

ARBUTUS INFILL:  
HOUSING ON THE EDGE

by

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## ABSTRACT

The theme of this exploration is the issue of *habitability*. In its most basic sense, dwelling seems to be defined by constructions which carry social values of privacy. At the same time, the many moves of *privacying* are understood to be relative to public worlds--to the point that ambiguities persist: the fact that private perceptions can be exchanged for public ones in the very same spaces.

Uncovering these relative and, at times, opposite realities means that a great deal of importance is paid to thresholds. By this, I mean the turns in plan, the drops in section, etc. which relate a *sequence* of unfolding via devices which stimulate subtleties in mood and awareness.

Issues of public to private (and its opposite, simultaneous inversion) are investigated using the concept of *nested scales*. Here, analogous moods shared by movements through scale (eg. street to courtyard; hall to room) are investigated for their synergy.

Parallel to these social perceptions are investigations which focus on the elemental specifics of dwellings. What value can hearths be to dwelling? What is a modern control centre for the household? What are the requirements for the bathing ritual? These types of questions permeate the general evaluation of dwelling design. Studies which detail abstracted, idealised elements help to inform the larger project--like a kit of parts, they serve as cornerstones which seed and temper the sequential experience of the dwelling. Ultimately, this abstraction absolves the need to make "rooms" but rather to compose dwellings via the integration of elements filtered through public/private dialogues, sequence, and continuity.

The site is bounded by 15th and 16th avenues to the North and South and by Arbutus St. and the CPR right of way to the west and east, respectively. Its dimensions are 270 feet in length and 16 feet and its narrowest, 44 feet and its widest. The site acts as catalyst for the whole project of fitting in thresholds and elements. Like a sandwich, the site compresses thin, discrete, and identifiable component parts into a whole building. The very narrowness of the site forces a dialogue to surface between the tremendous, double-sided exposure of the building--its public condition, and the construction of nesting scales of prospect and refuge.

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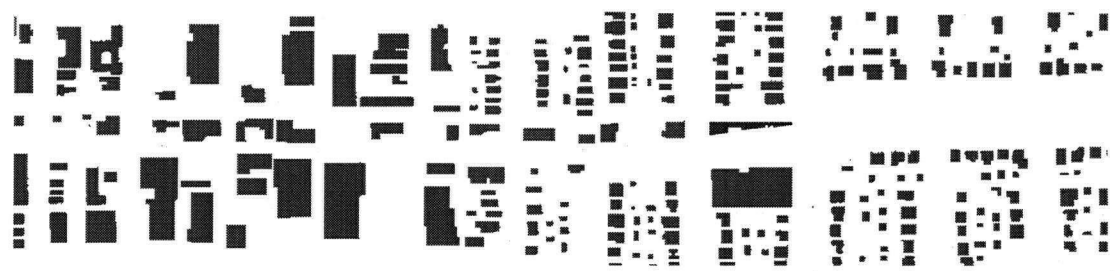
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North-west corner



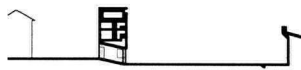
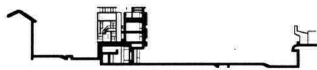
South-west corner



site figure ground

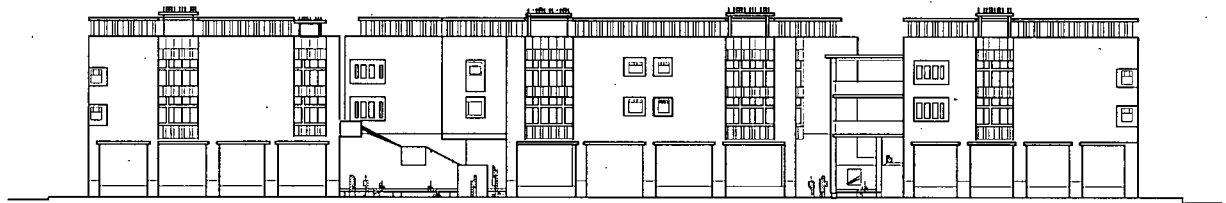


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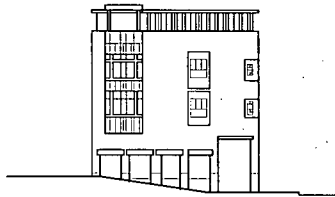


site sections

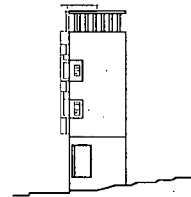
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west elevation



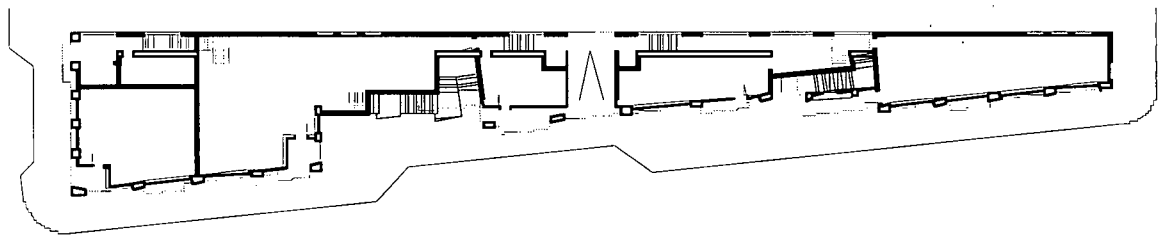
north elevation



south elevation

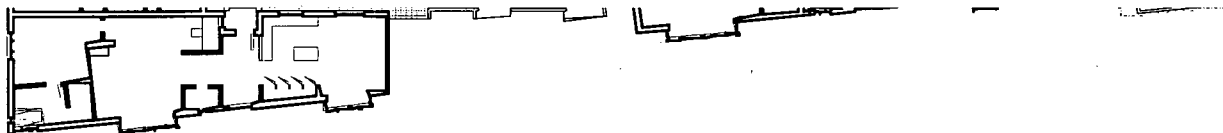


east elevation

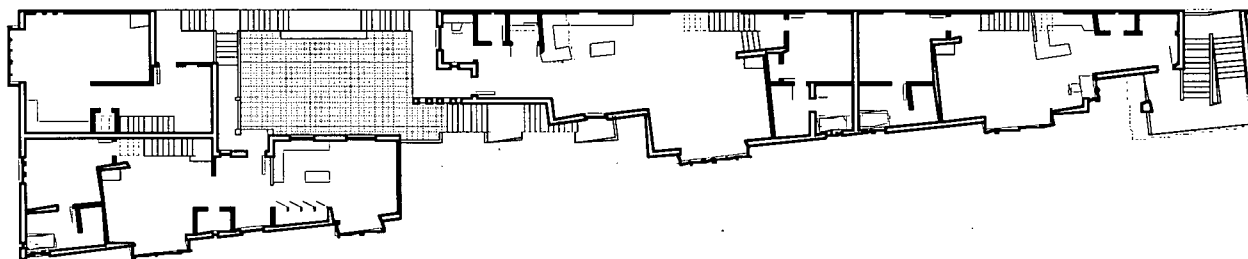


ground floor

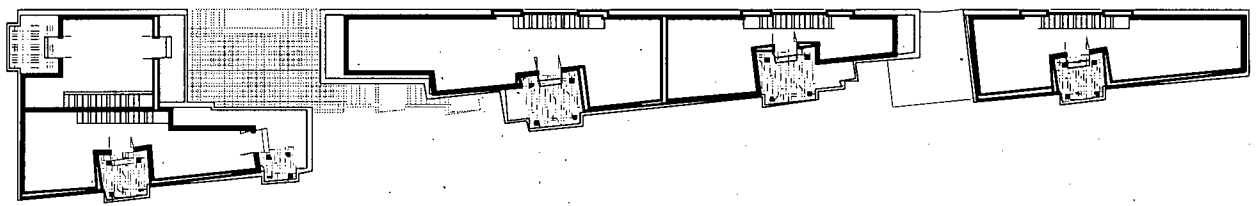




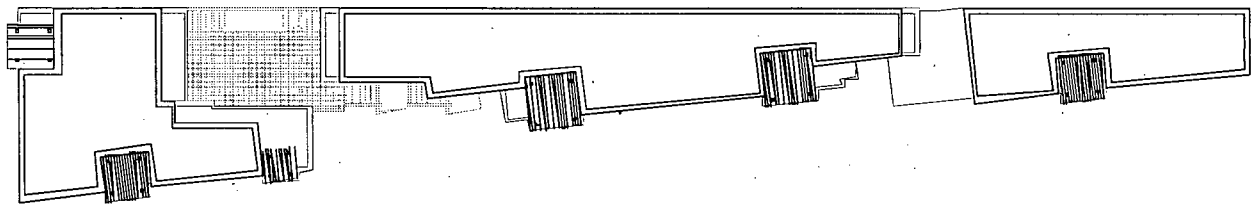
second floor



third floor



fourth floor



roof