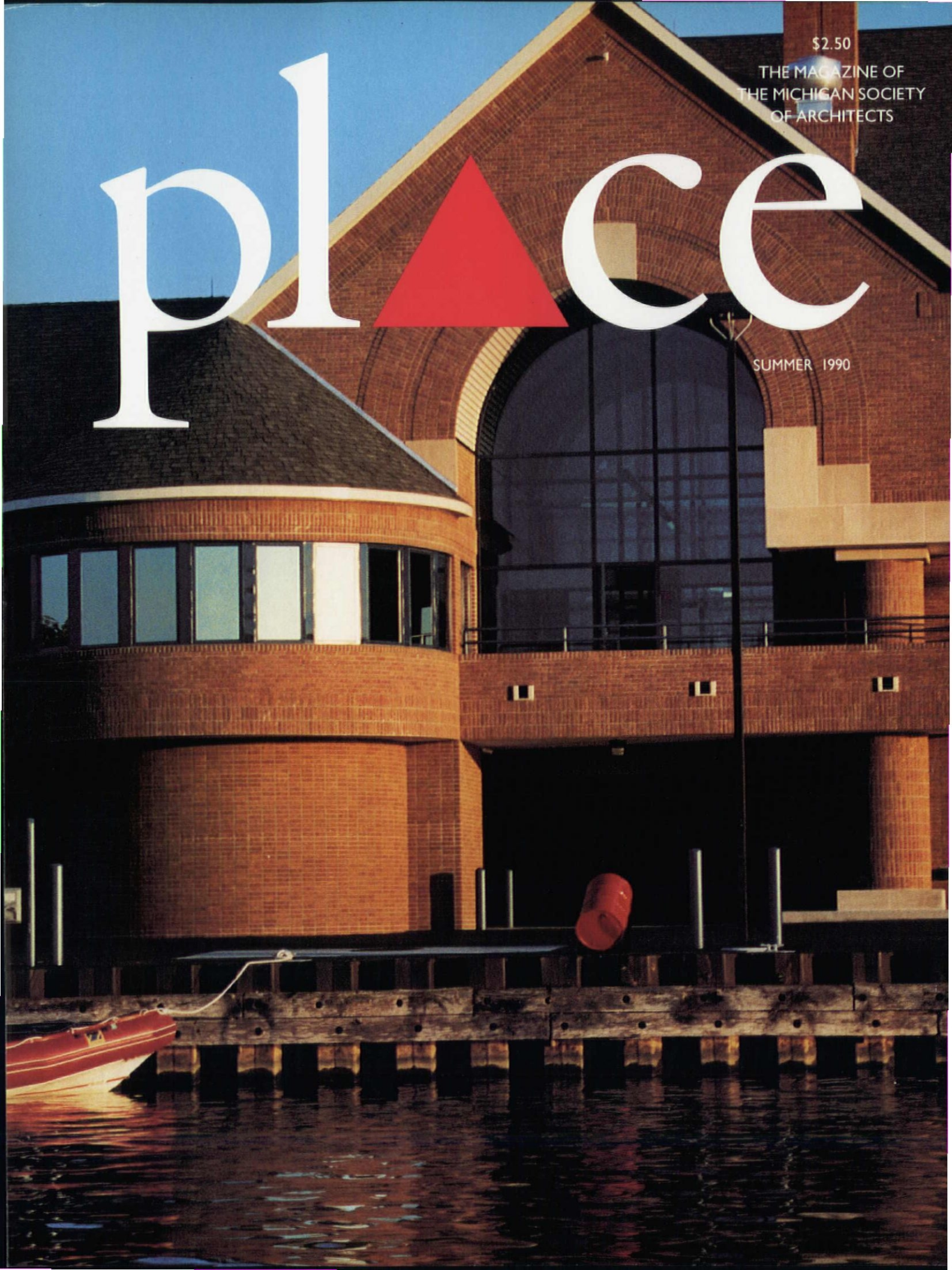


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THE MAGAZINE OF
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place

SUMMER 1990





RENOVATING THE STEARNS BUILDING
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AND A HEATING AND COOLING SYSTEM
WITH A LITTLE OF BOTH.

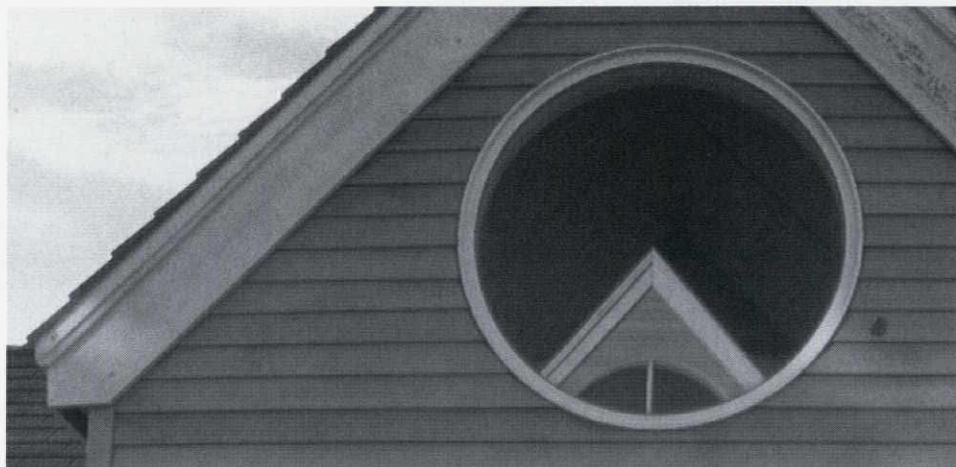


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SUMMER 1990

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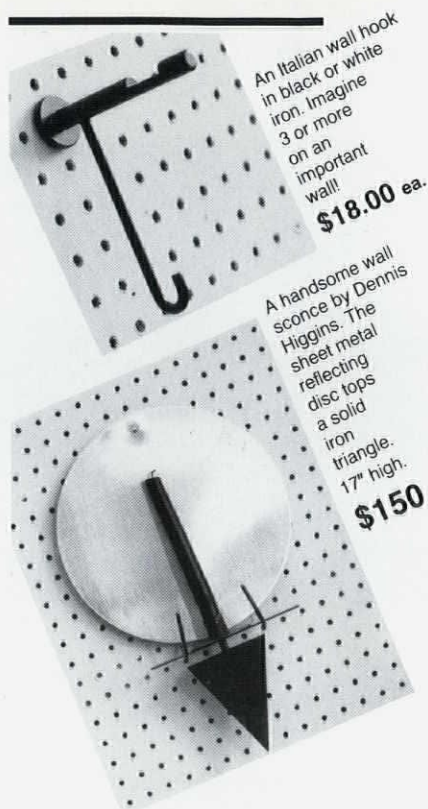
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Eagle Harbor on Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula.

A b o u t t h e C o v e r

A building at a place where land meets water,
U.S. Coast Guard Station Grand Haven is a symbolic gateway.
Immediately at the water's edge, the semicircular control and communications room
overlooks the busy shipping channel.



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A Question Of Balance

To spend your time by the Michigan shoreline is to enjoy some of the world's finest freshwater coast. From the western shore of Lake Erie near Monroe to the rugged coast of Lake Superior at Copper Harbor, Michigan boasts thousands of miles of beautiful beaches and spectacular scenery. And now that summer has grudgingly arrived, we head north (or south, or east, or west — water is everywhere in and around Michigan) to enjoy the experience. Our experience will be shaped not just by sitting on the beach and soaking up the sun, it will be influenced by a sense of place in the buildings that we use. We want to eat by the water, sleep by the water, shop by the water, even attend concerts by the water's edge.

But there seems to be an inherent conflict in all of this. As citizens, we carry with us the stewardship of the natural environment that has been passed down to our generation. As architects, we are charged with the creation of the built environment, which also brings along responsibilities to clients and to the profession. These two notions, when brought together, beg many questions. Is architecture an intrusion on the shoreline? Can architecture enhance the waterfront experience and still respect it? In theory, the

answers are yes. In practice the results are, at best, mixed.

Waterfront development has oftentimes lacked the sensitivity necessary to avoid the conflict between natural and built environments. Projects were built which infringed on the dune, or cleared the site, or blocked the view, and the results were lousy. However, a renewed spirit of cooperation has helped us to answer these questions in a more positive way.

In developing this issue, we sought to feature projects with a sense of what this conflict is, and how it can be addressed through creative design efforts.

There is a unique sense of place at the shoreline which

varies with our rivers and lakes, a sense of beauty and grandeur which is fragile and easily damaged. To build at the water's edge is to blend the natural and built environments, and to create design solutions as unique as the site demands. Successful building projects find the sensitivity of balance and live within its boundaries.

Do these projects succeed in finding the balance? You be the jury! The variety is great, ranging from places to live, to places to work, and also places to play. MSA architects have taken up the challenge to work with clients and government to design places that are respectful of the shoreline and responsive to the needs of users. We want this relationship to go on forever! See you at the beach.

Tim Casai, AIA

The editors of Place Magazine gratefully acknowledge the following important facts relating to the spring issue:

The Washington School featured in the article "Back to School" was originally designed by the Warren Holmes Company of Lansing, Michigan. The successor firm, MBDS, Inc. Architects, graciously released the original tracings to the St. Joseph Public Schools to help make the Whirlpool renovation possible.

The "Landmarks" page failed to credit the photographer, Balthazar Korab Ltd. Restoration Architect, for the Livingston County Courthouse and architect for the Courthouse office annex was William Kessler and Associates, Inc. of Detroit, Michigan.

We regret any inconvenience that this oversight may have caused and urge our readers to continue to respond to Place.

Protecting A Valued Resource

Michiganians are drawn to water for its beauty, recreational potential and, increasingly, the development opportunity it represents. Michigan is blessed with such an abundance of lakes, streams and ponds that their absence is inconceivable to most of us; indeed, an arid Michigan is highly unlikely in the near future. But development is changing these fragile peninsulas, shifting the precariously balanced ecology so that the future of Michigan's best feature stands in jeopardy. Anyone involved in the development process needs to understand the delicacy of this natural balance, and the impact its management can have on design and construction.

Q What are the most fragile pieces of our ecology?

A Dunes and wetlands are primary areas of concern. Much more than sandy playgrounds, dunes are important natural transition zones between land and water, and as such can act as spawning grounds for fish and breeding grounds for waterfowl. Equally important, however, is the role the dune plays in protecting natural systems inland. In Michigan, dunes take the abuse that the Great Lakes hurl at the shore. The primary dune protects the secondary and back dune, al-

lowing a protected area for fragile plant and animal cultures to develop, as well as creating a habitable area for human beings and their constructions. Development of the primary dune creates a scar; and aerial photographs have shown that such a scar has a negative impact on the landscape for several miles inland.

Q What is the significance of wetlands?

A Wetlands play very complex roles in the ecosystems of our state. Wetlands are a critical part of flood conveyance and control; they control erosion by containing

sediments that could choke rivers and lead to their disappearance; and they are natural filters that remove excess nutrients and chemicals that can foul the water supply. In addition, they shelter rare and endangered species of plants and animals. One example of this — unique to Michigan — is the Kettle Hole Bog. A remnant from the Glacier Age, it is an example of the often overlooked wooded wetland, and holds tremendous historic and archeological value.

Q What are the regulations regarding wetlands?

A The most significant is the Goemaere-Anderson Wetland Protection Act (Act 203, P.A. 1979) which took effect in 1980. In counties with a population of 100,000 or greater, the act regulates any wetland greater than five acres in size, or adjacent to an inland lake or stream, or within 1,000 feet of a Great Lake. In counties with less than 100,000 people, only those wetlands adjacent to lakes and streams are regulated. If there is any adverse effect on such wetlands due to site improvements or other specified activities, penalties of fines or imprisonment may result. Local governments may also have regulations that are more restrictive than the state ordinance, so it is advised that property owners contact their local governments.

Q How can I assess the impact these regulations may have on my property?

A Arm yourself with information about your property. Contact the Department of Natural Resources and see if the site has been included in the National Wetland Inventory Map. Find out if your county has developed a Wetland Bank, like those in

Washington state, in which parties which destroy a wetland have to contribute to the creation of larger, more systematized wetlands to replace those lost. Remember that you must prove to the DNR that there is no feasible or prudent alternative to the destruction of a wetland to be issued such a permit. This is difficult to prove, so carefully examine the site in question, with the assistance of the DNR, before making decisions.

Q Are there other environmental regulations that might affect my site?

A Many, with more being created every day. Many municipalities are adopting tree ordinances which require the replacement of trees above a certain size with a new tree of equal size. Regulations vary, and cannot be avoided. Careful analysis of and compliance with these laws is the best way to avoid costly procedures such as finding alternative sites or starting over with a new site design. But more important, they are the best way of insuring the future of Michigan's natural wonders. ▼

Dane A. Johnson, AIA
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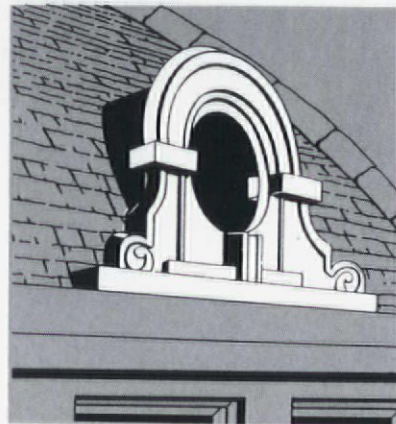
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Program

It has become our custom at Place Magazine to begin each "Jargon" column with the dictionary definition of the "Jargon" of the month. From that beginning, we can relate the general meaning of a word to the way we use it in architecture. Sometimes architectural jargon is close to the way Webster sees it. Other times, our words have taken on a life of their own. Such is the case with *program* and *programming*.

There are too many dictionary definitions of *program* to list here. They range in meaning from "television show" to the symbols that tell a computer what to do. Perhaps more interesting than its definitions are the origins of *program*. It comes from the Greek word which means "to write in public," literally from *pro*, "before," and *graphein*, "to write." *Grapphein* is the same Greek word that gives us *graphics*, another word dear to the hearts of designers!

So what does this tell us, this idea of writing in public? Well, it is really what we do when we *program* a building: we write in public, for everyone involved to see, a statement of what the building is to become. The *program* is what we write (or draw). *Programming* is the process. Both words are used as both noun

and verb; we are, after all, architects, not grammarians.

The process of *programming* occurs before design begins. Led by the architect, a team consisting of the owner, representatives of user and operating groups, and other key personnel work together to define the project. The product of this process is the *program*. It is a written and graphic document which lists all of the functions to be accommodated, how much space each requires, and the relationships between functions. Further, it starts to point the way toward design solutions by stating the overall goals the project is to meet and the beginning of concepts of how to meet them. These goals and concepts may range from functional to philosophical.

As the design proceeds beyond *programming* into *schematics* (see last issue's column), the *program* gives direction to design. It is the constant against which potential solutions are measured. *Programming* in architecture is not nearly so direct in its results as programming computers. One building *program* can have many design solutions, each meeting the needs and goals of the project.

The great importance of *programming* is that it is, first, a process which helps make needs and goals known and, second, a product against which the success of a design can be measured. It is public writing: the open process builds consensus and involves many. Thus, a well-founded *program* helps ensure strong design.

Sometimes jargon veils important ideas.

If you have a word from the jargon of architecture you would like explained, send it in. This column will appear in every issue, with the goal of demystifying architectural terms. We would like to respond to your inquiries. The address is Jargon, c/o Place Magazine, Michigan Society of Architects, 553 E. Jefferson Avenue, Detroit, MI 48226.

Brian K. Craig, AIA

Place Magazine

Editorial Schedule

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Be Submitted to MSA By:

Fall 1990	
Sports/Recreation	July 27
Winter 1991	
Bars & Restaurants	October 27
Spring 1991	
Arts & Architecture	January 27

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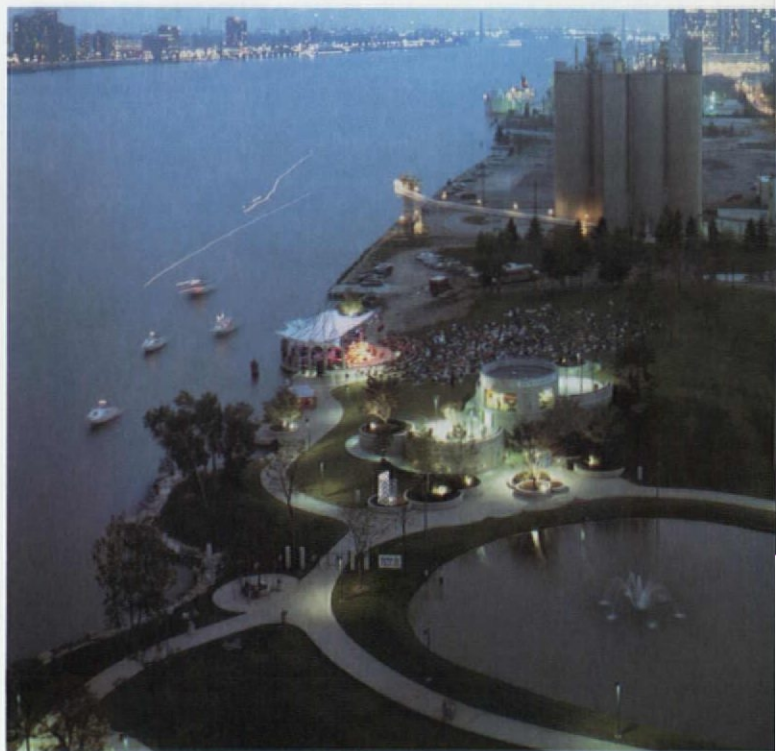
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A LINK TO HISTORY



In the 1970s the concept of a system of parks linking historic Belle Isle to Hart Plaza in Detroit's Civic Center was born. Envisioned by Mayor Coleman A. Young, the Linked Riverfront Parks Project (LRPP) would stretch three miles and join three distinct parks by bicycle and pedestrian trails. Over the past decade this dream has turned into a reality, with Chene, St. Aubin and Mt. Elliott Parks taking shape and bringing new life and activity to a waterfront long dormant.

The concept behind the LRPP was twofold; the first goal was to open the riverfront to the people and second, to stimulate private economic development.

LRPP is a joint public-private effort with \$40 million in funds allocated for planning, acquisition and public recreation development through the Detroit Recreation Department. Incorporating past and present land uses, linkages, visual character, circulation, current and future users and its recreational/entertainment potential into the design program was vital to

the LRPP's success as a comprehensive planned project. LRPP has been credited as the catalyst for the economic revitalization of River-town, the 320-acre stretch of industrial, commercial, residential and institutional land along the Detroit Riverfront east of the Renaissance Center. Currently the development commitment to this area exceeds \$500 million. The LRPP has stimulated private investment, enhanced the riverfront environment by providing places for public use and enjoyment and refined the image of Detroit.

Chene Park

The first of the linked parks, Chene Park, opened to the public in 1984. An emphasis on art festivals, performing arts presentations and sculpture exhibits was instrumental in attracting visitors and support from throughout the region. The site of a commercial shipping terminal for most of the past 50 years, the nine-acre site now boasts a concession building and a 42-foot amphitheater hill that is completely

continues



Three distinct parks are linked by bicycle and pedestrian trails.

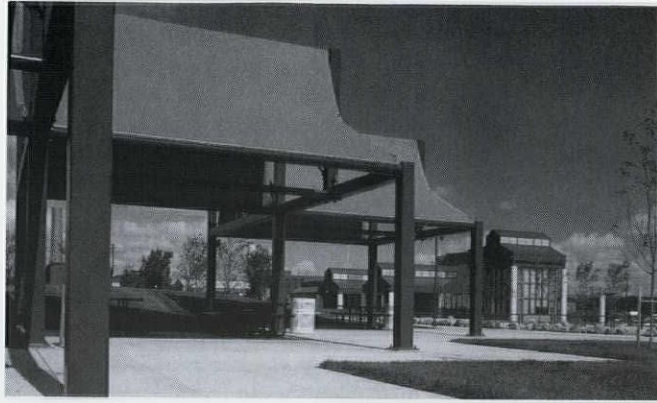
In the 1970s the concept of a system of parks linking Belle Isle to Hart Plaza was born.

The Linked Parks Project has refined the waterfront image of Detroit.



The first of the linked parks, Chene Park, opened to the public in 1984.

man made. As a result of its initial success, Chene Park is undergoing an ambitious program that will expand its capacity for outdoor concerts and special events. This includes a large fountain, one of the largest open air tensile structures to be constructed in the entire country, an expanded seating capacity for over 7,500 spectators, and expansion of concession and pavilion facilities.



St. Aubin Park is the site of the former Detroit Drydocks, which was established in 1853.

St. Aubin Park

Another of the linked parks, the twelve-acre St. Aubin Park, located between St. Aubin and Orleans Streets, is the site of the former Detroit Drydocks which was established in 1853. Marine engines fabricated in buildings across the street were installed in hulls at the dry docks. Dedicated in 1988, St. Aubin Park opens the east riverfront to visitors from the water in much the same fashion as Chene Park makes it accessible to land based visitors. St. Aubin's 70-slip marina is the only transient boat marina between Lake Erie and the upper reaches of Lake St. Clair. Boaters can find safe harbor in downtown Detroit from which they can enjoy dining and nightlife or spend the night as part of a longer vacation cruise. The program emphasis is on picnicking, fishing and instructional and interpretive programs. The linear form of the marina control building provides for functional separation of the marina and the park while also respecting the area's working waterfront heritage, as exemplified by its monitor roof line.



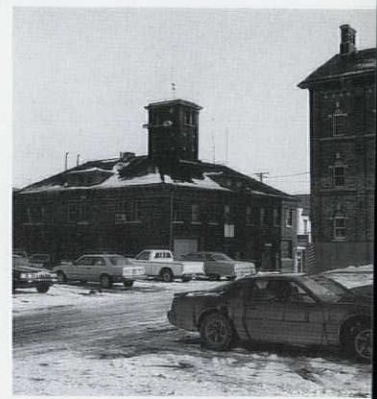
History played an important role in the design of the parks.

Mt. Elliott Park

Mt. Elliott Park and Interpretive Center, the last of these three recreational areas, is located on a

site between the newly-constructed Harbortown project and the former Uniroyal factory site, which has been cleared for new development. The design of seven-acre Mt. Elliott Park will relate to the adjacent projects and will feature historic Coast Guard buildings and a large historic industrial manufacturing building which will be adapted to interpretive and display uses. Mt. Elliott's theme focuses on the industrial succession of the working riverfront. Groundbreaking is proposed for the fall of 1990.

The historic context and succession of the industrial urban environment along the water-front played an important role in programming for the LRPP. The sites on which the three parks are constructed were significant in the early development of the City of Detroit. Chene Park was the location of an early saw mill and St. Aubin Park a turn-of-the-century boat works. Archaeological studies on each site were conducted and this informa-



tion contributed to the design program for the parks. Thus, the historical context of the area significantly shaped the design of each park to make it unique yet present an overall unified urban working waterfront theme. ▼

Chene Park, St. Aubin Park, Mt. Elliott Park

Architect: Schervish Vogel Merz, P.C.
Detroit, Michigan

Owner: Detroit Recreation Department

Civil Engineers: Charles S. Davis & Associates, Inc.

Construction Manager: (Chene) Warren Contractors, Inc. & Turner Construction Co.
(St. Aubin) Barthel Contracting Co.

Photography: (St. Aubin) Glen Moon



Groundbreaking for the seven-acre Mt. Elliott Park is proposed for the fall of 1990.



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COAST GUARD CITY

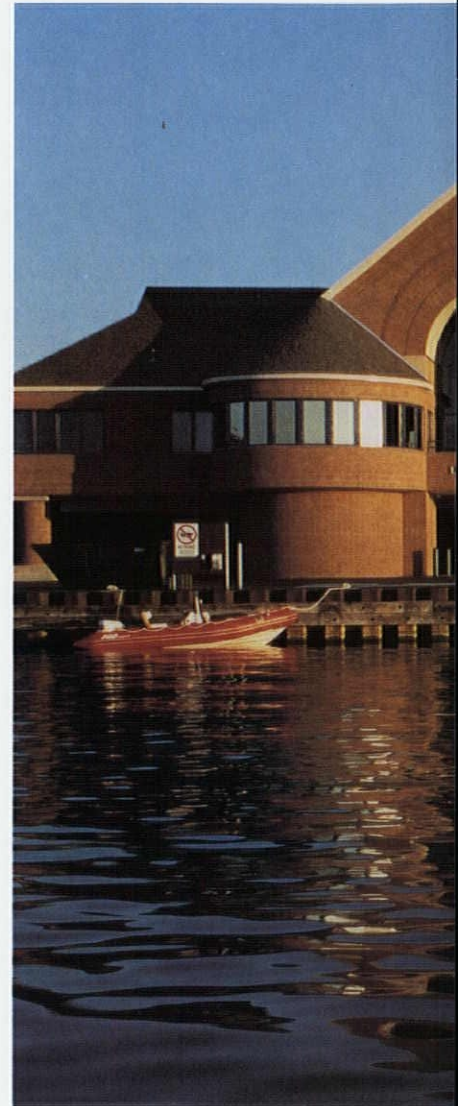
It is fitting that the residents of Grand Haven, Michigan, considered by many as being "Coast Guard City U.S.A.," look at the Guard's Multi-Mission Station as being a very special building. It is a symbol to the community which draws much of its identity and pride from a long association with this government agency. At the same time, this is a key installation in overseeing and protecting the Great Lakes waterways. Highly visible from all directions, the site reflects the building's functional and symbolic prominence. Each face of the building is its "front."

The project began with a long narrow strip of waterfront land, crisscrossed with existing utilities, bounded on one side by a seawall and on the other by a major roadway. Setback, height and flood plain restrictions severely narrowed the possibilities for the building envelope. In addition, heavy pedestrian traffic on the "public" side had to be separated from the secure governmental functions of the "waterfront" side.

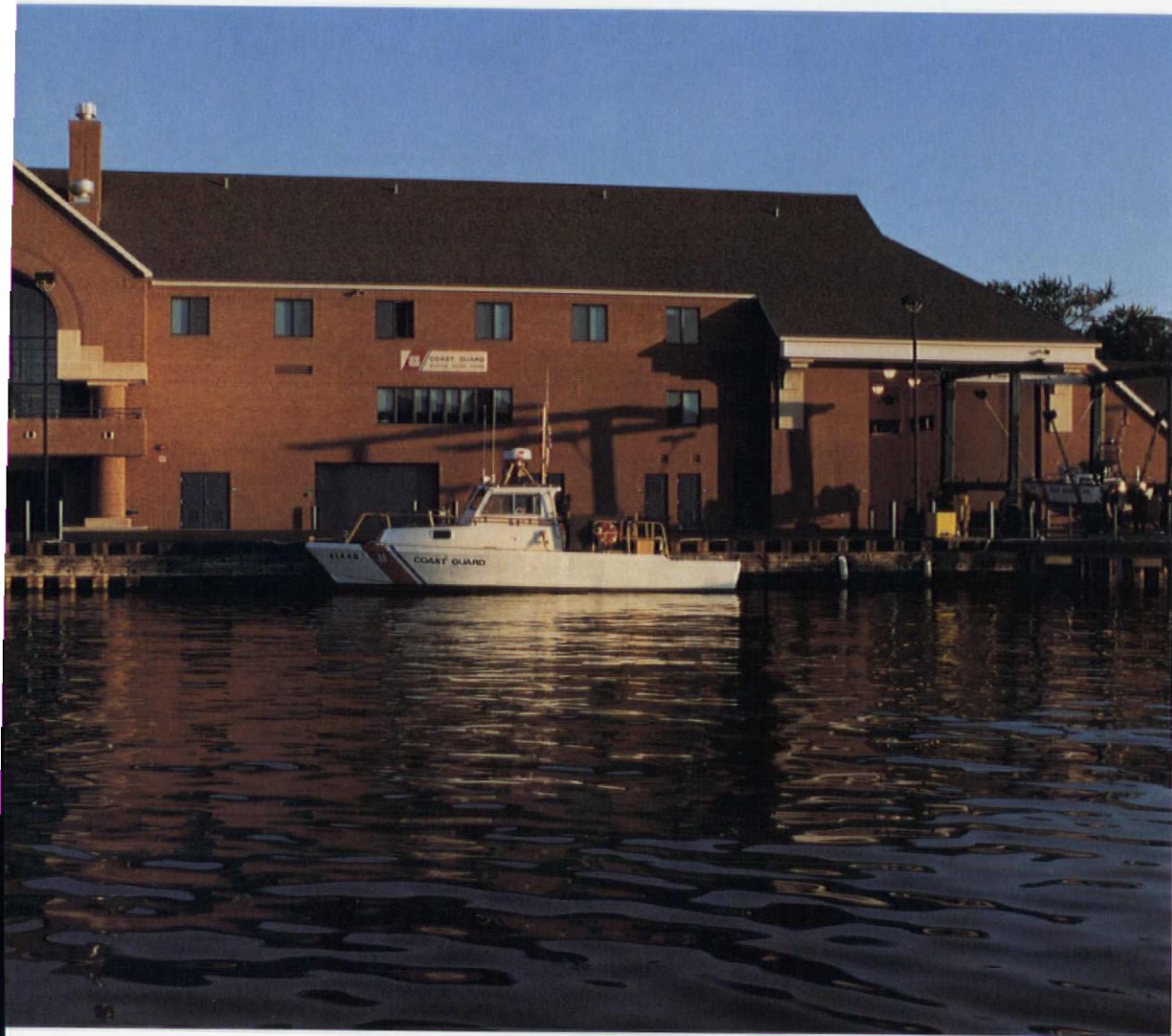
The 18,500-square-foot building includes administrative spaces, with classrooms for public education, berthing and commons spaces to accommodate 24 full-time residents, and boat maintenance shops and auxiliary areas. The commons areas for residents include a kitchen/cafeteria, laundry and recreation spaces.

A unique function, visually expressed on the exterior, is the curved communication center overlooking the shipping channel. With a 180-degree plus view of the channel, the officer stationed in this room is literally in control of pleasure and commercial boat traffic, as well as operation and deployment of the staff and equipment of the facility.

The shop space and the finger piers opposite allow indoor maintenance and repair of boats up to 40 feet in length. In addition, site



continues



The residents of "Coast Guard City U.S.A." consider this a very special building.



A curved communications center overlooks the shipping channel.

Both the physical and symbolic programs for this facility challenged the architect. The solution obtained is one which transcends the expected. The building houses its unique blend of functions successfully and, at the same time, speaks to the larger symbolic function of addressing the community. Beyond this, it has also become a source of pride for the Coast Guard and the people who live and work in it every day. ▼



The new multi-mission station is a source of pride for the Coast Guard.

14

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THE BEAUTY OF COSTAL CONDOS



Condominiums in Michigan offer many and varied architectural styles and locations. The following projects are all located on the shore of Lake Michigan and share those glorious watery sunsets over the lake.



Spyglass Condominiums were designed to exploit the panoramic views with expansive window areas.

Spyglass Condominiums Holland, Michigan

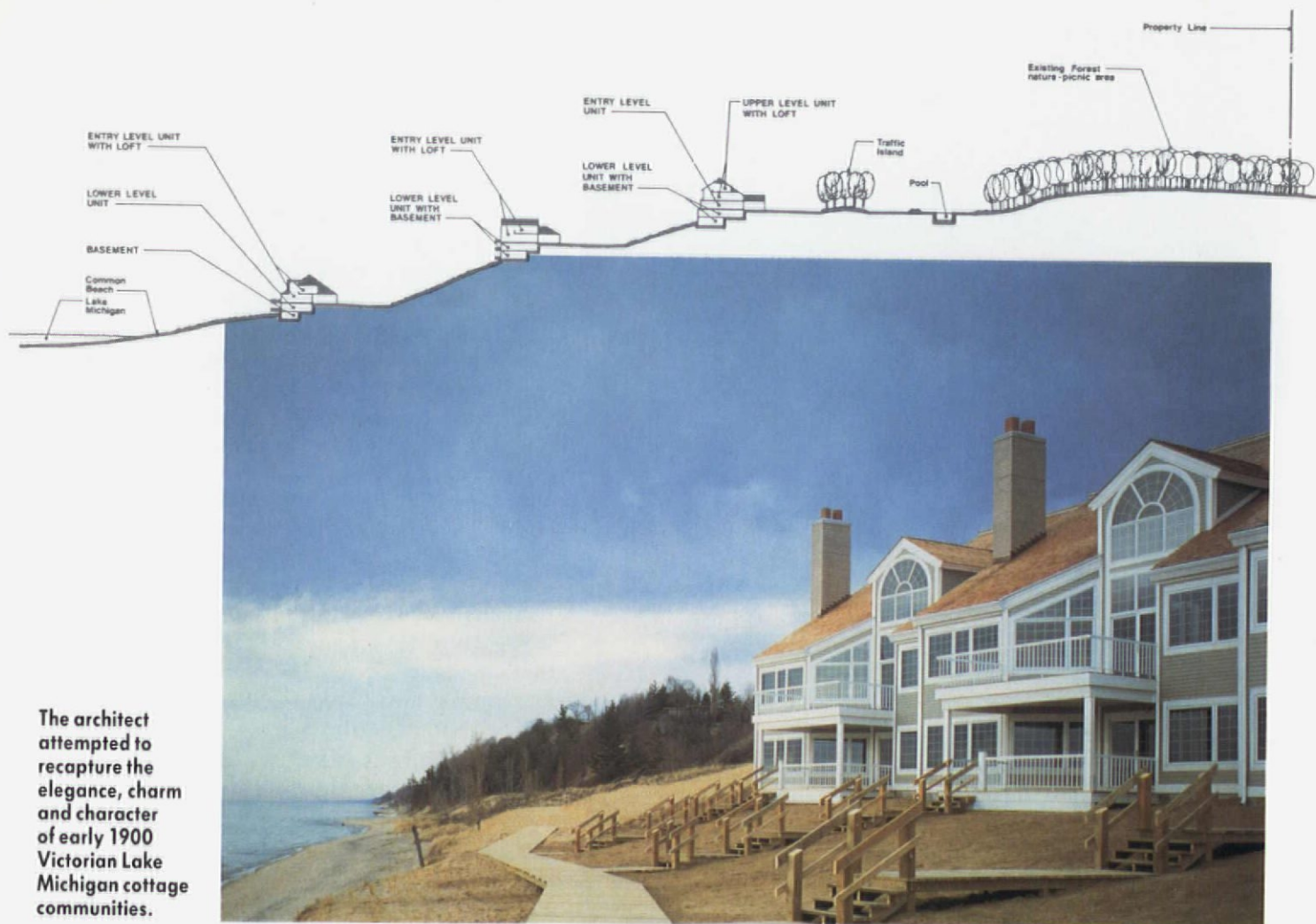
Sun, sand and surf are unbeatable ingredients for an exclusive condominium project

Each represents an architectural challenge and sensitivity in combining the built environment into the natural one.

called Spyglass. They are located on a steep sand dune on the shore of Lake Michigan where the amenities found there challenged the architectural and planning skills of Design Plus.

Spyglass was designed to enhance the romantic atmosphere of the Lake Michigan shoreline and surrounding dune and beach environment. The mood for the development set out to recapture the elegance, charm and character of early 1900 Victorian Lake Michigan cottage communities in a contemporized redefinition. While each building contains from four to ten condominium units, careful attention to massing and detail provides a human and sensitive scale for the individual units.

The steep sand dune site provided both opportunities and challenges for a housing development. The opportunity for panoramic and emotional views was exploited in the layout of the units and with expansive window areas on the view elevation. A regional climate



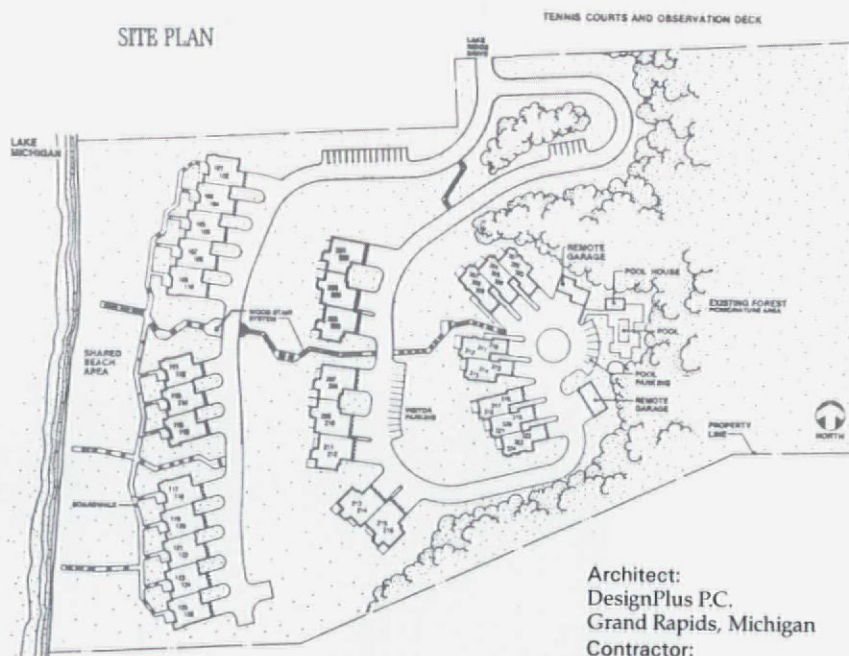
The architect attempted to recapture the elegance, charm and character of early 1900 Victorian Lake Michigan cottage communities.

with extremes of the hot summer sun to the harsh winter winds coming off the lake required special attention to energy conserving design. Triple glazed window units and heavily insulated walls and roofs were used along with high efficiency HVAC systems.

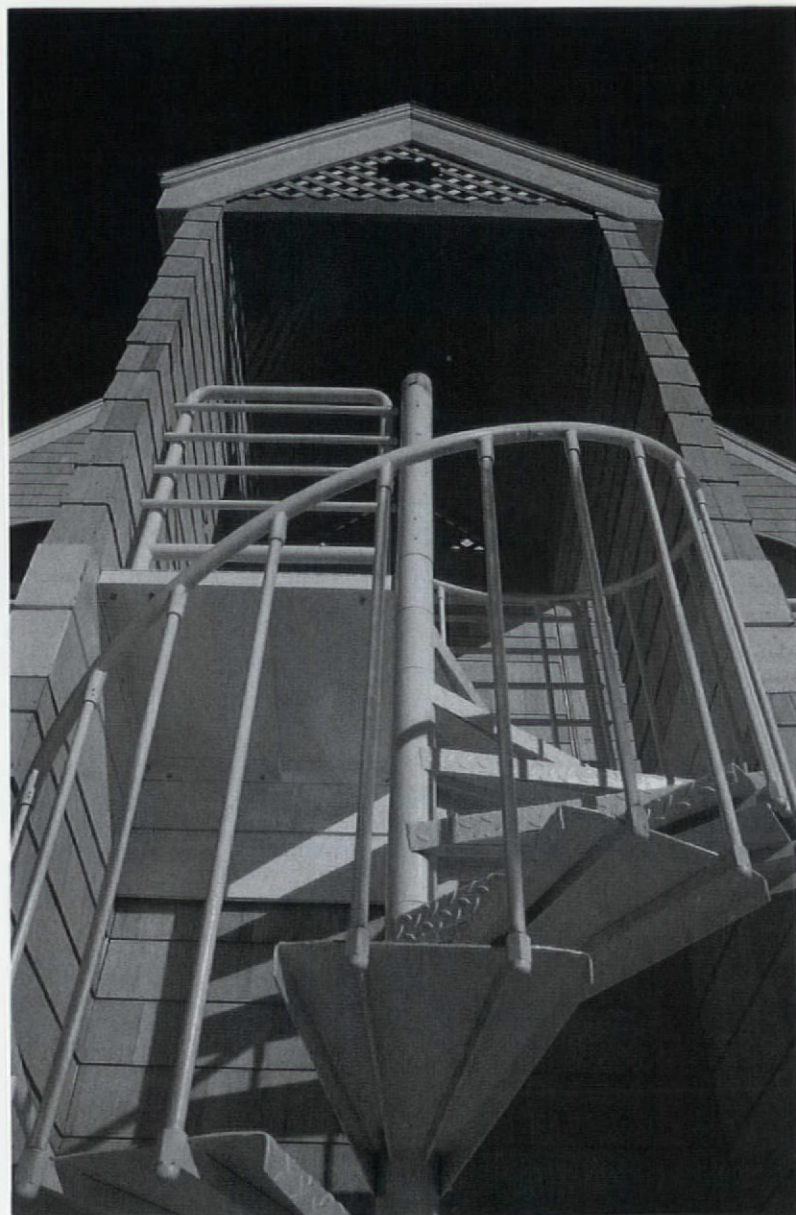
Additionally, much planning and design was necessary in order to control erosion from wind and people. The sensitive dune was stabilized with dune grass plantings and protected from people with a stair and boardwalk system. Careful attention to building location insures maximum use of the site, while preserving the breathtaking views of the lake.

It is obvious that, overall, the "feel" the owners wanted with this project, a blend of turn of the century detailing with contemporary planning, was achieved by the architects.

continues



Architect:
DesignPlus P.C.
Grand Rapids, Michigan
Contractor:
Spyglass Builders
Landscape Architect:
Design Plus, P.C.
Photography:
Karant & Associates



The design of the building is reminiscent of turn-of-the-century resort hotels.



The complex includes eight units, each offering different vistas.

Dunewood Condominiums New Buffalo, Michigan

The owners' requirements in developing luxury condominium dwellings on a narrow peninsular site were that the building design should address all of the attractive amenities of the site — startling views of Lake Michigan with a private beach on one side, views of the harbor, and a private boat dock on the other side.

The design of the building takes its precedence from coastal building types and is reminiscent of the opulence and grandeur of turn-of-the-century resort hotels found along the coast of Lake Michigan. It attempts to preserve a common thread between the harmonies of time gone by while still retaining local qualities indigenous with summers spent in Michigan.

The broad expanse of roof, with its dominant chimneys, provides a sense of shelter, while the wide verandas on both sides of the building define private outdoor spaces offering sweeping views of Lake Michigan on one side and the harbor on the other.

The building is composed of eight dwelling units, each offering different stage sets and vistas for rest and relaxation. Oak floors and trim, brass hardware, ceramic and marble tile, see-through fireplaces, whirlpool baths, and custom cabinets are all included in a palette of materials used by the buyers to appoint their own individual units.

All building parking is placed on the ground level which is carved into the sand dune.

Dunewood was designed to address all of the amenities of its Lake Michigan site.



Dunewood Harborside Condominiums

New Buffalo, Michigan

Project requirements for this beautiful condominium complex included designing individual dwelling units to be located along the edge of the harbor and include a 50-foot dock for every unit.

A 20-foot-wide, three-level townhome scheme with parking on the lower level was designed to minimize the footprint of the building on the site, provide a higher vantage point from the units, and to reduce the visual

impact of parked automobiles. An open interior plan enables clear views of both harbor and Lake Michigan from the majority of the interior spaces. Furthermore, a clear span between party walls enables the developers to offer a variety of optional interior floor plans without affecting the structural system of the building.

The palette of exterior materials that include cedar siding and roof, white pipe rails, treated wood decks and screen porch, and white

stained cedar trim boards are similar to those used in the previously constructed residences at the Dunewood Complex and enhance the nautical feel of the lake front units. ▼



Clear views of both the harbor and Lake Michigan are afforded from the majority of the interior spaces.

Architect: Allegretti Architects, Inc.
St. Joseph, Michigan
Consulting Engineer: Wightman and Associates
St. Joseph, Michigan

Landscape Architect:
Allegretti Architects, Inc.
St. Joseph, Michigan

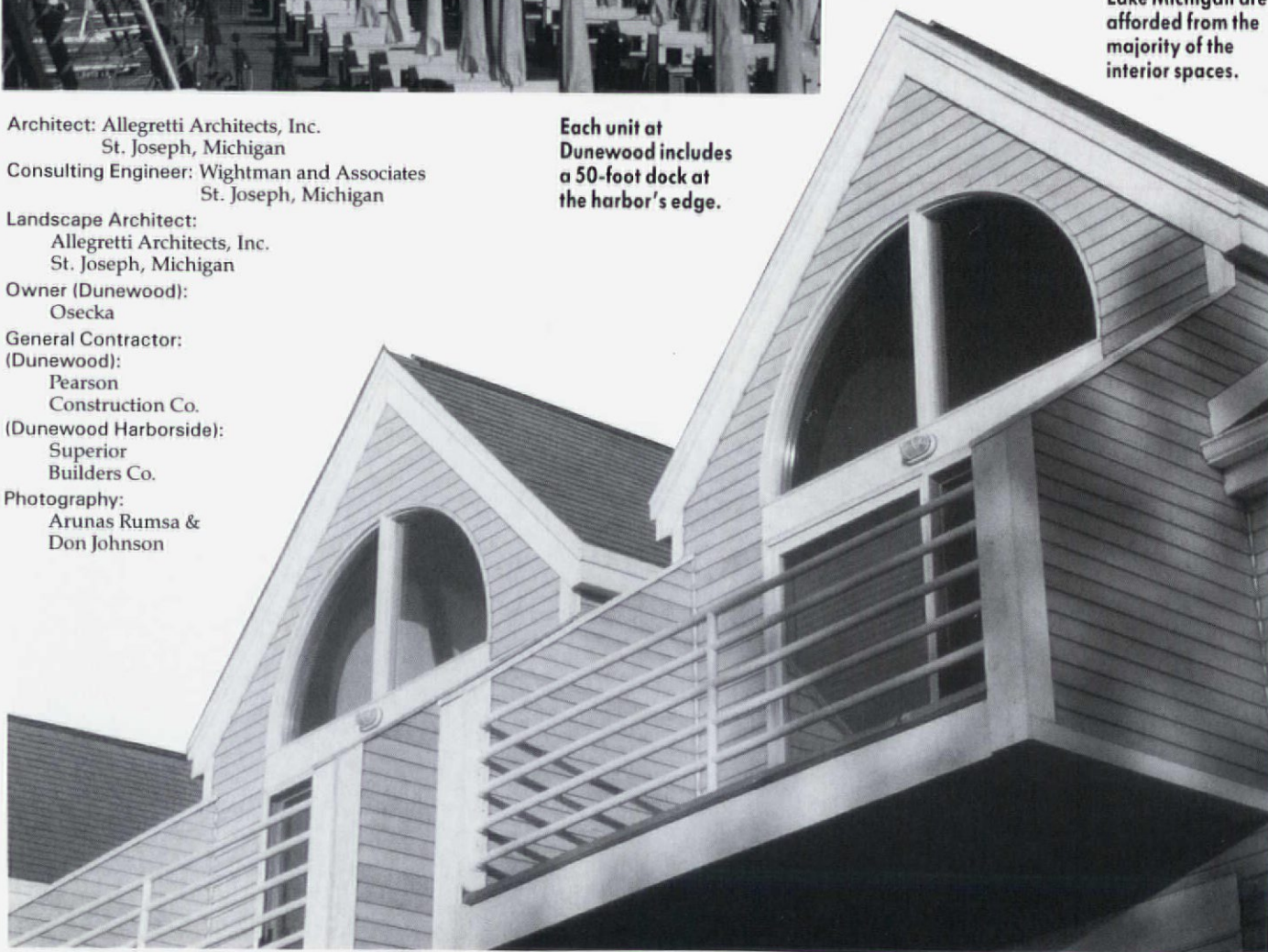
Owner (Dunewood):
Osecka

General Contractor:
(Dunewood):
Pearson
Construction Co.

(Dunewood Harborside):
Superior
Builders Co.

Photography:
Arunas Rumsa &
Don Johnson

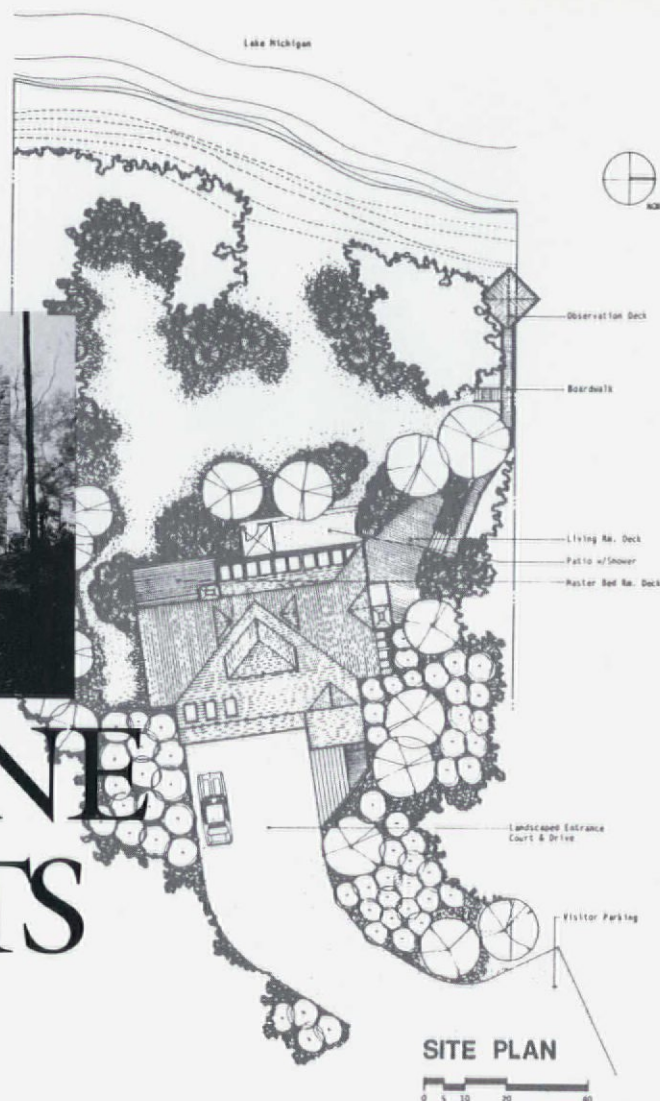
Each unit at Dunewood includes a 50-foot dock at the harbor's edge.







SHORELINE RETREATS



Michigan is a state of shorelines. The surf, the dunes, the magnificent raw beauty of Lake Michigan affords an ideal backdrop for architects to express their design talents in the creation of some of the most elegant residences anywhere. The two featured on this and the following pages, "Byington Cottage" and "The Guest House," are no exceptions.

Byington Cottage Grand Haven, Michigan

This year-round vacation residence was designed to fit into a natural gap in a low, wooded dune beside an established pathway to a bluff overlooking Lake Michigan. The owners wanted both the experience of approaching the house and of walking out to the bluff to be preserved as naturally as possible. The building had to be carefully sited and constructed to avoid jeopardizing dune-stabilizing trees and vegetation.

Exterior materials, shapes and details were selected to be reminiscent of "The Chicago Cottage."

The design required not only a response to dramatic views but also the need to create a bright, cheery year-round environment. Restrictions limiting the number of trees that could be chopped down coupled with often gloomy regional weather created a challenge in getting light to the interior. Generous size windows, some carried onto the roof plane, and a white painted interior with high, sloping ceilings solved the problems.

The owners' life style called for a relaxed, social atmosphere, convenient for entertaining, yet comfortably cozy for the family.

Materials, shapes and details were selected to be reminiscent of "The Chicago Cottage," from the era at the turn of the century when families from Chicago built numerous cottages in Michigan's lakeshore communities.

Architect: Design Plus, P.C.
Grand Rapids, Michigan
Contractor: Paul Wyrick Builders
Landscape Architect: Design Plus, P.C.
Photography: Mark Deremo

continues



The Guest House

Leland, Michigan

The planning stages for this elegant Lake Michigan project, north of Leland, Michigan, lasted many years and, when it finally became a reality, a few difficult problems arose. The owner felt it should have its own architectural style; however, it was to be in close proximity to her existing home and two thirds its size. Since it was to house a variety of art objects collected by the owner, it had to be an exciting experience.

Additionally, the site is high over Lake Michigan, offering magnificent views, and was located in an area north of the main house, where a steep sand slope started immediately and crested 45 feet higher. The architect's design solution to these problems resulted from the need to minimize the visual impact and cope with the pressures of the sandy soil, while maximizing the great view potentials. The structure that evolved curves into and out of the hill, while maintaining a cedar clump as its center. The sloping curved wall (Hoover Dam, as it was known during construction) was formed with masonry units consisting of poured cores and reinforcing running both vertically and horizontally. A large skylight directs illumination down the south face of the wall to all three levels. The remaining vertical closures are basically glass. Wood beams supported on the curved masonry wall and natural tree sections provide the structure for floors and glass walls. ▼

Architect: Roger A. Hummel, AIA - Architect
Suttons Bay, Michigan
Photography: Thomas Kachadurian
Traverse City, Michigan

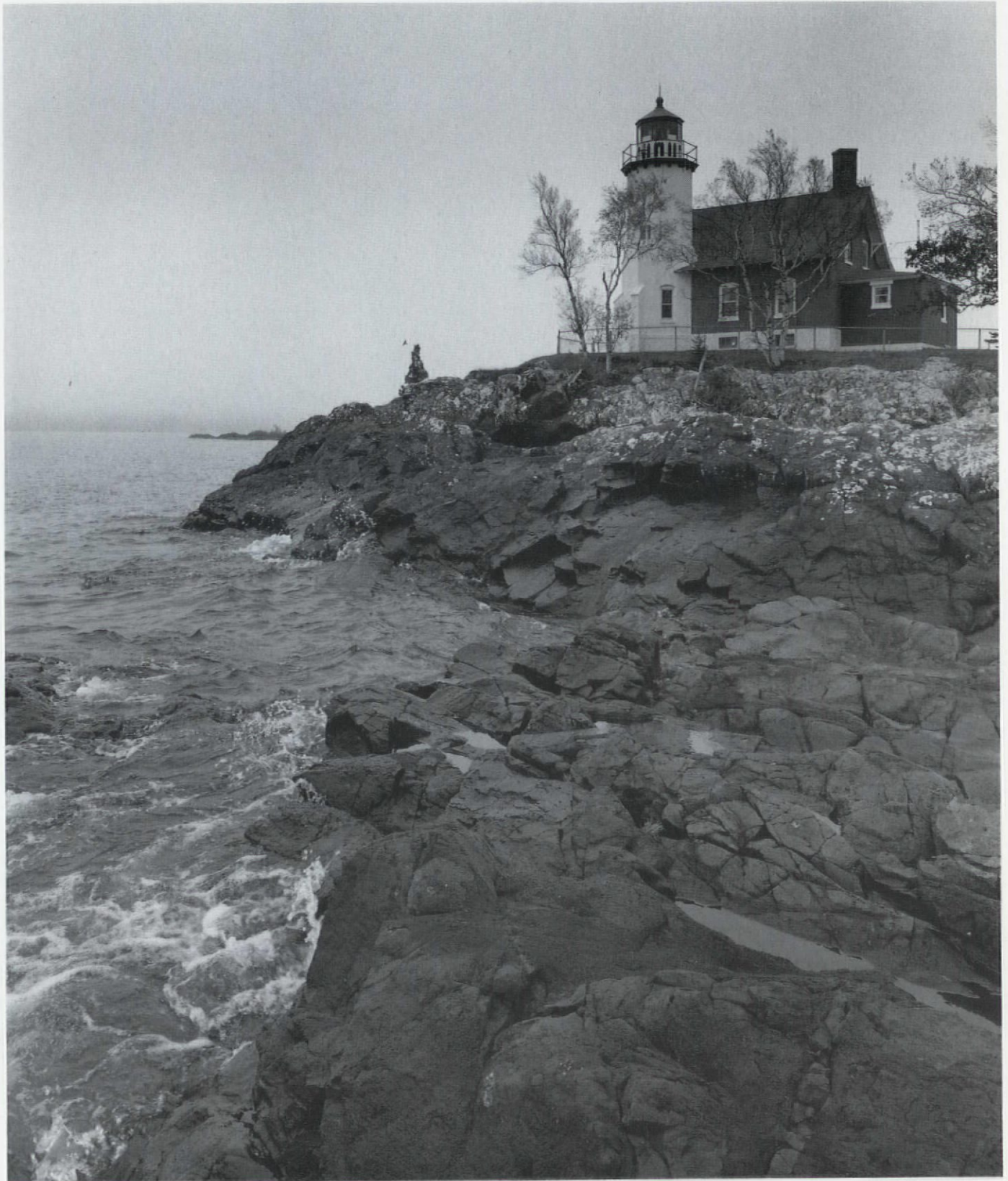


The planning stages for this elegant project lasted many years.

The site offered magnificent views of Lake Michigan.

A large skylight directs illumination to all three levels of the interior.

l a n d m a r k s



The beacon stands guard at Eagle Harbor on Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula.

A photograph by Balthazar Korab

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