Richmond Recreation Center

Developing a Community Vision

The parcel is the one I talked about with the large flat rocky/gravel top where they are going to put the panels, adjacent to route 95.

Prepared For: Town of Richmond Recreational Needs Assessment Committee, Denise Stetson, Town Planner and Committee Chair

Prepared By: Robert Barella and Allison Desbonnet under the direction of Professor Will Green, Department of Landscape Architecture, University of Rhode Island, Kingston,

Report Date: April 2014

Acknowledgements

The Richmond Recreation Center project would not have been nearly as successful without the help of a number of individuals from the town, the profession, and various stakeholder groups. We would like to take a moment to personally thank those who dedicated their time and energy to this important endeavor.

We would like to start by thanking Denise Stetson, Richmond's Town Planner, for providing our class with this opportunity and being such a large part of the process. Nathan Socha, URI Landscape Architecture alumni, also helped from start to finish with any and all design advice and review comments. We would like to thank Joseph Reddish, Richmond Town Council President, for organizing public meetings and giving us his insightful input. Erin Muir and Kyle Alfred, both URI Landscape Architecture alumni, helped by critiquing our conceptual designs during formal and informal presentations. Michael Bradley, URI's GIS Analyst and adjunct professor, assisted students during the analysis phase of this project.

A special thanks goes out to each classmate of the LAR 444 Design Studio for all of their hard work: Nick Caswell, Brianna Cato, Dan Danvers, Amanda Gaal, Heather Hussey, David Johnson, Ramon Ibarlucea, Mark Kissel, Kimberly Kline, John Luca, Dennis Staton, Brandon Wilbur and Nick Zartarian.

Finally, we thank our professor Will Green for organizing the opportunity to work on a public project while gaining professional experience.

Allison Desbonnet and Robert Barella, Senior Landscape Architecture students

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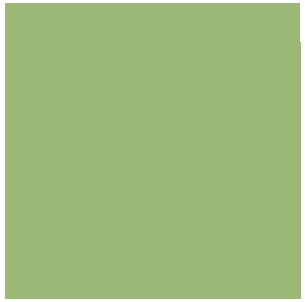
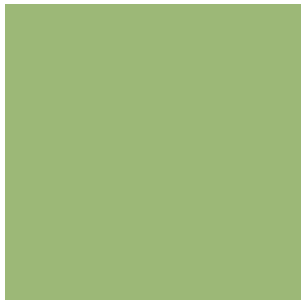




Executive Summary

Service learning is an important component in the BLA curriculum at the University of Rhode Island. Each year classes partner with towns, communities and non-profit organizations while working on projects where design is explored and students experience what it is like to perform as professionals. This project titled “Richmond Recreation Center, Developing a Community Vision”, documents one such project undertaken by the LAR 444 Design Studio. The project grew from a conversation with Richmond Town Planner, Denise Stetson, who reported that a forty-seven acre parcel of land had been donated to the town. MS Stetson inquired whether a class might be available to evaluate the site’s potential use as a community/recreation center. The senior design studio is a class in which students work with a community and help develop alternative design scenarios for particularly challenging sites and conditions. Following a meeting and site visit, it was determined that this land parcel would provide the challenges and complexity necessary for the senior sustainable design studio.

The project began in early October when the students met with representatives from the town to discuss the project and the town’s expectations. This kick-off meeting was followed by a site visit where together the group explored the nearby site and pointed out existing conditions. Shortly thereafter, the students returned to the site to begin the inventory and analysis phase of the project. During this phase, students examine the physical site and review existing digital resources, reports and regulations. They also meet with neighbors, stakeholders and officials as they evaluate the property and assess user needs. This phase informs the students about key issues and concerns and leads to the preparation of illustrative analysis boards indicating opportunities and constraints that will influence design decisions. The work is later presented at a public workshop, which is an evening for sharing and collecting information. This year’s class used clicker technology for facilitating an entertaining interactive preference survey.

On completion of their analysis and following an assessment of the workshop, the students highlighted the opportunities and constraints they had discovered and developed a list of programmatic elements that would drive their designs. Major constraints included the sizable wetlands running through the site, easements for drainage and water, an approved road location and layout, and traffic on Route 138, which makes for hazardous conditions for bicyclists and pedestrians. Unique features and opportunities included the site’s landform and exposed ledge, existing views, vegetation and habitats, the site’s central location and proximity to recreation and public land uses including a golf course, an elementary school, and the town hall with its small green. Nearness to neighborhoods, a potential large residential development on an abutting parcel and ease of access, seem to provide a unique opportunity for weaving these uses together and creating a recreation/community center district.

To illustrate the potential, students developed three master plans for the site. For two of them, the students chose to include a vacant six acre parcel of land conveniently located between the site and another town owned property. The six plus acre piece of land was available for purchase and could accommodate a larger building footprint within the proposed development. Each of the designs included items such as community buildings for seniors, children and teens. There were active and passive recreation areas, paths and trails. There was frisbee golf, a sculpture garden, play structures, baseball fields, a multi-purpose field and one for soccer. There were boardwalks through wetlands and decks on buildings where outdoor classes could be held. There were amphitheaters, picnic areas, an outdoor theater and community garden. Students highlighted the local ecology, provided alternative energy, and emphasized the need to collect and infiltrate storm water on site.

The work was presented before a large gathering, which included the Town Council President, council members, and members of the community. While this report is not a final word, it illustrates potential uses for this centrally located site, and it suggests that there are considerable opportunities to provide recreational, community and ecological benefits through sensitive design that can highlight sustainable practices and materials. While the economy suggests a cautious approach, discussions on how to proceed with such a project should be held now. It is the students’ hope that these ideas can lead to physical changes that can enhance the quality of life for all members of the community.

Will Green, Professor of Landscape Architecture, URI

Introduction

URI's senior landscape architecture studio class spent a semester participating in Will Green's LAR 444 Sustainable Design Studio. Denise Stetson, Richmond's Town Planner, had approached Will Green to inquire about a potential class project that could help develop ideas for how the town should use a newly acquired piece of land. This 47-acre parcel was donated to the town by Richmond Realty Associates, owner of an abutting 294-acre parcel of land that will be the home of the future Richmond Commons. The donated parcel consists mostly of wetlands, which makes it ideal to be used as a conservation and recreation area. Stetson and the newly formed Recreational Needs Assessment Committee worked with the students to envision a healthier and more sustainable Recreation Center for the town.

Richmond, Rhode Island is a small town in Washington County and home to nearly 8,000 residents. The majority of those residents commute to work using nearby connections to Interstate 95 and Rt. 138. Along Rt. 138 there are working farms, a golf course, and shopping center; however, it is reported that the majority of traffic passes through the town without stopping. Throughout the most developed part of town, travel by foot and bicycle are not very common. This is due to the high speed of automobiles and lack of alternate path and bikeways. Richmond holds onto strong cultural ties, and is supported by a community that shows a desire to be involved in the town's advancements. This is evident through their participation in local events such as farmer's markets, county fairs, and school programs.

Our specific site location falls within what can be considered to be the town's center; however this central area lacks a cohesive core and its pieces are poorly connected. This prevents people from accessing the various elements by any means other than automobile.

Both the town and citizens identified that they would like to envision and experience a more congruent and sustainable future for Richmond. URI's senior landscape architecture students were given the opportunity to create a series of designs that would address various use and environmental issues to enhance the village and town center. The process of this project served as a valuable learning experience for all that took part.

Purpose and Goals

Purpose

The LAR 444 Senior Landscape Architecture Sustainable Design Studio aims to involve students in a hands-on service-learning project with a local community or non-profit organization. Each year, the service-learning project allows students to develop professional skills while assisting local communities to address challenging design issues. Students use the skills they have learned in classes to analyze design, visualize, interact, and present their ideas.

The Fall 2013 LAR 444 class was presented the opportunity to create a community center for the town of Richmond, Rhode Island. The goal was to create a functional hub for the community that would connect the town's existing facilities while keeping landscape preservation, ecology, and sustainable practices as important design influences.

Goals

This document was prepared for the Town of Richmond to offer residents and officials alternative design ideas pertaining to the newly- acquired land bordering the future Richmond Commons and the Richmond Elementary School. The student work illustrates the site's considerable recreation potential within a disturbed environment containing sensitive natural areas. The greatest opportunity is in establishing an integrated recreation center where a golf course, elementary school, and town hall are, and new facilities could come together in an integrated way.

This report is meant to be viewed and used by developers, business owners, planners, designers, and citizens to encourage discussion related to future developement. The images included help illustrate the possibilities for what the Town of Richmond can achieve through the development of this site.

Site Analysis

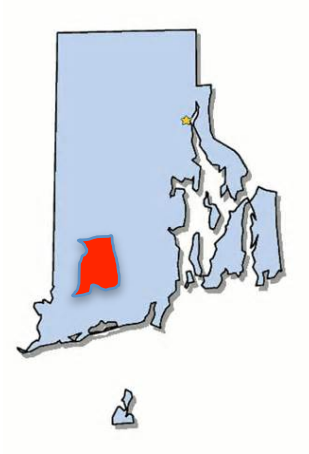
Site Analysis is an essential step for every design project. It allows designers to grasp and understand the context of a site, as well as the design opportunites and constraints posed by existing conditions. During this stage, students researched, compiled, and assessed information which would help them develop innovative solutions for the site.

Students were divided into groups to conduct the analysis. Through a series of site visits, and the evaluation of plans, GIS data, reports, and more, groups were able to grasp a sense of scale and understand the features and personality of the site. By analyzing the surrounding context of roads, traffic, and land uses, students were able to look beyond the immediate site and consider aspects that would effect their designs and the ways that the community would access the site.

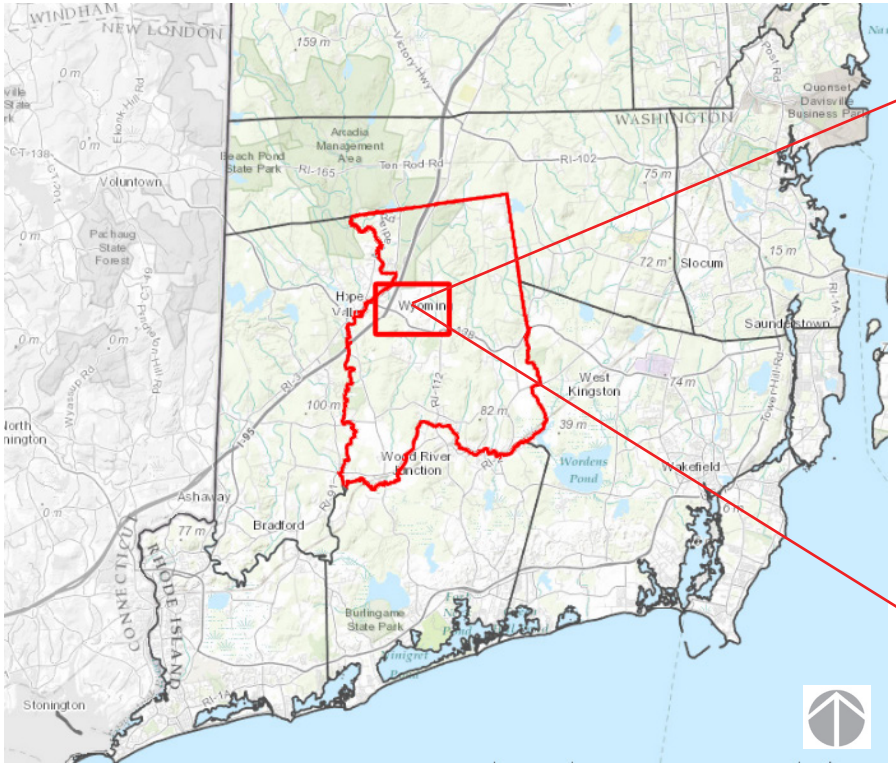
The teams focused on the following elements:

- Site Location
- History and Culture
- Visual Context
- Environmental Analysis
- Built Features
- Opportunities and Constraints
- Precedents

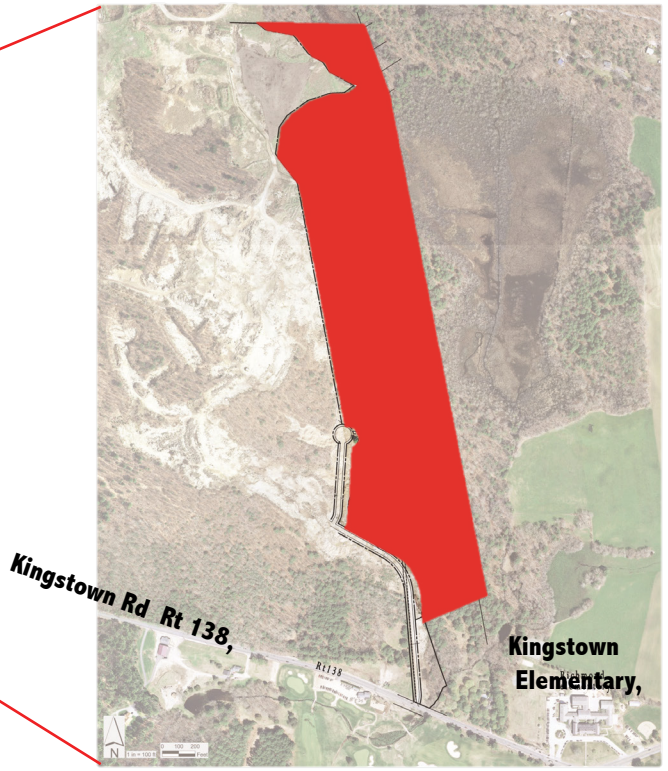
Site Location



Immediately south of the project site and to the north of Route 138 is a private 6+ acre parcel of land that is currently for sale. To the east is the Richmond Elementary School. Abutting the property to the west is a large area of land that has been a gravel operation for years and was recently approved for a large commercial and residential development. The site is also a short walk to the town hall and it's green to the southeast, and to Meadowbrook Golf and Country Club to the south.



Richmond, Rhode Island



47 Acre Site of Interest

History and Culture

Timeline

1826 — The Bell School, Kingstown Road

This one story, wood-shingled schoolhouse mainly served the Tug Hollow neighborhood, which was located in Northern Richmond.

1846 — Richmond Town Pound, Carolina-Nooseneck Road

A 30 x 30 ft square surrounded by a six foot stone wall, the entrance was a wooden gate with granite posts. This was used to pen up stray animals.

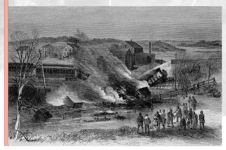
1855 — Barn at Clarke Farm,Lewiston Ave

The Clark Farm complex included a raised corn crib, sheds, a schoolhouse, and a machine shop. The landscape was known for its fine trees.

1867 — Albert S. Potter Octagon House

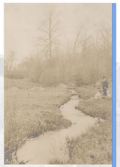
This octagon building was rare for the early Victorian era. The octagonal belvedere was a notable architectural structure for Richmond.

1873 — Switch Rail Disaster, Wood River Junction



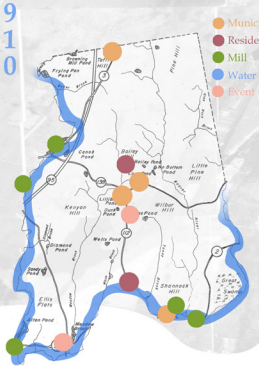
This accident was caused by a local dam giving way, which was said to have happened due to excess rain the night before.

1910 — Torry Brook, Shannock Hill



Water encompasses nearly all of Richmond's border, defining the town spatially and culturally.

1914



1911 — Dawley's Hotel

This image shows John Beresford and his Ice Cream Manufacturer truck, with which many memories were made.

For many years this operated as a stagecoach stop and tavern. Dawley's Hotel was strategically located on the turnpike connecting Providence with NewLondon.

1914 — J. Beresford Ice Cream, Carolina Road

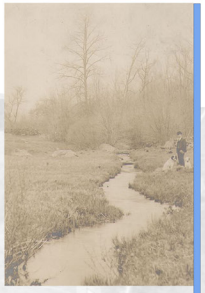
1937 — Dawley Park Shelter, Nooseneck Hill Road

This was part of an industrial complex, located along the river. It consisted of multi-storied brick and stone mills.

A one story structure with a large stone chimney. This is a rare example of Depression-era construction in RI.

1940 — Kenyon Grist Mill Packing Room

1867 Torry Brook, Shannock Hill



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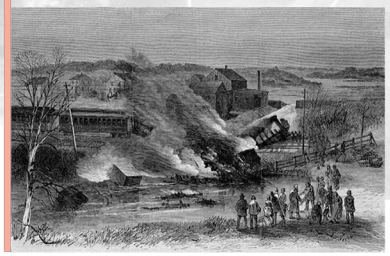

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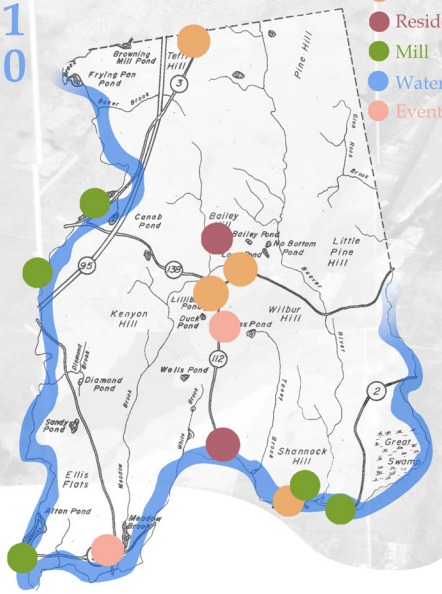
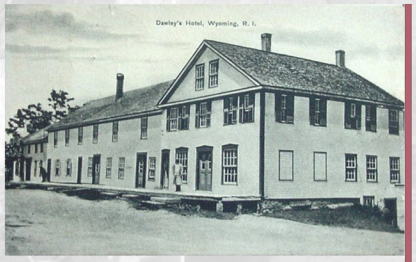


1911 Dawley's Hotel



This image shows John Beresford and his Ice Cream Manufacturer truck, with which many memories were made.

For many years this operated as a stagecoach stop and tavern. Dawley's Hotel was strategically located on the turnpike connecting Providence with NewLondon.

1940

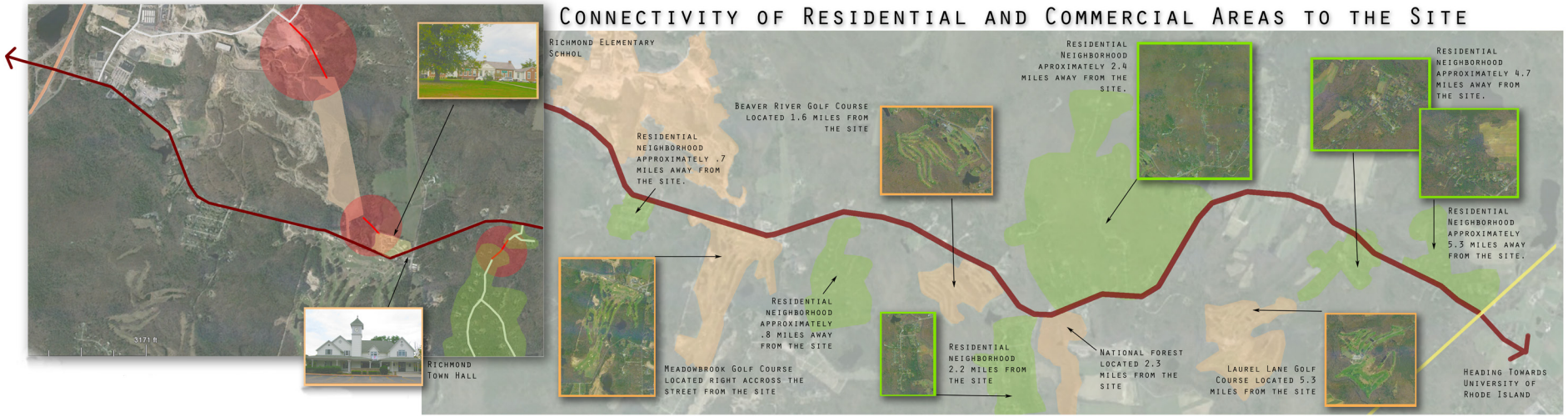
J. Beresford Ice Cream, Carolina Road

The town of Richmond values its history and has held onto its traditions tightly. The photographs presented here show vistas that have made Richmond what it is today. We still see similar styles, materials, and techniques used in the present day. Each building and landscape has left a unique impression that the students have considered and will use for inspiration for the final designs.

Visual Context

This diagram shows the locations and proximity to the site of surrounding neighborhoods, as well as commercial and recreational areas. Knowing the distance to these existing areas from the site can help determine the possible means and ease of connecting people to place.

By analyzing the existing town features, we can recognize what people value. It is also apparent that while the village has important attractions, the distances between are too great for easy access by pedestrians and bicyclists.



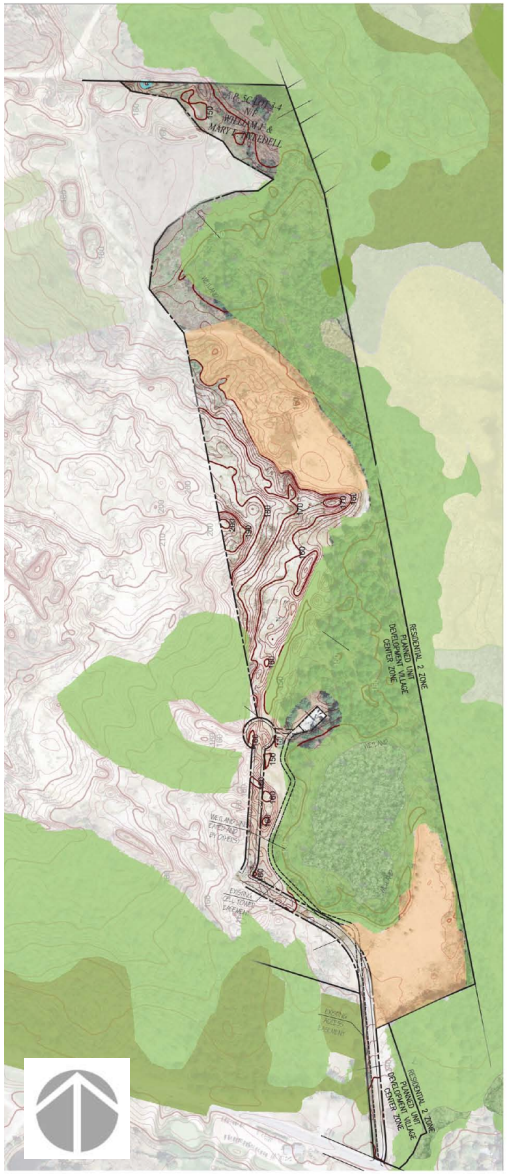
Legend

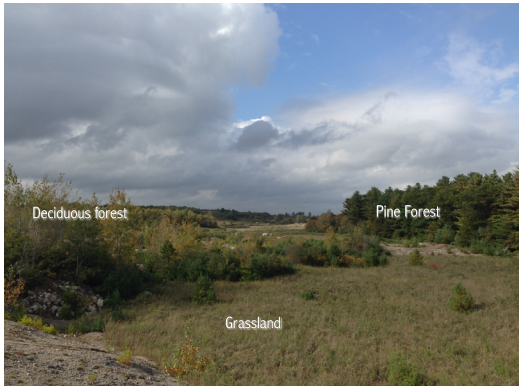
- Areas for Possible Connections
- Residential Areas
- Route 138
- Route 2
- Commercial Areas
- The Site
- Interstate 95
- Suggested Routes for Connections

Natural Features

Vegetation

The vegetation found on site consists of mixed forest, both coniferous and deciduous, wetlands, and brush found on the sloping sides of a ridge that was previously used for cuts through the site. White pines, oak, and understory plants provide an attractive setting for a recreation development.





Typical forest types

LEGEND

SITE BOUNDARY

PINE FOREST

WETLAND

DECIDUOUS FOREST

Hydrology

The hydrology analysis shows how water moves across the site, where it collects, and how it will impact areas targeted for development. The lowland areas located to the east collect the most runoff. These areas serve as wetlands and provide both opportunities and restrictions for development.

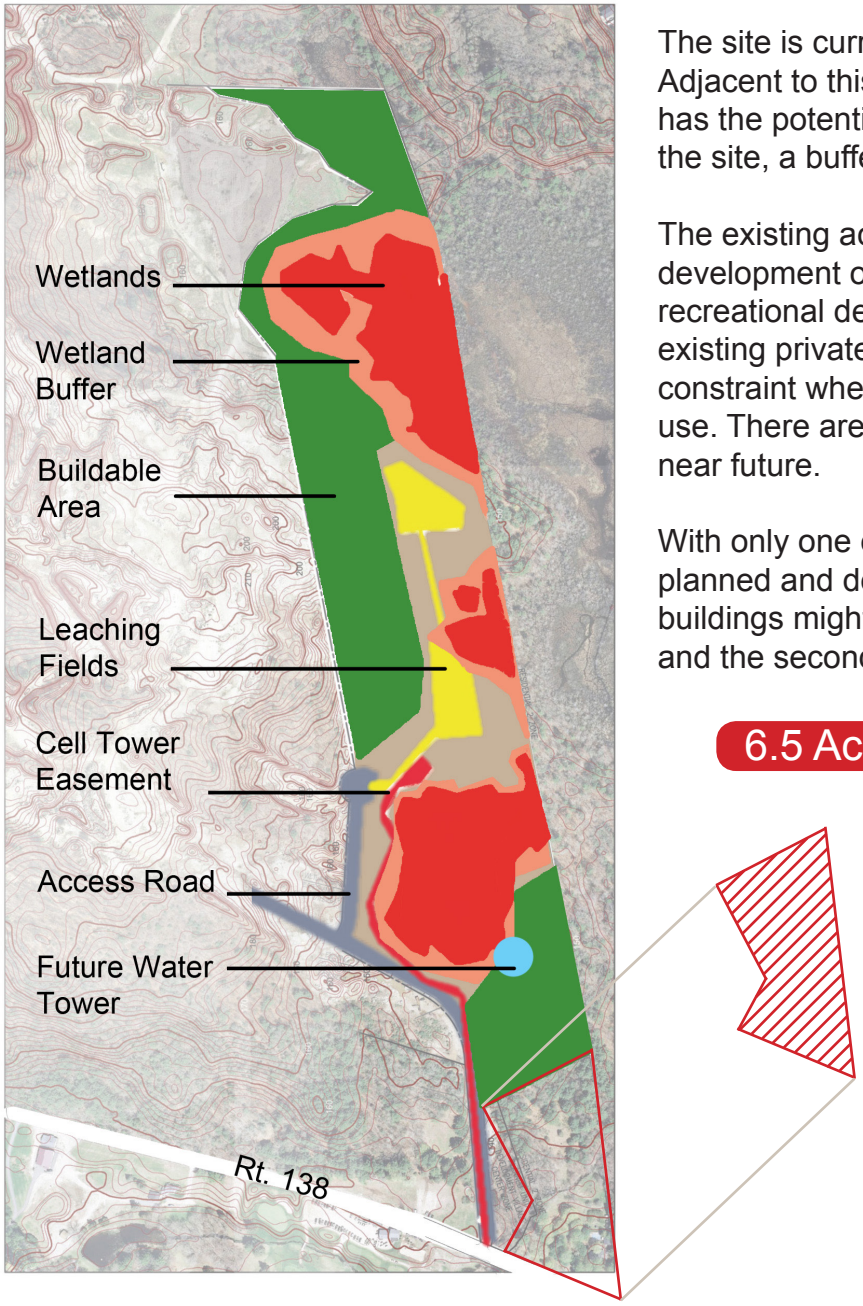
LEGEND

SITE BOUNDARY

WETLAND

DIRECTION OF FLOW

Built Features



The site is currently accessed by a narrow connection to Rt. 138. Adjacent to this connection is a 6+ acre lot that is currently for sale and has the potential to become a valuable transition area from Rt. 138 into the site, a buffer or location for a possible building.

The existing access road is planned to become a connection to the future development of the Richmond Commons, and it will be shared with the recreational development. Along this road is an easement leading to an existing private cell tower. Proposed leaching fields present a design constraint where the area must be maintained as open grass for this land use. There are also plans to construct a water tower on the site in the near future.

With only one entrance to the site, public access must be carefully planned and designed. There are currently two areas where fields and/or buildings might be developed. One area is near the entrance to the site and the second is located in the center near the central ridge.

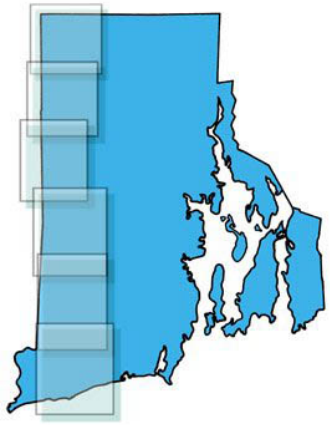
6.5 Acre Lot For Sale

Adjacent to the southern entrance of the site and west of the Richmond elementary school is a 6.5 acre lot that is currently for sale. There are several built structures on the parcel including a house, a detached garage, a three stall barn, and an inground pool. There is also a stream running across it which is a constraint.

If acquired, the parcel might be used to increase the size of a proposed building. It could also improve the connection to the Richmond Elementary School, as well as provide easier and safer access to the site.

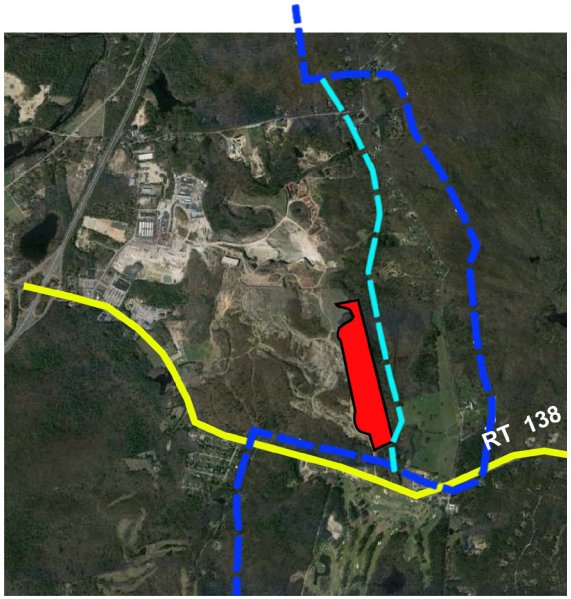
Opportunities and Constraints

North-South Trail

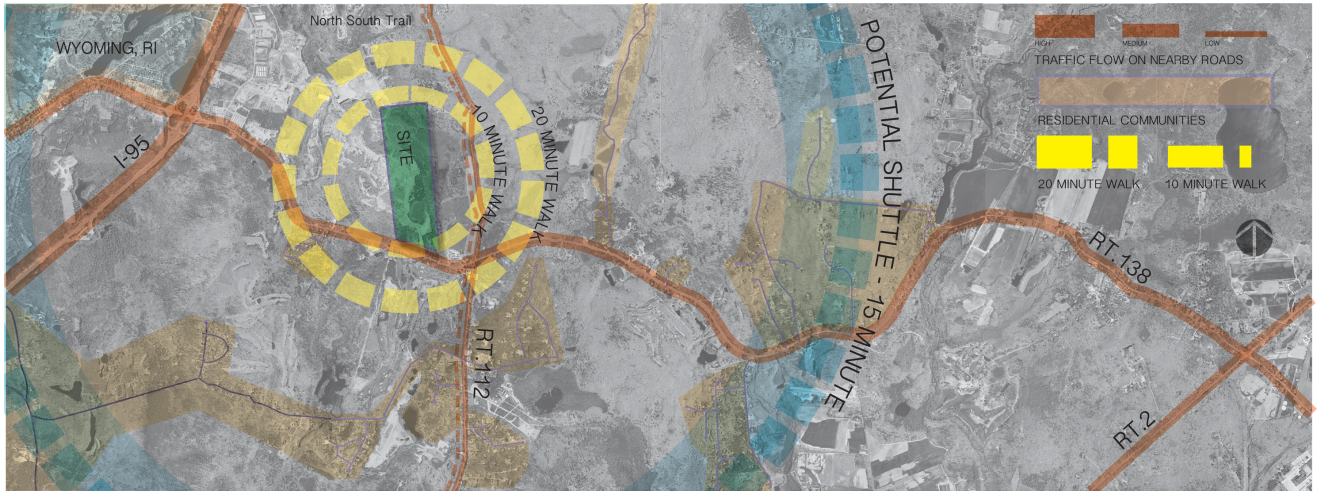


The existing site offers unique opportunities for bringing the town together and creating a **central recreation district.**

The North-South Trail is an existing 78 mile pedestrian path that traverses the Rhode Island landscape from Charlestown through Burriville to the Massachusetts line. Connecting the site to existing trails would link two major land reserves and create a protected connection.



Surrounding Features



Residential communities are located near the site, but are out of comfortable walking distance. Biking on Rt. 138 is not safe and not recommended for children.

Opportunities:

•Encourage bus use along Rt. 138 for accessing town center and commercial areas.
• The site is within close proximity to I-95, and could become an important attraction for residents and commuters.

Precedent Study

Students researched nearby parks and athletic facilities to evaluate how they are composed and used by communities. By comparing the size of precedent parks with the project site, viewers could see what is possible to achieve within the constraints of this site. The parks listed below were considered for their overall success at providing their neighboring communities with passive and active recreation.

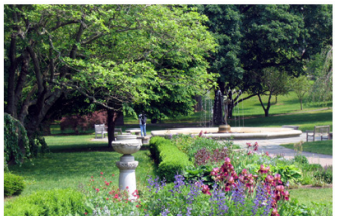
Richmond Site = 47 acres

Local

Curtis Corner Athletic Fields
South Kingstown, Rhode Island
103 Acres

Local

Wilcox Park
Westerly, Rhode Island
14 Acres



Public Workshop

On November 4th, 2013, a public workshop was held to gather and share information on what people from the Town of Richmond wanted to see the 47 acre property become. The workshop was held at the Richmond Elementary School, where over 80 attendees were present. The evening was organized as a series of activities including a presentation of the existing conditions analysis, a clicker exercise to gauge visual preferences, and a question & answer breakout session. The information gathered was analyzed and compiled to help aid students in prioritizing community needs and wants.

The clicker exercise included a series of images that were compared and evaluated by participants. Two images were shown at a time, and the participants would choose either A or B as their preferred use, style, or scale. Results were immediately projected on a screen and recorded by using remote clicker technology. Valuable information was gathered into charts, compared, and used for determining preferences and priorities.

For the question and answer activity, students were divided into groups so that they could gather personal comments from community members in a smaller setting. Students asked the same series of questions and recorded the responses on flipcharts. The community members were then given stickers to place on their most favored response to the particular questions.
(See appendix (A) for list of questions.)

Analysis Presentation

Clicker Exercise

Q & A Session

Public Workshop Summary

Summary:

The workshop provided students with critical data. Residents were able to voice what they wanted included in a town community recreation center, and students were able to find out what seemed important to the residents who attended the workshop. The students concluded that Richmond was looking for a central community recreation hub, that would serve a variety of age groups. Residents seemed to favor a park that would tie the town together and be easily accessible. They showed an increased interest in preserving the site's natural beauty and environmental quality, and supported the idea that sustainable development should be a consideration during the design process and after. With all of the requests from the community, it seems there are endless possibilities for this site. The town of Richmond showed their support for the development of a park, a community center serving children to seniors.

Design Priorities:

Athletic facilities:

- **Multi-use field**
- Handicap accessible trails
- Pool
- Baseball field
- Disk golf
- Tennis courts
- Basketball courts

Environmental:

- Proper drainage
- Stormwater runoff
- Minimal impervious surfaces
- Park relation to wetlands
- Maintain views
- Preserve wildlife habitat
- No pesticide use

Community:

- **Community/Senior center**
- Library
- Easy access
- Public transportation to site
- Sufficient parking
- Outdoor pavilion
- Enough lighting for safety

* See Appendix for additional workshop materials

Group Designs

Following the workshop and evaluation of the outcome, the studio came together to select design teams and begin work on alternative concepts. The students highlighted and prioritized the data from the workshop in order to begin their designs. With these program elements in mind, 3 teams of students came together. Each chose related program elements and features while emphasizing different approaches. All groups sought to achieve sustainability while also satisfying the needs of different age groups.

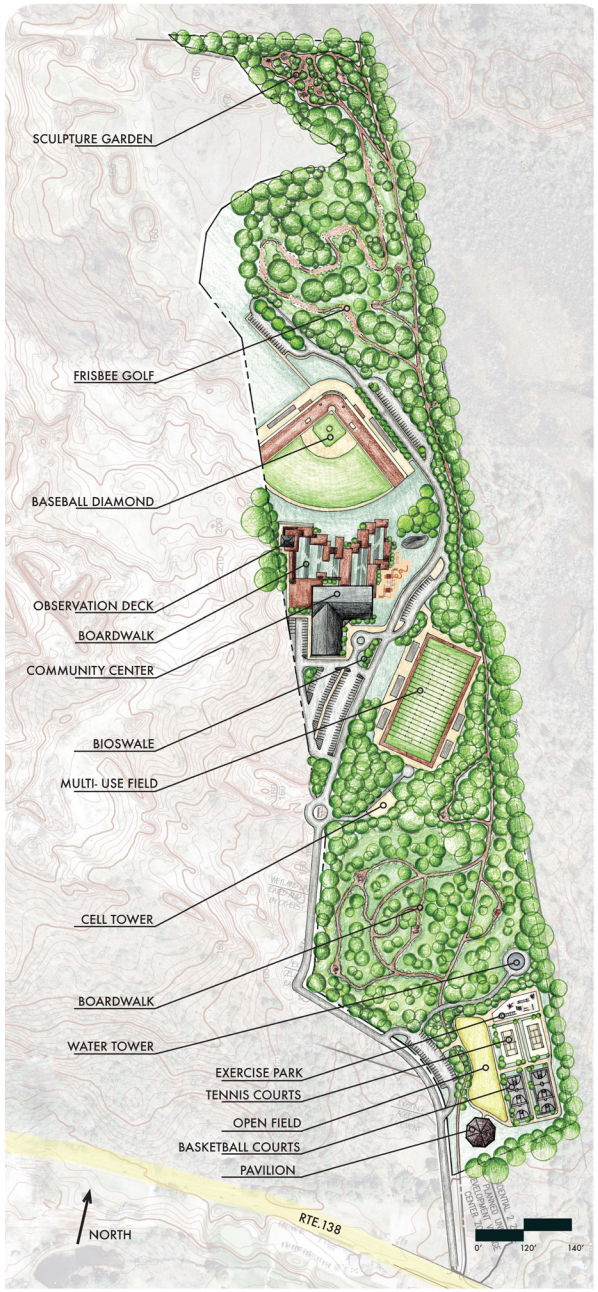
Group 1: Richmond Park
Using sustainable practices to provide community and active recreation.

Group 2: Community Park
Emphasizing recreation and people meandering through the site.

Group 3: Meadowbrook Park
A community park emphasizing minimal disturbance, ecology, and play.

Group 1: Meadowbrook Park

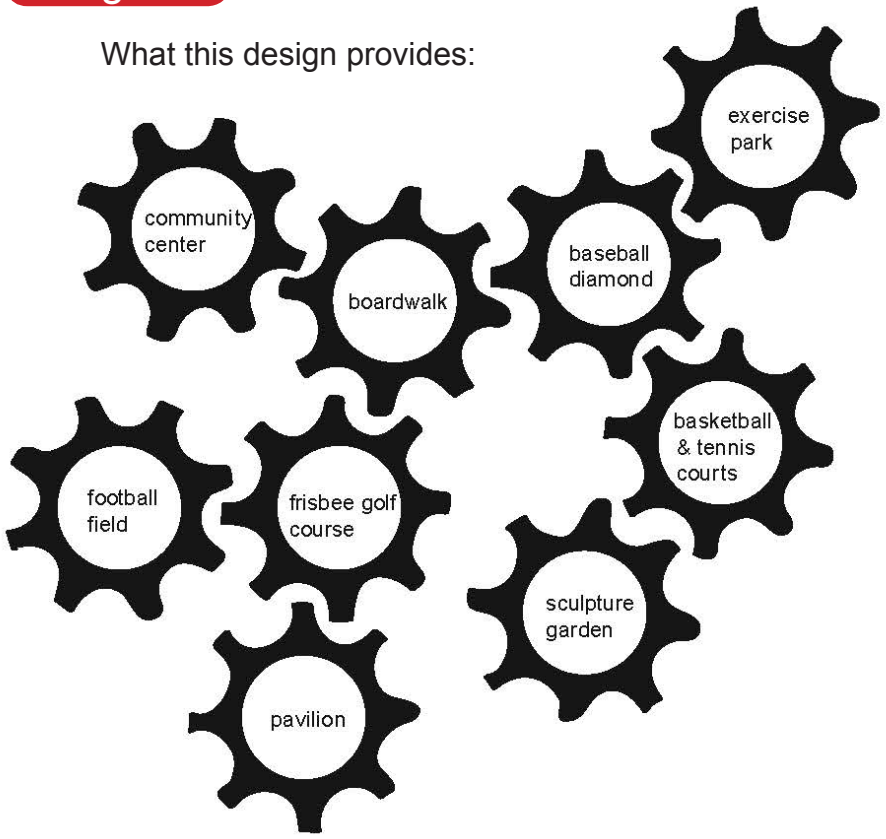
Master Plan



Meadowbrook Park creates a central recreation destination within the town of Richmond. Through an in-depth anlalysis of the area's potential to collect stormwater and produce energy, the design addresses the most important environmental issues that the town is facing. The designers attempt to blur the lines between natural and the built environments.

Program

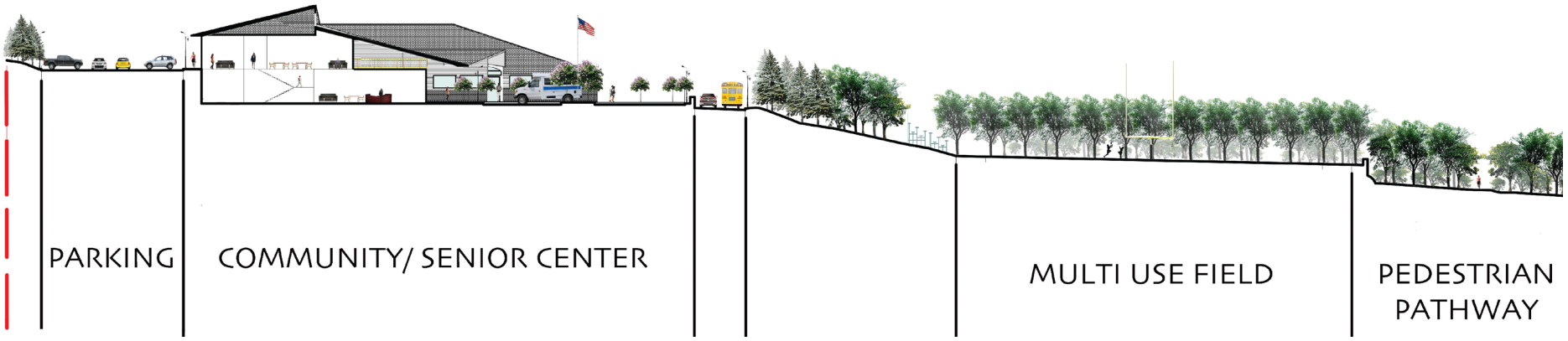
What this design provides:



Park Entrance

Currently, the entrance to the site goes unnoticed, especially as the road's speed limit is 40 mph. This view from the cul-de-sac opens up the front of the property to create noticeable views for passerbys.

Section

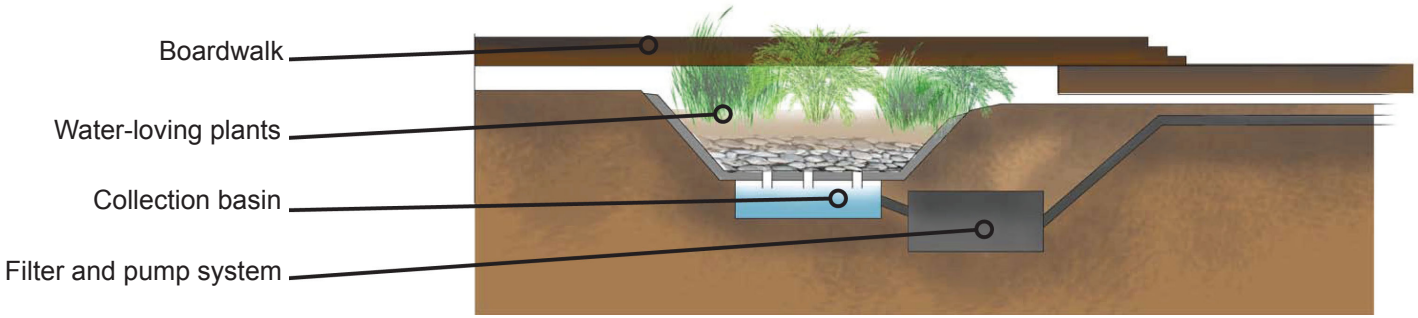


A cross section through the site

Community Center

Building to house activities for children, adults, and seniors. LEED certification will reduce impacts and demand on resources.

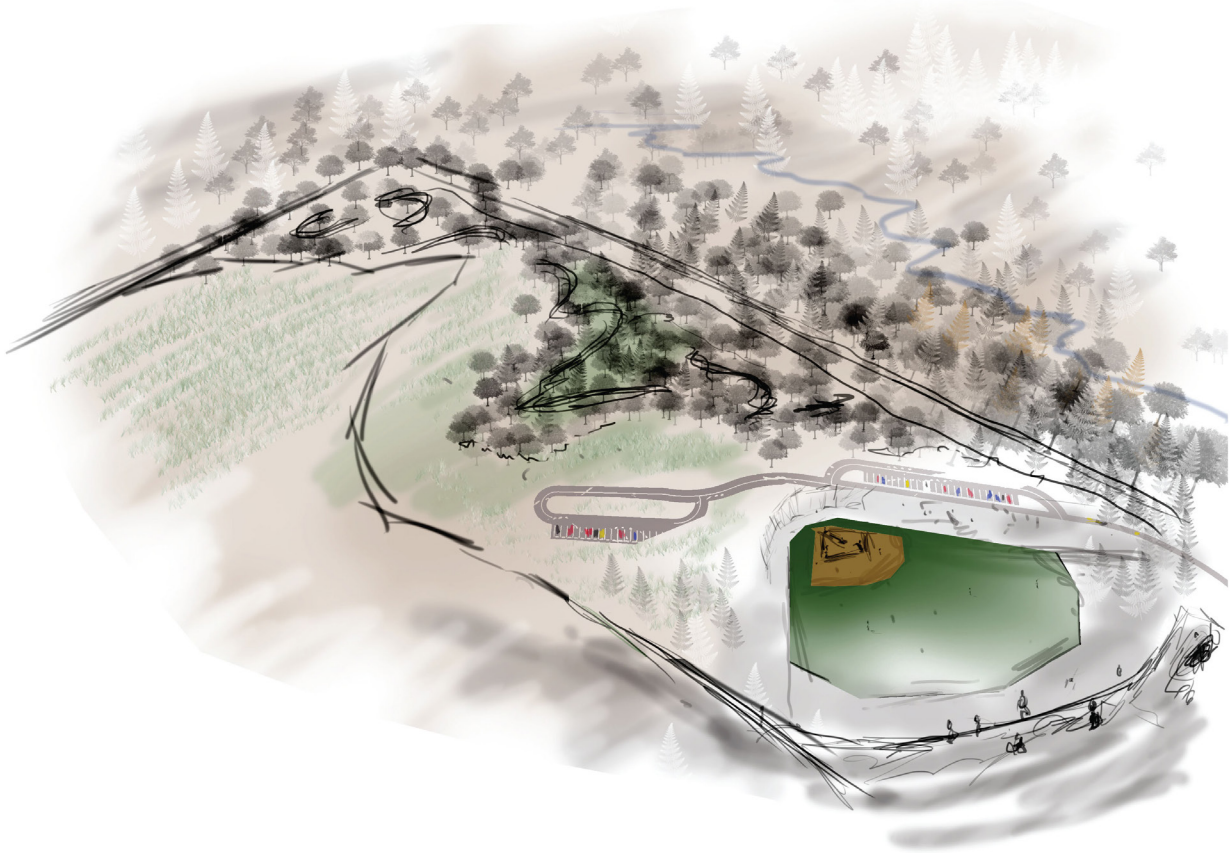
Stormwater Collection



A system for on-site stormwater collection and treatment utilizing rain gardens, bio swales, and methods for infiltrating stormwater runoff.

Frisbee Golf and Sculpture Garden

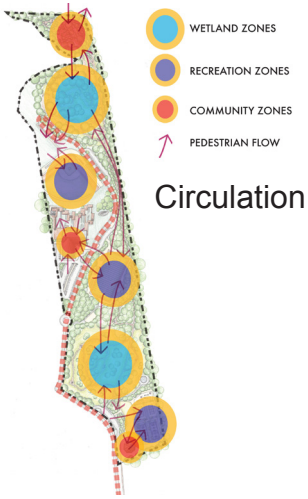
A low impact land use.



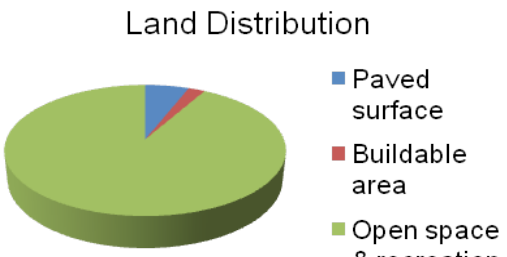
25% of building energy is supplemented

2,000 square feet of rooftop solar panels

40,000 pounds of carbon dioxide emissions reduced yearly and gallons of fuel not used.



Circulation



6.0%

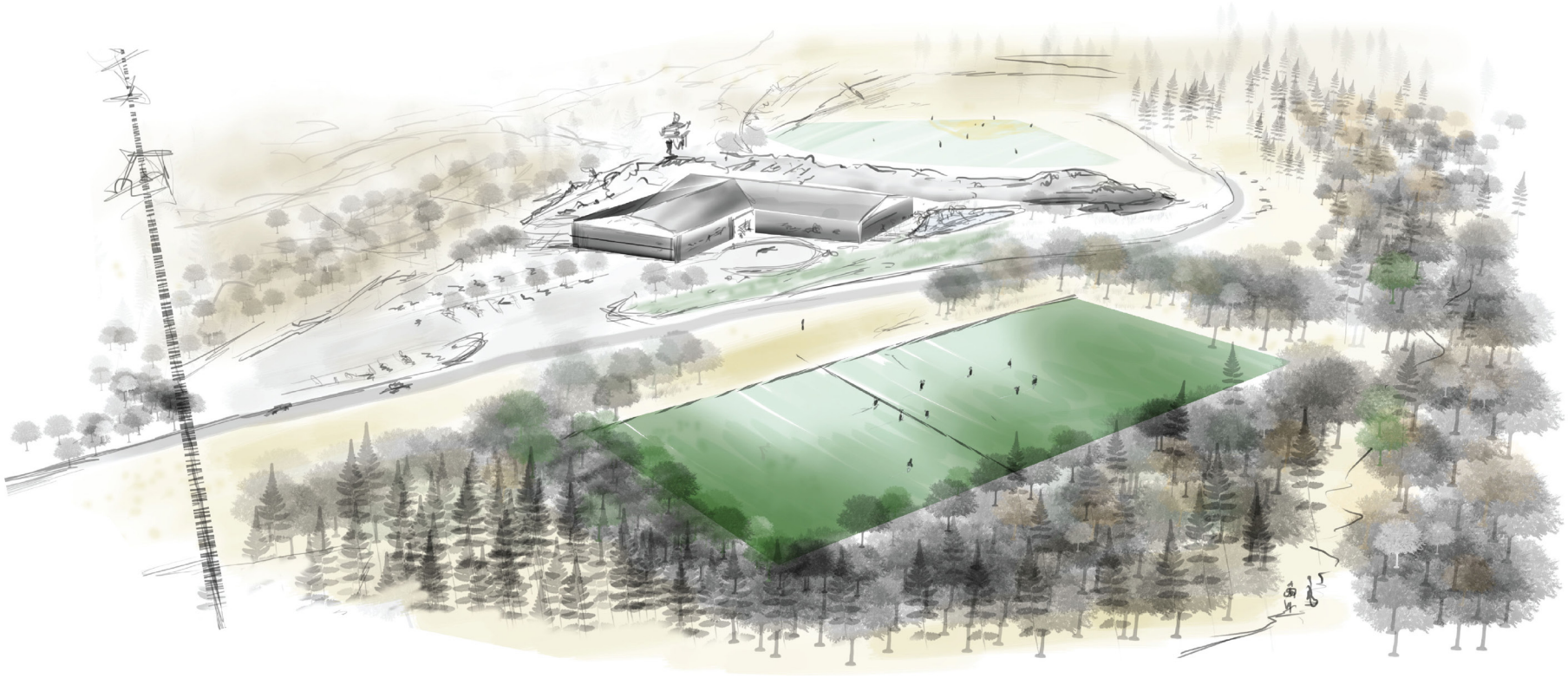
2.27%

91.93%

Water runoff will be collected from paved surfaces and reused for irrigation. This will help improve the quality of groundwater, which is critical for a town that primarily uses well systems.

Bioswales direct runoff into a series of basins that will reduce water volume during heavy storms. With the large amount of wetland conservation land on-site, it is necessary to increase infiltration, while promoting a diverse landscape.

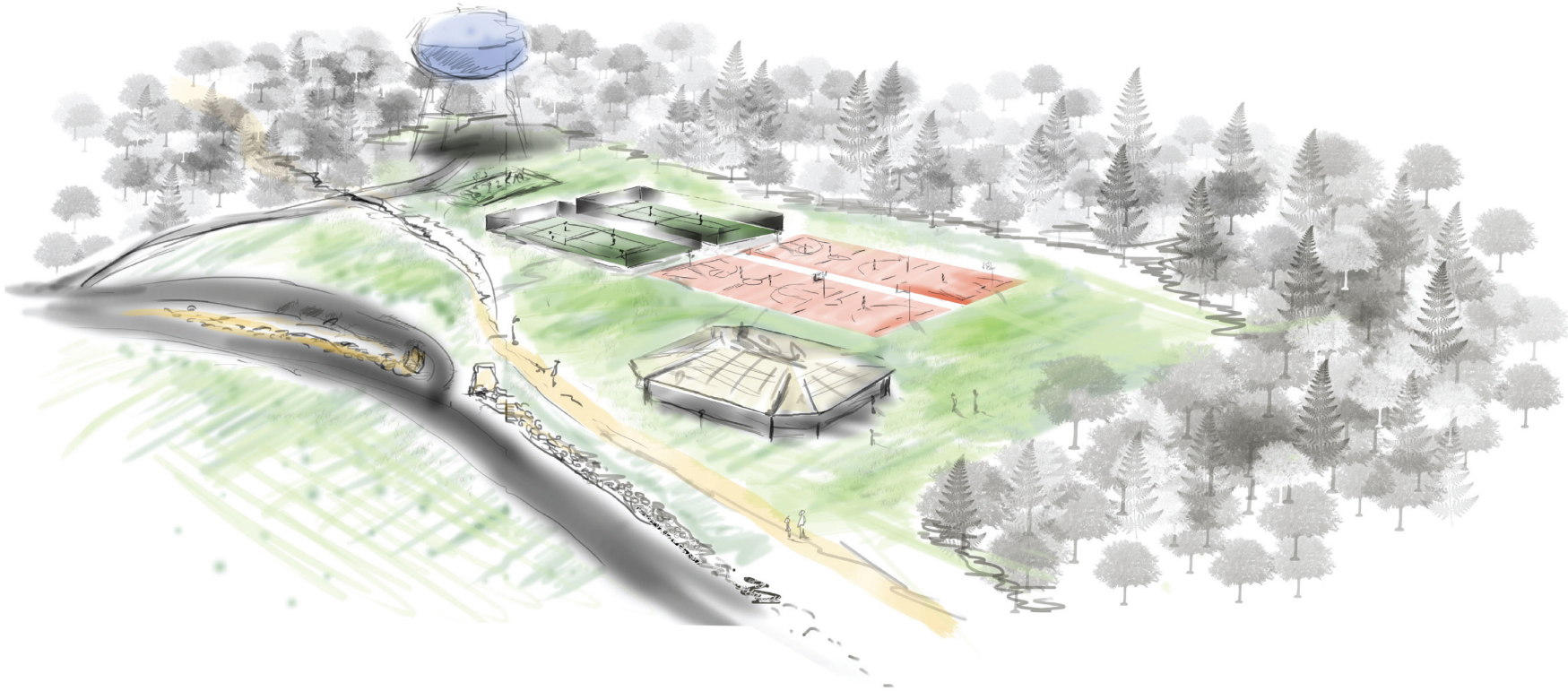
Aerial One: Football Field



View from southeast to northwest

The central area of the site features a soccer field, a community center with a permeable parking lot, a baseball field, an observation deck, rain gardens, bioswales, native landscape plantings, and pedestrian boardwalks.

Aerial Two: Basketball & Tennis Courts



View from southwest to northeast

Tennis courts, basketball courts, and an outdoor pavilion provide considerable recreation capacity. The beginning to a pedestrian trail is also located at the entrance of the site for easy accessibility. This trail is connected to other trails off-site.

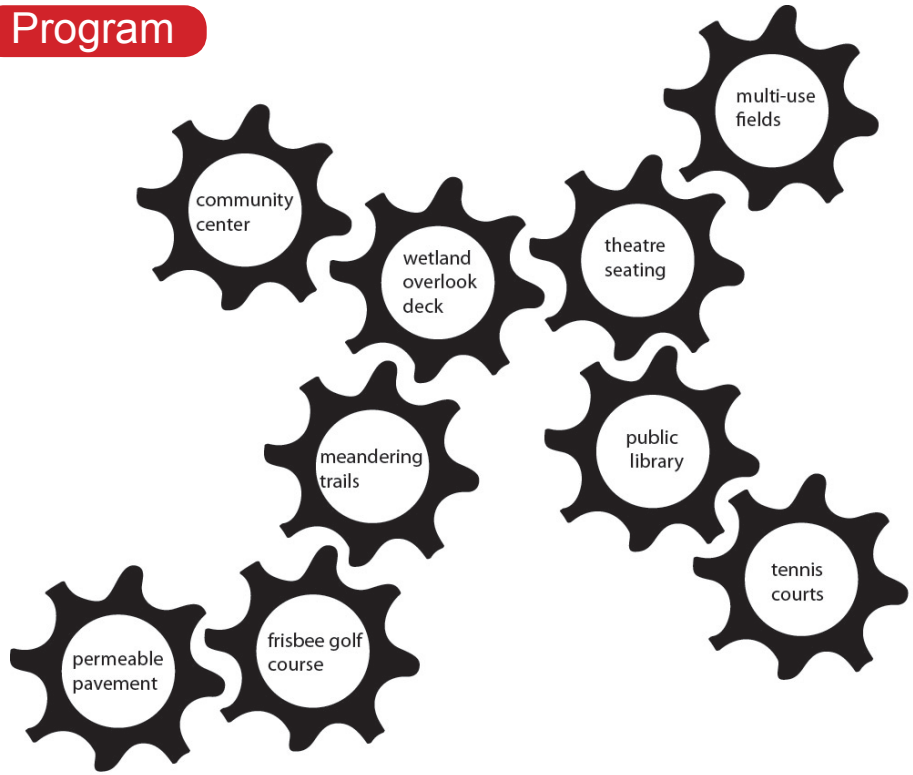
Group 2: Richmond Park

Master Plan

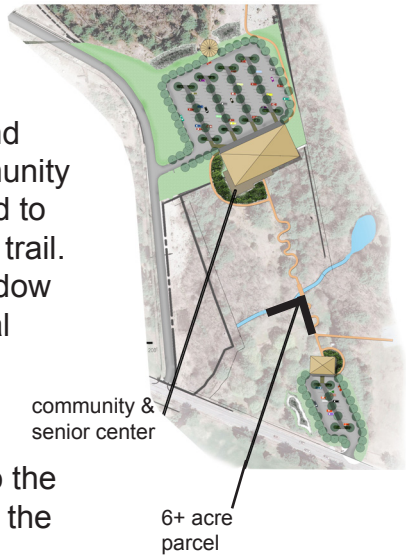
The goal of this design is to create a park which makes active recreation available to the surrounding community. The intent of the design is based upon the town's wants and needs. By adding a library, community center, baseball field, basketball courts, playground, tennis courts, and multi-use fields, the site will attract people of all ages and provide trails for pedestrians connecting within and beyond the site.

Being mindful and using a sustainable approach to design and management will contribute to a more prosperous and environmentally responsible development future for Richmond. The site will function by using rainwater to irrigate fields, solar power to supply lighting, and a LEED certified community center. The design will make use of native vegetation and locally sourced materials.

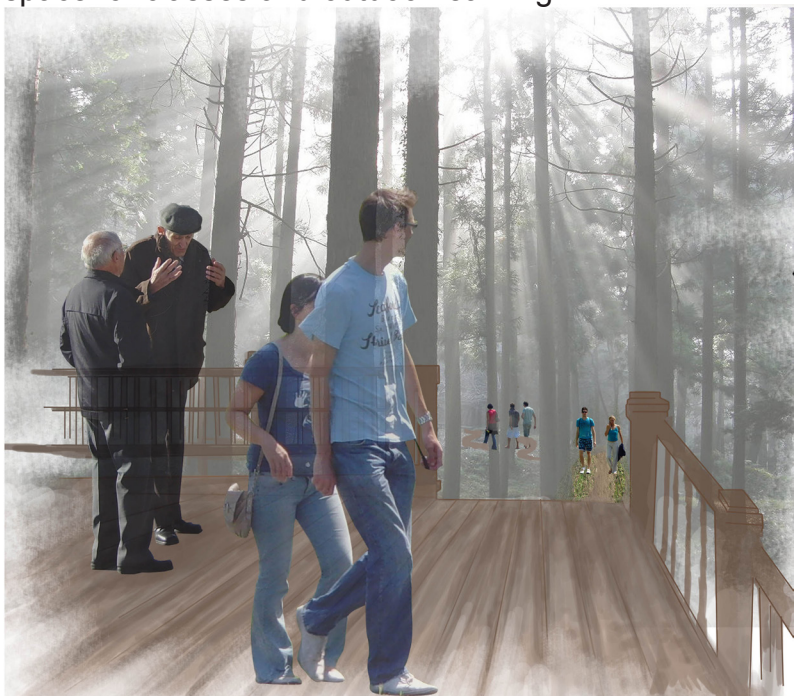
Program



This design includes the purchase of the abutting 6+ acre piece of land along Rt. 138. A new library, community center, and senior center are linked to one another by a woodland nature trail. This trail crosses the existing meadow brook and wetland, providing visual connection with a valuable habitat suitable for teaching.

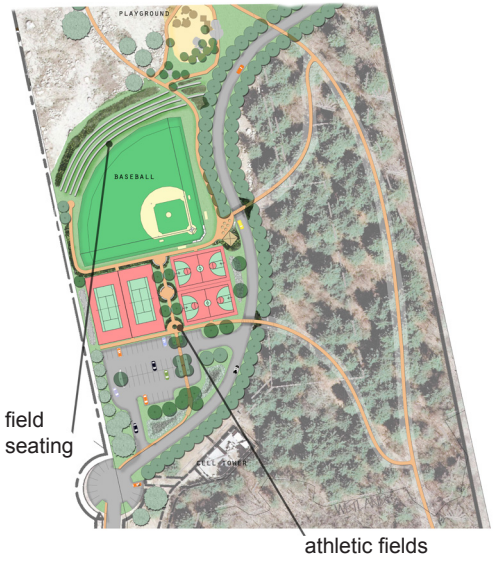


Shown below is a deck attached to the community center. The deck offers the public a higher vantage point for observation, and is also a suitable space for classes and outdoor learning.



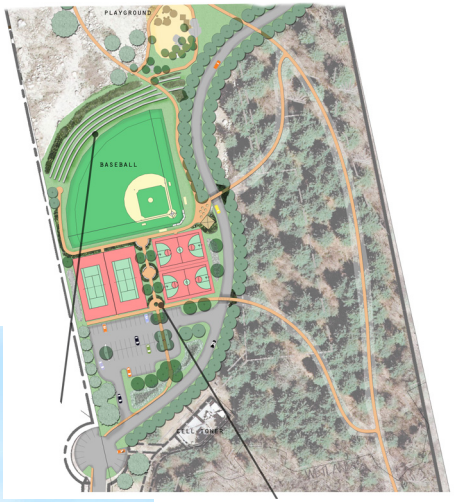
For convenience, the athletic fields are located next to each other with a parking lot to the south.

Running along the central axis of the complex is a formal walkway lined with low maintenance perennials and native plants. All construction materials will be sourced locally. This is shown in the rendering below.



Baseball Field

The two larger fields on the site will have a unique style of amphitheatre seating, where native stone is used to create grass terraces. These terraces will capture and infiltrate rain water. This seating will be used for viewing sporting events and for occasional town gatherings.



Frisbee Golf

Woodland Path

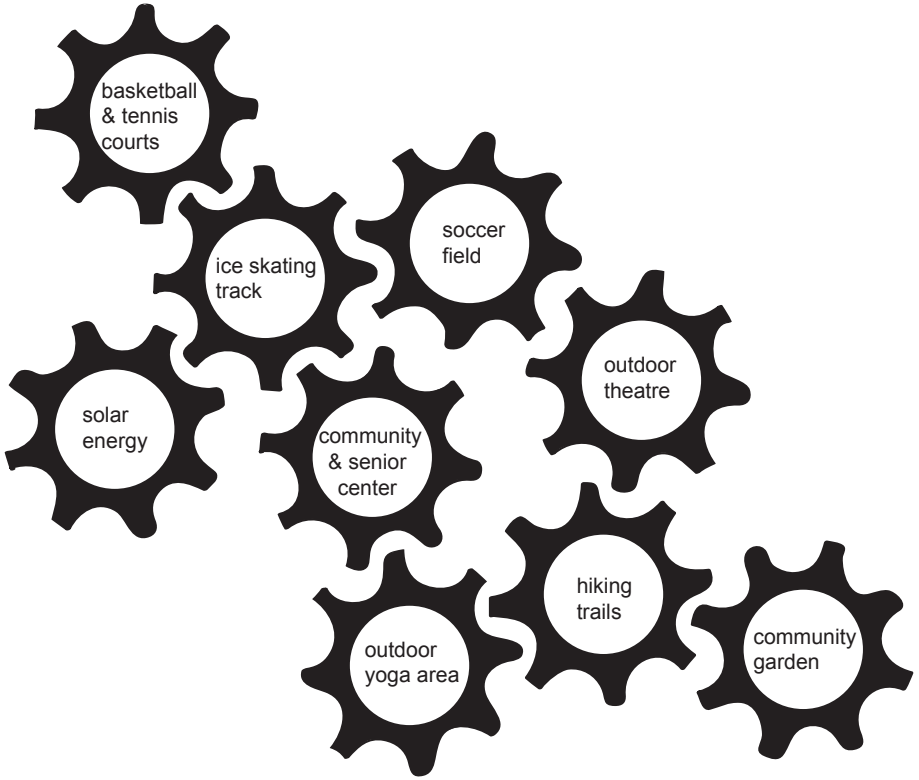
The northern end of the site is to be used for passive recreational activities such as frisbee golf. This area is to be preserved woodlands, with the frisbee golf course carefully located where clearings have occured to result in minimal site disturbance during and after implementation.

Group 3: Meadow Brook Park

Master Plan

Meadow Brook Park will capitalize on the location and natural amenities through a woodland restoration project. The main goals are to promote environmental stewardship, as well as the overall health and well being of Richmond residents. The community will develop and grow together through this new town center and promote future development to the elementary school, town hall, and golf course.

Program



Aerial View

The aerial view of the site displays the hillside recreation areas such as basketball and tennis courts, as well as a soccer field. An area of solar panels is seen adjacent to the parking lot that is used for accessing these amenities. Exercise, alternative energy, native plantings, and stormwater infiltration are highlighted within the design.

180 Parking spots

70 Percent of the site is vegetation

1.3 Miles of walking trails

2.3 tons The approximate amount of carbon dioxide one person in the US generates each year

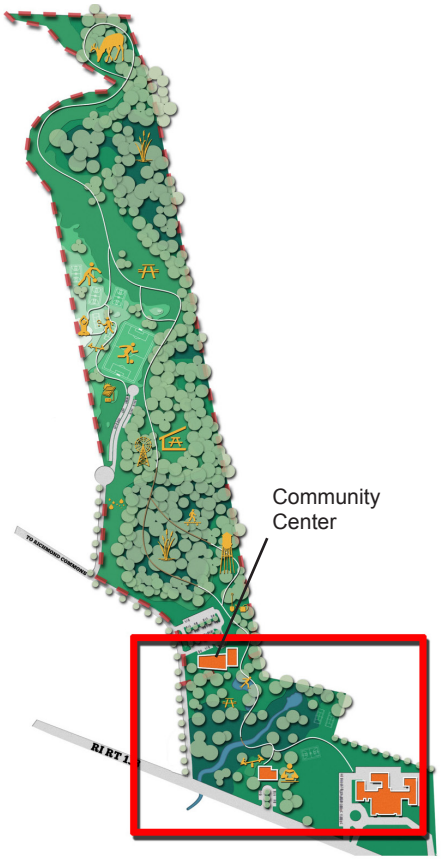
2.4 tons Amount of carbon dioxide 100 trees absorb per year

38 percent The amount of air conditioning needs that properly placed trees around buildings can reduce

20 percent Reduced cost of utility bills from shade trees

* www.USDA.gov
www.arborday.com

Community Center



This proposed building will function as an indoor recreation and communal meeting hub for all ages, including a senior center. The architects will aim for a LEED (gold or higher) certification. Parking will be on permeable pavement that is buffered with rain gardens and bioswales.

Ice Skating Track

Community Gardens

The ice skating track will give the town of Richmond a space unique to the region as a whole. This activity area will cut through the woods, utilizing the environment's natural beauty.

The environmental characteristics, as well as the close proximity to the community center, makes the south side of the site an optimal location for community gardens. These gardens will provide seasonal fruits and vegetables that can be used in the kitchen of the community center. The community gardens will encourage public participation and group involvement. There is a possibility of choosing to produce additional food on site.

Woodland Trails

With over 1.3 miles of meandering woodland trails, the park provides the community with a chance to explore the natural wildlife habitat. Each trail is carefully placed to create easy and safe accessibility to each athletic field and other site amenities. More difficult hiking terrain is mapped and denoted to create areas for more adventurous trekking. Signage will be developed to teach about the local ecology and sustainable practices.

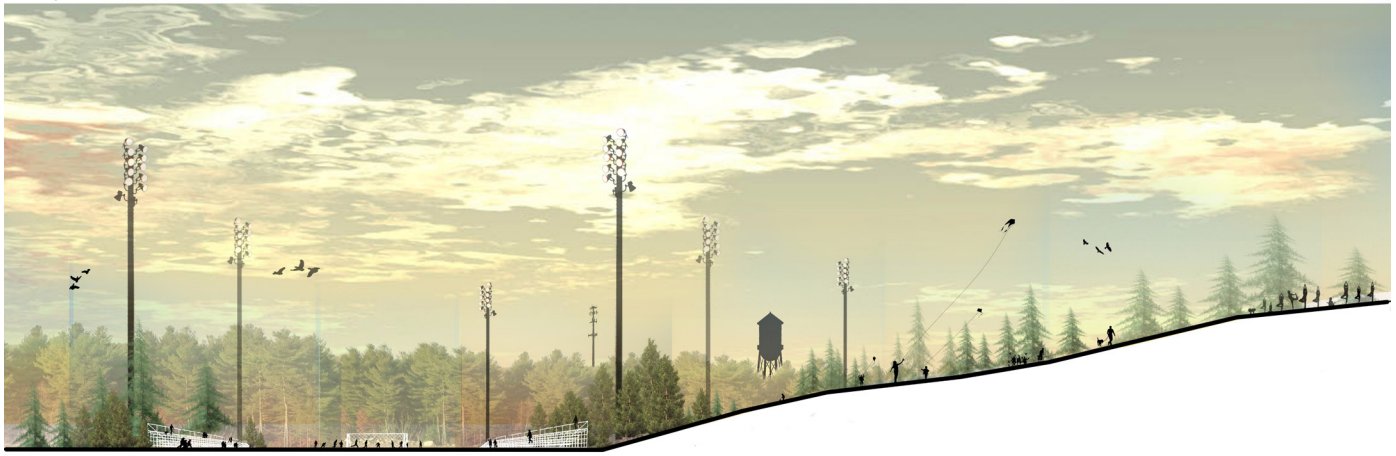
Outdoor Theatre

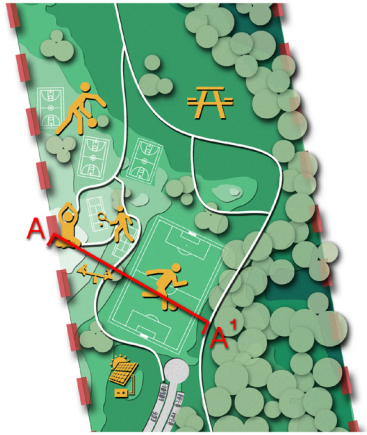
An outdoor theatre is located beneath the canopy of an existing mixed forest. This area will be utilized for activities such as grilling, camping, and both musical and theatrical performances. Enmeshing the community into the site's natural charm makes Meadow Brook Park a truly unique experience.

Roadside detail showing rain garden with informative signage.

Section A-A’

Daytime





Nighttime

Existing conditions on site feature a sloping landform on the west side of the site. Quarrying overtime has resulted in terracing of the site. This terracing provides the development of recreational fields with minimal grading required. The design and placement of various site amenities is driven by the optimal views provided by the existing topography.

Summit Yoga Area

Because of the breathtaking panoramic views and serenity from the highest peak of the site, the summit will be used for more intimate activities such as yoga, meditation, and quiet reflection.

A sunrise yoga class at the summit of the site takes advantage of the natural beauty by utilizing the green space on the top of the hill.

Active Recreation Area

The site features many integrated active recreation fields that blend and mesh together with the natural character of the site. The placement of these amenties creates a harmonious sense of place that is unique to the park.

Children's Play Area

A children's playground is situated on the north side of the hill and utilizes the existing slope of the site to create a unique experience for children to play while interacting with nature. Playground features include wood structures and natural rock formations used for climbing.

Next Steps...

This URI service-learning project ends for now with the preparation and submission of a final report that summarizes the semester's work. The prepared projects are to be used to encourage further discussion regarding a range of options that Richmond may use to move ahead with including the development of a community recreation center that emphasizes sustainable practices, ecology, and a healthy lifestyle. This report is intended to be used as a resource, example, and supplement for grant applications. Creating this report enables the student designs to be taken into consideration and refined into real life improvements for creating a vision for the Richmond Community Center.

URI Landscape Architecture Senior Design Studio 2013

Key Terms

ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act): A law enacted in 1990 by the U.S. Congress that prohibits discrimination based on disability.

Bioswale: Landscape forms that are designed to act as drainage features that remove pollution from surface runoff water. They are gently sloped and planted with native vegetation.

Collection Basin: Used to manage stormwater runoff by preventing flooding and erosion, and are capable of filtering water to improve its quality.

GIS (Geographic Information Systems): Computer software used to access and analyze geographical data for a specific area, in this case Rhode Island GIS, or RIGIS, was used.

Infiltration: The process by which surface water enters the soil.

LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design): A building certification program used to recognize sustainable and responsible building strategies and practices.

Permeable Paving: A hard surface that allows water to enter the soil to reduce runoff and erosion.

Rain Garden: A depression that is planted with native vegetation and used to collect rainwater runoff. These forms improve water quality and minimize erosion.

Stormwater: Runoff water created by periods of precipitation.

Sustainable Design: Environmentally responsible practices that aim to have a minimal impact on the environment while providing a community with a healthier lifestyle.

Workshop Survey

RECREATION | SURVEY

URI|LAR|SENIOR STUDIO FOR TOWN OF RICHMOND PLANNING DEPARTMENT, AND REC.COMMITEE

1. What is your gender?
   - A. Female 52%
   - B. Male 48%
2. What is your age?
   - A. 18 and under 2%
   - B. 19-25 0%
   - C. 26-35 6%
   - D. 36-45 2%
   - E. 46-60 23%
   - F. 61-70 32%
   - G. 71 or over 36%
3. Do you live with in a...
   - A. 5 minute walking distance from the site 2%
   - B. 10 minute walking distance from the site 2%
   - C. 20 minute walking distance from the site 12%
   - D. I live too far from the site to walk 84%
4. What is your preferred mode of transportation around town?
   - A. Personal Vehicle 100%
   - B. Bus
   - C. Bicycle
   - D. Walking
5. How many people live in your household?
   - A. 2 or under 75%
   - B. 3-4 21%
   - C. 5-6 4%
   - D. 6 or over 0%

RECREATION | SURVEY

URI|LAR|SENIOR STUDIO FOR TOWN OF RICHMOND PLANNING DEPARTMENT, AND REC.COMMITEE

6. Are there many areas in Richmond for you to gather with the community for activities or special events?
   - A. Yes there are many places like that in Richmond 0%
   - B. There are few places like that in Richmond 42%
   - C. No there are no places like that in Richmond. I go to surrounding towns 14%
   - D. We need places like that 42%
7. What do you believe Richmond needs most as an active recreational facility?
   - A. Football Field 2%
   - B. Soccer Field 20%
   - C. Basketball Court 14%
   - D. Tennis Court 26%
   - E. Skate Park 8%
   - F. Baseball Field 20%
   - G. Track 8%
8. What do you believe Richmond needs most that could be developed within a community building facility?
   - A. Senior Center 36%
   - B. Facility with stage and amphitheater 7%
   - C. Facilities for classes 9%
   - D. Greenhouse and area for gardening 6%
   - E. Indoor swimming pool 17%
   - F. Exercise/Dance Studio 12%
   - G. Cafeteria 10%

URI|LAR|SENIOR STUDIO
FOR TOWN OF RICHMOND
PLANNING DEPARTMENT,
AND REC.COMMITEE

9. Which would you most desire?

A. Bicycle Trail 15%

B. Fit Course (Outdoor Exercise) 7%

C. Walking Trail 37%

D. Play Area for Children 9%

E. Nature Trail 19%

10. Rank your top 5 choices from questions 7, 8, and 9 from 1-5 with 1 being the most desired.

1) Senior Center

2) Tie between Pool and Walking Trail

3) Walking Trail

4) Walking Trial

5) Tie between Pool and Senior Center

11. Facilities should be accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

A. Strongly Agree 9%

B. Agree 12%

C. Neutral 31%

D. Disagree 34%

E. Strongly Disagree 13%

12. Do you agree that it is important to build facilities in a way that is low impacting and makes use of alternative sources of energy?

A. Strongly Agree 43%

B. Agree 39%

C. Neutral 15%

D. Disagree 2%

E. Strongly Disagree 0%

RECREATION | SURVEY

URI|LAR|SENIOR STUDIO
FOR TOWN OF RICHMOND
PLANNING DEPARTMENT,
AND REC.COMMITEE

13. Is it important for your town to demonstrate a commitment to living, building, and managing sustainability, even if it costs a little more to do so?

A. Strongly Agree 33%

B. Agree 43%

C. Neutral 17%

D. Disagree 5%

E. Strongly Disagree 0%

14. Designing a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified recreational site is important to the town of Richmond.

A. Strongly Agree 35%

B. Agree 43%

C. Neutral 17%

D. Disagree 4%

E. Strongly Disagree 0%

Thank you for participating in this survey. Your answers are greatly valued and will be considered in the design of this site.

Question & Answers

Question 1: What is your favorite park, landscape, or environment in Richmond or a surrounding town?

Bike Park, South Kingstown
Browning Mill Pond
Knolls Park
Ninigret Park
Wilcox Park
Wood River Dam
Arcadia
Wilcox Park
Trustom Pond
Banks of Wood River
Ninigret
Quonset Bike Path
Wakefield Bike Path
West Kingstown Park
Browning Mill
Trustom Pond
Ell Pond
Ninigret Park
Wilcox Park
Kettle Pond
Beaver River Park

Question 2: What are the most important environmental issues the citizens of Richmond are facing?

Minimize impervious surfaces
Safety
Travel
Access
Parking
Renewable energy
Clean drinking water
Residential development
Septic systems
Water pollution
Flooding
Placement of parks near wetlands
Proper drainage
Stormwater runoff
Snow removal
Road width for bike paths
View scapes
General overdevelopment
Clean groundwater
Use of wells
Air quality
Lack of public transportation
Building on protected lands
Above ground utilities

Question 3: Besides specific recreation improvements, can you suggest other health or environmental improvements that we should achieve?

Lawn chemicals
Retention ponds
Runoff water
Tick & mosquito control
ADA paths
Senior center
Shade
Skating pond
Community garden
Health care center
Tree placement
Underground utilities
Pesticides
Community garden
Handicap accessibility
Recreation
Connect site to existing trails
Open fields
Library next to school
Pet waste stations
Down turned lighting
Nighttime / indoor courts
Beach

Question 4: If you were mayor of Richmond, what would be the first recreational need you would fill?

Multi-use areas
Picnic area
Tennis
Baseball fields
Community / senior center
Library
Ice rink
Ice rink
Community / senior center
Picnic grounds & fire pits
Baseball fields
Arcade
Multi-purpose fields
Restrooms
Softball field
Senior center
Community center
Recreational center
Multi-use field
Space for music / theatre
Indoor pool
Community / senior center
Multi-purpose field
Playground
Walking trails
Pavilion / picnic area
Outdoor stage
Community pool
Skating rink

Town of Richmond, Rhode Island

5 Richmond Townhouse Road,

Wyoming, RI 02898

www.richmondri.com

RECREATIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE
PUBLIC PREFERENCE SURVEY

1. The Town just acquired land for which a development plan is being considered. The plan will include developed recreation on approximately 14 acres. The remaining land will remain natural but may contain trails.

Choose 10 of the uses below and rank them in order of preference, with 1 being the highest and 10 the lowest. If you do not see a preferred choice, write it in the space provided below.

_____Multi use field
_____Soccer field
_____Football field
_____Baseball/softball field
_____Basketball – indoor
_____Basketball - outdoor
_____Tennis – indoor
_____Tennis - outdoor
_____Frisbee golf course
_____Handicap accessible outdoor trail
_____Swimming pool
_____Community Center with spaces for large and small meetings and events*
_____Teen/youth activities*
_____Senior Center with a commercial kitchen
_____Senior activities*
_____Outdoor area with a gazebo for special events, concerts
_____Outdoor covered pavilion for summer recreation and event use
_____Other*

*Please specify desired activities (optional)

_____
_____
_____

2. Construction and development of a recreational facility will likely increase your property taxes.

Would you support construction of a facility that increased your annual tax bill by $100 ($25 per quarter)?
Yes ____
No ____

Would you support construction of a facility that increased your annual tax bill by $50 ($12.50 per quarter)?
Yes ____
No ____

Would you support construction of a facility that increased your annual tax bill by $25 ($6.25 per quarter)?
Yes ____
No ____

Would you support construction of a facility that increased your annual tax bill by $10 ($2.5 per quarter)?
Yes ____
No ____

____ I do not support anything that raises my taxes.

3. What is your age in years?

18 and under _____ 31-45 _____ 61-70 _____

19-30 _____ 46-60 _____ 71 or over _____

4. Are you a Richmond resident?

Yes ____

No ____