

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: DRUID HILL PARK: THE NEXT 150 YEARS
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As architects, planners and citizens embrace sustainability and preservation at an urban scale for improved social conditions and interactions, they begin to re-evaluate the urban fabric: building, infrastructure and open space to inform the dialogue. This thesis seeks to explore and re-evaluate the potential of the urban public park: edge, access, program, and interaction with neighboring community to preserve and sustain itself, to positively affect the larger city. An ideal case study for this evaluation is Druid Hill Park in Baltimore, the third oldest urban public park in the nation.

In this park, issues of surrounding neighborhood crime and infrastructure disinvestment, along with historic structure and park edge erosion can be examined. An evaluation of their interdependence with proposal to connect urban fabric to park and vice-versa will protect the future park: a more accessible, inclusive and well-

preserved place for active and passive recreation and catalyst for a vital neighborhood.

DRUID HILL PARK: THE NEXT 150 YEARS

by

Lili Mundroff

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I. Site Introduction: Druid Hill Park

History and Setting

The history of the park can be traced as far back as 1688 to Thomas Richardson, a landowner who was granted a title for 2000 acres from Charles Calvert, Lord Baltimore. The land stretching on the west side of the vibrant Jones Falls was an advantageous property for American Indians due to the proximity of the falls as well as multiple springs on the site.

The land's topography is unique as it lies on the fall line between two physiographic regions: the Piedmont Plateau and the Coastal Plain.¹ As such, though the grounds were initially considered a hit-or-miss *hab-nab-venture*², they became quite profitable for lumber and growing tobacco.

Over the next century and a half, the land was subsequently divided (and united) with changes in ownership. It is important to note the key factor, the *raison d'être* for the preservation of the land as a whole – the legacy of Rogers and Buchanan families and their stewardship of the estates. Dr. George Buchanan, city land commissioner in 1729, had developed a love for architecture while attending Glasgow University. He had acquired a total of 578 acres comprising most of this site by 1741 and naming it *Auchentorlie* – Gaelic for ‘fields of sorlie’³. Colonel Nicholas Rogers, also having studied in Glasgow and developing his talents for

¹ Bowditch and Draddy, *Druid Hill Park*, 51.

² Ibid, 21.

³ Ibid, 25.

architecture and landscape design, married into the family and inherited the land, giving it the name of *Druid* relating it back to the revered oak trees (abundant on site), a totem for the ancient Celtic clans.

Druid Hill Park was purchased by the city in 1860 and is one of the first designed large public parks in the country, following New York's Central Park and Philadelphia's Fairmount Park. After the city's acquisition, the park's original vision and design: walks, drives and lakes are attributed to Howard Daniels, an engineer and landscape gardener, influenced by the *city greening movement* happening nationwide and inspired by the English countryside.

Reason for Being

The last decades of the eighteenth century saw the emergence in cities in Europe and America of the picturesque park, open to the public. This emerging trend became known as the American Parks Movement. With the increase of unhealthy urban conditions of the industrial city, the limited residential squares remained the only form of public open spaces.

Each park came to represent the impact of three distinct social forces: the urge to improve the living conditions of factory workers in crowded industrial centers; the urge to bring all classes in close contact with the moral and physical benefits of a 'natural' environment: and the urge to improve the real estate values of areas surrounding the new parks.⁴

It is important to understand and qualify the nature of Druid Hill Park within the larger social and economic context of the time. A Parliamentary Act in England

⁴ Jackson, John B., *A Sense of Place, a Sense of Time*, 114.

to address both the aesthetic and socially progressive needs of the urban centers by providing a bucolic estate park resonating with the English country landscape as well as a socially progressive measure of access to clean air and open land for the masses was adopted early in the 19th century. Birkenhead Park designed by Paxton in 1844 was the first example of this aesthetic and socially progressive movement, one which provided an indelible mark on Frederick Law Olmsted visiting the park a few years later. Olmsted translated the bucolic English park into the democratic *people's garden* in Central Park in 1858.

In the case of Baltimore, the acquisition and development of Druid Hill Park was just as much an economic asset tied to strong political aspirations as it was a moral and social amenity. Mayor Thomas Swann's re-election in 1858 amidst the turmoil issues of slavery and immigration was salvaged by the acquisition of the park. Most importantly, the financing of the Baltimore park system through the 20 percent tax of railway gross income to help establish and maintain the park system proved to be the crucial financial incentive without which nothing could have ever been implemented.⁵ One must recognize however the key players in this fortuitous venture – Thomas Swann, Mayor and former President and Director of Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, as well as all the leading citizens (and railroad barons) purchasing the bonds, friends and old colleagues of Swann.

⁵ This financing scheme was very successful and was a source of national attention. Later in 1874 the state reduced the park 'tax' from one-fifth to 12 percent of gross receipts, and by 1882 to 9 percent and again in 1932 to 3%, Bowditch and Draddy, 38.

Park Design and Interdependence with Transportation System

Under the auspices and leadership of Swann, John H.B. Latrobe, heading the Park Commission and two other commissioners set to procure the land. Upon the dedication of the park on September 27, 1860, the city also hired young George A. Frederick to design a series of pavilions serving as gateways and termini for a small railway once wounding through the park.

As noted earlier, the park acquisition and establishment is heavily connected with the transportation system. *Table 1* describes the timeline of the transportation system and its relationship to the park and public access.

Table 1: Transportation Timeline

June 1833	B+O Railroad founded
1844	B+O Commercial Deal
until 1862	North (orig. Boundary Ave) Passenger Railway Stop
1863	Baltimore City Passenger Company (improve access to park)
	Steam Railway (North to Madison Avenue)
	Dummy Line: steam engine with covered boiler to transport passengers in (3) stations around Druid Hill Park
1868	Patterson Park – Druid Hill Park Steam Line (orig. 70 min by horse), now transports 76,000 people/week
1891	Baltimore's 1 st cable Line (Baltimore Traction Company) from Patterson Park to Druid Hill Park
until 1899	Old White Line to Madison Avenue entrance of Druid Hill Park from (4) areas of city
1899	Cable Line stops
1899-1935	Baltimore Transit Company controls all surface transportation

Table 1: Transportation Timeline cont.

1930's	Park Bus Service halts with World War II
1946	Bus Service scheduled every 15 min; originally serving as transportation, later as a mini-tour

Additionally, understanding the development of the park as a mirror of the social and economic landscape of the time helps determine the park's gestalt, zeitgeist, along with the success and shortfalls of its parts. *Table 2* describes some of the key social events paralleling the development of the park.

Table 2: Socio-Historical Timeline

1632	Article XVIII Charter of Maryland; Cecil Calvert (G. Calvert's son) establishes the rights for parceling, distributing, granting and patenting land
1652	Charles Calvert (Lord Baltimore) acquires land (Druid Hill) from Susquehannock Indians (People of the Falls)
1688	(2000) acres granted to Thomas Richardson North (300-350 wooded acres) to Thomas Durbing, suitable for lumber, building, carpentry
1703	South (200) acres to Levil, suitable for tobacco
1715	Eagleston and later Gardner: lumber and tobacco
1716	Nicholas Rogers III, town surveyor and merchant inherits 350 acres
1729	Baltimore Town Plan established
1741	George Buchanan purchases 578 ½ acres and calls it Auchentorlie
1775-83	American Revolutionary War
1783	Nicholas Rogers marries Eleanor Buchanan, inherits land and renames the estate Druid Hill
1760-1820	Industrial Revolution

Table 2: Socio-Historical Timeline cont.

1789	French Revolution
1800-1850	Romantic Movement
1833	Andrew Jackson, 1 st President to ride a railroad (B+O Train)
1844	Birkenhead Park established, near industrial Liverpool
1850	Olmstead visits Birkenhead
1858	Central Park established, 1st large urban country landscape park
1859	George Peabody endows \$200,000 for establishment of Peabody Institute
Sept. 1860	Druid Hill Park dedicated to the citizens of Baltimore
Nov. 1860	Abraham Lincoln elected president

As reflected in the *Table 2* timeline, the convergence of industrialization, social reform and rationalization of nature, emotion and aesthetic experience during late 1700s and early 1800s, was a catalyst for the shift in gears to the health-promoting picturesque British park school of thought countering the manicured aristocratic French open spaces such as Place Vendome and Place de la Concorde. With the *Romantic Park Movement* we have the beginnings of a modern approach in which natural forms, the ground, trees, water are to be admitted as *elements de jure* (...with) full exaltation of nature combined with positive hatred of urban surroundings.⁶ Placing the aesthetic qualities of the park elements aside, it is important to recognize the social value of the site as a physical urban space bringing together the young and the old, the rich and the poor, allowing social interaction and

⁶ Tunnard, Christopher, *The City of Man*, 248-249

instilling social responsibility of behavior, together with appreciation and respect for the natural environment.

Park Elements

Druid Hill, following Olmsted's and Latrobe's vision, was established as a place of stasis, meandering and discovering nature with pathways following the natural topography while trees framed the paths (*Figure 1*) with an occasional folly or pavilion respite and stroll along a man-made lake. The zoo opened in 1876 the purpose of public exhibition for the instruction and recreation of people. Evolving from private menageries in the previous century, zoos had evolved into public learning and conservation centers. Additional recreation venues included the Bandstand, once located at the end of the Grand Promenade (*Figure 2*), or yellow brick road. Visitors would take the trolley or ride carriages to the Promenade and listen to concerts by the park band.⁷

George Frederick, the architect of many of the structures still present in the park, adopted a variety of architectural themes and motifs from Asia and the Near East, complementing the landscape and showing exotic influences in juxtaposition to the exotic animals.

⁷ Bowditch and Draddy, *Druid Hill Park*, 97



Figure 1 Philosophers' Walk



Figure 2 The Grand Promenade

Currently, the park comprises 745 acres divided into the park (561 acres) and the zoo (185 acres). In addition to the many structures including the pavilions (some of which have been relocated), the newly renovated Mansion House serving as the zoo administrative headquarters, as well as the successfully renovated Conservatory, the park includes many amenities such as tennis- and basketball courts, swimming pool, softball and baseball diamonds, football and soccer fields, interior playgrounds and other recreational facilities.

Current Use and Masterplan

The site is open to the general public each day morning until dusk, with public access to restrooms, water, telephones and parking. The visitor center provides self-guided maps as well as numerous scheduled tours ranging in historic, scenic, horticultural, cultural and sports tours and activities. Interpretive signage is well developed throughout the park informing visitors on the cultural and historical landscape of the park.

It is estimated that the park receives 1.7 million visitors per year; four out of ten people visit the park more than twice a week. Roughly seventy-five percent of the

visitors are African-Americans, whereas twenty percent of visitors are local – they walk or bike to the park. The park is a great recreational, cultural, economical (farmer’s market and rentable plots) amenity to all surrounding historical neighborhoods as well as a state and national destination for the comprising zoo, voted one of the top ten in the country.

In 1993 a new vision for managing the park was prompted to restore the health and vitality of the park and structures. As part of the masterplan process, consultants drafted plans and community members and users framed a vision for the park to protect its history while providing a vision for the future. Recommendations including steps moving forward with the management of the park are included in the *Renewing Druid Hill Park: A Vision for the Future of Baltimore’s Great Park* publication in 1995 and is used for capital projects and planning.

As noted on Part I, Druid Hill Park is the third largest planned public park in the country, providing a great amenity both as a natural, open and recreational space and heritage attraction resource. As a whole, the park is specifically identified in the heritage area management plan of the Baltimore National Heritage Area, under Section 2 – Heritage Resources and Section 3 – Heritage Area Initiatives.

II. Comparative Site Analysis

Parallel Movements

The foundation of Druid Hill Park is closely related to the citywide movement of the mid-1800’s of municipal improvements with the park as safety measure of idealized rural landscape amidst the industrial and social urban tensions.

Progressively, its formal growth and development of a ‘rural landscape’ in an urban setting together with park buildings, fountains, pavilions, gateways, followed by sports fields, botanical gardens and zoo is a reflection of the *American Parks Movement* of early 1900’s. It is important to add that the establishment, development, and longevity of Druid Hill Park is due not only to the municipal needs of the late nineteenth-early twentieth centuries or the landscape aesthetics of the *Parks Movement* but also to the *Department of Recreation and Parks*.

The development of the park parallels with the formation of the *Children’s Playground Association* (1897) and the *Playground Athletic League* (early 1900’s)⁸, forming by the 1920’s the *Bureau of Recreation*, and later merging with the *Department of Parks*. The merger and stewardship of the two in today’s *Department of Recreation and Parks*, fostered the growth and transformation of Druid Hill Park, from a passive, ‘natural’ respite with exotic artistry within an urban center, to an active space where scientific and technological advancements would be showcased.

The *American Parks Movement* has its roots from the earlier 1821 German gymnasias, where indoor fitness equipment was brought outside for outdoor play. Physical activity and play were key factors in the turn of the twentieth century as urban places proved inadequate for children to play. Public schools begin to incorporate community playgrounds, and Druid Hill Park is on the forefront of the *American Playground Movement* opening the first playground in 1897. Eliza Ridgely and Eleanor Freeland, inspired by Joseph Lee’s support of kids’ play in Boston “applied for space in Druid Hill Park expressly for a playground where children could

⁸ Bowditch and Draddy, *Druid Hill Park*, 112.

take some exercise [...and] Druid Hill became home to Baltimore's first designated playground.”⁹

Macro and Micro Scale

This thesis seeks to examine the park in its larger context, its edge, access within and connection to the rest of the city, along with the social, economic and ecological effect on the surrounding neighborhoods. This evaluation of existing historical development and future economic opportunities for the park and surrounding neighborhood can be examined through the 1904 *Proposal* by the Olmsted Brothers.

Commissioned by the Municipal Art Society of Baltimore in 1903, the Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects provided the Park Commissioners Board of Baltimore City a comprehensive analysis for the park system in the city, focusing on

a. Overall Extents and Distribution,

b. Purpose and Specific Requirements

*c. Local Conditions Affecting the Overall Network and Individual Parks.*¹⁰

The report, though never fully executed, stands as the foundation for all future park developments and improvements in the city and surrounding counties. Their critical, all-inclusive and forward-thinking recommendations on public infrastructure stand as true today as they did a century ago: “The continued success of the city as an economical, convenient and satisfactory place of carrying on the activities of life, commercial or social, is absolutely

⁹ Ibid, 114.

¹⁰ Olmsted Brothers, *Proposal of Development of Public Grounds for Greater Baltimore*, 7.

dependent upon maintaining adequate channels of many kinds by rail and road, for this inward and outward tide as well as for the farther-reaching currents of world commerce.”¹¹

To fully assess the current conditions of Druid Hill Park, the Olmstedian lens can be adopted to evaluate the multiple layers comprising the park from a macro to a micro scale and vice versa. Although each of the layers of the site can be analyzed simultaneously through both scales, for clarity of comparison and generally adapting the aforementioned recommendation outline from the 1904 *Proposal*, the following discussion begins to address the complex nature of the park:

a. Context and Comparative Analysis

b. Park Purpose as Active and Contemplative Realm

c. Physical Conditions

d. Future Opportunities.

The goal of this analysis is to identify the tangible site forces that characterize Druid Hill Park and the parameters they set forward for any future programmatic framework, edge reconnection, and surrounding neighborhood redevelopment. The theme of *access* – visual, pedestrian, and vehicular acts as a common thread between these four comparative studies. Some of the relative examples spawn from the Olmsted *Proposal* while others, as will be further discussed, compare well in physical characteristics and programming.

Context and Comparative Analysis

The existence and vitality of any urban park as noted by the Olmsteds, should be examined from a macro scale as a complete park and open space system: where large and small parks, connect with playgrounds and residential squares for a greater,

¹¹ Ibid., 47.

more accessible functional system. For such network, a careful utilization of public and private funding should be acquired to address land acquisition, general maintenance, and capital improvements. When such investments come from both realms and key stakeholders are identified, stewardship and long-term vision goals can be better achieved.

This macro-scale concept of the urban park as part of the larger whole, connected with greenway corridors and linear parks begun with Frederick Law Olmsted Sr. with the “design of the Boston park system’s *emerald necklace*, linking a series of wetlands on the city’s west side, and the park plans of the partnership continued by his sons as the Olmsted Brothers [including] greenway connectors in plans for Baltimore, Seattle and elsewhere.”¹²

Boston and Baltimore, similar in population size as indicated by the inner circle delineation (figure 3 and 5) denote a clearly different dynamic of park system. The public grounds in Boston are well dispersed outside of the city and metropolitan

¹² Orser, Edward W., *The Gwynns Falls*, 146.

district delineation,

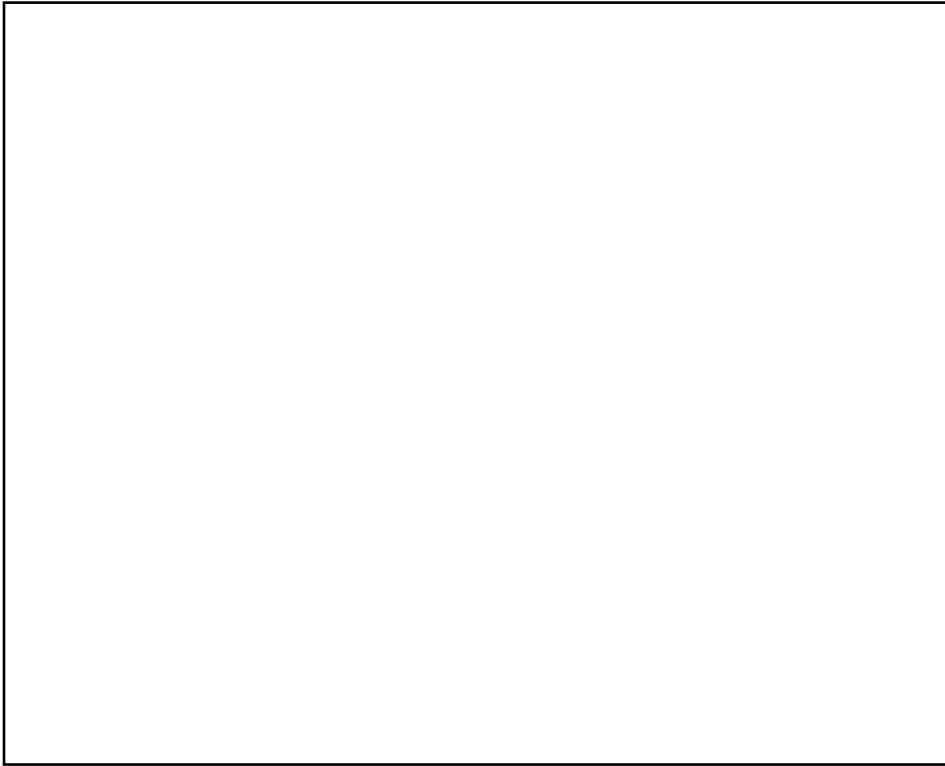


Figure 3 Boston Public Parks and Greenways (1904)

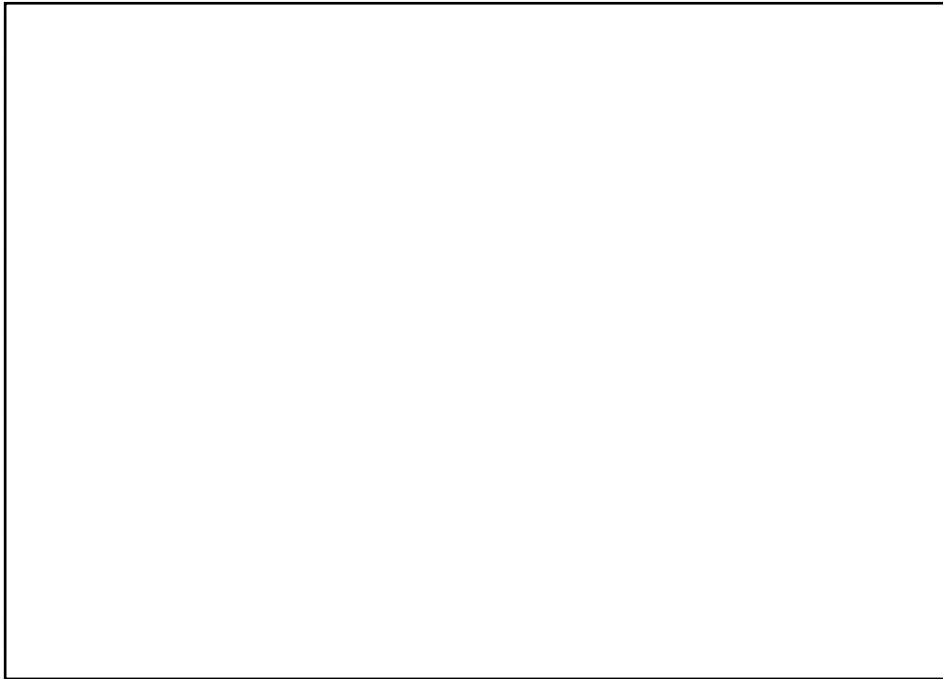


Figure 4 Boston Typical Streamside Parkway



Figure 5 Baltimore Public Parks Existing (1904)

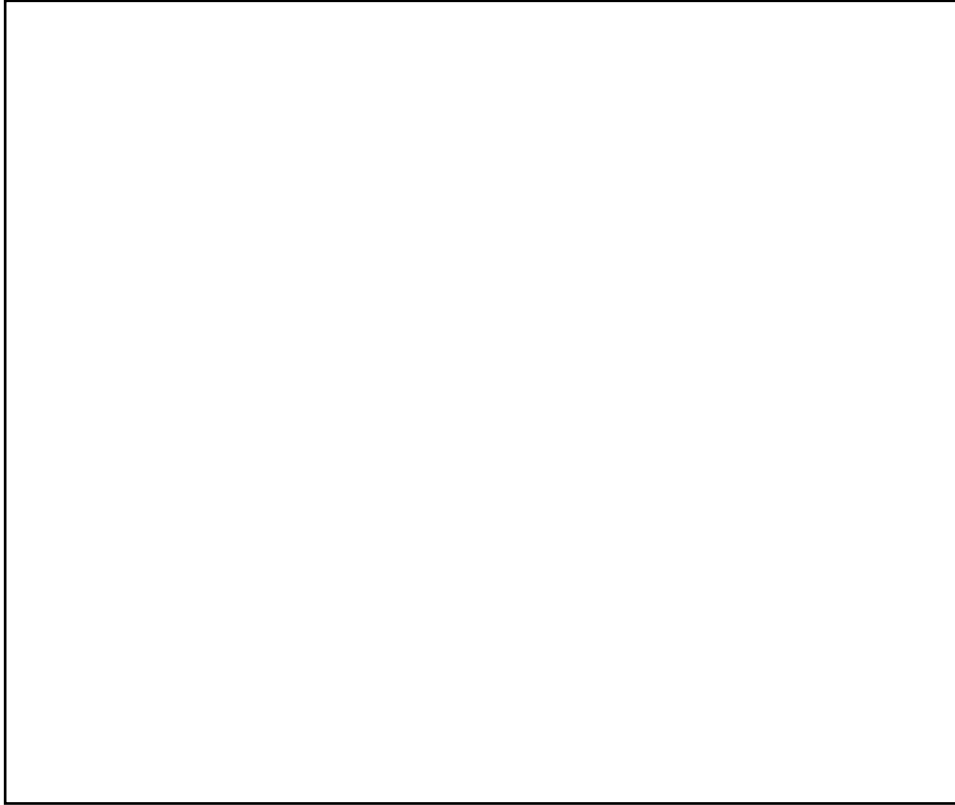


Figure 6 Baltimore Public Parks and Greenways Proposed (1904)

vary in size, and most importantly are well integrated with a continuous system of greenways, connecting periphery parks to the city and parks within the city. In Baltimore (figure 5), the existing public grounds are few, small in size (except Druid Hill Park) and located in the periphery of the city, disconnected between each other and the county grounds. Olmsted Brothers' *Proposal* included a better distribution of small open spaces interlaced with parkways and boulevards for a better-accessed system. When comparing side by side the park system designs and proposals (figures 7-9) for Boston, Seattle and Baltimore, one begins to understand the critical notion that these urban parks, unlike residential squares, are just as much related to the common thread of waterways as access channels as they are related to the city neighborhoods which they serve. These large urban park nodes, rather than

occupying a defined physical space of their own, interconnect with the surrounding built fabric through greenways and parkways as extended fingerlike vegetative linkages.



Figure 7 Boston Park System (large context incl. rural parks) Figure 8 Seattle Park System

Though these large-scale recommendations for Baltimore were never fully executed, in the past few decades valuable strides in trail connections have been achieved following the Olmstedian guiding principles of park system development. The responsible groups include public and private entities such as the Trust for Public Land (TPL), Gwynns Falls Greenway Task Force, the nonprofit Park and People Foundation together with the Friends of Druid Hill Park and many others, all under the supervision of the Department of Recreation and Parks. The recognized importance of the trails as linkages to the parks and the assets that such continuity and access brings to the fronting neighborhoods is well expressed in the TPL report of 1993: “This means restoring green space, parks, and playgrounds in inner-city neighborhoods. It also means conserving natural and recreational lands, connecting

our urban neighborhoods to our deserts, mountains, rivers, forests, and seashores. Each place depends upon the other for our cities; livability, our nation’s security, and our planet’s health.”¹³

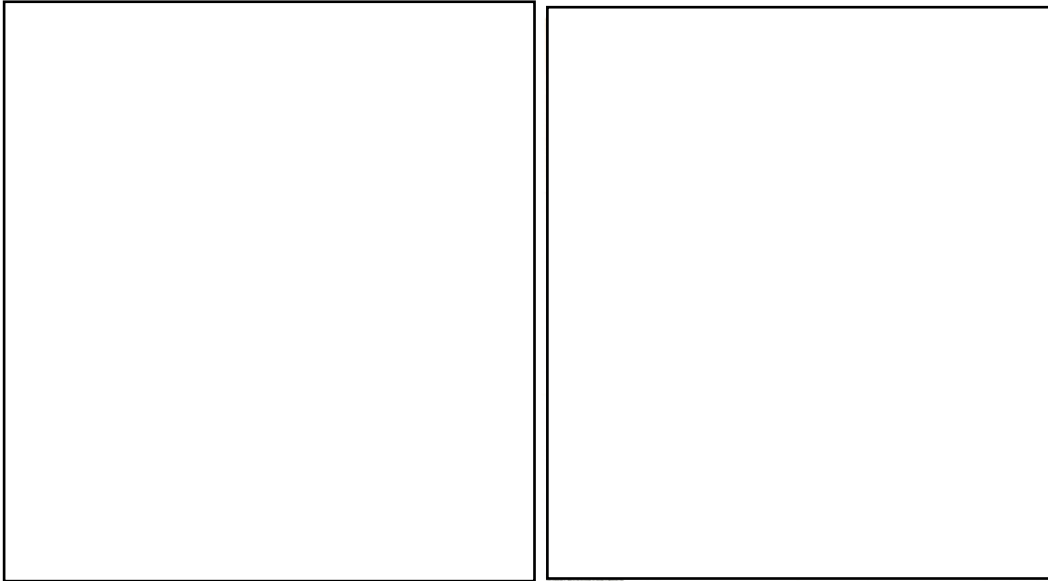


Figure 9 Baltimore Park System Proposal (1904) Figure 10 Baltimore Parks Proposal (1904)

The Gwynns Falls Trail, a 15-mile connection from the northwestern Winans Meadow (Leakin Park) down to the Middle Branch and the Inner Harbor, together with The Jones Falls Trail, a 10-mile run from the northern Cylburn Arboretum through Druid Hill Park down to the Inner harbor, links parks and streams along their watersheds. The assets provided by these trails go beyond the healthy nature extension of the parks. They are valuable “distinctive urban types of greenway”¹⁴ connecting important nodes in the city – museums, parks, nature conservatories, the harbor, and residential neighborhoods.

¹³ Orser, Edward W., *The Gwynns Falls*, 147.

¹⁴ Orser, Edward W., *The Gwynns Falls*, 147.

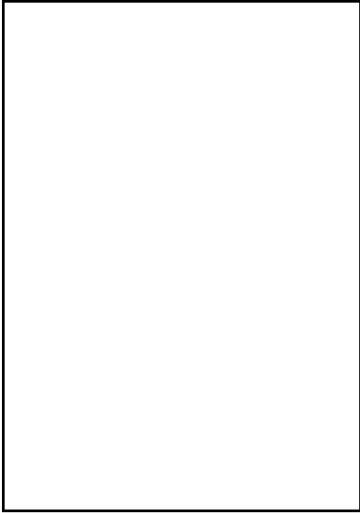


Figure 11 Jones Falls Trail



Figure 12 Gwynns Falls Trail



Figure 13 Gwynns Falls Trail: Path Nodes

From an economic standpoint, the trail system becomes part of larger network, in this case the Chesapeake Bay Gateway Network, fostering tourism, access and vitality of the “natural” and urban assets of the Chesapeake Bay Area. Additionally, the Jones

Falls Trail connects Baltimore to the East Coast Greenway trail system, running 2,900 miles along the eastern seaboard from Maine to Florida.

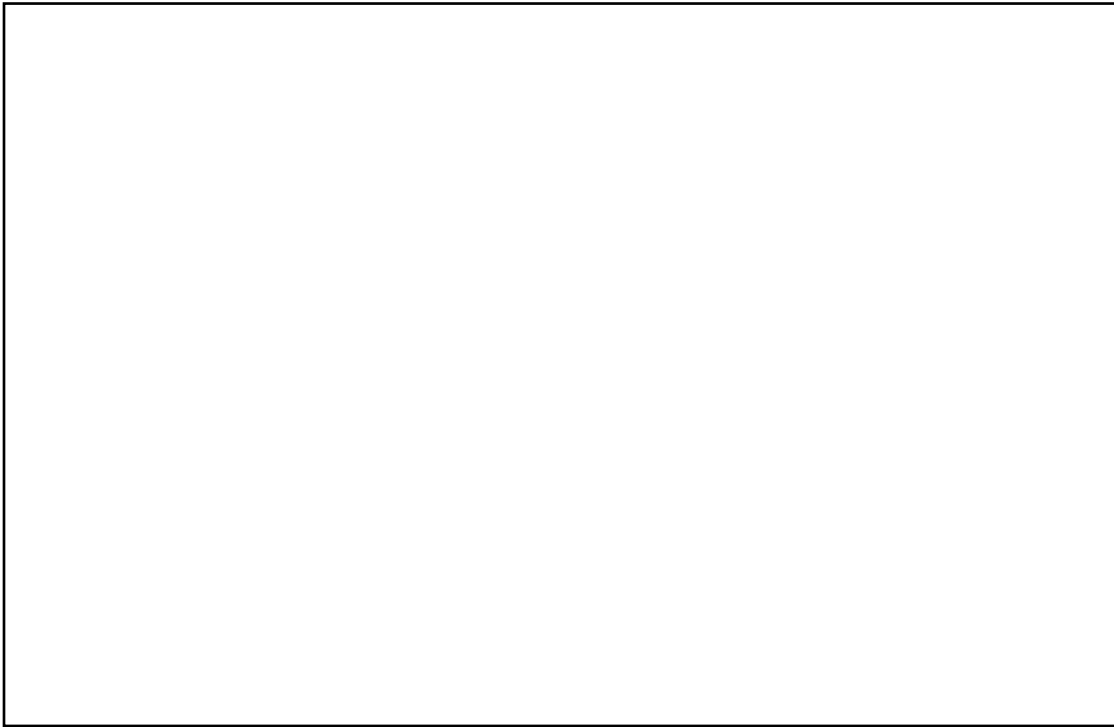


Figure 14 Pedestrian Trails: Baltimore and Surrounding

This chapter on examining the larger context of the park system begun with one of the Olmsted's *Proposal* recommendations of securing public and private funding to allow for land acquisition and improvements, not simply as a financial means to an end, but a sense of ownership, pride, and farsightedness for future goals. In the case of Baltimore, where the trails follow "[streams slicing] Baltimore's western side indiscriminately, rushing through villages and slums, past playgrounds and factories, forests and railroad tracks,"¹⁵ much effort was required to convince the connecting neighborhoods of the positive impact of the trails and parkways. The public input throughout the design, planning and decision-making process was key to

¹⁵ Rosen, Jill. "Bicycle Baltimore," The Baltimore Sun, 4 June 2015.

secure long-term conservation and ownership goals. The surrounding neighborhoods and stakeholders “would need to see it not only as the necklace, but for the pearls it offered along the way.”¹⁶ The effects of such trail network restate the goals of the Olmsted’s *Proposal* in enhancing public green spaces, fostering healthy urban environments and becoming a catalyst of rehabilitation and revitalization.

Park Purpose as Active and Contemplative Realm

To evaluate the role of the current status of Druid Hill Park, its successes, failures and needs for improvement in the amenities it offers, it is important to identify the purpose and requirements that were originally set forth in its establishment. As such, one begins to understand the role of the ‘rural’ urban park as a dichotomy of active and contemplative realms.

As noted earlier, the development of the park is closely linked to that of the playground, the provision of exercise in open air, where active physical play parallels the mental play. As playgrounds were associated with the younger population (sandbox, proximity to schoolyard and housing), athletic fields would cater to younger adults (usually run by clubs or associations). Following Olmsted’s recreation principles, the provision of activities in parks can be categorized as (a) *exertive recreation* including playgrounds, ball fields, pools, etc.; (b) *incidental exercise*, such as walking or biking, without the need to dictate a specific treatment; and (c) *social recreation*, or generally speaking, social interaction. In case of the latter, picnicking, restfulness and refreshments for the tired city worker, enjoyment of the park landscape in the shade, quiet, open expanse and the private moments.

¹⁶ Orser, Edward W., *The Gwynns Falls*, 149.

In the case of Druid Hill Park, numerous baseball fields, 18-hole disc golf course, playgrounds, tennis courts and swimming pools¹⁷, interlace with bike, pedestrian and woodland paths. Along these, picnic pavilions, benches, historic fountains offer(ed) a moment of pause and regeneration. Considering the evolvement of the park over the past 150 years as well as present multidimensional resources and services such as the Maryland Zoo, Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, Druid Hill Reservoir, community gardens and farmers' market and many other recurring events, such provision of activities will be examined in greater length in *Site Analysis-Future Opportunities* Section, where programming and use can be evaluated as assets delineating potential opportunities.

¹⁷ Many of these public recreational facilities were segregated starting in the early 1920's and lasted until the early 1950's following the outvoting and resignation of Robert Garrett. Just two years prior, in 1948 Druid Hill Park set the forefront stage of social action for civil rights, when a tennis match as demonstration against segregation in Baltimore took place. Considering the very recent public unrest at Mondawmin Mall, only half-a-mile from Druid Hill Park, as well as the current socio-economic data of the surrounding southwest neighborhood, the value and quality of these resources will be later examined.



Figure 15 Druid Hill Park: Active Realm with Jones Falls Trail

Social Recreation initiates the transition into the second purpose of the urban park, i.e. the *Contemplative Realm*. This second purpose of the park can also be subdivided in three categories as (a) *enjoyment of outdoor beauty*, such as foliage, flowers, earth, rocks, sky and light; (b) *enjoyment of formal decorative design*, where the designer controls the composition for a definite effect; and (c) *enjoyment of nature*, addressing typically a larger ‘natural scenery’ where human interference is not obtrusive resulting in a complex interaction of materials and forces. Although such purpose may seem to only concern a study of landscape architecture, evaluating the role of the human hand and design on the ‘natural’ realm begins to set the stage for a different type of urban park.

Considering *enjoyment of outdoor beauty* as a ‘natural element’ discussion relating to the *Site’s Physical Conditions* in the next section, *formal decorative design*

and ‘*natural scenery*’ will shape the discussion on the *contemplative realm* of Druid Hill Park. The element of scale and access is key in understanding the human experience. *Formal design* is mostly applicable to the passages, connections, treatment of streets and intimate spaces closely related to the normal city life. Here the passage of light, air, bridges, elevated or sunken passageways are orchestrated in a formalized and apparent manner. When considering such *formal design* applied to the character of parkway design, “the first essential of parkways of this sort is that they should avoid the petty annoyances and danger of ordinary street travel, that they should be free from ordinary commercial traffic, that they should cross at grade as few lines of commercial traffic as possible [...] that they should have comfortable pavements for driving, riding and walking, and that they should have adequate shade in the summer.”¹⁸

On a small scale comparison, the same view of the Grand Promenade leading to the (now-lost) Band Stand is remarkably different. The formal sequence of trees and their canopy, a vegetative wall marking the sequence of progressive, contemplative walk, offering the shade, mitigating the light and wind is lost. The benches aligning the edge of the promenade have also been lost, and with those the human scale of the sequence. The only remaining element of formal decorative design is the brick and concrete paving, in dire need of preservation, in an effort to continue providing a permeable and of-human-scale walking experience.

¹⁸ Olmsted Brothers, *Proposal of Development of Public Grounds for Greater Baltimore*, 40.

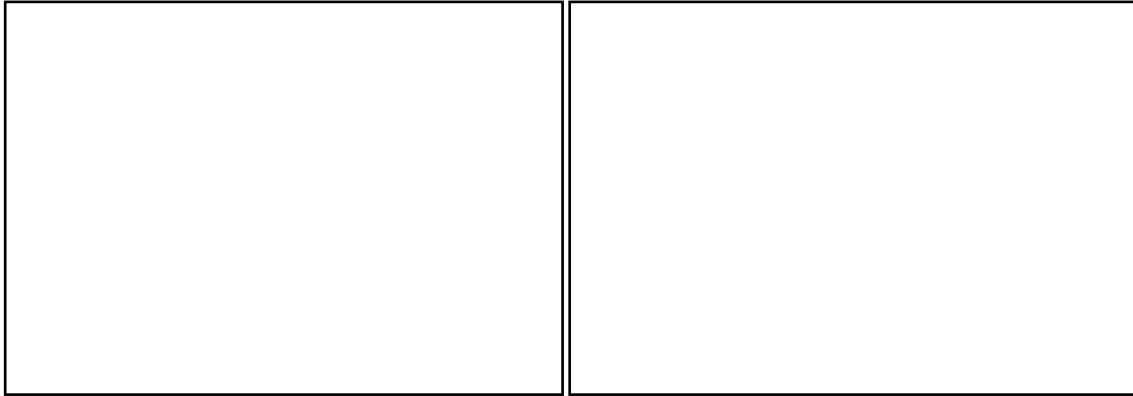


Figure 16 Grand Promenade circa 1950s

Figure 17 Grand Promenade 2015

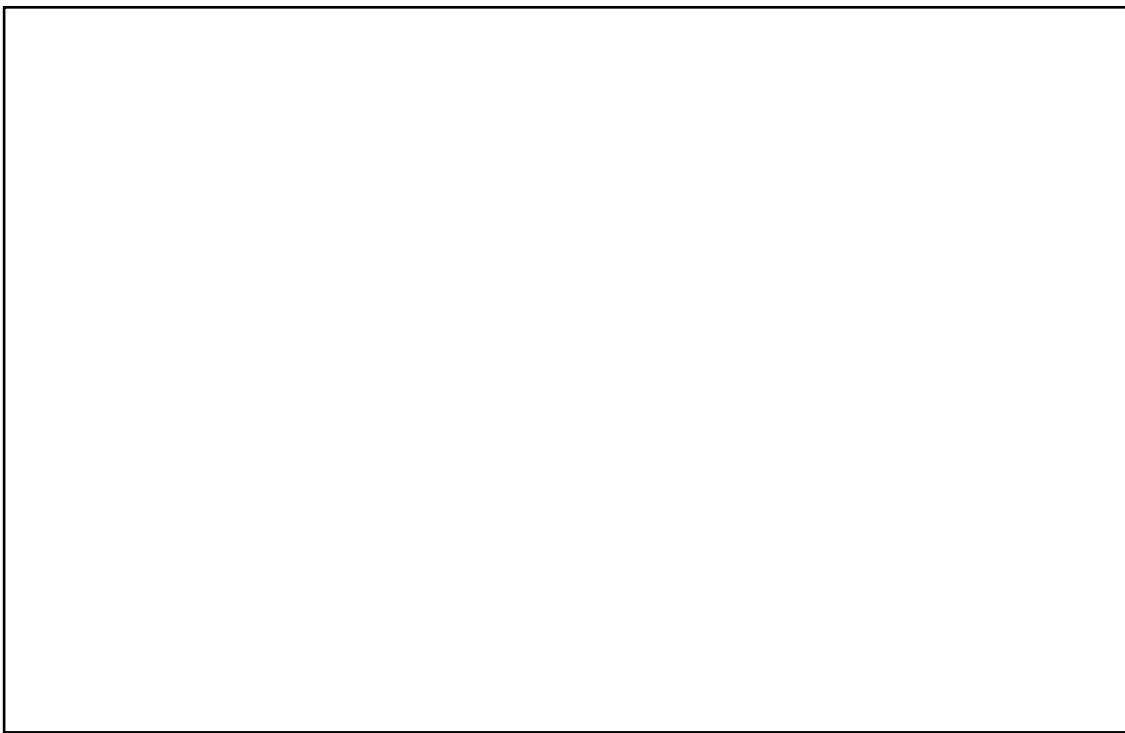


Figure 18 Druid Hill Park Map circa 1882

On a large scale comparison, when evaluating the approach as well as edge condition

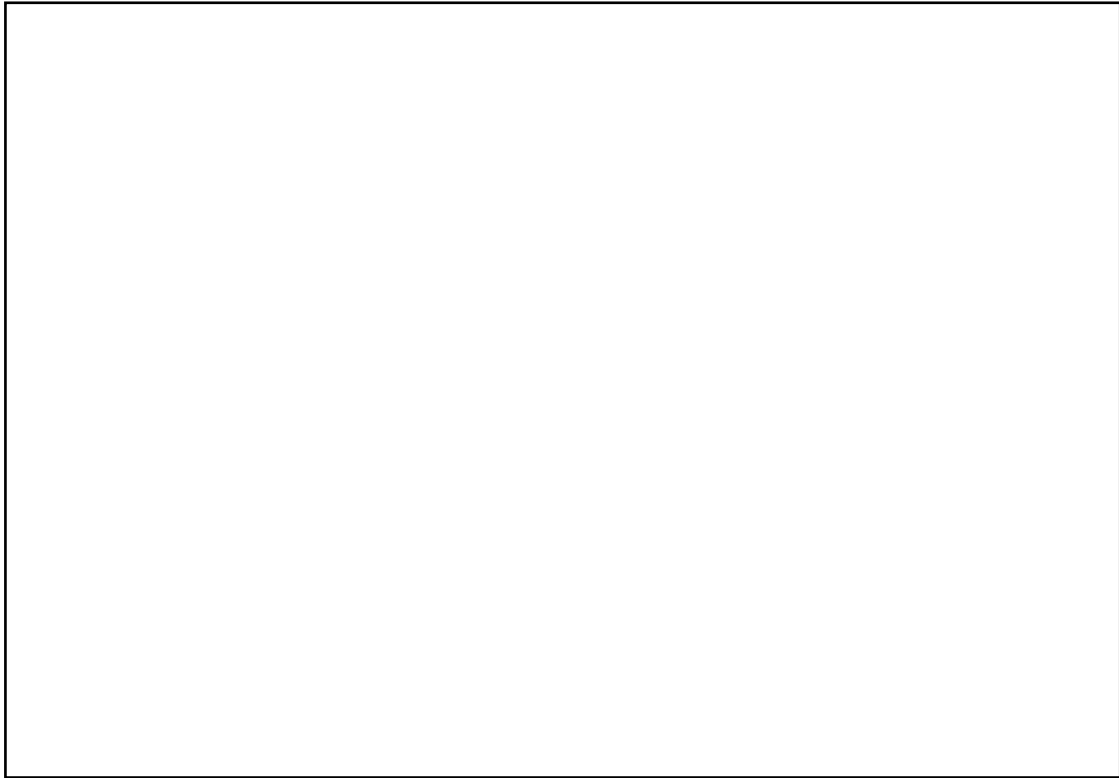


Figure 19 Druid Hill Park Map: current + no-longer existing trails + routes, 1872/1893-1993

of the park following Olmsted's recommendations of *crossing at grade as few lines of commercial traffic as possible*, it is clear that such condition is no longer respected.

On the 1882 map (figure 18) private estates on the southwest side of the lake, including Orem's Estate, Whitridge and Auchentorlie, front the park. The main entrance from Madison Avenue (leading to Swann Avenue and the Grand Promenade west of the lake) through the Etruscan Triple Arches Gateway was a distinctive threshold. Other entry points such as the Chinese Station helped re-orient pedestrians into the park. Today, those original formal decorative design elements of promenade, gateway, pedestrian access are lost. Swann Drive and Druid Hill Lake Drive are six-lane highways that separate the park from the surrounding south and western neighborhoods, offering minimal access, and separating parts of the park (Old Superintendent's House – now the new Parks and People Foundation) and smaller

green spaces to the southwest. These pedestrian crossings will be examined in later detail with access and connectivity, when evaluating the three types of edge boundary present in the park. Such issue of connectivity is evaluated here to consider the micro and macro scale of formal design that has been lost from the original planning, and deviates from the normative suggested in the 1904 Olmsted's *Proposal*.

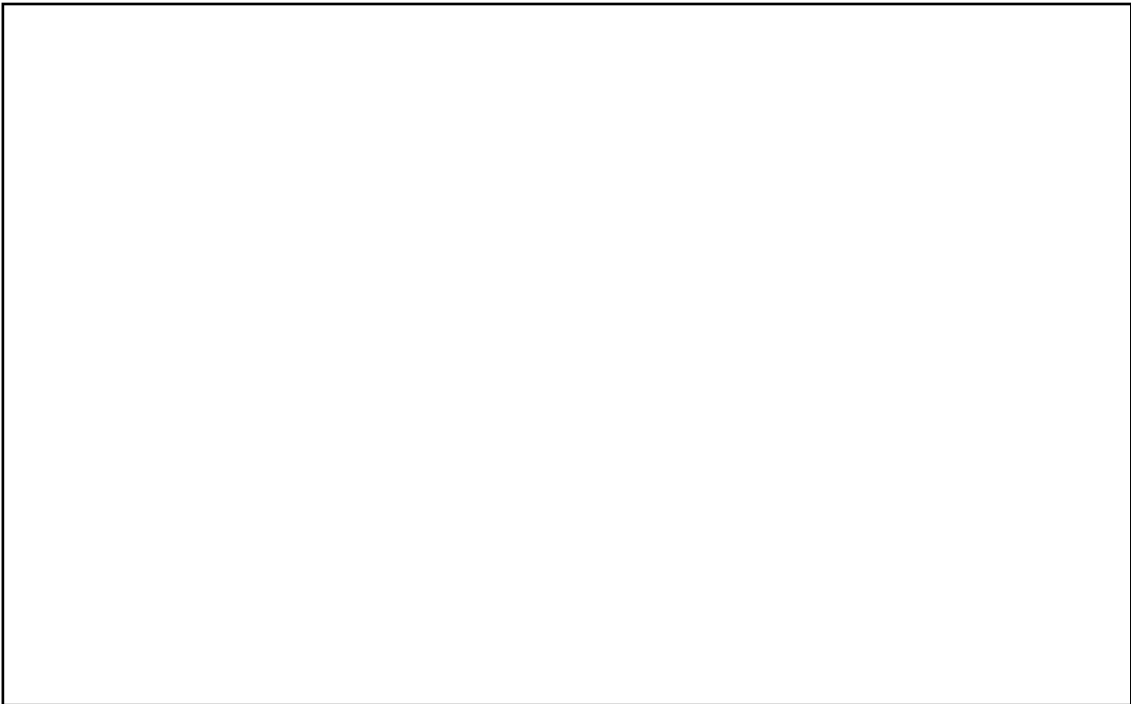


Figure 20 Aerial View of Druid Hill Park, southwest

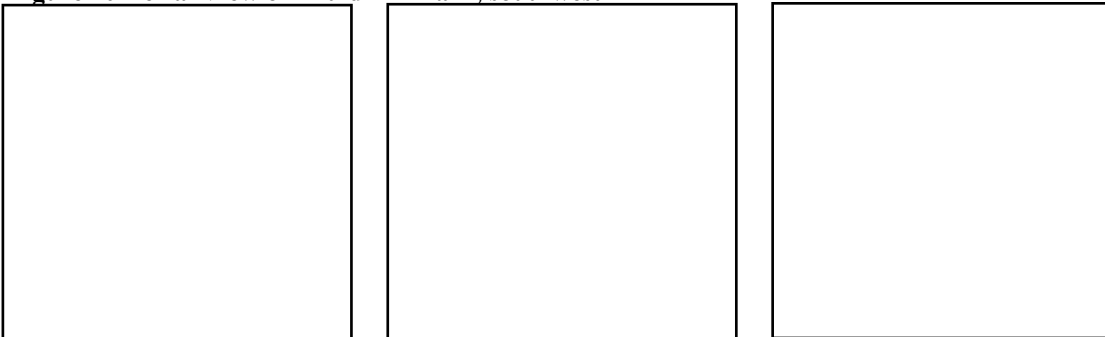


Figure 21 Aerial View at South and West Crossings of Druid Hill Park

Considering the third function of the park – that of enjoyment of *natural scenery*, it is important to re-define the terms *natural* and *landscape*. As the Olmsted Brothers note, everything so-called *natural* is not the primeval forest, the sylvan untouched original landscape. It is possible however, when considering an expansive space such as the case of Druid Hill Park, to refer to this urban (rural) park as a provision of *natural scenery*. In such case, the human interference is subordinate. At Druid Hill, a border screen characterized by trees, topography or a widened perimeter edge of open space allows for the seclusion from the city, its sounds and sights. The second element in providing this enjoyment of quiet *rural scene* concerns the element of scale. Spaciousness, in the case of Druid a 745-acre site, is the scale by which such *natural scenery* can be measured. “Large parks are not worth the price which must usually be paid for them if they do not afford spacious rural scenery with least [...] human control.”¹⁹ At Druid Hill, the mature forests on the north side, create an optimal buffer for this type of *rural landscape* in an urban setting. On the eastern border, where the natural Jones Falls Valley once provided a buffer of expanse to the park, the I-83 corridor with noise and pollution has destroyed that buffer, allowing those park areas to be less *sylvan* and *natural* as one might hope. On such note, allocating the more active park programs such as the playing fields and swimming areas on that side, identify more with the *active* rather than the *contemplative* realms of the park. A further study of edge conditions and program allocation will address the nature of the buffer and future opportunities.

¹⁹ Olmsted Brothers, *Proposal of Development of Public Grounds for Greater Baltimore*, 38.

Physical Conditions

As noted earlier, Druid Hill Park is quite unique in its physiographic characteristics with a steep forested terrain on the northern part of the park and a gentler slope on the southern side. Additionally, the Jones Falls River Valley (where interstate-83 has now been established), delineates a steep valley side, resulting in a natural and physical barrier. Such physical conditions favor a distinct landscape and use of the park. The zoo is heavily nested (and protected) within the densely forested northern part, whereas the recreational activities and reservoir are located on the more open southern side.



Figure 22 Druid Hill Park: topography and vegetation

The northern *forest upland landscape* consists of tall trees, high canopy, rich foliage of evergreens and oaks, and intricate undergrowth. The southern part of the park, once characterized by underground streams, consists of the meadow, the

reservoir, more deciduous trees including cherry blossoms surrounding the reservoir. Though the focus of this thesis is more the interaction of urban landscape to the natural one, it is important to note that the distinctive traits of the natural texture of the park can be utilized in understanding and re-envisioning the park, preserving the original scope as well as adapting some of the new programming within these natural characteristics.

The simple diagram of vegetation on figure 22 begins to address the nature of the perimeter green areas that connect to the park. On the west side (left), the Ashburn reservoir area is delineated by a green corridor (where the metro rail line currently runs). The east (right) side is also characterized by a large green space belonging to Johns Hopkins University – the Homewood Campus, Wyman Park, and the Hampden neighborhood.

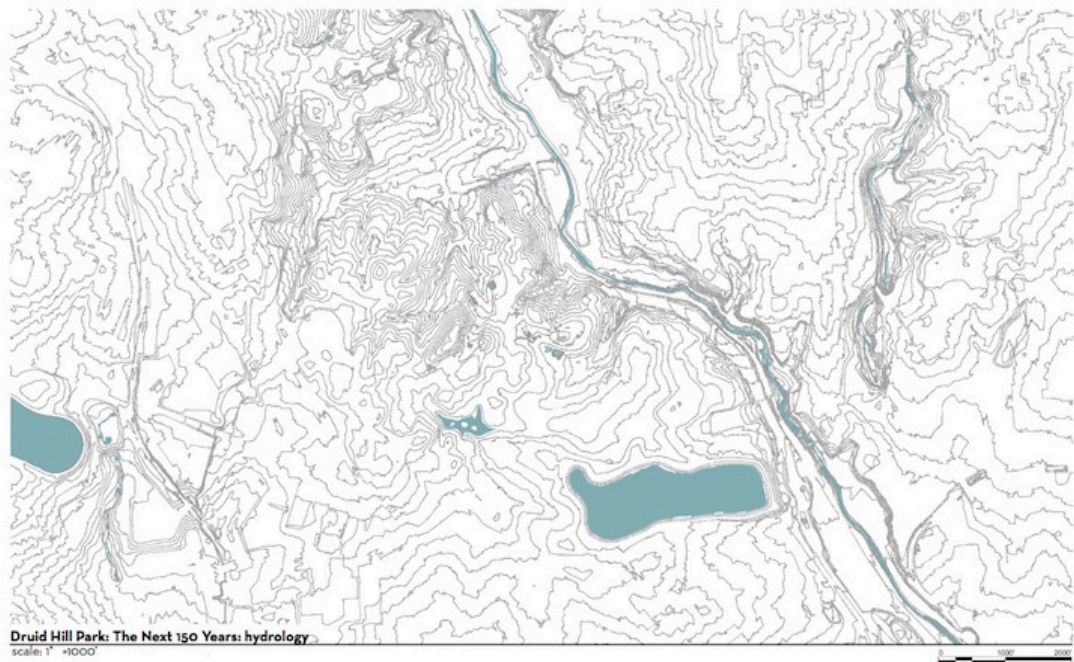


Figure 23 Druid Hill Park: topography and hydrology

Following the goals of this thesis to connect the urban fabric to that of the park, it becomes evident that the common thread of the neighborhoods surrounding the park is the language of the vegetative fabric, the parkway corridors that the Olmsted Brothers had stressed in their *1908 Proposal*. As such, the park's edges are blurred and its influence extends in a finger-like manner to the surrounding neighborhoods.

III. Urban Park Synergy: Common Themes

Goals

Rich in history and unique natural characteristics, Druid Hill Park offers a multi-layered approach of intervention. In attempting to synthesize the main problems and critical areas for an adaptable design proposal, it was important to set certain goals for the thesis based on the park's original mission, purpose of this and of others of same era, and most importantly, agenda that is just as applicable to today's users:

- a. Preserve and adapt (the park as a whole entity, the historic pavilions within the park) along with the original intent of access.
- b. Use park as an urban value, where active and passive recreation measures are well choreographed and serve the need of outside visitors as well as daily users from surrounding neighborhoods.
- c. Re-establish the urban grid by reconnecting park programming and the urban fabric, stitching together the neighborhood and eliminating blight, improving the real estate values of surrounding development.

Value

The success, longevity and preservation of an urban park has close ties to the economic value of the surrounding real-estate, as well as the maintenance costs and revenue from the park programs. This notion of economic incentive is neither a twenty-first century invention nor a derivative. Druid Hill Park was once a collection of profitable farm estates, purchased at an appropriate price by the city of Baltimore, and funded as a park development through the taxes on the rail line usage. In exchange, the park brought the idyllic countryside to the city, the exotic (zoo animals, conservatory gardens, architectural vocabulary) to the user, prompted the increased usage of the rail lines, and increased the value of surrounding development (Eutaw Place, Madison Avenue, Auchentoroly Terrace, Carlin Park and numerous others).

As Figure 24 begins to indicate, Druid Hill Park, similar in size to Prospect Park in Brooklyn, NY, has much fewer annual visitors (1.7 million as compared to 10 million), with a lower city budget (1.5 million compared to 4 million). Moreover, there is a clear revenue value that the private conservancies from other parks are able to declare (9.8 million in the case of Prospect Park, whereas those values are almost unattainable for Druid. In the latter case, the Baltimore Zoo Conservancy had revenue of less than 2 million, with their operating expenses matching or exceeding that revenue.

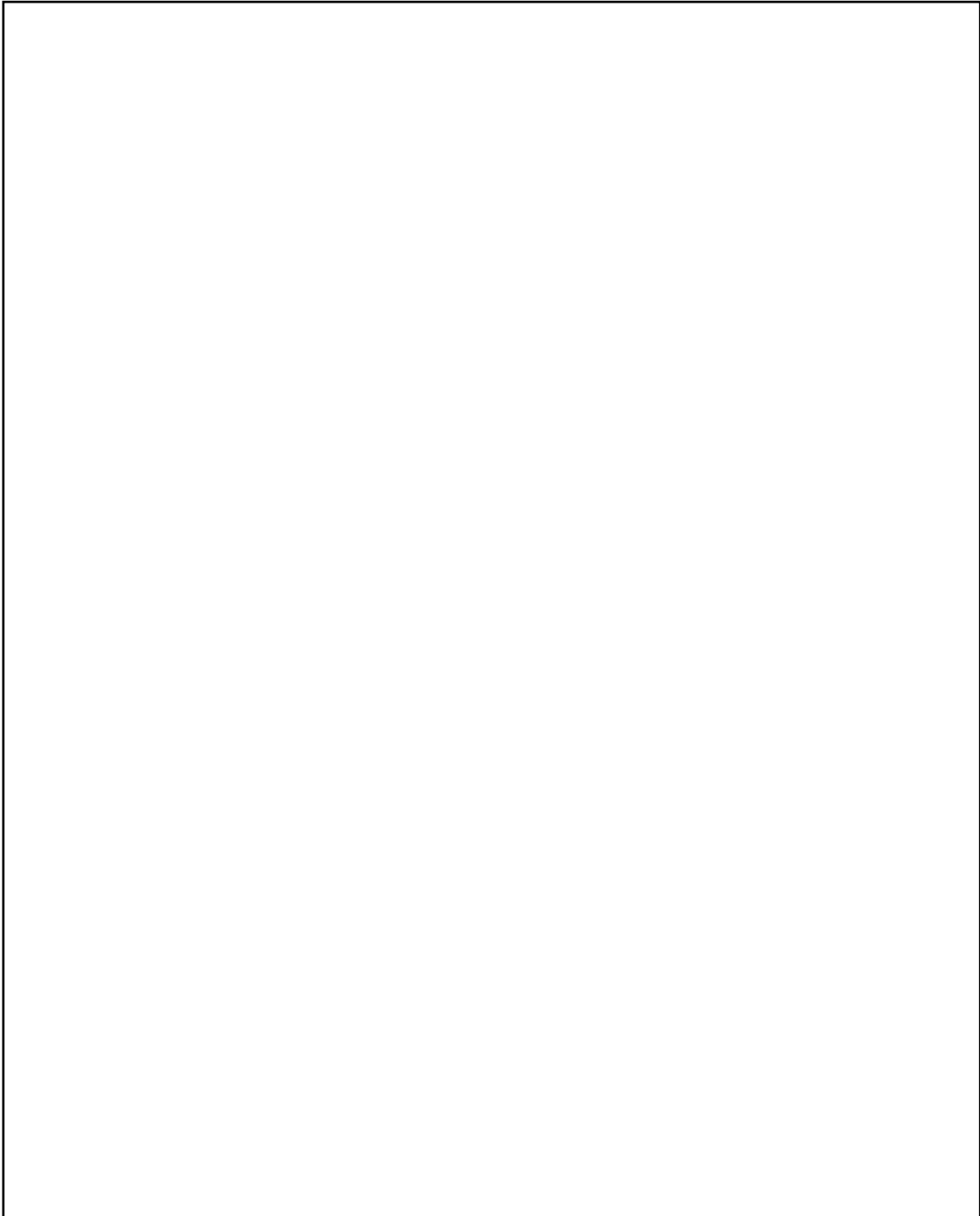


Figure 24 Druid Hill Park value compared to Prospect, Fairmount, and Forest Parks.

Interestingly, such problem of value or revenue is not new for Druid Hill Park. The Olmsted Brothers' Proposal of 1908 evaluated the size of the park and its surrounding real estate and determined that such large land preserve lacks the revenue it should have for the invaluable space it keeps from development. Such statement

does not query to diminish its size, but simply clarify that invaluable undeveloped land must be assessed from an economic standpoint, and reprogrammed and accessed in such a way as to allow for a continuous economic viability, for its own existence as well as that of surrounding real estate.

Continuity

A secondary overarching theme of continuity helps quantify the current issues and determine the focus of design intervention. The large urban park comprising of forest, meadows and lakes would have certainly presented an insular space, removed from the hustle-and-bustle of the industrial city. Yet as earlier described in the *Physical Conditions*, the parkways and meandering paths were critical in linking the city to the park as well as allowing the users to filter through the park.

Figure 25 reflects the current primary, secondary and tertiary arteries of continuity throughout the park, as well as the broken historic connections that once thread through the park. As one begins to examine these roadways and how they bypass the park without engaging with it, and go as far as separating it from the surrounding neighborhood (interstate-83 on the east side or the six-to-eight lane Druid Lake Drive on the south and west sides), one begins to understand the lack of connective tissue and the automobile-efficiency focus that the city has adopted over time. Moreover, Figure 27 reflects the effects that such road mapping and automobile-oriented urban planning can have on the city grid as a whole, with numerous inconsistencies, where the park becomes a fissure rather than a suture.

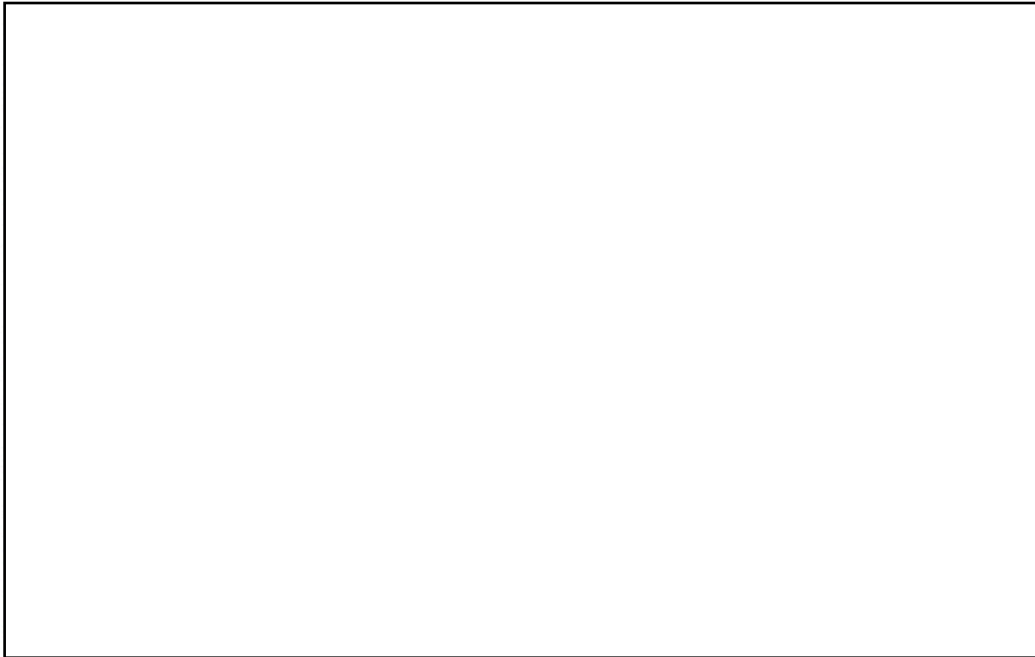


Figure 25 Druid Hill Park: current and historic arteries

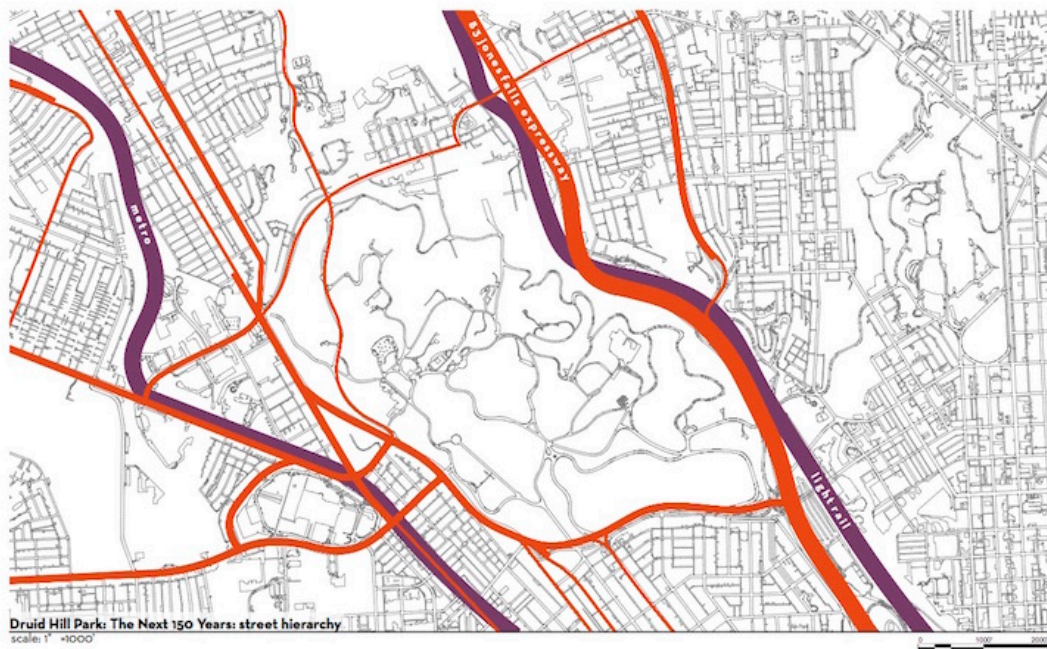


Figure 26 Druid Hill Park: road hierarchy



Figure 27 Druid Hill Park: urban grid disintegration

Upon identifying such loss of continuity, some of the earlier sketches included re-forming the original grid, whether by adding redevelopment, to the extension of the green spaces into the parkways, as well as the re-establishment of the grid infill to the expansive surface parking for the Mondawmin mall site.



Figure 28 Druid Hill Park: initial studies - connecting urban grid

Access

The theme of access is closely related to that of continuity. However, it merits a separate consideration from the earlier theme, in that it addresses at a smaller scale the surrounding neighborhoods and the threshold spaces where such continuity permeates the park.

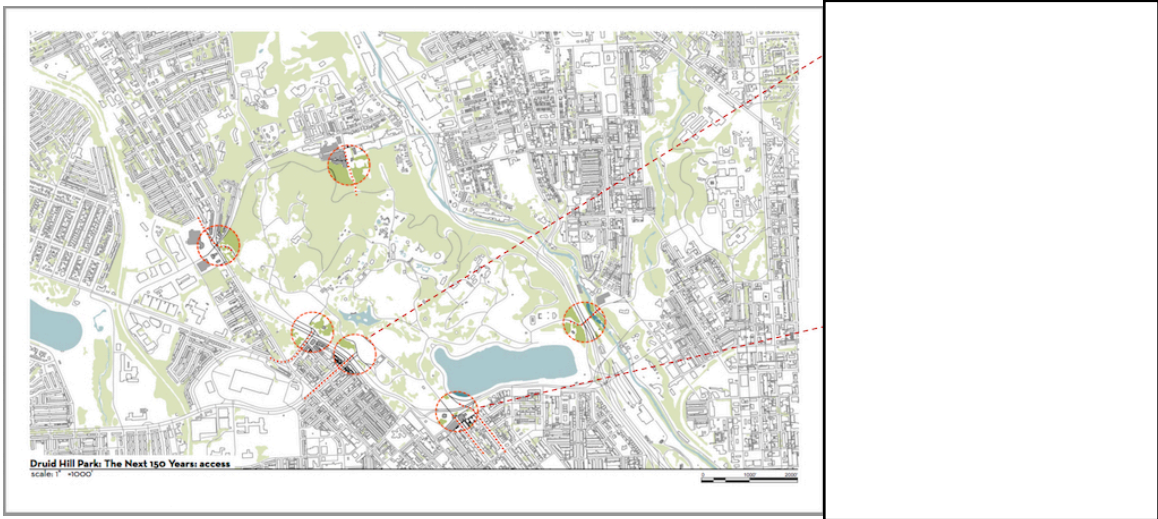


Figure 29 Druid Hill Park: access points

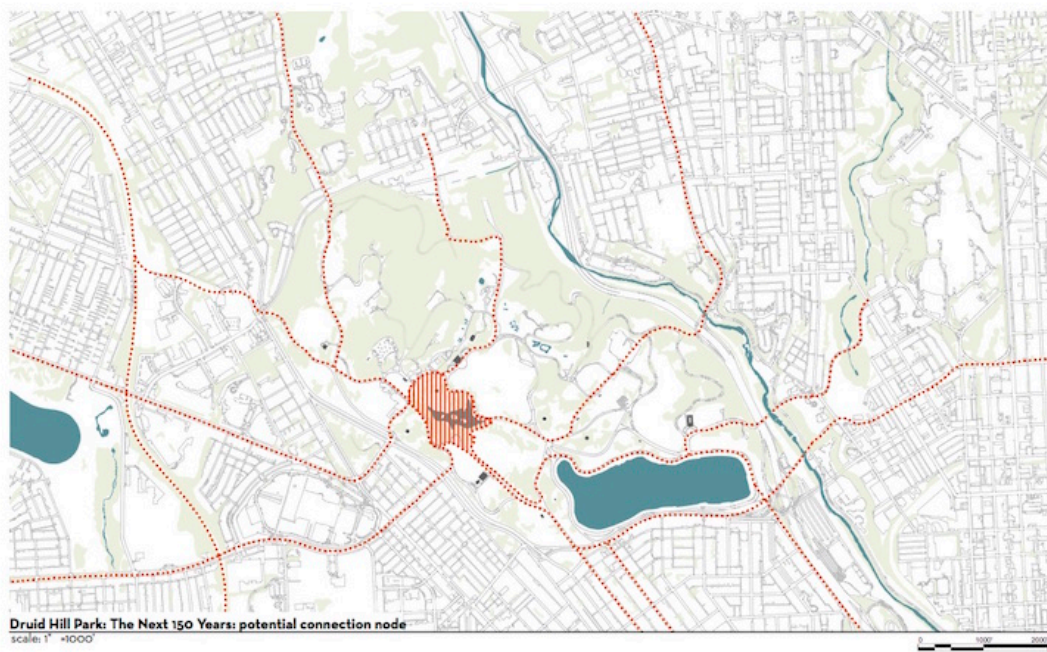


Figure 30 Druid Hill Park: possible access and continuity

Figure 29 indicates six critical access points to the park. They are different in nature, as the ones on the north side are secluded and hard to distinguish due to the heavy forested edge condition, whereas the south-southwestern ones tend to be somewhat visible, yet still lacking the celebratory arrival that such historic park requires.

The convergence of these access roads occurs at a critical western node of the park, as indicated by the shaded red area of Figure 30, the original Boat Lake. Currently fenced in by the Baltimore Zoo, the diagramming exercise clearly begins to underline the importance to free that entity from the zoo and allow it to become a re-organizing element within the park, a point of convergence and divergence for the multiple road connections.

Edge

Restoring this historic park to become a valuable asset for the surrounding neighborhoods can only be achieved by understanding how the park edge meets the urban fabric. In the earlier studies of Olmsted proposal and studies, edges are clearly distinguished between forested, low stone-walled, meadow planted, historic iron fenced, water edges and more. Their proposal however goes beyond the man-made landscape, physiographic and ornamental edges. They also touch upon the importance of building orientation within the realm of the park. The edge of the park is not merely the frontage of the buildings onto the green space, which is critical and must be safeguarded at all costs, but also how the rest of the urban fabric aligning the greenways and parkways begins to suggest the upcoming park.

In the case of Druid Hill Park, as noted on Figure 31-32, the urban fabric is inconsistent with the edge of park. Vehicular travel has taken precedence; many buildings are facing the park are now set off further by the six-eight lane Druid Lake Drive. In some instances, like the Gwynns Falls Parkway, the edge definition is lost, especially at the Mondawmin Mall site, where surface parking and easy service and vehicular access takes precedence over urban edge continuity.

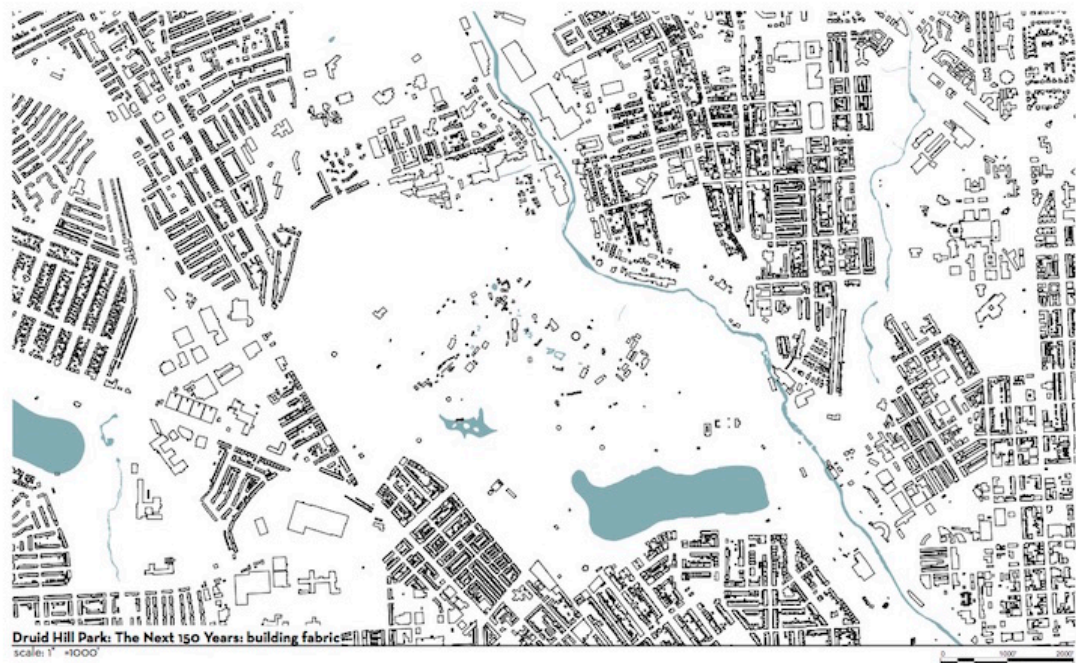


Figure 31 Druid Hill Park: urban fabric



Figure 32 Druid Hill Park: building frontage



Figure 33 Druid Hill Park: existing edge condition + possible intervention areas

Intervention can and should occur in all of the noted entry points on Figure 33. They are different in nature such as in the articulation of the urban fabric at these nodes (large apartment buildings as in the case of the southern Madison Avenue - node-2 versus the 3-story residential rowhouses on the western park edge - node 1. They also differ in edge condition as mentioned earlier, forested, dense and somewhat protected on the northern side against the open and eroded southwestern edge and the insurmountable concrete-and asphalt steep slope on the eastern edge.

For the purposes of this thesis, nodes 1, 2 and 4 will be further developed as intervention points as they begin to address all the overarching themes of value, continuity, access, edge and engagement of this discussion.

Engagement

This overarching theme can have multiple definitions, as it relates to the park programming and its adaptability to the frequent user, the special-event user, or the one-time tourist. However, in the context of the park as an entity in synergy with the

surrounding neighborhood, *engagement* begins to address the way in which the two entities begin to relate to one another.

The surrounding neighborhoods are characterized by high, medium and low income areas. Though such economic disparities concentrated in distinct neighborhoods begin to fracture the park, the mapping overlay of historic districts crosses such economic boundaries. These historic districts are recognized by CHAP - Baltimore City Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation, and/or by MHT – Maryland Historical Trust. The value of these historic districts, including the park and some of its individual buildings, attests the importance of preserving these places, their historic and social significance, and most importantly, allows for tax credit at county, state and federal level for their restoration and rehabilitation.

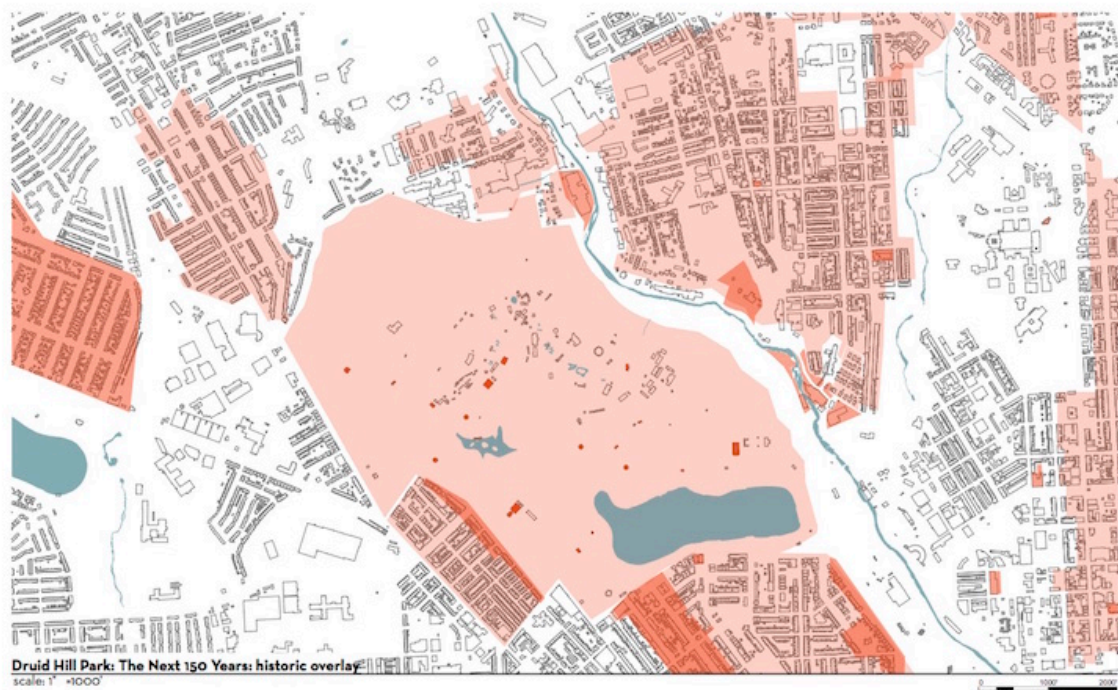


Figure 34 Druid Hill Park: historic overlay areas

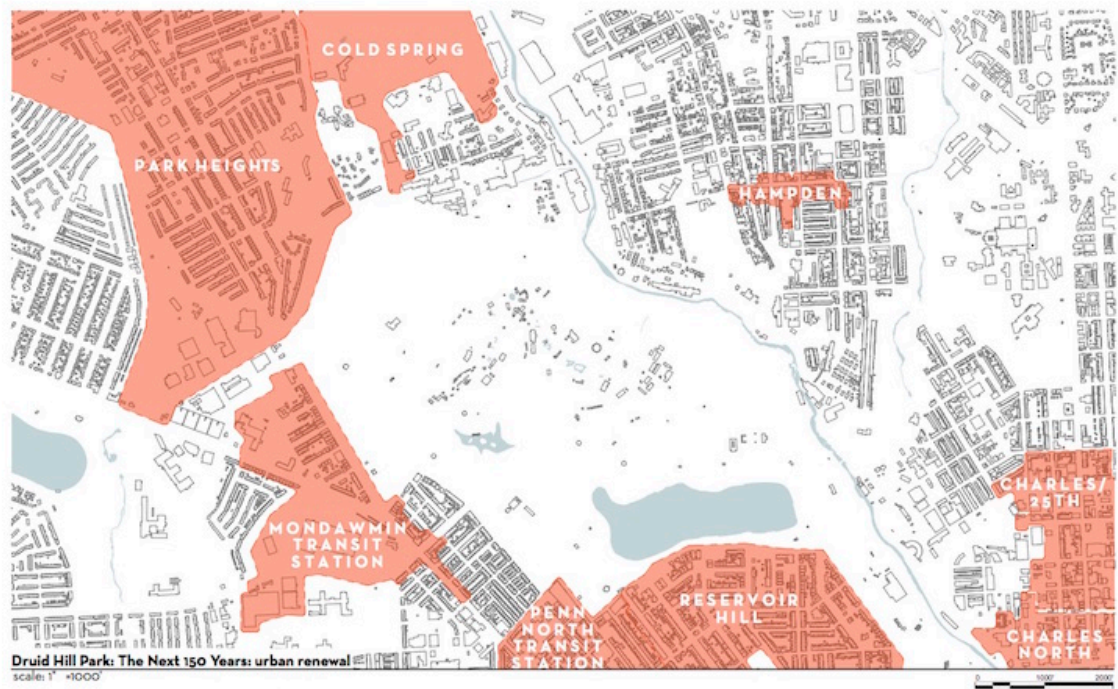


Figure 35 Druid Hill Park: surrounding neighborhoods

There is a clear identity for some of these neighborhoods, like Reservoir Hill, Station North, or Hampden. Years of investment in infrastructure, streetscape, outdoor programs and events have certainly helped. Similar methodologies can be used for the rest of the surrounding clusters – like Mondawmin Transit Center or Auchentoroly Terrace, where investment in the streetscape and historic tax credits for exterior façade improvements, small-business tax-credits and other alternatives can begin to foster a sense of place and community. Anchor institutions such as Coppin State University located on the south side of Mondawmin Mall and Johns Hopkins on the east side can begin to utilize the park and its programs as a common ground of intervention within the greater whole for the neighborhood.

In one of the community meetings regarding the reservoir water and the Baltimore City Department of Public Works' *Proposal* to submerge filtered water

storage tanks below the reservoir, issues of connectivity of neighborhood to park emerged as critical matters. After all, seamlessly submerging the tanks and restoring the existing edge of the reservoir would certainly satisfy the historian and the visitor, but would accomplish very little in terms of accessing the park, crossing the 8-lane highway without getting swiped by a vehicle.

The premise of the park as a lung for the city is taken literally in the diagram below; perhaps it helps somewhat that Druid Hill Park seems to conform well to such shape. It is interesting to begin to see and explore the opportunities of this park as a functioning organ that connects the surrounding neighborhoods and its citizens. The neighborhoods sought to find a way to the park, an artery of vehicular and pedestrian travel to access as well as celebrate an arrival point at the park.



Figure 36 Druid Hill Park: existing neighborhoods connected to park lung

IV. Comparisons with Other Parks

Side-by-Side

Upon analyzing Druid Hill Park in terms of opportunities of intervention and within the overarching themes that would begin to satisfy the goals for the thesis proposal, it became clear that a comparative study between this park and others established during the same time would be needed. As such, it was interesting to see Druid Hill Park side by side Fairmount, Central and Prospect Parks, to compare their size, the typical elements of green space, water, cemetery, zoo et al. Additionally, it was interesting to compare the way in which streets permeated these parks and the building fabric edge and orientation to the park. The following studies can be grouped in two categories that correlate with the themes discussed earlier: *access* and *edge*.

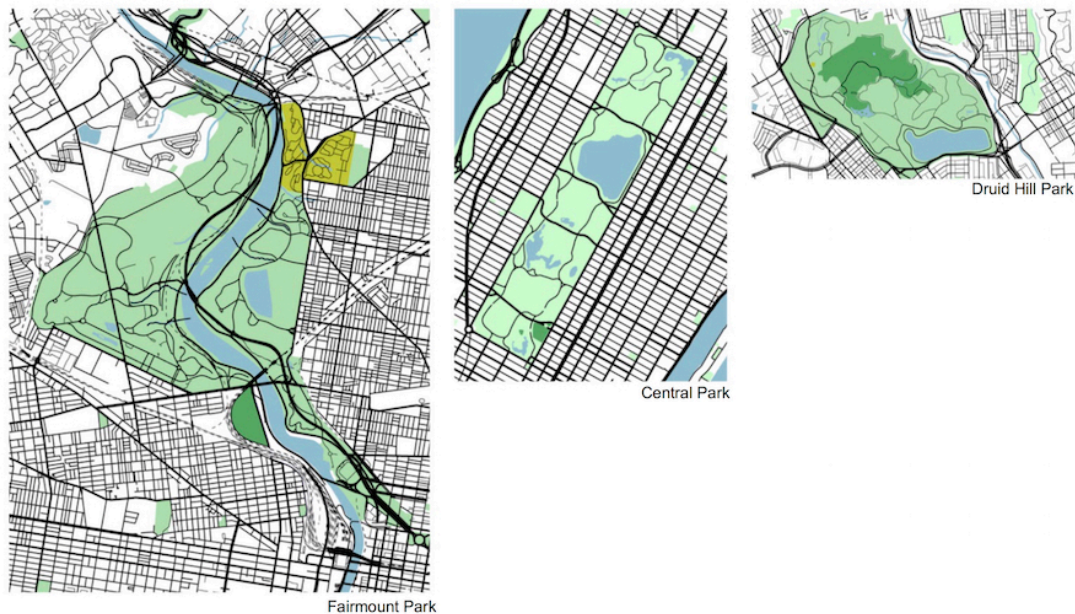


Figure 37 Comparative Study: Fairmount, Central and Druid Hill: Access

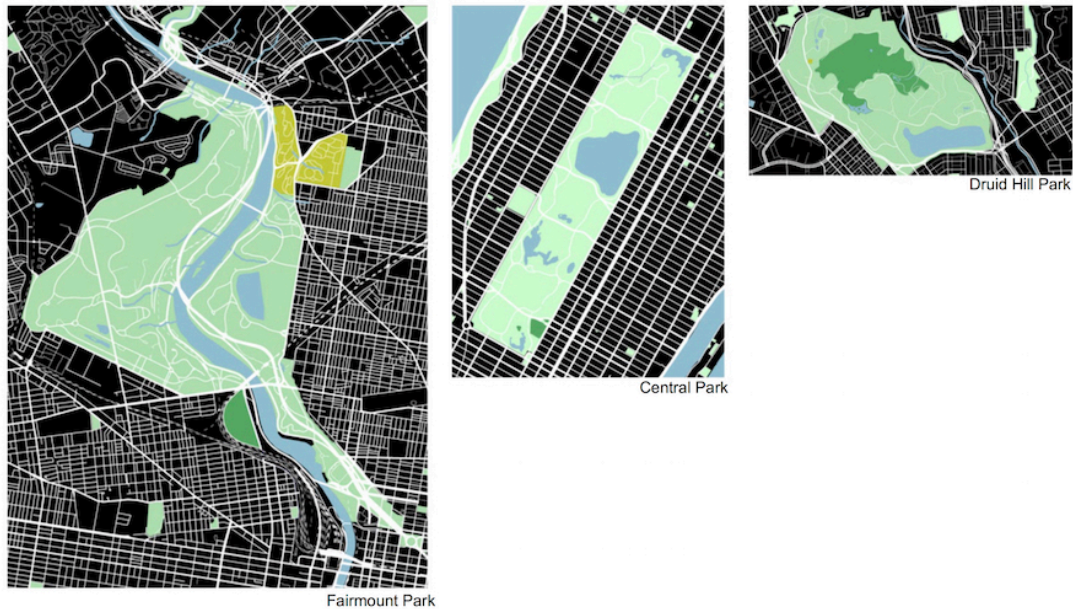


Figure 38 Comparative Study: Fairmount, Central and Druid Hill: Blocks

Access

An initial quick look on Fairmount Park might suggest a confusing ensemble of roadways and access points. The park was originally designed to showcase the Philadelphia Waterworks, and current proposals to revitalize this park include daylighting some of the original streams and capitalizing on that initial uniqueness of place for which the park was established. Moreover, the roads and paths begin to align along these streams, emphasizing the notion of manmade following nature. In the case of Central Park, there is a clear hierarchy of access: a systematic rigid grid of streets aligning the edge, a cadence of main arteries penetrating the park at equal intervals east-west, and a smaller inner park pathway system of a meandering nature. All of these systems, whether following the natural streams as in the case of Fairmount, or respecting the city street grid as in the case of Central, maintain a well-thought out methodology of access. In the case of Druid, the system is lost. The zoo maintains the central core of the park making it impermeable, and the rest of the highways and roads simply bypass the park rather than engaging with it.

Figure 43 illustrates the comparison between Druid and Prospect Park. Similar in size, the two parks are distinctively different. Prospect Park may not have the systemic rigidity in following the city grid, but is able to engage with the city just as successfully. The park resolves the multiple street grid orientations with nodes of access. Convergence and divergence occur in these urban-scale vestibules, as is the case for Grand Army Plaza on the north side of the park. In this node, better defined as an articulated park entry, four major streets lining the park edge and penetrating the park (Prospect Park West, East Drive, Flatbush Avenue and Eastern Parkway) radiate from a unified whole. Characterized by the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Arch and larger-scale well-articulated facades, the plaza resolves the street grid system and allows for a celebratory arrival terminal point to exist.

Yet not every corner of Prospect is and needs to be treated in the same level of scale as the northern plaza. Smaller circles at other corners of the park, arrival points along the edge are also well defined, sometimes by differentiated stone paving, low walls, tree canopy and benches. Access nodes at the perimeter edge of the park are pedestrian-friendly and begin to engage the surrounding urban fabric as well as the daily user.

In the case of Druid Hill Park, such nodes are non-existent. A poor attempt of entry has been made on the western side with the Gwynns Falls Parkway entrance. In this case, a few reclaimed arches have been relocated in an effort to define the space. The issues of pedestrian crossings of eight traffic lanes, lack of tree canopy continuity, and most importantly, discontinuance of the road network with the park upon crossing the edge of the park make this entrance unworthy of this historic urban park gem.

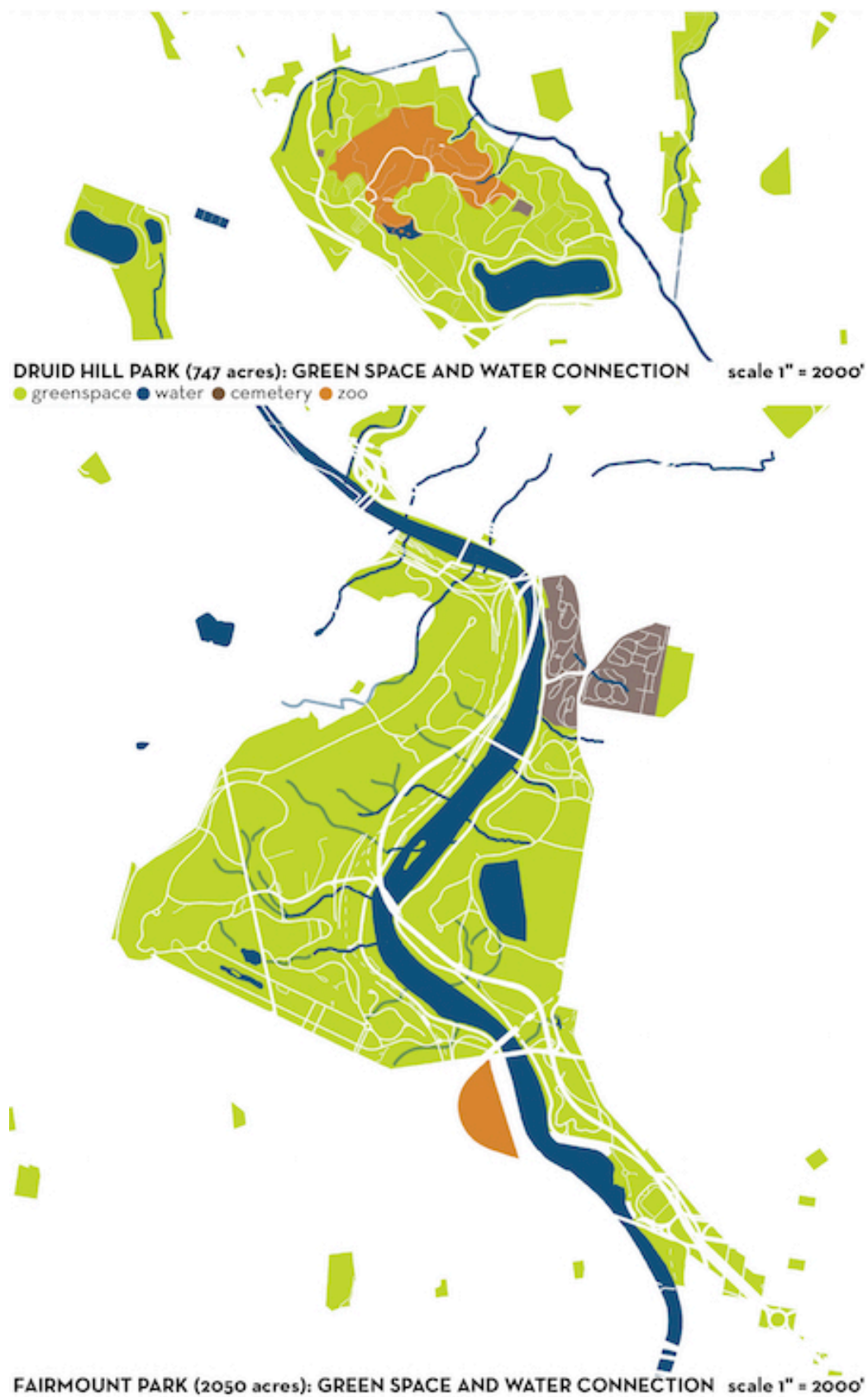


Figure 39 Comparative Study: Druid and Fairmount: Park Elements



Figure 40 Comparative Study: Druid and Prospect: City Fabric

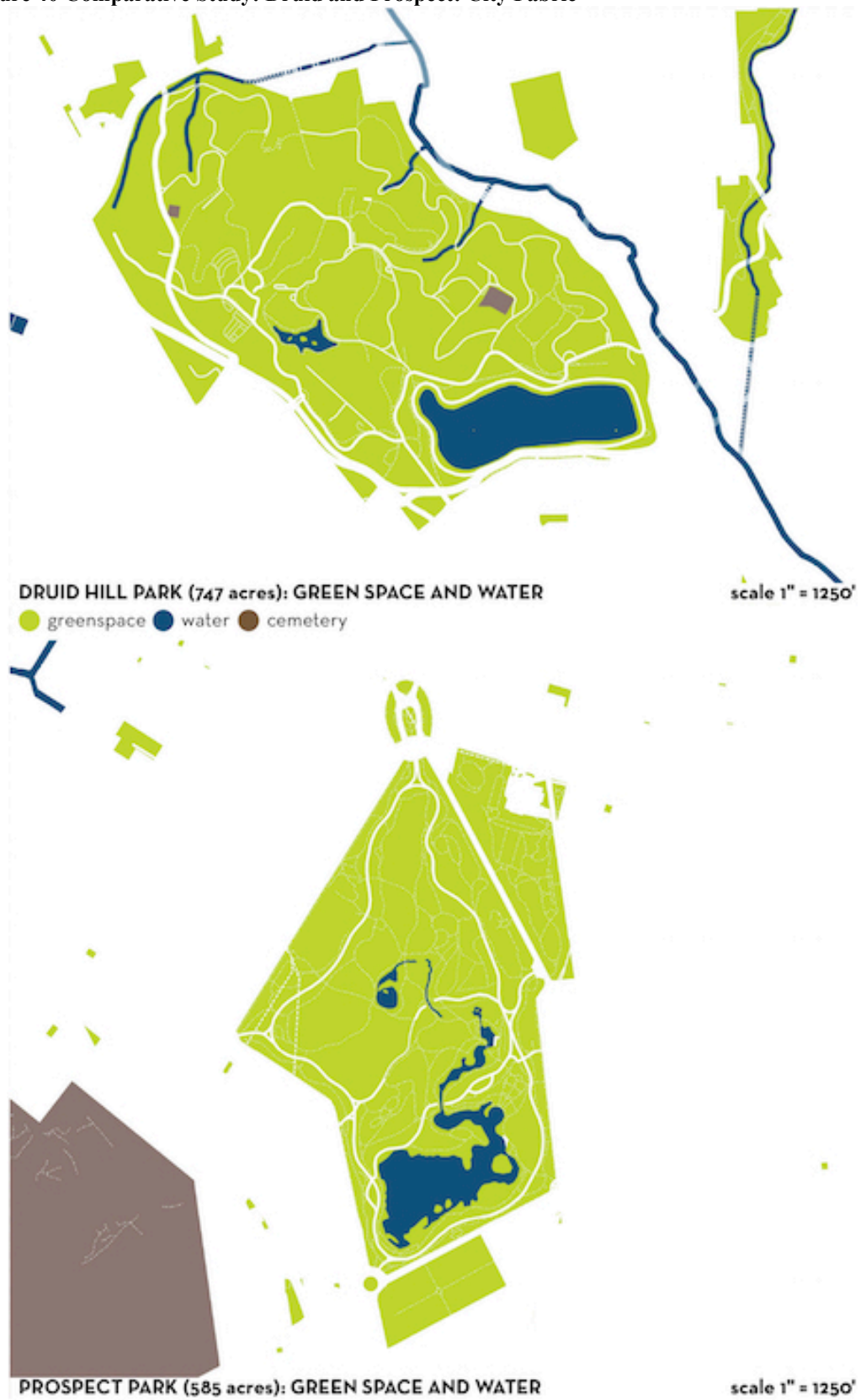


Figure 41 Comparative Study: Druid and Prospect: Green Space and Park Road Access

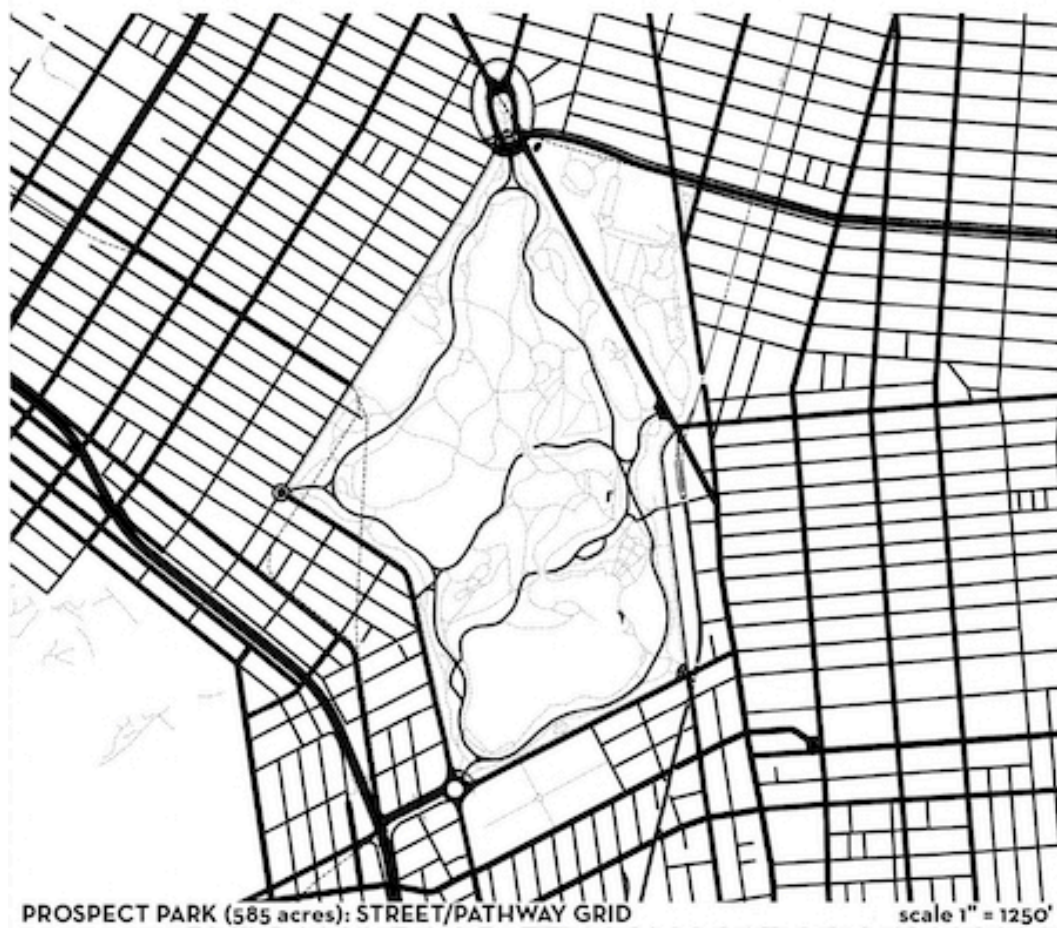
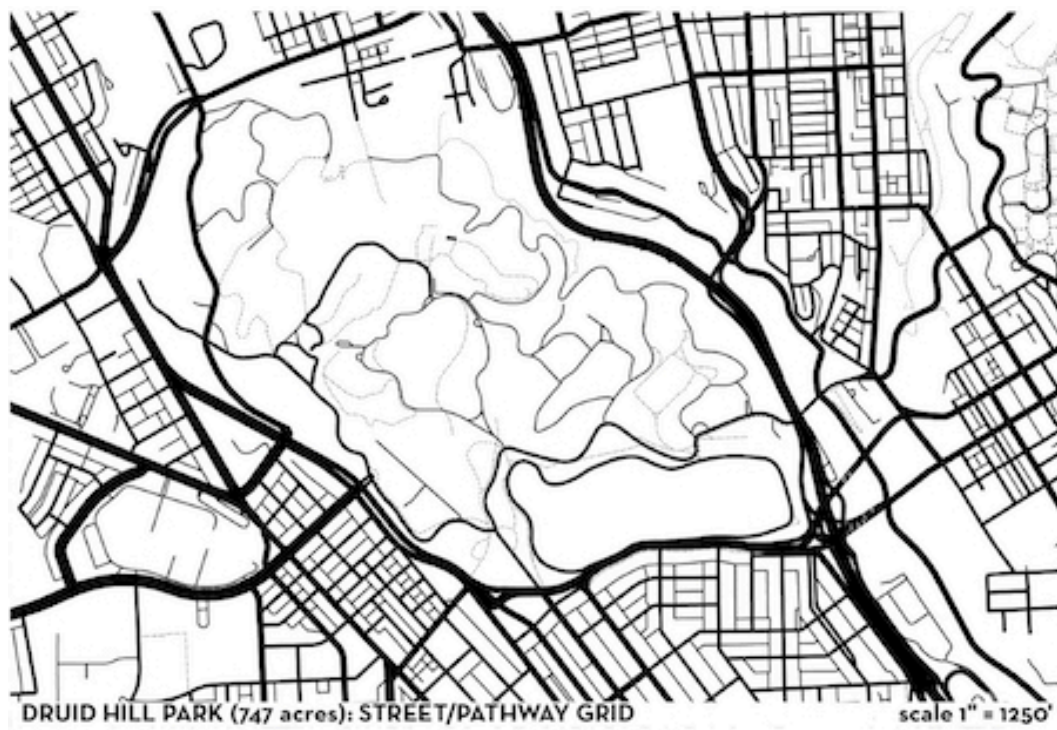


Figure 42 Comparative Study: Druid and Prospect: Road Access

Edge

The comparative study on a side-by-side analysis clarified the differences in edge conditions that occurred in Druid and more successful parks such as Prospect and Riverside. Critical in forming the edge are the building facades and the city block orientation to the park. In the case of Prospect Park as seen in Figure 43, the blocks are uniform, with the shorter side facing the park, allowing for more real-estate value to be connected with the park and allowing more view corridors and access points from the neighborhood to the park. Additionally, the buildings facades maintain a restraining, well-defined regulating line to the park.

In the case of Druid Hill Park, the continuity of the building edge condition is lost, with the south-western edge being the closest example of continuity. What makes this continuity seem and feel even less is the large infrastructure gap between the park and the building fabric, i.e. Druid Lake Drive.

Riverside Park in New York denotes a unique interaction between building fabric and park. In the case of Prospect, the park extends onto the neighborhood, and the buildings respond to such figural space. In the case of Riverside, the buildings follow the undulated edge of the park protruding and retracting to form an organic edge, an experiential meandering of the park that not occurs not just within the green enclave as the Olmsteds once described, but at the edge, enriching the vehicular and pedestrian experience.

Druid Hill Park has the potential of a similar edge condition on the southwest corner of the park, allowing the city fabric to engage with that of the green space, engaging the built form, the pedestrian, as well as the car-traveler who thus far, seems to navigate through a sea of traffic lanes without ever looking at the park for fear of accidentally crossing over.



Figure 43 Comparative Study: Druid and Prospect: Nolli Plans

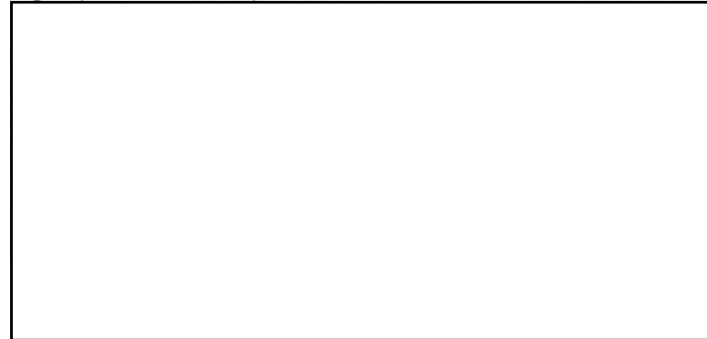
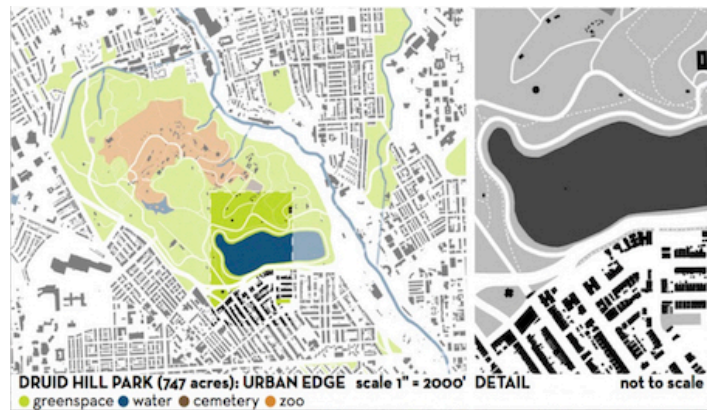
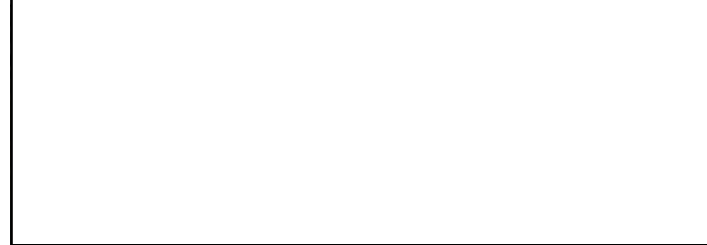
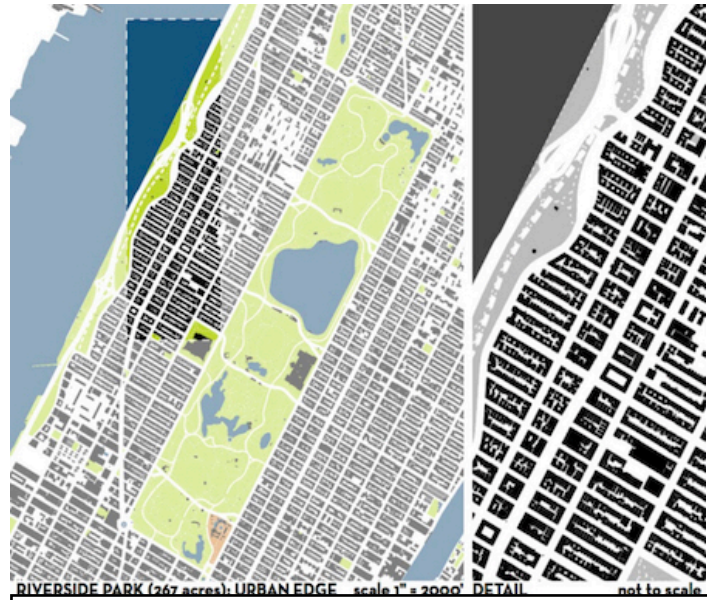


Figure 44 Comparative Study: Druid and Riverside: Park and Building Edge

V. Proposal

The complexity and scale of the urban intervention, the premise to resolve the disconnect existing between the park and the surrounding neighborhood in order to secure a vitality and longevity for the green space and the city that surrounds it was realized through the overarching themes introduced earlier: value, continuity, access, edge and engagement. The themes overlap both spatially and programmatically, which proves ideal in the urban park synergy that this thesis seeks to develop. As such, two distinct areas of intervention were developed further: the Mondawmin Mall/Place site and the SouthWestern edge of park. The two sites begin to address and resolve these concerns of continuity, access, edge and engagement as well as begin to create a framework to which other areas surrounding the park can adapt. Smaller interventions on the northwest corner at Park Circle and the eastern entry of Cedar Lane bridge indicate future adaptation.

Mondawmin Place

Mondawmin mall has lost over the last fifty years its reason-for-being. Originally a beautiful estate facing the park, it was developed in 1955 as an urban retail hub by the Rouse Company. After the 1968 Baltimore Riots and continuous decline, it was re-designed in 1977 as a covered shopping mall in *eternal spring* as noted from a poster of the era. Unfortunately the shopping mall concept along with the surface parking surrounding it, does not respond to the needs of a dense urban fabric, nor does it respect the park, nor address pedestrian access.

The proposal for the redeveloped site (figure 47 and 59-63) seeks to bring value to the neighborhood by recreating a denser urban metro/bus transit hub, with a center spine of *mainstreet* flanked by retail on the ground level and office and residential above. The gateway to the new Mondawmin Place begins at Gwynns Falls Parkway marked by an urban plaza - The Freddie Gray Memorial Plaza – a place to exchange ideas, talk, come together as a community. The gateway is located right across from Coppin State University and Frederick Douglass High School, thus beginning to establish these two as anchor institutions. Students from the university or the school can walk to and from the metro, shop on mainstreet and continue to walk over to the new park entrance. Access to the park is facilitated through narrower roads (4-lane Druid Lake Park Drive instead of the original 6 or 8), clearly marked pedestrian crossings, parallel parking lanes protecting the pedestrian, and appropriate building scale at ground level responding to the pedestrian scale.

The proposal for Mondawmin Place restores the continuity of the original street grid. On the west side, new residential development fronts the existing Tioga Parkway, bookended on both sides by small squares. On the east side, new residential development follows the curvature of the Gwynns Falls Parkway, with building setbacks reflecting those of the existing fabric and defining the edge of the parkway as intended by the Olmstedes. Restored tree cover helps extend the park to the neighborhood, with the retail/metro hub fully engaging the parkway, the park, and the existing city fabric.

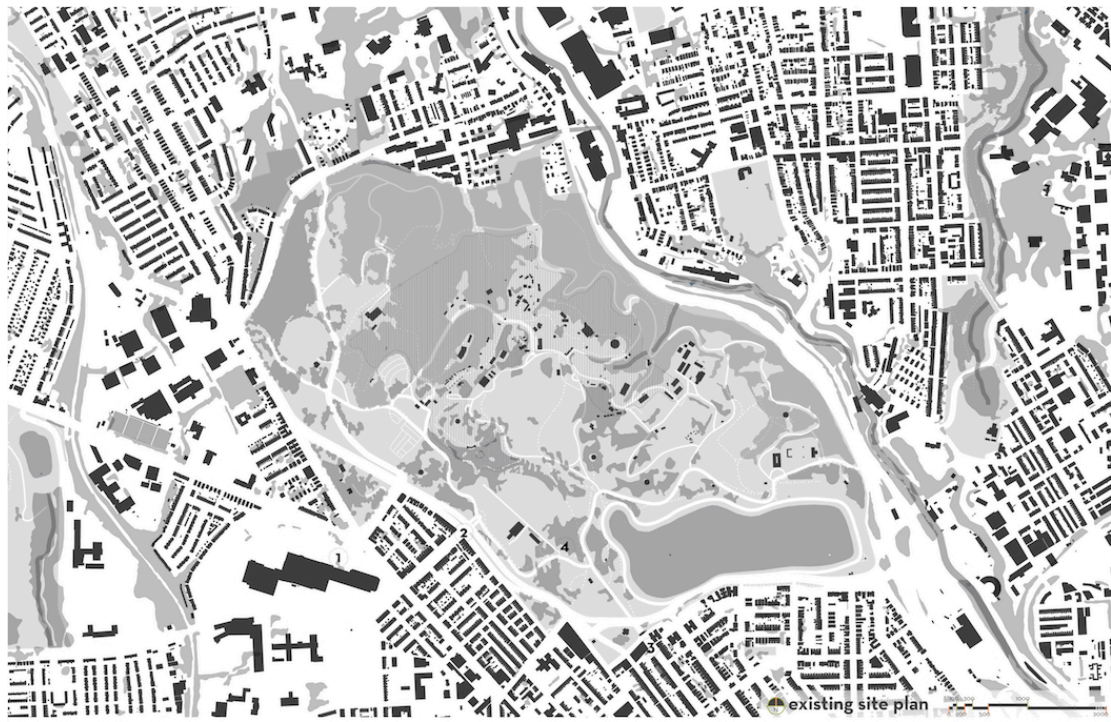


Figure 45 Proposal: Existing Druid Hill Park and surrounding urban fabric



Figure 46 Proposal: Existing Druid Hill Park and surrounding land use



Figure 47 Proposal: Druid Hill Park: place diagram

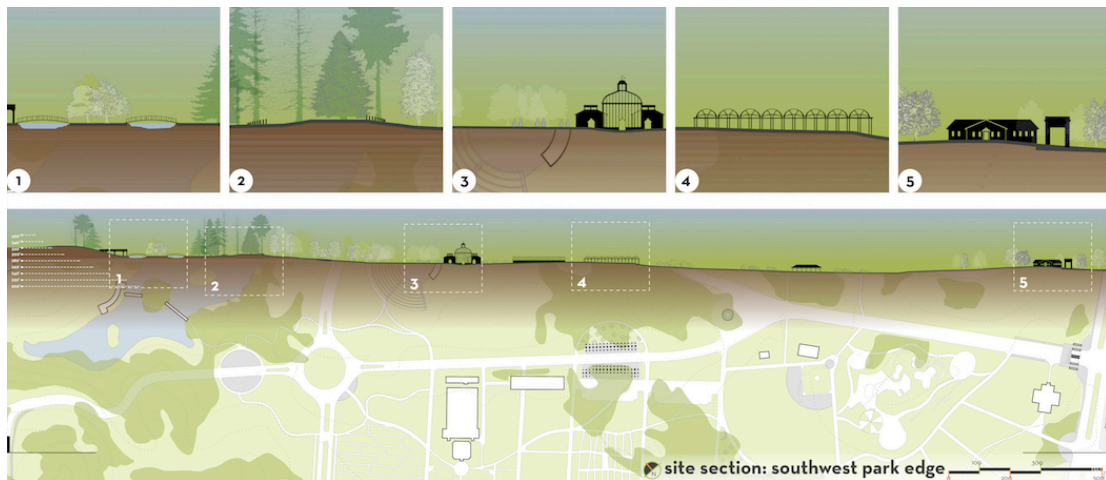


Figure 48 Proposal: Druid Hill Park: site section through the park



Figure 49 Proposal: Druid Hill Park: existing Mondawmin Mall site



Figure 50 Proposal: Druid Hill Park: proposed Mondawmin Place

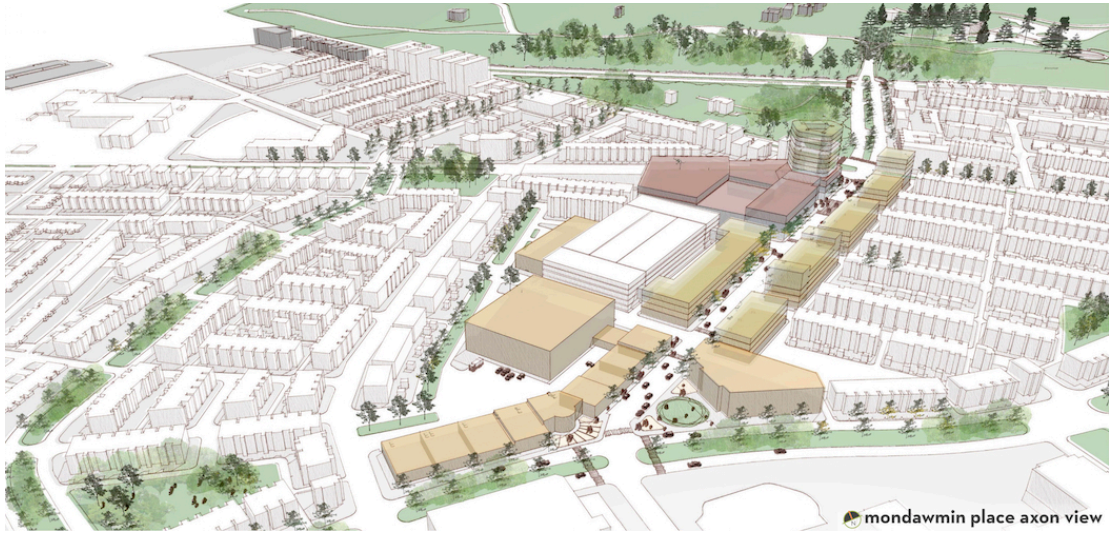


Figure 51 Proposal: Druid Hill Park: proposed Mondawmin Place axon



Figure 52 Proposal: Druid Hill Park: proposed Mondawmin Place land use and programming



DOWNTOWN MALL: CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA
Figure 53 Proposal: Charlottesville Main Street study

Surface parking can be adapted in less-dense rural areas, however here, a 5-deck parking garage faced with retail and residential is more appropriate, allowing for higher floor area ratio. The overall business model for the shopping is envisioned as a mainstreet retail, after looking at Charlottesville Mainstreet model (figure 53) and Columbia Heights with the big box stores on the second level, and smaller retail shops on the first floor level. A higher residential tower facing the park is located on the northern end of the retail street allowing for better views to the park, marking the metro center and following the same vocabulary of scale of the apartment towers on the southern side of the park.

Southwest Park Edge

The proposal to re-envision the southwestern edge of the park began with the intent of activating the edge that was most disintegrated as seen in earlier analysis diagrams. The main entrance to the park from the Gwynns Falls Parkway is redesigned to allow easier pedestrian crossing and clearly defined as an arrival and entry point. Here, the proposed low stone wall that lines the edge of the park becomes a ceremonial gateway with piers and curved walls that embrace the visitor and act as a threshold and resting point before entering.

Upon entering, Gwynns Falls continues in a narrower two-lane meandering park drive similar to Beech Drive in Rock Creek Park. The meandering park drive sometimes follows the existing drive, other times it meanders to connect to existing pavilions, following the terrain contours, aligned on the northern side with taller deciduous trees and smaller cherry blossoms on the southern side near the lake.

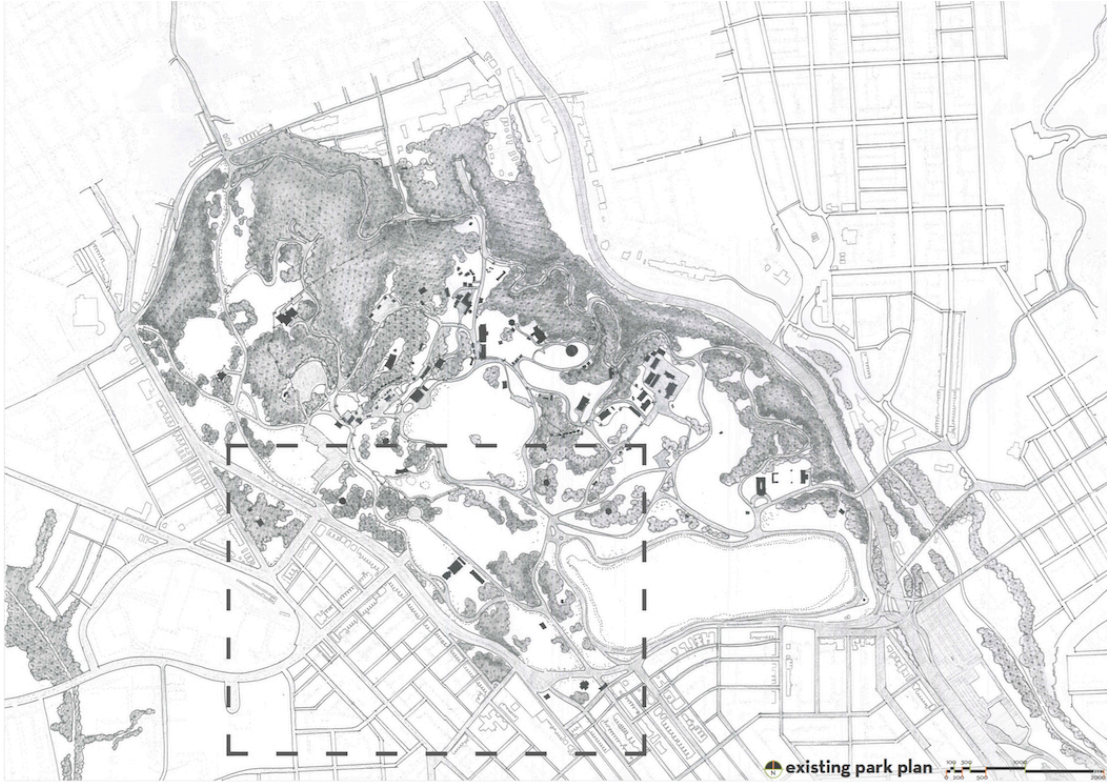


Figure 54 Proposal: Druid Hill Park: existing park plan



Figure 55 Proposal: Druid Hill Park: proposed southwest park edge

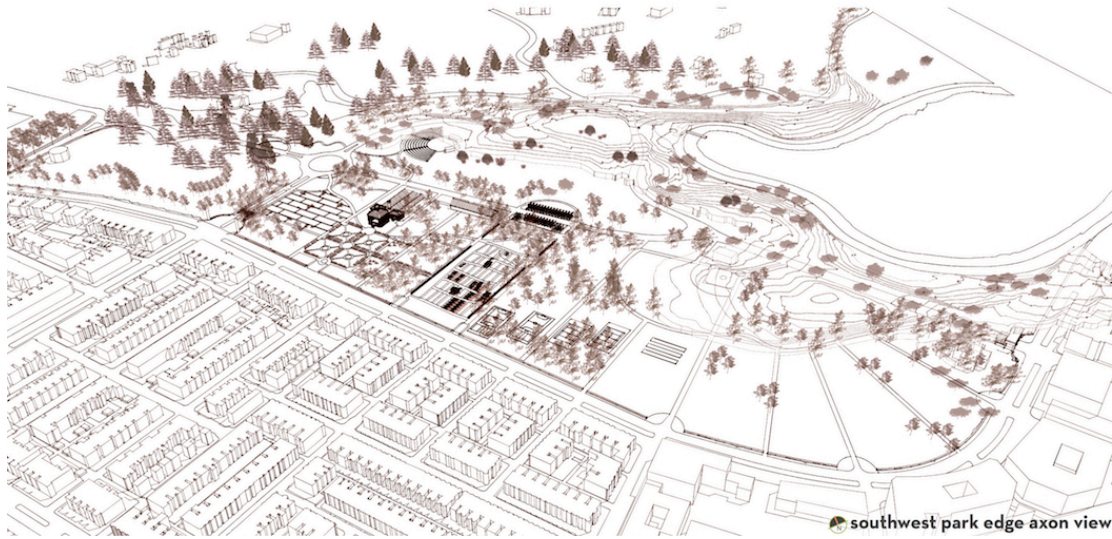


Figure 56 Proposal: Druid Hill Park: proposed southwest park edge axon

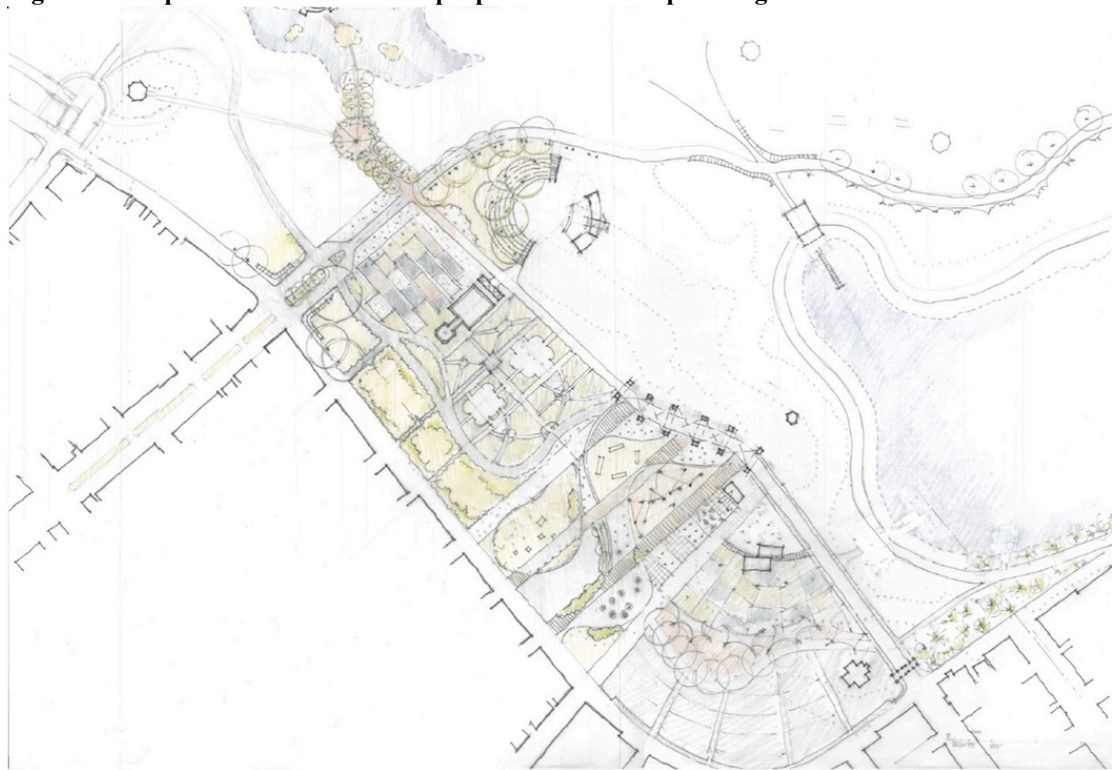


Figure 57 Proposal: Druid Hill Park: study southwest park edge



Figure 58 Proposal: Druid Hill Park: programming study: southwest park edge

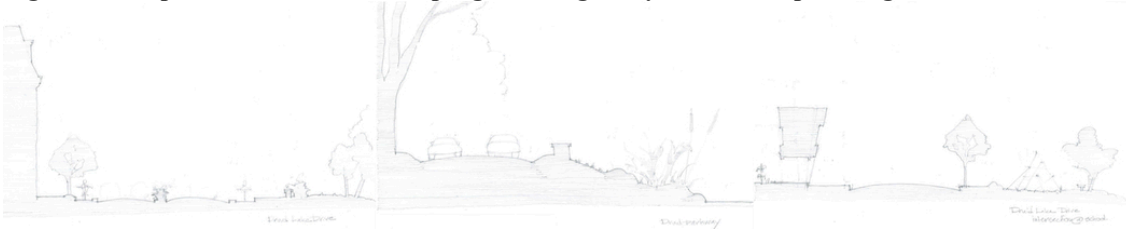


Figure 59 Proposal: Druid Hill Park: section studies

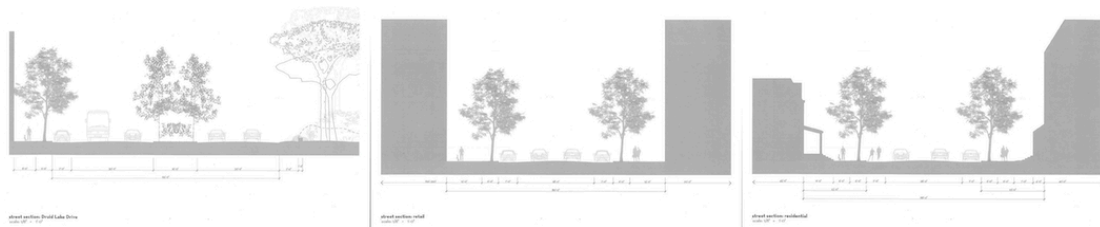


Figure 60 Proposal: Druid Hill Park: section: park drive, retail and residential

The new drive traverses the park east-west and connects to a new Cedar Lane Bridge on the east side leading to Hampden, Johns Hopkins Homewood Campus and Wyman Park, an idea that the Olmsteds had strongly recommended in their 1908 *Proposal*.

One of the key concepts of access into the park and its engagement with the surrounding neighborhood is the consideration of the southwestern side of the park as a more linear neighborhood park. In this manner, the city street grid extends onto the park in the form of roads, paths, allees and plantings. Additionally, programming of the park is re-examined to fit better with the surrounding neighborhoods. Active recreation, including sports fields, natural playgrounds, community gardens and an established market place begin to address the needs of the daily visitor. Those activities are no longer buried within the park but visible and accessible from the main road.

The themes of access and continuity expand beyond the main entry and Druid Lake Park Drive noted earlier. One of the original historic landmarks of the park is the Madison Avenue Arch, which originally served as a main entrance to the park from the south. Early photographs line the arch with a ceremonial promenade into the park, aligned by trees, urns, sequence of benches and enhanced by an articulated plane – the Old Yellow Brick Road. Currently, Druid Lake Park Drive divides the arch from the park and Madison Avenue runs in a single direction to south, thus making the location of this gateway trivial. The proposal includes relocating the archway across the Druid Lake Park Drive on the park edge, re-establishing the old entry connection with a restored tree cover leading to the Old Yellow Brick Road. Here the old promenade becomes the north-south spine, from the archway to the

Gwynns Falls Circle, heading north to the new WWII Memorial Grove (currently the forgotten Bandstand circle) and further north into the park. The overall result is the opportunity to enter and cross the path north-south and east west, re-establishing some of the old promenades and entry nodes, while addressing current pedestrian and vehicular needs.

The theme of edge and engagement for the proposed southwestern part of the park are explored in the southwest corner – the Druid Lake Place. Similar to Riverside Park and Grand Army Plaza, the newly proposed school facade (fitting in the city-block concept like the Henderson Hopkins School in east Baltimore), along with other ceremonial mixed-use buildings, undulate and reflect the curvature of the park. Here, the built form and the park are in synchrony, where the vehicular travel in between is a narrow thread instead of an imposing, heavily engineered 8-lane highway.

Conclusions

This thesis seeks to restore and protect the edge and vitality of Druid Hill Park. Through the research and analysis of the park, comparisons with others of same size, period and agenda, it became evident that any future framework to protect it was closely connected to the urban city fabric and the neighborhoods surrounding the park. Overarching themes of value, continuity, access, edge, and engagement helped shape the discussion of site selection and intervention.

The establishment of the urban park as a healthy breathing space to cure the personal, moral and social ills of the industrial and current post-industrial city has been one of the primary roles of the so-called public park. In the current framework,

the park responds to a more active recreational role. Additionally, when fully integrated within the city fabric, addressing the street grid, accessible from multiple points, connecting several neighborhoods adding real estate value, maintaining an edge as the rest of the city blocks, it becomes an integral part of the tapestry of the city.

In a recent panel discussion on Baltimore's urbanism Tom Mayne and Elizabeth Plater Zyberk had strong disagreements on the future of this city, the first focusing on technology and infrastructure and the adaptability of place, the latter on the value of historic preservation and uniqueness in placemaking. Fueled by a historic preservation approach, this thesis flanks the latter. Zyberk's words on 'restoring the grid, the city fabric' resonated throughout this research and proposal. The most efficient building (or place), is the one that already exists. Tapping on the existing values and resources while encouraging synergy of park and infrastructure ensures a functional and vibrant system.

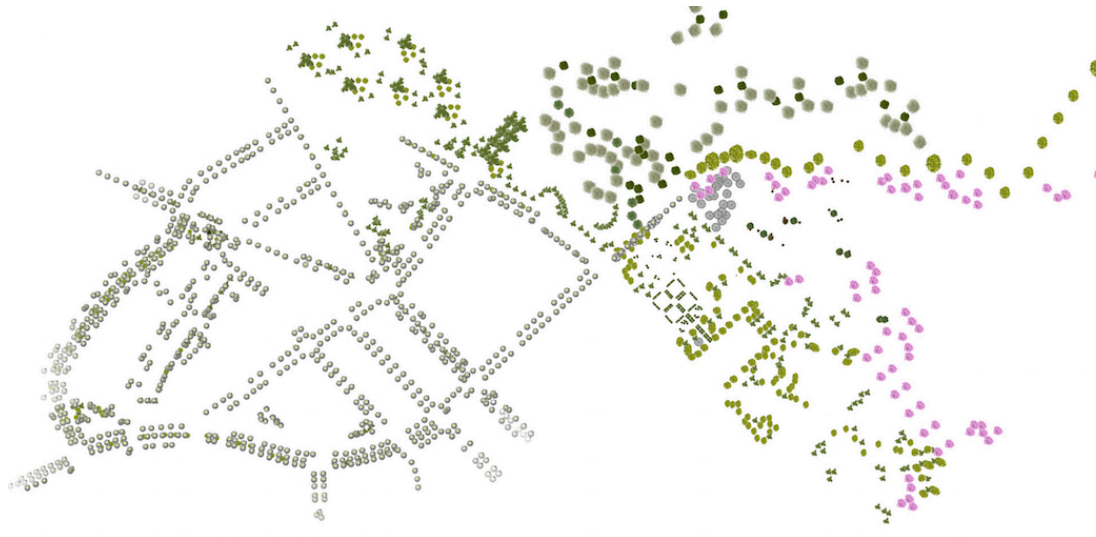


Figure 61 Proposal: Druid Hill Park: tree diagram



Figure 62 Proposal: Druid Hill Park: Gwynns Falls entrance

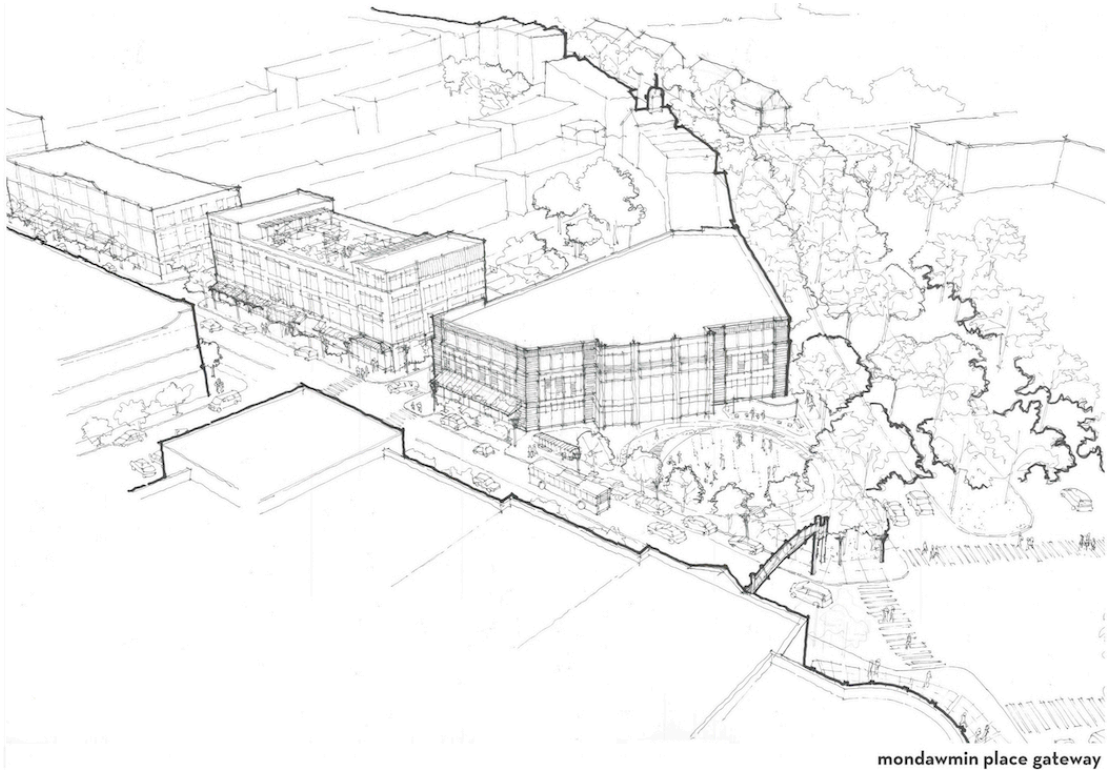


Figure 63 Proposal: Druid Hill Park: Mondawmin Place gateway



Figure 64 Proposal: Druid Hill Park: Mondawmin Place mainstreet

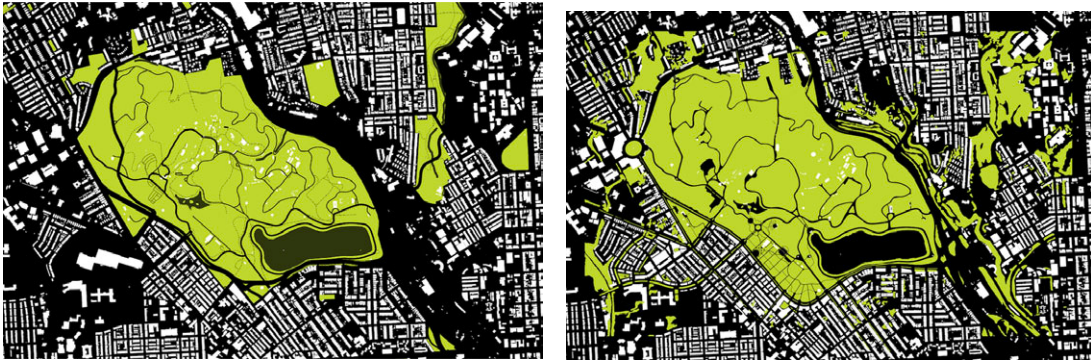


Figure 65 Proposal: Druid Hill Park: existing and proposed diagram



Figure 66 Proposal: Druid Hill Park: proposed noli plan



Figure 67 Proposal: Druid Hill Park: proposed noli plan with park

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