

(Sincerest apologies for lateness. Could you describe a finals week as a crash landing?)

- 1.) Client: This spring, my closest friends found themselves suddenly, precariously, housing insecure. For over two months of lockdown, five of my loved ones shared a one-bedroom residence while searching for affordable housing within walking distance of campus and viable workplaces. One of them in particular takes neurotic, baffling pride in the upkeep of their home, and I've eaten more dinners in their kitchen than I have in my own apartment. I designed a 12 x 20 tiny home on the 28th and SE Steele parking lot as a semi-permanent living situation for students or community members in situations like their own, one that can be moved and adapted for each resident that takes up in it; however, all matters of taste were informed by a client that spends too much time sweeping their baseboards.
- 2.) Site: The 12 x 20 size of the tiny house allows 5 transportable units (and bathrooms) to be easily placed onto the SE Steele lot, creating a community with autonomy and privacy between units as well as the opportunity for community in mutual garden and dining areas. Ideally, this would create a blended community as needed for students and houseless individuals in the area. Each unit has an open concept with a loft above a kitchenette, allowing room for individuals to utilize as needed. The model house faces north-south to let in plenty of southern light, guarantee privacy, and provide a loft view west over the river.
- 3.) Materials: The house is envisioned with recycled materials; the dimensions are somewhat standardized to reduce cost and assure ease of acquisition.
- 4.) Priorities:
 - a.) Mental wellness: Mental health is extremely difficult to care for in the midst of housing insecurity, and I wanted to design a space that was light, calming, private, and one's own. There are large windows cast all over the southern-facing walls to drink in as much light as possible. Because these units would likely be placed side to side, there are only small, high windows to the east, and to protect privacy from onlookers to the back, I installed broad Northern facing skylights to ensure cross-directional light properly illuminates the home. In the loft, where privacy is less of an issue, an east-facing window offers a lovely view of the west hills.
 - b.) Unit autonomy: The client I had in mind-- as well as a lot of the young adults I know-- finds a lot of solace in their ability to cook for themselves unfettered. Cooking is an inevitable act of care for oneself, and can be an especially poignant arena of independence. With the trade-off of communal bathrooms, I tried to include an open enough space within the unit to allow for a small kitchen. The demographic who would primarily be using the neighborhood is likely a) already a part of the campus community or b) will be interacting frequently with that defined community, and I want this space to be one in which community is established across demographics on one's own terms. Communal, outdoor (but sheltered) dining areas and green spaces would hopefully encourage community bonding.

c.) Architectural continuity: I spent a lot of time walking around SE neighborhoods looking at the architecture, theoretically for this project, mostly just to get out of the house. I scrapped a lot of the edgy, asymmetrical designs I sketched out after seeing how out of place they would look next to the gabled, wood-panelled houses that litter SE streets. (Well, except for the Wimbledons, but—and excuse me for saying this, but—the Wimbies have unspeakably evil energy.) This tiny house community is already physically unable to plant roots into the asphalt; I wanted to avoid other elements that would other the tiny home neighborhood from the surrounding, more permanent homes. Without deviating too far from the visual patterns of the surrounding neighborhoods, I tried to use the roof construction (with exposed beams underneath!) to vaguely delineate space-- there's a peak above a space that I imagine would make a good gathering area or living room, and the loft is not sequestered off from the rest of the limited space, but visually defined as a separate space by the roof structure. Personally, one of the hardest parts of quarantine has been the blurring of work, play, and rest, and I think that spatial suggestions for movement and balance can help alleviate that within architecture, without robbing the inhabitant of too much agency to do what they'd like with their space.

5.) Honorable mention for this tweet that was sent to me in response to my roof design



a.)

Process:

Masochists everywhere will be thrilled with the methodology I wound up using for this house. After pages of doodles, I ended up sitting down and “sketching” with cardboard until I settled on a design that I liked. This part was easy. What wasn’t easy? Transferring that sketch full of sexy, roguish scalene triangles into a clean, final product without a way to measure angles. Haters praying on my downfall wish they could inconvenience me as much as I inconvenience myself.

Sketches:



Cardboard sketch below (made out of the cardboard box my mom sent me slightly-stale cookies in):



Final photos (they have less character because the material doesn't smell like old sugar):

