Community Engagement in Project Development

CPC Planning Design & Construction

Who we are:

- Staff of 25+ (mostly landscape architects) design and manage projects through construction.

What we do:

Responsible for all physical planning and all restoration and reconstruction projects in Central Park.

Types of projects:

- Landscapes
- Structures (such as buildings and bridges)
- Recreational facilities (such as playgrounds and athletic fields)
- Infrastructure
- Works of art

Typically, we engage the public in the design process for projects through:

Community Outreach

- User surveys
- Community meetings / focus groups
- Consultation with established park user / advisory groups

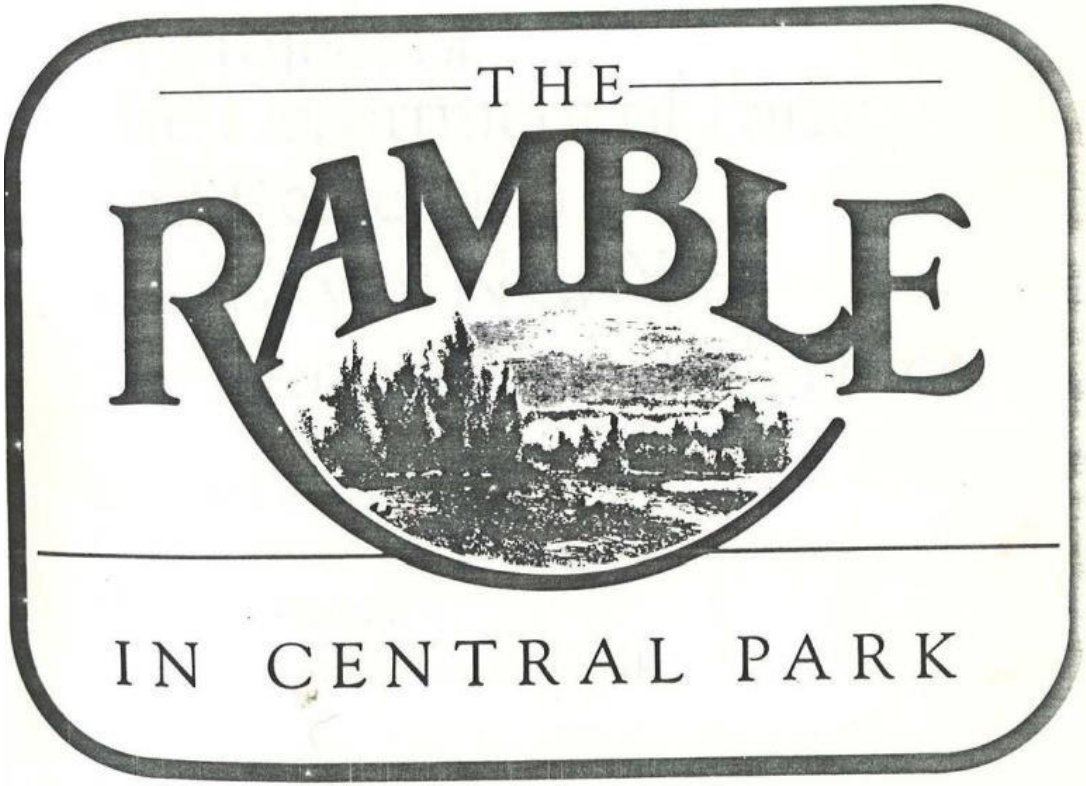
Formal Public Review

- Neighboring community boards
- Interested civic organizations
- Landmarks Preservation Commission
- Public Design Commission.

What do we seek to accomplish through community engagement?

- Engaging a broad spectrum of users and stakeholders
- Productive dialogue
- Ensuring that all perspectives are weighed on their merit
- Sharing expertise and explaining the design process
- Establishing credibility and earning trust
- Delivering the best possible solution
- Developing sustained relationships

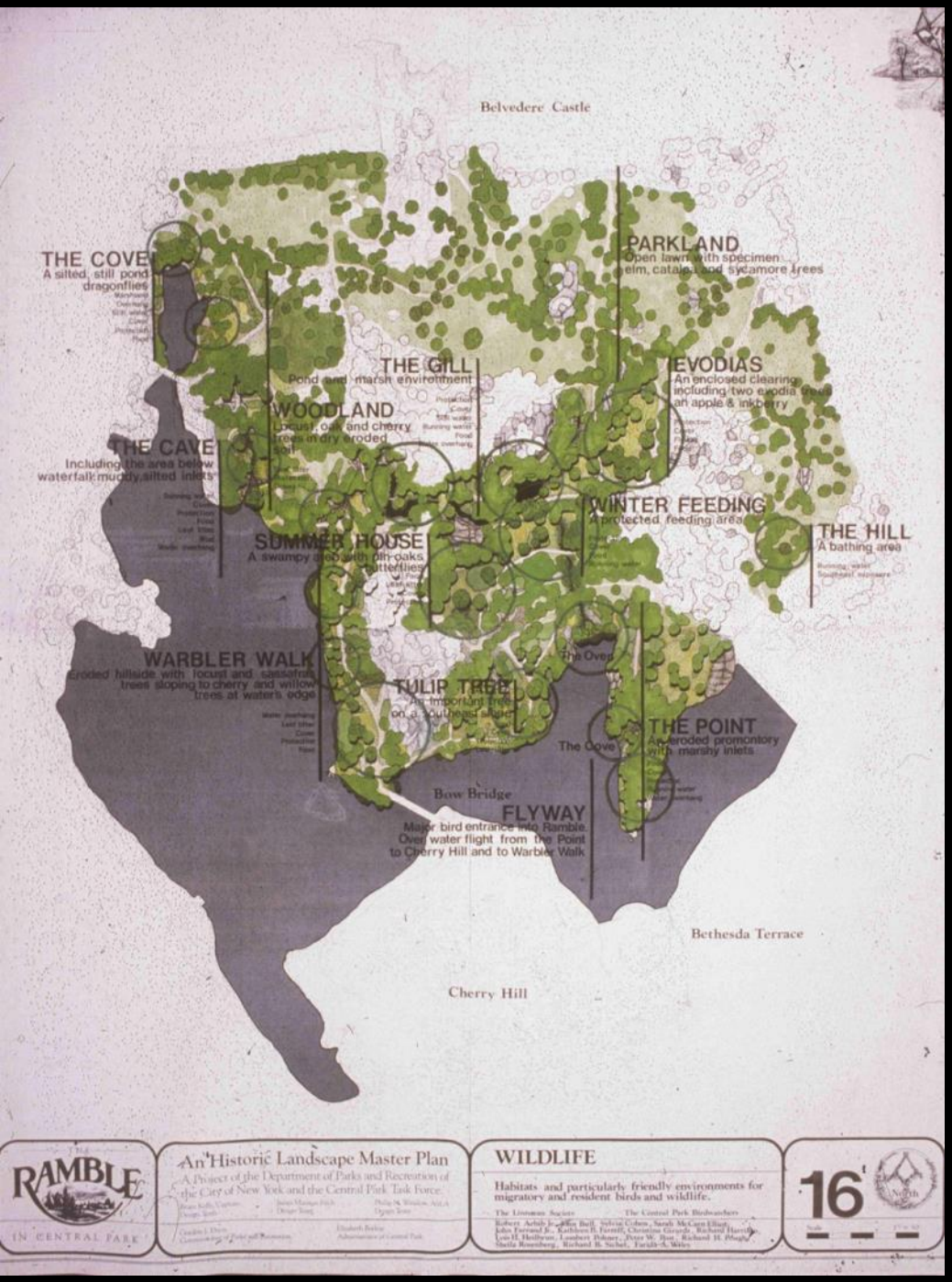
Case Study: Woodlands



An Historic Landscape Master Plan

A Project of
the Department of Parks
and Recreation
the City of New York
the Central Park Task Force.

1979



THE RAMBLE IN CENTRAL PARK

An Historic Landscape Master Plan

A Project of the Department of Parks and Recreation of the City of New York and the Central Park Task Force.

Brian Kelly Curtis, Design Team · Jonas Mortensen Fitch, Design Team · Philip N. Winslow, AIA A, Design Team

Gordon J. Davis, Commissioner of Parks and Recreation · Elizabeth Barlow, Administrator of Central Park

WILDLIFE

Habitats and particularly friendly environments for migratory and resident birds and wildlife.

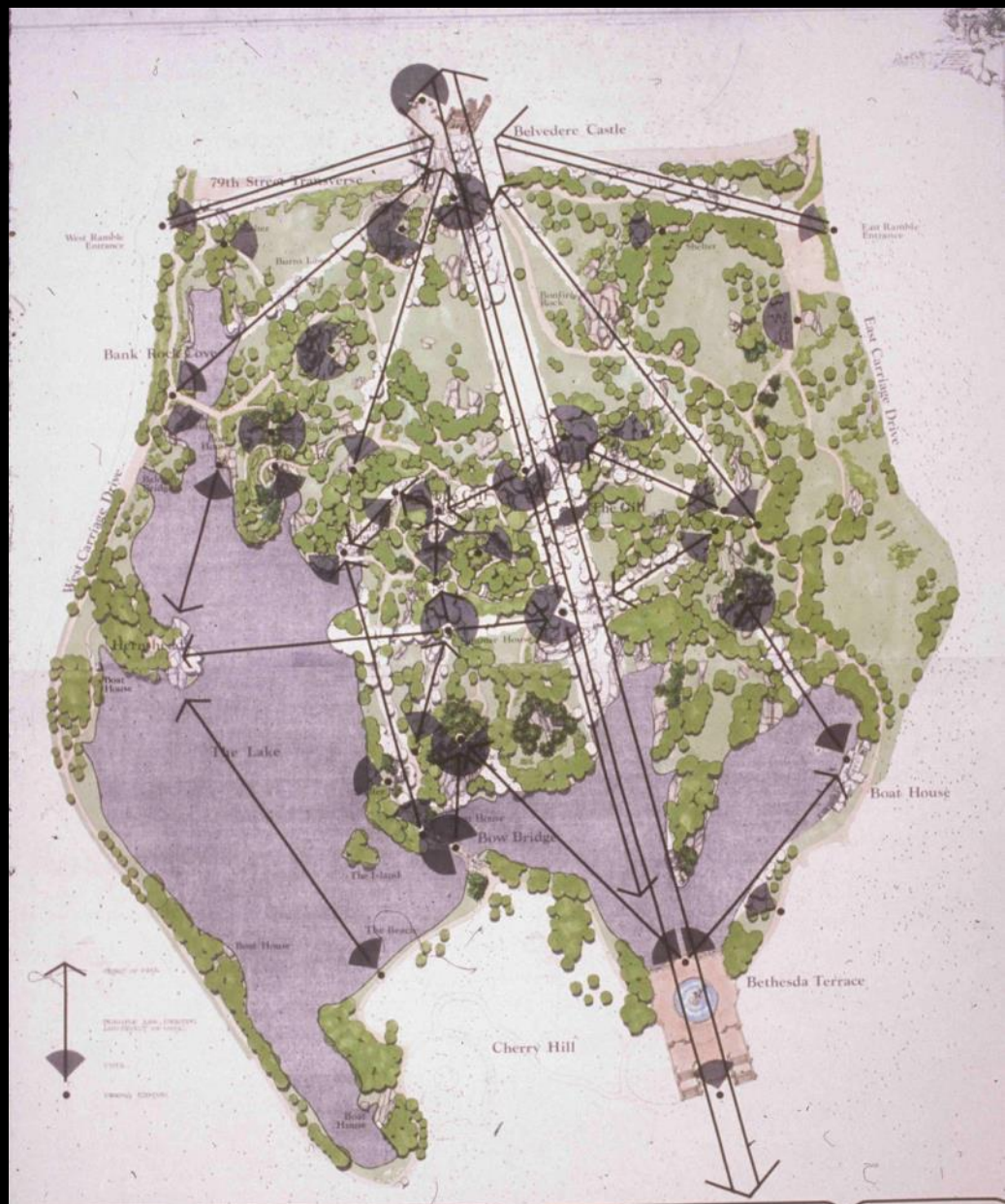
The Linnaean Society · The Central Park Birdwatchers

Robert Arbib Jr., John Bull, Sylvia Cohen, Sandi McCuen Elliot, John Fernald Jr., Kathleen B. Fertig, Christina Gerardi, Richard Harris, Lois H. Heilbrun, Lambert Palmer, Peter W. Post, Richard H. Pough, Sheila Rosenberg, Richard B. Sichel, Farish A. Weiss

16

Scale — — — 1" = 60'

North



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VISTAS

The organizing framework of the landscape: these original vistas provide orientation, excitement, scenic continuity and beauty.

Design Team

11

Scale — — — 1" = 60'

North

Cutting of Central Park Trees Angers Birders

By DEIRDRE CARMODY

The Parks Department has cut down dozens of trees in Central Park, including a persimmon and a northern magnolia that was home to a family of cardinals, and bird watchers are up in arms about it.

The department's action has sparked a controversy that becomes a bit less genteel with each passing day.

With the spring migration just under way and bird watchers out in force in the park, a thousand signatures have been collected on a petition to the Parks Commissioner. The petition states: "We are outraged by the mass destruction of mature and irreplaceable trees in Central Park, particularly the Ramble and adjacent areas. We urge that these cutting practices be halted immediately and that comparable trees be planted at once."

Elizabeth Barlow, the Central Park administrator, said last week that the trees had been cut down as part of the historic restoration of the park, which was designed originally by Frederick L. Olmsted and Calvert Vaux in 1858.

"What you really have," Mrs. Barlow said, "is a big philosophical difference between the birders, who become apoplectic if you cut down a dead tree because termites breed in dead locust trees and are good for the birds, and the principles of landscape architecture, which hold that a park is a garden — something to be managed and protected and planted."

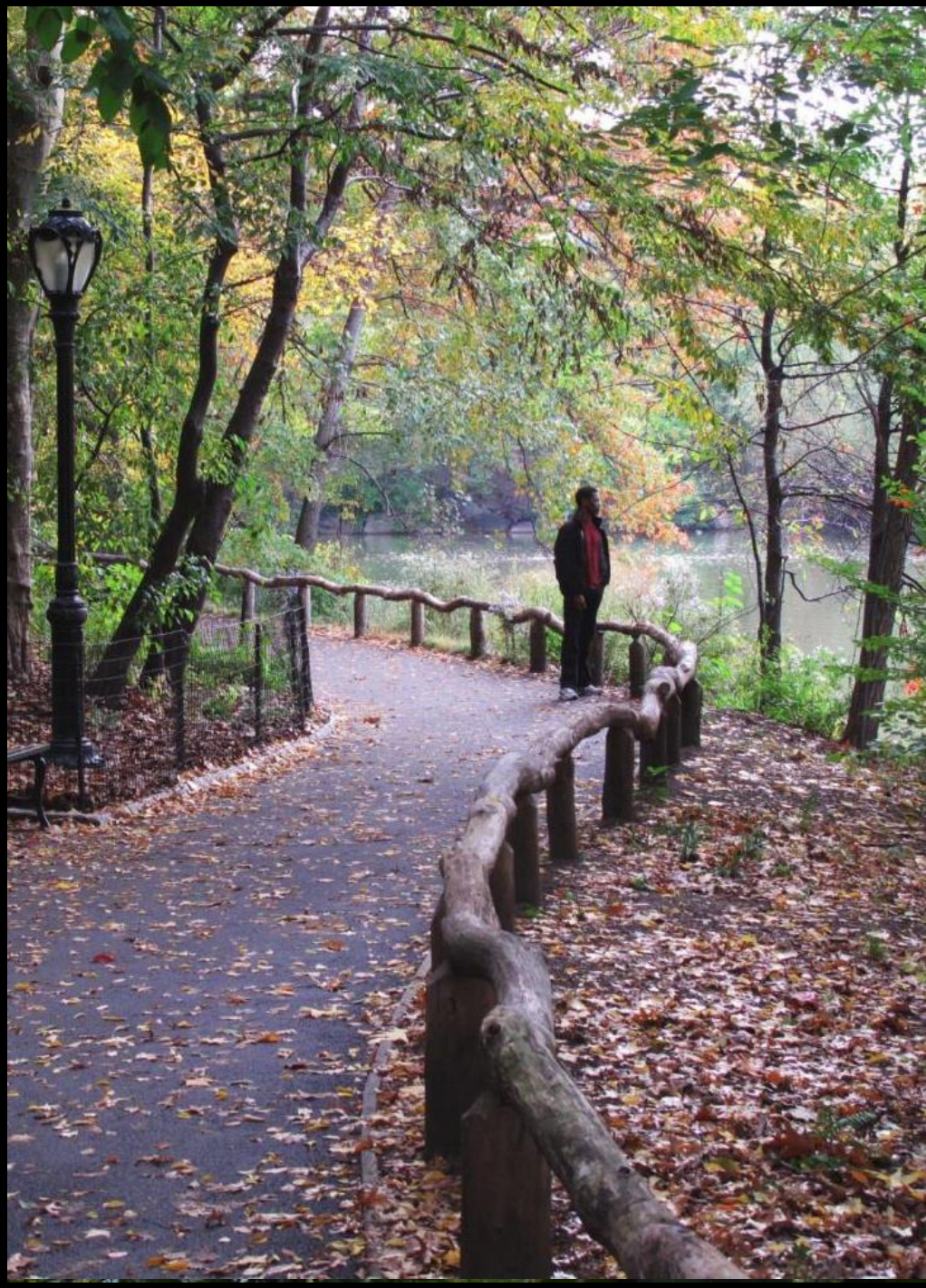
"It is a violent opposition of attitudes," she said.

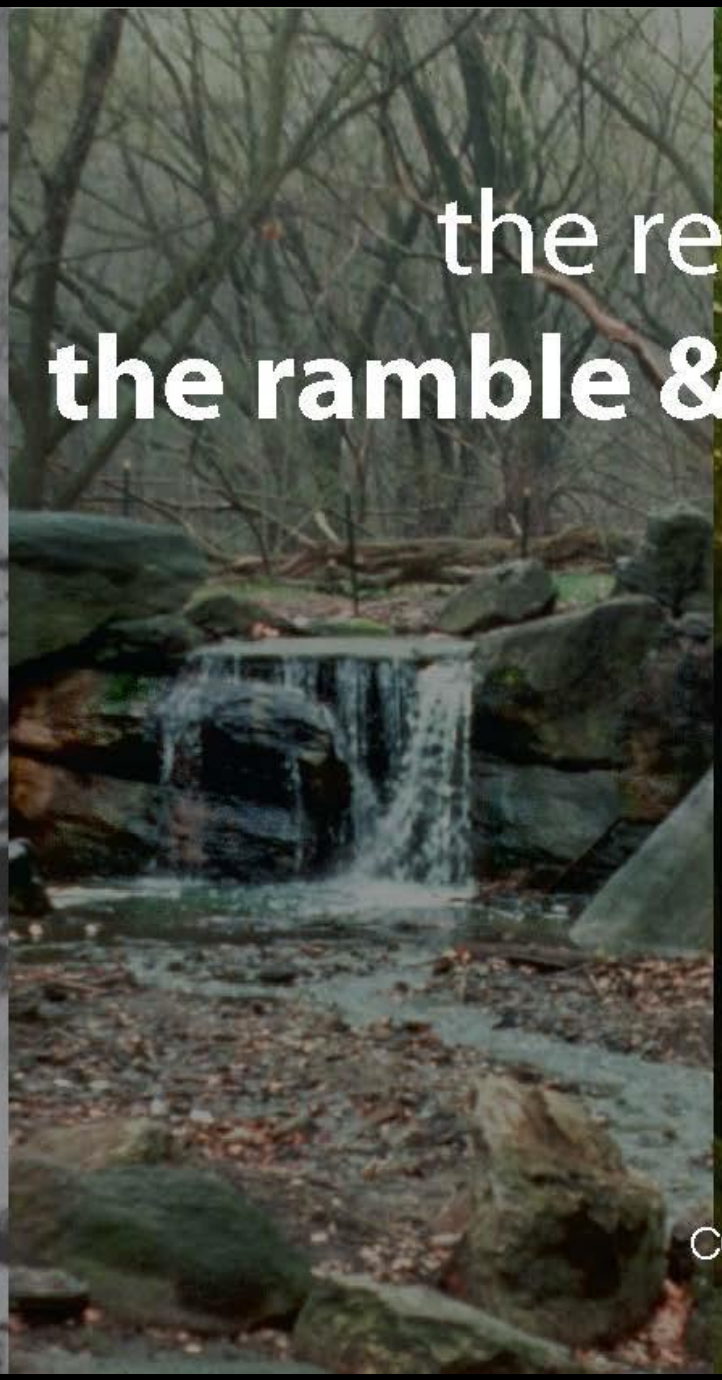
Mrs. Barlow said, however, that it had been a mistake to allow many trees to be cut down recently in the meadow south of the 79th Street transverse near the Belvedere Castle. While she said she was not certain how many trees had been cut down, members of the New York City Audubon Society said there had been about 20, including the persimmon and the northern magnolia.

"I don't think I've handled this brilliantly," Mrs. Barlow said. "Bruce Kelly, the landscape architect who did

Continued on Page B4, Column 1


N
LADIES' POND
LOCUST BRIDGE
WEST DRIVE
LADIES PAVILION
BALCONY BRIDGE
OAK BRIDGE
BANK ROCK BAY
LAKE
WAGNER'S COVE
THE CAVE
THE ISLAND
BOW BRIDGE
CHERRY HILL
THE GILL
THE RAMBLE
72ND ST
THE POINT
BETHESDA TERRACE
CROSS DRIVE
LOEB BOATHOUSE
EAST DRIVE





the restoration of **the ramble & the ravine**

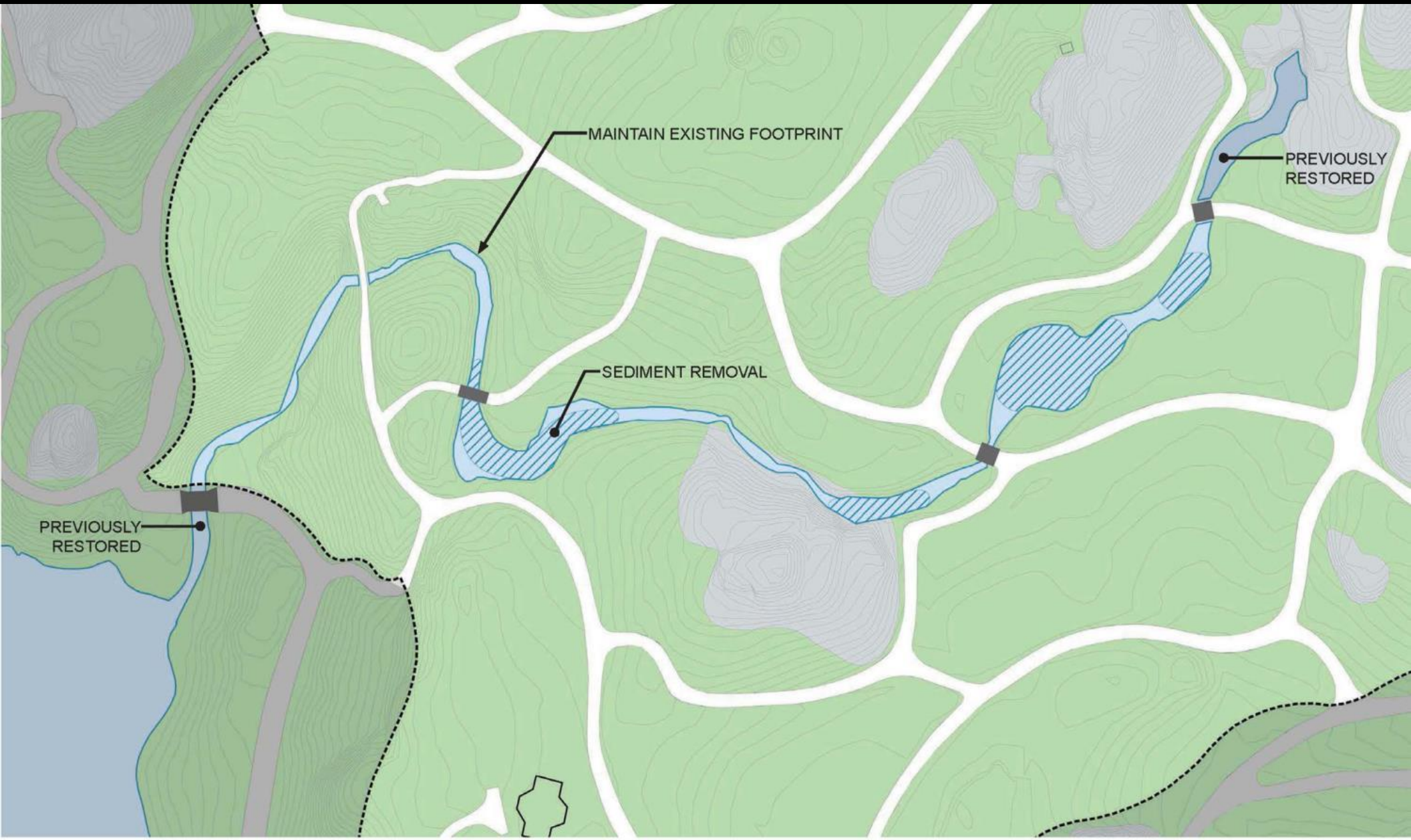
COMMUNITY BOARD REVIEW

CENTRAL PARK CONSERVANCY
central to the park

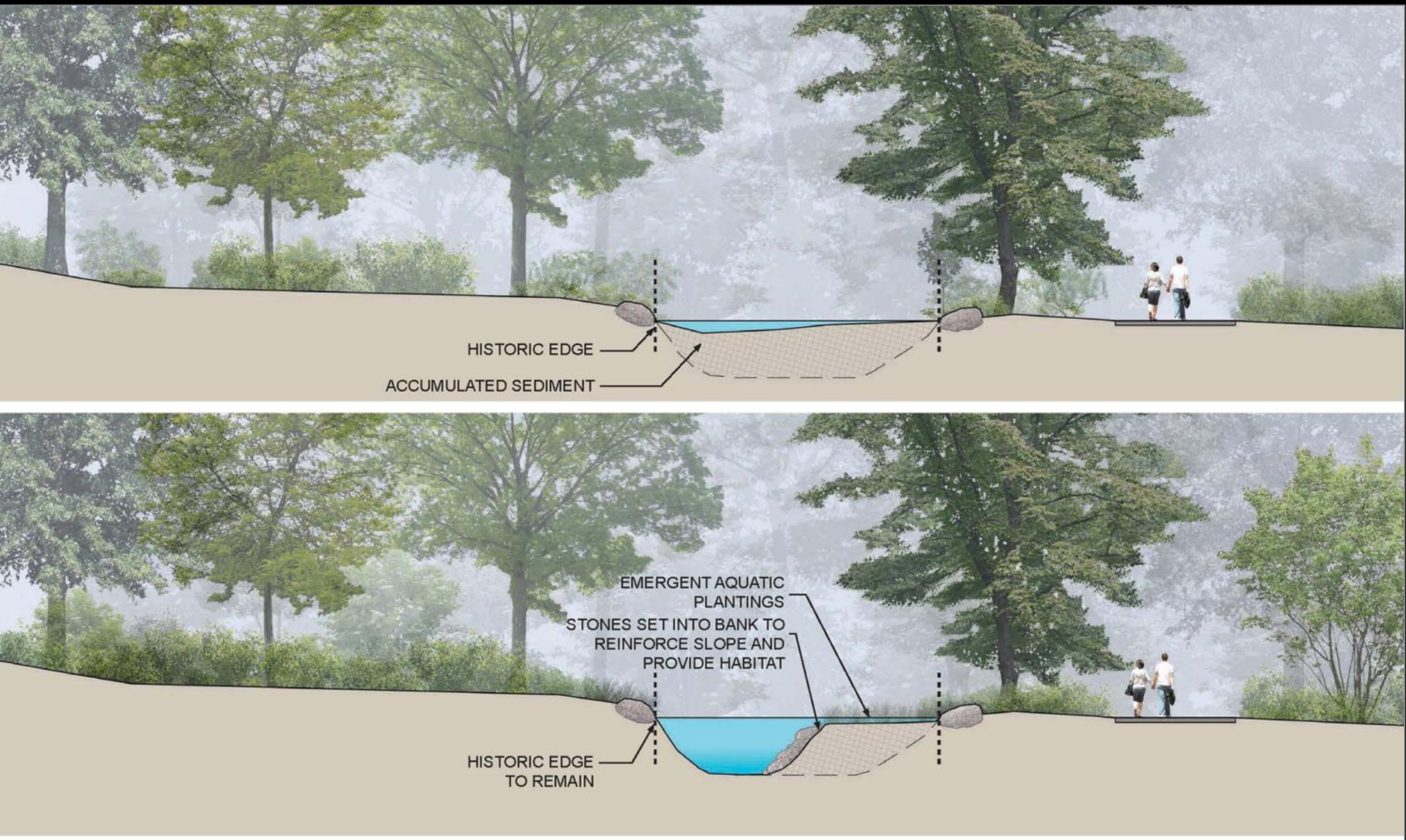
woodlands management program

goals

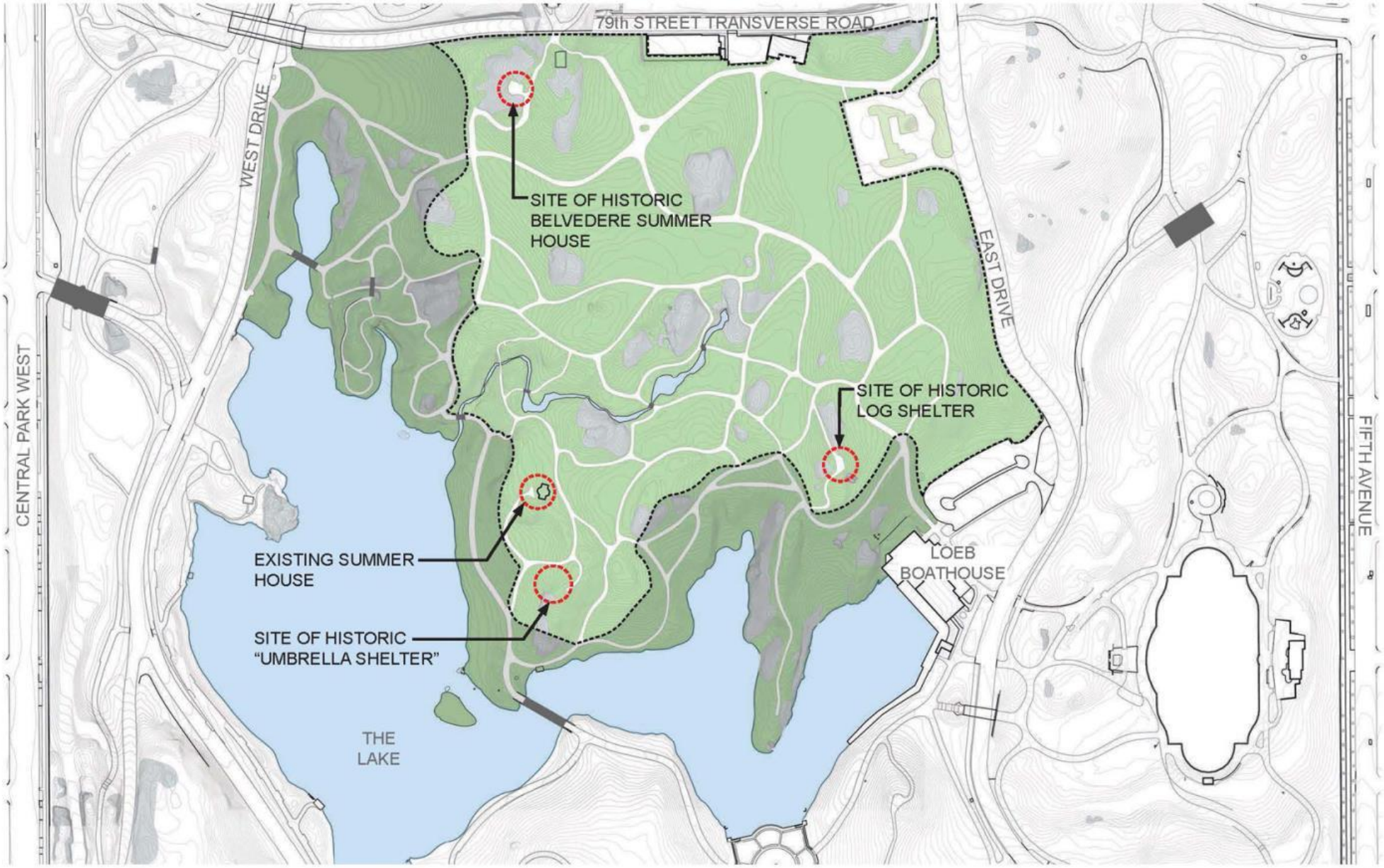
- Continue renewing woodland landscapes neglected through much of the 20th century by removing invasive species, stabilizing soils, and reestablishing native plant communities
- Continue revegetation of landscapes impacted by severe weather events
- Rebuild aging paths and infrastructure to support continued stewardship and increased use of the woodland landscapes
- Restore scenic and rustic features that contribute to the unique character of these landscapes



THE RAMBLE | THE GILL | PROPOSED WORK

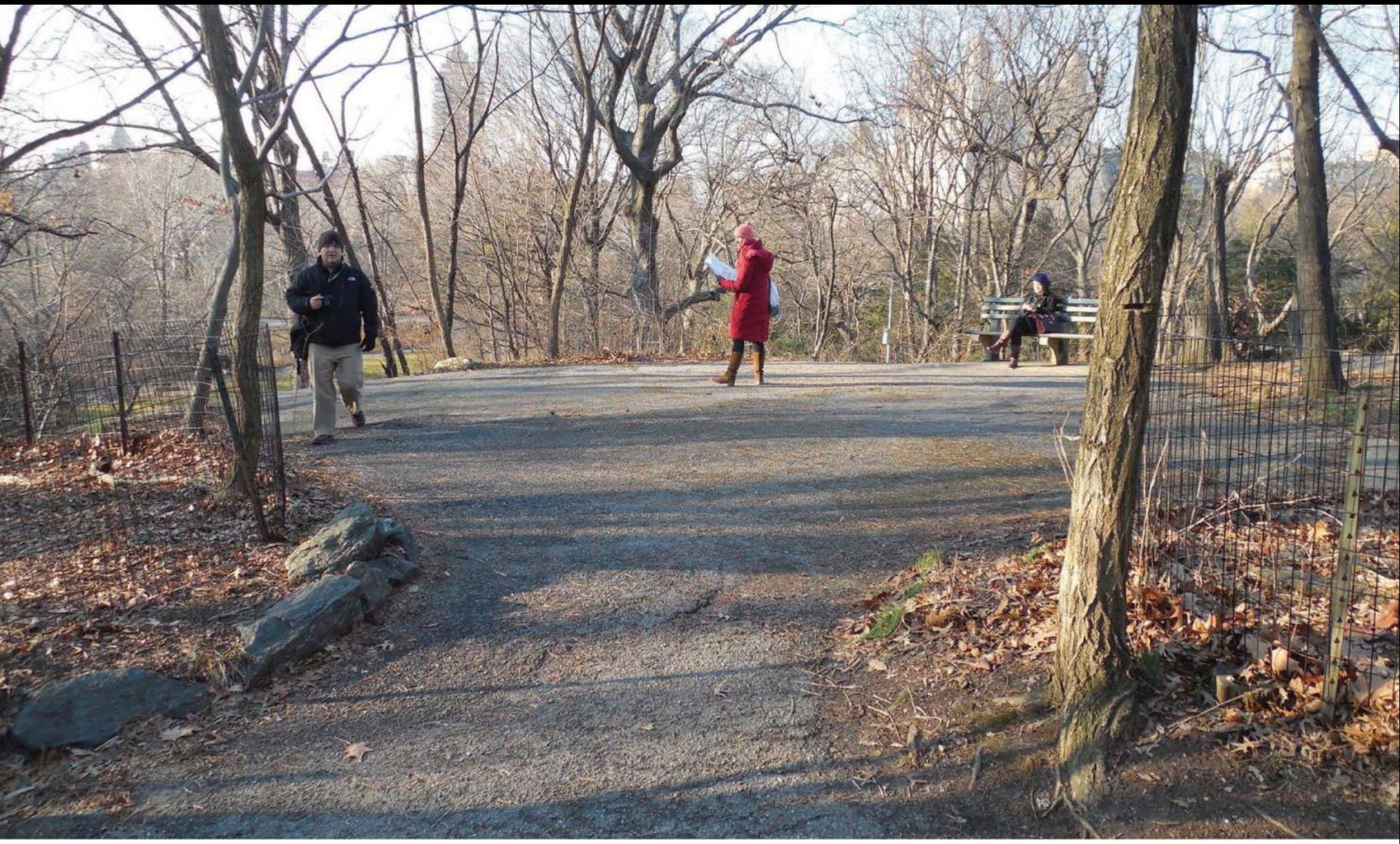


THE RAMBLE | THE GILL | MAINTAIN HISTORIC FOOTPRINT, VARYING DEPTH

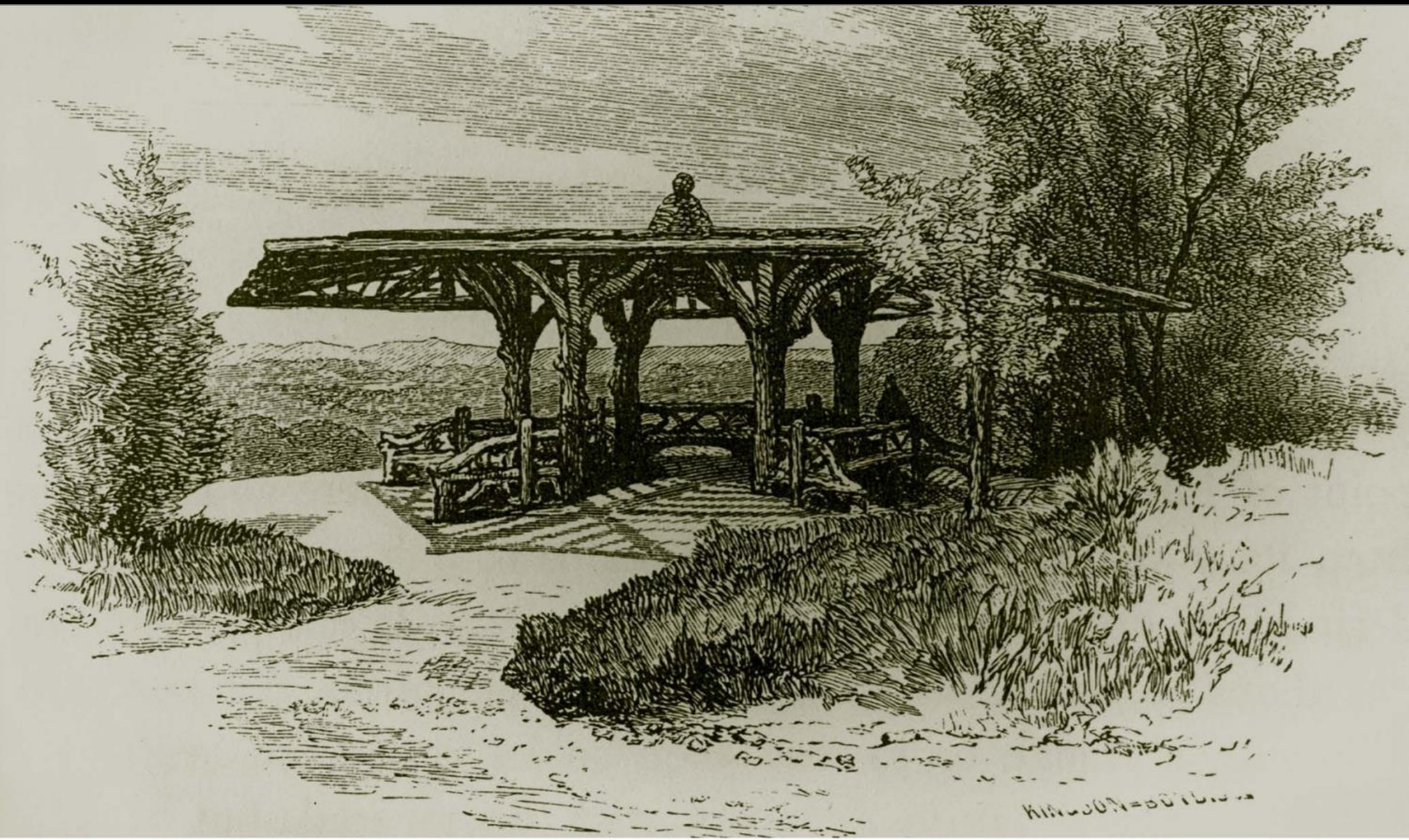


THE RAMBLE | RUSTIC FEATURES

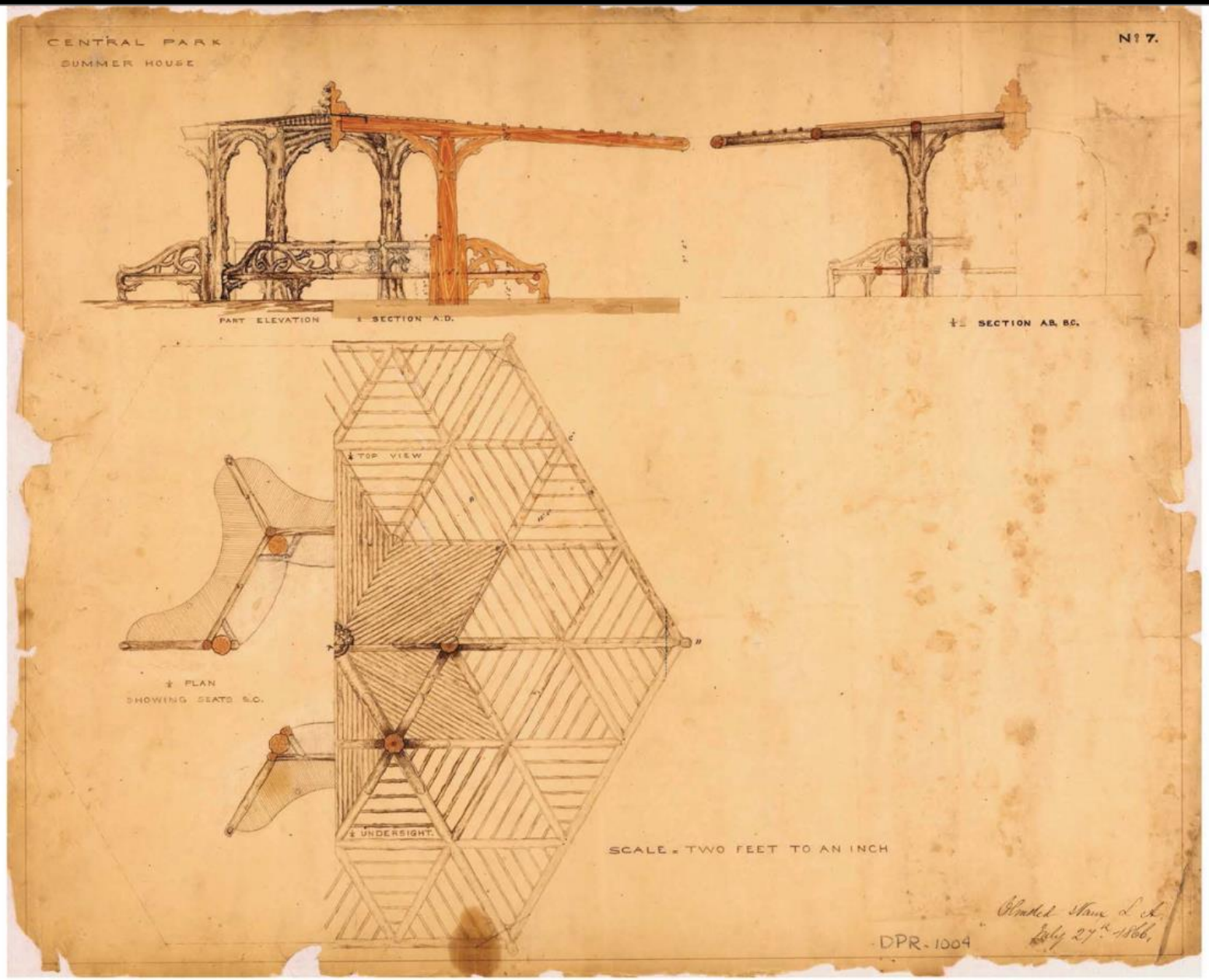
THE RAMBLE FEATURES | BELVEDERE SUMMERHOUSE, C. 1866



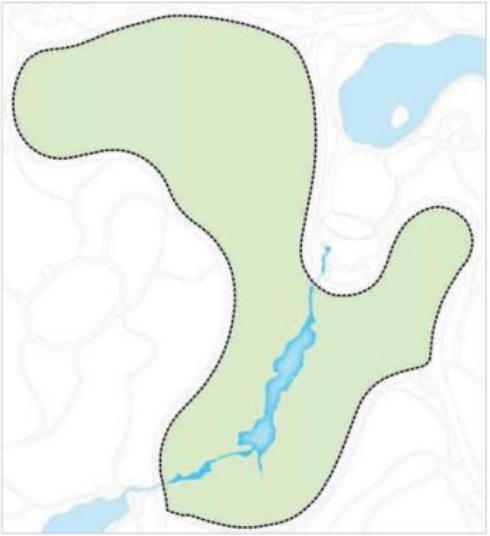
THE RAMBLE FEATURES | BELVEDERE SUMMERHOUSE SITE



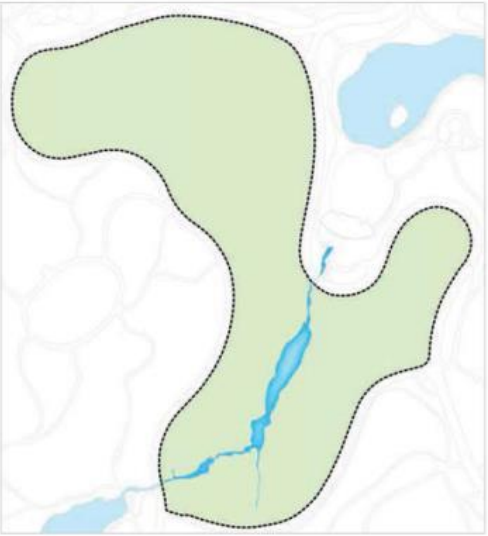
BELVEDERE SUMMERHOUSE | HISTORIC RENDERING



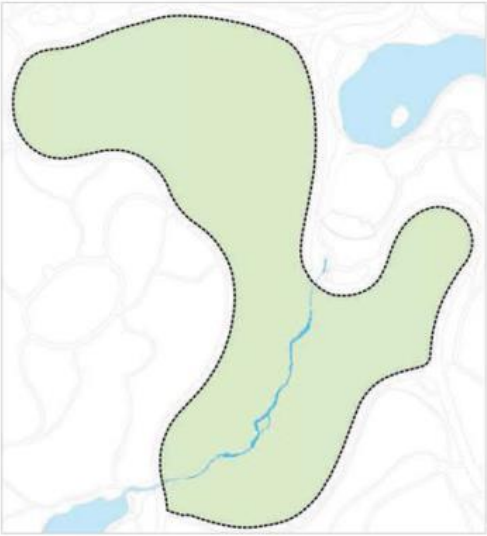
BELVEDERE SUMMERHOUSE | ORIGINAL DRAWING



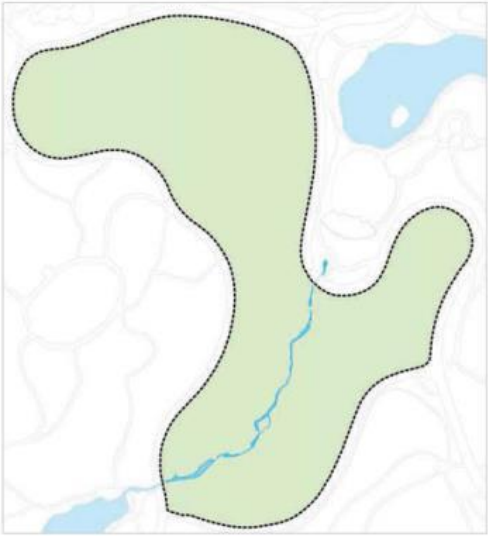
1873



1934



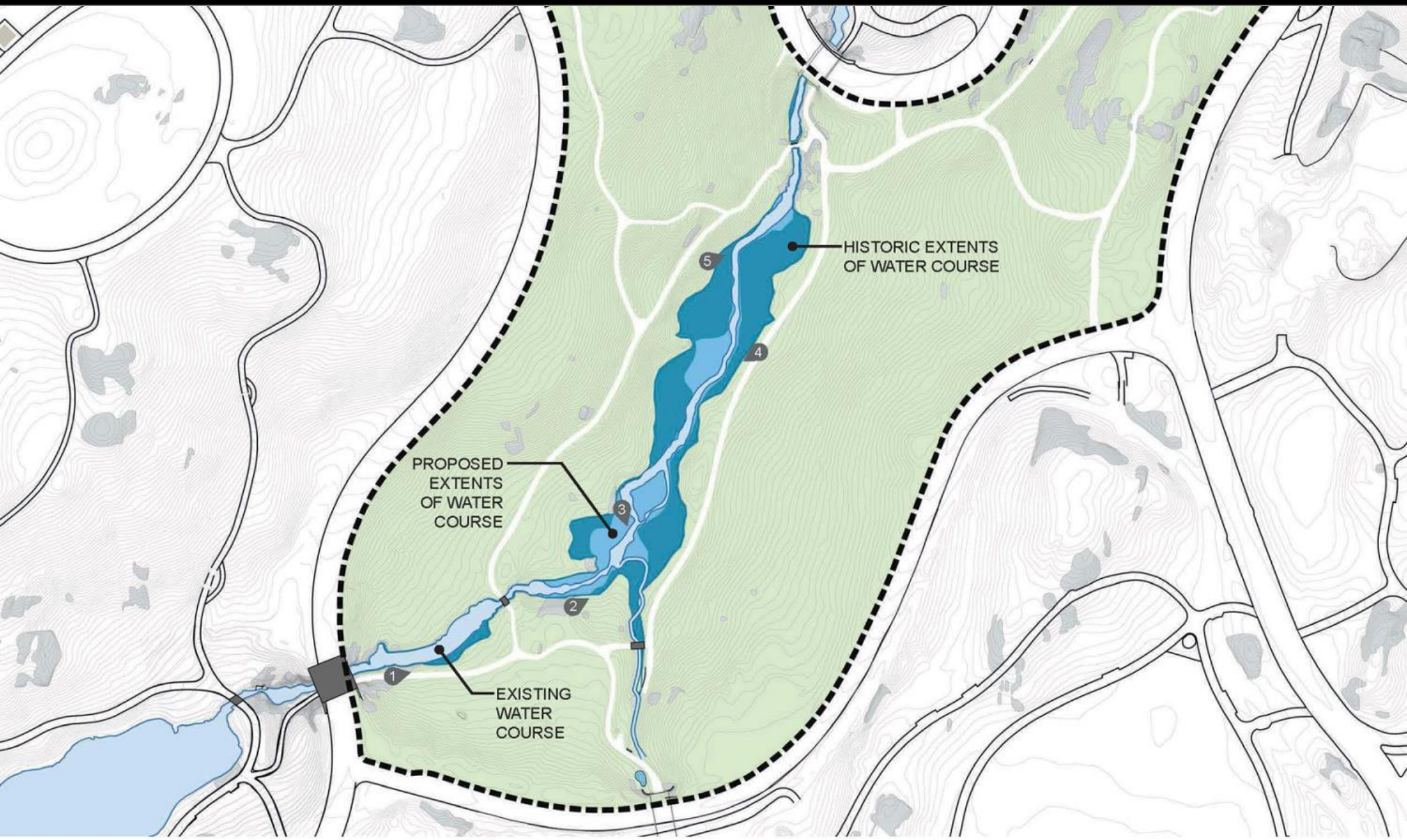
1982



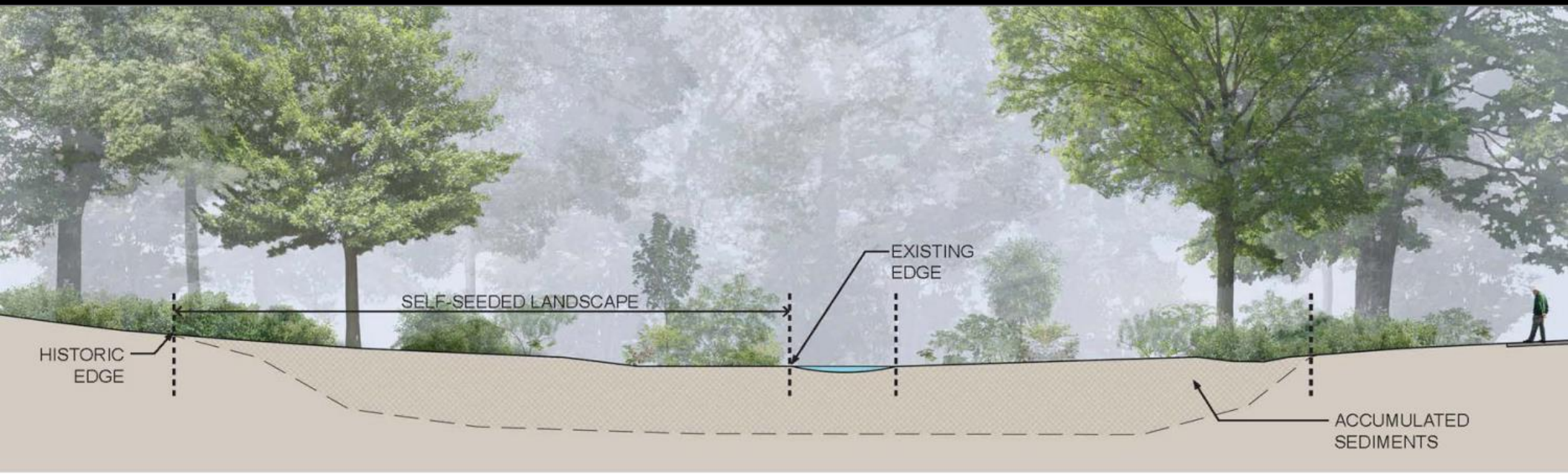
2013

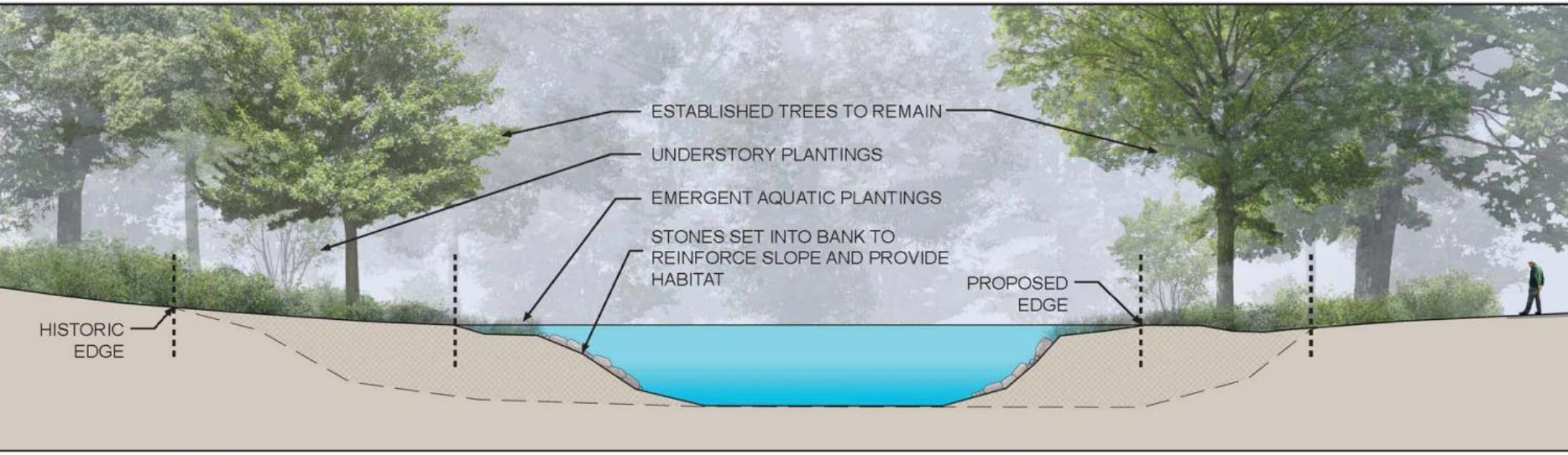
THE RAVINE | THE LOCH | WATER COURSE COMPARISON

THE RAVINE | THE LOCH | EXISTING CONDITIONS

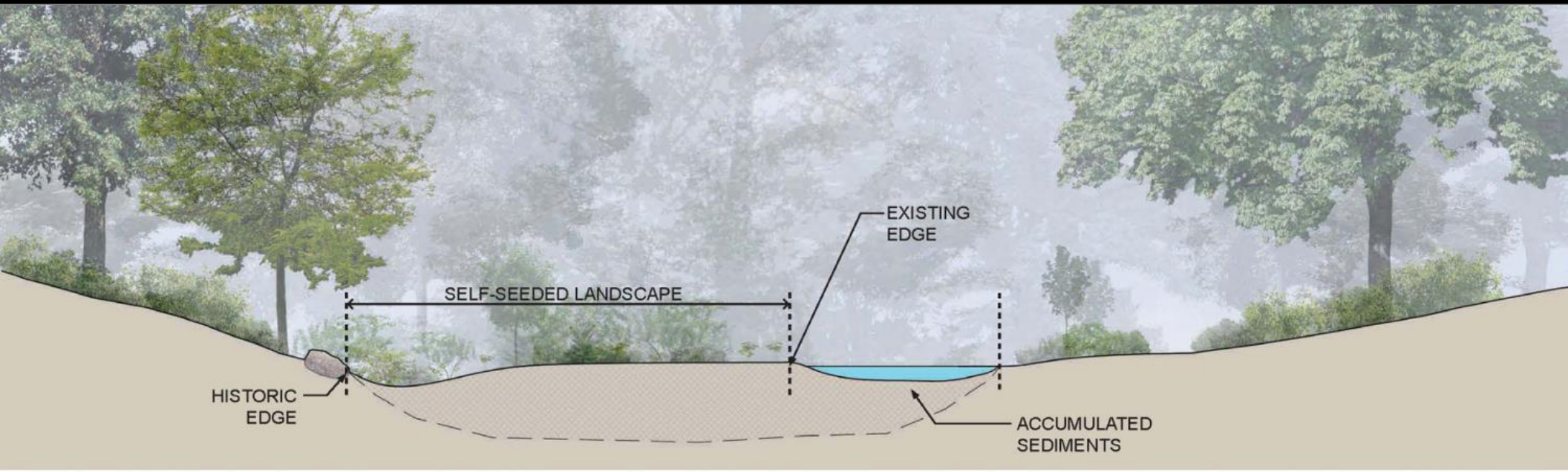


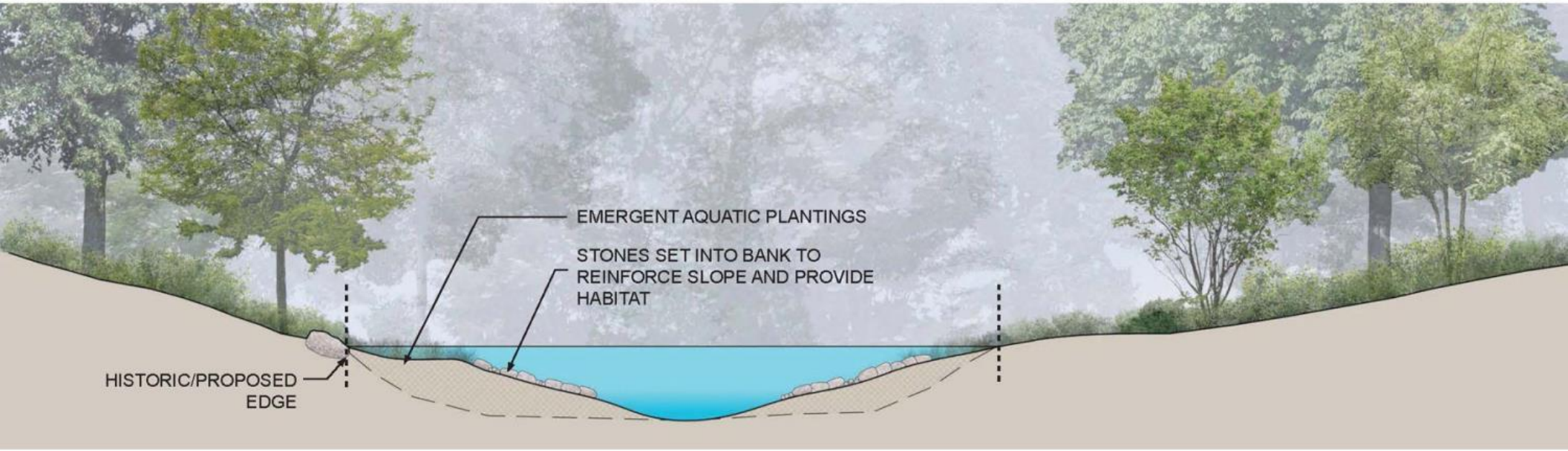
THE RAVINE | THE LOCH | EXISTING, HISTORIC AND PROPOSED





THE RAVINE | THE LOCH | WIDEN & DEEPEN THE PROFILE





THE RAVINE | THE LOCH | RESTORE HISTORIC FOOTPRINT

Case Study: Playgrounds

CENTRAL PARK CONSERVANCY
central to the park

Community Engagement in Project Planning & Design

Institute for Urban Parks | Urban Park Management Seminar Series

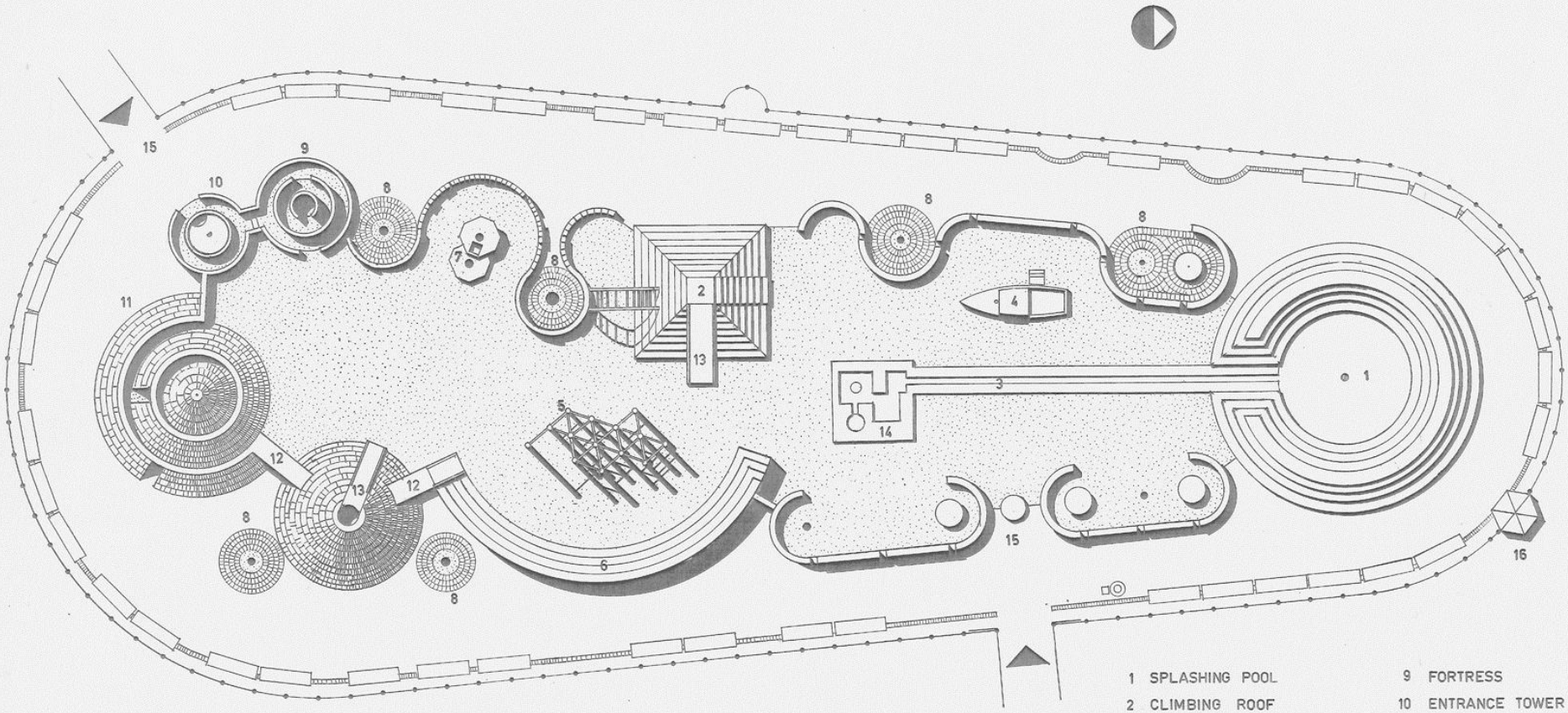
PLAY AREAS TO LINE CENTRAL PARK'S RIM

Work Will Begin Today on First of 19 to Be Built Near Various Entrances.

IDEA CALLED COMPROMISE

Moses Hopes It Will Meet the Demands for Children and Still Preserve Beauty.

In an effort to solve the problem of keeping Central Park an oasis of lawns and shrubbery without curtailing the recreation of small children, the Park Department will begin the construction today of nineteen playgrounds around the



1 SPLASHING POOL
2 CLIMBING ROOF
3 WATER CHANNEL
4 BOAT
5 CLIMBING POLES
6 AMPHITHEATER
7 TREE HOUSES
8 TREE PIT
9 FORTRESS
10 ENTRANCE TOWER
11 MOUND WITHIN A MOUND
12 TUNNEL
13 SLIDE
14 WADING POOLS
15 ENTRANCE
16 PUMP HOUSE

ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND FOR CENTRAL PARK

ESTEE AND JOSEPH LAUDER FOUNDATION - SPONSOR

RICHARD DATTNER AIA - ARCHITECT

Adventure vs. Safety in Playground Renovation Battle

When the Adventure Playground was built in 1966 on the west side of Central Park near 67th Street, it was a bold experiment in unprogrammed play with none of the usual playground staples like swings and seesaws. Instead, it featured mazes, a wooden pyramid, a splashing pool, a treehouse and plenty of cement and sand. It was designed to encourage children to explore, get dirty, and occasionally, suffer bruises.

Over the years, the playground has deteriorated, and Michael R. Bloomberg, president of Bloomberg Financial Markets, recently donated $500,000 for renovation. Now the question is: What kind of renovation?

Some older mothers and grandmothers who raised children there want any restoration to hew quite closely to the original playground's design and materials. But some younger mothers whose children currently use the playground would like to see a major overhaul, including the installation of new equipment (although they are undecided about specific items), removal of the pyramid and installation of a less treacherous climbing structure, railings around the treehouse, and brighter colors throughout.

"I think nostalgia is getting in the way of practicality," said Tami Aisenson, whose children are 3 and 6. "My kids have fun there; they use lots of imagination, which is the point, but there are too many hard surfaces."

The older mothers and their supporters say that the current users lack a long-term concern for the playground. "The life span of a playground user is six years, maybe," said Arlene Simon, who is leading a group to preserve the playground. On the other side, she said, are "people who come back 20 and 30 years later, people who have a commitment to the playground for a long time."

The Central Park Conservancy, the nonprofit group that runs the park along with the Parks Department, has held a few informal but increasingly contentious meetings with playground users and community members. At one last month, participants voted 22 to 7 against the Conservancy's proposed redesign, which includes replacing the pyramid with a ziggurat climber, removing climbing poles, putting railings on the treehouse and installing a rubberized safety surface. Some wooden structures would be replaced with metal and plastic.

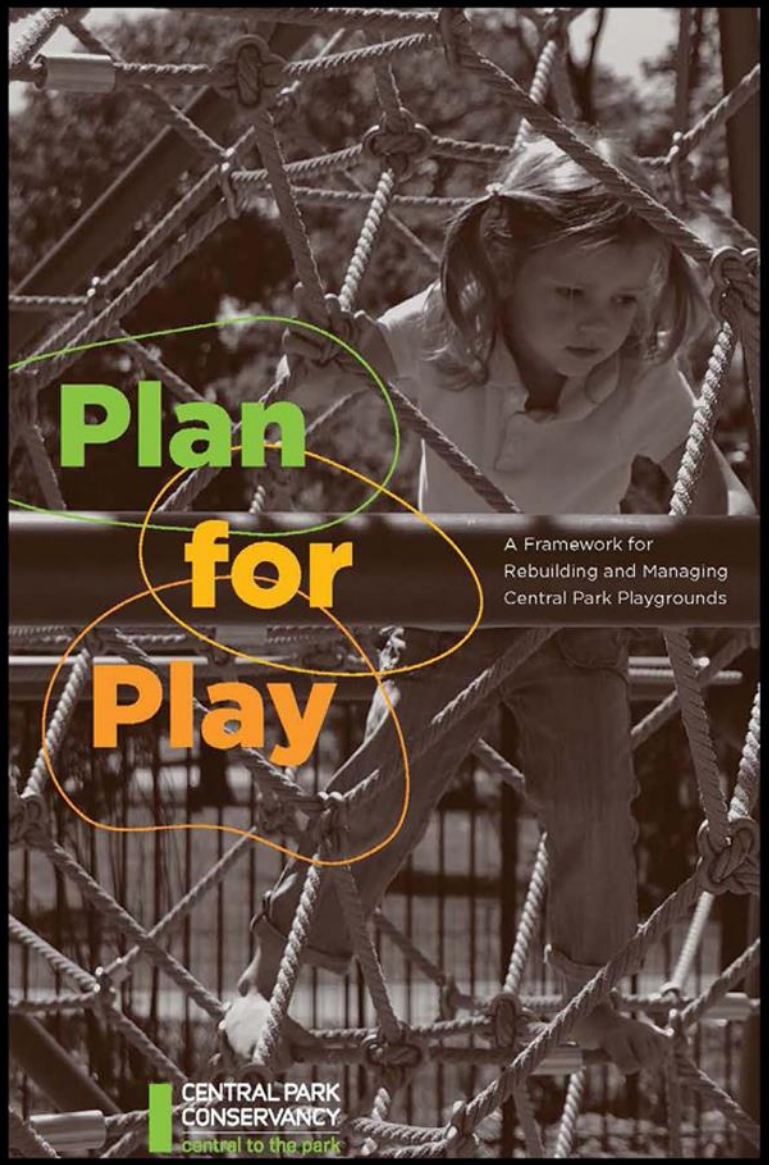
"The community thought it compromised the original organic intent of the playground," said Michael Conard, an urban design professor whose children played there when they were younger.

A Conservancy spokeswoman, Deborah Kirschner, said other modifications would be studied before the design is presented to the five local boards surrounding the park next month. The proposed changes face a lengthy review not only by the boards, which act as advisers, but also by the Landmarks Preservation and Arts Commissions, whose approvals are necessary. *JANET ALLON*

Brian K. Diggs/The New York Times

As playground debates go on, Morgan Durkel and Lilah Silverman still enjoyed a slide.

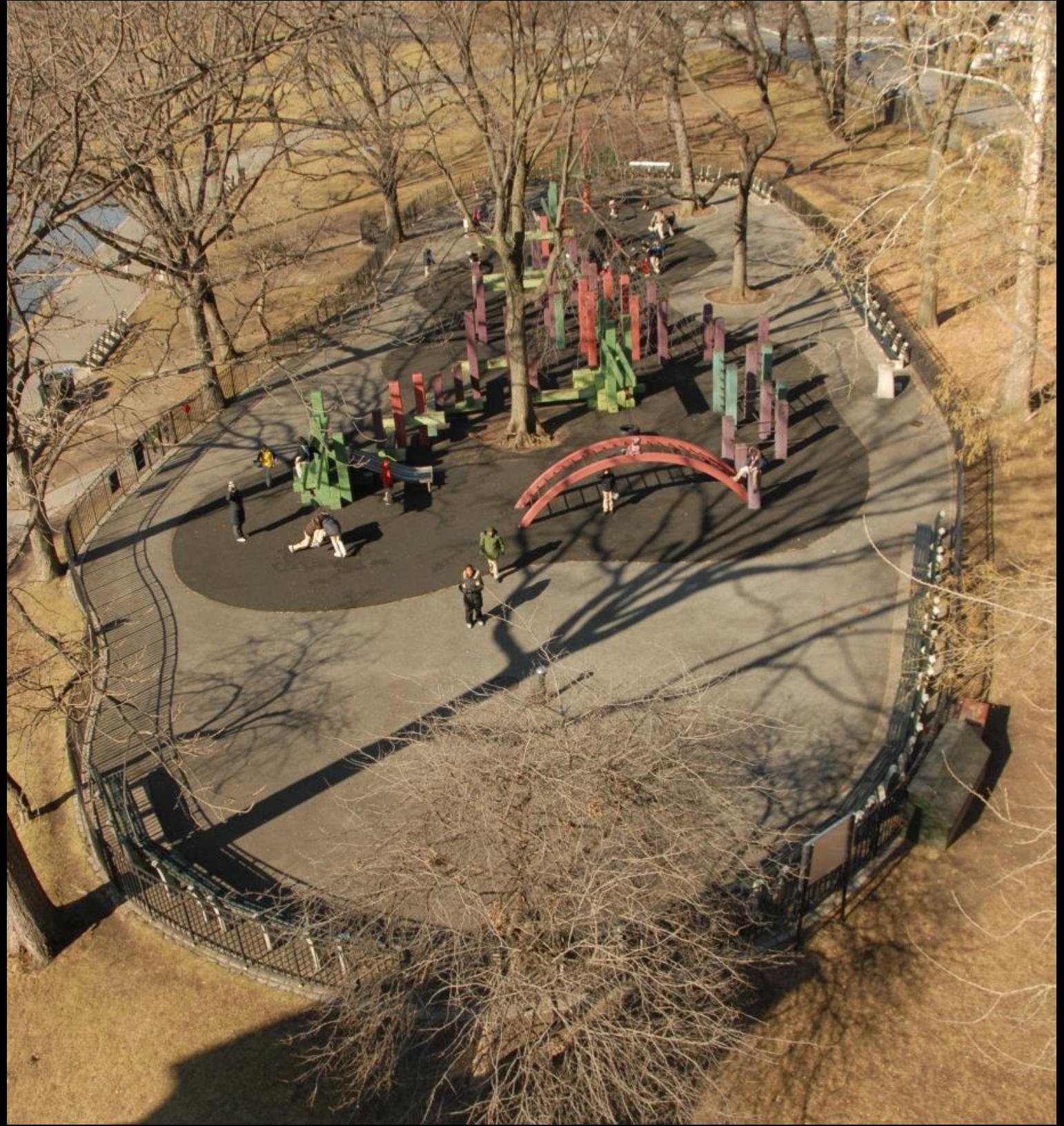

XA 9
165CFM

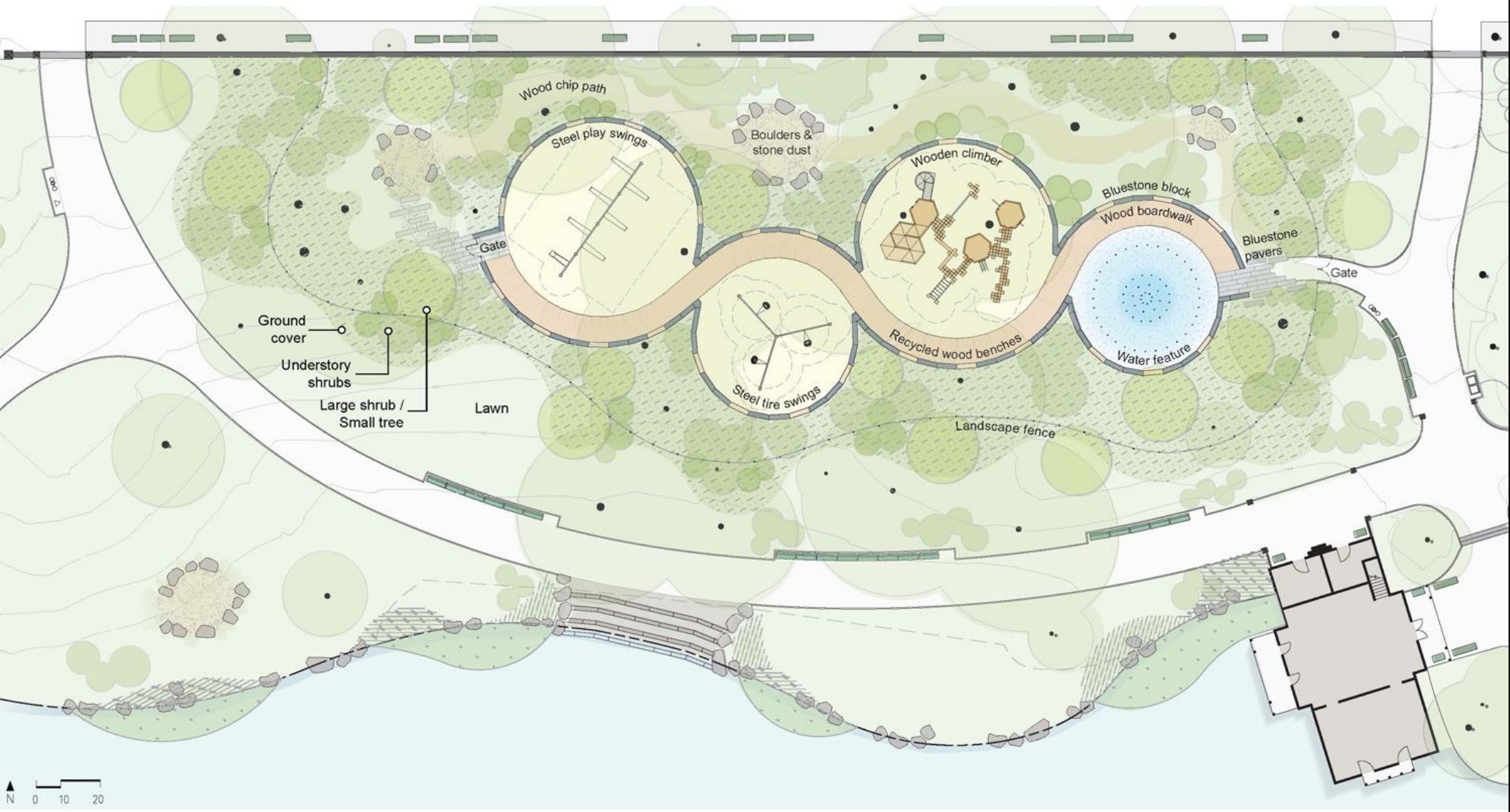


www.planforplay.org

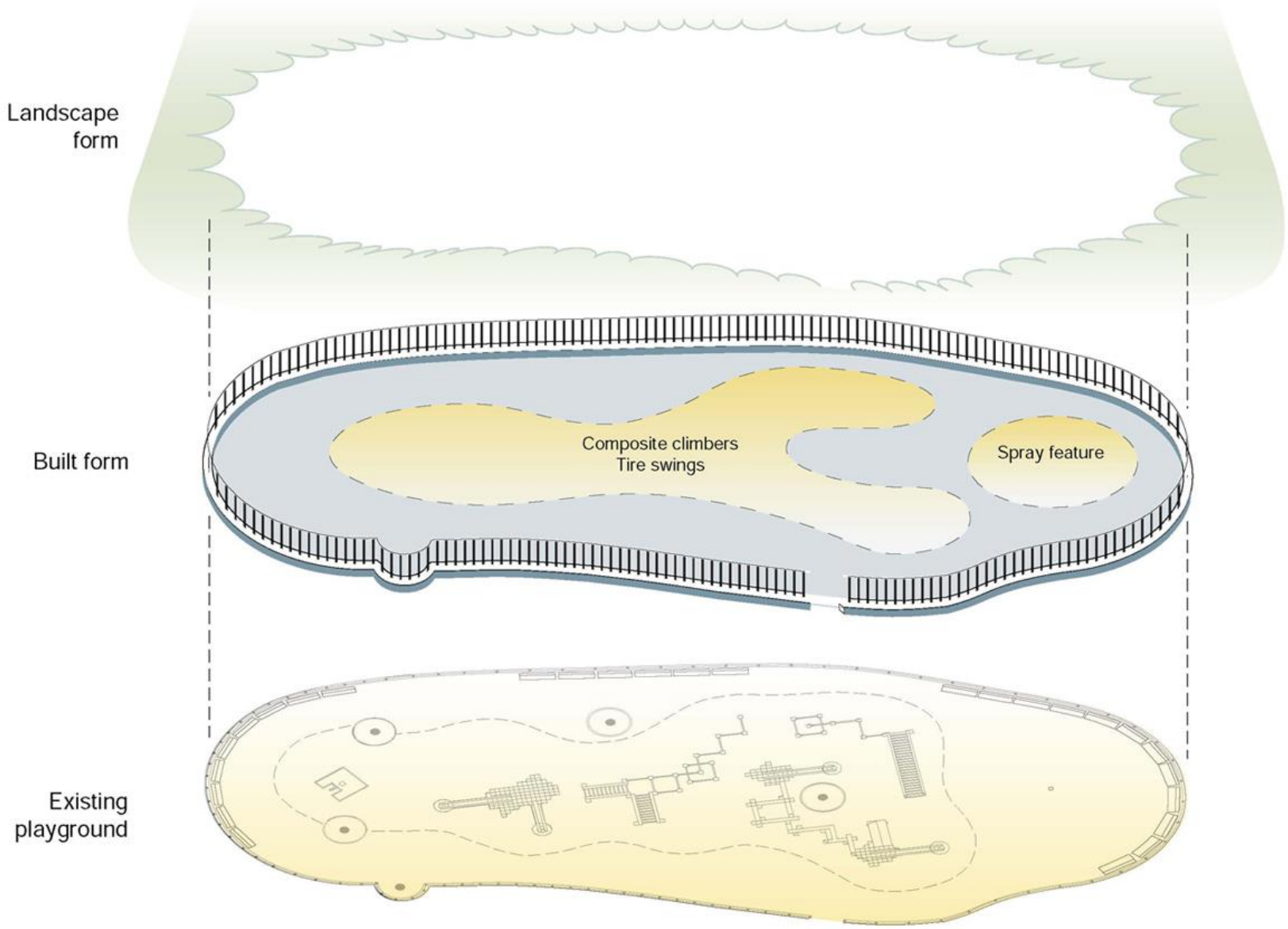
Parkwide Goals

- Improve relationship between the playgrounds and the Park.
- Enhance the quality and variety of play experiences.
- Maximize user accessibility.
- Ensure compliance with current safety standards.
- Preserve unique and successful aspects of existing designs.
- Practice sustainable design and construction.
- Design innovative solutions.

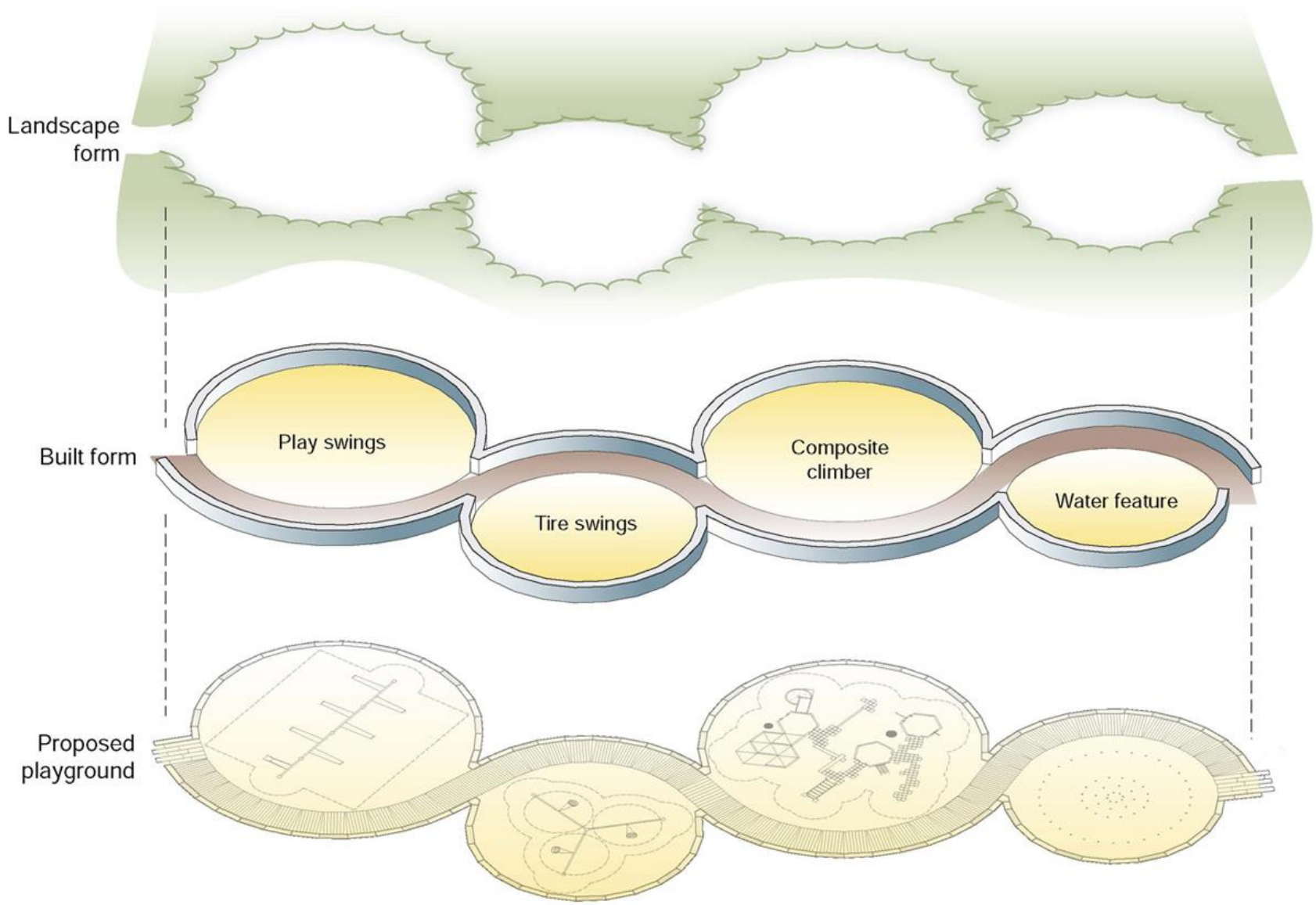




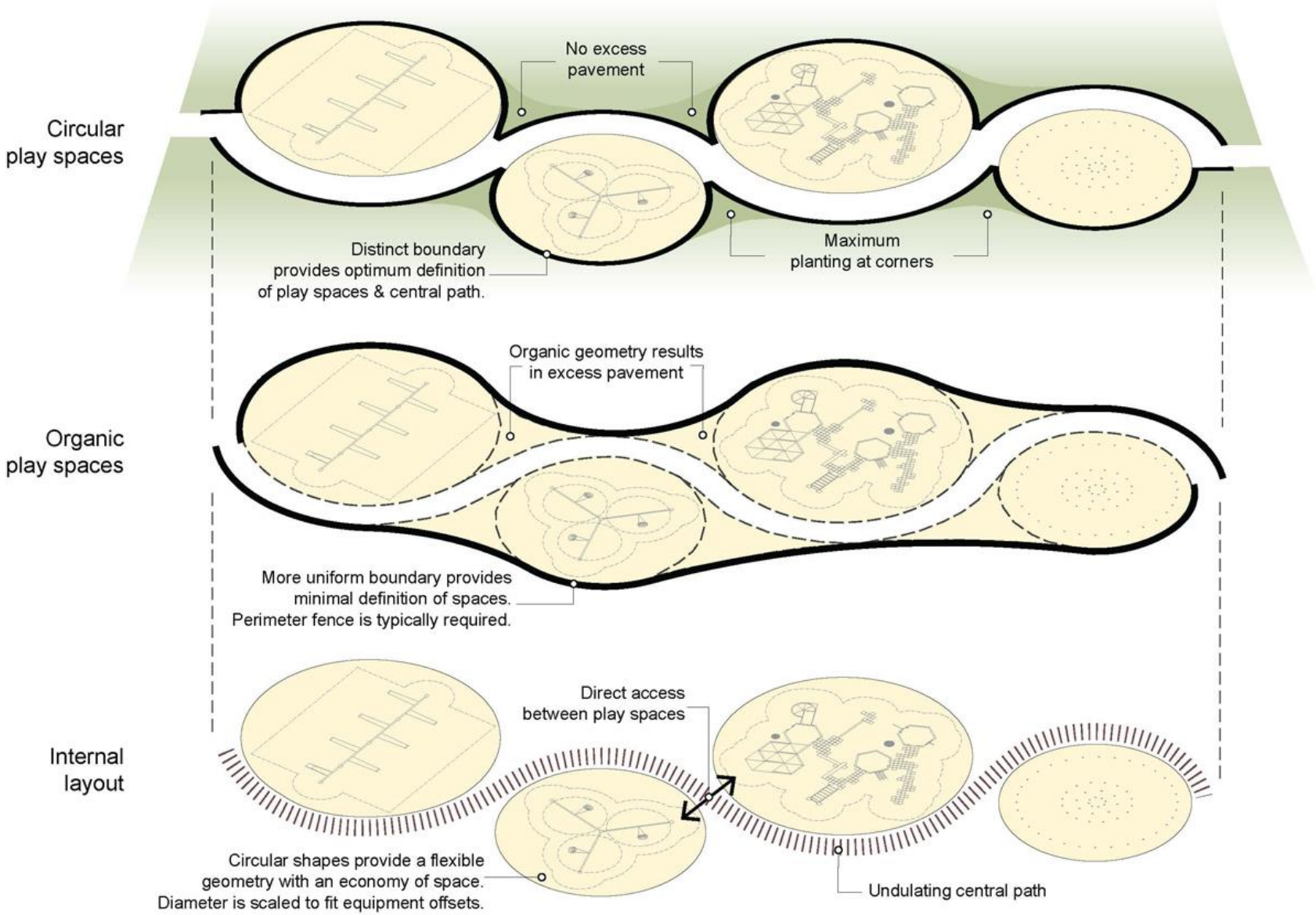
Preliminary Playground Plan



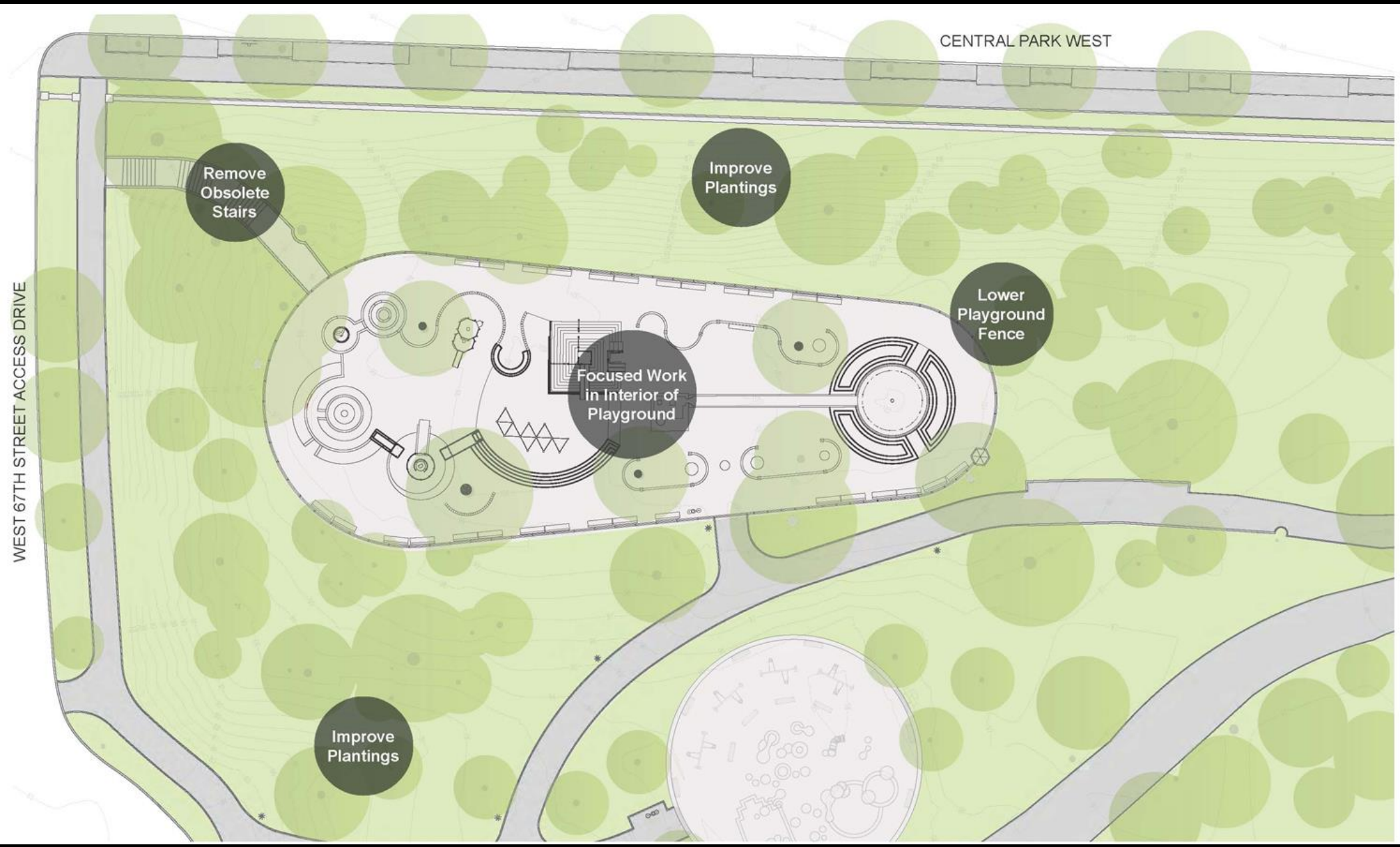
Existing Playground Diagram



Proposed Playground Diagram



Spatial Analysis

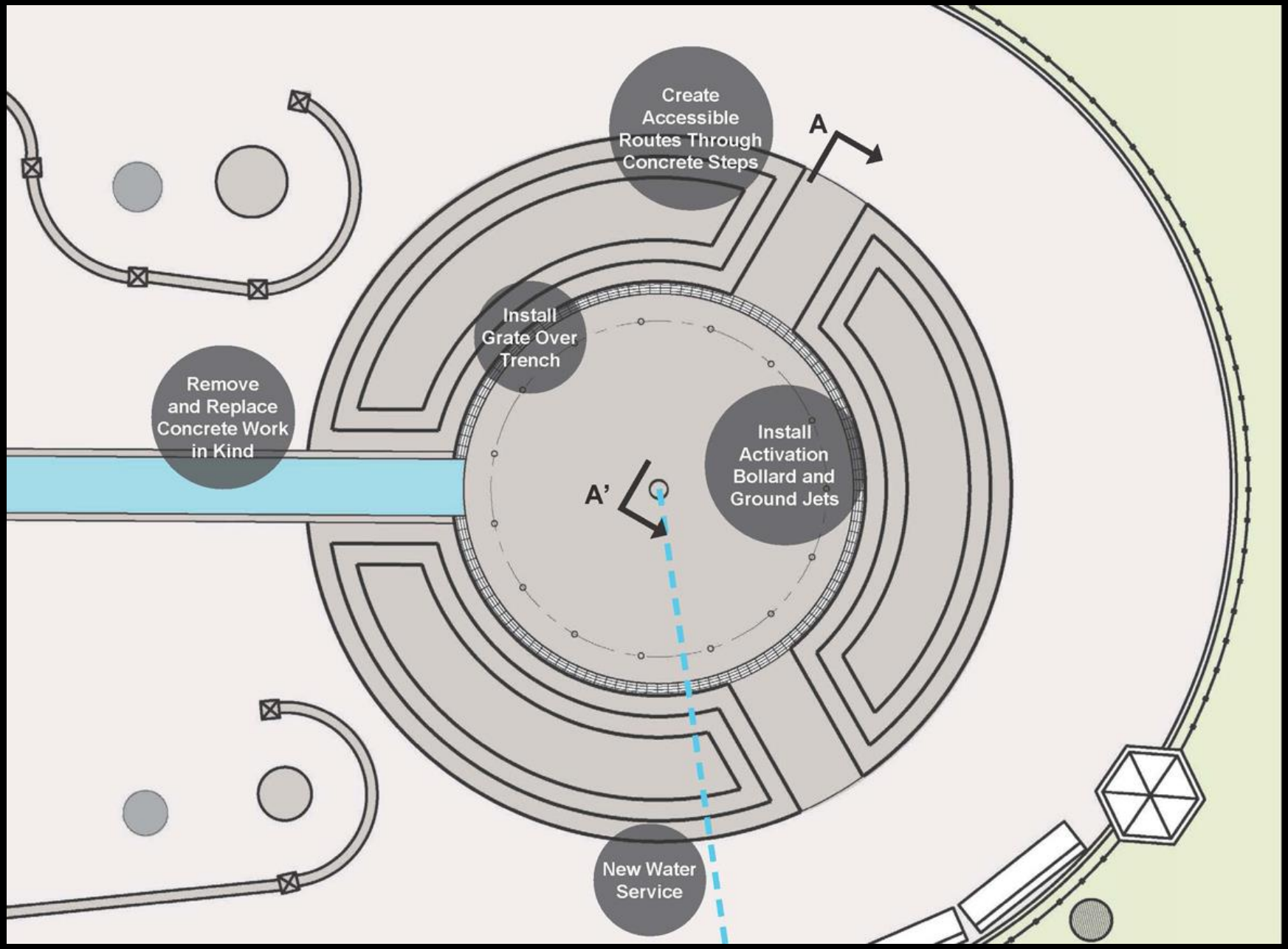


Playground Perimeter Modifications

Adventure Playground

Existing Playground - North End

Adventure Playground

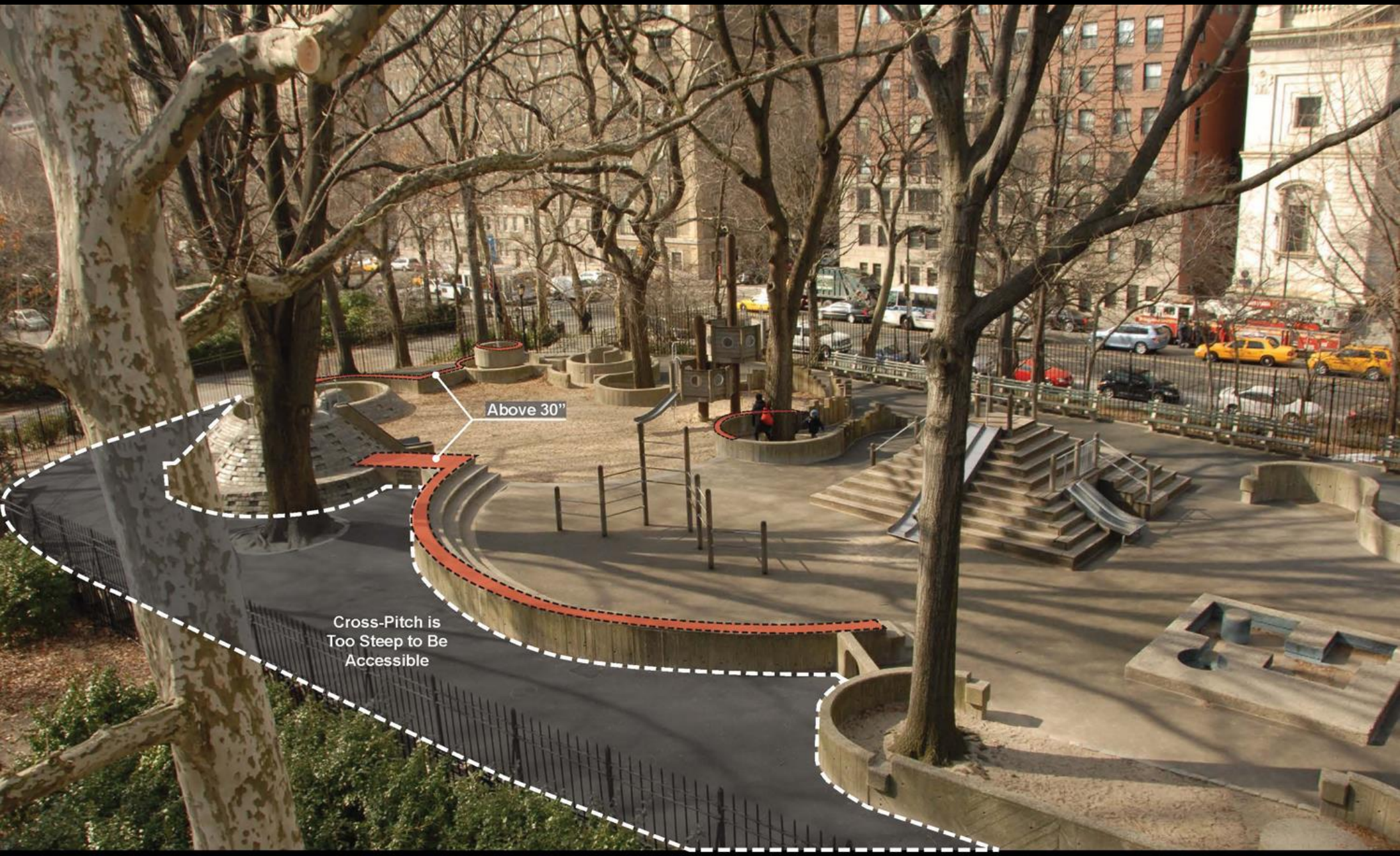


Modifications to Water Feature

Adventure Playground

Modifications to Water Feature

Adventure Playground



Existing Playground - South End

Adventure Playground

Conical Climber - Existing Conditions

Adventure Playground

Modifications to Conical Climber

Adventure Playground

CONCLUSION: Key Take-Aways

Build relationships and listen

Foster sustained connections to the community (not just engaging when there's a project) and respect for diverse points of view.

Demonstrate expertise

Be grounded in thorough knowledge of / experience with the site, its history, the community that uses it, relevant design constraints and opportunities, and maintenance and operations considerations.

Do the right thing

Evaluate alternatives rigorously. Question and test design solutions from every angle *before* you propose them as the right thing to do.

Illustrate and persuade

Share your thought process in a way that is clear and compelling and helps others reach the same conclusions you have.