

- (3) Place low walls, trellises, hedges, trees, etc. to provide additional enclosure for main garden.
- (4) Place low walls, trellises, hedges, along building front.
- (5) Define position of major trees in the main garden and secondary gardens.

- (6) Locate lawn areas, paved areas, and benches in the garden.
- (7) Define position of trees along the street.
- (8) Define special embellishments for the front garden and areas along the street or connecting with the street.



9 / UNIQUENESS OF DIFFERENT APARTMENT BUILDINGS GENERATED BY THE SEQUENCE



Uniqueness of each apartment building generated by the sequence, is clearly visible.

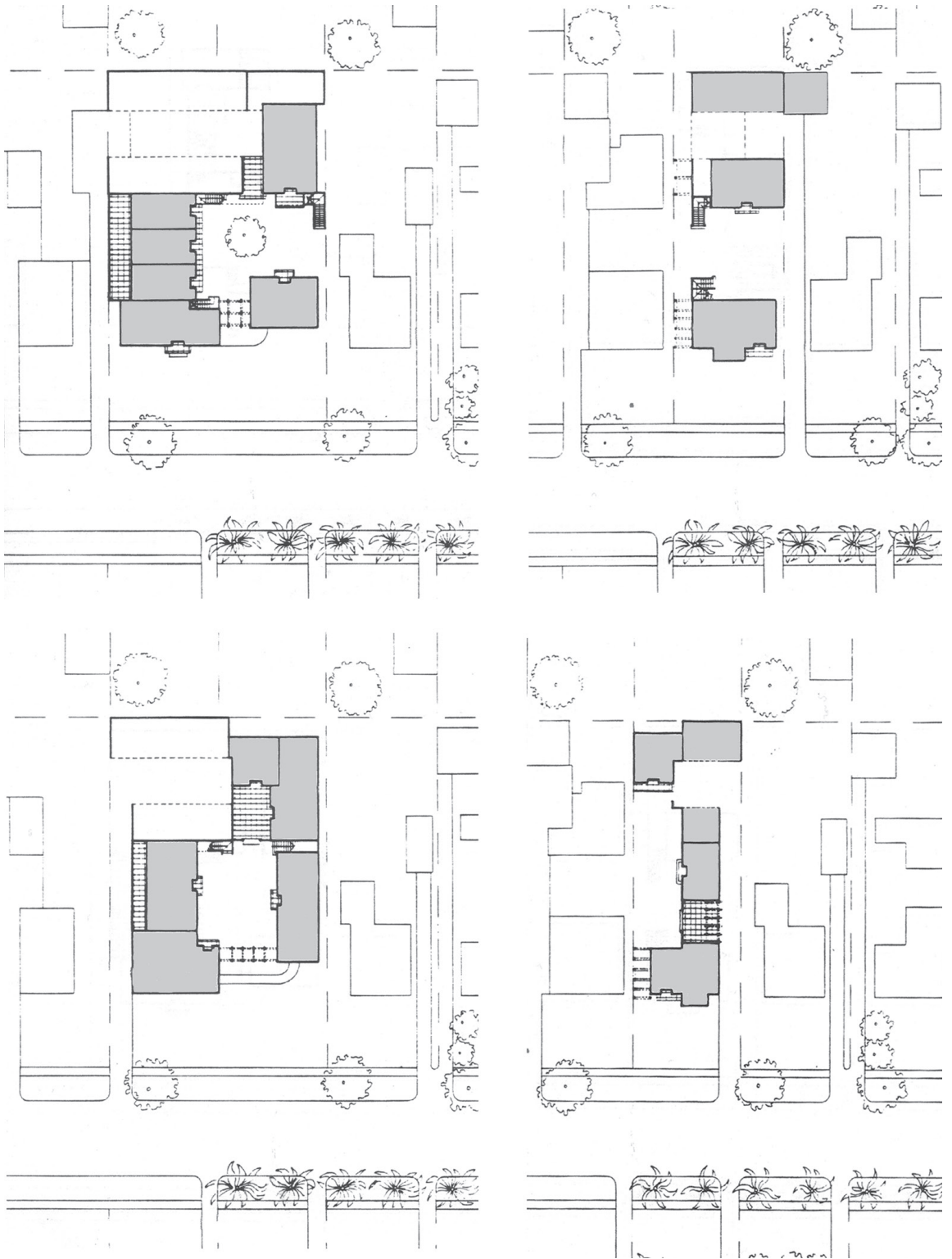
On the pages 313–16, we see a few examples of the variety of apartment buildings that can be created by this generative sequence. These are different apartment buildings, designed for a wide variety of site conditions (lot width, orientation, and so on) that occurred in the city of Pasadena. Each of these designs was made for a specific lot in Pasadena, and is unique to that lot. The lots vary in width and depth. They vary in the density for which they have been zoned. They vary in orientation. And, of course, they vary in the character of street which lies beyond the lot, and which must somehow be helped,

made more whole, by the insertion of the new apartment house.

The buildings show a surprising variety, all containing the same key invariant features specified by the generating sequence, but nevertheless each unique according to its context.

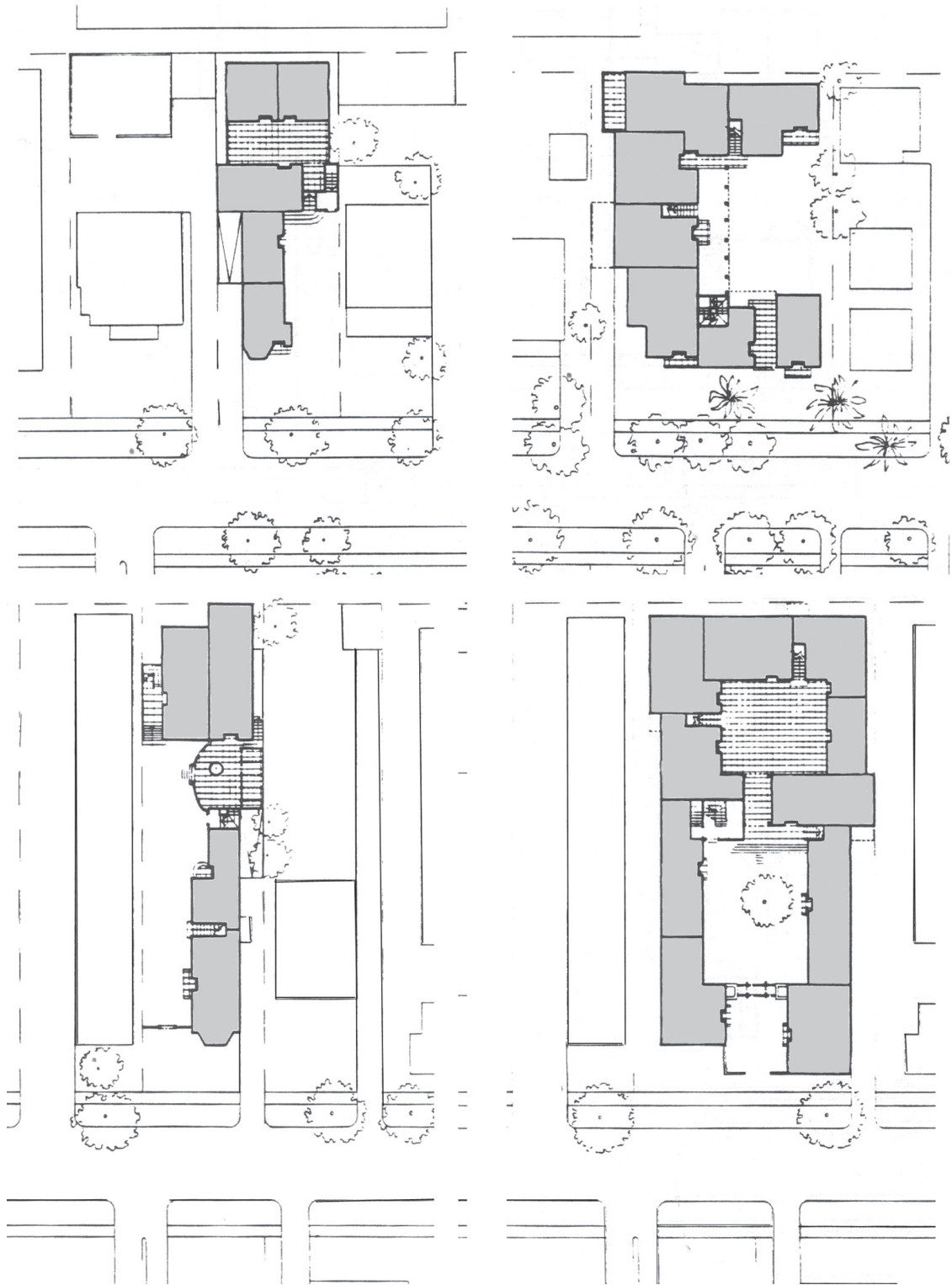
Dimensional factors are interesting. There is no hint of modular rearrangement in these designs. Rather, the building widths and configurations are pushed, pulled, squeezed, to form well-adapted structures for the conditions that exist on each lot. The variety which occurs, rather more like true organic variety, shows

THE PROCESS OF CREATING LIFE



Low density: Four apartment building plans generated by the sequence, for different conditions

THE SEQUENCE OF UNFOLDING



Higher density: Four more apartment building plans generated by the sequence, for different conditions

THE PROCESS OF CREATING LIFE



Another model of an apartment building showing the kind of detail and uniqueness that typically develops as a result of using the generative sequence.



A model of a block in Pasadena, in which a dozen different apartment buildings are visible, generated by the sequence described in this chapter. The simulation was carried out by my students at the University of California.

each one as unusual, with its own presence and its own life. In form, these buildings are less like typical apartment buildings of the late 20th-century era, and — at least in this one respect — slightly reminiscent of buildings in various traditional societies.

Although the generative sequence itself is fixed (and needs to be fixed in order to embody the dictates of the fundamental process), the variety this sequence generates, when interacting with a variety of contexts, is very great indeed — indeed, it is essentially infinite.⁸



10 / THE MENTAL CHANGE NEEDED TO ALLOW YOURSELF THE POSSIBILITY OF USING A GENERATIVE SEQUENCE WHILE MAKING A DESIGN

The crux of every design process lies in finding the generative sequence for that design, and making sure that sequence is the right one for the job. Because such a generative sequence is hard to find, people do not easily grasp the fact that such sequences exist, and therefore find design much more difficult than it needs to be.

Another way of saying the same thing is to observe that for many people, perhaps the most difficult thing of all in understanding living process, and in getting a proper sequence for the unfolding of the whole, is reconciling oneself to the idea of doing one thing at a time. Yet, according to prevailing norms, many architects and designers think it is impossible to get good results by working in this way.

That is because the prevailing wisdom about architecture suggests that since a building is a complex whole, a designer has to do everything all at once, in a kind of incredible artistic *tour-de-force*, where he sees everything all at once in a single coherent vision. This is nonsense of course. But it is based on a rhetorical question something like this: “How could one possibly succeed in design, doing one thing at a time, since a complex whole is a unitary undivided whole which cannot be separated into parts?”

It is precisely the trick of the unfolding process to solve this problem. The unfolding process allows you to go one step at a time, *precisely because* it is based on a sequence which permits this without disturbing or screwing up the unfolding of the whole.

The reason it works is that, like any system in nature, what is actually unfolding is indeed the *whole*. The key to any human unfolding process, is that the artist or builder visualizes the thing as an entirety, as a whole, from the first day. Even before you start, you already fix on it and see it as if it were a whole. You feel it as a whole, imagine it in its wholeness . . . and gradually tease out from it the features of this wholeness. At each step you do something which has a significant (and good) effect *upon* this whole, seen *as* a whole.

The effect of understanding this point can be dramatic. I remember a student, I will call him X. For months I tried to teach him. He was an outstanding student, but he was — at that moment in his life — still weak in design. He just did not seem to have the knack of putting things together to make something beautiful.

He struggled and struggled. And for months I tried to teach him. Then we came to a design class in which he had to design a house. He worked and worked at the design. Couldn't get it right. Never knew what to pay attention to. The mess on his drawing board was pretty bad.

Of course, when someone can't design, it is usually because they confuse themselves by taking things in the wrong order. The continuous back and forth between all possible issues causes confusion instead of clarity.

Finally, one day I sat with him, and I said “*Look, I am going to talk you through your design*