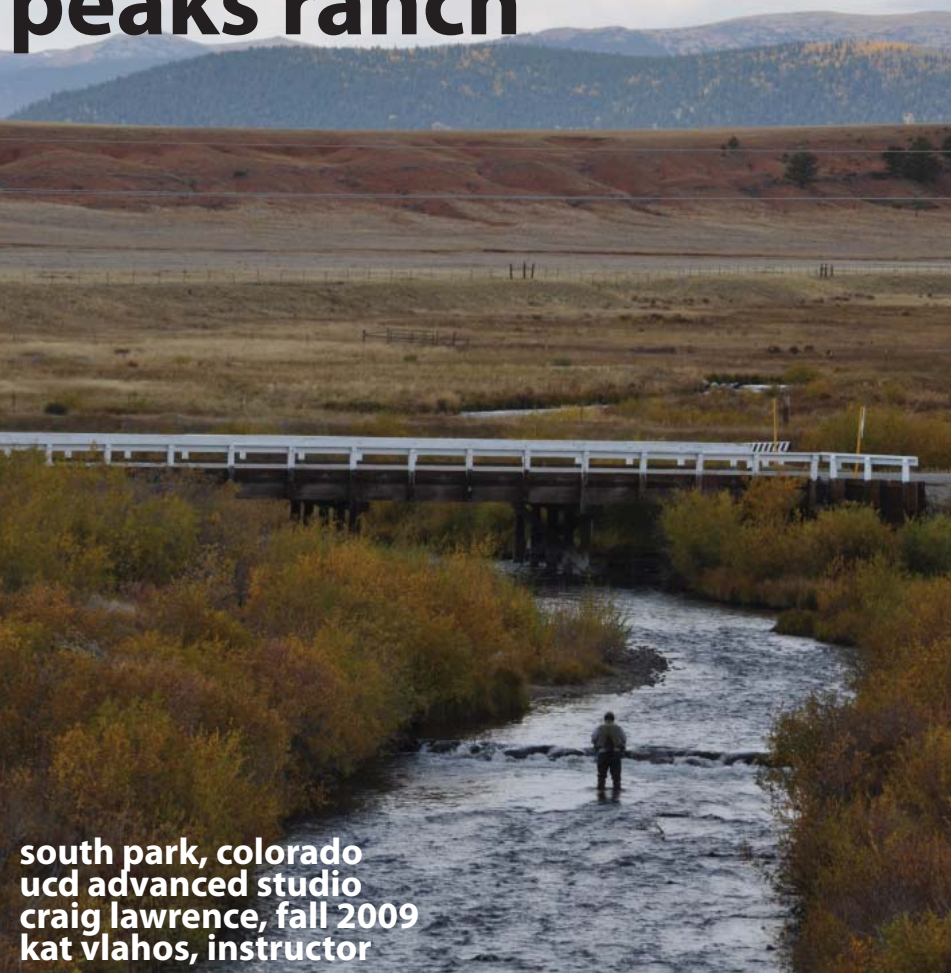


rocky mountain land library @ buffalo peaks ranch



A sense of place: it is difficult to define, but immediately understood when experienced. Does it come from the land—the scuffed ground beneath our boots, the chill sky above—or does it come from the culture that inhabits that land—the people and their buildings? Perhaps the best answer is that it comes from both. Indeed, the two are so entwined they seem to share common roots: feeding each other, interdependent, a single system, really.

program



The Rocky Mountain Land Library, a non-profit 20,000 volume collection, seeks to extend our knowledge of the land, and to build within each of us the ideals of stewardship and responsibility for our collective resource: the living ground at our feet.

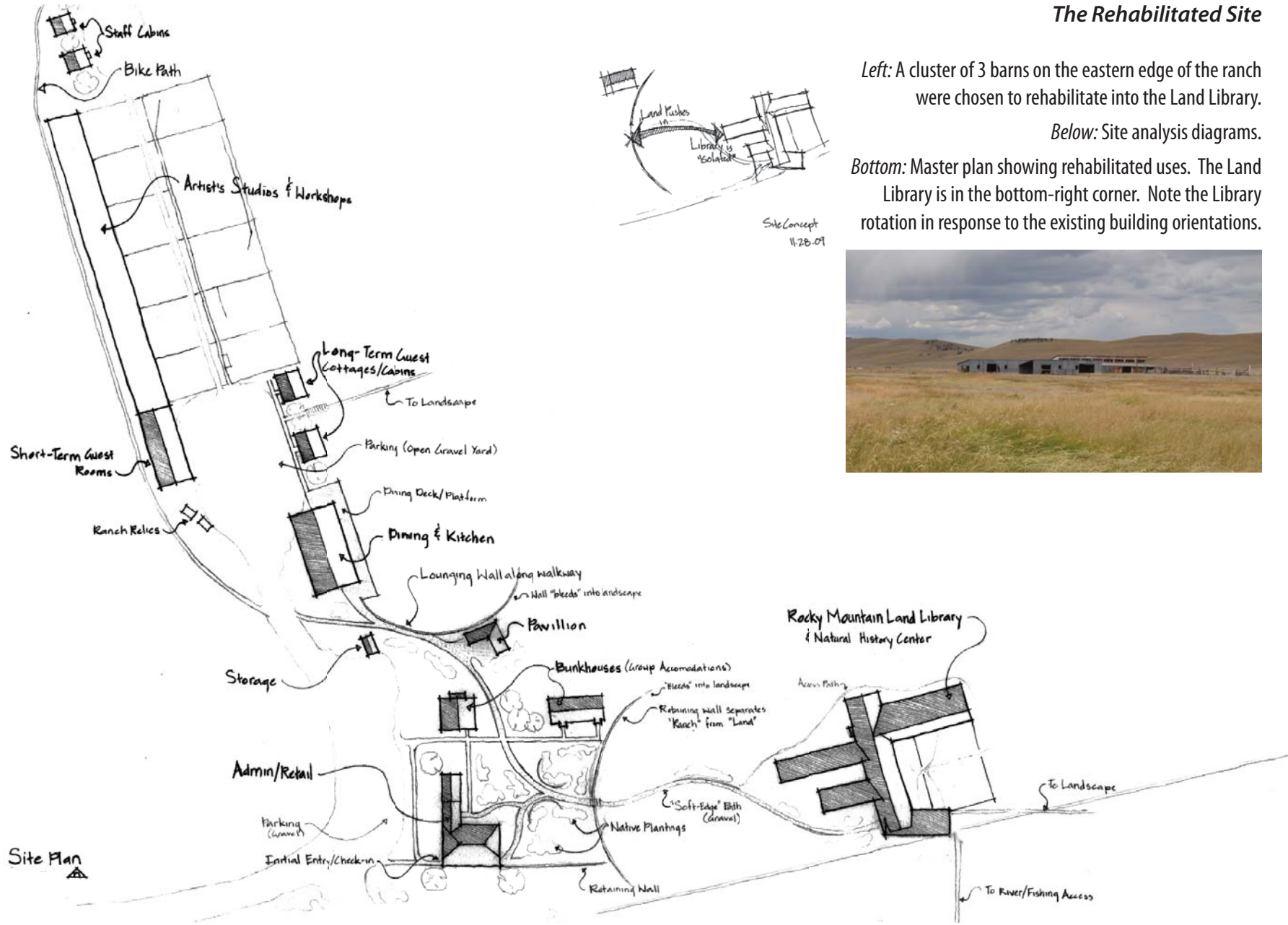


Buffalo Peaks Ranch is an 1860s sheep and cattle ranch located in South Park, Colorado. All existing buildings must be preserved or rehabilitated in the process of accommodating the Land Library and an accompanying hospitality program. The site is one of Park County's five Heritage Sites, and is currently owned by the City of Aurora for its water rights. The Middle Fork of the South Platte, which bisects the site, must remain open for public use.

The American West has a sense of place. Sure, we lose that sense sometimes when we spend much of our time in cities, or when we grow up here and know no different. But the West is a Place, we have only to visit the grassy prairies, the expansive deserts, or the mountains and their valleys to know it.

Often, the notion of the 'authentic' is something we think we can find and experience: Colorado's mountain resorts often manufacture and advertise such experiences. But the 'authentic' is a tricky notion—as soon as we think we have it, it slips away from us.

site concept



The Rehabilitated Site

Left: A cluster of 3 barns on the eastern edge of the ranch were chosen to rehabilitate into the Land Library.

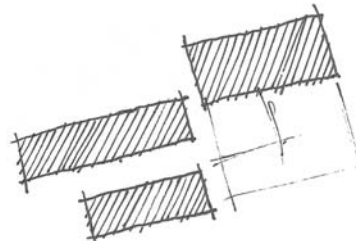
Below: Site analysis diagrams.

Bottom: Master plan showing rehabilitated uses. The Land Library is in the bottom-right corner. Note the Library rotation in response to the existing building orientations.

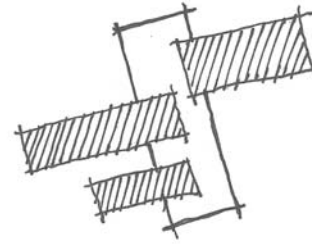


building concept

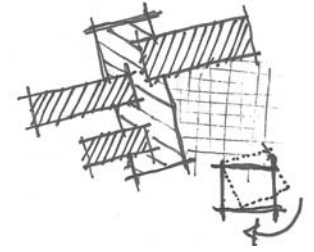
Vernacularism has a bad rap. Building vernacular is not all tin corrugated roofs and clapboard siding. It is a series of principles that tie a construction to its site—to the sun, wind, earth, and water which bless it. Vernacular building is a mode, a method, not a style.



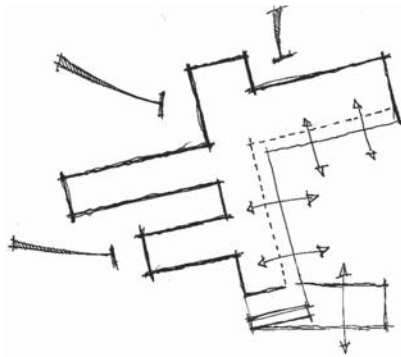
1. existing building cluster



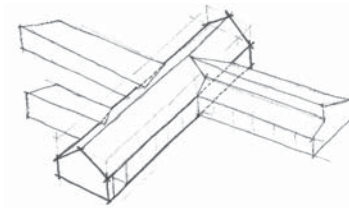
2. "pin" together with new construction spine



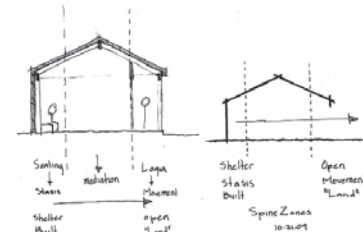
3. enclose outdoor space



4. turn away from prevailing northwest winds and open up to southeast



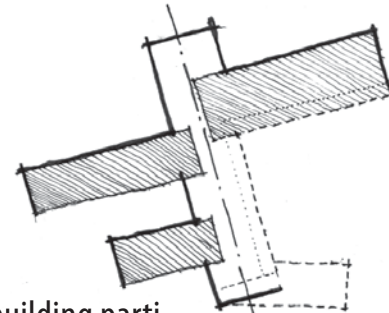
5. spine as equalizer and organizer



6. spine as shelter in the landscape



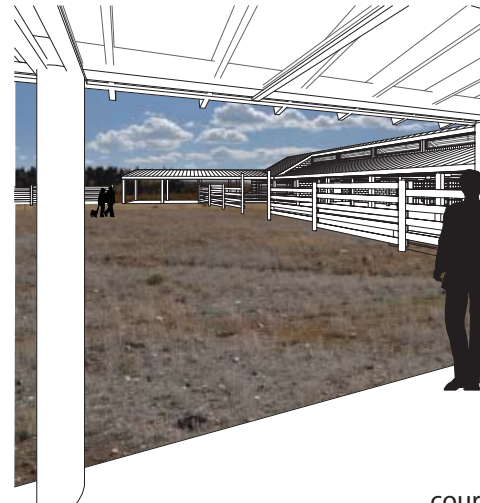
7. pivot door effect - Library is pushed out and the land invited in



8. building parti

Parti
10-21-09

How then, do we capture the spirit of this Place when we build? How do we capture the 'authentic,' and yet avoid replication? If true contextual vernacularism is "of its place and time" then our imperative must be to build in a way that ties the past with the present, history with contemporary context, and the land with the people.



courtyard from north loggia

rocky mountain land library

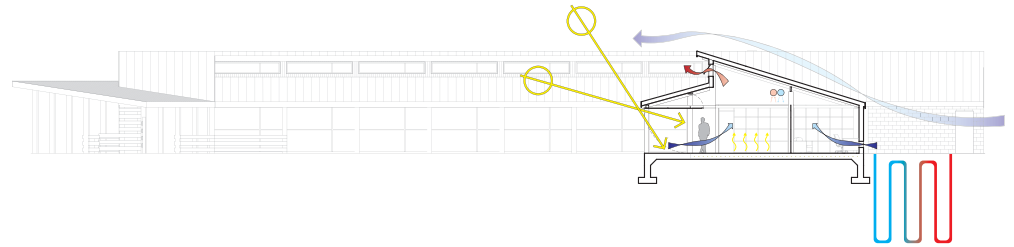


ground floor plan

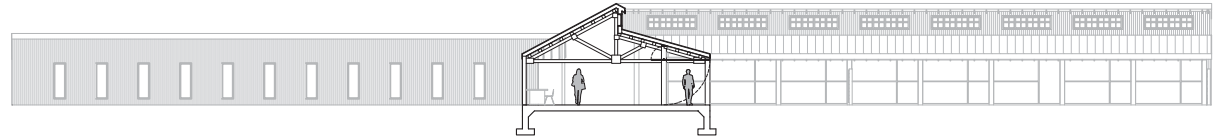


Key

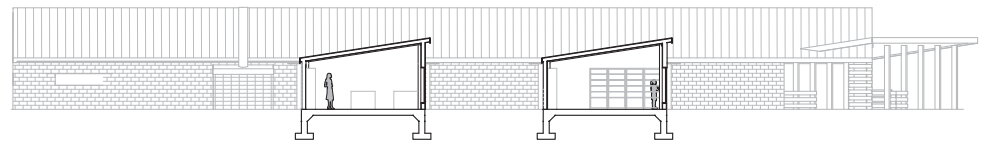
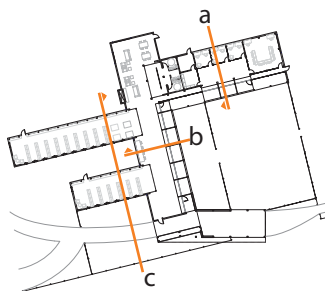
- | | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Entry | 6 Kitchenette | 11 Loggia |
| 2 Stacks | 7 Storage | 12 Courtyard |
| 3 Reading Area | 8 Mechanical | 13 Path to 'Ranch' |
| 4 Hearth | 9 Work Space | 14 Path to land |
| 5 Restroom | 10 Classroom/Workshop | 15 "Pivot doors" |



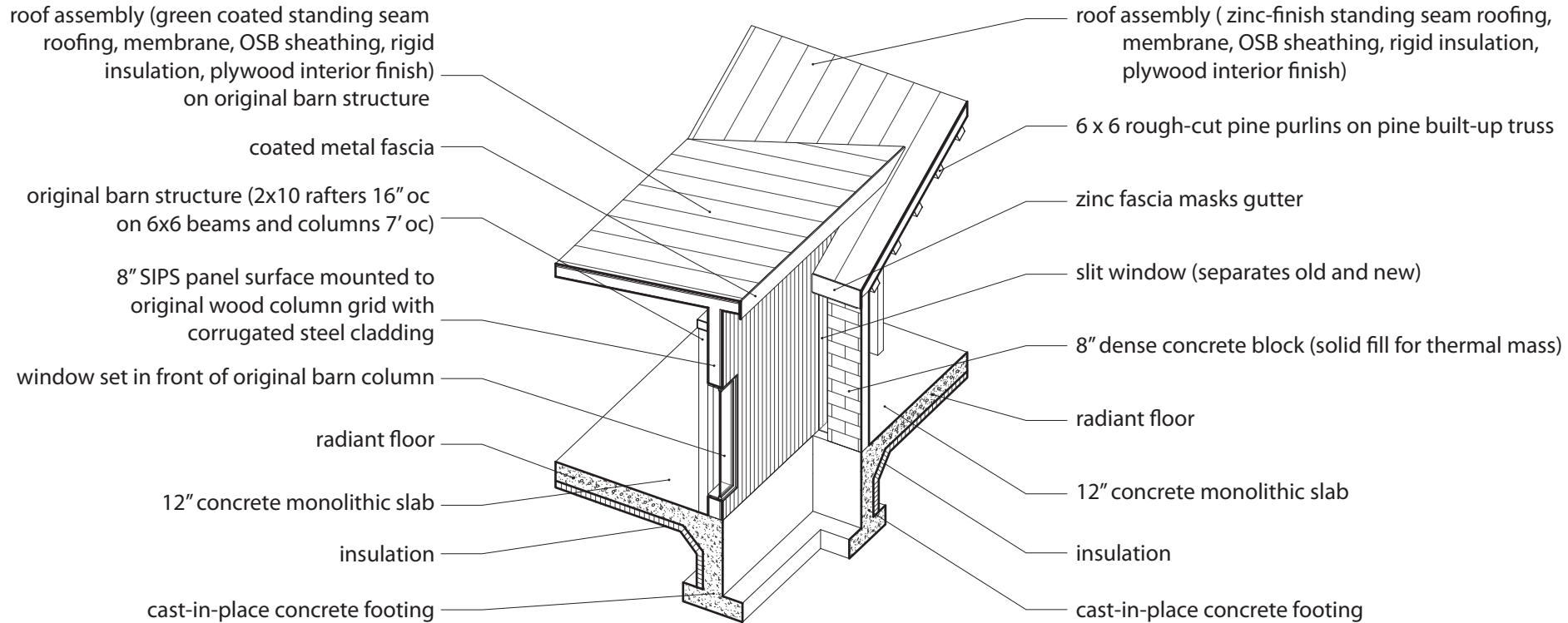
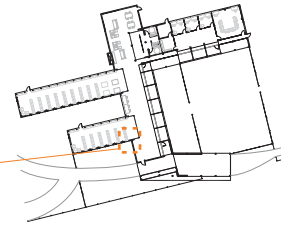
section b



section c

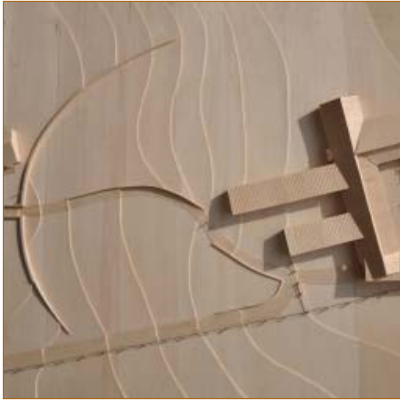


old meets new detail



forest green standing seam roofing (existing structures) reclaimed corrugated steel cladding from existing siding original barn structure (typical) plywood interior finish of SIPS panels zinc standing seam roofing (spine) concrete block wall (spine) reclaimed wood for entry cavity wall screen

building model



isolated library



old and new pinned together



site and structure



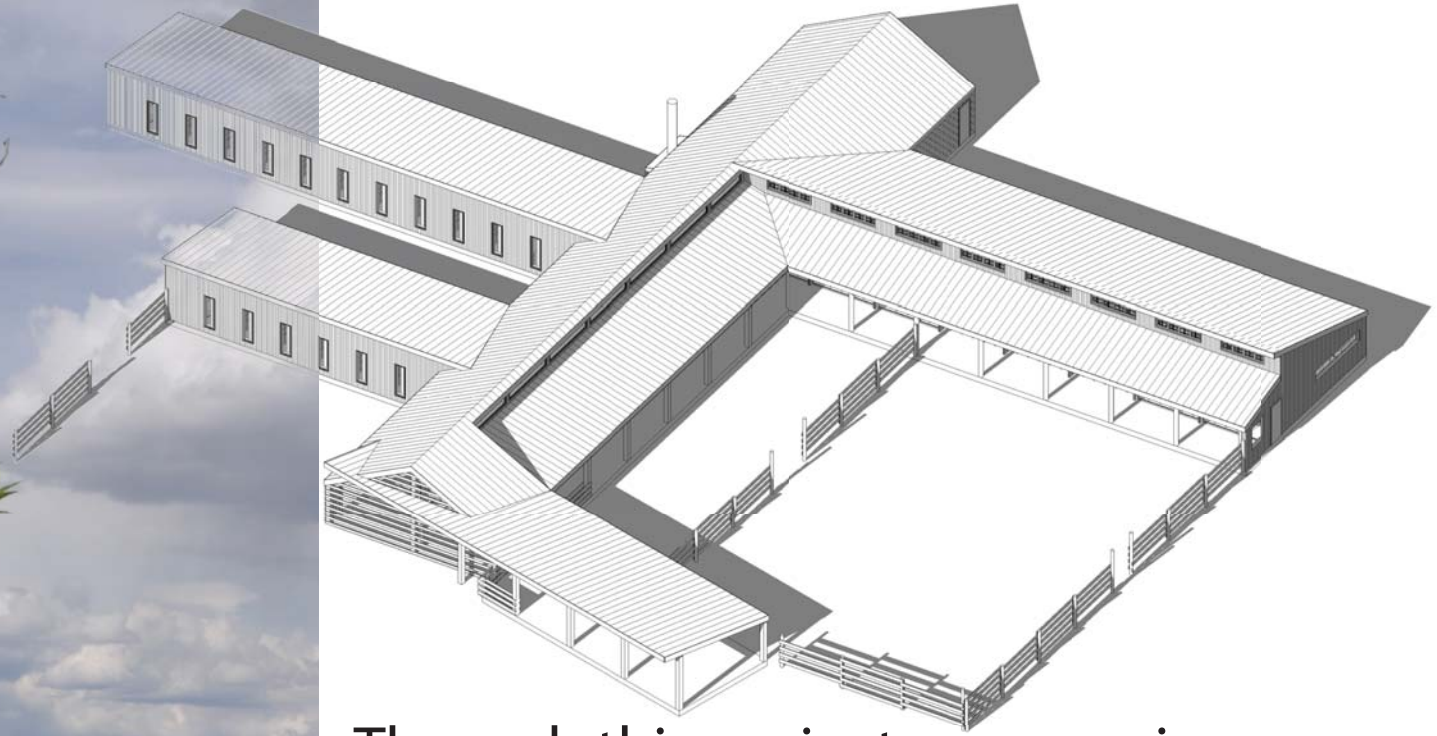
protected entry



loggia around a courtyard



existing fences define approach



Through this project, an experience of the American West was created—one devoid of kitschy costumes and manufactured storefronts—an experience of contemporary spaces for contemporary uses responding to and enhancing the surrounding cultural landscape. In the end, a Place for the Library was found.