Master of Architecture Thesis Presentation

Design for Relocation and Reassembly:
Self-Determined Adaptability for the Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe's 'Upland Expansion'

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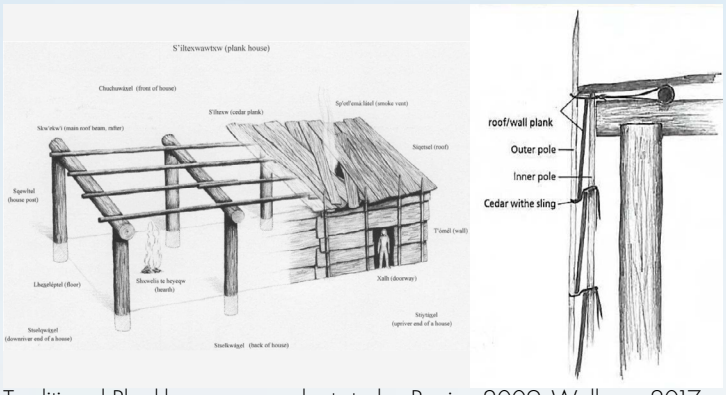

Traditional Plankhouse, precedent study. Perrier, 2009. Wallace, 2017.

This thesis will explore how buildings that are intended to be assembled, disassembled, and reassembled can address current and future needs of the Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe while supporting cultural continuity for their community during their upland expansion project. This continuity of "home" across multiple dwelling sites promotes self-determination of the individuals in the tribal community by incorporating local materials and labor in adaptable, low-carbon design methods while connecting to historical practices.

Zero House, a case study designed for disassembly, 2017.

The proposed methods will be informed by traditional building methods and typologies of the region, and will demonstrate how relevant methods available today can be used to address the desire for culturally-relevant and deeply sustainable architecture that can meet the needs of the community, maintain their health and safety, address adaptation and mobility, consider attachment to place, and promote self-determination. Panelized homes address the housing shortage and affordability problem in the lowlands, and the ability to move the homes to the uplands addresses long-term needs of the tribe.

Future housing design, a prototype using CNC machining, SP23 Studio.

Access to housing and community services are inherent to the livelihood of the tribe during this transition from the lowlands to the uplands, and there is a need to meet current deficiencies in the lowlands while considering long-term settlement in the uplands. Architecture that responds to environmental risks in a culturally-affirming way can ease transition to a new location while supporting current and future generations. The findings intend to benefit other tribal communities who are facing similar environmental threats to their lands.