REHABILITATION PLAN
for
LATROBE PARK

Prepared for

City of Baltimore, Department of Recreation & Planning

Prepared by

LANDSCAPES

Landscape Architecture•Planning•Historic Preservation

With

EBA Engineering, Inc. , Survey

Kann and Associates, Inc., Architectural Assessment

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March 2002

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. PROJECT OVERVIEW

Latrobe Park, in south Baltimore, is a small historic, neighborhood park designed by the Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects, used by local residents and others for active recreation, passive recreation, and socializing. Created specifically for this working class neighborhood, spaces for these various activities were designed to work together in this ten acre site. The Olmsted Brothers' firm is well known and respected for its work in Baltimore's parks and throughout the United States. Latrobe Park is particularly important because the original design and many of the historic features are intact today. It is a rare surviving example of a small neighborhood park built in the early 20th century. The park is well used and shows some signs of deterioration today. Neighborhood residents are concerned about the disrepair of several structures, the problems with some facilities and the delinquent activities that occur in the park. In response to these concerns, the Baltimore City Department of Recreation & Parks, Capitol Projects (BR&P) has undertaken planning for the rehabilitation of Latrobe Park and selected LANDSCAPES Landscape Architecture•Planning•Historic Preservation, EBA Engineering, Inc., and Kann Associates to develop a Rehabilitation Plan for the park.

B. PROJECT STEPS

The development of the Latrobe Park Rehabilitation Plan involves a series of steps that together build an understanding of this park and how to best achieve an ongoing and useful future for it. Understanding the origins, history and evolution of the park is an important first step. In this historically important park the remaining historic character and features have value and require careful consideration of how to safeguard them into the future while current and future needs are met. Research and study of historical information includes seeking out original plans, early photographs and text descriptions of the origins, original design, as-built condition and changes over time in the park. Jillian Storms, AIA, and Peg Ross, members of the Friends of Maryland Olmsted Parks and Landscapes and volunteers, carried out historic research on Latrobe Park. LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP is grateful for their research effort and for providing our office with their report and copies of historic plans.

The documentation of the park's existing conditions is then undertaken to thoroughly understand all of the park's physical elements. EBA Engineering, Inc. surveyed the park in the field and constructed a digital drawing as a record of all current park elements and features. Working with a park vegetation map prepared by BR&P Capitol Projects, LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP specifically reviewed the vegetation conditions and added identification, size and condition information to park trees on the base map. This detailed park base map is included in this report in several versions and includes topography, vegetation, walks, buildings, playground equipment, playing courts and fields, track and drainage and utility information.

Understanding the full diversity and intensity of park use is also important in addition to gaining an understanding of the way park users perceive the park and what they desire for the future of

the park. Observing how the park is used and community meetings, where dialogue is encouraged, are tools used to achieve a greater understanding of the park. Discussion between park planner, Mary Porter and other BR&P staff provided additional information from their own park observations and meeting with community members. A user survey was also conducted to gain an understanding of demographics, frequency and type of use, attitudes, perceptions and desires of park users.

Assessment of the existing conditions and the function of the park also considers areas of use and conflicts, pedestrian and vehicular access routes, visual relationships and park character. This assessment process provides guidance for the development of a rehabilitation plan that meets multiple needs including those of historic preservation and today's park users. For example, some playground equipment is outdated and playing fields have drainage problems that disrupt play. Solutions for these problems are considered holistically.

Ideas were tested to address the full range of issues to include historic preservation objectives, circulation options, recreational facility options, resolution of use conflicts, structure use alternatives and interpretation of the historic neighborhood park. Alternatives were considered in a process of tracing paper sketches and discussion. A sketch plan was developed that sought to capture and address all the Latrobe Park issues about physical and social conditions and city stewardship responsibilities. All the factors gathered contributed to the development of an approach to park rehabilitation. After review and consideration of the data gathered and options developed, the final rehabilitation plan was developed to direct the implementation of the proposed upgrades to the parks features for contemporary use.

C. LATROBE PARK ISSUES

Neighborhood park users focus on the physical aspect of the park and want their park to look, feel and work better. There were a number of issues related to the park that were voiced by neighborhood residents at community meetings and through the user survey and by City of Baltimore, Parks & Recreation, Capital Projects staff. These included a number of features in the park as well as park activities. These concerns were taken into consideration as the project progressed through the historic research, field investigations and subsequent development of the rehabilitation plan. The following list is organized by the physical elements of the park and suggests the rehabilitation activity that may be carried out:

1. *Drainage Infrastructure: Problems with poor drainage on walks and fields, Clogged drain inlets*
   Repair/Replace underground pipe system as needed
   Repair/Replace drain inlets/outlets as needed

2. *Circulation: Deterioration of paths and poor appearance*
   Repair/upgrade walks

3. *Soccer Fields: Irregular surface, wet and soggy areas, need for regulation size field for competition play*
   Improve drainage of field (re-grading)
   Accommodate regulation size field

4. *Softball/Little League Fields: Fields have drainage problems, conflict with adult baseball league players behavior in neighborhood, inadequate lighting for night play*
   Improve drainage of fields (regrading)
   Potential addition of lighting for night play

5. *Playground: Play equipment outdated, sand box harbors dangerous/unhealthy trash*
   Add appropriate play structures
   Remove outdated play structures
   Remove sand box while retaining the overall structure
   Add benches

6. *Entry Steps: Steps show some deterioration, Social conflict with people hanging around steps especially at night*
   Repair deterioration
   Consider how to address issues of vagrancy on steps
   Add discrete, vandal proof lighting

7. *Field House: Structure is abandoned; Neighborhood use is desired, especially for restrooms convenient to playing fields; Concern about vagrancy around building*
   Ensure structure is stable, take necessary steps to stabilize
   Explore options for occupancy and uses
   Upgrade bathrooms for use by sports teams

8. *Tennis & Basketball/Roller Hockey Courts: Some conflict in uses and overlap of activities; recently rehabilitated and are in good condition; lighting may be improved*
   Consider scheduling activities to reduce conflicts

9. *Lighting: Some areas of the park are especially dark at night, which encourages vagrant activity; If night play is required, adequate lighting for field sports to extend playing time*
   Add adequate lighting for overall park
   Add adequate lighting for:
      Volleyball court
      Soccer/Softball playing fields if a need is determined

10. *Vegetation: Some trees require pruning or replacement*
    Prune and/or remove trees as needed
    Add/replace trees as needed
    Prune hedge along Latrobe Terrace

11. *Signage: There are not adequate signs in the park regarding regulations or park hours; There is no enforcement of rules that are posted.*
    Post park rules
    Post timing for specific recreational activities
    Enforce posted rules and regulations

12. *Parking: Conflicts arise during times when games are being held; There is no enforcement of illegal parking;*
    Enforce illegal parking penalties
    Determine availability of parking on Andre Street (western border of park)

13. *Dogs: Many dogs are not kept on leashes; Dog mess and lack of clean-up make park unpleasant*
    Enforce required clean-up after dogs
    Determine appropriate designation for dog area within the park or adequate barriers to prevent dogs from being in specified areas of the park.

14. *Benches: Many benches need repair, Some use areas have no benches*
    Upgrade existing benches
    Add benches to areas of high use

15. *Trash Cans: Garbage Cans are unattractive; cans are not secured and are often tipped over and trash is scattered*
    Replace existing trash cans with an appropriate style that are secured to the ground and that are covered

16. *Running Track & Outdoor gymnasium area: Track surface is cinder; no material has been added for some time; surface is weedy; sand volleyball courts are not well maintained*
    Upgrade track surface
    Define volleyball court boundaries and Maintain volleyball nets
    Upgrade lawn area as needed with minor regrading and reseeding
    Add adequate lighting at track and volleyball courts

17. *Perimeter Boundaries: Areas of access allow vehicles to be driven onto playing fields, which creates problems upon field surface and promotes loud behaviors, which disturb adjacent neighbors*
    Use gates or bollards to prevent access to vehicular traffic onto playing fields

These issues were drawn from the community meetings, user survey and discussions with Baltimore Parks & Recreation, Capital Projects staff. They are listed here as a record of the areas of consideration and as a starting point for this rehabilitation plan.

II. PARK ORIGINS & EVOLUTION

A. PARK HISTORY OVERVIEW

The city of Baltimore acquired property at Locust Point in 1902 for a park. Shortly thereafter, the City also accepted offers made by the Public Park Athletic Association donating gym apparatuses and the Children's Playground Association who proposed to operate a playground at the newly acquired property. In 1904 the Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects, Brookline, Massachusetts, was commissioned to develop a plan for the park to accommodate playground activities and publicly requested playing fields.

Originally only six acres in size, the park was designed to accommodate a variety of activities in a natural setting. The proposed design for the park followed the philosophy of park development that was emerging at the beginning of the twentieth century. This new philosophy encouraged active recreation as well as passive recreation, and was promoted by the Olmsted Brothers in their 1904 *Report Upon the Development of Public Grounds for Greater Baltimore* where they state "Provisions for exercise in the open air...is a matter of vital importance...as cities increased in density, as more people come to be engaged in confining occupations, and...cheap transportation...reduces the amount of exercise people are compelled to take..."[1]. Children were also becoming the focus of park planning with the initiation of the playground movement in the late 1890s. The Olmsted Brothers designed some of these early playgrounds, such as the Charlesbank playground in Boston, which emphasized the importance of "the quantity and quality of physical and mental play of children"[2]. Latrobe Park provided the opportunity to design provisions for these activities in a very compact space.

B. OLMSTED PLANS & AS-BUILT FEATURES

The Olmsted Brothers began the design process for Latrobe Park by convincing the city to purchase additional acreage to the west (up to what is now Latrobe Terrace) to prevent the backyards of housing from being built adjacent to the park border. They then developed a concept for a broad promenade along Fort Avenue overlooking the park, bordered by trees and other plantings to separate pedestrians from the street traffic. Refer to *Selected Historic Graphics*, Figure 1, '1904 Preliminary Plan for Latrobe Park' and Figure 2, '1907 General Plan for Latrobe Park'. The five foot grade change between the street and the park was accommodated with a grand staircase, with an overlook area and a small fountain at the base. The waters of the Patapsco River were viewed in the distance from this overlook and from other areas in the park. This stair provided a central entrance to the park from Fort Avenue and continued with an axial path through the wide, open lawn area below. Two curvilinear paths lead from each corner of the northern end of the park and converged with the axial path in the center of the park. The axial path led to a grove of trees, which was intended to provide a place of shade for park users to sit and relax or listen to concerts. To the west of this center grove a men's running track with open air gymnasium was proposed and to the east a children's playground, including a swimming pool and sand courts would be built. Adjacent to the children's play area a women's recreational area was proposed. The southern end of the grove was to be flanked by a pair of

field houses for men and women's dressing rooms. Between the field houses a grand arch would lead to a piazza overlooking the southern third of the park where field sports would occur. This view from the proposed piazza looked beyond the sports field over the adjacent railroad track and to the Patapsco River.

The execution of the Olmsted Brothers' design was very similar in arrangement and details to the 1907 General Plan, with only a few elements not built or implemented as intended. Figure 3 of the *Selected Historic Images* is a copy of the grading plan submitted by the Olmsted Brothers showing the strong definition of areas within the park through the use of changes in topography and alignment of walkways. By 1905 Latrobe Park was under construction with the basic layout of the park taking shape. This included the central staircase, the curvilinear paths from both northern corners of the park and the center grove of trees, although paths were placed on the ground plane under the grove rather than a unified gravel covering. The children's play area was built, including the circular wading pool and sand courts with massive two foot columns and gable wood trellis roofs. A covered seat, which provided shade for mothers and caregivers watching children, was constructed adjacent to the sand courts. Only one of the field houses was constructed although the adjoining piazza was extended to the south to accommodate both field houses as proposed. To accommodate the grade change and provide a transition between the piazza and the playing fields, several sets of steps were built into the slope along the northern and western edges of the field. The men's field house was constructed along with the running track and men's open air gymnasium to the west.

Latrobe Park retains much of its historic character, with several of the original features still in place. More recently, other facilities have been added to the park that contributes space for specified activities. The Locust Point Recreation Center was built in the northeast corner of park in the 1960s with tennis and basketball courts added to the south of this building. One of the original purposes of the park was to provide areas for active recreation, such as individual and team sports. The original layout of the park organized areas of use to include a playground for small children, a running track and outdoor gymnasium area and an open field for field sports. These areas are still well defined and intensively used today for similar activities. Latrobe Park continues to provide recreational space for the adjacent neighborhood while retaining much of its historic character in a pleasant, natural setting.

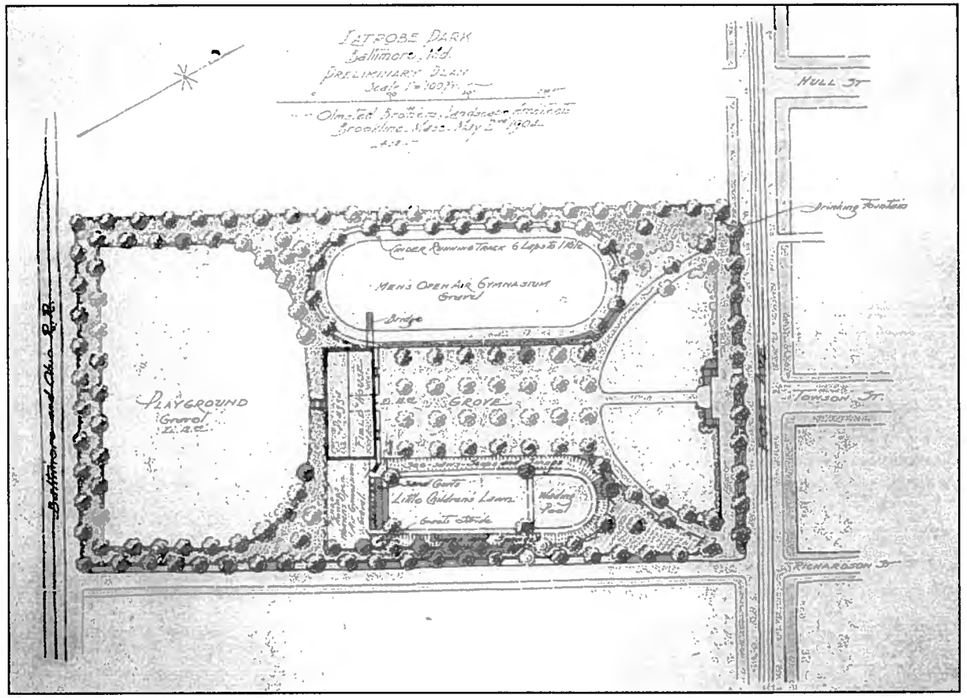

Figure 1: 1904 'Preliminary Plan for Latrobe Park' by the Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects. Courtesy of Friends of Maryland's Olmsted Parks & Landscapes.

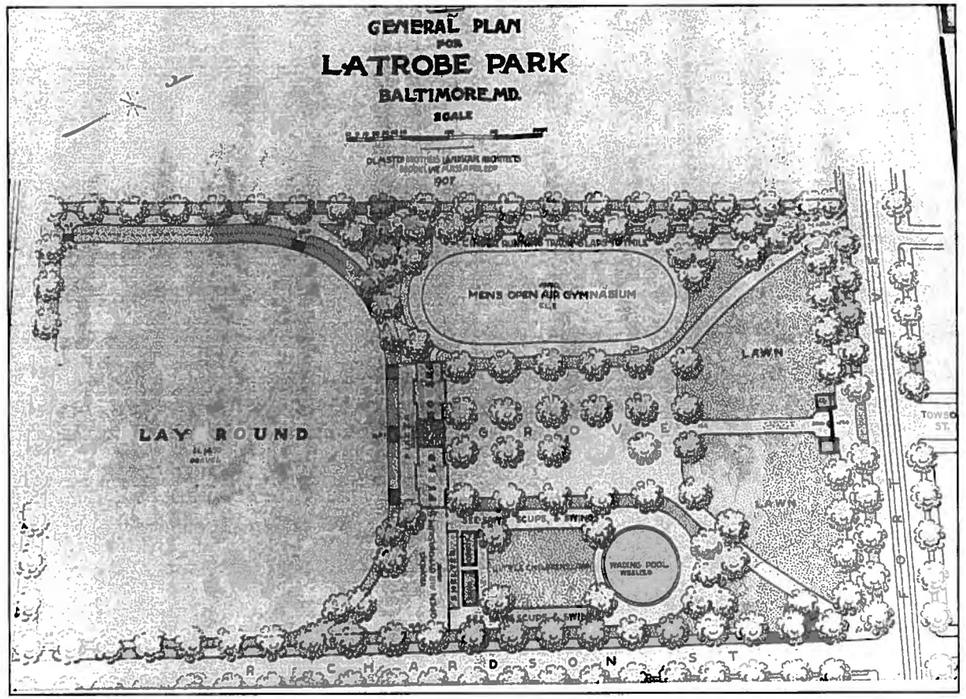

Figure 2: 1907 'General Plan for Latrobe Park' by the Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects. Note the symmetry of the park layout with the center grid of trees flanked by oval forms for athletics and play. Courtesy of Friends of Maryland's Olmsted Parks & Landscapes.

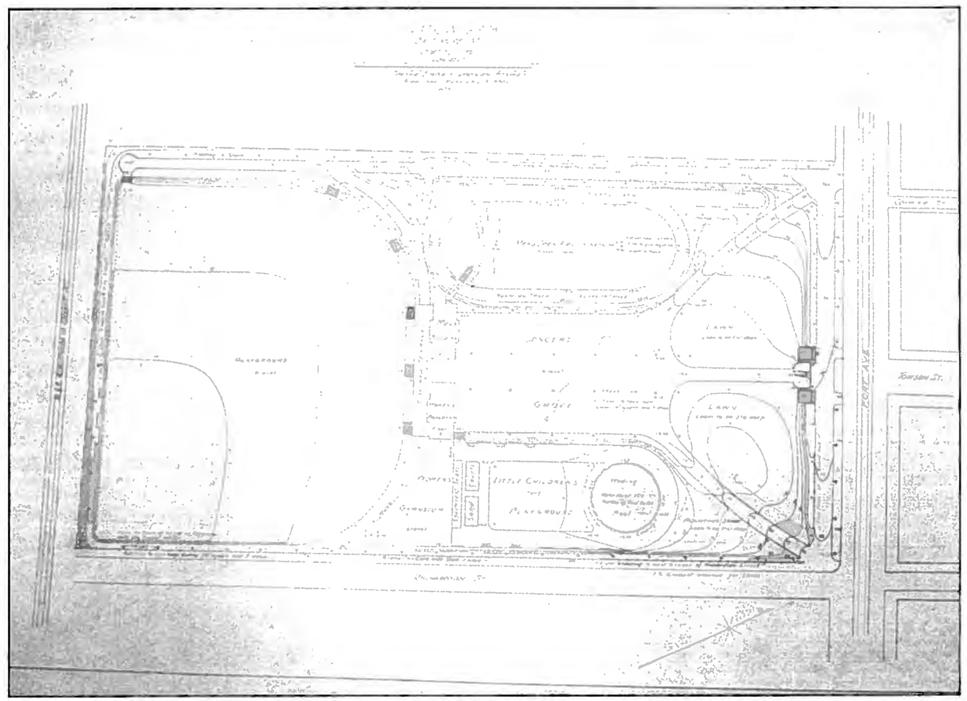

Figure 3: 1907 Grading Plan for Latrobe Park by the Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects. Note the stong symmetry of paths, placement of vegetation and built structures. Courtesy of Friends of Maryland's Olmsted Parks & Landscapes.

Latrobe Park was originally only 6 acres in size, created to serve the working class neighborhood on the Locust Point peninsula and those on the the trolley line along Fort Avenue. The Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architecture firm was hired to provide a plan for the park in 1904. The original design concept for the park included a broad promenade along Fort Avenue overlooking the park, including a grand stair with a fountain at the base. Two gently curving walks were designed through a wide lawn converging with the axial path in the center of a grove of trees, with gravel as the ground cover to allow for activities such as dancing. To the west was to be a men's running track and open air gymnasium an to the east was to be a children's play area including a wading pool and sand court. A small area for women's recreation was to be adjacent to the children's area. The south edge of the grove was intended to be flanked by two field houses for men's and women's dressing rooms. This simple orderly design represented the ideals promoted by the Olmsted Brothers who saw parks as an intimate part of city life.
Text Courtesy of Jill Storms, AIA, Friends of Maryland's Olmsted Parks & Landscapes, 2001.

Latrobe Park Rehabilitation Plan

Baltimore, Maryland

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March 2002

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III. EXISTING CONDITIONS & ASSESSMENT

To develop a rehabilitation plan it is important to understand the current conditions of features within the park. A survey was conducted and a base map was developed through further field studies, which documents the existing conditions of park. This section will discuss the findings of the survey and field visits, and includes the *Existing Conditions Plan, Existing Conditions with Vegetation,* and *Existing Conditions Images*. The character-defining features, including spatial organization, topography, vegetation, circulation, water features, structures, furnishings and objects, are discussed below. A comparison of the existing conditions is then made to the historic conditions of the park, noted in photographs, plans and written materials. This comparison, or assessment, of the park features leads to an understanding of what historic features remain in the park and will help to determine the most appropriate methods of rehabilitation for the overall park.

A. CURRENT CONDITIONS & ASSESSMENT OF PARK FEATURES

1. Spatial Organization

The arrangement of different areas within the park is referred to as the spatial organization and is the three-dimensional organization and patterns of spaces in the landscape. It is created by both natural and cultural features, such as vegetation and vegetation patterns, walls, steps or structures[3]. Latrobe Park is organized by use into three types of spaces; entrances and views, active recreation areas, and special events areas. The park was designed to be suitable for various types of recreation and socialization. Today, Latrobe Park continues to function effectively as a place where local residents and others can come for various sports functions and social activities. The following text describes the existing conditions of the park and is accompanied by the *Existing Conditions Plans.*

a. Entrances and Views

The center park entrance is pronounced with a grand staircase with two secondary side entrances from the northeast and northwest corners of the park. The staircase is constructed of concrete and brick laid in a herringbone pattern. The stairs are in fair condition with some degradation of the concrete treads and missing or broken brick on the landings. The side entrances are understated asphalt walks that slope gently into the central area of the park. A wooden sign is located at the west entrance noting the Victor P. Dooa Sr. Memorial Fields. A vehicular entrance to the park, for maintenance purposes, is located in the southeastern corner of the park at Andre Street. This entrance is signed "Vehicles Prohibited beyond this Point, Dept. of Parks & Recreation". Views into the park are directed from the corner entrances and the central staircase with the placement of canopy trees and walks. Refer to *Existing Conditions Images*, Image 1. Views are terminated on the south end of the park by the I-395 berm.

The center grand staircase and two secondary side entrances from the northeast and northwest still exist in the original locations. Slightly modified from the General Plan for Latrobe Park submitted by the Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects, the secondary entrance walks define the entry lawn area at the northern end of the park. A double row of trees was proposed along the front or northern edge of the park. It is unclear if this was originally implemented, but there

are currently two rows of trees along this northern edge of the park, although the rows are incomplete. Originally, views into the park were very open and provided an overview of the entire park and beyond to the Patapsco River. Views into and beyond the park have changed dramatically with the addition of the berm at the southern end of the park and canopy vegetation at the northern end of the park. Views to the river no longer exist from the park. The canopy vegetation at the northern end of the park directs views into the center of the park, rather than allowing for sweeping views overlooking the entire park.

b. Active Recreational Areas

One of the original purposes for the park was to provide active recreation areas for the adjacent neighborhoods. There are currently three areas within the park that function as active recreation space. On the east side of the park is a playground area with varying types of play equipment. Adjacent to the playground on the east are various courts, including tennis, basketball, and roller hockey, which are separated by a chain link fence. To the south is an open lawn area used for field sports including baseball, softball and soccer. Refer to *Existing Conditions Images*, Image 2. There is a backstop and bench on the south corner of the basketball court area, but no infield is delineated. A second backstop is located to the southwest of the field house and a skin infield is delineated. Soccer fields are marked as needed. The third active recreational area is located on the west side of the park and includes an oval running track with informal sand volleyball courts in the center. The running track is 1/6th mile and is a cinder surface. Areas designated for field sports, including softball and soccer, are also located in the southwest corner behind Francis Scott Key school.

The recreational areas of the park remain in their historic locations with the playground area on the east, running track and outdoor gymnasium area on the west and field game areas to the south. The playground area has seen the greatest change with the loss of the wading pool at the northern end. The addition of contemporary play structures has also changed the overall configuration of this area as well. The open air gymnasium, in the center of the track, no longer has apparatuses for exercising as seen in historic photographs, but is used for activities such as volleyball. Although there have been modifications within each of these areas, the organization of these spaces has remained the same.

c. Special Events Area

Latrobe Park was designed to include areas for passive recreation, or socializing. The lawn area at the park entrance has two symmetrical lawn panels separated by a central walk, which is lined with canopy trees. The central walk extends through the center of the park terminating at the Field House. The central area, adjacent to the southern edge of the entry lawn, was designed as a 'grove' of trees and has two symmetrical lawn panels, approximately 40 feet by 100 feet, on either side of the central walk. Two parallel walks define the outside edges of the lawn panels. Each of the three walks is lined with canopy trees, creating a unified space for gathering. Refer to *Existing Conditions Images*, Image 3.

The lawn area at the park entrance and the grove are still extant and remain functional for social gatherings and passive recreation activities. The entry lawn was proposed to be an open space with a center walk leading to the interior of the park. The ground plane of the grove area was proposed with a continuous gravel surface below the trees in order to provide a consistent,

unified appearance that could withstand heavy foot traffic. Refer to Figures 2 and 3 of the *Selected Historic Images.* Rather than a continuous surface, three separate paths were installed containing rectangular lawn panels. Trees still line both sides of the three paths. The entrance lawn, adjacent to the central stair, was proposed as an open lawn area, with a central walk and very broad views into the park. Canopy trees were planted along the center walk, as well as at the perimeter of this lawn area, creating a slightly different character than proposed by the Olmsted Brothers.

2. Topography

The ground slopes generally from the north to the southeast corner of the park with some distinct changes in grade between areas of use. There is an approximate change of five feet in ground level at the northern end of the park, from street level to the lawn area in the park. This change in grade is accommodated with the central staircase. The east and west entrance walks slope down approximately 5.5% into the central area of the park. The grove is relatively flat with a drop in elevation of approximately three feet to the playground area on the east and a slight rise to the track on the west.

Another distinct change in grade occurs to the southwest of the field house, which is placed above the playing fields. The change in grade forms a short steep slope approximately 33% within a distance of fifteen to twenty feet. This bank curves around to the west forming a semi-circular edge to the field area. Refer to *Existing Conditions Images*, Image 2. This change in grade is accommodated with four sets of steps spaced at varying intervals in the slope. The field in the southern section of the park generally slopes from north to south at a very slight grade. Due to several factors, drainage of the playing field is poor and causes water to pool. This causes problems with the stability of the field surface and interferes with game play. A large berm is located on the southern end of the park to separate it from the railroad and Interstate-395.

The topography of the park exists, to a large degree, as it did historically. Refer to *Selected Historic Graphics*, Figure 2, '1907 Grading Plan for Latrobe Park'. The most notable change in topography of the park is the addition of a large berm located on the southern end of the park, which separates it from the railroad and Interstate-395. The addition of the berm and other slight changes to the topography of the playing fields has disrupted the drainage patterns and caused water to collect in various areas of the playing field. Overall, the topography of the park has changed very little since it was built.

3. Vegetation

The vegetation within the park consists mainly of canopy trees. Many trees have been replaced within the past five years, generally in the same locations. Tree conditions range from good to very poor. Canopy trees are located along the walks within the park, forming an allee along the path on the west side of the park and a grove in the center. The trees in the park were inventoried by BR&P and further evaluated in the field and rated according to health by LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP. Tree species, rate of growth and size provide clues as to the age of many of the mature trees and indicate the era in which they may have been added to the Park. Species of trees include oak/*Quercus sp.*, Japanese zelkova/*Zelkova serrata*, elm/*Ulmus sp.*, ash/*Fraxinus sp.*, linden/*Tilia sp.*, yellowwood/*Cladrastis sp.*, cherry/*prunus sp.*, and

pear/*Pyrus sp.* A general assessment of tree conditions and sizes was conducted and used the following codes as to the general health of the tree: A = Good Condition, B = Minor Care Needed, C = Major Care Needed, Potential Hazard, D = Poor Condition, Dying. For example, a 32 inch caliper elm in good condition will have the code Usp32A. These are shown on the *Existing Conditions with Vegetation* plan. There are very few shrubs within the park. A privet hedge, which is not continuous, is located along Latrobe Terrace to the west. A variety of shrubs, including boxwood/*Buxus sempervirens*, Forsythia/*Forsythia sp.*, Yew/Taxus sp. and others are located near the Recreation Center.

As noted previously, the vegetation within the park consists mainly of canopy trees. There are 13 trees that appear to be historic. The patterns of vegetation remain consistent from the historic period, although the trees that were originally planted did not follow the proposed Olmsted plans exactly. Historic images that were studied show areas planted with shrubs, specifically along the promenade on the west, and along the northern end of the running track and the playground. These areas of shrub plantings no longer exist today. The patterns of vegetation in the park today very closely reflect those seen in the plans by the Olmsted Brothers, which included canopy trees.

4. Circulation

Circulation features may include roads, paths, trails or parking areas[4]. Pedestrian walks are located within the park, structured in a symmetrical layout, and generally run parallel east to west. Refer to the *Existing Conditions Plan.* There are no vehicular traffic paths or parking areas within the park, with the exception of handicap spaces adjacent to the Locust Point Recreation Center. Fort Avenue, Latrobe Terrace and Andre Street all lie immediately adjacent to the park edges. Traffic is heaviest along Fort Avenue with mostly residential traffic along Latrobe Terrace. Maintenance vehicles were observed within the park during a field visit. The two main types of circulation are discussed below.

a. Recreational Traffic Flow & Parking

Vehicular traffic is associated with softball and soccer games and is heaviest during game time. Parking is provided for participants behind Frances Scott Key School and on Decatur Street. Parking is also available along Fort Avenue and Andre Street. It was noted by residents adjacent to the park that sporting event participants often park along Latrobe Terrace, which is designated for residents only, or drive directly onto playing fields.

There are no vehicular paths within the park, although walks are constructed wide enough, approximately 10 feet, to accommodate maintenance vehicles. There is vehicular access into the park at the southeastern corner from Andre Street for maintenance vehicles only and adjacent to the Locust Point Recreation Center for handicap access in the northeast corner. Vehicular traffic impacts the west edge of the park, along Latrobe Terrace, and when vehicles are driven onto playing fields.

b. Pedestrian Paths

Pedestrian paths within the park are approximately 10 feet in width and are an asphalt surface. Path alignment is shown in the *Existing Conditions Plan*. A center path begins at the central

staircase on Fort Avenue. This path continues through the center of the park, terminating at the Field House. Two paths enter the park from the northeast and northwest corners converging just to the north of the grove. These two paths turn southward to create two parallel paths on either side of the center path. These three paths continue through the grove in the center of the park and terminate at the Field House. On the west side of the park is a 'promenade' walk extending in a north-south direction, beginning at the park entrance and ending at the toe of the I-395 berm. A short path connects the promenade to the field house on the south side of the track. Refer to Image 4 of the *Existing Conditions Images*. On the east side of the playground area a path parallels the west side 'promenade' path, beginning at the park entrance and continuing to the playing fields at the southern end of the park.

Pedestrian paths within the park reflect the patterns proposed by the Olmsted Brothers with only minor modifications. The junction of the entry paths, from the center, the northeast and northwest corners, was shown on the Olmsted Plan with a wider radius at the southern end of the entry lawn than exists today. The three entry paths then continue, separately, but parallel, through the grove rather than converging at a consistent gravel surface under the trees. As originally intended these paths converge at the field house on the southern side of the grove. The south-north axis of the promenade and the central path and a path to the east of the playground are still in place. The most dramatic change to pedestrian paths is evident in the playground. A circular wading pool at the northern end was surrounded with a path that extended along both sides of the playground to the covered seat at the southern end. This path no longer exists. A short path connecting the promenade to the field house remains in its historic alignment on the south side of the track and open-air gymnasium. The asphalt surface is in fair to very poor condition throughout. The surface of the paths in historic photographs appears to be a loose material, such as cinder, but it is unclear as to what this material was. The path system of the park is to a large extent still intact, allowing pedestrian movement throughout the park and defining areas of use.

5. Water Features

Water features may be an aesthetic or functional component of the landscape. It may be linked to the natural hydrologic system or fed artificially and include fountains, pools or streams[5].

There is only one water feature in the park today. A small lion head fountain and basin is located in the center of the lower wall of the central staircase, but is no longer in working order. Refer to *Existing Conditions Images*, Image 5.

The drainage structures of the park include a number of inlets located throughout. These inlets are in fair to poor condition. Drain inlets are located in the entry lawn area, along the walks in the center grove in the gymnasium area in the center of the track, in the playground and at the northern end of the playing field. A grading plan for the park was done by the Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects, but does not indicate locations of drain inlets. A 1912 utilities plan for the park does indicate locations of several drain inlets and pipes throughout the park. Many of these inlets are still in place today, however, many are clogged with debris or have covers that are damaged or missing.

Historically, there were two main water features in the park including the small lion head fountain at the base of the central staircase and a wading pool in the northern end of the playground. The wading pool no longer exists. The fountain is no longer functional and has been filled with concrete. Drainage plans were done by the Olmsted Brothers for the entire park, but individual drain inlets were not delineated on this plan. A 1912 utilities plan notes placement of drainage structures and underground pipes indicating that the drainage infrastructure was an integral part of the park early in its development. Subtle changes in the ground and deterioration of drainage structures have created some drainage problems within the park.

6. Structures, Site Furnishings, Objects

Structures, Site Furnishings and Objects are non-habitable features. Structures are constructed features such as walls, terraces, arbors, tennis courts, playground equipment, or steps. Site furnishings and objects are small-scale elements that may be functional, decorative or both. They may include fences, tree grates, flagpoles, benches, light poles, trash receptacles or drinking fountains[6].

a. Entry Staircase and Field Steps

The grand central staircase is located at the northern border of the park along Fort Avenue. Centrally located along this border, it is constructed of concrete and brick in a symmetrical layout. There are two sets of steps, one on either side, which descend to a landing. Each then turns toward the center to a second landing centered behind a retaining wall. A small lion head fountain is located in the center of the retaining wall. The standard size, yellow brick in the landings are laid in a herringbone pattern. Refer to *Existing Conditions Images*, Image 5.

The grand central staircase, designed by the Olmsted Brothers, is an original park feature. The concrete steps are in fair to good condition with some cracks evident on the steps. The brick landings are in fair to poor condition with some brick missing and patches of asphalt. As a central element of the park, this feature provides a distinct entry into the park from Fort Avenue.

There are four sets of steps leading down to the level of the playing field on the south and southwest side of the field house. These steps are constructed of concrete and include seven treads. They provide a way to traverse the change in grade on the northern and western edges of the playing field.

These field steps, in their historic locations, were built as noted on the Olmsted plan for the park and provided a way to access benches that were located on the level of the playing field from the promenade and field house. Refer to *Selected Historic Graphics*, Figure 2, '1907 General Plan for Latrobe Park' and *Existing Conditions Images*, Image 2. The four sets of concrete steps are in fair to poor condition.

b. Covered Seat

The covered seat is located at the southern end of the playground area and is constructed of concrete with a metal roof, Image 6. This covered seat is an original park feature. It was designed to provide shade for those watching children in the sand boxes on the playground to the north and those watching field sports to the south, while defining the southern end of the

playground area. This structure is discussed in further detail in Section B, Architectural Review, below.

c. Sand Box

One of the original two covered sand boxes is still in existence. Refer to Image 6 of the *Existing Conditions Images*. Designed and built with a trellis covering, this structure provided a place for children to play in sand with dappled shade. This distinct element of the park is an original feature and could be considered for uses other than a sand box. This structure is discussed in detail in Section B, Architectural Review, below.

d. Benches

There are several benches of varying length located throughout the park. Benches are placed along Fort Avenue, on the west side of the park along the promenade path, on the east side of the grove area, in the playground area, and on the northern side of the playing fields near the field house. These benches are constructed of metal with wood seats and backs and vary in length from five to twenty feet.

The review of historic images revealed that benches were located throughout the park, and concentrated in areas of high use or where views where prominent. As noted, benches in the park today vary in location and length, although the style is very similar to those seen in historic images. Refer to Image 7, *Existing Conditions Images.* Fewer benches exist in the park today, especially in areas of high use, such as the playground. It was noted from community meetings and the user survey that park users desire more benches in the park, especially in areas of high use. Benches are, and have historically been an integral part of the social life of the park.

e. Light Standards

A variety of light standards exist in the park, which differ in style, size and illumination. The most well lit areas are the tennis/basketball courts. There is also a small concentration of light standards in the running track, but they provide a fairly low level of illumination. A few other light standards are located in the playground, grove, and at the edge of the playing fields.

Lighting in the interior of the park includes hi-pressure sodium lights, approximately fourteen feet high with a shield cap on top of the fixture. Historically, lighting in the park was a single post style with a center globe fixture and six smaller globes below it. Historic images indicate that some fixtures were located at equally spaced intervals along the inside of the running track, but it is unclear where other fixtures may have been located. As noted, light standards in the park today vary in style, size, location and illumination, leaving some areas of the park interior very poorly illuminated.

f. Trash Receptacles

Numerous white, plastic barrels are located throughout the park and are used as trash receptacles. They are free standing and do not have lids or coverings. Refer to *Existing Conditions Images*, Image 3.

It is unclear as to the location or style of historic trash receptacles, however, it is assumed they were not plastic barrels, which are in the park today. It is important to the cleanliness of the park

and safety of park users to have convenient trash receptacles. Aesthetically, it is important to provide receptacles that fit into the character of the park. The trash receptacles in the park today do not reflect historic style or materials.

g. Drinking fountains

There are two drinking fountains in the park, one on the west side of the field house and the other located in the playground area. The fountains are a cast iron pedestal base with a small basin on top, and are operated with a foot petal.

It is unclear if there were drinking fountains located in the park historically. Today the two existing water fountains are in working order and are located in the playground and to the east of the field house, where the women's field house was proposed.

h. Playground Equipment

A variety of play equipment can be found in the playground area of the park. Refer to *Existing Conditions Images*, Image 8. There are two modular units that consist of slides, climbing and swinging apparatus. These modular units are more recent additions to the playground and accommodate different age groups. There are also several older pieces of play equipment including swings, monkey bars and uneven parallel bars. There are four swing sets, built of metal bars with swings hung from metal chains. Two sets include six swings each, while the other two sets each include four toddler type swings. The monkey bars are a series of round metal bars, some of which are bent and rusting. The uneven parallel bars are located near the covered seat and are made of metal. There is one see-saw in the playground. One set of parallel bars is located in the outdoor gymnasium area in the center of the track.

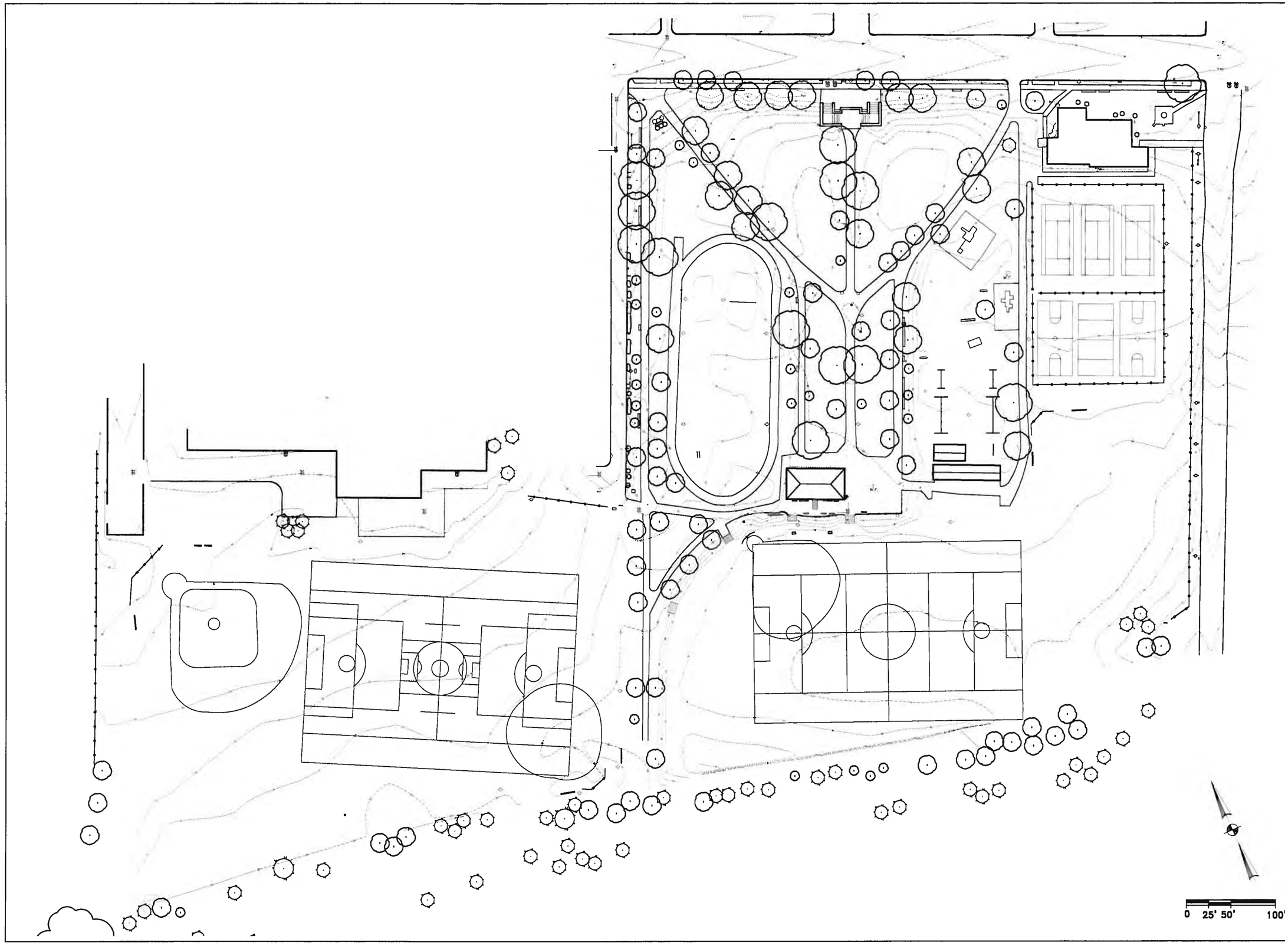
In the original plans for the park, areas are noted for see-saws, scups and swings, but few photographs were found of the playground area and do not show the type of play equipment installed. An historic image shows the corner of a swing set, indicating that these types of structures were in place during the early development of the park. Several apparatus are seen in photographs of the men's open air gymnasium, but only one set of parallel bars remains today.

B. CURRENT CONDITIONS & ASSESSMENT OF ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

1. Field House

The Field House is located in the center of Latrobe Park, south of Fort Avenue and north of the athletic fields. It is one of two such structures, which were to be constructed under the original Olmsted Brothers plan, to flank the central north-south park axis. The western building was to house facilities for men, the eastern one for women. However, only the men's building was erected, while the second structure apparently was never built.

The one-story building, which was constructed c.1905, is a simplified Craftsman-Tudor style timber and masonry structure. It has a broad, shallow hipped roof covered with slate shingles, punctuated at each end of the ridge by a small hipped dormer which acts as a ventilator for the attic, and a single brick chimney. The north facade consists of three distinct bays, with the center portion indented to form a shallow elevated porch. Entrance doors and paired double-hung



Latrobe Park Rehabilitation Plan

Baltimore, Maryland

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Drawing Title:
EXISTING CONDITIONS PLAN

Date:
March 2002

Drawing Number:

Image 1: View into the park from the grand staircase.

Image 2: Sports field, looking west. Note banked edge of field and concrete steps leading to field level.

Image 3: Grove in center of park with canopy trees and walks.

Image 4: Promenade walk on western side of park, looking north.

Image 5: Center grand staircase on Fort Avenue. Note herringbone pattern of brick and fountain on lower retaining wall.

Image 6: Covered seat and sand box at southern end of playground.

Image 7: View looking east along north/Fort Avenue side of park, showing character of front edge of park. Note style of bench.

Image 8: Playground area with variety of play structures.

Image 9: View of Field House from center path, looking south.

Latrobe Park Rehabilitation Plan

Baltimore, Maryland

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EXISTING CONDITIONS IMAGES

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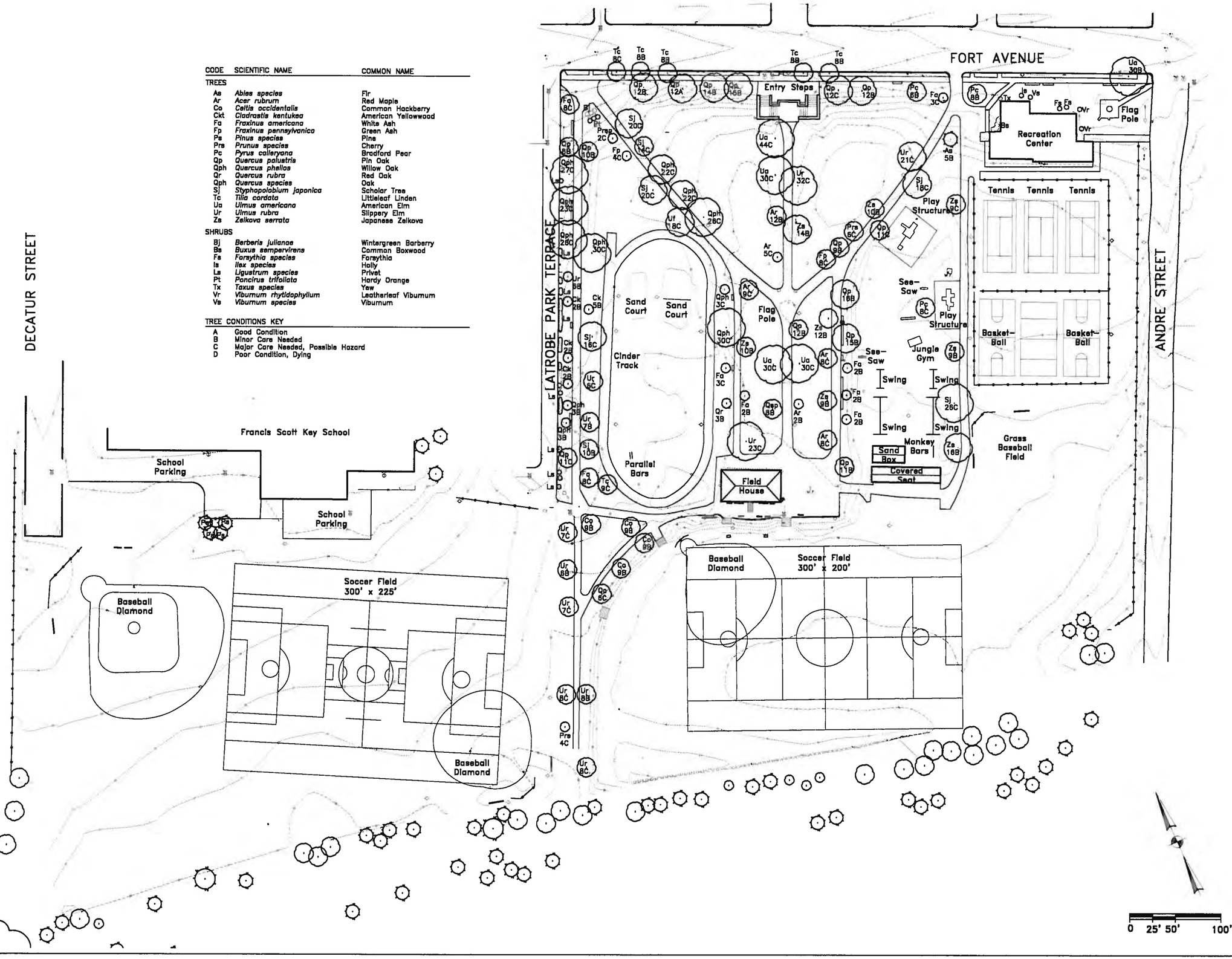
March 2002

Drawing Number:

CODE	SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
TREES		
As	*Abies species*	Fir
Ar	*Acer rubrum*	Red Maple
Co	*Celtis occidentalis*	Common Hackberry
Ckt	*Cladrastis kentukea*	American Yellowwood
Fa	*Fraxinus americana*	White Ash
Fp	*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*	Green Ash
Pe	*Pinus species*	Pine
Prs	*Prunus species*	Cherry
Pc	*Pyrus calleryana*	Bradford Pear
Qp	*Quercus palustris*	Pin Oak
Qph	*Quercus phellos*	Willow Oak
Qr	*Quercus rubra*	Red Oak
Qph	*Quercus species*	Oak
SJ	*Styphopolobium japonica*	Scholar Tree
Tc	*Tilia cordata*	Littleleaf Linden
Ua	*Ulmus americana*	American Elm
Ur	*Ulmus rubra*	Slippery Elm
Zs	*Zelkova serrata*	Japanese Zelkova
SHRUBS		
Bj	*Berberis julianae*	Wintergreen Barberry
Bs	*Buxus sempervirens*	Common Boxwood
Fs	*Forsythia species*	Forsythia
Is	*Ilex species*	Holly
Ls	*Ligustrum species*	Privet
Pt	*Poncirus trifoliata*	Hardy Orange
Tx	*Taxus species*	Yew
Vr	*Viburnum rhytidophyllum*	Leatherleaf Viburnum
Vs	*Viburnum species*	Viburnum

TREE CONDITIONS KEY

A	Good Condition
B	Minor Care Needed
C	Major Care Needed, Possible Hazard
D	Poor Condition, Dying



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EXISTING CONDITIONS PLAN WITH VEGETATION

Date:
March 2002

Drawing Number:

windows characterize the flanking bays. The remaining three sides are only a single bay. The Field House measures 65'-1" by 34'-2", with its broader front facade and entries facing north toward Fort Avenue.

The interior of the Field House, which consists of only a first floor and partial basement, is divided into several spaces. Though the original uses of these spaces is unknown, they were at one time used for a combination of men's and women's locker rooms, and for athletic offices and storage.

A series of exterior clerestory windows originally ran virtually around the entire building, to provide light and air to the interior. Unfortunately, all but two of these were covered on the outside with brick and the interior with plywood long ago.

The basement level was only partially constructed, and was used exclusively for the building's mechanical systems. The basement was ventilated and lit by a pair of window wells located at the rear of the building. A hatch inside the building appears to give access to an unfinished attic space.

The building has not been utilized as a field house for some time. Through visual examination, the building was found to be in structurally good condition, while the materials and finishes were in good to fair condition. While no severe or threatening structural conditions appear to exist with either the foundation or the building, some localized damage was observed to several wood timbers.

On the outside, the facades are composed of the original exposed timber framing, with brick masonry infill. This structure sits on a "platform" of poured concrete, which forms a 1-to-2 foot water table around the entire perimeter. The base and timbers are painted brown, while the brick infill is painted white, refer to Image 9 fo the *Existing Conditions Images*. All of these materials are still intact, and are in generally good condition.

While all but two of the clerestory windows are covered by brick on the outside and plywood on the inside, and possibly gone, there remains two intact clerestory windows on the east facade. The only other original windows are the pairs of wood double-hung units on the flanking bays of the front (north) facade. There are two wood entry doors and frames on the front facade, and two more on the back. Some elements of these doors are original, though they have been heavily abused and repaired.

The original wood rafter boards and tongue and groove soffits are still mostly intact, with some replacement and repair evident.

The roofing appears to be the original slate shingle system, though it has seen fairly extensive repair. Approaching 100 years old, the system is well past its useful life. However, the current roofing appears to be in good condition, with no leaks observed inside, and with upkeep can last for many more years.

The storm water drainage system consists of large half round gutters, draining into downspouts at each corner. Each downspout, which is a combination of galvanized and cast iron components,

is designed to run into an underground drain line. The gutters appear to be in good condition. Some of the downspouts are functional; however, breaks and blockage in the underground system are a problem.

The original hipped ridge ventilation dormers are still intact, and require only minor repair. Also, a sizable brick chimney with an ornamented top pierces the roof at the rear southeast quadrant. This element is in fairly good condition, except for a crack that extends three feet down on the south side. This will require some repair and/or reconstruction, which should be done with like materials in a manner that preserves the integrity and character of the structure.

On the inside, the original interior room layout and finishes remain virtually intact. Finishes were very spartan as would be expected. Throughout most of the Field House, the floors were exposed poured concrete, and the walls are painted wood tongue and groove bead board. The ceilings are finished in 4' x 8' fiber boards with lath strips at the seams, nailed flat to the bottom of the roof rafters. Some old interior furnishings remain today. Many of the original doors, transoms, interior windows and moldings remain.

In the bath and shower rooms at the east end, the finishes appear to be from a later period (c.1930's). Ceramic tile in white with black accents covers the floors and a 5'-8" wainscot. The remaining walls are drywall, and the ceilings are the original fiberboard.

The plumbing fixtures and toilet partitions have been neglected, and some have been vandalized. All of the plumbing systems appear to have not functioned for some time. The same can be said for the original radiator heating system, which is also currently not functional. An working electrical panel is located in the office, and the functional lighting consists of exposed ceramic sockets and bare bulbs in each room.

Most of the interior structure and finishes are in good condition, and still serviceable. The Field House is primarily utilized today as a storage facility for sports and park maintenance equipment.

2. Covered Seat

The covered seat is also an original park feature, located east of the Field House. The 75' by 16' structure, which was also constructed c.1905 as part of the Olmsted Brothers plan, is another Craftsman-era gem. Refer to Image 6 of the *Existing Conditions Images.* It consists of a heavy poured concrete base with a rough finished texture; timbered buttresses, supports and rafters; wide tongue and groove underlayment; and a flat-seamed metal roof. The original bench seating, which ran the entire length of the wall on each side, has long since been removed.

Through visual examination, the covered seat was found to be in structurally good condition, though marred with graffiti.

The concrete base is solid, with only minor damage to its textured finish. The timbered structure supporting the roof is also in good condition, with only minor deterioration to its components. The flat-seam tin roofing appears to be sound, with no sign of leakage observed. The covered seat is still located in its historic location and retains much of its historic character, with the exception of the missing wooden benches.

3. Sand Box

The covered sand box is also an original park feature, located east of the Field House and adjacent to the covered seat. Refer to Image 6 of the *Existing Conditions Images.* The 25' by 19' structure, constructed c.1905 as part of the Olmsted Brothers plan, was also originally designed in the Craftsman style. The remaining structure is one of two open-roofed structures that originally stood end to end. The covered sand box is contained within a concrete-curb, which also forms the base for the Pergola. Eight heavy concrete pillars, in a simplified Doric style, are topped with wood timber framing. Once open to the sky, a roof has been added atop the framing, consisting of modern plywood substrate and asphalt shingle roofing.

Through visual examination, the sand box was found to be in basically good structural condition. The concrete base and columns are solid. The timbered structure supporting the roof is also in good condition, with only minor deterioration to its components. Several of these components have already been replaced. The roofing substrate consists of modern plywood, and recently installed asphalt shingle roofing appears to be sound, with no sign of leakage observed.

The sand box remains in its historic location and retains much of its historic character. With the exception of the roof being covered, the structure has been changed very little.

IV. COMMUNITY DESIRES & NEEDS

A survey of park users was conducted to better understand uses, attitudes and opinions about the park. A total of 40 people returned the survey. The majority of respondents were female and between the ages of 36 and 65. Latrobe park is used daily by those who live adjacent to or less than a five minute walk from the park. Leisurely walking is the activity most park users participate in with relaxing and socializing the second most common. Other activities important to park users include attending concerts and enjoying nature. This indicates that the character of Latrobe Park, specifically canopy trees and other plantings are an important aspect of the park. The character and layout of Latrobe Park are remaining features of this historic park, which was designed by the Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects in the early twentieth century. Several concerns were also noted by survey respondents including vandalism, vagrancy and the lack of clean-up after dogs. A summary of the survey results is included below.

Demographics:

65%	between the ages of 36 and 65
70%	female respondents
52%	married
62.5%	educations beyond high school
85%	live adjacent to or less than five minutes from the park
99%	use Latrobe Park more often than other parks
80%	use Latrobe Park daily or more than once a week
92.5%	stayed in the park up to three hours at a visit

Park Uses:

70%	leisure walking
60%	relaxation and socialization
48%	visit the Recreation Center
42.5%	dog walking
37.5%	attend concerts
30%	enjoy nature
25%	children's playground

Attitudes about the Park:

Cleanliness, Safety/Security	Average Condition
Vegetation	Average Condition
Recreation Building	Excellent Condition
Field House	Poor Condition
Covered Seat & Sand Box	Poor Condition
Playground & Playing Fields	Average Condition
Drainage of Playing Fields	Poor Condition
Conditions of Track	Poor Condition
Park Access	Excellent Condition

Condition of Staircase	Below Average Condition
Park Signage	Average Condition
Park Lighting	Poor Condition
Information on Park Activities	Average

As a whole, the responses on the survey were positive in tone and reflected a keen interest in the park's improvement. Dogs and drugs were the two leading complaints. Positive suggestions given by respondents for improvements to the park included better signage, parking enforcement, restricted dog areas, enforced 'poop scooping' and leash rules and improved playground equipment. It was suggested that there be a more visible police presence in the park to help eliminate drug use activities that occur in several areas. Elimination of the sand box would also take away a spot where drug paraphernalia is regularly left.

It was suggested by several respondents that more benches be placed in the park and restrooms be improved and made more accessible. Other suggestions revolved around the sports fields: better lighting, better drainage, renovation of the field house, better parking for spectators and barriers to keep cars off the fields.

Latrobe Park is a popular park and used daily by neighborhood residents. The original intent of the park was to provide neighborhood residents and others a place for both active and passive recreation within a natural setting. The benefits of enjoying nature while participating in passive activities such as walking or socializing or more vigorous activities, such as running or field sports was emphasized by the Olmsted Brothers in their design. Today, park users come to Latrobe Park for the same or similar reasons. This park is a valuable historic resource in the City of Baltimore that continues to function effectively as a gathering place for neighborhood residents and others who visit the park for various activities. As noted above, there are many positive aspects and features of the park with a few areas of concern for park users. This historic park is highly valued by park users who care deeply about its character and condition.

V. REHABILITATION PLAN

As indicated in the user surveys, Latrobe Park is an important amenity to the local neighborhood and used daily by residents. The park is also important in its association with the Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects who provided a design for the park, much of which was implemented. Many historic features of the park still exist today, and the park itself is an important example of a neighborhood park built in the early 20th century.

A preliminary rehabilitation plan was presented to the community for comment to show the concepts developed for the park. These concepts were based on feedback from community members, the client and budgetary constraints. This plan was used to further develop the final rehabilitation plan. The *Rehabilitation Plan* shows both diagrammatically and in text, those areas of the park that require upgrading, repair or change. Also included in this report is an *Illustrative Rehabilitation Plan* indicating the overall character of the park if rehabilitation of the park is implemented. Providing for the retention of historic features, upgrading features for contemporary uses and installing new features as appropriate, the illustrative plan shows how each of these contributes to the viability of the park. The following text and plan discusses the appropriate rehabilitation treatments for the park.

A. OVERALL PARK REHABILITATION

The overall original spatial organization and layout of the park is still intact. There are, however, slightly different demands on the park than there were historically. The rehabilitation plan for the park addresses these new demands in the current space and layout of the park. Decisions for appropriate treatment of the park and changes that are recommended for implementation were based on the field review and assessment of the character-defining features of the park, with appropriate attention to historic features still remaining and with consideration given to the needs, desires and attitudes of park users.

1. Spatial Organization

As noted previously, the spatial organization of the park remains intact. Latrobe Park is organized by use into three types of spaces; Entrance and views, Active Recreation, and Special Events. Each area is marked with structures or playing fields that define its use. The edges of these areas are in turn delineated by walks and in some instances tree plantings. Views are defined by this system of walks allowing visitors to experience the park from several vantage points. The orientation of views from both outside and within the park remain as important today as intended in the Olmsted Brothers' design. Originally, views into the park were very open, providing an overview of the entire park. Today, views into the park are more directed through canopy trees that limit the overview of the entire park. Treatment for the three types of spaces that create the organization of the park are described below.

a. Entrances and Views

The park entrances as originally located at the corners and center of the Fort Avenue frontage continue to provide easy access for neighborhood use and should be retained. The grand central staircase is important to park users as a signature element and provides a place to view the park,

and should be retained. While the stair exhibits minor deterioration, it can be repaired, maintaining the steps for active use. The upper landing of the staircase, adjacent to the Fort Avenue sidewalk, should be replaced with brick, laid in the historic pattern, to redefine this as an element of the park. It is also recommended that benches be placed along the Fort Avenue sidewalk to provide views both toward the street and into the park, where feasible. The secondary entrances from the northeast and northwest corners of the park provide access for the majority of park users. It is recommended that these entrances be more clearly articulated to upgrade their function and appearance. These three entry areas provide overall views into the park from a slightly higher elevation. Unfortunately the long view beyond the parks southern edge to the Patapsco River has been lost with the construction of the I-395 planted berm. Views into the park, and from the interior to the outside, need to be retained and enhanced.

b. Active Recreational Areas

The active recreation area of the park is comprised of several play fields and use groups, these include the playground and tennis, roller hockey, basketball courts, to the east, the soccer and softball field to the south and running track and outdoor gymnasium/sand courts to the west. These areas continue to function as active recreational areas and should be retained making improvements and upgrades as described below.

The playground area on the east side of the park retains several early play structures with the addition of more recent play equipment at the northern end. It is recommended to reorganize the children's play area into separate play spaces based on different age groups, following the historic layout of this area. Placing a fence at the perimeter of the redefined playground would provide limited security by preventing children from wandering outside the play area and also preventing dogs from having access to this area. A low, 3 ½ to 4-foot high, picket style fence, with self-closing gates would successfully achieve these objectives while fitting into the character of the park. The children's play area is also in need of additional benches for parents and caretakers watching children while in the playground area. The adjacent courts for tennis, basketball, and roller hockey have recently been resurfaced and continue to be in good repair. They should be retained at this time.

The sports field at the south end of the park is currently organized with a non-regulation soccer field and overlapping softball field. The request from the local community members is to provide a regulation size soccer field 110 x 70m (225'x360') while removing the softball in-field. Improvements to this field requires a re-grading of the area to create effective drainage and prevent pooling of water. The field will be canted, or placed at a slight angle in order to accommodate an appropriate width that will not interfere with the berm at the southern end of the park. The existing softball/baseball needs to be removed to avoid conflict with the soccer field. Use of adjacent softball/baseball fields behind Francis Scott Key school, to the southwest, is available to park users and additional fields are being planned at Clifton Park. The soccer field is intended for youth play and does not require provision of athletic field lighting. The adjacent field at the Francis Scott Key School is currently illuminated.

The historic, cinder running track on the west side of the park is one of the few known remaining cinder tracks of it's era and should be retained. The track has lost much of its surface material and needs to have the cinder surface repaired to support proper active use. Located within the

track infield (historically known as the outdoor gymnasium) are two informal sand volleyball courts. The courts are in continuous use and need to be upgraded. This upgrade involves the repair or replacement and maintenance of nets and the definition of the court edges with the addition of sand to create an even court surface and provide proper drainage. The remaining area within the center of the track provides an area for individual exercise activities. The lawn for these activities is generally in good condition but may need minor upgrading to promote better use.

c. Special Events Area

Historically, areas in the park defined for special events included the lawn area at the northern end of the park and in the grove at the center of the park. The lawn area at the northern end was proposed as open space with a center path and no trees. This provided for an expanse of lawn appropriate for larger gatherings and provided an open feeling to this end of the park. It appears that trees were placed along the center path early in the development of the park, however, which provides a different character to this area of the park. By retaining the allee along the center path, the character that was implemented historically will be retained. Trees along the corner entrance walks should be replaced as needed to retain this edge definition to the lawn.

The grove in the center of the park, was created with three parallel walks lined with canopy trees. The definition of this area is currently still intact and should be retained and rehabilitated. Trees should be replaced as they decline and follow the historic pattern along the paths. Benches should be added to this area, to meet desires of community members and should be placed along the edges of the paths facing the center of the grove. The area under the trees should be retained as lawn where events such as festivals, concerts or other gatherings can occur. This may require very minor grading and reseeding.

2. Topography

The topography of Latrobe Park is unique and helps to define the individual areas of use within the park. Existing topographical features closely resemble the 1907 Olmsted Brothers grading plan for the park and should be preserved to the extent possible. The changes in topography at the northern edge of the park, on the western side of the playground area and along the western and northern edges of the playing field should be retained. These changes in topography continue to reinforce the overall design and use of the park as well as provide a natural drainage pattern. Some minor changes in the topography of the playground area may be considered to define areas for different age groups and to ensure proper drainage. Minor re-grading of the playing field area at the southern end of the park will ensure proper drainage and prevent the pooling of water in the field while accommodating a regulation size soccer field.

3. Vegetation

As the Olmsted Brothers stated, their intention was to provide for areas of various activities within a natural setting. Patterns of vegetation were established to provide areas of lawn, canopy trees and other plantings. The retention of vegetation patterns is important to the character of the park as well as the comfort of users. In the rehabilitation of vegetation within the park, consideration should be given to the following: re-establishment of the allee along Fort Avenue, replanting where trees are missing along both sides of the sidewalk; retention of the allee on the west side of the park, replanting where trees are missing; retaining the center grove; re-

GENERAL REHABILITATION NOTES:

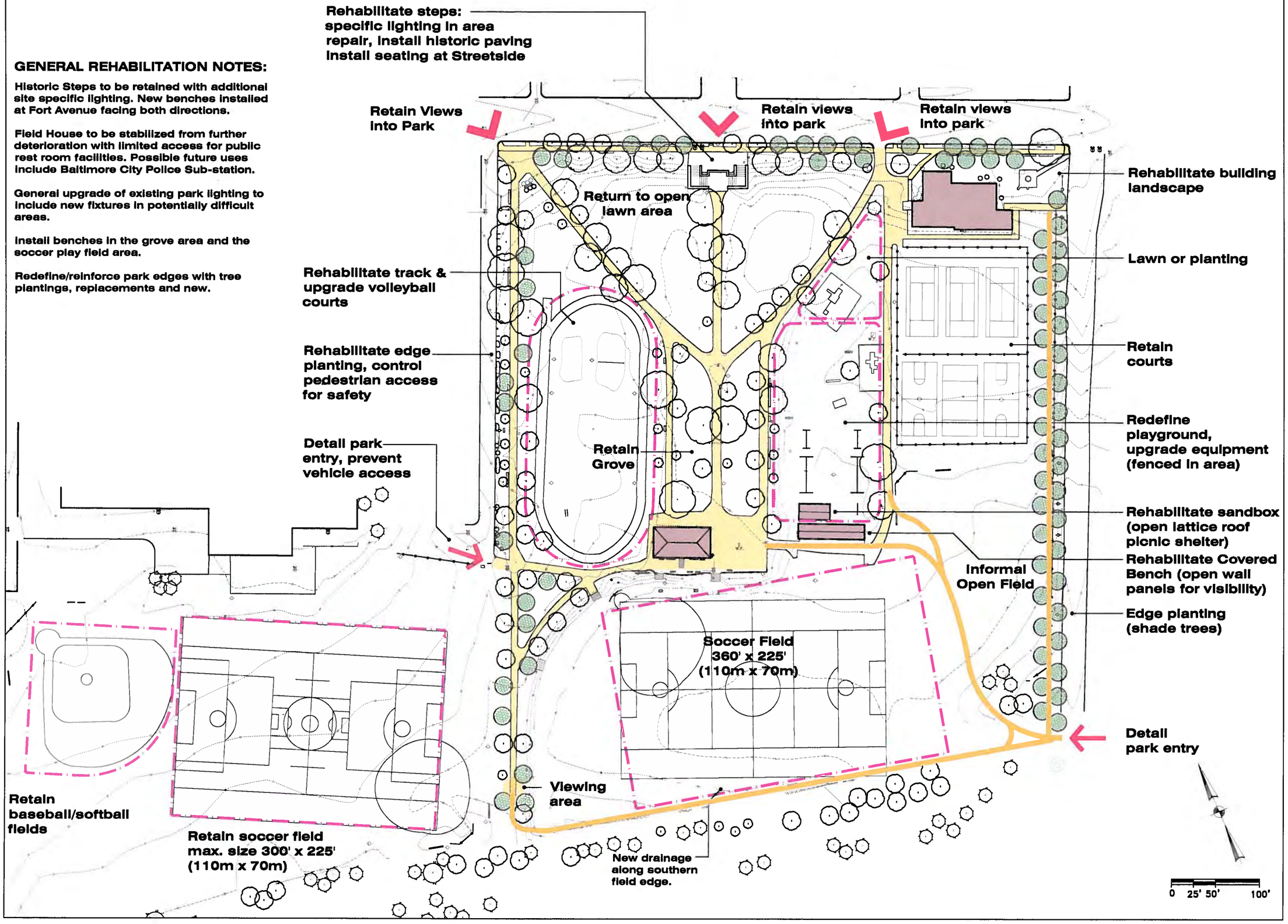
Historic Steps to be retained with additional site specific lighting. New benches installed at Fort Avenue facing both directions.

Field House to be stabilized from further deterioration with limited access for public rest room facilities. Possible future uses include Baltimore City Police Sub-station.

General upgrade of existing park lighting to include new fixtures in potentially difficult areas.

Install benches in the grove area and the soccer play field area.

Redefine/reinforce park edges with tree plantings, replacements and new.



Latrobe Park Rehabilitation Plan

Baltimore, Maryland

Client:
Baltimore City Department of Recreation & Parks, Capital Projects
2600 Madison Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21217
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Landscape Architect:
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Drawing Title:
Rehabilitation Plan

Date:
March 2002

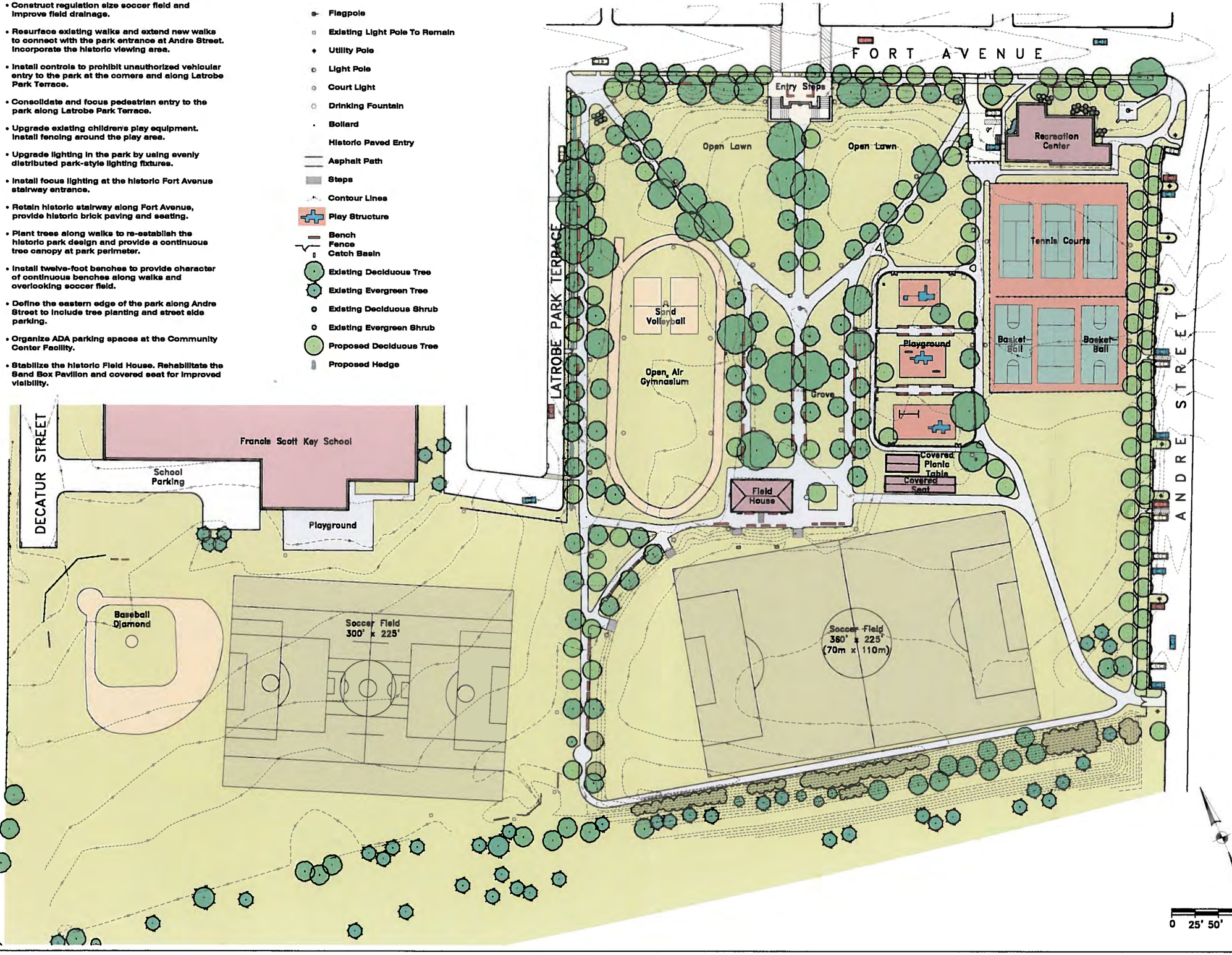
Drawing Number:

GENERAL REHABILITATION NOTES:

- Construct regulation size soccer field and improve field drainage.
- Resurface existing walks and extend new walks to connect with the park entrance at Andre Street. Incorporate the historic viewing area.
- Install controls to prohibit unauthorized vehicular entry to the park at the corners and along Latrobe Park Terrace.
- Consolidate and focus pedestrian entry to the park along Latrobe Park Terrace.
- Upgrade existing childrens play equipment. Install fencing around the play area.
- Upgrade lighting in the park by using evenly distributed park-style lighting fixtures.
- Install focus lighting at the historic Fort Avenue stairway entrance.
- Retain historic stairway along Fort Avenue, provide historic brick paving and seating.
- Plant trees along walks to re-establish the historic park design and provide a continuous tree canopy at park perimeter.
- Install twelve-foot benches to provide character of continuous benches along walks and overlooking soccer field.
- Define the eastern edge of the park along Andre Street to include tree planting and street side parking.
- Organize ADA parking spaces at the Community Center Facility.
- Stabilize the historic Field House. Rehabilitate the Sand Box Pavilion and covered seat for improved visibility.

Key

- Flagpole
- Existing Light Pole To Remain
- Utility Pole
- Light Pole
- Court Light
- Drinking Fountain
- Bollard
- Historic Paved Entry
- Asphalt Path
- Steps
- Contour Lines
- Play Structure
- Bench
- Fence
- Catch Basin
- Existing Deciduous Tree
- Existing Evergreen Tree
- Existing Deciduous Shrub
- Existing Evergreen Shrub
- Proposed Deciduous Tree
- Proposed Hedge



Latrobe Park Rehabilitation Plan

Baltimore, Maryland

Client:
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Drawing Title:
Illustrative Rehabilitation Plan

Date:
March 2002

Drawing Number:

establishing trees along the eastern edge of the playground; establishing edge plantings along the east side of the park. A variety of species provides better ecological health to the park and should be considered when replacing or adding new trees. Tree protection measures are important to the long term health of trees by providing protection from mower damage or other impacts in the early life of trees. Appropriate species of trees to use in the park include oak/*Quercus sp.*, Japanese zelkova/*Zelkova serrata*, elm/*Ulmus sp.*, ash/*Fraxinus sp.*, linden/*Tilia sp.*, yellowwood/*Cladrastis sp.*, cherry/*prunus sp.*, and pear/*Pyrus sp.* It would be appropriate and is desired by community members to re-establish the privet hedge along Latrobe Terrace at the western border of the park. Reestablishing areas of shrub plantings or perennial beds may be appropriate if desired by community members who will also be responsible for maintenance. Appropriate shrub species for planting in the park include low growing varieties of flowering or evergreen shrubs such as boxwood/*Buxus sempervirens*, forsythia/*Forsythia sp.*, St. John's wort/*Hypericum prolifcum,* or bush cinquefoil/*Potentilla fruiticosa*.

4. Circulation

Circulation within a park is an important aspect of both its character and use. Paths provide ways of directing park users as well as assist in defining areas of use. The following discussion includes the types of circulation within the park that need to be addressed.

a. Recreational Traffic Flow & Parking

As noted, there are no vehicular drives within the park. However, user surveys and feedback at community meetings indicate that those participating in sports activities often drive vehicles onto the playing fields. In order to eliminate this activity it will be necessary to prevent entry by placing bollards or similar item at the potential points of entry. Two main entry locations are, the southeast corner of the park at Andre Street, intended for maintenance vehicles only, and at the southern end of Latrobe Terrace. A third vehicular entry point for the park is located off of Fort Avenue adjacent to the Locust Point Recreation Center. This entrance is intended for handicap access only and is limited to the handicap parking spaces adjacent to the west side of the recreation center building. Entry from this point however may become more frequent when the other two entry points are closed, necessitating a need for blocking this access, during sporting events, as well. There is parking along Fort Avenue, although this is limited. Additional parking for sport activities is available on Decatur Street and at the Frances Scott Key School, adjacent to the southwestern edge of the park. Informal parking is currently available along Andre Street bordering the western edge of the park. Formalizing parking along Andre Street and providing an entry to the park at the southeast corner should be considered in more detail.

b. Pedestrian Paths

Because the pedestrian paths within the park exist in their original locations and still provide a logical sequence of movement and definition of spaces they should be retained and upgraded. Improvements to the walks include new a surface and correction of poorly drained areas. A new path is proposed from the southeast corner of the park that will connect to the field house plaza. In addition a path along the southern edge of the playing field, at the toe of the berm, connecting the promenade walk with the proposed walk at the southeast corner should be considered. These walks become more appropriate with the addition of formalized parking along Andre Street. This path would also serve as access for maintenance vehicles from the Andre Street entry where they

currently enter the park. Additional paths that are ADA compliant should be placed within the rehabilitated playground area in order to make this area accessible.

5. Water Features

There is no desire to rebuild the wading pool or add a compatible water feature in the playground area. Cost for the initial installation and annual upkeep makes this type of feature prohibitive for this small neighborhood park. The lion head fountain at the base of the central staircase should be retained, and if feasible in the future be considered for rehabilitation which would include possible new plumbing.

Catch basins and drain inlets in the park are important for user safety and maintenance of walks, lawns and playing fields. All inlets need to be reviewed for proper operations and should be cleaned and repaired as needed. Covers that are broken or missing should be replaced with appropriate, pedestrian safe covers.

6. Structures, Site Furnishings, Objects

Structures, Site Furnishings and Objects are non-habitable features. As noted previously, structures are constructed features such as walls, terraces, arbors, tennis courts, playground equipment, or steps. Site furnishings and objects are small-scale elements that may be functional, decorative or both. Latrobe Park retains many of its historic structural elements. Several of these features still provide use as initially intended, whereas a few no longer are actively used. The following discussion includes recommendations for the structures, site furnishings and objects in Latrobe Park, retaining and rehabilitating these historic features when feasible while allowing for contemporary uses.

a. Entry Staircase and Field Steps

The central entry stair has masonry and brick landings that exhibit a minor amount of deterioration and are in need of repair. Rehabilitation efforts should include not only the repair of masonry and brick paving with like materials but also construction of a landing at the upper stair along Fort Avenue, adjacent to the sidewalk. Asphalt paving in this area should be replaced with brick to match historic patterns. The addition of benches on this landing would provide seating with views both toward the street and into the park. Site specific lighting should be added to illuminate dark areas at the staircase with fixtures that are aesthetically compatible and vandal proof.

Concrete steps at the playing field on the southern end of the park were an integral part of the Olmsted Brothers design and grading solution for providing easy access to the lower playing field. These steps continue to function in this way and should be rehabilitated. Repairs should be done with like materials to reflect the historic character.

b. Covered Seat

The covered seat is an historic structure not currently being used for recreational activities. Its position at the southern end of the playground and adjacent to the proposed regulation size soccer field is expected to more readily bring the structure into use. This structure may be used for those watching children on the playground and as a staging area for field play. More specific

details for the rehabilitation of this structure is discussed in Section B, Architectural Features Rehabilitation, below.

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c. Sand Box

The remaining sand box in no longer used as initially intended. As noted previously, the sand often harbors harmful trash and is not safe for play. This structure, can, however, be utilized for other purposes, such as a covered picnic shelter. Section B, Architectural Features Rehabilitation, provides more details for the rehabilitation of this structure.

d. Benches

Benches have historically, and continue to be, an integral part of Latrobe Park. Remaining benches in the park should be repaired and reinstalled when possible. New benches should be installed as required to accommodate park users. Benches should be the Baltimore Bench style and be placed at areas of high use within the park and at the perimeters as appropriate.

e. Light Standards

Lighting improvement recommendations for Latrobe Park include replacement and reorganization of the existing pedestrian walk fixtures. Light standard should be a consistent with those of other Baltimore City Parks and provide appropriate illumination. Placement of the fixtures is to be arranged for even light distribution throughout the park eliminating dark spots and hidden areas. The lighting on the tennis, basketball, roller hockey courts is currently functioning and is not in need of replacement. It was determined that lighting for the proposed regulation size soccer field is not desired at the time. Conduit and foundations for the existing fixtures should be capped off and marked for future need if desired.

f. Trash Receptacles

Trash receptacles should reflect an appropriate style for the character of the park. They should be secured to the ground and have some type of covering.

g. Drinking fountains

The drinking fountains should be retained and rehabilitated as needed and kept in working order.

h. Playground equipment

Outdated and non-ADA compatible equipment should be replaced with appropriate structures or equipment. Equipment should be organized so that different age groups have separate play areas within the playground.

B. ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES REHABILIATION

1. Field House

The Field House is an integral part of the Olmsted Brothers legacy, architectural history and aesthetic environment of Latrobe Park, constituting its primary architectural focal point. Though in need of repair and re-finishing, it is still a very viable and stable structure. The key to the future of the Field House will be finding a new use for the structure, and sensitively adapting the interior to accommodate it. This adaptation will need to respect the original environment of the

interior, while upgrading it to meet modern codes for life safety and accessibility. Re-installation of the clerestory windows would also contribute to bringing back the building's original turn-of-the-century character.

Another key to the Field House's future will be the burden of stewardship toward maintaining and securing it, so as to deter and prevent the occurrence of vandalism and future deterioration.

2. Covered Seat

The covered seat, though currently underutilized due to its condition, is an integral part of the Olmsted legacy, architectural history and aesthetic environment of Latrobe Park. It is structurally sound, and only requires minor repairs and re-painting to remain serviceable. While greater visibility through the central wall is desirable, it is integral to the structure and should not be cut into. With creativity, this element can again contribute to the vitality and spirit of Latrobe Park. As noted, with rehabilitation, including the reinstallation of benches, this structure could once again be a viable part of the park and used as staging area for field sports or for leisure activities associated with the rehabilitated sand box.

3. Sand Box

The covered sand box is also an integral part of the Olmsted legacy, architectural history and aesthetic environment of Latrobe Park. It is structurally sound, and only requires minor repairs and re-painting to remain serviceable. The modern roof should be removed, and the open nature of the structure restored. As noted above, park users voiced concern about the condition of the sand box and the trash that is often found buried in the sand. Consideration should be given to modifying the ground plane to accommodate picnic tables, while retaining the overall character and integrity of this structure.

C. PROJECT PRIORITIES

Based on feedback from community members, Baltimore City Department of Parks & Recreation, Capital Projects and budget constraints, the following list of priorities was established for the rehabilitation of the park.

1. *Soccer Fields:*
   Improve drainage of field with minimum re-grading
   Mark for regulation size field

2. *Drainage Infrastructure:*
   Clean drain inlets, repair/replace as needed
   Repair/Replace underground pipe system as needed

3. *Circulation:*
   Repair/upgrade walks, retaining alignments
   Add walk at southeast corner of park along Andre Street if appropriate
   Add walk at south edge of playing field, at toe of berm, to connect west side of park to southeast corner
   Add additional, ADA compliant paths in playground as required

4. *Playground:*
Remove old and inadequate play structures
Redefine perimeter to reflect historic layout
Add age appropriate play structures
Add low, (3 ½ - 4 foot), square-picket style fence at perimeter
Replace sand pit in covered sand box with concrete flooring

5. *Lighting:*
Determine appropriate style and illumination for overall park
Add fixtures for adequate lighting for overall park
Add lighting for field areas, covered seat, field house in the future if desired

6. *Benches:*
Upgrade existing benches
Add benches as required within and at perimeter of park

7. *Trash Cans:*
Add appropriate style trash cans that are secured to the ground and have covers

8. *Parking:*
Enforce illegal parking
Determine availability of parking on Andre Street (eastern border of park)
Add bollards where needed to prevent access of vehicular traffic onto playing fields (Andre Street and Latrobe Terrace)

9. *Signage:*
Determine appropriate style signage for park
Post park rules
Post timing for specific recreational activities
Enforce posted rules and regulations

10. *Dogs:*
Enforce leash law and required clean-up after dogs

11. *Vegetation:*
Prune and/or remove trees as needed
Add/replace trees as needed
Prune and/or replant privet hedge along Latrobe Terrace

12. *Covered sand box*
Rehabilitate sand box as open-air picnic pavilion
Replacement of sand pit with concrete flooring completed with playground improvements.
Replace open lattice style roof to reflect historic roof

13. *Rehabilitate Covered Seat:*
Create openings in center wall to allow more visibility through structure
Repair roof
Replace benches on both sides of center wall

14. *Entry Steps:*
Repair concrete treads, retaining walls and brick landings with like materials
Rehabilitate upper landing using brick placed in historic pattern
Add vandal proof, discrete lighting to eliminate dark areas

15. *Interpretive Signage:*
Develop simple interpretive signs about the historic significance of the park

16. *Field House:*
Rehabilitate building to stabilize structure
Explore options for occupancy and uses
Upgrade bathrooms for use by sports teams

17. *Running Track:*
Upgrade track surface with like material
Upgrade sand volleyball courts in gymnasium area (center of track)
Add lighting as required

The above list provides proposed priorities for the rehabilitation of the park. Latrobe Park is an important remaining example of an early 20th century park and is a vital part of the Locust Point neighborhood. It holds a high degree of integrity and is an extremely valued asset by neighborhood residents. The rehabilitation of Latrobe Park will ensure that this public space and its historic features are safeguarded and brought into the future while accommodating the needs of today's park users.

ENDNOTES

[1] Jillian Storms, AIA, and Peg Ross conducted research on Latrobe Park, designed by the Olmsted Brother's Landscape Architects, and recorded the findings in a report titled *Rediscovering Latrobe Park's Hidden Charms"*, no date, for The Friends of Maryland Parks and Landscapes. This quote is from that report.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid. p.15
[4] Ibid. p.15
[5] Ibid, p. 16
[6] Ibid, p.16