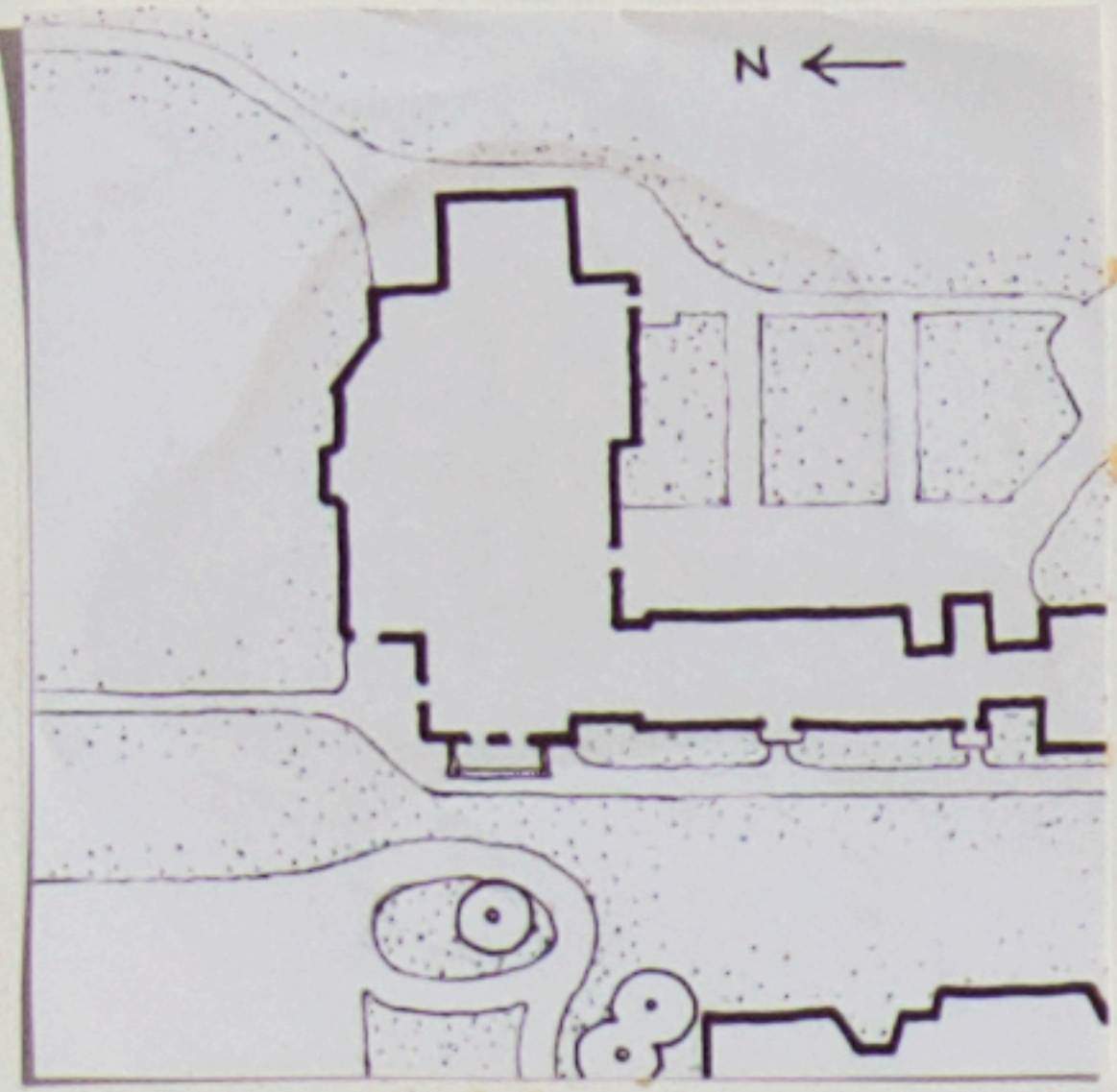# REPAIR OF AN EXISTING AREA

HOW USERS CAN REPAIR AN EXISTING AREA WITH THE HELP OF DIAGNOSIS. IDEALLY, EVERY BUILDING AND OUTDOOR SPACE WILL BE CONSTANTLY REPAIRED BY ACTS LIKE THIS.
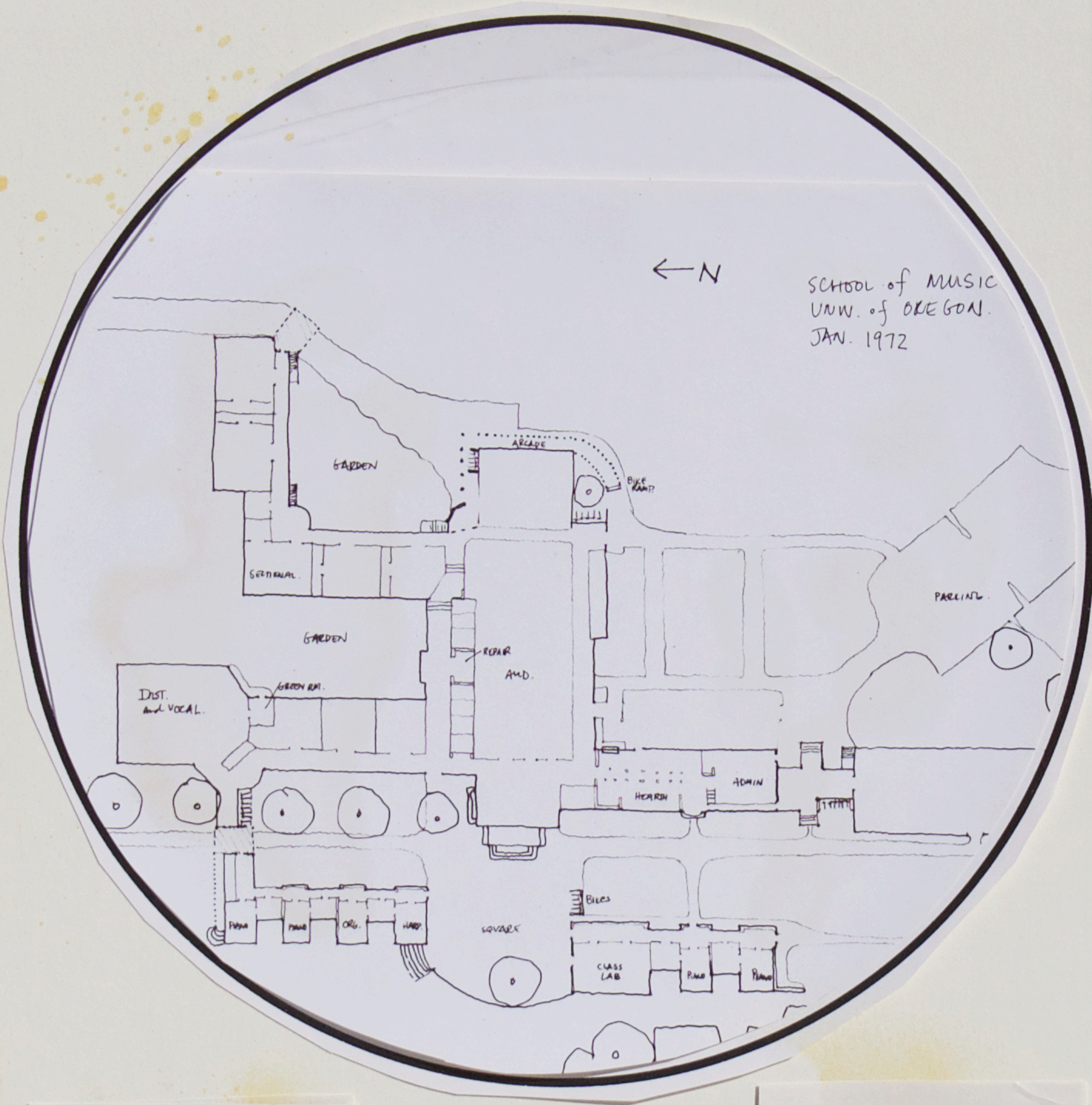

SCHOOL of MUSIC
UNIV. of OREGON.
JAN. 1972

The buildings for the School of Music at the University of Oregon are working badly. There is too little space (a shortage of 1100 m^2), and a number of other problems: too much noise from the practice rooms, no where for students and faculty to meet, no clearly marked entrances to the building, no where for small public recitals, and too much noise from passing traffic.

The University Planning Office had made a diagnosis of the general area around the music school which showed what the environmental problems were in that larger area. They encouraged the Music School to make a proposal for modification of the present building which would also solve the larger problems of the surrounding environment. The University promised funds if they could manage this.
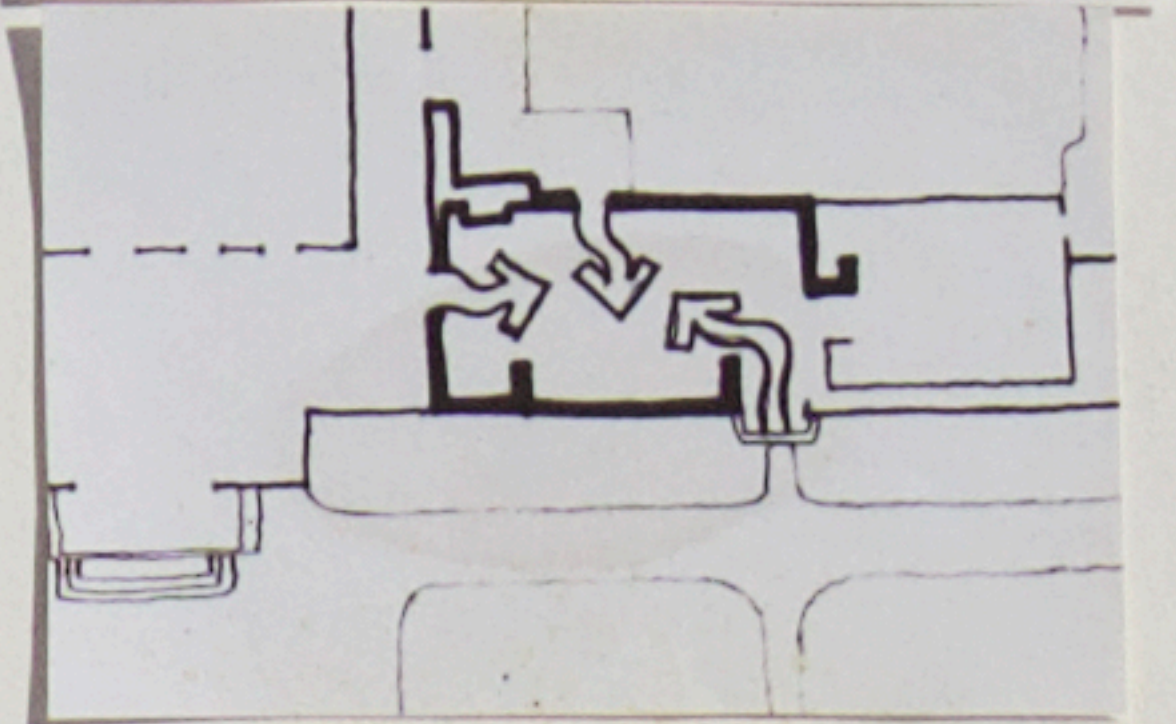
The Dean of the School of Music, chose a user group of seven persons: himself, three faculty members, one student, the campus planner, and one person from the Center for Environmental Structure. Others, like the instrument repair man, were brought in when needed.

As a first step, the users tried to decide how new construction might be distributed around the existing area to help create University streets, Activity nuclei, Circulation realms, and Visible gateways. The University diagnosis shows that these patterns are deficient in this part of the campus.

The first pattern they used was University street. It points out that larger departments and heavily centralized academic facilities actually make learning in the University more difficult. What is needed instead are smaller individual work groups, each housed in its own space with its own entrance at ground level, the various work groups strung along both sides of public pedestrian streets.

As the University diagnosis shows, these streets of learning opportunities need to be created on the north and west sides of the complex; the users decided to place their buildings like this to form these streets.

The pattern Activity nucleus, also part of the University's diagnosis, suggests that there should be a concentrated focus outside the concert hall, where several paths from different directions meet, and there is some chance of being able to generate pedestrian life there. The users decided to form this activity nucleus, by careful placing of the buildings next to it, and with a balustrade, overlooking a beautiful view, where people can stop and talk before and after concerts.

Circulation realms. This pattern discusses the problem of disorientation, one of the most common experiences in modern cities, yet also one of the most disconcerting and frightening. To solve this problem the environment must form a nested set of realms in which it is always possible to see the entrances to any system of realms, from the larger realm which leads to them.

The users applied this principle by identifying the 3 major entrances to the Music School complex as a whole, and then by making them with gateways. Once the visitor to the complex enters these gateways, the smaller entrances to the individual work areas are easy to see.
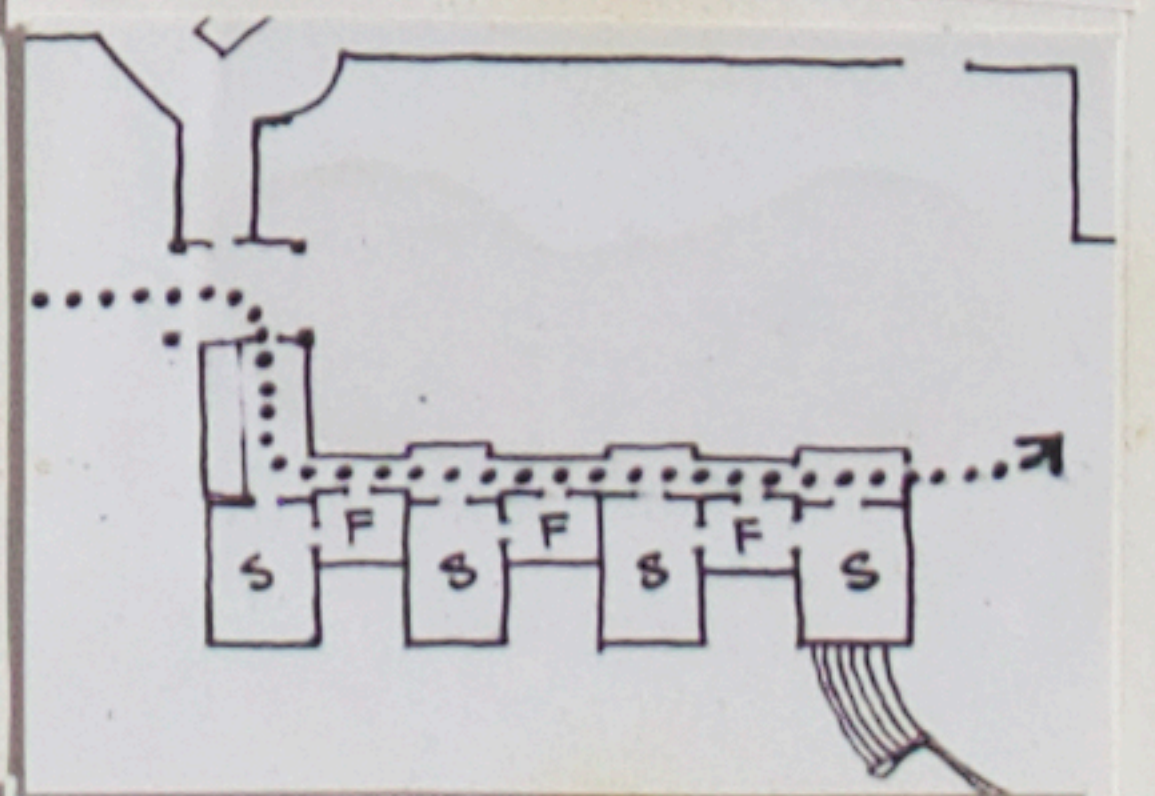
As the user began the detailed design of the complex, patterns such as Department hearth became important. This pattern describes the problem created when a University department is nothing but a collection of offices and labs, without a central meeting place for informal contact between faculty and students. This means that each department needs to have its own "hearth" at the center of gravity of the offices and near a path that everyone uses. This hearth should be a lounge where people can sit, read journals, have a cup of coffee, pick up departmental mail, and get supplies and information.
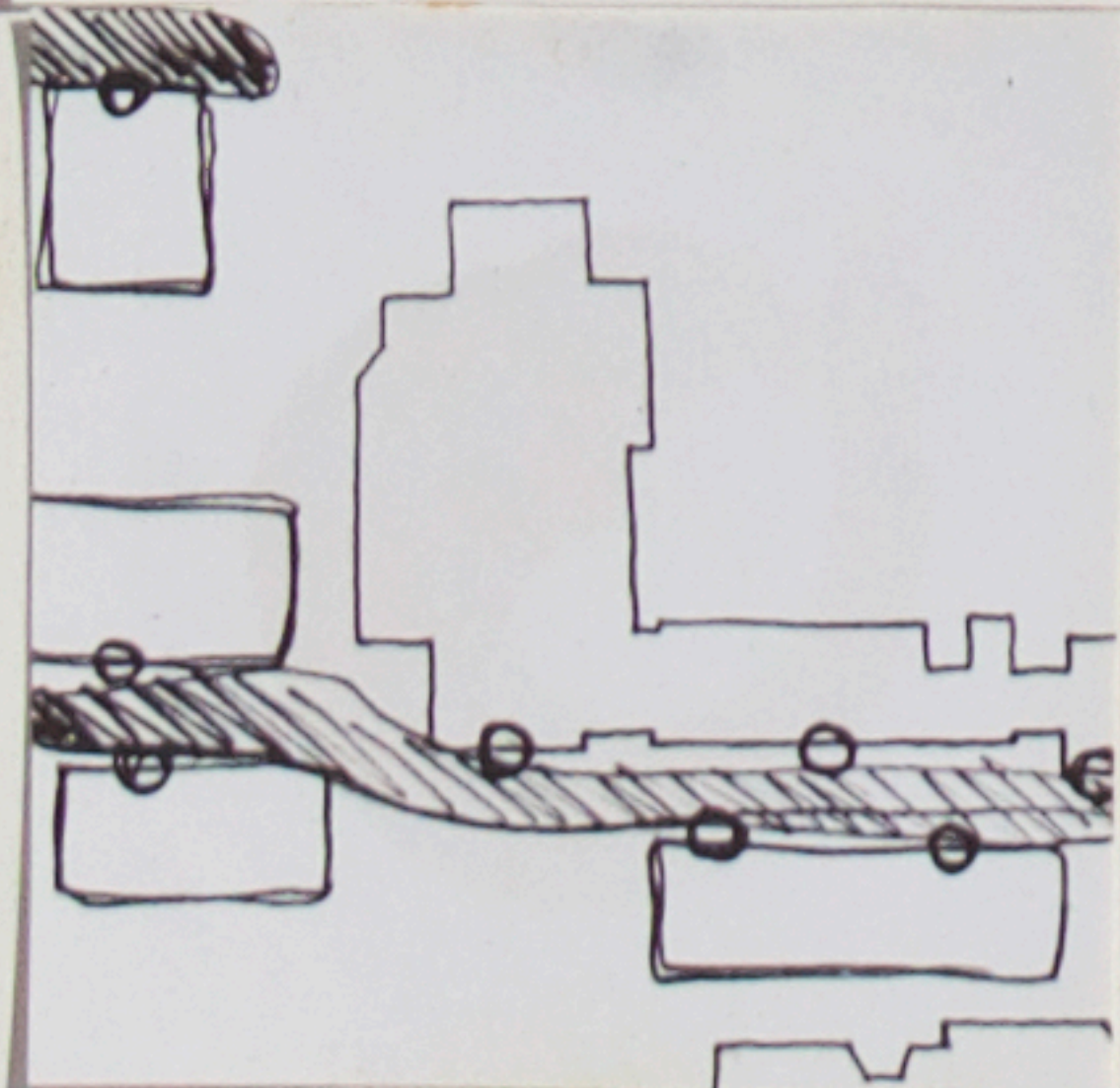
To create a department hearth, in the right place, the users decided to convert the whole ground floor of the oldest and most central building, making half of it, next to the main paths, a department hearth, and half of it further from the path, into administrative offices.

The team then addressed itself to the pattern Faculty student mix, which tries to break down the barriers between students and faculty. This is because learning and research cannot flourish without the sustained informal contacts which occur within groups. But this becomes impossible if the faculty offices are isolated from the places where students naturally gather. The solution is to locate faculty offices in small groups of 2 or 3 among the graduate student's workplaces.
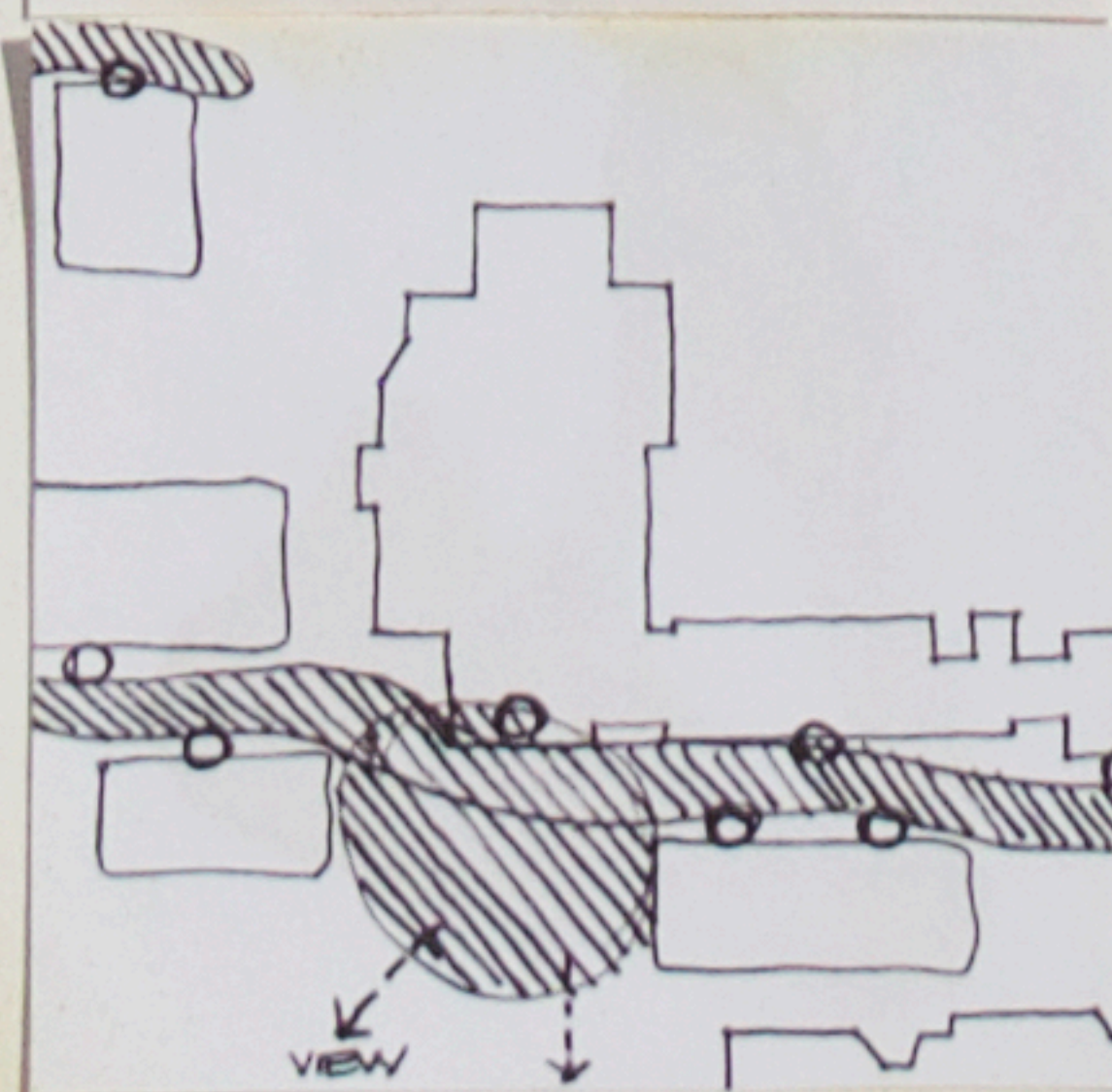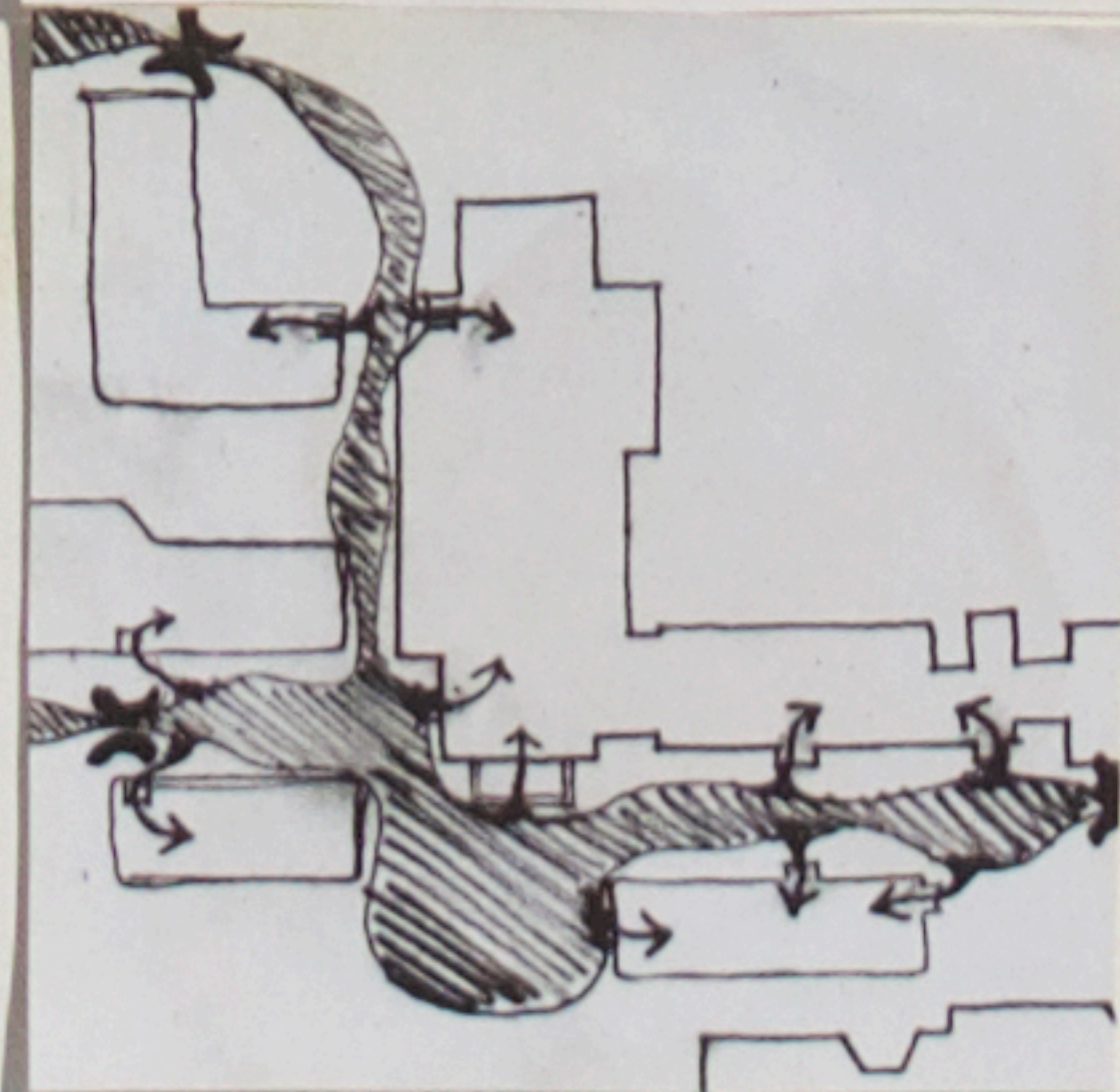
To build faculty student mix into the new buildings, the users decided to alternate faculty offices with student practice rooms, and to repeat this structure all the way along the newly formed university streets. The diagram below shows how the offices and practice rooms open off the one-sided corridor which forms the edge of the university street.

This project is still under way: at this moment (March 1972) the users are making a more detailed drawing, which will show the detailed positions of doors, windows, seats and partitions more carefully.

AFTER THE USERS APPLY THE STRUCTURAL PATTERNS IN THE LANGUAGE TO PUT THE DETAILS IN, THIS SCHEME CAN GO DIRECTLY TO A BUILDER.