The focus of this thesis project looks into how a site and structure influence a person's ability to experience the recovery process. As a designer, it has been a goal to change the perceptions of those with addiction and to educate the public on the important subject that is present everywhere where humans exist. It will be important to design with senses and emotions in mind, in addition to natural elements in producing a comfortable place to recover.

The proposed site sits along the Northern shore of Lake Superior, about six miles northeast of Two Harbors, MN. The site is a delicate place set in nature; soothing and healing for the mind, body and soul. Duluth is the largest city in the area and this recovery center would serve the upper arrowhead region of Minnesota as well as a community and educational center for the population along the North Shore of Lake Superior.

Standing within the site, it stands open to the East revealing a breeze that comes off the lake and a beautiful sunrise each morning. There is something wonderful about living in a place that is living and breathes through cycles; such as a place like this one. Looking North, South, or West, you stand alone and hidden from the roadway and nearby residences and lake cabins. Being easily accessible, its a wonderfully hidden place.

The direct site lays between MN HWY 61 to the West and Lake Superior to the East. The area has great diversity in topography with the site itself remaining relatively flat, with its gradual slope towards the water. The density of wood and timber around the site is a powerful attribute and one I felt important for the senses all around.

KEYWORDS: Recovery, restoration, rehabilitation, addiction, hope, healing.
DESIGN JUSTIFICATION: Recovery & Therapy Approach

INTRODUCTION

This project explores the design of a residential rehabilitation center that focuses on recovery and therapy through the use of vernacular connections. The design aims to provide a sense of home for each individual through the use of materials and the creation of space through positive, negative, void, or mass. The successful design of a secure and safe environment for patients and residents to focus on their health, healing, and wellness is essential. The design takes into account the successful design of safe and secure environments for patients with addiction or mental illness, as well as the importance of being present in a strong, nature-driven space both indoors and outdoors. The building aims to remind guests and patients of their surroundings and to take advantage of their sensory engagement with the surrounding outdoors.

RATIONALE

The design process involves understanding the potential spaces and positions of each unit within the building to ensure the successful design of a secure and safe environment for patients and residents. The design takes into account the successful design of safe and secure environments for patients with addiction or mental illness, as well as the importance of being present in a strong, nature-driven space both indoors and outdoors. The building aims to remind guests and patients of their surroundings and to take advantage of their sensory engagement with the surrounding outdoors.

FINESSES & MATERIALS

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MATERIAL

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STABILITY & HARMONY

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DESIGN DECISIONS: Recovery & Therapy Approach

- Shared living areas: Designed to encourage community and strengthen relationships, allowing patients to build a sense of belonging and feel connected with others.
- Private bedrooms: Ensures privacy and allows patients to feel safe and comfortable, which is crucial for recovery.
- Sensory engagement: Incorporates elements that stimulate the senses, such as natural light, sound, and fragrance, to promote relaxation and well-being.
- Spatial strategy: Designed to facilitate reconnection with oneself and the environment, promoting self-reflection and personal growth.

SITE MAP

- Location: Lake Superior, Minnesota
- Site: 25 MN HWY 61
- Topography: Rolling landscape with views of Lake Superior
- Climate: Temperate climate with cold winters and warm summers
- Access: Easy access to major roadways and public transportation

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DEVELOPMENTAL STRATEGY

- Community spaces: Designed to foster social interaction and provide a sense of community for patients.
- Private therapy rooms: Ensure privacy and confidentiality, allowing for focused and therapeutic sessions.
- Sensory engagement: Incorporates elements that stimulate the senses, such as natural light, sound, and fragrance, to promote relaxation and well-being.
- Spatial strategy: Designed to facilitate reconnection with oneself and the environment, promoting self-reflection and personal growth.

DESIGN DILEMMAS

- Balancing privacy and community: The design aims to create spaces that allow for both individual privacy and communal interaction.
- Creating a sense of home: The design seeks to create a nurturing environment that feels like a home away from home.
- Harnessing the power of nature: The design incorporates elements of nature to create a healing environment.

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