



Superior Shores Lakehomes

Lake Superior's Hidden Destination, Two Harbors MN Senior Design Thesis Melissa Schlukebier 2005



Superior Shores Lakehomes Two Harbors MN

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Project Introduction

Project Type

The Superior Shores Lakehomes are in an area of northern Minnesota that has been heavily developed in the past century. But it has been the push to attract more visitors to the area through the development of modern amenity rich resorts that has added enormous stress to the environment and ecological well-being of the region. This resort gives travelers the ability to go to an upscale all encompassing destination and connect with nature and other visitors on a very unique north shore property. Superior Shores Lakehomes provides a connection between the ecology of the land and the people who want to be there. This is a privately owned, association managed ecotourist destination in Northern Minnesota that isn't a state forest or park system.

Concept

The Northern Shore of Lake Superior had a very hardy and healthy ecosystem until the development of a large percentage of its coastline. Lakehomes and resorts which developers have created have taken away from the natural features in the area. Park systems and local associations can only go so far when it comes to protecting the land and teaching developers how to respect the natural basin of Lake Superior. A push for increased ecotourism in Minnesota is taking place and developments need to start looking into how they can design ecologically friendly surroundings.

The Superior Shores Lakehomes were originally developed in the early 1920's as Scenic Point Resort and Campground and redevelopment began in the 1980's. The resort grounds now need to be restored again in order to protect the land, shoreline and restoration. There are currently problems with both natural features on the site and what visitors expect when they reach the resort due to confusing advertising and in constant management of the property. There needs to be a comprehensive site management plan developed that will bring balance between the uses that people have while on vacation and what the environment needs in order to remain both healthy and beautiful.

Project Introduction

Project Justification

There are few places where people and nature come together in a balance outside of National and State Parks. In general people don't understand how they can have a healthy relationship with nature and still have all their personal needs met. Efforts for establishing a destination that is good for the environment and visitors are hard to come by outside of back-country backpacking and Ecotourism destinations in remote and exotic locations around the world. This resort wants to provide all the comforts of home without causing further damage to the ecosystem on Lake Superior's shore.

Methodology

In order to be successful in creating a sustainable site plan research must first be done on similar resort properties and shoreline restoration projects. Research should be focused on places where there is either a Great Lake, an Ocean, or other large comparable body of water. Looking at sites that are both natural and highly used will be important to understanding the needs and desires for this site.

Further research will need to be focused on the human experience in a site, animal and plant habitats along the North Shore, and sustainable land use plantings. Creating a site which has low maintenance sustainable qualities without looking unorganized or cluttered is one of the project's main objectives.

The research that is collected for this project will be done in an ongoing fashion. There are going to be times during the inventory, identification of concept, opportunities and constraints, and up to the final refinement of the project where additional research will be needed to discover and develop new ideas.

Project Description

Site Description

Superior Shores Lakehomes is located 1.8 miles northeast of Two Harbors Minnesota on Highway 61. It is in Lake County and lies within Silver Creek Township. This resort lies on 46 acres and is bordered by Superior Shores Resort to the north (a hotel/condominium development), a plot of land which is in a local trust fund and cannot be developed to the south, Highway 61 to the west and to the east Lake Superior. This land, in some ways, looks like a peninsula as it juts into the lake.

This site currently has 7 condo buildings comprised of 46 individual units, 1 maintenance building, 1 cabin used as a rental office, tennis courts, playground, hiking trails, pool and pool house and several storage garages. Approximately 23 acres of land are untouched.

The owners of this site are approximately 180 individuals mainly from Minnesota and Wisconsin who each care about the future of the land, but there are currently no plans to help restore the natural beauty of the land or make it a more usable site. Owners and rental guests come and stay at their lakehomes and visit other tourist destinations in the area such as Gooseberry Falls and Split Rock Light House State Parks.

Major Project Elements

Site Entry
Erosion Control
Trail System
Signage
Ecological Repair and Management
Parking
Future Site Planning
Shoreline Restoration
Highlighting Offsite Views
Site Program Activities
Advertising and Marketing

Project Description

Client Description

The Superior Shores Lakehome Association board of directors is an elected seven member board which is in control of the property, future development, rental pricing, marketing, utilities, insurance, and all site maintenance. This board is made up of owners who oversee the everyday operations of the site. They represent the 180 owners of the 46 units. A majority of owners purchased this property as a seasonal recreation home. Each owner has the option of renting or not renting out their lakehome to defray the cost of ownership. There are currently 25% of the condos which are not in the rental pool.

Superior Shores Lakehome Association has developed a vision statement which sums up who they are. It states that “the Superior Shores Lakehome Association provides its owners a high quality, relaxing North Shore vacation experience, while providing an optional rental program that makes ownership available to the broadest possible group. “

User Description

The renters who stay at Superior Shores Lakehomes have traveled there from all over the country as well as the world. They are looking for an enjoyable vacation destination along the North Shore of Lake Superior. These users of the site either want a destination that they can use as a base as they go out to explore other nearby state parks, hiking trails and tourist destination or they just wish to stay in the relaxing comfort that a lakehome has to offer. They have needs that fluctuate depending on the individual as well as the season.

Throughout the year there are different seasonal activities which bring people onto the site. In the winter months visitors enjoy the North Shore for the snow. Guests want to snowmobile, cross-country ski, down hill ski, or cozy up near a fireplace and watch the snow fly. In the summer, visitors enjoy hiking, agate hunting, bird watching, golfing, fishing on nearby inland lakes and shopping along Highway 61. In the fall months visitors are drawn to the North Country for the brilliant color of the birch and maple trees. Spring time is the slowest of all the tourist seasons for businesses along the North Shore; it can be very quiet and secluded during these few months before the wildflowers and trees bud out.

Project Description

Financial Resources

These condo units have an insurance value of 9.3 million dollars, and the average cost of ownership varies from \$250,000 to \$600,000. There are several categories of ownership, ranging from one-eighth interest to full ownership.

Each month every owner pays dues to the Lakehome Association. Monthly, each unit is responsible for \$400 and these dues go towards maintenance, landscaping, garbage removal, water and sewage, snow removal and insurance for all the buildings and the common property.

Goals and Performance Requirements

The goal of this project is to bridge the mission statement of the association together with nature and the new face of ecotourism in Minnesota.

Some of the goals of this project include establishing areas for both large group gathering and personal nature reflection and redesigning a trail system that relates to the Superior Hiking Trail and/or offers visitors the opportunity to explore the landscape features onsite without traveling long distances. There is also the need for ADA regulations to become incorporated throughout the site to offer a place for people and families affected physical disabilities to explore the North Shore area. Other goals may include, making sure each unit has a more open lake view again, restore animal habitats and natural vegetation creating a sense of place and community on the site, restoring and stabilizing of Lake Superior's shoreline and establishing a unique marketable identity for the Superior Shores Lakehomes which will attract visitors who enjoy and respect ecotourism concepts.

Site Analysis

In this Section:

Site Location
Site Context
Site Map
Region History
Site History
Site Views
Existing Circulation
Climate
Geology
Native Vegetation
Codes and Ordinances
Opportunities and constraints

Site Analysis

Site Location

Superior Shores Lakehomes are a privately owned resort rental property located on the northern shore of Lake Superior. This property is located in Lake County, Minnesota and is part of Silver Creek Township. Superior Shores is located 1.8 miles from Two Harbors, approximately 22 miles from Duluth and 135 miles from the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul.

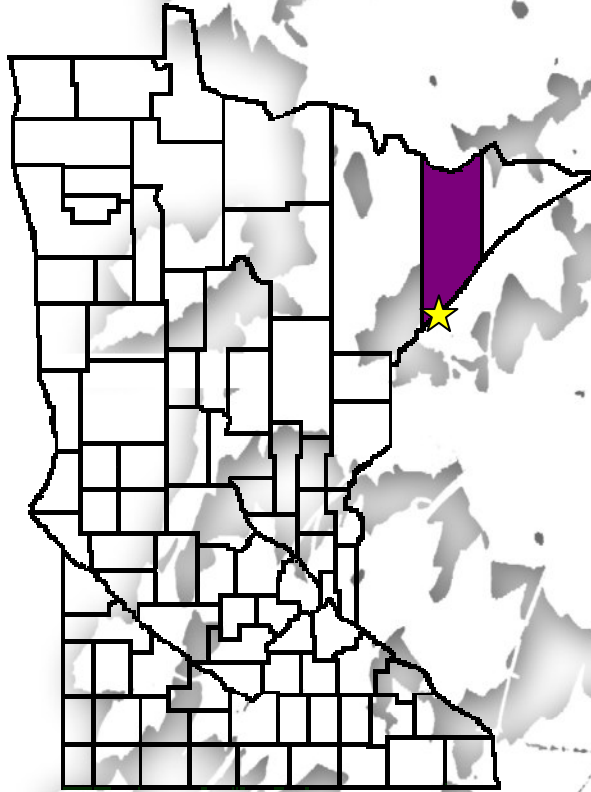


Figure 1- Minnesota Map (Schlukebie2004)



Figure 2- Ariel Photo (Schlukebie2000)



Figure 3- Ariel Photo (Schlukebie2000)

Site Analysis

Site Context

This resort has 46 acres and is bordered by Superior Shores Resort to the north (a hotel/condominium and conference center development), a plot of land which is in a local trust fund and cannot be developed to the south, Highway 61 is to the west and to the east Lake Superior. There is still approximately 23 acres of woods and wetland area on the site. All of the current development has taken place along its main road and the shoreline.

Site Maps

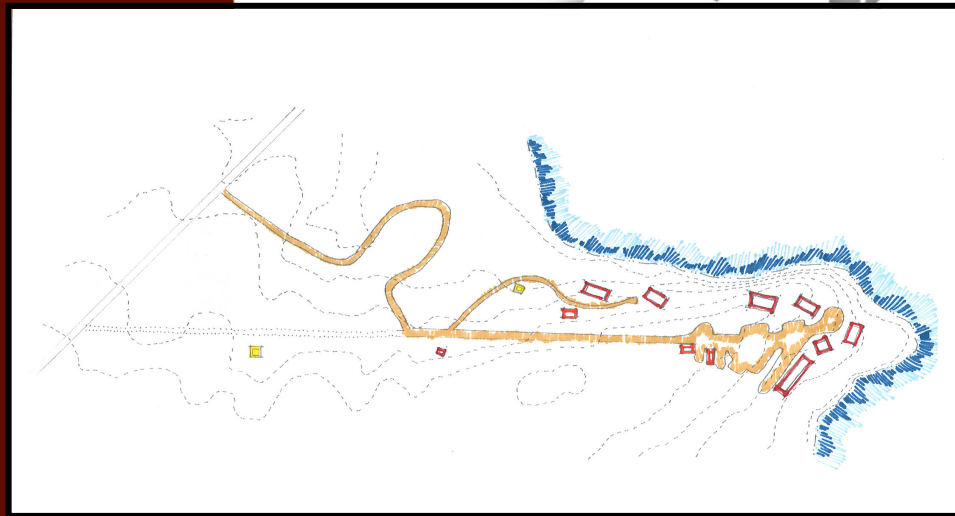


Figure 4- Site Map- Roads and Buildings (Schlukebier 2004)

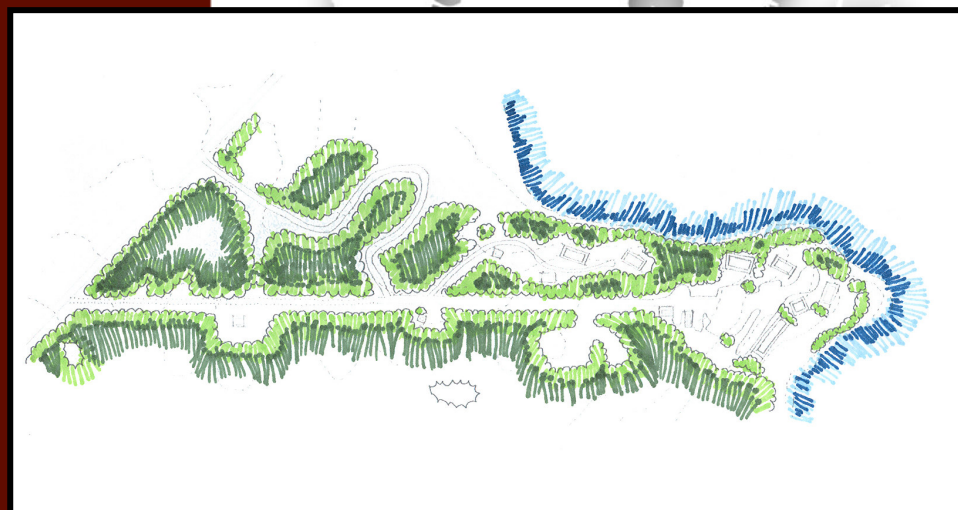


Figure 5- Site Map- Vegetation (Schlukebier 2004)

Site Analysis


Regional History

Two Harbors is the closest town to the site and like many of the places along the north shore of Lake Superior it has a history that is unique. This small community is a port city that was built on the need for a light station in 1872 (Two Harbors, 2004). The men who founded the city left their families and built small homes up and down the shore from Two Harbors. The city was started with one church, civil organizations, a bank, school, and a few business, some of which are still in operation in the downtown. In 1888 the county seat moved from Beaver Bay to Two Harbors. Shortly after the international highway was under construction and tourism became the fourth largest industry for the city (Community, 2004).

Site Analysis

Site History

The Superior Shores Lakehome property was originally developed as a 'Ma and Pa' resort and campground in the early 1920's. Scenic Point Resort and Campground was built with 10 cabins and a few utility buildings. It eventually grew to include campsites for both RV's and tents as well. Major redevelopment to portions of the site began in the mid-1980s under the direction and control of the owner Delray Pearson and his son, Mark. They expanded the site to what it is today which includes 7 lakehome buildings containing 46 units, 2 outdoor pools with utility houses, a lodge with 60 suites, an indoor pool, conference center, gift shop, and a restaurant. At various periods during this development period the whole property, originally encompassing fifty plus acres, also included a rental office building/cabin, as well as a pole barn and several detached garage buildings. Currently, the lakehome property still includes one remaining original 1920's cabin, which is not used, as well as an old fish house located near one of the parking areas. The buildings on the property were all built and oriented to capitalize on the views to the lake and the adjacent bay area. This was true for the original cabins and held true as the property was redeveloped. 'No unit should have a blocked view of the lake' according to Mark Pearson. The original owners redeveloped the property in phases and established separate management boards for the lakehomes and the more commercial hotel (condominium resort) and conference center. For several years the property was managed and maintained, in conjunction with the two established boards, by the original developer through his business operated as Scenic Shores Properties. When Scenic Shores Properties, under the ownership of Mark Pearson, the son, fell into financial difficulties management of the rental operations, property management and control of the commercial businesses (the restaurant and conference center) was transferred to Blue Waters Development Corporation (BWDC). In 1998 the Lakehome Association board terminated its property management contract with BWDC and has been self-managed ever since. Blue Waters Development Corporation had remained the only rental manager on the property until 2004 when the Lakehome Association Board launched its own rental program managed through Scenic Shores Properties now under new ownership.



Additionally, the Board has hired Scenic Shores Properties to provide property management services as well. The Superior Shores Lakehome Association has control over 46 acres of the land for the 46 townhouses, provides an optional rental program and provides security/access to the site.

Site Analysis

Site Views

There are 7 buildings each one of which should have a million dollar view. However due to the lack of regular tree maintenance there are several buildings whose units 10 years ago could see the lake but now due to the thick undergrowth growing do not have much lake view left. Other notable features on the site include hiking trails, 2 remaining buildings from the original 1920's construction, a varied rock shelf to cliff shoreline and several views to adjacent properties and Lake Superior.

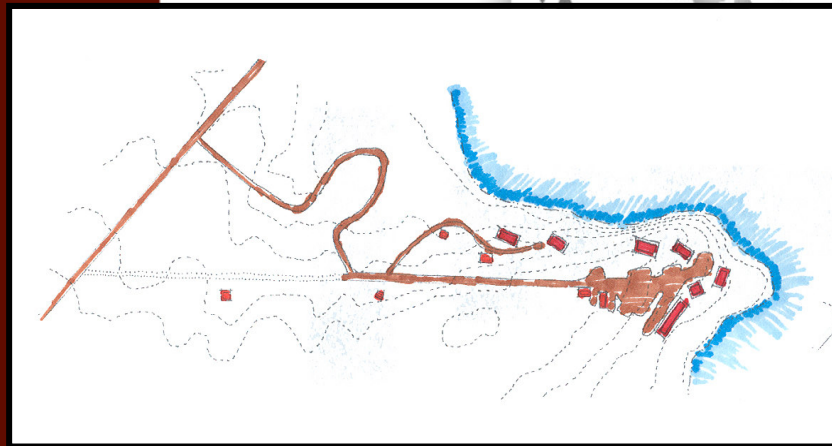


Figure 6- Site Map (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 7- Shipping Boats in the Harbor (Schlukebier 2004)

Superior Shores Lakehomes Two Harbors MN

Site Analysis

Building 1 Built in 1985

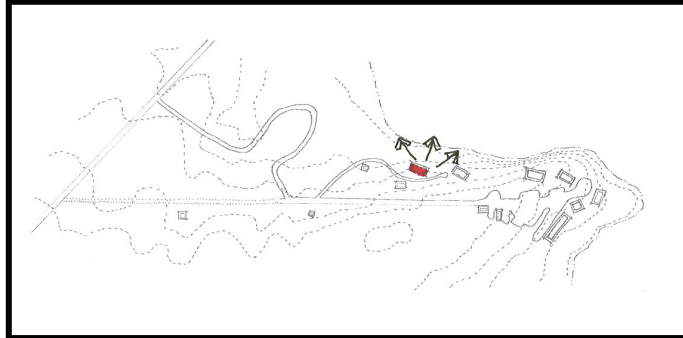


Figure 8- View 1 (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 9- View 2 (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 10- View 3 (Schlukebier 2004)

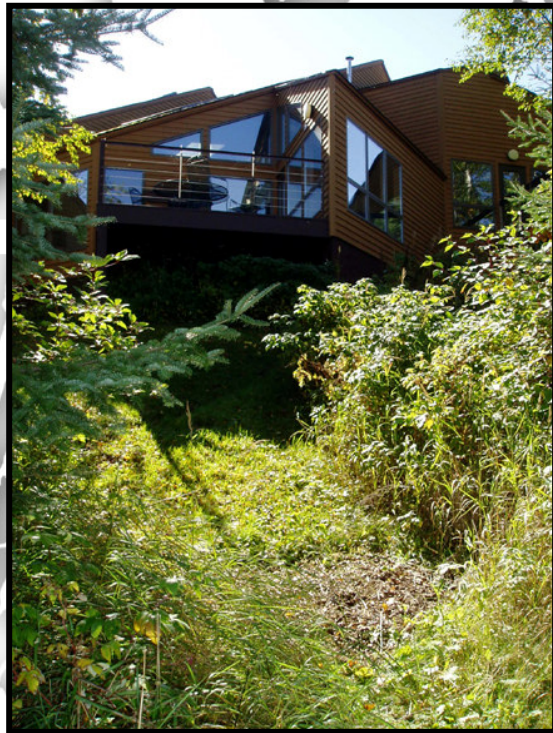


Figure 11- Building 1 (Schlukebier 2004)

Site Analysis

Building 2 Built in 1986

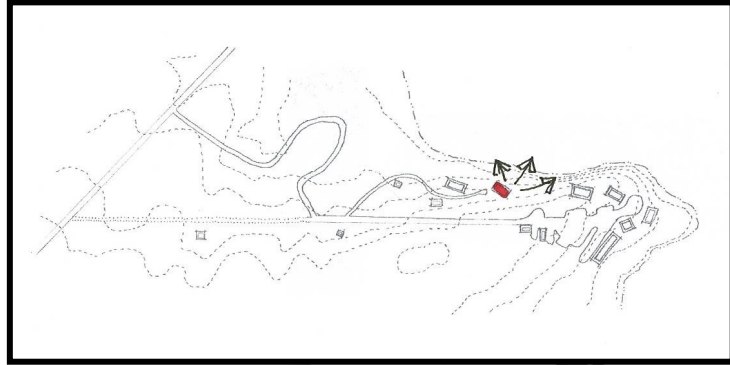


Figure 12- View 1 (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 13- View 2 (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 14- View 3 (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 15- Building 2 (Schlukebier 2004)

Site Analysis

Building 3 Built in 1987-88

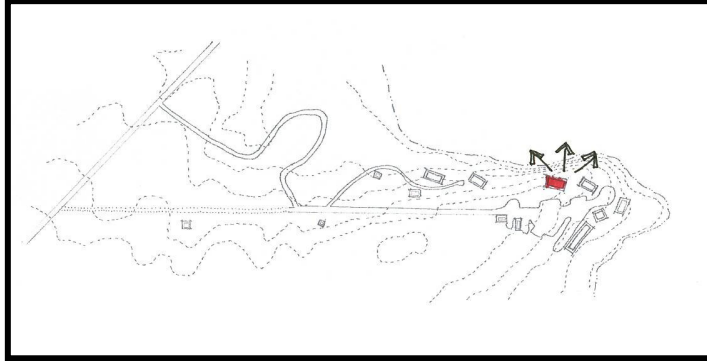


Figure 16- View 1 (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 17- View 2 (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 18- View 3 (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 19- Building 3 (Schlukebier 2004)

Site Analysis

Building 4 Built in 1989

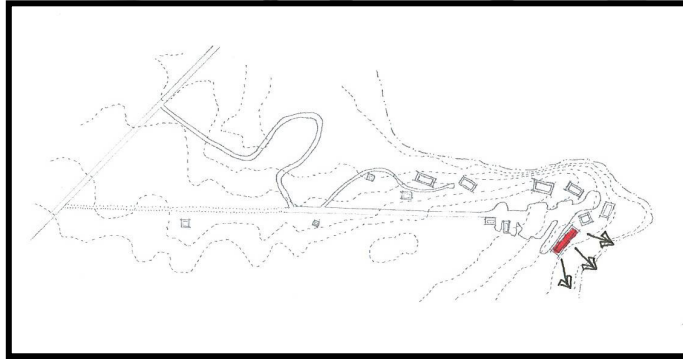


Figure 20- View 1 (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 21- View 2 (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 22- View 3 (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 23- Building 4 (Schlukebier 2004)

Site Analysis

Building 5 Built in 1994-95

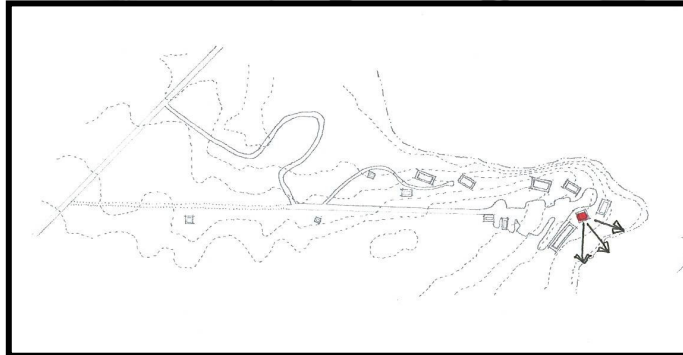


Figure 24- View 1 (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 25- View 3 (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 26- View 3 (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 27- Building 5 (Schlukebier 2004)

Site Analysis

Building 6 Built in 1991

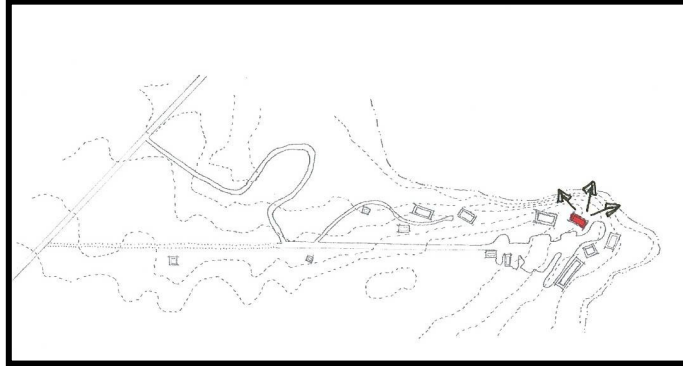


Figure 28- View 1 (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 29- View 2 (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 30- View 3 (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 31- Building 6 (Schlukebier 2004)

Site Analysis

Building 7 Built in 1992

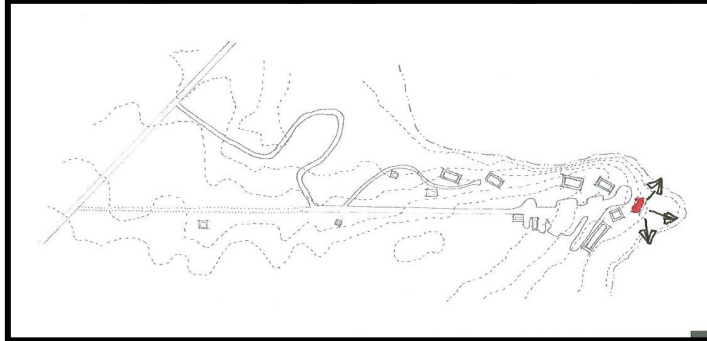


Figure 32- View 1 (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 33- View 2 (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 34- View 3 (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 35- Building 7 (Schlukebier 2004)

Site Analysis

Other views on the site

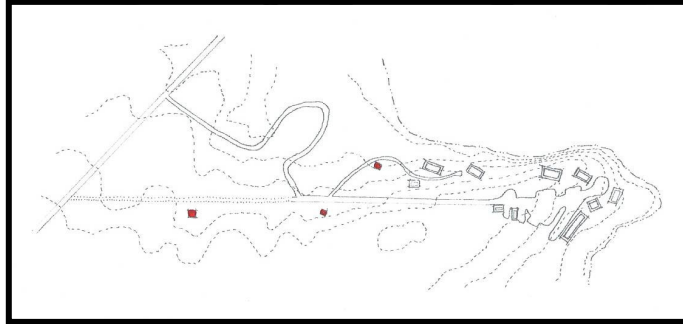


Figure 36- Office (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 37- Maintenance Building (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 38- Pool Building (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 39- Shoreline (Schlukebier 2004)

Site Analysis

Existing Circulation

Circulation

Two main types of circulation exist together on site. The first is vehicular which includes use of the main entry drive from Highway 61 through the adjacent property, dead end parking lots, inconvenient parking spaces, limited garage access, and a gravel maintenance road. These vehicle pathways intersect each other at random. Pedestrian circulation is the second type of circulation on site. Visitors walking the site have two choices for walking – to use the same narrow roadways as cars, which don't offer any separation from vehicle traffic, or to use mostly unmarked and worn foot paths which may provide chance encounters with wildlife or come perilously close to steep cliff edges. The weathering effects of wind, pounding waves and natural erosion impact and undermine the safety of these existing footpaths. Pedestrians who venture out to the highway will find access to the Superior Hiking Trail across the road.

There is also pedestrian circulation on the site in the form of a small trail which bring guests down through the woods along the cliff of the lake and then out onto the point. This system is very close to the drop off in several places and also can't always be found easily. This trail is not planned or managed in any way. There is another system of trails along the south side of the property which has been maintained sporadically. The new property managers hired in 2004 have been charged with installing signage and re-establishing the trails. And, there is also one stair case down to the ledge rock shore line on the south east edge of the site. This makes it easier for owners and guests to be able to go out on the rocks and explore that area of the site.

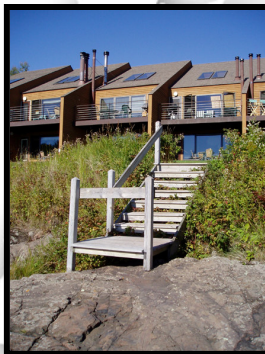


Figure 40- Steps (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 41- Hiking Trail (Schlukebier 2004)

Site Analysis

Climate

Precipitation:

The total annual precipitation ranges from 28 to 30 inches, about 40% of which occurs during the growing season. The growing season ranges from approximately 121 to 135 days, with the longest growing season along the shore of Lake Superior (North Shore, 2004). The growing season on Lake Superior is about 10 days longer than at the equivalent latitude, but 6 miles inland. Lake effect increases the amount of snowfall by about 10 inches within 5 miles of Lake Superior shoreline, but a similar trend is not apparent in the annual precipitation data.

Temperature Extremes:

Along Lake Superior's shores there are several things that are climatically different from the rest of the region and one of these is certainly the temperature. Lake Superior is such a large lake that it is able to act more like an ocean so the summer temperatures are lower than around the area and the winter temperatures are slightly higher (North Shore, 2004).

Monthly averages:

January- 16

February- 22

March- 33

April- 48

May- 62

June- 71

July - 77

August- 74

September- 64

October- 52

November- 35

December- 21

In Degrees Fahrenheit
(North Shore, 2004)



Figure 42- Ice Rocks (Schlukebier 2001)

Site Analysis

Geology

Bedrock Geology:

Glacial drift is thin over the entire subsection, and bedrock is exposed or near the surface in large areas (Wold, 1982). The underlying bedrock consists of Upper Precambrian, basalt, rhyolite, gabbro, diabase, anorthosite, granite, sandstone, and shale (North Shore, 2004).

Soil:

The soils are developed from rocky, red tills of the Superior lobe- textures range from sand to clay. Loams and sandy loams are the most common soil and textures on the moraines which occupy most of the subsection. The Highland Flutes, along the eastern edge of the subsection, have a predominance of thin soil over bedrock and clay soils (North Shore, 2004).

Hydrology:

Lakes make up 2-3 percent of the subsection- there are 20 lakes larger than 160 acres in size; 17 of these are located on Highland Moraine. Numerous short streams, 10-15 miles long, lead directly from the highland to the shores of the Lake Superior. Most of these streams have water falls near the shoreline (DNR, 2004).

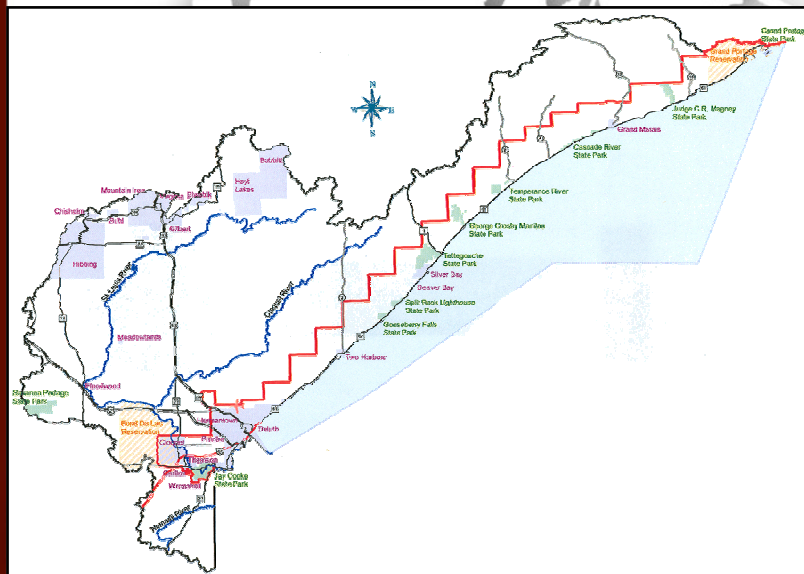


Figure 43- Watershed map (DNR 2004)

Site Analysis

Environmental Concerns

The environmental conditions of this site are very highly regarded and are generally good. However, three areas exist which could use improvement including the old septic fields and tanks, drainage from the parking lots, and the current swimming pool location. Many birch trees have been lost or are dying due to birch borer and disease. A reforestation project, beyond the scope of this project, should also be considered to provide for the continued beauty and future enhancement of this site. The old septic tanks and drain fields are no longer needed due to a connection into the city sewer system in 1996. This connection should make it possible for the tanks to be removed and for the land to be restored back to its natural state. (Note: a sewage lift station must remain intact.) The parking lots currently drain into a catch basin which drops down a steep slope and into the lake with little to no filtration and cleaning taking place. The swimming pool is currently built over a natural spring. The constant water flowing from the spring along with the cyclical pattern of freezing and thawing breaks down the concrete walls of the pools and causes tiles to break. In addition, the current hot tub has been rendered unusable due to the effects of the flowing spring waters.

Site Analysis

Codes and Ordinances

Lake County Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Ordinance #12 is currently the document being used for development in Silver Creek Township. There are several sections of this document relevant to this site and project.

- Article 7- Shoreland Zoning Provisions
- Article 8- Hydrology
- Article 14- Residential- Recreational District
- Article 18- Resort- Commercial District
- Article 22- Signs and outdoor lighting

The North Shore Management Plan also has design guidelines for all sites adjacent to Lake Superior.

- Chapter 2 - Public Outreach and Education
- Chapter 3 -Ecosystem Objectives
- Chapter 6 - Habitats in the Lake Superior Basin
- Chapter 9 - Developing Sustainability in the Lake Superior Basin

Site Analysis

Opportunities and Constraints

While there are numerous opportunities on this site, I feel that the complications will come from the constraints and the existing conditions on parts of the site. There are many details that need to be taken into consideration in order to make 180 individual owners satisfied with their property value.

Opportunities & Constraints

Create Community Feeling

Well established client routine

Diverse Landscape Features

Individual Private Ownership

23 areas of untouched land

Shared Access

Lodge / Building Support

Steep and Unstable Slopes

Minnesota's Tourism Campaign

DNR Land protection

Case Studies

In this section:

Gooseberry Falls

Superior Hiking Trail

Weller/ Russell Shoreline Stabilization Project

Larsmont cottages on Lake Superior

Sea Villas of Lutsen

Camp Courage Environmental/ Outdoor Education

Old Faithful Inn

Sea Ranch

Case Studies

Gooseberry Falls, State Park

Gooseberry Falls State Park is a 640 acre park on Lake Superior which follows the mouth of the Gooseberry River back into the wilderness several miles. The park includes trails for hiking to the upper and lower falls, hunting access, picnic grounds, camping areas, and other outdoor activities for guests to enjoy such as animal and bird watching. This park has always been dedicated to bringing people to nature and showing them what had been there in the past. Gooseberry Falls was once used by both Native American Tribes and French Explorers as they passed through the area.

There has been recent restoration done to the site since the development of the new visitor center. Park designers have been working on controlling the erosion on site as well as looking into growing all native plant species. This site is highly trafficked, so seeing animals on site is rare; however possible since there has been a large amount of consideration taken into animal habitat locations and focusing on not disrupting them.



Figure 44- Gooseberry Erosion (Easter 1996)



Figure 45- Gooseberry currently (Schlukebier 2004)

Case Studies

Superior Hiking Trail

The Superior Hiking Trail is over 200 miles in length and begins in Two Harbors and stretches up the coast to the Canadian border. This majestic trail offers trails from low to high impact. There are natural features on every trail which range from rocky high points, to inland lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams. There are also places on this trail where you can join into the National and State park trail system and see the visitor attraction on their sites.

While on the Superior Hiking Trail there are countless plant and animal communities that anyone may see. Most commonly seen are the white-tailed deer, snowshoe hare, red squirrel, and beavers. Some visitors do get the chance to see moose, black bear, red fox, river otter, fisher, coyote, and even the occasional timber wolf.

Currently there are missing links on the trail near the larger lake cities and where there are private residences.

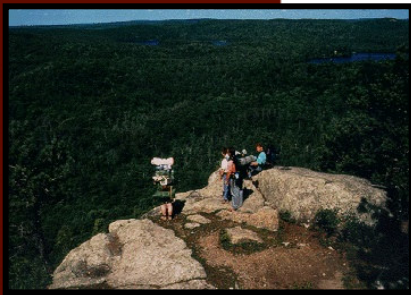


Figure 46- Eagle Ridge (Superior Hiking Trail, 2004)



Figure 47- Sailboats and Island (Schlukebier 2004)

Case Studies

Weller/ Russell Shoreline Stabilization Project

This project is an example of what has happened on Lake Superior with too much development and not enough consideration to the shoreline and winter erosion. The DNR was called in several years ago to help prevent further erosion and restore the beach which had washed away.

The plan which was used to help restore this landscape was presented by the Army Corp of Engineers, and can be found in the North Shore Management Plan.

This independent project has helped to save the existing buildings on the site as well as make the shore a usable and accessible feature on the site. The Weller/ Russell project was independent; both homeowners recognized the need for professionals to adapt their shoreline.



Figure 48- Pre- erosion control (DNR 1997)



Figure 49- Current Shoreline (Schlukebier 2004)

Case Studies

Larsmont cottages on Lake Superior

This private 40 acre, cottage resort, inspired by traditional Scandinavian fishing villages, features vacation homes tucked away in a private area of woods, south of Two Harbors, Minnesota, with 1300 feet of pristine Lake Superior beachfront shoreline (Christensen, 2004).

These new homes sell from \$132,000, in either two or three bedroom floor plans and with the option of full or ¼ ownership(Christensen, 2004). On the site there is also a oversized lodge which will be the center of activity for the owners, it will house a pool, whirlpool, massage room, game room, exercise room, fire place, restaurant, library, bar and large space gathering areas.

One major selling point for this new development is the idea that it is a new owners chance to “camp out” in the middle of the rustic North Woods, surrounded by all the amenities and conveniences of a luxury resort(Christensen, 2004). This is currently under construction and is not yet available for use.

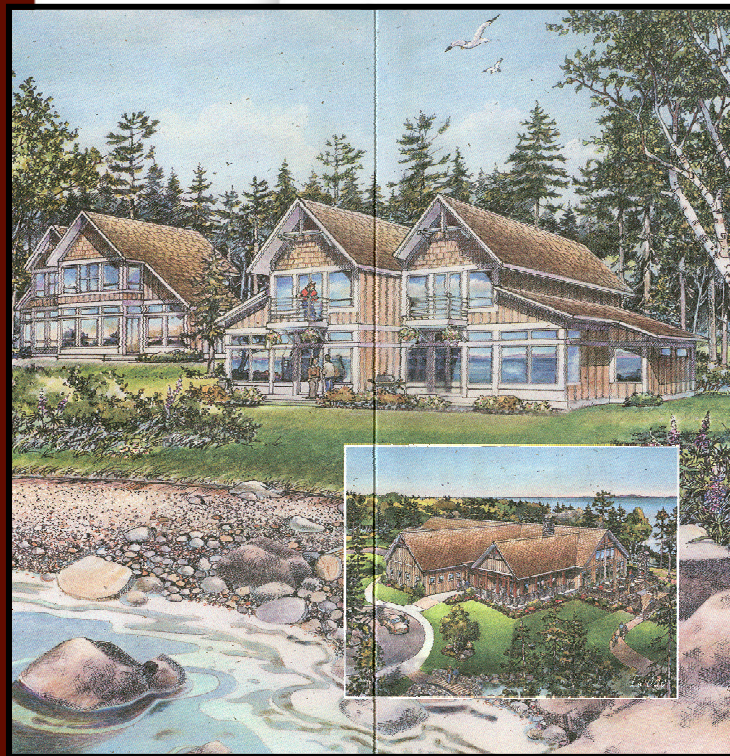


Figure 50- Larsmont Brochure Picture (Odyssey Development 2004)

Case Studies

Sea Villas Townhomes of Lutsen

These townhomes are located 3 miles from the Lutsen Resort and are right on the shores of Lake Superior. There are 30 acres of property spread out over ½ mile of shoreline. They have a guest service building within walking distance of all of the homes that offers a swimming pool, whirlpool, sauna, and a “wet deck” play area for children.

Sea Villa guests and owners have the option to use all of the amenities that are also available to them at the main resort and ski lodge.

The Sea Villas were developed in 1988 and have had very little impact on the natural ecosystem off site. There has been no need to change the shoreline since the use of large boulders was installed during the construction and excavation of land during construction. The rocks which are there are good for climbing on and prevent shoreline erosion in the winter months. On this site there are short hiking trails between the parking and Highway 61. There are no formal paths between the buildings and Lake Superior since it is planted with turf grass.



Figure 51- Bridge (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 52- Site Entry (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 53- Shoreline (Schlukebier 2004)



Figure 54 – Campfire (Schlukebier 2004)

Case Studies

Camp Courage Environmental and Outdoor Education Site, Maple Lake, MN

Camp Courage is located 55 miles northwest of the Twin Cities on Cedar and Mink Lakes. There are 4,800 feet of shoreline. This camp covers 305 acres of forest, fields, and marshlands creating a large and varied outdoor laboratory. Camp courage, besides having programs in natural areas, also has a working farm, horse ranch, cross country ski, and hiking trails system (Courage, 2004).

This camp is in operation year-round and offers not only classes but also a chance for kids and adults of all abilities to be part of nature. There are 35 building which are open all year providing cabins, food services, educational classrooms, and areas for nature observation (Courage, 2004).

The main Lodge on this site was designed for multipurpose uses and can be used for not only eating, but also conferences, classes and other activity spaces. The materials that were used reflect the natural surrounding that it is situated in.

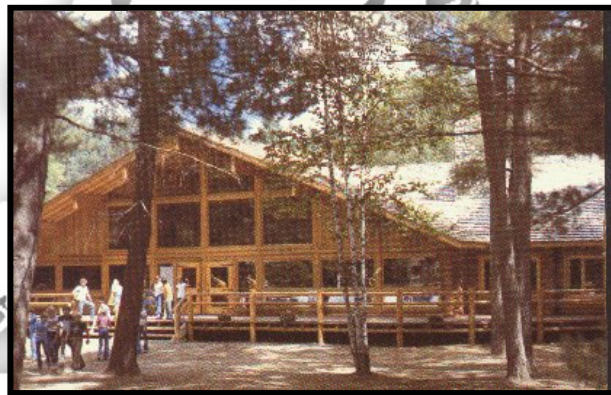


Figure 55- Camp Courage Lodge (Courage 1998)

Case Studies

Old Faithful Inn, Yellowstone National Park

100 years ago Robert Reamer, an Architect, had a vision for a new Inn at Yellowstone National Park where visitors would want to stay for more than a few hours or just a night as the case often was at that time. The facilities that were built made visitors dreams come true and soon became an influence on national grand hotels throughout the country. In 1904 this 40 room lodge became a popular destination and in 1928 needed to be expanded to accommodate all the visitors who wished to stay additional nights in the Inn. Again in the late 30's and early 70's this great historic inn was renovated and added on too. The latest changes were made in adding both east and west wings to the building and renovating the main area of the lodge using the same construction techniques as in 1904.

This historic building is still a tourist destination and doesn't change for the times. It still has community bathing rooms, and only sinks in guest rooms. Even in this mountainous region of the country Reamer was able to build a lodge that stood up to the elements that are part of that region. Old Faithful Lodge has stood through 2 significant earthquakes, multiple fires, and every bad mountain winter in the past 100 years. This lodge is one that has a refreshing sense of comfort when guests walk through the door, and much like the Old Faithful Geyser, is faithful at fulfilling the needs and desires of guests each year.



Figure 56- 1978 Inn (History 2000)

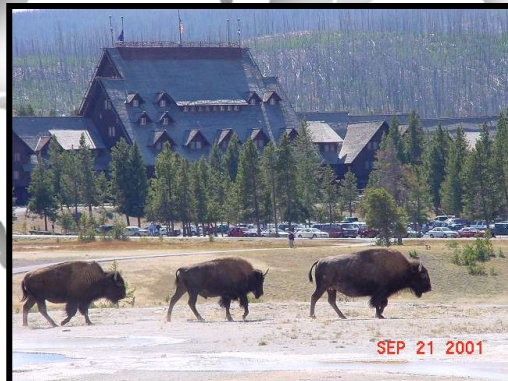


Figure 57- Current Building (Schlukebier 2001)

Case Studies

Sea Ranch, Sonoma California

The Sea Ranch of Sonoma California is a 5200 acre ranch which was originally designed by the Architectural firm MLTW. Charles Moore headed up this project in 1963. The goal of all the design work on this site was to integrate everything into the land and make everything new look as though it is part of the old landscape. This idea is still in place today when developers wish to build new homes and condos on the ranch. Some of the elements which help to make Sea Ranch what it still is today, an escape from the rigor of city life, is the more than 10 miles of bluff trails, sandy beaches, and hiking in the redwood forests. There are also activities that aren't so natural but they have been worked into the site which include swimming pools, tennis, basketball, volleyball courts, stables for horses, a private airport, and an 18 hole golf course. Just about half of this land has not been touched by development, 200 acres became private parks, and there are over 40 miles of public roads now in place throughout the site (Sea Ranch Village, 2004).

Visitors to this site are mainly from the San Francisco Bay area and go there for a weekend getaway. Visitors agree that it is such a hot spot for travel thanks to the natural and untouched areas all over the site (Sea Ranch Association, 2004).

Sea Ranch now has developed very strict codes for development. These include things that cannot be done on the site including; no showy or non-indigenous plants on the site, no urban solutions, no excessive plantings or masses of one species, and no planting which could hinder the enjoyment of the area for neighboring property owners.



Figure 58- Sea Ranch (MLTW 1999)



Figure 59- Sea Ranch Buildings (MLTW 1999)

Programmatic Requirements

In this section:
Spatial Requirements
Performance Requirements

Programmatic Requirements

Spatial Requirements

Lodge
Parking
Trails System
Outdoor Eating/ Cooking Area
Lawn Area
Pool
Garages

Performance Requirements

Signage
Future Site Planning
Site Program Activities
Advertising

Appendix and References

In this section:
Appendix A
Statement of Intent
Proposal
Appendix B
Thesis boards
References
Books
Online
Other

Appendix A

Statement of Intent

Superior Shores Resort and Conference Center
Two Harbors, Minnesota

The north shore of Lake Superior in Minnesota is a major tourist destination for travelers from around the country and worldwide. The past 50 years has seen rapid development of both residential and commercial lots along the lake shore. Much of this development has had an adverse affect on the ecology of the shoreline.

Superior Shores, a resort and lake home rental property near Two Harbors is an example of housing and business on the lake which I have interest in. This 46 acre property includes a lodge, several condo units, restaurants, pools, small shops and conference center. The property edges the shore and includes some undeveloped woodland areas. This property is currently undergoing changes in both ownership and property management. Soon the lodge, conference center, and restaurant will be a new property and not part of the Lake Home Association which I am working with.

The underlying premise of design is that the Lake Superior ecology can inform ways to restore that environment to a more natural state. I purpose to rework the existing property into a more natural and secluded site. The area of this site that I would like to work in includes the lake homes, shore line, natural wooded area and the community parking and new entryway into the site. I wish to study how the vegetation has been affected by the closeness of the shoreline and the proximity of all the buildings on the site. I will research the different plants that can be employed to solve the erosion problem that is plaguing the shoreline. I will design noise buffers as part of the natural entry through the woods off of the adjacent highway. Looking at the natural areas that are in close proximity to the resort I will to be able to discover a planting palette that is appropriate to the site. I will research other lake shore resorts whose designs successfully address circulation as well as entry. I intend that there be a design for the entire site that creates private as well as natural spaces that help to restore the connection between the woodland and the shoreline.

THESIS PROPOSAL
Melissa Schlukebier
OCTOBER 7, 2004

a. Title

Superior Shores Lakehomes, Two Harbors, MN

b. Project Type

Superior Shores is a property that is adjacent to Lake Superior in northeast Minnesota. The site will be developed in such a way that it feels less like a commercial resort and more like a natural hide away. There will be issues addressed that will deal with the ecology of the shoreline, as well as bridging the natural wooded areas on the site back together. This landscape design will incorporate native plantings with the more desired and necessary aspect of a resort.

c. Unifying Idea

The North Shore of Lake Superior is a highly developed and desired property market in Minnesota. This is due to its natural and less extravagant feeling; it brings you back to nature. The fast development of the shore has meant that there are less than adequate standards for development in the county as well as in the small cities. Codes were developed only after they realized that the development was causing problems for animal populations in the area, wooded and herbaceous plantings and the lakeshore itself. Many new developments have been able to help prevent shoreline erosion, but not many can prevent habit loss in order to make a profit. There is now a strong interest in making the natural part of the "up north" experience more available within the resort properties.

As a lakehome resort there are several issues that need to be carefully planned out in order for the site to become successful. The focus of the site can not be on just the environment and the ecological factors but there need to be a balance with the human experience while visitors are on the site. Over the years that I have spent traveling along the North Shore I have been reminded that there are a large number of people who enjoy the 'escape' from city life that the area has to offers. Many times resorts have a very glamorous appearance but they have created it with the destruction of the natural ecosystem. From the resorts stand point the site needs to be safe, secure and accessible for all of its owners and rental guests.

d. **User/ Client Description**

Superior Shores Lakehome Association has the vision statement which sums up who they are looking to have as their client base. It states that Superior Shores Lakehome Association provides its owners a high quality, relaxing North Shore vacation experience, while providing an optional rental program that makes ownership available to the broadest possible group. So in this there are several categories of site users, the owners, the renters, and the management team.

The Superior Shores Association is an elected seven member board which is in control of the property, future development, rental pricing, marketing, utilities, insurance, and all site maintenance. This board is made up of owners who are actively involved in the everyday operations of the site. They are representing the 180 owners, of the 46 units. Owner in many cases have this property as a seasonal recreation area. Owners of the property have the option of renting or not renting out there home to make profit. There are currently 25% of the condos which are not in the rental pool.

The renters who stay at Superior Shores have traveled here from all over the country as well as the world. They are looking for a vacation destination along the North Shore of Lake Superior. These are the users of the site who are either looking to go to the major tourist destinations, or wish to stay in the relaxing comfort that a lakehome has to offer. They have needs that fluctuate depending on the individual as well as the season.

The last set of users is part of the site due to the need for the day to day business functions to be taken care of. They are the staff of Scenic Shores Property management team. They have 5 members on staff who handles all of the renters, cleaning, and handiwork that needs to be taken care of. These are people who live in Two Harbors or the surrounding area and are familiar with the seasonal fluctuation in the tourist industry.

Throughout the year there are different seasons which bring people onto the site for different purposes. In the winter months visitors enjoy the North Shore for the snow. Guests want to snowmobile, cross-country ski, down hill ski, or cozy up near a fireplace and watch the snow fly. In the summer visitors enjoy fishing, hiking, agate hunting, bird watching, and shopping in a wide variety of stores. Fall months are slower but they draw visitor who want to see the fall color, and be outside before the winter approaches. Spring is the slowest of all the seasons for all businesses along Lake Superior's North Shore; it can be very quiet and secluded during these few months.

e. Major Project Elements

- Site Entry
- Erosion Control
- Trail System
- Signage
- Ecological Repair and Management
- Parking
- Future Site Planning
- Shoreline Restoration
- Highlighting Offsite Views

f. Site Information

Superior Shores Lakehomes are a rental property located on the shores of Lake Superior. This property is located in Lake County Minnesota.

Superior Shores is located 1.8 miles from Two Harbors, approximately 22 miles from Duluth. The Minneapolis/St. Paul area is 175 miles from this site.

Many of the resorts located in this area where development throughout the past century during the state highway construction pushed northeast. This area undergoes a large amount of activity throughout the year with visitors coming from all over the world who would like to enjoy the North Woods of Minnesota. Superior Shores is one rental property which caters to the outdoor enthusiast offering hiking trails, snowmobile trail access and other activity areas for families and individuals.

These condo units have an insurance value of 9.3 million dollars, and the average cost of ownership varies from \$250,000 to \$600,000. There are several categories of ownership, ranging from one eighth interest to full ownership. Owners are mainly from Minnesota in the Twin Cities, and in almost all cases this is the second or seasonal property.

Superior Shores was first developed as a Ma and Pa resort and campground in the early 1920's. The site was first developed with 10 cabins and a few utility buildings, the site also had areas for both RV and tent camping. Major development and changes started in the 1980's under the control of the owner Delray Pearson and his son, Mark. They expanded the site to what it is today, 7 lake home buildings containing 46 units, 2 outdoor pools with utility houses, lodge with 60 suites, pool, conference center, gift shop, and restaurant, also a rental office building, as well as several freestanding garages. The property also still includes 1 remaining cabin which is not used, as well as the old fish cleaning building in one of the parking areas. The buildings on the property were all built and oriented to capitalize on the views to the lake and the

adjacent bay area; no unit should have a blocked view of the lake according to Mark Pearson. This property was recently split into two organizations, the resort on the east side of the property and the lakehomes on the west with 46 acres, 23 of which are not developed.

This property is more specifically located on Superior Shores Drive off of HWY 61. The highway is the only street that is a boundary to the site. The other sides are adjacent to the lake, the Superior Shores Resort, and the Burlington Bay. The Burlington Bay property is not currently being built upon in the area directly adjacent to the site. It is in a family trust, and remains a wooded area near Superior Shores and there are no plans for development.

Several things in close proximity to the site that are travel destinations are Gooseberry Falls State Park, Split Rock Lighthouse State Park, Duluth, Boundary Water Canoe Area, The Superior Hiking Trail, and the Harbors of Two Harbors. Each of these places is within 10 minutes to 1.5 hours from the lakehomes.

Looking more closely at the site it slopes south towards the lake, and is heavily vegetated. The hydrology and overland flow of the site move in the direction of the lake as well. The Two Harbors area is in the hardwood-pine mixed forest region. Superior Shores is dominated by Aspen, Maple, and Birch trees. There is also an abundance of native grasses and low growing shrubs along the shoreline. The most common soils in the area of Lake Superior range from clay to sandy loams. This is a thin layer of soil over the bedrock which outcrops in many areas on the property. This bedrock mainly consists of Upper Precambrian basalt, rhyolite, gabbro, granite, sandstone, and limestone.

The microclimate of the site changes in the two different areas. On the north end of the site, near HWY 61, there is little to no effect from the lake winds and the temperature stays within the averages for the area. On the lakeshore there are lake winds to contend with most days, and it can be 5 to 10 degrees cooler. In the winter the winds can change from the lake and they can be the northeasterly winds.

g. Project Emphasis

- Ecological Shoreline Restoration

There has been an enormous amount of damage done to the site throughout the last 20 years with the new building development and lake erosion. Currently there are areas of shoreline which are falling into the lake and are not safe for use. There needs to be plantings established to prevent further loss of property into the lake.

- Sustainable Planting Palette

On the site there has been a move to make it more appealing to visitors; this is often done with a planning palette which includes non-native plant material. There needs to be an emphasis on plants that are suitable for the area.

- **Master Site Planning**

Superior Shores Lakehomes have a vision statement but they currently don't have a master plan or a direction which they would like to see the site go. Developing a plan would help to unify the site, as well as improve the visual experience.

h. Plan for Proceeding

i.

1. Definition of Research Direction

Research for this site will include both case studies in the Great Lakes region as well as the ecology of shorelines. There will be a need for information that has been collected for other developments whose plan was to protect the shore and prevent erosion. Information on resorts that have made their properties welcoming and well organized will aid in the development of the Master Plan. Inventories and research needs to be done which will help to assist in the decisions of plant materials for erosion control and shoreline restoration.

2. Design Methodology

In order to be successful and creating a sustainable site plan research must first be done on resorts and shoreline restoration. Research should be focused on the Great Lakes area in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Michigan. Each of these states has begun to make an effort to improve the Great Lakes. Looking at sites that are both natural and highly used will be important to understanding the needs and desires for this site.

Further research will need to be focused on the human experience in a site, animal and plant habitats along the North Shore, and sustainable land use plantings. Creating a site which has sustainable qualities without looking unorganized or cluttered is one of the projects main objectives.

3. Document of the Design Process

The information that I collect on this subject will be recorded and applied to this thesis project. Documentation as well as notes will be organized in binder, by topic. Sketching and photography will also be kept and dated in a journal/sketchbook. All other sketches done outside the journal will be kept in the binder.

4. Schedule

5. Previous Work Experience

Second Year

Fall:

Tim Kennedy

The Ideal Landscape

6 Schematic Designs

The Plains Art Museum Outdoor Café, Fargo, ND

Spring:

Dennis Colliton

NDSU Fountain Plaza

Boy Scout Camp, Outdoor Amphitheater, MN

Roundhouse Square, Devils Lake, ND

Third Year

Fall:

Joshua Walter

Alternative Activity Parking Lot

Sheyenne National Grasslands, Campground, ND

Spring:

Tim Kennedy

Upper Landing, St. Paul, MN

YMCA Camp Cormorant, Lake Cormorant, MN

NDSU Masonry Competition

Fourth Year

Fall:

Joshua Walter

Urban Design, Fargo, ND

Spring:

Angela Hansen

Broadway Square, Fargo, ND

City Square, Edgeley, ND

Fort Totten, Devils Lake, ND

National Stone Competition

Fifth Year

Fall:

Joshua Walter

River Restoration, Fergus Falls, MN

Appendix B

Final Boards

Superior Shores Lakehomes

Lake Superior's Hidden Destination, Two Harbors, MN

Introduction: Project Description



Project Location
This site is situated along the North Shore of Lake Superior in Two Harbors, MN. The property of Superior Shores is a 100-acre parcel of land, which includes a 10-acre lake. The site is located in the north woods of Minnesota, near the border of Lake Superior. The site is a 100-acre parcel of land, which includes a 10-acre lake. The site is located in the north woods of Minnesota, near the border of Lake Superior.

Project Type
Superior Shores Lakehomes are located in an area of the North Shore of Lake Superior that has a rich history of recreational use. The site is a 100-acre parcel of land, which includes a 10-acre lake. The site is located in the north woods of Minnesota, near the border of Lake Superior.

Client Description
The client is a group of individuals who are interested in developing a residential development in the Superior Shores area. The client is a group of individuals who are interested in developing a residential development in the Superior Shores area.

User Description
The user is a group of individuals who are interested in using the Superior Shores Lakehomes as a vacation home. The user is a group of individuals who are interested in using the Superior Shores Lakehomes as a vacation home.

Site History
The site has a rich history of recreational use. The site is a 100-acre parcel of land, which includes a 10-acre lake. The site is located in the north woods of Minnesota, near the border of Lake Superior.

Site Views
The site offers a variety of views, including views of the lake, the woods, and the surrounding area. The site offers a variety of views, including views of the lake, the woods, and the surrounding area.

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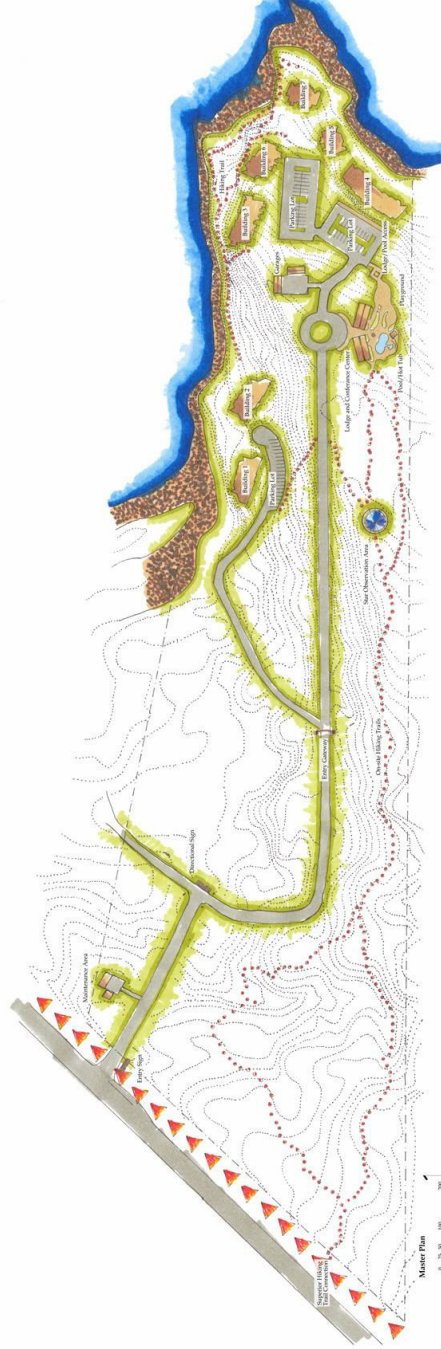


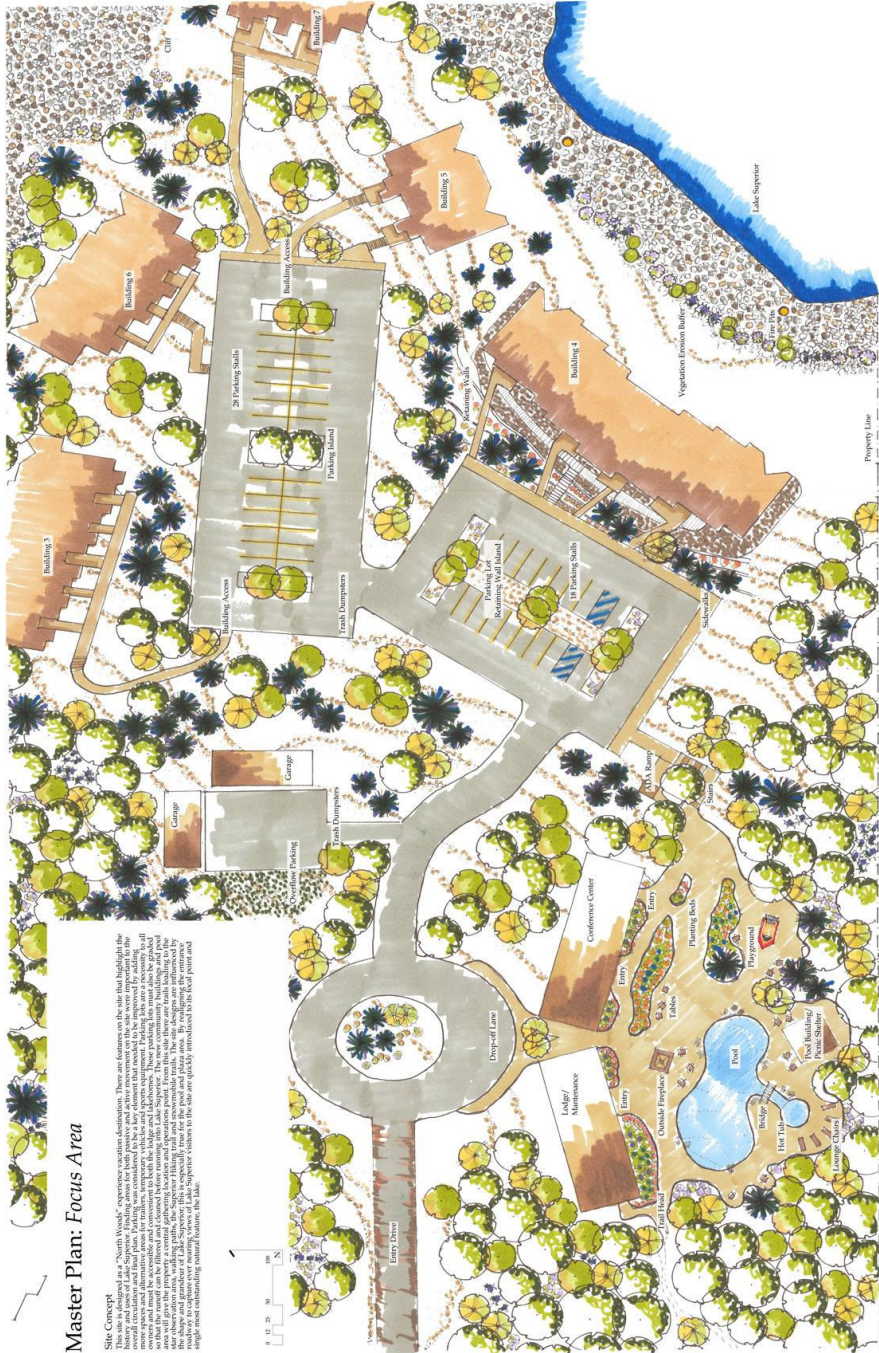
Plan: Existing Conditions, Master Plan

Master Plan
 The Master Plan for Superior Shores Lakehomes is a comprehensive site plan that will facilitate the development of a high-quality, high-end resort. The plan includes a detailed site layout, building footprints, parking areas, and landscaping. The plan also includes a detailed site layout, building footprints, parking areas, and landscaping. The plan also includes a detailed site layout, building footprints, parking areas, and landscaping.

The Tour
 The tour of the site was designed to better accommodate the two business buildings from off Highway 61. On the right hand side of the site, a new sign identifies the location of the Superior Shores Lakehomes and the left hand side of the site identifies the location of the Superior Shores Lakehomes. The tour of the site was designed to better accommodate the two business buildings from off Highway 61. On the right hand side of the site, a new sign identifies the location of the Superior Shores Lakehomes and the left hand side of the site identifies the location of the Superior Shores Lakehomes.

Existing Site
 Currently, Superior Shores Lakehomes is a high-end, privately owned resort. The resort is located on a 100-acre site, and is situated on the shore of a large lake. The resort includes a variety of amenities, including a clubhouse, a restaurant, a bar, and a pool. The resort is currently owned by Superior Shores Lakehomes, LLC.





Master Plan: Focus Area

Site Concept

This site is designed as a "North Woods" experience vacation destination. There are features on the site that highlight the natural resources and scenic views. Landscaping was considered as a key element that needed to be incorporated. The site plan includes a variety of trees and shrubs that are appropriate for the climate and soil conditions. These trees and shrubs will provide shade and privacy for the buildings and parking areas. The parking lots will also be landscaped with trees and shrubs to provide a more natural setting. The site plan also includes a variety of plantings and shrubs that will provide a natural backdrop for the buildings and parking areas. The site plan also includes a variety of plantings and shrubs that will provide a natural backdrop for the buildings and parking areas. The site plan also includes a variety of plantings and shrubs that will provide a natural backdrop for the buildings and parking areas.

Master Plan: Sketches



Entry Sign
Identifying Superior Shores Lakehomes as a separate resort property will be accomplished with the installation of a new Adirondack wood and rock entrance sign at the driveway turn in off Highway 91.

Fire Rings
Five raised stone fire rings will be randomly spaced along the rugged shoreline to allow both owners and guests the opportunity to safely build and enjoy campfires. Traditionally families have gathered around campfires to read marshmallows and share ghost stories under the stars.

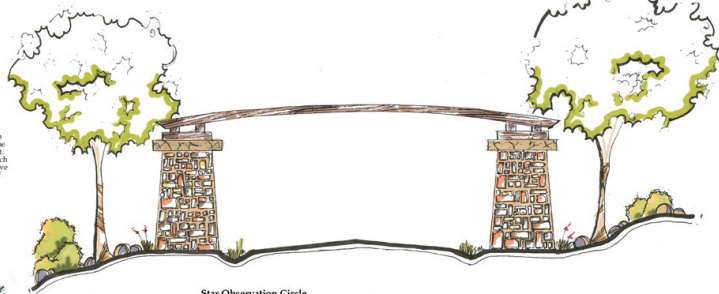


Relax and Enjoy
Spending time at the lake doesn't need to be a busy and rushed vacation. Chairs have been placed on the lake side of the lakehome buildings for community use. These Adirondack style chairs are both rustic and comfortable for gazing across the lake, reading a book or sketching in a journal.

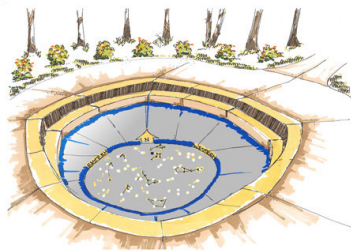


No Litter
Panes throughout the site and in common areas of the site are trash receptacles. These bins have been designed to look more natural and less of an eye sore to visitors on the site. This property can be heavily used, but shouldn't reflect the impact people can have on the land.

Entry Gate
This wooden arched entrance gate sign with stone foundations is situated at the "historical" entrance point to the resort. It replaces a former rustic log sign which greeted visitors to the property and gave the guest the feeling and impression of entering someplace unique.



Star Observation Circle
Needed in an opening in the woods and set far away from any major light sources resort guests will be able to observe stars in the vast night sky at the "Star Observation Circle. Uniquely designed to allow the star gazer the opportunity to identify major stars and constellations no matter the season, this one of a kind "Star Observation Circle" will intrigue, enlighten and delight guests of all ages.



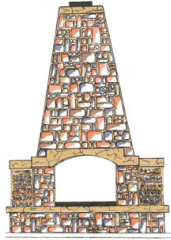
Benches
Situated periodically along the walking paths and biking trails, rustic log benches will give both the casual walker and the rigorous hiker a chance to rest, breathe in the fresh north country air and enjoy the scenic views of Lake Superior.

Focus Area: Sketches



Lodge Building

The main lodge building is the heartbeat of the resort property. Housed in this invitingly designed building will be the reception and registration desk, a business office, a large group gathering space with a stone fireplace, a small conference room, a fitness center, a game room, laundry and housekeeping services, and public rest rooms.



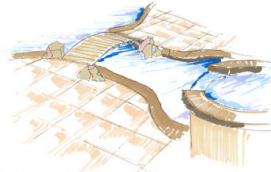
Outdoor Fireplace

Central to the patio and pool area is this over sized, four-sided, open hearth designed stone fireplace. Designed to both overlook the swimming pool and warm the surrounding patio area in even the most brisk Lake Superior weather, owners and guests will be invited to gather around the blazing wood fire to burn lake lore or just enjoy the opportunity to socialize.



Pool Building

This 24' x 24' pool building has all of the amenities to keep play time at the pool fun and enjoyable. Each of the corners to this open style building is home to a different feature. These include a snack bar, kitchenette, shower, restroom, and pool utility room. The roof on this building is open allowing natural light to vary through the space. This building is located adjacent from the lodge buildings and can be used for small gatherings and family picnics.



Swimming Pool

This uniquely shaped swimming pool has taken its form from some of the deepest areas of Lake Superior. The gradual entry into the pool allows for even the most hesitant swimmers to enjoy the water. The pool includes depths up to 12' suitable for diving from the small bridge. The hot tub is also joined to the pool creating a pleasant water fall and alternative heating source to the pool. The stone edge has boulders periodically spaced around the pool giving adults close places to catch the summer sun and watch small children play in the water.



Playground

This fun and exciting place for kids to play is also located in the lodge area. Designed with unique Lake Superior characteristics, the theme of this playground reflects the main daily activity on the lake - shipping. The play area features a small tug boat that includes climbing nets, slides, swings and role playing stations, such as playing the boat's captain.

Aerial Picture

This site is on a spectacular area of land located on Lake Superior. The whole site is oriented to the lake and the views it has to offer. The new lodge and the location of the garage connects the areas of pool and several lakehouses without taking away the serenity of the site. These changes will cause little damage to the ecosystem and in some areas, such as the removal of the septic tanks and drain fields, the ground is going to be cleaner than before the construction.



Focus Area: Sketches and Details



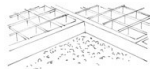
ADA Access

A new feature to this site will allow for users of all physical mobilities to move throughout the community areas of the site. This ramp is just one way that the site has become more usable for all people. The ramps are designed to run adjacent to the stairways so there is little to no separation between people.

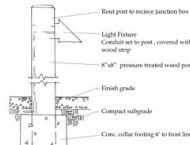


Garages

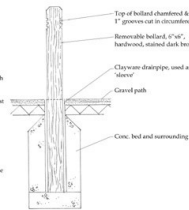
New garages are located to the north and east of the lodge area and replace two current garage buildings. This redesigned area includes space for overflow and trailer parking. The garages are designed to be very low in height to blend more easily into the natural environment and not obstruct any views. These new garage buildings, with more space than the ones they replaced, will be available for owners to purchase. The overflow parking area is constructed with Cabkan Easy Green, a temporary parking ground cover solution. These grid-shaped pavers are able to bear the loaded weight of a full size vehicle and have the capacity to grow grass. These pavers look as natural as grass from a short distance and help to control the runoff on site.



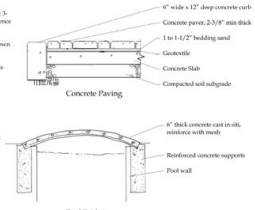
Cabkan Easy Green



Lighting Fixture



Bollard

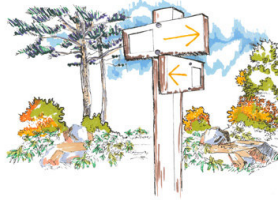


Foot Bridge



Parking

Parking lots have been a major problem on this site since its first redevelopment in the 1980's. This solution provides for the same number of vehicles to park using nearly the same amount of physical space. The main parking lot has also been designed to have designated parking for building A and the lodge and all of the other buildings will access the second lot. The first parking lot visitors arrive to has been designed to minimize the slope by adding a small retaining wall in the center of the lot creating two reasonably flat parking areas. The second parking lot has long spaces allowing trailers and other oversized vehicles room to park, and vegetation breaks the spaces in the lot every 8 spaces. Sidewalks have also been added to the outside of the driveways to allow pedestrians to move throughout the site without being in the same paths as vehicles.



Site Orientation

Spaced throughout the site are orientation signs showing "you are here" on a map of the property. These signs are easy to see and read, but they do not stand out in the wooded areas. Their rustic wood construction reflects nature and the environment. Directional signs will point visitors in the right direction and identify trail heads and useful building locations. Some orientation signs will point out possible animal tracks, habitats, and vegetation which can be viewed in the various ecosystems on site.

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Melissa Ann Schlukebier

I came, I saw, I learned, and now I must move on. Thanks, to all who have made this journey possible and enjoyable.