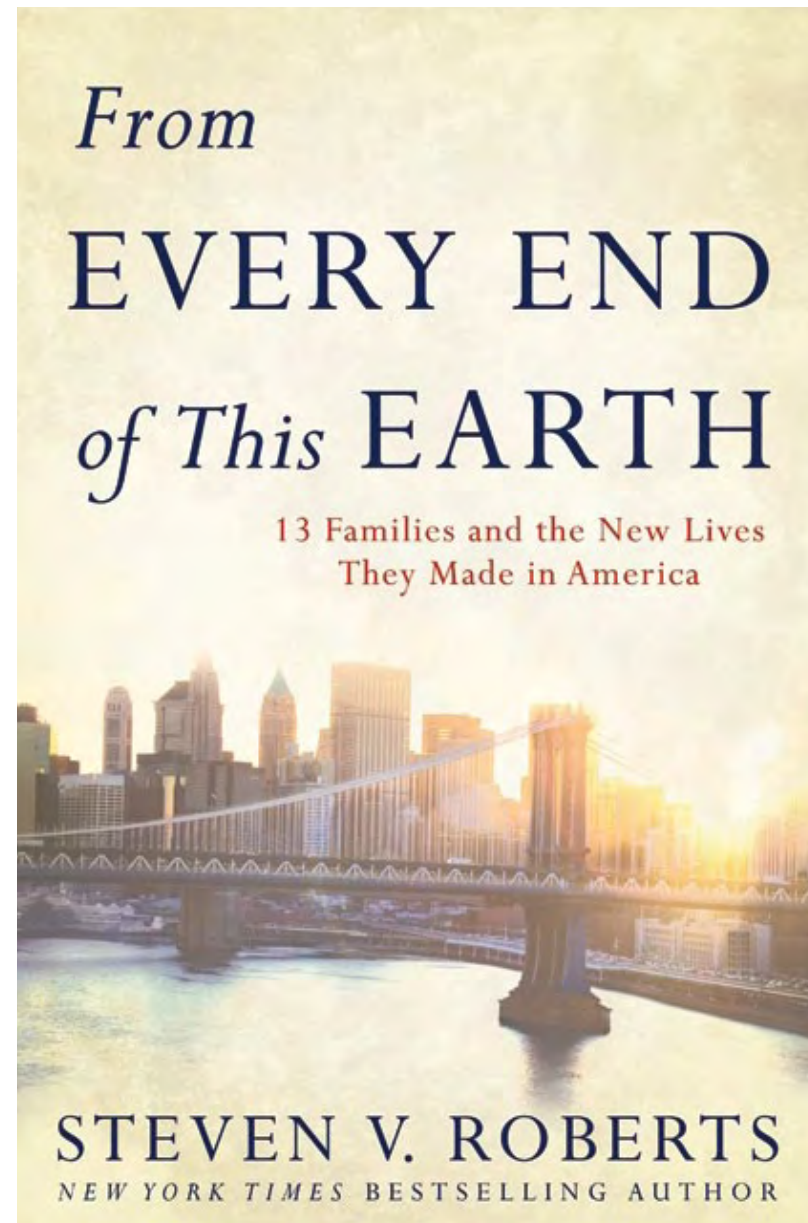
This is the story of a group of a refugee children in a town called Clarkston, Georgia. The book chronicles how Luma Mufleh, a Jordanian woman, founded a youth soccer team to help keep refugee children off the street. These children face seemingly insurmountable obstacles, such as losing parents and siblings, however the team is able to create hope for the children and help them turn their lives around.

St. John, Warren. *Outcasts United: A Refugee Team, an American Town*. New York, NY: Spiegel & Grau, 2009.

Narrative: From Every End of this Earth

Steven Roberts has interviewed immigrants and refugees from all over the world that have settled in the United States. Roberts groups the stories into groups called “The Survivors,” “The International Entrepreneurs,” “The Business Owners,” “The Professionals,” and “The Women.” Through telling these stories, he combats many of the prejudices American’s have against immigrants, such as the idea that they are a drain on the economy.

Roberts, Steven V. *From Every End of this Earth: 13 Families and the New Lives They Made in America*. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2009.



the influence of international and state laws and policies on the refugee experience:

Kelly L Clarke - December 2010 - Soc 340: Comparative Immigration - Dr Teal Rothschild - Roger Williams University

Refugees are, in the most basic sense, a group of outcasts, people who are considered undesirable and who are persecuted in their home country. Refugees may be deported or forced to leave by their government, or they may flee to escape danger to their well-being. Either way, for a refugee, home can no longer be home. Prior to the mid-1970's, most refugees could expect to return to their home country after a number of years in exile. However, since the late 1970's, this has not been the case, and many refugees will never return. (Hakovirta, 37, 1993)

Refugee migration carries very different implications for participants than non-forced migration. Psychological issues refugees face include “memories of persecution; wrenching decisions about leaving family, friends, and familiar surroundings; the ordeal of escape; constant thoughts of who and what was left behind; frustrations of existence in foreign environs; uncertainties of future prospects.” (Rose, 9, 1993) Many refugees will experience a marginalized life, both in their country of origin and in the country will they settle. The word most frequently used to describe the feeling this brings is “loneliness.” Refugees “seek admittance but are ever conscious of their foreignness; they want acceptance but are never sure of their acceptability. They are eager to find niches of their own. Their friends tell them they must not look back, yet in their hearts they cannot help but hear what the Russian exiles often describe as ‘the evening bells of home.’ They are caught in limbo, in an oxymoronic state of permanent instability.” (Rose, 10, 1993) For many, this feeling will persist throughout their lives and no matter how integrated they become

in their new home, they will still consider themselves a refugee. (Rose, 11, 1993)

After the end of World War II, the international community recognized the need to protect those who could no longer depend on the protection of their home country government. According to policies derived at the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, an international legal framework has been in place to help these people identified as refugees headed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Most importantly, the Convention established a definition for the term refugee which is almost unanimously used today. A refugee is a person who

“owing to well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.” (UNHCR, Convention and Protocol, 16, 2007)

The Convention also lists the rights of refugees, including the right to non-discrimination, the right to wage-earning employment and self-employment, the right to possessions, the right to public education, the right to freedom of movement and travel documents, the right to non-expulsion and non-refoulement, and the right to naturalization. The concept of non-refoulement is essential because it assures that the refugee will not be returned to his country of origin against his will. This keeps refugees from being forced back to the dangerous situation they fled from.

Originally, the Convention only afforded protection to those who have become refugees “as a result of events occurring before 1 January 1951.” (UNHCR, Convention and Protocol, 16, 2007) However, this prevented those suffering from refugee situations after 1951 from becoming protected by the Convention. In 1967, a new convention created the Protocol, an amendment to the Convention document, which extended protection to all people that qualify for definition as a refugee, regardless of the time period. Since its implementation, 147 nations have signed either the Convention or the Protocol, the main difference being recognition of Post-World War II refugees, 141 nations having signed both. These two documents offer incredible measures of protection and rights to people who qualify as refugees, rights that member countries are required to uphold. However, difficulty arises in the process of granting refugee status. For both humanitarian and security purposes, it is essential that those who are declared refugees are actually those suffering from persecution. To this end, a lengthy bureaucratic process is required

of those who wish to be classified as refugees.

The memoir *Singing to the Dead: A Missioner's Life Among Refugees from Burma* by Victoria Armour-Hileman (2002) serves as a case study of how international refugee law affects the lives of refugees during this stage. Armour-Hileman worked with Burmese refugees of the Mon ethnicity in Thailand from 1992-1995¹. One of her main activities was helping refugees apply for official refugee status with the UNHCR. Her book highlights many of the issues refugees face in this situation and is the main source for the following information on Burma and Thailand.

Since certain political events in 1988, hundreds of thousands of Burmese people have fled their country, the majority ending up in camps along the Thai-Burmese border. However, their fate is always uncertain since Thailand has still not agreed to follow the 1951 Convention or 1967 Protocol.² This means that refugees may, and sometimes have been, returned to Burma against their will. In order to apply for refugee status, refugees must enter the city of Bangkok and apply at the UNHCR office; however, refugees are illegal in the city of Bangkok and face being arrested, imprisoned, transported to camps, and/or returned to Burma if they are caught. The process of applying for refugee status may take from several months to a year, and many must hide in the city of Bangkok in Buddhist temples during that time period, for at a camp they would not be likely to receive their acceptance or denial letter. Many refugees are also in the city for medical treatment, but it is only legal for doctors to provide treatment in situations that are life-or-death. Because the medical facilities outside Bangkok only treat basic injuries and illnesses, if a refugee has a severely debilitating but non-life threatening injury or illness, it is not likely that he or she will be treated. People that could have lived normal lives with proper medical treatment become crippled and reliant on others for the rest of their lives.

Aside from these location difficulties, refugees face problems with the application process itself. Forms are designed with a Western mentality that does not make sense to many people. For example, application forms require a first name and a family name; however, many Burmese people do not have last names. In addition, many of the men have both a layman's name and a monk's name. (210) This is just one example of how it is impossible for many to fill out the applications without the assistance

1. For this paper, I am discussing the situation in Thailand as of 1995, since that is when the author returned to the United States. However, there are still hundreds of thousands of Burmese refugees in Thailand and that country still has not signed the 1951 Convention or 1967 Protocol, and so is not obligated to follow its policies.

2. This is a major issue since Thailand is one of the leading countries that refugees in south-east Asia flee to.

of a Westerner. Another major issue is that there are many people who would seem to obviously qualify as a refugee that, for one reason or another, are denied.

Amour-Hileman tells the story of Nai Cham and his wife Palei, who are denied official refugee status. One day, Nai Cham and Palei's village is occupied by Burmese troops. The troops rape any girl they see in the village, and attempt to rape the couple's daughter. The soldiers also took villagers hostage and demanded money from their families, killing them if the family could not give enough. When one their sons participated in a general strike, Nai Cham was tortured for a day and a half to give up the location of his son. His two eldest sons run away after this incident. His third son was also captured and beaten for four days, after which he was hospitalized for fifteen days; this son eventually ran away as well. One day, the soldiers planted land mines all around the couple's home and shot at the house all night. After three days of hiding, the couple decided to try to escape. Fortunately they were able to make it to the Thai border, but they have no idea of the whereabouts of their three sons and their daughter, who was living in a different town as a teacher at the time of their escape. (153-156) Nai Cham is blind, partially deaf, and missing an arm because of injuries sustained during escape. Although this couple has consistently suffered general ethnic persecution and individual persecution, their application for refugee status is denied. This story points to major issues in the determination factors for refugees.

Ayaan Hirsi Ali is a Somali Muslim woman turned refugee turned influential and internationally recognized politician. In *Infidel* (2007), she tells her life story, including her life as a refugee in the Netherlands. In 1992, Hirsi Ali was forced to marry a Somali man living in Canada against her will. While she is waiting for her Canadian visa in Germany, she escapes to the Netherlands where she applies for refugee status. While staying at the Zeewolde Reception Center, Hirsi Ali is advised that being married off against her will does not qualify her for refugee status. With the help of her lawyer, she comes up with a story that may qualify her for refugee status. In addition she changes her name from Ayaan Hirsi Magan to Ayaan Hirsi Ali so that her family will not be able to track her down and forcibly return her to her husband. Her application for refugee status is accepted. (183-199) While Hirsi Ali's life story is tragic, it is not enough for recognition as persecution. She, just like many other refugees, must lie about her circumstances in order to be accepted. In addition, her fabricated story is not nearly as tragic as the story of Nai Cham and Palei, who applied only a few years later and were denied. These narratives point to obvious structural problems in the refugee application process.

In 1997, the European Union Member States ratified the Dublin Convention. The purpose of the Convention was to determine which Member State was responsible for examining asylum claims. In most cases, the Member State which the asylum seeker first entered would be responsible for processing the application. The Convention received widespread criticism. However, the EU took the standpoint that the Dublin Convention was beneficial as a “means of deterring the movement of potential asylum seekers from one EU Member State to another... Such movement was viewed negatively since all Member States were considered to be safe, asylum could be claimed in any of them and further movement across Europe therefore indicated a clear choice based on motives other than seeking protection.” (Collyer, 378, 2004) In response to criticism, the Commission published a new proposal “which resembled the original very closely indeed.” (Collyer, 378, 2004) This new document became known as the Dublin Regulation and went into effect in 2004. Again, the Regulation lists one of its objectives “to deter misuse of asylum procedures by preventing asylum applicants being able to choose in which Member State they seek asylum.” (European Commission 2000 in Collyer, 378, 2004)

The Dublin Convention and Regulation create many problems for refugees who apply for asylum once in Europe. A major issue is unequal recognition rates for various groups in different member states. For example, “in 1999, almost all applications for asylum from Iraqis were successful in the United Kingdom... In the same year, the success rate was just above 10 percent in the Netherlands... The success rate of application from Afghans in Germany in 1999 was around one-quarter but 67 and 80 percent in Belgium and the Netherlands, respectively.” (Neumayer, 48, 2005) Neumayer statistically proves that different groups are more likely to be accepted in different states. For this reason, many refugees historically have chosen to apply to countries where they will have an increased rate of success, however, the Dublin Regulation Prevents this. “Restrictions on choosing one’s preferred asylum destination country – sometimes called somewhat pejoratively asylum shopping – subjects asylum seekers whose claims carry the same substantive merit of the danger of unequal treatment contingent on where they lodge their asylum claim. Such discriminatory treatment violates the spirit, if not the letter of the Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees from 1951...” (Neumayer, 44, 2005). Additionally, many people feel that refugees have the right to some choice in the place will they will spend the rest of their lives. Choosing a nation with a compatible government and culture could be essential to success in settlement and integration.

Once a refugee has been officially classified as such by the UNHCR, they must either integrate into the country they currently

occupy or resettle in a third country. While all refugees are protected as described above in countries that have signed the Convention and Protocol, their experience will vary widely based on the policies and laws of the country they settle in. Some nations take a centralized, highly regulated approach to integration while in other countries independence is stressed from the very beginning. It is important to realize that the “settlement of refugees is shaped and constrained by governmental policies and cultural norms of the receiving societies.” (Korac, 89, 2005)

In “The Role of Bridging Social Networks in Refugee Settlement,” sociologist Maja Korac studies how the integration policies of the Netherlands and Italy influence the integration of refugees from the former Yugoslavia. (2005) In her paper, Korac builds on the concepts of bonding social capital and bridging social capital as described by Putnam (2000). Bonding social capital occurs between similar people and “bolsters our narrower selves” while bridging social capital occurs when people connect to diverse groups and can create broader identities and reciprocity. However, when refugees arrive in a new country, they lack social capital and networks. Korac argues that successful integration policies will facilitate the formation of both bonding social networks with similar refugees and bridging social networks with the larger community. Bridging connections have the potential to “increase trust and reduce racism and xenophobia” while facilitating “functional integration of refugees, ranging from fostering acquisition of language skills, retraining, and employment.” (Korac, 89, 90, 2005) While some argue that bridging connections occur later in the refugee experience, Korac argues that they can occur at an early state of integration, given the proper context. (90)

The Dutch system of refugee integration “is based on a number of measures and interventions by the state intended to meet the immediate needs of refugees and to facilitate their gradual and structural integration into Dutch society.” (Korac, 95-96, 2005) The policy emphasizes a contractual relationship between the refugee and the government; while the government provides language and re-training courses, financial assistance, and housing, the refugee is also expected to meet a number of requirements over time. If the refugee does not meet these requirements, their social security benefits may be reduced.

Korac conducted her ethnographic fieldwork studying refugees in Amsterdam in 2000 and 2001. These refugees had arrived between 1991 and 1995 from post-Yugoslav states. She collected both quantitative data – age, gender, marital status, parental status, educational level, legal status, and employment – and qualitative data through both formal interviewing and casual social interactions. (Korac, 96, 2005) Korac found that due to the specificity of the integration program, refugees are in continu-

ous contact with government employees that assist them throughout the process. (96, 2005) At the same time, the process is framed as a minority situation, in which the receiving society is ranked as superior, and this, along with a lack of other informal connections to Dutch society, creates a “perception of a profound cultural distance between Dutch society and their societies of origin.” (Korac, 97, 2005)

On paper, Yugoslavian refugees in Amsterdam appear to be very well settled and integrated. After five to ten years in the Netherlands, “almost all were Dutch citizens, around half of them were employed, and another quarter was studying or in the process of getting their formal skills recognized.” (Korac, 97, 2005) The majority saw their future in the Netherlands and had no plans to return to their country of origin. However, refugees felt that they were not “of Amsterdam.” (Korac, 97, 2005) In the words of a “successfully integrated” Bosnian man

“I am employed in a Dutch medical firm, I speak Dutch language well, my child goes to a Dutch school and soon he’ll speak Dutch better than his mother tongue, but we live here in a parallel existence, because we don’t have real contact with Dutch society. We are neither accepted nor rejected. The biggest problem is that we don’t have any friends among the Dutch here. We are left to ourselves. I have a flat in Amsterdam, I live here, but I don’t have any ties with Dutch people.” (Korac, 98, 2005)

Although the refugees emphasized Dutch social tolerance, they felt “invisible.” Korac explains that although these people appear well settled, they are socially isolated because of the Dutch integration policy. (98, 2005) The Dutch integration policies, as part of their highly developed welfare system, render refugees “passive recipients of aid.” (Harrell-Bond in Korac, 99, 2005)

The Italian system of refugee integration offers a startling contrast. Because Italy only began accepting substantial immigrant and refugee populations in the 1990s and because the Italian welfare system is relatively underdeveloped, the nation “lacks legislative framework that could be a basis for social policy pertaining to reception and integration of refugees.” (Korac, 100, 2005) Because of this, refugees are quickly received and processed, unlike the Dutch process which can take up to three years, and then are largely unassisted in settlement. Aid falls to various church organizations which provide assistance to the destitute. (Korac, 100, 2005)

Korac studied Yugoslavian refugees in Rome between 1999 and 2000 using the same process and variables as her studies in the Netherlands. She found that according to quantitative variables, refugees in Italy appear to be much less integrated than those

in the Netherlands. They “encountered profound problems in achieving financial security and their first years of settlement were characterized by a struggle for physical survival, ranging from finding shelter to learning the language and finding any kind of work.” (Korac, 101, 2005) However, these hardships were “interwoven with feelings of self-respect for being active in finding a solution and for being self-sufficient.” (Korac, 101, 2005) Most of the refugees in Italy had unstable, low-paying jobs, had not continued their education, were not married, did not have children, and had not become Italian citizens. (Korac, 101-103, 2005)

At the same time, refugees in Italy developed extensive networks with other refugees and with native Italians as a strategy for survival. “These and other spontaneous contacts with Italians they had to establish in various social settings, ranging from their neighborhoods to the markets and cafes, while in search for vital information or some other kind of help, were not mediated through professional or voluntary service providers.” (Korac, 103, 2005) Because of these informal contacts, Yugoslavian refugees did not feel as if their culture was in opposition to Italian culture, as did the refugees in Amsterdam. After being in Rome for seven or eight years, “over half the group had more contacts with Italians than with people from their countries of origin.” (Korac, 103, 2005) A Serbian man in the study explains:

“The only way to become integrated somewhere is to be in contact with local people. That means stepping out of a kind of ‘national scheme’. Limiting yourself to what you see as your own identity prevents you from accepting whatever may be outside of it. Some, for example, speak perfect Italian, even the Romanacio dialect, so there’s no way you can recognize us as foreigners, they are well adapted. However there’s still a difference [between the well adapted refugees and Italians], which isn’t bad at all. From what I’ve seen it’s not a disadvantage and I’d like to keep that distinctive quality.” (Korac, 103, 2005)

One could argue that although the refugees in Italy fare poorly in terms of conventional integration measures, they are actually more integrated than many others. They consider themselves “‘of Rome,’ that they are part of the social fabric of city life.” (Korac, 104, 2005) By studying the settlement of members of a single group in two different countries, Korac proves that the government policies towards refugee integration have a profound impact on their successful settlement.

Through this paper, I have aimed to show how both international and state laws and policies affect the experiences of refugees around the world. The 1951 Convention regarding the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol establish international policies which affect all refugees worldwide. While this system creates opportunities for many of those in need, the large, bureaucratic

nature of the UNHCR negatively affects application procedures and isolates many individuals in need of assistance. This is demonstrated through the narratives of missionary Victoria Armour-Hileman and refugee Ayaan Hirsi Ali. In addition, the Dublin Convention and Regulation have profound effects on refugees that apply for asylum once in the European Union. Once a refugee has been accepted, their settlement and integration is mainly influenced by policies of the specific country they have settled in. The systems of the Netherlands and Italy offer contrasting models of integration and demonstrate the influence these policies have on successful integration. By examining both official policies and individual or group experiences, I hope to have given an overview of the commonalities and differences in refugee experiences and success in resettlement and integration around the world.

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Agriculture and Politics in Modern Burma:

Kelly L Clarke - May 2010 - Anth 430: Political Ecology- Dr Jeremy Campbell - Roger Williams University

Burma¹ was once known as “The Rice Bowl of Asia,” supplying much of Southeast Asia with its rice during the years of British rule (1924-1948). Yet, in recent years, the country has failed to feed its own people, importing rice from other countries. According to Peter G. Warr, a Professor of Agricultural Economics at the Australian National University, the real agricultural output per head has not exceeded its level from 1985.² In the 1994/95 season, Burma exported 1 million tons of rice; only four years later, it exported only 250,000 tons. Pulses and beans are now the leading export.³ Why has Burma declined in rice production so rapidly in recent decades? What is being done and what can be done to improve the agriculture of Burma? This paper will explore these questions.

Burma’s Irrawaddy Delta is literally the heart of the nation. Not only is it geographically central, but in a country where two-thirds of the citizens are farmers, fertile land is the most prized possession. A quarter of the land is considered arable, about 43

1. For this paper, I am discussing the situation in Thailand as of 1995, since that is when the author returned to the United States. However, there are still hundreds of thousands of Burmese refugees in Thailand and that country still has not signed the 1951 Convention or 1967 Protocol, and so is not obligated to follow its policies.

2. This is a major issue since Thailand is one of the leading countries that refugees in south-east Asia flee to.

3. Ibid.

million acres. About 23 million of those acres are currently cultivated, mostly by small family farms. The average size of a farm is 5.6 acres and 86% of farms are less than 10 acres in size. Rice occupies about half of the farmed land, with pulses, sesame, and sugarcane being the next largest crops.⁴

However, no aspect of Burmese culture can be understood without examining the basic history and structure of its government. In 1948, the nation became an independent country under democratic rule. However, in 1962 General Ne Win led a military coup and for twelve years Burma was led by a council headed by the General. In 1974, Ne Win and many other generals resigned and began to rule Burma through the Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) in a single-party system. Under the rule of the BSPP, Burma became one of the most impoverished countries in world. However, political oppression and the disastrous economic situation lead to a series of protests in 1988 called the 8888 Uprising. The protests became very violent, and General Saw Maung “staged a coup” and the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), described as an “interim” government, came into power. In reality, Saw Maung had been a loyal general under Ne Win and this was barely a shift in power.⁵

The SLORC had promised to hold a multiparty election and on May 27, 1990, free elections were held. The National League for Democracy and its Leader Mrs. Aung San Suu Kyi won by astonishing numbers, winning 392 of the 425 seats it contested. However, the SLORC found excuse after excuse to delay handing over power. Eventually, it became clear that it never would. Instead, the SLORC announced it, instead, would institutionalize “disciplined democracy” within the country. “Indeed, the junta held a National Convention in 1992, and its actions indicated that the leaders did not intend to surrender power in the near future. The junta artfully manipulated the convention, creating a constitution that secured a strategic role in Burmese politics for the military for many years to come...”⁶

Government policies towards agriculture

The SLORC has been in power since and their policies on agriculture have essentially negated much of the previous progress that had been made in the farming industry. “Farmers, human rights workers, and diplomats say the government’s incoherent

4. Ibid.

5. Smith, Martin. *Burma: Insurgency and the Politics of Ethnicity*. London: Zed Books Ltd, 1991.

6. Kyaw Wyin Hlaing. “Challenging the Authoritarian State: Buddhist Monks and Peaceful Protests in Burma.” *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs Journal*. Winter 2008. <http://www.lexisnexis.com> (accessed 2 May 2010).

policy making – such as the government’s drive to boost exports and increase the quota system requiring farmers to sell rice at a subsidized rate – as well as the lack of infrastructure, has created an army of disenfranchised rice farmers and scores of hungry citizens.”⁷ In short, the government has not supplied farmers with the tools they would need to increase production. “Agriculture is central to Myanmar’s poor economic performance and to the lack of reform. It represents forty-three percent of gross domestic product, employs seventy percent of the population, and accounts for at least that proportion of Myanmar’s poor people. But the performance of the agricultural sector has been deteriorating and current policy directions seem unlikely to improve it.”⁸

Not only do current policies not encourage agricultural growth, they actually discourage it. Farmers are given no incentive to try to increase crop yield. For example, the government has in place a quota system that requires farmers to sell a fixed amount of rice to the government. However, they are required to do so at a price that can be as low as a fifth of the market value.⁹ For example, in the 1997/98 season the government paid a price of 320 kyat per basket of paddy. This same price was used the following two years. With an inflation rate of thirty percent, the real value of the procurement price is dropping rapidly.¹⁰ Even if a farmer has produced no rice, they must sell that fixed quantity to the government. Failing to do so could result in prison or land confiscation. Sometimes farmers are forced to purchase rice at market value, and then resell to the government at a fraction of the cost in order to meet quotas.¹¹ This procurement process is essentially a land tax. The government keeps detailed records of the quality of different lands and adjusts the quota as necessary; on average they collect about ten percent of the crop, but in highly fertile areas they may collect as much as twenty percent.¹²

This system has a negative effect on the quality of rice that Burma exports. The Myanmar Agricultural Produce Trading (MAPT) is a government-owned enterprise that has a legal monopoly on rice exports. “Because the procurement price is so low, farmers

7. Tony Broadmoor. “Empty Bowl: Rice in Burma.” *The Irrawaddy News Magazine*. March 2003. <http://www.irrawaddy.org> (accessed 21 April 2010).

8. Peter G. Warr. “The Failure of Myanmar’s Agricultural Policies.” *Southeast Asian Affairs*. 2000. P219-239. <http://0-web.ebscohost.com> (accessed 2 May 2010).

9. Tony Broadmoor. “Empty Bowl: Rice in Burma.” *The Irrawaddy News Magazine*. March 2003. <http://www.irrawaddy.org> (accessed 21 April 2010).

10. Peter G. Warr. “The Failure of Myanmar’s Agricultural Policies.” *Southeast Asian Affairs*. 2000. P219-239. <http://0-web.ebscohost.com> (accessed 2 May 2010).

11. Tony Broadmoor. “Empty Bowl: Rice in Burma.” *The Irrawaddy News Magazine*. March 2003. <http://www.irrawaddy.org> (accessed 21 April 2010).

12. Peter G. Warr. “The Failure of Myanmar’s Agricultural Policies.” *Southeast Asian Affairs*. 2000. P219-239. <http://0-web.ebscohost.com> (accessed 2 May 2010).

have an obvious incentive to supply their worst rice to the procurement agency, subject to meeting the minimum requirements as to the quantity and quality demanded of them. But because the MAPT is the sole exporter, this rice becomes the stock available for export, with obvious consequences for the prices subsequently received from foreign purchasers.”¹³

The junta receives a large portion of its funding from these exports, at the expense of its citizens. “[Many] blame the government’s attempt to export rice before first satisfying consumer demand at home. Maung Sein Pru, editor of the Bangladesh-based Narinjara News Service, describes the rice crisis in Burma s ‘artificial,’ saying the government is more interested in bumping up exports than feeding the populace. ‘Crop failure is one thing, and another is that the government is bent on exporting rice to an amount that is not practical. These have caused [the rice shortage] to get worse and worse.’”¹⁴

The credit system present in Burma also limits the growth of small farmers. A government agency called the Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank (MADB) provides loans to farmers at an interest rate of seventeen percent. While this is a good interest rate because it is below the rate of inflation, the amount that small farmers are lent is very small.¹⁵ “Capacity to repay loans is taken into account by the MADB in allocating its loans and the effect is that small land holders receive a disproportionately small proportion of total loans.”¹⁶ In addition, farmers cannot take out loans against their land because all land in Burma is the legal property of the government. Farmers only have use rights over the land and use rights cannot be used as collateral. “Since land is the major non-human asset of most poor rural households, the inability to mortgage land presents a major problem for financing agricultural production activities.”¹⁷

Burmese small farmers face additional difficulties in trying to produce a crop. There has been little infrastructural development to assist farmers in getting rice to market. With the poor line of credit, farmers cannot purchase fertilizers or tools that would increase their productivity. In addition, it is very difficult to import anything into the country, including foreign knowledge. Foreign agencies that would be willing to help farmers learn new techniques to increase production are not allowed into the

13. Ibid.

14. Tony Broadmoor. “Empty Bowl: Rice in Burma.” *The Irrawaddy News Magazine* . March 2003. <http://www.irrawaddy.org> (accessed 21 April 2010).

15. Peter G. Warr. “The Failure of Myanmar’s Agricultural Policies.” *Southeast Asian Affairs*. 2000. P219-239. <http://0-web.ebscohost.com> (accessed 2 May 2010).

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

country. “Government sources emphasize climatic problems as the causes of these outcomes, but the decline in fertilizer use, lack of access to credit, and inflation combined with continued suppression of farm-gate prices of key commodities are more significant factors.”¹⁸

Warr explains that farmers are given no incentive to increase production. “There are two ways yields could be improved: by cultivating existing farming lands more intensively, or by opening new lands to cultivation. Elsewhere in Asia, the ‘green revolution’ made the first of these approaches possible. It required that new agricultural technologies were available and that farmers had the economic incentives to apply them. In Myanmar, neither condition applies. New technologies have not been adapted to local conditions because domestic agricultural research and extension capabilities are almost non-existent. More important, the prices of agricultural commodities and the markets for the inputs required for agricultural expansion are suppressed to such an extent that farmers lack incentives to expand production.”¹⁹

Instead, the government has been focusing agricultural development on the second method: opening new lands to cultivation. There are currently 20 million acres of uncultivated farmland in Burma. “The government views this land as an abundant resource, available for agricultural exploitation.”²⁰ Recently, the government has been granting large tracts of land to “local entrepreneurs.” These entrepreneurs are given a thirty-year lease at no cost and are given an extensive list of benefits. As long as the land is developed within three years, investors can expect these benefits:

“The public works required for flood control, drainage, and irrigation are provided to the project area free of charge.

Government agencies assist in supplying the heavy earth moving machinery used to create the level fields to be used for paddy production. They do this under contract with the developer, but at subsidized rates.

The government assists in providing technical assistance in developing the project, free of charge.

Local private banks are encouraged to provide loans to the projects on a preferential basis.

Fuel required for project construction and land preparation is provided at the government price of 160 kyat per gallon, compared with the current market rate of 320 kyat per gallon.

18. Peter G. Warr. “The Failure of Myanmar’s Agricultural Policies.” *Southeast Asian Affairs*. 2000. P219-239. <http://0-web.ebscohost.com> (accessed 2 May 2010).

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Ibid.*

Project investors may export 50 percent of the rice they produce and are exempted from the rice procurement system operated by the government agency, the MAPT.

Preferential provision of telephone services, including cellular phones and land-based phone lines.

Provision of security services to protect project staff and equipment, free of charge.

Permission to import equipment, including water pumps, tractors, bulldozers, excavators, duty-free and without limit, and without the need to demonstrate foreign exchange earnings through approved channels, which applies to all other importers.”²¹

In 2000, eighty-two business groups had been allocated 1.1 million acres to develop in this manner.²² Though it is unknown how much land has been granted today, the government had plans to continue the process.

This method of increasing production has potentially disastrous effects. Warr demonstrates that this process is not financially valid. He estimates that it will cost 106,400 kyat per acre to produce farmable land using this method, however the value of the land when prepared will be about 85,000 kyat per acre.²³ “The potential for avoidable but permanent ecological damage caused by this haste is obvious, not least the danger of land degradation in fragile upland areas. There is also the potential for enduring social conflict between the local groups now denied access to these lands and the business groups being established on large agricultural estates.”²⁴

It is clear that government policies on agriculture have had disastrous effects on the welfare of the farmers and the economy. “...Rice historians note Burma has never been able to harness technological advancements but instead relies on expanding land production as opposed to increasing yields. Nonetheless, analysts have noted the irony that a country once dubbed the ‘Rice Bowl of Asia’ should now be suffering from food shortages.”²⁵

21. Peter G. Warr. “The Failure of Myanmar’s Agricultural Policies.” *Southeast Asian Affairs*. 2000. P219-239. <http://0-web.ebscohost.com> (accessed 2 May 2010).

22. Ibid.

23. Peter G. Warr. “The Failure of Myanmar’s Agricultural Policies.” *Southeast Asian Affairs*. 2000. P219-239. <http://0-web.ebscohost.com> (accessed 2 May 2010).

24. Ibid.

25. Tony Broadmoor. “Empty Bowl: Rice in Burma.” *The Irrawaddy News Magazine*. March 2003. <http://www.irrawaddy.org> (accessed 21 April 2010).

Burma captures the attention of the world

Recent natural and political events have paved the way for change in Burma. The Protests of 2007 caught the attention of the world. For the first time, Burmese journalists within the country were able to capture footage of major protests and violent government responses. "...The internet activities undertaken by young Burmese proved to be very effective in disseminating pictures and information to the international community."²⁶ Videos and pictures were shown all over the world and the foreigners were able to understand for the first time in many years, what was happening in Burma.

The protests started when the junta drastically raised fuel prices in August 2007 with no warning or explanation. On September 5, a group of monks staged a peaceful demonstration to protest the rise in fuel prices in Pakokku. Passing citizens joined in the peaceful protest. When the participants would not disperse as ordered by soldiers, many people were beaten and three monks were arrested. Soon, "an underground union of monks, known as the Alliance of All Burma Buddhist Monks, emerged."²⁷ These monks asked for the government to apologize for the mistreatment of the monks in Pakokku.²⁸

It may surprise those of us not familiar with Burma that monks were so politically involved, however this is typical. "Buddhist monks have had a legacy of playing a major role in Burma's politics since pre-colonial days. They have always been considered influential community leaders."²⁹ Monks depend on their *dajaka*, the people that give them alms, for survival. In return, they feel the need to protect the interests of those people and speak up for them when necessary. As one monk said, "We basically live on the support of our lay disciples. In our country, monks had to get involved in politics when the government was not fixing the problems of the people."³⁰

Because monks are so highly respected, "local officials committed grave errors in the incident in Pakokku. If the junta had

26. Kyaw Wyin Hlaing, "Challenging the Authoritarian State: Buddhist Monks and Peaceful Protests in Burma." *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs Journal*. Winter 2008. <http://www.lexisnexis.com> (accessed 2 May 2010).

27. *Ibid.*

28. *Ibid.*

29. *Ibid.*

30. *Ibid.*

apologized to the monks and took the necessary actions against the officials responsible for the violence and arrests, the crisis could have been resolved peacefully.”³¹ However, the government did not apologize and protests continued. The military did not crack down and the confidence of the people grew; by the sixth day of protests, the number of participants had swelled to an estimated 100,000.³² The influence of the video journalists was key: the world was now watching their actions. “The junta’s design to improve its image in the eyes of the international community also enabled the monks to sustain the demonstrations. If the junta had arrested many leading monks before the September 17 deadline, it is likely the protests would not have gained such momentum.”³³

On September 25, 2007, the military decided it would tolerate the protests no longer. The junta ordered a curfew on the cities where the largest demonstrations had occurred. It then deployed large numbers of soldiers to those locations. On September 26, the monks again came out to protest.³⁴ “The soldiers initially ordered protestors to disperse, but when the people did not obey their orders, soldiers used tear gas and fired upon them. In some instances, soldiers fired warning shots before they started shooting at protestors, but in many areas soldiers allegedly shot at protestors without warning. Soldiers also beat monks and other protestors with bamboo sticks.”³⁵ As many as twenty monks were beaten and taken away in trucks and a Japanese reporter was shot and killed. That night, the government entered the monastery that had led the protest to beat and arrest monks. The following morning, only about fifty of the 225 monks remained. Yet, the next morning monks came out to protest. Soldiers opened fire on the crowd. On September 29 the body of a dead monk was discovered in a river. Video reporters captured the image and it was broadcast all over the world. However, despite foreign pressure, by October the military was back in control. ³⁶

Although the government had regained control, it now felt increased international pressure from the renewed attention of people all over the world. In the spring of 2008, another incident directed attention towards Burma. On May 2, Cyclone Nargis hit

31. Kyaw Wyin Hlaing. “Challenging the Authoritarian State: Buddhist Monks and Peaceful Protests in Burma.” *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs Journal*. Winter 2008. <http://www.lexisnexis.com> (accessed 2 May 2010).

32. Anders Ostergaard. *Burma VJ*. (aired on HBO, 20 April 2010, 9:30 pm).

33. Kyaw Wyin Hlaing. “Challenging the Authoritarian State: Buddhist Monks and Peaceful Protests in Burma.” *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs Journal*. Winter 2008. <http://www.lexisnexis.com> (accessed 2 May 2010).

34. *Ibid.*

35. *Ibid.*

36. Anders Ostergaard. *Burma VJ*. (aired on HBO, 20 April 2010, 9:30 pm).

the Irrawaddy Delta killing at least 130,000 people. It is estimated to be the eighth deadliest cyclone of all time. Not only were people killed, but the homes, fields, tools, livestock, crops, infrastructure, and food stockpiles needed by millions of more people were destroyed. Essentially the entire rice crop for that season was destroyed, as it was about time to be harvested. Millions of people were homeless and starving.

Then the government announced it planned to meet all of its contractual commitments for rice exportation.³⁷ Reporters from all over the world spread word of the ineptitude of the government in handling the crisis. Ian MacKinnon described a scene in a port town: “While sacks of rice for export were being loaded on to the freighter at Thilawa last Friday, cyclone survivors from surrounding villages said they had received only hand-outs of spoiled rice from the port’s warehouse, where the storm had soaked 40 percent of the stored rice.”³⁸ Seth Mydans reported on farmers who had created makeshift settlements along the roads, waiting for passing civilian vehicles to throw them food. “Few of those who wait say they have received anything from the government, other than threats. ‘They said if we don’t break our huts and disappear, they will shoot us,’ one man in the village of Thee Kone said.” Signs posted along the road read “Don’t throw food on the roads. It ruins the people’s good habits.”³⁹

Not only did the government fail to aid the displaced victims of Cyclone Nargis, it actually blocked foreign aid for weeks. “International relief from the UN and other agencies has been blocked, and disaster management experts barred from entering even though there has been little evidence that the Burmese military is alleviating the suffering,” MacKinnon reported on May 11. If rice seeds were not replanted within forty or fifty days of the cyclone, the planting would not happen in time and an additional season of crop would be lost, according to Diderik de Vleeschauwer from the UN’s Food and Agriculture Organization.⁴⁰ The incident was seen as “...just another facet of the Burmese regime’s insensitivity to the suffering of its own people as it continues to block international relief to cyclone victims.”⁴¹ Luckily, the government did eventually allow aid into the country and planting occurred on schedule.

37. Ian MacKinnon. “Burma exports rice as cyclone victims starve.” *The Observer*. 11 May 2008. <http://www.guardian.co.uk> (accessed 21 April 2010).

38. *Ibid*.

39. Seth Mydans. “Weeks After Cyclone in Myanmar, Even Farmers Wait for Food.” *The New York Times*. 26 May 2008. <http://www.nytimes.com> (accessed 21 April 2010).

40. Chris Hogg. “Burma’s rice harvest under threat.” *BBC News*. 18 April 2008. <http://news.bbc.co.uk> (accessed 21 April 2010).

41. Ian MacKinnon. “Burma exports rice as cyclone victims starve.” *The Observer*. 11 May 2008. <http://www.guardian.co.uk> (accessed 21 April 2010).

Upcoming election

On September 3, 2007, around the time of the Pakokku incident, the junta finally concluded the fourteen year long National Convention. In October, a committee was formed to draft the new democratic constitution.⁴² The constitution will implement what the junta likes to call “disciplined democracy,” and many fear the military will still remain in control. In the new Parliament, twenty-five percent of the seats will be reserved for the military. In addition, amendments to the constitution will require more than seventy-five percent of representatives’ votes, meaning part of the military must agree to amendments.

Change is inevitable however. “The reclusive leader of the junta, Senior Gen. Than Shwe, a master at keeping his opponents off balance, is 78 years old and has no obvious successor.”⁴³ Perhaps that is why the government has announced that elections will be held later this year. The question then becomes, who will run?

Experts say, foreigners overestimate the unity of the military and underestimate individual ambition. “Mr. Thant Myint-U, the historian and former diplomat, said the main tensions in the country today were within the military itself, not between the generals and Mrs. Aung San Suu Kyi and her democracy movement. ‘Outside the country, the situation is perceived as a simple one where the army is trying to perpetuate its own rule,’ he said. ‘Inside, everyone knows that intense competition will be under way within the elite, involving not only the military, but also retired army officers, senior bureaucrats and a rising business class.’”⁴⁴

Late in April, several members of the military resigned in order to run as civilians in the elections. “The prime minister, Gen. Thein Sein, and 22 cabinet ministers gave up their uniforms on Monday, a move that was not unexpected in advance of the elections.”⁴⁵ Former military members are likely to augment the twenty-five percent of seats set aside for the military, increasing their presence in the Parliament. In anticipation of the election, the government has begun to sell off its various real estate assets, including government buildings, port facilities, and state-run factories. “Diplomats and businessmen say that the sales may

42. Kyaw Wyin Hlaing. “Challenging the Authoritarian State: Buddhist Monks and Peaceful Protests in Burma.” The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs Journal. Winter 2008. <http://www.lexisnexis.com> (accessed 2 May 2010).

43. The New York Times. “Change Comes to Myanmar, but Only on the Junta’s Terms.” The New York Times. 17 March 2010. <http://www.nytimes.com> (accessed 21 April 2010).

44. Ibid.

45. Seth Mydans. “Myanmar Junta Members Go Civilian.” The New York Times. 1 May 2010. <http://www.nytimes.com> (accessed 18 May 2010).

be allowing ruling generals to build up cash for election campaigns to the new Parliament.”⁴⁶

Notably absent from the elections, however, will be Mrs. Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy. This year, the military announced new election laws banning anyone with a criminal conviction from running. Several years ago, Aung San Suu Kyi was convicted of violating the terms of her house arrest by letting an uninvited American enter her home after he swam across a lake. This prohibits her from the election.⁴⁷ However, the NLD had its own reasons for not participating in the election. “After months of internal debate, members of the party of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi the long-detained pro-democracy leader, defied Myanmar’s junta by announcing Monday that they would boycott the country’s first elections in two decades.”⁴⁸ The NLD still recognizes the 1990 elections as valid and Aun San Suu Kyi the Prime Minister-elect of Burma. It would degrade the NLD’s position by participating in these elections. In addition, “The National League for Democracy has called the elections a false front intended to put a civilian face on the military’s continued grip on power.”⁴⁹ On May 7 this year, the NLD was officially dissolved. By refusing to register for the polls, the party was automatically disqualified as a political party per election laws.⁵⁰

The upcoming election is already having positive consequences for Burmese citizens. “Military officers are campaigning for the elections as if their careers depended on it, announcing dozens of projects, including the plan for 24-hour electricity in Yangon that they hope will win the affection of a population that in many parts of the country despises them.”⁵¹ In addition, the ban on motorcycle imports has been lifted. This move “is likely to transform the lives of thousands of people in towns and cities.”⁵²

46. The New York Times. “Myanmar’s Ruling Junta is Selling State’s Assets.” The New York Times. 7 March 2010. <http://www.nytimes.com> (accessed 18 May 2010).

47. Reuters. “Myanmar Bars Democracy Advocate From Election.” Reuters. 9 March 2010. <http://www.nytimes.com> (accessed 18 May 2010).

48. Thomas Fuller. “Main Opposition to Boycott Myanmar Election.” The New York Times. 29 March 2010. <http://www.nytimes.com> (accessed 18 May 2010).

49. Seth Mydans. “Myanmar Junta Members Go Civilian.” The New York Times. 1 May 2010. <http://www.nytimes.com> (accessed 18 May 2010).

50. Seth Mydans. “Myanmar Opposition Party Formally Disbands Before Election.” The New York Times. 6 May 2010. <http://www.nytimes.com> (accessed 18 May 2010).

51. The New York Times. “Change Comes to Myanmar, but Only on the Junta’s Terms.” The New York Times. 17 March 2010. <http://www.nytimes.com> (accessed 21 April 2010).

52. The New York Times. “Myanmar’s Ruling Junta is Selling State’s Assets.” The New York Times. 7 March 2010. <http://www.nytimes.com> (accessed 18 May 2010).

For the first time ever, the military has issued permits for private hospitals and schools.

The military is also taking moves to help farmers. A new group called the Myanmar Rice Industry Association (MRIA) has been formed to encourage development of Burma's rice industry till it is as strong as it once was. "The MRIA was formed this year with the approval of the military government and will work in cooperation with the pre-existing Myanmar Rice and Paddy Wholesalers' Association, the Myanmar Rice Millers' Association, the Myanmar Rice Merchants Association and individual private companies working in the rice-growing sector."⁵³ The MRIA will issue "agri-credits," provide and train farmers in the use of imported fertilizers, seeds, and technology, and help form more rice-focused private companies.⁵⁴ In addition, "The government has empowered the [MRIA] with management of the country's rice stocks, a crucial change from the past when generals who feared rice shortages shut down exports with the stroke of a pen, overriding any contracts that rice traders had signed with their customers."⁵⁵

Recommendations for improving agriculture

With these positive changes already occurring, it seems as if the government will be more open to foreign suggestions as to how to improve the agricultural sector of the economy. Many experts have suggestions for improving rice production. For example, Dr Marcotte thinks "the majority of Burma's rice woes, including pest problems and low yields, could actually be resolved with the implementation of new varieties."⁵⁶ Burma should follow the example of Indonesia, which gets as much as eight tons of rice per hectare while Burma reaps less than two. "We could probably easily double [the yields] without any amendment change just by using different varieties," explains Dr Marcotte.⁵⁷

Peter G. Warr has five recommendations for improving the agriculture industry. First, the prohibition on private sector rice

53. Aung Thet Wine. "Burma Could be 'Rice Bowl of Asia Again': MRIA." The Irrawaddy News Magazine. 18 January 2010. <http://www.irrawaddy.org> (accessed 21 April 2010).

54. Ibid.

55. The New York Times. "Change Comes to Myanmar, but Only on the Junta's Terms." The New York Times. 17 March 2010. <http://www.nytimes.com> (accessed 21 April 2010).

56. Tony Broadmoor. "Empty Bowl: Rice in Burma." The Irrawaddy News Magazine . March 2003. <http://www.irrawaddy.org> (accessed 21 April 2010).

57. Ibid.

exportation must be removed. If this occurred, “the domestic price of export quality grades of rice would increase by around 35 percent and the prices of non-export grades of rice would increase also, but by a smaller proportion, and with a delay. Export earnings would increase along with farm incomes. Farmers could be expected to respond to the increased prices by increasing their production through greater use of fertilizer and more intensive cultivation.”⁵⁸ The prohibition on exportation should be phased out over about a five year time period, and liberalization of the trade of other crops would reap similar benefits.

Secondly, because liberalization of rice exports will raise rice prices for consumers, “it is recommended that consumption of lower-quality grades of rice be subsidized” especially for low-income groups.⁵⁹ Third, the current system of rice procurement should be replaced “with direct purchase of rice by the MAPT at market prices at the wholesale level, combined with an explicit land tax system levied in cash, rather than kind, as at present. The rate of tax per acre would depend on the quality of land (as is the case with the present procurement quotas) and could be progressive with respect to farm size. That is, the rate of tax per acre could be lower for small-sized farms than for larger farms.” With this system, the quality of imported rice would improve and the MAPT would be able to control the quality of the rice it receives.⁶⁰

Next, farmers need a better system for obtaining loans. “If farmers could use their land-use rights as loan collateral, the provision of credit could be greatly enhanced and credit costs to farmers could be significantly reduced, thereby improving the profitability (and incomes) of many small farms.”⁶¹ It would become possible and desirable for farmers to increase their production, unlike today.

Finally, Warr wants to end the system of granting uncultivated land to corporations for development. “The present land reclamation scheme is unnecessarily costly. It is financially attractive to the business groups participating in it because of provision by the public sector of inputs priced below their social opportunity costs, including the land itself. The additional food supplies

58. Peter G. Warr. “The Failure of Myanmar’s Agricultural Policies.” *Southeast Asian Affairs*. 2000. P219-239. <http://0-web.ebscohost.com> (accessed 2 May 2010).

59. *Ibid.*

60. *Ibid.*

61. Peter G. Warr. “The Failure of Myanmar’s Agricultural Policies.” *Southeast Asian Affairs*. 2000. P219-239. <http://0-web.ebscohost.com> (accessed 2 May 2010).

this may deliver would be more efficiently obtained by improving productivity on land already in intensive cultivation.”⁶²

Conclusion

Although it may be difficult at first to understand the relationship between rice farming, political protests, and the changing government form in Burma, the three are incredibly interrelated.

Burma was once the largest exporter of rice in the world. Due to government policy over the past fifty years, rice production has dropped drastically. The military government has crippled the livelihood of many farmers due to their policies. Farmers have been required to “sell” to the government a certain amount of rice, no matter how their production was that year, at a fixed price well below the market value of the rice. In addition, a government limitation on foreign visitors and the media means that farmers are using outdated techniques and species. There is not the proper infrastructure to import any technology in the first place. These shortcomings have led to poverty, discontent, and political protests.

Recent technological advances have given the outside world a window into once mysterious Burma. We can now see what the political protests are like. The world also paid attention when during a time of need, such as the cyclone in 2008, the government was unable or unwilling to help those affected and limited foreign aid. As a result, foreign nations have applied a considerable amount of pressure on Burma. Because of international attention, the Burmese government must be more careful than ever in how it conducts the upcoming elections.

Due to the upcoming election, there seems to be progress in the government’s position towards agriculture. While these elections are strictly regulated and the motives of the military government are uncertain, there is hope of change. In preparation for these elections, various members of the military have actually been more supportive of farmers and are more receptive to foreign advice and aid. With the potential for change in sight, it is important to examine what has and has not worked in the past. I am hopeful that those in power in Burma, and those who will soon be in power, will carefully examine these issues in order to pursue the best possible government policies towards agriculture.

62. Peter G. Warr. “The Failure of Myanmar’s Agricultural Policies.” *Southeast Asian Affairs*. 2000. P219-239. <http://0-web.ebscohost.com> (accessed 2 May 2010).

“What passes for hope in Myanmar is incremental change and the prospect that the military will gradually fade from politics – allowing this country of vast resources, with land so fertile it once fed large parts of the British empire, to finally participate in the economic dynamism that surrounds it.”⁶³

63. The New York Times. “Change Comes to Myanmar, but Only on the Junta’s Terms.” The New York Times. 17 March 2010. [http:// www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com) (accessed 21 April 2010).

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[http:// www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com) (accessed 21 April 2010).

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site images



Panorama 1: from the corner looking west on Union St



Panorama 2: from the corner looking north on Bliss St





Panorama 3: of the front of the site



Panorama 4: of the left front of the site





Picture 5: house at the rear of the site



Picture 6: Bliss St north of the site



Picture 7: the side of the site from Bliss St



Picture 8: building across Union St



Picture 9: left of site, looking past the garage



Picture 10: northwest corner of the site



Picture 11: rear of site looking west



Picture 12: northwest corner of site



Picture 13: towards Union St from the rear center of the site



Picture 14: towards the eastern corner from the site



Picture 15: towards Bliss St from the site



Picture 16: towards the southern corner from the site



Picture 17: Town Green



Picture 18: Town Green



Picture 19: street in the center



Picture 20: existing Lutheran Social Services building

Table 5-1: Table of Use Regulations, Residential Zoning Districts

Table 6-1B: Table of Area Regulations

Table 6-2: Table of Height and Bulk Regulations

Section VIII: Development Methods (Multiple Family Dwellings)

Section IX: Additional Land Use Regulations (Parking)

Table 5-1: Table of Use Regulations, Residential Zoning Districts

Table 5 - 1 West Springfield Table of Use Regulations RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS						
<u>Uses</u>	<u>Standards & Conditions</u>	<u>Zoning Districts</u>				
		<u>RA</u>	<u>RA-1</u>	<u>RA-2</u>	<u>RB</u>	<u>RC</u>
RESIDENTIAL USES						
3. Multi-family dwellings	All required front and side yards shall be landscaped and shall not be devoted to off-street parking. No use, other than residential, shall be permitted in a multi-family dwelling unless provision for such use, including required parking space, is clearly depicted on the original plan.	-	-	-	-	SPR
4. Boarding house and lodging house		-	-	-	-	P
COMMUNITY FACILITIES						
1. Churches or other religious purposes and any religious sectarian or denominational educational purposes		P	P	P	P	P
2. Educational uses, not conducted for profit		P	P	P	P	P
3. Private educational uses conducted for gain		-	-	-	P	P
4. Child care facilities	Must file a copy of operating license with the Building Inspector before a certificate of occupancy can be issued.	P	P	P	P	P
5. Family home day care	Must file a copy of operating license with the Building Inspector before a certificate of occupancy can be issued.	SPB/SPR	SPB/SPR	SPB/SPR	SPB/SPR	SPB/SPR
6. Recreation community center	Building grounds must be for games and sport. Center must be of a non-profit character only. Sale of alcoholic beverages shall not be permitted. See Section 10.4 for additional standards.	SPA/SPR	SPA/SPR	SPA/SPR	SPA/SPR	SPA/SPR
7. Recreational uses, athletic fields, parks, marinas and similar outdoor uses		-	-	-	-	-

**Table 5 - 1
West Springfield Table of Use Regulations
RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS**

<u>Uses</u>	<u>Standards & Conditions</u>	<u>Zoning Districts</u>				
		<u>RA</u>	<u>RA-1</u>	<u>RA-2</u>	<u>RB</u>	<u>RC</u>
8. Correction institution or place of detention		-	-	-	-	-
RETAIL AND SERVICE COMMERCIAL USES						
1. Hotel, motel, inn, bed-and-breakfast establishment		-	-	-	-	SPR
2. Bank, credit union, trust company or similar financial institution	In RC district, banks shall not include armored car services or similar uses.	-	-	-	-	SPR
3. Medical/dental center, offices, clinic or laboratory	In RC district, medical/dental offices only are permitted. See Section 10.3 for additional standards.	-	-	-	-	SPR
4. Rest home, convalescent home, nursing home		-	-	-	-	SPR
5. All other professional, business, insurance, executive, administrative, and technical offices and services	Does not include any office and services specifically listed in Table 5-1.	-	-	-	-	SPR
AGRICULTURAL USES						
1. Agriculture, horticulture, floriculture, or viticulture	Must be located on parcels of land with more than 5 acres. Agricultural uses include commercial kennels, the commercial keeping and raising of swine and livestock, the commercial keeping and raising of poultry and farmstands. No yard for the raising of swine and livestock shall be situated nearer than 100 feet to any lot line or any building or structure used for human habitation. No poultry yard shall be situated nearer than 100 feet to any lot line or any building or structure used for human habitation. A farmstand must be located at least 30 feet from any street line and accessible over a private driveway. Farmstands shall be accessory to a dwelling on the same lot.	P	P	P	P	P

**Table 5 - 1
West Springfield Table of Use Regulations
RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS**

<u>Uses</u>	<u>Standards & Conditions</u>	<u>Zoning Districts</u>				
		<u>RA</u>	<u>RA-1</u>	<u>RA-2</u>	<u>RB</u>	<u>RC</u>
ACCESSORY USES						
1. Accessory residential buildings such as private garage playhouse, greenhouse not used in farming operations, tool shed, or other similar accessory structures	Accessory structures shall be located in the rear yard of the principal structure. A private garage shall be permitted only as an accessory use and shall be subject to all applicable provisions of this bylaw pertaining to accessory buildings. A private garage or storage space for not more than three (3) motor vehicles shall be permitted on a lot, except as otherwise provided therein. In the case of multi-family or group dwellings, individual garage storage space for each family accommodated on the lot may be provided either as an integral part of the building or in an accessory building or buildings.	P	P	P	P	P
2. Garaging or parking of commercial vehicles	Vehicles used primarily for agricultural purposes on the premises are exempt. The following Standards and Conditions shall apply on in all residential districts. a. Commercial vehicles shall not be more than three-fourth tons in rated capacity. b. Not more than one commercial vehicle can be kept per lot. c. Commercial vehicles shall not be customarily parked in the open. d. The lease or rental of garage storage to a non-residential owner of a commercial vehicle is not permitted.	P	P	P	P	P
4. Fences	Fences are subject to additional standards in Section 9.4	P	P	P	P	P
5. Home Occupation	See Section 10.0 for standards.	P	P	P	P	P
6. Accessory signs	See Section 9.2 for sign standards.	P	P	P	P	P
7. Accessory off-street parking and loading standards	See Section 9.0 for standards.	P	P	P	P	P

**Table 5 - 1
West Springfield Table of Use Regulations
RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS**

<u>Uses</u>	<u>Standards & Conditions</u>	<u>Zoning Districts</u>				
		<u>RA</u>	<u>RA-1</u>	<u>RA-2</u>	<u>RB</u>	<u>RC</u>
8. Temporary structure	See Section 9.9 for standards.	P	P	P	P	P
9. Storage	With the exception of single-family and two-family dwellings all equipment, vehicles, storage bins, etc., associated with snow removal, care of grounds, solid waste disposal and maintenance in general shall be stored in designated areas, distinct from open space and associated with automobile and pedestrian circulation and shall be shielded from public and private view. Such storage shall be consistent with fire and safety regulations.	P	P	P	P	P
10. Common Driveway	See Section 9.1 for standards	SPB	SPB	SPB	SPB	SPB

Table 6-1B: Table of Area Regulations

TABLE 6-1B									
WEST SPRINGFIELD TABLE OF AREA REGULATIONS									
<u>District</u>	<u>Use</u>	<u>Lot Area</u> Minimum Size in Square Feet	<u>Lot Width</u> Minimum Width in Feet	<u>Frontage</u> Minimum in Feet	<u>Lot Depth</u> Minimum in Feet	<u>Front Yard</u> Minimum Depth Required in Feet	<u>Side Yard</u> Minimum Width Required in Feet	<u>Rear Yard</u> Minimum Depth Required in Feet	<u>Other</u>
RC	Two-family dwelling	10,000	90	75	-	25	12	25	See Notes A, B and I.
	Multi-Family dwelling								See Notes C, D, E, F, G, and I.
	3 dwelling units	21,000	100	100	150	30	15	25	
	4 dwelling units	28,000	100	100	150	30	15	25	
	5 dwelling units	36,000	125	100	150	30	15	25	
	6 or more dwelling units	Note H	150	100	150	30	15	25	
	Any other permitted use or structure	10,000	90	75	-	25	12	25	See Note I.
BA	Any permitted use or structure	7,500	75	50	-	25	10	25	See Notes B and C.

Note A: A two-family dwelling shall provide a minimum net floor area of 640 square feet per dwelling unit.

Note B: All required front and side yard areas shall be landscaped and shall not be devoted to off-street parking. All remaining lot area not devoted to building or off-street parking shall be suitably planted and landscaped for tenant use. Such remaining area shall be equal to or greater in size that the required yard area. A landscaped buffer at least 5 feet wide shall be maintained between off-street parking space and all lot lines.

Note C: Every dwelling shall provide a minimum net floor area, per dwelling unit, as follows for multi-family dwelling units. One room units: 325 square feet; Two room units: 450 square feet; Each additional room: 120 square feet

Note D: All required front and side yard areas shall be landscaped and shall not be devoted to off-street parking.

Note E: The minimum side yard requirements shall be measured along the property line of each side yard.

Note F: All area requirements may be waived upon submission of a site plan to the Board of Appeals and issuance of a Special Permit by that board.

Note G: All multi-family dwelling developments shall also meet the additional standards in Section 8.2 of this Bylaw.

Note H: For multi-family dwellings with 6 or more dwelling units, the minimum lot area is 43,000 sq ft for the first 6 dwelling units, 3,000 sq ft for each additional unit.

Note I: Section 6.3 includes additional regulations applicable in the RB and RC districts.

Note B: Section 6.3 includes additional regulations applicable in the NB and BA districts.

Note C: No public garage, automobile repair shop, greasing station, storage battery service station, gasoline filling station, nor any of their appurtenances of accessory uses, and no commercial establishment for the sale or dispensing of alcoholic beverages shall hereafter be erected or placed so that any entrance or exit at the street line thereto shall be within a radius of two hundred feet from any entrance or exit at the street line of any public or private school, public library, church, playground or institution if such entrances or exits are on the same street or on an intersecting street; and no driveway or door to such premises shall be in any part within thirty feet of any residence district.

Table 6-2: Table of Height and Bulk Regulations

TABLE 6-2					
WEST SPRINGFIELD TABLE OF HEIGHT AND BULK REGULATIONS					
<u>District</u>	<u>Use</u>	<u>Building Height</u> Maximum Permitted in Feet	<u>Number of Building Stories</u> Maximum Number of Stories	<u>Building Coverage of Lot</u> Maximum Percentage Permitted	<u>Other</u>
RC	Any permitted use or structure	60	4	45%	See Note A.
BA	Any permitted use or structure	60	4	90%	See Note A.
Note A: Special permits as to building height limits may be granted by the Board of Appeals provided that such permits require side yards of not less than one-fourth of the height of the building					

6.36 Visibility at Intersections

On a corner lot, no signs, fence, wall, tree, hedge or other vegetation, and no building or other established street grades shall be erected, placed or maintained within the area formed by the intersecting street lines and a straight line joining said street lines at points which are twenty-five (25) feet distance from the point of intersection, measured along said street lines.

6.37 Front Yards As Affected By Abutting Existing Buildings

No part of any building needs to set back from the street line of any street on which it faces more than the average of the setbacks of existing buildings on the lots adjacent thereto on either side thereof and facing on the same street and within the same zoning district. Where no such existing building exists, the front yard requirements of the zoning district in which such building is located shall be applicable.

6.38 Corner Lots and Side Yards

No part of any building on a corner lot shall be nearer the side street line than fifteen (15) feet or the required side yard, whichever is greater.

Section VIII: Development Methods (Multiple Family Dwellings)

SECTION VIII. DEVELOPMENT METHODS

8.0 GENERAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

All developments in the town shall conform to the Rules and Regulations Governing the Subdivision of Land in the Town of West Springfield, Massachusetts, as amended.

8.1 CONVENTIONAL RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Conventional Residential Development includes: any subdivision of land, as defined in the Subdivision Control Laws, Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 41, Sections 81K to 81GG, to be developed for residential purposes; and the development of a single-family home on a lot which does not require approval under M.G.L. Chapter 41.

8.2 MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING WITH SITE PLAN REVIEW

8.21 Multi-Family Dwellings Permitted by Site Plan Review

Multi-family dwellings shall be permitted only upon Site Plan Review by the Planning Board, as specified in Section XIII of this Bylaw and in accordance with the additional requirements specified in Section 8.2, in the Residential (RC) district as noted in Table 5-1 and the Business A-1 (BA-1) and Business B-1 (BB-1) districts as noted in Table 5-2.

8.22 Dimensional Requirements

- a. All multi-family dwellings shall conform to the dimensional requirements specified in Table 6-1 and Table 6-2 in Section VI.
- b. The maximum permitted lot dimension is up to, but not including, 5 acres for one or more contiguous complexes in common ownership.

8.23 Open Space Requirements

Any required open space must be:

- a. maintained by the owner;
- b. devoted to plantings (including grass areas); and
- c. devoted to pedestrian oriented paved areas designated for social or recreational use in common by the residents of the complex, and provided that such areas are kept essentially open to the out-of-doors and are at ground level. Paved open space areas will be clearly designated on building plans and provided and maintained

with appropriate recreational equipment. Specifically excluded from required open space are those areas devoted to parking, parking access, and service drives whether or not designed for multiple use and those areas deemed not usable for recreational or other tenant use. In designating open space, due regard shall be shown for all natural features which, if preserved, will add attractiveness and value to the development.

8.3 MULTI-FAMILY DWELLINGS BY SPECIAL PERMIT WITH SITE PLAN REVIEW IN THE RESIDENCE C (RC), BUSINESS A-1 (BA-1) AND BUSINESS B-1 (BB-1)

- 8.31 Since the dimensional requirements of Section 8.2 may inhibit the imaginative use of various parcels, these dimensional regulations may be waived by the issuance of a Special Permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals with Site Plan Review from the Planning Board, as specified in Sections XII and XIII of this Bylaw and in accordance with the additional requirements specified herein.

8.32 Site Plans for Special Permits

- 8.321 Site Plans for Special Permits shall be drawn on mylar, or similar durable materials at a scale of 1 inch equals 40 feet on standards eighteen (18) by twenty-four (24) inch sheets or twenty-four (24) by thirty-six (36) inch sheets; such plans shall contain or be accompanied by the following information:
- a. the name of the proposed development, its boundaries, north point, size in acres, scale, soil types as determined by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service (available in the Planning Board Office) or as determined by the project engineer, number of units proposed, total floor area of all buildings, and number of parking spaces;
 - b. name and address of owner, landscape architect, and architect or engineer;
 - c. existing and proposed topography at one foot contour intervals and methods of disposing of surface water. The project engineer shall indicate on the site plan and also in writing that the proposed topography shall not adversely effect abutting parcels through erosion, flooding or similar conditions;
 - d. location of utilities;
 - e. major existing site features including but not limited to walls, fences, buildings, large trees and stands of trees, rock ridges and outcroppings, swamps, wetlands, 100 year flood plains and water bodies (note: the developer shall indicate in writing his intentions with respect to preservation, removal or alteration of existing site features);

- f. location of proposed structures, buildings and roadways. Elevation drawings of buildings and cross-sections of roadways shall be included;
 - g. solid waste storage and other storage facilities, if any, and proposed methods of screening such facilities from public view of the residents of the proposed development;
 - h. proposed location and type of bicycle paths, if any; and,
 - i. proposed location and type or design of plantings, signs, recreation areas, and pedestrian walkways.
- 8.322 Those aspects of the site plan dealing with building placement, design of pedestrian walkways and motor vehicle parking areas, screening of storage and other facilities and development of landscaping plans shall be prepared by a landscape architect licensed to practice in the Commonwealth.

8.33 Dimensional Requirements for Multi-Family Dwellings in the RC, BA-1 and BB-1 Districts

- 8.331 All multi-family dwelling units shall conform to the dimensional requirements specified in Table 6-1 and Table 6-2, in addition to the dimensional requirements specified herein.
- 8.332 The number of allowable densities for multi-family developments shall be permitted as follows:
- | | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| 1 story | 10 units/acre |
| 2 stories | 20 units/acre |
| 3 stories | 25 units/acre |
| 4 stories or more | 30 units/acre |
- 8.333 Floor Area Ratio
- The "Floor Area Ratio" (FAR) of principal buildings shall not exceed 0.52.
- 8.334 Open Space Ratios
- "Open Space Ratios" (OSR) shall not be less than a 1 to 1 ratio (50 percent); not more than 40 percent of that portion of any site which exceeds a slope of 15 percent may be used to fulfill open space requirements. The required open space shall include all portions of a lot not devoted to a building or to required parking shall be designated as open space. The required open space shall not be less than 50 percent of the area of the multi-family development. All areas not used for building, parking or required open space shall be maintained in a natural and clean condition. Such areas may be used to complement recreational areas.

The OSR is defined as the total area of open space divided by the total site area in which the open space is located.

- 8.335 Maximum Permitted Lot Dimension
- The maximum permitted lot dimension is up to, but not including, 5 acres for one or more contiguous complexes in common ownership.
- 8.336 Minimum Distance Between Buildings
- The minimum distance between principal buildings is twice the height of the higher building but not less than 30 feet.
- 8.337 Setback of a Building or Structure from Public Streets or Ways
- Setback of a building or structure from public streets or ways shall not be less than 1.2 times the height of said building.
- 8.338 Distance of a Building or Structure from Adjoining Property Lines
- Distance of a building or structure from adjoining property lines shall not be less than 0.5 times the height of the building at its highest point or 15 feet, whichever is greater.

8.34 Additional Requirements for Multi-Family Dwellings in the Residence C (RC), Business A-1 (BA-1) and Business B-1 (BB-1)

- 8.341 All utilities shall be placed underground.
- 8.342 Pedestrian walkways shall be provided to connect all buildings to parking facilities and recreation areas. Walkways serving parking facilities shall extend to the most distant portions of such facilities and shall be clearly distinguished, through design and/or material and shall be protected from automobile parking spaces and driving lanes.
- 8.343 Buffers and plantings shall be provided in accordance with the provisions of Table 13-1, Section XIII, of this Bylaw. (Note: That percent of parking areas required to be landscaped may be calculated as a portion of the required open space.)
- 8.344 Existing structures of historic value as listed by the West Springfield Historical Commission, the Lower Pioneer Valley Planning Commission publication, A Future For the Past or subsequent directory or the National Register of Historic Places, may be retained for any use permitted in the zoning district in which they are located if refurbished to a sound condition and if external architectural features are preserved and/or restored. Floor areas available in such structures shall be permitted in addition to floor areas developed through the use of the floor area ratio noted in Section 8.33. Building coverage occupied by such structures may be deducted from the open

space requirement set forth and intrusion of such structures into required landscaped buffers is permitted.

8.35 Open Space Requirements

Any required open space must be:

- a. maintained by the owner;
- b. devoted to plantings (including grass areas); and
- c. devoted to pedestrian oriented paved areas designated for social or recreational use in common by the residents of the complex, and provided that such areas are kept essentially open to the out-of-doors and are at ground level. Paved open space areas will be clearly designated on building plans and provided and maintained with appropriate recreational equipment. Specifically excluded from required open space are those areas devoted to parking, parking access, and service drives whether or not designed for multiple use and those areas deemed not usable for recreational or other tenant use. In designating open space, due regard shall be shown for all natural features which, if preserved, will add attractiveness and value to the development.

space are those areas devoted to parking, parking access, and service drives whether or not designed for multiple use and those areas deemed not usable for recreational or other tenant use. In designating open space, due regard shall be shown for all natural features which, if preserved, will add attractiveness and value to the development.

8.4 MULTI-FAMILY DWELLINGS BY SPECIAL PERMIT WITH SITE PLAN REVIEW IN THE SPECIAL USE (MULTI-FAMILY) DISTRICT

8.41 Multi-family dwellings shall be permitted in the Special Use (Multi-family) districts as noted in Table 5-4 only upon issuance of a Special Permit with Site Plan Review from the Planning Board, as specified in Sections XII and XIII of this Bylaw and in accordance with the additional requirements as specified in Section 7.5.

8.42 Dimensional Requirements

All multi-family dwellings shall conform to the dimensional requirements specified in Table 6-1 and Table 6-2.

8.43 Open Space Requirements

Any required open space must be:

- a. maintained by the owner;
- b. devoted to plantings (including grass areas); and
- c. devoted to pedestrian oriented paved areas designated for social or recreational use in common by the residents of the complex, and provided that such areas are kept essentially open to the out-of-doors and are at ground level. Paved open space areas will be clearly designated on building plans and provided and maintained with appropriate recreational equipment. Specifically excluded from required open

Section IX: Additional Land Use Regulations (Parking)

SECTION IX. ADDITIONAL LAND USE REGULATIONS

9.0 OFF-STREET PARKING AND LOADING STANDARDS

9.01 Purpose

The purpose of this Section of the Ordinance is to provide provisions for adequate off-street parking which will protect the health, safety and welfare of the general public while providing for and ensuring adequate access for the development of land in the Town of West Springfield.

9.02 General

- 9.021 Changes to parking or curb cuts for residential structures greater than four-family and all non-residential structures shall be subject to Site Plan Review.
- 9.022 Each required parking space shall not be less than nine (9) feet wide and eighteen (18) feet in length exclusive of adequate access to said space.
- 9.023 Except for single and two-family uses, parking areas shall be designed so that vehicles will not need to back into the street.
- 9.024 No parking area shall encroach upon public property.
- 9.025 No more than two access drives shall be allowed per parcel except as approved through Site Plan Review.
- 9.026 Access drives shall be allowed up to twenty-four (24) feet in width, but not wider than the internal driveway, at their intersection with the street right-of-way except as approved through Site Plan Review.
- 9.027 Mobile homes, campers, boats, trailers and other similar vehicles shall not be customarily parked in the front yard of a residential property.
- 9.028 A structure in existence prior to January 1, 1997 which is enlarged, or a use in existence prior to January 1, 1997 which is extended, shall be required to provide parking and loading spaces in accordance with Table 9.1 for the entire structure or use unless the increase in units or measurements amounts to less than twenty-five percent (25%) whether such increase occurs at one time or in successive stages.
- 9.029 The reconstruction of a structure shall require the providing of parking and loading spaces in accordance with table 9.1.

9.03 Location

- 9.031 Except for single and two-family structures, no parking shall be permitted within the required front yard; where feasible, all parking areas should be located to the rear of the principal structure.
- 9.032 Parking for non-residential purposes may be shared with abutting businesses provided that:
 - a. The uses are similar and compatible with one another;
 - b. The uses and underlying land are located in the same zoning district or different districts allowing the same uses;
 - c. The total number of curb cuts are reduced by the use of common driveways;
 - d. A plan outlining the proposed parking has been approved by the Planning Board through Site Plan Review; and
 - e. An easement allowing for the sharing of parking is recorded in the Hampden County Registry of Deeds. Said easement shall be subject to approval by Town Attorney.
- 9.033 Access drives initially constructed after March 1, 2009 shall not be located within forty (40) feet of the intersection of any two (2) streets. The forty (40) foot offset standard shall not apply to the reconstruction or resurfacing of an existing access drive.
- 9.034 Access drives initially constructed after March 1, 2009 shall not be located within thirty (30) feet of another access drive. The thirty (30) foot separation standard shall not apply to the reconstruction or resurfacing of an existing access drive.
- 9.035 Parking areas shall be designed so that vehicles cannot extend beyond the perimeter of such area onto adjacent properties or public rights-of-way. Such areas shall also be designed so that the vehicles do not extend over sidewalks or tend to bump against or damage any wall, vegetation, or other obstructions.

9.04 Drainage

- 9.041 No surface water shall be allowed to enter a public or private street or way.
- 9.042 Adequate measures shall be implemented to prevent pollution of surface water or groundwater, to minimize erosion and sedimentation, and to prevent changes in groundwater levels, increased run-off and potential for flooding. Drainage shall be designed so that off-site run-off shall not be increased,

groundwater recharge is maximized, and neighboring properties will not be adversely affected. Increased runoff from parking areas shall be recharged on-site by being diverted to vegetated surfaces for infiltration or through the use of detention ponds.

9.05 Landscaping

- 9.051 Except for single and two family structures, all parking areas shall be screened from abutting streets by a landscaped buffer which shall be a minimum of four (4) feet in height and five (5) feet in width which may include plantings, earthen berms or fences complimented with plantings.
- 9.052 At all street or driveway intersections, trees or shrubs shall be planted so that they do not present a pedestrian or vehicular visibility hazard.
- 9.053 All landscaped areas as required by this bylaw shall be properly maintained. Shrubs or trees which die shall be replaced within one growing season.
- 9.054 Parking areas shall be subdivided with landscaped islands so that no paved parking surface shall extend more than eighty (80) feet in width. The island shall be a minimum of five (5) feet in width. At least one shade tree and four shrubs per 20 parking spaces or fraction thereof shall be provided within the landscaped island. Trees shall be a minimum of 2" diameter breast high and shrubs shall be from 18 to 24 inches in diameter and two feet in height at the time of planting.
- 9.055 In cases where landscaped islands are not required, a minimum of two ornamental shade trees and four shrubs per 10 parking spaces or fraction thereof, must be provided and maintained along the border of the parking area. Trees shall be a minimum of 2" diameter breast high and shrubs shall be from 18 to 24 inches in diameter and two feet in height at the time of planting. In no case shall less than two trees and four shrubs be provided.

9.06 Space Requirements

- 9.061 For the uses herein set forth, motor vehicle parking accommodations shall be provided as in Table 9-1 as follows:
- 9.062 In the case of mixed uses and uses with two or more different functional areas, the total requirements for off-street parking spaces shall be the sum of the requirements for each of the various uses.
- 9.063 Where parking is determined by the number of seats and continuous seating such as pews or benches is provided, every twenty (20) inches of bench or pew shall represent one seat.

- 9.064 The Planning Board may approve a reduction in the number of improved parking spaces with the remainder being set-aside as future parking provided that the total number of improved and set-aside parking spaces meets or exceeds the minimum number of parking spaces required by this Section.

Table 9-1

Off-Street Parking Requirements

<u>USE</u>	<u>MOTOR VEHICLE PARKING ACCOMMODATIONS</u>
RESIDENTIAL USE	
Single and two family dwellings	Two spaces per dwelling unit
Multi-family uses: a. one room efficiency unit b. units with two or more rooms	One and one-half spaces per unit Two spaces per unit
Boarding or lodging house	One space per boarding/lodging unit
Home occupation	Two spaces plus one space per employee
Housing for the elderly (i.e. dwellings designed for and occupied exclusively by persons 60 years of age or older)	Two spaces per unit, except one space per unit for subsidized housing
HEALTH SERVICES	
Medical and dental offices and office buildings	One space per 200 square feet of gross floor area exclusive of basements and garages used solely for utility and storage purposes, or 5 for each practitioner, whichever is greater
Hospitals	One space per bed plus one space per employee of the largest shift
Convalescent and nursing homes	One space per 4 beds, plus one space per two employees on the largest shift
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL	
Retail establishment	One space per 200 square feet of gross floor area exclusive of basements and garages used solely for utility and storage purposes
Furniture Store	One space per 750 square feet of gross floor area exclusive of basements and garages used solely for utility and storage purposes.

Table 9-1
Off-Street Parking Requirements
(Continued)

<u>USE</u>	<u>MOTOR VEHICLE PARKING ACCOMMODATIONS</u>
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL (Continued)	
Major Appliance Store	One space per 700 square feet of gross floor area exclusive of basements and garages used solely for utility and storage purposes
Convenience stores; video stores	One space per 150 square feet of gross floor area exclusive of basements and garages used solely for utility and storage purposes; a minimum of 4 spaces is required
Professional, business and insurance offices	One space per 300 square feet of gross floor area exclusive of basements and garages used solely for utility and storage purposes
Bed and breakfast use	Two spaces plus one per rooming unit
Banks	One per 200 square feet of gross floor area plus 6 stacking spaces for each drive-up window
Motels and hotels	One and one-quarter spaces per unit
Health club	One space per 150 square feet of gross floor area exclusive of basements and garages used solely for utility and storage purposes
Child Care facility	Two spaces plus one space per employee
Barber shops and beauty parlors	Two spaces per chair or station
Gasoline/service stations automobile repair	Four spaces per service bay, but not less than one space per 100 square feet of gross floor area
Automotive sales	One space per 600 square feet of gross floor area
Car wash	One space for each wash stall, plus 2 additional. The wash stall shall not be construed as a required parking space. Additional requirement for self-service care wash: 3 stacking spaces per wash stall
Restaurants	One space per two and one-half seats, one space addition to each two employees on largest shift
Fast food restaurant; take-out restaurant	One space per one and three-quarter seats; minimum of five spaces is required
Bars, taverns or nightclubs	One space per 100 square feet of gross floor area

Table 9-1

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West Springfield Zoning Ordinance – August 2009

Off-Street Parking Requirements
(Continued)

<u>USE</u>	<u>MOTOR VEHICLE PARKING ACCOMMODATIONS</u>
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL (Continued)	
Membership clubs; lodges	One space per 50 square feet of assembly area
Drive-through business:	
In addition to the parking spaces required by this section, all drive-through business operations wherein patrons customarily stop or wait in line in motor vehicles for service shall have on premises space to accommodate any waiting line so that such vehicles do not wait on streets and sidewalks. A minimum of six stacking spaces shall be provided.	
Industrial, manufacturing, warehouse and wholesale uses	One space per two employees of the two largest shifts combined and customarily employed on the premises.
Supermarket	Six spaces for each 1,000 square feet of gross floor area
Discount club, warehouse club, warehouse supermarket	Five spaces for each 1,000 square feet of gross floor area
Contractor yards	One space per employee on the largest shift plus one space per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area
Personal and consumer establishments, including but not limited to: laundry or dry cleaning; tailor; cobbler; photographer; repair shop for household appliances or business equipment; photocopy shop	One space per 300 square feet of gross floor area
RECREATIONAL	
Billiard hall	Two spaces per table
Bowling alley	Four spaces per alley
Golf course	Four spaces per hole
Golf driving range	One and one-quarter spaces per tee
Miniature golf	One and one-half spaces per hole
Shooting range	One space per target area
Tennis, handball or racquetball facilities	Three spaces per court

Table 9-1

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West Springfield Zoning Ordinance – August 2009

**Off-Street Parking Requirements
(Continued)**

<u>USE</u>	<u>MOTOR VEHICLE PARKING ACCOMMODATIONS</u>
RECREATIONAL (Continued)	
Indoor place of assembly with fixed seating capacity including theaters, auditoriums, churches and arenas	One space per four seats
Indoor place of assembly without fixed seats, including libraries, art galleries, recreation and community centers or other places of amusement	One space per 250 square feet of floor area
EDUCATIONAL	
Elementary and middle school	One space per employee plus one space per classroom
High School	One space per employee plus one space per 10 students
Trade school	One space per employee plus one space per two students
OTHER	
Any use permitted by this by-law not interpreted to be covered by this table	Closest similar use as shall be determined by the Planning Board

9.07 Accessible Parking Spaces

- 9.071 In accordance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Table 9-2 establishes the minimum number of accessible parking spaces in addition to the spaces required by Table 9-1 of this Section.
- 9.072 Accessible spaces are required to be located with and adjacent to access aisles of five (5) feet in width.
- 9.073 One in every eight accessible spaces shall have an access aisle eight (8) feet in width (rather than 5 feet) and shall be designated "van accessible".
- 9.074 All accessible spaces shall comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility guidelines.

Table 9-2

Accessible Parking Spaces

<u>Total Parking Spaces in Lot</u>	<u>Accessible Spaces (Required Minimum)</u>
1 to 25	1
26 to 50	2
51 to 75	3
76 to 100	4
101 to 150	5
151 to 200	6
201 to 300	7
301 to 400	8
401 to 500	9
501 to 1000	2 Percent of total 20 plus one space for each
1001 and over	100 over 1000

9.08 Off-Street Loading Facilities

- 9.081 Adequate off-street loading/unloading space with proper access from a street shall be provided whenever the normal operation of any development requires that foods, merchandise or equipment be routinely delivered to or shipped from that development.
- 9.082 The loading/unloading area must be of sufficient size to accommodate the numbers and types of vehicles that are likely to use this area, given the nature of the development proposed. Off-street loading/unloading areas shall be provided for each use as set forth below:
- a. Retail, restaurant: One space for the first ten thousand (10,000) square feet of floor area, plus one space for each additional fifteen thousand (15,000) square feet.
 - b. Office: One space for the first ten thousand (10,000) square feet of floor area, plus one space for each additional forty thousand (40,000) square feet.
 - c. Hotel, motel, recreational facility: One space for the first ten thousand (10,000) square feet of floor area plus one space for each additional one hundred thousand (100,000) square feet.
 - d. Service and repair enterprises: One space for the first ten thousand (10,000) square feet of floor area, plus one space for each additional thirty thousand (30,000) square feet.
 - e. Warehousing, wholesale, manufacturing, and motor vehicle sales, rental and service establishments: One space for the first five thousand (5,000)

square feet of floor area, plus one space for each additional thirty thousand (30,000) square feet.

- 8.083 All off-street loading/unloading areas shall be designed and constructed to accommodate the largest vehicles likely to service the use of the property, but in no case shall loading/unloading spaces be less than twelve (12) feet in width and twenty-five (25) feet in length and have a minimum of fourteen feet of overhead clearance from roadway grade.
- 9.084 Loading/unloading areas shall be so located and designed that the vehicles intended to use them can maneuver safely and conveniently to and from a public right-of-way and complete the loading/unloading operations without obstructing or interfering with any public or private right-of-way or impede the circulation of vehicles in any off-street parking or driving area.
- 9.085 No area allocated for loading/unloading facilities may be used to satisfy the area requirements for off-street parking, nor shall any portion of any off-street parking area be used to satisfy the area requirements for loading/unloading facilities.

9.09 Additional Required Parking in the Central Business (CB) District, Industrial Park-Light (IP-L) District, Industrial Park (IP) District, and Special Use (SU-T, SU-O, SU-M and SU-H) Districts

With the exceptions noted below, parking shall be provided in accordance with the requirements of this Section of this Bylaw.

9.091 Parking in the Central Business District:

- a. "Off Site Parking": parking required by this Section need not be provided on the same site as the proposed development but may be located on any parcel of suitable size located within the Central Business District provided such site is landscaped in accordance with the provisions of Section 9.72.
- b. No additional off-street parking or loading is required for the following:
- (1) Town buildings and town properties.
- (2) Continued use or reuse of a building in existence prior to January 1, 1997 as long as that use or reuse does not increase the total floor area within the building.

- 9.092 "Combined Parking"/"Reduction of Required Parking": In order to encourage cooperative development of parking areas and, in general, promote more efficient use of land within these districts, the Board of Appeals may grant a Special Permit to allow one or more petitioners to share common

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1. Aung San Suu Kyi: Photo from “Aung San Suu Kyi: Freedom Fighter” by Wang Dan; The 2011 Time 100; http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,2066367_2066369_2066127,00.html
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3. Burmese generals of the SLORC: Photo from “Why is Burma’s junta afraid of Suu Kyi?” by Jonathan Head; BBC News; <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8050262.stm>

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1. Rice fields in Kengtung: Photo entitled “Big Stairs” by Pascal Boegli, 2006; <http://travel.pboog.com/photo-2-600-8-2.html>
2. Intha fisherman on Inle Lake: Photo entitled “Peaceful fisherman, Inle Lake” by Pascal Boegli, 2006; <http://travel.pboog.com/photo-2-552-8-2.html>
3. Burma Map: Map entitled “Burma Topo” from Wikipedia.org; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Burma_topo_en.jpg

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1. Bagan mother and daughters: Photo entitled “Mother & daughters” by Pascal Boegli, 2006; <http://travel.pboog.com/photo-2-518-8-2.html>
2. Akha woman and child: Photo entitled “Akha generation” by Pascal Boegli, 2006; <http://travel.pboog.com/photo-2-588-8-2.html>
3. Woman of the Loi tribe: Photo entitled “The signs of time” by Pascal Boegli, 2006; <http://travel.pboog.com/photo-2-700-8-2.html>

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1. Pa-O women: Photo entitled “The quest” by Pascal Boegli, 2005; <http://travel.pboog.com/photo-2-384-8-1.html>
2. Woman from the Palaung tribe weaving: Photo entitled “Craft” by Pascal Boegli; <http://travel.pboog.com/photo-2-630-8-2.html>

3. Woman making pottery: Photo entitled “ The potter” by Pascal Boegli, 2006; <http://travel.pboog.com/photo-2-564-8-2.html>

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1. Novice monks: Photo entitled “Novices” by Pascal Boegli, 2006; <http://travel.pboog.com/photo-2-580-8-2.html>

2. Praying to a Buddha at Mahamuni Pagoda in Mandalay: Photo entitled “Adoration” by Pascal Boegli, 2005; <http://travel.pboog.com/photo-2-412-8-1.html>

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1. Typical Mon house: Image from “Traditional Houses as a Complement in Built Environment” by Yin Min Paik

2. Typical construction method: Diagram by Kelly Clarke, 2011

3. Mon house plan: Information and original diagram from “Traditional Houses as a Complement in Built Environment” by Yin Min Paik; Adapted by Kelly Clarke, 2011

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1. Shwezigon Pagoda, Bagan: Photo entitled “Meditation at Shwezigon Pagoda” by Pascal Boegli, 2006; <http://travel.pboog.com/photo-2-506-8-2.html>

2. Stupas on the plain of Bagan: Photo entitled “Unlimited temples, Panorama on the plain of Bagan” by Pascal Boegli, 2006; <http://travel.pboog.com/photo-2-504-8-2.html>

3. Monastery on Inle Lake: Photo entitled “Monastery on the Lake” by Pascal Boegli, 2006; <http://travel.pboog.com/photo-2-578-8-2.html>

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1. Intha house on Inle Lake: Photo entitled “Inle Lake, Intha house” by Pascal Boegli, 2005; <http://travel.pboog.com/photo-2-392-8-1.html>

2. Palaung house: Photo from “Palaung Highlands III” on World Is Round website, 2003; <http://www.worldisround.com/articles/18696/photo24.html>

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1. A Karen refugee watches Thai soldiers at a refugee camp: Photo from PRX.org; <http://www.prx.org/pieces/12807#description>
2. Refugees at the Huay Nam Khao refugee camp in Thailand: Photo from “Thailand Begins Repatriation of Hmong to Laos” by Seth Mydans on the New York Times website, 2009; <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/28/world/asia/28hmong.html?scp=1&sq=thailand+repatriation+hmong+refugee&st=nyt>

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1. Satellite images of Massachusetts: Google Earth
2. PTVA Bus Map: Pioneer Valley Transportation Authority website; <http://www.pvta.com/systemMap.php>

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1. Statistics: US Census Bureau Website; <http://www.census.gov/>
2. Sun Path Diagram
3. Temperature and Rain Data: <http://www.idcide.com/weather/ma/springfield.htm>
4. Wind Rose

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