

Urban Housing

Kansas City, Missouri

Walter J. Daniels

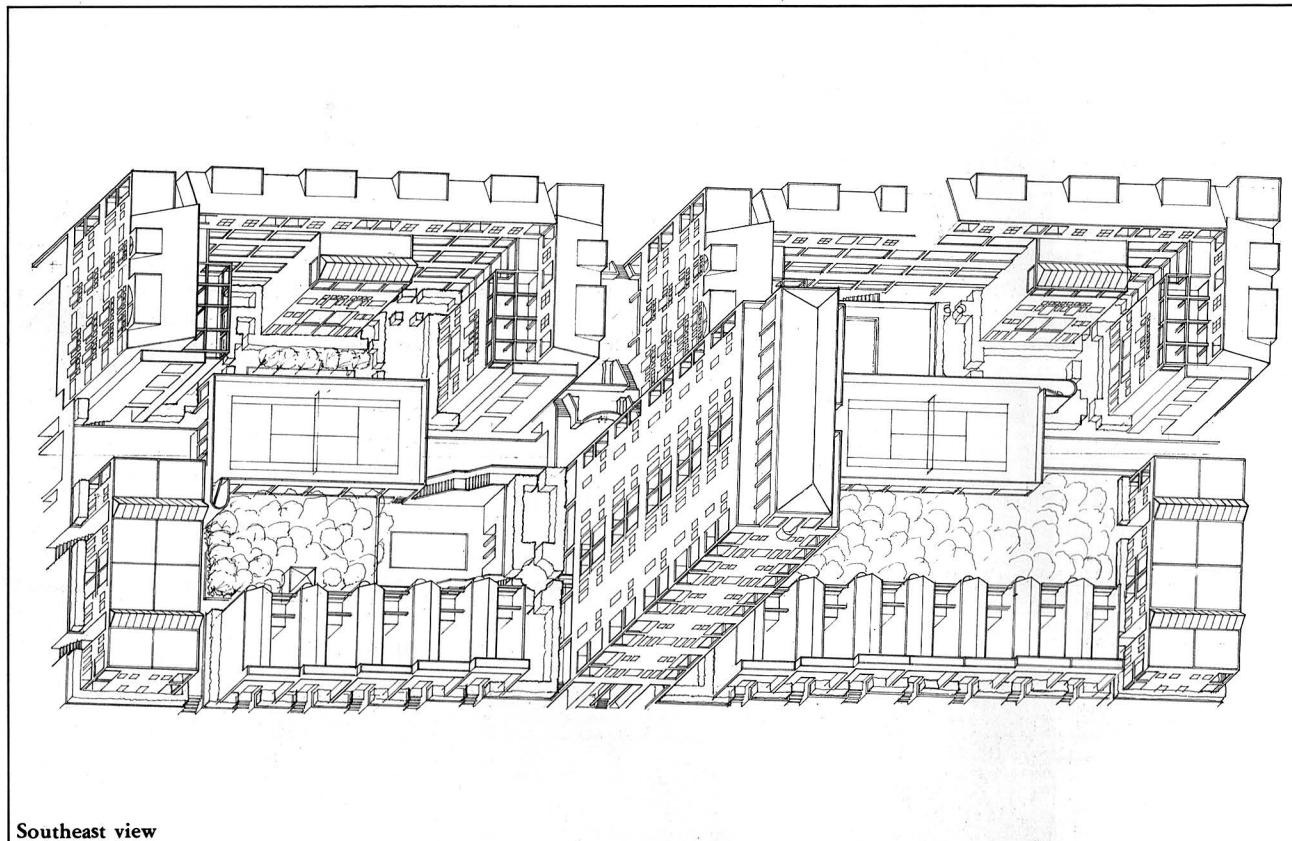
Critics: Ed DeVilbiss
William Miller
Al Sanner

Background

This inner city housing scheme is located in Quality Hill, an affluent residential neighborhood during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Industrial growth in the adjacent west river bottoms and the development of new suburban districts to the south led to the area's decline. A group of apartment towers was constructed in the 1950's, but most of Quality Hill was by then comprised of low-income residents and marginal business enterprises. Many of its fine houses were demolished. Recently the area has begun to make a comeback. This design was conceived to enhance that tendency. It provides middle-class residential units with open space and privacy reminiscent of old garden apartments while strengthening the sense of a dense urban order.

Solution

The scheme is based upon a transformation of the suburban archetype into urban form and a contextual approach which views architecture as a fragment of the city. The synthesis of urban and small town qualities suggested the use of a geodetic structure with its smooth, hard outer edge and multifaceted, eroded interior. The project encompasses two city blocks creating a fortress-like mass that encloses a park. The exterior walls confront the street at the lot line and become part of the city's grid, allowing the park to gain distance, solitude and privacy from the city. The perimeter is broken through the center, on axis with Eighth Street, with a pedestrian way



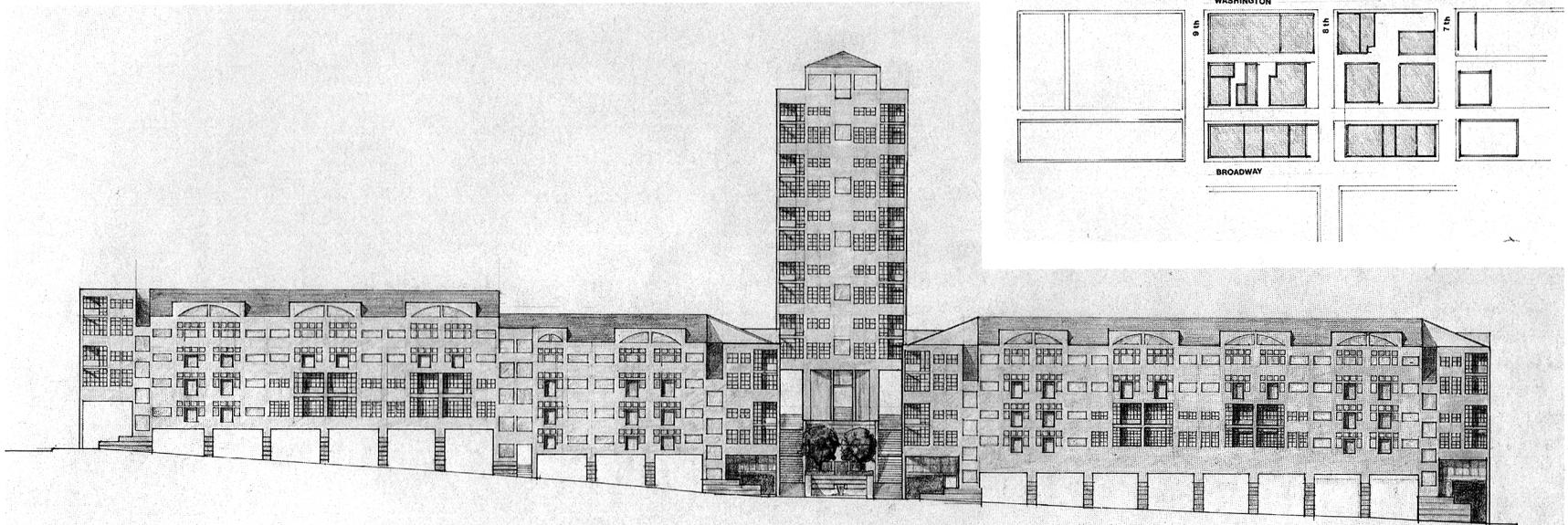
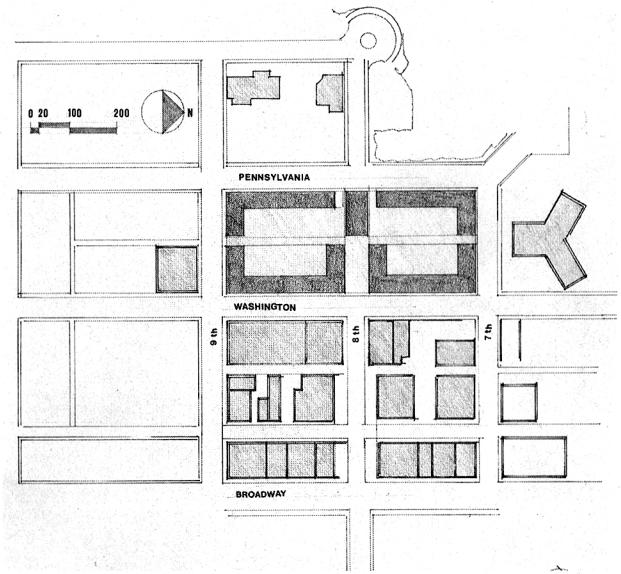
to Lewis and Clark Point to the west. A cross axis is formed by a service ramp to underground parking garages and is bridged by two recreational facilities. The site division creates a zoning for family units to the west and single units to the east.

An obelisk-like tower terminates the Eighth Street axis and acts as a reference point for the project. The varied heights of the housing units responds directly to the diverse scale of neighborhood buildings. The variation allows the eastern housing

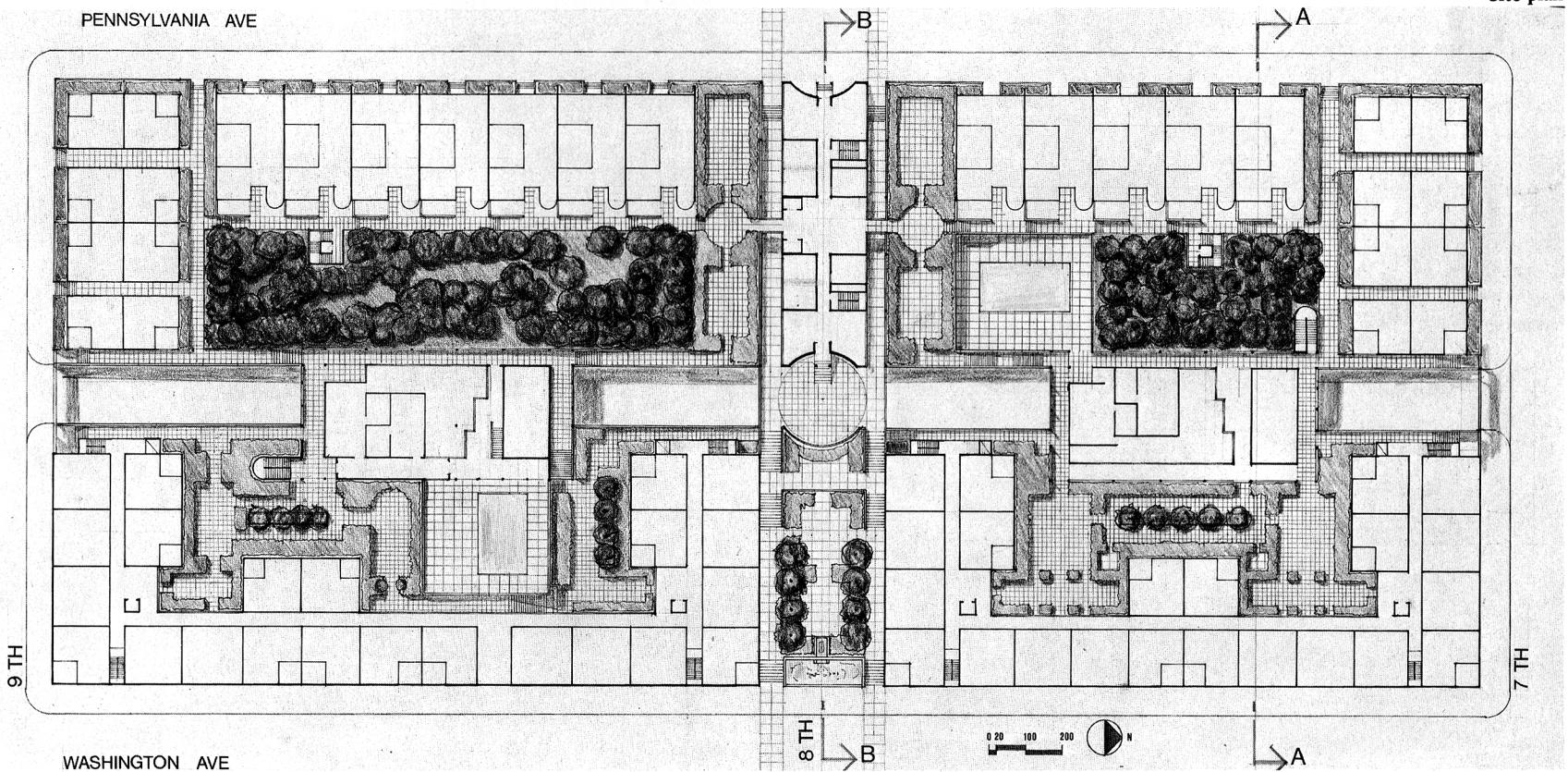
units to gain panoramic views of the park and Missouri River.

The scale, order, fenestration, and materials of the area are recalled in the street facades. The east elevation employs a tripartite division — rusticated base, smooth walls above, and sloped roof — that converses with nearby buildings. At the same time, varying window forms and sizes break down the facade's scale and suggest the presence of individual residential units inside.

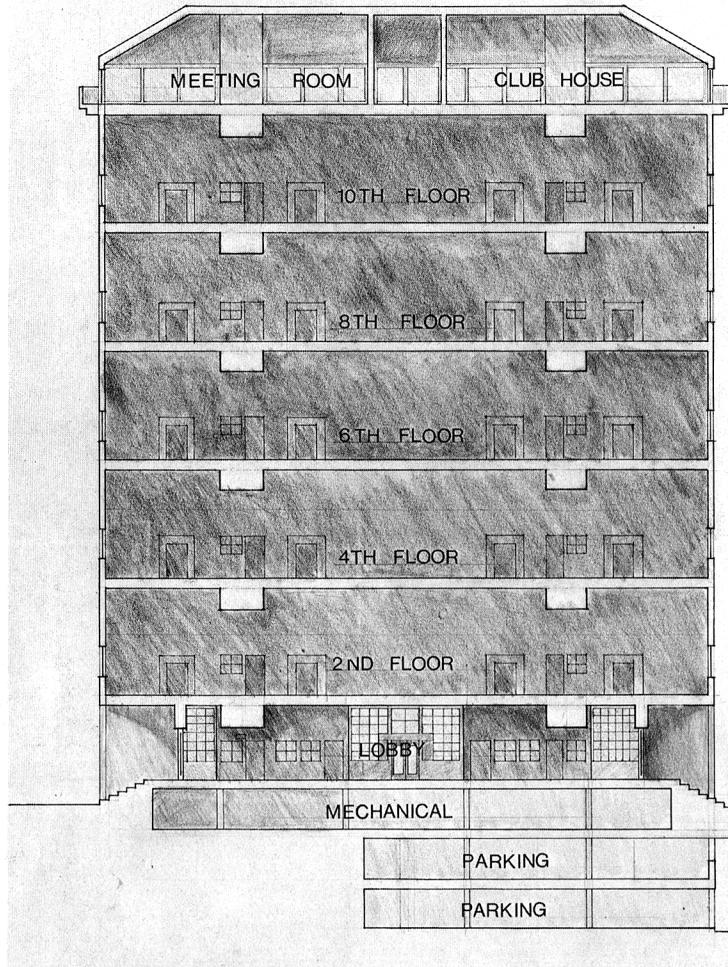
Site locus



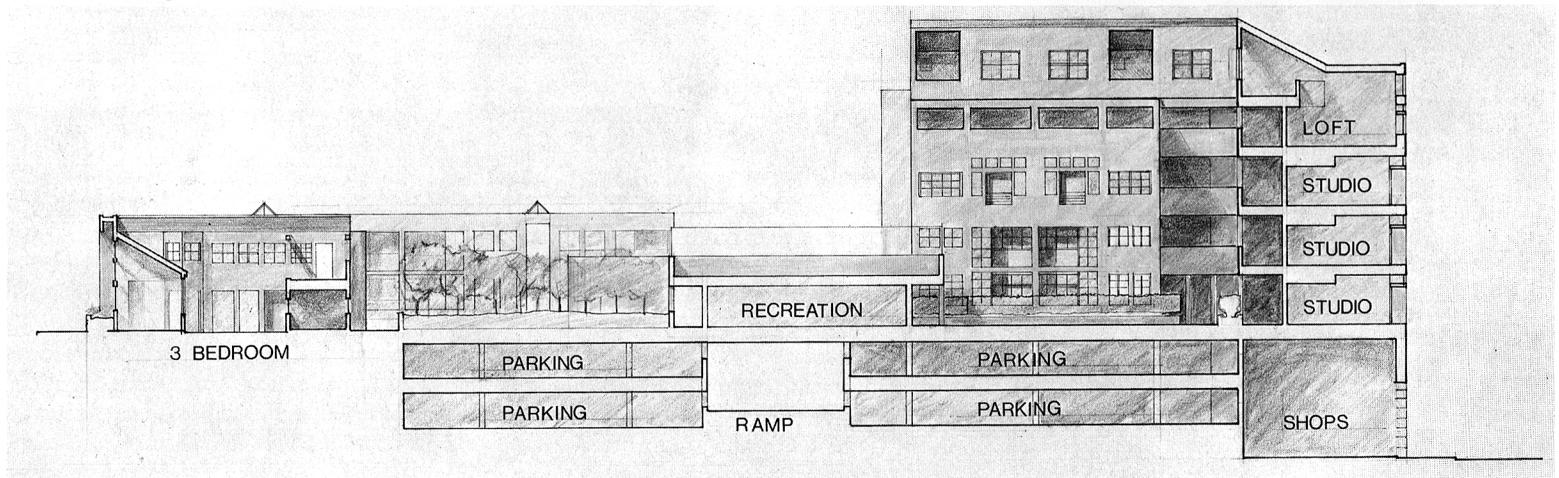
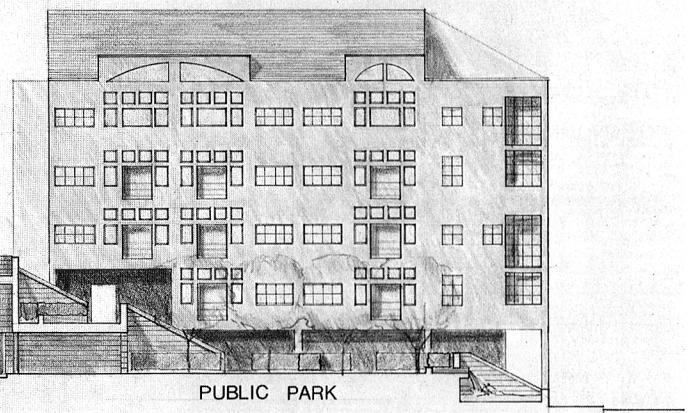
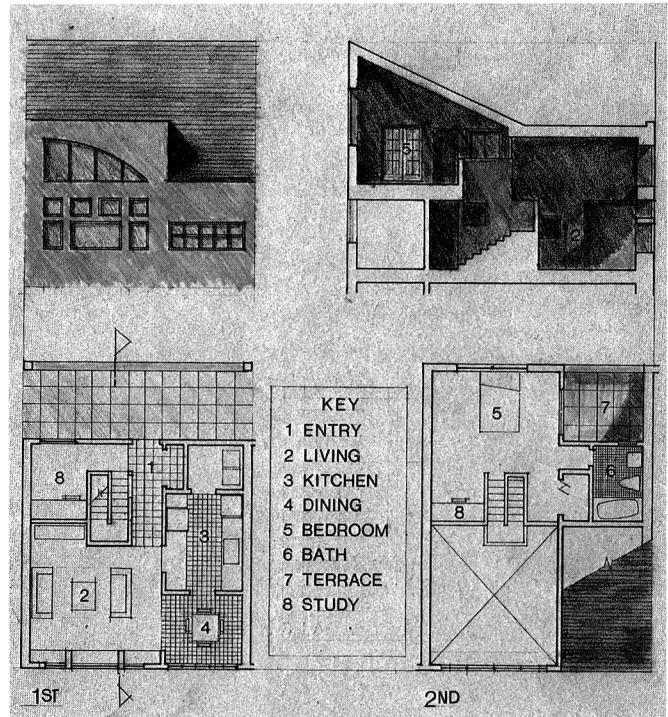
East elevation
Site plan

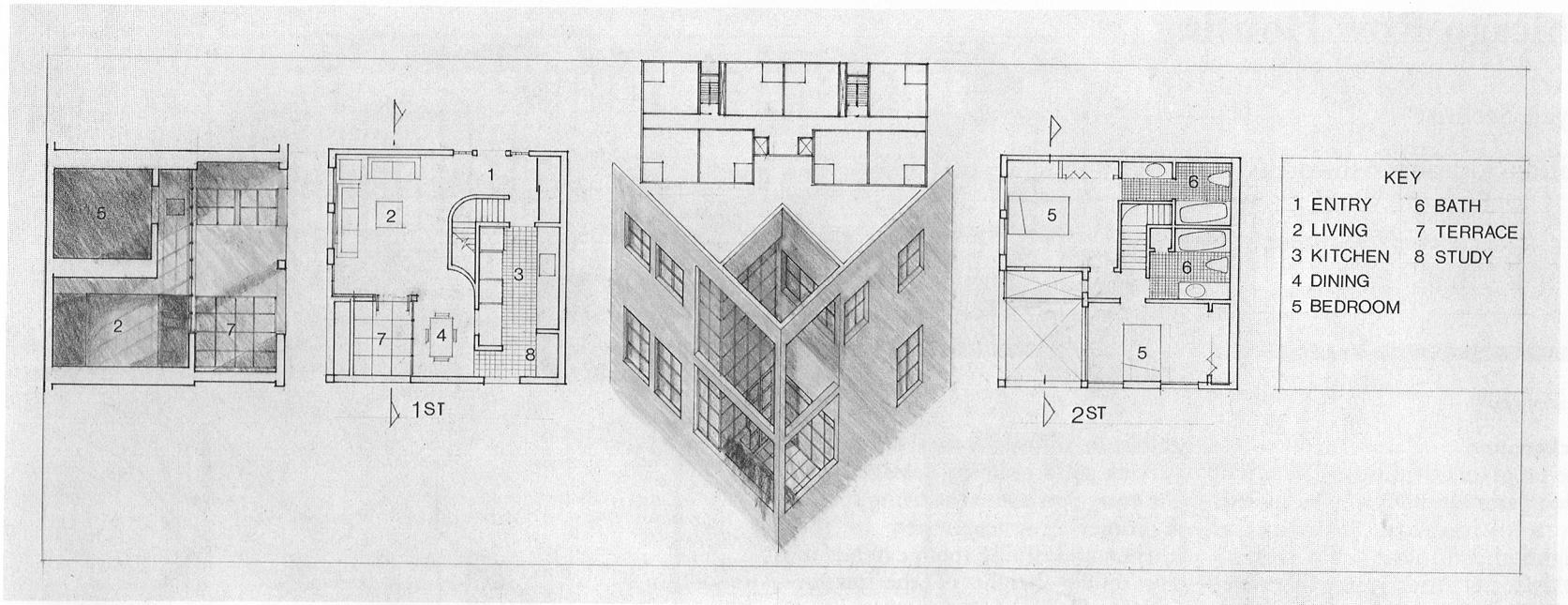


Loft floor plan

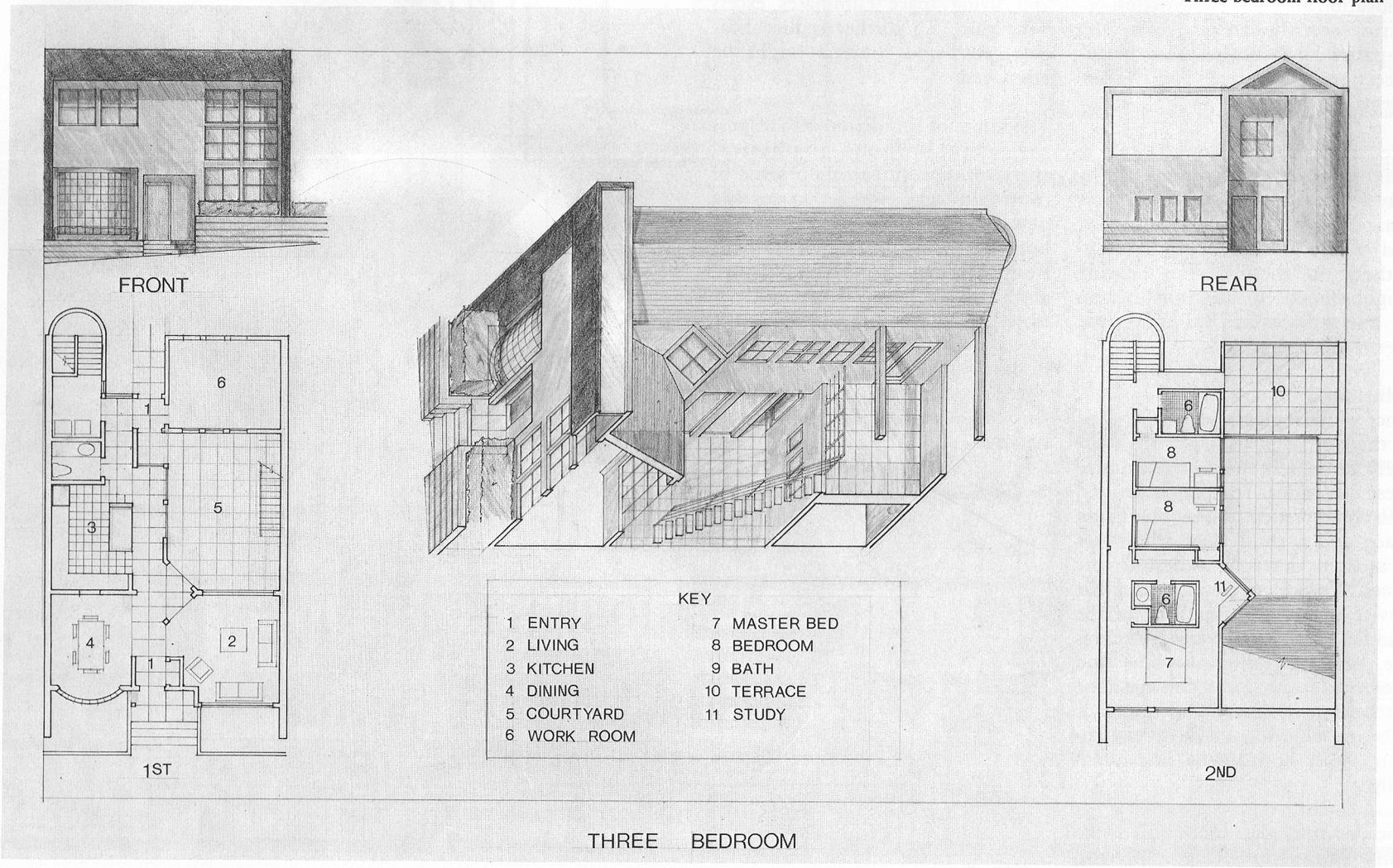


Section B looking north
Section A looking north





Two bedroom floor plan
Three bedroom floor plan



THREE BEDROOM