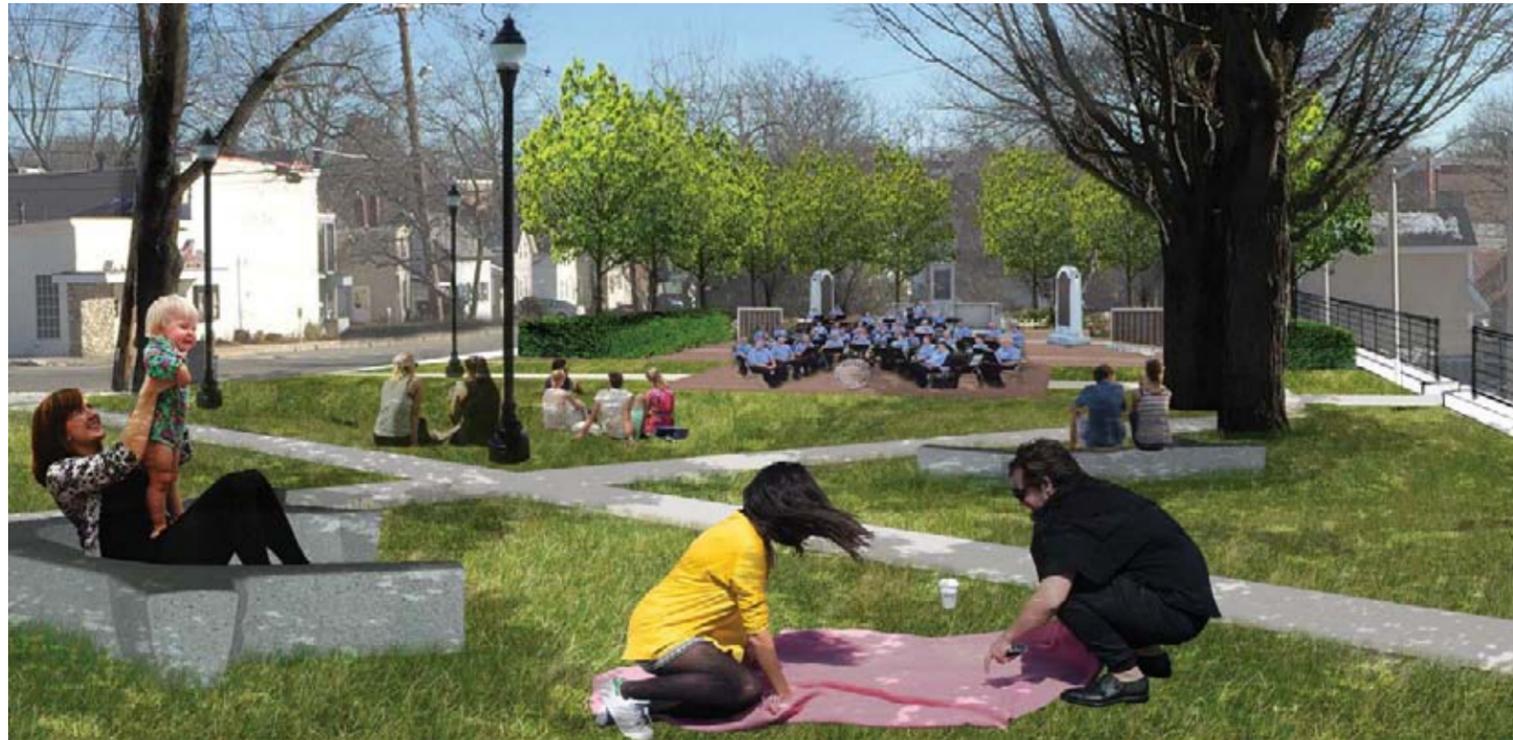


Veterans Memorial Park

Maynard, MA

Preliminary Studies Report

January 2016 - April 2016



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INTRODUCTION

Maynard has an attractive, popular, active, and walkable commercial center and the Veterans' Memorial Park - which is loved and well used by the community – is an important part of it. The park serves as a place where Maynard's veterans are honored and remembered, a music venue, a gathering spot, and a place for individuals to sit and relax. However, the park can be much more. While continuing to serve all of its current functions it also can be the hub of the downtown, connecting the shops and restaurants with the Fine Arts Theater, beautiful Town Library, and the Artspace. By physically connecting the park to the basin (the large parking lot below) and developing a path system that encourages people to walk through the park while visiting various town amenities, shops, restaurants, and cultural venues, a redesigned park will make the whole downtown greater than the sum of its parts.

The Town of Maynard commissioned CBA Landscape Architects, LLC to develop preliminary studies and explore schematic design options for Maynard's Veterans Memorial Park. CBA produced three alternative Schematic Designs and based on public input and municipal review, developed a final Schematic Design of the park. The Town will use this plan to focus its budgeting, fund raising, and visioning for the downtown. Goals for the redesign of Maynard's Veterans Memorial Park include:

1. Improve/increase pedestrian circulation through the park to establish stronger connections between the commercial, municipal, and arts establishments.
2. Create a focal point for activities in the downtown area.
3. Redesign the memorial area as a contemplative and respectful space to pay honor to the Town's veterans.
4. Enhance the performance area.
5. Provide accessible paths through the park.
6. Provide a variety of places to sit, including places to eat.
7. Improve the overall aesthetic of the park.

In order to gather information from the general public and to ensure an open design process the Town held three community meetings between January 2016 through April 2016. The following pages summarize the design process and document the information and designs presented at each meeting.

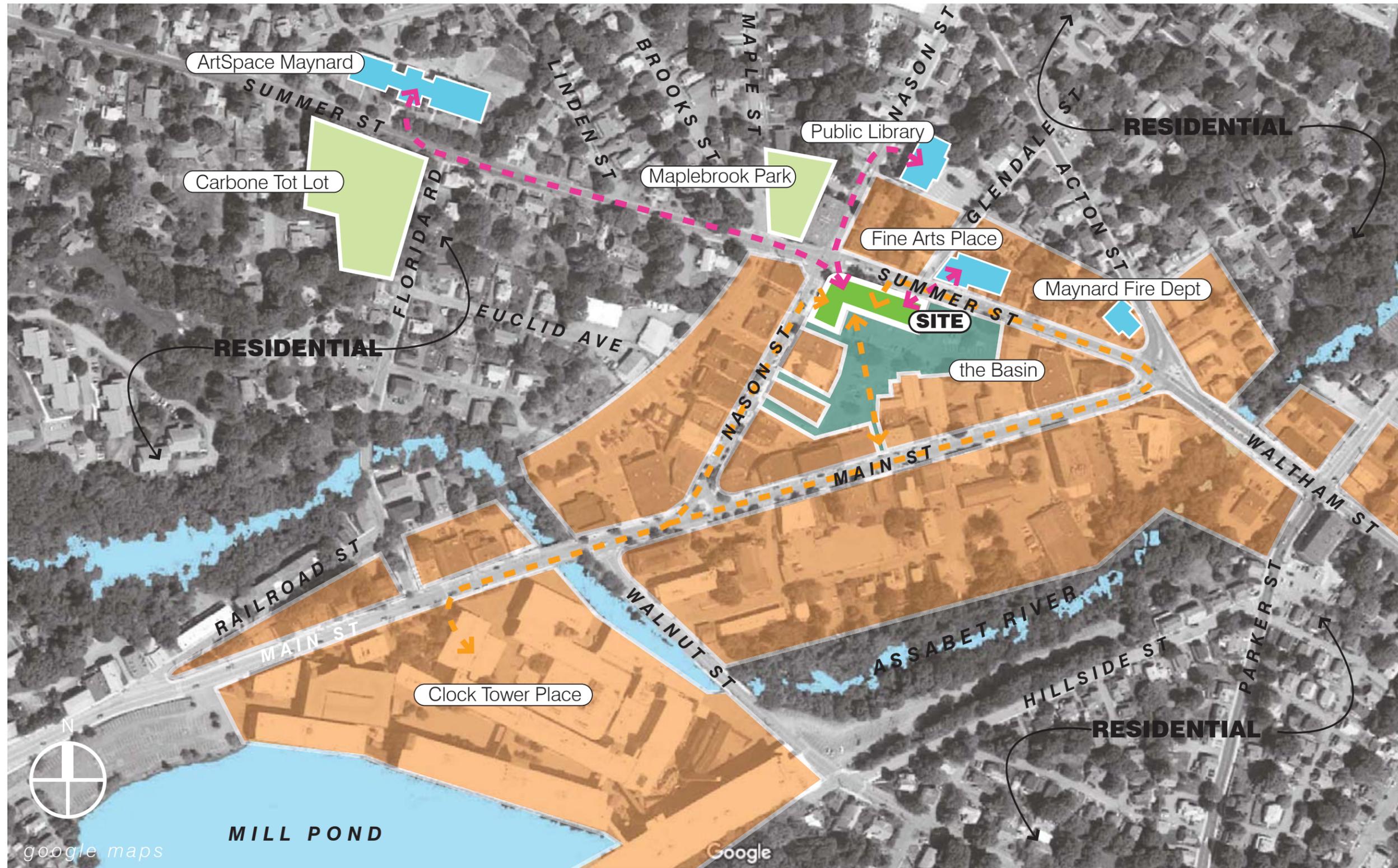
COMMUNITY MEETING 1 | January 7, 2016

Goal

Present site analysis and precedents, gather community input, and develop a program wish list to guide Schematic Designs for future meetings.

The meeting prepared the following to help guide this process:

- Site Analysis
- Design Precedents
- Programmatic Studies



Located at the heart of Downtown Maynard, on a commercial block bordered by Nason, Summer, and Main Street, the Veterans Memorial Park has the potential to become a vibrant Town hub that can create stronger connections to and from various shops, restaurants, and cultural venues.

LEGEND

- Municipal
- Downtown/Retail/Commercial
- Green Space
- Water
- Cultural Connections
- Retail/Comm Connections

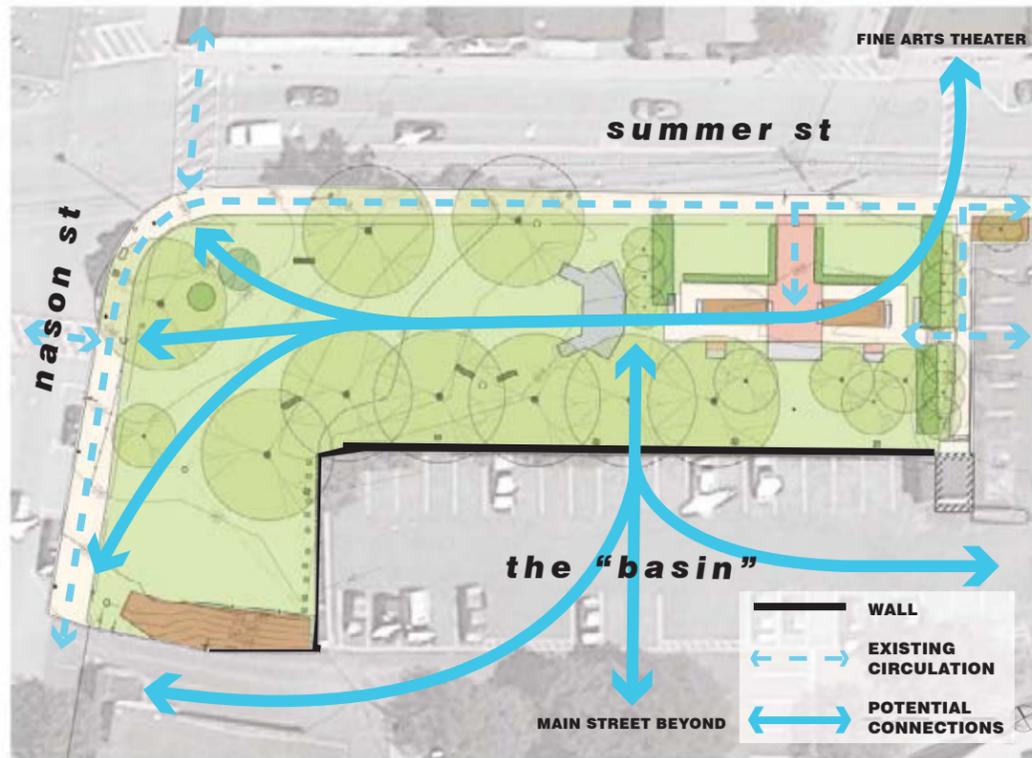


The L-shaped site is located at the intersection of two major streets in Downtown Maynard, making it easily accessible from various Town and cultural facilities. The park could also become an important destination itself.

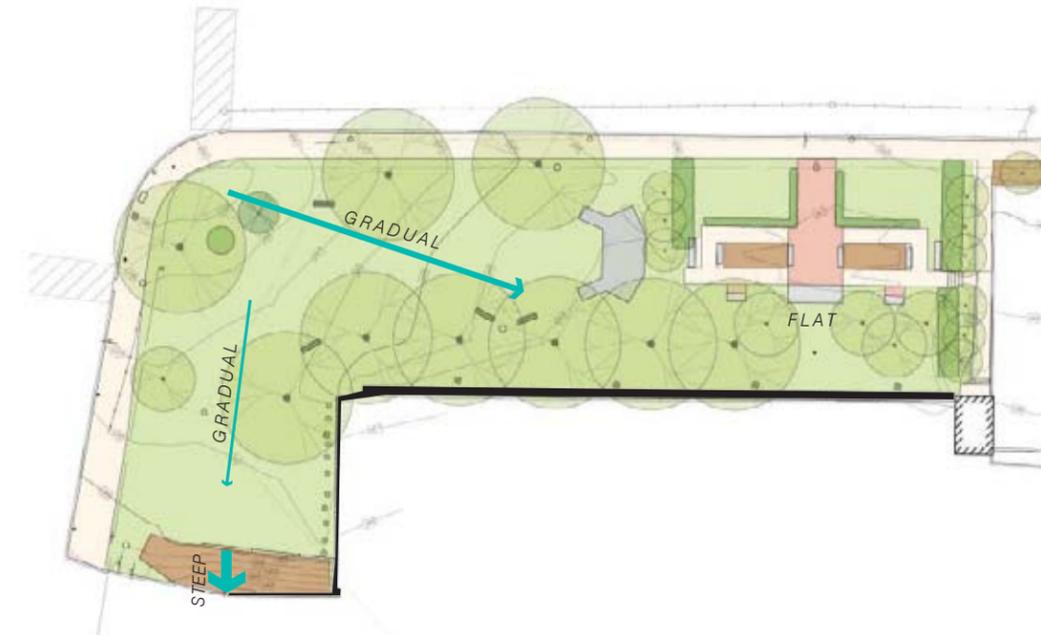
A retaining wall borders much of the south side of the park from the parking lot below. Formerly, a parking deck was located over part of the parking lot below the park. (The parking lot is commonly called “the Basin.”) Drivers would access the deck from a driveway off of Nason Street. Now that access to the parking deck is gone, more open space is available to be actively used as part of the park. Furthermore, there is opportunity to break down this barrier and create a direct connection from the Park to the “Basin” that would link the site directly with Main Street.

The Park consists of a memorial space, a stage, benches scattered throughout an open lawn, and numerous mature trees. However, there are no paths outside the memorial area and there are few amenities to attract users.

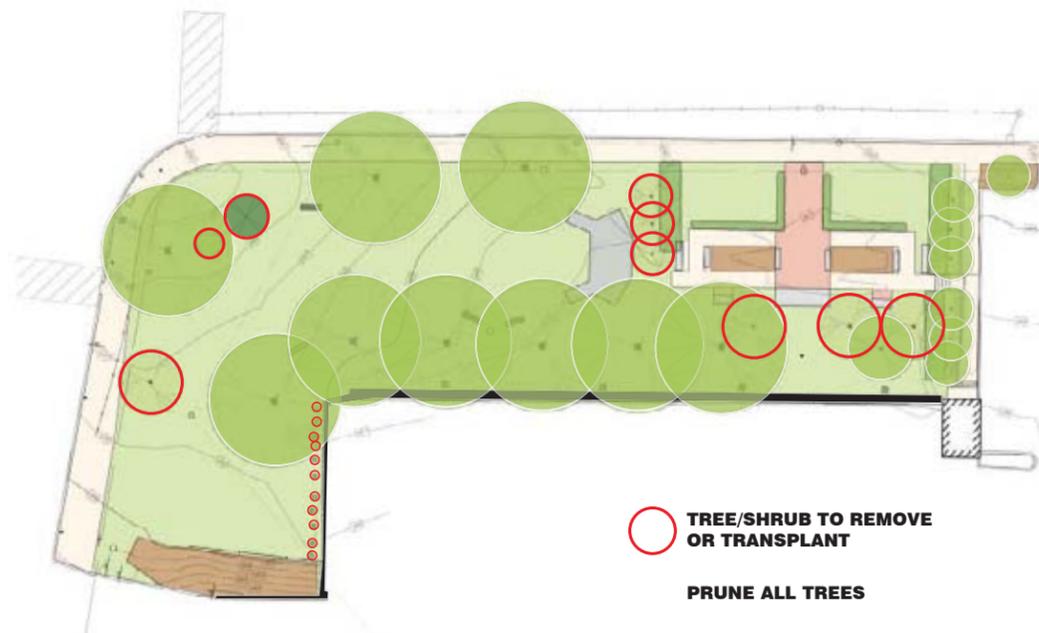
Exploring ways to activate this space could include a more defined performance space, a more open memorial space, and pathways that can create a stronger connection between these two programmatic elements and increase circulation throughout the rest of the Park.



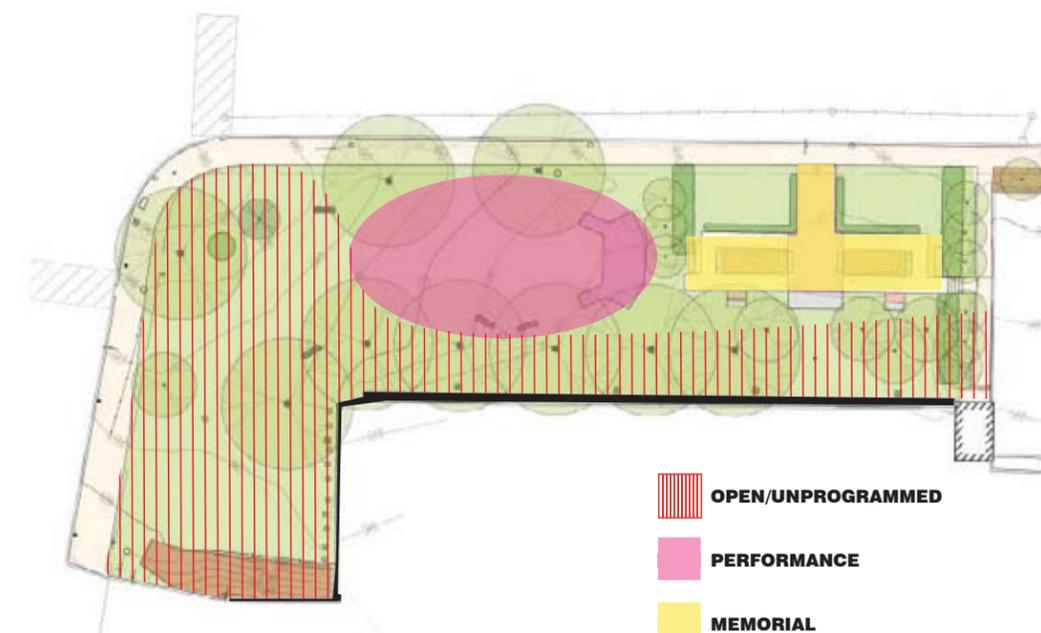
CIRCULATION + CONNECTIONS



SLOPE



TREES + SHRUBS



PROGRAM



Memorial Area



Performance Area



Existing Benches and the "Basin" beyond



Looking toward Nason St



Park gently slopes downwards from Summer/Nason St



Looking northeast from "Nason St. Parcel"



Panoramic view from Nason St. -- gentle slope into the park



“the Basin”



“the Basin”



“the Basin” at Night

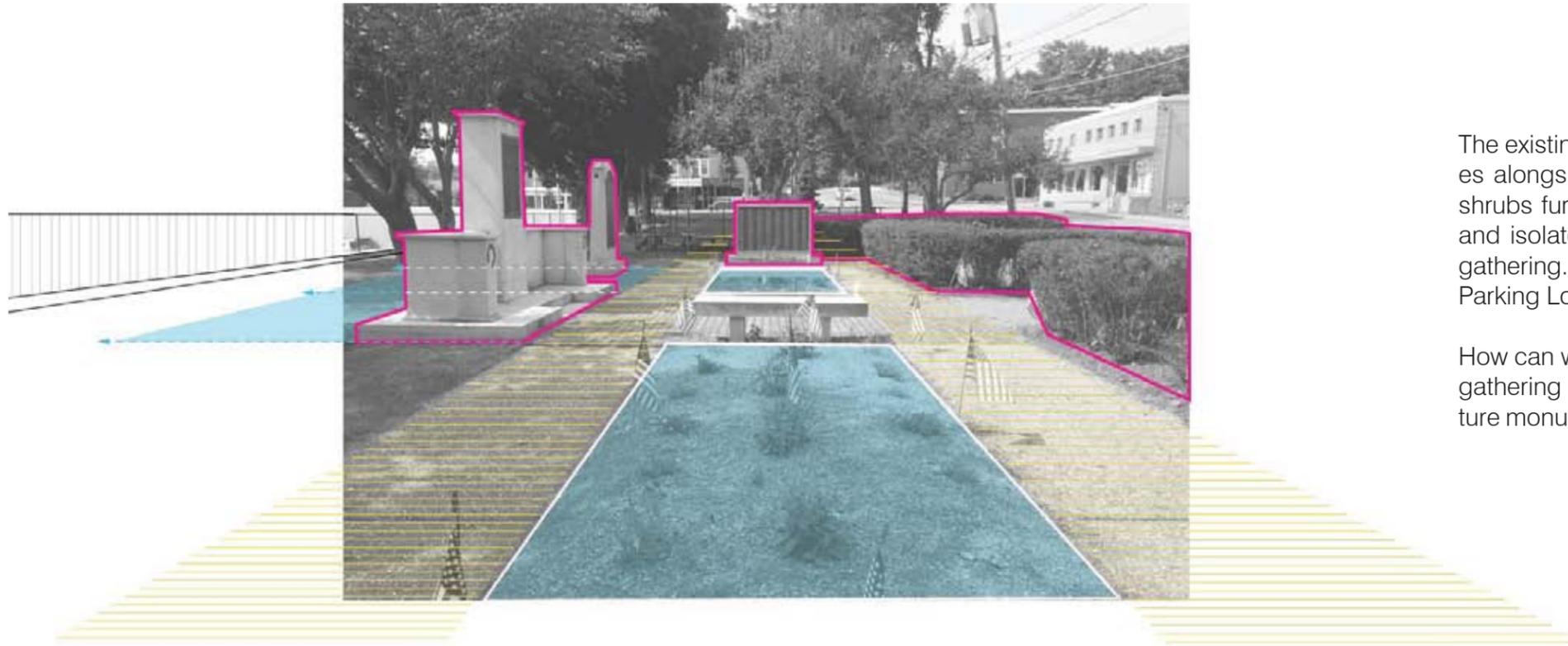


Electrical Power and Lighting



Relocate Utility Pole?

Existing Memorial Area - Opportunity for expansion



The existing memorial area is composed of 5 monuments, 4 granite benches alongside 2 plant beds, and brick and concrete pathways. Trees and shrubs further enclose the T-shaped space into one that feels rather tight and isolated from the rest of the park and doesn't leave much room for gathering. People can access the area from Summer Street or the Theater Parking Lot.

How can we open up the memorial area so that it could become more of a gathering space? Can the elements be reconfigured to allow space for future monuments and establish a better connection with the rest of the park?

Possible Reconfigurations



Clustered



Meandering



Staggered



Linear



Maynard Community Band

The current performance area is made up of a simple raised platform that is put up seasonally. It faces away from the memorial space and towards Nason Street.

How can this area be more clearly defined as an important space and programmatic element? How can this performance area accommodate for the community band and other types of performers? What will this space look like when not in use?



Raised Stage



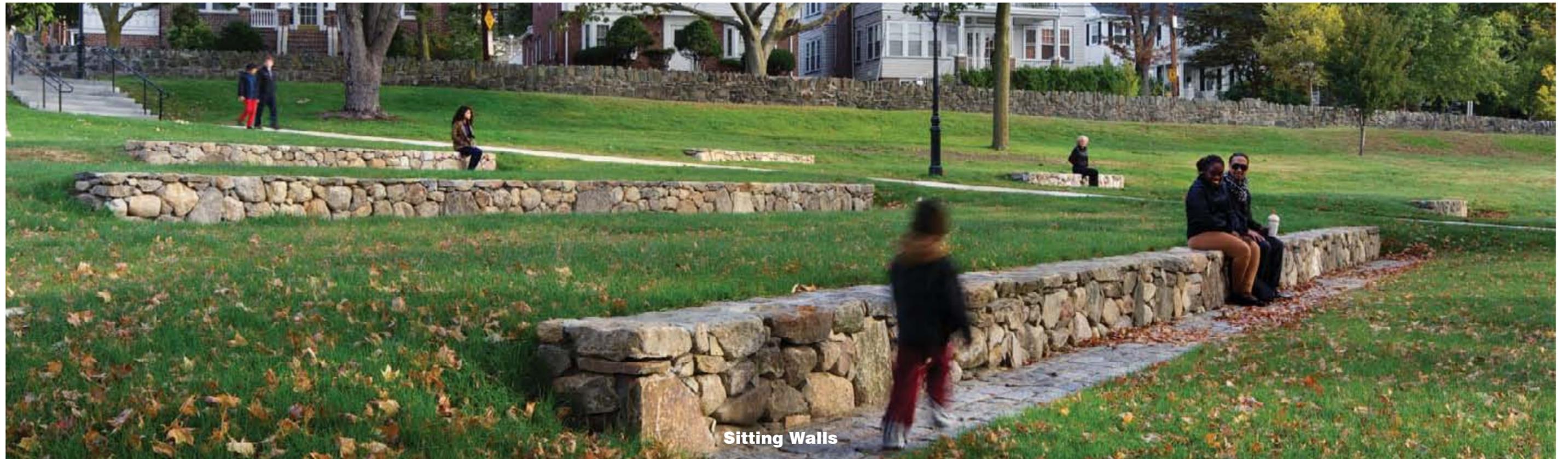
Raised Stage



Wooden Stage/Decking



Terraced Slope + Flush Plaza

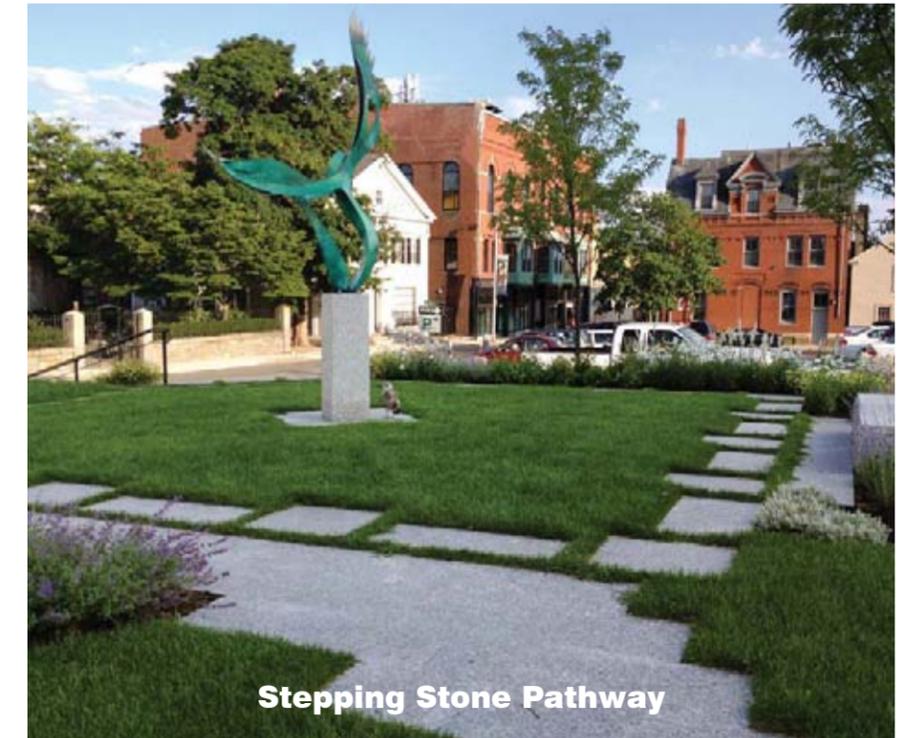


Seating



Sculptural Seating

Pathways



Stepping Stone Pathway



Curvilinear Paver Pathways



Pathway as Play

Sculptural Play Elements



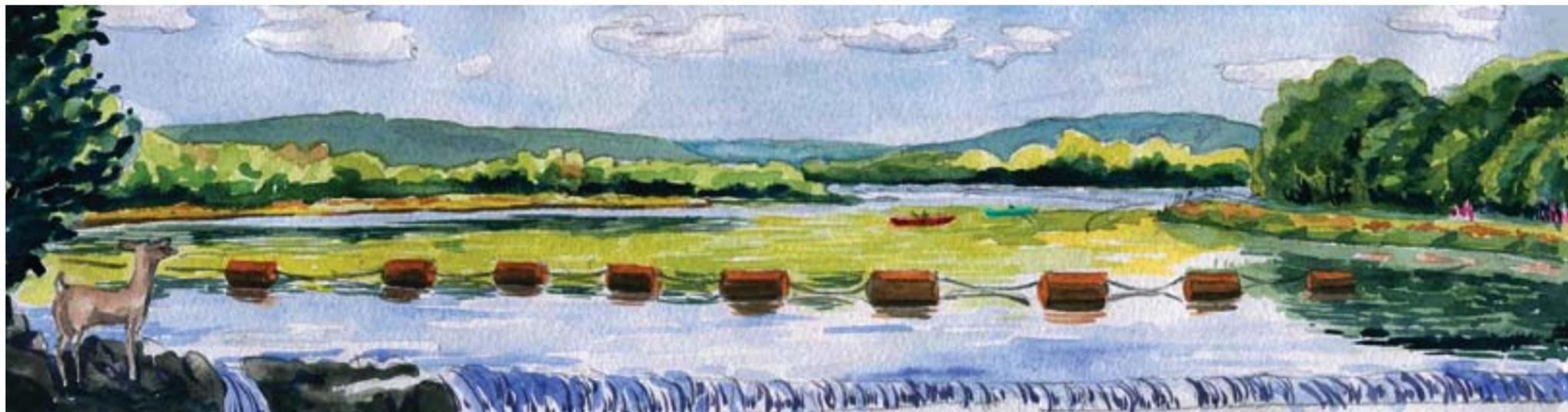
Sensory and Sound Elements



Ornamental Fencing

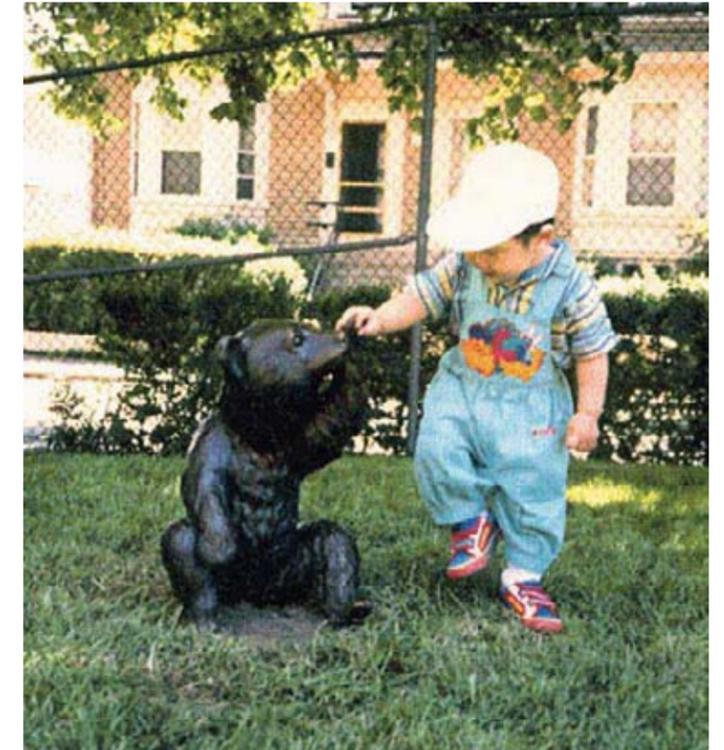


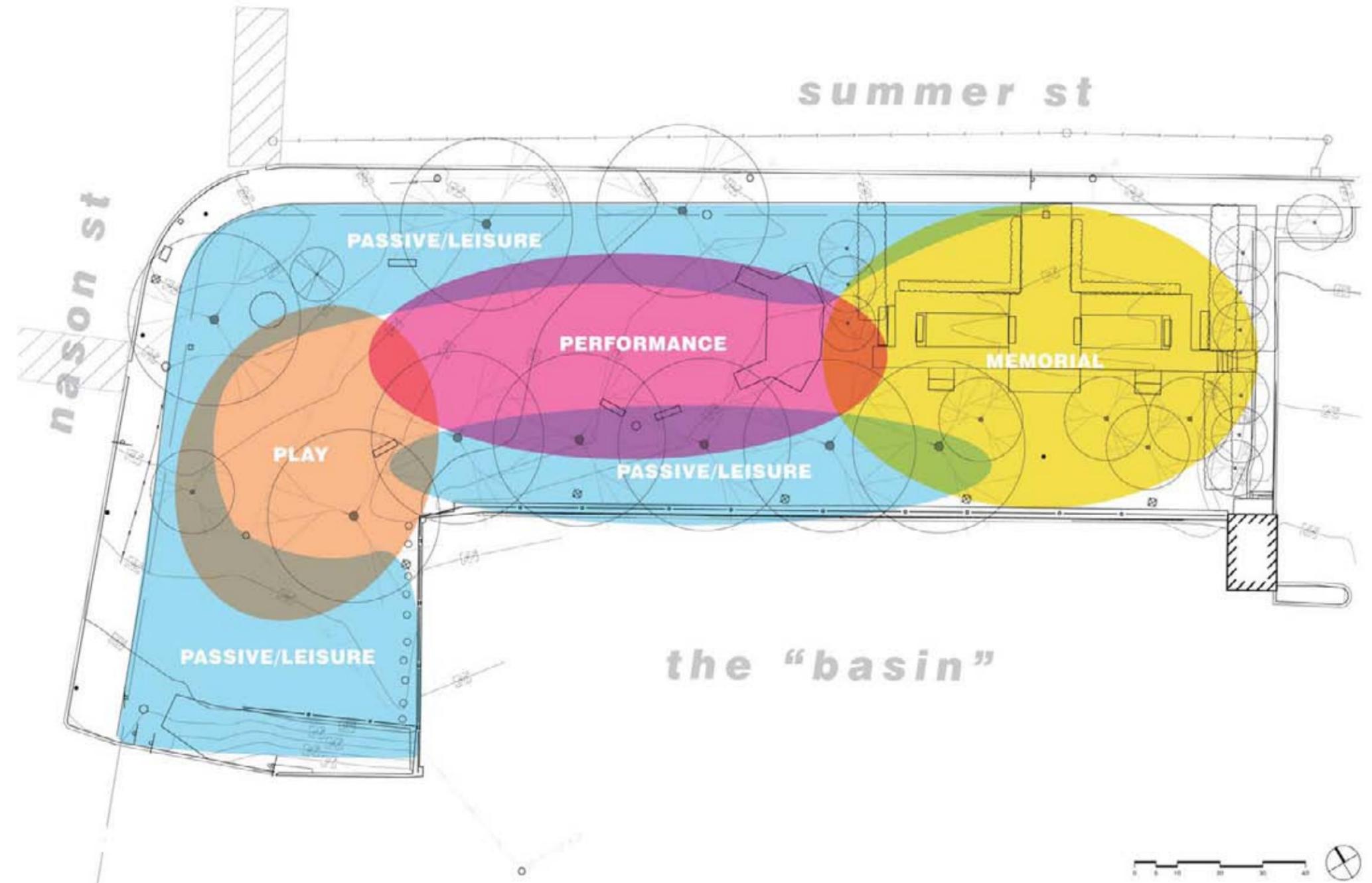
Murals



Proposed Mural by local artist Joyce Dwyer

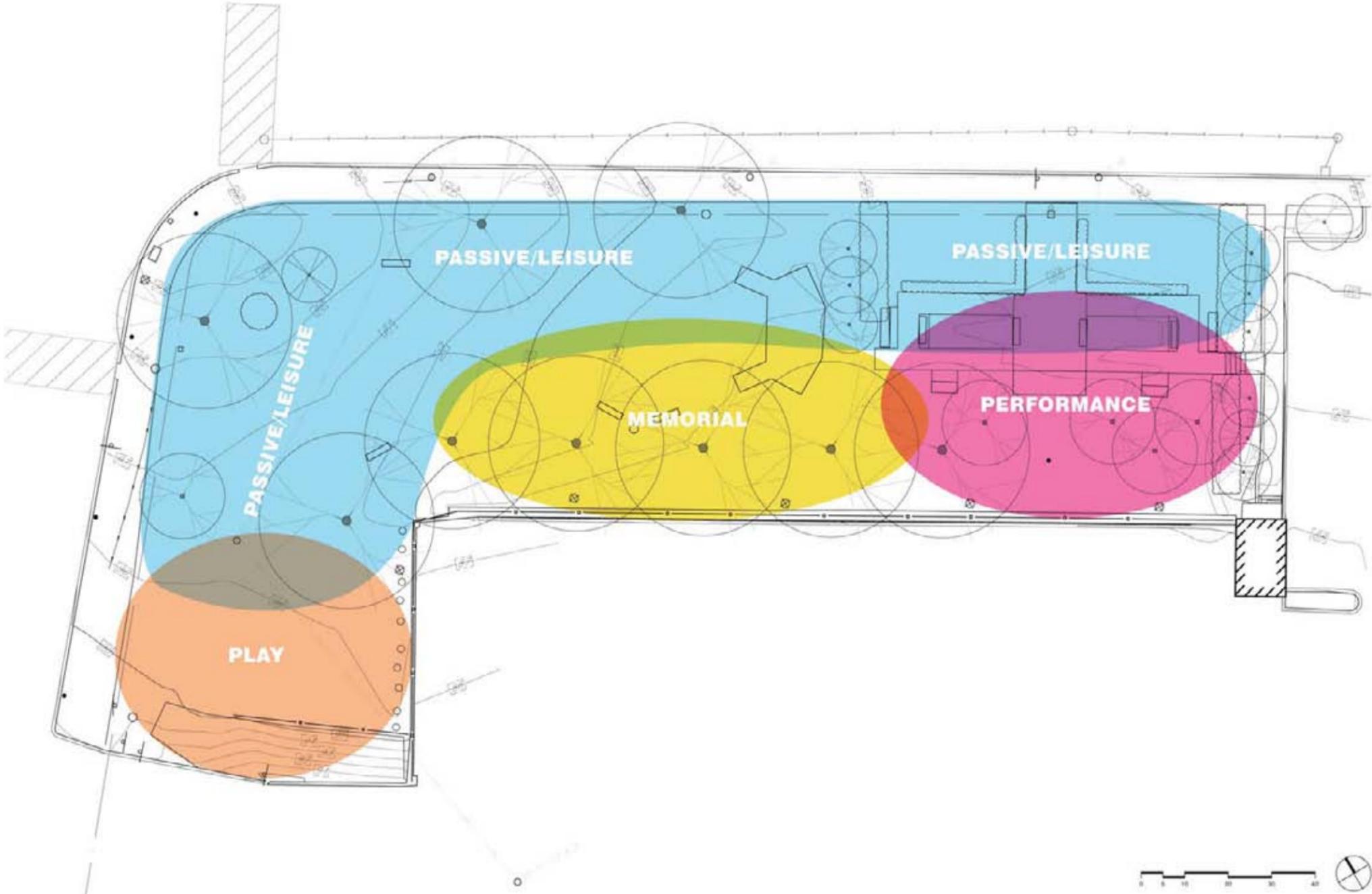
Sculptures





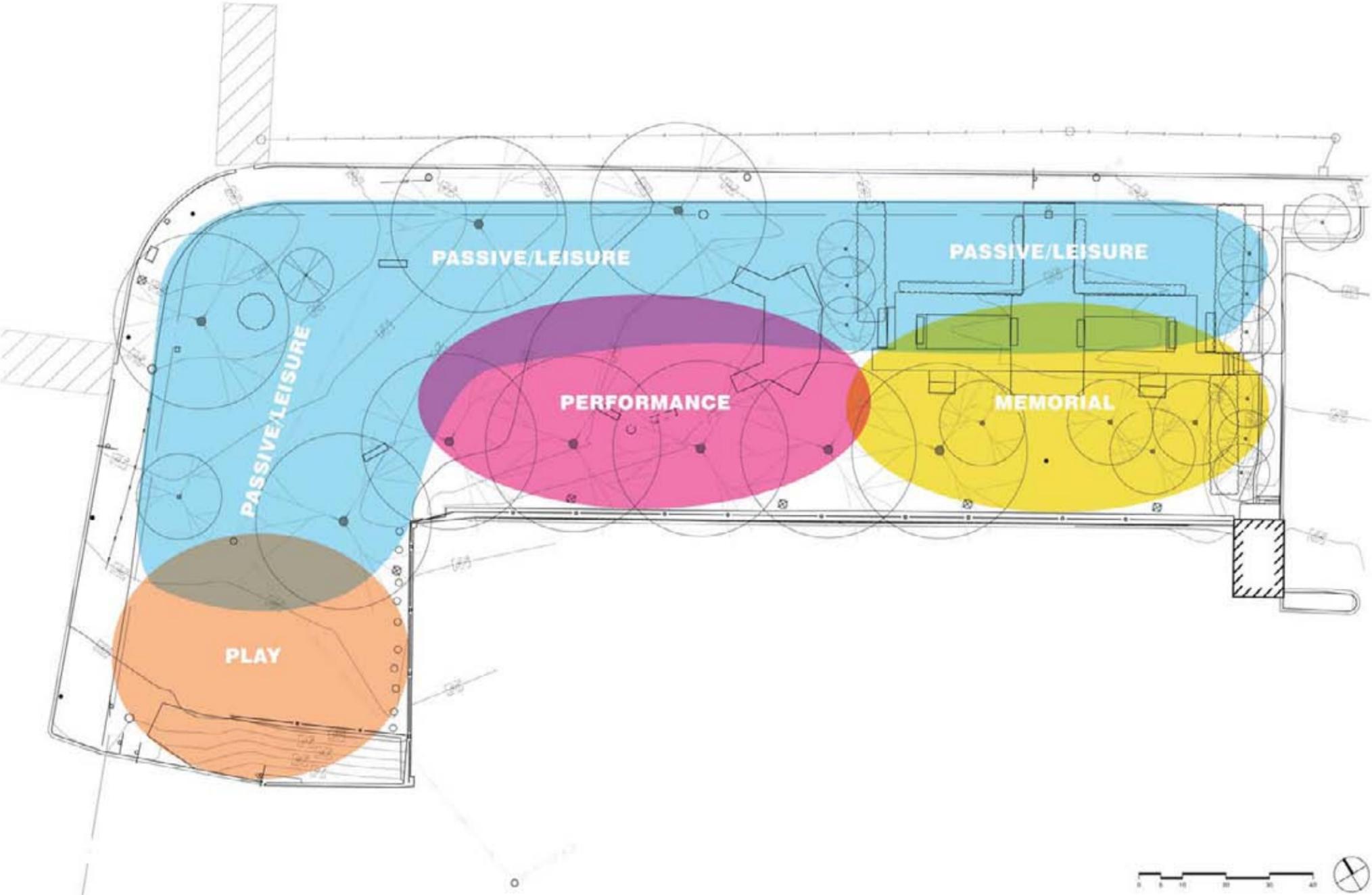
KEY ELEMENTS

- Gently terrace corner of Nason Street and Summer Street into a more defined performance space
- Expand existing memorial area
- Create clearer pathways along edges of park
- Integrate sensory/musical play elements



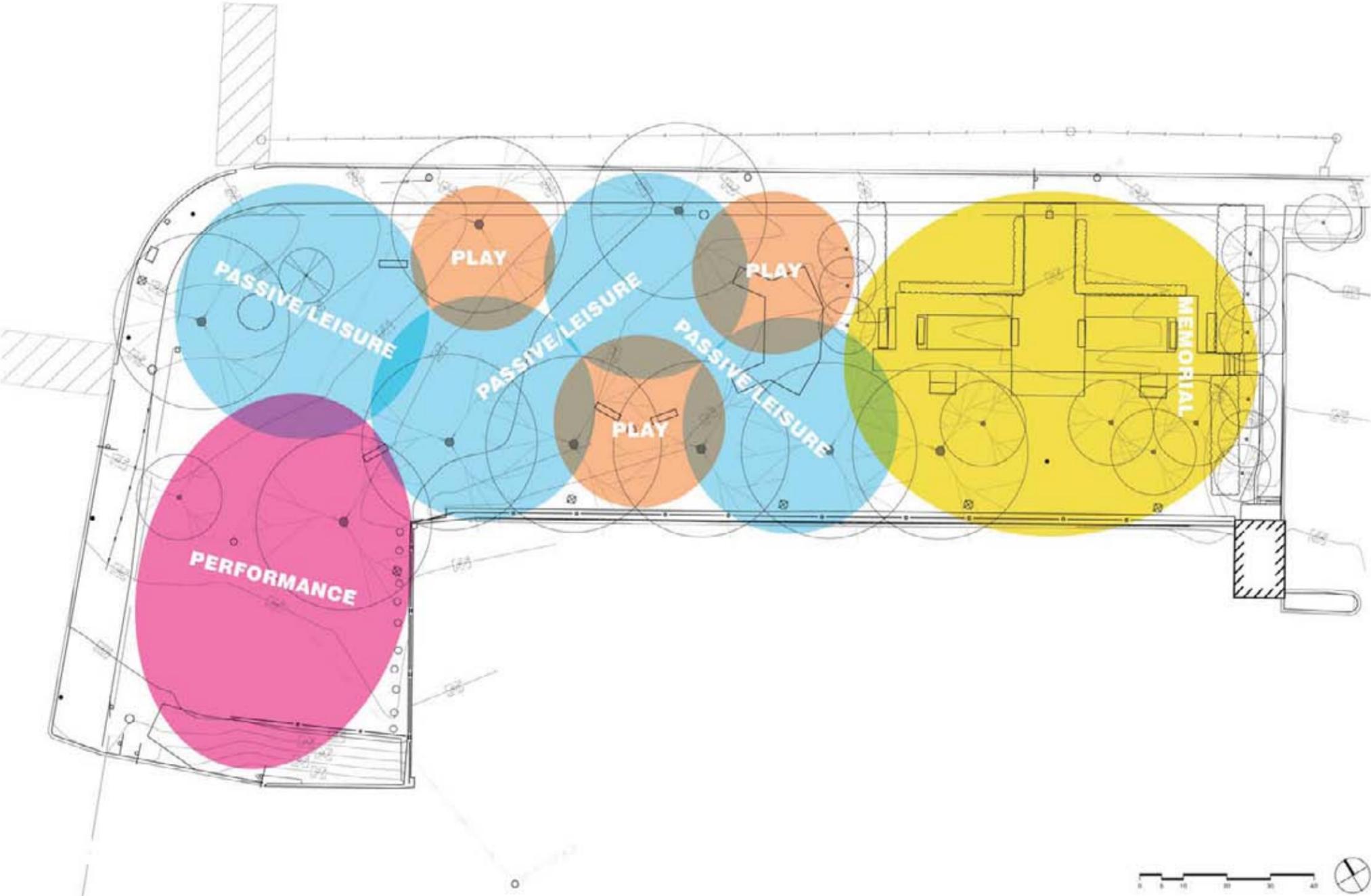
KEY ELEMENTS

- Push performance and memorial spaces towards the “Basin”
- Relocate memorial with a more linear configuration
- Define corner of Nason/Summer Street with a sculpture/art piece
- Activate unused spaces with more defined seating, pathways, and passive play experiences



KEY ELEMENTS

- Push performance and memorial spaces towards the “Basin”
- Relocate memorial with a more linear configuration
- Define corner of Nason/Summer Street with a sculpture/art piece
- Activate unused spaces with more defined seating, pathways, and passive play experiences



KEY ELEMENTS

- Separate memorial and performance spaces, providing opportunity for a more playful narrative in between--marked by pathways, episodic play, and sculptural seating areas
- Activate corner at Nason Street and Summer Street with a water spray feature

COMMUNITY MEETING 1 | Main Takeaways

- Open up the Memorial Area to increase its visibility, and to strengthen its presence in and connection with the rest of the park
- Design a general performance arts space for a variety of users and events: the community band, carolers, speakers, puppet theaters, etc.
- Minimize use of play elements; Town has plenty of playgrounds, but not many places for older residents/seniors; The park should be for all ages but without play equipment.
- Add more benches/seating; many restaurants nearby have limited outdoor seating
- Address/utilize the “Basin” walls in a way that makes it seem less of parking garage remnant and more part of the park.

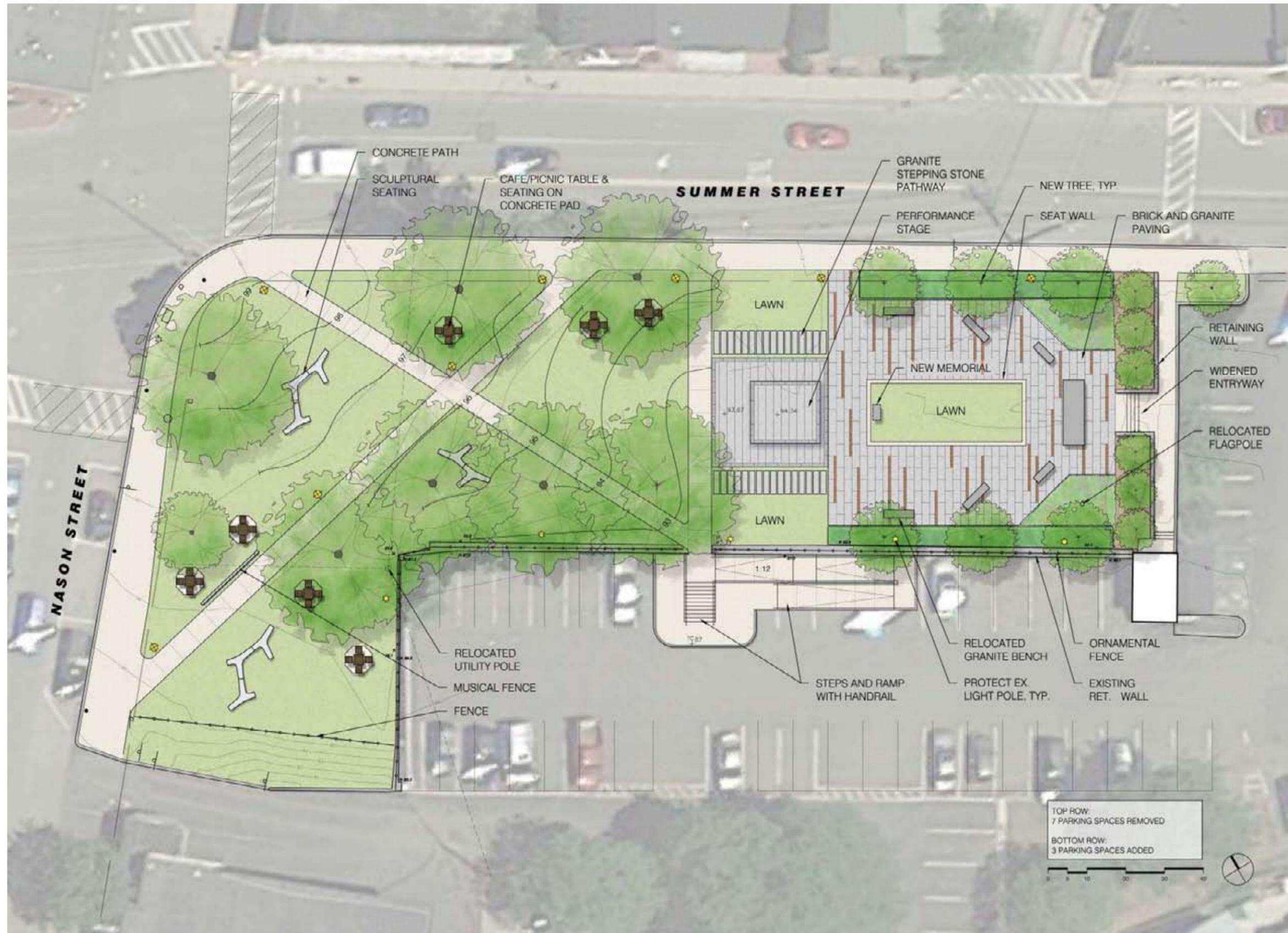
See Appendix for Meeting Notes

COMMUNITY MEETING 2 | February 25, 2016

Goal

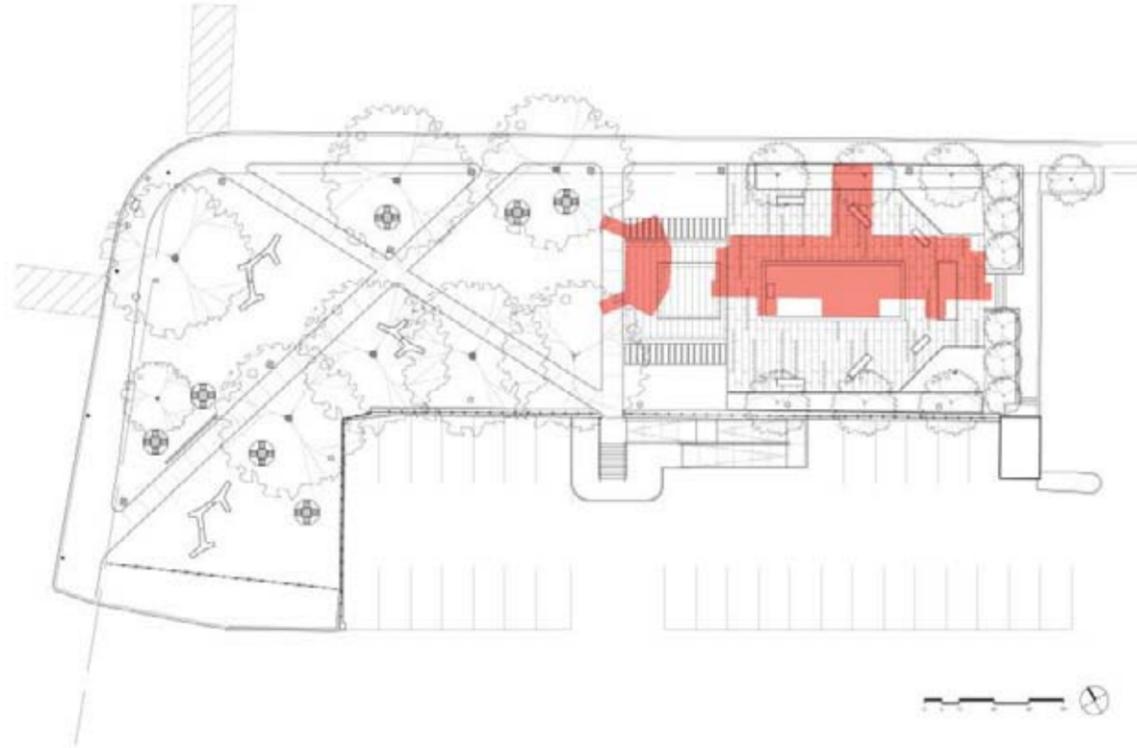
Present three schematic design alternatives based on first meeting input. Gather public reaction in order to develop a final preferred design plan for the next public meeting.

Schematic Design Alternatives.
Community review and discussion.

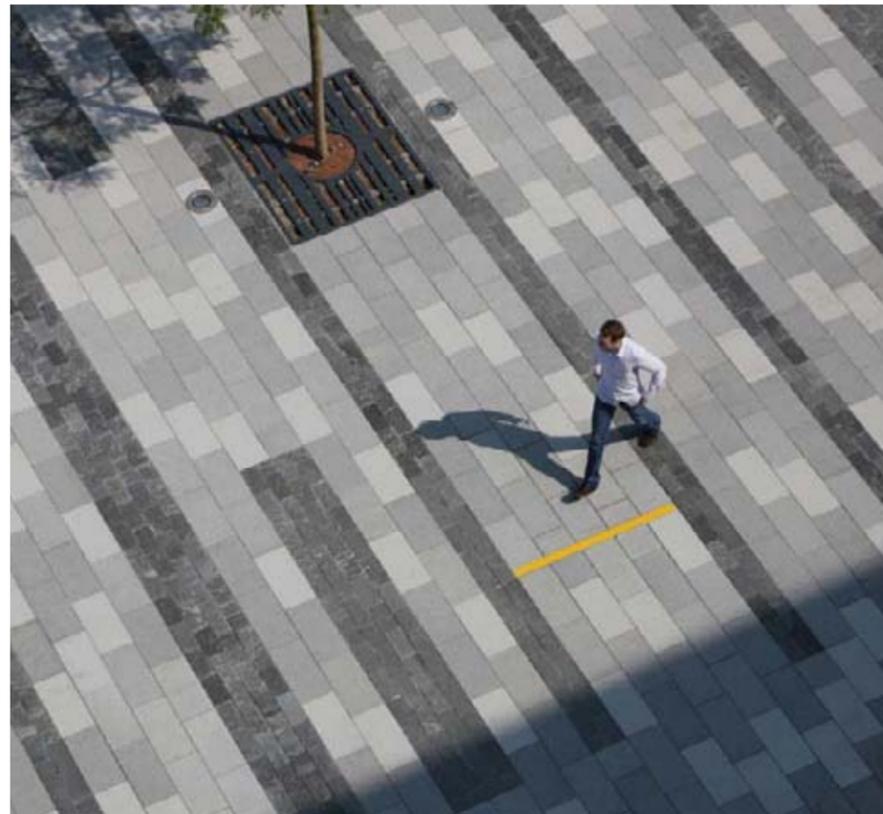


Key Elements

- Reconfigured memorial space that establishes a strong longitudinal axis through the park
- Defined performance space
- Pathways that increase circulation and divide one open lawn space into smaller passive park spaces
- Picnic Tables and Seating
- Direct path, stair and ramp connection to the Basin



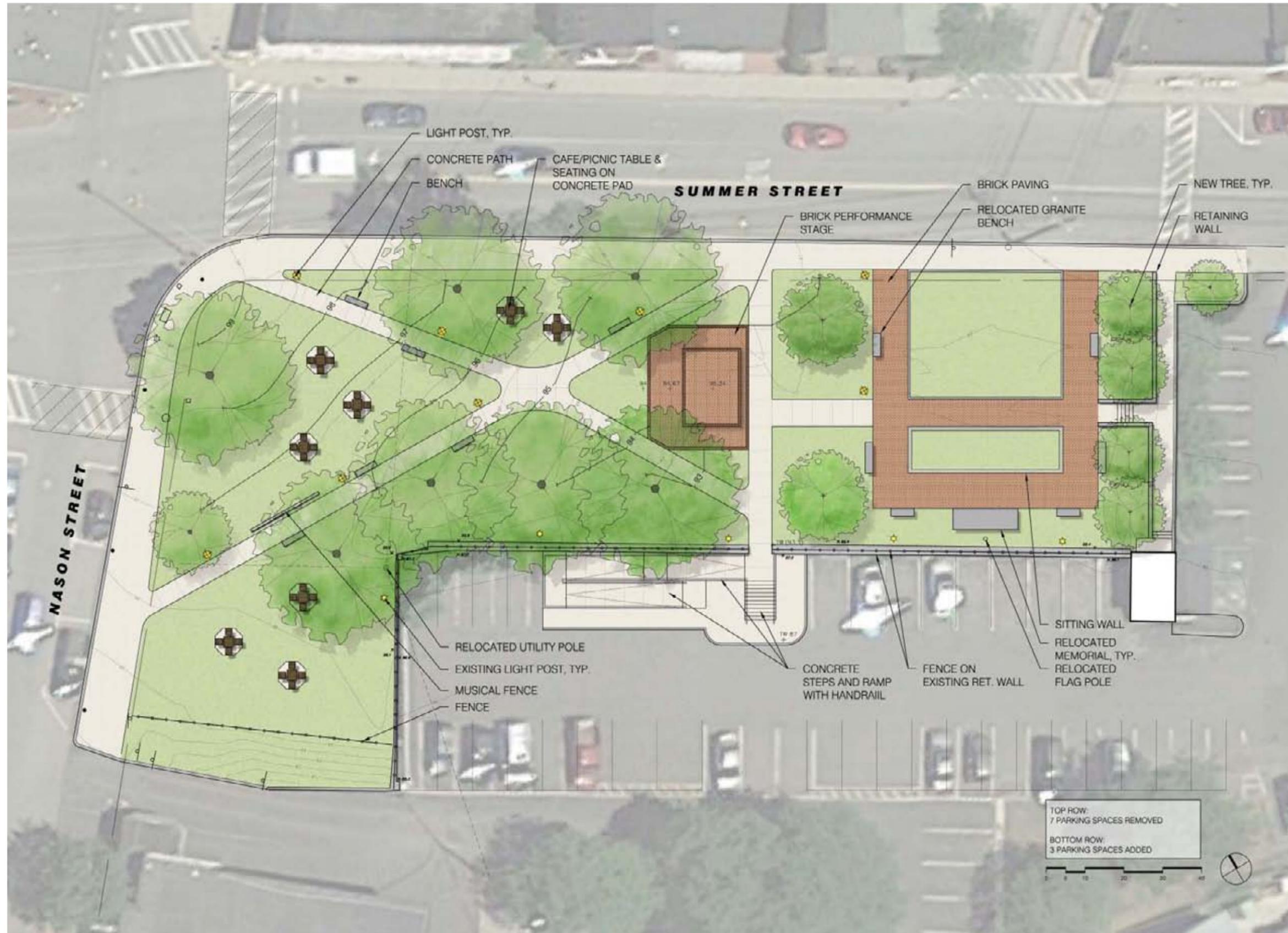
Design Option 1 with existing Memorial and Performance Spaces in Red





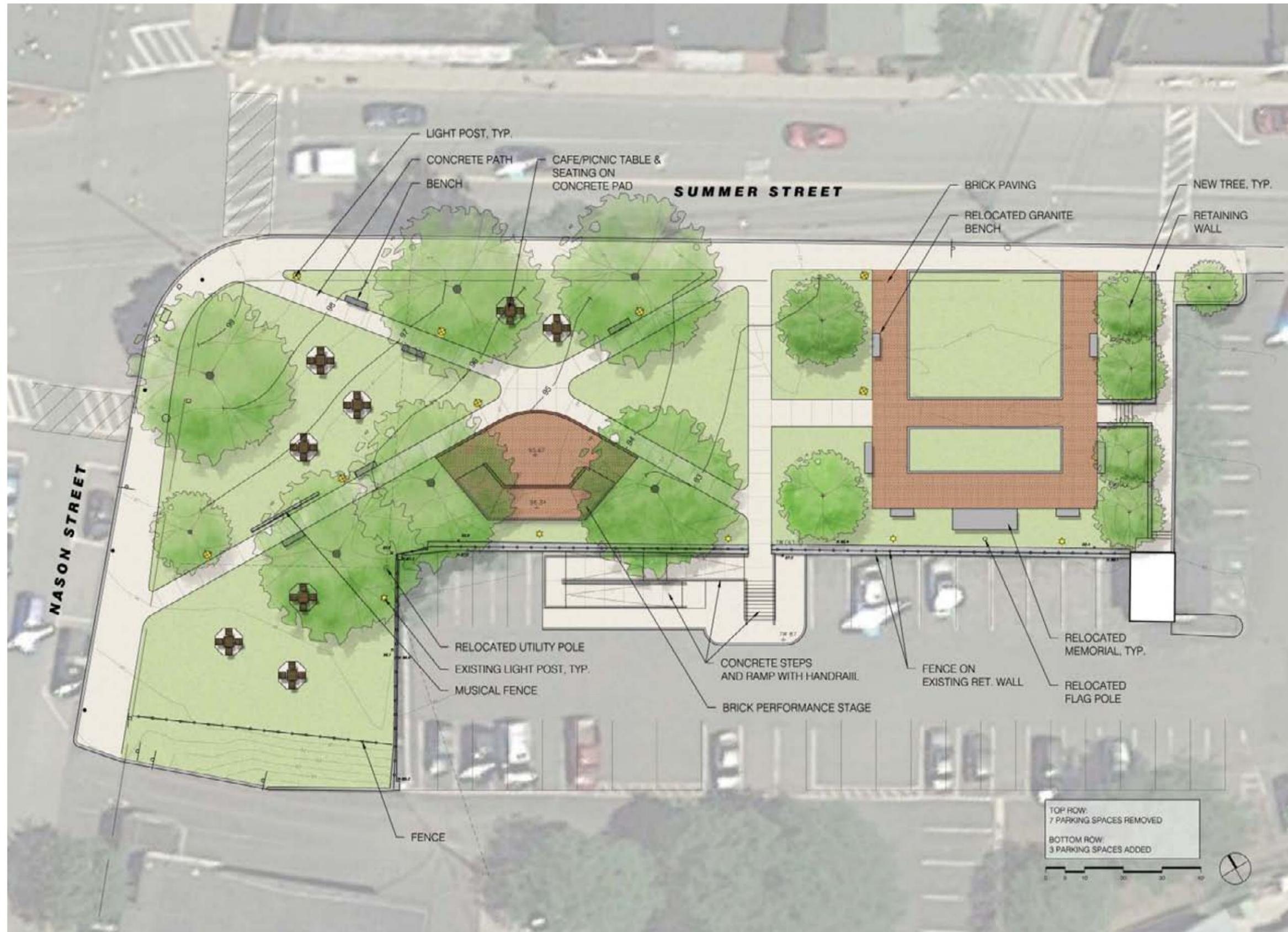
View from Nason St, looking towards existing performance and memorial area





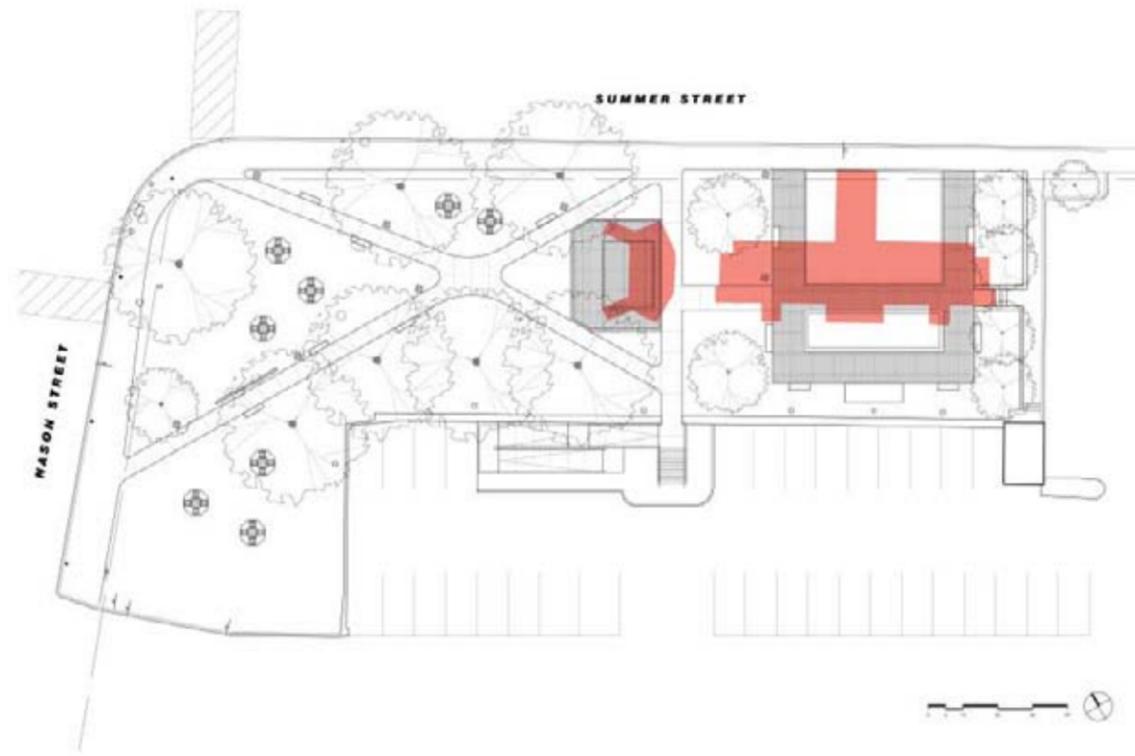
Key Elements

- Expanded memorial area, utilizing space between Summer Street and retaining wall
- Defined performance space
- Pathways that increase circulation and divide one open lawn space into smaller passive park spaces
- Picnic Tables and Seating
- Direct path, stair and ramp connection to the Basin

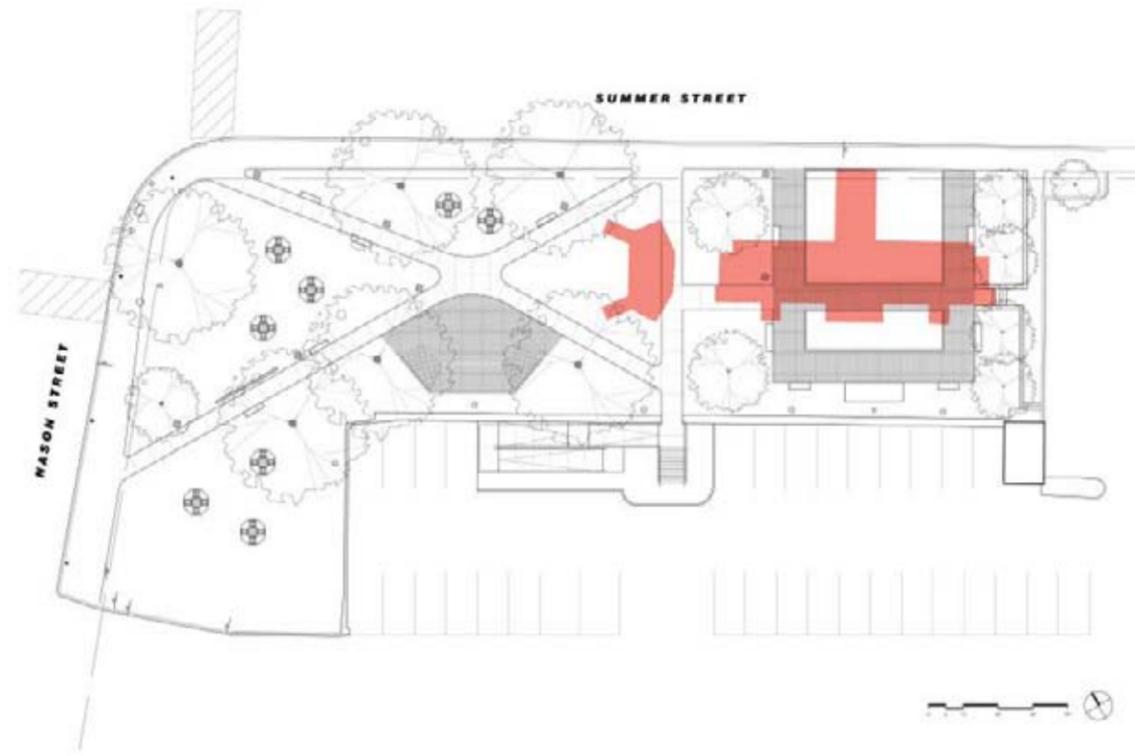
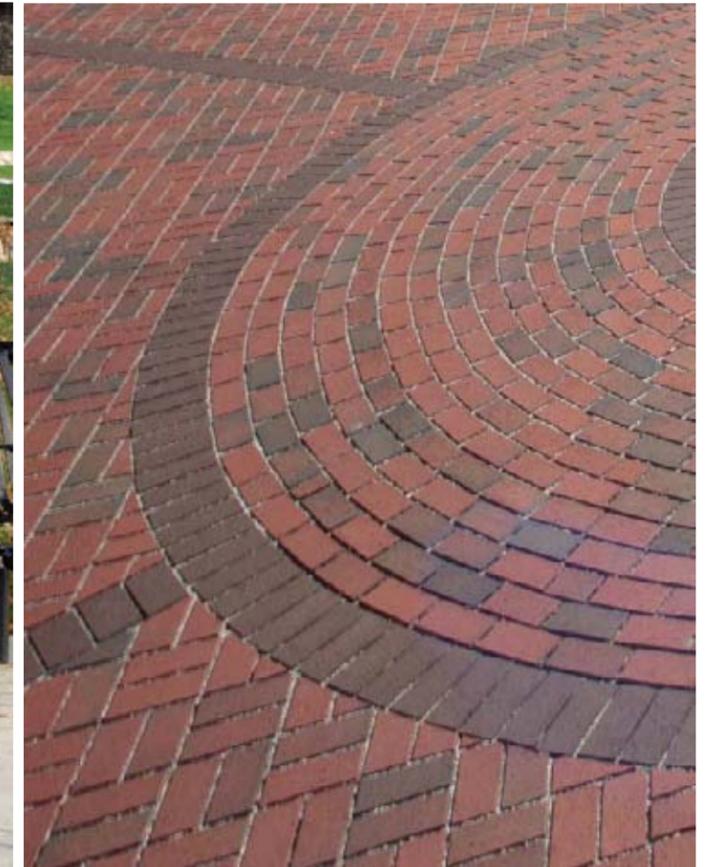


Key Elements

- Expanded memorial area, utilizing space between Summer Street and retaining wall
- Defined and rotated performance space
- Pathways that increase circulation and divide one open lawn space into smaller passive park spaces
- Picnic Tables and Seating
- Direct pathway, stair and ramp connection to the Basin



Design Option 2a with existing Memorial and Performance Spaces in Red



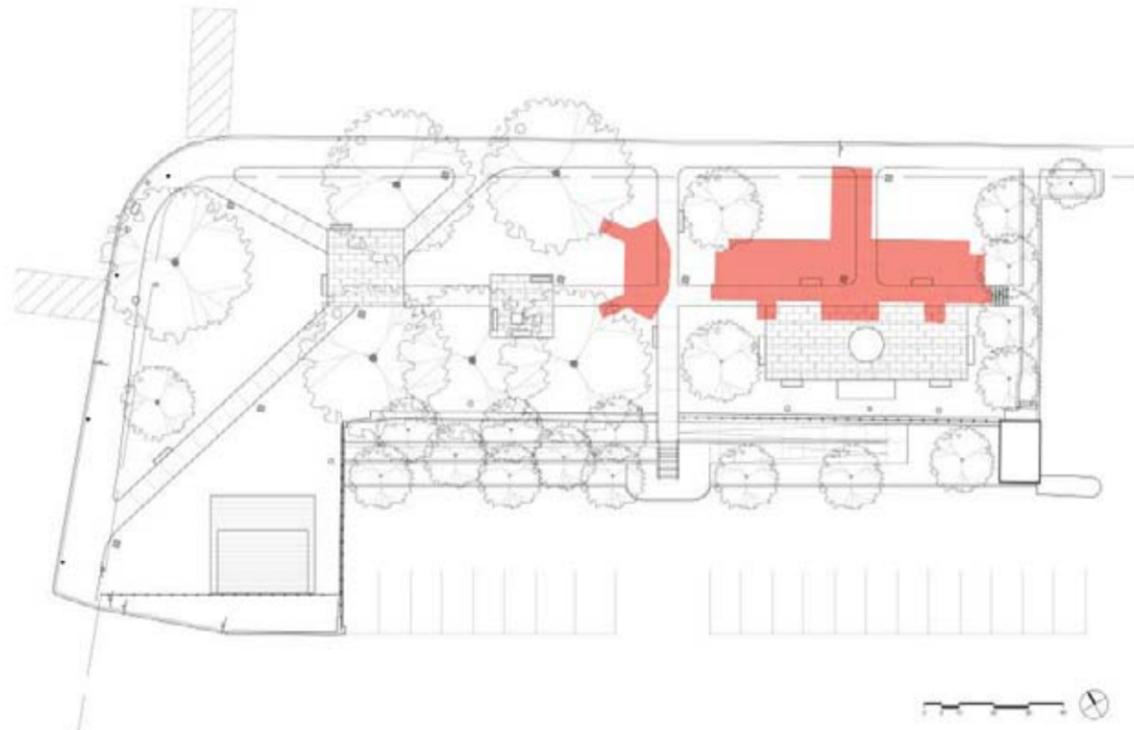
Design Option 2b with existing Memorial and Performance Spaces in Red



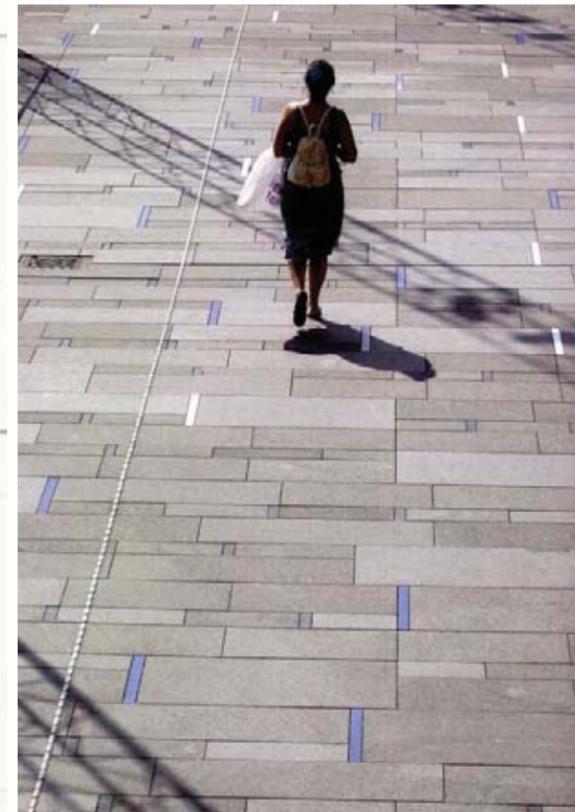
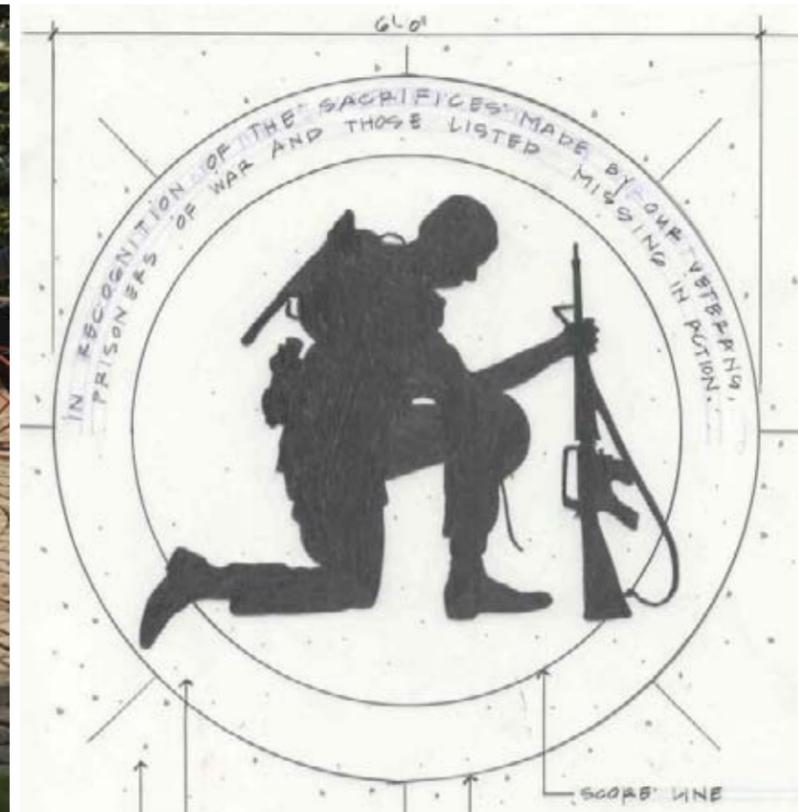


Key Elements

- Expanded memorial area, utilizing space between Summer Street and retaining wall
- Series of gathering spaces with seating
- Various pathways throughout the park
- Defined performance space near Nason Street
- Direct path, stair and ramp connection to the Basin
- Terraced lawn to create a transition between the Park and the Basin



Design Option 3 with existing Memorial and Performance Spaces in Red





View from the "Basin"



COMMUNITY MEETING 2 | Main Takeaways

- Increase pedestrian safety (add new sidewalk)
- Add more curvilinear pathways
- Enable performance space to be multi-purpose
- Add more brick paving
- Add more flowering plants
- Create a more defined space for flagpole
- Musical Fence may be too noisy
- Remove small building in parking lot to continue level sidewalk, but keep charging stations
- Enlarge green space if possible

See Appendix for Meeting Notes

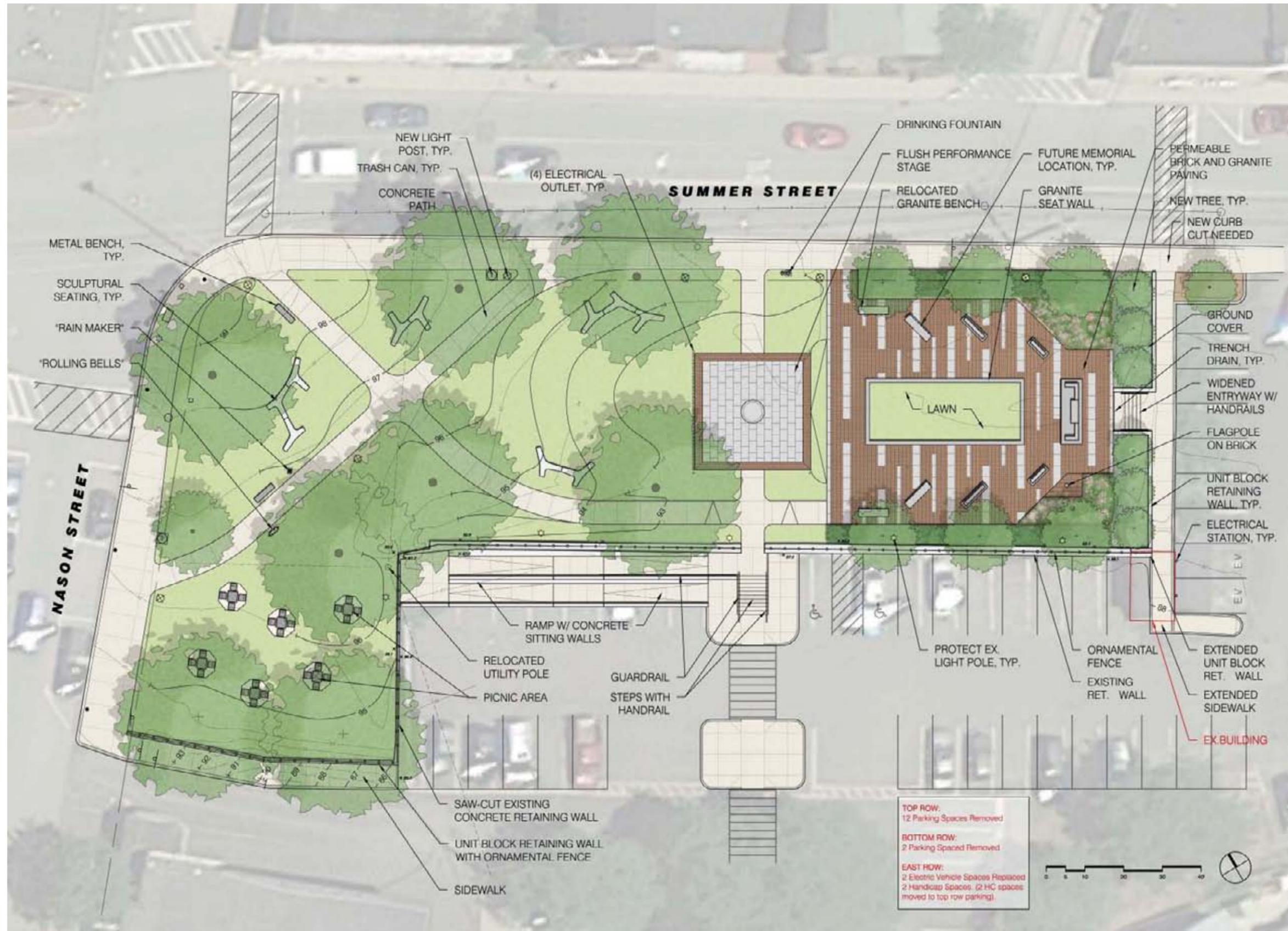
COMMUNITY MEETING 3 | April 21, 2016

Goal

Present Definitive Design based on community discussion at Meeting 2. With community input, discuss and clarify final design, phasing, and funding for park.

Definitive Design:

Plan, Sections & Elevations, Diagrams, Key Elements





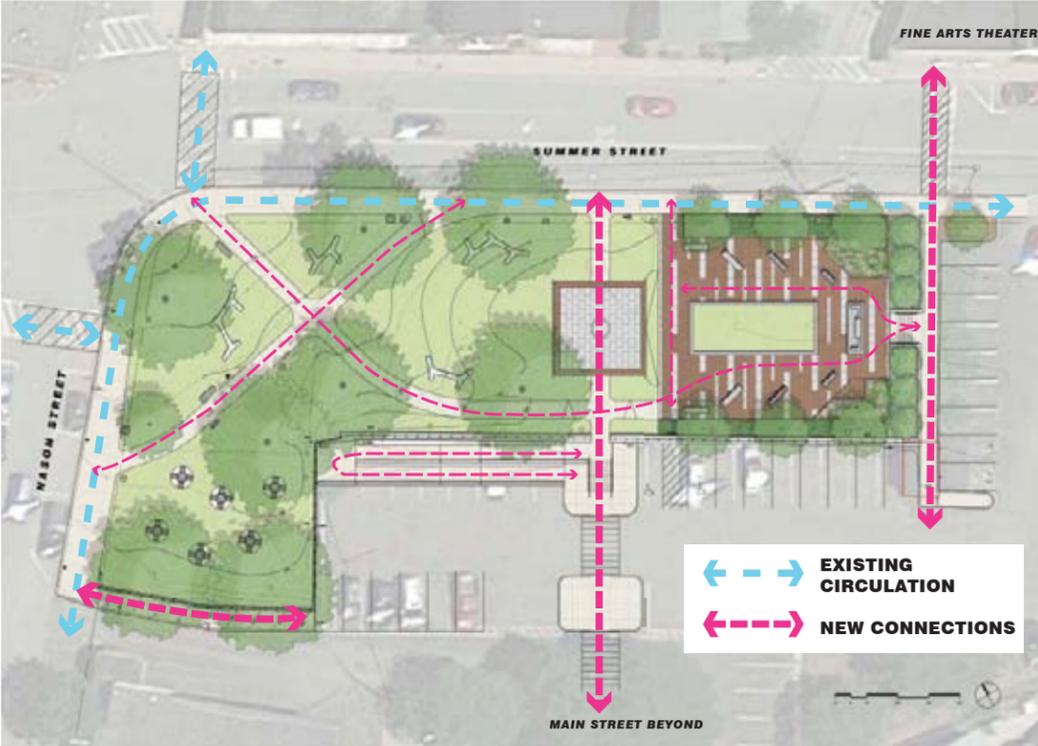
PHASE 1



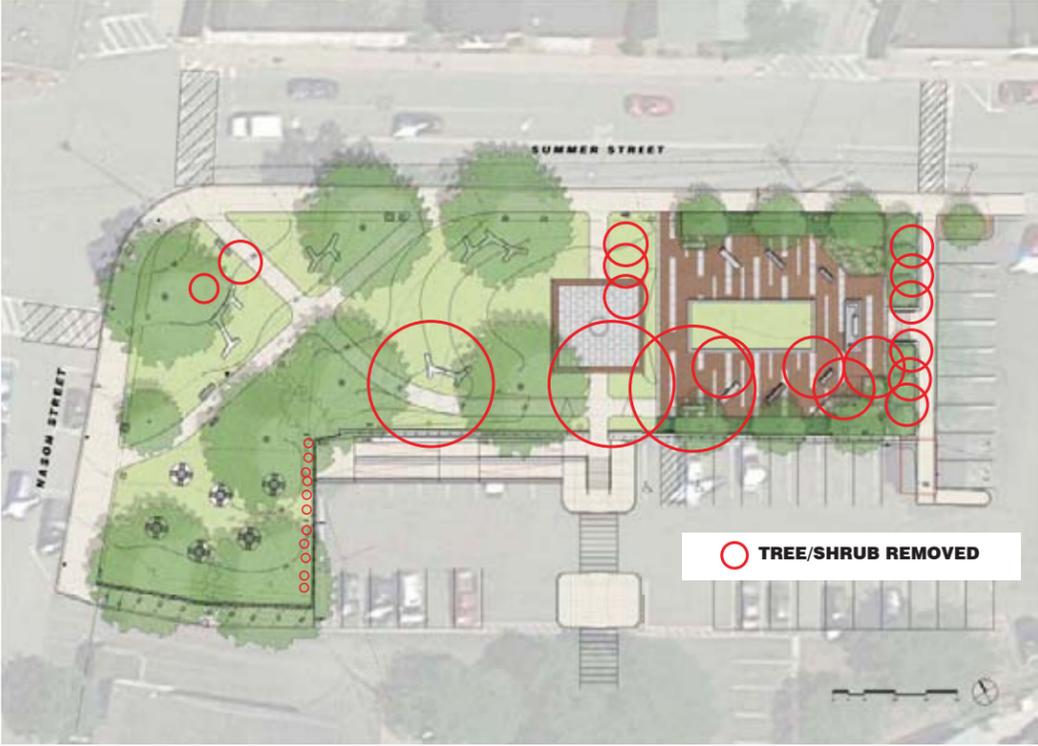
PHASE 2 (and summary of major components)



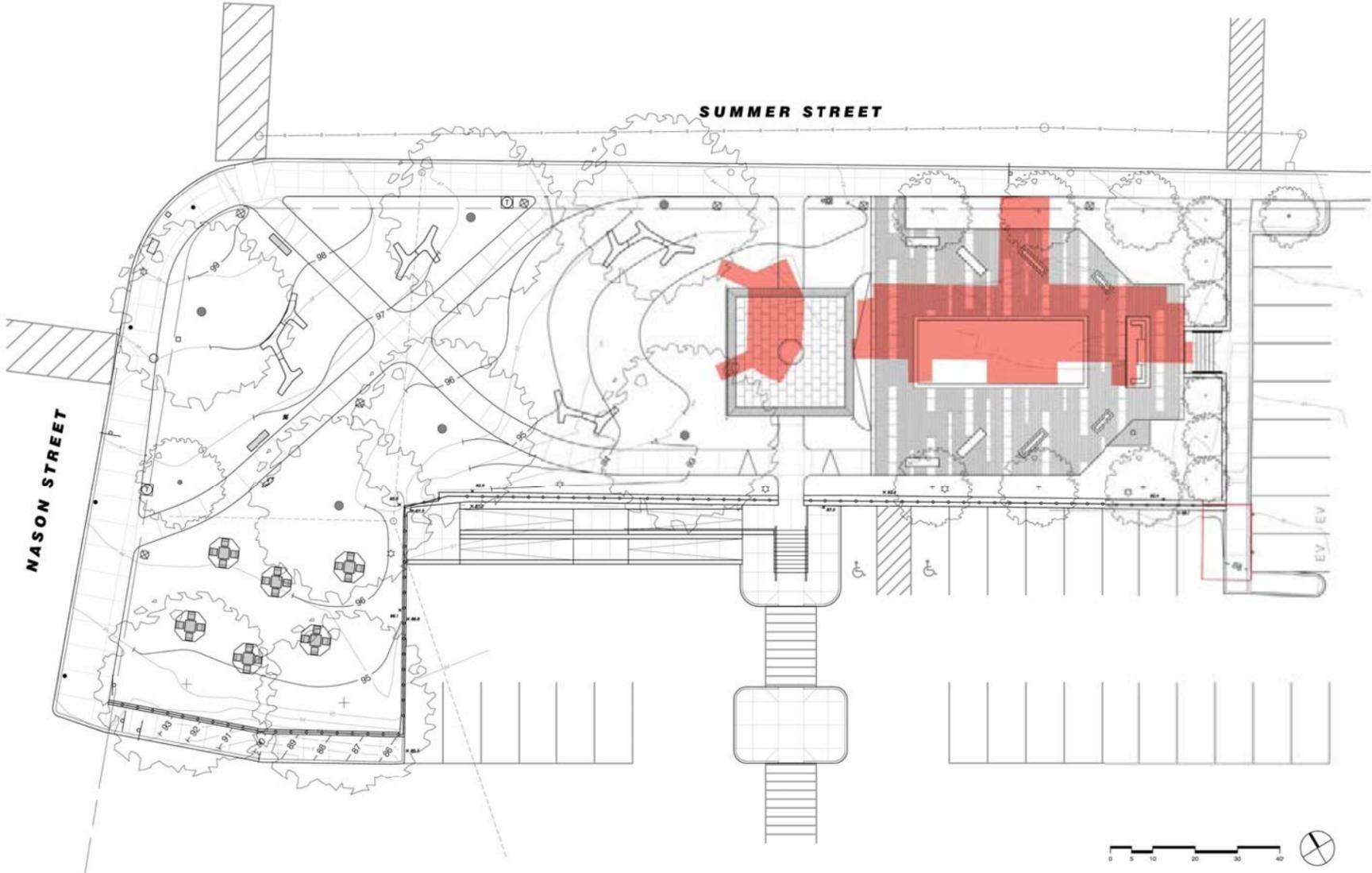
KEY ELEMENTS



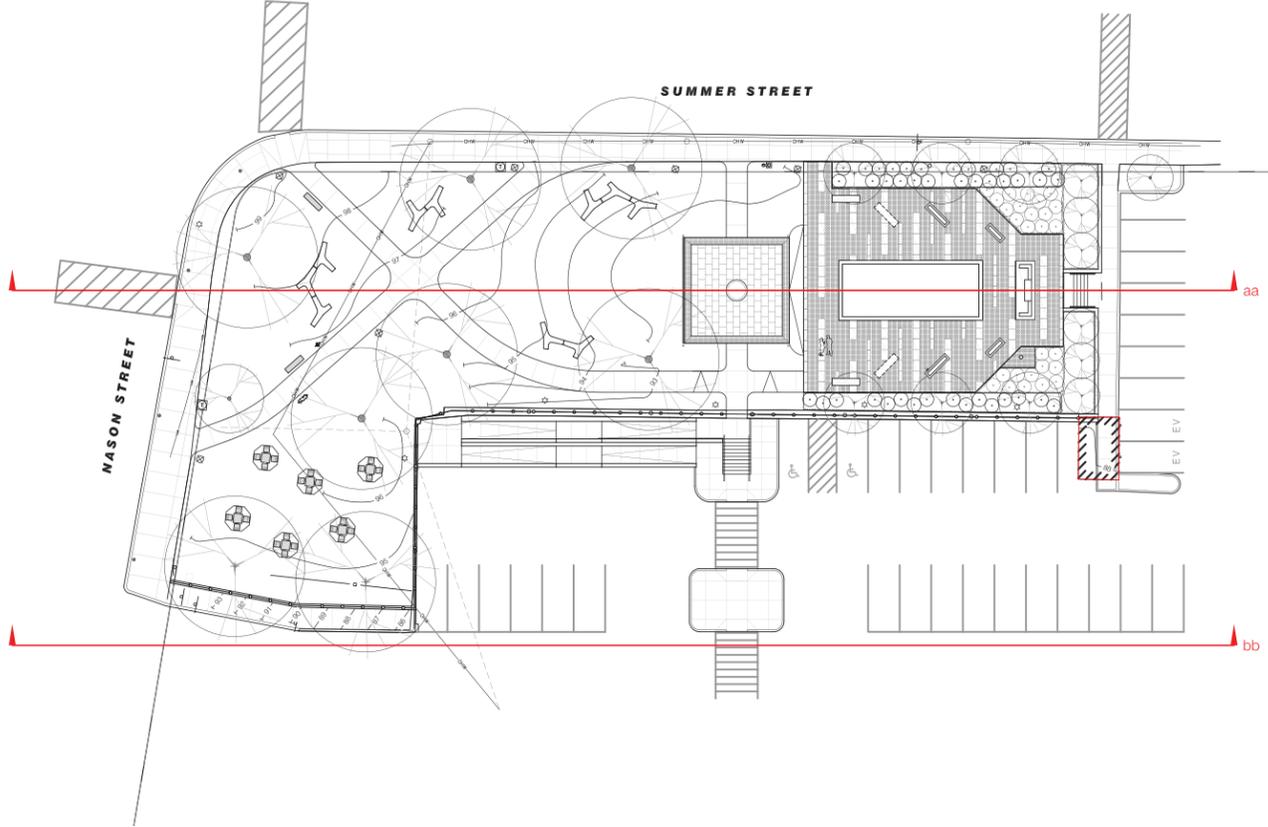
EXISTING CIRCULATION + POTENTIAL CONNECTIONS



TREES + SHRUBS REMOVED



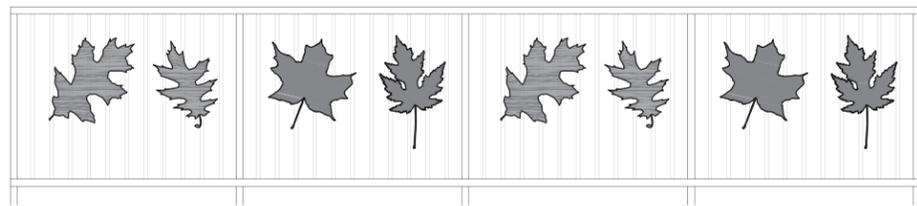
OVERLAY OF EXISTING MEMORIAL AND PERFORMANCE SPACES



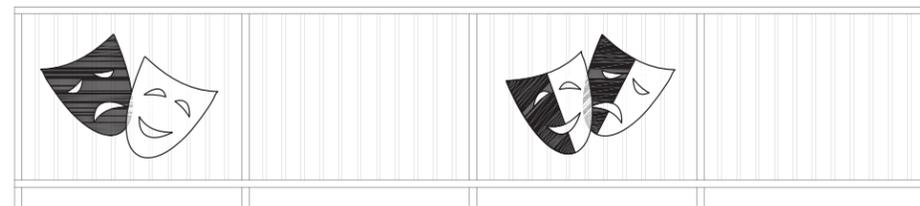
LONGITUDINAL SECTION (aa)



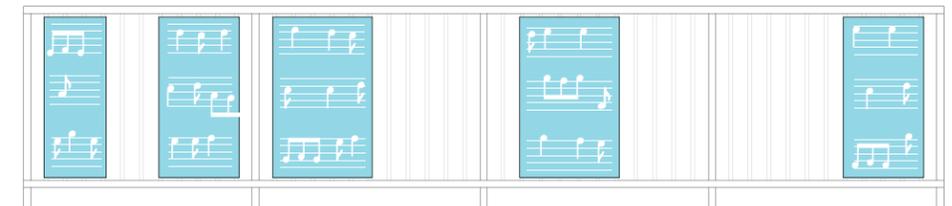
LONGITUDINAL ELEVATION (bb)



Leaves

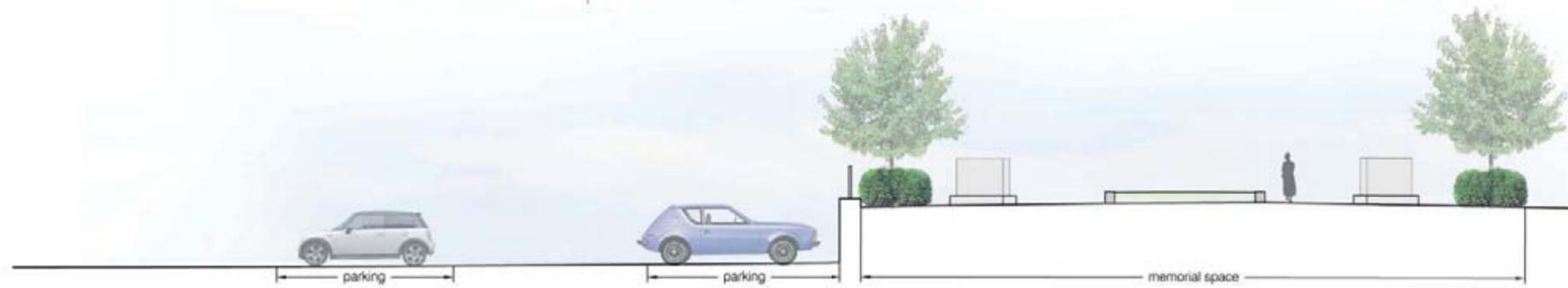
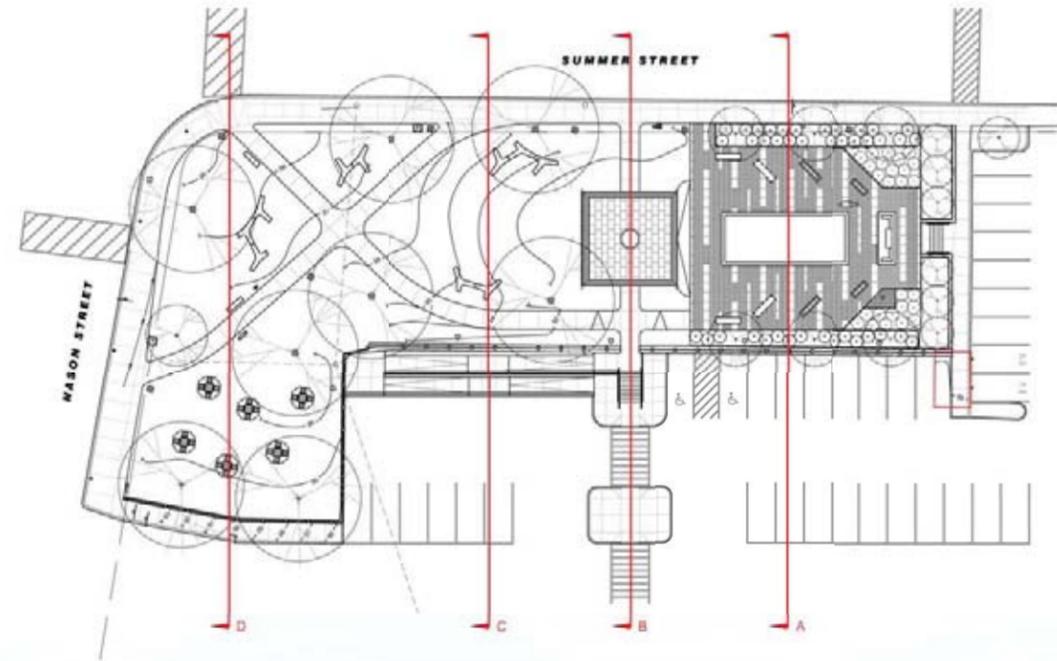


Thespian Masks

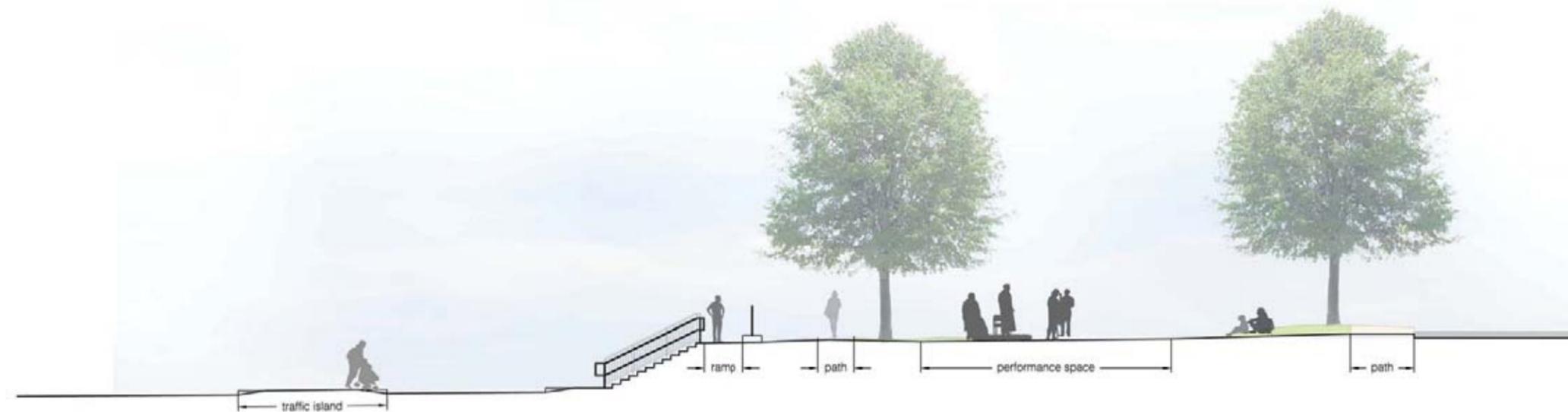


Musical Notes

ORNAMENTAL FENCE STUDIES FOR TOP OF RETAINING WALL

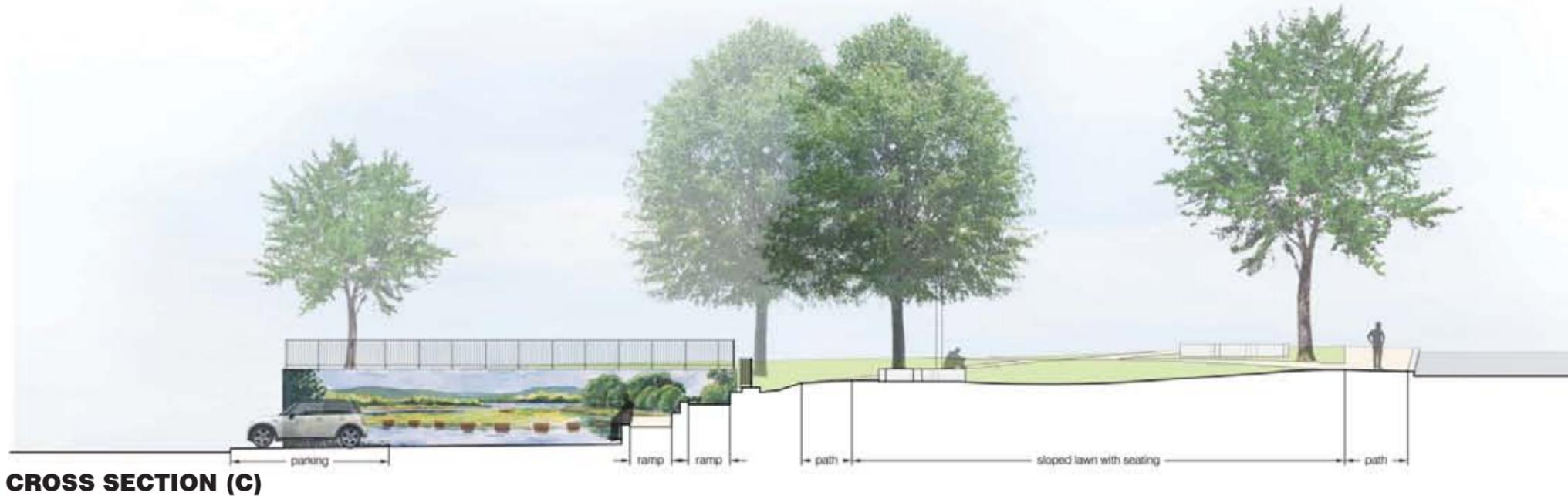


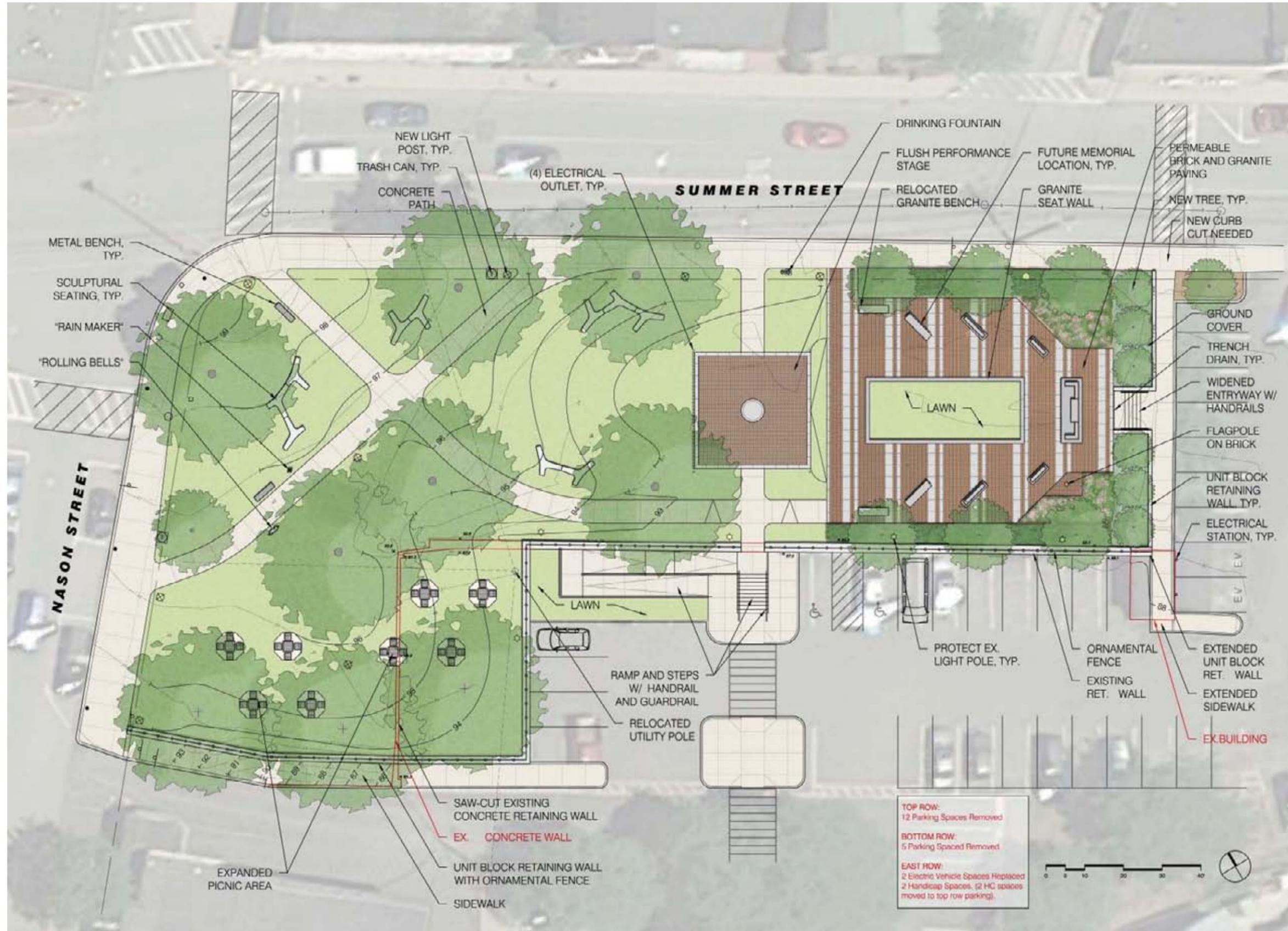
CROSS SECTION (A)



CROSS SECTION (B)

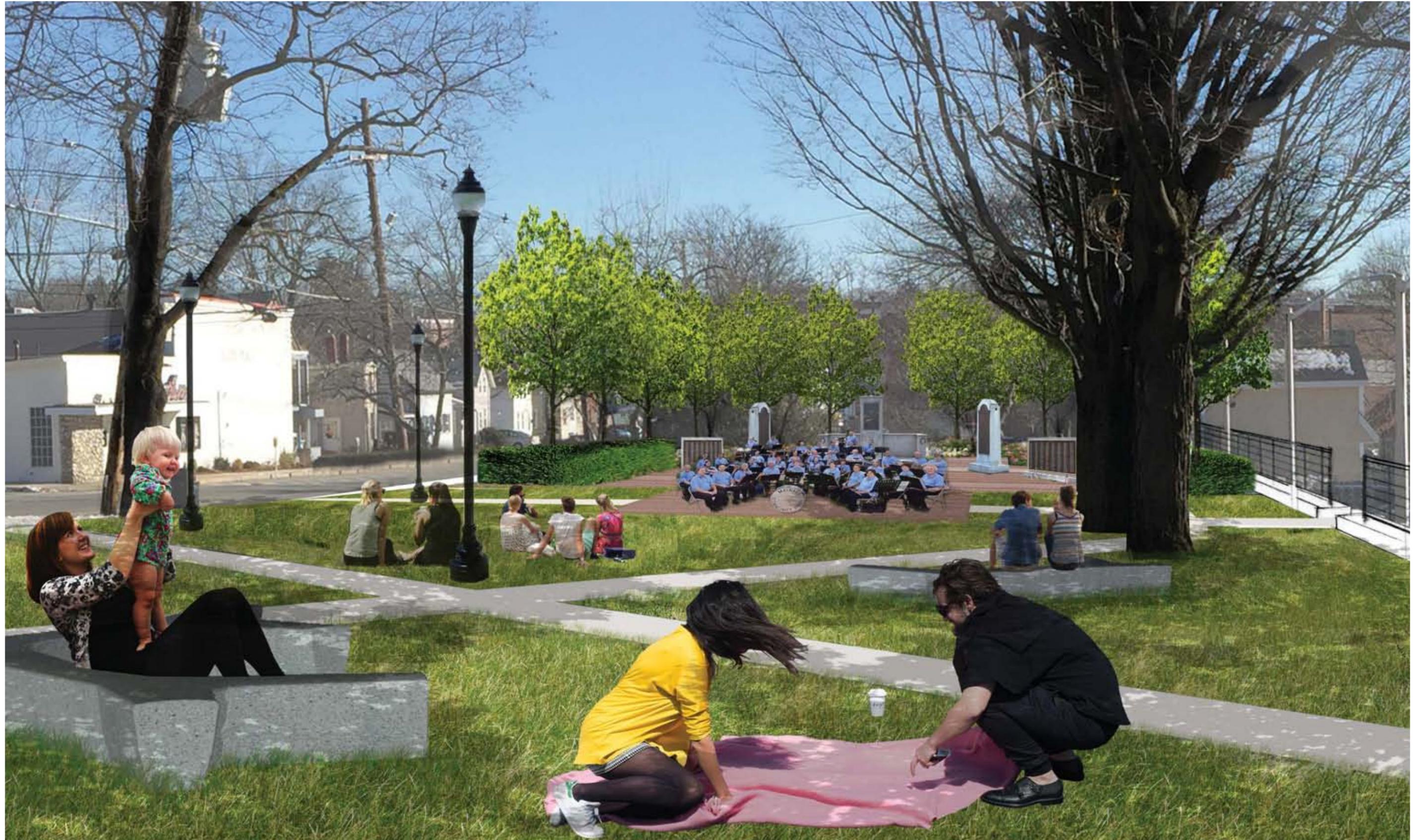








View from Nason St, looking towards existing performance and memorial area



COMMUNITY MEETING 3 | Main Takeaways

- We will need to do a more thorough study of the parking area and how we can reconfigure it to minimize parking loss while maximizing connectivity between the park and the rest of the Town.
- We will want to phase implementation in a way that will maximize impact; Phase 1 will address the whole park, while Phase 2 will address the connection between the park and the Basin.
- Design should continue to be developed while Town seeks funding for the park. Town needs to determine what is feasible, how much money it can raise, and what total cost they will be comfortable with.
- A budget will always be kept in mind. “Add-alternates” (or bonus features) will allow us to cut back costs without compromising the overall essence/integrity of the design.

See Appendix for Meeting Notes and Cost Estimate

Presentation

Project Schedule; Context and Connections; Site Analysis + Photos; Precedents; Program studies (Bubble Diagrams)

Major Program Elements and Arrangement: Memorial, Performance, Play**Comments from Michael; Band Leader**

- Park used to be all of the Basin and had a fountain.
- Call the “Band Stand” a Performing Arts Stage to encourage all kinds of users.
- Band performs every Wednesday night, Memorial Day through Veterans Day (One neighbor is upset that the turnout is disappointing; another counters with the observation that during the summer about 150 people showed up per week).
- Current band stand fits only about 25 band members (half of the band).
- Performance stage should be about 30-35' square to fit whole band.
- Push back memorial space towards wall to fit performance space in front; OR just keep where memorial is and expand performance area.
- Tucking performance space into Nason St parcel might be less space for players/audience.
- 8” gap underneath fence along Basin wall – safety hazard for kids.

Comment from David Gavin, Board of Selection

- Memorial feels like a gate; takes effort to go in and visit.
- Create a more a more meandering/learning experience.
- Prioritize memorial; then performance.

Comments from Denise from Artspace

- agrees to rotate memorial 90 degrees – increases visibility and creates a nice backdrop for band; does the memorial need to be quiet always? Feels that it's more important to see and remember
- kids run towards street a lot; create some kind of barrier along Summer St.

Additional comments from various attendees

- Pushing memorial back and performance in front will only encourage kids to be climbing and sitting on memorials and fence.
- Rotate memorial space 90 degrees so that it faces Nason St.
- Band used to play at corner of nason/summer but too much noise/traffic on both streets
- Is there a way we can screen the band?
- Memorial in Nason St Parcel and expand performance area all across park along Summer Street.
- (Diagram 2a/2b) having play in the Nason St parcel area seems unsafe for kids; too close to driveway of parking; (Clara – mentioned there is a fence there but agrees safety should be considered).
- Agrees with suggestion to turn memorial 90 degrees; could performance be like a gentle amphitheater at corner of Nason and Summer? Stage below; audience above?
- Son was in Iraq War – add memorial to park; (Clara: we will show how we can incorporate into park).
- Nice to have performance area elevated just 8-16” ; band can be elevated further using platforms donated from school.

- Performance stage should be some kind of permanent installation for band, carolers, speakers, etc.

Other Comments and Suggestions about Site Amenities - Water, Play, Walkways, Seating, Lighting, etc.

- Incorporate a sound system especially for bigger events like parades, etc. (Clara: agrees that we should set up outlets throughout the park).
- Furniture should be low maintenance.
- Evergreen tree at corner of Summer/Nason not that significant in size (on our drive back we noticed that this tree is currently lit up for the holidays) Merchants and Business Owners buy and set up a holiday tree every year.
- Water feature will be nice to have during the summer.
- Drinking fountain works from time to time.
- Minimal play elements (like water feature); town has plenty of playgrounds but not many places for older residents/seniors.
- Bike racks; rail trail is going in nearby.
- Place a permanent tree for holiday lighting.
- Decorative fence would be a nice addition; suggests looking at Glenwood Cemetery
- Park currently has cobra head lighting – use other lights.
- Use same lights that are used throughout town.
- More benches/seating; limited outdoor seating at the many restaurants nearby; moveable cafe seating like at Kenney Park would be nice.
- Memorial itself could use more lighting – good for night presence and special events.
- Pull inspiration and elements from Clock Tower Place.
- Some type of marquee board or kiosk would be helpful.
- Add parking into Nason Street Parcel if we need to make up for any lost?
- A puppet theater would be a good addition.
- There is an impromptu marching parade throughout park by a band member every Wednesday.

Comments Concerning the Basin and Connection

- Show number of parking spaces before/after new design.
- Travel aisle between parking seems wider; might not have to lose/gain any parking.
- How can we address the walls? Make it look less like a remnant of a parking garage or more intentional?
- We can think about ways of “deconstructing” the wall by terracing, adding ramp/stair, etc.
- Use the Basin as flex space for more programming; concert instead of parking.
- Basin as program – create a green deck over; Band Stand over parking?

Miscellaneous Comments

- No pesticides.

Presentation

Three design options were presented at the second meeting and the second design option had two variations. (Design were labeled 1, 2a, 2b, and 3.) All were guided by the following three major principles that came out of the first public meeting:

1. Memorial should stay generally in the same location.
2. Performance space should be away from corner of Nason/Summer Streets (too noisy).
3. Park should not be a playground but defined more as a passive/memorial park.

Comments in Response to the Alternative Designs

- The overall consensus was in favor of Option 1 - but with the performance area the shape of 2B.
- There was an overall consensus for lowering wall along the Nason Street Parcel.

The Performance Area

- Performance stage shape doesn't seem to address both sides of the park; concerned that "wings" won't be utilized.
- A tiered stage, with the second level more in the middle?
- Likes how option 1 has the performance area stay where it is and a slight amphitheater lawn is formed.
- Take shape of stage from option 2b and locate it where the stage is located in option 1.
- Other performers include high school band.
- 2B stage shape is nice; could be 1/2 octagon; 35'x35' minimum for 45-55 people; (Option 3) Stage location will not work
- Stage design should work with multiple kinds of performances.
- Consider a flat/at-grade stage for maximum flexibility. This was seconded by other people.
- "Stage" should serve many activities i.e. dances, theater, rallies, etc.

Memorial

- "Future memorial" - other options don't show where future memorials would be located.
- Flag-raising is a key part of ceremony during veterans/memorial holidays. Flagpole should be in a more focal location.
- Events that take place in the park: Memorial Day and Veterans' Day (during which performances are part of the ceremony); other events include Maynard Fest and library events.
- Create a backdrop of flags behind main memorial.

Circulation/Accessibility

- People are concerned about the loss of parking.
- Safety in the basin is a concern with location of new stair; worries that steps lead right into car traffic.
- Rotate and position stair/ramp along Nason Street Parcel.
- Entrance drive from Nason Street into parking lot is narrow and slippery.
- Create a sidewalk along Nason St Parcel—this will necessitate a retaining wall.
- Is there a future desire to create an axis down the middle of the park into the Basin?
- If we remove access through the middle, we should definitely address accessibility and circulation on the east and west sides of the park.
- No curving paths?

- Remove paths that lead to basin stair/ramp entry.
- A path that cuts right through middle might disrupt performances. (Others responded saying that people can take the diagonal path.)
- Show plan in phases (and with more context?) to illustrate more clearly how this new central path will connect to the greater Maynard community (Phase 1 – park, Phase 2 – basin).
- Shift car route through parking over so that it doesn't align with staircase.
- Regarding the new position of the traffic route, island of trees create a pinch point; traffic might not flow as smoothly.
- Central axis shouldn't be discounted; push for further study/exploration of park's connection to greater context and how the whole feel of the park could be transformed with this new path. Also, address accessibility and circulation along east and west sides of park.
- Mirror ramp circulation (rotate 180 degrees) so that less bottlenecking in parking would occur
- The designers will explore the following items for the next meeting:
 1. Central axis, connecting to Basin and Main St beyond and with new sidewalk along driveway from Nason Street.
 2. Ramp/stair pushed toward Nason Street "parcel" and with new sidewalk along driveway.

Seating/Lighting/Planting/Materiality

- Twig seating – will this affect visibility and seating? (The designers will create a rendering that shows how the twig seating will be used and how it impact the site lines to the performance area.)
- Lots of people bring blankets and chairs during holiday/events.
- Place seating more along edges so kids don't run out into street.
- Lighting should match what's existing – maintain "village feel".
- Add planting that's low-maintenance but colorful and has seasonal like potentilla or easy-care roses.
- Musical fence will be too distracting during performances and conflicts with overall atmosphere of solemnity of the memorial park. As there ways to mute/muffle the sound as needed?
- Others felt that musical fence adds a nice playful element to the park; if not the musical fence, any quieter objects?
- Use brick material – works better with overall Town feel and refers back to Mill history/materiality.

The Final Design Discussion

The Final Overall Plan, Elevation, Sections, Design Elements; Phasing; and Opportunity for Expansion

Community Feedback/Design Suggestions

Design

- Why make the performance area flush with ground?
 - (CBA) To create a space that’s more multi-purpose and accessible—an area that can easily transform between an active performance space/stage to a passive plaza area when no event is taking place.
- New “ramp” that takes away parking spaces may not be received well by the rest of the City
 - (CBA) - We will need to do a more thorough study of the parking area and how we can reconfigure it to minimize parking loss while maximizing connectivity between the park and the rest of the Town.
- How many trees will be lost in this design?
 - (CBA) Several of the large trees and most of the smaller trees in the memorial area are removed to allow for better circulation throughout the park; New trees have been added to the memorial area in the new design.
- Why have a path cut straight through the performance space? Why not off to the side/in front/behind space?
 - (CBA) When a performance will take place, people are more likely to take the paths around the space. When there is no performance, the path will provide pedestrians with a direct way through the park. (In an earlier plan, there was a path immediately in front of the performance space, but this appeared to cut off this area and the memorial from the rest of the park. By pulling the performance space slightly away from the memorial area, the two areas are more clearly defined programmatically.)
- Where did the 35’x35’ dimensions come from for the performance space?
 - (CBA) They were based off of the Community Band’s suggestions (Note/CBA correction: current dimensions are 30’x30’ which is within the size range initially suggested by band leader)
- Has the topography changed? How will drainage work? How does drainage currently work?
 - (CBA) The design subtly manipulates the existing gradual slope down into the park to create a more concave-sloping, defined lawn area for people to gather in front of performances. We have proposed areas to place trench drains to capture the water that will run down the hill. Currently, it appears that water simply soaks through the ground. We will need a Civil Engineer to investigate the site more carefully as we push the design further.
- How will a lawn mower access panel of grass surrounded by sitting wall in memorial area?
 - (CBA) A part of the wall can be cut with a slight ramp to allow lawn mower to be rolled up.
- Provide a rail along new sidewalk along driveway.

Next Steps/Funding

- Are there other ways the Park Design can be phased?
 - (CBA) We will want to phase implementation in a way that will maximize impact; Phase 1 will address the whole park, while Phase 2 will address the connection between the park and the Basin.
- To help fund the park, perhaps the Town could launch a “Purchase a Paver” program to help with

- the paving of the Memorial/Performance Areas.
- Adding an accessibility component (i.e. ramp between the Basin and the Park) can open up more funding opportunities.
- Further study of how we can reconfigure the Basin can help show how the Town can reclaim parking spaces elsewhere.
- What is the cost estimate for the whole park design including both phases?
 - (CBA) For a preliminary estimate, roughly \$1 million (which includes designer’s fee, contingency, and “bonus” items).
- What are the next steps? Where will we find funding?
 - (CBA/Town Planner) - PARC grant (from the state) will be a good starting point. Planning Board will look at preliminary cost estimate more carefully to see how the design can be phased as needed or broken down into components. The Community Preservation Committee helped fund the schematic phase of this project; Planning Board can refer to them for guidance on how to proceed as well.
- Design should continue to be developed while Town seeks funding for the park. Town needs to determine what is feasible, how much money it can raise, and what total cost they will be comfortable with.
- What level of design is needed to receive PARC grant?
 - (CBA) The current schematic design is sufficient.
- How would you “scale back” cost if needed?
 - (CBA) A budget will always be kept in mind. “Add-alternates” (or bonus features) will allow us to cut back costs without compromising the overall essence/integrity of the design.
- For everyone’s review, the priorities of the new park design are:
 - Improve/increase pedestrian circulation/accessibility to establish stronger connections between park and the Town
 - Enhance performance area
 - Improve overall aesthetic of park
- (CBA) As project moves forward, public meetings will continue to take place to keep Town involved with the Design Development