PEOPLE REBUILDING BERKELEY

THE SELF CREATING LIFE OF NEIGHBORHOODS

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WORKING DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION

PEOPLE REBUILDING BERKELEY:

THE SELF-CREATING LIFE OF NEIGHBOURHOODS

Working draft

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MEMORANDUM TO THE MASTER PLAN REVISION COMMITTEE, CITY OF BERKELEY

November 20, 1974

Members of the committee:

In June of this year, we agreed to prepare for you, a document which would describe a possible component for the Berkeley Master Plan. The manuscript which follows, is the first draft of that document. As you will see, it relies heavily on the idea that the local neighbourhood (a unit of some 4-6 blocks, 500-1000 people) should be the fundamental unit of the planning process.

We are aware, of course, that you and the planning staff are working on a conception of the Berkeley Master Plan which will include new emphasis on neighbourhood control, and we are fully in sympathy with your efforts in this direction. At the same time, we feel that no current efforts in this direction go nearly far enough to recognise the fundamental fact about cities, namely: That the heart of any city lies not in its environment, viewed as a static "thing", but in the energy of the people themselves, being actualised in the constant process of creating their environment.

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Concretely, we suggest that the committee might undertake the following actions:

1. Recommend, formally, to the Planning Department and/or the City Council, that this document(edited and revised) be adopted as a component of the Berkeley Master Plan. This would require three steps:

   a. Examine the present master plan, and those revisions currently contemplated by the committee, and check for any practical incompatibilities.
   b. Revise both this document and/or the other existing master plan documents, in such a way as to remove these inconsistencies.
   c. Recommend, formally, to the Planning Department and/or to the City Council, that this document in its edited and revised state, be adopted as a formal component of the Berkeley Master Plan.

2. After revision of chapter 5, The Rebuilding Berkeley Ordinance, it might also be possible to propose the formal adoption of this ordinance into law, either through action of the City Council, or by referendum, in the next city ballot. To this end, the committee might:

a. Undertake a study of the detailed revisions in the proposed ordinance.

b. Draft a revised ordinance.

c. Then recommend that this ordinance be placed on the next ballot, or presented to the council.

3. As a third, and still bolder alternative, it would also be possible to revise the present master planning process, in its entirety, along the lines suggested by this manuscript. Although we believe that such a revision ought to be contemplated at some time in the near future, we doubt if it would be realistic to attempt it now.

Christopher Alexander

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PREFACE

This book, and the process it describes, presents a fundamental, and far-reaching hypothesis about the nature of towns. If the hypothesis is correct, then a great deal, almost all of city planning as we know it is wrong, fundamentally misoriented, and must be changed, because it would then be entirely incapable, in its present form, of bringing our towns to life.

We do not know that this hypothesis is correct. In fact, as we shall see, the conditions which now exist in cities are so radically different from the conditions which we describe, that there is no way of telling whether our hypothesis is true or false. We believe it to be true. There are dozens of small indications which lead us to this belief. But of course we are not certain. And we cannot be certain, until the conditions we describe are created, somewhere, and tested. However, even in this state of uncertainty, we believe that this hypothesis is so fundamental, so essential, so central to the heart of urbanism, that no city can afford to ignore it entirely. We believe, indeed, that until this hypothesis is clearly confirmed, or rejected, almost any town with serious intentions to improve the life of its people, must at least give this hypothesis consideration, and must at least launch pilot projects along the lines which we suggest.

This is the hypothesis:

There is one primary generating process, which plays the central role in the life of a town. This is the process by which the energy of the people of the town is liberated, and, being liberated, coalesces in the creation, growth, and constant repair of this common land.

It is the process by which the people of the town form neighborhoods, small enough for people to work together to create, replenish and repair the common land which gives their neighborhoods identity. And this process, the creating and repairing of their common land, neighborhood by neighborhood, is the one process which can liberate their energy sufficiently to bring the town alive; for only in the liberating of their energy, can they create a healthy functioning environment for themselves, create their common potency, their freedom, their potentiality, their commonness, their communality.

CHAPTER ONE

THE ENERGY OF THE PEOPLE IN THE NEIGHBORHOODS

Imagine the most wonderful Berkeley.

Parks everywhere, with flowers blooming; children learning and schooling in small groups outside the houses; narrow lanes with crooked houses; opening out into beautiful small squares, with fountains playing in them; arcades connecting building; groups of workshops, men and women working together, with children round them, no longer separated in office areas, and industry, and residential neighborhoods and schools; fruit trees with plums and oranges waiting for the gathering; large pools, large enough to swim in, on every block; small pools, blue tiles, with gold fish slowly swimming; the ancient streams of Berkeley which run down from the hills, running open in the streets, with beds of flowers next to them; dense areas where shops cluster, places for dancing in the streets open at night, music and singing filling the night air; no crime in the streets; different restaurants and entertainments in each part of Berkeley; perhaps a circus in the streets; horses and bicycles instead of cars, except for trips which need a bigger carrying capacity, or trips which take you out of town; the sound of bells; the sound of water; flickering light at night; beautiful sun warming the cafe terraces by day; the hum of work and play and families together in the town; the greetings of people nodding and knowing each other in the streets.

Is this impossible? Is it a dream?

We do not think so. For thousand of years this image, which looks so romantic, and so impossible, has been the commonplace experience of towns. It is the ordinary way things are; but, we have entirely misunderstood the processes which have created it.

We know that towns can be like this: and so, we change the planning department, the police department, the recreation department, the sanitation department, the public works department, the social services department ... we believe that these departments are capable of creating this joyful kind of town, so we increase our faith in them; we try to allocate more money to them--we create, endlessly, plans which will direct our centralized departments to create this sort of town for us; we give our faith to them; and they try, hard, as hard as they can, to create these things for us, within the difficulties of the public service.

Who should create the fountains for us--the public works department? Who should create the crooked streets--the planning department, backed by the zoning ordinance? Who should create the parks and green things in the streets--the recreation department? Who should manage to keep our streets safe and free of crime--the police department? Who should create the goldfish in the blue tiled ponds--the public works department, and the parks department? Who should help to create small groups of work communities which serve the local neighborhoods--the social services department? Who should make sure that there

are clinics where they need to be, and that the outdoor cafes are safe and clean for us to be in--the public health department?

Our conception of the city, our dreams about its possibility are true. There is no inherent difficulty why a town cannot be wonderful, and beautiful, and live, just as towns always were. But our conception of the way to do it is entirely wrong. We have entirely misunderstood the processes which actually created living towns in the cultures of the past; there is no way that our departments can create this kind of town for us. There is no way, with all the goodwill in the world, that our planning department, our inspection services, our public works, can help us have the kind of town where streets are living vibrant parts of our community, and where our life can be as much out in the street as in our houses. They do not have the competence.

Let us begin, now, with an analysis of the problems which our city departments face in trying to create this kind of word world for us; and then, from our analysis, we shall come to the kind of process which might actually be able to do it.

Under current assumptions about city management, the city faces two main problems:

<u>First, there is a constant need for more central programs</u>--

more social services, more planning, more public works--the people are calling for street dividers, for health clinics, for better programs, for more services; and the city, in order to provide these services, is growing more and more centralized, with the natural and resulting need to undertake more and more control, more planning, more guidance. This is what our master plan is all about. The master plan, and other centralized public agencies, like zoning, recreation, public works ... are all intended to make sure that the overall spending of public and private money is controlled and planned, to make sure that the environment does gradually get better.

Second, there is too little money--vastly too little money. The present city budget already takes a great proportion of our incomes, in the form of tax. It is virtually certain that there would be widespread public resistance to an increase in taxes. Yet, the budget is too little. Inflation makes it impossible to keep up with last year's programs even--and yet, during this very same inflation, the centralized view of cities seems to require more and more tax money to fill the budget.

BOTH THESE KEY ASSUMPTIONS ARE FALLACIOUS, AND THE TWO FALLACIES INTERACT IN THE MOST DEVASTATING WAY.

First, it is a fallacy to think that huge amounts of money are needed to improve Berkeley, and that it must necessarily take twenty

or thirty years to do. The fact is that this city of 120,000 people has vast human energies in it--the energy of one hundred and twenty thousand souls. Under the proper conditions this vast supply of human energy, together with the rather limited supply of private capital, and public tax money which already exist, could entirely transform Berkeley within a period of three or four years.

Second, it is a fallacy to think that the centralized control created by the master plan, the zoning office, the public works department, parks and recreation, and so on, are making matters better. In fact, they are making matters worse and worse and worse, because life cannot be generated in a city unless it is created, pulsing, by the people of the city themselves, at every point of the city, throughout the city, by the energy of their activities.

These two fallacies interact strongly, since each one seems correct, so long as you assume that the other is also correct. It is only possible to see how incorrect they are when you look at them both together.

First, you cannot take seriously the idea that all the energies of the people of the city might flower together, and recreate the city within a period of a year or two, so long as you imagine that the city is controlled by the present kind of master plan--because, obviously, the present master plan is throttling any possibility of this release of energy. We shall study this phenomenon in detail later.

And secondly, you can't take seriously the idea that the master plan is bad for Berkeley, at the moment, because so long as the effective energy of Berkeley's people is not allowed to unfold, it seems as though the master plan is necessary, and provides the only possible source of order, and plan and design--and is indeed essential for our welfare.

THERE IS A FURTHER INTERACTION BETWEEN THESE TWO FALLACIES.

The master plan idea makes the assumption that the environment will work well when it is well designed. Now, the environment is working well at the moment when it helps to liberate the energy and life of all the people living in it. A city can do no more for its people than create an ambience, which allows them to express themselves, and live life fully.

And, indeed, it is true that the environment has enormous power in this respect. It can help sustain the natural outpouring of people's energy--as it does in a beautiful street, a sidewalk cafe, a garden ... or it can bottle it up--as it does in a place which is frightening and dark and dangerous.

But it is entirely fallacious to think that the environment will work, and will succeed in liberating people's energy, no matter who is shaping it.

If the city is designed by a centralized planning process, then, no matter how much wisdom there is in the actual detailed shaping of the streets, the buildings, the workplaces, the public gathering places--if it has been shaped by any centralized authority--its actual effect will be stale and deadening. The nature of the interaction between people and their environment is far more subtle than it seems. People do not merely need to be given a well organized environment, like penguins in the zoo, being given the most perfect concrete penguin house designed by penguin experts. The environment is only working properly for people when they have shaped it themselves, when they have both given it the shape it needs to meet their needs, and also had an active hand in shaping it. It is not only the liberator of their energy, but the product of their liberated energy. It is not merely a tool for making us feel good, but the product of our hands and hearts while we are feeling good.

This dual nature of the environment in its relationship to man--the fact that it is both the shaper, and the shaped; and that we ourselves are also, both the shapers and the shaped--this is the fundamental fact, which master plans entirely ignore; and this is why the process of the master plan cannot create a satisfactory environment for its people, no matter how wise, or subtle the plan itself may be.

We must therefore recognize that a proper city will only come into being when the two major sides of this great interaction are treated together as dynamic parts of a dynamic whole.

We must find a process of construction, planning and reconstruction which is born of the interaction of the people's natural energy, and their need for properly shaped space--a process in which the people's energy is released, and creates for itself the very space in the environment which it can feed upon.

Imagine for a moment. Berkeley is a city of 120,000 people. Imagine the vast human energy that lies in us. Imagine that some process could allow this human energy to flow: and that the process of regenerating our city could be seen merely as the natural outcome of the energy from all of us 120,000 taking care of our daily lives, and taking care of the world around us, building it, repairing it, making it beautiful, making it satisfy our natural longings.

We became aware of this incredible reservoir of human energy in two different ways.

First, we became aware of it because we saw it released in a few special cases, where we deliberately broke the law, in order to make something beautiful. In the cases where we decided to build small parks in the parking places of the city streets, we found that people would come out and help, bring flowers, lend tools, gather round, work hard, work together, form energetic groups of people who cared about what they were doing together--we realized that the act, on our part, of saying look here is a parking space, let's build something

here, unlocked this reservoir of human energy. We did it in three different places: each time it was the same. Each time we realized what reserves of energy were lying frustrated, and untapped below the surface of people's lives.

We became aware of this energy in a second way: by realizing how systematically, how crushingly, it was being destroyed by refusal, frustration, laws, the public works department, the city attorney.... These experiences, where even though people loved their parks, the public works department would at once send out letters saying that these parks must be removed; the process by which the director of public works smilingly told us how wonderful it was what we were doing, and how unfortunate it was that it was he who had to give the orders that it be removed; and the way in which he smilingly told us that it was his job to keep the streets clean, and that he had 50 bulldozers and the whole Berkeley police force at his command, to help him enforce this law. This colossal and neurotic force, coming from good men, from well intentioned people, who just did not understand what they were doing--the power, the oppressive force of their refusals, these made us realize too, what vast reserves of human energy are being hidden. It is hard to recognize the vastness of a reserve, unless one begins to see the size of the thing which is oppressing it and hiding it.

But third, and most important of all, after these experiences, we began to realize that the sheer act of building, the act of being

out on the land, working to make something, is an almost magical act: that it is a process in which people are transformed entirely: that it gives them energy, yields their energy; taps their energy; makes them into entirely different people; increases the extent to which they share; that, in fact, the act of designing something common together, and the act of building it, is almost a sacrament, a spiritual force, a way of unlocking human energy which is as powerful as almost any other human institution. We began to realize that the task of designing places in the public world and building them was not something which was a responsibility or a privilege which the people need to exercise merely in order to make better designs--and because they understand their own local world and their needs better than any planner or administrator--but that the process of doing this is essential, that it creates a form of human linkage, a power, an energy which is entirely beyond words to describe it.

We began to see it in the almost extraordinary harmony which another of our groups experienced, while building a small building without permission: where only the necessities of the building, guided their actions: where the decisions about exactly how to build were not made in advance on paper, but made constantly from day to day as the building grew. The harmony of this group was almost radiant; and we began to realize that it was simply because their energy was being released--because they were able to build together; they had the land; they had the materials; they were acting together; there was no

external permission needed. In this state, where there was no oppression at all, we sing, we work like animals or angels: there is no stopping us: and it is only because the energy which is in us, naturally, flows out without constraint.

We talked to a psychiatrist who, years ago, stood on a piece of land in Modesto, designing a clinic of which he was to be director. Now, years later, seeing the building made real--even though he has since moved--he remembers that week, standing in the fog, making chalk marks on the ground, as we laid the building out, talking about the place for the entrance, the place for the greenhouse, the place where people could sit, the fountain, the small gardens, the rooms, the arcades--he remembers this week as the best week of his working life in Modesto. He is a psychiatrist who loves his work, and is good at it; for him, making this building with us, out on the land, is the week that matters most in all that period of his life.

And we remember the week we laid out the extension to the music school in Oregon--described in The Oregon Experiment--standing in the mud, often knee deep in mud, wearing crazy yellow hats, playing the fool, dancing up and down, joking, working from early in the morning every day, until late into the evening. I remember one person--a graduate student--who was part of the design team: at the beginning of the week he told us that he would only be able to spend one day with us, because he had to work for his PhD exams. But the work

together meant so much, it was so unusual, so extraordinary, that he came day after day, and let his exams to themselves--because there are no ordinary experiences of this intensity, in our social lives: this was communion; and there is no communion in our lives.

The almost magic way in which the communion of a few people, building together, or even walking the land, and placing stakes, where their buildings and seats are going to be--this is a process which brings men and women together, and allows their energy to flow out into the world, towards one another. It is this energy which we are trying to tap; this energy which can be the generative force behind our building; this energy, in all the 120,000 people of the city of Berkeley, which can create the constant process of regeneration, that a half dozen planners and officials now usurp.

If the active process of creation, the process by which the people of a town express their energy in the creation of their common land, is, indeed, fundamental to the city's life, we must then ask just how this energy is organized. What are its natural units?

Is the individual person the proper unit? Can the individual people of the town express their energy in isolation. Or is the family the proper unit: can the energy which shapes our common land be expressed family by family. Or, at the other extreme, is the proper unit the city itself: the large collective unit, in which people act together?

The key to the proper unit lies in two facts.

1. First, that this energy which shapes the town is, above all, collective energy.

2. Second, that being collective energy, it finds its best expression in the creation of that common land, which then sustains the collectivity which generates it.

The common land in a neighborhood is land which is shared by individuals--individuals who know each other, talk to each other every day, and have the capacity to work together in the improvement of that land. In fact, the neighborhood common land is the largest unit of space which a group can rally around and work on: any larger and the people would not know each other well enough to make the experience of working on the land real; any smaller, and it would be too small to evoke collective energy effectively. It is therefore the natural unit for the energetic process of repair and rebuilding to take place.

And, for this reason, we have come to believe that the physical unit, which most closely corresponds to the expression of the people's energy, is that unit of land which we may call the "local neighborhood." By being small enough to be completely comprehensible to the people who live in it, and also large enough to make an impact as a political unit at the scale of the city, it is the natural "cell" in which to expect the energetic process of repair and growth to take hold.

In fact, we believe that it is not possible for a town or city to come to order, in organic terms, unless the process of planning, construction, design, creating, regeneration, growth, and repair is based on local actions, and is going on, independently, in thousands of different neighborhoods. In short, the life process of the city, as far as its environment is concerned, depends totally on the local neighborhoods. For this reason the local neighborhoods are essential. They are not essential because they have intrinsic social importance, but because the regenerative processes of the city require their existence.

The processes of repair must be composed of local actions defined by association with neighbors. The associations for this purpose are strongest among immediate neighbors and people living in the same cluster of houses, because they will have the most number of decisions to make together about their places and immediate environment. The links between people living further away, again for the purpose of collaborating on building projects, will be less strong, because there will be fewer projects in common and also because there would be more people working on a project which two people, from opposite ends of the neighborhood, are concerned with. The neighborhood must be small enough so that everyone collaborating on a building project on common land belonging to the whole neighborhood can consult with each other.

It may be argued that only a very large group, say of the size of the communities or neighborhoods which have now defined themselves

in the city, can have the political clout to get things done with the city. This is not true. What has happened with some of the larger neighborhood organizations is that they themselves have become power structures unto themselves, bureaucracies like the bureaucracy they are trying to fight, only on a much smaller scale. Nothing much gets done; a lot of people in those neighborhoods don't really feel that their neighborhood organization represents them particularly. The only way a group can be effective--where effectiveness is measured in how successfully the energy of its members is released for constructive means--is if the group is small enough so that everyone in it can have a real part in it, so that everyone in it knows everyone else in it as someone with honest concerns and demands which are as real--and valid--as their own. Then energy is not used in fighting the bureaucracy, or, as often happens, in giving up altogether. Groups must be small enough so that every member can be personally accountable to every other.

Then, there would be a continuous hierarchy of groups, ranging from the family, to a pair of neighbors, to a group of neighbors in a house cluster, to a group of house clusters in a neighborhood, to a group of neighborhoods in a community, and to a group of communities in the city.... Each group or the representatives in that group, would be responsible only for the common land belonging to the group as a whole, and not for any land within the realm of any smaller group. There is a balance between the needs of the smaller part and the needs

of the whole. No individual can be responsible for more than his own share, no group takes control over what is properly the individual's responsibility.

So, we define the local neighborhood as a small group of people, about 500, 1000 at the most, who occupy a particular piece of land--a few blocks at the most--who live there, work there, who use it, who live there.

If we consider this neighborhood as a living entity, we must then, most essentially, be concerned with the life-process of this neighborhood--the processes by which this neighborhood generates itself, regenerates itself, maintains itself, is continually building itself up, tearing itself down, repairing itself--both its physical fabric and its social fabric--since these two are inseparable.

And, since each of these neighborhoods is itself part of a larger city, and we want to look at these neighborhoods in an organic way, we must also recognize that in being alive, and in making themselves alive, daily, in creating and recreating themselves, each neighborhood must also contribute to the larger structures, the community, the road system, the network of learning, the larger city of which it is a part, and we must therefore be able to show how the life process of the neighborhood, helps to sustain the life processes and structures of the larger community in which it sits.

And, by the same token, since each neighborhood is itself composed of individuals, families, small workgroups, which have their own life, at their own level, we must also recognize that in sustaining itself, in becoming, and being, and staying alive, each neighborhood must help to create conditions which enhance the possibility for all these individual persons, and families, small shops, workshops, work-groups, to maintain themselves in a state which is also alive, to the maximum of their potential, at their own level--and that the life process of the neighborhood will fail, of course, unless it gives each one of its internal parts the chance to be alive in its own terms as well.



TWO HUNDRED NEIGHBORHOODS

CHAPTER TWO

THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF NEIGHBORHOODS

We have said that the energy of the people in a town can manifest itself only under those conditions when the neighborhood--a small, intense, connected group of people, occupying a few blocks of land--is realizing itself, and creating its own commonness through the continual creation and repair of its environment. To give a detailed picture of this process we must now come to the organization of a neighborhood--its structure.

In this chapter we shall therefore describe the building blocks of which a neighborhood is made, remembering that since the neighborhood relies, almost entirely, on the commonness which is created there, the building blocks which give a neighborhood its soul are just those things of which its commonness is made: in short, its natural units of communality, its common land.

We shall argue, in fact, that within the local neighborhood there are a number of other, smaller, archetypal units, which we call patterns--each one of them identifying a particular kind of common land, a particular portion of the common land in a neighborhood, a particular social and spatial manifestation of the commonness of common land.

And we shall argue that the process by which the energy of the people can most properly express itself, in the continual creation of a city, is in the constant creation, and re-creation, and repair of these fundamental units of common land, which we call patterns.

We shall see, then, that the life of the city comes, when it is functioning properly, from the continual interplay between the energy of the people and the units of land and space--or patterns--which it is continuously creating.

In order to define the life of a small neighborhood in terms which both reflect its physical structure and its social life, we shall now give summaries of those physical-social patterns which most often contribute to the life and organization of a neighborhood. (These patterns are taken from A Pattern Language, by Alexander, Ishikawa, Silverstein and others, soon to be published by Oxford University Press.)

As we shall see later, it is our belief that the people of a neighborhood are able to act together most harmoniously when they begin to create, and re-create some version of these patterns in their own neighborhood. Of course, each neighborhood has its own version of these patterns, and other similar patterns, according to culture and life style. However, some version of these patterns is almost archetypal for small neighborhoods.

SOME PATTERNS CONTRIBUTING TO THE REPAIR OF SMALL NEIGHBORHOODS

NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARY

ACTIVITY NODES

HOUSE CLUSTERS

WORK COMMUNITIES

NEIGHBORHOOD WORKSHOP

✓ LOOPED LOCAL ROADS

✓ GREEN STREETS

PATH NETWORK

MAIN GATEWAYS

ACCESSIBLE GREEN

✓ SMALL PUBLIC SQUARES

DANCING IN THE STREET

POOLS AND STREAMS

COMMON LAND

CONNECTED BUILDINGS

✓ PUBLIC OUTDOOR ROOM

✓ SMALL PARKING LOTS

GRAVE SITES

STILL WATER

LOCAL SPORTS

SHOPFRONT SCHOOLS

CHILDREN'S HOME

STREET CAFE

CORNER GROCERY

NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARY

Encourage the formation of a boundary around each local neighborhood, to separate it from the next door neighborhoods. Form this boundary by restricting access to the local neighborhood--cut the normal density of access points at least in half. Place gateways, or

the feeling of gateways, where the restricted access paths do cross the boundary; and make the boundary zone wide enough to contain meeting places for the common functions shared by several neighborhoods.

ACTIVITY NODES

Create activity nodes every 100 to 300 yards in each local neighborhood. Modify the layout of the paths in the neighborhood to bring as many of them through these nodes as possible. This makes each center function as a "star" in the path network. Then, at the center of each star, make a small public square, and surround it with a combination of community facilities and shops which are mutually supportive.

Wherever possible, create the activity nodes by first identifying those existing spots in the neighborhood where action seems to concentrate itself, and then intensifying them, according to the dictates of the pattern.

HOUSE CLUSTERS

Arrange houses on the ground to form very rough, but identifiable, clusters of 10 to 12 houses around some common land and paths. Take care not to cut the cluster off from the neighborhood around it; in fact, run the clusters together so that edges are ambiguous and some homes are in overlapping clusters. Arrange the clusters so that anyone can walk through them, without feeling like a trespasser.

WORK COMMUNITIES

Build or encourage the formation of work communities--each one a collection of smaller clusters of workplaces which have their own courtyards, gathered round a larger common square or common courtyard which contains shops and lunch counters. The total work community should have no more than 10 or 20 workplaces in it.

NEIGHBORHOOD WORKSHOP

Establish in each local neighborhood a small public workshop, and adjacent yard for storage of materials, in order to encourage and help the activity of building. Put the workshop in the busiest part of the neighborhood so that it is visible and convenient for as many people as possible. Include in it a place for people to gather and discuss local projects, a public bulletin board on which the current neighborhood diagnosis can be posted, and a place where people can refer to catalogues, handbooks, and other written material.

LOOPED LOCAL ROADS

Lay out local roads so that they form loops. A loop is defined as any stretch of road which makes it impossible for cars that don't have destinations on it to use it as a shortcut or a through road. Do not allow any one loop to serve more than 50 cars. Keep the road less than 18 feet wide, and make the pedestrian path continuous, if the road is a dead end.

GREEN STREETS

On local roads, closed to through traffic, plant grass all over the road, and set occasional paving stones or gravel, or dirt, into the grass, to form a surface for the wheels of those cars that need access to the street. Combine the sidewalk with this kind of street, so there is no fast distinction between streets for cars and sidewalks for people. Where houses open off the street, put in more paving stones or gravel to let cars turn onto their own land. On existing local roads this means, essentially, closing the road and digging up the asphalt.

PATH NETWORK

As far as possible, lay out pedestrian paths at right angles to roads, not along them, so that the paths gradually begin to form a second network, distinct from the road system, and orthogonal to it. This can be done quite gradually--even if you put in one path at a time, but always put them in the middle of the "block," so that they run across the roads; the net of paths will gradually take on this rather complex character, orthogonal to roads, without being planned. Keep most of the points on the path network within 150 feet of the nearest road.

MAIN GATEWAYS

Mark every boundary in the city which has important human meaning--the boundary of a building cluster, a neighborhood, a precinct--by great gateways where the major entering paths cross the boundary.

Make the gateways solid elements, visible from every line of approach, enclosing the paths, punching a hole through a building, creating a bridge or a sharp change of level: but above all make them "things."

ACCESSIBLE GREEN

Build one open public green within 3 minutes walk--about 750 feet--of every house and workplace. This means that there will have to be one green for every one or two local neighborhoods. Make the greens at least 150 feet across, and at least 60,000 square feet in area.

SMALL PUBLIC SQUARES

A town needs public squares; they are the largest, most public rooms, that the town has. But when they are too large, they look and feel deserted; fewer and fewer people come to use them; and they destroy the very possibility of life which they create. So, make public squares much smaller than you would at first imagine: usually no more than 45 to 60 feet across, never greater than 70 feet across.

DANCING IN THE STREET

Along promenades, in squares and evening centers, make slightly raised platform to form a bandstand, where street musicians and local bands can play. Cover it, and perhaps build in at ground level tiny stalls for refreshment. Surround the bandstand with paved surface for dancing, leaning and sitting; establish it as a place where people can come to play music and dance--no admission charge.

POOLS AND STREAMS

Preserve natural pools and streams and allow them to run through the city; make paths for people to walk along them and footbridges to cross them. Let the streams form natural barriers in the city, with traffic crossing them only infrequently on bridges.

Whenever possible, collect rainwater in open gutters and allow it to flow above ground, along pedestrian paths and in front of houses. In places which do not have any natural running water, create water fountains in streets and public places where people can gaze at running water, and be in touch with it.

COMMON LAND

Give over about 25 percent of the land in house clusters to common land and common functions. Organize this land so that it touches or is very very near the homes which actually share it. To begin with, leave it open land; and let it grow to suit the tastes of the people who use it. Basic: be wary of the automobile; on no account let it dominate this land.

CONNECTED BUILDINGS

In the medium and high density parts of a neighborhood, connect your building up, wherever possible, to the existing buildings round about. Do not keep set-backs between building; instead, try to form new buildings as continuations of the older buildings. And do the

same, as far as the individual buildings and wings of building in your project are concerned: connect them up wherever possible, to make a continuous swath of buildings.

PUBLIC OUTDOOR ROOM

In every neighborhood and work community, make a piece of the common land into an outdoor room--a partly enclosed place, with some roof, an arcade or trellis; place it beside an important path and within view of many homes, workshops.

SMALL PARKING LOTS

Make parking lots small, serving not more than 6-8 cars, each lot surrounded by hedges, fences, slopes, and trees, so that outside the lot, the cars are almost invisible. Space these small lots so that they are at least 100 feet apart.

GRAVE SITES

Allocate pieces of land throughout the community as grave sites: corners of parks, sections of paths, gardens, beside gateways--where memorials to people who have died can be ritually placed with inscriptions and mementos which celebrate their life. Give each grave site an edge, a path and a quiet corner where people can sit: by custom, this is hallowed ground.

STILL WATER

In every neighborhood provide some still water--a pond, a

pool--for swimming. Keep the pool open to the public at all times, but make the entrance to the pool only from the shallow side of the pool, and make the pool deepen gradually, starting from only 1 or 2 inches deep. At the deep ends, create islands, where people can swim, rest or jump into the water. Locate public paths close to the wall, so that people can watch.

LOCAL SPORTS

Scatter places for team and individual sports through every work community and neighborhood: tennis, squash, table tennis, swimming, billiards, basketball, sauna, dancing, gymnasium... and make the action visible to passers-by, as an invitation to participate.

SHOPFRONT SCHOOLS

Instead of building large public schools for children 7-12, set up tiny independent schools, one school at a time. Keep the school small, so that its overheads are low, and a teacher-student ratio of 1:10 can be maintained. Locate it in the public part of the community, with a shopfront and three or four rooms: part of the fabric of work, shopping, and housing, near transportation, so that the children can get easily out in the town each day.

CHILDREN'S HOME

In every neighborhood build a children's home--a second home for children--a large rambling house or workplace--a place where

children can stay for an hour or two, or for a week. At least one of the people who run it must live on the premises; it must be open 24 hours a day; open to children of all ages; and it must be clear, from the way that it is run, that it is a second family for the children, a place where children are raised collectively, and which is essential to the proper education of the children--not just a place where baby sitting is available for parents.

STREET CAFE

Encourage local cafes to spring up in each neighborhood. Make them intimate places, with several rooms, open to a busy path, where people can sit with coffee or a drink and watch the world go by. Build the front of the cafe so that a set of tables stretch out of the cafe, right into the street. Give this terrace some definition, perhaps with a low sitting wall, a canvas roof, a different ground material, but keep it continuous with the street, so that people passing are brushing past the patrons at the edge.

CORNER GROCERY

Give every neighborhood at least one corner grocery, somewhere near its heart. Place these corner groceries every 200-800 yards, according to the density, so that each one serves about 1000 people. Place them on corners where large numbers of people are going past. And combine them with houses, so that the people who run them can live over them, or next to them.

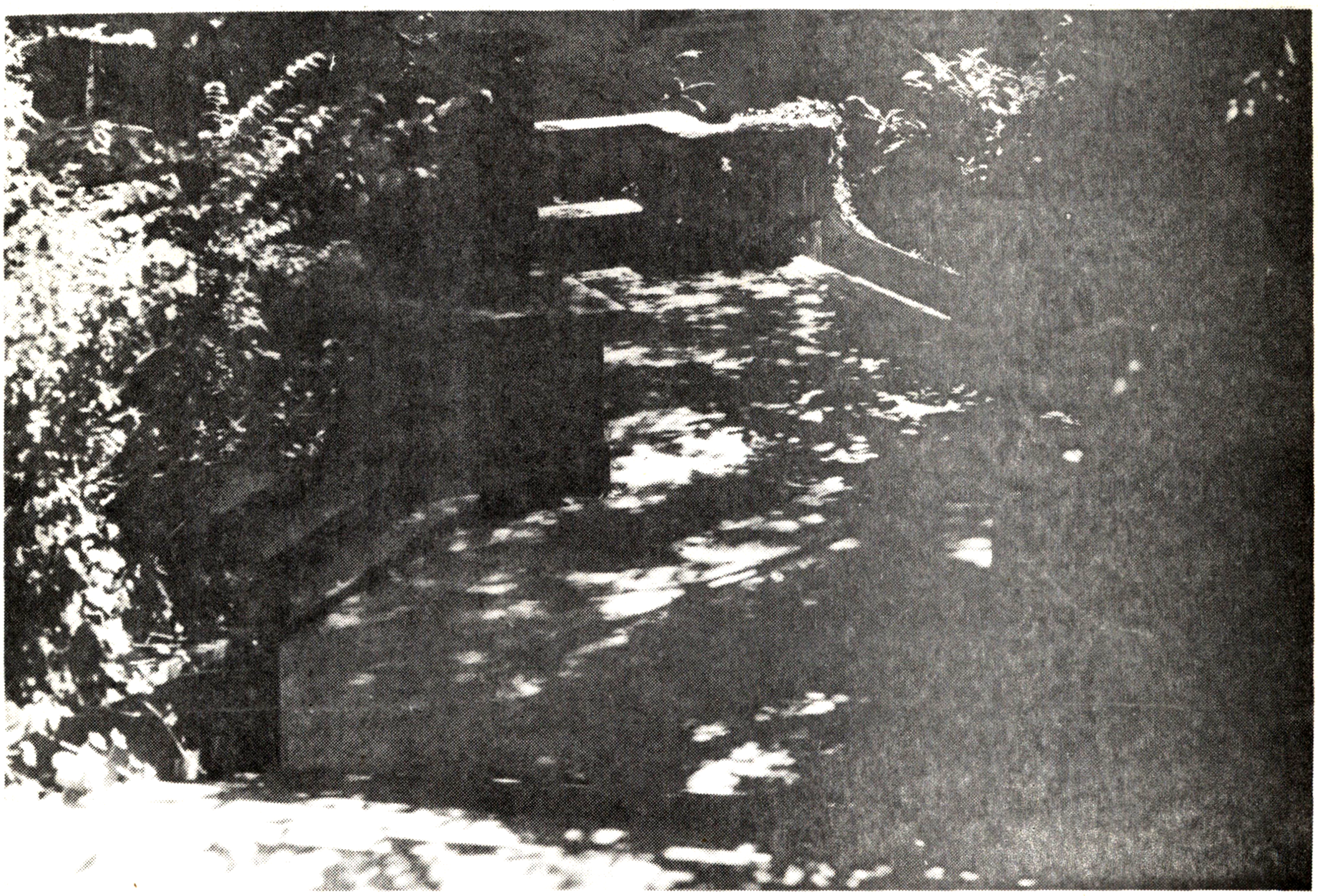
Here are some pictures which describe some of these patterns.



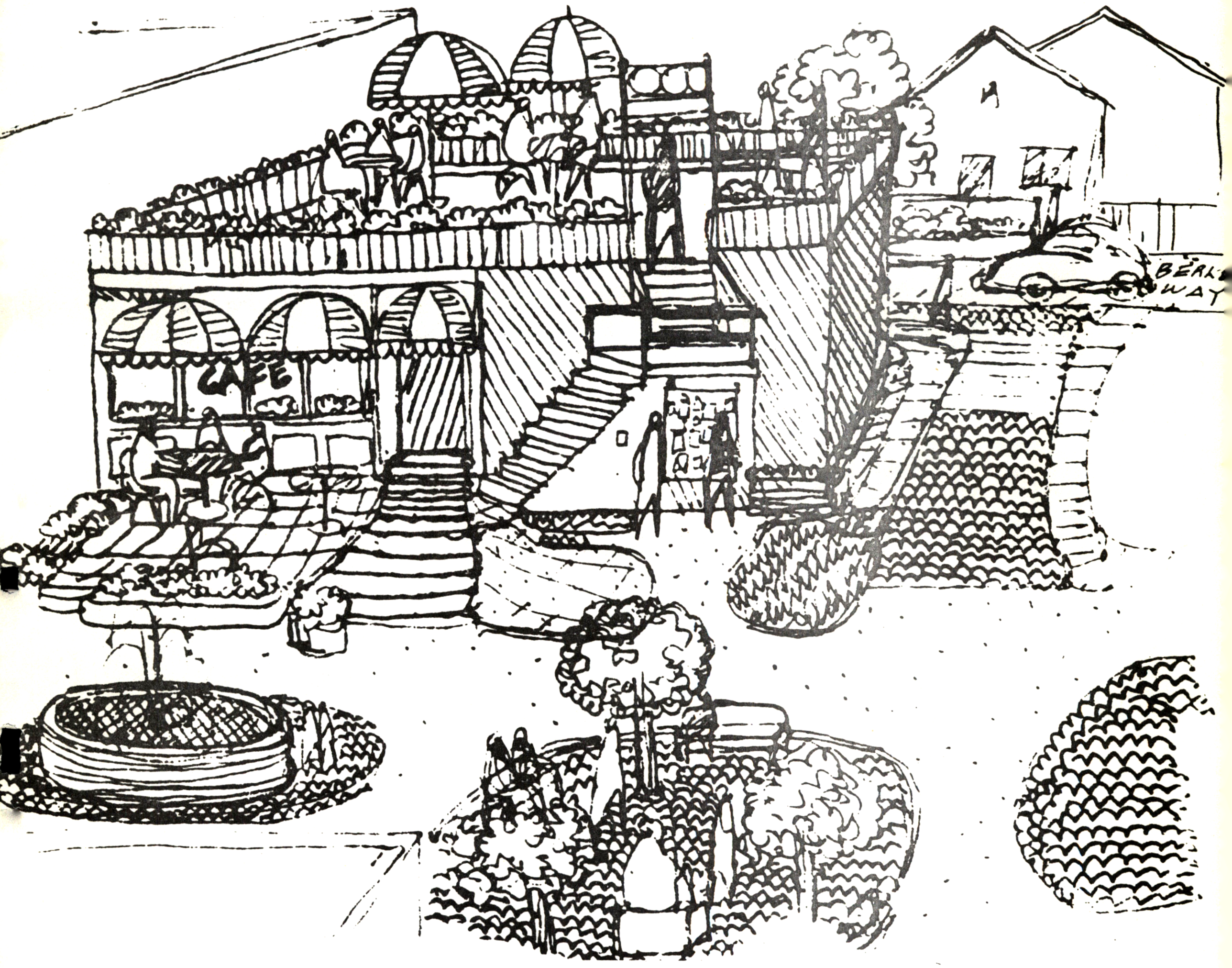
PATH SYSTEM TO VITALIZE THE BACKS



CLAREMONT GATEWAY: GRAND ENTRANCE TO A NEIGHBORHOOD



PART OF A PATH NETWORK: ORCHARD LAND



A SMALL PUBLIC SQUARE



ACTIVITY NODE: NEAR THE CENTER OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD



ACCESSIBLE GREEN: RIGHT NEAR THE HOUSES



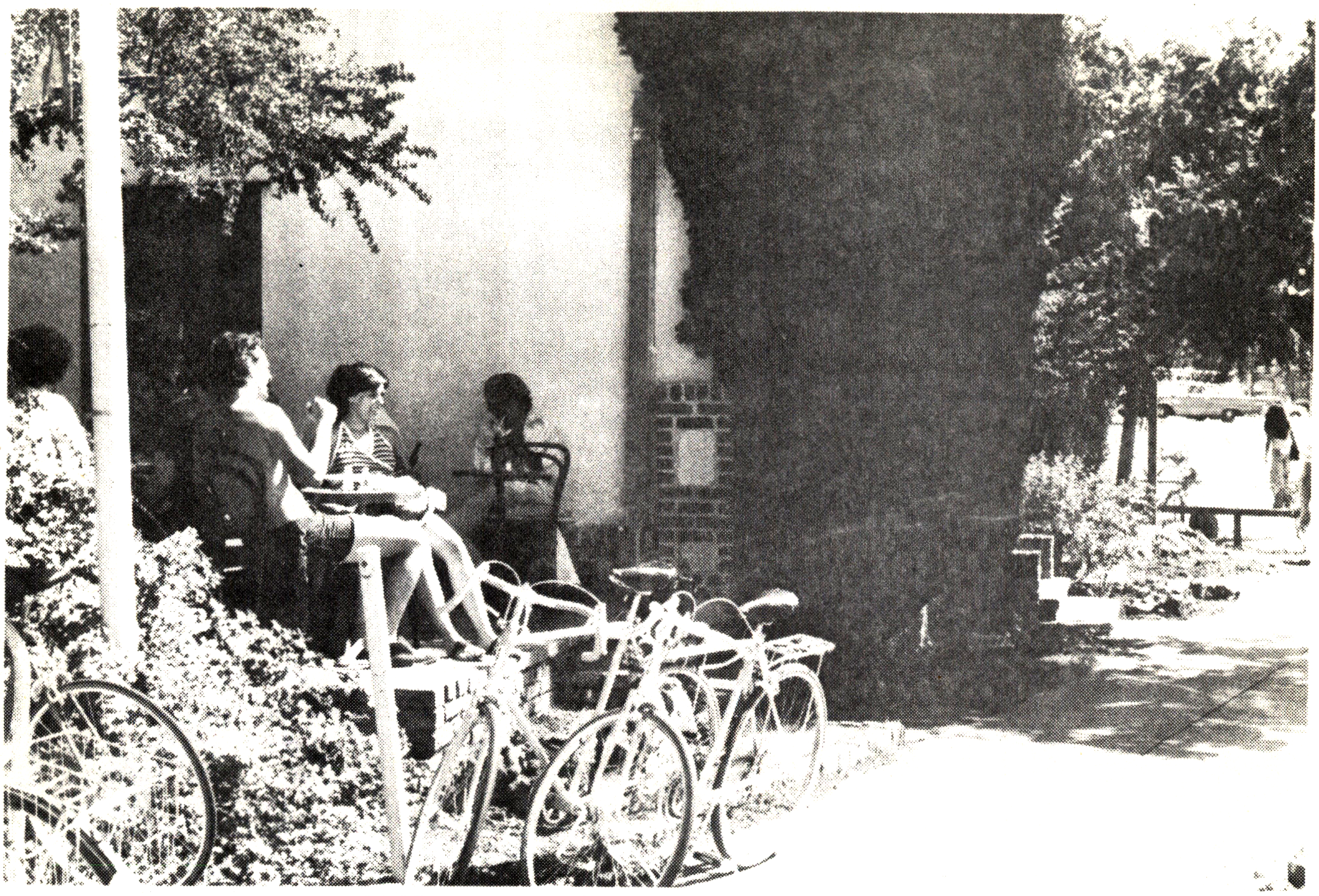
GRAVE SITES: AMONG THE LIFE OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD



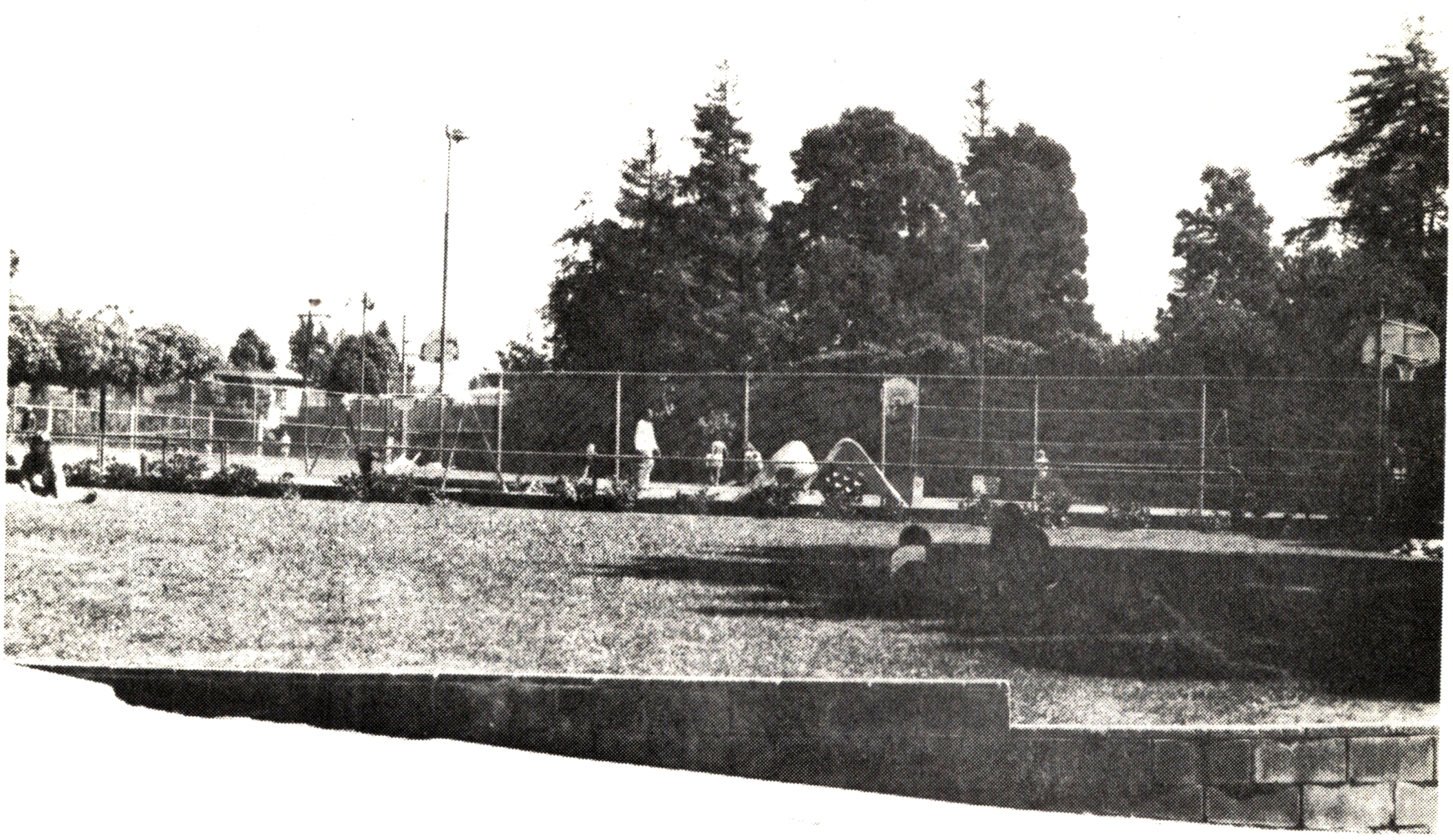
CHILDREN'S HOME: A PLACE FOR CHILDREN TO CALL THEIR OWN



CORNER GROCERY: DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT THE CITY



STREET CAFE: OVERLOOKING THE STREET



LOCAL SPORTS: PART OF EVERYDAY LIFE



STILL WATER: TO SWIM, AND KEEP COOL, AND LOOK AT THE WATER

It must be stressed, again, that the mere inclusion of all of these patterns in a neighborhood is not enough. They only work well if they are being made by the people in the neighborhood, with their own hands, because then the process of creating them contributes to the wholeness of the people and liberates their energy, at the same time that it contributes to the wholeness of the neighborhood environment.

All the parts of the environment which we have mentioned, the streets, the parks, the land between buildings, concerns that land in the town which we may call "common land."

Throughout human history, all communities, all over the world, have always had large, accessible swaths of common land running between buildings. This land provided the community with the possibility of community and communality.

In this era, the era of cars and trucks, the land which was once common is still, in some abstract legal sense, common--the streets and sidewalks. But effectively, functionally, psychologically, it no longer exists.

It is not safe; it has a psychological character which encourages people to stay away from it; in some places public gatherings are considered illegal obstructions; it is not possible merely to sit, and

stay in the common land without having a reason--a person may easily be asked to "move on"; and above all, the people have no control at all, over this common land. They cannot build there, they cannot put benches there, they cannot change it; they cannot dig up the asphalt; they cannot build buildings there. Ordinances, laws, public decency, and common "morality" prevent it.

And what is the result? This is the first society in history, the first in the earth's history--where there is no common land. It is no wonder that there is also no community. The great part of this book will show just how devastating this loss of common land is, how it works, how it destroys people's energy and communality, and what steps must be taken to bring these areas between our buildings back into their functional and legal status as common land.

The process of creating common land, by building up these patterns which we have described, will not only repair the neighborhood in its most obvious physical aspects--it will, at the same time help to create that feeling of community, which is missing now, and which can only be created by the active common work of shaping common land together.

CHAPTER THREE

THE REPAIR OF NEIGHBORHOODS

In the last chapter we have described the fundamental building blocks of any neighborhood--the patterns for common land.

We shall now describe the process by which the people of the neighborhood can gradually generate these patterns, in their particular neighborhood, over time.

These patterns take a different form each time that they occur: they are always unique, shaped and used according to the local peculiarities of the neighborhood in which they occur. We now describe the process by which these general patterns take on their unique shape, piecemeal, gradually, over time, through the small actions of the people in the neighborhood.

Of course, the process is a piecemeal one. We cannot build a "green street" or an "activity node" in one act of construction, the way we build a geodesic dome. Any one of these patterns can only be built gradually, by painstaking, repeated applications of good sense, and care, to the existing neighborhood.

In fact, what happens takes the following form.

We look at our neighborhood, as it is, and try to find each of these patterns in the neighborhood. We identify the patterns, where they exist already; we seek them out, where they exist in imperfect,

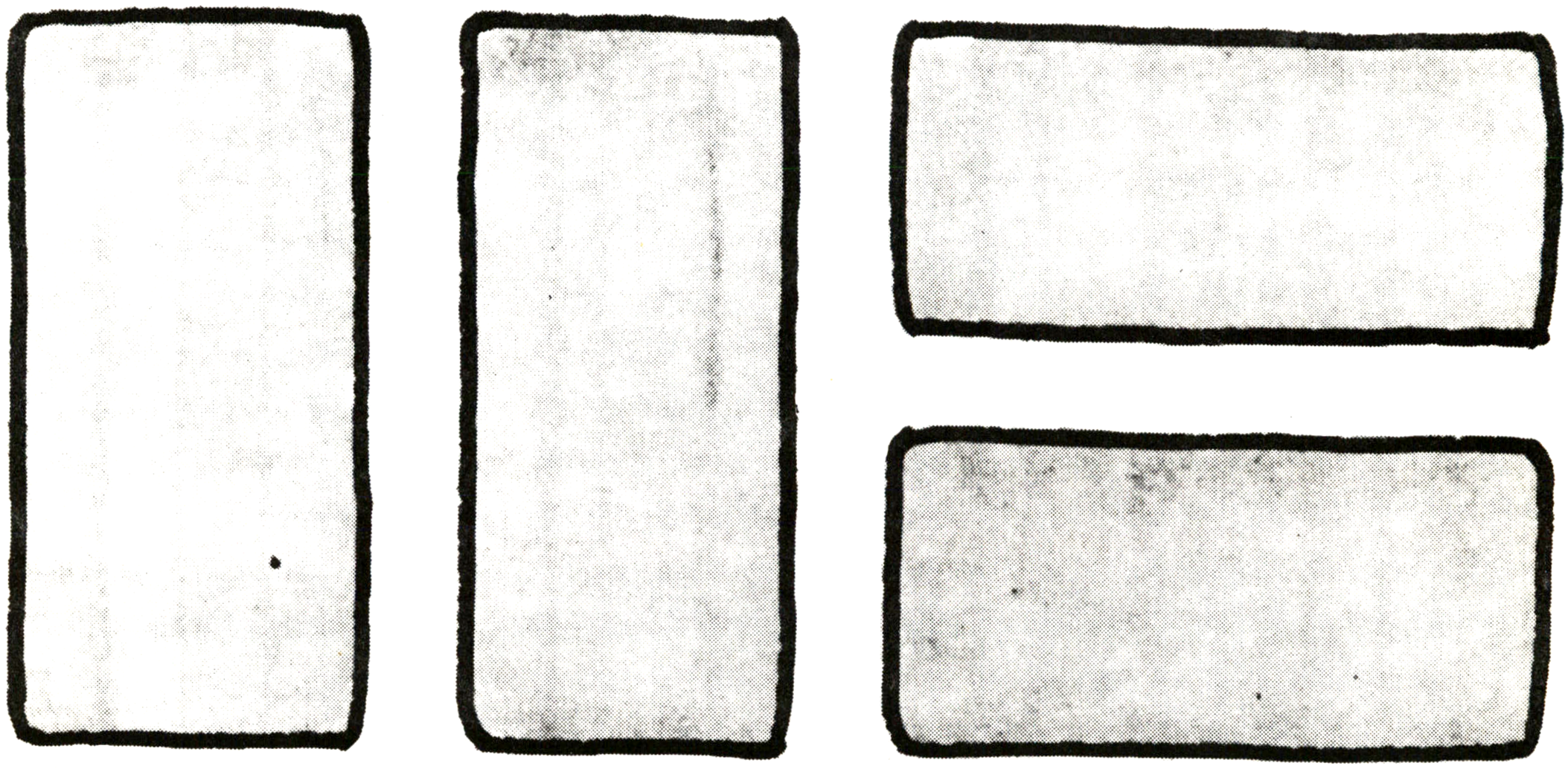
rough and ready form; we try to imagine them in those places where some rough half-formed equivalent exists, and has the murmur of potentiality for the pattern to be created there; and we identify those places where one of these patterns does not exist at all, but--in our judgment--needs to, and try to imagine how we might create it there.

All this, the process of imagining just where the patterns are, and where they might be improved, and where they might be formed from nothing--in short, our overall analysis of the places in the neighborhood, and the extent to which these patterns are missing--all this we call the diagnosis.

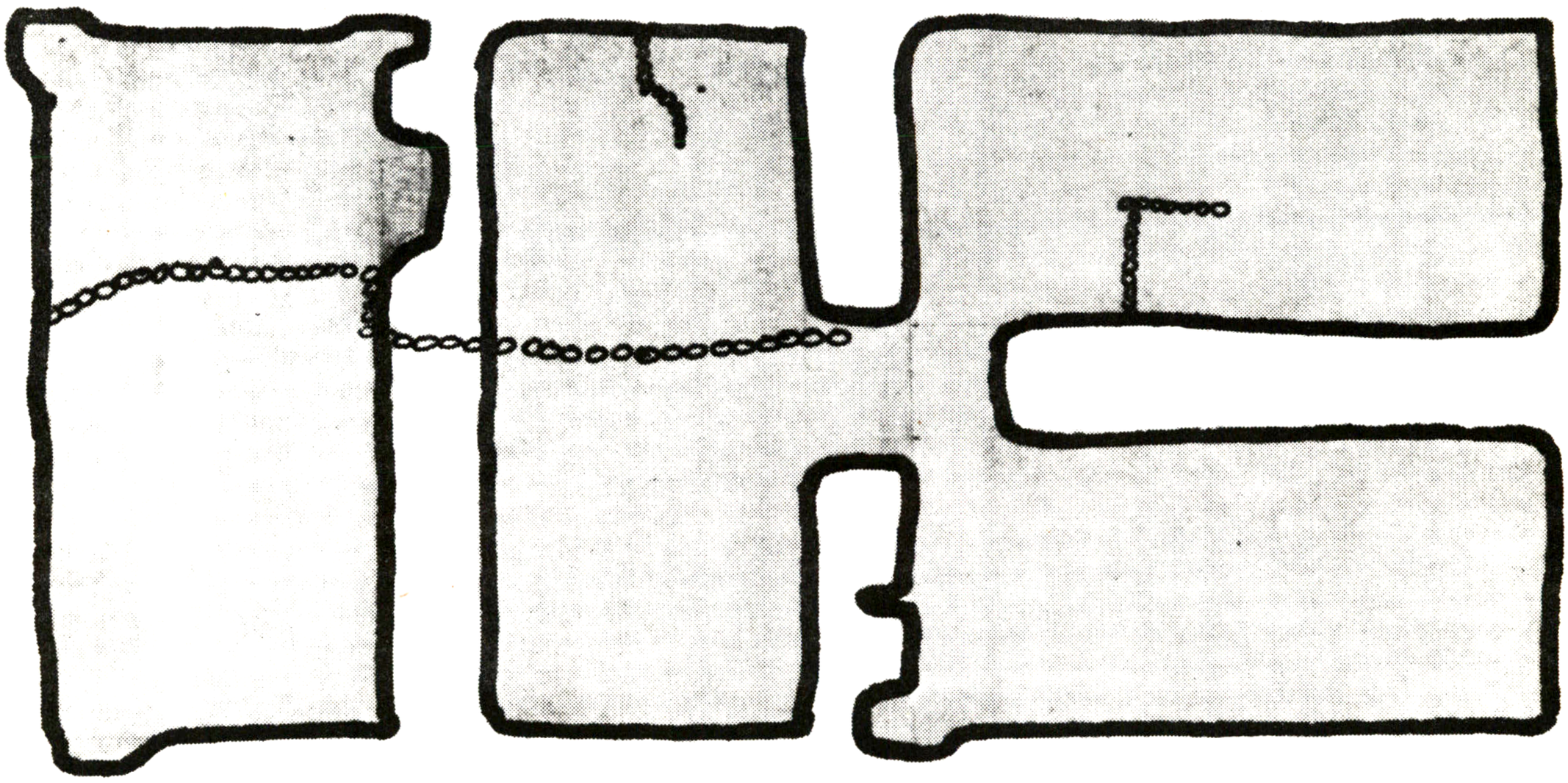
Once we have the diagnosis, we make sure, very simply, that each act of construction gradually helps to create the missing patterns, one by one and piece by piece, until we find them gradually emerging--all of them helped by a dozen or a hundred separate acts by different people in the neighborhood.

To make this process clear we now describe how these patterns might grow in one particular neighborhood, Cedar-Virginia, Grove-Shattuck.

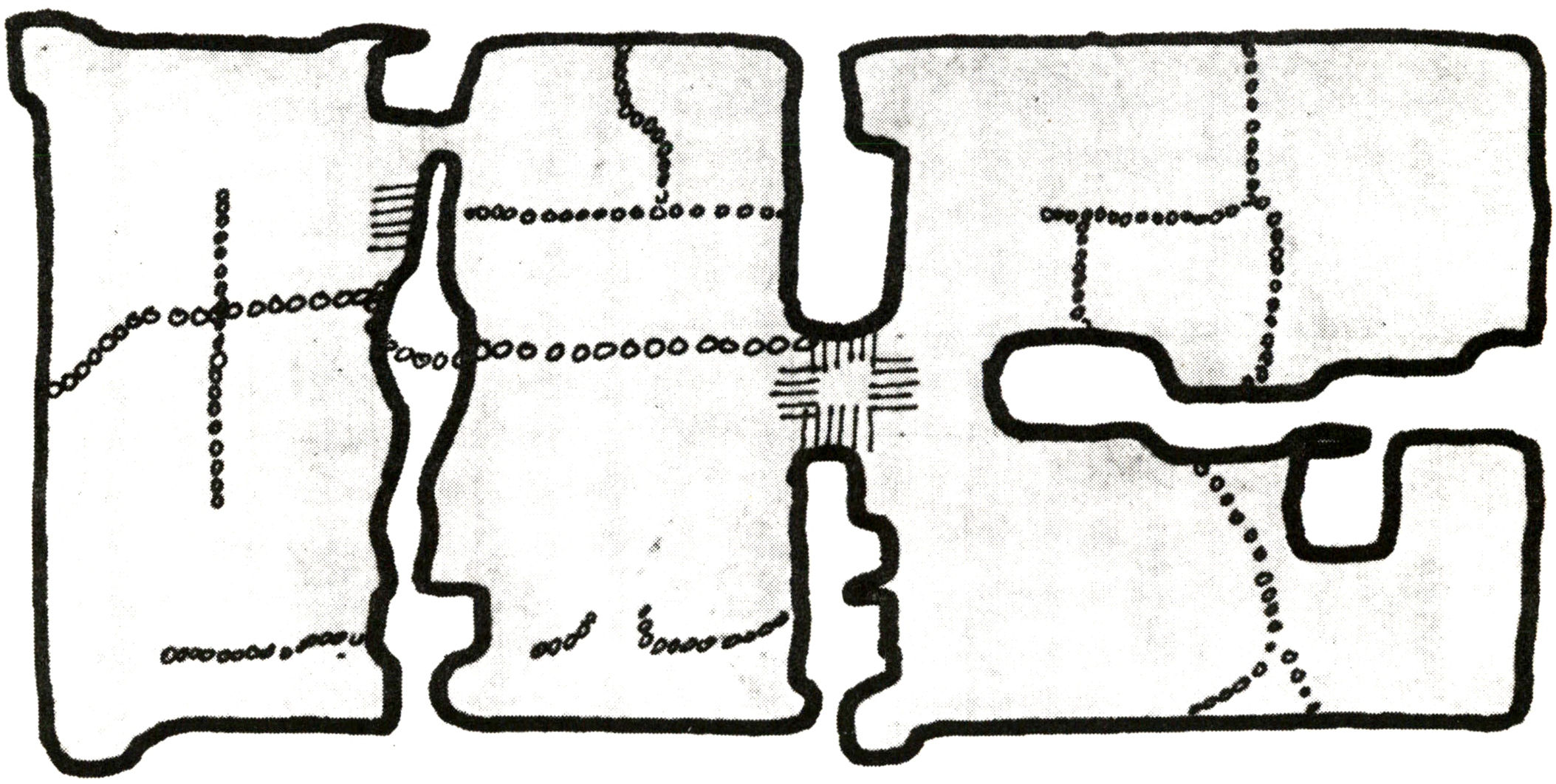
Here are three simplified maps of the neighborhood, which show the gradual emergence of the patterns over a period of ten years.



THE NEIGHBORHOOD AT THE BEGINNING....



....THE NEIGHBORHOOD AFTER FOUR YEARS....



....THE NEIGHBORHOOD AFTER TEN YEARS....

Of course, this example is only an example. We have tried to imagine what this process might be like, but of course, our imaginings are vastly simpler, and less interesting, than the actual thing will be when it is guided by the people of the neighborhood themselves. Still, it does give us something to look at: it shows something of the life and the complexity which might emerge in neighborhoods from the actions of the people, if people begin to "repair" their neighborhoods by trying to build in the patterns which we have described.

The attitude which guides this example, and which we hope can take root in the city as a whole, is based on the idea that building ought to take place only in the worst places so as to make them better, rather than in the best places, which makes the dichotomy between good and bad even worse.

It is the idea of repair: when something breaks, fix it.

What we advocate is a procedure of diagnosis in which people try to determine those parts of the neighborhood which are most in need of repair, those places which, according to the patterns or just some basic feelings, aren't working as well as they should, aren't really contributing to the life of the neighborhood as much as places which we have a good feeling about. Then, if priorities for repair are set according to that diagnosis, the neighborhood as a whole will eventually get better.

What happens in the city today is just the opposite. The areas in good repair get better; the areas in not so good repair get worse. "City beautification" projects are a good example of this. A lot of money is spent in downtown areas for planting trees, repaving sidewalks with red bricks, installing benches and planters. But if the downtown is healthy, and thriving, already, then that money can probably be better spent in some more needy area of the city: the downtown will take care of itself. And if the downtown is dying, then the kind of help which is needed probably has very little to do with trees and benches.

In a neighborhood the purpose of a diagnosis is to find, discuss, argue over, and eventually come to some common agreement about the areas which are most in need of repair. There will be rivalries: everyone will want the new improvement outside his own front door. But we believe that, eventually, people will come to realize that if the decisions about what is wrong, and the consequent acts of repair, occur following a common set of values about the kind of place they want, then any improvement, anywhere, will be seen as benefiting the neighborhood as a whole and not only the particular place in which it was done. This is the critical idea. By leaving along those places which are clearly in good shape, and doing work on the places which aren't, the neighborhood as a whole will come to order, and everyone will benefit.

In our example we placed limits on the amount of money which could be "spent" for construction, and used current building costs. We were guided initially by actual observations and discussions with people who lived in the neighborhoods, who told us what was wrong and made suggestions for improvements. We also adhered rather strongly to the idea that projects should be small, immediate, and complete in themselves; but they were also done with a view toward improving the general condition of the neighborhood.

More exactly, the repair of the neighborhood was done according to the following rules:

1. Several neighborhoods were defined arbitrarily, roughly according to the existing voting precincts. In real life things would happen more naturally and groups of people with common concerns would present themselves as a neighborhood.

2. We assumed that every two years a diagnosis would be performed by a representative group within each neighborhood to show which areas are most in need of repair and which ought not to be touched. On the diagnosis maps we used shades of grey, along with explanations, to express the diagnosis: the darkest grey indicates those areas which are most in need of repair, or where action must immediately be taken; the lightest grey indicates those areas which are well functioning and not in need of repair; and intermediate shades indicate areas which are basically in good shape but can use some work. For example, in the first diagnosis a dangerous intersection has been made dark grey, as has a large tract of vacant land which seems like the

ideal place for a park; a place where people already gather has been made an intermediate grey because it can do more to support that activity; and houses and yard which are apparently in good shape have been made light grey.

3. We assumed that each year there would come from the city $25,000 unrestricted, to each neighborhood, which could be used as the neighborhood saw fit for public projects. The expenditure of public money was done according to the need which the diagnosis indicated. We also assumed that there would be each year a total of between $40,000 and $50,000 to be spent on private projects; we tried to persuade "investors" or "developers" to make the diagnosis a little better.

4. Building costs were assumed to be approximately:

   $20/sq. ft. for new construction

   $10/sq. ft. for remodelling with no structural change

   $10/sq/ ft. for construction of structures without cladding or services (e.g., arcades, outdoor rooms, etc.)

   $5/sq. ft. for landscaping work

   $4/sq. ft. for land purchase--cost of land

5. The design of public projects as a response to the diagnosis was based on the following patterns:

NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARY	ACCESSIBLE GREEN
NETWORK OF LEARNING	SMALL PUBLIC SQUARE
WEB OF SHOPPING	COMMON LAND
NINE PERCENT PARKING	PUBLIC OUTDOOR ROOM
SHIELDED PARKING	MASTER AND APPRENTICES
SMALL PARKING LOT	SHOPFRONT SCHOOLS
CENTERS OF ACTION	CHILDREN'S HOME
HOUSE CLUSTER	STREET CAFE
WORK COMMUNITY	CORNER GROCERY
LOOPED LOCAL ROADS	CIRCULATION REALMS
T JUNCTIONS	MAIN GATEWAYS
PATH NETWORK	PEDESTRIAN STREETS

- 0 -

The following account was written by Larry Thompson and Reuel Young, who took care of the diagnosis in the neighborhood:

THE NEIGHBORHOOD

After selecting the "neighborhood" bounded by Cedar and Virginia, Grove and Shattuck, we were impressed by the diversity of life within the four blocks (commercial, schools, church, offices, and residences-single family and multi-family), and by the number of repair and renovation projects already being carried out by owners and tenants.

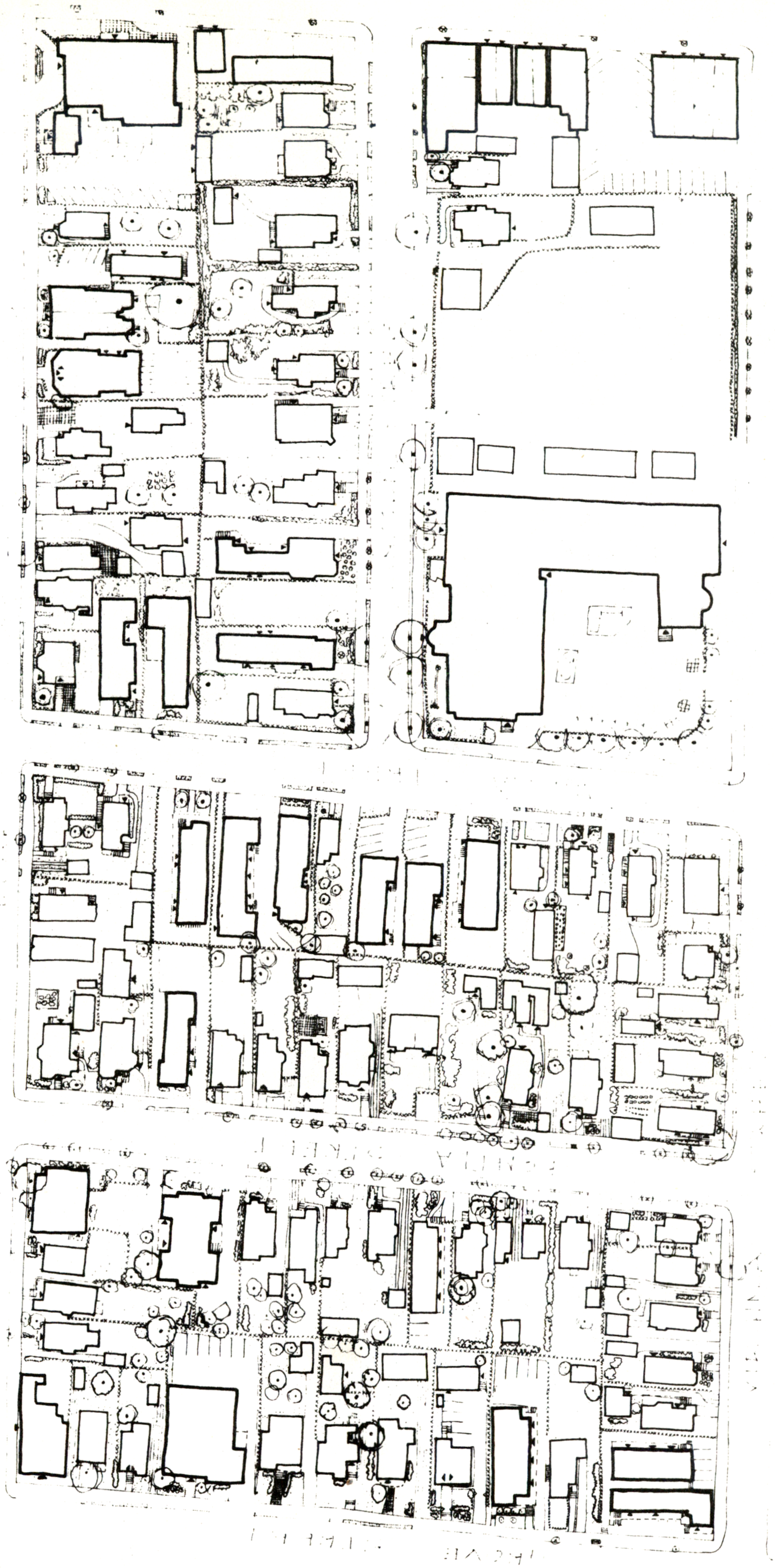
In general we were received well by the residents when we began our informal survey. While talking with people it seemed that the intention behind our work resonated with many of their own feelings, and we felt encouraged to proceed though always somewhat apprehensive as to what exactly would come of our work to benefit them directly.

We were surprised that many people already felt a part of a neighborhood roughly defined by our boundaries. This sense of belonging seemed to range in meaning from a few who were actively involved in local political organizing to down-zone the area, to people whose friends along the block created a feeling of neighborhood, to an old man who at one time "knew everyone on the block," to an old lady who while knowing only a few people in the area always walked her dog along the boundary of the neighborhood. Several people commented that the neighborhood was so desirable that people who had once lived there and moved away ma e a special effort to return to the same place when moving back to Berkeley. Also rental units were often handed down to friends rather than allowing them to be put on the market.

Bonita Street seemed to be the most cohesive area within the neighborhood with most people knowing people on both sides of the street. Owner/residents and renters were about equal in number, while on Milvia the number of rental units far exceeded resident/owners. The problem of "transients" concerned many people, either because of life-style differences or the disruptive effect on the sense of stability within the neighborhood.

In general the neighborhood's view of itself seemed to be that it was desirable at present due to its low density, little traffic (except on Milvia), and the locality (close to a major shopping area). However the quality of the neighborhood was threatened by increasing traffic and density. The boxy stucco apartment buildings were almost unanimously resented as being unesthetic, overcrowding the neighborhood, and undermining neighborliness. Another issue was raised regarding Whittier School and the Unitarian Fellowship at Cedar and Bonita. Both institutions were criticized for increasing traffic and street parking, and for not being more directly related to the neighborhood in their functions. In response to suggestions from us that the neighborhood seemed to lack a center and paths which might tie the neighborhood together internally, residents seemed intrigued and even enthusiastic.

These resident comments collected in talks over two weeks are presented in the form of a diagnosis in Map A. Our "objective" view of the neighborhood's physical environment is presented on Map B.



NEIGHBORHOOD
AT START OF
SIMULATION

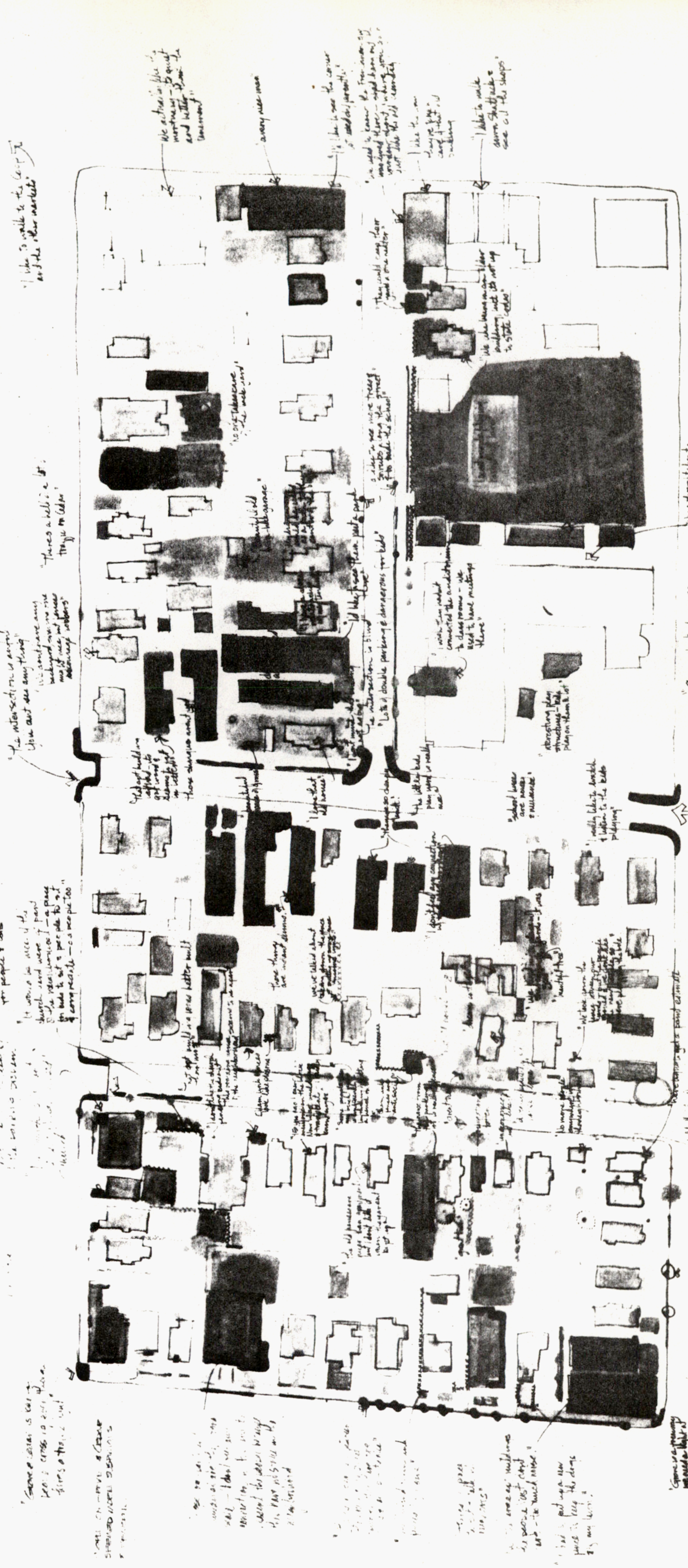
DIAGNOSIS #1

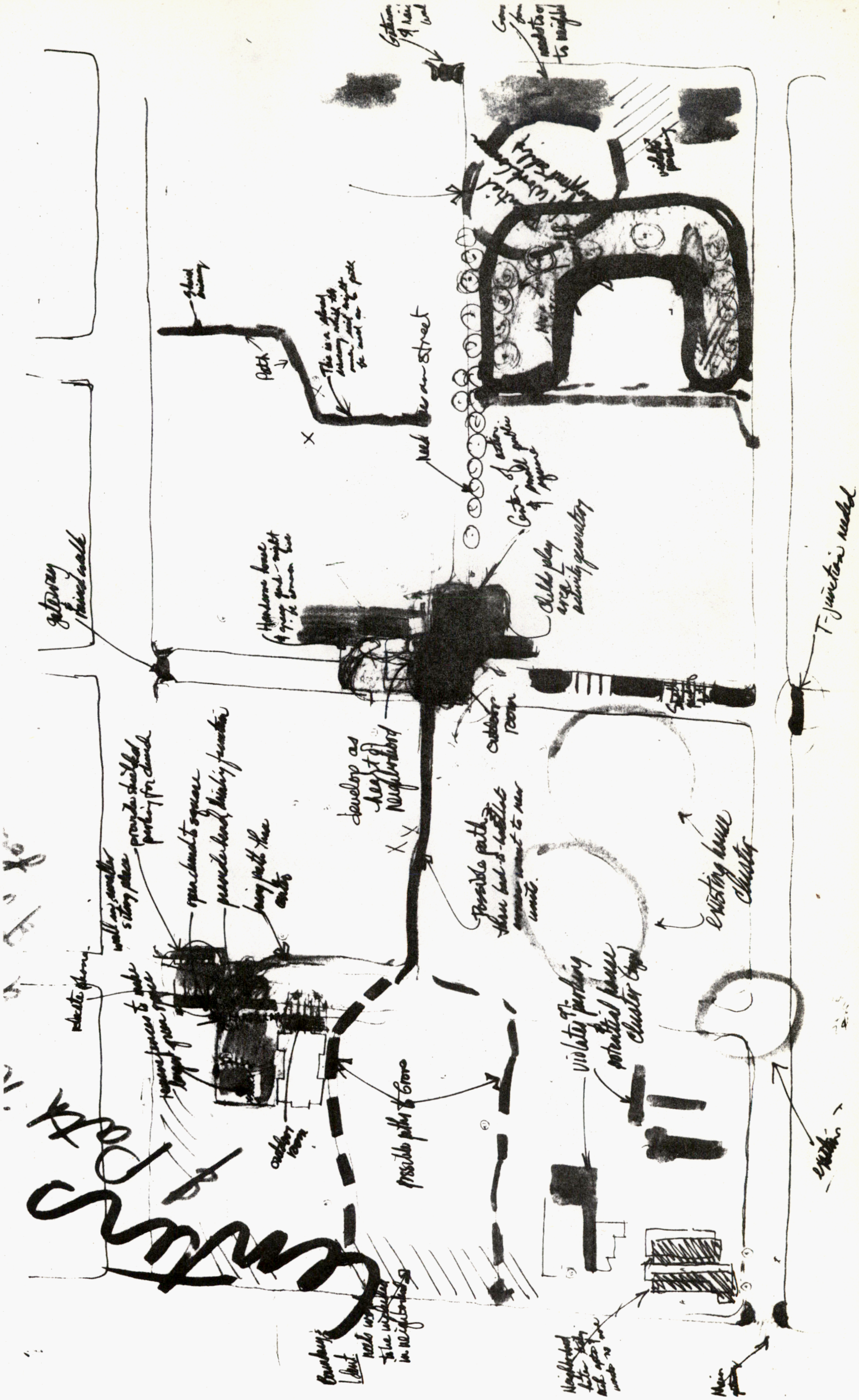
In our first diagnosis for the neighborhood we wanted to call for some of the more obvious and significant changes to begin. First we wanted to stop the heavy through traffic on Milvia which was cutting the neighborhood in half. Secondly we felt there was a natural center, the intersection of Milvia and Lincoln, which could become the heart of the neighborhood--Activity Node. We put the suggestion for the Activity Node on the paper in such a way that it would also serve to close Milvia and make Lincoln a dead end. Pedestrians would take over the place where cars had been.

While we had an intuitive feeling for the intersection being a center, the impetus for paths through it came from the pattern language. These patterns suggested a continuation of Lincoln as a pedestrian path through the block to Bonita.

Our other main goal for the first two years was to strengthen the neighborhood boundary--to make the neighborhood more identifiable and cohesive. On Shattuck, we felt the boundary was well made by shops and offices, but on Cedar and Grove the houses seemed painfully exposed to noisy and busy public streets, and we felt they needed some protection. The school playground, also part of our neighborhood's boundary, seemed bleak and underused, and we suggested it be converted into a large green space (defined as an Accessible Green in the pattern language) which could be used by people from several neighborhoods.

DIAGNOSIS AT
START OF SIMULATION
(NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS)





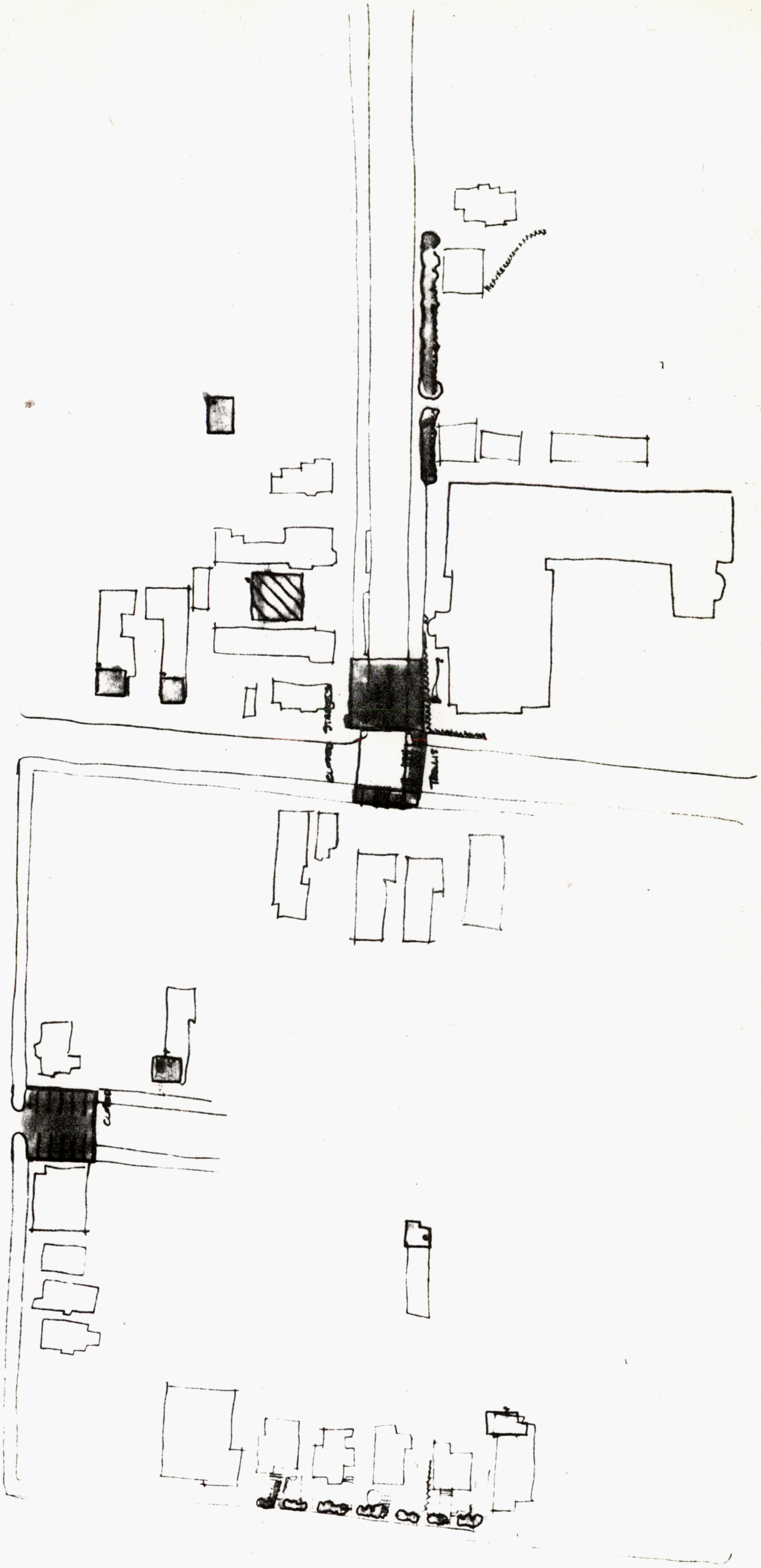
DIAGNOSIS
AT START

RESPONSE TO YEARS 1 & 2

We were excited by the closing of Milvia and the start of "life" there indicated by the resurfacing and trellis, and the path all the way to Grove seemed to promise at least some more intimate connection within the neighborhood was possible. But the shrubs on Grove to provide some visual screening was a first step in a process that we never felt was satisfactorily completed.



GROWTH: YEAR 1



GROWTH: YEAR 2

NEW DIAGNOSIS

DIAGNOSIS #2

Because we were still concerned with large-scale patterns of the neighborhood as a whole, this diagnosis was quite similar to the first one. The activity node and the boundaries were again emphasized, and again we were fairly vague about what we wanted to have done.

We found another place in the neighborhood that seemed right for an activity node--a church and a day-care center at the top of Bonita with a nice yard and place space. We thought it would be a good place for more kids to play and adults to sit in the sun, so we suggested opening up the yard and making an outdoor room with sitting space. We also called vaguely for more work on the first activity node.

We again suggested work in the boundaries. The shrubs which had been added on Grove St. seemed inadequate protection, so we called for more barriers on Grove and Cedar. We also wanted the unfriendly corner of Grove and Cedar to become more of a place. On the Shattuck boundary, we pointed to the ugly and unused backs of shops as a possible work community, a place of diverse enterprises sharing common open spaces. We also wanted to re-emphasize the importance of changing the quality of the school playground.

GROWTH: YEAR 3

GROWTH: YEAR 4



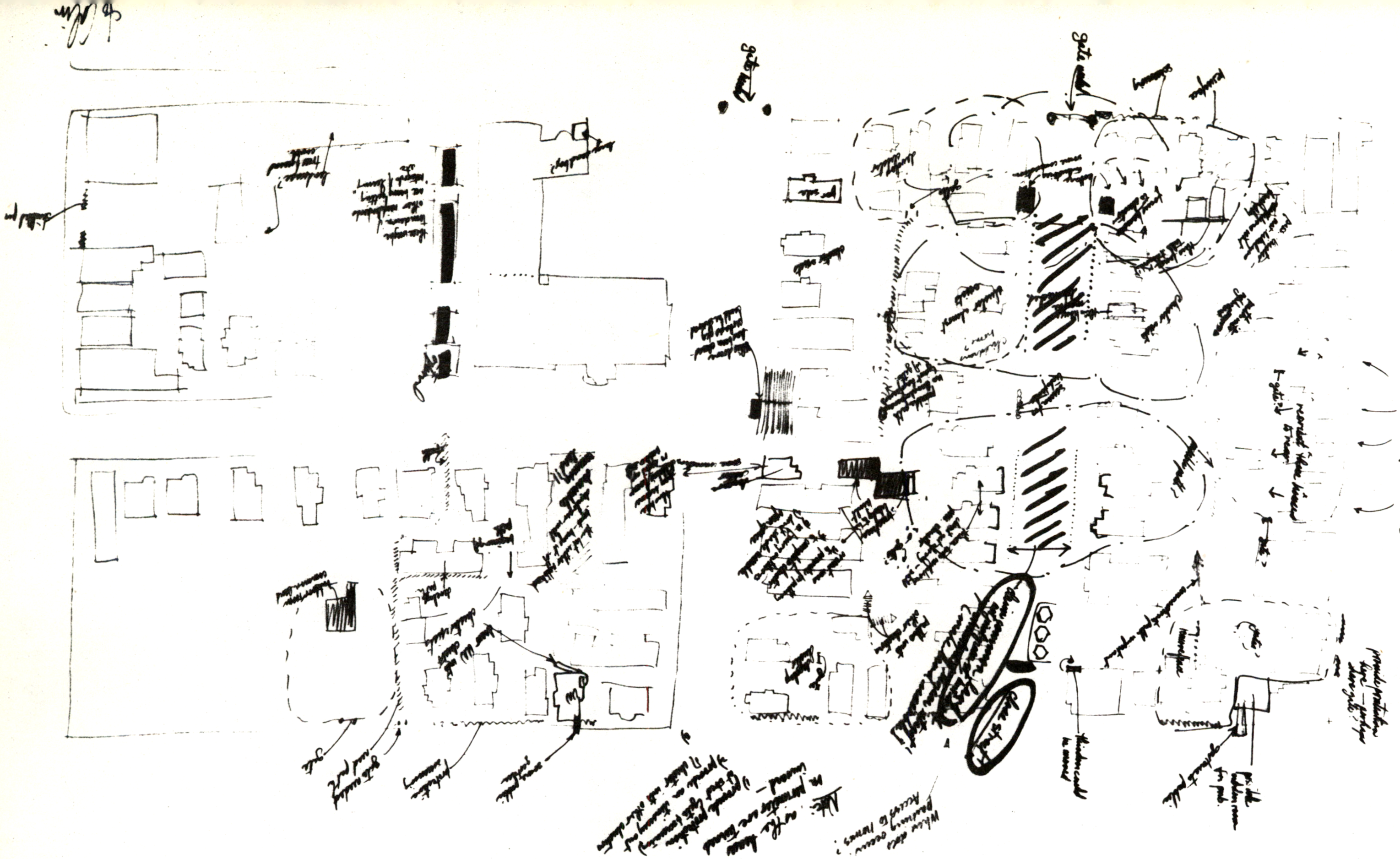
GATE TO PATH

RESPONSE TO YEARS 3 & 4

These two years gave us the first taste of the life possible with the process. Several rather humble acts taken by the designer built on previous projects and gave a sense of growth and adaptation. At the Milvia/Lincoln center, the addition of a fountain and benches seemed like a stroke of genius. The modest planting in the school yard continued the theme begun the previous years, and we began to feel that creating a significant green space was possible over the next years.

Along with these modest acts came several more dramatic steps which somehow felt less fulfilling than the smaller acts--perhaps because the large acts seemed isolated and somewhat arbitrary, even when in response to the diagnosis. The biggest step was taken by a developer who renovated several buildings just behind the shops on Shattuck. Guided by a pattern titled "work community" the design created a place where shoppers and workers could meet in an enclosed outdoor area. New functions were introduced to the area to help diversify the services. The second major act was the appearance of an outdoor room next to the Unitarian Fellowship yard on Bonita. While each act was in response to our diagnosis, the "suddenness" of their appearance, and their seeming completeness was unsettling to us. They did not seem to be alive in the way the smaller acts which built on previous years' work did.

What became clear to us regarding the process was that the life we were seeking came as a sequence of steps, not just well-designed independent projects. The growth which continued at the M/L center and was to appear later in the school yard and the work community was the most exciting for us.

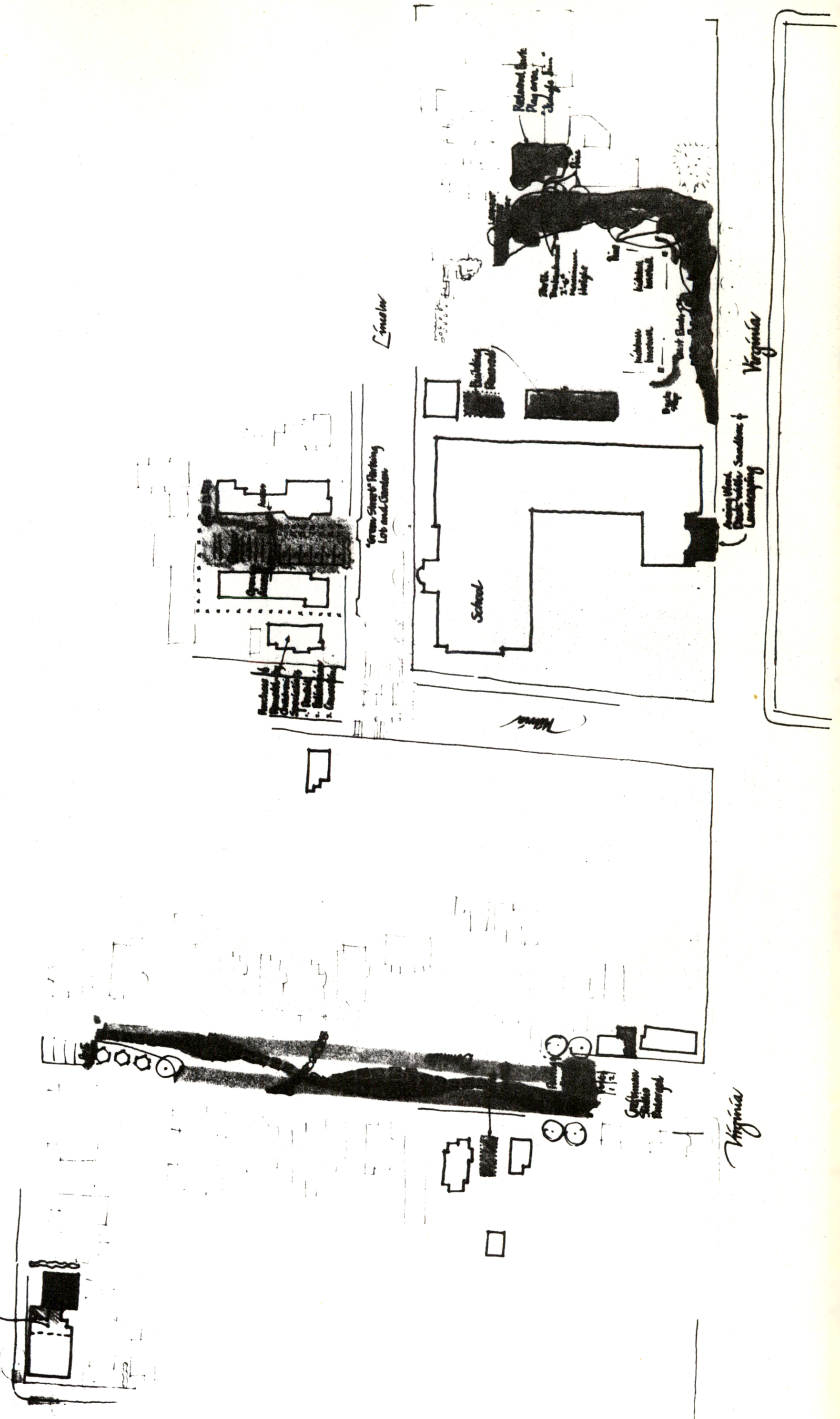


DIAGNOSIS #3

Now, relatively happy with the beginnings made toward large-scale patterns, we began to concentrate on smaller acts related to clusters of houses. There were a few beautiful clusters existing in the neighborhood-groups of houses and apartments sharing common land, and we wanted to encourage more of that with the question of private property unsettled. We suggested some connecting paths and gates and the removal of some fences. In a few cases we just identified potential clusters without knowing what to do to make them work.

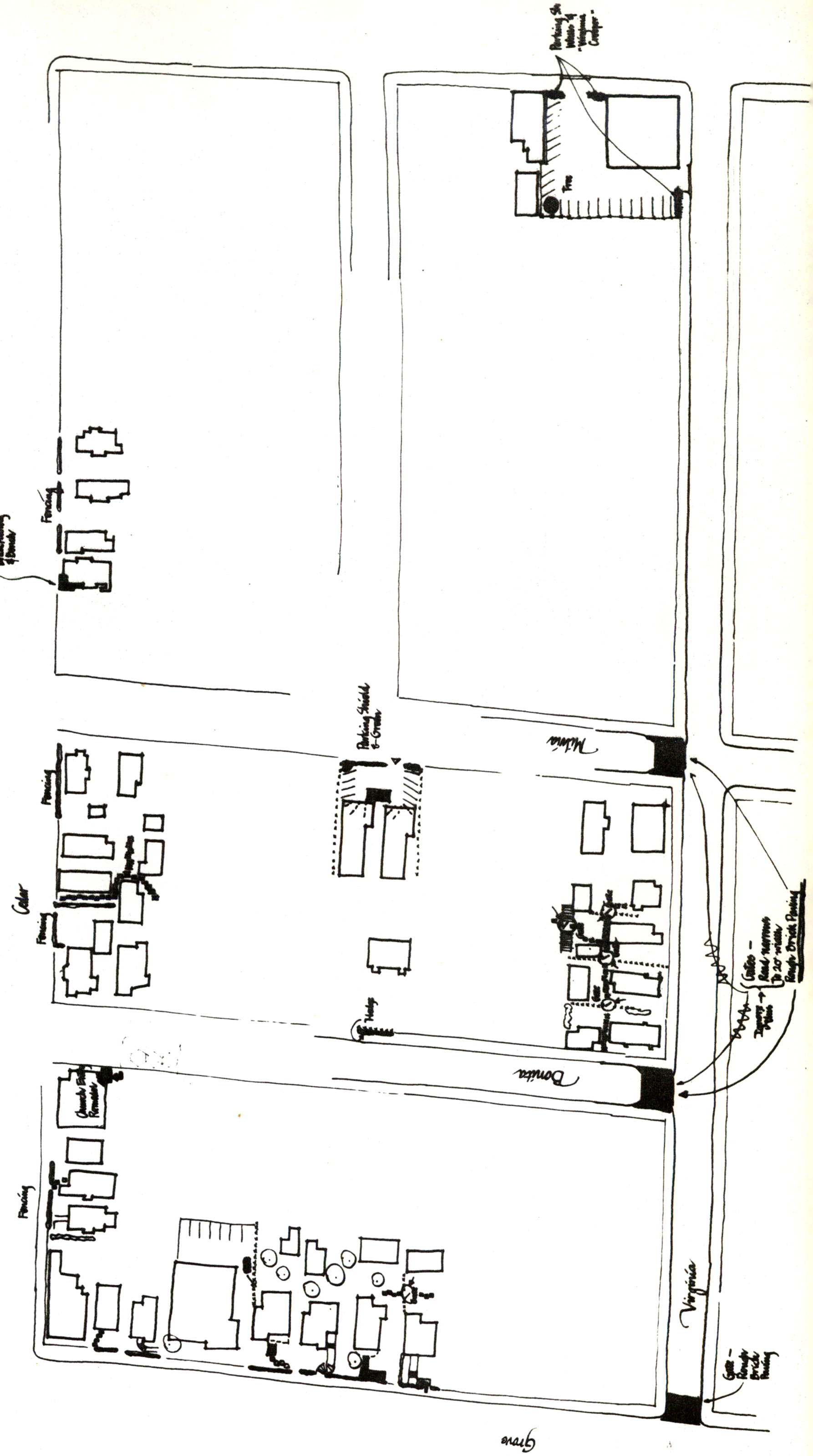
One important thing which we thought could help the clusters evolve was the use of part or all of the streets for common land. On Bonita, we called for the street to be claimed as common land to unite, rather than divide, the houses on either side. We didn't know exactly what the street should become, but we were convinced it could be a usable shared open space.

Returning to some early issues which needed continued work, we called for better screening of houses on the Cedar boundary and the continuation of the greening of the playground. Also, for the first time, we suggested that the school begin to be decentralized, as education spreads out over the whole city.



GROWTH: YEAR 5

GROWTH: YEAR 6



RESPONSE TO YEARS 5 & 6

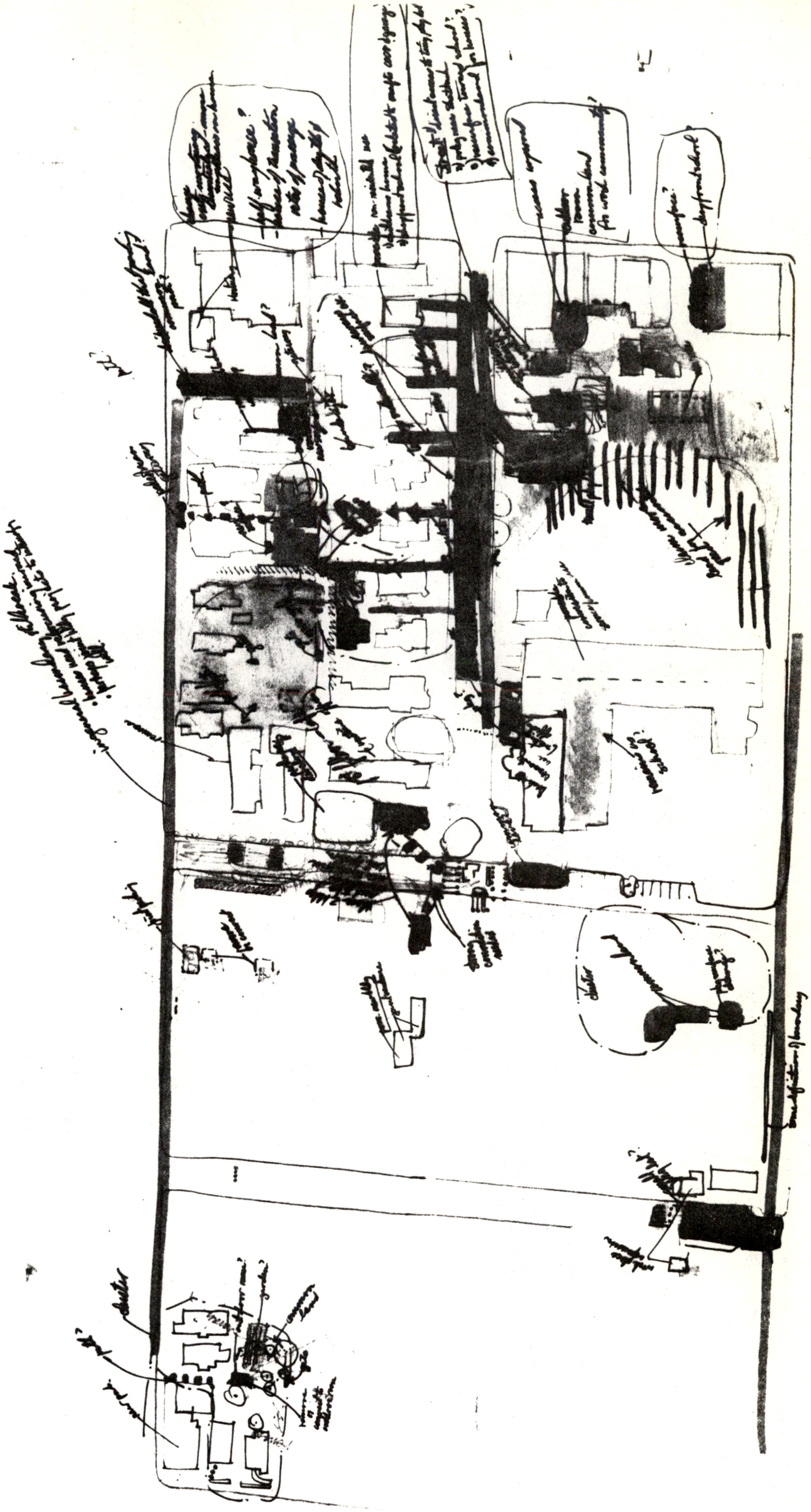
The designer's response to our request for common land to be developed along Bonita struck as grandiose, and we began to see how naive was our understanding of how such an act (or series of acts) would actually proceed and how the land would be used once it was claimed as "common." The design clarified also our ambivalence toward the car: while not banning it, we strongly discouraged its dominance of commonspace and left the responsibility for its accommodation to the individual.

The work on Cedar and Grove (fences and shrubs) to create a sense of boundary again showed how inadequate and superficial the changes we were dealing with were. We saw clearly that what was needed was a reorientation of the peripheral house inward toward common land. The problem of infringing on private property rights still inhibited us from suggesting any strong action either to the houses or to the backyards of the houses to create common land.

The schoolyard greening continued to please us, and the numerous gates which appeared seemed to indicate the types of change we were hoping for though where and when they appeared is clearly arbitrary in this simulation.

The conversion of the corner house at the M/L Center of Action was done to intensify and diversify the life there. Though we had suggested it, we later felt qualms about having given such a lovely home to institutional use.

NEW DIAGNOSIS

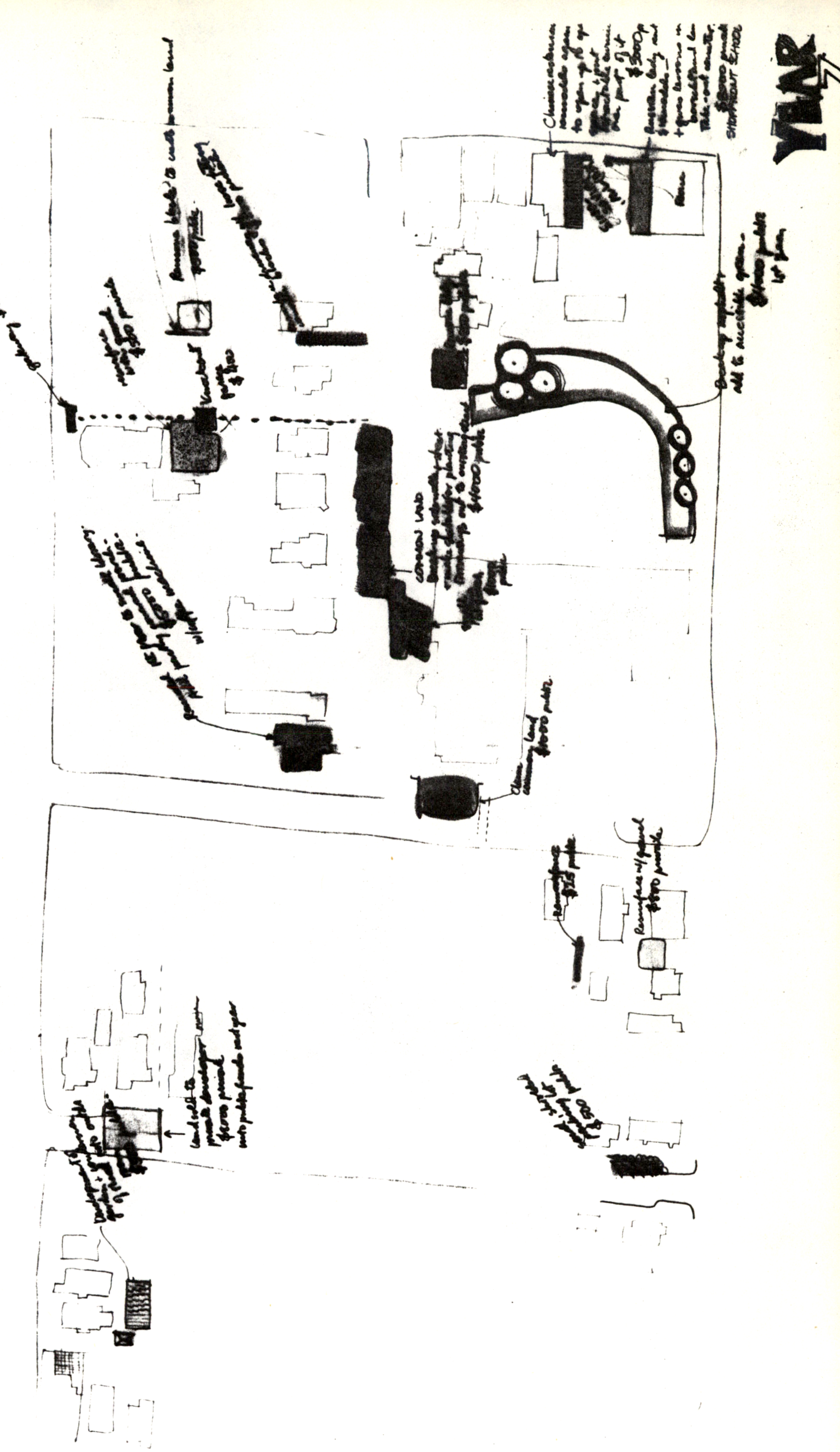


DIAGNOSIS #4

After having engaged in three rounds of diagnosis/design, we began to be more specific and demanding about what we wanted now for "our" neighborhood. We had received each previous designer's efforts with a mixture of excitement and disappointment. As our own design work in other's neighborhoods became more sophisticated and our vision and enthusiasm for the evolution of our neighborhood grew, we became impatient to give expression to our understanding of the neighborhood and the process. We began to recognize that this enthusiasm was causing our diagnoses to become close to designs or master plans, but it wasn't until the next year that we made a significant change in diagnosis technique.

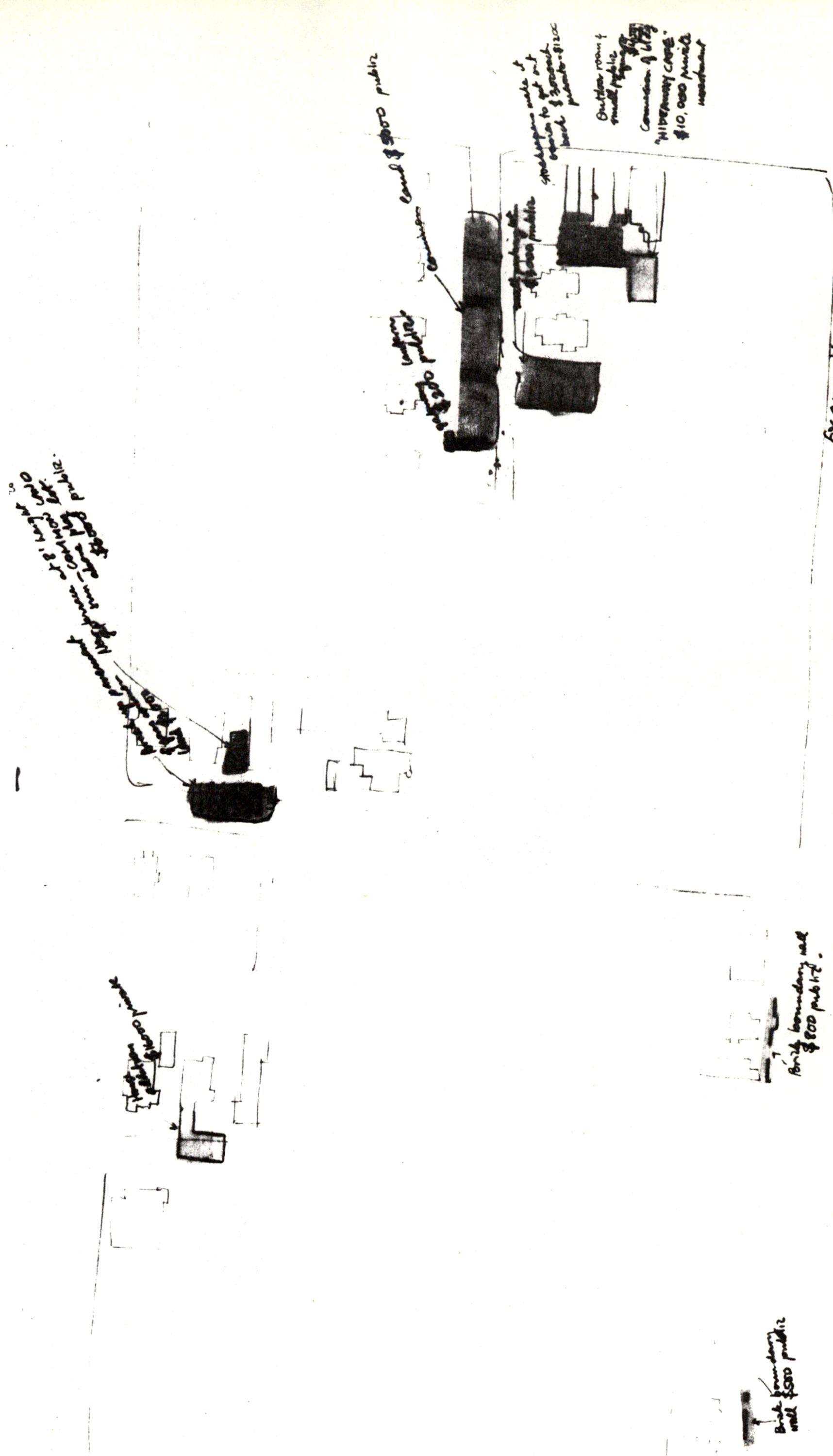
We focused most of our attention this time on the Lincoln St. area. We wanted the street to be used as common land without taking on the unsettling qualities of the previous Bonita St. "design." A different element here was the fact that there were houses on only one side of the street. We also wanted a path to be created between Lincoln and Cedar, to bring the Cedar houses more into the life of the neighborhood--the location for the path was suggested later.

We also wanted to build upon the work of previous designers in the Shattuck area. The work community had been started and we suggested that it be intensified with another work place and that its common land be improved for outdoor use by the workers. We also wanted the green space of the playfield to continue to grow and to become more related to the work community.



GROWTH: YEAR 7

GROWTH: YEAR 8





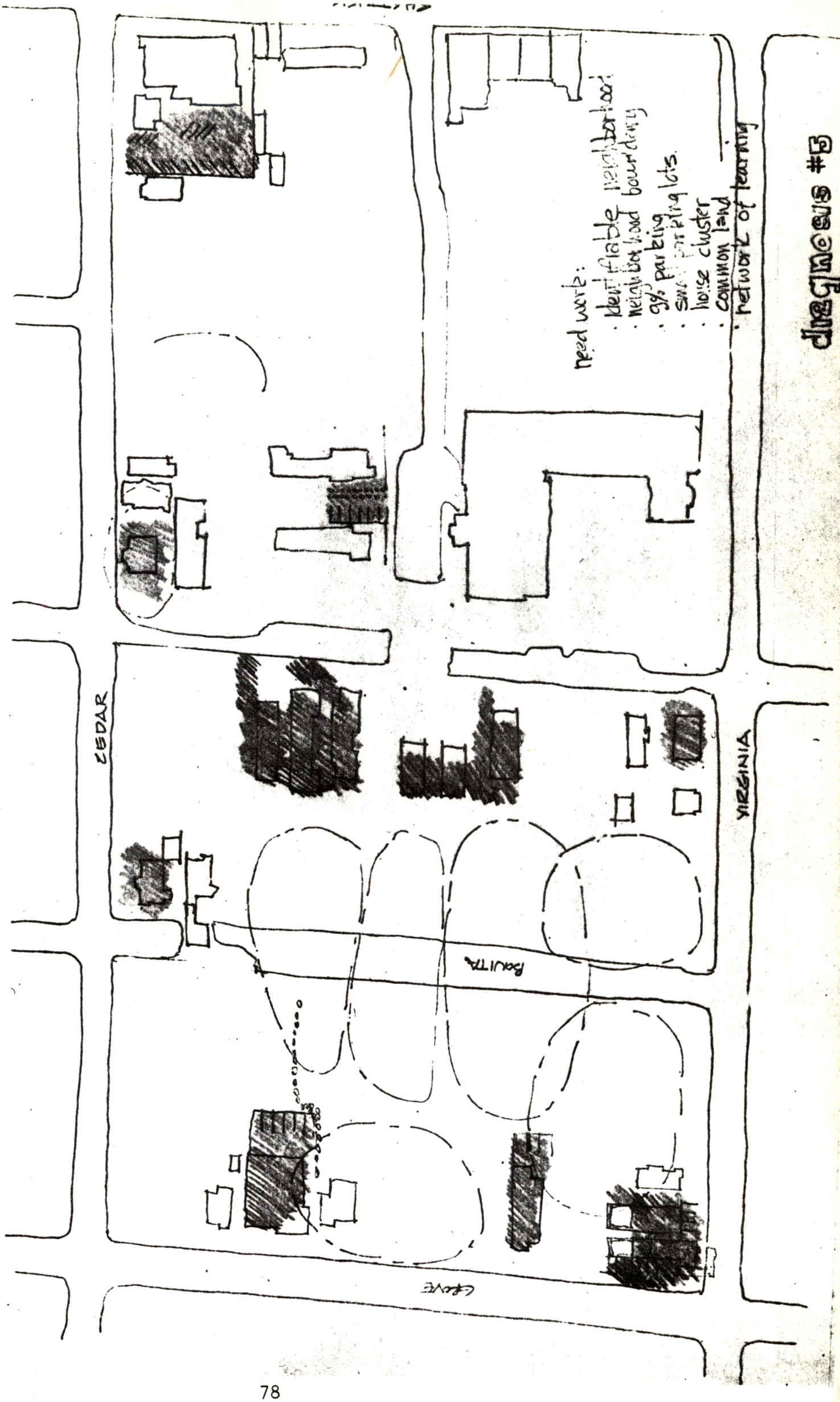
NEW LINCOLN COMMON LAND

RESPONSE TO YEARS 7 & 8

The common land which emerged on Lincoln seemed very realistic and pleasing. Another effort was made to claim street land on Bonita where a private home added a room which extended into what had been the street. By building close to the existing outdoor room the place seemed denser and the street was definitely closed. The legal issues of such land ownership did not concern us greatly though it was suggested that the neighborhood as a whole could sell the land to the homeowner.

The school yard took another step back to nature, and we felt it was time to stop for a while.

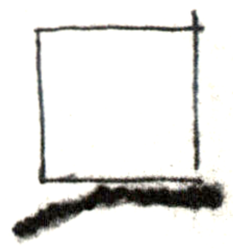
NEW DIAGNOSIS



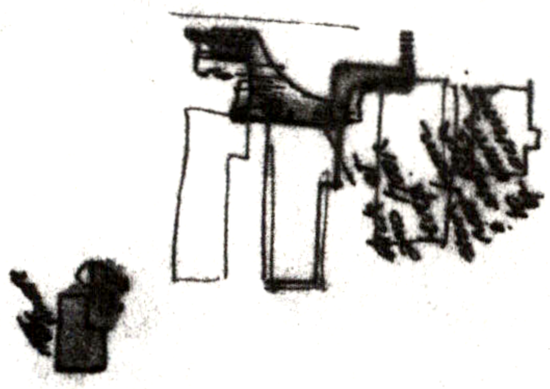
DIAGNOSIS #5

The last round came after a discussion during which the role of the diagnoser was re-examined. It became clear during the discussion that our use of the diagnosis had been very directional and imposed an order to the evolution of the eight years' work which was contradictory to the spirit of the self-repair, decentralized process. Hence our last diagnosis was merely a means of calling attention to areas we felt still needed work (primarily the apartment buildings on Milvia, and a list of patterns which had not yet taken form. We did not make any direct connections between place and pattern, allowing the last designer to act as she wished. The list of patterns would hopefully guide her work to bring as many as possible to bear on her work.









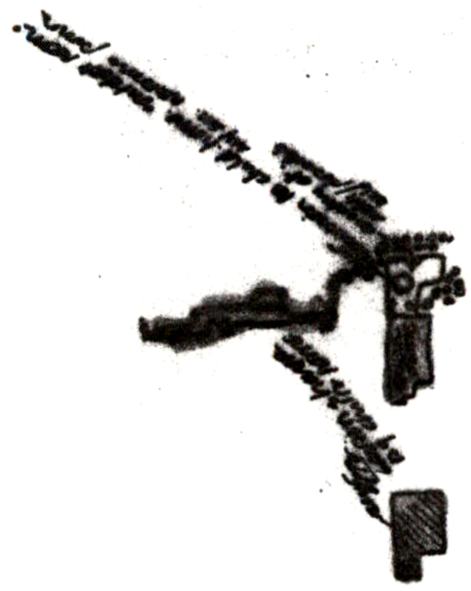
GROWTH: YEAR 9













GROWTH: YEAR 10

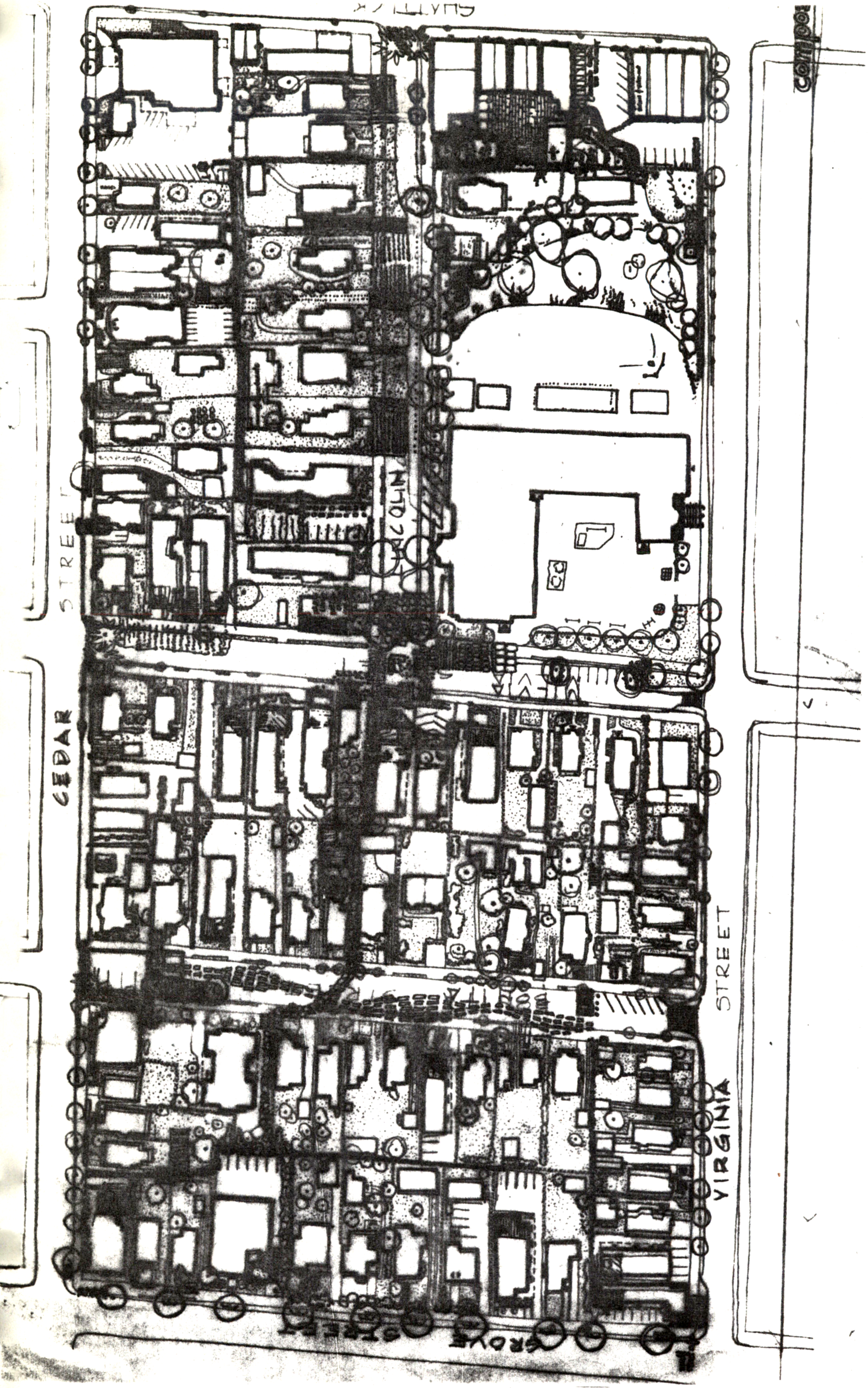


RESPONSE TO YEARS 8 & 10

The neighborhood continued to add to the M/L Center of Action by building a second story terrace serving several apartment houses and by converting a house facing the center into a Children's Home.

The small acts which also appeared such as removing fences and placing secondary paths seemed to indicate the intimate evolution we were hoping would slowly infuse change and life into our neighborhood.

The work which was done under this last, vague diagnosis was both surprising and pleasing. We felt in retrospect that our earlier more prescriptive diagnoses may have inhibited the creativity of the people, and may have been similar to a conventional "master plan" in denying diversity.



NEIGHBORHOOD
AFTER 10 YEARS

EVALUATION

After ten years of simulated change, the neighborhood seems to have made great progress toward becoming a pleasant and beautiful place to live and be in. The drawing indicates a general expansion of green space and implies much use of outdoor public spaces for play, meeting and socializing.

Probably the most dramatic change the neighborhood has experienced is a decrease in the dominance of cars. Streets have been closed and narrowed and had their surfaces softened; they are now more like lanes or alleys, in which pedestrians feel comfortable and plants have a place. But, although no streets serve through-traffic any longer, all houses can still be reached by car by their residents. There may be some difficulty maneuvering large garbage trucks and fire engines on the new streets--perhaps smaller apparatus will be developed.

The place in which cars still occupy more than their share of the space is in parking. Some fairly large asphalt lots still exist, and much land around each house is still use for driveways to rear garages and for parking. We diagnosed this situation as orange several times, but the designers did little about it. Perhaps we all felt that we couldn't realistically predict a decline in the number of cars in the next ten years, even though we would have liked to.

Partly because of the continued existence of this parking problem and partly because of a fear of arbitrariness, common land around houses is not well developed. Although the streets have been changed into common use, the house lots themselves have had little change to indicate new common uses. Because of this, house clusters are still not very identifiable--some future construction projects might help to give them clearer form.

Unfortunately some houses still seem part of no cluster at all, isolated at the edges. The Grove St. houses and some of the corner houses are probably not yet strongly enough a part of the neighborhood. Perhaps the next course to follow would be to encourage garages of those houses to be relocated to the street side of the house, so that the house can turn its back on the street a bit and focus inward.

The growth which occurred in the playground and in the Shattuck work community looks very good. There is still room for change, but the area has been convincingly improved as a neighborhood green and as a place to work and learn.

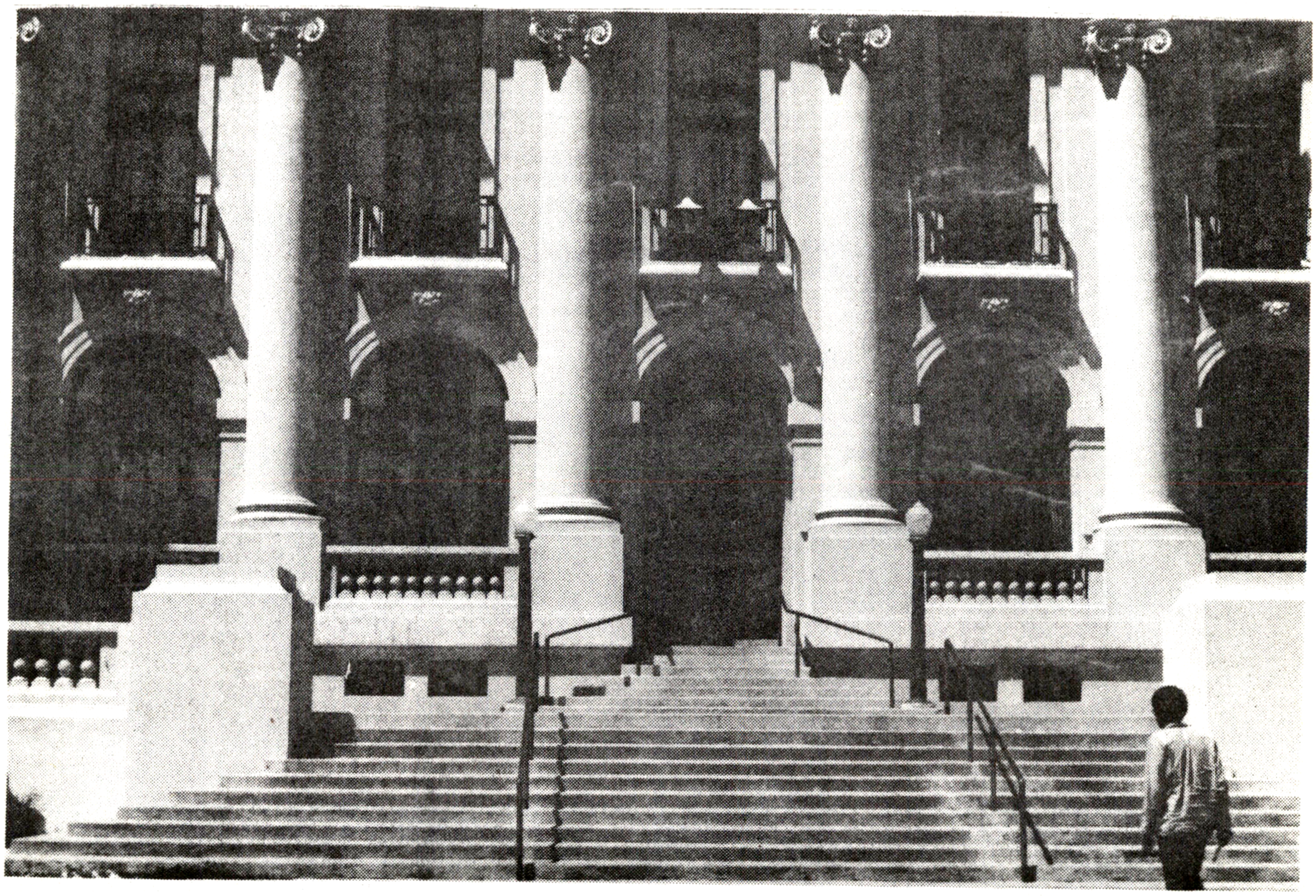
We see the enormous change and complexity which can happen in a neighborhood as the result of small building acts done over a period of ten years, using a pattern language as the guiding structure. The place has come alive through the actions of hundreds of people, each doing things to satisfy his own needs and contributing to the life of the whole neighborhood also. In the relatively short span of ten years the neighborhood has been literally transformed; it has become itself, unique among all places in the city.

But in Berkeley today, this cannot happen. It is impossible, because the energy which would be required is bottled up, stifled--by people who say that their actions are actually bringing this kind of thing about.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE INHIBITION OF ENERGY


DO NOT
ENTER



BERKELEY CITY HALL

The process which we have described in Chapter Three seems sensible and obvious. It is simple. It is direct. It is fairly clear that after several years of this activity all the neighborhoods of Berkeley would be flourishing; and the city as a whole would be immeasurably better off.

However, as things stand, in Berkeley today, this process cannot be implemented.

There is a vast number of ordinances, financial hurdles, and soul destroying bureaucratic procedures which slowly, silently, patiently, like water wearing down a stone, make certain that this kind of process cannot happen.

And, by the most amazing irony, the very same people who are administering the laws which make it certain that it cannot happen, will at the same time assure us that the existing democratic procedures and city ordinances provide for this, within the due process of the city procedures.

Let us now examine this paradox.

Collapse of Energy Theorem

The fundamental process which acts to inhibit energy, and to prevent things from happening, is simply this:

The day that people conceive a project they have a certain amount of energy to implement that project.

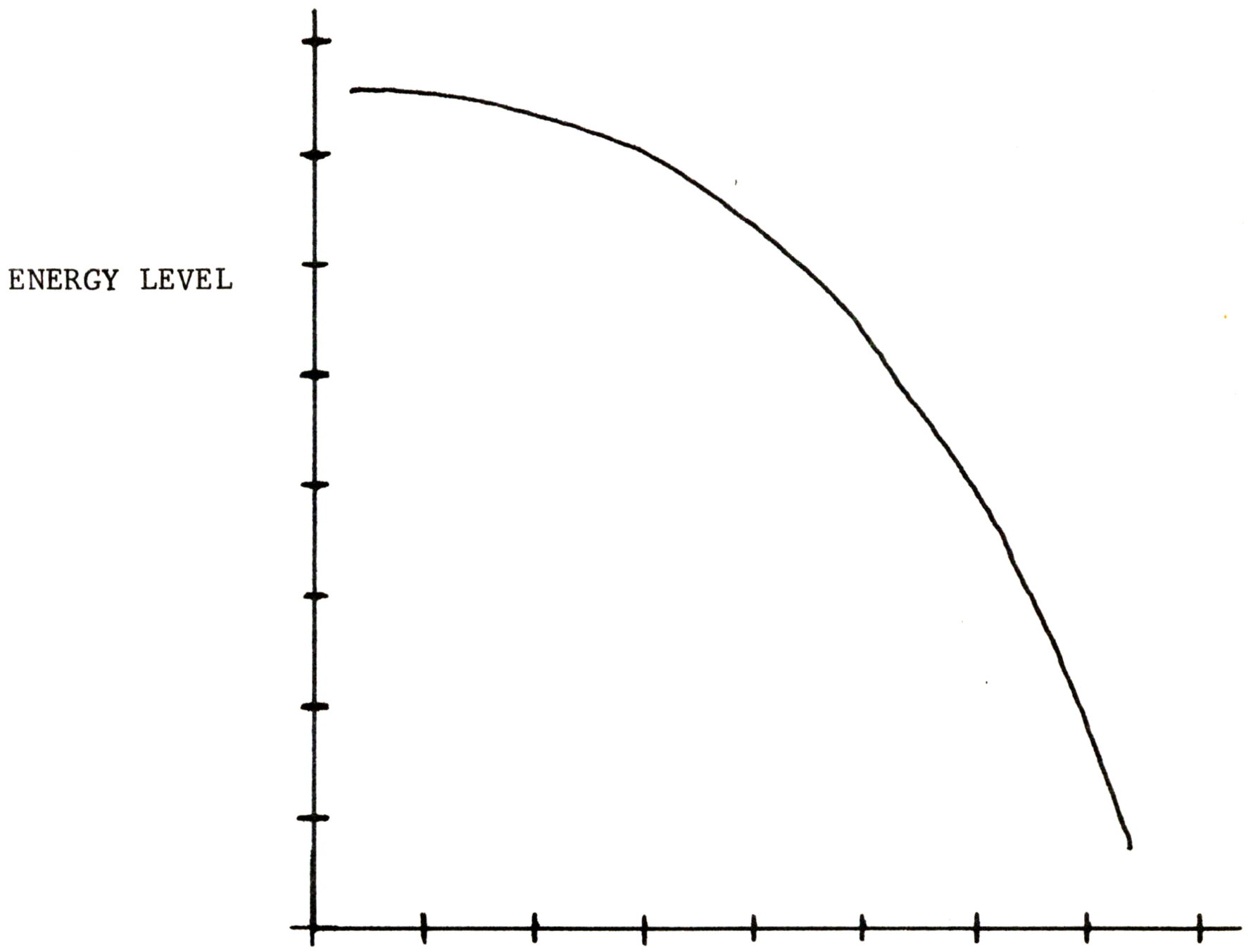
The amount of energy which is naturally available, in this form, is vast. It is more than enough to carry these projects through. If this energy could be tapped, in its undiluted form, then this energy alone would constantly create and recreate the city in the most beautiful and human way.

But this energy is very vulnerable. Each delay, each stumbling block, each extra form that has to be filled out, each telephone call, does not merely slow the process down, but actually reduces the total effective amount of energy.

The city processes which now exist to implement and test, and check and recheck planning projects, although they are intended to protect the public welfare, actually destroy our public energy entirely--and crush the growth and recreation of our town entirely.

To understand the degree of inhibition which is taking place, right now, in this town of ours, it is necessary to understand the subtlety and character of the oppression which people accept as normal.

Time and time again we have gone into a small neighborhood, sat talking with the people about their problems, and about our ideas



GRAPH SHOWING THE COLLAPSE OF HUMAN ENERGY

for the future. Gradually people begin to get excited about the small things they could build, the gateways, small parks, places for old people, a barrier across a street, a cafe terrace on the sidewalk--they begin to imagine...wouldn't it be nice if...it could go right here...we could all work on it...it would give our neighborhood a heart...and then someone--often one of us--will say "let's get the materials together, and start tomorrow."

And then, suddenly, there is a quiet. People stop talking. The atmosphere changes. And then, in this Berkeley of ours which is not a police state, not a totalitarian government, people begin to express all kinds of fear: concrete fear, fear of going to jail, fear of the police, fear that there may be reprisals against someone who is too bold, the city will never allow it, we'll get into trouble, we can't block the street; it is against the law; we'd better let the planning department do it; it'll be too complicated; it'll never be allowed; it will take too long. What about the insurance; we'll be liable. Maybe the city can do something. Hey, why doesn't someone call and find out, sometime, what the regulations are about this sort of thing.....

It is over. The energy that grew about the concrete substance of the things which needed to be done is killed by fear, by awe about the law, by the secret unspoken knowledge that it is almost impossible to carry something like this through, because it takes too long, and there are too many laws against it.

Theoretically you can do anything that is within the law. But practically the laws, and their administration, oppress every ounce of energy which people have. In principle this is a democracy. But, de facto, in terms of the way things actually work out, in terms of the way that people's energy is prevented, stopped, and blocked--it is a de facto police bureaucracy.

This is not some paranoid vision of imagined terrors. It is the real fact: that the people of Berkeley, ordinary people like you and us, have the natural inclinations to do beautiful things, outside their houses, in their neighborhoods; and they are prevented from it, stopped, by fear, and by the secret knowledge that it can't be done, and that it is hardly worth trying any more.

The sheer amount of confusing and intricate laws, procedures and people who presently control our environment is enough to smother anyone's desire to involve himself in the destiny of his environment. Beneath this tangled mess of rules and regulators, however, lies the fact that even in its seemingly disorganized, weblike way, municipal services very distinctly and effectively deprive us, one way or another, of the very real requirements of land, money and permission that are vital to the success of a spontaneous process of repair of public lands. Even if we are able to somehow find, with a maximum of effort, either land or money to undertake small neighborhood projects, the existing system of constraints comes instantly to the rescue of the City, providing the necessary "legal" qualifications that quickly puts an

end to our actions. More frustrating is the fact that, no matter what alternative channels are then pursued, municipal services always have ways to withhold money, permission, and land from us and our plans.

Although every person's threshold for frustration varies, the eventual result of its encouragement is the same--sooner or later we give up the pursuit of the frustrated goal. Since there are so many laws, rules, and ways invented by the city for us not to achieve our goals, the odds that any reasonable human being will aim persistently at a seemingly untenable goal are very small. Laws, procedures and people, working harmoniously together, create a constant stream of red tape, road blocks, delays, bureaucratic checks that finally frustrate any energetic, spontaneous ideas.

In dealing with municipal services we have constantly come up against laws, procedures, and people determined to inhibit citizens' free and natural contributions to the physical environment. Operating together or independently, city laws, procedures and people have successfully frustrated every effort to continue a Saturday neighborhood construction workshop that was started to involve people in their environment. Even as a last resort, when determined neighbors chose to go ahead and build a pocket park in the street, finding the fruits of their labors under the threat of the bulldozer, they were "forced" to abandon it. Laws, procedures, and people have also stymied long-range attempts to legally modify existing municipal budgets and services.

The Berkeley City Ordinances contain a wealth of old regulations governing public land and street uses and people's behavior in such places. They are still on the books and available for reference when a city agency wishes to serve a citation for an action or act of which it does not approve. Several of the tiny street parks recently constructed by neighbors and our group have received citations. In one case, a park removal was requested from the street right-of-way because a handmade sign decorating the park was an "illegally placed sign." In another case, although we received no written explanation of our park's violation, we were verbally told that it interfered with street cleaning machinery. When the "violation" was challenged ("what about parked cars?") sure enough, there was the back up infraction which concerned the fact that the relationship of structure to curb height was "illegal." With regards the sign incident, obviously had the sign been removed another infraction would have been "discovered" and cited--the process repeating itself until we were forced to remove the park. Much the same with the other controversy--but with a slightly different twist--when, in dealing with a public official, trying to pin down exactly how the park broke the law, we found that he was unable to cite either public complaints or a particular ordinance that favored the structure's removal.

Procedures for building even the smallest bits of construction are, like the laws that govern them, equally confusing and exasperating. The simplest sort of construction in a public location, "Decorative

Non-Commercial Construction" requires a permit from the city and the requirements placed on the construction are so incredibly vast that in essence, possible variety of such kinds of construction is very narrow indeed. Not only are there scads of regulations to which the building must conform (in many cases, we would find that if all dimensional stipulations were met there would remain no land on which to build!), there also is an elaborate chain of approvals that must accompany such a proposal. Within the process of gaining approval lies the incredible and inevitable inefficiency found when many agencies within government must deal with each other--delays (reasonable and unreasonable), lost documents, lost approvals, repeated approvals, different meeting days, working hours, vacation schedules--all resulting in making what could be a simple process a long drawn out and discouraging procedure. On projects of larger scale, citizens would be subject not only to the above regulations and approvals but also, in many cases, to a building inspector and fire inspector, etc., who would constantly be reviewing and altering our work--a very depressing and discouraging scrutiny.

The gaining of permission, then, becomes a long, halting, painstaking series of approvals which we as applicants may abandon either because of the endless demands made on us or the countless changes required of our original design. The acquisition of both land and money, resting on the ultimate approval of every city agency involved, i.e., permission, is equally elusive.

A comparison of two similar construction projects--one taken entirely through city government processes, the other avoiding such processes--will dramatically show the different physical and spiritual results involved with each.

A Tale of Two 16 Foot Square Sheds--A True Life Story

	Shed One	Shed Two
Jan. 1974		
	Planning and Design	--
Feb. 1974		
	Design, Documentation	--
March, 1974		
	Specifications, Estimates	--
April, 1974		
	Meeting #1 with Park & Recreation re: procedures and rules, permission to build. Meeting #2 with Park & Rec. re: where to build, construction rules, land laws.	Basic concept decided. Private site chosen, neighbors' permission gained. Part-time construction begins, Foundation and floor poured. Start of rough framing.
May, 1974		
	Meeting with Waterfront Advisory Board. Approval gained one week later. Design referred to Water-front Advisory Design Review Board. Approval granted if changes made to original plan.	Excitement grows. Design of details as construction continues and progresses. Rough framing, roughing in, roofing, decorations. Pride is visible results.

	Shed One	Shed Two
June, 1974	Petition presented to City Clerk for Parks and Recreation approval. Petition mistakenly sent back to W.A.B. where it sits for weeks. Possibly approval by Park & Recreation by end of June. Z-Z-Z-Z-Z-Z City Planning Approval? City Council Approval? Original designers leave town. Who will carry on?	Completion of shed near. A spontaneous, natural building that exactly suits the client's needs has been built. Happy People.

Shed One with permission and land still withheld will not be built in the foreseeable future, and, should the builders of it become understandably frustrated by their unrewarded attempts to realize a goal, it may never be built. The energy that was born with the concept of Shed Two never ran down--if anything it increased because the people involved had land, materials and the permission of all concerned neighbors; they saw their ideas take form before their eyes and they were spurred on by them.

Let us now survey all this inhibition of energy, and what we can do about it.

We want to stress, first, that the exercise of energy, in the community environment, is a normal human function, which, under "normal" circumstances will, by itself, do everything that is required. "Normal" here means noninhibiting.

In other words, whereas city governments sometimes behave as though no one would do anything unless pushed to do it, the fact is opposite: The vast reserves of human energy and goodwill are waiting to exercise their normal function, and will take care of almost everything in the environment, if they are only permitted to do so.

What is it that is inhibiting the release and normal exercise of human energy? Is it ill-will by the blue meanies, malice on the part of malignant city officials? Obviously not. The people who act, on behalf of the city, to inhibit human energy are as trapped as the people whose energy they inhibit. They are acting within the context of institutions which they must obey, to keep their jobs, to keep things running smoothly, to be decent, to be fair--what is at fault is not the people but the institutions.

What must be changed, therefore, are the institutions, not the people. Once the institutions are changed, in such a way that there are no institutional inhibitors of energy, the people who work within the institutions will be as helpful as they need to be, because they want to be.

What are the changes which must be made in our institutions? How exactly, are our present institutions inhibiting the exercise of human energy?

Our most complete answer to this question is given in the next chapter, in the form of an ordinance, which--we believe--replaces all those aspects of our current city planning institutions which are inhibiting our energy.

In the rest of this chapter we shall discuss the institutional problems which have led us to construct this ordinance. From an institutional point of view, we believe that there are five necessities required for the free release of human energy in the environment. They are:

1. LAND
2. MATERIALS
3. IMMEDIACY
4. A HUMAN GROUP
5. THE RIGHT TO BUILD WITHOUT IMPEDIMENT FROM LAW

In short, we believe that under circumstances where LAND is freely available, where there are some MATERIALS available to build with, where building can happen IMMEDIATELY, where there are HUMAN GROUPS who can cooperate to do the building, and where they can do it WITHOUT IMPEDIMENT FROM LAW.....UNDER THESE FIVE CONDITIONS THE ENVIRONMENT WILL VIRTUALLY TAKE CARE OF ITSELF, BECAUSE THE FREE RELEASE OF HUMAN ENERGY IS NATURAL AND ORDINARY UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, AND IS ALL THAT IS REQUIRED.

In the remainder of this chapter, we shall now explain the basis of this belief, and show how our present institutions interfere with these five fundamental necessities.

LAND

Obviously, if it is true, as we have claimed, that the energy of the people is, particularly, a form of creative energy which seeks release in acts of construction, then of course, these acts of construction need land. You can only build if you have land to build upon.

One might ask--well, why not build on your own lots? If all it needs is land, then what is preventing people from displaying their energy in the improvement and repair of their own property?

But the energy which we are speaking of is, above all, communal energy. It is the energy which comes into being when a group of people build something together, and make their communal values solid, by affirming them in their surroundings. This can only happen if the people build <u>together</u> on a piece of land which they own <u>together</u>: in short, on common land.

In most societies in history the common land, the land outside the houses of the people, is shared common land in just this sense. Only in our own time, under the impact of technology, and cars, and services, and laws, has this land been frozen, and taken away from us.

Yet it is lying there, waiting for the people to work on it.

The land which people need to express their energy, and to form community, by building commonly, according to communal values, is just that land, now called street, which lies outside their houses, and which is essentially theirs already, but for the accidents of history, which, for the moment, make it unavailable to them.

The common land in each neighborhood lies essentially in the streets, which are misused and controlled by people who cannot possibly determine the best use for them. It is essential that that land be made available, so that the energetic process of reconstruction and growth can go ahead.

MATERIALS

Another very simple requirement, before people can start building projects, is materials with which to build. Materials which are clearly available, right there when we need them, and available to everyone on an equal basis. Throughout human history this requirement was met; in fact the materials came directly from the common land, land which was not claimed by any one individual or group.

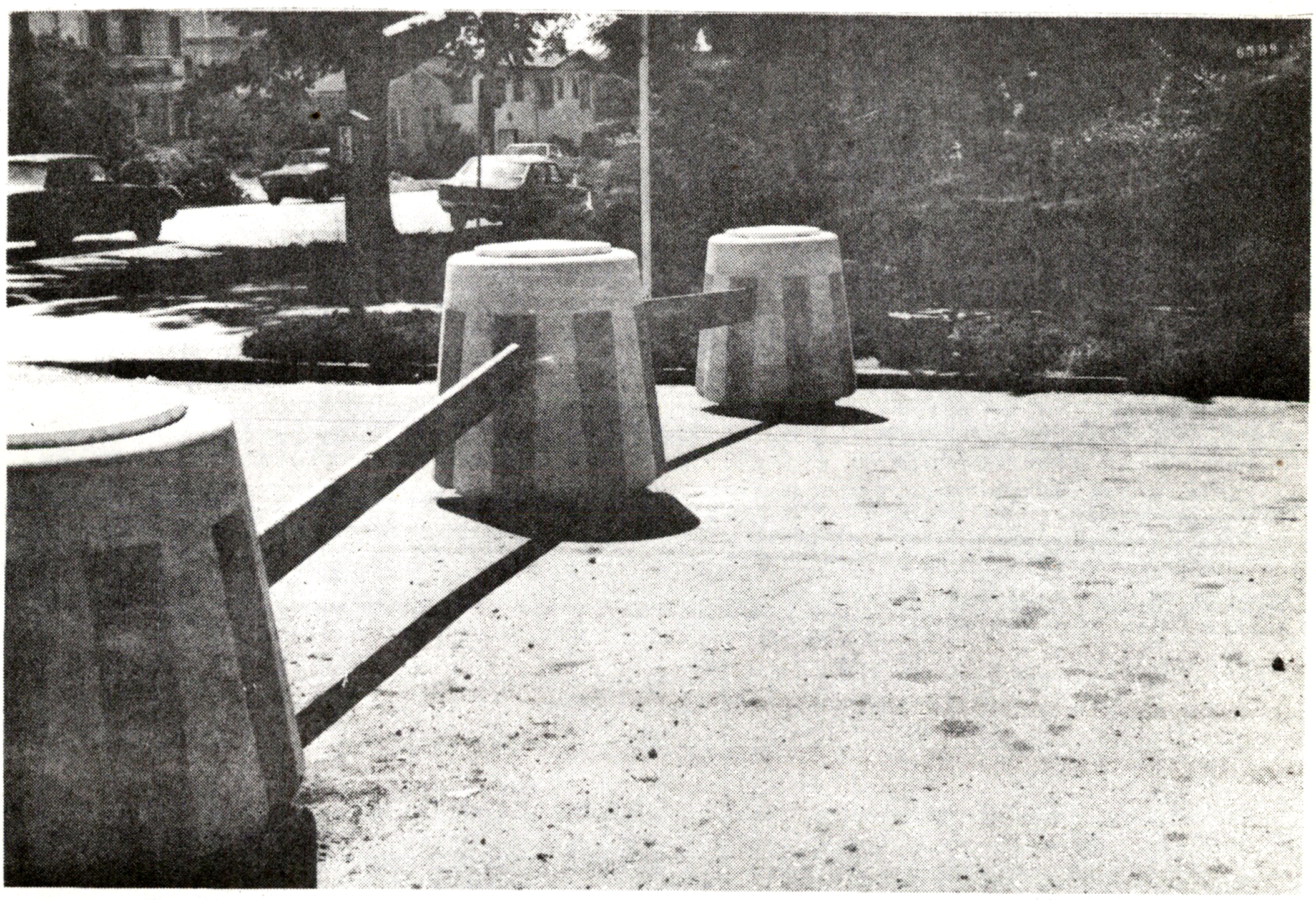
Today we can no longer take the materials directly from the land; they have to be bought, with money. Well, then, people have plenty of money--why can't they use some of it to buy these materials?

The answer is that they can, to some extent. But there is also a vast amount of money in the city which is being misused and wasted, if we look at the money that the city itself spends to do things which can be done better by individuals.

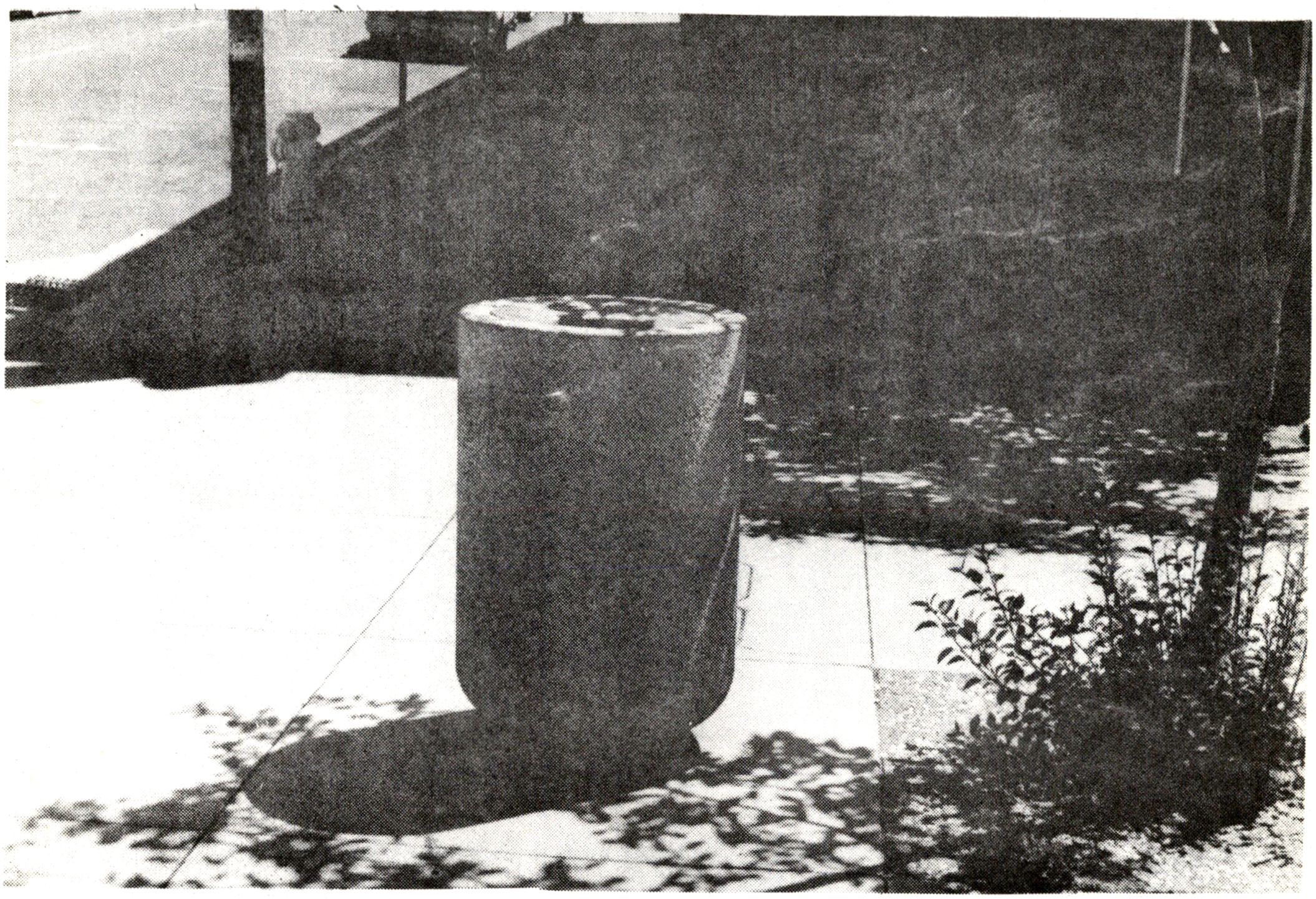
For example, with purely good intentions, the Public Works Department has installed traffic diverters at a number of intersections in the city. They are elaborate "landscaped" structures, which cost up to $14,000 each (Neighborhood Traffic Study, July 16, 1974, p. 22). What are actually needed, initially, are a few 6 x 6 posts stuck into the ground, with perhaps a little concrete to keep them in place. The total cost would be a couple of hundred dollars, at most. The total savings would be over $9,000. And the people surrounding that intersection would be able to determine for themselves what they wanted there, and perhaps would want to do it themselves, with their own design, and maybe embellishing it with a bit of green space, a garden which they could plant: a place which is theirs.

Another example: concrete waste baskets have recently been distributed around the city. They cost $300 each. For a waste basket.

Less directly obvious is the money spent for salaries of the people in the city who maintain the streets, shuffle the papers, process the applications for variances, public hearings, etc. etc.-- all the things which "keep a city running." The total proposed budget



A TYPICAL NEW STREET DIVERTER



A WASTEBASKET: $300

of the City of Berkeley is $30,478,095. To give a very rough calculation, the total amount of money spent by the Departments of Public Works, Parks and Recreation, City Planning is $2,893,000. In addition, police personnel are used to some extent to enforce the laws about the use of public land. And even if we assume that there are some functions of those departments which are properly in the realm of the city as a whole--corresponding to the largest levels of the planning process--there is still a couple of million dollars a year wasted on things which the city should not be dealing with at all. That money should be returned directly to the neighborhoods for building projects.

IMMEDIACY

In our experience, the projects which have generated the most enthusiasm have been those where people said "let's go and build it"--and it was done--rather than where people said "let's file an application for a zoning variance"--and the project may or may not have gotten built.

It must be possible for people to get an idea for a building project and then to do it, immediately, with no red tape, applications to fill out, public hearings, or any of the things which take time and stifle enthusiasm. The only way this can happen is for people not to have to request permission at all; because in the process of that request, and waiting for an answer, the original impetus for that project is forever lost. Building, as part of a ritual of construction

and reconstruction, must proceed naturally from original conception to completion of the project, with nothing in the way. The present system of ordinances, variances, requests, and public hearings only serves to act in the other direction. Any system of laws must be only a framework--within which immediate building can take place.

A HUMAN GROUP

When we began to build things in the public land in neighborhoods, the event of building generated a lot of activity; a lot of people volunteered their help, and the result was greater even than the sum total of people working individually. There is something in the communion of a group which causes the energy level of individuals to be increased, and helps them get more done.

And certainly, when we are talking about improvements to common land, it is a reciprocal effect: the group is needed to make their land alive; and the land, and the work that the people do on it, is needed to make the people alive. Indeed, it is partly the lack of common land which is preventing the formation of human groups, and therefore improvements which might make common land...

The cycle is endless, but we have to break into it someplace; we have to be consciously aware of the fact that even with the proper laws (or the lack of improper laws), some initiative on the part of the neighbors will be required, to begin to undo the effects of all these years of inhibition.

For example, right here in Berkeley, a report on traffic, with proposals, was published several years ago. There were many objectionable things in that report, which individual neighborhoods could rally around and discuss, fight over, and possibly eventually protest. That report was the beginning (or the continuing shot in the arm) for several neighborhood organizations in the city.

We have an explanation for this in terms of the patterns which deal with automobile circulation: in particular, IDENTIFIABLE NEIGHBORHOOD, NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARY, and LOOPED LOCAL ROADS. The patterns are strong; they represent tendencies which people already have to shape their surroundings, but may be, by whatever means, suppressed. In this case, the implementation of that report would have meant that those patterns would be violated in the neighborhoods which identified themselves. People organized themselves into groups, and in so doing identified their neighborhoods, in the process of protesting these recommendations.

But, the neighborhood groups themselves have no power to actually determine circulation patterns other than by illegal means; the best they could hope for is a correction in that report, or the Neighborhood Traffic Study, which may or may not be implemented, after several years' debate in the city. By that time, conditions will change, and what is needed may not be needed then.

But for a short time the impetus for the organization of groups concerned with the quality of neighborhoods does exist, and they would be able to continue with their own ideas and their own building, if the things which restrain them were lifted.

THE RIGHT TO BUILD WITHOUT IMPEDIMENT FROM LAW

For building projects to take place immediately, for human groups to get together, for them to be able to build on common land in the local neighborhood, all this requires that they be allowed to do it without any interference from the law, without any of the restraining ordinance which are now on the books. Indeed, the release of human energy in building requires that it flow out without restraint, without the slightest kind of restraint, so that it can be used totally and fully in a creative way, without being used up in fighting legal battles and hurdling administrative roadblocks.

The following ordinances all inhibit people's energy in local neighborhoods, by controlling and constraining their relation to the public land.

No. 413 July 4, 1915

Prohibiting the erection or maintenance of any movable structure or any tent, cloth-house, or any house having walls or roof of paper, felt, cloth or other similar materials without a permit. Providing for application for such permit and granting thereof, and imposing a penalty for violation of said ordinance.

No. 582 August 15, 1918

Requiring the repair and reconstruction of sidewalks in the city of Berkeley by the owner, or others in charge or control of buildings, lots or premises. Fronting on paved streets along which such sidewalks are located.

No. 648 April 15, 1920

Prohibiting loitering, picketing, carrying or displaying banners, badges, newspapers, signs or signals or transparencies or speaking in public streets, sidewalks, alleys or other public places in a loud or unusual tone, for certain purpose herein named, and providing a penalty for any violation thereof.

No. 791 May 14, 1922

Providing for the method of procedure to be followed by the city of Berkeley in the establishment of set-back lines on its streets, and providing penalties for the violation of the provision of ordinance.

No. 1180 June 3, 1926

Regulating the placing of banners and signs across the public streets of the city of Berkeley and providing a penalty for the violation of this ordinance.

No. 1358 September 29, 1927

Prohibiting intoxication and drunkenness on the street thoroughfares, sidewalks, public ground and other public places in the city of Berkeley, and repealing ordinance No. 366.A.

No. 1592 May 15, 1930

Providing for the lighting and barricading of excavations and obstructions in public streets, sidewalks, alleys or other public places in the city of Berkeley.

No. 2631 June 30, 1944

Regulating meetings, assemblies and parades in or upon the public streets, side walks and public parks within the city of Berkeley.

No. 2795 October 30, 1946

Defining and prohibiting disorderly conduct within the limits of the city of Berkeley, and repealing ordinance No. 2014 N.S.

No. 2949 April 22, 1948

Prohibiting the erecting and maintaining of barbed-wire fences along any public street or sidewalk in the city of Berkeley, and repealing ordinance 246 A.

No. 3018 February 17, 1949

City of Berkeley zoning ordinance.

No. 3069 September 1, 1949

City of Berkeley organization ordinance.

No. 3262 August 1, 1952

City of Berkeley traffic ordinance.

No. 3517 September 1, 1956

City of Berkeley position ordinance.

No. 3380

Relating the planning, trimming, cutting down, removal or mutilation of trees, ornamental shrubs, plants or lawns, or the placing of

deleterious material in the streets, public squares or parks in the city of Berkeley, and repealing ordinances No. 1338-NS, and No. 1491-NS, and No. 1559.

No. 3718 October 8, 1959

Regulating the erection, construction, enlargement, alteration, repair, moving, removal, conversion, demolition, occupancy, equipment, use, height, and maintenance of buildings or structures in the city of Berkeley: providing for the issuance of permits and collection of fees thereof: declaring and establishing fire districts: providing penalties for the violation thereof: and repealing ordinance No. 3544-N.S. and all ordinance amendatory thereof.

No. 3602

Prohibiting the deposit, litter, garbage or rubbish on public or private property, requiring the removal of grass, weeds, rubbish or other obstructions from sidewalk areas, requiring the removal of debris or noxious plants from private property, providing for the removal of debris or noxious plants from private property by the city of Berkeley, after due notice and making the cost of such removal a lien upon such property, providing a penalty for the violation thereof, and repealing ordinance No. 330-N.S., No. 600-N.S. and No. 1568-N.S.

No. 3909 February 1, 1963

Establishing minimum standards governing the condition and maintenance of residential buildings: establishing minimum standards essential to make residential buildings safe, sanitary, and fit for human habitation thereof, and repealing the violation thereof, and repealing ordinance No. 3899-N.S.

No. 3996

Regulating the placing or maintenance of temporary banners, decorations, signs or other similar devices in, or across public streets or other public places, providing a penalty for the violation thereof, and repealing ordinance No. 1180-N.S. and all ordinances amendatory thereof.

No. 4109 September 23, 1965

Requiring the construction of sidewalks, parking steps, driveway approaches, curbs and gutters, the placing of gutter fill and the paving of street, area adjacent, to curb or curb and gutter construction: providing for the levying or liens against property for the cost of such construction work when performed by the city of Berkeley: providing penalties for the violation of this ordinance: and repealing ordinance No. 1178-N.S., and all ordinances amendatory thereof.

No. 4111 September 23, 1965

Requiring that a permit be secured and money be deposited for the certain uses of streets or sidewalks, providing penalties for the violation thereof, and repealing ordinance No. 3085-N.S. and all ordinance amendatory thereof.

No. 4169 March 22, 1966

An ordinance calling a special bond election in the city of Berkeley for the purpose of submitting to the electors of said city measures of incurring a bonded indebtedness of said city for the acquisition, construction and completion of the following municipal improvements, and each thereof, to wit: a) recreation and parks, b) acquisition of land for municipal purposes: declaring the estimated cost of said municipal improvements, and each thereof, and the amount of the principal of said indebtedness to be incurred therefor and the maximum rate of interest to be paid thereon: making provision for the levy and collection of taxes: fixing the date of said election, the manner of holding the same, providing for notice thereof, and consolidation of said special municipal bond election with the State of California direct primary election to be held in said city on June 7, 1966.

No. 4187

City of Berkeley building code.

No. 4414 May 22, 1966

An ordinance regulating the erection, construction, enlargement, alteration, repair, moving removal, conversion, demolition, occupancy,

equipment, use, height, area and maintenance of buildings or structures in the city of Berkeley: providing for the issuance of permits and collection of fees thereof: declaring violation thereof: and repealing ordinance No. 3985-N.S. and all ordinances amendatory thereof.

No. 4363 July 25, 1968

Regulating the use of public streets and thoroughfares for the purpose of laying down pipes and conduits therein and making connections therewith, and repealing ordinance No. 1165-N.S. and all ordinance amendatory thereof.

No. 4641 April 18, 1973

Providing for the establishment of a new planning process to achieve the preservation and enhancement of the neighborhoods of the city of Berkeley including the interim regulations or residential construction and demolition.

These ordinances are too abstract, too all-embracing, too constraining. So long as they exist it is impossible for people to reconstruct their neighborhoods, because, quite simply, <u>they are not allowed to do it</u>.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE RELEASE OF ENERGY

The preceding chapter paints a rather bleak picture of how the energy of the people is inhibited by the bureaucratic structure which has built itself up, slowly and insidiously over the years. The process of the natural growth of a city is just as slow and just as pervasive, but depends on the release of energy which has up until now been hampered by the bureaucracy.

We have seen that five conditions are needed for the release of this energy:

1. Land. You must have a place where you can build.
2. Materials. Free and available.
3. Immediacy. You must be able to do it right after you think of it.
4. A human group. It works best when half a dozen are doing it together.
5. Permission. Or, better, the absence of a structure in which permission is needed.

The following ordinance is intended to make it possible for those five conditions to be satisfied in the city.

ORDINANCE

Section 1. Title The Rebuilding Berkeley Ordinance

Section 2. Purpose There is one primary generating process, which plays the central role in the life of a town. This is the process by which the energy of the people is liberated, and, being liberated, coalesces in the creation, growth, and constant repair of this common land.

It is the process by which the people of the town form local neighborhoods, small enough for people to work together to create, replenish and repair the common land which gives their local neighborhoods identity; and this process, the creating and the repairing of their common land, local neighborhood by local neighborhood, is the one process which can liberate their energy sufficiently to bring their town alive; for only in the liberating of their energy, can they create a healthy functioning environment for themselves, create their common potency, their freedom, their potentiality, their commonness, their communality.

As things stand in Berkeley today, this primary generating process is not working. The energy of the people is stifled by ordinances, red tape, misdirected city money; all of which lead to a sense of futility and hopelessness when trying to do anything with

the city. Common land is not available, although it is there: the streets, which belong to all the people of the city are controlled essentially by a very few people in the city bureaucracy. As a result of all this, small neighborhoods have not developed; there is no sense of community or a common mission in making the city--and its people--alive.

This ordinance is written to go directly to the root of this problem; to recognize that it is all these things, together, which must be solved, together, before the city can become fully alive; and to recognize that the liberation of human energy is as critical as the configuration of the physical environment in the life of the city as a whole, and of every person in it.

Section 3. Definitions

(a) LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD A local neighborhood is any connected area in the city in which an appropriate group of users have identified themselves as belonging to that local neighborhood, according to Section 4 of this ordinance. The local neighborhood can contain no more than 1000 users nor be more than 1000 feet in diameter.

(b) USER A user is any person who either lives or works in the local neighborhood. It does not include people who service the neighborhood, such as letter carriers and delivery men, if their base of operations is outside the local neighborhood.

(c) COMMON LAND Common land is any land in the city now under the jurisdiction of the city itself, such as streets, parks, public buildings, etc.; or private land which individual owners contribute to a common pool. In the case of "city-owned" land, the land is common to all the people in the city; in the case of "privately donated" land, the land is common only to the particular group designated by the person "donating" it.

(d) LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARY The boundary line shows which private lots and parts of private lots are contained within the local neighborhood and which portions of public land are contained within the local neighborhood. The boundary must be formed by a series of straight lines, connecting points which are defined in existing legal documents. No piece of land may lie in more than two registered local neighborhoods at the same time.

(e) NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN GUIDELINES The NDG is a set of design guidelines which are in common agreement among the residents of a local neighborhood. These guidelines, which will be different in each local neighborhood, will make it possible to provide for basic, common sense, needs and desires through building.

(f) NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL Each registered local neighborhood shall have a Local Neighborhood Council consisting of seven users from within the local neighborhood, as elected by votes cast at meetings advertised

according to Section 4 of this ordinance, and re-elected each year according to the same procedure. The primary function of the Local Neighborhood Council shall be to coordinate planning and diagnostic work concerning the local neighborhood and to oversee the distribution of allocated public funds for construction work. In addition, the Local Neighborhood Council shall act as the primary representative of the local neighborhood in dealing with other neighborhoods and with higher levels of city government.

(g) LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD DIAGNOSIS The diagnosis is a document, in the form of a map and supporting written material which classifies every bit of public land in the local neighborhood in one of the following three categories, or in some other manner of classification which serves the same purpose.

1) Areas in good repair, functioning well.
2) Areas which need some improvement, but of a low priority.
3) Areas which need major improvement to bring them to a well-functioning state.

The diagnosis is prepared annually, and updated whenever necessary throughout the year.

(h) LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD BUILDER The local neighborhood builder is a resident of the local neighborhood whose job it is to keep the local neighborhood diagnosis up to date, to coordinate construction work in

the local neighborhood, to provide help with construction, to maintain a "materials yard" and perhaps a workshop in the local neighborhood. The builder shall be paid partly out of local neighborhood funds.

Section 4. Initial Identification of Local Neighborhood

(a) APPLICATION Any group of people who either live or work in an area which would fit the definition of a local neighborhood may make application to the City Clerk for neighborhood status.

(b) INITIAL STEPS At the time such application is made, that group must:

(1) Inform by mail all the users in the proposed local neighborhood of such application.

(2) Inform all the users immediately adjacent to boundary of the proposed local neighborhood of the application.

(3) Arrange an open meeting or a series of open meetings, the purpose of which is to choose a Local Neighborhood Council; and to inform all users and over-the-boundaries people of meetings. After the Local Neighborhood Council is chosen, it has the responsibility for communication with the City Clerk and with other local neighborhoods.

(c) OVERLAP OF GROUPS In the case that the City Clerk receives application from more than one group in the same area, the City Clerk will notify all groups involved to ensure that open meetings include

all groups. In no case may a given area have more than one Local Neighborhood Council.

(d) OVERLAP OF LAND In the case that two or more areas initially overlap, it will be the responsibility of the Local Neighborhood Councils involved to work out the boundary.

(e) READJUSTMENTS Each year, before allocation of money by the city, it will be the responsibility of adjacent local neighborhoods to make any needed adjustments in the position of the boundary. A boundary may remain "loose" but projects involving funds from both local neighborhoods must be approved jointly.

(f) DESIGN GUIDELINES To allow time to determine an initial set of guidelines, no allocation of funds to the local neighborhood may take place until the Local Neighborhood Council can state that there is a set of guidelines which has been agreed upon by most of the users in the local neighborhood.

Section 5. Diagnosis The Local Neighborhood Diagnosis shall be prepared annually by a group of at least 3 persons who live or work within the local neighborhood, and who come from geographically separate parts of the local neighborhood. This group is held accountable for the formulation of an accurate diagnosis; however, all local neighborhood users are encouraged to participate in the group diagnostic work. This document must reflect the local neighborhood condition as agreed upon by a majority of the users.

Section 6. Decentralization of Money and Materials

(a) EQUAL SHARE OF FUNDS Each properly constituted local neighborhood shall be entitled to an equal share of those funds allocated to this purpose in the city budget. This money shall be given by the city, with a minimum of delay, no strings attached, to each properly constituted local neighborhood.

(b) AMOUNT OF ALLOCATION The total amount of money to be allocated for this purpose shall be no less than ten percent of the total city budget in any given year, or at least $20,000 for properly constituted neighborhood, whichever is less, and shall be subject to annual review by the City Council.

(c) ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS A group of the local neighborhood builders, and the city official responsible for the distribution of these funds, shall meet regularly to assess needs and specifically to determine if materials can be procured more cheaply if they are bought directly by the city; in which case that will be done and then materials, rather than money, will be distributed to the local neighborhoods.

Section 7. The Local Neighborhood Repair Process

(a) APPLICATION Each local neighborhood user or cluster or users may apply to the Local Neighborhood Council in order to obtain funding

for work on public land in the local neighborhood. The allocated money shall be distributed according to the diagnosis, by a group of not less than three members of the Local Neighborhood Council. In order to guarantee immediacy, the allocation of funds should come no more than 72 hours after the initial request.

(b) MAXIMUM PERCENTAGE OF ALLOCATION No single project shall be funded for more than 5 percent of the total amount of money available that year for building in the neighborhood.

(c) ADMINISTRATIVE FUNDS The Local Neighborhood Council shall be entitled to administrative funds from the local neighborhood allocation, not to exceed 10 percent of the total.

(d) NEIGHBORHOOD BUILDER Each local neighborhood may use up to 10 percent of the funds allocated to it by the city, in addition to administrative funds, for the purpose of supporting a "Local Neighborhood Builder." The function of this job is to keep in touch with the on-going diagnosis and to provide construction help in carrying out projects for which money has been allocated by the Local Neighborhood Council. In addition, this person will be expected to provide advice on the diagnosis and design guidelines to anyone in the local neighborhood doing private building.

(e) ANNUAL REVIEW OF GUIDELINES An annual review of the local neighborhood design guidelines shall take place at the same time

as the preparation of the diagnosis, and any guidelines may be added to or deleted from the list.

Section 8. Lifting of Restricting Ordinances It must be possible for the money decentralized by the provisions of this ordinance to be used to maximum advantage, unrestricted, without the straitjacket of any other ordinance which may have hindered this kind of process in the past. Therefore, for a specific building project which this money contributes to, or for any project in common land done with privately contributed money, the following ordinances shall be lifted: 413, 582, 648, 791, 1180, 1358, 1592, 2631, 2795, 2949, 3018, 3069, 3262, 3517, 3380, 3718, 3602, 3909, 3996, 4109, 4111, 4169, 4187, 4414, 4363, 4641.

Section 9. Incentive for Local Neighborhoods to Cooperate in the Formation of Large-Scale Order in the City

(a) FORMATION OF DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR THE CITY A set of design guidelines shall be worked out for the city as a whole in the same way that design guidelines are worked out for each local neighborhood. Agreement by most of the people in the city is required. These design guidelines are large-scale patterns which cannot be created by the actions of one local neighborhood, but would require the cooperation of at least two local neighborhoods for their creation.

(b) ALLOCATION OF ADDITIONAL MONEY TO LOCAL NEIGHBORHOODS In order to generate large scale order in the city, each local neighborhood diagnosis should refer as well to the city as a whole: that is, include large scale patterns which are or are not satisfied at the local neighborhood level; where a small act of building might help along the order not only of the local neighborhood, but of the city as a whole. The City Council, and the people it designates to do the diagnosis of large scale patterns at the city level, will determine whether the building in a particular local neighborhood has helped the larger city patterns to take shape, and if so, that local neighborhood shall be entitled to an additional allocation of up to 20 percent of its original grant, depending on the extent of help in making the large patterns take shape.

Some of the larger, city-wide patterns have the names: LOCAL TRANSPORT AREAS, COMMUNITY OF 7000, WEB OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, DENSITY RINGS, PROMENADE, SHOPPING STREET.)

Section 10. Provision for Distribution of Information

(a) LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD LEVEL The Local Neighborhood Builder shall be responsible for maintaining an information center, which contains the latest diagnosis approved by the local neighborhood (this should be posted on the door so that amendments and corrections can be made), and a file of the patterns agreed to by the entire local neighborhood,

and other additional information about building techniques, materials, and costs. In addition, every resident of the local neighborhood shall be sent, when patterns have been agreed to by the local neighborhood at large, a set of all those patterns for his own use. And, when a new pattern has been adopted, copies of that new pattern shall be sent out to everyone holding a copy of the full pattern language for that local neighborhood. If a pattern is deleted from the common list, then notice of that deletion shall be made, also, to every holder of the common pattern language.

(b) LARGER LEVEL The same procedure shall apply at the community and at the city level for the distribution of the pattern language for that level, any additional patterns, and any deletions of patterns.

Section 11. Local Control of Zoning

(a) The powers which the planning department and the board of adjustments now have, to apply and regulate the zoning ordinance, shall pass, in their entirety, to the local neighborhood board, for all acts of construction and changes of use within the local neighborhood boundary.

In particular, the Local Neighborhood Council may, if they see fit, lift the zoning ordinance entirely, and replace it by any other, more flexible guidelines--including, for example, the patterns mentioned elsewhere in this ordinance.

(b) Any person or organization intending to build on local neighborhood private land must first consult with and obtain the approval of a majority of the users in the local neighborhood.

(c) The procedure for doing this shall be to call a general meeting of the local neighborhood, at which any preliminary ideas for the new building will be presented and discussed. The local neighborhood, using the guidelines which have already been adopted, decides whether or not new building fits into those requirements. It may request the builder to change the design, and present them again at another meeting.

Section 12. Absentee Landlords

(a) USERS ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDS It has already been stated that only users in a local neighborhood may apply for funds, under the provisions of this ordinance, for building projects in the local neighborhood.

(b) REDESIGNATION OF PRIVATE LAND Another possibility is that users might want to change the use of private land: for example, to take down back fences to create a common green. Such a redesignation of private land must be approved by the landlord, with the understanding that it is only a temporary "loan" of the land to the group, and that for the period of the loan the legal responsibility for the land is with that group, or some designated representative of the group, rather than with the landlord.

Section 13. Building Code

(a) NO CENTRAL APPROVAL Any structure built in the common land of a local neighborhood can be built without the prior approval of the Building Department and without the requirement of a building permit.

(b) SAFETY GUIDELINES Any local neighborhood may include in its set of design guidelines a set of rules which is different from the Uniform Building Code, which relate to the safety of any structure built in the local neighborhood common land. The approval of such guidelines happens in the same way as the other, general guidelines, with approval of most of the people in the local neighborhood required.

(c) The resources of the Building Department will be available for help on matters relating to the building code [possible under the provisions of Section 9 of this ordinance].

Section 14. Required Public Notice

(a) LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD BULLETIN BOARDS Each local neighborhood, upon becoming registered, shall designate a minimum of three geographically diverse official notice posting spots.

(b) NOTICE TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD Notice of public hearing provided for in this ordinance shall be sent at least 21 days before the public hearing date to all users of the local neighborhood.

(c) NOTICE TO THE REGISTRY The City Clerk shall maintain a registry of all persons and groups requesting notice, to whom notice of all public hearing shall be sent as specified in Section 4(b), and shall be sent at least 21 days before the public hearing date.

(d) NOTICE BY POSTING A notice of public hearings shall be posted in the official spots, as called for in Section 14(a), and upon the site of the proposed construction at least 21 days before the public hearing date.

(e) COSTS OF NOTICE All costs of giving notice shall be paid for by the applicant in the case of private development and shall be paid out of the Local Neighborhood Council administrative funds in the case of public projects or development.

Section 15. Severability If any portion of this Ordinance or application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, this invalidity shall not affect other provisions of this Ordinance which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this Ordinance are declared to be severable.

CHAPTER SIX

THE CONSUMMATION OF ENERGY

In Chapter 3 we described how a neighborhood might gradually come to order, after hundreds of small acts of building performed by individuals, over ten years in the life of the neighborhood.

In Chapters 4 and 5 we described how the human energy which is needed to make those small acts take place has been bottled up and stopped by the city, and how that energy might once again be recovered for useful work.

The purpose of this chapter is to describe what would actually happen if the ordinance proposed in Chapter 5 were enacted; if restraining ordinances were lifted and money began to flow from the city back into the neighborhoods, where it started out, for the improvement of public land in the neighborhoods, under the control of the people who live there.

A few months ago we began to talk to a number of neighborhood organizations about these ideas. Different members of our group became involved with each of the neighborhoods, and, naturally enough, different ways evolved for the people in each neighborhood to begin this activity. The ways through which these things began to be done varied with the personalities of the people doing the work, and with the requirements of each neighborhood.

We have been in contact specifically with the NOBBS neighborhood, the SUDS neighborhood, the Berkeley Tenants Union, the Deakin Street

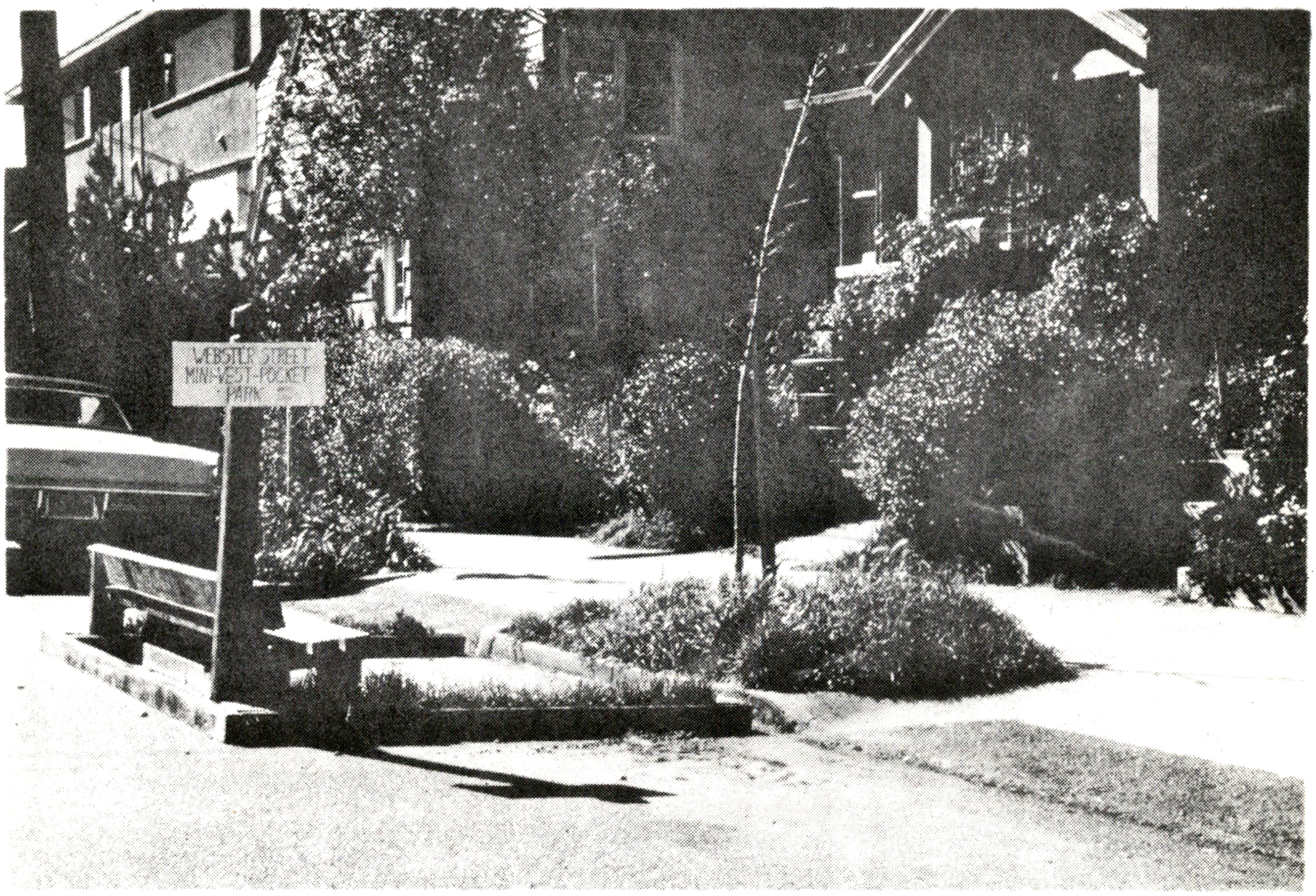
Neighborhood, the LeConte Neighborhood, the Ocean View Neighborhood, and the Walker Street Neighborhood. In several of these local neighborhoods enough enthusiasm and energy was generated, just on the basis of a couple of initial meetings, to actually begin the process of diagnosis and repair, even without any money from the city, and without the lifting of restricting ordinances.

Here is a description, written by Halim Halim, of some of these neighborhood events.

WEBSTER STREET BENCH

"On a Sunday morning Ed and Marian were standing in front of their house trying to decide on a location for a new plum tree. On my way to the local market I stopped by as usual and suggested that instead of planting grass around the tree they should build a bench facing the sidewalk and the houses. We had a short discussion on how our neighborhood is sliced to pieces and we hoped that a street bench would help create some sense of gathering in the street.

"We started with two yellow chairs and a Christmas tres that a working neighbor had brought. We put them first on the edge of the sidewalk, then moved them onto the pavement of the street. The difference was startling. They seemed to be much more powerful and more right on the pavings. A few neighbors and a passer-by stopped and asked what was going on. Shortly a small crowd was engaged in a



A SMALL ACT IN PUBLIC LAND: A MINI-PARK

vivid and clear conversation about the bench long before its construction. Everybody felt that it would be great to have a long bench with a tree next to it and a sort of shading around it. Tom, the next door neighbor, brought an old bench from his back yard. His son, Jason, a five-year-old boy, piled loads of his colorful toys around the chairs. Everybody visualized exactly what it would look like when the bench is completed. Then came a flow of ideas. People were suggesting closure of the street, a cafe next door in a house used by a radical psychology group, planting trees in the entrance of the neighborhood, and many others.

"The energized crowd, standing as testament of the neighbors' approval and eagerness to build started to act by getting some 2 x 4's from their back yards. Ed opened his garage and pulled out a powersaw and a few tools. Mike, the eight-year-old, restless gang leader of the neighborhood kids, insisted on helping. He carried the lumber, handed tools to people, and made a lot of noise running around. And when we finished the construction, he planted flowers around the bench, and called it the "Mini Park Bench."

"In the beginning of the construction everything was chaotic, but soon it started to be naturally organized. Ed and I were cutting and nailing the wood. Mike was handy with tools, Tom carried the lumber. Chris was watching and taking photographs. The rest of the people were taking turns in all sorts of things. A neighbor that we

had not seen before came to ask if she could use the powersaw to cut some lumber for book shelves. who had just learned how to use the saw a while ago, showed her how to use it, and she made her shelves there, right on the sidewalk.

"By early afternoon the bench was built, flowers were planted, and a lot of backyards had been opened to the neighbors for the first time. People sat around, tired yet relaxed, seeing the street differently and seeing what can be done with it.

"The construction of the bench on the edge of Webster Street was an effort to cement the street neighborhood. The bench became a pivot around which a passer-by can have a conversation with a neighbor, an old shopper stops to rest, a worker has his lunch breaks, or for the neighborhood kids to stage on it their daily play.

DEAKIN STREET HOSTING THE BENCH

"The bench that was built on Webster Street was, by all accounts, a good thing for the neighborhood. Yet the city was pushing forcefully to remove it. Several patrol cars stopped and the officers made unfriendly remarks. Then, about two weeks after the construction, Ed, whose house faced the location of the bench, received a notice from the public works department asking him to remoove the bench. They claimed it to be a safety hazard.

"After a hopeless fight with the department, we decided to move it somewhere else. The people of Deakin Street across Ashby Avenue from our neighborhood, were planning for a street party, and they approved of having the bench there. First we thought of carrying it on a truck. It sounded reasonable, but not attractive. Everybody wanted to move the bench along the street, and get the neighbors into the event of moving it.

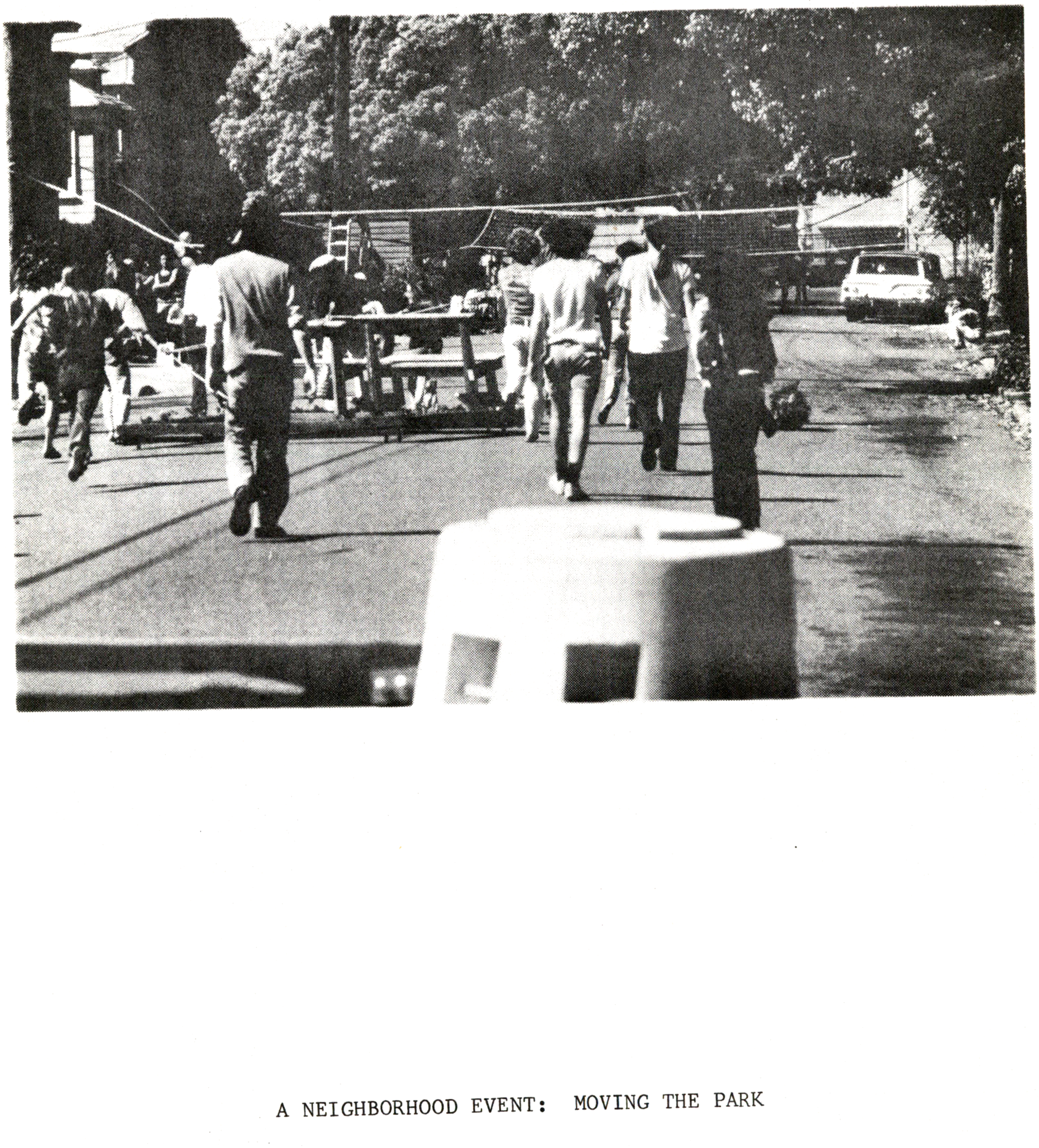
"Ed came up with the idea of putting the bench on wheels and soon we tried one and found it to be all right. We then put eight of them on. Similar to the day of construction, but with different sentiments, people came to help. Some worked on the reinforcement of the frame, while the others were drilling holes and facing wheels.

"Then we tied two sides of the frame with a rope, long enough to form a 30-foot circle. Then we set the bench down on the ground and started pushing it. With its first move, a wild spark of energy touched everyone. It was a great sense of relief and strength. Everybody felt good about saving the bench, their modest creation. Moreover, there was something almost magical about moving a piece of construction in the street. The wide circle formed by the rope was getting filled with people of all sorts: children, parents, neighbors, were jumping into the circle and pulling together the full load of kids, dogs, and flowers covering the bench.

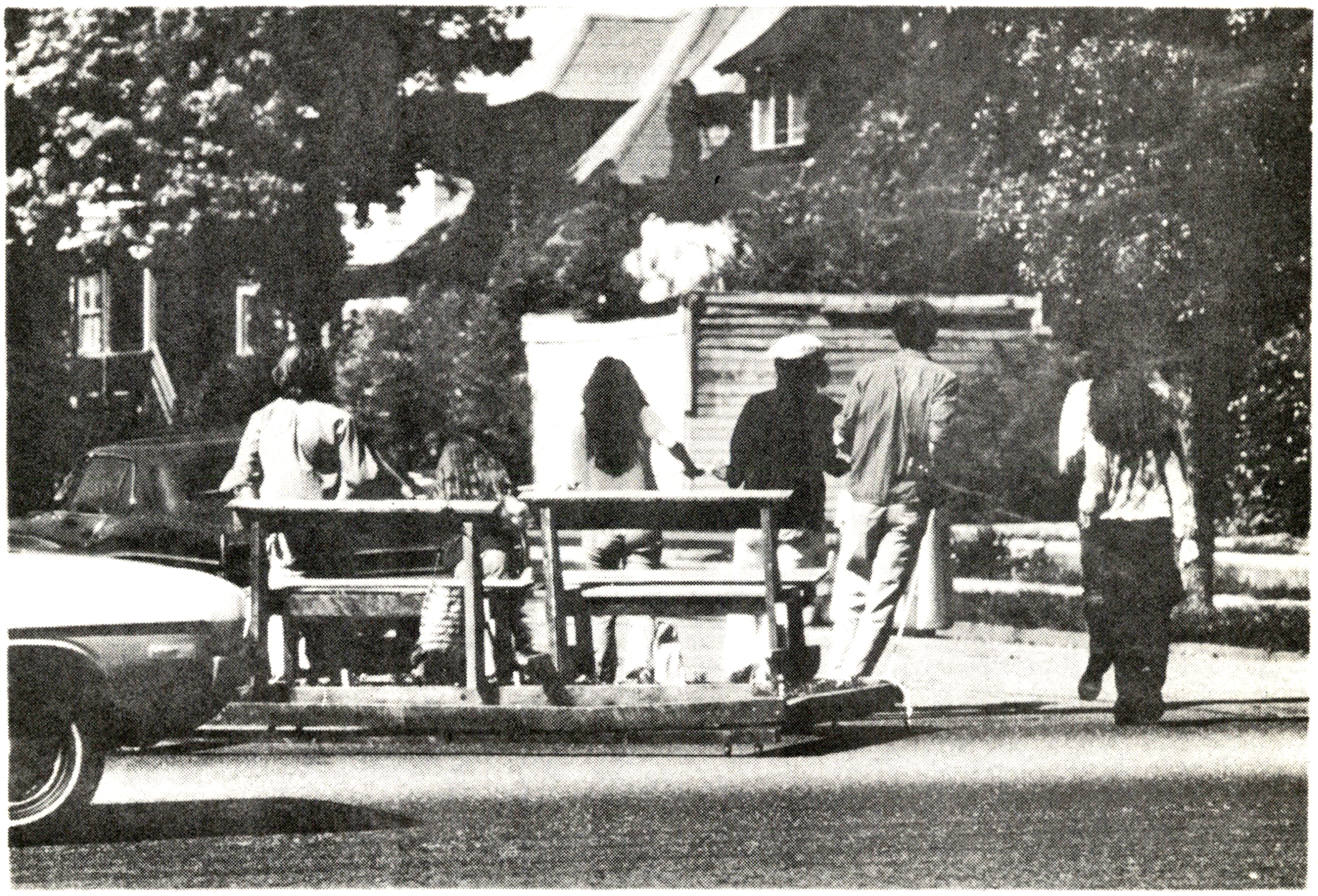
"The feeling from inside the circle was incredible. A sense of freedom and joy, a feeling of being both a child and an adult. A sense of accomplishment in pushing or pulling the bench. But also it is a play. An experience of intimacy without the conventional fear of closeness. One is being watched while in, but can easily step out and watch. Adults were among children, but with adults. A 30 year old man said that the cries and shouts of 30 children inside the circle moved him in a timeless mood, where he no longer knew whether he was 5 or 50 years old.

"When we got to Ashby Avenue, the Deakin Street people came running, but interestingly enough, they stopped on the edge of their street. Watching both sides, it was a rare expression of neighborhood boundaries. As we moved arross Ashby, the motorists stopped and greeted the feast with horns and cheers.

"The moment we crossed the edge of the street divider at the north of Deakin, tens of people for the party jumped into the circled rope, and started off pulling the whole thing towards the party place. Soon the activities of the party covered the bench, but there, in the crowd, was a young woman painting a child's face and another watching the flowers and small crowds of all kinds were on the bench and around. Later, when the bench was moved again to Fulton Street, the people in Deakin Street built their own bench and planter.



A NEIGHBORHOOD EVENT: MOVING THE PARK



MOVING THE PARK:
You can see the energy in the rush of the people, in the pull of their backs, in the way they move together.



THE NEIGHBORHOOD CONTINUES TO BE TOGETHER



ENJOYING THE FRUITS OF THEIR LABOR: SITTING ON THE BENCH



WALKER STREET DIAGNOSIS

"Within the Walker Street neighborhood, in our meeting, six people volunteered to help in the diagnosis. We met with the group on Bob's front porch. After a general discussion, we handed them some patterns to read, and suggested that they try to diagnose the nieghborhood according to the absence or the presence of these patterns. Although most of them understood the patterns and showed some concern, the atmosphere was very tense and formal.

"We started our tour from the edge of the neighborhood, the intersection of Derby and Shattuck. With Ed carrying the map and Halim talking to the group, despite our encouragements, the group seemed reluctant to mark anything on the map. We then handed the maps to Ron, who began leading. This seemed to alienate the group more and more. The formality grew to a sort of disinterest, and we soon realized that only one or two people at the most were involved in the diagnosis. We also noticed that they were limiting their remarks to one block. Later we learned that none of them lived on that block.

"Later, we decided not to use maps in the beginning, but rather to have informal discussions with the several people.

"By then we had built, with the people, four benches, a gateway, and bulletin boards. Some neighbors were getting organized. Also we had several meetings with the council. Yet there was something

missing. We had felt all along that we were not reaching the hearts of the people; that our activities were not capable of activating the most valuable level of their energy, and that we were not succeeding in linking them to the source of that energy, neither within themselves nor within their neighborhoods. We failed to learn what was missing until from Walker Street told us about the Jungle.

"After spending several hours work with a group of residents from the Walker Street neighborhood, everybody seemed to be bored and confused. Although our task was to make a diagnostic map for 2 to 4 blocks of the neighborhood, we had only covered 1/2 of a block. For whatever reasons, most of the remarks seemed to be trivial, and of course they found their way to the map, and the group involvement was at best a forced one.

"Suddenly , a man in his late 30's, who was restless during our discussion, asked us to follow him to what he called "the Jungle." From an alley to a path, between the houses to the backyards. At first the scene looked familiar. Then the regularity of the spaces between the houses turned to an unbroken area, heavily covered with oak trees. We then came to a spot, dark, very quiet, and under the thick branches; it was damp and very cool. Nobody spoke for a few minutes. Then with the affirming silence around him, the stage was set for to speak. This time relaxed and confident, he told us the dream of the neighborhood. To tear some backyard trees down

and to build a wooden path through the Jungle, and to turn the old house next to the trees to a playhouse, communal workshop, or perhaps a guest house for the neighborhood.

"One by one, people from the group added to dream--benches, gateways, closing off a street, building a playground in a vacant lot, and tens of other ideas, all were floating coherently from the six people as if they were all dreaming together. Within one hour we had completed a vivid and true diagnostic map.

"During this event, people took turns in telling stories about the old lady who owns the Jungle and the empty house, her love for the wild birds, stories about the strange man who lives around the corner and runs around taking notes and arguing about the health of the neighborhood, but he never has done anything, and many other stories. The secrets of the neighborhood start to unfold; with them the neighbors' dreams flow, uninhibited and free. It all began by recognizing and placing a spot, and not fearing to associate with a fantasy--a myth, or a dream.

"In other neighborhoods, we found similar attitudes. Their "Jungle" was an old converted train station, a barriered creek, or a closed store. A place from the past, with a symbolic meaning for all people. In all cases it was the story of the hidden creek, or the memory of the old train station, a fantasy which touched the most

sensational level of people's energy, brought them to a rare sense of intimacy, and created an atmosphere for sharing their individual visions. More importantly, it gave them a shared point of beginning. When that happened, the diagnostic events turned to an event of dreaming aloud and together.

"The revival of an old object, whether it is uncovering a creek or building a playhouse in a thick tree, are all acts of repair, expressing our natural desire for continuity and our tendency to link ourselves to such a continuum. Hence, we feel that our energy is preserved and the acts of repair become acts of regeneration of our energy and of our environment.

SATURDAY CONSTRUCTION

"After our experience in the Jungle, we offered to come back and help the neighborhood build some of the things they suggested in their diagnosis. They agreed to build a wooden gateway with benches around, at the entrance of Walker Street facing South. The construction time was chosen to be on Saturday, so that most of the kids and their parents would be around. When we arrived, the scene looked like a usual Saturday--kids riding their bikes, some people chatting on the corner. There was very noisy music coming from a nearby house. We met with Ron who took us to a garage facing the circle midway between Derby and Ward--the garage is used as the neighborhood workshop.

"Opening the shop, pulling the lumber and the tools out to the sidewalks, had attracted a few of the teenagers who usually hang around. They came to ask what was happening, and they offered their help. Ron gave them sanders and asked them to clean some old lumber and to fix the shopfront fence. They got busy, and we began collecting the materials for the Gateway as suggested in the diagnosis.

"When we got the materials together, Ron, Bob, and a few other people suddenly changed their mind about the gateway, and decided to build two rocking benches. Surprised, and somehow upset, we reminded them of their previous agreement. They insisted anyway and explained that the person who suggested the gateway had not shown up. Also, she does not live on the block. Remembering their insistence on the block identity, we went along and started the construction. The first bench was built fast and efficiently. To an extent, that drove most people away. It was like having a professional crew of carpenters working on the street. When we realized that, we moved some lumber and a few tools across the street and asked people to help. Three people took it on and started working.

"Before they nailed the back, they mocked it up and several people sat down. When agreement was reached, they finally nailed it up. They checked a number of locations before they decided on one, and fixed the edge of the back to the sidewalk. Of course it took longer to build the second bench, but it looked more relaxed.

"When we left that afternoon we had a feeling of disappointment and failure. But two weeks after, Ron called and asked us to come and visit. The street looked much different this time. There was one more bench, a big tree planted in the middle of the street, with a redwood planter around it high enough to be a seat, and three small trees in a wood planter on several sides of the street. The workshop fence was completed and the shop door was working again. A basketball board was erected near the edge of the street. The people did it by themselves.

"Ron told us that he did very little beside opening the shop some afternoons and supervising the construction, most of which was done by the kids and the teenagers. Saturdays turned out to be a sort of construction ritual on Walker Street.

"These very energetic acts of construction are only a modest beginning, and can only hint at what might begin to happen with the release of human energy. But they are real; they actually happened, and if they continue, in the same way, the city will be totally alive, pulsating with the ideas and activity of every one of us."

NOBBS

An initial meeting was held with some representatives of the NOBBS neighborhood on Thursday, April 18th, 1974. At that time we presented our ideas, and the NOBBS neighborhood voiced some of their concerns: repair of a sidewalk bench, clean up the Santa Fe tracks, Sun Yat Sen

Park.... Subsequent meetings and diagnosis sessions were held; a day was spent cleaning up the Santa Fe tracks, planting a tree and some flowers there, starting to build a pathway: a family along the pathway offered to take care of the plants.

But possibly one of the most remarkable results of this series of meetings was that an owner of an apartment house in the neighborhood, which was surrounded by a fence, voluntarily put in gates at intervals along the fence, thus setting up possibilities for public pathways through his yard, and the use of that yard by the children in the neighborhood as well. This action was done because there were no restraining ordinances, and very little money was needed to do it--all that was needed was the first impetus, the idea of doing it.

The following is a description, written by Ann Wochiler, of our activities with the Berkeley Tenants' Union:

"Six months ago I went into a neighborhood about 4 to 5 blocks in size to find out what the people there felt about it. I spoke with between 50 to 60 people during a weekend--talking to people I met on the street, also knocking on doors. I learned many things--how long people lived and worked in the neighborhood, who people knew, what concerned them the most where they lived, how old a particular elm tree was, how one of the blocks had been a cherry orchard around the turn of the century. [See map with comments.]

"I had very little difficulty getting people to speak to me· the problem, if any, was getting them to stop talking. It was as if they all had a load to get off their chest. Several showed off their houses, gardens, new born puppies, and offered me wine and coffee. But while they shared all this with me, an outsider, they did not, with a few exceptions, share this with the people of their own neighborhood. The reason for this, of course, is that a good number of the problems they brought to my attention actually prevented them from coming together: too much traffic, dangerous intersections, no local grocery, no place for children to play; rip-offs, not safe to walk at night, apartment buildings.

"There is one group, however, that is very much together. They live in about seven different houses on two sides of a block. Paths connect their yards and they share common land. They help each other out--gardening, building things. Oddly enough, they were the only ones in the whole neighborhood who were suspicious of motives at first, when I spoke to them. But since they belong to the tenants' union and were involved in a dispute with their landlord, it seemed only natural for them to question my presence. These same people, however, came to us a few months later when we were making presentations to neighborhood groups about a new grass roots planning process. What excited them at first was the possibility of getting $25,000 from the city to take care of their own immediate neighborhood.

"They invited us to one of the homes and gave a beautiful slide presentation about the tenants' union. Priscilla, Randy, Mary, Doug, Mark and a few others from the BTU were there. We spoke about the new planning process, the proposal, the ordinance. We got together again the following week. They loved the map of their neighborhood with all the comments the people had made. They boasted about their common land and paths connecting yards, about having taken over an empty lot and growing vegetables there. They still wanted a sheltered food conspiracy depot about 20 feet x 20 feet and a neighborhood work-shop.

"They decided that more people from the neighborhood should become involved--that although they had come to us initially, it would have to be others from the neighborhood who would take over, release more energy. They had to devote most of their time to fighting Bachenheimer. That was fine.

"They contacted other people. At the next meeting only one person from the BTU was there; the others were from all parts of the neighborhood. The group at this meeting decided to have a block party/potluck to use that to begin to organize their neighborhood. The boundary was tentatively extended to Virginia Street. They were concerned that the block party should not end up being just one pleasant afternoon, but that it would become a regular event in the neighborhood. They would have maps posted that people could make comments on, and show where they live. There would be a list of tasks and available

services--from building benchs to providing day care, creating common land where people could meet, a neighborhood store, places for children to play. They felt it was particularly important to gain the confidence of all the people in the neighborhood, and thought "security" would be an issue that would unite them. Younger members could help and look out for some of the older ones; there could be a phone service and a neighborhood patrol.

"But it was building activities, they felt, which would release the energy of the people which is incredibly inhibited right now. And, therefore, it was extremely important to have a workshop with materials and equipment that the people could use, and that it be located in the heart of the community where everyone would have easy access to it. They decided that formal boundaries would be established after they had seen who showed up at the block party. They intended to inform all the people about the party who live between Shattuck and Grove, and Virginia and Hearst. Lloyd thought it was possible that 100-200 individuals would be involved in different projects around the neighborhood. Somehow it was decided that the block party would be on both Delaware and Francisco with a path through the block connecting the streets, not just on one block.

"Lloyd, who has a background in political organizing, said that a cadre of at least 5 or 6 persons was needed in any neighborhood which would take the responsibility for getting activities started

(releasing energy), organizing the neighborhood, leafletting, etc. About six people at the meeting assumed that responsibility, but as things get moving they thought more people would become involved and that some, if not all, from the initial cadre would be replaced.

"The group hoped that David would let the neighborhood use his garages for a workshop. Priscilla decided to convert her garage into a small day care center. Robin had thoughts about turning the vacant BART strip land next to her house into a park.

"Lloyd and Priscilla were very excited about having a path through the block. They both live at 2022--one on Francisco, the other on Delaware. Lloyd's neighbor in the rear already shares his yard with his next door neighbor, so Lloyd doesn't feel that there will be any problem getting him to go along with the path. And Lloyd, John and Tom want to get some more of their neighbors interested in developing some common land--their backyards.

"We talked some more about the block party at the last meeting. The cadre for the time being seems more or less established: Robin (Milvia Street), Priscilla (Delaware Street), Lloyd (Francisco Street), John (Francisco Street), Jean (Francisco Street). Lloyd felt it was important that tasks were set up that would continue beyond the block party. For example, if there was a group interested in day care, they would get together at the block party but would also set up

future meetings. The same thing for car repair. In fact, John thought it a good thing to invite the mechanics from the service station on the corner to the block party and perhaps get them to offer their services (little free repair jobs, some classes in how to fix your car) to people in the neighborhood. In return more people from the neighborhood would buy gas from them.

"Other things mentioned were: a workshop where tools would be kept, or a list of names showing who had what tools that could be borrowed; common gardening. The cadre decided they would have posters at the block party--on one side listing services people have to offer, on the other services people need. Following the block party there would be a newsletter with this information, and those who needed could be matched up with those who had.

"The cadre is getting ready to go out into the neighborhood to let people know about the block party, to find out what they would be most interested in doing there, asking them to bring food. The block party will probably be July 14--Bastille Day."

-oOo-

So much for our experiences. They are tentative. A beginning. We know, from them, that the process works, in essence; and that, under the right circumstances. the people's energy can be released.



THE PEOPLE IN A NEIGHBORHOOD DO A DIAGNOSIS ON THEIR LAND

Let us now describe, in a little more concrete detail, the steps which might be typically involved in getting the process of energy and action flowing in a neighborhood, under the conditions of the ordinance.

1. The Formation of a Human Group

What was common to all of the actual neighborhood activities, in the beginning, was the concern that people had for what was going on in the neighborhoods, in what was wrong--the traffic problems, the lack of community, how hard it is to get things done with the city, not enough parks....the list goes on.

The initial work springs naturally from that concern, and the desire to improve the neighborhood, and to bring the city as a whole gradually to order. But even after the ordinance is passed, which would mean that a majority of the people in the city want to see it in effect, possibly some outside impetus would be needed to get the process started, to answer people's questions about patterns, repair, the process of diagnosis. The neighborhoods aren't well organized yet; the organization which does exist is not geared for this kind of activity.

We had several initial meetings with neighborhood groups, to try to get this process started, even without any money or permission to build in the streets from the city. A dozen or so people, sitting around in someone's living room, each with his or her own individual

complaints and ideas about the neighborhood, each from the very particular vantage point of his own life, his own house. In some neighborhoods people have already been talking to each other about these things; in most, they have not. But even where people are beginning to talk to each other about their neighborhood for the first time, they are surprised and pleased to learn that they have many things in common: they agree about too much traffic on a street, they agree about the need for a park, they agree that there needs to be some common place for people to get together. They agree, even though they have never talked to each other before. <u>It is this common agreement, this common set of values, which will build the neighborhood</u>.

There are also disagreements, and people aren't sure, and sometimes people don't know what's happening on the next block, or even a few houses down. And with all this money now available for building, it becomes clear that there has to be some more systematic procedure for determining what is most in need of repair, where the priorities of money should go.

2. The Neighborhood Builder, and the Workshop

At the time of the initial activity, one or two people get very interested in this process, interested enough that they might want to spend full time or half time working only on this activity. They might be people who have been involved all along in neighborhood events; they might also be people who have been building for themselves

and for neighbors all along, fences, and porches, and toolsheds, and extra rooms, who now see that they have a valuable service to perform for the whole neighborhood. We know several people with carpentry experience who are doing just that: making themselves known to neighbors and available for building, and at the same time getting involved in community activities. For them, it is a good merger of "thinking and doing," and it helps in a neighborhood to have someone there concerned with both activities, at the same time. This person is the "neighborhood builder," and he guides the activity for the neighborhood.

When money and materials are available, and the first diagnosis has been completed, then building can go on right away, according to the diagnosis. The "neighborhood builder" is a busy person--doing a lot of construction work himself, keeping up with the ongoing diagnosis and possibly changing it as changes in the neighborhood are made. His yard is the place for the "materials stockpile" for the neighborhood, and on weekends especially it is full of activity as people come to get lumber, nails, borrow tools--and while they are there, also get advice and exchange information with other people who are doing the same things. That yard is itself an "activity node"--for the activity of building.

3. Patterns and the Diagnosis

The object of the diagnosis is to know what common land needs to be repaired, where work needs to be done. But the diagnosis should

not turn into another master plan. How is it possible, on the one hand, to have a complete picture of the neighborhood, in terms of where work is needed, and where it is not, and on the other to maintain the philosophy of piecemeal growth through small acts of building? The only way is for the diagnosis itself to be a living document, changing along with the neighborhood, every time something is built or destroyed. Therefore, the process of making the diagnosis should be full of life itself, a part of the natural cycle of neighborhood events.

The patterns described in Chapter 2 will most likely form the basis for the diagnosis of the neighborhood. A decision on the part of the neighborhood to adopt a certain number of patterns means that the absence of those patterns will form the basis of action to improve the neighborhood through building. For example, if the neighborhood has decided that LOOPED LOCAL ROADS is a good pattern to use, then heavy traffic on what should be a quiet street will be indicated as "LOOPED LOCAL ROADS NEEDED," or something like that. Then, any small act which would help to promote that pattern would be encouraged in the future, at the time of any request for funds.

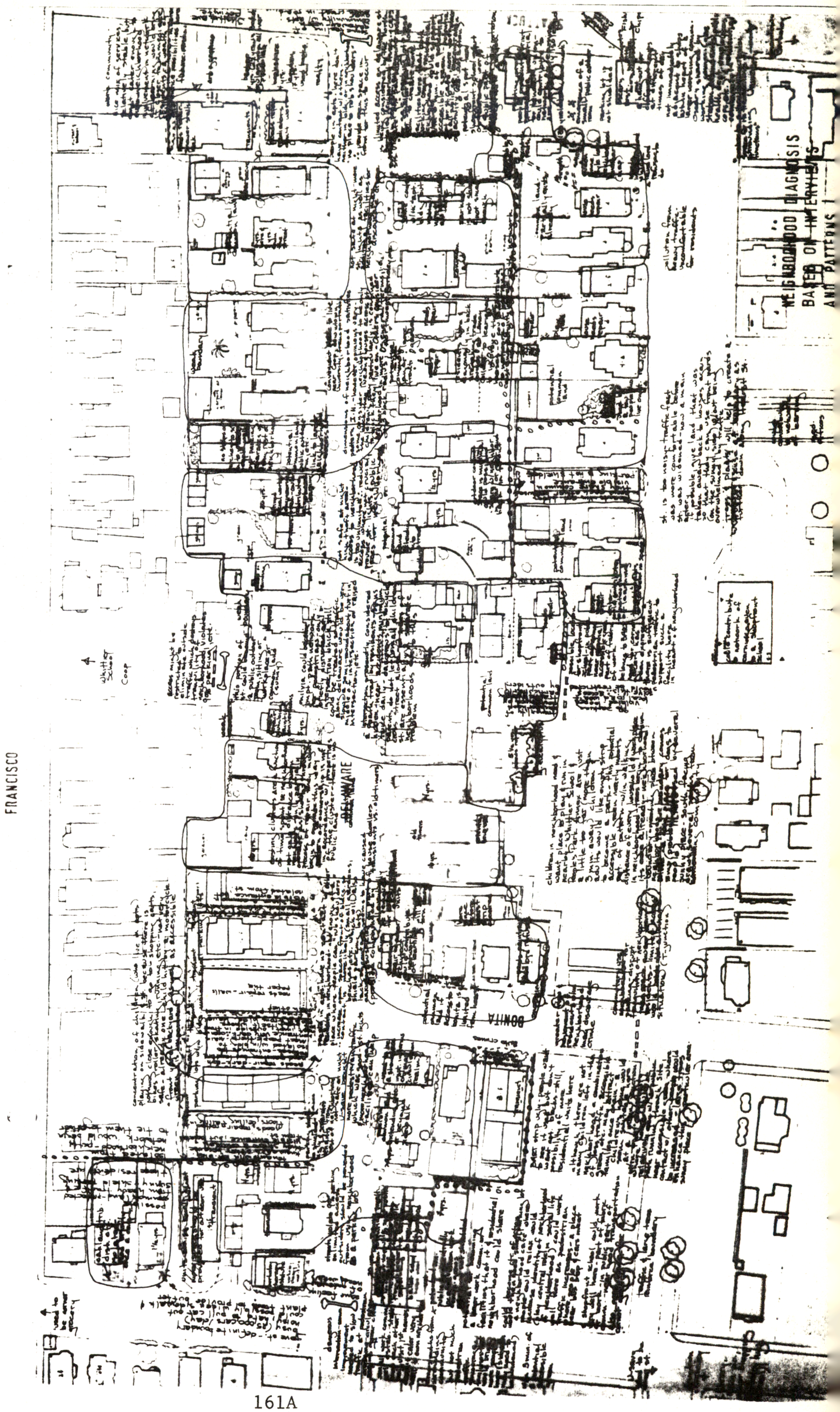
So, the acts of repair, even an act which an individual does with his own hands and his own peculiarities, will be acts which improve the neighborhood as a whole, according to the standards which the people in the neighborhood have themselves set up.

In our work with neighborhoods several different kinds of doing a diagnosis were invented. Each of them had some merits; some of them came closer to being energetic and life-giving processes than others.

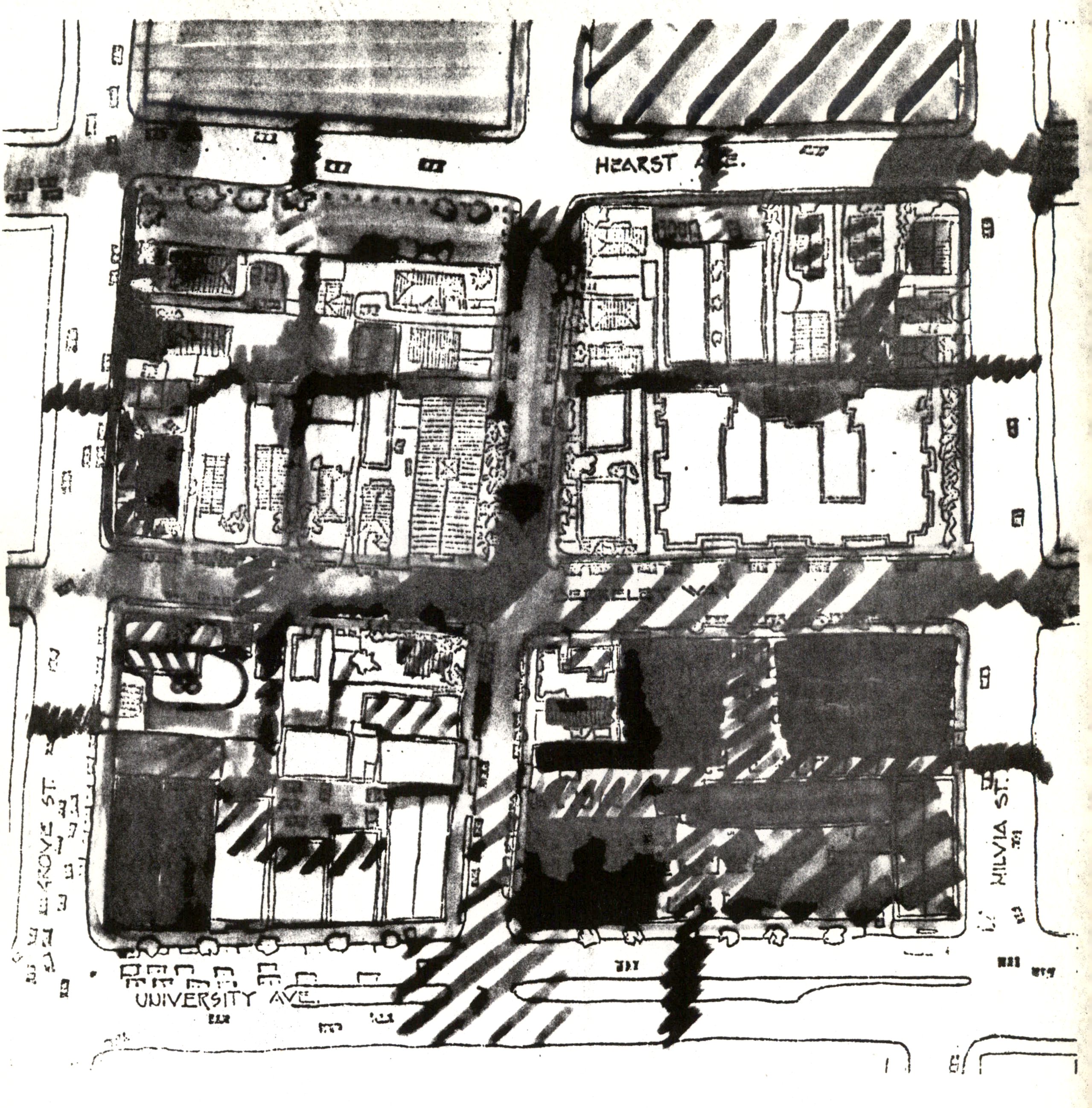
In one of the neighborhoods we worked with, maps of the neighborhood, showing all the houses, driveways, trees, and sidewalks, were distributed to all the households in the neighborhood. The people then marked, right on the maps, what they saw as wrong with the neighborhood--a dangerous intersection, not enough trees, the whole place is without a park, Mr. X. has a nasty dog, the apartment house across the street is ugly.... Someone then took those maps and compiled them into a "master map" of the neighborhood--many of the comments were the same, and the task wasn't as hard as it might seem. The result was a document to which everyone had contributed, and which reflected the views of all the people in the neighborhood.

Another time a few residents of the neighborhood, living in different parts of it, walked around it together, discussing each place of concern, and recording their comments on a single map.

Still another way we did it was by having a big neighborhood "event"--a party at which doing this diagnosis is the main attraction, the reason for the affair. We see this as the most promising way. For if most of our concern is with the common land in the neighborhood,



IAGNOSIS:
VERYONE'S COMMENTS
BOUT THE NEIGHBORHOOD


HEARST AVE.
GROVE ST.
UNIVERSITY AVE.
NILVIA ST.

There are several places where neighbors have gotten together and used the interior of blocks for a common green, by taking down backyard fences, sheds, and planting trees and bushes to provide for a large open sunny space while at the same time preserving the privacy of their own houses.

<u>These things don't take an ordinance, or a revision of the master plan. They can be done now</u>.

There are also a few examples of things which have been built in the streets, without permission, to try to get people in the neighborhoods interested in this idea. In all cases--a couple of benches, a "mini-park" in a parking space, a gateway to a small neighborhood--the activity of building provoked a lot of neighborhood comment, offers of building help, offers of neighborhood support for the political action necessary to implement this.

The physical changes in the neighborhood are visible right away; the place will be completely transformed in a few years. But even in the first couple of weeks, there will be places for people to gather and sit in the sun where there have not been before, some streets might be closed to traffic, with people busy planting gardens in the new-found common land; at the local store, people have put some tables and chairs outside.

Also visible in the neighborhood are the people, working, building--releasing their energy in constructive ways, being alive. It is this vision--as much even as seeing the things which can actually get done--seeing your neighbor working and building--which is infectious; everyone wants to do it, and soon the whole neighborhood is pulsing with life, being repaired, breaking down, being repaired again, growing by the actions of a thousand different people, fully alive.

Another diagnosis takes place in a few months; by this time it is a natural part of the life of the neighborhood. The building has been going on for some time now, the streets are beginning to be transformed: probably most of them within the boundaries of the neighborhood are being taken over, partly, by things other than cars: tennis courts, gardens, places to sit, places for infants to play. There are still things wrong with the neighborhood, there are also new things wrong with the neighborhood which could not have been foreseen at the time of the first diagnosis. That is all part of the natural cycle of decay and repair.

People have been confident from the beginning that the process would work, would be able to regenerate life in their neighborhood, but now that confidence has been replaced by absolute certainty, the certainty of experience--it has actually happened. <u>The process takes over as the prime force which shapes the neighborhood</u>.

Here are several examples of the form which different neighborhoods might take after a few years of this process. They all come from the same simulated process which we described in Chapter 3.

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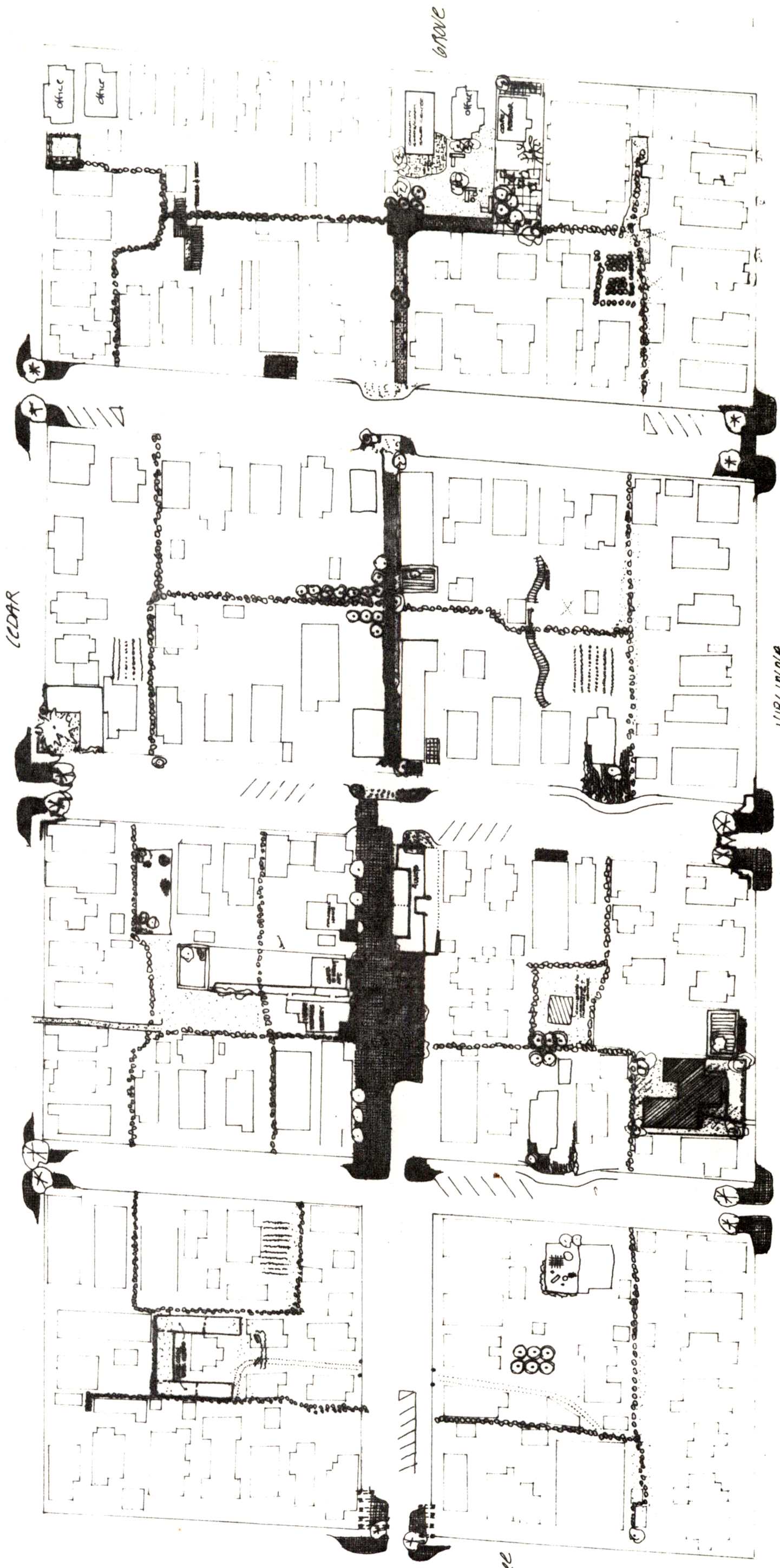
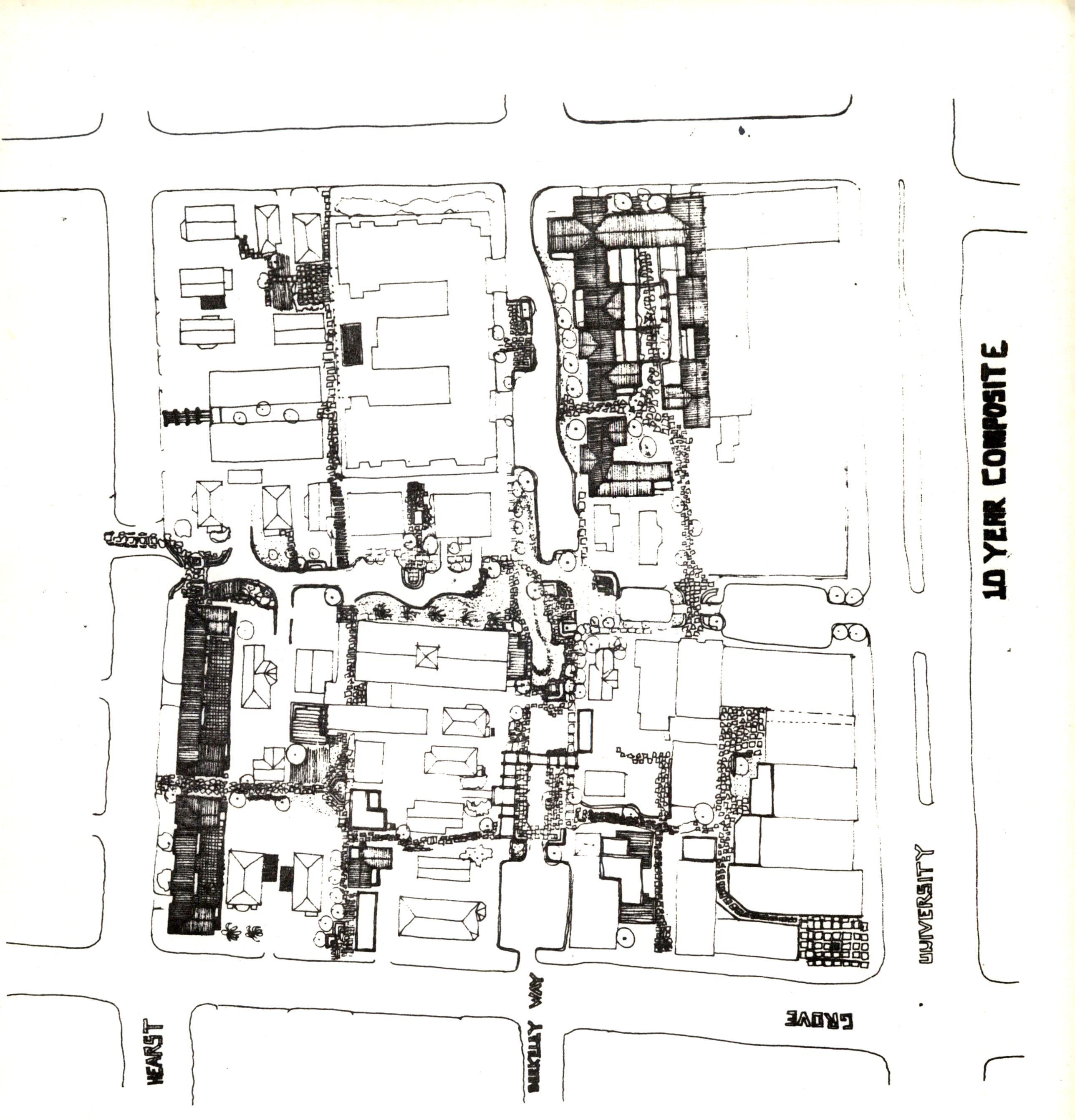


A NEIGHBORHOOD AFTER 10 YEARS



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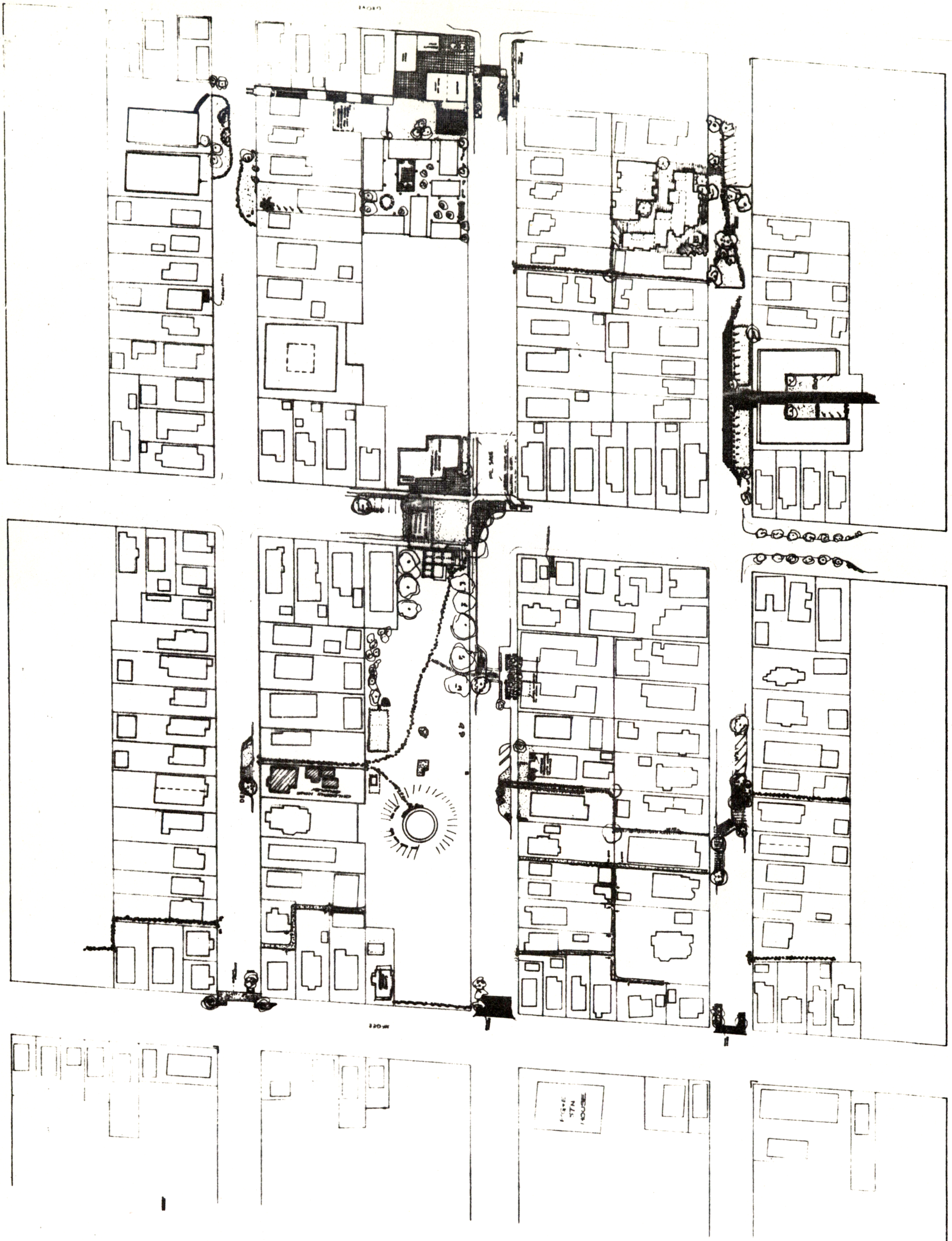

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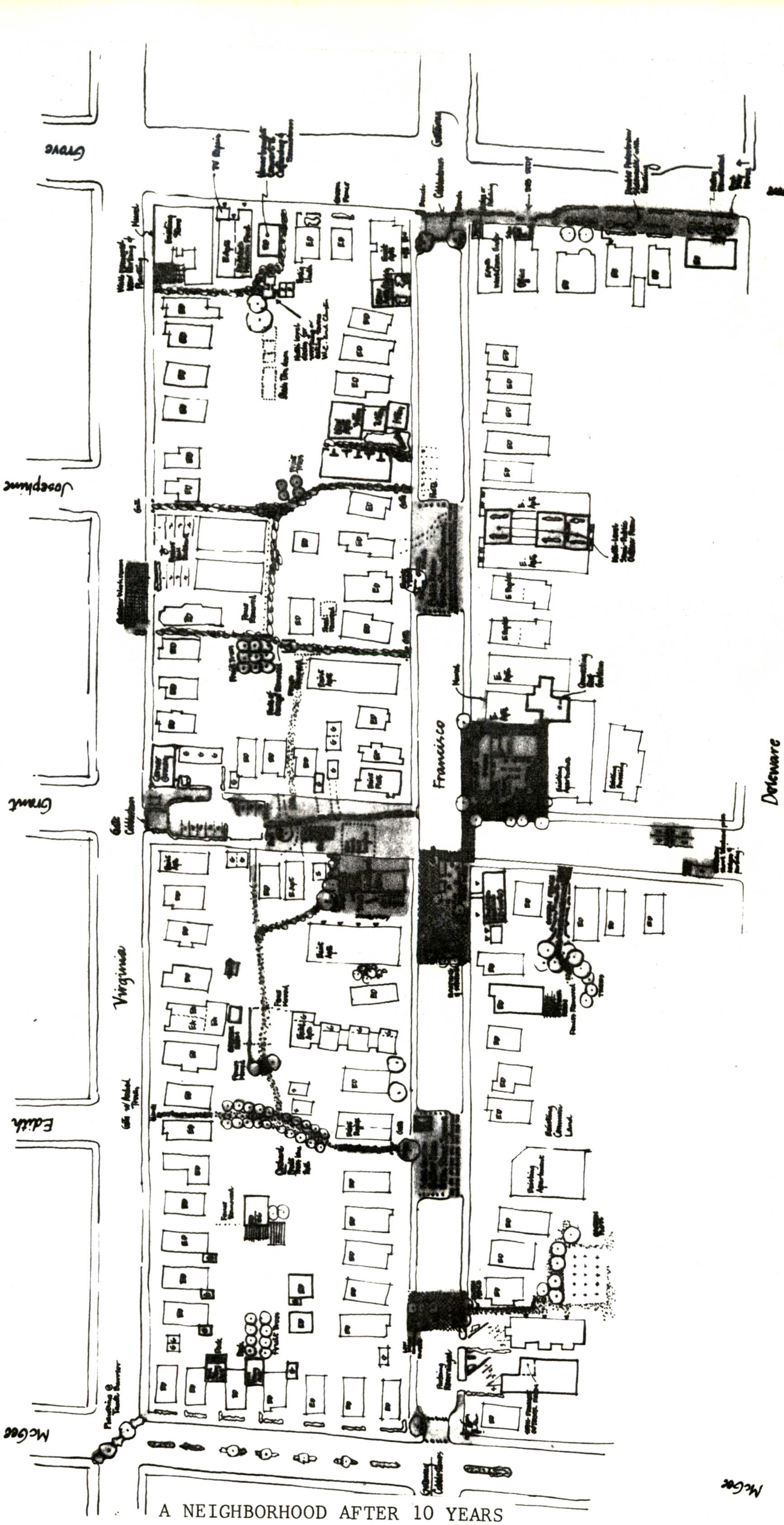
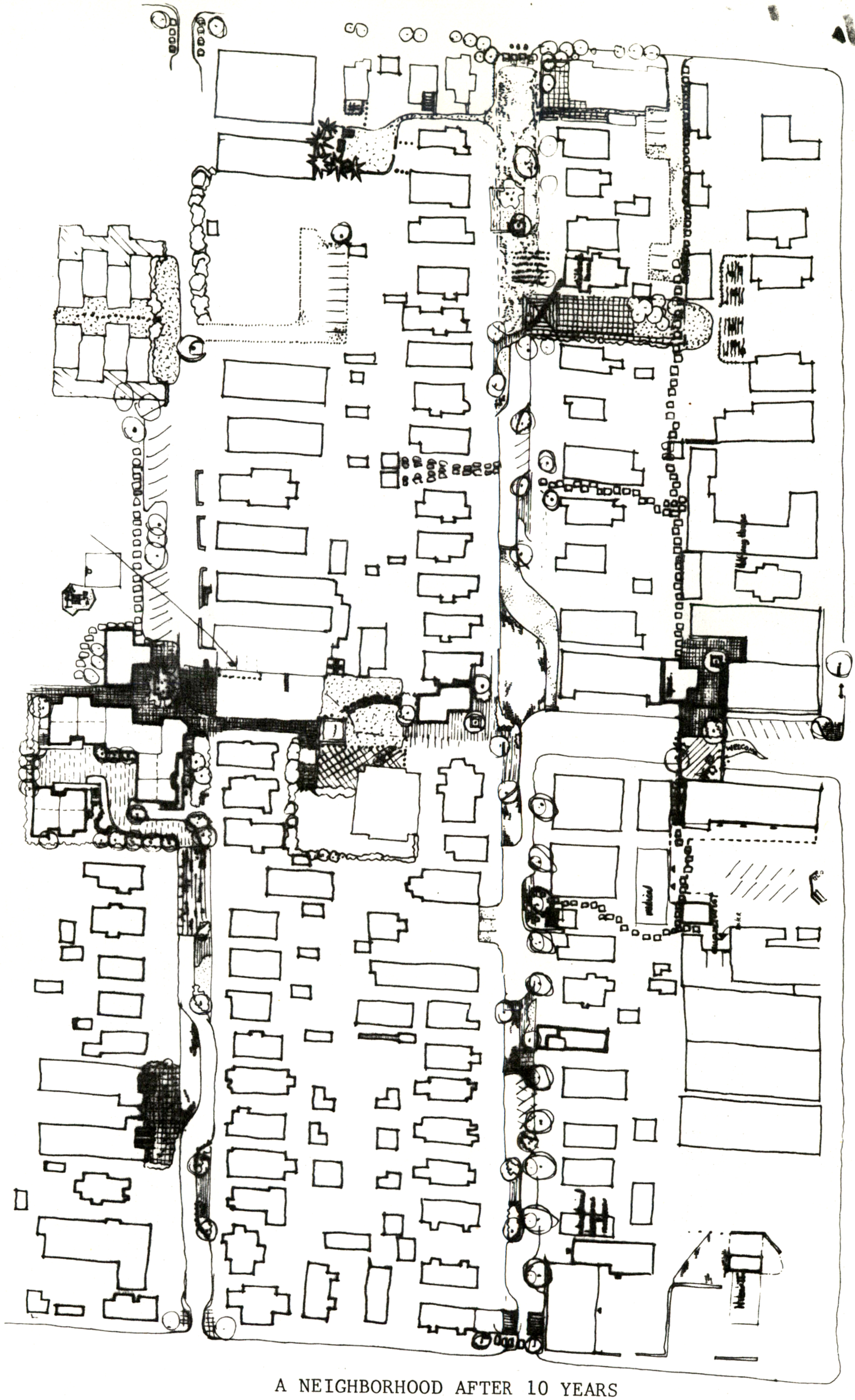


A NEIGHBORHOOD AFTER 10 YEARS



A NEIGHBORHOOD AFTER 10 YEARS

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE PULSATING WHOLE

Let us assume, now, that each neighborhood in Berkeley has taken advantage of the Life of Berkeley ordinance, and that the people of each neighborhood are daily taking care of common land within the neighborhood.

The question now is this. How much of the city planning activity does this account for? Is it merely icing on the cake of the more usual city planning processes, a filip which helps make the neighborhoods a little nicer, but contributes little to the serious business of the Berkeley master plan? Or: Is it in fact the beginning of an entirely new kind of process, a process which is able to replace, in great part, the processes we now call city planning; a process which has the capacity to transform the city both in its small particulars, and in its greater structure?

We believe it is the second. We believe, in short, that the release of human energy, harnessed in the manner which we have described, is not merely a nice contribution to the life of the city, a way of making cities livelier, but that it is the very stuff of the great process which creates the city: and that there is, essentially, no other process needed, and that once this process will have taken hold, the other, larger central processes, will vanish, like the dinosaurs.

We believe, in short, that the process which we have defined, and which the ordinance in Chapter 5 is able to release, is not only

wonderful, enjoyable, and beautiful, but is the most important process in a city, and that once we give birth to it again, the city will be able to live again, as it has done in past societies. It is able to overcome the evils of our cities: and no other process is. Any short term, minor revision of a master plan, is a waste of time. The only fundamental change in master plans, which actually goes to the heart of city problems, is that change which accepts this process that we have described, and lets this process do the work of cities, and replaces almost all the central processes which are crippling cities now.

For the sake of concreteness let us consider the total number of decisions which are presently part of the planning process in the city of Berkeley. These decisions are being made by the planning department, by the zoning department, the public works department, the recreation department, the board of adjustments, the planning commission... We include all decisions which have an effect on the public environment in our city. We can measure the number of decisions being made, in all these departments, and committees, very crudely, by measuring the total number of people involved in these decisions, or the total amount of time spent in making them, or the amount of money spent on the capital construction in these categories.

We may now rephrase our statement in more precise terms. In the city of Berkeley, which has 120,000 inhabitants, we believe that

there might reasonably be three planning levels:

1. The city itself
2. A level of 15 or 20 communities, of 5-10,000 persons
3. 200 neighborhoods at the neighborhood level, which we have discussed.

Ten years ago, 100 percent of all money, decisions, were going to the first level: the level of the city. The breakdown was: 100,0,0. In the last few years a few percent, a very small proportion indeed, has shifted away from the first level, towards the second level. Perhaps the current breakdown is: 95,5,0.

Once the process we have described is functioning, we believe that the vast majority of decisions will be covered by this process, and that only a few larger decisions will need to be made at the first and second levels. We believe that at this future stage, the breakdown can be: 10,20,70. In short, we believe that 70 percent of the city budget in public works, zoning, planning, and so forth should be decentralized to the neighborhood level we have described; that a further 20 percent can be decentralized to the intermediate communities or sectors of Berkeley, and that only 10 percent or so would need to stay at the central level, for those decisions that do indeed affect the city as a whole.

This concept is not at all a part of most current notions of cities. It is assumed that the centralized planning and decision-making

provides the framework within which the life of the city, the things which the people of the city actually do to give it its life, can take place. This assumption is false; moreover, it destroys, rather than enhances, the life of the city. It destroys it by neglecting it: how can we be convinced of the need for a certain number of decisions to be made at a local level, if we do not even acknowledge the existence and reality and need for these decisions in the first place?

Now what about the larger structure of the town? If neighborhoods are given this degree of individual autonomy, and if the city's central funds are spread around to the 200 neighborhoods, what will happen to the larger structure of the town: the road system the schools, the park system, the shopping areas, the density?... <u>What, in short, will guarantee that all these larger structures still emerge where they are needed</u>?

There are two answers to this question. First, the individual actions of the neighborhoods, even without regard for larger patterns, is entirely harmless and benign. The kind of variety which gets created by the juxtaposition of the autonomous actions in different neighborhoods creates a rambling, organic town, which is entirely consistent with the larger patterns which are needed.

Second, if the city provides some incentive mechanism, along the lines we have described in Chapter 5, to encourage the cooperation

of adjacent neighborhoods, then the neighborhoods themselves will gradually see to it, that the necessary larger patterns do emerge, and are superimposed upon the rambling organic plans created by the local actions.

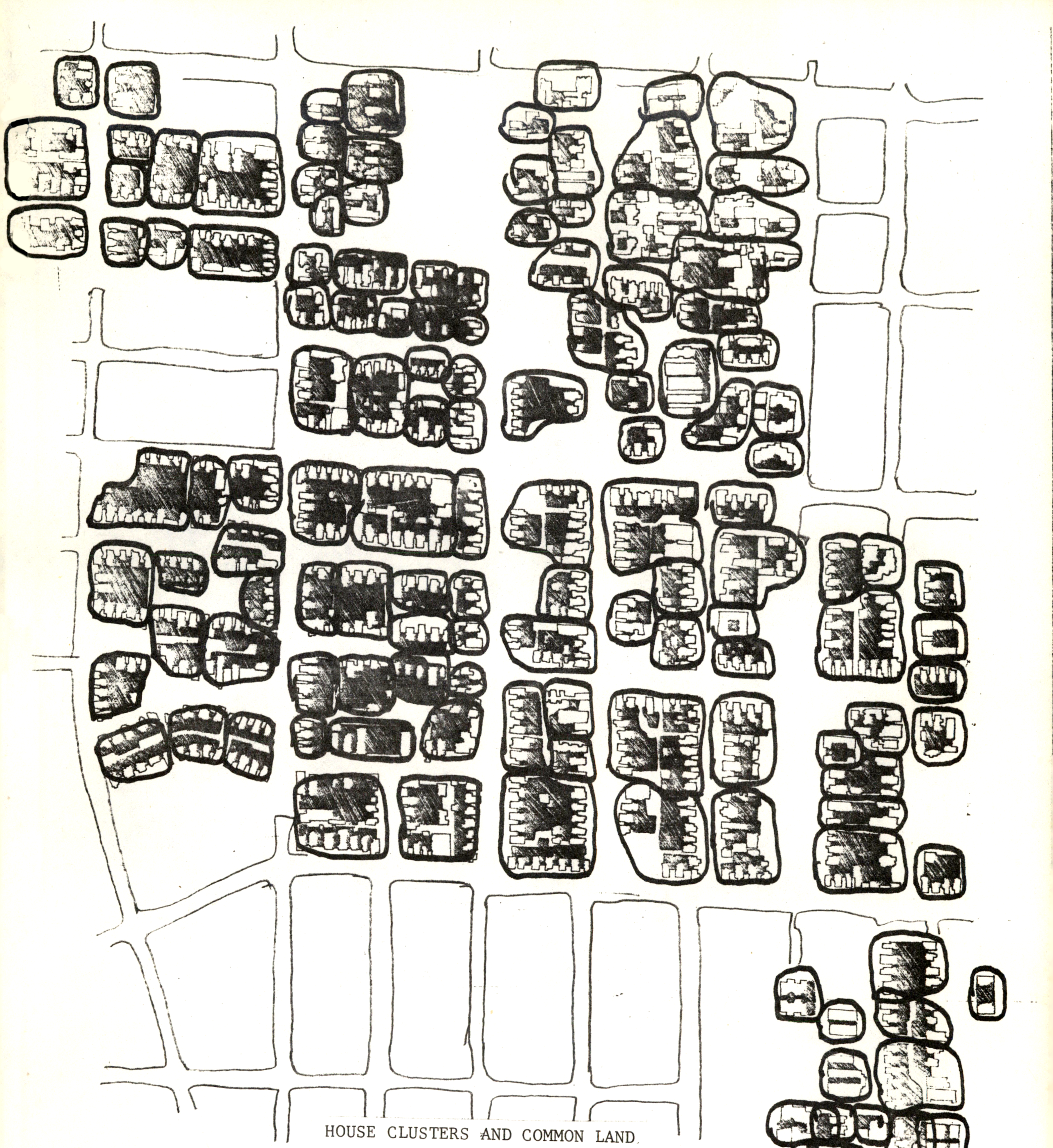
First, the autonomic, unguided interaction of the neighborhoods:

The following maps show the impact of the many hundreds of small acts, performed over ten years in the lives of several small neighborhoods, on the form and order of a whole section of the city.

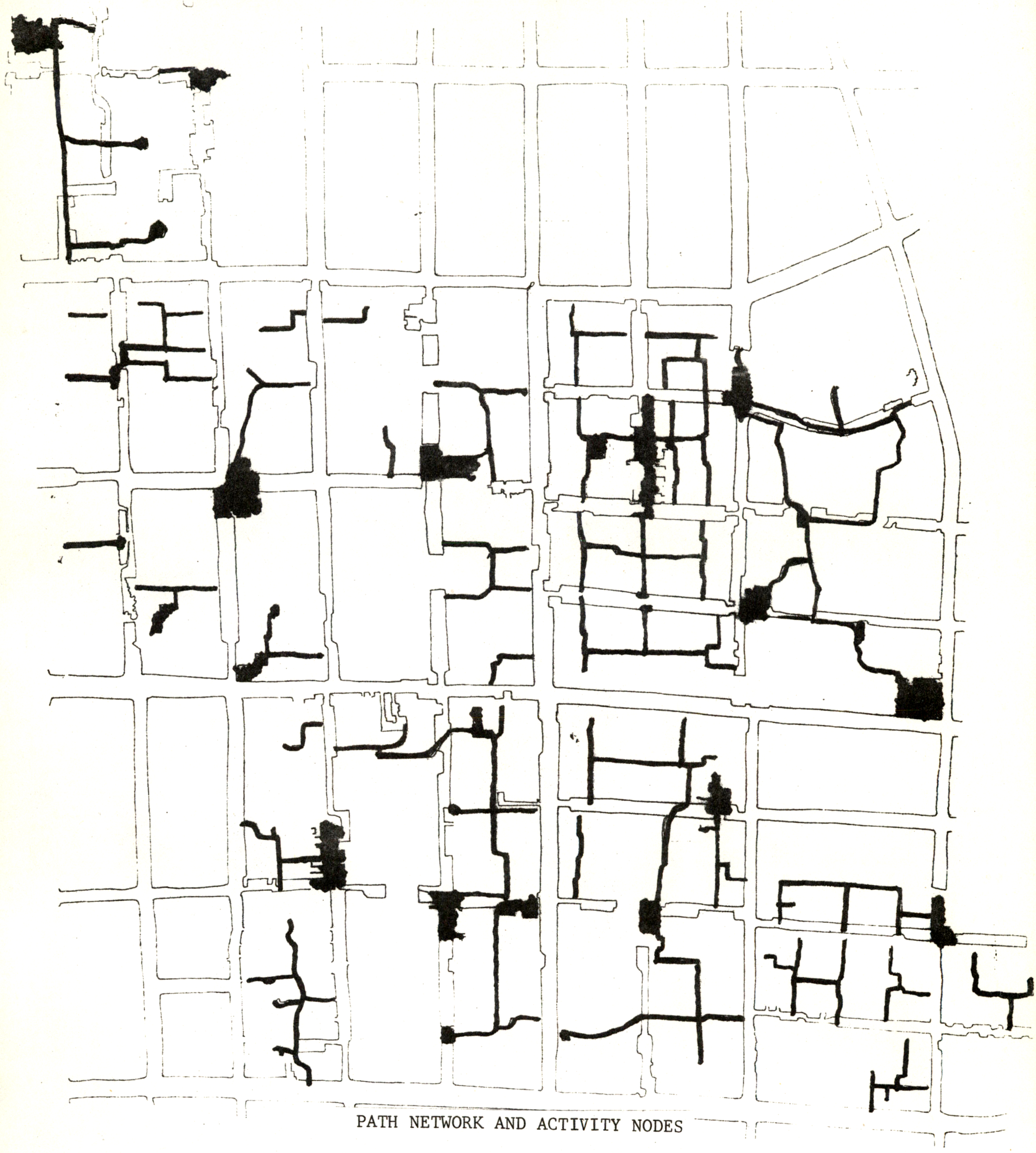
The map of the streets shows the transformation of the grid system. There are still through-streets, but those do not cut neighborhoods in half, as before: neighborhoods, in fact, are defined, in part, by this street arrangement. The streets form an ordered pattern, at all scales, but the large scale order was not generated by any large plan, but rather by the simulated hundreds of small acts of building done by the people in the community.

The same is true for the distribution, say, of activity nodes, connected by paths, and of work communities, and accessible greens.

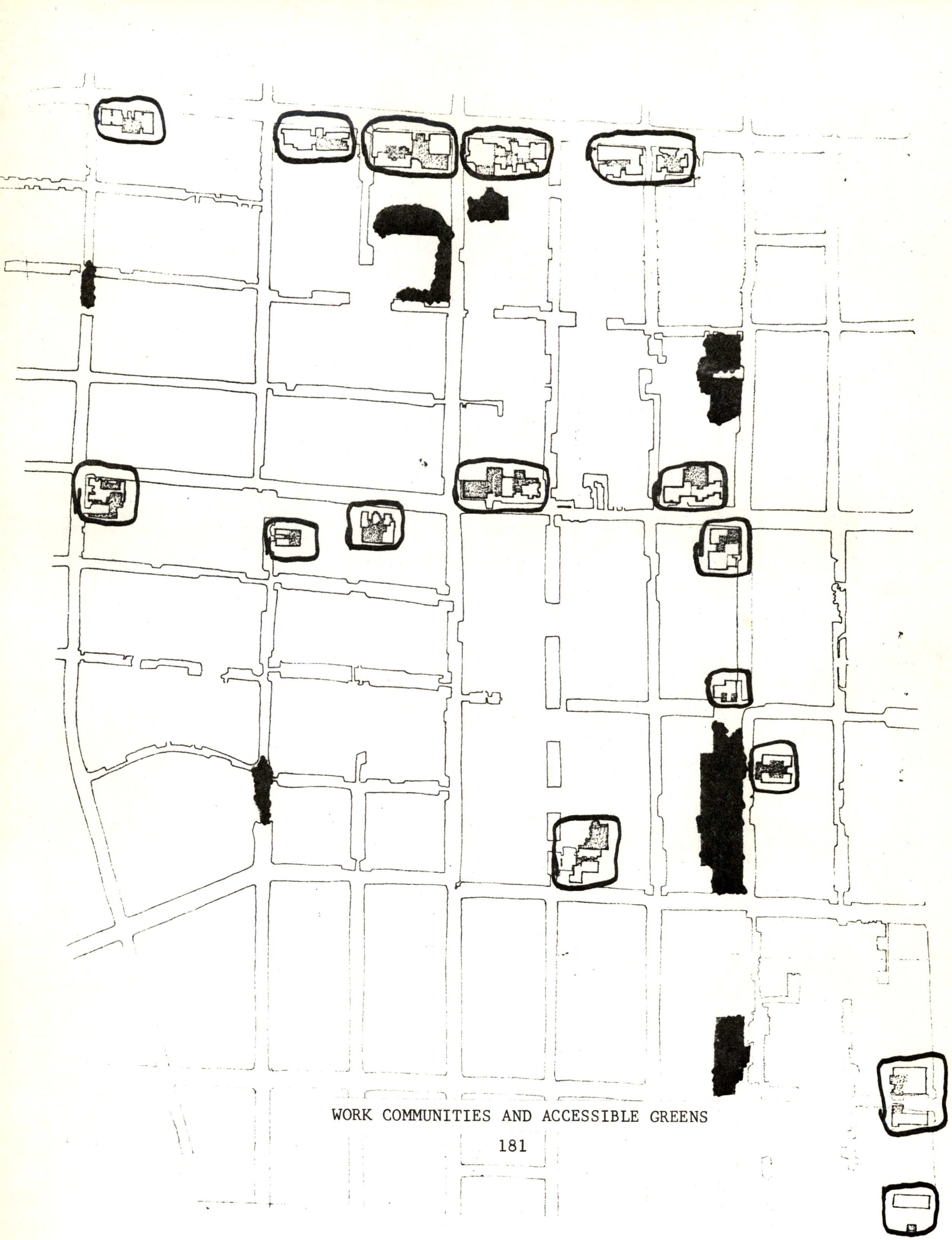
NEW PATTERN OF STREETS



HOUSE CLUSTERS AND COMMON LAND



PATH NETWORK AND ACTIVITY NODES



Second, the creation of larger patterns, through cooperation by adjacent neighborhoods, acting on incentives provided by the city.

To be specific, we may imagine that some one community of 7000 in Berkeley has adopted the following patterns:

COMMUNITY OF 7000

SUBCULTURE BOUNDARY

LOCAL TOWN HALL

FOUR STOREY LIMIT

DENSITY RINGS

ECCENTRIC NUCLEUS

PARALLEL ROADS

PROMENADE

SHOPPING STREET

MARKET OF MANY SHOPS

NETWORK OF LEARNING

And, let us assume further that the city itself, acting as a whole, has also adopted still other patterns, which apply to the overall character and structure of Berkeley, but not to any one of its specific communities or neighborhoods. Imagine, for example, that these adopted city-wide patterns might be:

LOCAL TRANSPORT AREAS

SCATTERED WORK

CITY COUNTRY FINGERS

ACCESS TO WATER

SACRED SITES

RING ROADS

MOSAIC OF SUBCULTURES

INDUSTRIAL RIBBON

WEB OF SHOPPING

Let us now try to understand the nature of the pulsations which might connect one level to another.

Assume that the neighborhood is to some extent responsible to the community in which it sits; that the community is equally responsible to its neighborhoods. And assume, at one level higher, that each community is responsible to the city: and that the city is responsible to its communities.

We have seen the individual acts of building, which take place on successive weekends, in a neighborhood, will gradually help to generate the patterns which the neighborhood requires. Gradually, ACTIVITY NODES, WORK COMMUNITIES, PATH NETWORKS, GREEN STREETS and so on get created, by the small acts of the people in the neighborhood.

It is now very possible to imagine that just as the individual acts help to generate these larger structures, so, for instance, the overall acts undertaken by the neighborhood, help to generate the larger patterns which the community requires: and that the overall actions undertaken by the community will generate the larger patterns which the city requires.

In the neighborhood, the neighborhood gives money to those projects which agree to help the larger patterns of the neighborhood, as an incentive. Just so, the city might give money to those communities which will help generate its needed larger structures; and the community might give its money to those neighborhoods which will agree to generate the patterns which the community requires.

The funds would be disbursed by the City Council, acting on the recommendation of the City Planning Commission, with the understanding that neighborhoods would be given more or less of the available funds according to the extent that they help the city to meet its large-scale problems.

To be precise, the City Planning Department, and the City Planning Commission, would together prepare an annual diagnosis, which concerns all these problems of the city which are global in nature, and cannot be successfully solved at the neighborhood level (transportation, densities, the waterfront, distribution of industry,

distribution of parkland, and so forth). However, the city itself would only be empowered to take direct action to solve these problems in very special cases. Instead, most of the time, the large-scale patterns required to solve these global problems would be built up piecemeal, by the action of neighborhoods, acting through the incentive funding described above.

In short, each tiny local neighborhood, small enough to contain fact to face groups and to have some degree of common interest, would have the power to determine its own future, and to shape its own public environment--but with the knowledge that these public funds awarded to the neighborhood would be larger or smaller, according to the extent that the neighborhoods' local decisions helped to implement the larger city-wide policies.

This creates the basic freedom of all systems of federalism:

1. Each individual local group has the right to pursue its own interests, and the guarantee of some limited budget with which to do it.
2. The budget will be larger, or smaller, to the extent that each local neighborhood can shape its own future in a way which helps itself, but also helps implement the needs of the larger community in which it rests.
3. The city cannot implement any policy whatsoever, if they cannot persuade at least some local

a through street, then clearly it would have to help to create alternate routes around the neighborhood, if it wants to maintain its identity.

4. Suppose a SHOPPING STREET in the city needs a shot in the arm to keep it a thriving and lively place. That could not happen by the actions in only one neighborhood; but it could also not happen through the actions of some centralized authority. A shopping street may be a part of several neighborhoods, each one contributing to its life. Then incentives would be given to each neighborhood bordering the existing shopping street, to persuade them to help that pattern along.



small neighborhoods are not perhaps too isolated, too separate, too paralyzing almost.

What we shall try to show, now, is that these many individual neighborhoods are not parochial at all, not small, and village like, but that the fabric of these neighborhoods is just the fabric of a city, and just the place where urban life, with all its vast extraordinary happenings, can happen, because the most extraordinary, most individual peculiarities, can happen here.

What is the argument in a nutshell?

In a city which is centralized, as Berkeley is today, the life that happens, to the extent that it is controlled and shaped by common agreements, by plans, by what is thought to be "allowed," is grey, average, pale, inhibited--because the only life which is allowed is just that life which everyone agrees to. It is the lowest common denominator, the idiot nothing which is so harmless that everyone agrees to it.

But that is not what cities need; that is not where a pulsating city comes from. There are 100,000 people in the city of Berkeley. Imagine how extraordinary it would be if the city was big enough to contain all the action and variety, created by all these different people with their different beliefs, different backgrounds, different cultures, and different interests.

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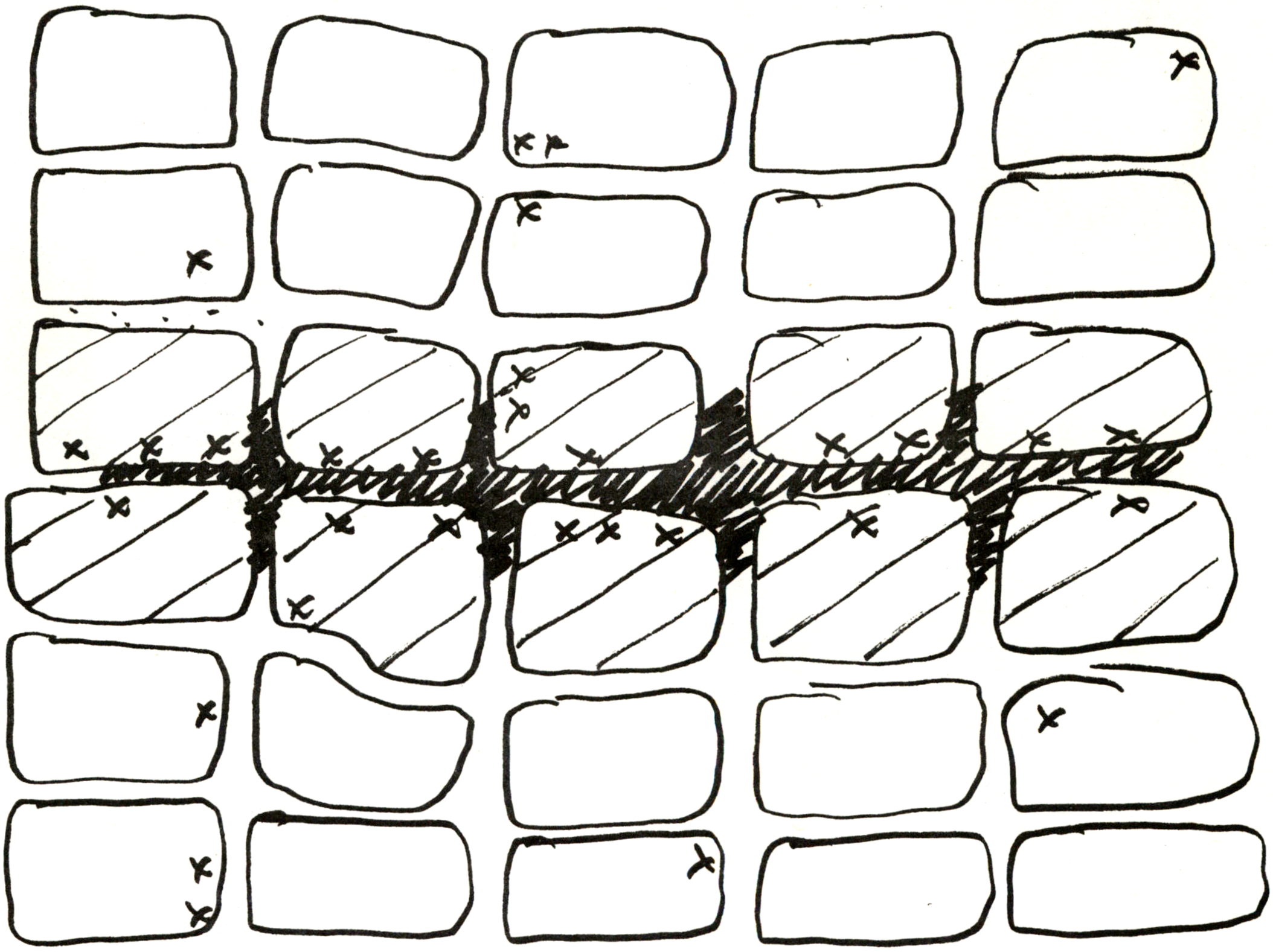
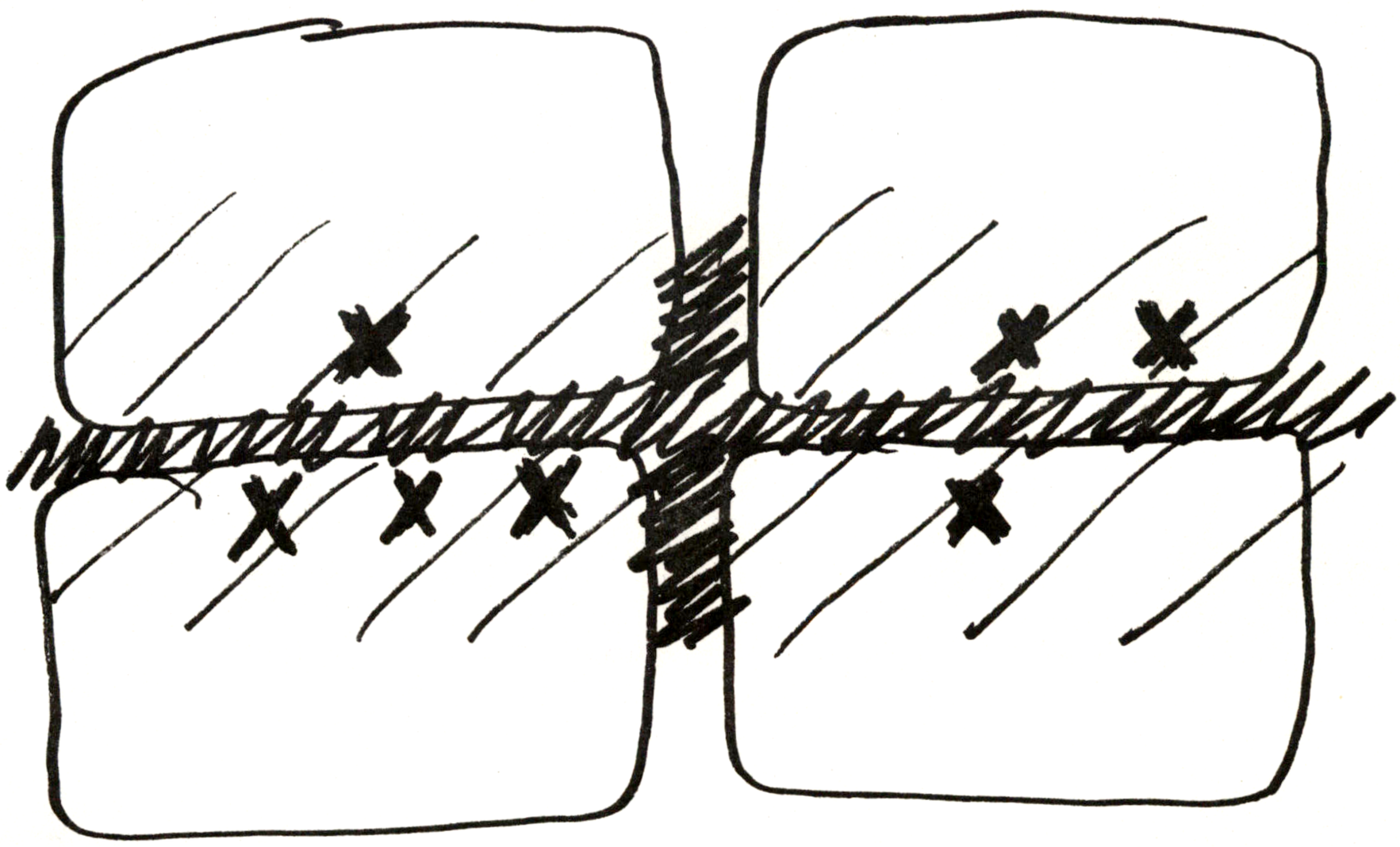
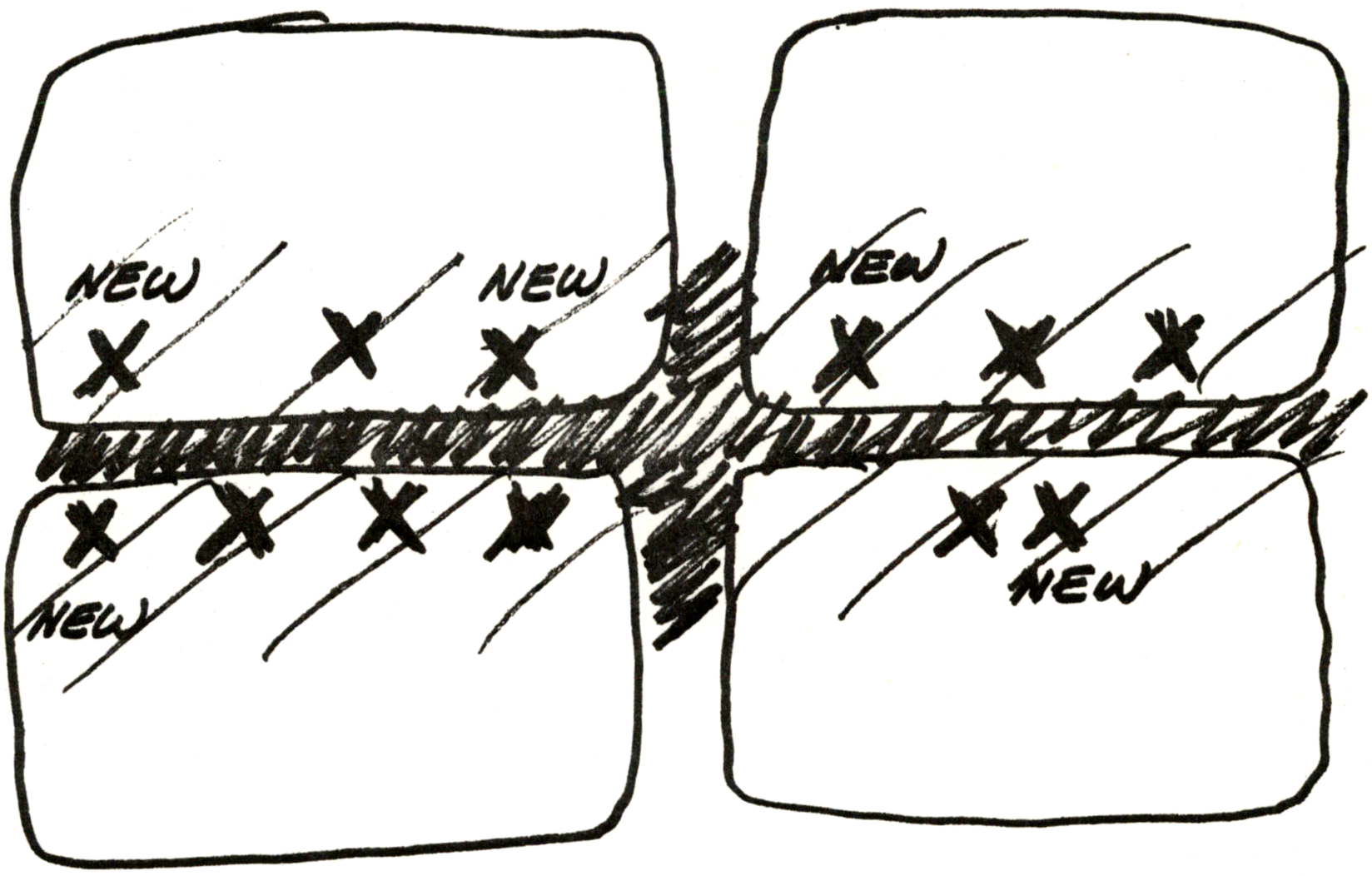


Each of those neighborhoods would, in turn, create incentives within its own boundaries, to encourage people to open shops on or near that street.



New shops would open in each neighborhood, in the areas in which incentives have been granted:



The SHOPPING STREET becomes a more vital and prosperous place, but its "shot in the arm" is based entirely on local actions, purely voluntary, with no centralized control over what may or may not take place on the street. The placement of the shops would be guided both by the need for a lousy and prosperous shopping street, and also by the desire of the individual shop owner to open a place, to design it in his own way.

Imagine now, that this process which we have described, is happening in 200 neighborhoods: across the city of Berkeley.

We shall try, lastly, to paint a new vision of a city, a vision in which the whole 100,000 people of the city are alive and moving, jumping, giving their life to the city, a New York, a Rio at carnival, a place where every human feeling, and every experience, is out there, on the street, or somewhere, in some neighborhood: where almost no dimension of the human being is not experienced somewhere in the city.

Start with the neighborhoods themselves. So far we have presented the neighborhoods as fairly isolated entities, autonomous, village-like almost, inward turned, coherent, partly self-contained, and small in scale.

Very naturally, you may have wondered if this is not too romantic, too small in scale, too suburban, too enclosed: if the

small neighborhoods are not perhaps too isolated, too separate, too paralyzing almost.

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This, in a nutshell, is what the breakdown into neighborhoods will do. It will create the framework in which differences can survive. It will create a framework in which differences between people, between groups of people, between ways of life, will not be threatening, because it is accepted, welcomed, that each neighborhood will have a different kind of life--far more exciting, far more subtle, than the life that could be made by any centralized control; far more exciting, far more vivid than the kind of somber average place which gets created by planning--a place where people's peculiarities thrive, a place which is a city in the small, a metropolis, because it honors every way of life, and lets it thrive.

Suppose, in short that each one of the two hundred neighborhoods is so alive, so different, that every one of them becomes, in its own way, a tiny center in the myriad of neighborhoods--since no two are alike, each person wants to visit all of them, at different times--far from some kind of weak suburban dream where people sleepily live out their lives in pseudo villages, this is a world where every person can live life in the way which makes sense to him--and where the city of Berkeley gives the framework for this multiplicity.

That is the world which our decentralization of the neighborhoods will help to shape.

And what about the awful possibility of chaos? Is it perhaps true that all this freedom, all this liberated energy, pulsing and

differing from neighborhood to neighborhood, will harm the gradual emergence of the collective whole? Will it somehow prevent the larger structure which the city needs from showing itself? Will it, in short, be possible to have a city in which every neighborhood can live the life it wants to--without some kind of control over the actions of the neighborhoods, to help protect our larger common interests?

What we have tried to show is that the slow cooperation of the individual neighborhoods, following their individual desires, shaping, transforming themselves to become individual, different, according to their many ways of life, will, in the process which we have described, at the same time create a larger structure which is suitable as a framework for neighborhoods. We have tried to show that that larger structure which the city needs, and which in fact must be provided to make sure that transportation, parks, hospitals, schools and shopping work, is not at all at odds with the process which we describe, but that it is in fact compatible with it; and that, in fact, the very exercise of the procedures which we have outlined, will gradually give birth to just those larger structures which are needed, so that there is no need, at all, therefore, to make a master plan, which seems to need control over the individual exercise of liberty in individual neighborhoods.