



## Ecological Elementary School

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### Elementary School: The Design Process

Although the final presentation documents were all either generated or processed by computer, the steps leading to a final product were the result of constant interaction between computer and paper. The process began on paper with quick sketches of the main grid elements—the most fundamental pieces of the “kit of parts”.

The move was then made to the computer, creating a “sketch” model comprised of the grid in a simplified form (the origins of a symbol library) and rough volumes representing the buildings, streets, sidewalks, trees, and people of the actual site. This model allowed for walkthroughs and fly-bys helping to visualize and better understand space arrangement and orientation.

The views created by the computer were then converted to quick paper sketches to allow for quick documentation of thoughts on special arrangements and relationships of masses.

The computer was used to lay out space arrangement with rough volumes. More walkthroughs and fly-bys were used for greater visualization of the interaction of spaces, and again, more paper sketches were used to document thoughts of possible detail.

Large steps were taken on paper to conceive the “feeling” of the spaces. Quick perspectives of classroom spaces, interior and exterior, allowed for rapid documentation of many simultaneous decisions—quickly rendering allowed for rapid experimentation with material and scale. Quick gesture-sketches was congruent with my process of thinking and decision making. I began sketching details of the components of which spaces would be comprised.

The kit of parts was then refined to great detail on the computer, extensively expanding and detailing the symbol library. Each symbol was created in several levels of detail to aid in the “construction” process. Once the parts were created, I began fitting them together, roughly mimicking the actual construction method of such a structure. When placing symbols and the navigation of views, low levels of detail were used in the interest of expediting rendering time. When detail was important to a rendering, detail levels of necessary elements were increased.