Architecturally, the row house responds in several ways to its proximity to the public sidewalk. The row houses are set back from the street 11'-9". The front stairs protrude into this space and run parallel to the street. The repetition of the stairs imply a public sidewalk zone closer to the street, while the space in between the stairs belongs more to the row houses. This second zone is ideal for a potted garden to help screen the private from the public. The first level is elevated from the street 3'-0". Row houses with front porches have 42" high frosted glass guard panels which allow for light, but not direct visual connection into the living room. The porch itself is also a physical separation. The other row houses infill the bottom 42" of the large first story opening with frosted glass block. In addition to obscuring the view in from the sidewalk, the block has the thickness and mass consistent with the concrete.
The concrete party wall not only separates the houses, but, through its thickness, draws activities to itself. In spaces such as living rooms, bedrooms, and dining rooms indentations provide opportunities for placement of art and decoration. In the row houses, the wall slants along the stairs. At its thickest dimension of 2'-0", on the first level, the wall allows space for a 3'-0" wide stair. The stair remains this width while ascending, flanking the steel grid of posts and beams. The wall, however, tapers and pulls itself away and narrows to a thickness of 0'-10" at the roof level. The growing gap between the elements allows for cascading light from the glazed roof above the stair, and it accentuates the increasing sense of being high up in the air as one climbs. In the alley house, the wall shifts to accommodate entering the front door and to make a visually generous passage to the kitchen/dining side. With the wall moved, the higher concrete slab at the back of the house extends in the form of a shelf and integral bowl to hold keys, groceries, and other belongings.
The idea of living between and on various planes is present in the floor structure. In the row houses, a reinforced, hollow core, concrete slab spans from the party wall to the steel structural grid. The edge of the slab is always visible as it rests on the steel structure. In language of the addition, open web steel joists hold a lightweight precast concrete panels, which are exposed from the underside. Plane edges are not concealed by supporting wall, but are shown supported by beams.

Shifts in levels within the site become important methods of connecting and separating functions. These changes become boundaries, which attract activity. In planters, they become places to sit. In balconies and terraces they are places to look down. In the townhouse patios next to the courtyard, they are gentle demarcations between public and private.
The stair connecting the courtyard and the garage draws people to itself. Its curves in three dimensions contrast with the rectilinear architecture of the project in general. In conjunction with the large tree planters, it is an orienting element for the garage—a point of reference. The surface of the stair wall faces south and changes in appearance as the sun moves. It hold the ends of the cantilevered concrete steps. The steps are always perpendicular to the curving wall at the middle of the tread, thus undulating with the wall, and casting different shadows throughout the day. Two large steel brackets, bolted to the wall, carry the two beams for the stair roof. The beams extend in either direction, sheltering the stairs and the elevator, and supporting translucent glass panels.