



# Infilling the Aging

a holistic approach to urban care environments

Peter Kuelbs

What stimulated my interest in this project was the fact that my 96 year old grandfather had spent his final years at an assisted living facility in Redwood Falls, Minnesota. When I visit, I find myself contemplating all the missed potential in the building—a building where he is spending the years that only a lucky minority are ever fortunate enough to see.

Grandpa Isidore and what he stood for has always been a source of inspiration for me. Though his chance at a college education slipped through his fingers during the height of the Great Depression, his enthusiasm for higher education never wavered. He is a large part of the reason I'm writing this thesis document today.

Growing up in an area of the United States that is staunchly socially conservative, Isidore was always a beacon of light when it came to issues of social justice. Having lived through the Great Depression as a young adult, he strongly believes in uplifting those who are marginalized in society. As a result, we were always taught that a real test of society and the individual is how we care for the most vulnerable among us. This project is for him.



# PROBLEM STATEMENT

Could altering how the built environment responds to the need for care-based living foster new relationships among family, community, and a growing elderly population?



# PREMISE #1

In twenty-first century America, long-term care facilities are needed to improve the quality of life for our aging population.



# PREMISE #2

Families are often burdened by the decision to place a loved one in long term care. The family, community, and resident are all potential beneficiaries of an improved system for long-term care.



# PREMISE #3

To improve quality of life is different than improving living conditions. Quality of life is also linked to a basic need to belong to a family and a community, improvements in health-care delivery, and maintaining autonomy. These combined elements work in concert to create the feeling you and I would describe as “home”.



# PREMISE #4

Connecting places and people create a more complex fabric of opportunities that promote new roles for those in need of long-term care.



# JUSTIFICATION

As the need for long-term care continues to increase and evolve, there must be a method for improving the quality of life for not only the resident, but also the family and community that are impacted by such facilities. By fulfilling this need, new roles can be created and old roles re-discovered among those who need long term care, their families, and communities.





# TYOLOGY

An urban, mixed-use, long term care facility



# RESEARCH

70% of Americans over 65 will need long-term care at some point in their lives.

Those individuals will need an average of 3 years of care.

(U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)



# RESEARCH

Overall, the current system of care-based living needs a more dignified approach.

Many facilities address the need to improve the quality of living conditions, but don't holistically address the need to improve quality of life.

Moving into a care-based facility often causes an abrupt change in lifestyle, living conditions, and social circles - these reasons alone are enough to cause people to delay the decision - negatively affecting quality of life.



# RESEARCH

Integrating care-based living back into urban environments has three main advantages.

For the Individual  
For the Family  
For the Community



# Choice = Autonomy = Home

- Creating a place that is 'homelike' does not necessarily make it 'like home'
- despite making changes to the style of the building, many residents are unable to perceive the space as home.
  - When an elderly individual leaves independent living, they give up a level of choice in their daily lives.





SITE



# WHY THE BELLTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD?

Belltown is a walkable residential neighborhood within half a mile of Seattle's financial, cultural, and retail core.

Less than half a mile from Pike's Market and only 2 blocks from Seattle's Waterfront



# WHY THE BELLTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD?

- Home to nearly 12,000 people
- Highest neighborhood population densities in Seattle
- Very skewed demographics
  - 85 % of the population is between the ages of 18 and 65 (VS 72%)
  - 2 % is younger than 18 (VS 16%)
  - 13 % is older than 65 (VS 12%)
- Roughly 300 Belltown Residents will turn 65 every year for the next 30 years.



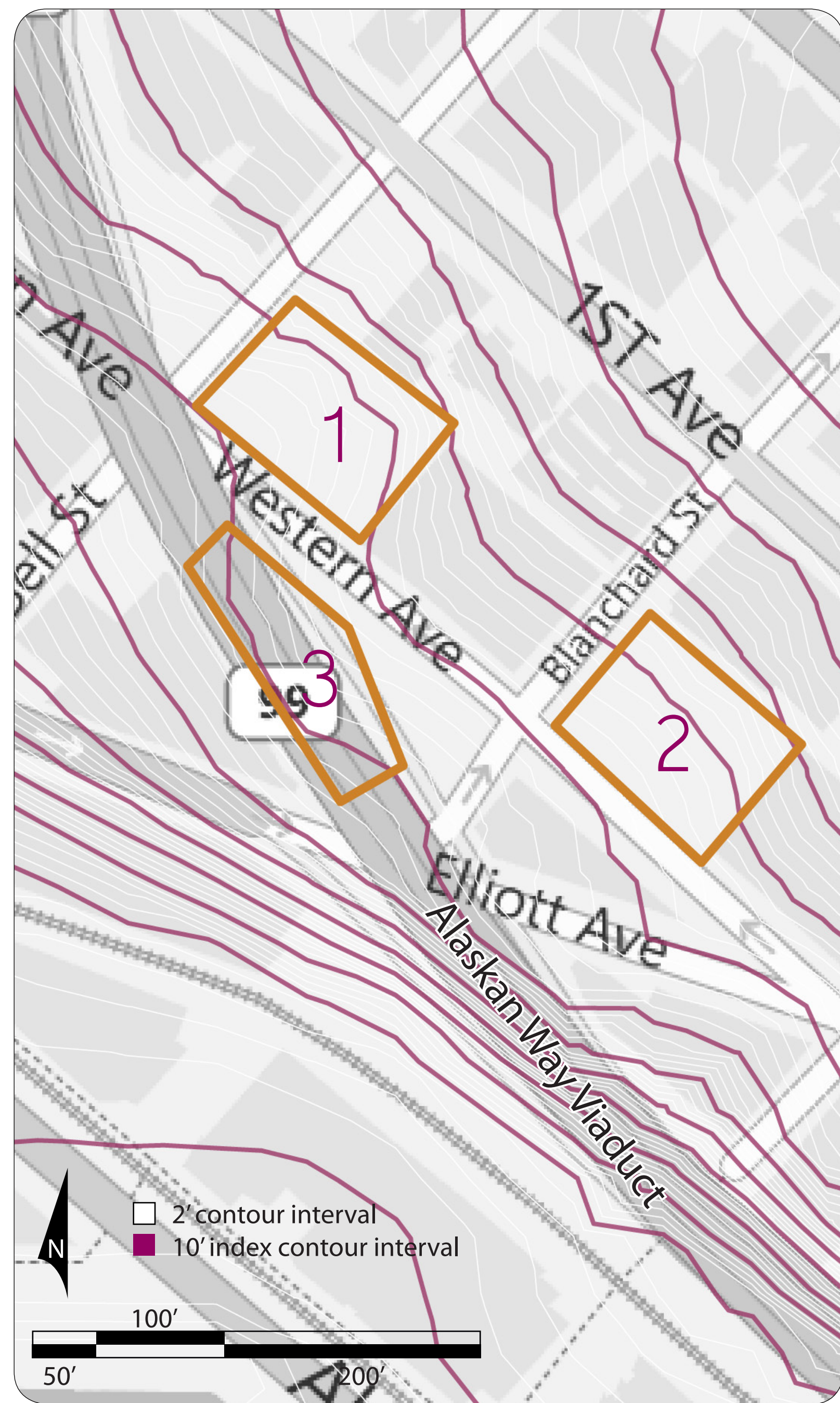
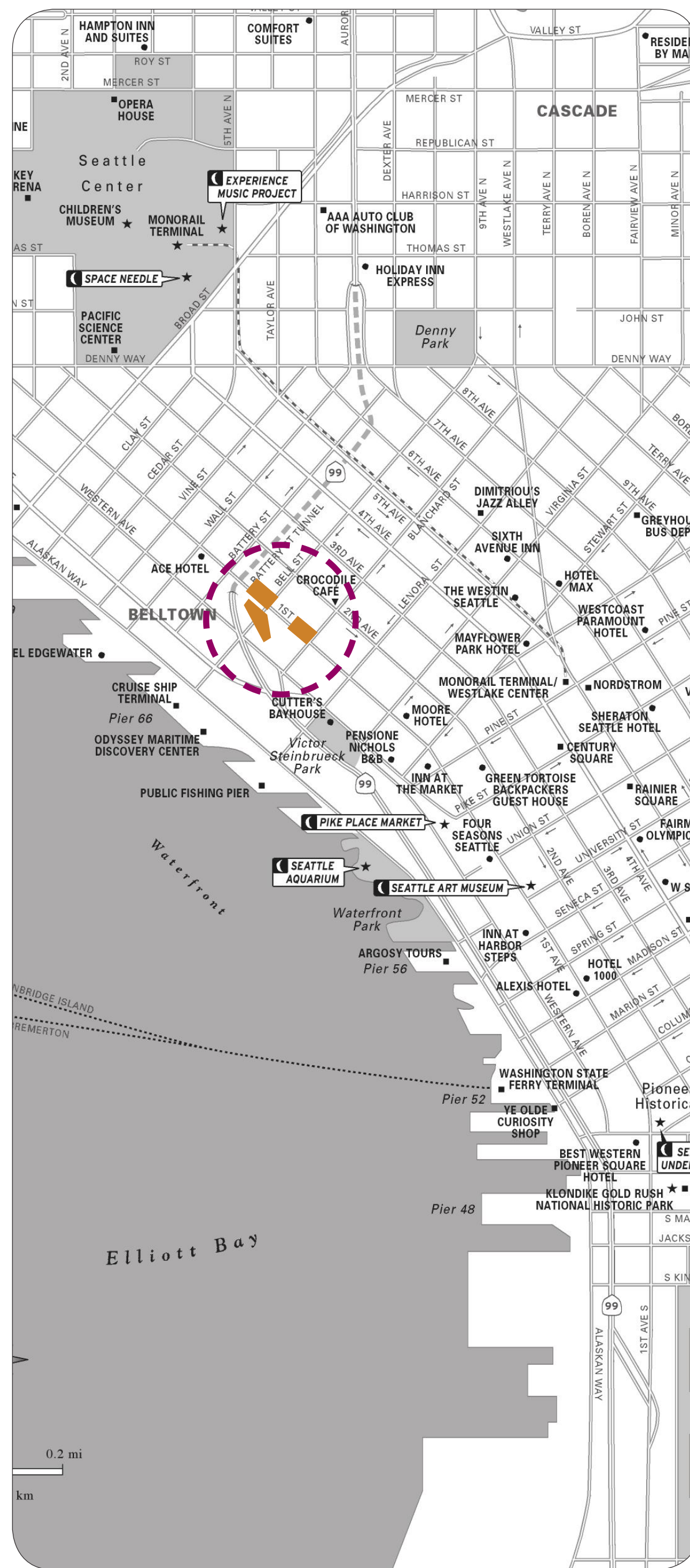




Regional Site:  
Pacific Northwest



Seattle, WA





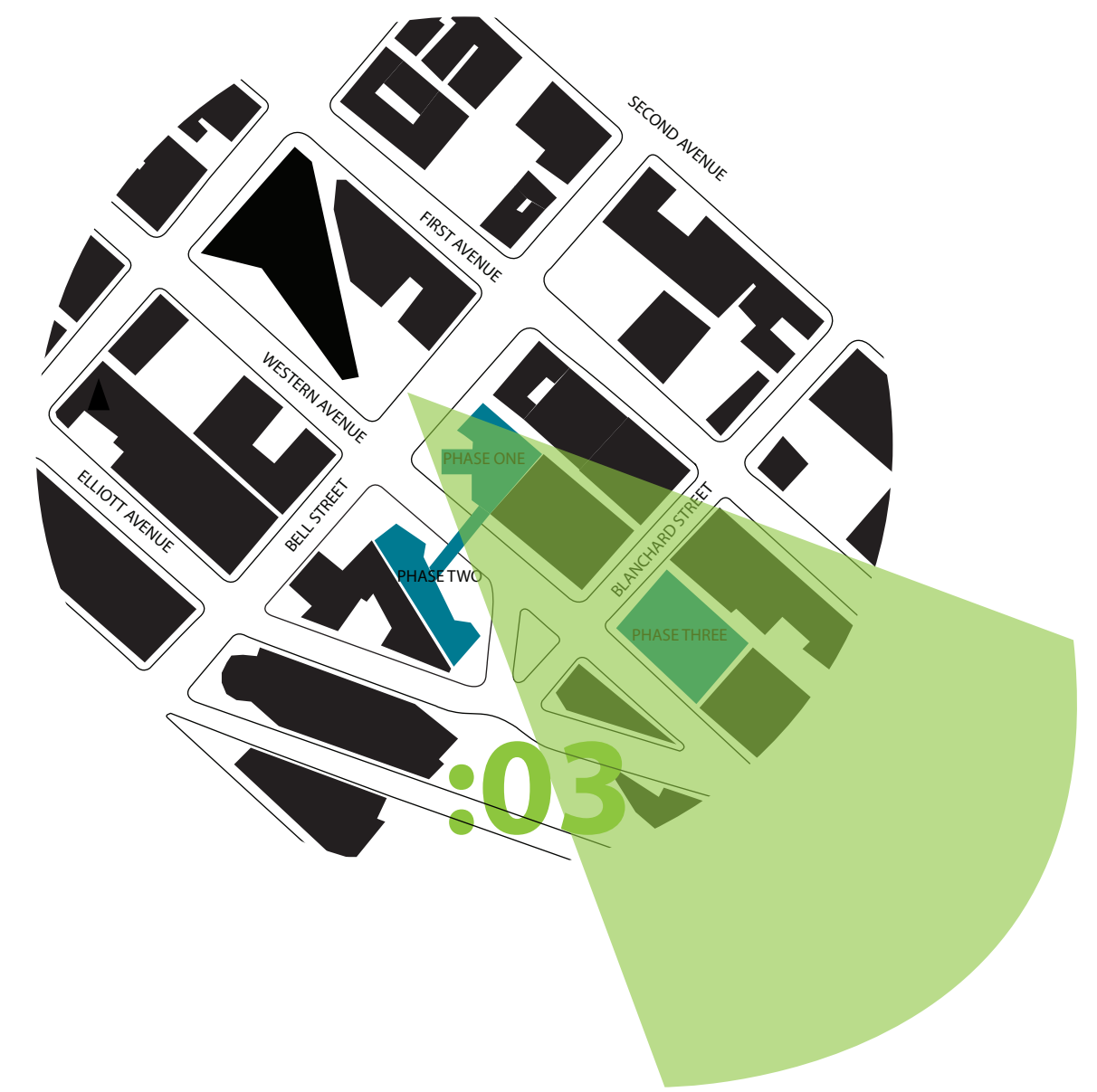
Aging in Belltown makes sense. An abundance of amenities and residences within walking distance make this neighborhood easily accessible, even as driving becomes a challenge.

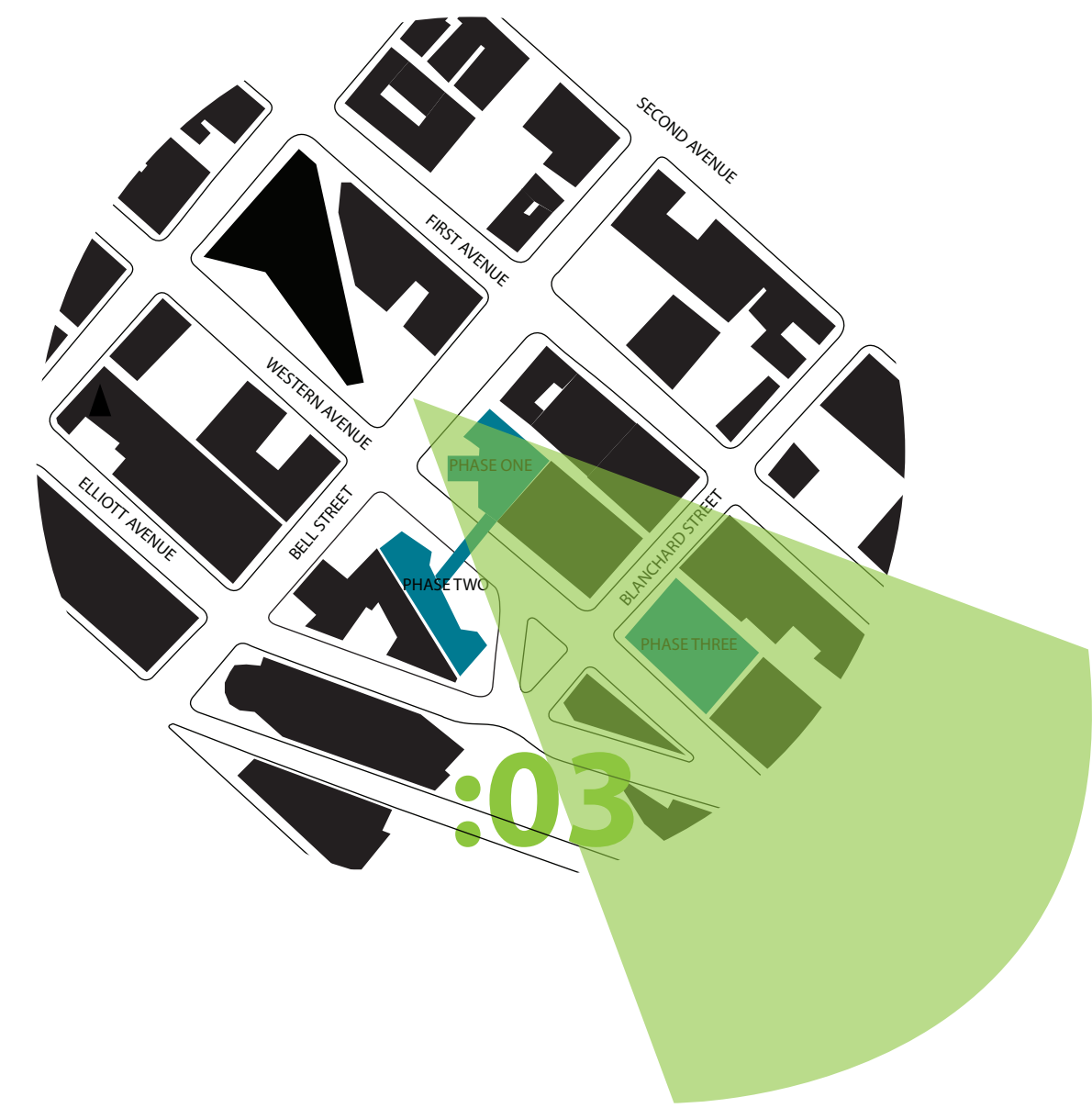
Since normality of daily life is not tied to a vehicle, residents of Belltown can avoid the sharp decline in freedom caused by the loss of a driver's license.



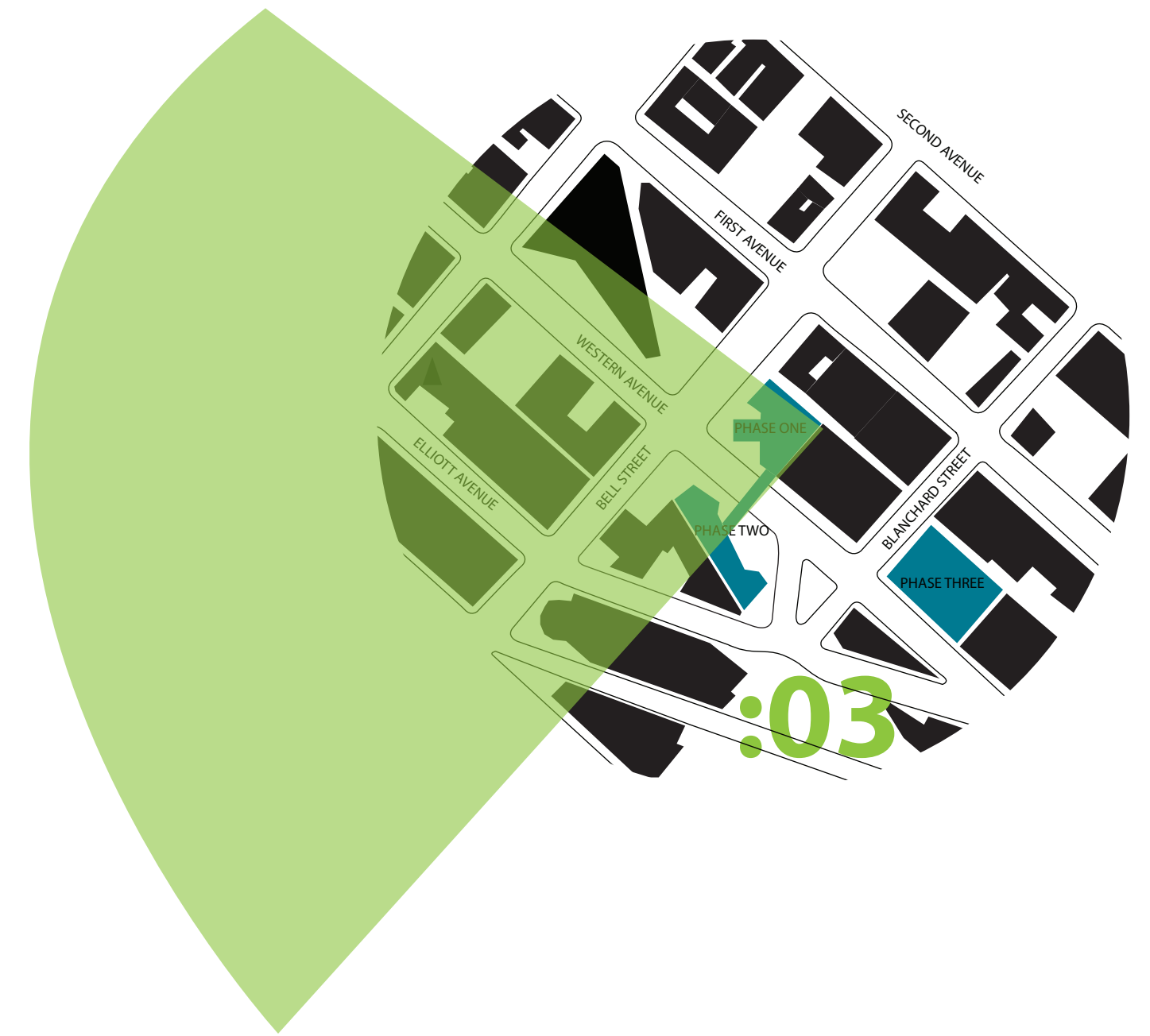
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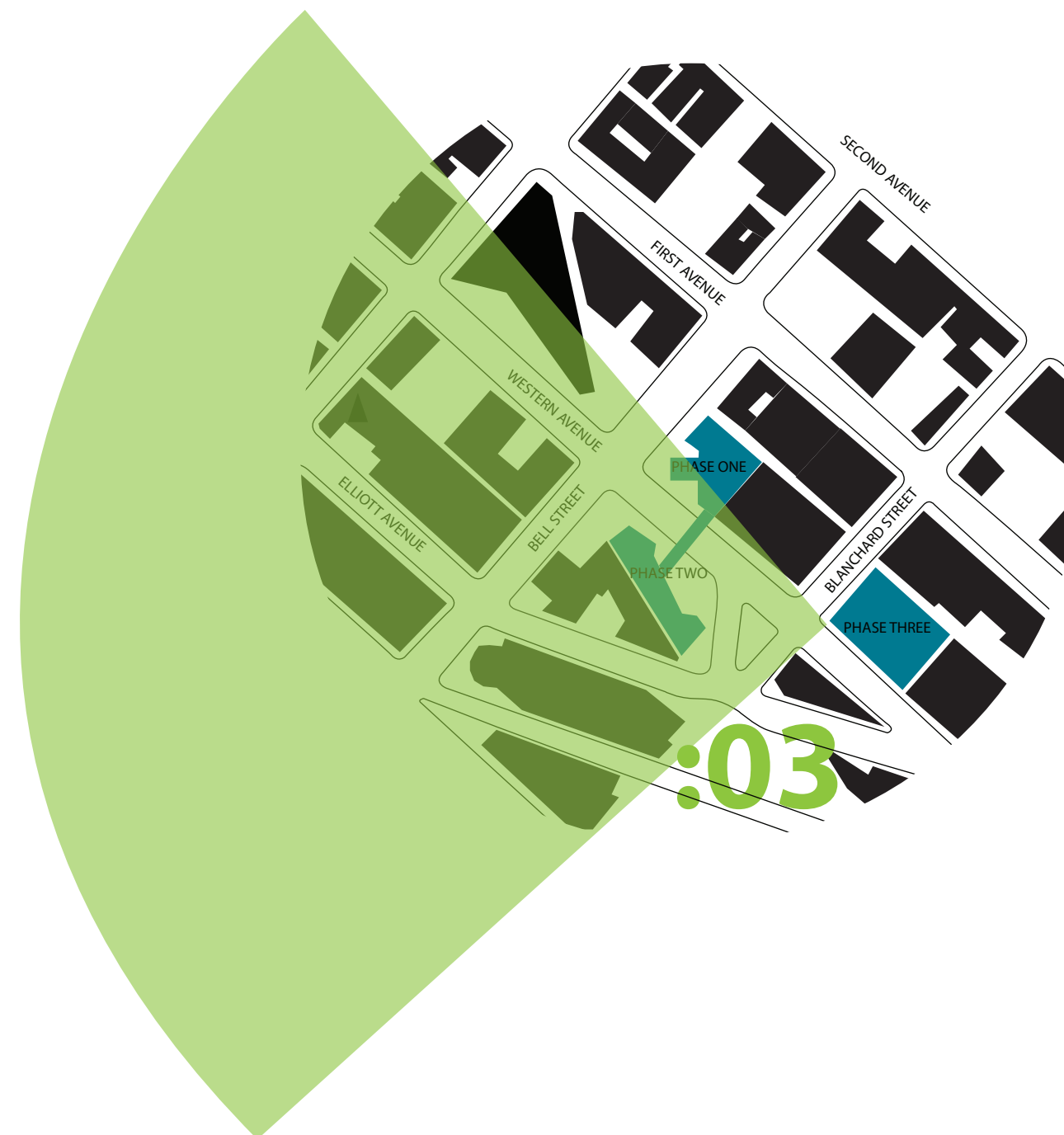








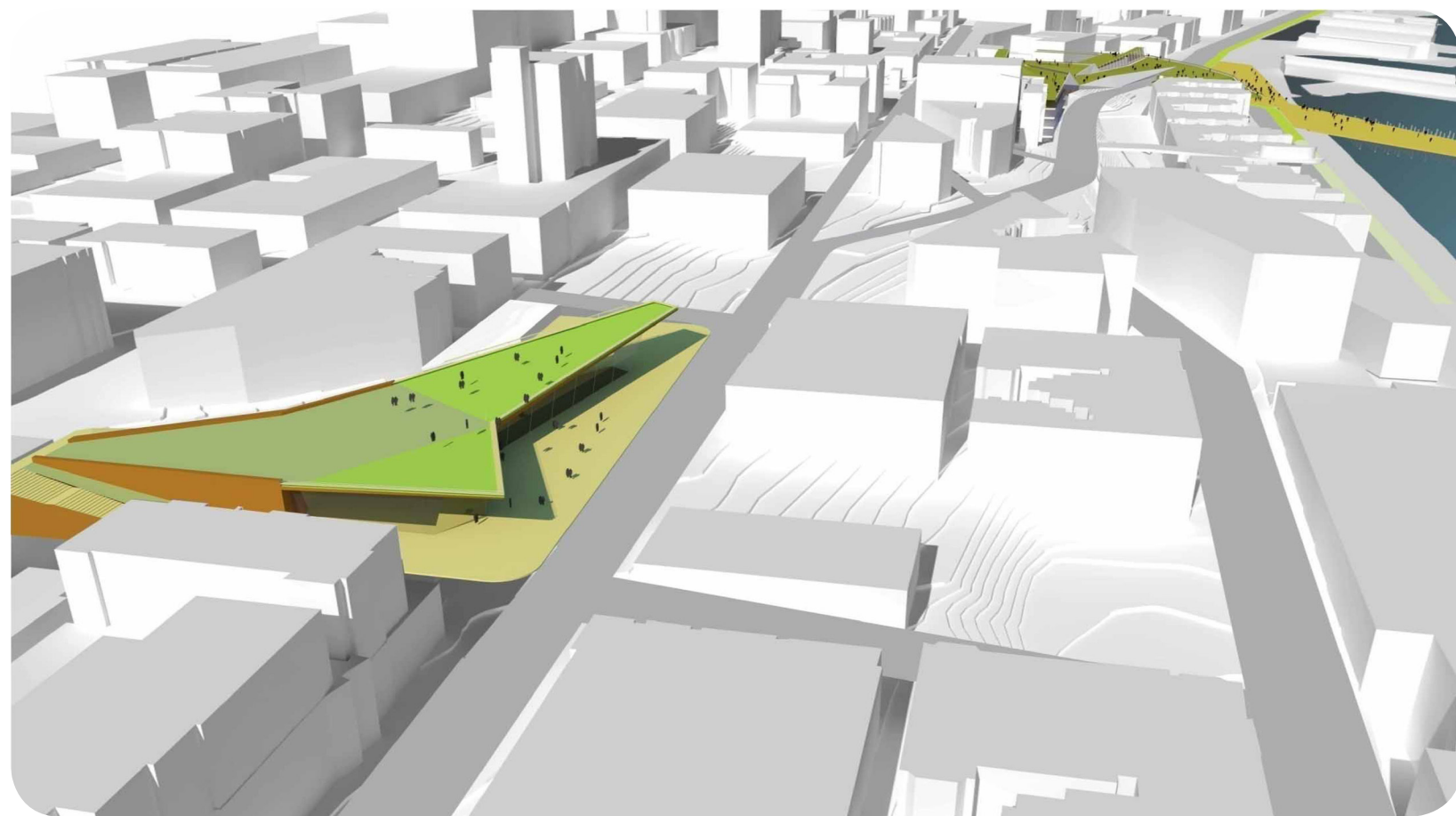






site + human characteristics,  
distress, and future intervention

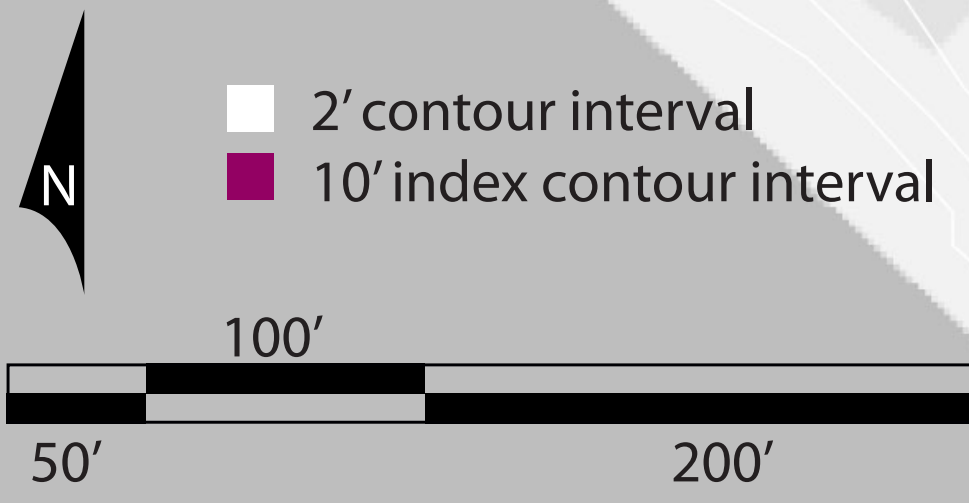
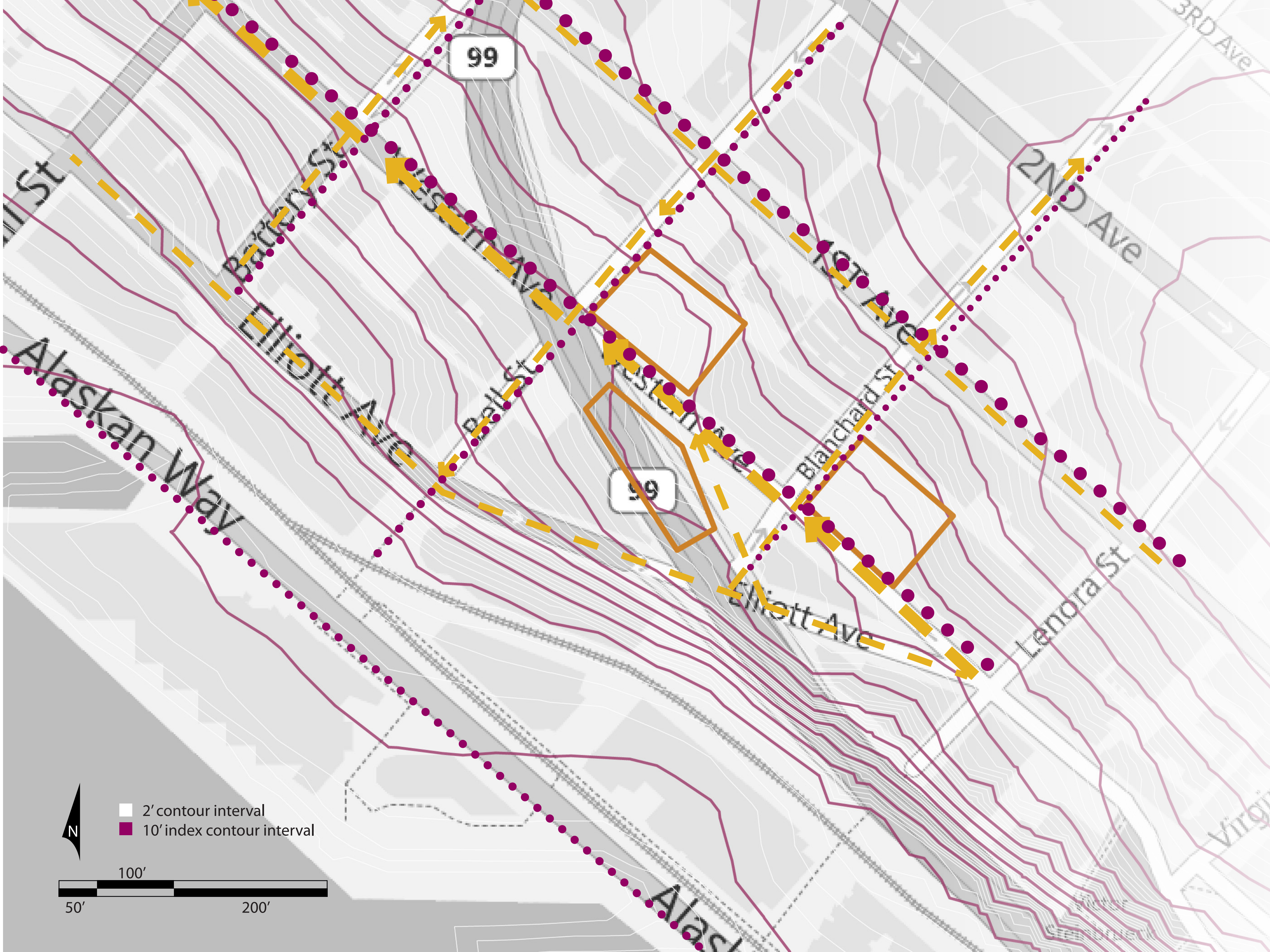
Since the construction of the viaduct in the 1960s, values of older building stock has decreased. Sidewalks have been neglected and under designed. The sidewalks have few people walking down them and a lack of public space deters people from stopping on their way through the neighborhood. However, after the demolition, many streets around the demolition site will have to be re-worked including the grading and paving of a new Elliot-Western connector. (The road that navigates the bluff and connects Western and Elliot Avenue to the Alaskan Way) Additionally, the overgrown parcel where the Alaskan Way viaduct enters the Battery Street tunnel will be redesigned. The tunnel will be capped off and a new public park will occupy the current site. This will dramatically increase the number of people on street-level around the sites. By 2018, the area around the sites will be completely transformed.











## BEST PLACES TO RETIRE 2007

### Best neighborhoods to retire

If life after work means more than a beach chair, the best place to retire might be the big city. We looked at 30 of the nation's largest metro areas and found the right neighborhoods for you.

By Carolyn Bigda, Erin Chambers, Lawrence Lanahan, Joe Light, Sarah Max and Jennifer Merritt

Money

BACK NEXT 29 of 35

#### Seattle

##### Best place to retire: Belltown

**Pros:** A walkable neighborhood with everything you need.

**Cons:** About 20 minutes to hospitals and not many elevator condos.

**Real estate:** The average median price of a condo rose to \$360,000 by 2005. Nice one-bedroom apartments can rent for up to \$1,500.

If you picture vendors tossing fish back and forth at Pike Place Market when you think of Seattle, you're also picturing Belltown.

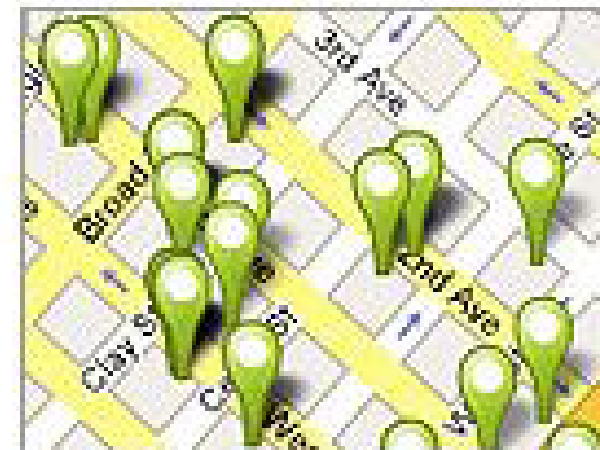
This waterfront neighborhood just above the central business district also houses another historic institution, the century-old Moore Theater, a concert hall featuring eclectic dance, pop, and classical programming - think John Zorn, Mark Morris, and The Kingston Trio.

Over the last few decades, many trendy restaurants and boutiques moved in, and new residents followed.

For a downtown waterfront neighborhood, Belltown is surprisingly affordable, but prices are even more reasonable inland. For a gorgeous "small town in the big city," look northwest of downtown to Magnolia, which sits on a peninsula in the Puget Sound. You could spend a ton for water views, but most apartments are in the low \$200,000s.



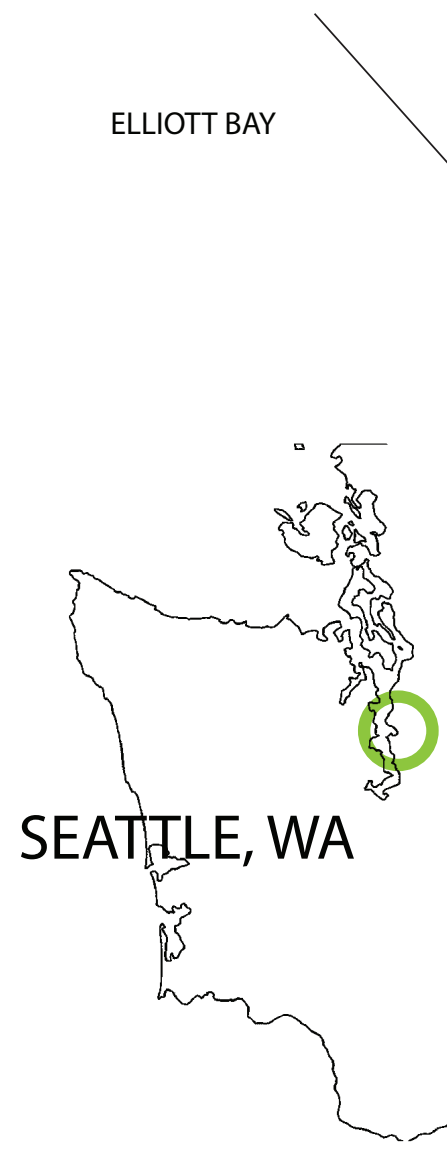
PHOTO: TIM THOMPSON



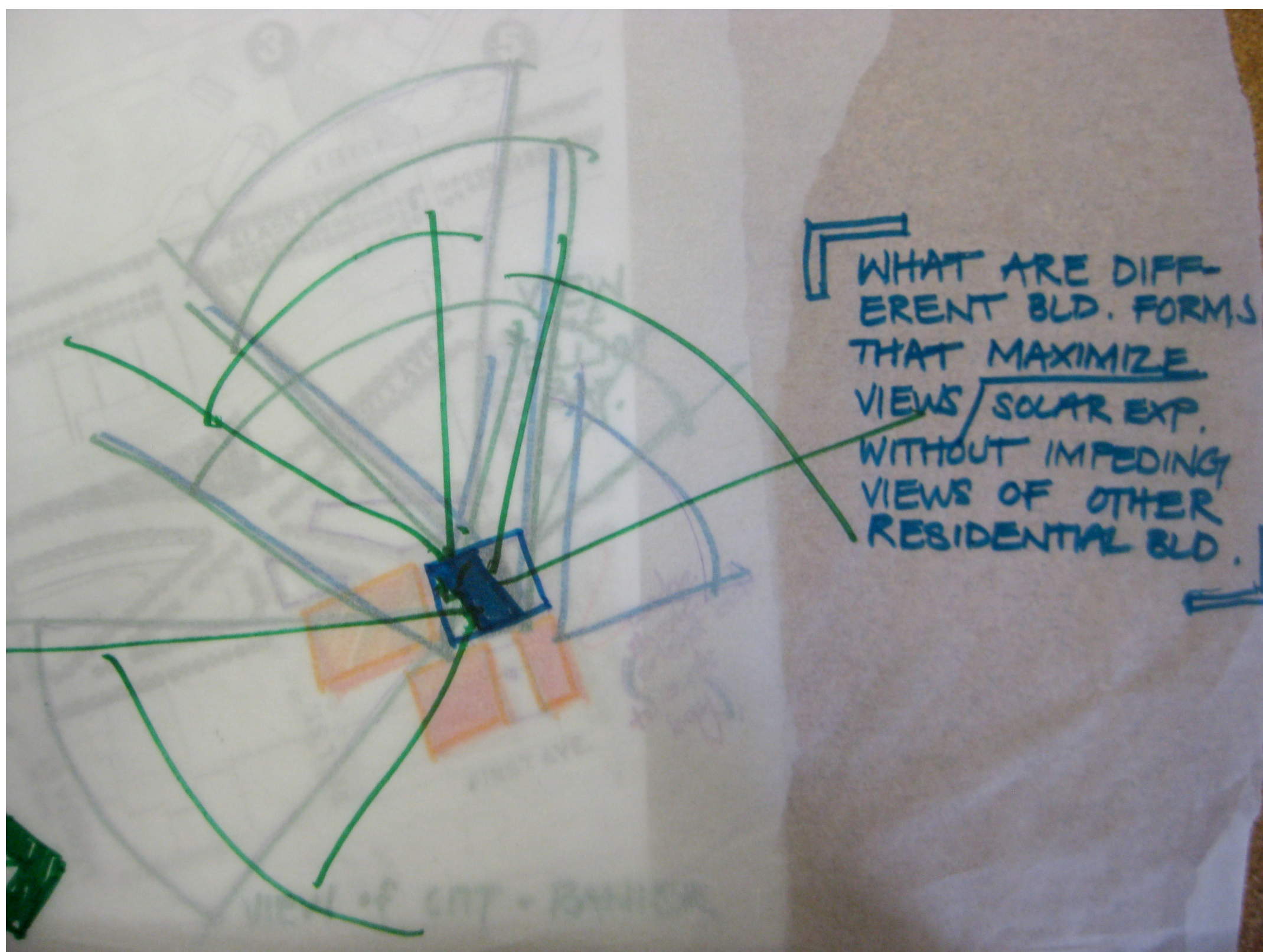
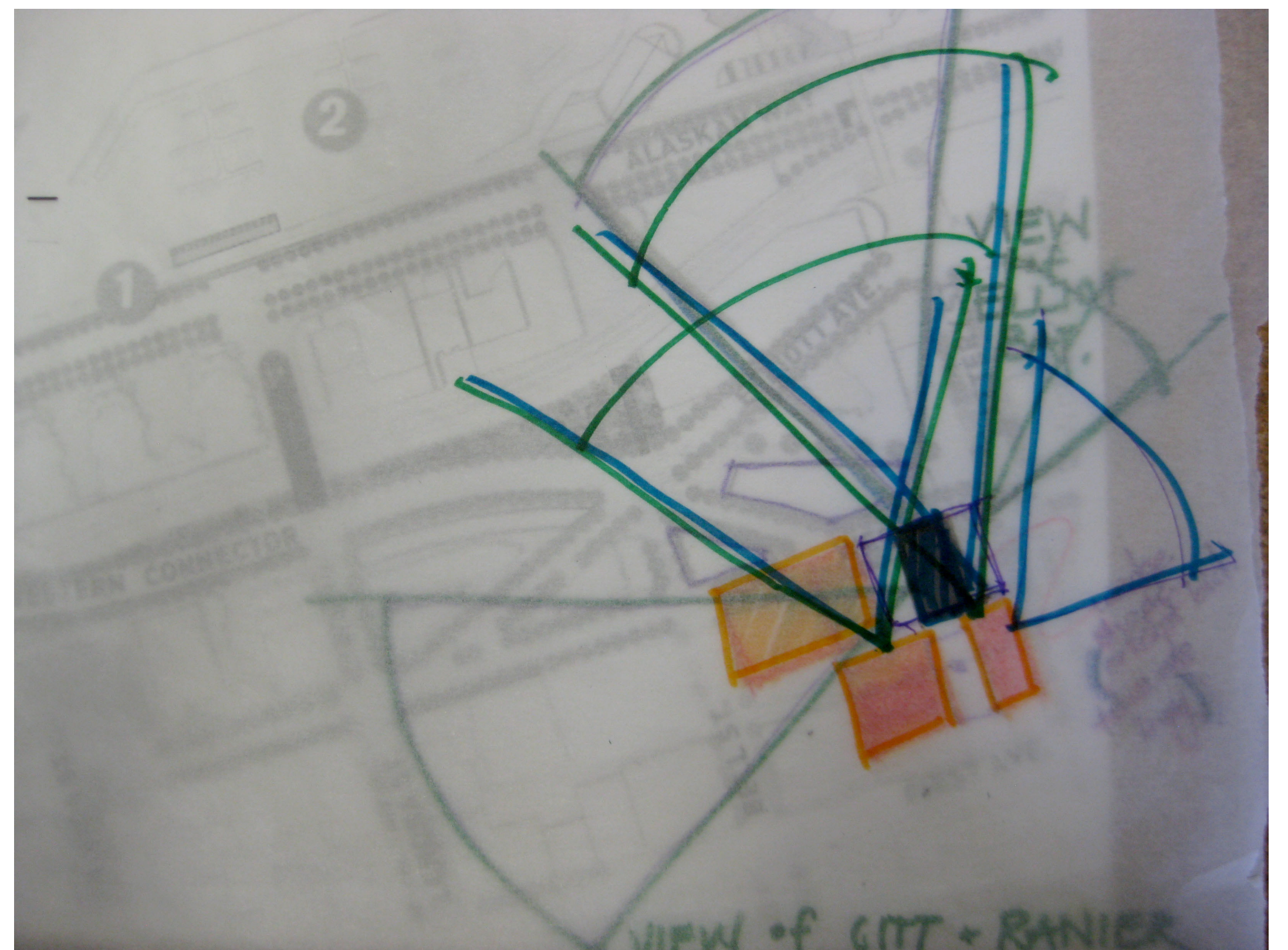
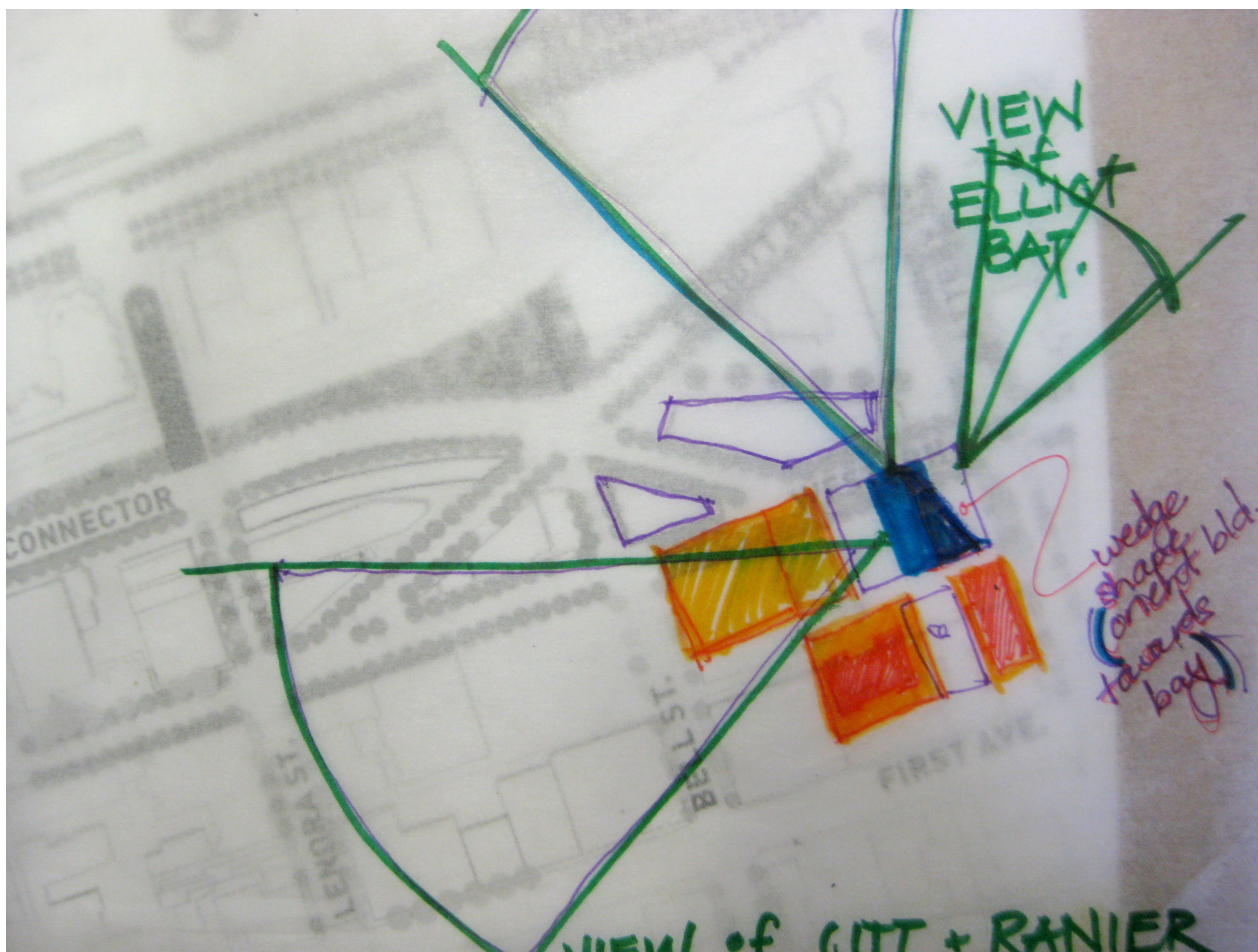
#### Interactive map Seattle, WA Belltown

- Homes for sale
- Million dollar homes

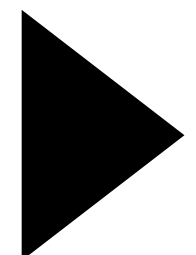
Only about 275 beds in Belltown are dedicated to elderly individuals - 65 of which are provided by a licensed long-term care facility. Posing a challenge for current residents who wish to age-in-place.

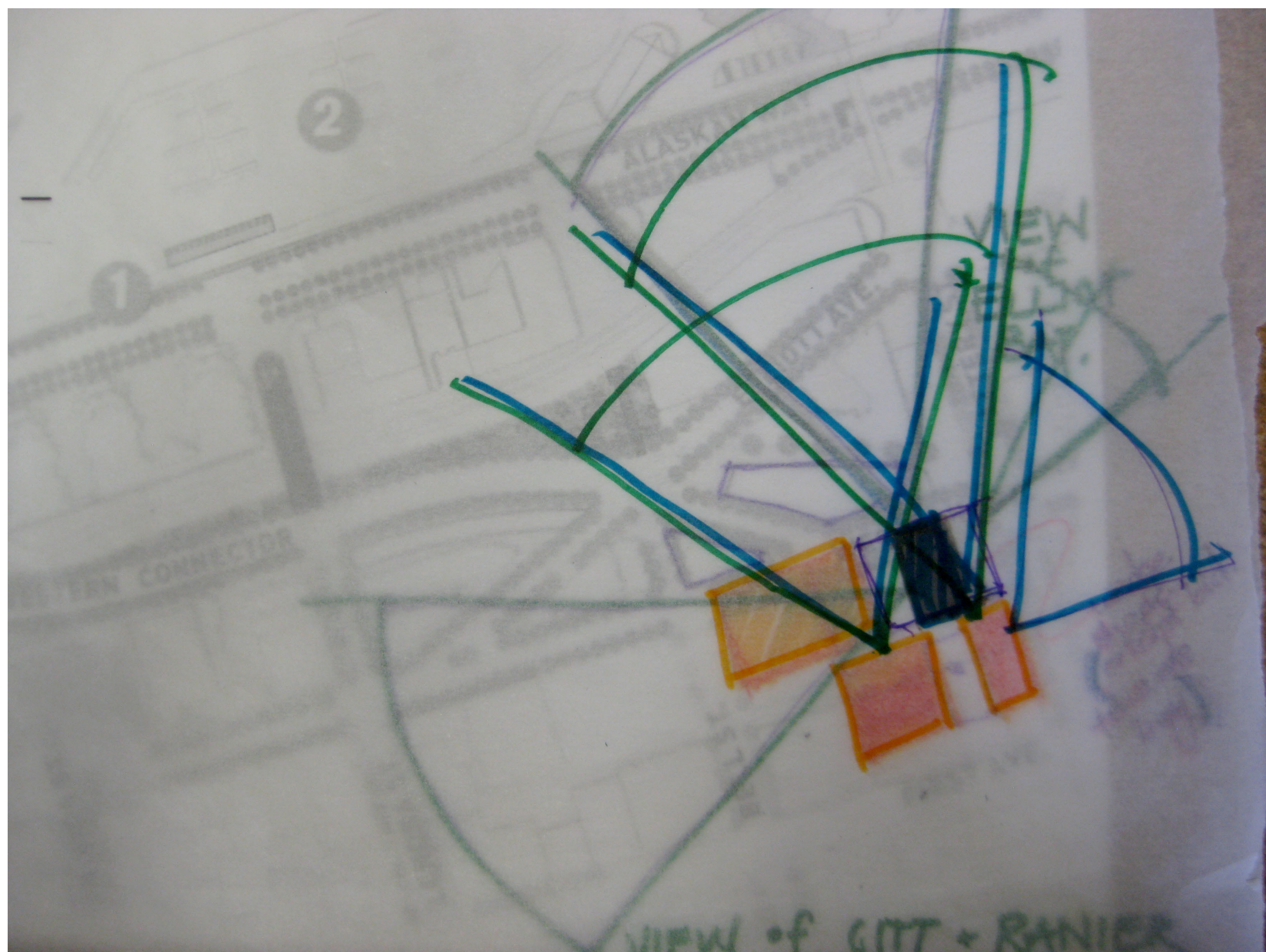
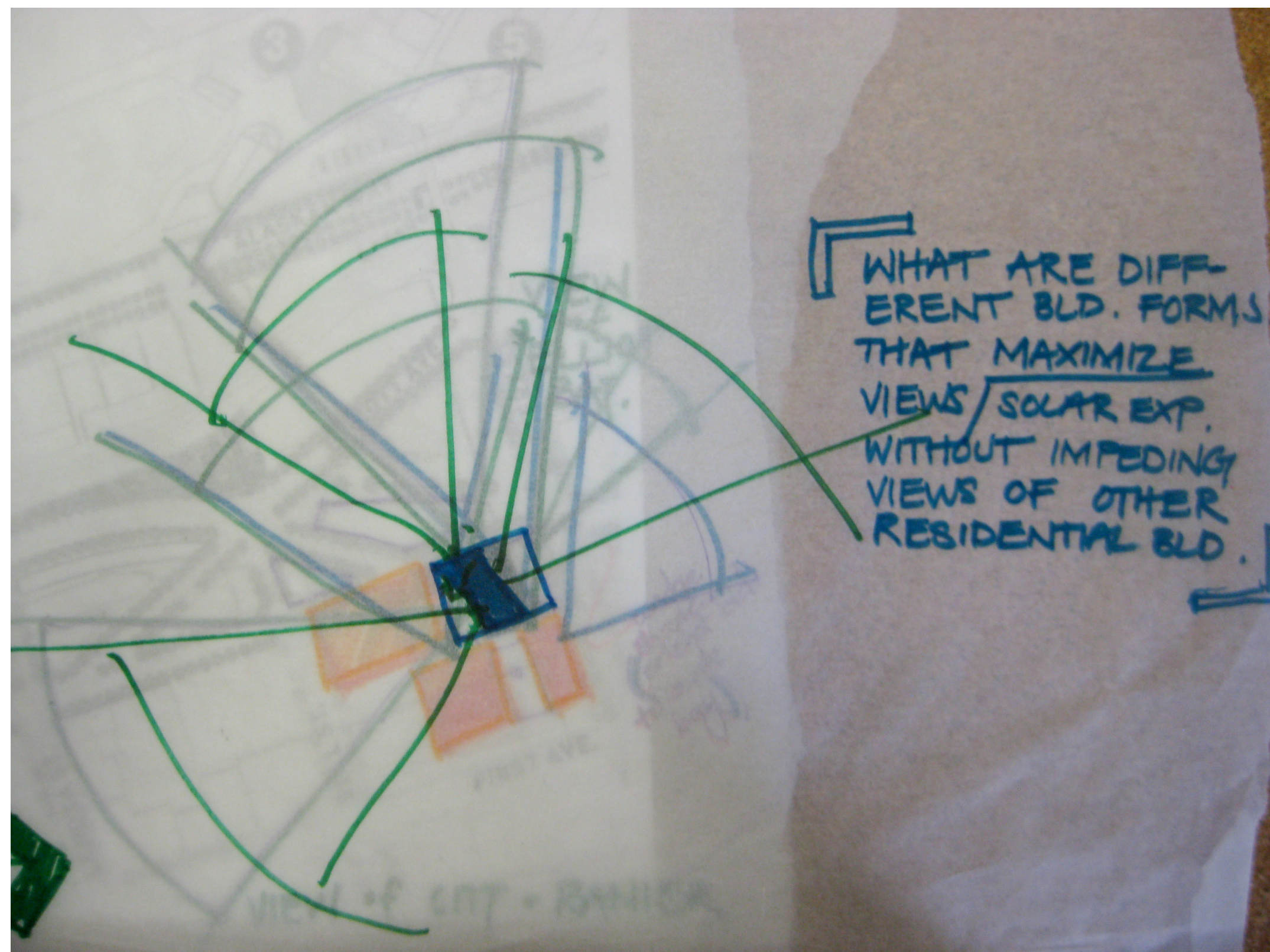
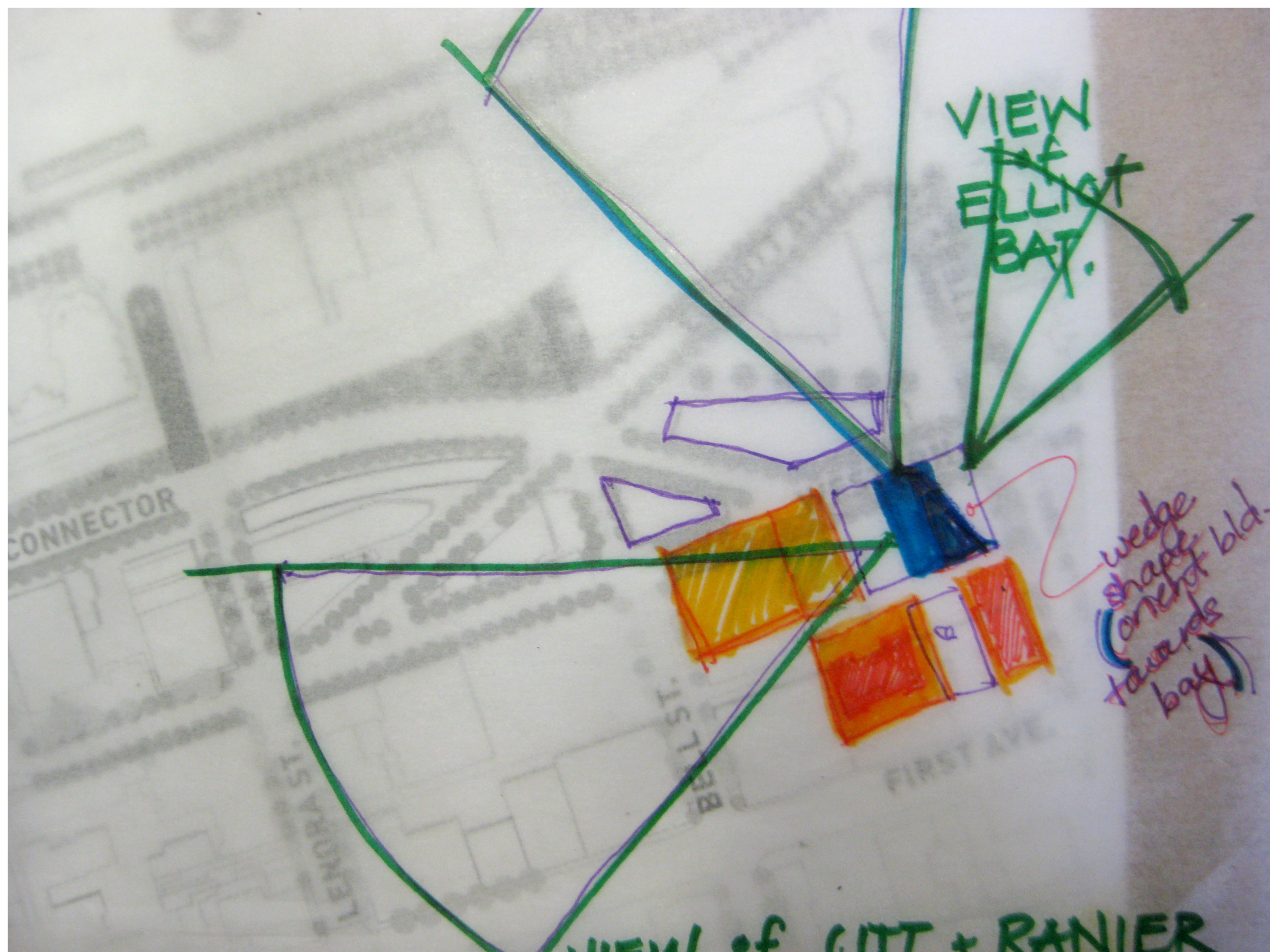


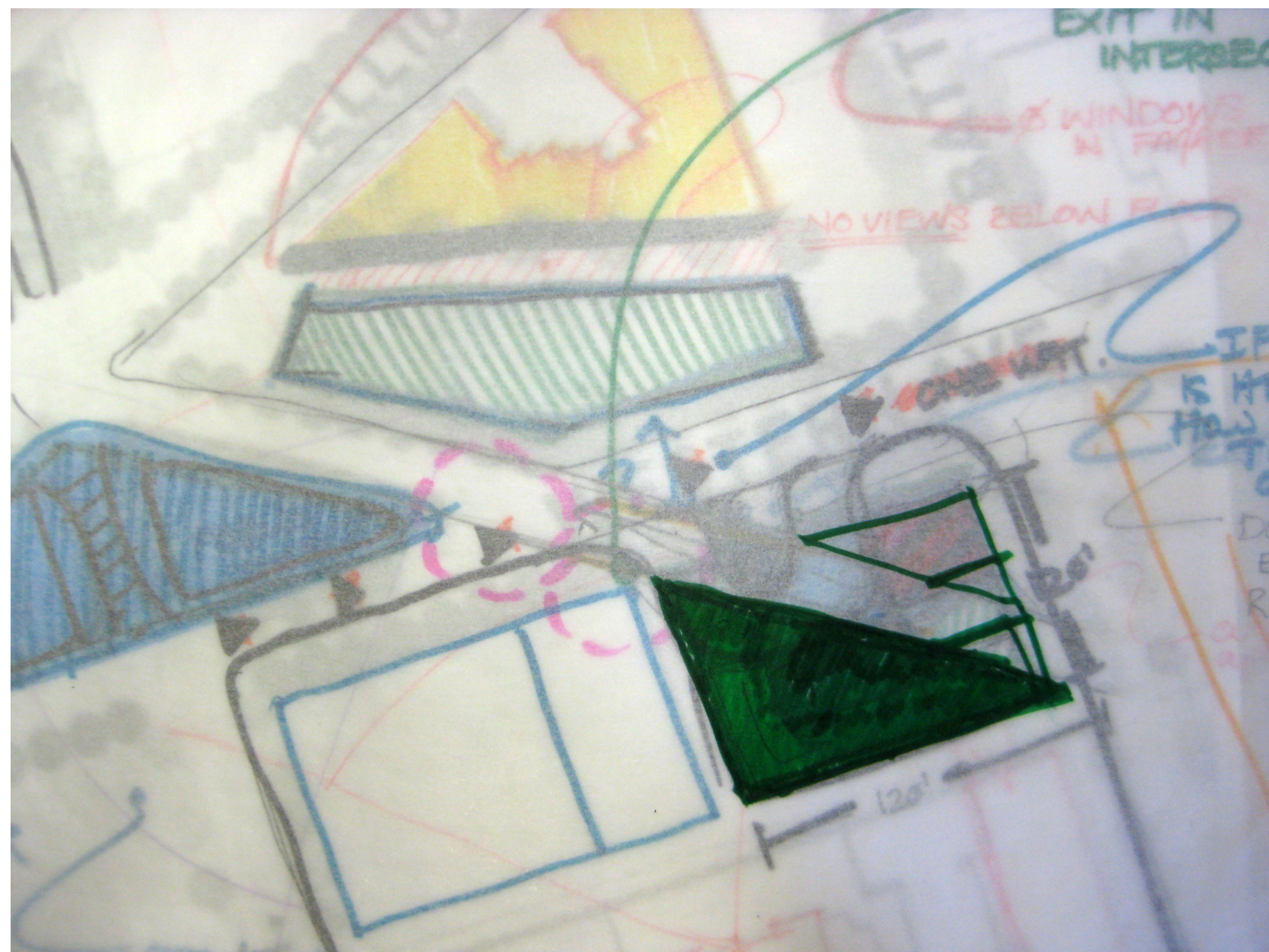
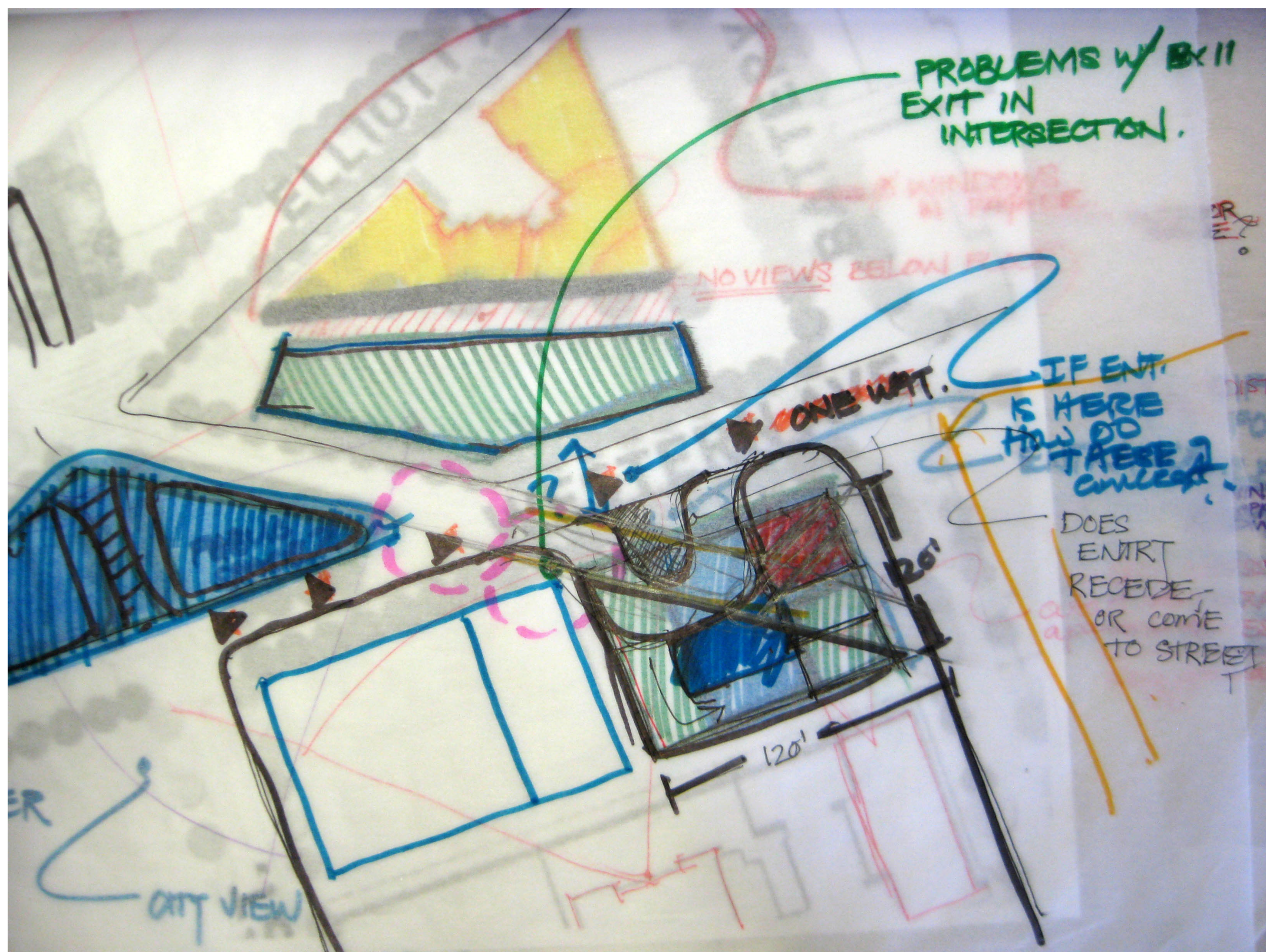
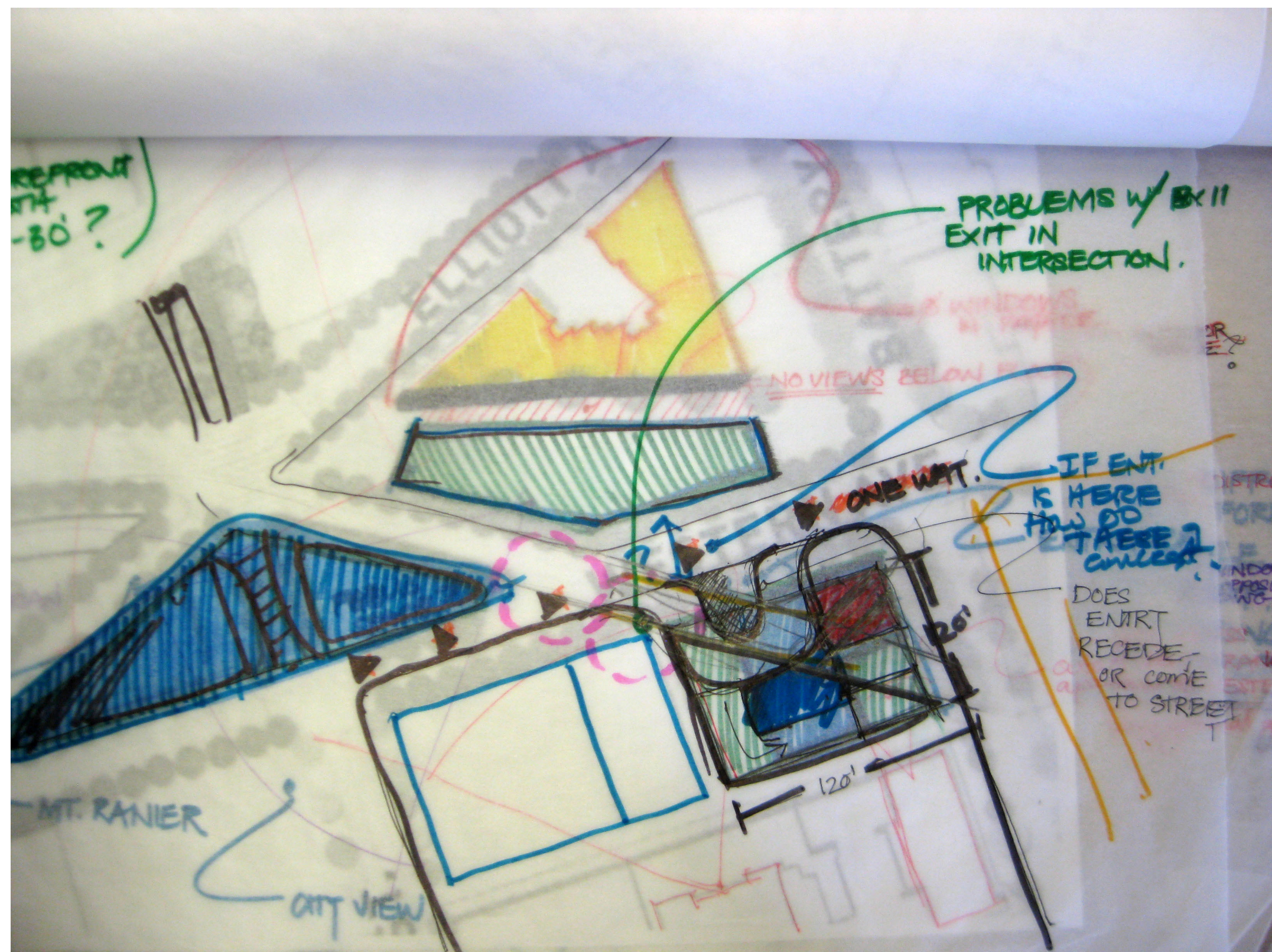
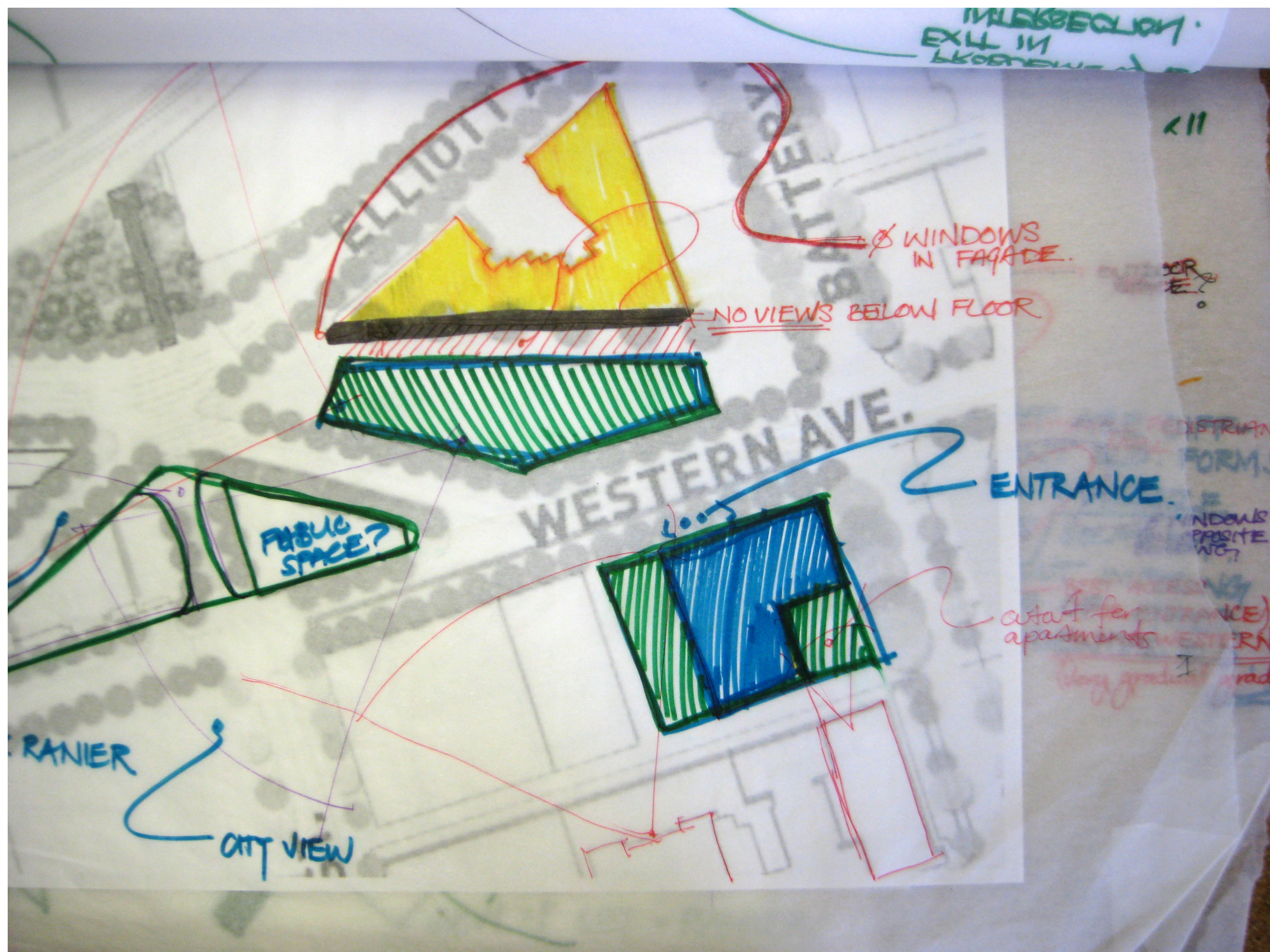


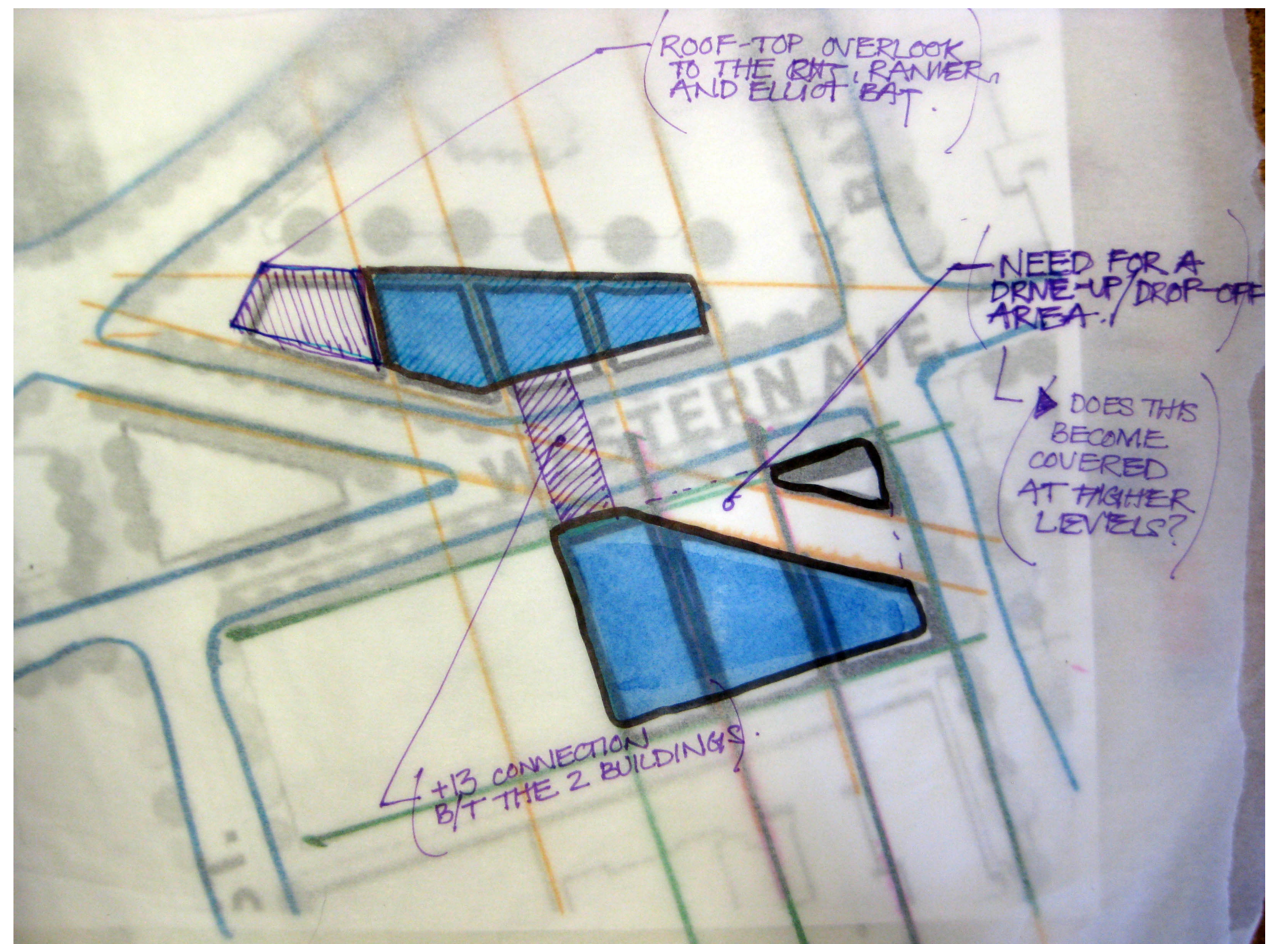
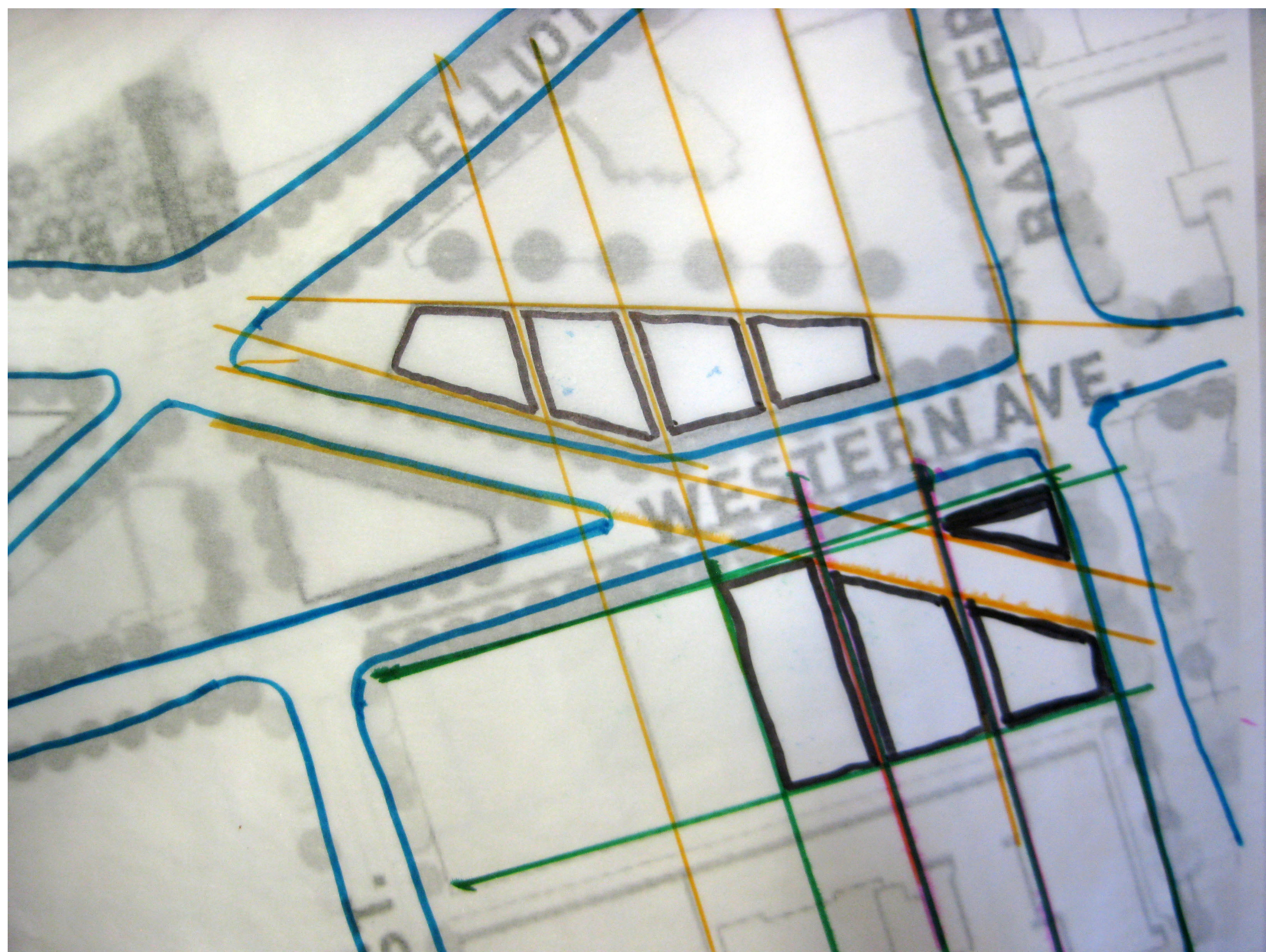
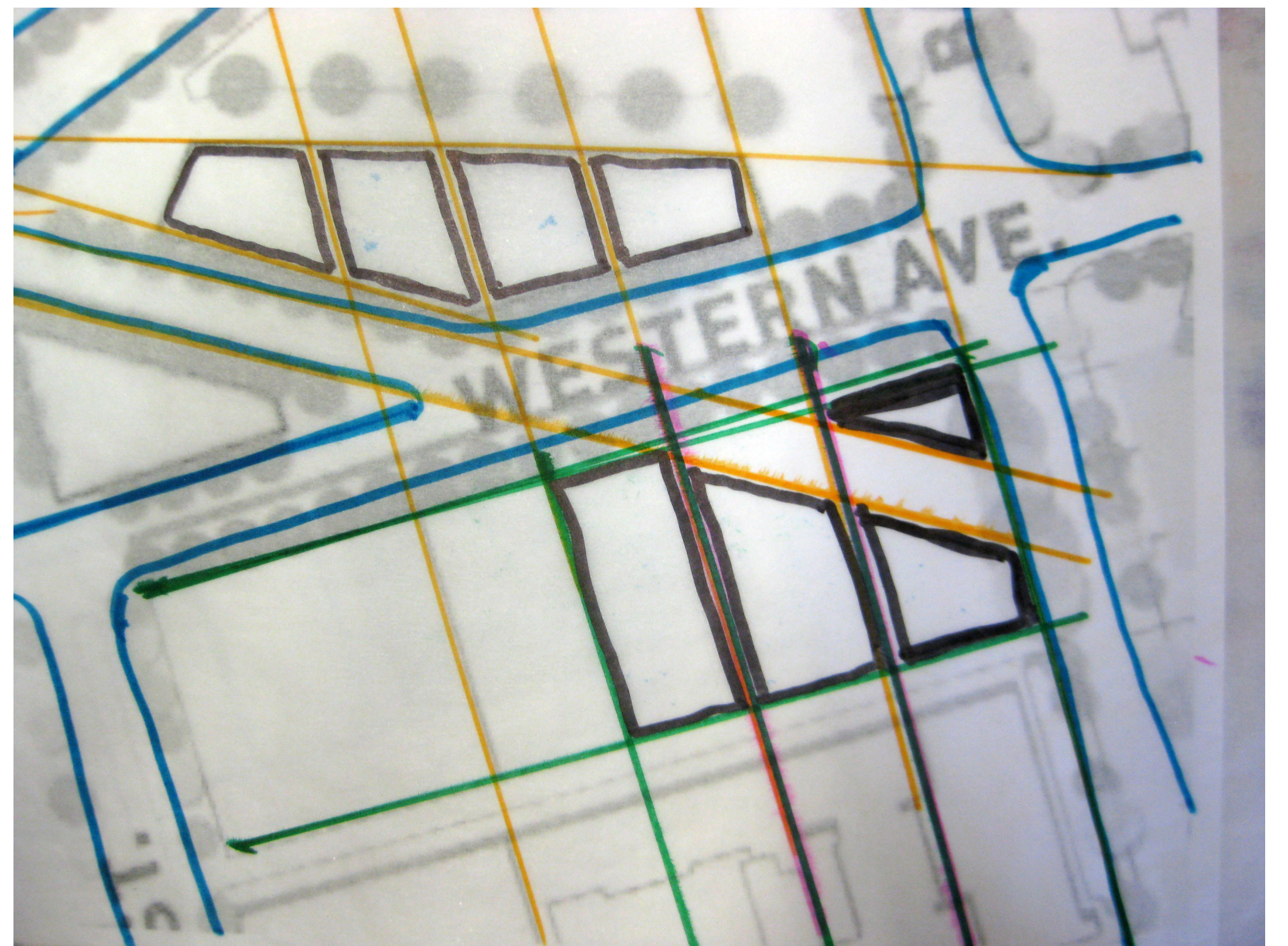
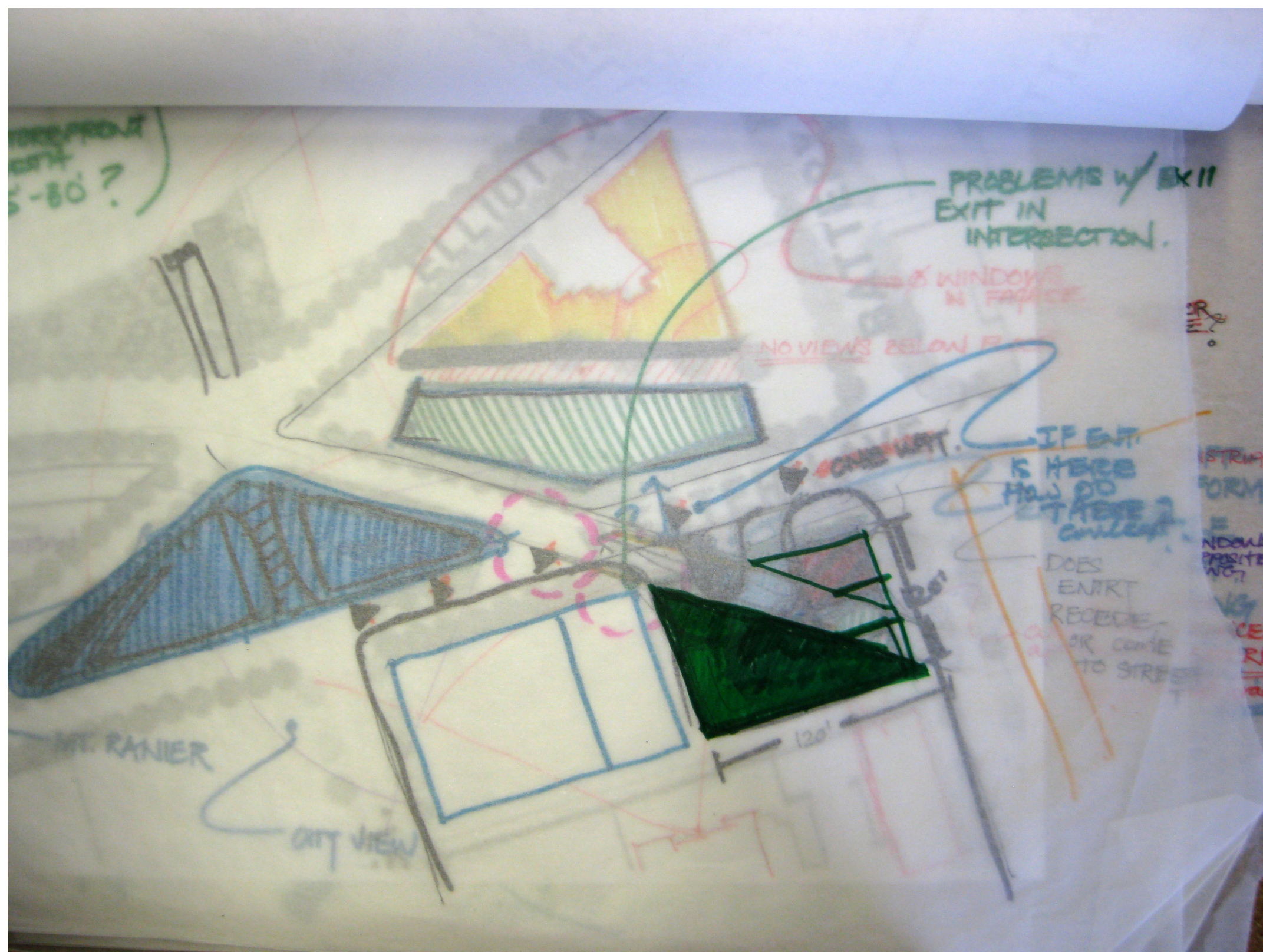


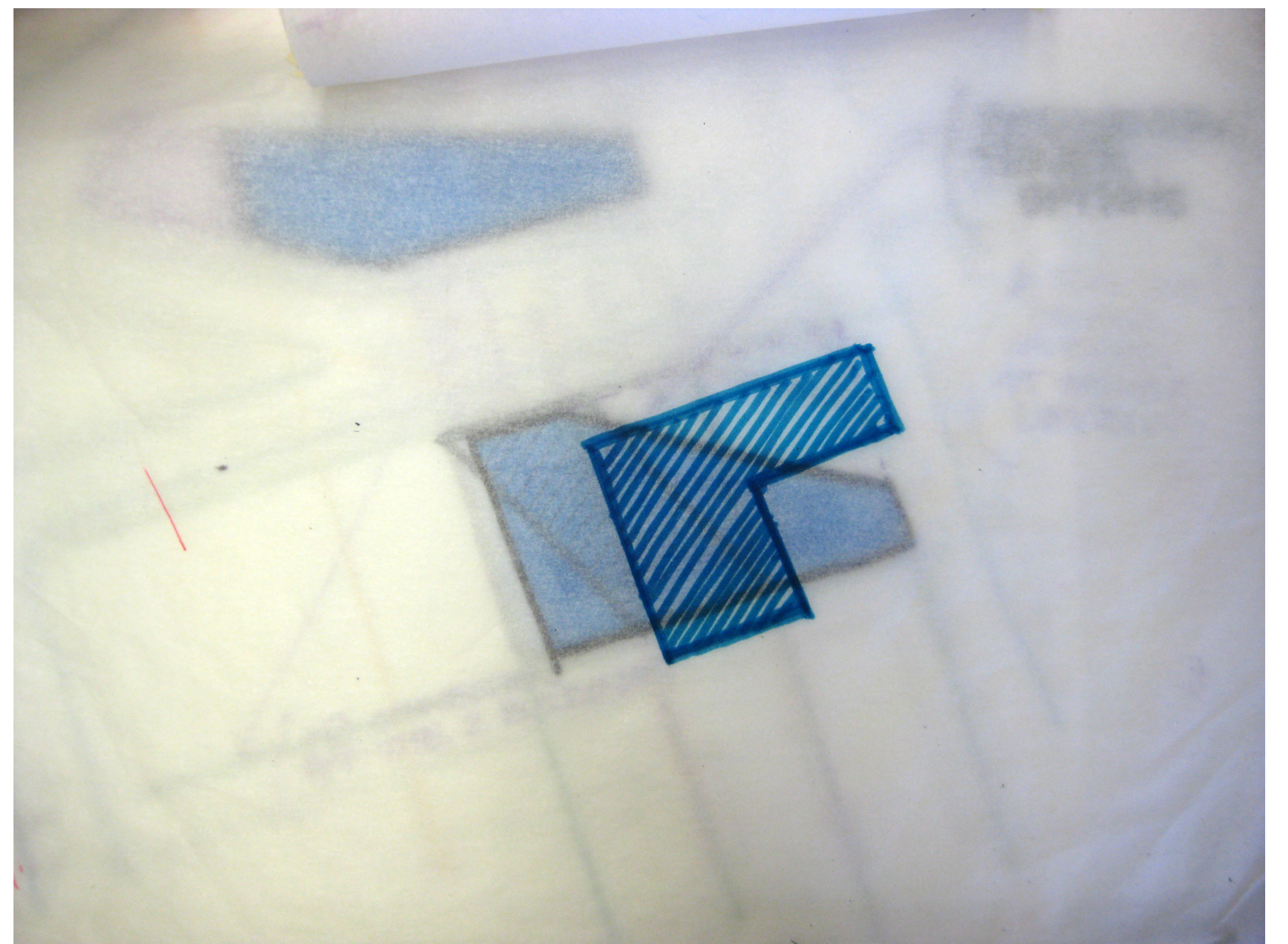
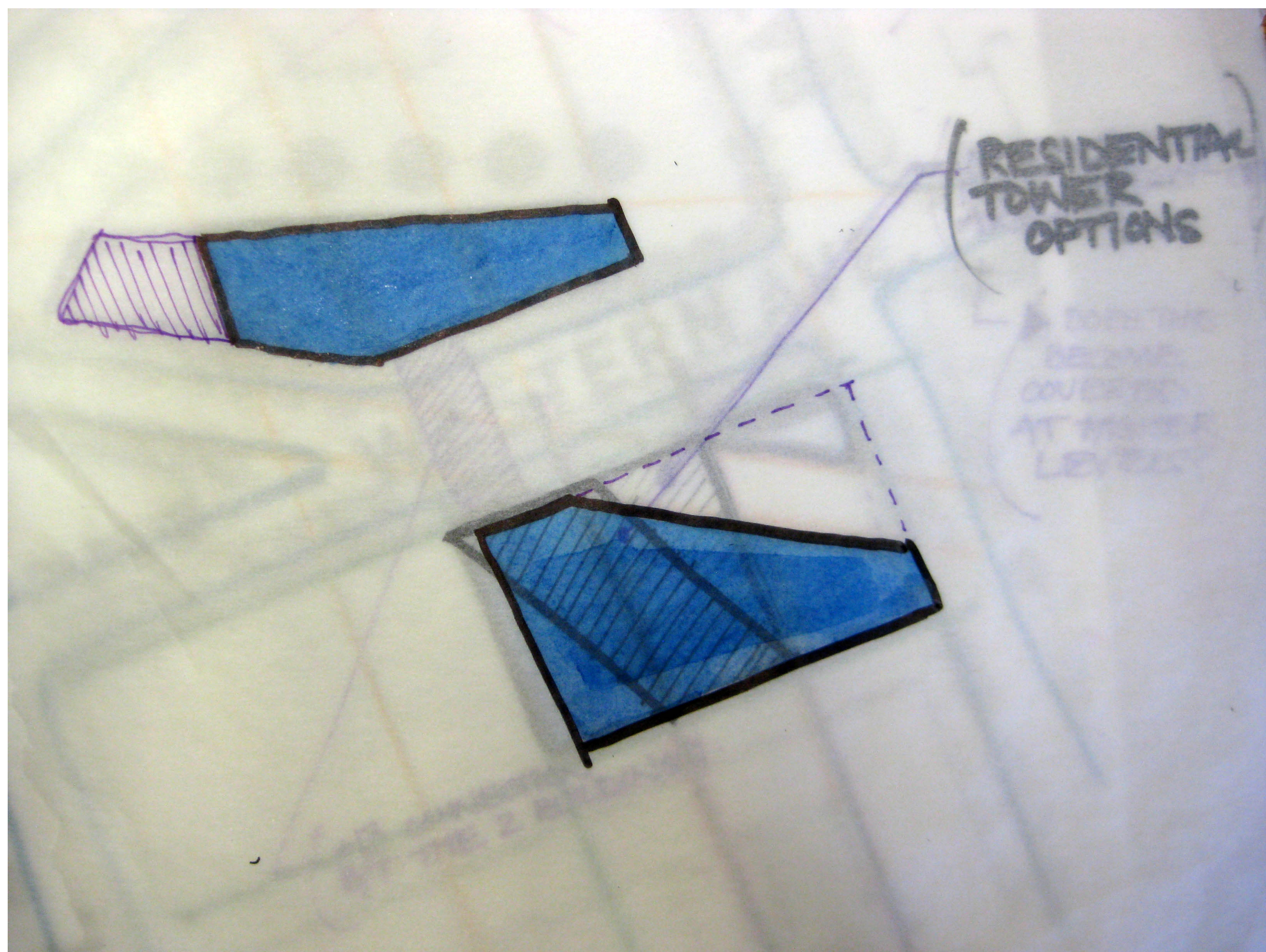
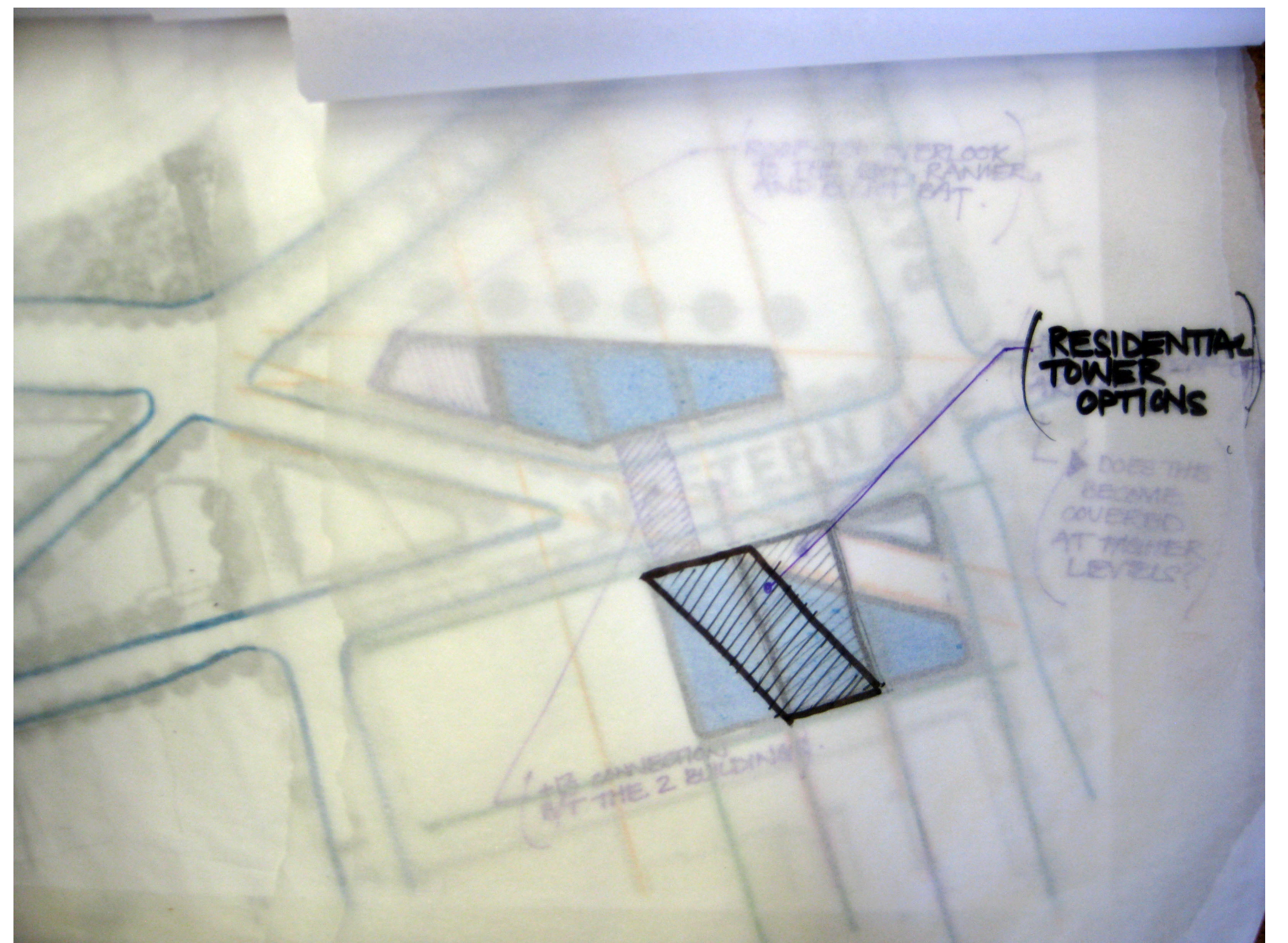
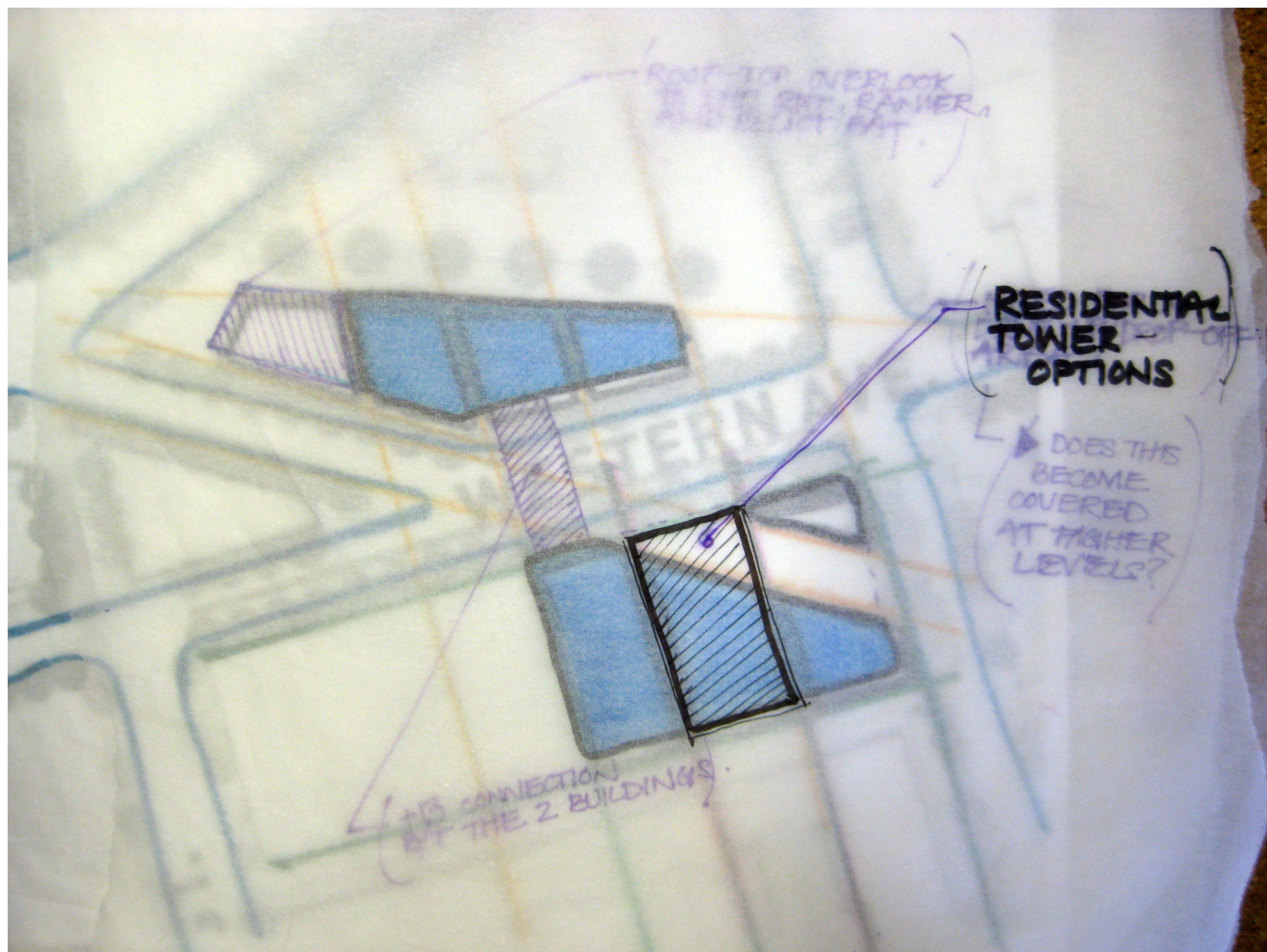
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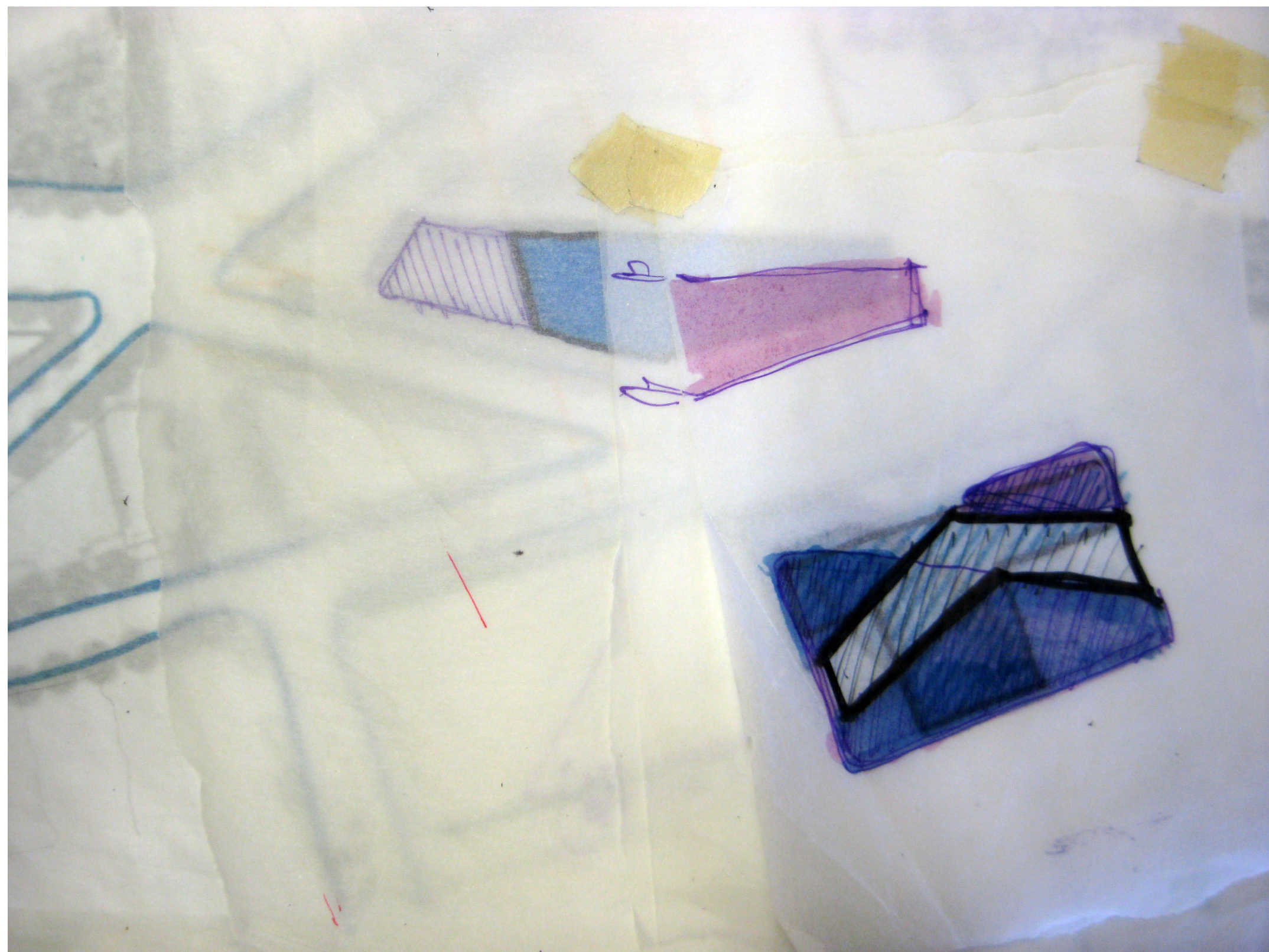
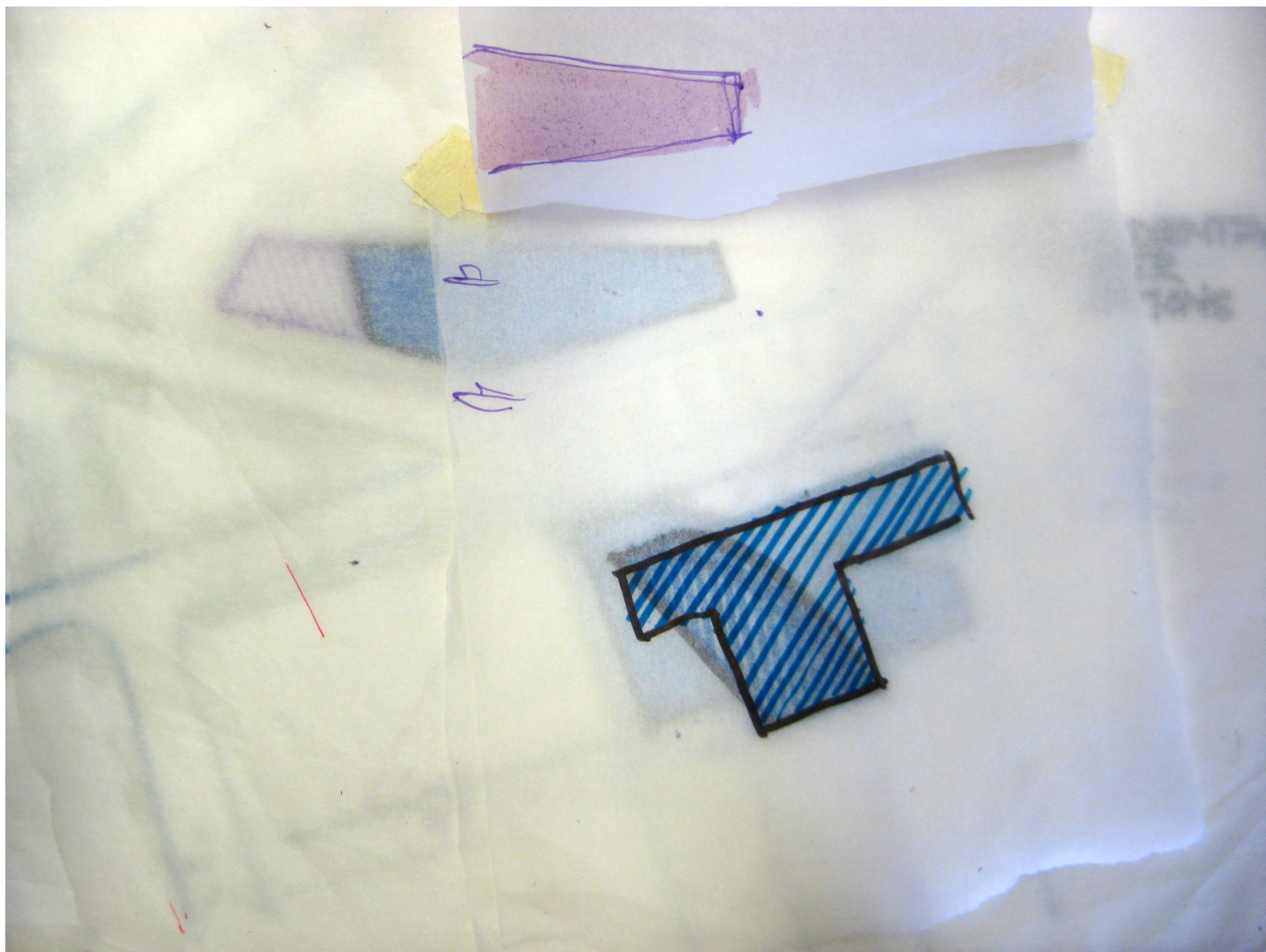
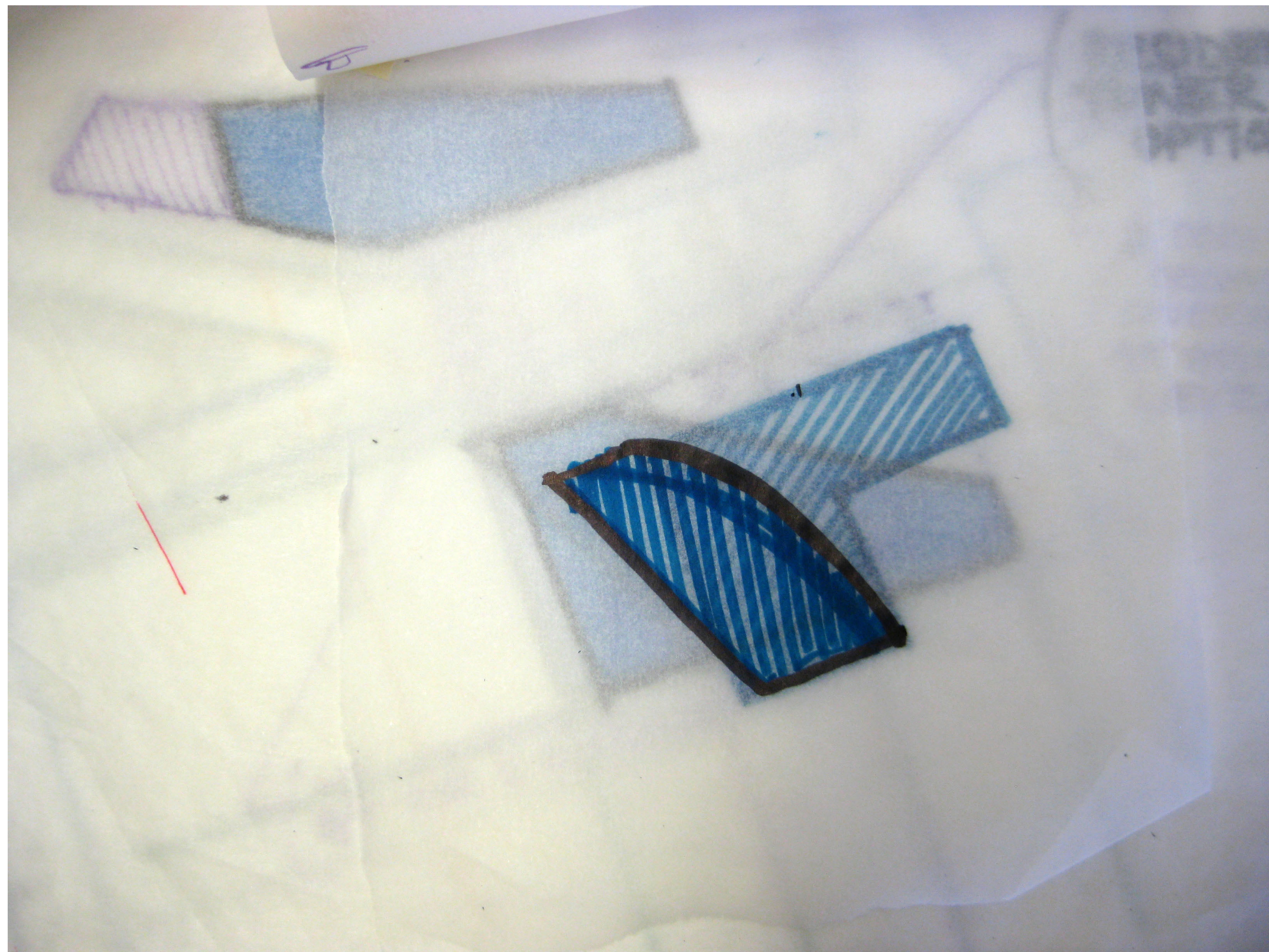
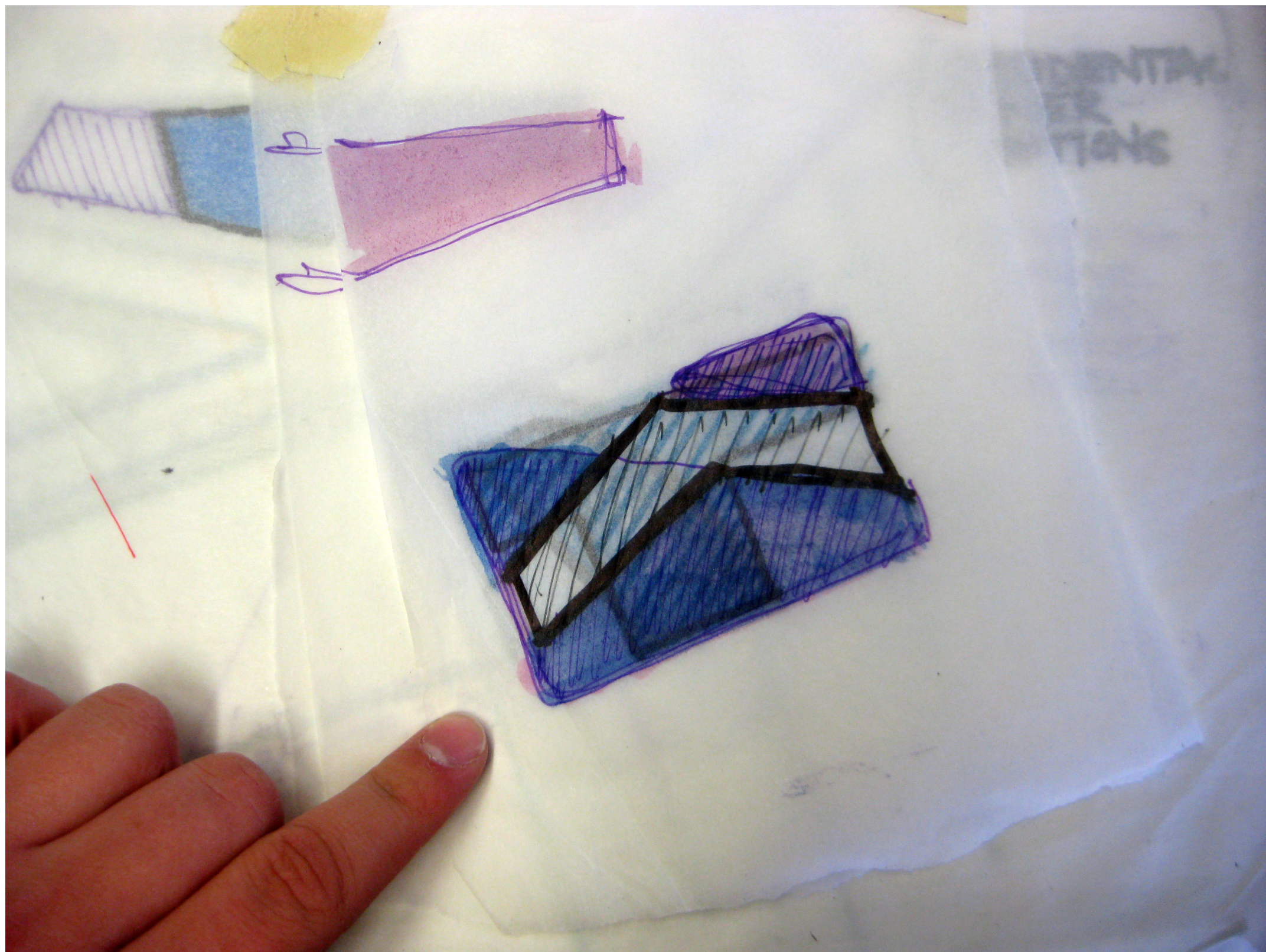


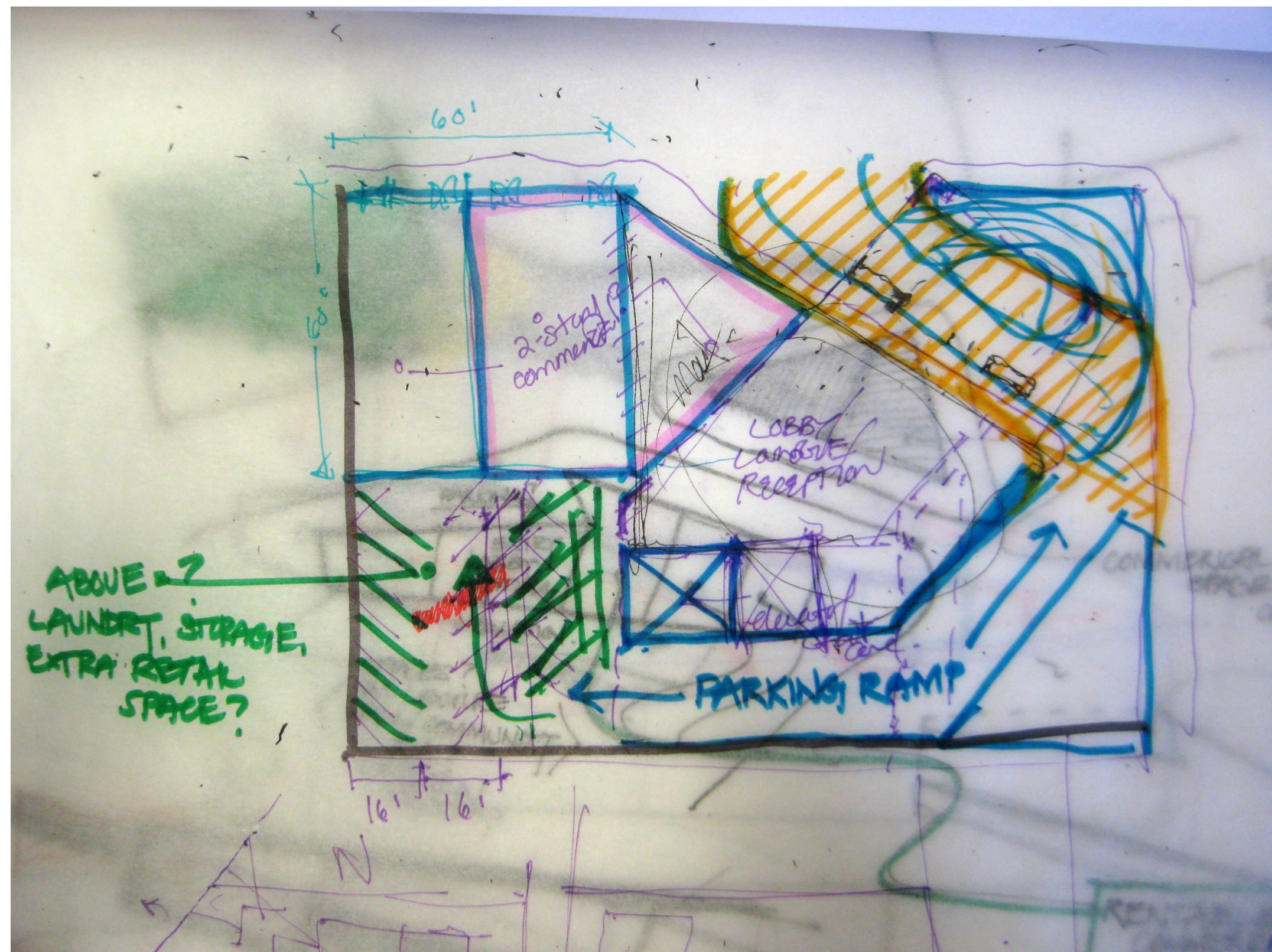
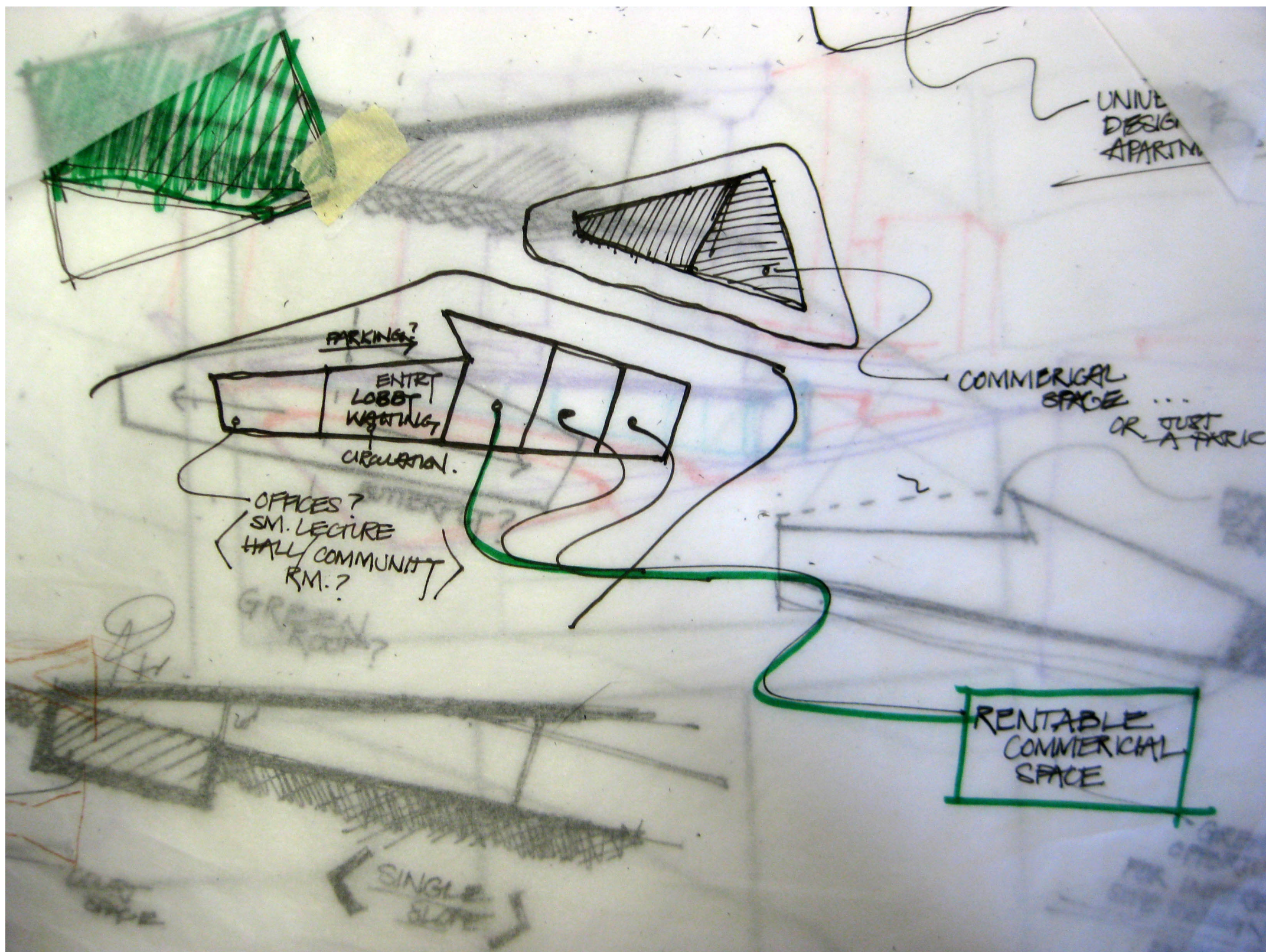
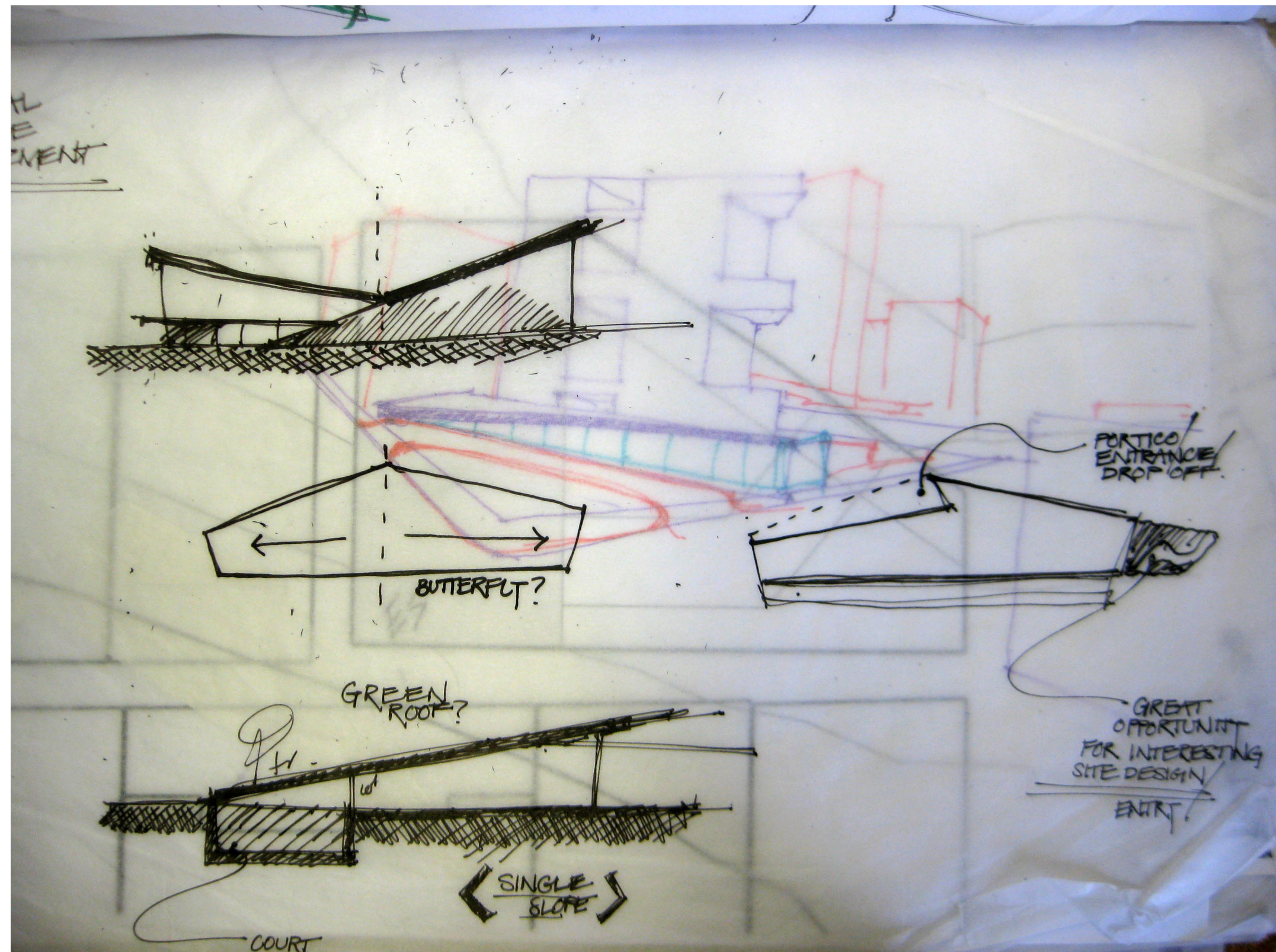
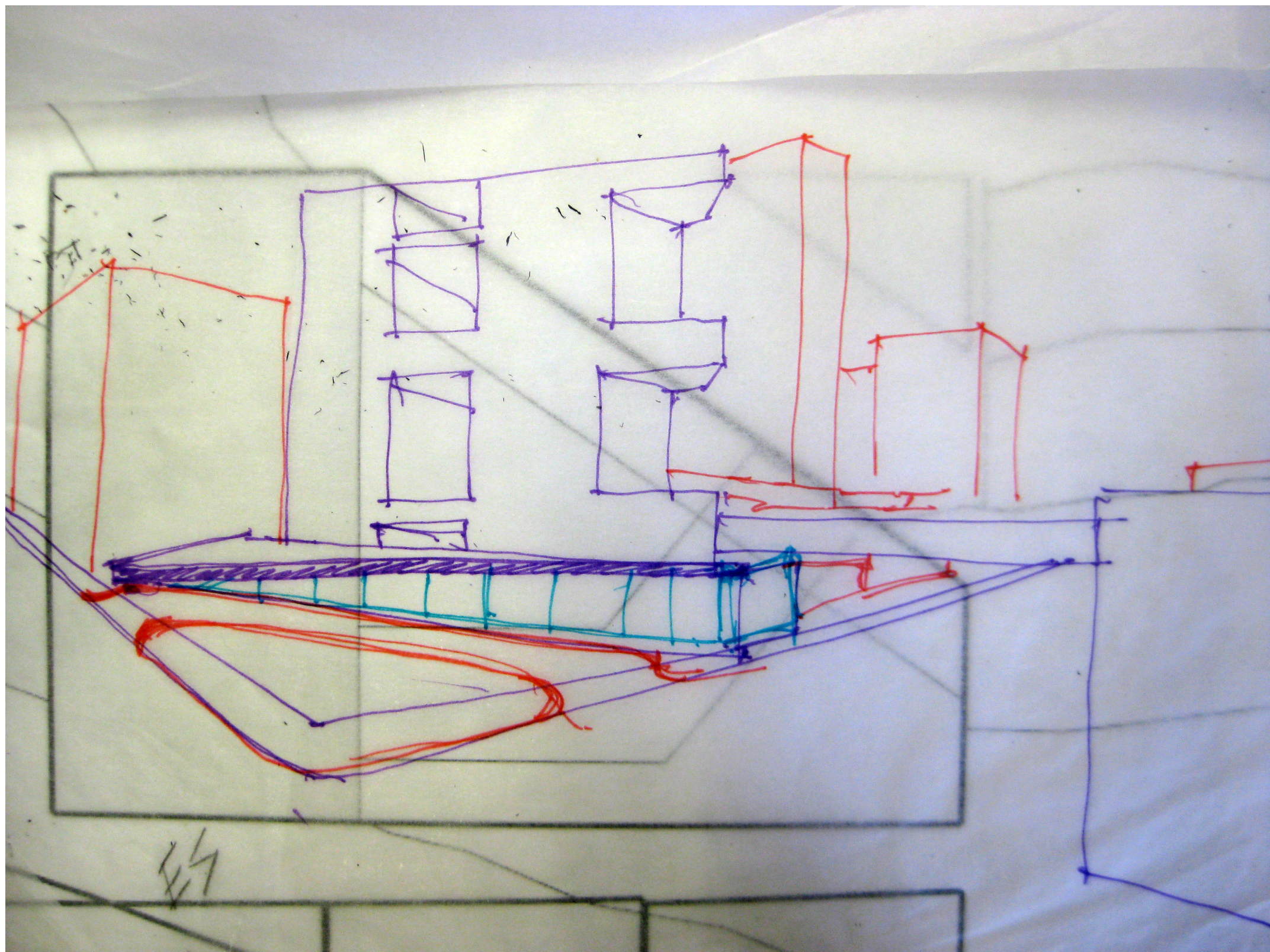


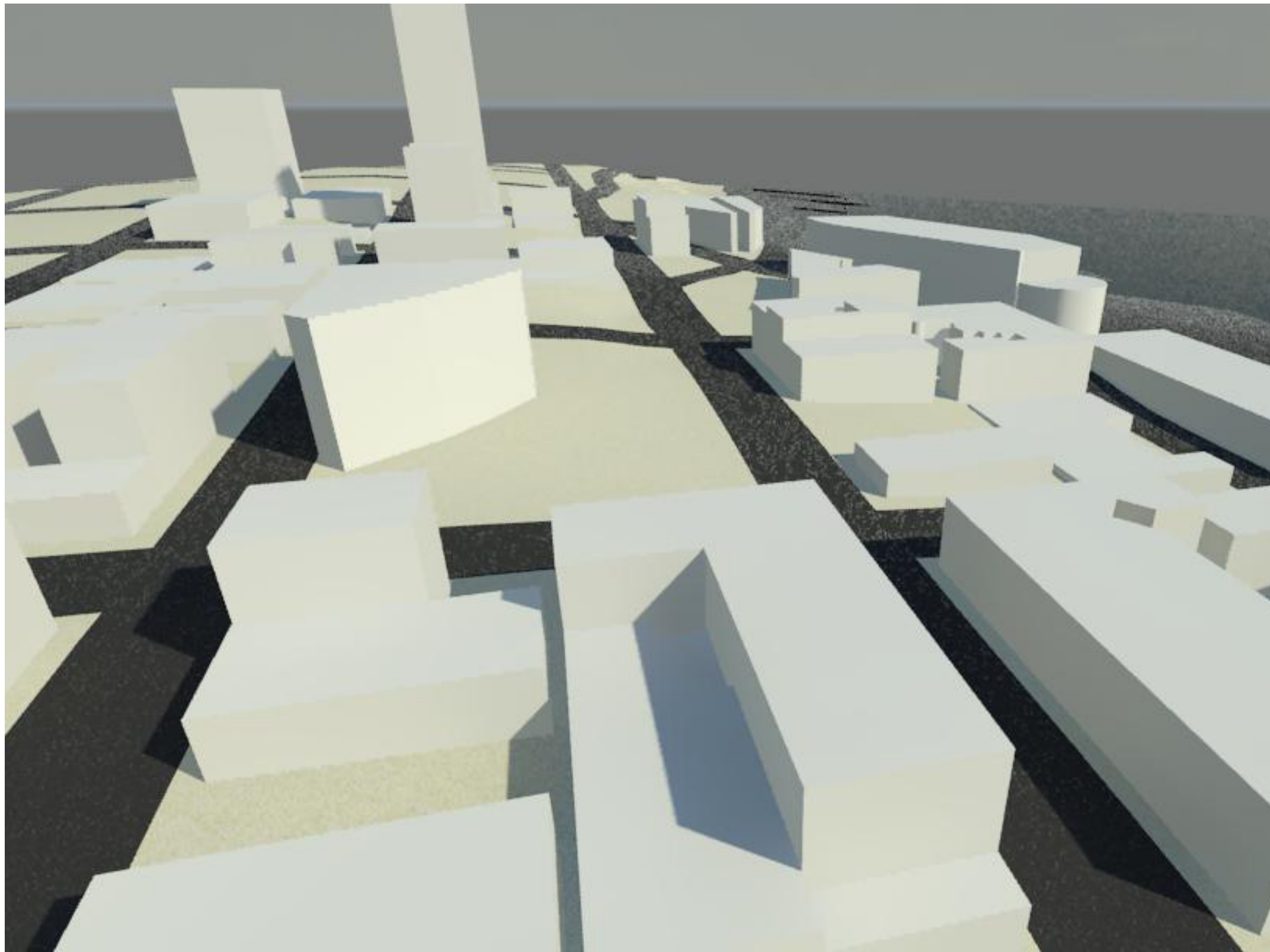
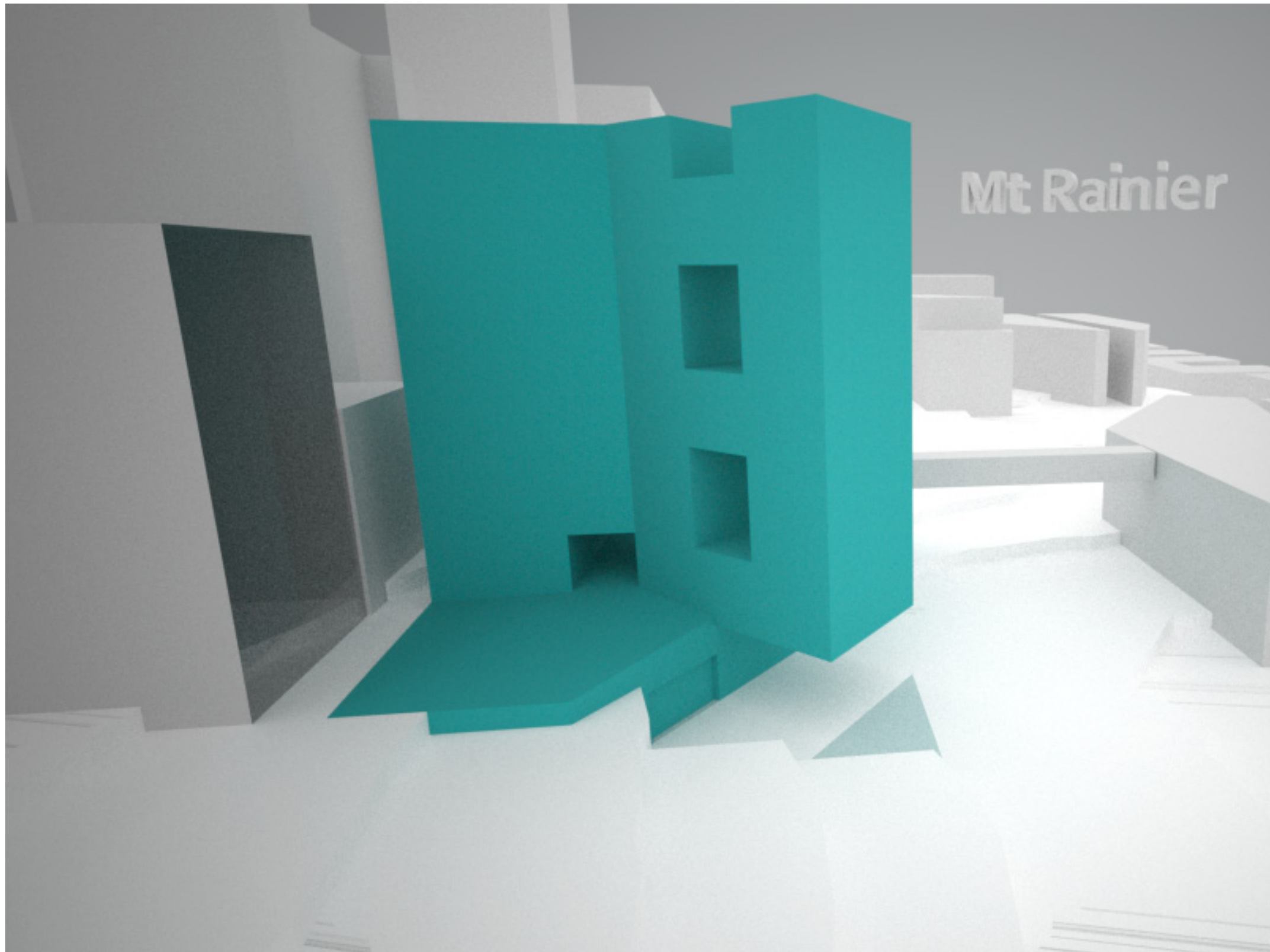
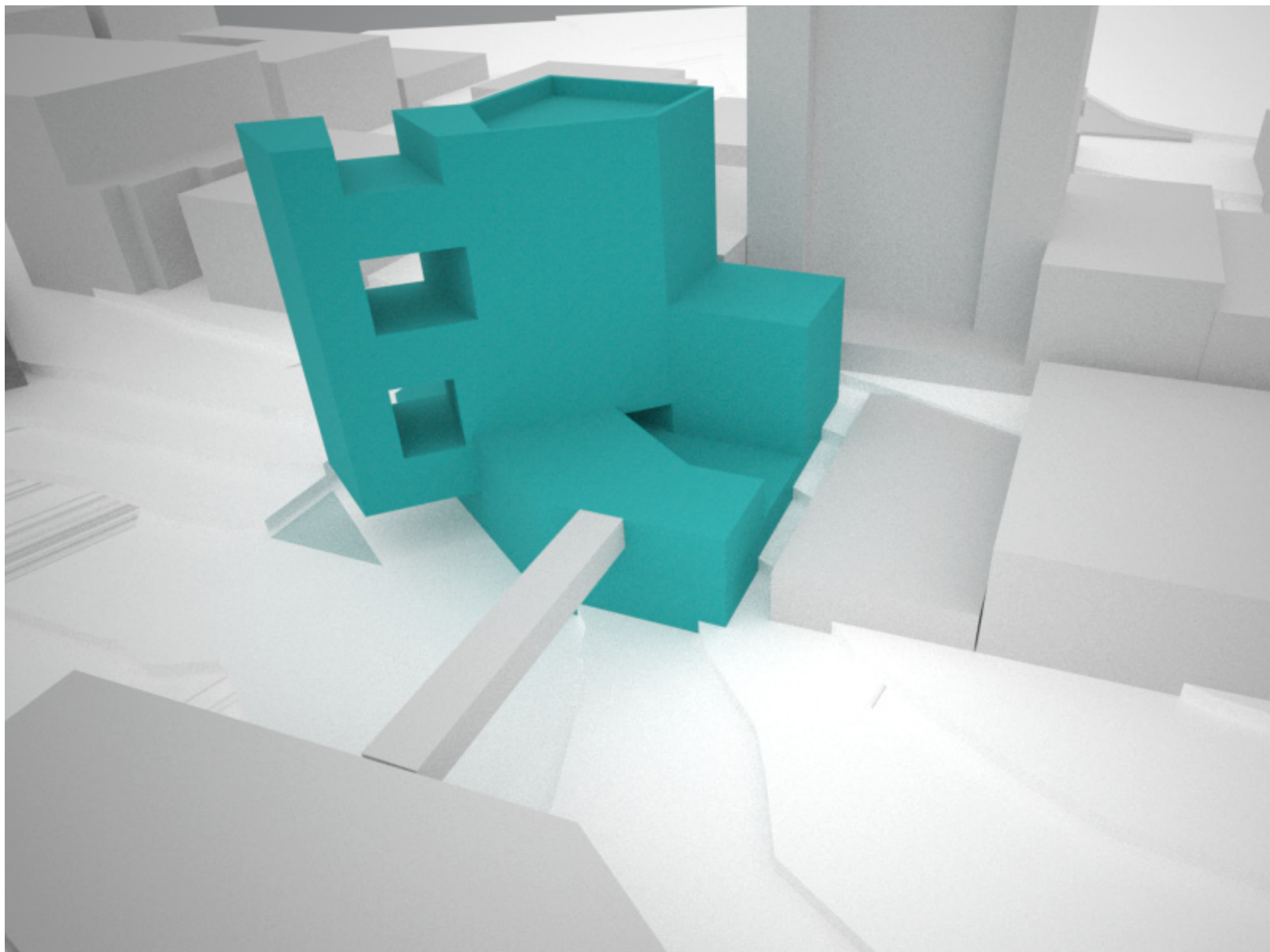




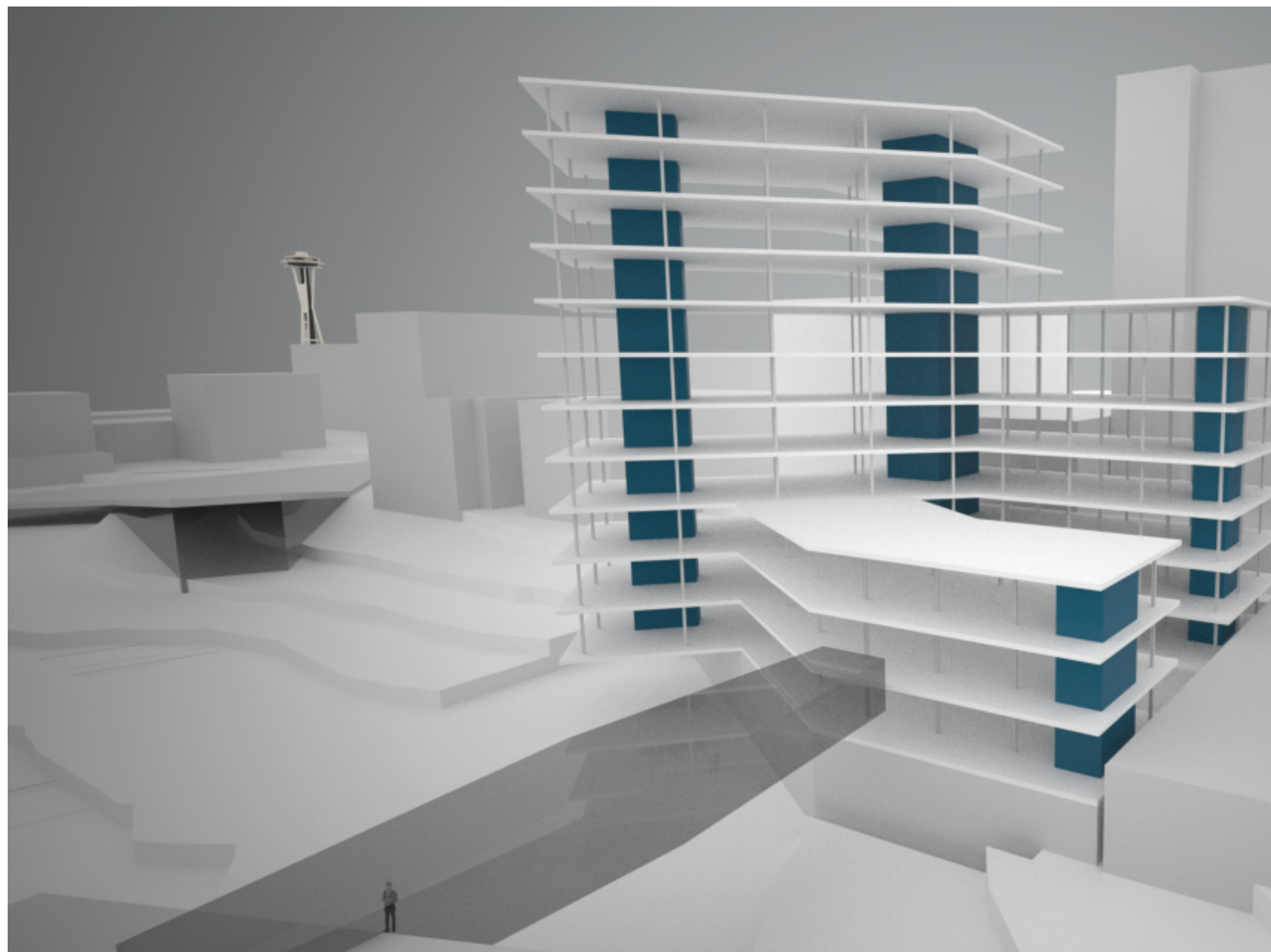
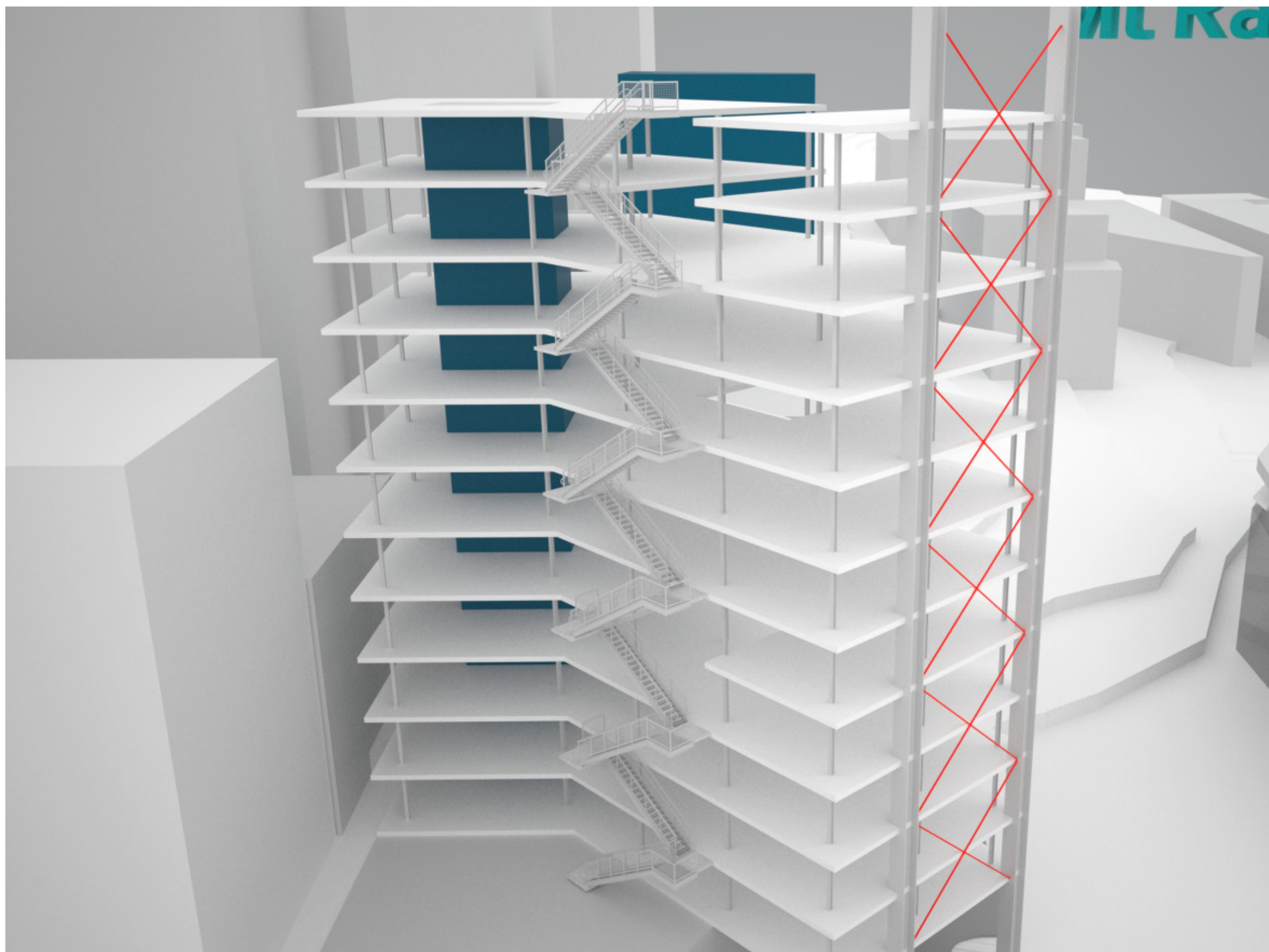
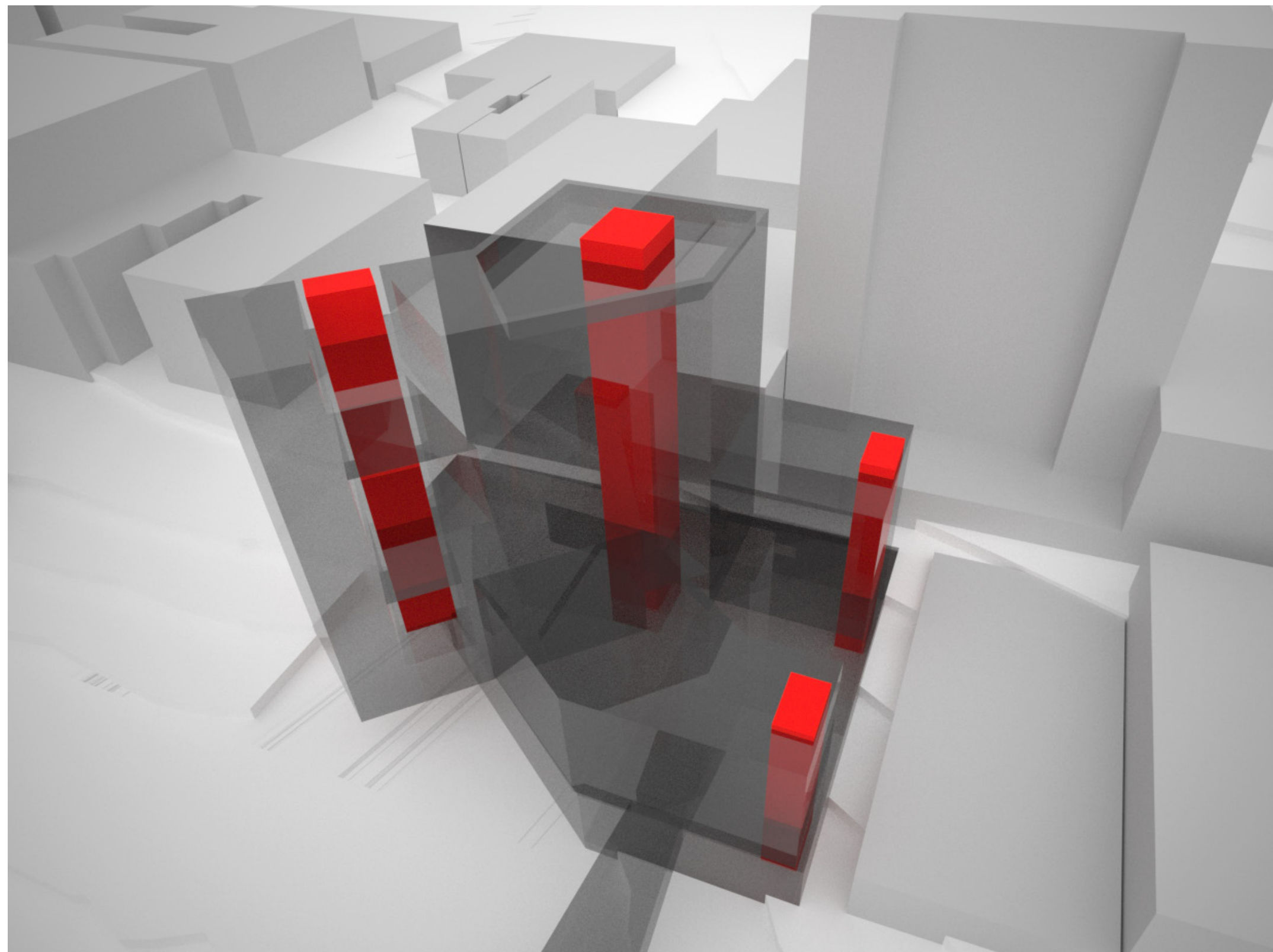
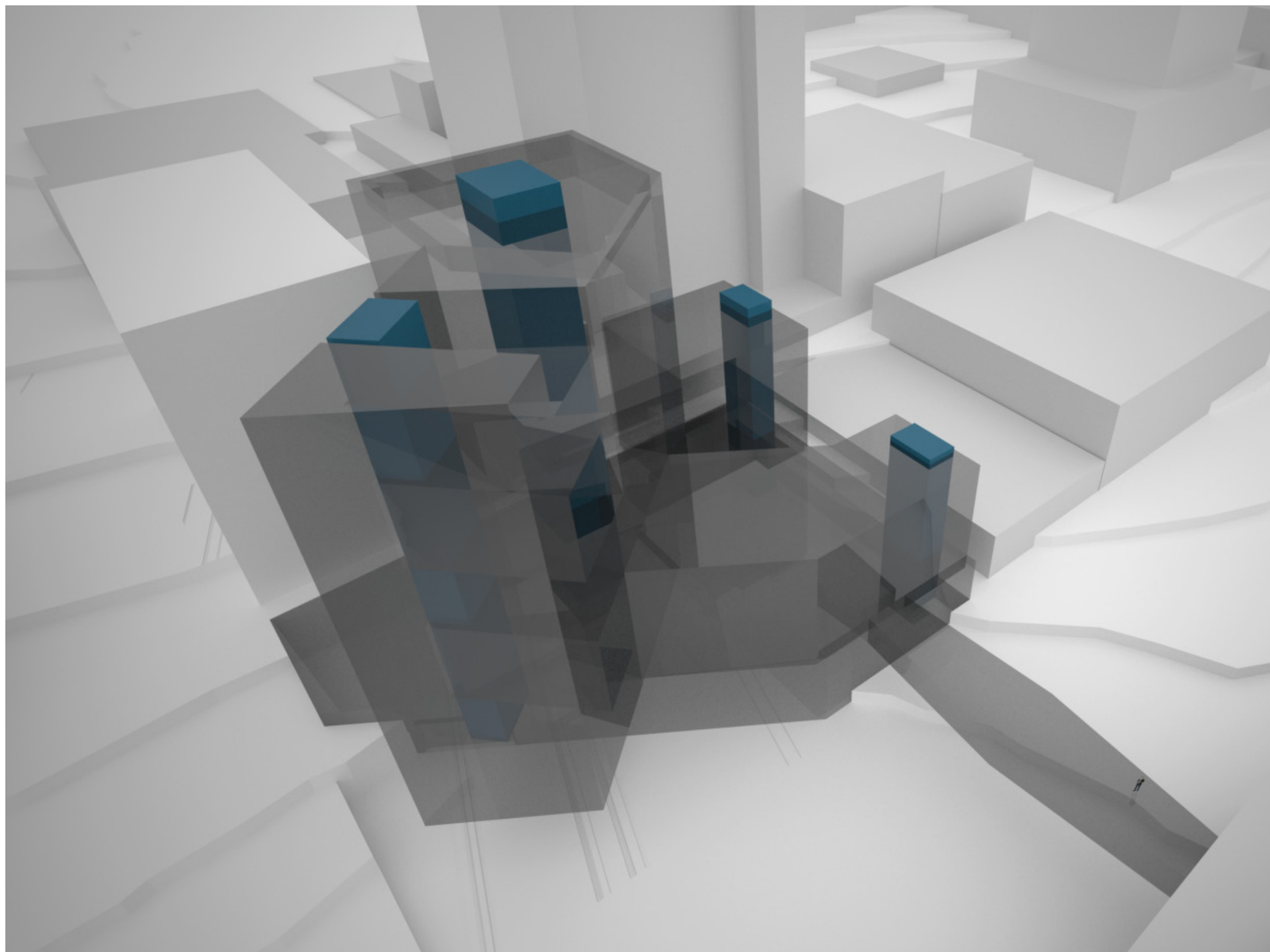


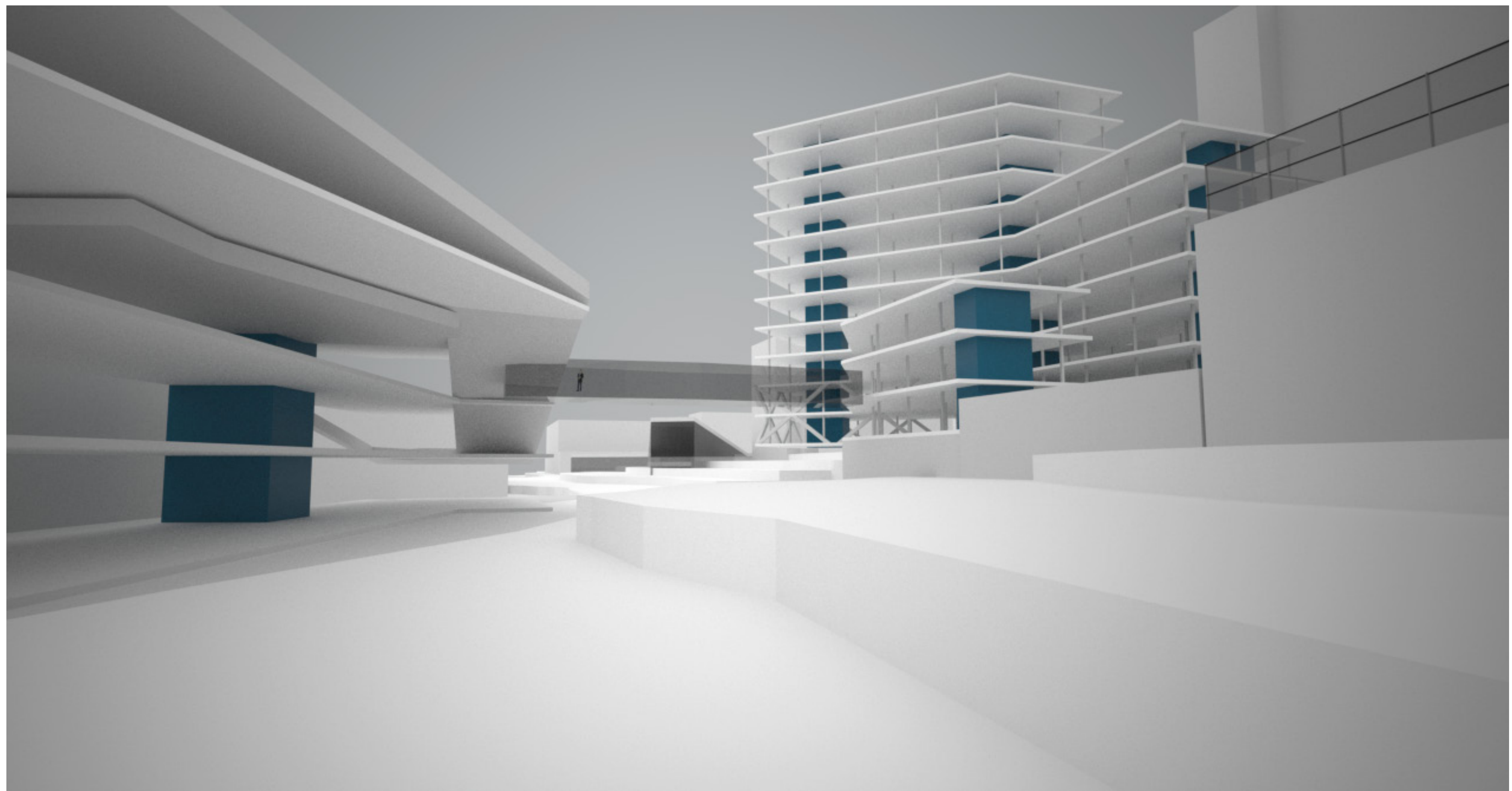
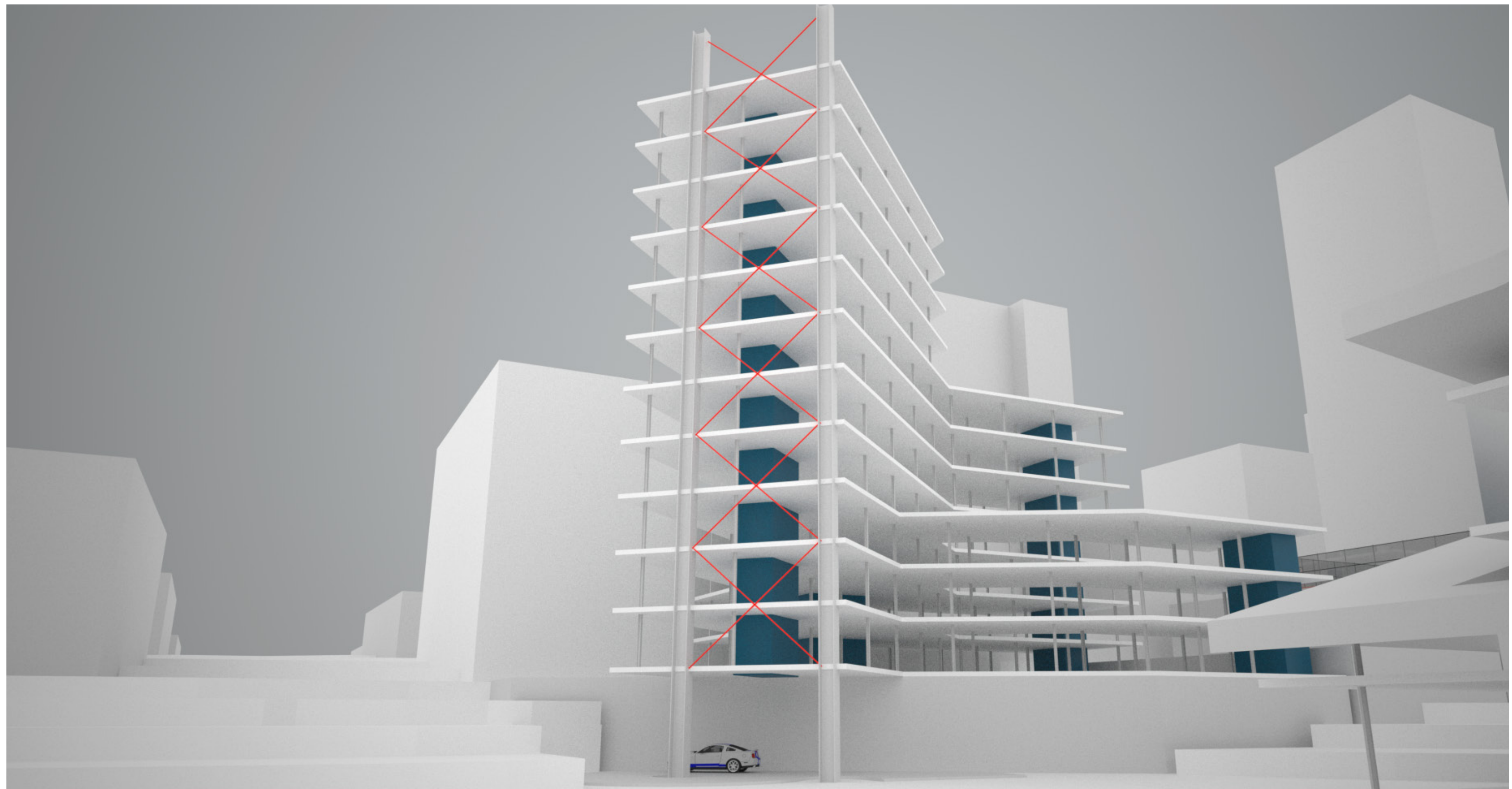


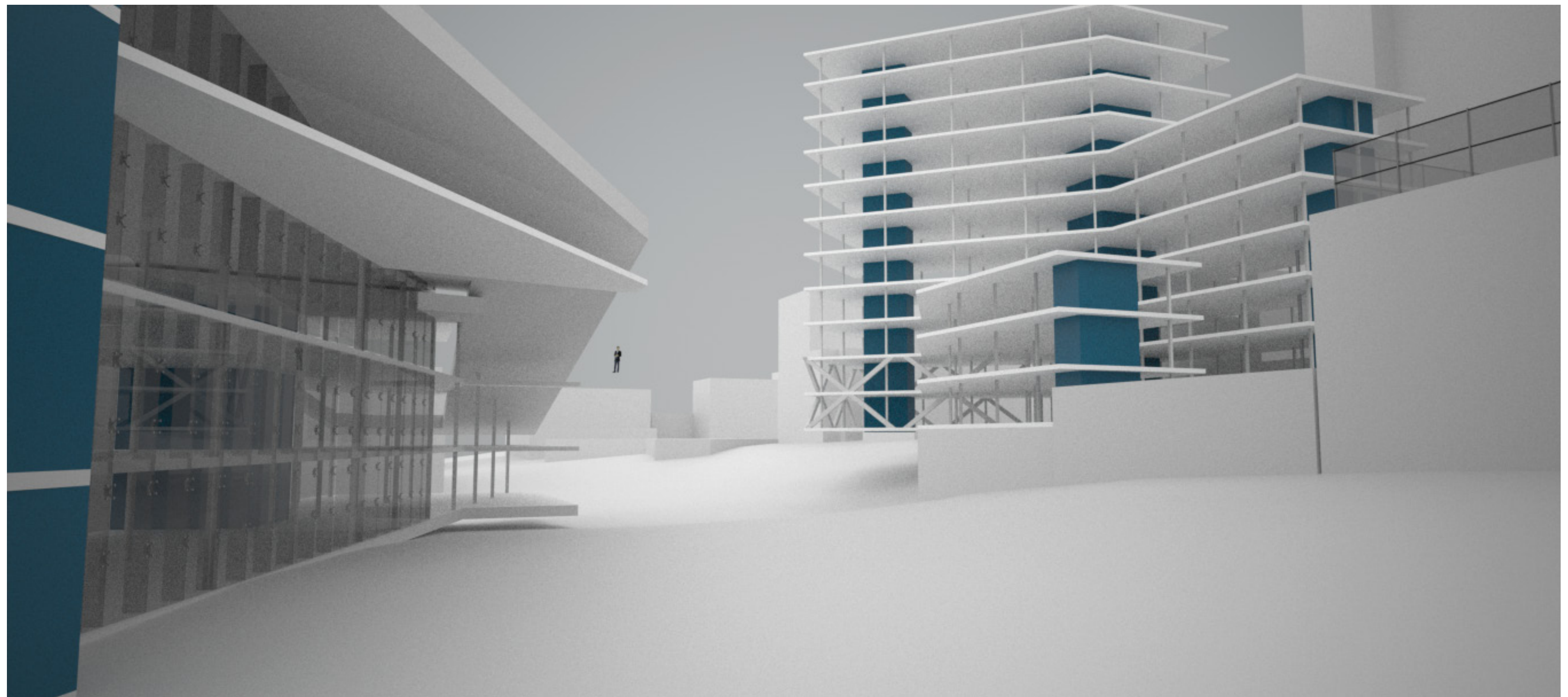
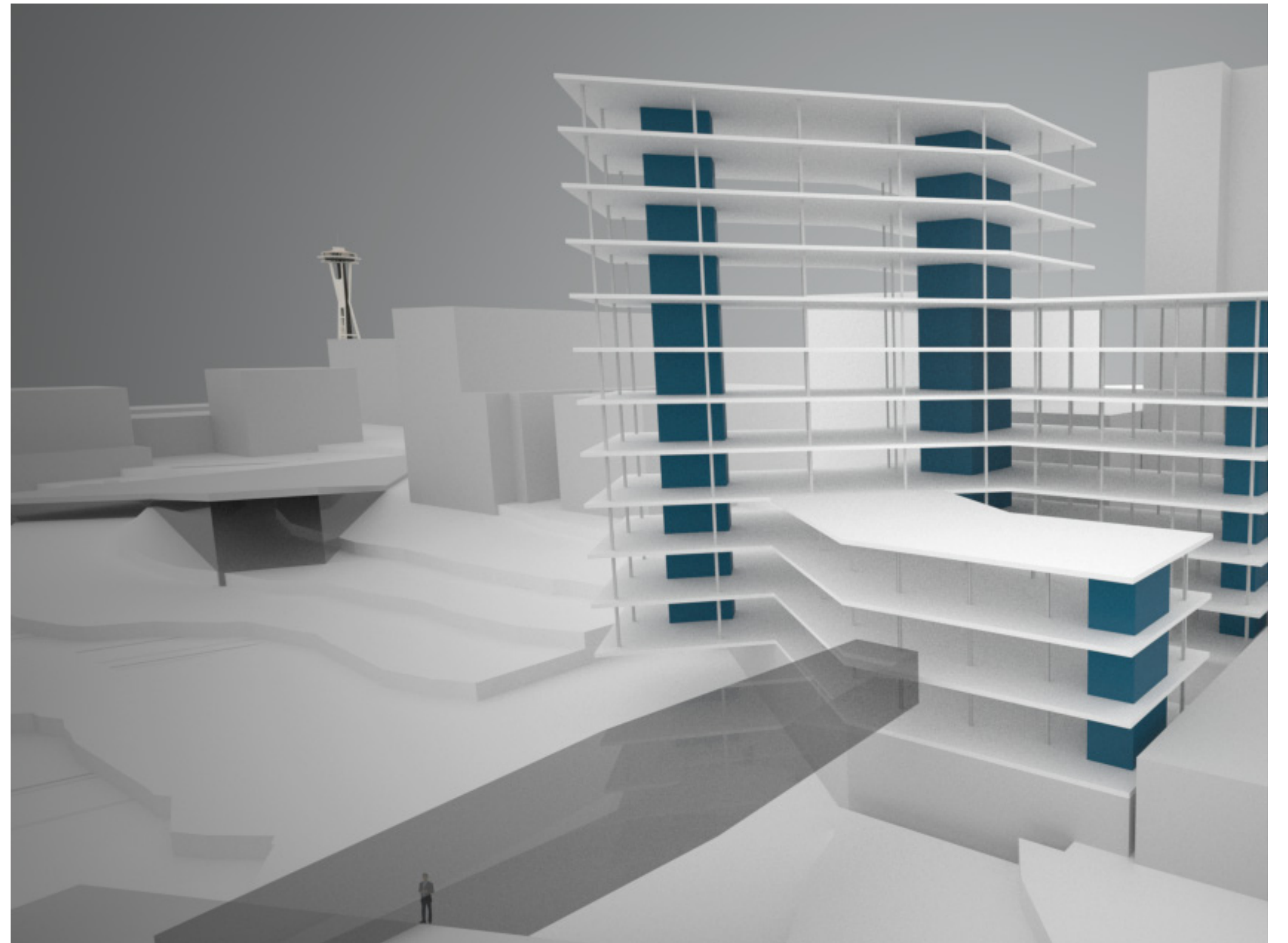
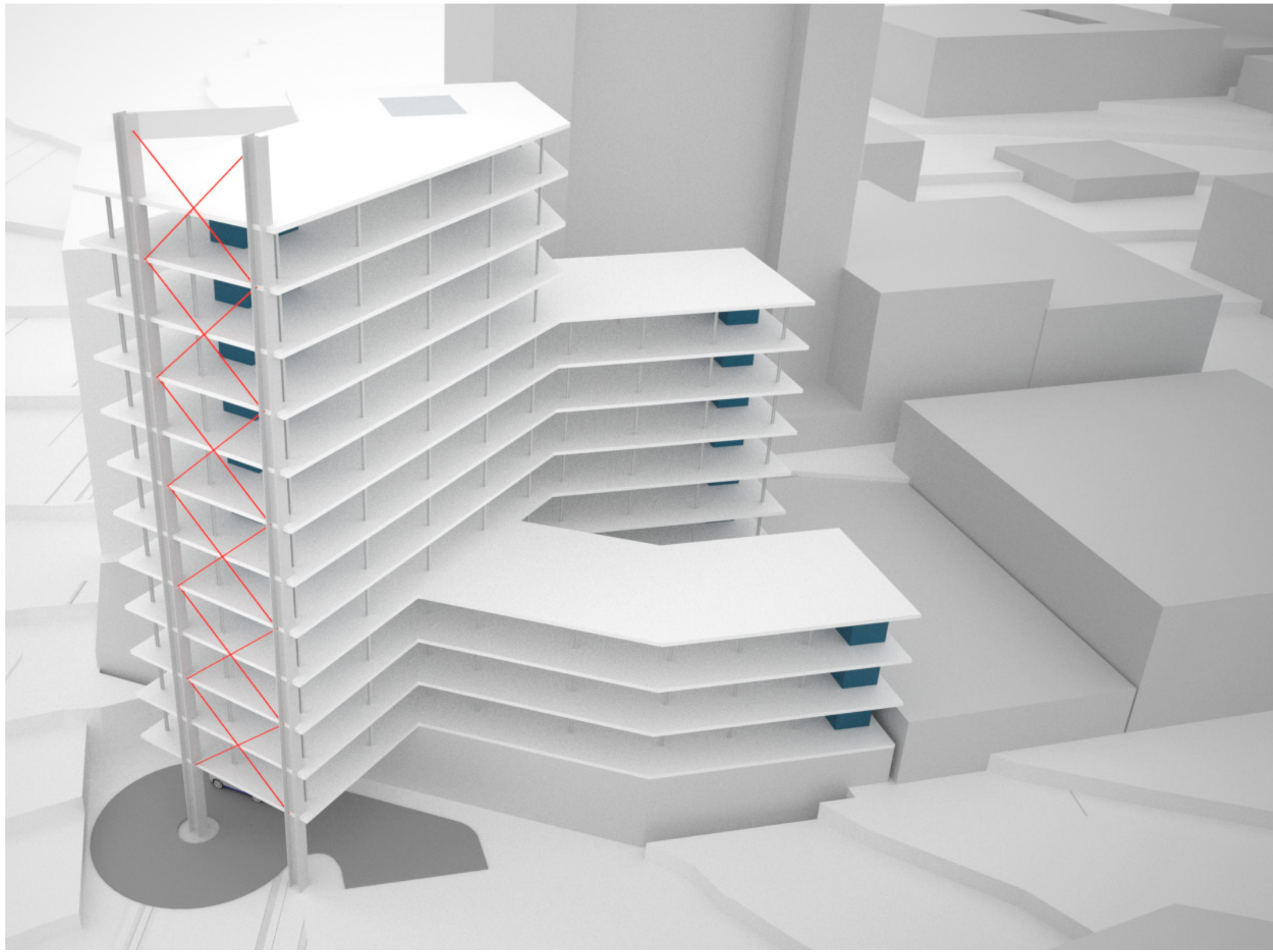


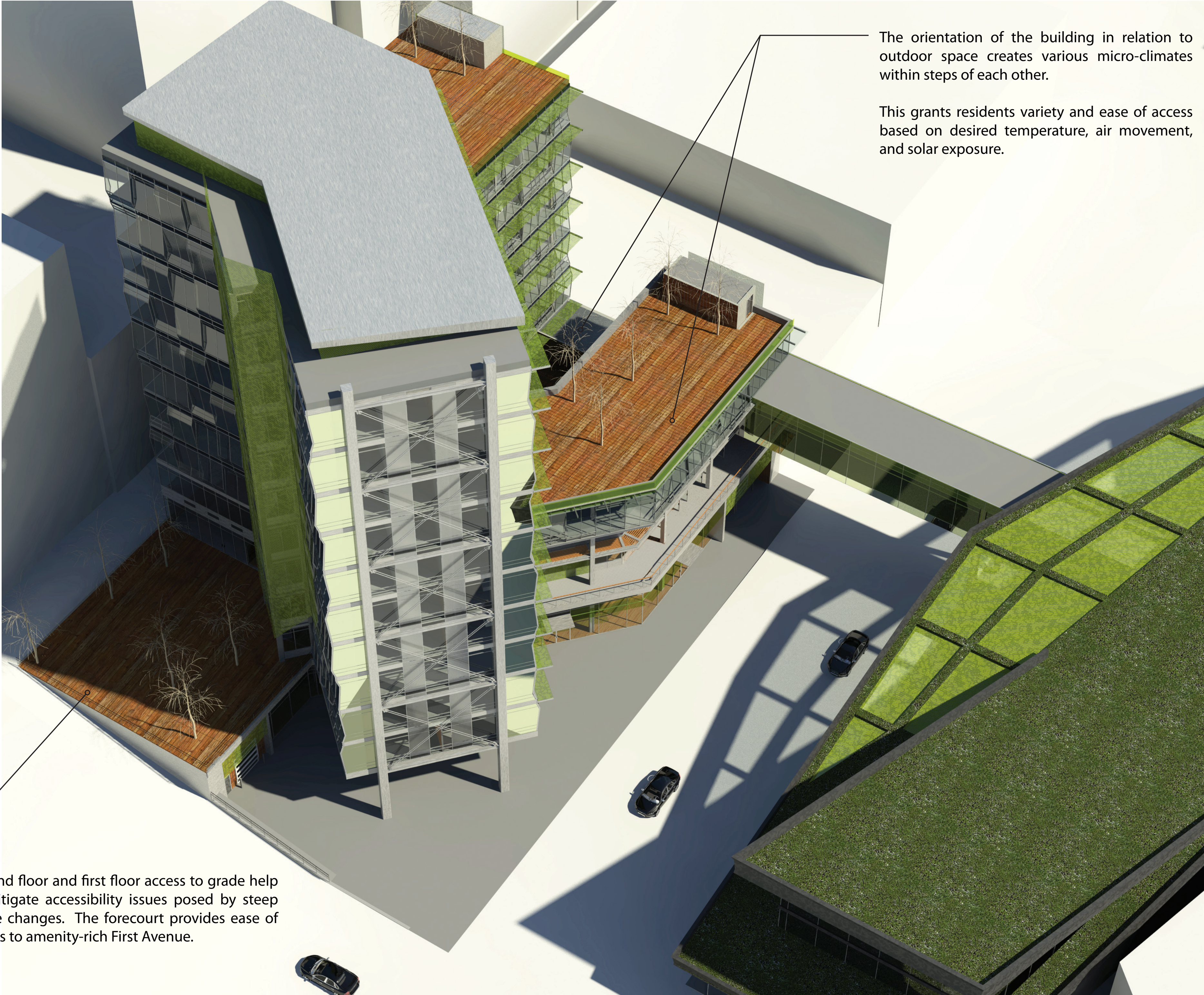












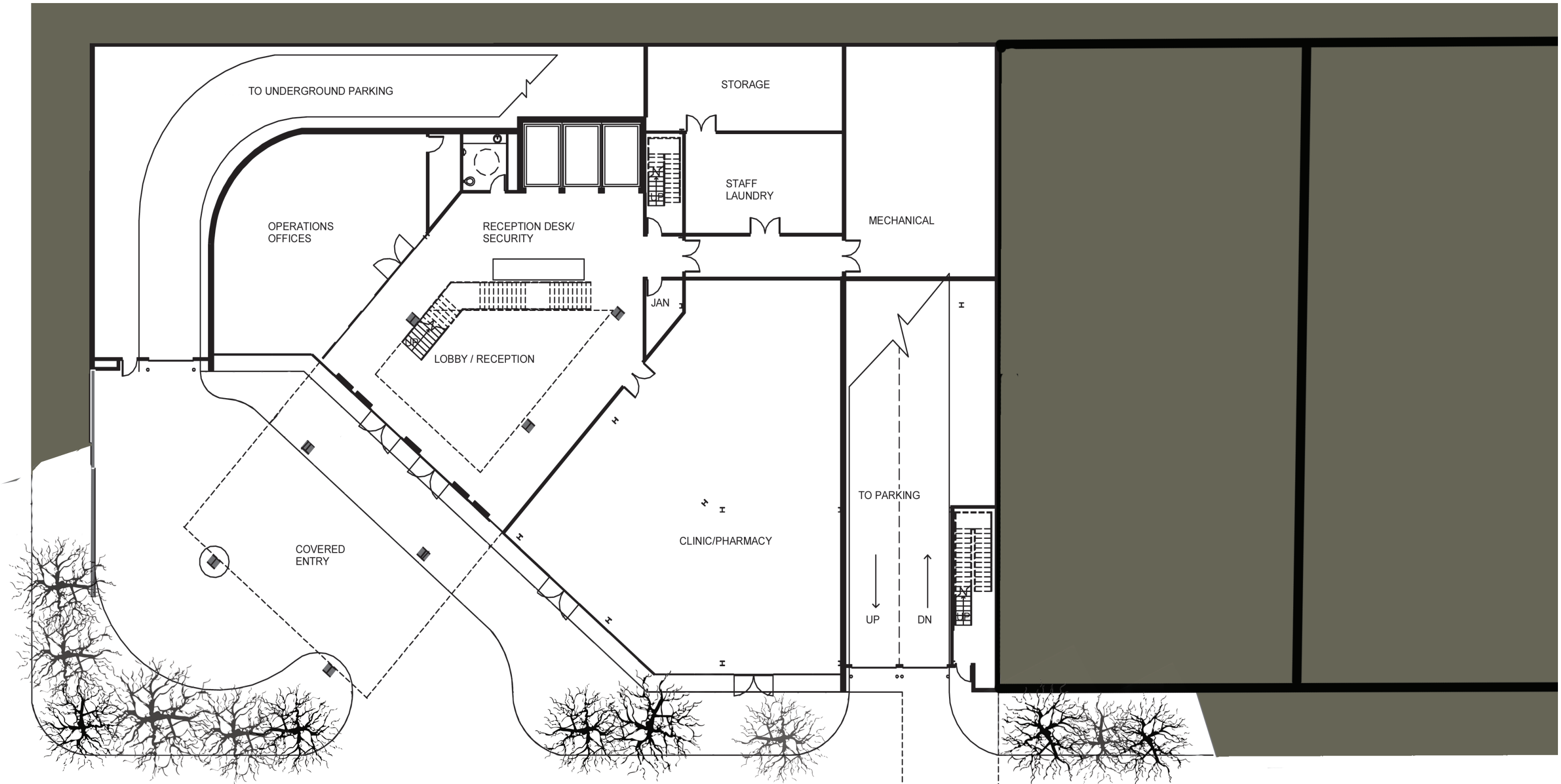
The orientation of the building in relation to outdoor space creates various micro-climates within steps of each other.

This grants residents variety and ease of access based on desired temperature, air movement, and solar exposure.

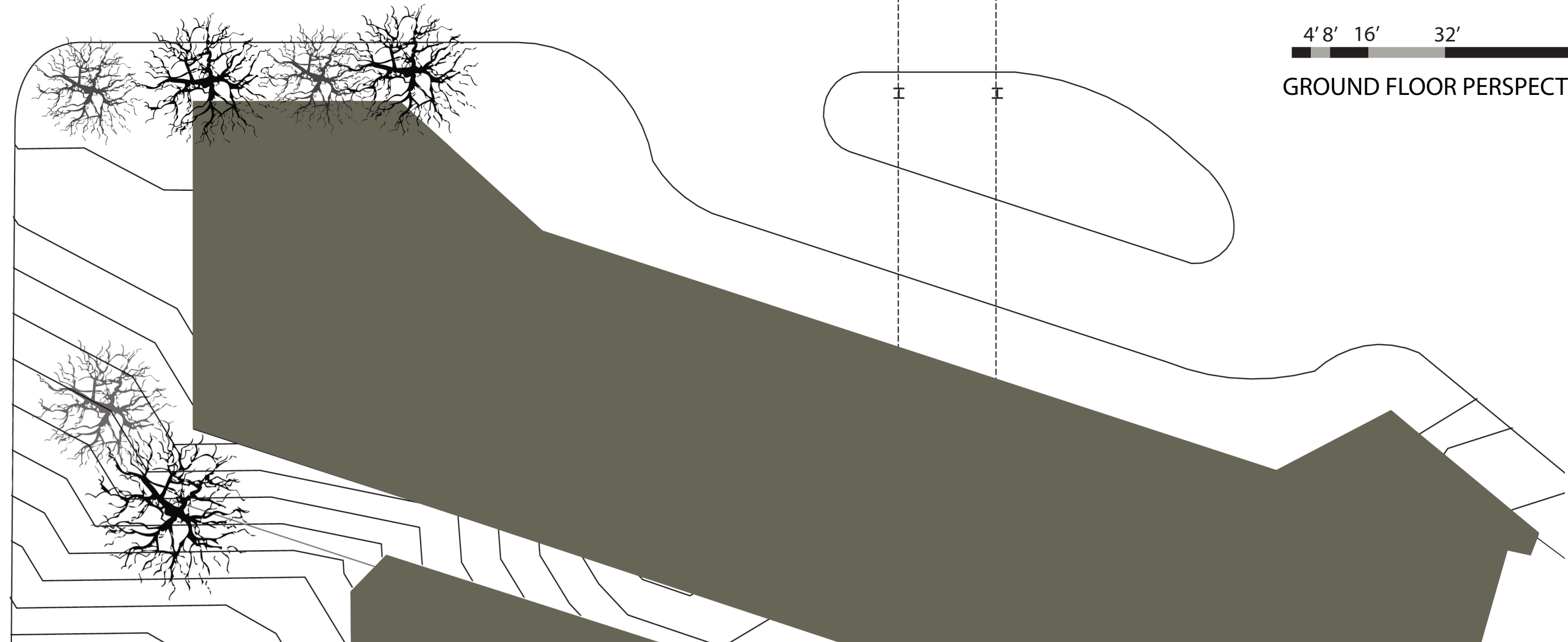
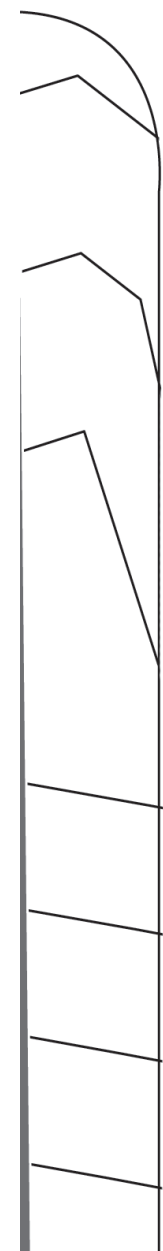
Ground floor and first floor access to grade help to mitigate accessibility issues posed by steep grade changes. The forecourt provides ease of access to amenity-rich First Avenue.



BELL STREET

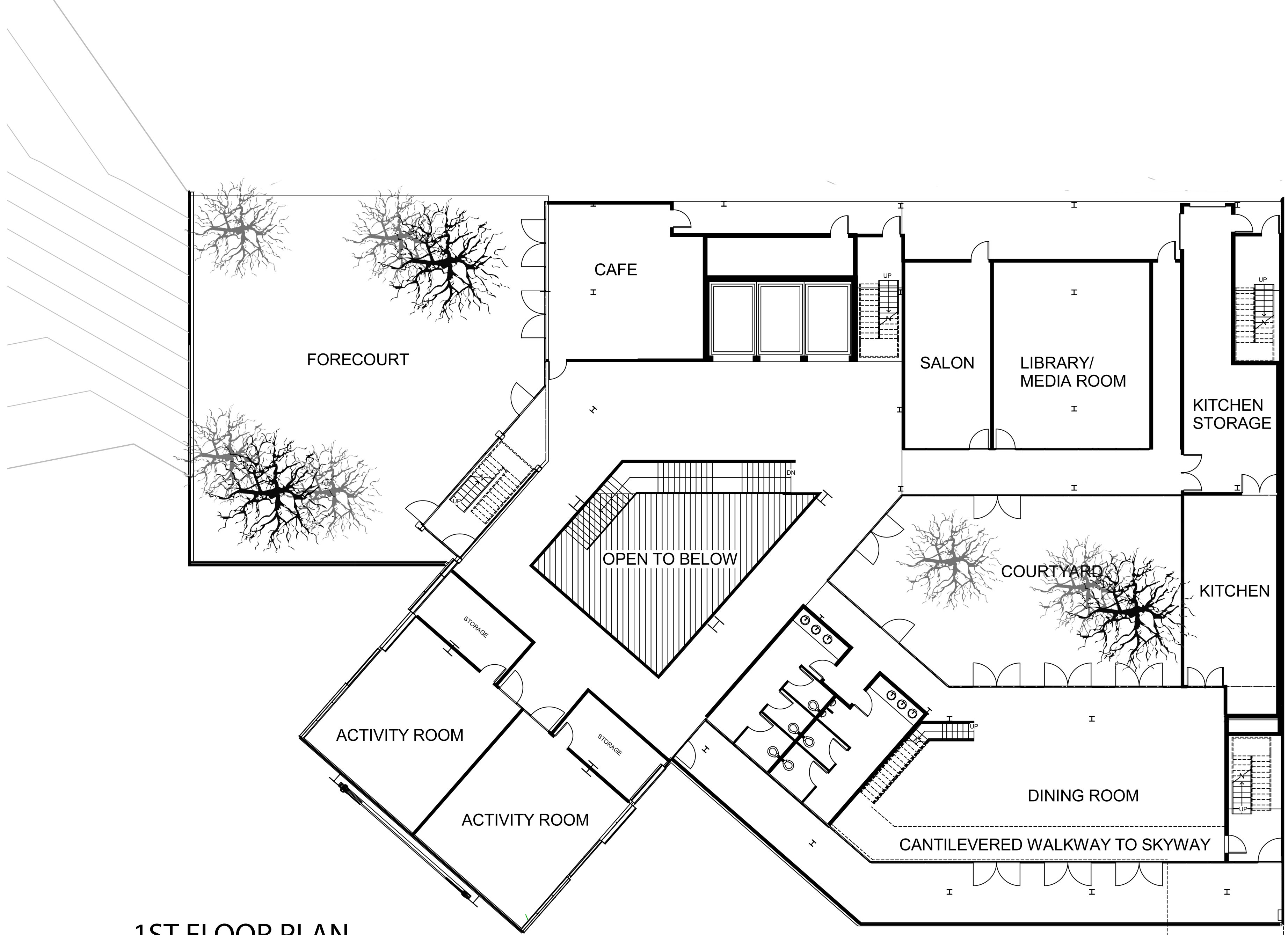


WESTERN AVENUE

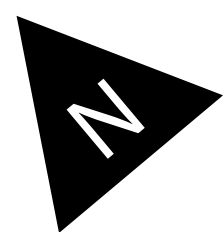


4' 8' 16' 32' 64'

GROUND FLOOR PERSPECTIVE

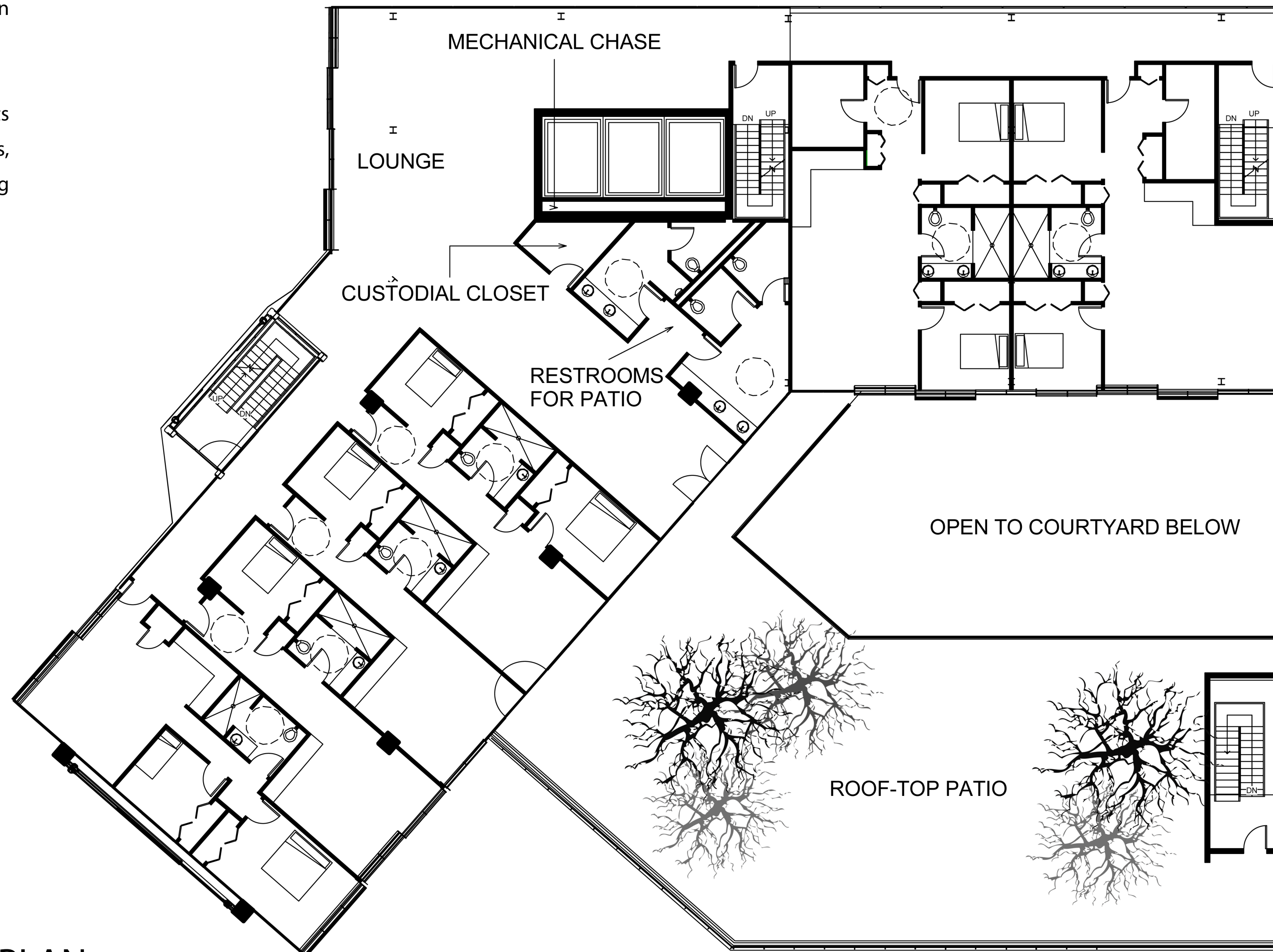


1ST FLOOR PLAN

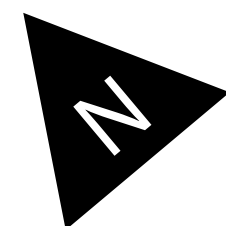


In a rainy climate, access to sun is especially desirable . Single loaded corridors ensure all tenants will have access to solar exposure--even those with restricted mobility.

Additionally, since many residents walk as part of exercise routines, single loading creates more inviting space in which to do so.



4TH FLOOR PLAN

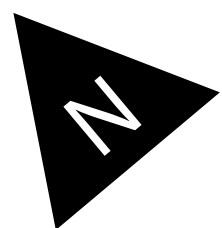


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5TH FLOOR PLAN



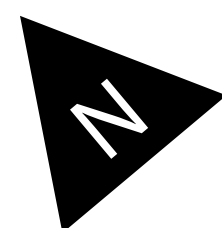


In a rainy climate, access to sun is especially desirable . Single loaded corridors ensure all tenants will have access to solar exposure--even those with restricted mobility.

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10TH FLOOR PLAN





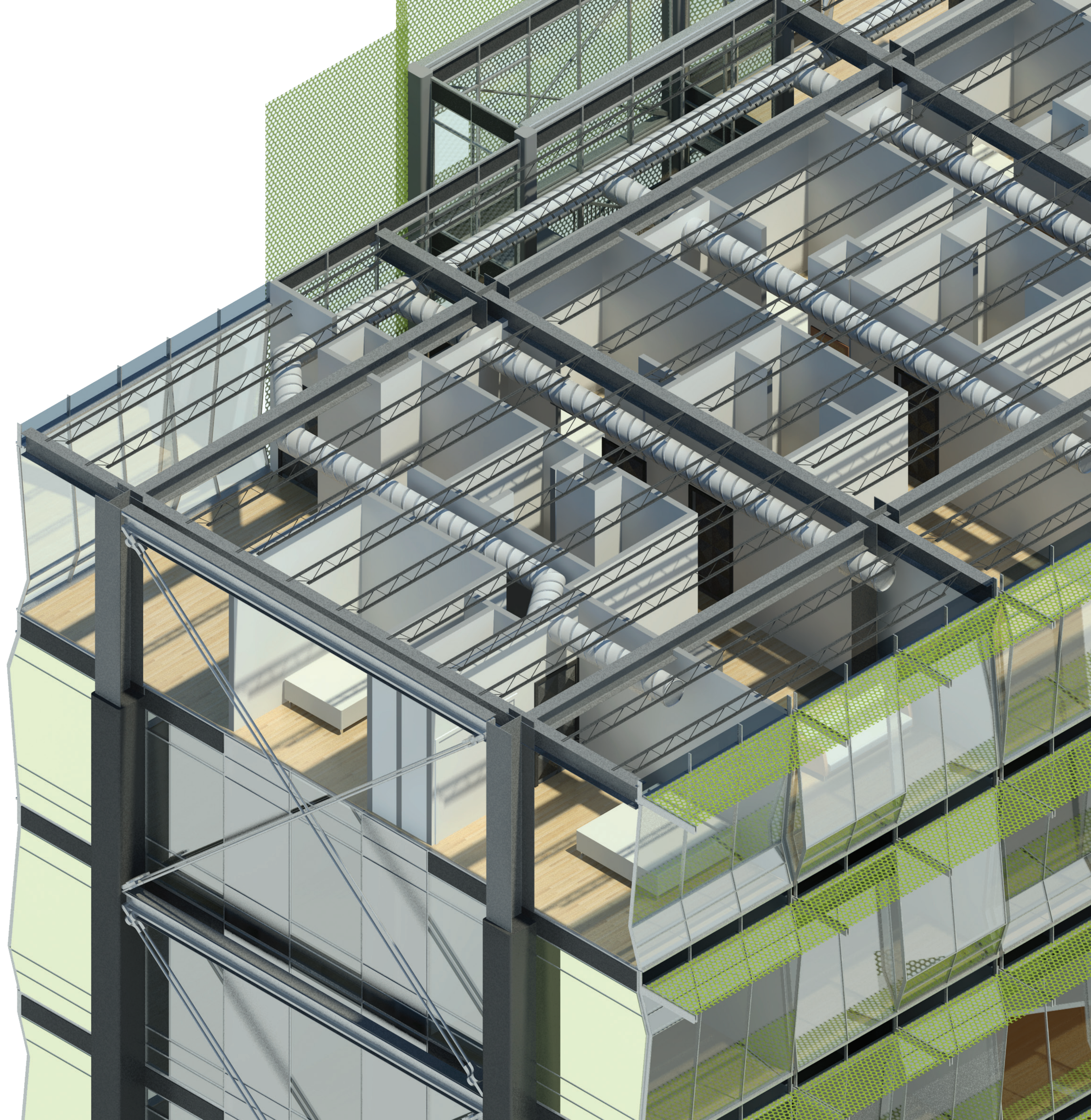




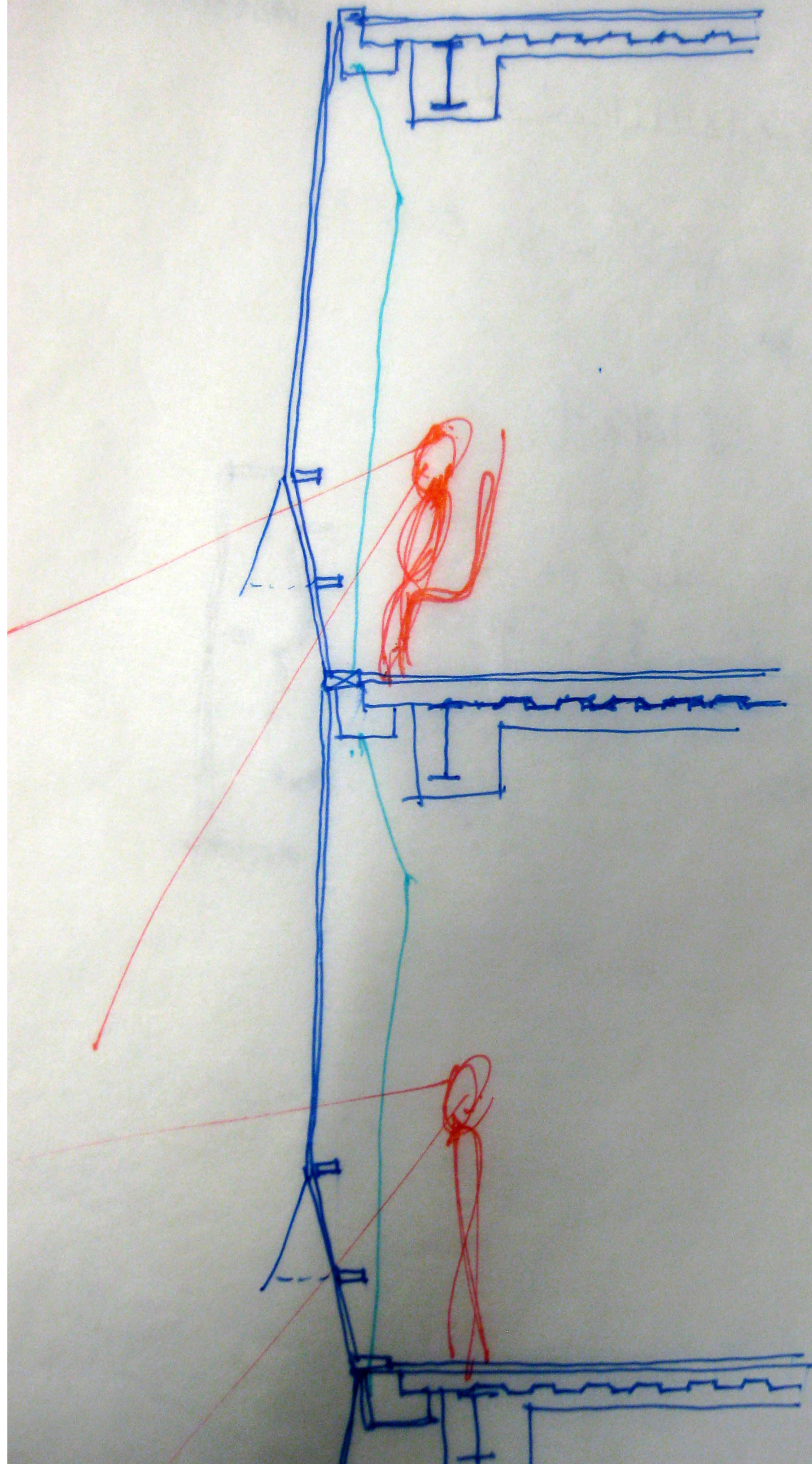


Glazing details that promote autonomy: the undulation of the glass within the units allow for a greater field of view than typical perpendicular glazing. Not only are views increased up and down, but also side to side.

Even from a seated position, residents can visually engage with the street, sky, and sun.











# PROBLEM STATEMENT

Could altering how the built environment responds to the need for care-based living foster new relationships among family, community, and a growing elderly population?



Thank You  
Questions, Comments, Critique?

