

A NEW KIND OF PLANNING PROCESS

THIS IS A PLANNING PROCESS WHICH
ALLOWS THE PEOPLE OF MARSTA-SIGTUNA
TO MAKE ALL PLANNING DECISIONS FOR
THEMSELVES.

NEIGHBORHOODS, APARTMENTS, AND HOUSES,
PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND COMMUNAL AREA,
WILL ALL BE DESIGNED BY THE PEOPLE
WHO WILL EVENTUALLY USE THEM.

THE PROCESS HAS 4 ELEMENTS.

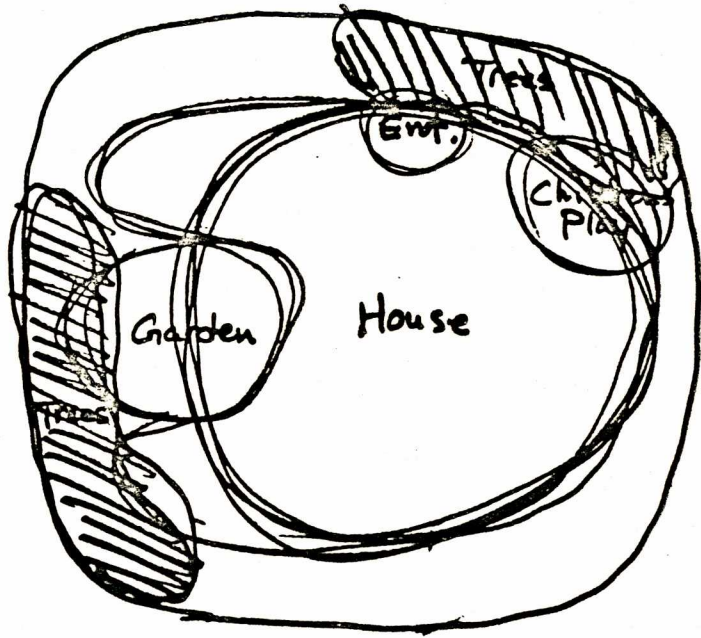
THE PATTERN LANGUAGE
DIAGNOSIS
PROJECTS
PROCEDURE.

Families in Marsta Sigtuna will be able to design their own houses just as Japanese families have been doing for centuries - the whole family participates as a unit and each member of the family has a chance to contribute his good ideas to the design.

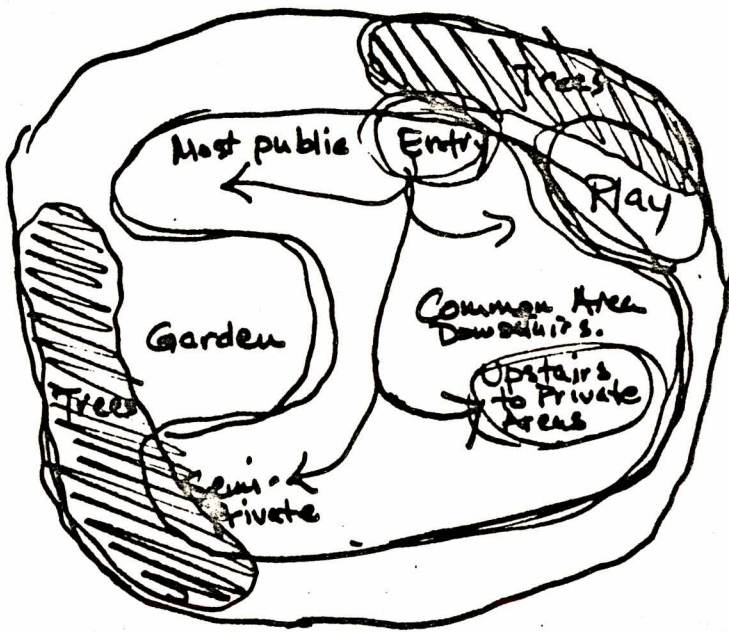
The example we use, to explain the process, is a house designed by a California layman in two days.

The family will begin by studying the patterns together. Then they go to the site itself to make their design on the land. Each pattern is taken in the order given by the Pattern Language. They walk around the site, considering how to implement each pattern in turn. As major elements are located, they are marked on the site with wooden stakes, then later sketched out on paper.

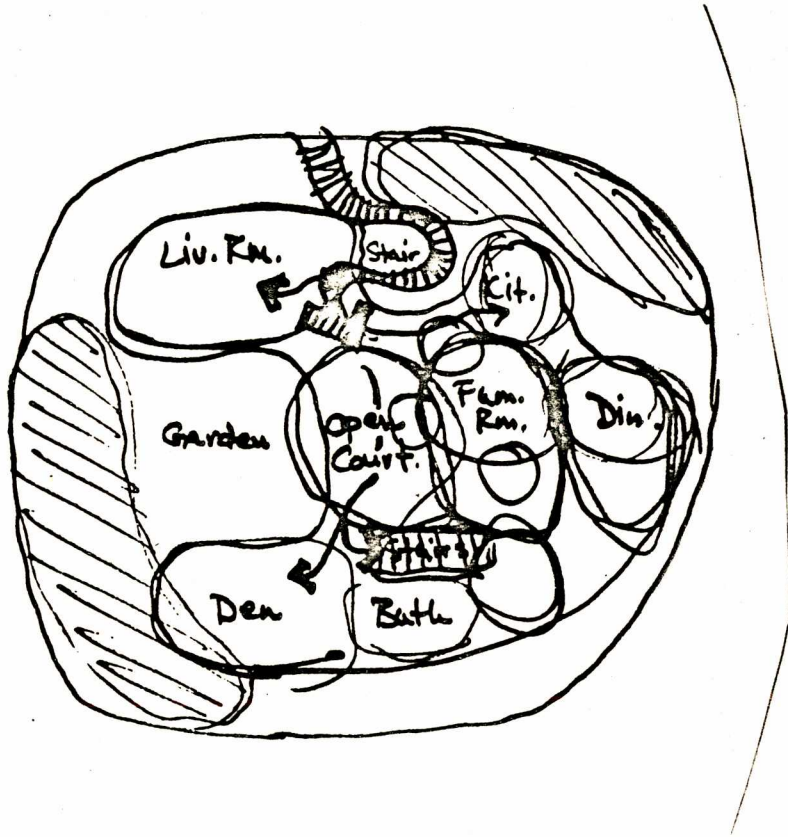
Convex outdoor space was one of the first important patterns in our California example. It explains the need to consider outdoor spaces as important as indoor ones, and to realize that for an outdoor area to be experienced as a "space" it must be partly enclosed, almost like a room. Our Californian used the mass of the building to enclose his outdoor garden area.

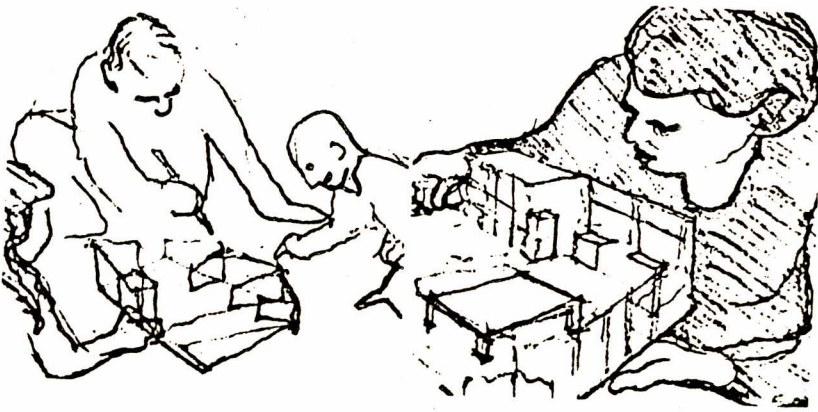


The pattern Intimacy gradient has been very influential in his next sketch. This pattern presents the idea that the act of entering and moving through a house should be a gradual progression from the most public and formal areas to the most private and intimate ones. The normal sequence would be Entry-Receiving Room-Kitchen-Family Room-Bedrooms. In this scheme, he has used two floors to emphasize the privacy of the bedroom areas.



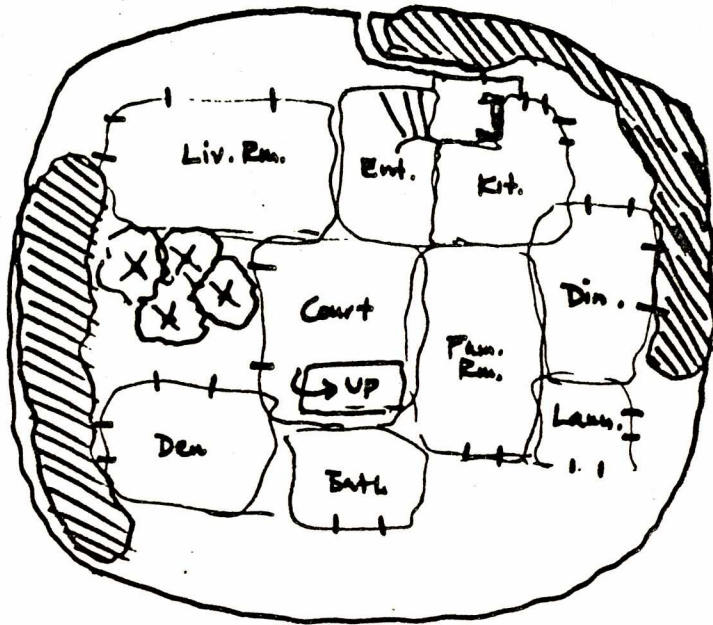
The pattern Wings of light attempts to correct those situations where rooms cannot receive adequate light due to their position in the building. It specifies that a small building should, from the very start be quite narrow - either one room wide, or, if the wing is short enough to have all its rooms at the exposed end, two rooms wide. This was achieved in this example by all the rooms of the house gathered around an open skylit courtyard.



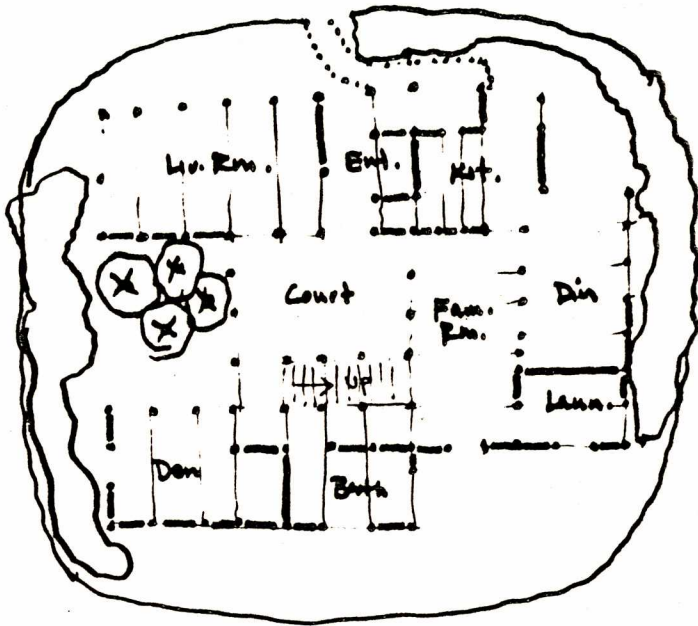


Up to this stage, the entire family would work as a unit. But now the individual members of the family can take special areas of responsibility. The mother might do the further design of the kitchen, the father take charge of the development of the den, and the children might help to design their bedrooms and outdoor play areas.

At this stage the family would be implementing such detailed patterns as Pair of windows. This pattern says that every room should have windows on at least two sides to reduce glare and give the room a spacious, airy feeling. Notice how in this example the interior court and his previous use of Wings of light allows every room to be lit from two sides.

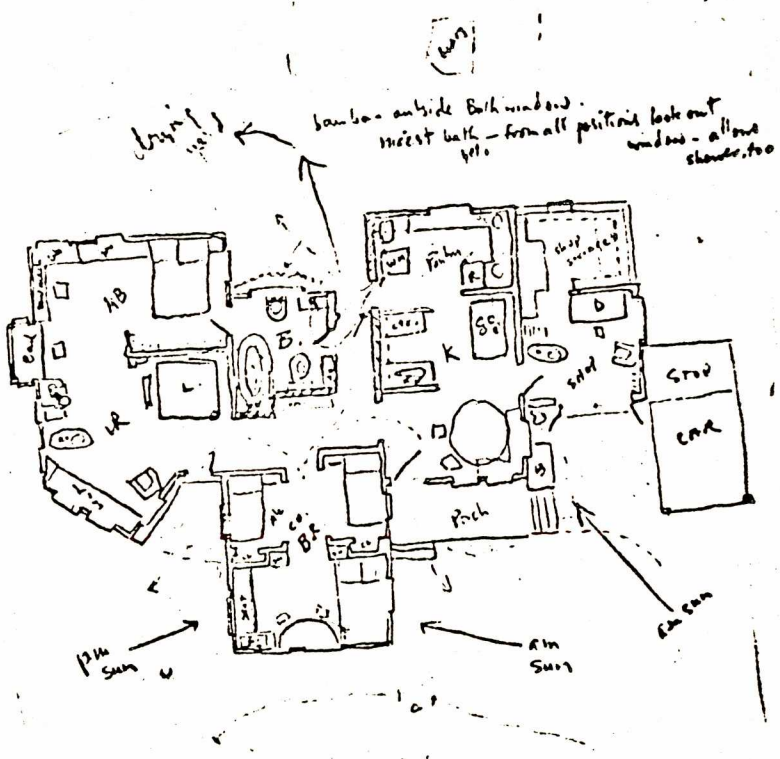


Towards the end of the house design process, the family will put the construction into their previous design decisions. One example of a structural pattern has to do with the placement of wooden columns in post-and-beam construction used in California. Columns at the corners explains how one begins to give structure to the design by placing columns at the corners of all social spaces, then continuing to add other columns along their sides to form structurally sound bays.



The family would now give this sketch to a builder directly. This builder understands the structural system used by the family in the preparation of the sketch. He can work directly from their drawing, by using his own detailed structural patterns.

Our Californian's final drawing is shown in the circle. His house is rather large, around 145 m². Below we show another house designed by a less wealthy family. It has only 65 m², yet provides enough room for 2 adults and 3 children.



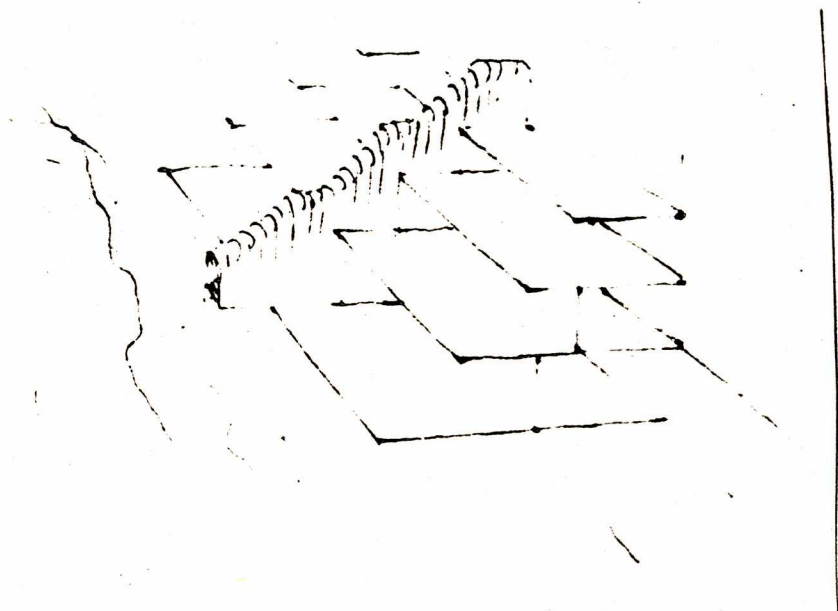
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When the designs were finished,
the government architects began to
prepare the usual contract drawings
for the bidding and construction. It
should be built before the end of
1973.

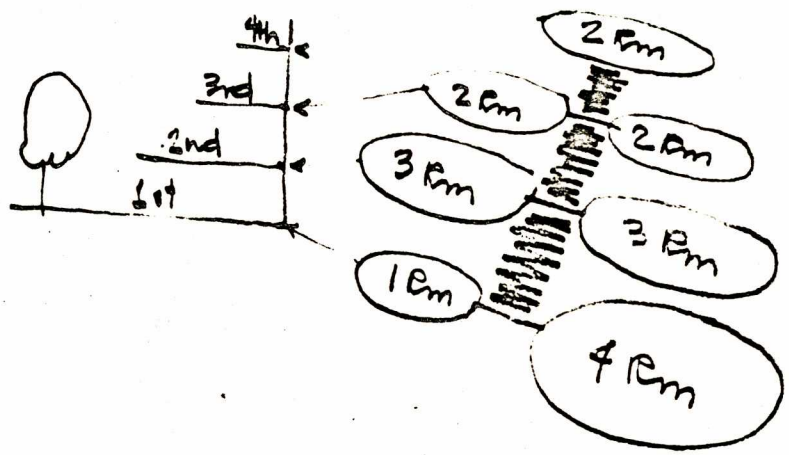
It is very hard to involve the inhabitants of an apartment building in its design, since they are not usually living in Marsta when the building gets built. The process we illustrate here assumes that they are known ahead of time (because their names are on a waiting list for apartments), but that they live in other parts of Sweden. To design an apartment building when the names of would-be occupants are not known at all, ahead of time, a slightly different process will be used.

Let us assume that this building is one of the apartment buildings to be built within the framework laid out on the NEIGHBORHOOD panel. It is placed to the north of several clusters of houses, and has, to the north of it, a local access road running east-west. According to the pattern Apartment valley, already used in laying out the neighborhood, this building will have four storeys, will have a meandering pedestrian path to the south, will have parking inside it, at ground level on the north, and will have office space on the second storey, also on the north. It is also possible that there may be one or more small shops on the eastern or western sides of the building, at ground floor. The building will contain about eight apartments.

Starting from the pattern Apartment house leaf, the team decides that the building will be a sloping building, arranged around a long public stair whose slope faces south, as to give maximum south exposure to the apartments, and that the apartments open off a common, long covered public stair which opens off the pedestrian path to the south.

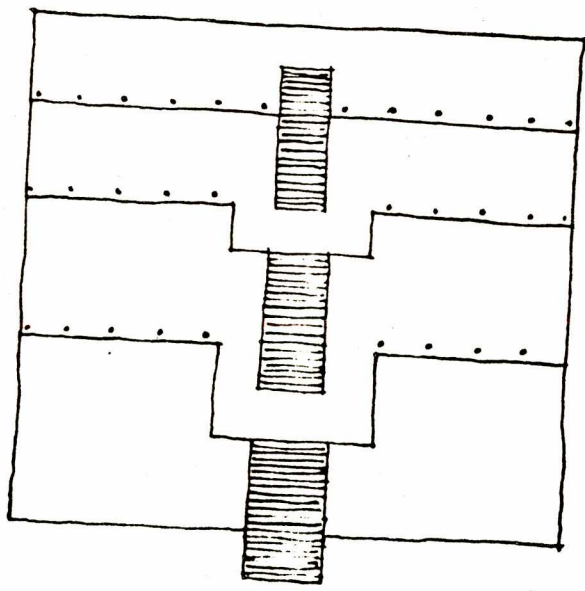


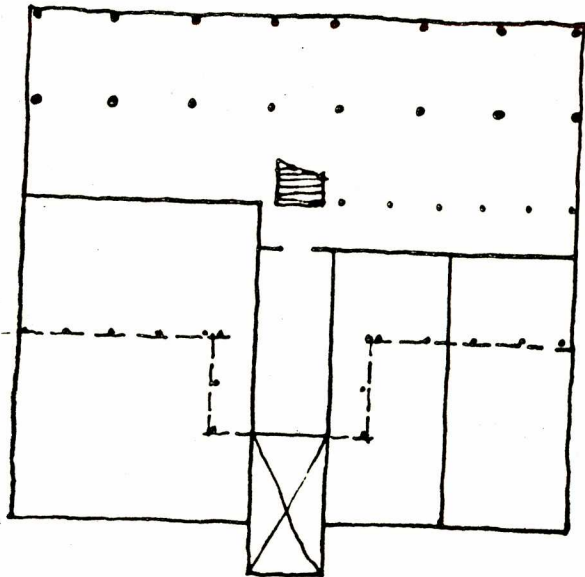
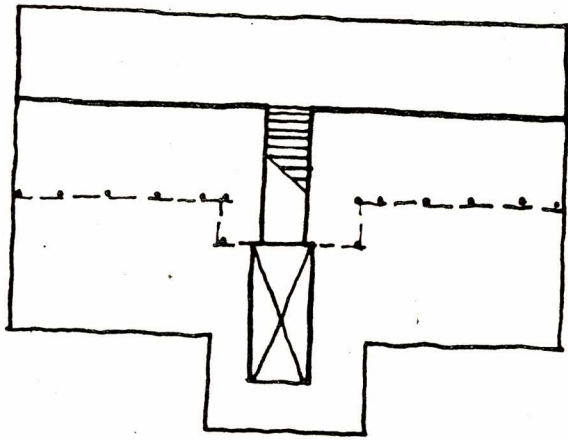
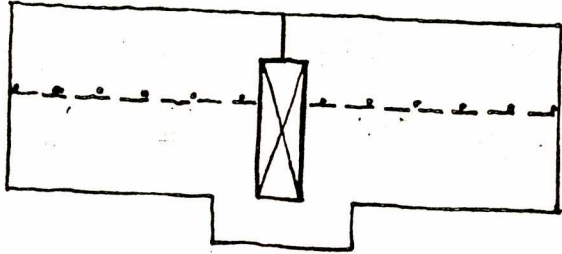
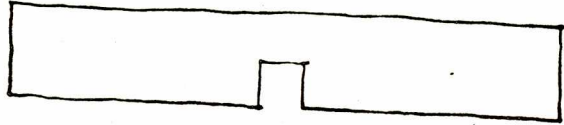
Household mix. This defines the range of household sizes which must be provided, and explains that it is best when households of different kinds are mixed together; and that those for old people, and very young children should be closest to the ground; while those for single young people, and young couples, can be further from the ground. Using this pattern the team decided to make one 2-bed apartment on the 4th floor, two 2-bed apartments on the 3rd floor, two 3-bed apartments on the 2nd floor, and one 1-bed and one 4-bed apartment on the ground floor.



This process starts with a manager, or builder, or cooperative, who wants to build an apartment house. The commune tells this manager that he must assemble a team, which includes a representative from the neighborhood where the building is going to be built, at least two of the families who intend to live in the building when it is finished, chosen from the list of waiting applicants, and an architect-engineer.

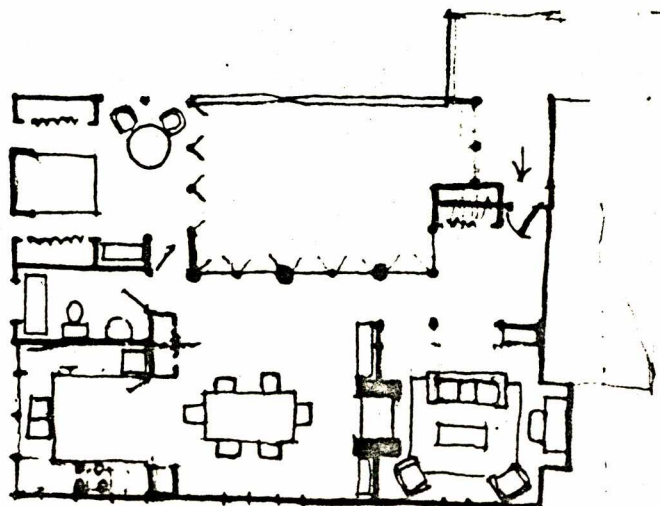
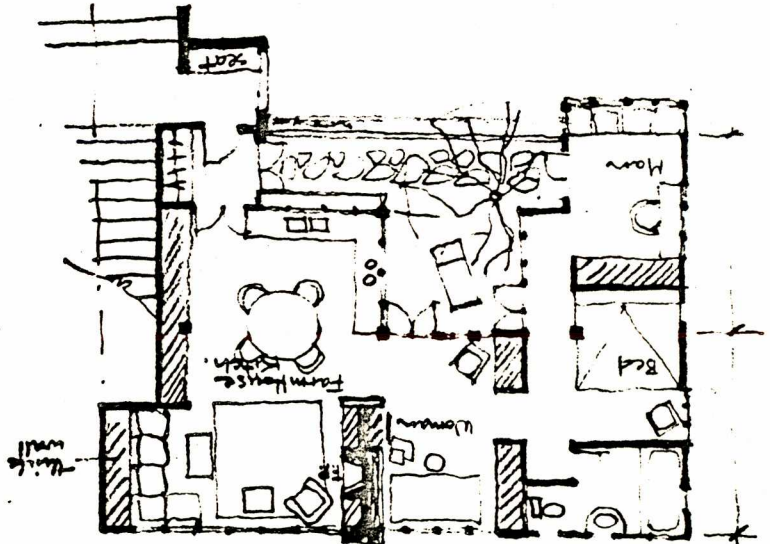
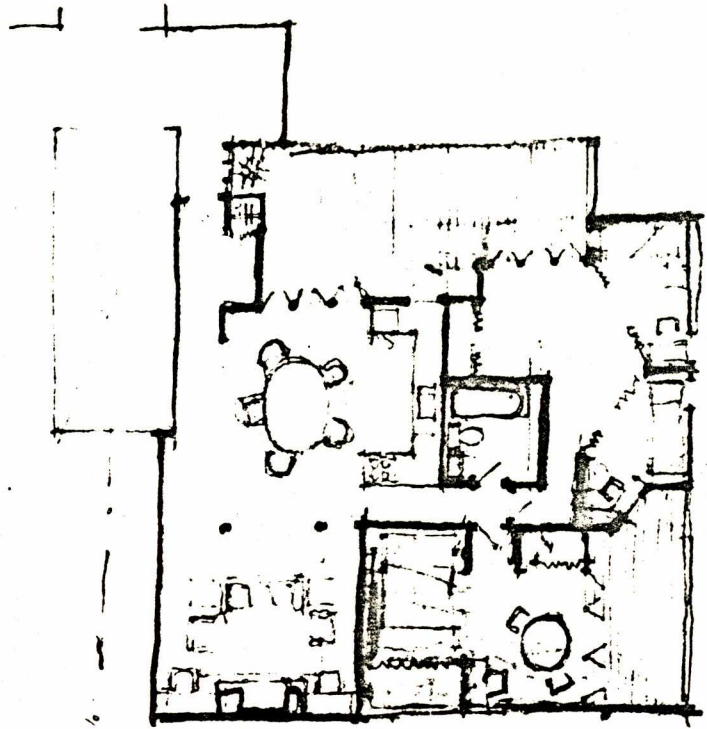
Earth balcony. This pattern says that every apartment must have a balcony or terrace open to the sun, and strong enough so that people can grow things on it. Using this pattern, the team decides to what extent each apartment sticks out beyond the one above it, and with the help of the engineer, the rough position of columns which will provide structural support.





Connected playspace. This pattern says that young children require frequent contact with other children, and that there must therefore be safe playspace immediately outside all houses with young children in them, and that it must be connected to all the houses directly. To include this pattern, the team makes a large communal garden, at the bottom of the stair, to the south of the building, where it is sunny.

At this stage, the management writes to seven families who are on the waiting list for an apartment, who want to take part in the process, and who fit the different sizes of apartments on the four different levels, to take part in the project. Each family gets a rough plan of the building, as it has been conceived so far. (If they live far from Marsta, it is sent by mail.) They are given the part of the pattern language that deals with individual houses, and asked to design their own apartment for themselves, within the larger framework. For the nature of this process see the panel HOUSE.



Each family is given a clear understanding of the cost of construction, per square meter, and told the limits of area they must keep to, in order to be within their chosen cost limits. They are told that the layout is mainly a frame of reference: that they can add or subtract from the slab, that the column location is somewhat flexible, that they are free to build on the open part of the slab as well as underneath the next floor slab. It is emphasized that they are initially only to do the rough design.

When the families have created a rough design for their apartments, including the location of the columns in their design and the best position for the edge of the slab, they send them back to the management team. This team, led by the architect-engineer, now resolve conflicts between the different apartment designs, and work out a new column structure which is compatible with the designs, and changes them as little as possible.

This process creates a modified version of each apartment design, is sent back to the family which made it. Each family then finishes the design of its apartment according to the new slab positions and new column spacing. These final designs are then returned to the management who make final modifications and prepare for construction.

The details of the common land at the bottom of the stair, are left unfinished until after the building is finished. When the families start living there, and have some real experience of the way this common land works, they meet to shape this common land. The original budget includes a small amount specifically set aside for this purpose, so that people can build what they feel is right. This final act of building and planting common land will itself be treated as a project, which uses patterns from the lower end of the pattern language.

EXAMPLE: HOW THE SIGTUNA MARSTA COMMUNE CAN DECIDE WHERE TO BUILD WHATEVER NEW BUILDINGS THEY CAN AFFORD DURING THE COMING YEAR.

The planning office of the commune, together with representative users from the population at large, starts by making an annual diagnosis of the region in its current state. To do this, they consider the largest patterns one by one, asking which parts of the commune now satisfy this pattern, which parts most obviously lack this pattern - and, as a conclusion, where it would make most sense to concentrate development to mend this pattern during the coming year. We show sample diagnoses for 10 patterns.

Agricultural valleys. The pattern says that, for ecological reasons, valleys should be left for nature and farming. The map shows the valleys which should be left intact. The commune should encourage farming, orchards, nurseries, and other soil oriented land uses in these valleys.

Waters edge. The pattern says that development should be near water, when possible; and that there is always a narrow belt of entirely public land along the waters edge. The map shows where edges are undeveloped.

South slopes. The pattern says that development should concentrate mainly on south slopes to catch the sun. The map shows the areas, where development might take place.

Urban ribbon. This pattern calls for urban ribbons narrow enough so that the people have easy access to surrounding countryside. The map shows where new buildings should be added to the existing fabric of Marsta-Valsta to conform to this pattern.

The map shows those areas which are suitable for increased development into ribbons.

Mosaic of subcultures. The pattern requires that communities and neighborhoods be distinct, and separated by boundaries, so that each one can take on its own character, according to the people who live there. The map shows the existing communities, by marking the areas between them dark. These boundary areas need to be developed and marked more strongly as boundaries. No housing must be allowed to develop in them.

Scattered work. This pattern says that it is essential that there be opportunities for closer ties between work and family; possible for children to see men during the day; and possible for women to be less tied to the domestic world only. Marsta is very bad in this respect, since the industry is entirely segregated. We have marked all those housing areas where there might be enough space for work, either in the form of offices, or small scale workshops.

Street theater. This pattern says that every local region needs at least one place, within 15 minutes of every house, where people can go to see people and be seen. The map shows the place which comes closest to this in Marsta now; with development it could satisfy the pattern.

Promenade. This pattern says that every street theater and every community of 7000, needs one promenade - a place where many people may be walking. The map shows the places where this is needed most, and the potential lines for improvement of this pattern.

Activity nuclei. Along every promenade, at frequent intervals, there are nuclei of activity. The map shows the places where these nuclei might come, on the incremental promenades shown on the previous map.

Local transport areas. A local transport area is an area bounded by fast roads, made so that internal automobile traffic is possible, but discouraged. Valsta and Marsta are two possible local transport areas: Valsta is already well organized; Marsta is deficient. In order to improve this, the use of bicycles should be encouraged by the construction of bicycle paths; mini-bus service should be provided within each area; and the internal roads, inside each local transport area, should be made harder to drive on (rough surface, more bends, obstacles, etc.)

The final drawing shows how the commune could choose to allocate its limited money for 1973, based on the diagnostic maps. It shows the best sites for the next 600 housing units; the creation of a dam to create more waterfront; the creation of beautiful work environments which will encourage employment to divert from Arlanda and Stockholm; the location of short stretches of pedestrian promenade that will improve existing conditions and enhance future growth; the location of farms in local valleys to preserve the land, and yet be accessible to people use; the beginnings of a general policy to close internal streets, discourage internal car movement, and encourage bicycles, mini-buses for all internal traffic.