**HEALING THROUGH ARCHITECTURE**

What is the ideal environment to help patients and their families battling cancer heal emotionally and physiologically through architecture and design?

Designers play an important and specific role in the design of health-related facilities. Specifically, for diseases such as cancer which has its own criteria within the field of health care design. Besides the physical equipment and correlating spaces required, there are psychological, emotional, and philosophical requirements. Designing environments for the care and treatment of people with cancer requires a holistic and sustainable approach, encompassing empathy, operational knowledge, and creative design thinking from the architects, interior designers, engineers, and client team (Scheer, 2014). Cancer is one of the most frightening and stress-inducing diagnoses a person can receive. By providing a space that can help in even the slightest would be beneficial to people battling cancer.

**WHAT AND WHY**

- The emphasis of my project is to focus on the emotional, mental, and spiritual wellbeing of patients with cancer.
- This design must show that there is no specific right way to heal or treat someone. Every person is different and requires different needs.
- I want to design something that is worthwhile and would lessen the weight on patients with cancers' shoulders.
- Currently, this is a small niche in the architecture world and if something like this was designed and built, it would be the first of its kind in the U.S.

**SITE: DULUTH, MN**

**STRENGTHS:**

- Close to grocery stores and pharmacies.
- Within walking distance of two hospitals and a surgery center.
- Nearby a secluded landscape area.
- Right across the street.

**WEAKNESSES:**

- Right next to fairly heavy traffic flow (pedestrian and auto).
- Very small site.
- Not a very great view to the NE.

This site was chosen for its proximity to nature and other medical facilities. One of the key aspects of the project was to have the facility be staffed and filled with patients. Another requirement was that there needed to be ample working space (or a set of rooms for the patients and staff to visit) throughout the site. The site is within walking distance to multiple grocery stores, First Lutheran Church, St. Luke’s Hospital, and the Duluth Rose Garden is right across the street.

**PROCESS & RESEARCH**

**OUTDOOR AREA**

- A CVS and Walgreen’s, St. Luke’s Hospital, and First Lutheran Church.
- Multiple grocery stores.
- Walking distance to a secluded landscape area.
- Requirement was that there needed to be a larger population of people for the facility to be staffed and filled with patients. Another requirement was that there needed to be ample working space (or a set of rooms for the patients and staff to visit) throughout.

**SITE PLAN**

**DESIGN DECISIONS**

- Kitchen applied as a home.
- Colors people feel more secure in spaces with warm colors. Cooler colors give the perception of a more open space and are recommended in areas with limited access to natural light or in small spaces with low ceilings.
- Curved walls should be considered because curved space allows for the floor to curve and they also appear more private and not as busy.
- Carpeting/flooring is comfortable and inviting but can be hard for maintenance and wheelchair navigation. Carpet should only be used in the sitting area. Wood/flooring should be used for the passages.

**FLOOR PLAN**

**SECTION CUT**

**EAST ELEVATION**

**SOUTH ELEVATION**

**CONSTRUCTION SPECIFICATIONS**

- Thermal air layer 2” plywood sheathing
- Plywood siding 3” clapboard
- Asphalt shingles
- Insulation
- Center focused
- Radial or centralized organization
- Movement configuration
- Furniture, physical elements
- Design elements
- Small elements
- Colors schemes
- Textures, naturals
- Choice and control
- Communal kitchen and dining in the middle