



Introduction:

The following presentation is intended to be given to city council members, those who may attend a townhall, and property developers interested in choosing a design for the empty lot in Chapel Hill. By creating this presentation, I feel I am best reaching my three audiences, the City Council, citizens of Chapel Hill, and property developers. I believe that the multimedia approach best reaches my intended audiences and best explains the theories behind my work. I realize this is very different from my initial proposal. But after our final conference, I realized this was the best way to communicate my ideas. Enjoy!

Bringing a Community Together

Uma Knaven



The Lot

- Empty for many years
- Has great walking access, curb appeal, and a proximity to many other businesses
- The Problem: not being used to its full capacity, pressure from locals to maintain its charm and functionality as a social activist space.





The Goal: A design to align all needs and wants

- We want to bring all ages together, old and young, privileged and underprivileged, under one roof.
- The solution: a Community Center

Goals for the Exterior

The following images represent the exterior design of the community center.

Used brick and incorporated as much glass as possible to give the building natural light.

Aligned the design with surrounding area, commercial access, and community access.

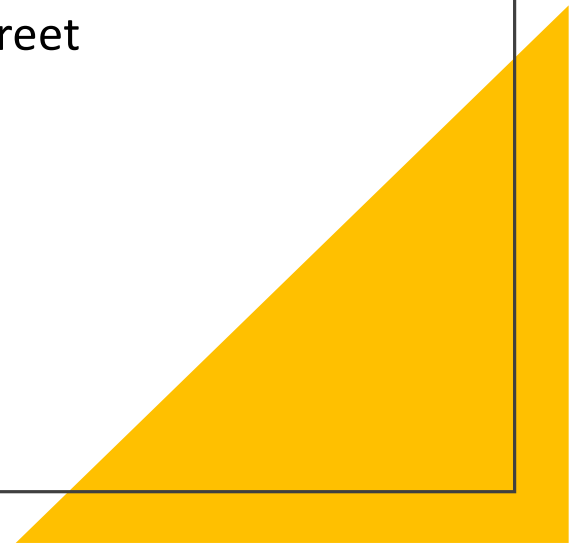
What we don't want: A building erected with no other purpose than to prevent disallowed behavior or gatherings. The space should be reanimated and welcoming.





To comply with city planning expectations:

- The next three images are of the buildings located on each of the other corners of the intersection of West Weaver Street and North Greensboro Street.
- Notice that these buildings inspired the design of my proposed community center, with brick, glass, and tall windows. My design however takes a more modern approach.









Inspiration

- The following two images are designs that I drew inspiration from when thinking about my own design. They helped refine my ideas of the atmosphere and aesthetic that I wanted to achieve.
- H.D.F. Kitto's theories as described in *The Polis* inspired the design as well. I drew on the ancient Greek ideals of the Acropolis as the central location of the city's activities.





Goals for the Interior

- The organization of the space was inspired by Sig Langegger's theories in *Rights to Public Space*.
- The community: property as a place
 - Place = cultural meaning, belonging to the people, and a collective memory which legitimizes its community ownership
- The city: property as a territory,
 - Territory = enforce laws (removal of graffiti, enforcing privacy with a fence) and stake a claim over a potential money maker that is not shareable with the general public
- Final Goal: Unite the two, community and city, around these ideas to create a locality, a location where place and territory coexist naturally.



Key Aspects:

- Within each room is a color-coded functionality for each space.
- **Pink** = functionality for the city (territory)
- **Blue** = functionality for locals (place)
- **Orange** = bringing the community together as one (locality)
- Each space is color coded, regardless of its perceived importance. I want to highlight the functionality of the space and draw attention to how each aspect of the space serves in some way to fulfill the community directive.
- Sharon Zukin's "Whose Culture? Whose City?" inspired me to ask questions about the intentions of this design. There's a fine line between improvement and gentrification, which makes a space an exclusive one. Everyone who wants to use this building should be able to use it. But it must appeal to everyone. If not designed that way, the space is still exclusive by not accommodating all people, on their terms.

How each
space brings
the
community
together
through
Territory:

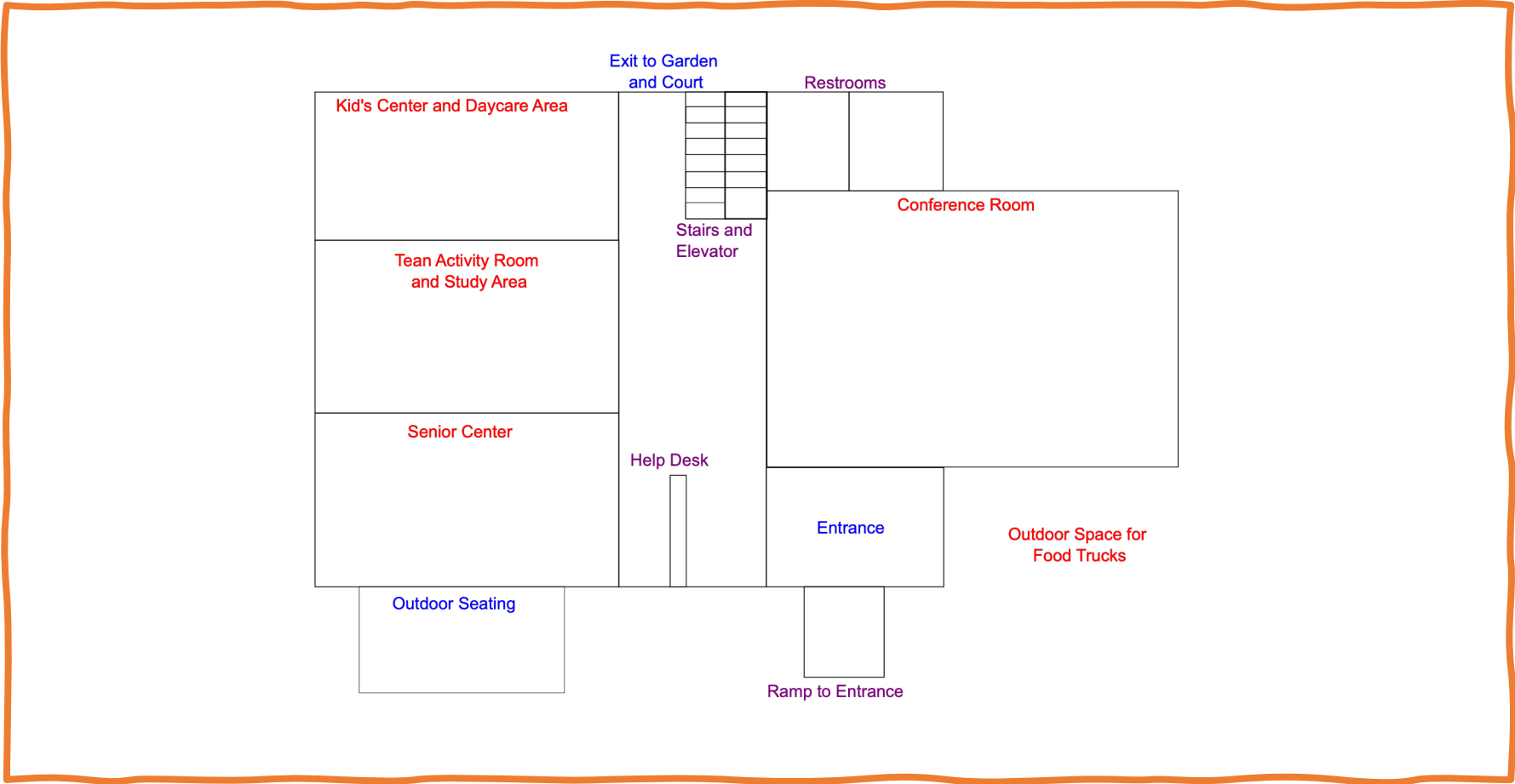
- Upper Levels: function as rented apartments for housing, providing land developers with profit.
- Help Desk: this area is entirely controlled by the city, as they can dictate who manages the front desk, what it provides (signups, information about the center, information about the area), and how often it is used.
- Ramp, elevator, and stairs: these access points are a part of the functionality of the space, making it accessible despite disability. This is required per city code and thus under the city's control.
- Restrooms: the restrooms will be gender-neutral to accommodate all identities and create a welcoming and accessible environment, key to making the space inclusive. They will include showers for those who may need one.

How each
space brings
the
community
together
through
Place:

- Outdoor Seating: this area is unregulated by the city, other than maintenance and patio furniture. Locals may use this space however they want, for any type of gathering they want, and can attach their own meaning to the space.
- Gardens and Basketball Court: the gardens will be maintained entirely by locals, with the food being used in any sense they desire. The harvested food can be donated to a soup kitchen, an organization that Chapel Hillians are passionate about. The basketball courts will attract kids of all ages. The sport itself is known as a community builder, creating friends, building teamwork, and bonding.

How each space brings the community together through Locality:

- Kid's Center: daycare, classes oriented for different ages, and an area to be creative. This combines creativity (place) and education (territory) into locality.
- Teen Activity Room and Study Area: tutoring, classes, book rentals, writing and resume help, advising on real world skills. This again combines creativity and education into locality.
- Senior Center: space to socialize with other's their age or participate in joint classes with younger people, can come for counseling, and easily accessible. This area combines social activities (place) with education and accessibility (territory) to create locality.
- Conference Room: space to rent for talks, conferences, book clubs, and birthday parties; large skill building classes; always open for social gatherings. This area combines socializing (place) with education and organization (territory) to create locality.
- Food Trucks: space for local food trucks to park and have patrons eat. This space brings profit to local businesses (territory) while giving the space an identity and an activity to gather around (place).





Final Thoughts:

The charm and culture of Chapel Hill are what make the city so enjoyable and welcoming. This design aims to amplify the diversity and beauty of the Chapel Hill community. By drawing on theories of place, territory, and locality, I hope to have created a space that exemplifies the diverse audiences that will use the space.

Citations:

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Lalahpolitico, et al. “Hillview Community Center Project Shows Pedestrian Connection.” *Los Altos Politico*, losaltospolitico.com/2018/03/hillview-community-center-project-pedestrian-connection/.

Langegger, Sig. “Public Space and the Rights Rift.” *Rights to Public Space: Law, Culture, and Gentrification in the American West*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2017, pp. 27–45.

Langegger, Sig. “Rights to Public Space.” *Rights to Public Space: Law, Culture, and Gentrification in the American West*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2017, pp. 53–68.

Zukin, Sharon. “Whose Culture? Whose City?” *The Cultures of Cities*, 1995, pp. 1–47.