T. PFEIFFER

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE REPORT
PRESERVATION PLAN AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL

WASHINGTON PARK, ALBANY, NEW YORK

for the

WASHINGTON PARK CONSERVANCY AND CITY OF ALBANY

Consultant Team

KESTENBAUM/LANDSCAPES JOINT VENTURE

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Historic Preservation Planner, Landscape Architect

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Charles E. Beveridge, Consulting Historian

WASHINGTON PARK CONSERVANCY

May, 1989

The Honorable Thomas M. Whalen, III
Mayor, City of Albany
Albany, New York 12207

Dear Mayor Whalen:

In a few short years since our formation, the Washington Park Conservancy has established a tradition of supporting the preservation, protection and improvement of Washington Park. In June of 1987 the Conservancy initiated a major effort to develop an historic landscape analysis and long-range preservation plan for Washington Park. Since that time, a consultant team of national experts has spent considerable time and effort documenting and analyzing the park. As President of the Conservancy, I am privileged to present to you the "Historic Landscape Report, Preservation Plan and Management Proposal" for Washington Park.

The Conservancy is guided by the view that Washington Park is a work of art, the "crown jewel" of Albany. Our report envisions a future for the Park that will retain its historic character, while simultaneously providing for contemporary use and practical management concerns. Preservation and protection of the Park's historic and scenic integrity are important, but do not require an antiquarian approach. However, a fully-staffed management structure is clearly a critical element for effective stewardship.

The Park was designed more than one hundred years ago by skilled landscape architects who were influenced by noted park planner Frederick Law Olmsted. Hundreds of workmen toiled for more than a quarter century to create a carefully designed naturalistic landscape, which Albanians could cherish for centuries to come. The Park's listing on the National Register of Historic Places, and its inclusion in the Albany Urban Cultural Park, attest to its significance.

Because of its significance, implementing a coherent "vision" for the Park will require much public discussion and the hard work of a cooperative public/private partnership. We offer this well thought-out and expertly prepared report to guide this partnership. The Conservancy is committed to forging such a collaboration with the City, in order to preserve Washington Park as Albany's special landmark into the twenty-first century.

Sincerely,

David P. Quinn, President

Washington Park Conservancy PO Box 1145 Albany, New York 12201

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The grateful thanks of the Washington Park Conservancy go first and foremost to Mr. Irving Kirsch, through whose generosity this **Historic Landscape Report, Preservation Plan and Management Proposal** was made possible. Additional financial support from R. A. F. Associates and the Washington Park Neighborhood Association provided for important enhancements to the project.

We also wish to thank Mr. Richard Barrett, Commissioner of Parks and Recreation for the City of Albany and Mr. Richard Patrick, Deputy Commissioner, for their help and cooperation.

A large number of individuals gave freely of their time and energy to see the project through to its completion. Among then are members of the extended Planning Committee who met with us and contributed many valuable suggestions; the respondents to the questionnaires who provided many insights into current perceptions of the Park; and last but not least the Board of Directors of the Washington Park Conservancy who firmly supported us through a long and complex process.

To all of these, and to many other individuals who manifested their interest along the way, the Washington Park Conservancy's Planning Committee expresses its heartfelt thanks,

David Barnet, Co-Chairman
Paul M. Bray
Martin Kanes, Co-Chairman
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Kestenbaum/Landscapes Joint Venture, the project consultant team, would like to acknowledge the contributions of the Washington Park Conservancy's Board of Directors, Planning Committee members and other Committee chairs as well as the general membership throughout the project. We would also like to thank the staff members at each library and institution who assisted immeasurably in the research phase. We extend our appreciation to all those individuals who contributed to each phase of the project.

Report Prepared by:

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WASHINGTON PARK, ALBANY, NEW YORK

APRIL, 1989

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Washington Park is a valuable, historic landscape that has served Albany's citizens since a portion of the grounds were opened in 1871, 118 years ago. The development of the park began in 1869 with the passage of a law setting aside park lands. After an initial park report by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux, John Bogart and John Yapp Culyer, who were working under Olmsted and Vaux on the construction of Prospect Park, developed the first plan for the park in 1870. This plan was further defined and implemented over a thirty-eight year period under the primary direction of William S. Egerton. The landscape of Washington Park was fully realized in the period of 1891 to 1908 combining the "Olmstedian" style of naturalistic landscape with areas of gardenesque treatment that were popular around the turn of the century. The landscape of Washington Park still embodies its past glory, although many plantings and features and most of the historic structures have been lost over time. The historic research findings fully articulate the importance of the park, its history and chronology, pointing the way for the future through an integration and renewal of the past.

A set of goals for the park were developed through meetings and mailings involving a broad group of interested citizens and public officials. These Goals for Washington Park are the source for action. They articulate the course and emphasis of future direction.

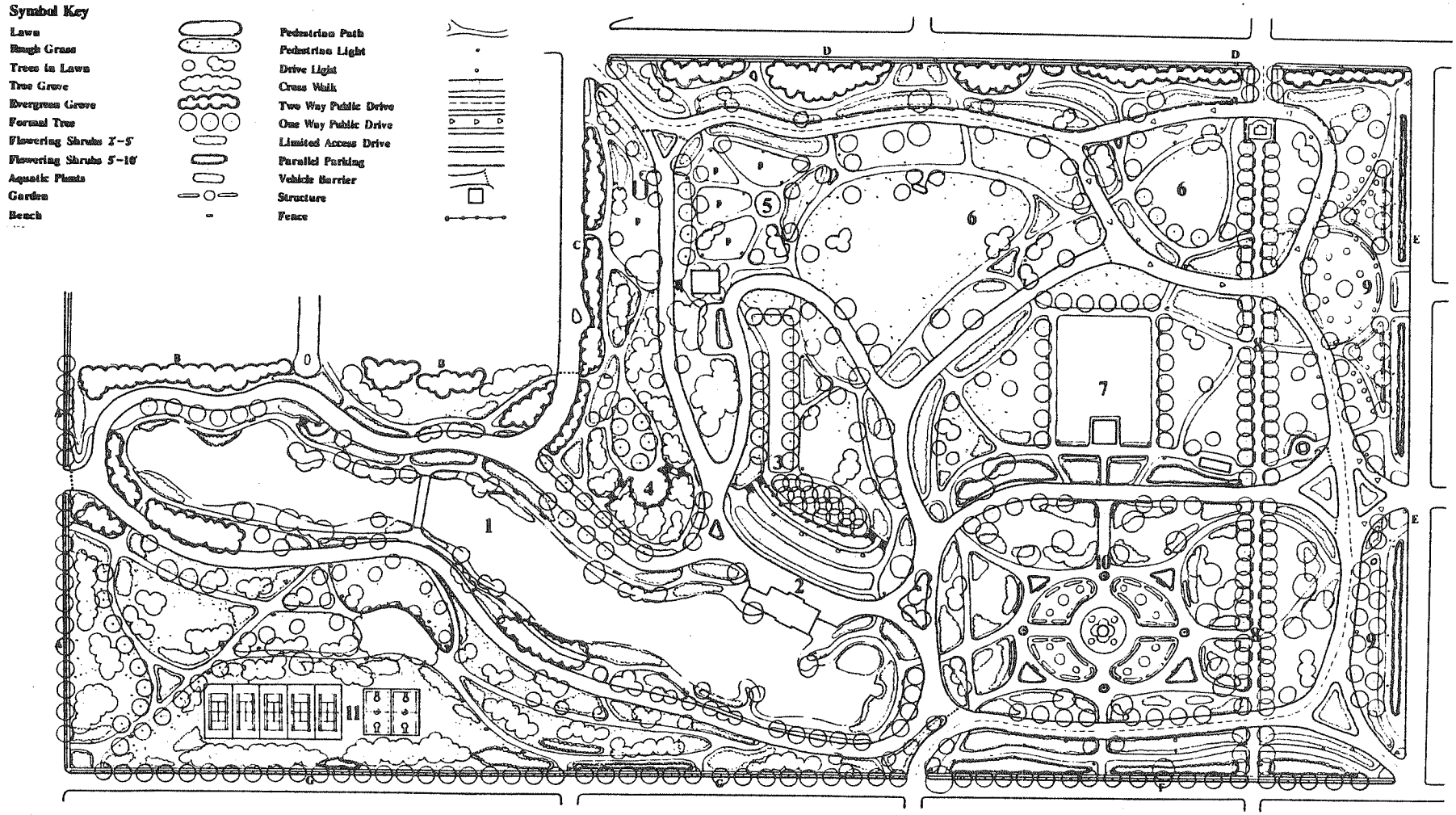
A detailed inspection of existing conditions in Washington Park was carried out in January and February of 1988. A thorough record of four bodies of information was compiled (circulation, built elements, landscape composition, soils and water), and is recorded in text and maps. This information serves as a benchmark for future action and catalogs the variable conditions which reflect insufficient investment, staffing and materials, and some detrimental use over recent decades.

Investigation of existing conditions was followed by an Historic Integrity Analysis and Sector Analysis. These steps articulated the changes in the park over time, especially the loss of original features and the deterioration of vegetation and scenic quality. Also recorded in text and maps, these bodies of information lead directly to recommendations for the preservation and management of Washington Park.

The intent of the preservation and management effort is to delineate the unique and special past of Washington Park and integrate it into its future by defining a comprehensive plan. The plan addresses both specific projects to renew the fabric of the park and a multi-faceted management structure to maximize the condition, appearance, maintainability and positive use of the Washington Park.

The Preservation Plan and Management Proposal for Washington Park is complex and ambitious. They address the physical fabric of the park and the life of this public landscape within the community. The vision portrayed herein concerns both immediate issues and future considerations. A reduced copy of Exhibit 7: Preservation Plan is included here, as well as later in the report for reference. It is a comprehensive approach to a venerable public resource that continues to serve Albanians. Thorough review and consideration of all that this document embodies is the first of the "First Steps". Refinements may be desired and should be made in the future as needed, to frame a final Preservation and Management Plan. The implementation of the final Preservation and Management Plan will be require a period of years. A target time frame of ten years would be reasonable. Development of a phasing schedule for implementation, based on accurate cost estimates, should take place over the next year. This step will be dependent on the findings of initial management assessment tasks described herein and the responses to the review of this entire document.

In conclusion, the goals for Washington Park are embodied in the myriad proposals stated within these pages. The development of this vision for Washington Park has been an educational process and incorporates the ideas and aspirations of all who contributed. The Preservation Plan and Management Proposal expresses a consensus of those affected and concerned, and functions as a guide for all future activities and projects within the park. The future of Washington Park is entrusted to Albanians who share a vision of the unity of past, present and future and who have embarked on an ambitious program to achieve their vision.



Historic Landscape Report & Preservation Plan for WASHINGTON PARK

for the WASHINGTON PARK CONSERVANCY, ALBANY, NEW YORK

prepared by KESTENBAUM LANDSCAPES JOINT VENTURE

Patricia M. O'Donnell, Landscape Preservation Planner Joy Kestenbaum, Landscape Historian Charles E. Beveridge, Consulting Historian

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1987-88 Scale 1"=100'

PRESERVATION & MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL

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I. THE PRESERVATION PLANNING PROCESS

In 1987 the Washington Park Conservancy sought qualified consultants to research and develop a Historic Landscape Report and Preservation Plan for Washington Park. Kestenbaum/Landscapes Joint Venture was selected and the project began in January, 1988. Joy Kestenbaum, landscape and architectural historian, Patricia M. O'Donnell, preservation planner and landscape architect, and Charles E. Beveridge, Olmsted scholar and landscape historian were the principal members of the consultant team.

Joy Kestenbaum had primary responsibility for the historic component of the Historic Landscape Report including research in Albany and New York libraries and archives, preparation of bibliography report, historic analysis and chronology, and discussion of historic significance and historic usage.

Patricia O'Donnell had primary responsibility for the existing conditions inventory, analysis, summary of present and potential park uses, recommendations on management and maintenance issues, presentation of a recommended future form of Washington Park in the Preservation Plan, and recommendations for initial steps toward implementation.

Dr. Charles Beveridge, editor of the Frederick Law Olmsted Papers, was consulting historian for the project. He contributed relevant documentation from the Olmsted Papers at the Library of Congress and contributed to project discussions, reviewed each submittal, and participated with the principal consultants in a public meeting and a video tape presentation.

The Washington Park Conservancy designated a Planning Committee of five members to work closely with the consultants, while a larger advisory group, drawn from the Conservancy membership, local institutions and city government attended progress meetings and commented on draft reports.

The project work plan defined a series of steps including:

1. Project Orientation, initial meetings, field inspection, transmittal of available documentation;

2. Historic Research in written and graphic documents conducted at various municipal archives and institutions in Albany at the Albany Free Public Library, Albany Institute of History and Art, Albany County Clerk's Office, City Engineer's Office, Albany Department of Public Works, Albany Department of Parks and Recreation, New York State Library, and Library of the Capital Newspapers; in Washington, DC, at the Frederick Law Olmsted Papers at the Library of Congress; and in New York at the New York Public Library, Brooklyn Pubic Library, and New-York Historical Society. The historic research phase culminated in the preparation of a bibliography and sources report.

3. Historic Analysis phase included the preparation of a full-length park history report, a park chronology, and a summary of the park's history, the latter two which are included within this Historic Landscape Report, Preservation Plan and Management Proposal. The separate study of Washington Park's origins, design and evolution is entitled The History of Washington Park: the Evolution of an Urban Landscape.

4. Field Reconnaissance to gain a basic understanding of the topography, soil, water, vegetation, furnishings, structures and monuments of Washington Park. Photographs of typical conditions were taken to provide a visual record. A written text articulates the field reconnaissance techniques, details

findings and indicates what further investigations may be advisable. Exhibits 1 and 2 synthesize the physical condition findings and serves as a visual reference for the text.

5. Investigation of Past, Present and Potential Park Use through historic research and observation of actual use; observation of the park itself as a record of use through the accretion of traces of use and the erosion or loss of elements through use (such as noting where desire paths exist and reviewing a play area to develop a sense of use volumes), etc.; analysis of the findings of a recent park users survey and review of recent park use for organized events;

6. Development of goals for Washington Park through Conservancy mailings and meetings with the Planning Committee and Advisory Group and Conservancy membership;

7. Definition of Park Sectors through examination of the historic record and analysis of the existing park landscape;

8. Analysis of Historic Landscape Integrity through a comparison of the condition of the park at the completion of its initial development and the park today;

9. Development of Preliminary Proposals to present and review circulation, vegetation and built elements issues and options; and

10. Articulation of a Preservation Plan and Management Proposal that embodies the goals and incorporates all relevant issues in framing a vision for the future of Washington Park.

The project involved the synthesis of historic research and analysis and the existing conditions, use, management and maintenance of the park into a useful, relevant report that will serve as a benchmark and recommend appropriate directions for the future of this historic park. The work of the project can also be utilized in several ways to contribute to the growth of community and city support, implementation of individual projects, ongoing fund raising efforts and other initiatives through brochures, videos, exhibitions and other means.

II. GOALS FOR WASHINGTON PARK

The Goals for Washington Park are the source for action. They articulate the course and emphasis of future direction. The aspirations of the Washington Park Conservancy initiated this project and, hopefully, the aspirations of those who care about the park are voiced in the broad set of goal statements developed. These goals are presented here because they frame a context for consideration of all that follows. In particular, they act as a lens for viewing and reflecting on the preservation and management proposals.

Goals are general mission statements that describe the major directions for Washington Park. Efforts by City officials, the Conservancy and the general public on behalf of the park all contributed to the development and clarification of these goals. The goal statements were developed from responses to a mailed questionnaire and contributions made by those attending a Conservancy Preservation Planning Meeting on March 29, 1988.

After this basic input was received, the statements were fully developed and sent out in a letter survey to one hundred Conservancy members and other interested individuals in August of 1988. Forty-nine responses were received. The respondents rank ordered their top five priorities out of the list of nine goal statements. The goal statements listed here are organized under key word phrases and are listed in order of importance. While all the goals were important to half of the respondents or more, those at the top of the list were given a higher priority.

1. Frame a vision for the park: Act from a comprehensive plan. Define initiatives and specific projects into the future. Complete the Historic Landscape Report and Preservation Plan. Create a demand. Generate excitement. Investigate an alliance with persons and organizations of similar interest nationwide.

2. Improve Park Management and Maintenance: Make a commitment to improved management and maintenance. Manage the park more effectively. Build staff skills and establish high standards of landscape maintenance. Address all areas of deterioration and hazard first. Urge and aid in improving levels of park maintenance.

3. Improve scenic quality: Simplify or eliminate the visual clutter in the park. Deal with parked cars, signs, overhead wires and other obtrusive elements. Improve vehicular traffic pattern and address the problem of commercial traffic. Create a more park-like atmosphere. Increase the border plantings to buffer the park from the city.

4. Develop stewardship of the park: Develop a sense of the park as something to be conserved. The park is the Crown Jewel of Albany parks. Have the park appreciated as a public work of art. Build respect for the park. The Conservancy needs to do more. The City should make a stronger commitment to its Crown Jewel.

5. Provide for a diversity of park uses: Diversity is the strength of the park. Reinforce the diversity of spaces that were originally designed for the park and, thereby, diversity of uses. Provide more diverse events, model boat races, sports events, performances, etc. Incorporate more gardens and exotic plants to enjoy. Reinforce the tulip festival tradition by planting 80,000 not 20,000 tulips, and making it a major regional attraction.

6. Emphasize the natural environment of the park: Emphasize the park as a green place, a healthy, natural environment. Improve planning, care and maintenance of the vegetation. Recognize and integrate ecological factors.

7. Articulate the historic and cultural value of the park: Educate the public. Interpret the park's history for all park users. Develop a clear statement of the significance of the park for Albany and as a 19th century park.

8. Recapture lost historic elements and preserve remaining historic resources: Regain lost historic elements by reconstructing the Swings, the Drinking Fountain Shelter, the Croquet Shelter,the Refectory and other historic structures. Preserve extant history. Retain and safeguard remaining historic resources to the maximum extent possible. Replace modern lighting with appropriate historic lighting. Furnish the park with replica historic elements. Establish high standards of landscape design, in accordance with the historic record. Develop a policy of documentation.

9. Balance contemporary needs and historic origins: Remain open to contemporary needs to balance between today's uses and historical authenticity.

The clarification of goals and the ranking of priorities ranking are effective tools for developing concepts of park preservation. These values are expressed by the priorities assigned. The achievement of one goal may overlap with another. For example the improvement of Scenic Quality may also improve the Natural Environment. Each of the goals is incorporated into the Preservation and Management Concept with a greater emphasis placed on those with highest priority.

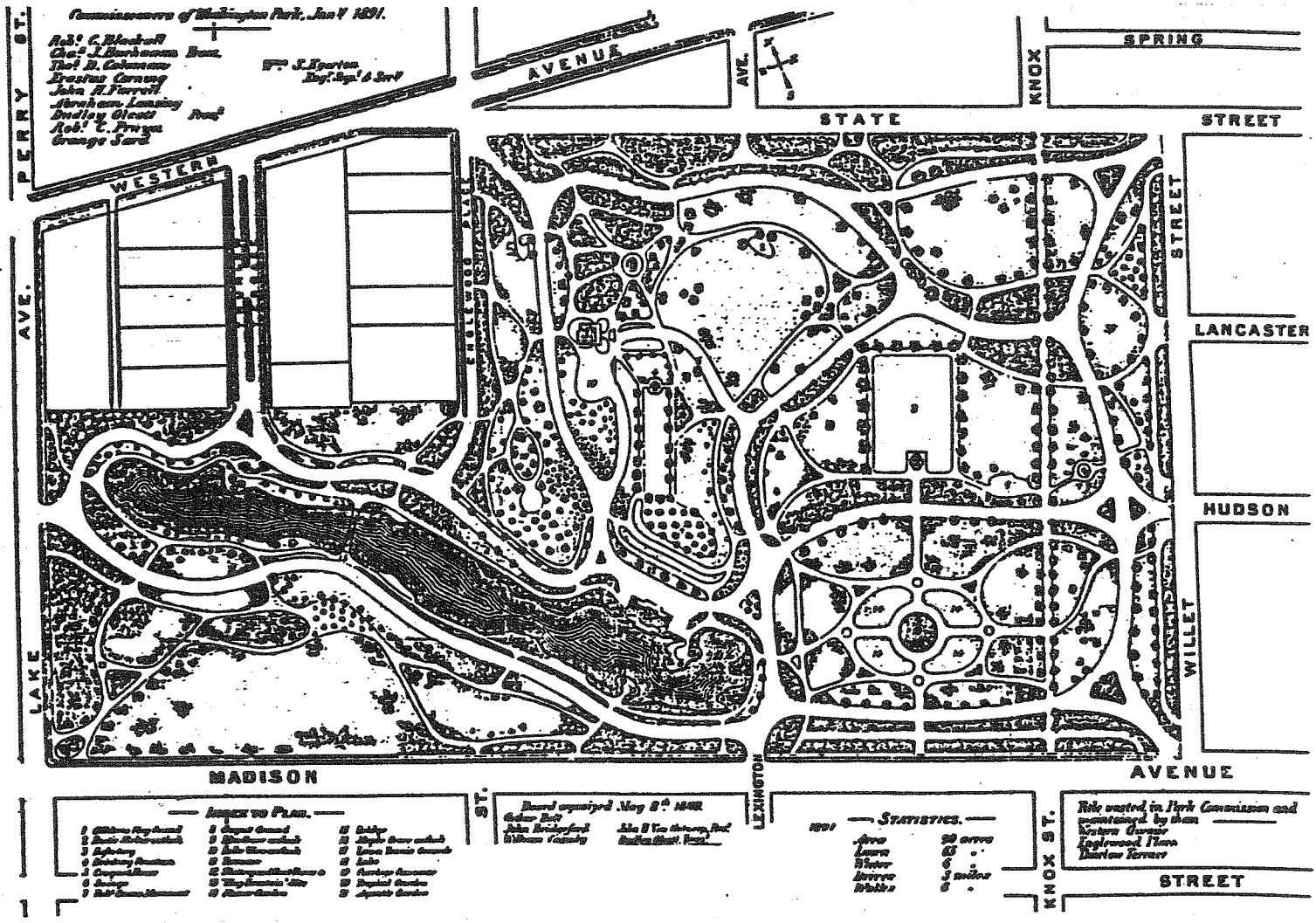
III. WASHINGTON PARK HISTORIC SUMMARY

Washington Park is the oldest, largest, and most venerated park in Albany. The significance of its site is in fact longer than the park's actual 120-year history, since sections of the present park had long served as a public square and as city burial grounds. Established in 1869 by an act of the State Legislature, Washington Park was for many years the only amply sized pleasure ground in Albany and was described in the 1880s as the "gymnasium and breathing place of the city." The author of an 1884 guidebook to Albany wrote glowingly of Washington Park, emphasizing its great civic importance for the people of the capital city in contrast to the Capitol building, which was a state wide enterprise of the same period. Washington Park has continued to serve the purposes for which it was initially created, providing Albany's citizens and visitors with an expansive green space and a necessary retreat from the surrounding urban fabric.

A. Origins of the Park

Much of the acreage of Washington Park had a long history as public open space. The easternmost portion of the park (the area east of the Mall), which was the first completed section and opened to the public in 1871, had served for many years as the city's parade ground. Originally dedicated in 1806 as the Middle Public Square and renamed Washington Square in 1809, it was used principally as a drill field, but was also the location of a botanical garden, county fairs, a skating rink, and a ball field, providing at different times some of the purposes for which a large public park would be wanted. To the west of Washington Square the area originally bounded by Robin, State, Knox and Hudson Streets had been the State Street burial grounds from as early as 1800. Purchased in 1882, the plateau overlooking the lake at the corner of Madison and Lake was the last section added to the park. The designated location since 1889 for the playing of tennis, this area had long been occupied by the mansion and landscaped grounds of John Taylor, a mayor of Albany.

As cities grew more crowded and knowledge and concerns about sanitation and disease increased, the location of burial places in central cities came into question. Following the lead of Boston, Philadelphia, and Brooklyn, in the early 1840s Albany established north of the city a rural cemetery, a large romantically landscaped burial ground. After the Albany Rural Cemetery opened in 1845, the already outmoded burial grounds off of State Street, seen as a potential health hazard, were viewed as an impediment to the westward expansion of the city. In 1866, in anticipation of a new city park in this vicinity, the City Council began to plan the removal of the graves that still remained at this location. As was the case with rural cemeteries in other cities, Albany's rural cemetery enjoyed popular use as a landscaped setting for leisurely strolls and relaxation and helped to provide the germination for ideas about the need for and character of a municipal park.



Plan of Washington Park, January, 1891, Index to Plan lists twenty-one park features, Extent of plan shows outline of existing park with all land parcels integrated. WSE

Like the rural cemetery, the public pleasure ground emerged as a result of the dramatic changes and deteriorating conditions which accompanied industrial growth in American cities. Albany, the New York State capital since 1797, was strategically located for commerce. The rapid growth of industrial activity and population in the years between 1830 and the 1860s helped to make Albany the fourth largest city in New York State.

Influenced by the development of public parks underway in such other major cities as New York, Brooklyn, and Buffalo, and the quickening pace of their own city, several of Albany's prominent citizens spearheaded an Albany parks movement that would stimulate ten years of public debate. Initial efforts began in 1859 and included articles and proposals where specific sites were recommended as well as those which were more general endorsements of the concept. Thurlow Weed, editor-proprietor of the Albany Evening Journal, believing that a park would "elevate the morale of the whole city," was the first to endorse the site of the "proposed Washington Park." In 1863 David Murray, an officer of the Albany Institute and the principal of the Albany Academy, and William Barnes, a lawyer and son-in-law of Thurlow Weed, expressing the urgent need for an adequately sized public pleasure ground, both presented their reports to the city government. That several of Albany's prominent industrial leaders organized a public subscription in 1868 to obtain the services of Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux, the foremost landscape architects in the country, demonstrates the growing support for a park that existed in the capital city at this time. The principal individuals responsible for bringing the firm of Olmsted, Vaux & Co. to Albany were Franklin Townsend, an iron manufacturer, banker, and former mayor, Stephen Munson, a leading shoe manufacturer, and Townsend Fondey, a partner in the well-known hardware firm of Corning & Co.

In the "Report on the Proposed City Park," Olmsted, Vaux & Co. discussed the results of their examination of the various potential sites and their thoughts on the most suitable for the new park, expounding their belief that the main purpose of a park was to create rural scenery in sharp contrast to the surrounding city. Essential to the firm's thinking was that the pastoral landscape treatment provided the soothing and restful setting needed to restore the spirit of the urban dweller. The landscape architects acknowledged that the ground in the vicinity of the present Washington Park was the most centrally located and contained mature trees and a varied topography which offered the possibility of creating "an open, quiet, natural landscape treatment." Being a preliminary overview the exact boundaries and precise area of the park were not provided. However, the report did offer a general recommendation regarding a significant landscape feature of the future park, proposing that the park should "extend to the further side of the valley of Beaver creek . . . and its design should include a considerable body of ornamental water, which would be obtained by damming the creek." The lake and the expansive meadow, two key elements of pastoral scenery, were critical to the design theory of Olmsted, Vaux & Co.

When Olmsted and Vaux prepared their study on the proposed Albany park, their professional experience as urban park planners had expanded to comprise not only New York's Central Park, their first collaboration and a work of significant influence, but also the pleasure grounds and park systems of two other major urban centers of New York State: Brooklyn and Buffalo. Within the next few years, their firm would be designing the South Park system of Chicago and the parks of such smaller manufacturing cities as Fall River, Massachusetts, and New Britain, Connecticut. In keeping with their latest thinking on the role of public parks in the improvement of cities, Olmsted and Vaux envisioned the proposed Washington Park as the centerpiece of a comprehensive park system that also included two smaller parks in the more populated north and south districts of the city, all of which would be connected by parkways.

Under the State enabling legislation enacted in 1869 which created the Board of Commissioners of Washington Park, the land designated as Washington Park was to include three discrete sites: the State Street burial grounds and, on the south side of Madison Avenue, the Almshouse farm and the grounds of the Albany County Penitentiary. In addition to these properties, the Board of Commissioners held title to the parade ground, which it had the authority to sell, and it had the power to purchase additional lands for the park. In actuality, the almshouse farm and penitentiary grounds were never incorporated into the park, although strong public opinion helped ensure that the parade grounds were. The difficulties and conflicts which arose over the acquiring of desirable additions for the park help to explain its sequential development and the fact that Olmsted and Vaux were not hired to create the more ambitious park system that they had proposed.

B. Park Construction

The park's construction began in 1870 according to plans prepared by Bogart and Culyer and continued under the leadership of William S. Egerton, whose close association with the park totalled 38 years. John Bogart (1836-1920), an Albany native son and graduate of the Albany Academy, and John Yapp Culyer (1839-1924) had served early in their careers as assistant engineers in Central Park and were closely involved in the construction of Olmsted and Vaux's second important public landscape, Prospect Park in Brooklyn, New York. At the time of their selection as landscape architects and consulting engineers, Bogart and Culyer had also formed a partnership in New York City which included work in surveying, civil engineering and landscape and architectural design. Reuben H. Bingham, the Albany city surveyor who had consulted with Olmsted, Vaux & Co., when the firm made its report on the park, served as chief engineer and superintendent to the Board. In 1873, when the Board of Commissioners of Washington Park terminated their contracts with Bogart, Culyer & Co. and Bingham, in their stead, William S. Egerton, who had been the assistant engineer, became Washington Park's engineer-in-chief and, later, the superintendent of all the city's parks. He was also appointed the first superintendent to serve under the Bureau of Parks, a city agency created in 1900 to replace the Board of Commissioners of Washington Park.

Although Olmsted, Vaux & Co's direct involvement with the park was limited to a general study, the individuals who were chosen to make and implement plans were influenced by this report and their respect for and association with the firm and its ideas on the landscaping of municipal parks. The Bogart and Culyer plan for the park proposed the layout for the lands north of Madison Avenue that were in the possession of the Board of Commissioners by 1872. Although the separate tracts were somewhat limited in extent and their combined boundaries considerable irregular in form, in many respects this plan for Washington Park reflects the ideas of Olmsted and Vaux. Constituting a basis for the future development of the park, the plan shows a system of curvilinear carriage drives and pedestrian walkways that traversed and linked the different grounds. These drives and walks were intended to be well-drained and surfaced with gravel in order to enhance the pleasurable experience of walking or driving through the park. As at Central and Prospect Parks, they were provided with inlet basins and connected to an underground drainage system so as to allow for proper surface and subsurface drainage. Furthermore, the recommendation contained in the Olmsted, Vaux & Co. report for the damming of Beaver Creek was incorporated in this early plans. Extending from northwest to southeast was an elongated and picturesque lake, which was planned as the major element at the western section of the park.

Due to the limited funds available, no structures were originally planned for the park. Instead, the commissioners concentrated primarily on the treatment of the landscape, "ornamentation by shrubs, trees, flowers, roads and walks, instead of the more artificial and costly architectural style of adornment."

The Bogart and Culyer design made use of many of the handsome, old trees found on the site. For example, they kept the line of elms which marked the limits of a former burial ground to define the croquet ground and included pre-existing trees growing at the borders of the old parade ground. The park was also planted with a diversity of species of trees and shrubs, many of which were provided by the well-known Rochester nursery of Ellwanger & Barry. By 1872, however, with an increased annual expenditure provided by law, the commissioners were able to provide architectural features which would offer services and conveniences for the growing number of park users. As a result, Bogart and Culyer prepared plans for the refectory and well shelter.

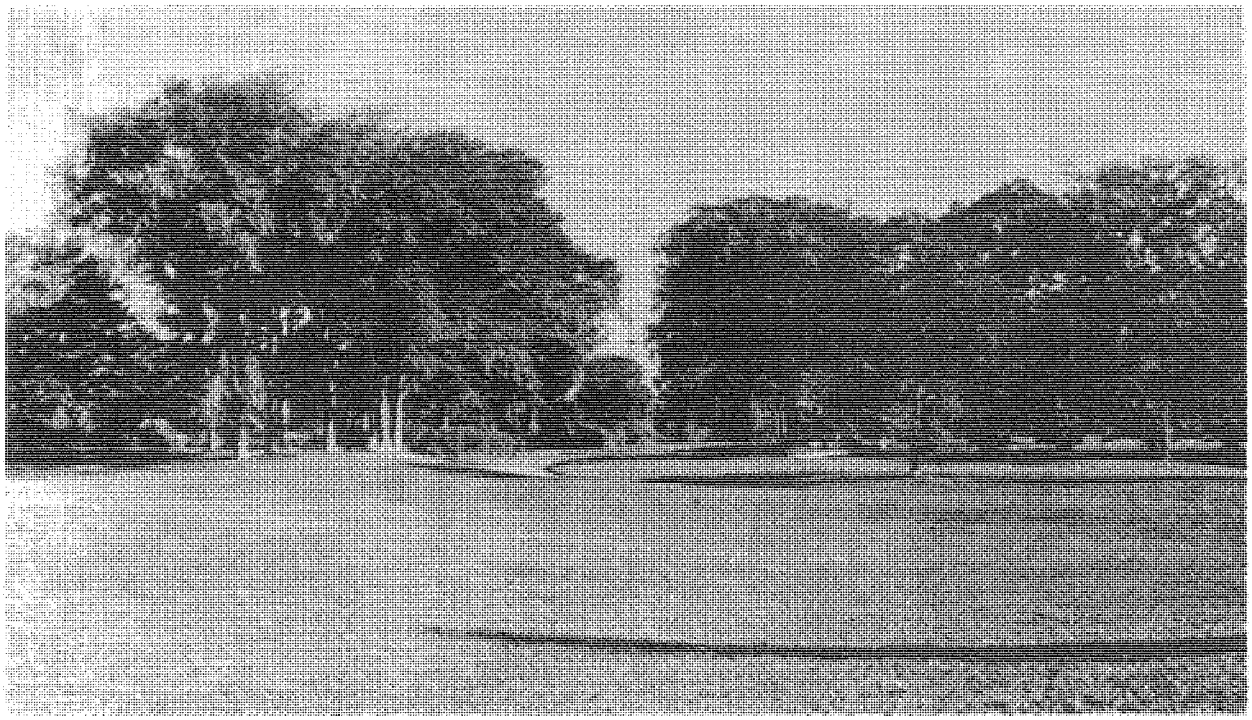
C. Egerton's Tenure, Park Completion

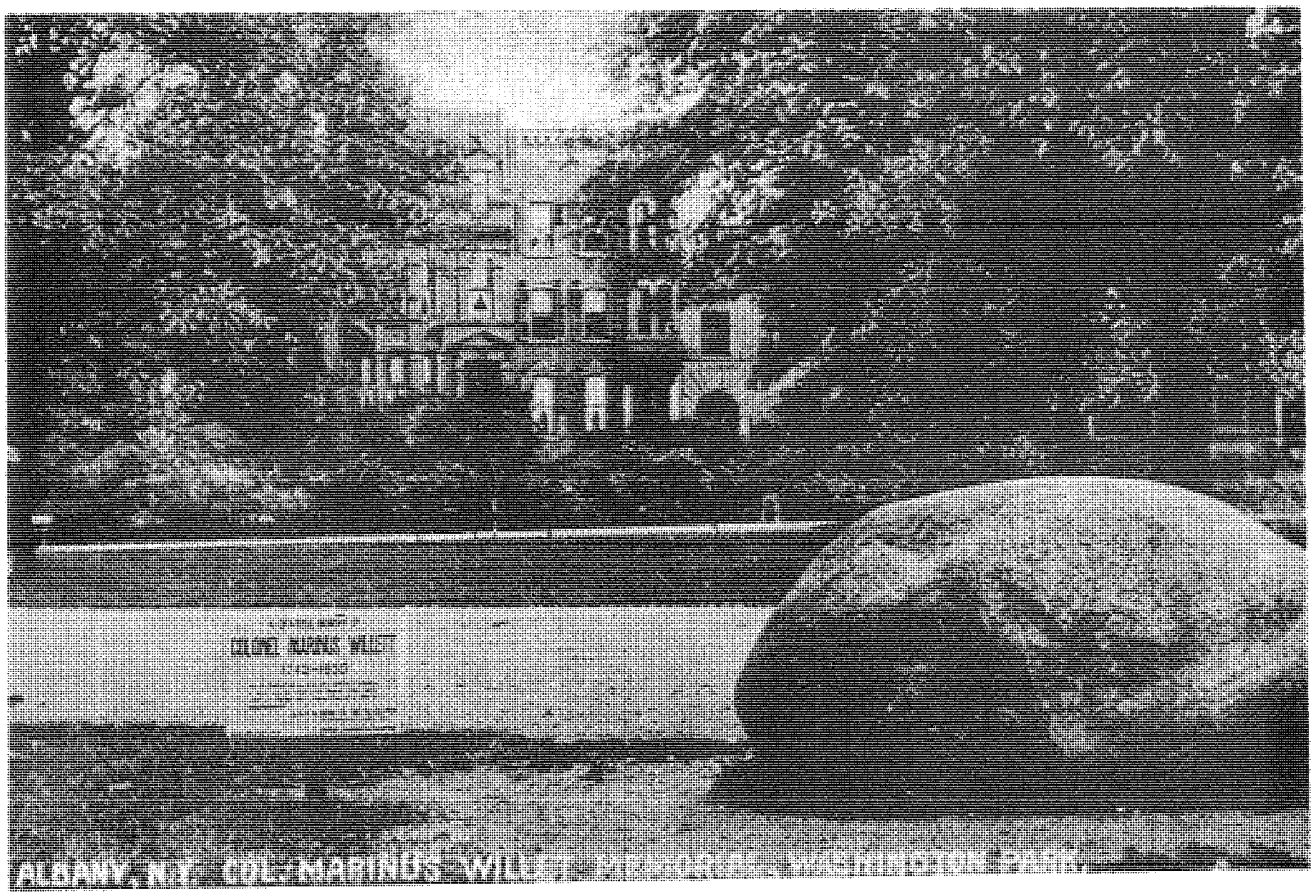
Under Egerton's able guidance the park's original layout was completed and its mature stage of development realized. He continued to construct the park according to the Bogart and Culyer plan, but with some modification. By 1876 the lake, much of the original circulation system, and all of the original structures were completed. As the new parcels and structures were added, Egerton integrated them by adding connecting walks and drives. When the last parcels of land were acquired in 1882, the park's final boundaries were established. In Egerton's final plan of 1891 several separate areas with distinct landscape treatments and different intended uses are all linked by a coherent system of walks and drives. Although somewhat more compartmental in treatment than the contemporary parks of Olmsted and Vaux, Washington Park still achieved a design integrity and a cohesive design scheme that reflects the thinking that has become characterized as "Olmstedian".

Like Olmsted, Egerton emphasized the importance of rural scenery in a public park. Several hallmark features of the park as it continued to develop supported the initial intent expressed in the Olmsted, Vaux & Co. report and reflected important elements found in other parks of this firm. In addition to the picturesque form of the lake and the circulation system previously mentioned, these "Olmstedian" or naturalistic elements include the dense boundary plantings of trees and varied flowering shrubs which screened out the surrounding streets and buildings and the central meadow and other smaller areas of open lawn. The scenic experience of the park was further enhanced by the numerous outlooks, which provided expansive views of the park's landscape. Although a more formal element in the landscape, the elm-lined "Mall" at its mature phase as it appears in the old photographs reminds the experienced park visitor of the similar landscape element at Central Park.

Egerton was especially concerned about the condition and appearance of the plantings around the perimeter of the park. He believed, like Olmsted (even quoting him in his park reports and other writings and enlisting his letter of support), that the park's main purpose is to provide natural scenery as an escape from the surrounding city. Therefore, as Washington Park developed, shrubbery was introduced along the park's perimeter, particularly along the Willett Street and Madison Avenue borders, to screen from view the sidewalks, roads and adjacent houses. The shrubbery borders included lilacs, honeysuckle and other low growing, flowering varieties which, although regularly maintained, were allowed to grow in a naturalistic style without being formally pruned. The question of how to treat border plantings was as much a philosophical one as an aesthetic one. Like Olmsted, Egerton believed that the park should be designed to benefit the larger community and not just those individuals who lived on the borders of the park; therefore, he emphasized the importance of the quality of the view from within rather than the appearance of an extended garden for those living just outside.

In its mature phase of 1891-1908, the park combined the "Olmstedian" or naturalistic landscape treatment with the gardenesque. When the latter was introduced, Egerton advocated that the more formal garden elements or ornamental areas be subordinated to the broader effects of nature and





Top: View of portion of the Meadow with gently rolling lawn and mature trees, 1892. WSE
Bottom: Willett Monument in foreground, boulder with commemorative plaque, Background shows dense, flowering shrub border along Willett Street, c. 1900. MK

confined to specific and limited areas. In a paper he wrote entitled "Ornamental Planting for Public Parks and Grounds," Egerton attempted to articulate a theory of public landscape design that was clearly based on his experience in Albany as well as on Olmsted's writings. He described the particular treatment of Washington Park's landscape, justifying its combined usage of the purer principles of park design as advocated by Olmsted with the Victorian love for the gardenesque:

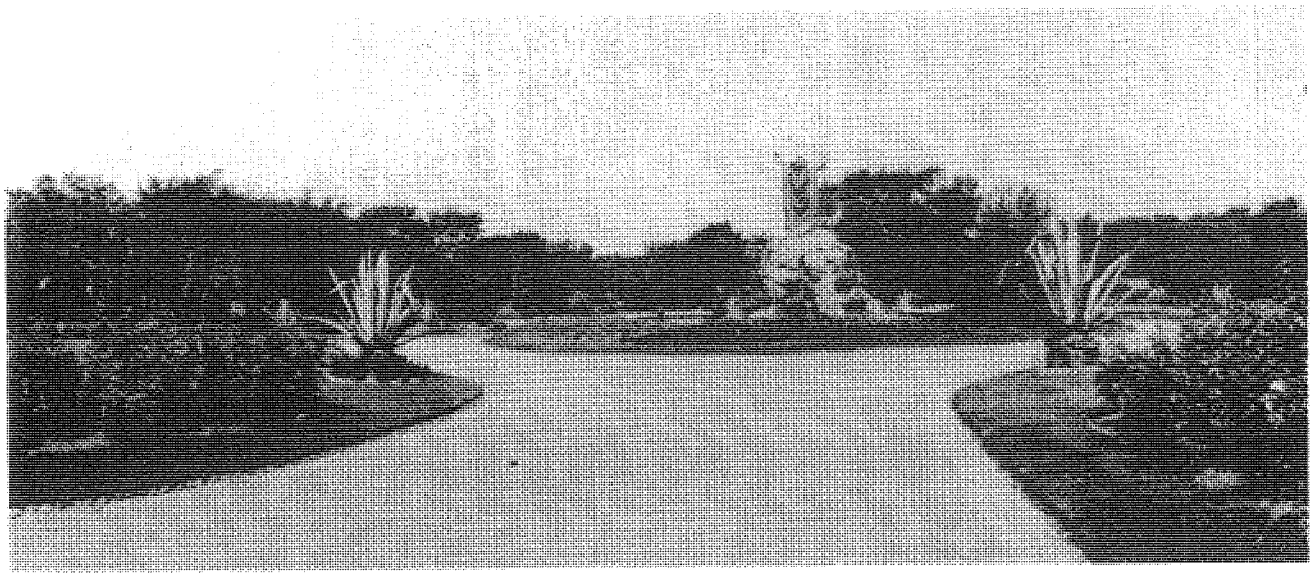
> "There are two localities set apart for floral exhibits in the open borders in Washington Park, where the design of the grounds is somewhat formal, and at no other points are flowers used. The interior of the park is treated in a simple manner, the main feature of the tree-growth being the size and beauty of the elms. A large number of ornamental trees and shrubs have been introduced, but they are so distributed as not to become prominent features of the landscape, the shrubs being confined to the borders for screens, or massed for color effects, or treated as specimens, with ample space for individual growth and expression."

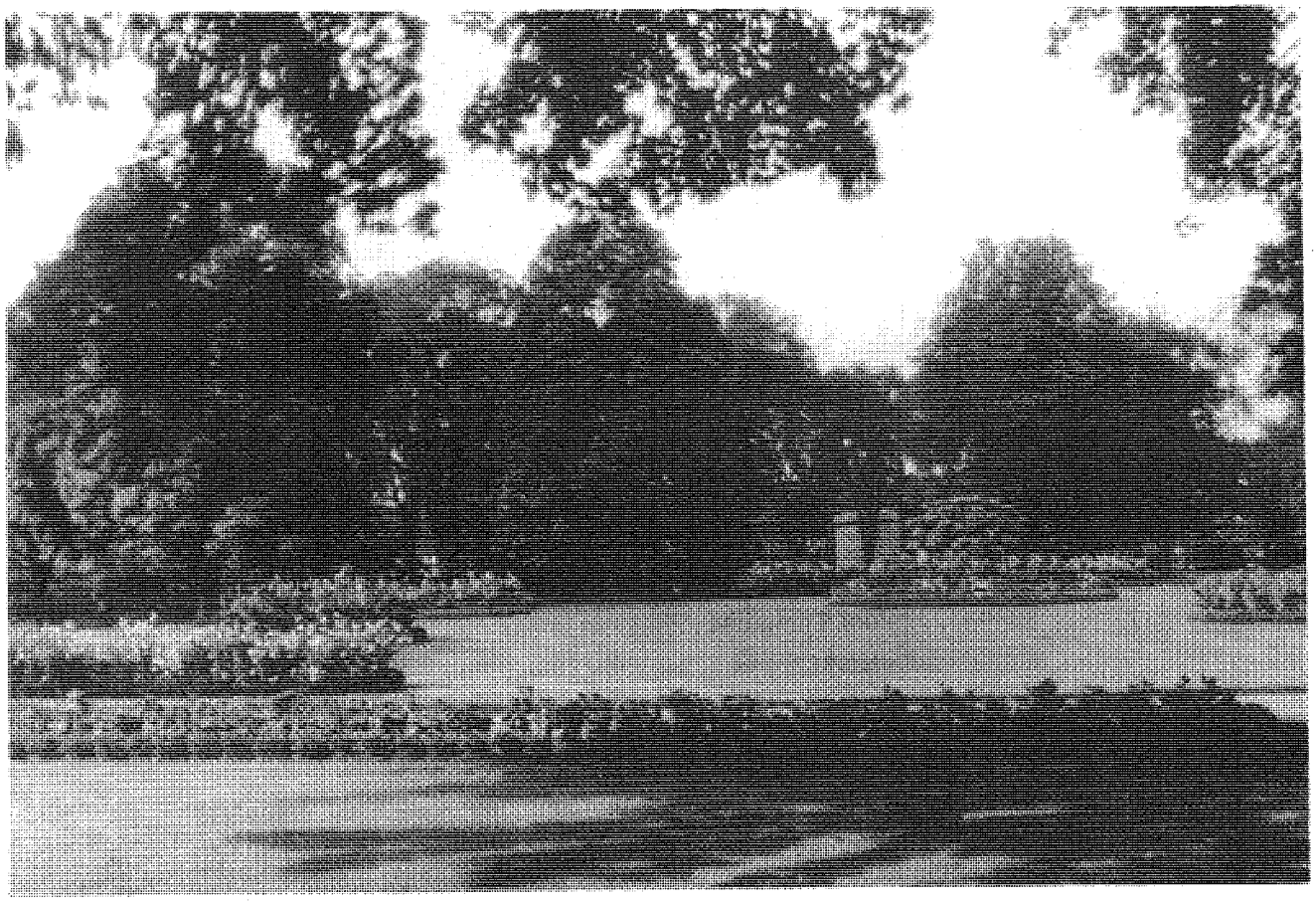
Similarly, by the time Egerton took over the overall planning of the park in 1873, there was a clear need for structures which would offer provisions for shelter, refreshment and recreation. These structures were erected at carefully selected locations and served as destinations or passages in the landscape. Several were similar in style and function to those constructed in other large "rural" parks of the same period. However, Washington Park had at least six shelters contained within its more limited 90-acre area. The earliest buildings, the refectory and drinking fountain shelter, were designed by Bogart and Culyer and built by Richard Wickham, a respected Albany carpenter. Additional structures which were constructed by 1876 included: two rustic (constructed of untrimmed logs) shelters, the croquet shelter, an elliptical arched footbridge spanning the lake, and a lake house, the largest structure erected in the park, designed by the local architect Frederick Brown. Like the refectory, the lake house was constructed in the picturesque "Stick Style." The work of the Albany iron manufacturer, T.J. Sullivan, the bridge is the only original structure still remaining in the park, although in a somewhat altered form.

Between 1879 and 1912 at least six monuments were erected in the park. Of the monuments erected under the superintendence of Egerton, the memorial to Dr. James Armsby (designed by Erastus Dow Palmer), the first monument placed in the park, and the Robert Burns statue (1888 and 1891), by Charles Calverly and George Henry Boughton, were placed somewhat discreetly so as not to dominate the landscape. The King Memorial Fountain, however, was planned as the central feature of the Flower Garden, the square area of roughly nine acres along Madison Avenue that was acquired in 1880. First promised in 1878 as a bequest of Colonel Henry L. King in memory of his distinguished father, Rufus H. King (1784-1867), banker and long-term president of the New York State Bank, it was finally dedicated after some delay in 1893. Designed by the Scottish-American sculptor, J. Massey Rhind, a third-generation sculptor, it depicts Moses at the Rock of Mt. Horeb. Later, in 1907, the boulder in memory of Colonel Marinus Willett was placed in the park along the main drive parallel to Willett Street.

Egerton's plan of 1891 includes three areas designated as gardens: the Tropical Garden near Willett Street and Lancaster, the Flower Garden designed to surround the King Memorial Fountain, and the Aquatic Garden at the eastern end of the lake. Although restricted to these locations, the floral displays at Washington Park became a prominent and highly popular feature and required considerable maintenance and expense. The popularity of bedding plants and the need for larger storage facilities led to the construction of a new greenhouse and larger storage and propagating structures in 1883 outside of the park on the New Scotland Plank Road.

By the late 1890s the park offered a succession of seasonal exhibits of plants extending from early spring to late fall. The garden surrounding the King fountain emphasized floral effects while the Willett Street garden featured sub-tropical plants to satisfy the Victorian taste for exotic effects. A short account





Top: Wide angle view of Moses Fountain setting, Flower Garden, shows tropical plant accents and bedding plant gardens. WPC
Bottom: Willett Street Garden, also known as Tropical Garden, shows decorative exotic and bedding plantings, view from Willett Street with Soldiers and Sailors Memorial in Background. WPC

on Washington Park published in The American Florist of 1903 includes a plan of the arrangement of the beds and the plants of the Willett Street Garden as it was planted that year. In 1893 a ten-day exhibit of more than fifty varieties of chrysanthemum grown in the park greenhouses was held in the lake house in mid- November. Several thousand visitors attended and the event continued to be held yearly until at least 1921.

By 1877 the park's actual construction was well advanced and the park began to require a greater outlay for maintenance. The cost to maintain the park continued to increase so that by 1899 nearly an equal amount had been spent on maintenance ($440,820) as on construction ($434,677). From 1875 until his death in 1891 the maintenance of the park roads, walks and lawns surfaces as well as the planting and floral embellishments, was under the supervision of the park gardener Michael Fink. After Fink's death Egerton assumed charge of every aspect of the management of the city's parks. His efforts in these years as superintendent were directed to improving the conditions and appearance of the park's lawns, walks and roads, surface drainage and ornamental features. The appointment gave him the authority to reorganize the labor force to produce a high level of management and his goal was to "raise the standard of maintenance, . . . the efficiency of the force, and to present to the public . . . yearly increased attractiveness without an increased expenditure."

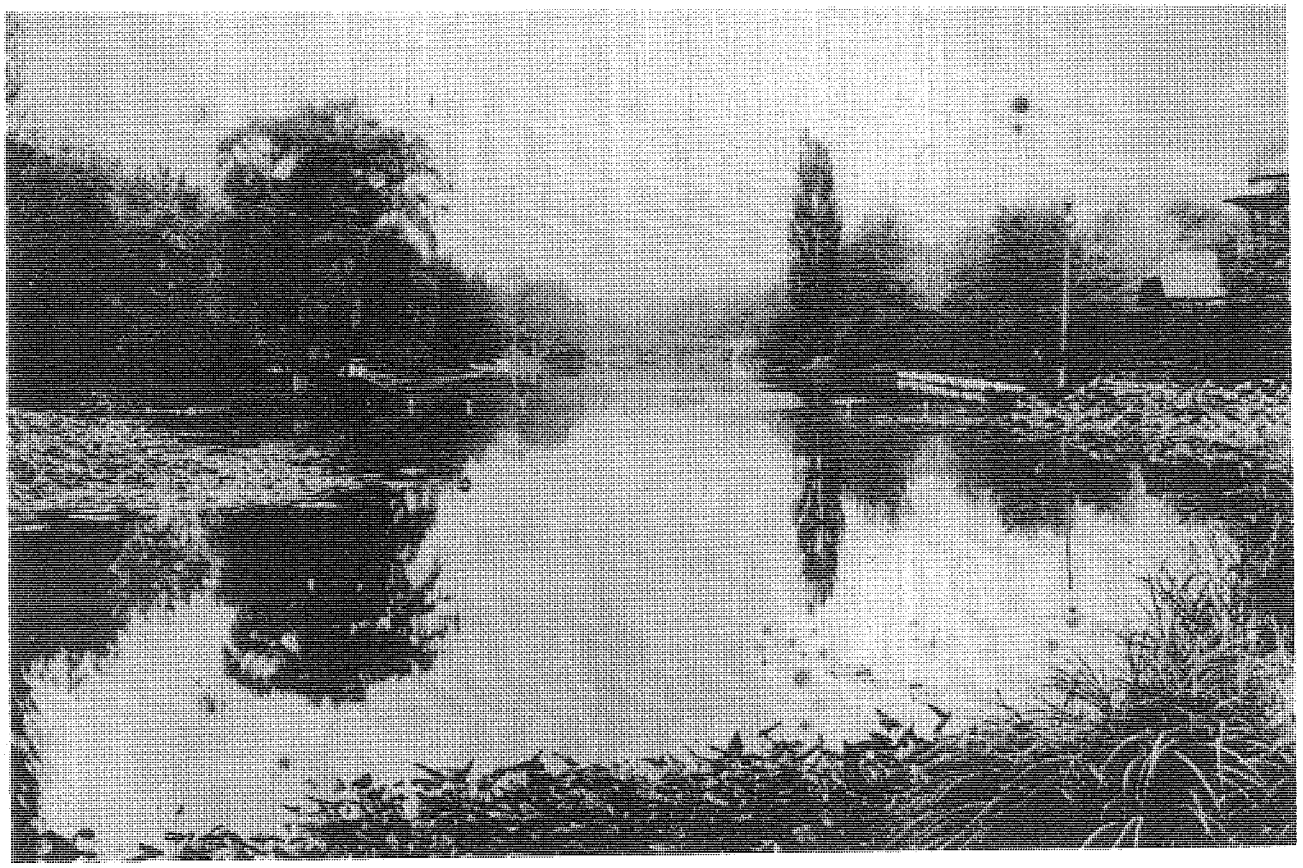
In 1900 the independent Board of Commissioners was replaced by the city run Bureau of Parks. Egerton continued as superintendent until 1908 and brought a continuity to the management of the park as the twentieth century influences began to be felt. Egerton and his staff continued the high level of maintenance for which the park was renowned. As he noted in his first report as superintendent of the newly established bureau, "If a park is allowed to deteriorate either from lack of funds or from neglect and incompetency, or both, a much larger sum, in the end, is required to restore the surfaces or buildings to their proper condition." In 1903 park planners from all over the country complimented Egerton on the beauty of the park. As one superintendent expressed:

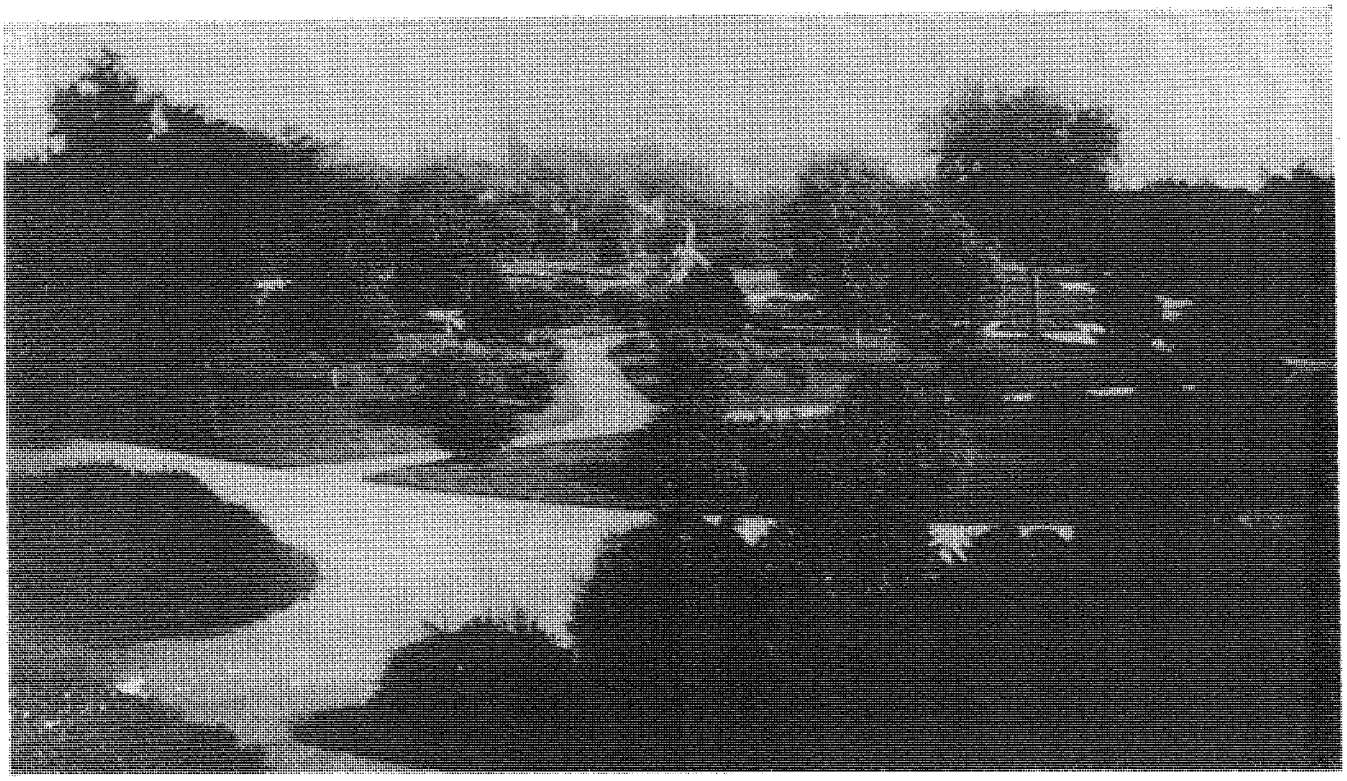
> "There was more to be seen and enjoyed in Washington Park (condensed within an area of 90 acres) than in any park of the same size in the country. A diversity of surface, a great variety of beautiful trees and shrub growths, abundance of flowers, simple, unobtrusive and useful structures and diversity of amusement; these features being distributed so as not to be too prominent for the restful enjoyment of the loiterer ... Such a park as maintained in Albany [was] more satisfactory to the average citizen than more extensive suburban parks of a rural or pastoral character, accessible only by the trolley or private conveyance."

Washington Park, in fact, became a popular regional attraction for out-of-towners as well as the local community. The commuter railroads, the Schenectady and Hudson Valley Railways, made the park more accessible. With the establishment of two new vehicular entrances at State Street, a major change was made in the park's circulation pattern. A new entrance for vehicles and bicycles was added at the Knox Street path entrance in 1900, serving as a continuation of Northern Boulevard. In 1907 a new drive and walk entrance at State Street and Lexington Avenue was completed.

D. Post-Egerton Chronology

The only permanent monument erected in the years after Egerton's retirement, the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial, was unveiled at the Northern Boulevard and State Street entrance to the park in 1912. Although located on the interior side of the new entrance drive, it was oriented toward the perimeter. The neoclassical work still functions today as a grand terminus to Northern Boulevard, while the rear of the monument terminates the Knox Street Mall. When changes were proposed in 1910s in the city,





Top: Early view of the Lake with the original Lake House, shows Aquatic Gardens with water lilies, lotus and other aquatic plants, note boats on shoreline, picturesque Willow and Poplar trees at Lake edge, c. 1890. AI-DPR
Bottom: View from Elm Grove Outlook toward Moses Fountain shows character of park landscape, c. 1900. NYS-L

as part of the local interest in civic improvement, and plans were being advanced to improve and to expand Albany's park system, Washington Park was respected for its design integrity and left intact. Arnold Brunner and Charles Downing Lay, the authors of Studies for Albany (1914) wrote that Washington Park was "in excellent condition, and ... a delightful piece of landscape design." The only proposal related to the park was for the approach along Northern Boulevard leading to the Soldiers and Sailors monument. The City Documents of 1916 noted: "In Washington Park the city has developed a park of which she is justly proud."

However, during the eighty years since Egerton's retirement Washington Park has gradually lost some of its historic integrity. While during these years there has been increased effort to promote the park, at the same time some of the major changes affecting the park have been made.

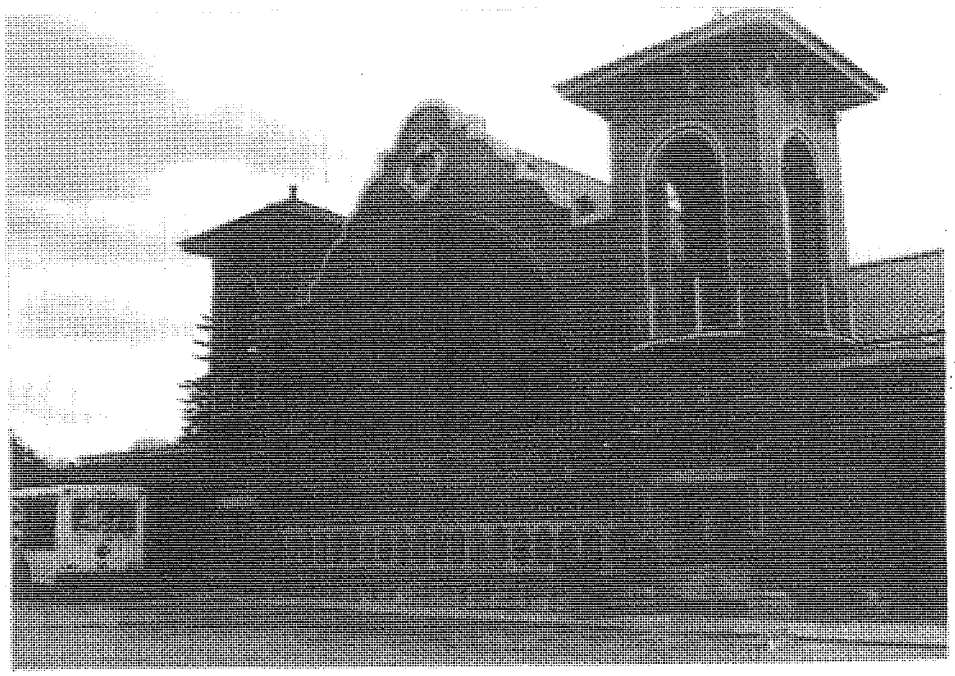
The popularity of the automobile during the course of the twentieth century has seriously affected the park, causing the park's natural environment to become increasingly urbanized. Over time the drives have been widened and resurfaced with asphalt and the increasing number of automobiles and shortage of adequate parking space in the neighborhood have resulted in the appropriation of some of the park drives for that purpose. In the late 1950s an extension of Lancaster Street into the park, which was carried out despite community opposition, resulted in the elimination of a section of the park along Willett Street that had been used as a flower garden for eighty years and resulted in opening the park up to even more traffic.

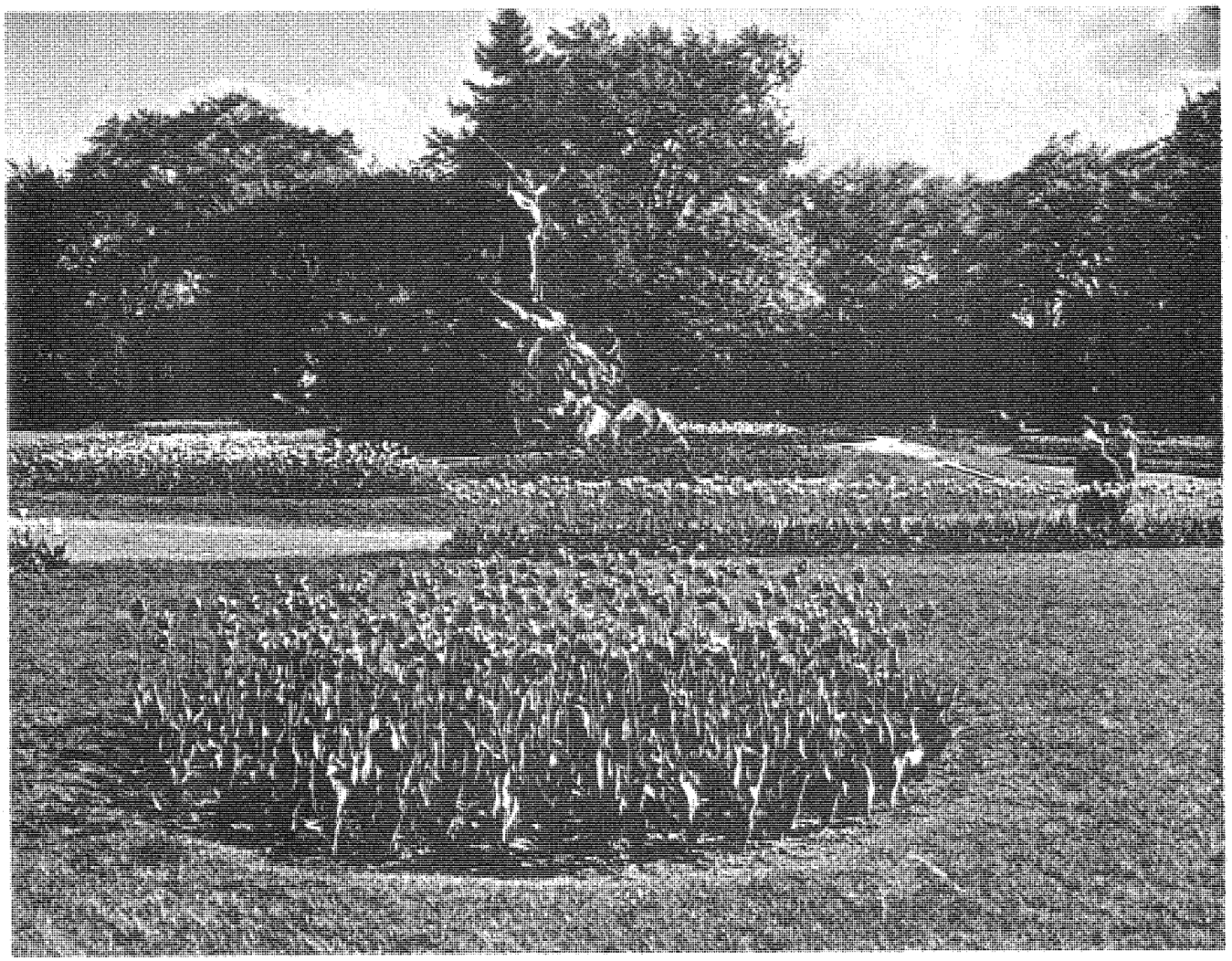
The park's original structures and furnishings were removed or replaced with new ones. The original lake house, which was fifty-five years old, was replaced in 1929 with a modern Spanish style structure designed by J. Russell White. By the 1960s only the lake footbridge remained, and the refectory, croquet and fountain shelters, and swings torn down. In 1939 the older, more historic iron and wooden benches, which were placed in the park during the warmer seasons, were replaced with concrete and wooden ones. Today, the park lacks many of its original amenities, including drinking fountains and an adequate number of benches, which made for a pleasurable visit.

The park's renowned flower displays took on renewed interest in the 1920s. The annual spring tulip display continued until World War II. Following the war, Albany resumed its planting of tulips and in 1948, in honor of its Dutch heritage, the Common Council passed an ordinance naming the tulip as Albany's official flower. The following May the first annual Tulip Festival was held to encourage tourism and civic pride. Albany's "tulipmania" can be seen as something of a mixed blessing. On the one hand it has created increased interest in and enjoyment of the park and on the other hand, it has impacted the resident wildlife and migratory bird population because of the number of patrons that attend the festival.

While new plantings have been made during the twentieth century, the beauty of the park has suffered from the loss of many of its oldest trees, which had contributed to the park's special character. The loss of the elm trees created a most noticeable change in the park's appearance. The beautiful old elms, which had been affected earlier in the century by the elm leaf beetle, were devastated as a result of the Dutch Elm Disease of the early 1950s to the 1960s. In addition, severe storms have uprooted some of the park's largest trees.

As early as 1958, in response to the extension of Lancaster Street through the Willett Street garden, citizens encouraged the formation of a "Friends of Washington Park" group. While it was not until 1984 that a group by that name was organized to promote the needs of the park, citizen and civic groups were successful in preventing the seizure of park land for the construction of a state highway in the 1960s. The designation of the park as the center of a historic district and listing on the National





Top: View of current Spanish Style Lake House from base of Terrace, shows domed performance stage, 1988. K/L
Bottom: Moses Fountain at Tulip Festival time, Albany's tulipmania, 1954. AL-CN

Register of Historic places in the 1972 brought new attention to the park's historic, cultural, and social importance. With more neighborhood involvement, the park began to be viewed as a renewed "social center for families and community." By the 1970s several neighborhood associations joined together in an effort to deal with the future of Washington Park. The Washington Park Conservancy was founded in 1985, the same year the Washington Park Historic District was included within the newly designated Albany Urban Cultural Park, a special program of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. A legacy from the last century, Washington Park continues to be used and appreciated. As it is studied and interpreted, its historic fiber and character will be better understood and protected.

IV. EXISTING CONDITIONS

A detailed visual inspection of existing conditions in Washington Park was carried out in January and February of 1988. A thorough record of four bodies of information was compiled: 1. Circulation, 2. Built Elements 3. Landscape Composition, and 4. Soils and Water. The entire park was recorded on **Exhibit 1: Existing Conditions, Circulation and Built Elements** and **Exhibit 2: Existing Conditions, Landscape Composition**. The exhibits are included here for your reference. They serve as a record of the existing conditions in Washington Park early in 1988.

A. Circulation and Built Elements

On Exhibit 1: Circulation and Built Elements, all visible built elements are recorded. The elements include: drive and traffic lights, high intensity sports lights, overhead wires, chain link fences, signs, monuments, structures, play equipment and all the paths, drives, drive parking, pavement and traffic barriers that comprise the circulation system.

Since 1900, four changes have occurred at the edges of the park that have altered the arrangement the entries and exits. Streets were opened extending Sprague Place, Northern Boulevard and Lancaster Streets into the park in areas originally designed as path and landscape areas. The former entry and exit at the corner of State and Willett Streets was removed. In addition, projects in 1970's significantly altered the use of park drives by three pavement reconfigurations and numerous bollard and chain drive closures. As a result of these changes, vehicular circulation on park drives is divided into drives open to public and drives open to service and security vehicles. The drives in each category are portrayed on the exhibit as "Full Access Drives" or "Service Access Drives."

The park drives are surfaced in asphalt and are in generally fair condition, with some poor and some good areas. About one-third of the drives have relatively new granite curbs. The balance are edged with grass. Former cobblestone swales and drainage grates are apparent in some areas and may be covered with paving, mud or grass in others.

Parallel parking for area residents is currently allowed on public road edges. Curbs, bollards, wood guard rails and railroad tie barriers restrict parking to paved surfaces where they occur. Where no barriers exist 6 to 12 feet of roadside landscape is damaged from car tires.

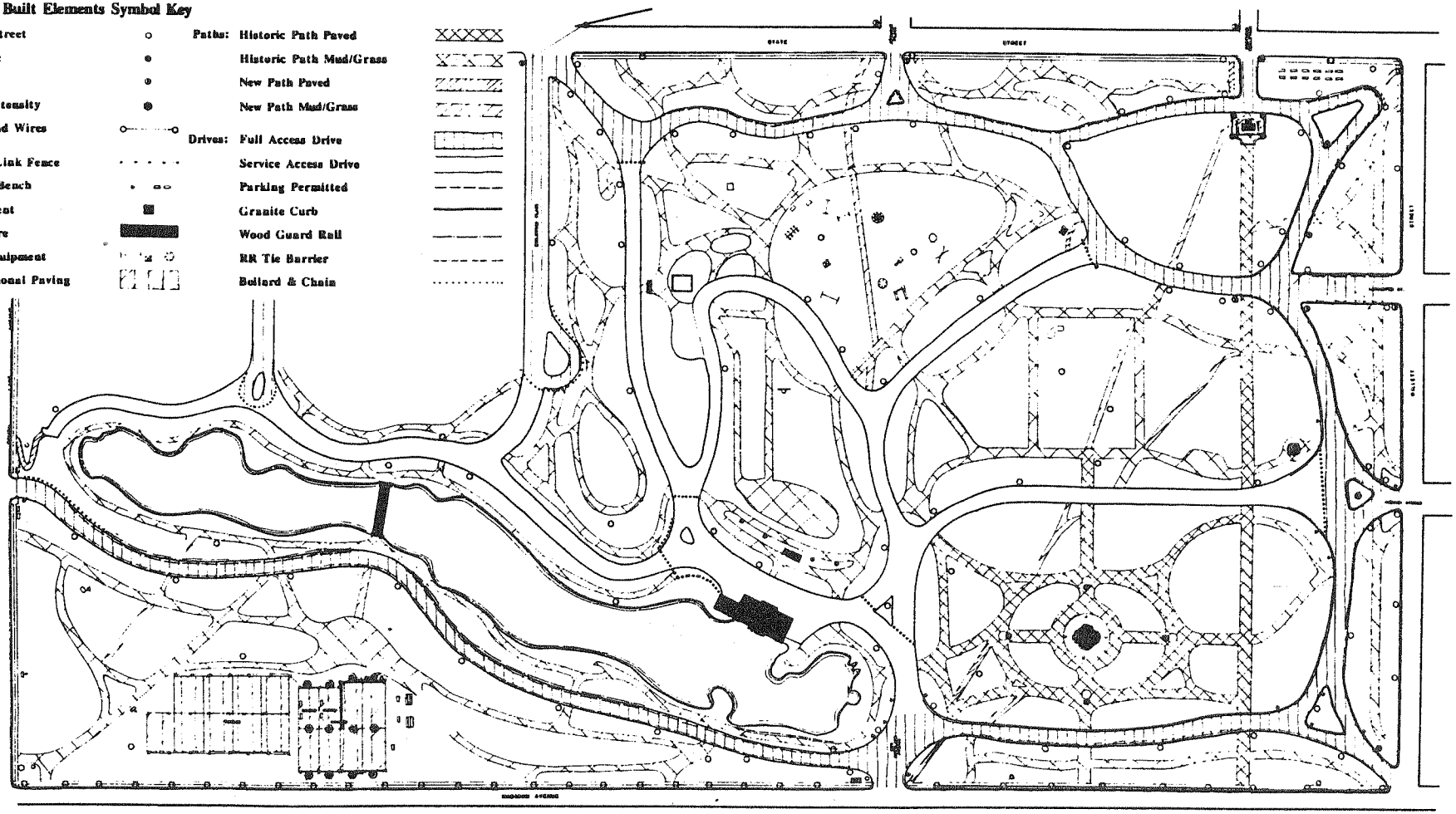
The park path system is annotated in four categories: historic path paved, historic path mud/grass, new path paved, and new path mud/grass. These categories represent the materials of each path and also

Circulation & Built Elements Symbol Key

Lights: Drive/Street; Historic; Traffic; High Intensity; Overhead Wires; Chain Link Fence; Sign / Bench; Monument; Structure; Play Equipment; Recreational Paving

Paths: Historic Path Paved; Historic Path Mud/Grass; New Path Paved; New Path Mud/Grass

Drives: Full Access Drive; Service Access Drive; Parking Permitted; Granite Curb; Wood Guard Rail; RR Tie Barrier; Bollard & Chain



N W E S

Historic Landscape Report & Preservation Plan for WASHINGTON PARK

for the WASHINGTON PARK CONSERVANCY, ALBANY, NEW YORK

0 350 700

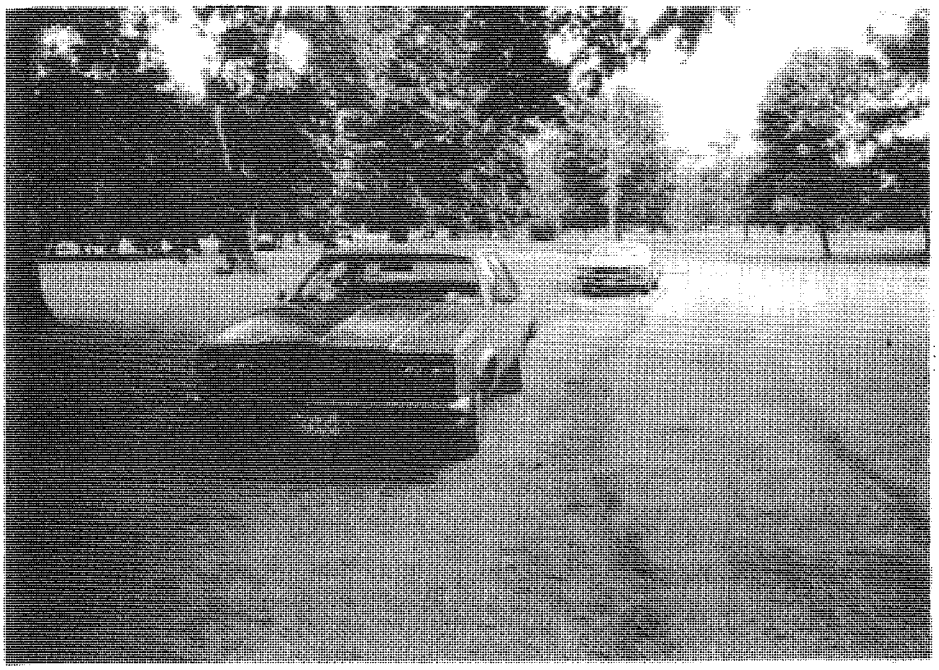
prepared by KESTENBAUM LANDSCAPES JOINT VENTURE

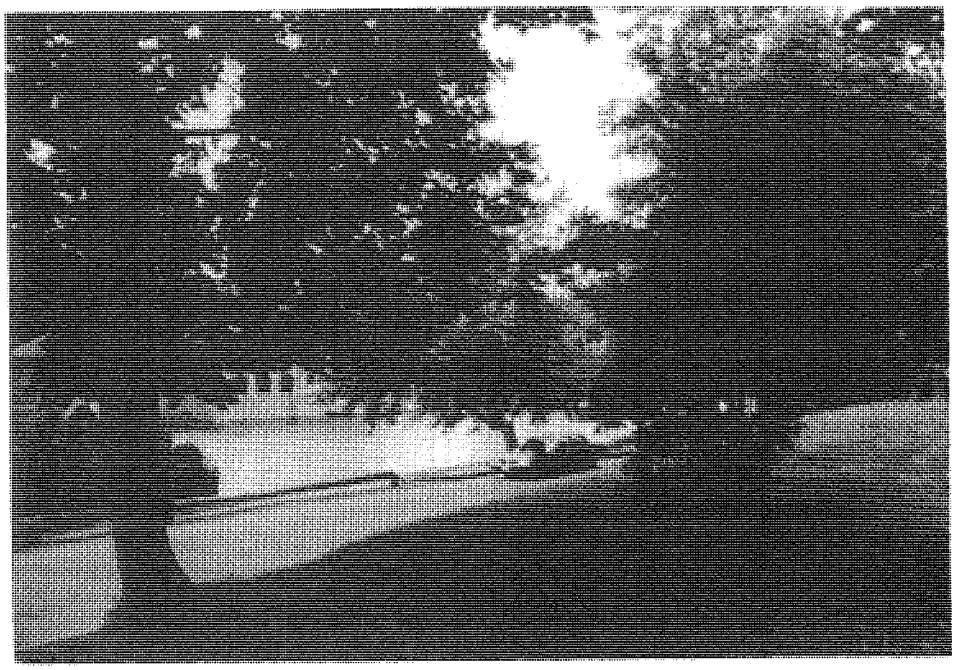
Patricia M. O'Donnell, Landscape Preservation Planner Joy Kestenbaum, Landscape Historian Charles E. Beveridge, Consulting Historian

1987-88 Scale 1"=100'

EXISTING CONDITIONS: CIRCULATION & BUILT ELEMENTS

1





Top: Park drive without curbs, shows vehicular compaction damage ten feet from road surface, 1988. K/L
Bottom: South Lake Drive vehicular parking on paved surface, note telephone pole barrier, 1988. K/L

their function or dysfunction. In general, historic paths are those shown on the 1891 Egerton Plan and additional paths are shown as "new". Historic path construction appears to have been composed of coursed gravel with fine stone screenings as the topmost layer. The intent was to have well-drained, all-weather paths allowing for convenient, pleasurable use in all seasons.

The original paths of Washington Park, averaging ten feet in width, were graded into the land and are generally depressed from the surrounding landscape. The excavated material from the paths appears to have been used along the path sides to grade these higher. This extensive grading is a unique aspect of historic Washington Park. It defines the pathways and subtly directs the pedestrian to use the path rather than move over the landscape surround. The current disrepair of most historic paths compounded by drainage and erosion problems, leaves many paths unpassable, especially in wet weather or during the winter months. Non-original paths noted on Exhibit 1 are "desire" paths; routes frequently used that eventually wear down and become visible. The development of desire paths in Washington Park relate to desired pedestrian destinations and to the dysfunction of many historic paths.

Recreational paving is utilized for court surfaces on the sixteen courts located in the southwest corner of the park. Included are thirteen tennis courts, two walls with four handball courts and two basketball courts. The courts are edged with chain link fence in various conditions from poor to good.

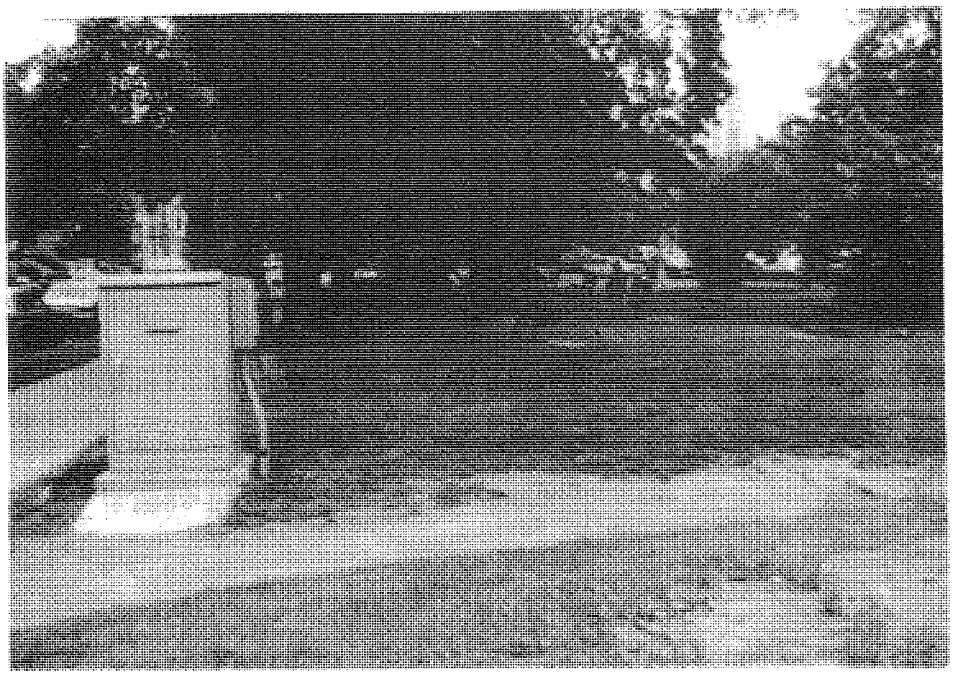
The existing drainage system was observed, in part, during the course of the field work. Along historic path and drive edges some original drainage gratings are evident, although most catch basins appeared to be filled with silt and debris. In Washington Park and other historic parks developed in the late 19th century, small cast iron pipes were often used for the storm sewer system. Today these pipes are most likely filled and/or corroded. Because of the depressed profile of pedestrian path grading in Washington Park, subsurface drainage is required for proper function. Further investigation will be needed to determine the exact conditions and recommend specific rehabilitation measures.

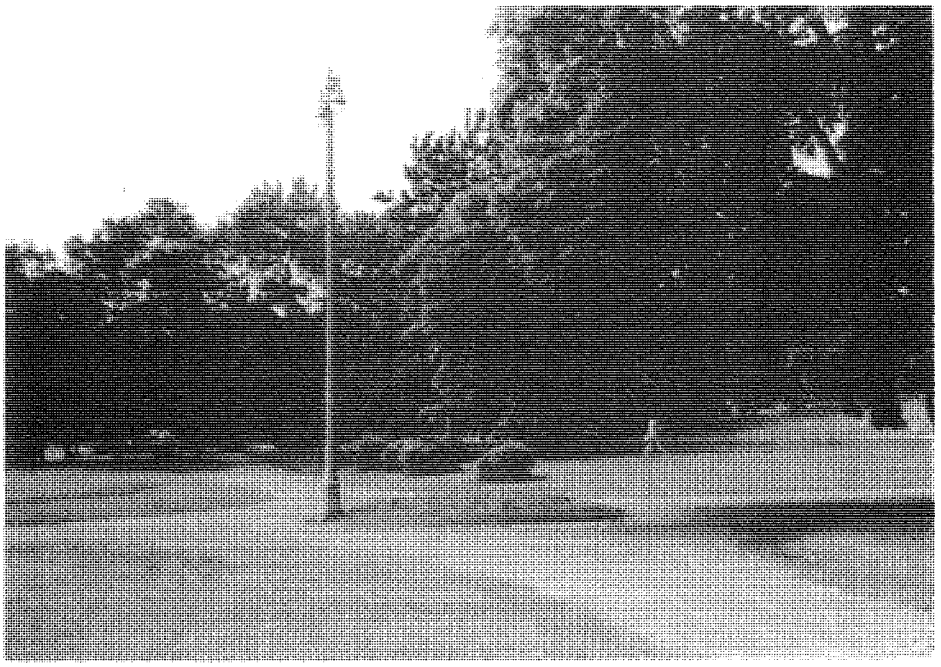
Four categories of lighting were delineated on the exhibit: Drive/Street, Historic, Traffic and High Intensity. The lighting within Washington Park occurs primarily along the drives. In the Drive/Street category 85 lightposts are located within the park and 40 were noted on city street frontage. The lightposts along Madison Avenue are connected by overhead power supply wires. These lights are all functional, modern cobra-head types, approximately 25 feet high with an arm-mounted down light. Six of these high lightposts are located within the park landscape, two along the lakeside, two in the playground meadow and two on the former Croquet Ground. They are too large for placement in the landscape and appear out of place in these locations and elsewhere when the scenic landscape is interrupted by these lights. No nine to fifteen foot pedestrian lights are found in the park.

Four historic lights are located at the King Fountain Site. Their design appears to date to the early 20th century. These lights are about twenty-two feet high. The decorative pole is surmounted by a cross arm and two drop lights. Four decorative replica historic lights, installed in 1987, also surround the Soldiers and Sailors Monument. The iron standards stand on granite plinths and are topped with multiple globe luminaires. Historic views show similar light standards in these corner locations.

Traffic lights occur within the park only at the Lancaster Street intersection where three lights and their accompanying overhead wires are found. Traffic lights on the park perimeter occur along State Street at Englewood Place, Sprague Place and Northern Boulevard.

Twelve high-intensity lights for night time sports use are located at the edges and center of the lower section of courts in the southwest corner of the park.





Top: State Street entrance showing desire path, utility trunk box, and cluster of benches, 1988. K/L
Bottom: Pedestrian walking on desire path through Moses Fountain sector, note remnant shrubs and decorative double-drop light pole, 1988. K/L

Thirty-one benches of four types are located in Washington Park. Ten simple metal pipe and board fences are concentrated along former path edges near the corner of State and Willett Streets. This is the largest concentration of benches in the park. It is also a non-original location for a grouping of benches. Three of these, in the southwest corner of the park, appear to be the same design as those shown in early park photographs. They are in poor condition. Wooden slats and metal frames are predominate materials. Four benches at the Lake Drive entrance are constructed of wooden slats and concrete supports. Twelve benches, including three of cast fiberglass, are located individually and in small groups around the playing courts. Benches were notably absent from the paths around the Lake, the King Fountain and the Mall. Early views show that these areas had numerous benches for park users to sit and enjoy the surrounding landscape and gardens.

Numerous traffic-control and street-name signs are located in the park. Fourteen signs at three entry drive intersection are located on Exhibit 2. This proliferation of signs clutter views of the park landscape and urbanizes the natural park setting. Informational and interpretive signage does not exist in Washington Park. A policy regarding the type and location of signs within the park should be developed.

Five structures are found in Washington Park. The primary structure within the park is the Boat House Pavilion. Dedicated in 1929, it replaced an earlier Lake House. It houses the park management and maintenance operations, a seasonal refreshment stand, public restrooms, an assembly room and a bandshell. The Lake Bridge is the other important structure in the park. The bridge has stone abutments and an iron structure and spans the Lake. The wooden decking is relatively new. The entire bridge appears to be in good condition. Three other minor structures within the park are the concrete block lighting booth at the foot of the Terraces, the metal and plexiglass bus shelter at the New Scotland entrance and the retaining walls and Handball court walls in the court complex.

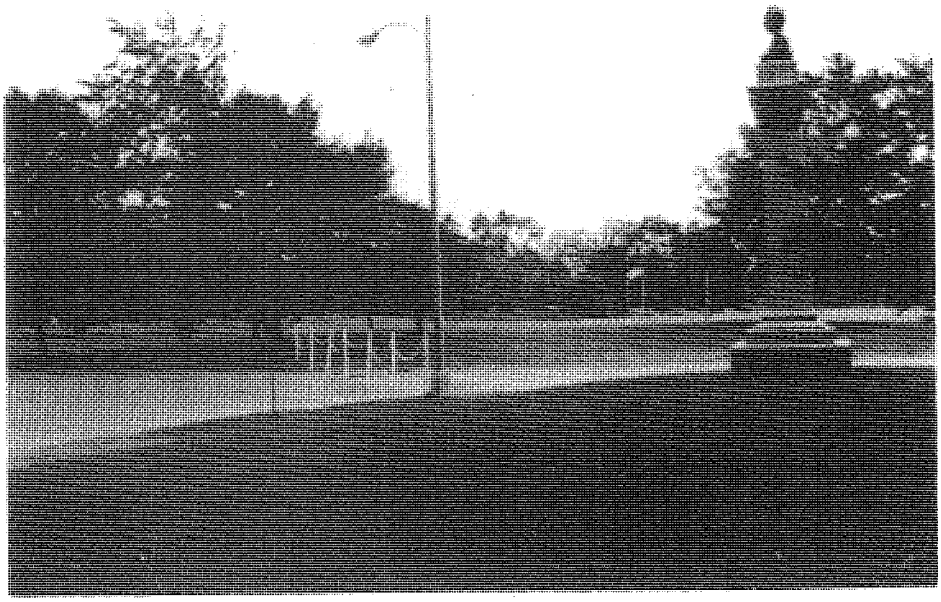
Partial foundations of the Refectory, the Croquet Shelter and the Swings are visible upon close inspection. These foundations are shown in approximate outline on the exhibit. The slate flooring of the Rustic Shelter on the Meadow and the Drinking Fountain shelter can also be accurately located.

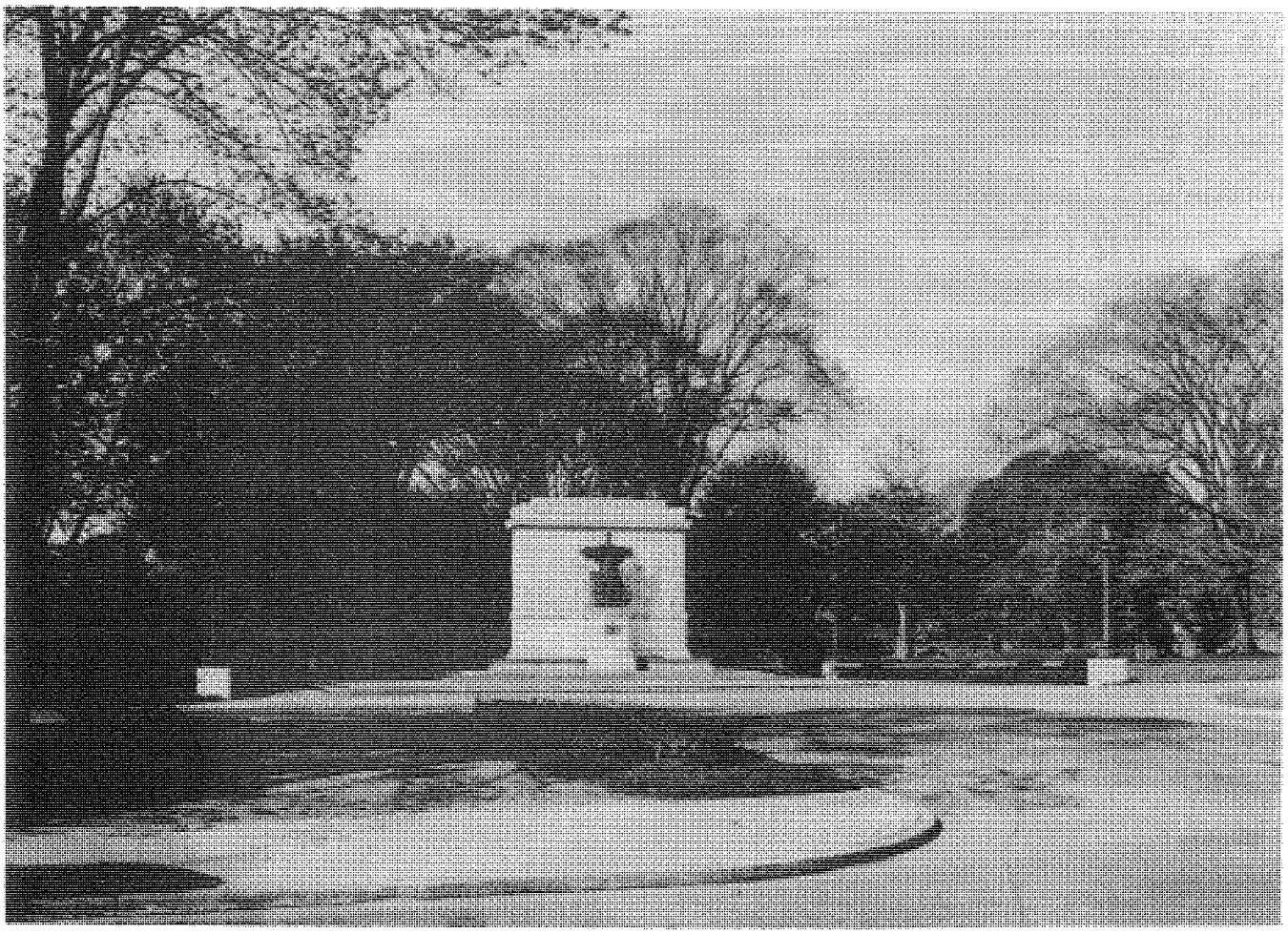
Five monuments are located in Washington Park today. The Armsby Memorial, Robert Burns Memorial and Moses Fountain were sited in the park prior to the turn of the century. Two others, the Willett Monument and the war veteran's Soldiers and Sailors Memorial came into the park at later dates.

The Robert Burns Monument is a full size bronze statue of Burns atop a granite plinth. It is located on the north west corner of the Hudson Avenue intersection. A circular path surrounds it and the trees of the Mall form a back drop for it. Early views shows a former planting of low shrubs in the lawn outside edges of the circular path. The Burns Monument appears to be in very good condition.

The Moses Fountain Monument, called the King Fountain on the historic plan, is a multiple-figured bronze statue mounted on a large rock formation. A large scale piece, the entire landscape around the monument, an approximate 450 foot by 650 foot area, comprises its designed setting. It was in fair condition and a monument restoration effort was carried out by the Conservancy in 1988.

The Soldiers and Sailors Memorial is a highly important focal element in the park. It functions as a focal object and visual terminus for the formal Mall. The monument itself is granite, marble and bronze. It was restored in 1986-87 and is in very good condition. A new pavement panel and four decorative lights form a frame around the monument. Long wooden benches were formerly placed at the corners of the pavement and are visible in early photographs. Historic photographs and postcard views show the memorial backed by towering elms.





Top: View of Meadow showing Armsby Monument, Cobra Head light pole and bollard and chain road closing.
Bottom: View of Soldiers and Sailors Memorial from State Street, unveiled in 1912, shows open, paved space, benches, four decorative light posts on stone plinths and Mall Elms as a frame behind the memorial. WPC

The Willett Monument is a large granite boulder with a bronze plaque. The plaque could be cleaned but the monument is otherwise in good condition. The current location next to the park drive is inappropriate. The character of the monument would be best complemented by a more rustic setting.

The Armsby Monument is a bronze bust atop a marble plinth. Some staining from the bronze is apparent on the stone. The monument is sited inappropriately, at the corner of a drive intersection at the northeastern edge of the meadow in an area formerly devoted to scenic landscape views. A more suitable location should be sought.

Various types of play equipment are randomly scattered around the Meadow. Swings, a teeter totter, slides, climbing structures and other elements are located at distances of thirty to one hundred feet from each other. The predominant material is tubular metal. The equipment appears to be in fully functional condition and is painted red, white and blue. This equipment is visually obtrusive and inappropriately sited.

In summary, the elements within Washington Park portrayed on Exhibit 1: Circulation and Built Elements are in fair to very good condition. These annotated elements do not appear to be causing any hazardous situations for park users. They appear to be functioning as intended with the exception of the subsurface drainage system and many historic paths as noted in the discussion above.

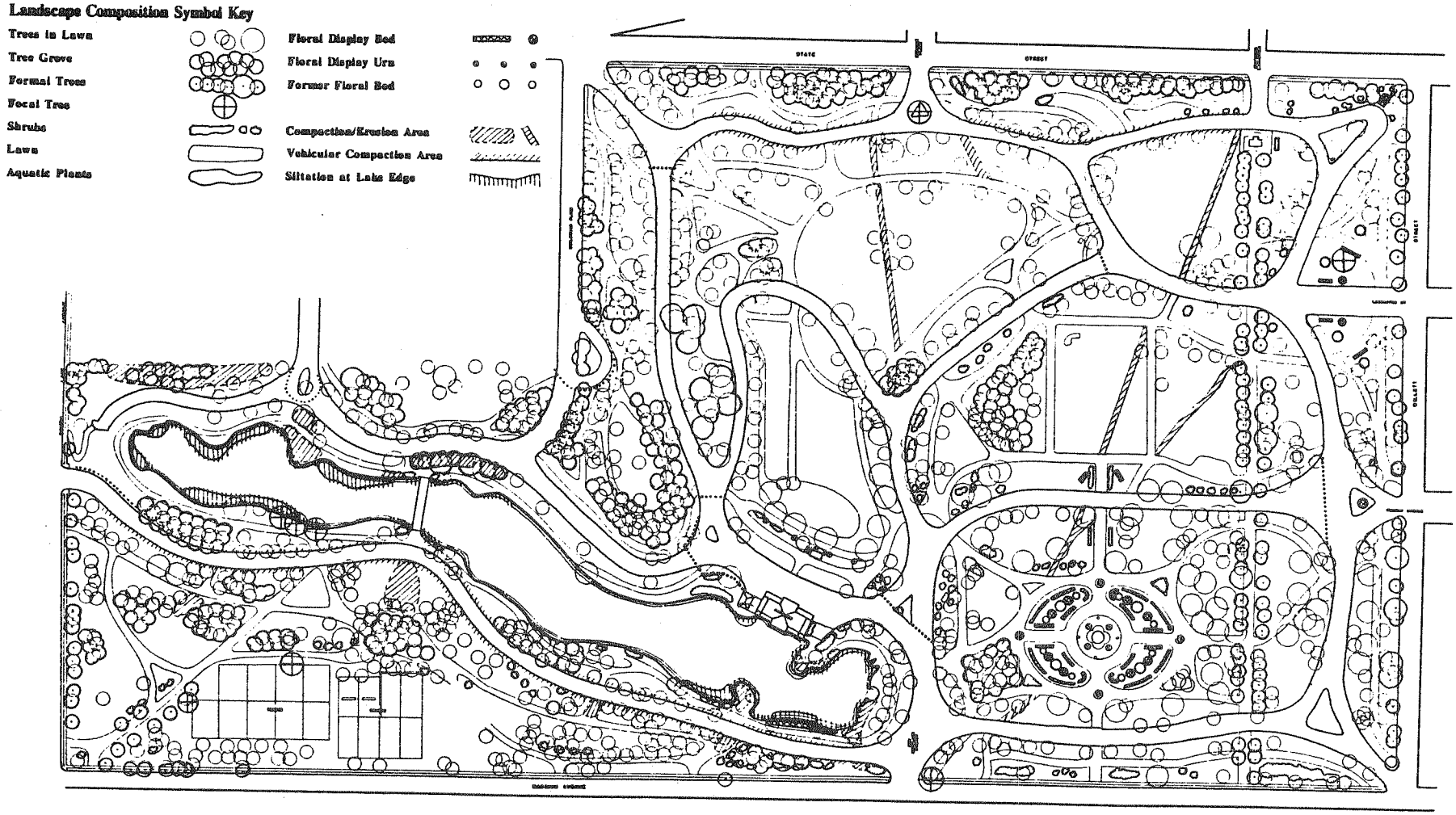
B. Landscape Composition

The three key elements of the nineteenth century public landscape designed in the naturalistic style are woodland, water and meadow. Each of these was and is represented in the landscape composition of Washington Park. These three landscape types were contrasted to the highly articulated, formal garden landscapes of the Moses Fountain and the Willett Street Gardens. Topography and vegetation are the primary defining elements of the park landscape.

The vegetation, soil and water of Washington Park was observed in the park and recorded on Exhibit 2: Landscape Composition. Soils were categorized as compaction or erosion areas and as vehicular compaction areas. The Lake was observed for edge condition, soil stability and siltation. The symbol key for Exhibit 2 includes vegetation described by type: Trees in Lawn, Tree Grove, Formal Trees, Focal Tree, Shrubs, Lawn, Aquatic Plants, Floral Display Beds and Urns. These landscape composition types were used because:

- they can be compared to the landscape composition of the park portrayed in historic plans and views;
- they have distinct visual qualities, and;
- they imply discrete management and maintenance strategies and intensities.

Soils were categorized as compaction or erosion areas and as vehicular compaction areas. Compaction areas are caused by detrimental pedestrian use. Erosion areas occur when lack of vegetation on slopes creates unstable soils and overland flow carries soils away. Other drainage problems, combining subsurface and overland flows, can cause erosion. Erosion or compaction on slopes is often a combined result generally exhibited with bare soils and exposed tree roots. A good example of this situation is the steep slope between the Maple Grove Outlook and the Bridge. A large area on the face of the slope is only partially vegetated and the tree roots at the top of the slope are exposed showing



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Historic Landscape Report & Preservation Plan for WASHINGTON PARK

for the WASHINGTON PARK CONSERVANCY, ALBANY, NEW YORK

prepared by KESTENBAUM LANDSCAPES JOINT VENTURE

Patricia M. O'Donnell, Landscape Preservation Planner Joy Kestenbaum, Landscape Historian Charles E. Beveridge, Consulting Historian

0 350 700

1987-88 Scale 1"=100'

EXISTING CONDITIONS : LANDSCAPE COMPOSITION

2

a soil loss of at least one foot. The washed-out soil is most likely contributing to the Lake edge siltation. In a few cases the original grading of sloped segments of path combined with subsurface drainage failure have led to a loss of material ranging from a few inches to several feet from these paths.

The erosion areas that are shown directly around the Lake are in four locations where scenic views are most pleasing. Three of the four are shown in the 1891 Egerton Plan. These areas simply show the results of intensive use.

Bare soils that occur on relatively flat areas are the result of compaction. Compacted areas in Washington Park are linear path elements that define pedestrian movement patterns. These paths were mapped as part of circulation on Exhibit 1, but are included here because of their effect on soil. Vehicular compaction areas are apparent along curbless drives. Cars pull off the paved surface and onto the road edge landscape because no barrier holds them to the road. Significant deterioration of the roadside landscape occurs. Rutting causes puddling, runoff and soil loss.

The water element of the park is the Lake, a six-acre naturalistic feature. Exhibit 2 records the areas of the Lake edge where siltation is apparent, which often occurs in conjunction with aquatic plants. The predominant water-margin plant found at the Lake edge is Common Reed, Phragmites communis with smaller quantities of narrow-leaved Cattail. Since phragmites grows to heights over six feet and covers increasingly larger areas over time, the scenic quality and ecological health of the Lake are at risk.

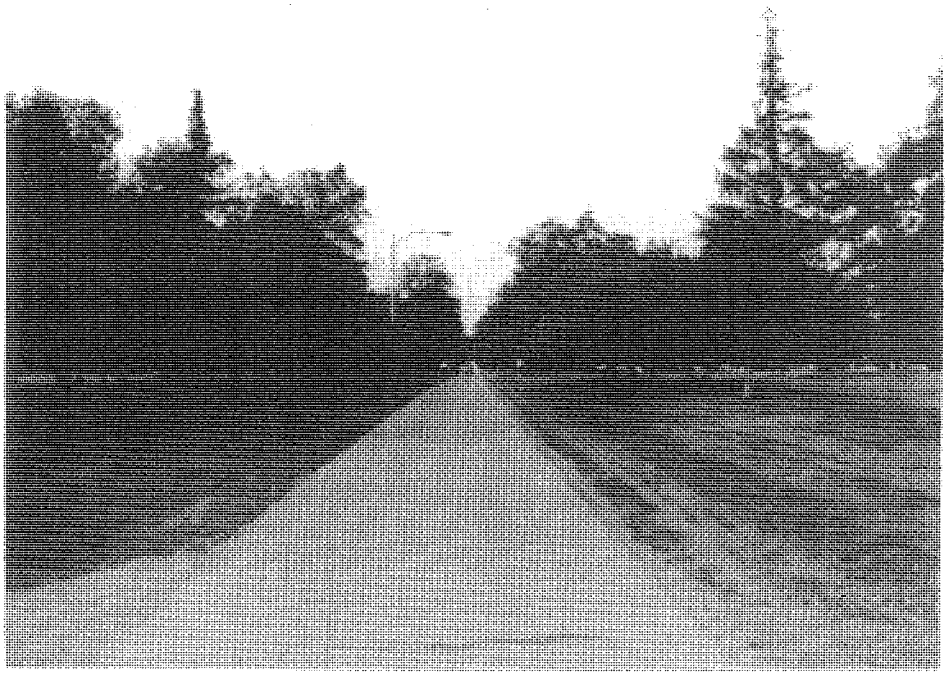
The siltation into the Lake originates from any slope surrounding the Lake that drains into it. Stabilization of all soils in the Lake watershed would need to be accomplished prior to any action to remedy the siltation build-up. A 1940 Gerber collection photograph shows the lake drained. The sides appear to be sloped to about a 30% angle with a depth of about eight or ten feet.

The Washington Park trees are in a situation common to historic landscapes; much of the remaining original tree material is mature or in decline; volunteer trees of aggressive varieties have taken hold and range from saplings to fifty years of age; additional trees have been planted with little regard for the historic plan or scenic intent, often utilizing the wrong trees in the wrong place. An abundance of historic evidence, combined with the existing mature vegetation, can create specific guidance for future tree planting and maintenance activity. The ideal situation for the tree inventory of the park is a range of trees of all ages, of historically accurate types in appropriate locations.

The Trees in Lawn category represents about eight hundred and fifty trees shown on the base map. These are all trees planted informally with a surround of lawn. Approximately 125 of these are large, older canopy trees shown on the plan. The field review indicated that a higher percentage, possibly half, of the trees in the park are seventy to one hundred years old. These trees are a priceless asset.

Eight Focal Trees were noted on the exhibit. These trees, and others of similar quality, are visual landmarks in the park. Such trees significantly enhance an area of the park and deserve special attention in a preventive maintenance program. One component of the tree inventory effort would be the mapping of all the older, visually important trees.

Tree Groves are a key element in the Washington Park landscape. Around the Lake, at the outlooks and around the perimeter were the three historic grove planting locations. The groves shown on the exhibit indicate the remnants of these locations plus five more recent groves. The three Eastern Larch groves around the Lake are especially noteworthy. The former Maple Grove now includes mixed varieties and the Elm Grove is gone. The third general location of grove plantings was along the State Street



Top: View of existing Mall with Crabapple trees and asphalt pavement, 1988. K/L
Bottom: View of Mall with mature Elms, benches, simple fence and people promenading, c. 1900. MK

to discrete landscape areas or destinations. Developed in sections according to the sequence of their acquisition, areas of the park offered scenic enjoyment and organized activities. The Egerton plan lists twenty-one features within the park landscape that supported three types of uses; 1. active/exertive, 2. passive/recreative and 3. gregarious. This terminology reflects both historic Olmstedian vocabulary and contemporary use terms.

Active/exertive recreation focused on the health benefits of exercise. Passive/recreative enjoyment of the landscape scenery of the park was intended to refresh and re-create the urban dweller by providing a natural environment that was different from the surrounding city. Gregarious uses include social recreation enjoyed with family and friends. Washington Park provided for all these recreation types.

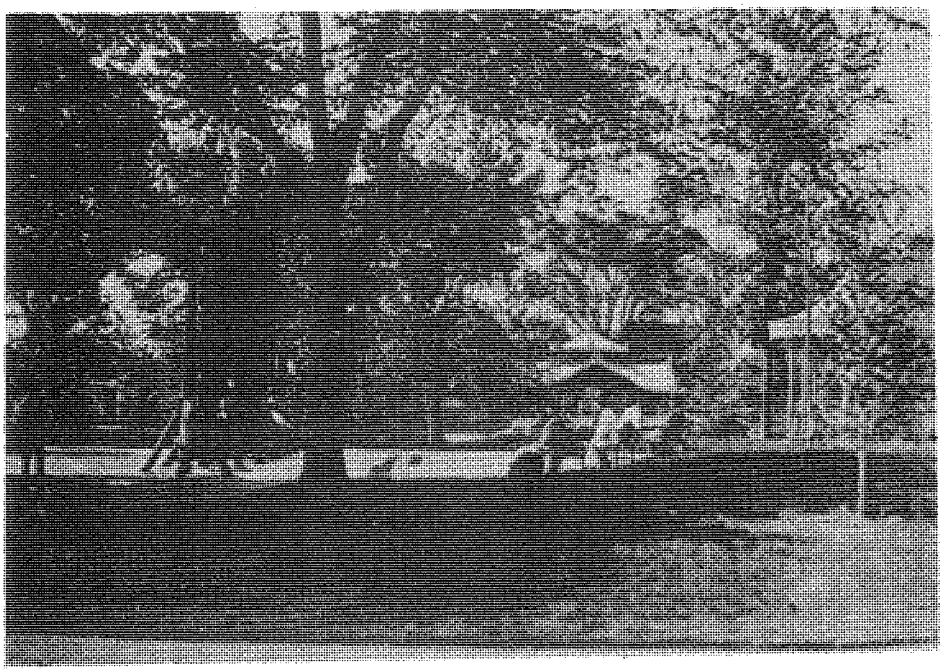
A. Historic Park Use

Over time, uses of the park evolved, with some constancy, some change and some augmentation. For example, the Croquet Ground, a former burial ground bordered by elms, was set aside for croquet players, but the Commissioners also permitted its use as a parade ground, and for the competitive drills of the Albany Academy Cadets. Croquet was played through the 1930s but fell out of favor in recent decades. The elms surrounding the court were lost in the 1960s and the space defining rectangular walks are barely visible today. However, croquet is experiencing a resurgence and interest in reviving this original use has been expressed.

The original Lake House was opened to the public in 1876. It served as a boat house, public restroom, refreshment location and performance setting. The performances were concerts, staged in the third story open balcony, which faced the terraced hillside. Uses of the Lake have included boating, ice skating and, in the 1880s, ice curling. Curling was played at the west end of the Lake and was promoted by the members of the Curling Club of Albany. Fishing derbies were held in the 1960s. Over the years row boats and, more recently, paddle boats have been available at the lake house through the Park Department or from concessionaires as a rental service. Walking or sitting on benches along the lakeside, to enjoy the water views and the Aquatic Garden was a common and constant use.

Band concerts, originally funded by private subscription, were held outdoors in 1873. After 1876 they were performed from the bandstand surmounting the Lake House, facing the terraced hillside. The current Boat House, dedicated in 1929, included in its design a half-domed stage area, also facing the terraces, used for band concerts and performances. The stage is currently unused, but summer theater performances are staged on a temporary structure on the drive surface. Throughout the park's history the variations on the setting for performances have generally utilized the lake house and faced the terraces.
The Lake View Outlook shown on the Egerton plan was originally known as Deer Paddock Hill. In 1874 a Deer House was erected and nine deer were installed in 1875. The accommodations were already inadequate and, while the development of a varied animal collection was suggested, this small zoological collection was phased out. In many other historic parks early deer paddocks became large zoos.

Seasonal floral displays and flower beds were a popular feature of Washington Park from its earliest years down to the present. By 1891 there were three special gardens: 1. the Tropical Garden, along Willett Street between State and Hudson Streets; 2. the Flower Garden, surrounding the King Memorial Fountain; and 3. the Aquatic Gardens in the Lake. The most decorative of these was the Willett Street Garden or Tropical Garden. The central area of this garden was lost, however, when the Lancaster Street was extended into the park in 1958.



Top: Wooden Swings, Croquet Shelter and small Drinking Fountain Shelter viewed from the Mall, c. 1900. AI-I

Bottom: Young park picnickers at the ornate Drinking Fountain Shelter, note the Refectory in the background, photographer J.F. Van Buren c. 1900. AI-I

In 1880 the Knox Street property was acquired and laid out as a floral garden. In 1893 the Moses Fountain was installed as the focal element of this ornamental space. The popularity of floral displays led to a chrysanthemum show in the fall of 1893, a tradition that continued through the 1920s. Several thousand flowering bulbs were planted each fall in the Moses Fountain gardens and the Willett Street gardens although the numbers and quality varied depending on available resources. In 1947 the tulip was chosen as Albany's official flower, in honor of the Dutch Queen and Albany's Dutch origins. That year 65,000 bulbs were planted, many originating from Holland. Two years later, 1949, the first annual Tulip Festival was held, drawing large numbers of visitors to the park. In recent years through Conservancy and Parks Department efforts, annual display gardens have experienced a resurgence.

Specific areas of the park were reserved for tennis. The sport was first introduced in 1889 on the Lawn Tennis Ground, which was located along Madison Street near Lake Avenue. By 1890 there were fourteen courts in this area. Another lawn area near State Street on the east side of the park was also used for lawn tennis for a brief period. In the early twentieth century the Madison Avenue courts were regraded and surfaced with clay. Asphalt surfacing appeared in 1957. New paved courts were constructed in the 1970s for tennis, handball and basketball.

The Children's Playground was initially located near the Refectory. Twentieth century photographs show large slides and swings west of the Meadow near the Refectory. Large "old-fashioned" swings were located southeast of the Croquet Ground. These swings held several people and were a very popular feature. Today a variety of play equipment is widely spaced around the former open meadow east of the Refectory site. Many of the park uses over time are documented in the Conservancy's historic photograph archive.

B. Contemporary Park Use

The park as it exists and is used today is the baseline for the future. Contemporary use of the park was discerned in three ways: by reviewing the 1987 "A Day in the Life of Washington Park, Albany, New York: Results of an Inquiry into Uses of the Park, including Recommendations for Change," a Conservancy volunteer survey of park users with results compiled by Robert M. Briber; by observing actual use in progress and the traces of use in the park and by inquiring about events and use of the park by large groups.

"A Day in the Life of Washington Park" records interviews with 337 park users from 7am to 7pm on Wednesday August 26, 1987. This represents the most recent compilation of direct contact information. Since the interview was a random sampling in different areas of the park, it is a well conceived, defensible study of Washington Park users. This survey recorded a typical summer weekday and is reliable for generalizing strong trends.

For planning purposes the two most useful aspects of this user survey are the responses to the questions "What will you do here?" and "Are there changes, new activities or additions you would like to see in the Park? What are they?." The grouping of the responses by type of recreation shows general trends. It is clear that the vast majority (64.5%) of people who use the park engage in passive/recreative activity. They come to the park to experience the general setting, not to utilize a specific facility. This result for Washington Park is supported by similar figures for passive/ recreative uses surveyed in Prospect and Central Parks in New York City, the Emerald Necklace Parks in Boston/Brookline and Houghton Park in Buffalo. The findings of each user survey indicated over 50% of park users experienced the parks in passive/recreative ways.

Top: Paddle boating on the Lake, note Phragmites mass on the right and Larch grove on left, 1988. K/L
Bottom: Ice Skating on the Lake, note pedestrian light pole on scenic outlook, and arched facade of Lake House, January 1935. AI-CN

Active uses of various types accounted for 25% of the responses. The response of "play" by 30 users is somewhat puzzling because it is not further qualified by what type of play and represents 9% of the total active responses. Uses related to specific facilities such as tennis and basketball courts, contributed under 3% for each facility. Jogging was indicated as under represented because joggers did not generally stop to be interviewed. Jogging does not require a special facility, although this fast moving traffic can be separated from slower moving pedestrians to avoid conflict. In general, the active/exertive use responses show the use of the park and its recreational facilities by a considerably smaller but substantial group of park users than those who use the park passively.

Gregarious uses of the park listed in the interview report include 10.5% of the responses. Eating lunch, picnicking, sports spectating, attending a performance and general enjoyment of companionship are grouped under this type of use. The largest component of the responses, 29 out of 35, were eating lunch and picnicking. For planning considerations it would be useful to gain an understanding of where these activities happen. Those coming to the park to attend a "Live at the Lake" performance were not fully represented because of the timing of the interviews.

Two hundred thirty-one respondents answered the question "Are there changes, new activities or additions you would like to see in the Park? What are they?." The wording of this question favors the suggestion of new activities or elements and should be kept in mind when reviewing the results. The responses have been grouped by subject for consideration in park preservation planning. The largest number of responses were on the subject of park furnishings requests for more trash cans (36), benches (27), picnic tables (8), water fountains (6), and picnic grills (3) accounted for 80 responses. Requests for improved security (32) were the second most prevalent and included five requests for more night lighting. More events were also favored (21).

Respondents expressed a desire for additional active use facilities including requests for more or better playground equipment with specific suggestions (22) and a cleaner, better maintained playground (6). Requests for a swimming pool (12) wading pool (2) or swimming in the lake (1) were also frequent. Additional facilities mentioned included more basketball courts (3) and a skateboard area (2).

Responses concerning park plantings included more or better labeling for trees, bushes and reeds (6), better plant maintenance (5), more flowers (3) and more big trees (2).

Respondents raised issues concerning cars and circulation including requests to ban cars or decrease their number (6), to close the Lakeside Road (6), to open more (2) or alternately close more (1) roads, or to take down the log fences (1). Two users were concerned about eliminating parking.

Loud music was seen as a concern in requests for banning or restricting boom boxes (5) and reducing loud band music (1). In the Central Park Sheep Meadow boom boxes have been banned so that less obtrusive sounds will prevail.

Seven respondents noted general maintenance improvements. This low number indicates that everyday maintenance such as litter pick-up, was not an obvious problem at the time of the interviews.

A small number of respondents indicated the desire for more information about the park and park events with four requests for a bulletin board, map, schedule or information booklet.

The "Day in the Life" user interviews are valuable as a way of gaining more insight into the opinions of the general park user. This user is often unaware of the historic significance of the park, current

planning efforts or management and maintenance issues and voices her/his opinion from first hand experience. The findings of this user survey are one source of preservation planning guidance, and should be supplemented in the future by a more exhaustive user survey covering at least one full year cycle.

Complete contemporary park use findings are recorded in other documents developed during the project. These reports are available through the Conservancy. As indicated later in this summary, the Preservation Plan envisions a diverse group of park uses and an overall improvement of the scenic quality and the natural environment of the park to benefit current and future park users.

VI. PRELIMINARY PROPOSALS

Two sketch proposals for Circulation and Built Elements, and Landscape Composition are shown on Exhibits 5 and 6 respectively. Each exhibit reproduces the 1891 Egerton plan, the 1988 Existing Conditions plan, and shows the two proposals for future treatment. Each sketch proposal presents alternative ways of resolving some of the more difficult issues in the park: the degradation of scenic quality and park experience caused by vehicular traffic and parking; the obstacles to pedestrian movement in and through the park. For example, the closing of the Northern Boulevard and Sprague Place entrances would discourage commuter traffic that utilizes the park as a short-cut.

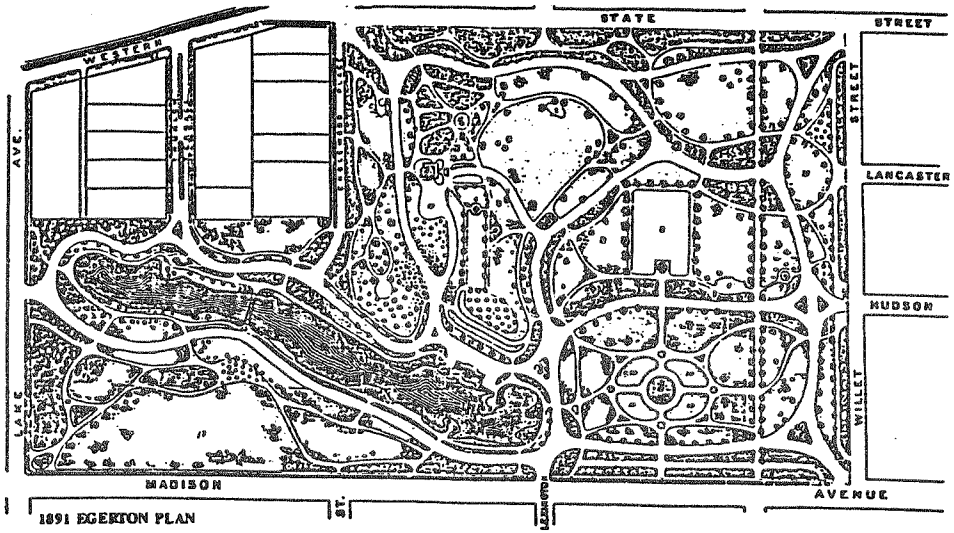
The development of a parking policy was discussed in reference to these and any circulation proposals. The intent is to accommodate needed neighborhood parking while addressing the scenic quality issues and conflict issues present today. Several alternatives are reasonable to explore and are addressed in the Management Proposal.

Both proposals include the rehabilitation of the historic pedestrian path system. Proposal 2 also includes the development of several additional path segments to accommodate, in an appropriate manner, movement patterns that now create desire paths across turf or plantings. Proposal 1 shows the reconstruction of all five lost historic structures, while Proposal 2 shows the Refectory, Drinking Fountain Shelter and Swings.

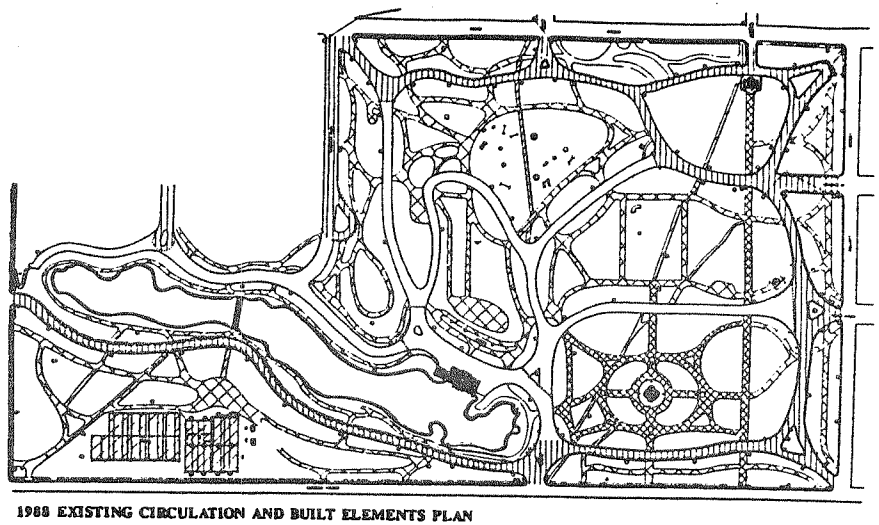
The existing tennis and basketball courts are reconfigured. The upper tennis courts are currently less than the regulation size. In both proposals five full size courts are shown. In Proposal 1, a single basketball court is shown while two are shown in Proposal 2. All the courts are shifted toward the south to limit conflict with the pedestrian paths to the north and the Maple Grove outlook.

The Landscape Composition Proposals are shown on Exhibit 6. Landscape Composition Proposal 1 favors a historically authentic restoration and reconstruction approach that reinstates lost qualities and specific elements of the vegetation palette to the period of historic significance.

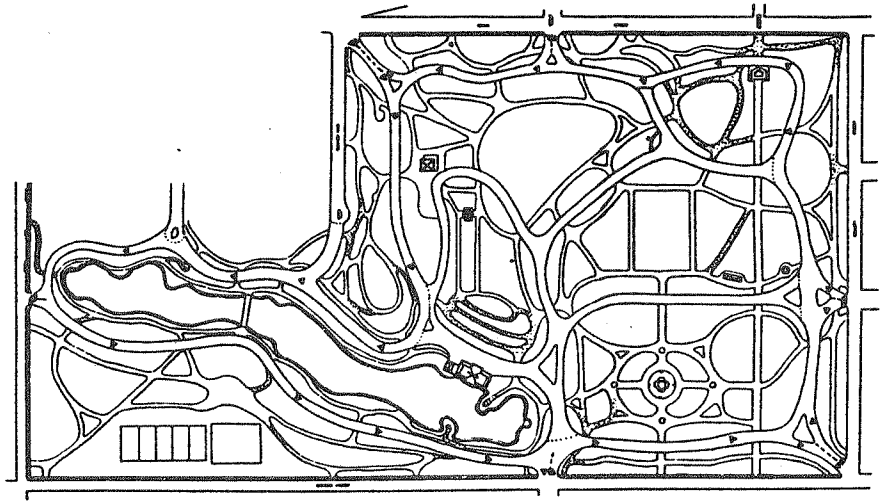
In Landscape Composition Proposal 2, rehabilitation, bringing all portions of the park to a good and useful condition is stressed. In some cases features and sectors would be authentically restored. In other cases adaptations within the character of the original design are made to accommodate contemporary use and maintenance.



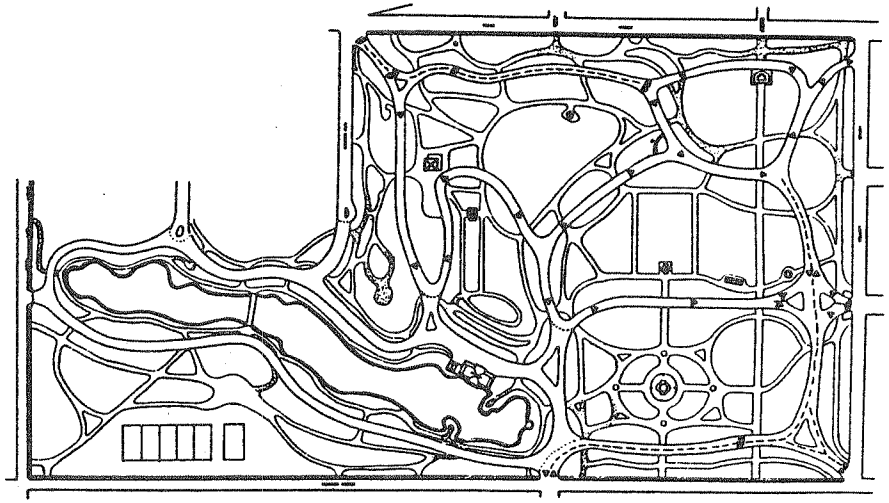
1891 EGERTON PLAN



1988 EXISTING CIRCULATION AND BUILT ELEMENTS PLAN



CIRCULATION AND BUILT ELEMENTS PROPOSAL 2



CIRCULATION AND BUILT ELEMENTS PROPOSAL 1

NEW OR RESTORED PATH SEGMENT
ONE WAY DRIVE
TWO WAY DRIVE
RECONSTRUCTED STRUCTURE
DRIVE DIRECTION ARROW
RECONFIGURED COURTS

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Historic Landscape Report & Preservation Plan for WASHINGTON PARK

for the WASHINGTON PARK CONSERVANCY, ALBANY, NEW YORK

prepared by KESTENBAUM LANDSCAPES JOINT VENTURE

Patricia M. O'Donnell, Landscape Preservation Planner Joy Kestenbaum, Landscape Historian Charles E. Beveridge, Consulting Historian

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1987-88 Scale 1"=100'

CIRCULATION AND BUILT ELEMENTS PROPOSAL

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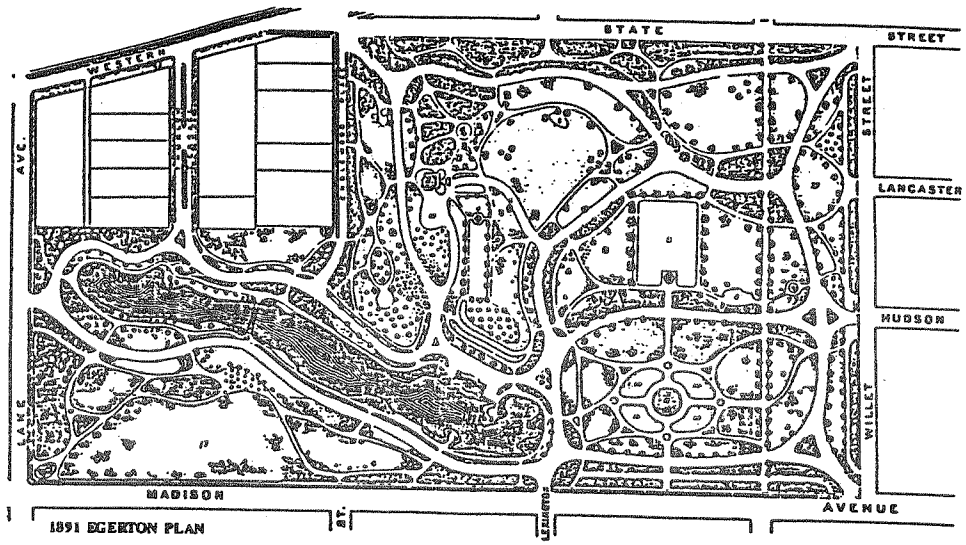
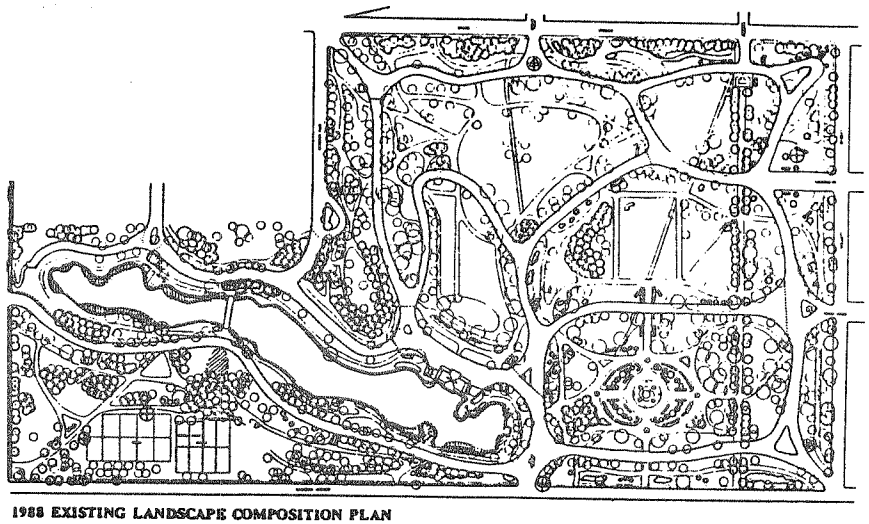
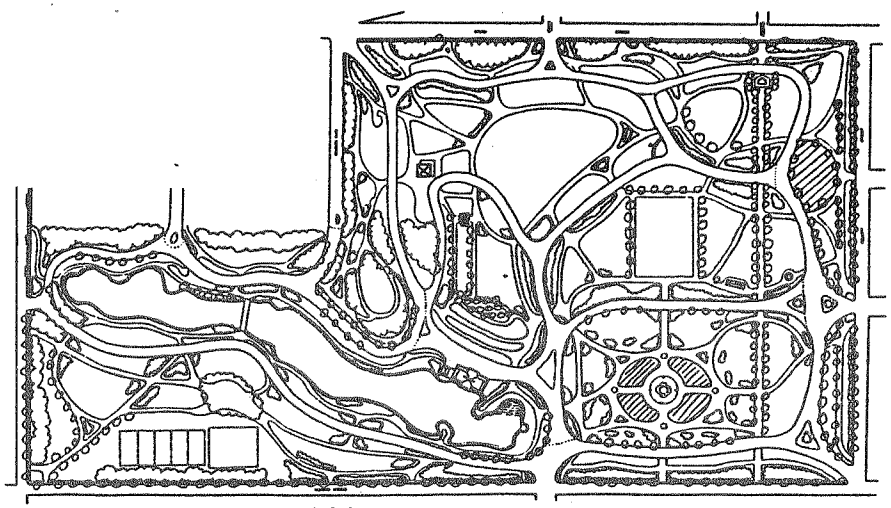


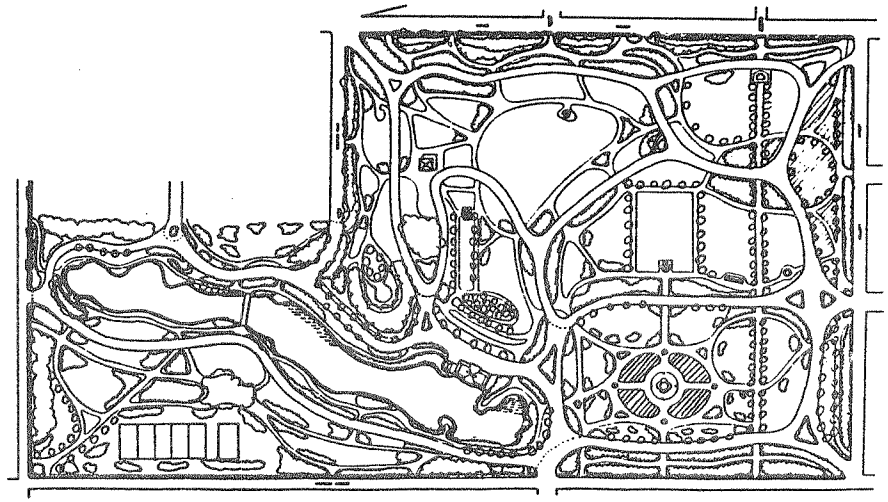
1891 EGERTON PLAN



1988 EXISTING LANDSCAPE COMPOSITION PLAN



LANDSCAPE COMPOSITION PROPOSAL 2



LANDSCAPE COMPOSITION PROPOSAL 1

FORMAL CANOPY TREES
GROVES
SHRUB MASSES
GARDEN PLANTINGS
OPEN LAWN WITH TREES
AQUATIC PLANTS

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LANDSCAPE COMPOSITION PROPOSAL

6

Each of these proposals applies a preservation concept to the entire park with minimal distinction between discrete areas. The response to these sketch proposals was to more highly articulate the preservation concept by adjusting the preservation treatment applied to each sector or buffer area. These preservation treatments include authentic restoration or reconstruction, rehabilitation and adaptive use. (While this terminology is continually under discussion, currently accepted definitions of historic landscape preservation treatments are found in Landscape Architecture Magazine, July/August 1987, "A Preservationist's Glossary", edited by Patricia M. O'Donnell, with contributions from several sources including the National Park Service, pages 96 to 98. A copy of the glossary is available through the Washington Park Conservancy.)

The exploration of these proposals at a public meeting of the Conservancy in 1988 provided an exchange of views. These opinions contributed to the development of the Preservation and Management Plan for Washington Park which is described below.

VII. PRESERVATION PLAN AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL

A. Introduction

The Preservation Plan and Management Proposal was developed from extensive historic research [and planning efforts] planning efforts on the part of the Washington Park Conservancy, the Department of Parks and Recreation, interested individuals, groups and institutions, and the consultants. In addition responses to the goals questionnaire crystallized priorities for the Preservation and Management Plan.

The intent of the preservation and management effort is to delineate the unique and special past of Washington Park and integrate it into its future by defining a comprehensive plan. The plan addresses both specific projects to renew the fabric of the park and a multi-faceted management structure to maximize the condition, appearance, maintainability and positive use of the Washington Park.

The Preservation Plan for Washington Park addresses the physical aspects of the park. It is presented by sector using the Park Sector organization and by topical area using the Historic Integrity Analysis organization. In this way each element and system within the park is addressed and recommendations are made in a comprehensive way.

The target period for the landscape elements is the period of significance, dating from 1873 to 1908. Egerton was active in the development of the park throughout this period. By 1908 the park was at its peak. Basic construction was complete, early plantings were maturing, the scenic quality of the park was excellent, the garden plantings had been fully developed and refined in the garden areas. The park as executed under Egerton is the model for the Preservation Plan.

The Management Proposal for Washington Park succinctly addresses seven aspects of managing the park:

1. Park Administration, all aspects of on-site and Departmental administration;

2. Public/Private Partnership between the City of Albany - especially the Parks and Recreation Department - and the Washington Park Conservancy and other community groups and individuals;

3. Fiscal responsibility for all aspects of park management and Preservation Plan implementation through annual budgets and capital improvements;

4. Preservation Plan Implementation over a period of years through the initiation of early projects and development of a Phased Schedule;

5. Maintenance Operations, including personnel, equipment and the managing of the work force for daily, weekly, seasonal, annual and cyclical operations;

6. Visitor Services, including the operation of public buildings and concessions, visitor education and park interpretation, programming of events and entertainment and volunteer coordination;

7. Security and Policing, including the types and levels of staffing and the physical aspects of improving perceived security that are incorporated in the Preservation Plan;

Each of these components of management functions to some extent today. To reach the future vision for Washington Park embodied in the agreed goals, each area needs to be more systematically and creatively approached.

B. Preservation Plan

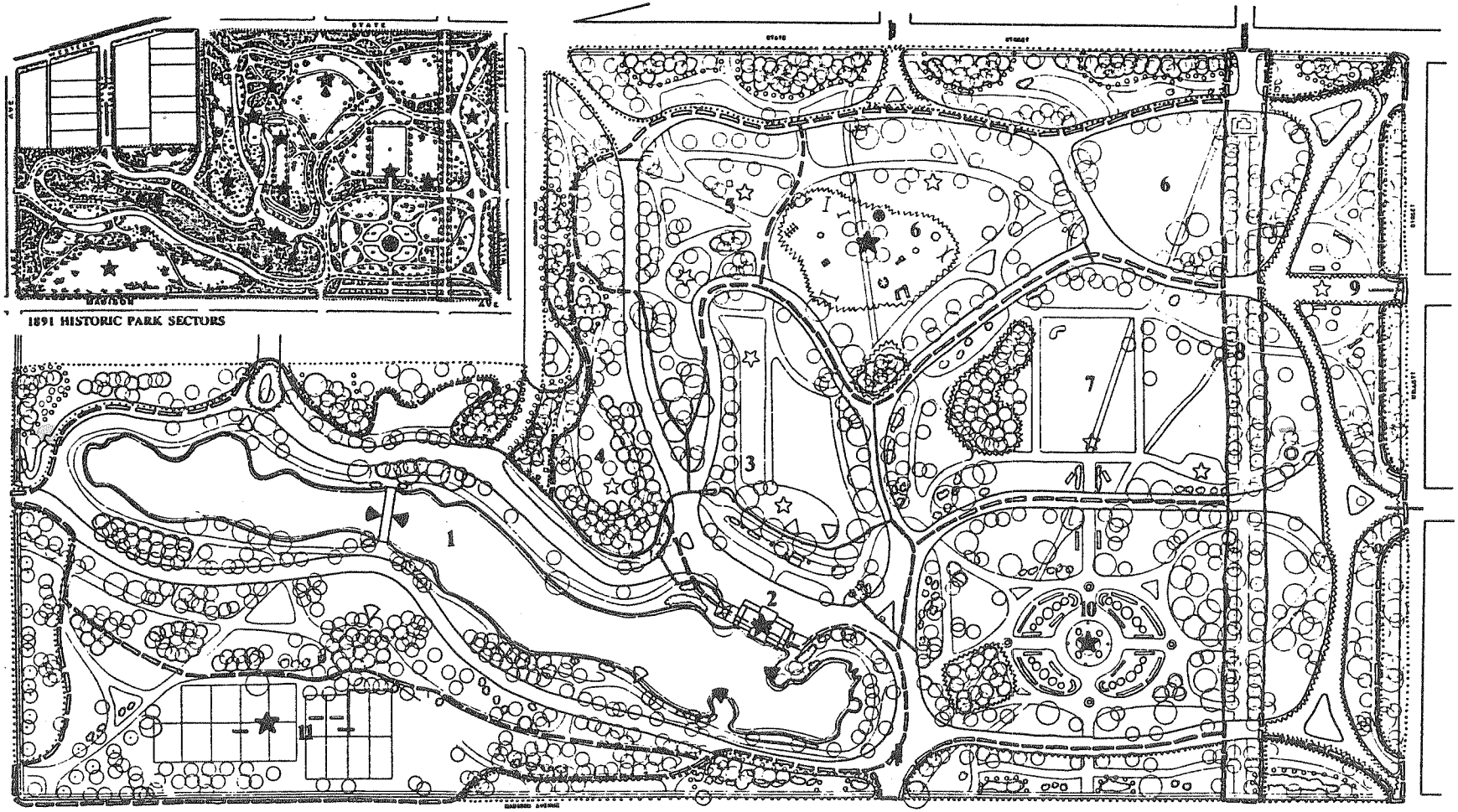
In both the "Park Sectors" and "Historic Integrity Analysis" tasks, each component of the park is understood as a relationship between the historic record and its existing condition. The Preservation Plan, making recommendations with respect to the physical aspects of the park, brings the past and present into the future.

The presentation of the Preservation Plan is based upon a discussion of Park Sectors: Exhibit 3 and Historic Integrity Analysis: Exhibit 4. First, park sectors and buffer edges, dense plantings that create a visual buffer at park edges, are described and then further detailed under the three headings Condition, Objective and Recommendations. Second, historic integrity analysis of landform, water elements, vegetation, circulation systems, structures, monuments and furnishings are presented using the same format. In both cases the stated Recommendations are portrayed on Exhibit 7.

1. Definition of Park Sectors

Washington Park was designed, and exists today, as a varied landscape. Separate areas of the park serve as discrete scenic compositions and specific use areas. The experience of the park differs, sometimes subtly, other times dramatically, as the various sectors are traversed. The sectors of the park, as designed and originally developed, were more distinct than the park landscape is today. Sectors often contained "destinations" that drew park users to a specific point.

The spatial relationships within Washington Park were and are defined by topography, vegetation, circulation systems and structures or features.Exhibit 3: Park Sectors shows the 1891 Egerton Plan and the 1988 base plan. The 1891 Egerton Plan is shown in the upper left hand corner. The plan as been annotated with Sector, Buffer Edge, Destination and Scenic View symbols. Historic interior park sectors are well defined, relating to park uses and scenic compositions. These discrete areas defined as sectors include the related destinations and scenic elements. The historic plan shows eleven sectors, twelve destinations, ten scenic view locations and a nearly continuous buffer edge.



Symbol Key

Sector: Historic-Intact; Compromised; Internal Disruption

Destination: Historic; Lost; New

Scenic View: Historic-Intact; Compromised

Buffer: Historic; Existing

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PARK SECTORS

3

Significant alterations to the integrity of park sectors and buffers over time are portrayed on Park Sectors: Exhibit 3. Two historic destinations remain, nine former destinations have been lost, and two new destinations created. Four historic, scenic views remain while six have been compromised by changes in the view from and of the park. Most of the sector edges have been compromised over time. In a physical sense, this means that the boundaries between sectors have lost definition. From a visual perspective, the distinction between formerly discrete park areas has been diluted resulting in a loss of a sense of distinct spaces. The location and extent of the historic buffer has been significantly reduced. These alterations have occurred because of:

- changes in vegetation and landscape composition that have altered view limits, eliminated or compromised edge definitions or established new visual barriers;

- changes in or deterioration of the circulation system that have altered both the pedestrian and vehicular experience of the park;

- changes in the park's destinations, especially the loss of historic structures, and the disfunction or degradation of remaining features that compromise intended uses;

- changes in the scenic views from the three main outlooks and the Lake edge scenic locations that have altered visual perception of the park, especially in the area of the Lake.

The level of differentiation achieved during the period of historic significance (1873-1908) is diffused in the park as it exists today. The definition of strong features, such as the formal, linear Mall, the Moses Fountain Site and the Lake, is retained in a diluted form. Other areas have lost their original spatial relationships. One good example is the Meadows, Croquet Ground and Refectory/Children's Playground sectors that, due primarily to vegetation changes and loss of structures, have become one mass, losing their individual qualities.

It is also obvious that the buffer edge is a limited remnant of its former condition. Less than one quarter of the park edge formerly in buffer functions as a buffer today.

Internal sector disruption, by invasive or inappropriate vegetation in three locations, by traffic and parking in two locations and by playground equipment in the large meadow is also indicated. In each case, these elements alter the spatial relationships and perceptions of the particular area.

A general recommendation for sectors and buffers is to reinstate the distinct, historic sectors of Washington Park that were unique to this landscape. These sectors are a critical component of the historic integrity of the park, and simultaneously permit diverse, conflict-free park use and higher quality scenic experiences. The reinstatement of both park sectors and buffer edges is a primary objective of the Preservation Proposal that will aid in achieving several goals.

2. Park Sectors : Condition, Objective, Recommendations

Eleven park sectors and seven segments of the buffer edges are evident on the 1891 Egerton Plan. These divisions form the basis for the park sector discussion. Each sector and buffer edge is described below, beginning with the Lake and proceeding, clockwise through the park. The historic importance and function of each sector is addressed first. Then the existing condition is described. These

statements are followed by recommendations for each sector or buffer edge. These recommendations are shown on Exhibit 7: Preservation Plan.

1. Lake Sector

Condition: The Lake and its surround form one of the largest and best-defined sectors in Washington Park. This sector includes the adjacent shoreline paths, drives and slopes up to the ridge lines. A lake is a key landscape feature of nineteenth century parks in general, and of Washington Park in particular. Both the traditional elements of serene water and adjacent groves and wooded slopes composed the scene. It was historically visually enclosed by dense plantings on the northwest and west edges and by slopes along the northeast and south edges. The east end of the Lake was relatively open to the adjacent park lands and functioned as the primary visual entry point. The scenic quality of the Lake and its surround was high. Picturesque groves of coniferous trees and individual focal trees were located in a carefully molded sloping lawn. These elements were contrasted with mass plantings of flowering shrubs especially along the northwest and western edges. The original Lake House contributed to the picturesque scene.

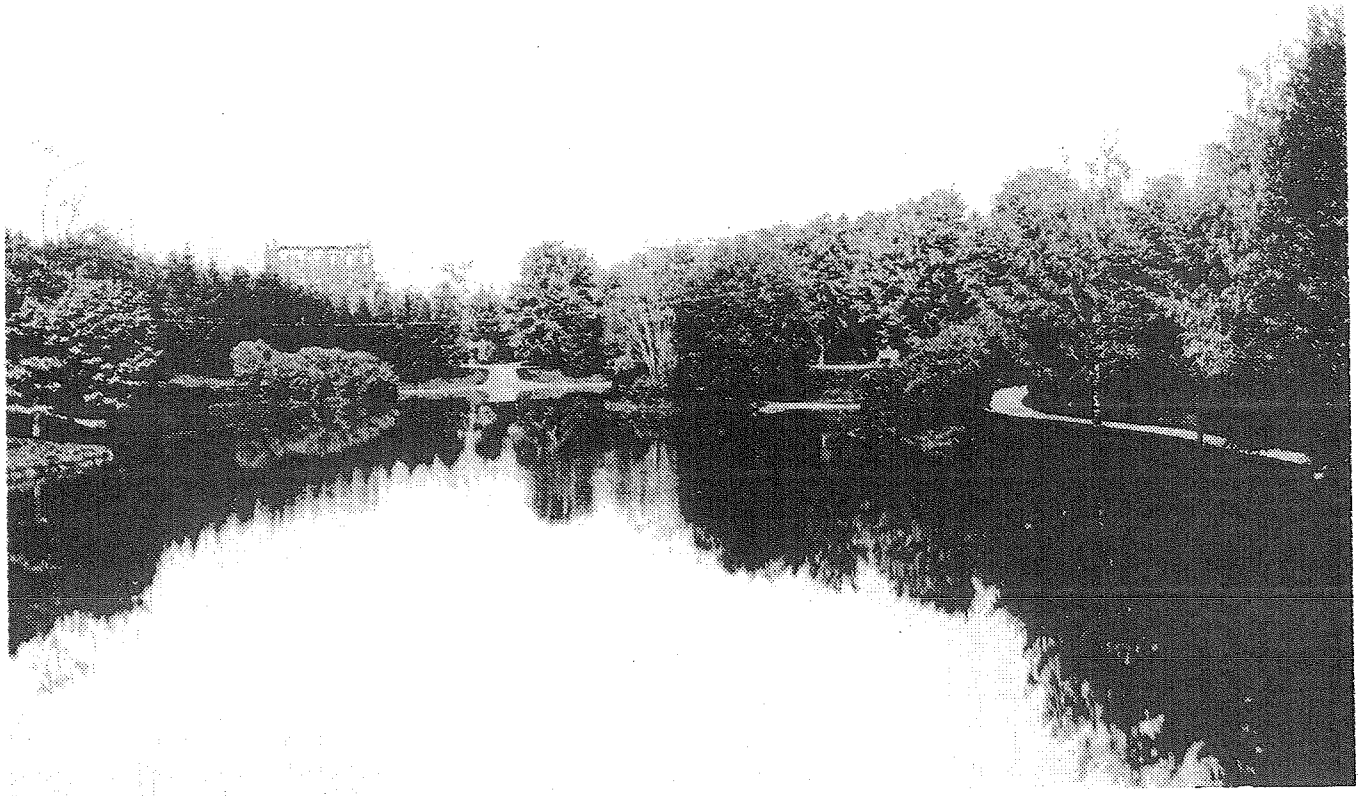
Since the Lake sector is clearly defined by topography on both the north and south and on the west by the edge of the park, the boundary of this sector is intact today. The scenic quality is diminished by: 1. the loss of plantings throughout, especially shrub materials; 2. intrusive vehicular traffic and parking on South Lake Drive; 3. hillside and shoreline erosion and siltation into the lake resulting in diminished ecological health due to shallowness and the related invasion of large stands of phragmites, a tall water edge weed; 4. disfunction of the Lake edge pedestrian path and several other path segments in the sector; 5. loss of one segment of the historic Lake drive at the west end.

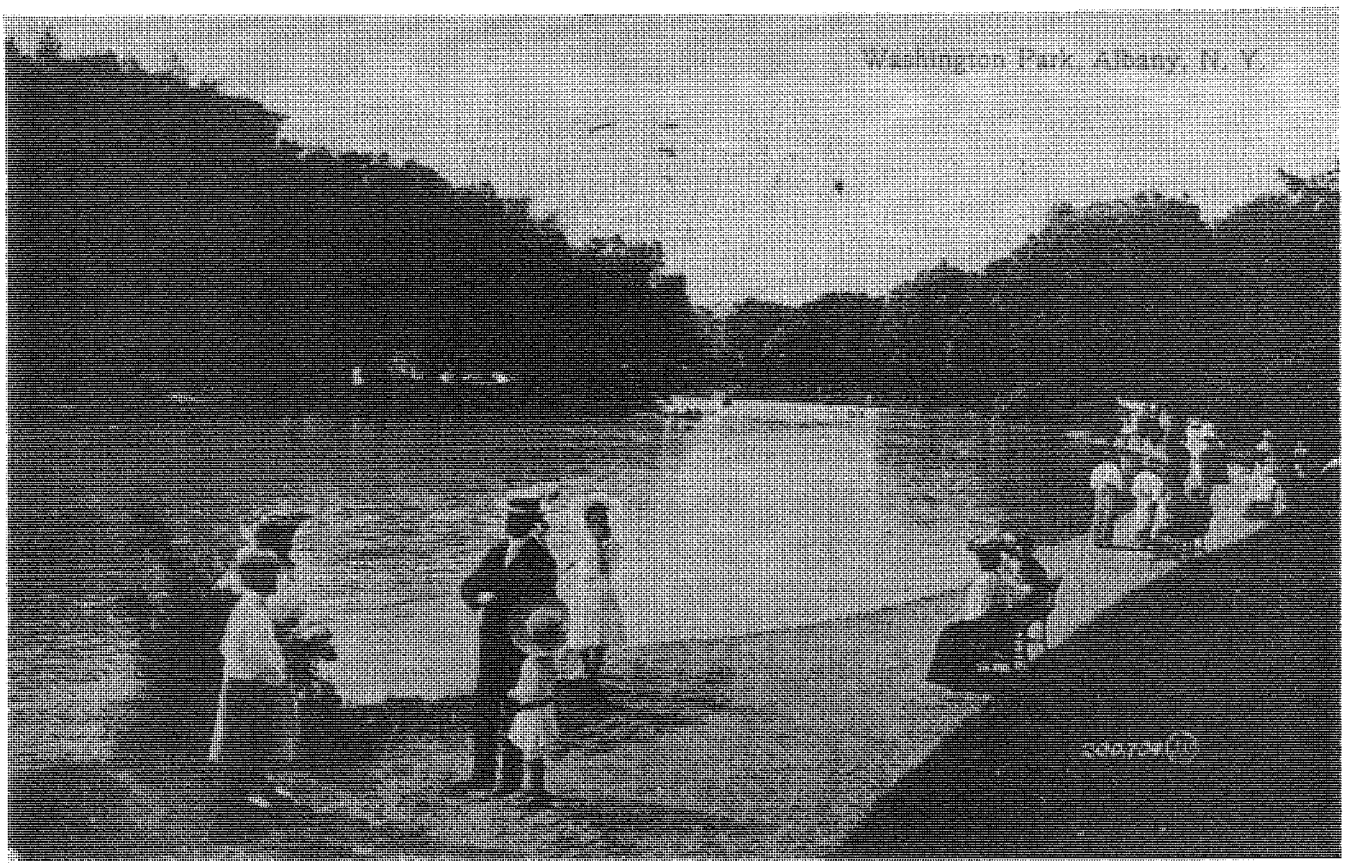
Objective: Recapture the picturesque character and scenic quality of the Lake Sector. Augment uses that will be in character with the Lake Sector.

Recommendations: Begin the rehabilitation of the Lake sector with the stabilization of bare soils that are silting into the Lake. Stabilize the Lake edge where pedestrian paths come to the water and heavy use is intended. Once soils are stabilized, the deepening of the Lake to improve ecological health and related native and ornamental aquatic planting can proceed. Improve the health of desirable existing vegetation. Remove invasive vegetation where appropriate. Augment plantings of trees and shrubs in character with the historic documentation.

Close South Lake Drive to daily vehicular traffic and parking. Reconstruct the lost segment of the Lake Drive for use by joggers, bicyclists, maintenance and surveillance vehicles and occasional public use for special events. The railroad tie and telephone pole barriers along South Lake Drive are functional but detract from the scenic quality of the Lake. These barriers could be removed if the drive is closed.

Augment passive use by reconstructing dysfunctional pedestrian paths, providing benches, and rehabilitating scenic viewpoints. Augment active uses by continuing the paddle-boat rental service, stocking the lake with appropriate game fish to support fishing, clear the ice surface when frozen and provide warming and refreshment facilities to encourage ice-skating, and groom paths in this sector and elsewhere in the park for cross-country skiing.





Top: Scenic view of Lake looking west from bridge, note entry drive and path configurations, and shrub massing along shoreline, c. 1910. WPC
Bottom: Park goers promenading along Lake paths, note areas where path is at water's edge and areas where path is away from water, c. 1900. MK

2. Terraces/Lake House/Performance Sector

Condition: The Terraces/Lake House/Performance Sector historically functioned somewhat better than it does today. The original Lake House had a rooftop gazebo that served as a performance stage used primarily for concerts. The stage was at about the level of the crest of the Elm Grove Outlook and afforded good views and acoustics to the surrounding area. The Current Lake House has a second story, domed stage for concert use, but the setting is primarily for performances which are presented on a temporary stage. The recent construction of a small, concrete block structure in the hillside as a performance control center is obtrusive and conflicts with the original Terraces. The Terraces themselves are steeply sloped, limiting their use for comfortable sitting to view events.

Objective: Make the Lake House more useful as a performance setting as well as maintenance center. Explore fuller use of bandshell and interior spaces through feasibility study. Develop the Terraces to be more useful as an informal amphitheater for spectators.

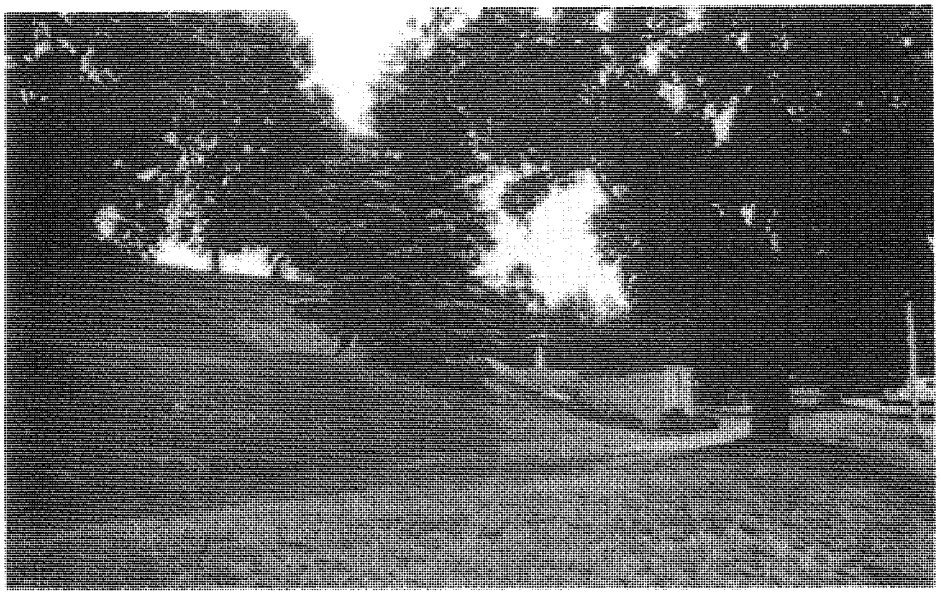
Recommendations: Consider the reshaping of the Terraces to establish a gentler slope that can more readily serve as an informal amphitheater for audience seating. Exhibit 7 shows a modified configuration that brings and additional 10 feet of pavement into the slope and narrows the level shelves at the walks gaining some 30 feet, to allow for a decreased angle of slope. Utilizing this solution will also accommodate easier mowing of the grass slope. Construct two flights of stairs, one on each side, to improve access to the Terraces and the Elm Grove Outlook. Undertake a feasibility study for expanded use of Lake House interior and exterior spaces. Include consideration of support functions for performances of all kinds. Remove the cement block performance support structure by relocating the necessary functions to the Lake House. Add pedestrian lighting for evening use.

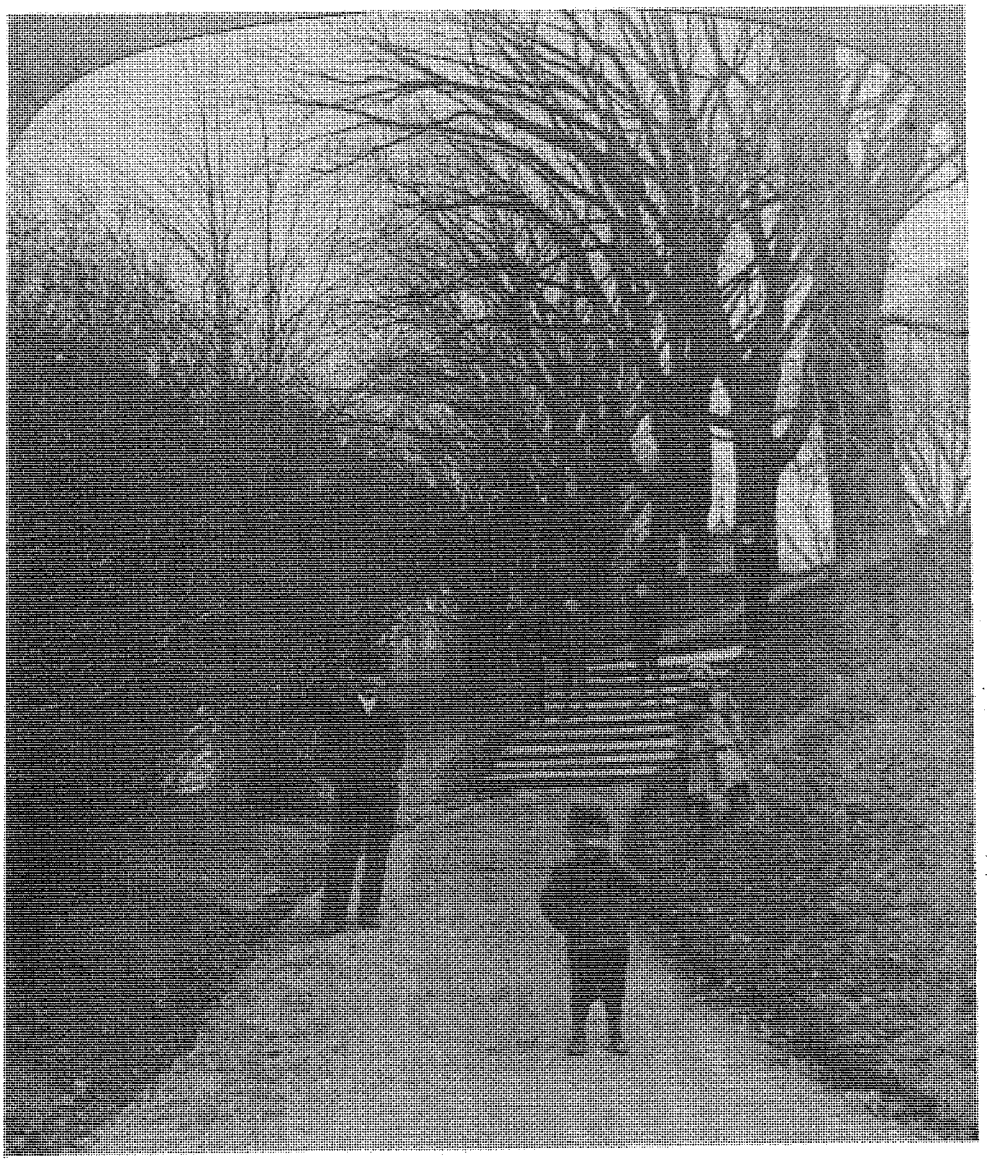
3. Elm Grove Outlook Sector

Condition: The Elm Grove Outlook was intended for scenic enjoyment. This sector included the ornate Drinking Fountain Shelter, straight, formal walks and a grid pattern tree grove providing shade and scale for the outlook area. Today the Elm Grove Outlook is flat and nearly featureless. The Drinking Fountain shelter is lost. The plantings are depleted. Former walk segments and stair are gone. Like the Lake View Outlook, it has no longer has a destination and is little used. While views to the Moses Fountain can be achieved from one path, Ash Trees at front of outlook block views down the Terraces and to surrounding park features.

Objectives: Improve visual quality. Increase use. Return lost elements and features to the extent possible.

Recommendations: Construct two flights of stairs at each side of the Outlook. Stairs will function for everyday park use and performances. They are shared with the adjacent Terraces/Lake House/Performance Sector. Reconstruct lost walk segments. Interpret ornate Drinking Fountain Shelter by installing an appropriate fountain, or providing a foundation marker indicating the former location, and bearing an explanation and historic view. Replant lost vegetation to reframe spaces along walks. Replant Elm cultivars or Zelkovas in the historic grove pattern to reinstate shade and scale.





Top: View of existing Terraces with wide paths and steep slopes, note cement block structure, 1988. K/L
Bottom: Park visitors posing on stairs at the side of the Terraces, note mature trees along paths at Elm Grove Outlook and Drinking Fountain Shelter in background, November, 19, 1899. Al-I

4. Lake View Outlook Sector

Condition: The Lake View Outlook Sector is defined by topography and scenic intent. The high area was intended for scenic enjoyment affording main views over the Lake and secondary views to other areas of the surrounding park landscape. The Lake View Outlook was accessed by two symmetrical paths and terminated in a round open area at the front edge of the hill. The front slopes of the hill were planted informally with about sixteen trees, creating a open grove that allowed views through. Over forty mature trees are now growing on these front slopes. They close in the formerly open views of the Lake. The Lake View Outlook was not designed with a way for the person enjoying scenic views to move down to the Lake without doubling back to a path on the west edge, about 200 feet from the outlook. This causes a dead-end situation that, coupled with the loss of view, acts as a strong deterrent to the use of this park feature. Some park users traverse the steep slope to reach the lakeside paths, causing significant soil erosion.

Objectives: Reinstate scenic value. Integrate more fully with surrounding park. Bring back use.

Recommendations: Selectively prune and remove trees from Lake View Outlook to achieve views of Lake from several vantage points. Tree removals should be a part of a vegetation management approach to this and other outlooks. Trees should be removed when in decline. New plantings of historically appropriate trees should be planned with the retention of views in mind. Construct two flights of stairs at each side of the Outlook. Install appropriate fence around front of outlook for safety and to inhibit movement down the slope. Install benches for enjoyment of the view.

5. Refectory and Children's Playground Sector

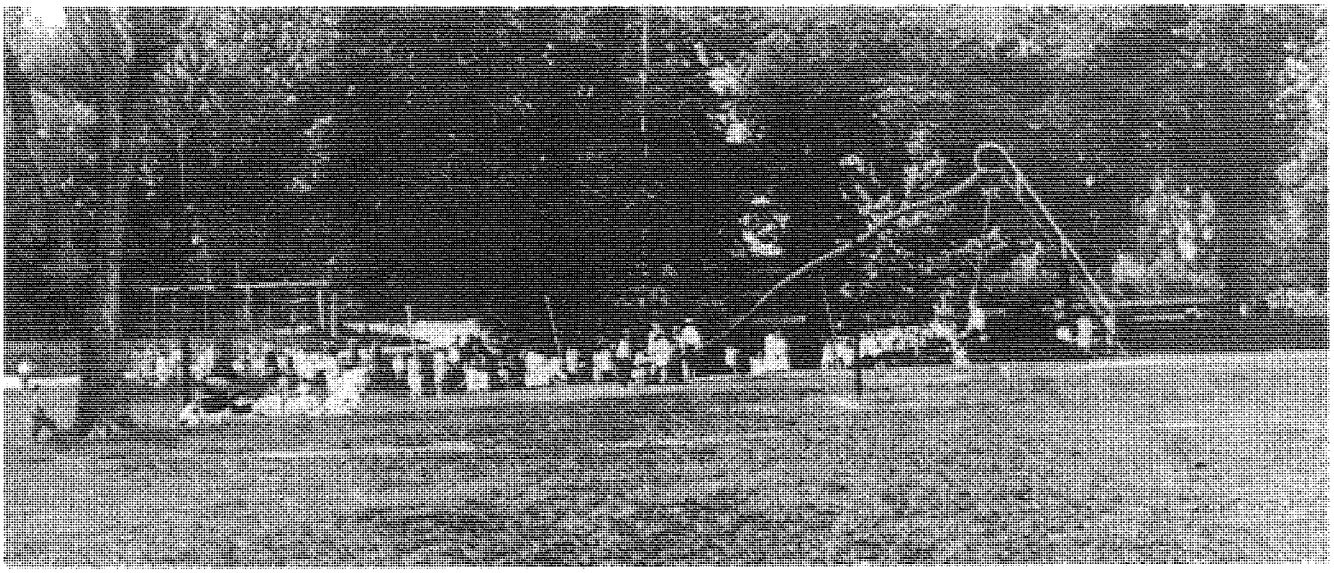
Condition: The Children's Playground, Refectory and Carriage Concourse Sector functioned as a visitor service area. It was defined by topography, circulation elements, destinations and plantings. A complex arrangements of walks, now lost, segmented the Children's Playground. While this sector is distinct and separate, visual contact with the Meadows was an important connection. Views from the Refectory and center knoll of the Children's Playground were all open to the Meadows, offering an expansive, pastoral view.

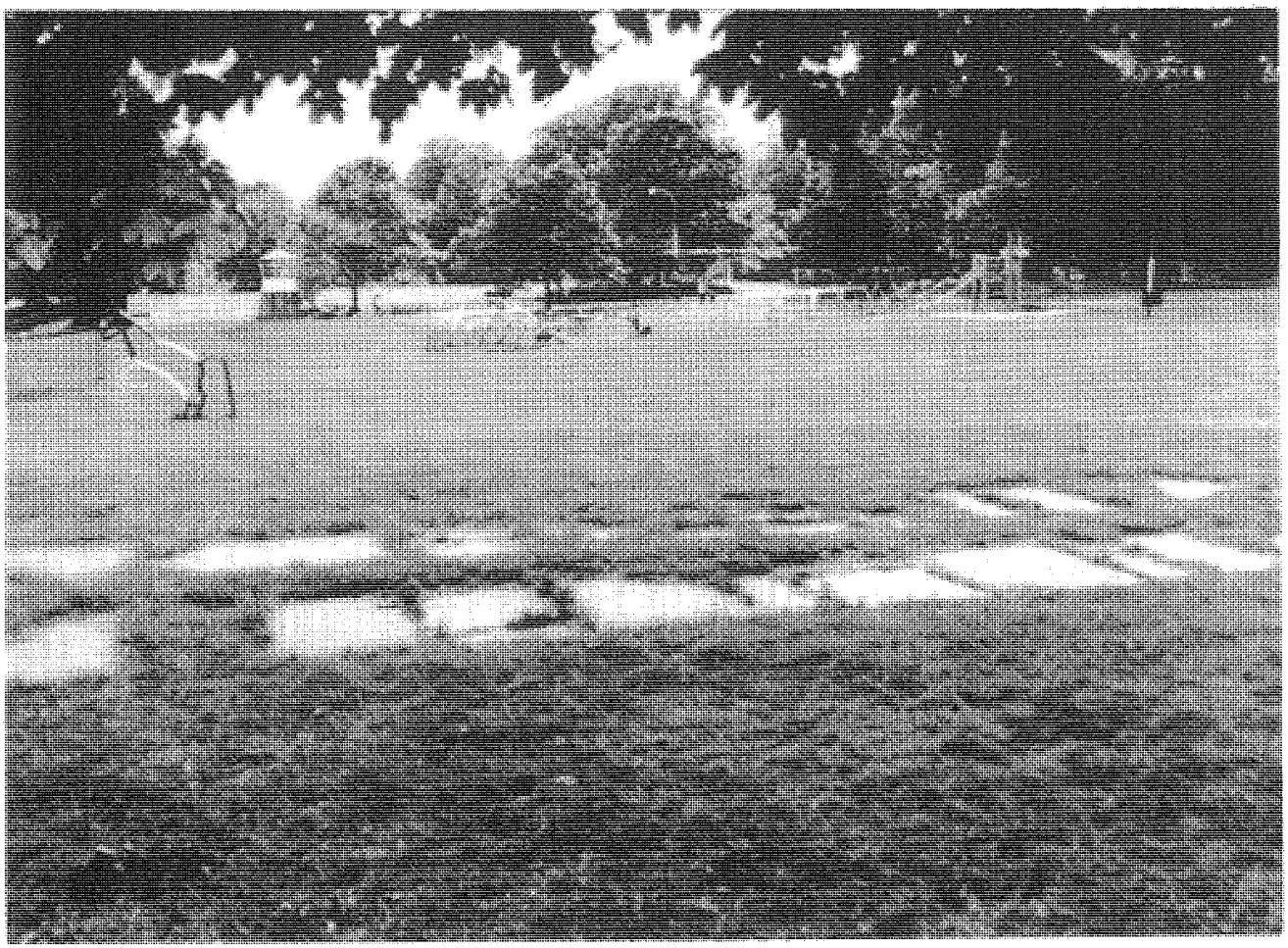
Objectives: Reinstate lost features, provide visitor services.

Recommendations: Consider reconstruction of the Refectory, or development of a building of similar scale, detail and texture utilizing historic documentation. Potential uses for the building might include an Urban Park Ranger Center, a base for Interpretive and Educational programs, a volunteer coordination Center, or a Washington Park Conservancy office. Reconstruct historic walk pattern. Relocate the play area to the original playground site indicated by "P" on Exhibit 7. Cluster equipment by age group so that play with peers is encouraged. Potential groupings are; 1 to 4 with supervision, 5 to 8, 9 to 12, 13 and over. Utilize durable, attractive equipment with natural wood members of painted to blend into park setting in green or brown tones. Provide play equipment that is not visually obtrusive.

6. Meadows Sector

Condition: The two meadows were intended to be distinct but visually connected and continuous. They were open, pastoral landscapes. The broad lawns with occasional mature shade trees were carefully designed to appear natural. The expanse of open, peaceful landscape was intended to be a strong





Top: View of Playground near the Refectory with large slide, swings and many children, c. 1930. WPC
Bottom: View of existing Playground in Meadow, floor of former Rustic Shelter in foreground, 1988. K/L

contrast to the surrounding city. The Rustic Shelter was a picturesque and useful element. The existing meadows are open turf sprinkled with red, white and blue play equipment and tall light posts. The expanse of space is severely compromised by the equipment. The smaller meadow near the Mall has lost definition. Both Meadows are crossed by desire paths. Historic path segments are lost and derelict. The Rustic Shelter floor remains, but the structure is gone.

Objective: Regain open, pastoral landscape.

Recommendations: Reconstruct Rustic Shelter. Relocate play area to original Children's Playground area. Remove tall light fixtures. Reconstruct historic walks as shown on Exhibit. Improve quality of turf. Plant appropriate deciduous, canopy trees and shrubs to recapture pastoral qualities and spatial divisions.

7. Croquet Lawn and Swings Sector

Condition: The Croquet Ground, designed with linear, canopy trees at the edges, was a geometric feature at the heart of an informal setting. It included the decorative Croquet Ground Shelter and the unique, large Swings. This Sector was visually connected to the Meadows and edged by the Mall. Today the Sector is featureless, crossed by a strong desire path and without a destination.

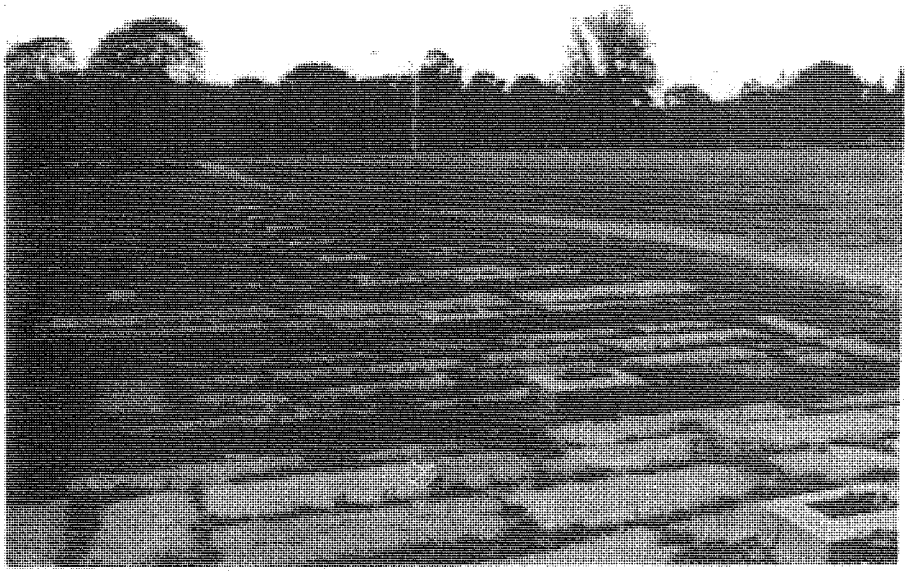
Objective: Recreate destinations. Improve circulation. Make a useful space, reintegrate with park.

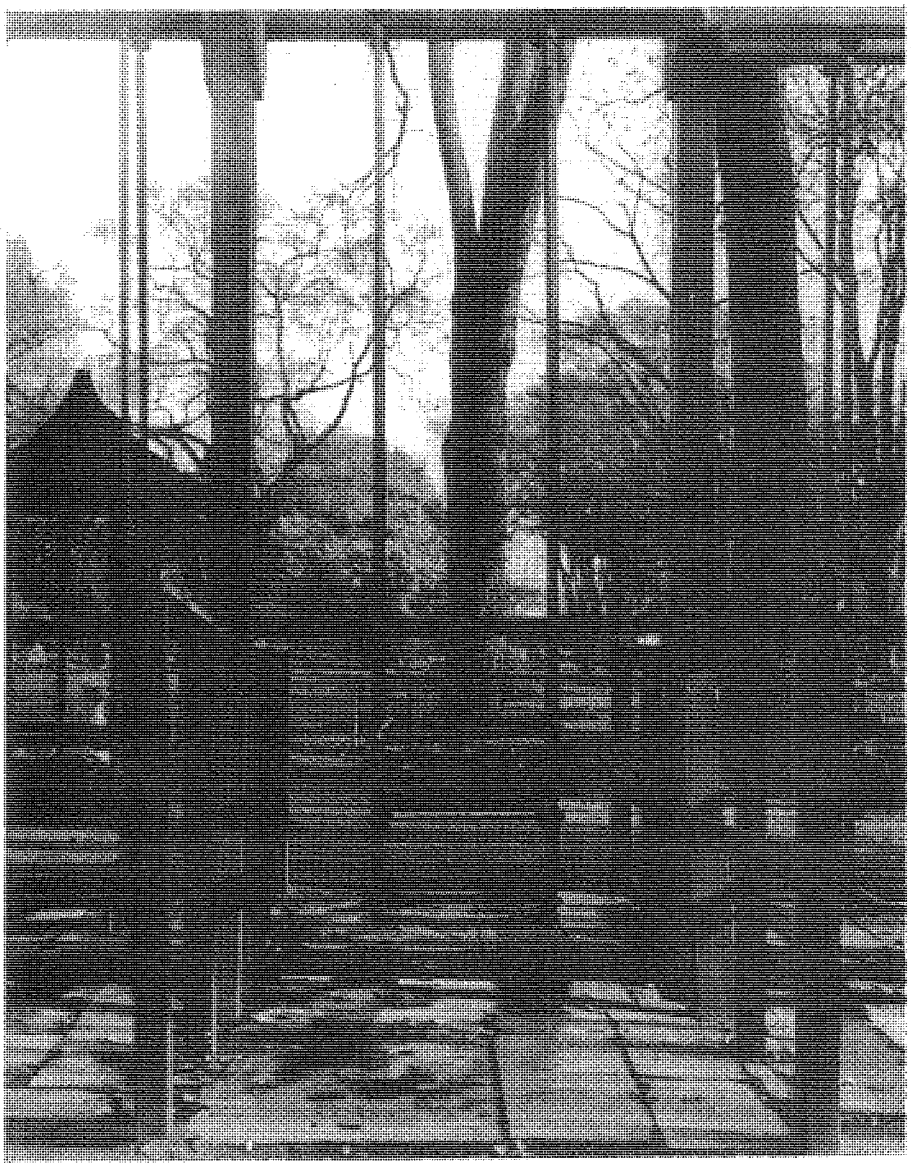
Recommendations: Study reconstruction of the large swings. Consider building a new structure on the site of former Croquet Shelter, utilizing original building outline. Explore development of roof lines to mimic former Croquet Shelter. Such a structure could serve as a greenhouse either as a display area for tender plants or to provide plant materials for the Willett Street and Moses Fountain Gardens. Rehabilitate pedestrian path system by rebuilding historic paths and adding new path segments to address desire path routes. Over time, remove grove of trees on the west side of this Sector. Explore transplanting these trees and utilizing them elsewhere in the park. Plant rows of appropriate, historic trees around the Croquet Ground. Establish four decorative garden beds to provide a setting for the Croquet Shelter area. Improve the quality of the turf. Promote croquet matches or similar recreational activities.

8. Mall Sector

Condition: The Mall is also a distinct sector. A linear composition, it bisects the east end of the park. It provides a clear edge for the landscape sectors to each side. It was intended as a formal promenade, a place to sit on a shaded bench, eat a picnic lunch, read the paper or watch the passers by. Historic views show the grand allee of mature Elms arching over the Mall. The Veterans Memorial, a later addition, forms a visual entry/terminus for the long walk. Currently a mix of Flowering Crabapples and assorted canopy trees lines a black asphalt paved Mall. These trees do not function as grand, enclosing elements as did the Elms. All the benches are gone. Three, active traffic intersections segment the different sections, visually distract from the park-like setting because of cars, traffic lights and signs, and act as pedestrian barriers.

Objective: Recreate the grandeur and use of the historic Mall.





Top: Flagstone surface and post foundations for former Wooden Swings in foreground, open expanse of former Croquet Lawn in background, 1988. K/L
Bottom: Detail of Wooden Swings, with small Drinking Fountain Shelter in background, 1944. AI-DPR

Recommendations: As the Crabapples decline, replant a continuous row of deciduous, canopy trees all at once. The 'Liberty' American Elm has recently become available through a joint project of the Elm Research Institute and the Boy Scouts of America. Explore use of this Elm or of Zelkova 'Green Vase'. Provide pedestrian lighting and benches as shown. Repave surface of asphalt path with crushed gravel top dressing to give the appearance of historic gravel paths while allowing for heavy traffic and winter plowing. Install cast iron and wood benches of appropriate Victorian or early 20th century design. Three simple benches, that appear to be original and match those seen in historic views, are still in the park and could be used as models. Thirty-two benches are shown on Exhibit 7.

9. Willett Street Garden Sector

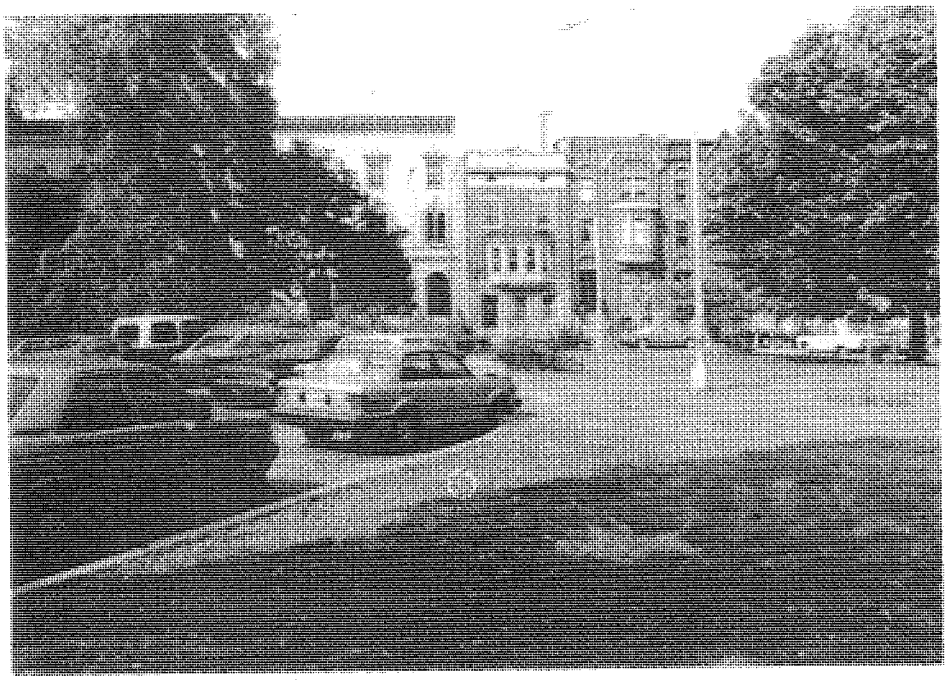
Condition: This sector was highly articulated with exotic garden beds and appointed with formal trees. It was buffered from the urban surround by the street frontage plantings on three sides. The highlight was the area from State Street to Hudson Avenue and the Park Drive containing forty-nine gardens beds that were described in detail in a 1903 article. This area was a gardenesque landscape intended for viewing and enjoying. Benches were provided. The remaining portions of the sector from the Park drive to the Mall and from Hudson Avenue to Madison Avenue were supportive, rather than focal. The Park Drive created an internal division in this sector, and current increases in traffic have amplified this division. The extension of Lancaster Street into the park destroyed the gardenesque landscape that was the key feature of this sector. Current conditions are dominated by the vehicular congestion of many parked cars and excessive traffic. The parked cars are especially disruptive near the corner of State Street where the drives have become a parking lot because the entry/exit drive segment was removed. Some gardens beds remain and new ones have been created but plantings and maintenance are inadequate to recapture the historic setting.

Objective: Reinstate historic gardenesque landscape. Decrease vehicular impacts.

Recommendations: Close Lancaster Street. Reconstruct Garden area according to 1903 plan with gardens, trees and shrubs. Place benches within this area. Plant border of tall, historic, flowering shrubs. In response to visual barrier and safety issues, locate shrubs 10 feet to 15 feet from the path. Close former drive segments at State Street corner and return to vegetation. Plant shrubs and trees as in historic pattern with grass in former roadway. Reconstruct pedestrian paths in this area. Move the Willett Rock Monument to the southeast corner of the Hudson Avenue entrance. Locate in bed of ivy and ferns. Plant shrubs around Burns Memorial as shown in historic views.

10. Moses Fountain Sector

Condition: The Moses Fountain Sector is a discrete landscape composition focusing on the monumental fountain. Its associated space is clearly articulated with decorative gardens surrounding the fountain, shrubs in the mid-ground islands and edges of paths and drives and formal trees along two edges. Benches were located along the oval interior path. Decorative, double-drop light fixtures enhance the area. Topography and plantings separated this sector from adjoining ones. The Moses Fountain Sector was created as a setting for passive enjoyment of a formal, gardenesque landscape. The Moses Fountain Sector retains much of its historic quality today, especially in the interior portion. Several changes in vegetation have altered the sequence of the landscape that moves from center to edges. Invasive trees have encroached while shrub plantings have depleted. Exact garden locations have changed over time. Desire paths, recently formalized by stone dust paving, have disrupted the circulation system.



Top: Parking area from former entry drive at State and Willett Streets, recommended for removal to reinstate setting for Willett Street Gardens, 1988. K/L
Bottom: View of the Mall with twenty-five foot path, benches, mature trees and potted palms, emphasizes the loss of scale relationships and formality in existing Mall, 1988. K/L

Objective: Strengthen the Moses Fountain Sector as a visually pleasing and enjoyable park area.

Recommendations: Recreate original planting intent by: locating gardens where former garden mounds exist, planting islands and other areas with appropriate shrubs, removing invasive trees, and planting formal trees at the edges. Locate benches where shown and remove desire paths. Alter historic paths slightly to accommodate desired movements.

11. Tennis Lawn/Courts/West Entrance Sector

Condition: The Tennis Lawn destination is at the center of its landscape surround with the main area defined by a single path and the Madison Avenue frontage. The Tennis playing surface in historic times was turf. Adjacent landscape areas included in the sector are those that can be readily viewed from the Tennis Lawn. It was intended to be a separate, active use landscape with the playing lawn located in the center of the sector. The purpose of the Tennis Lawn was active recreation. This discrete sector was not meant to conflict with the adjacent Lake Sector and Maple Grove Outlook. Currently the Tennis Lawn Sector is visually dominated by a large area of paving for the surfaces of sixteen courts. Included are thirteen tennis courts, two walls with four handball courts and two basketball courts. The upper tennis courts are in poor repair and are undersized. All the courts are edged with chain link fence. Twelve high-intensity lights for night time sports use are located at the edges and center of the lower section of courts. This amount and placement of playing courts intrudes on the adjacent park areas, especially the Maple Grove Outlook. The appearance of the playing courts from the Madison Avenue frontage is cluttered and unattractive.

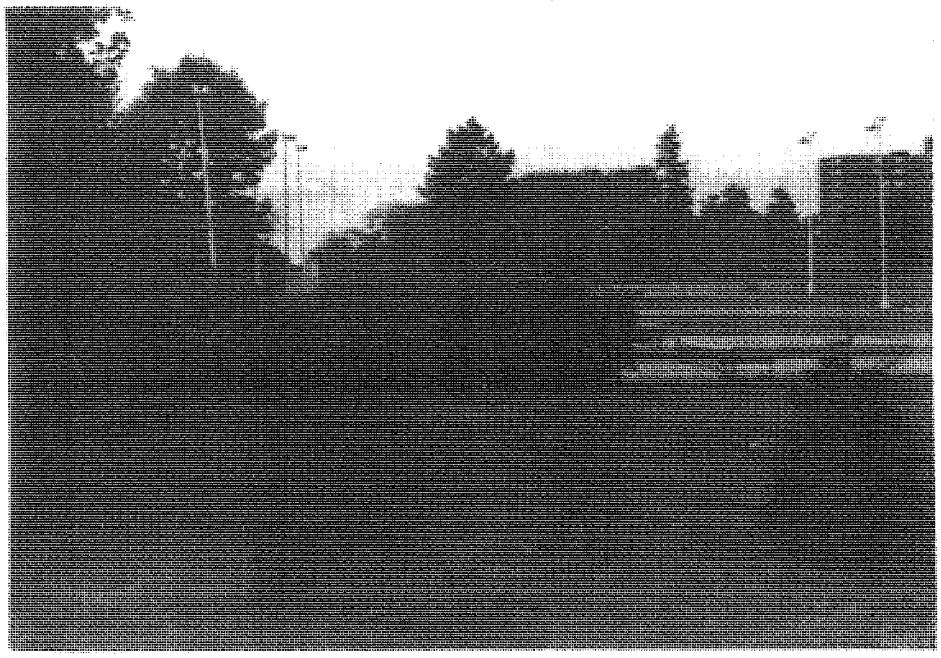
The West Entrance is a minor, discrete component of this sector. It was clearly designed as a formal entry sequence, with rows of trees and two planted islands. These elements remain in remnant form.

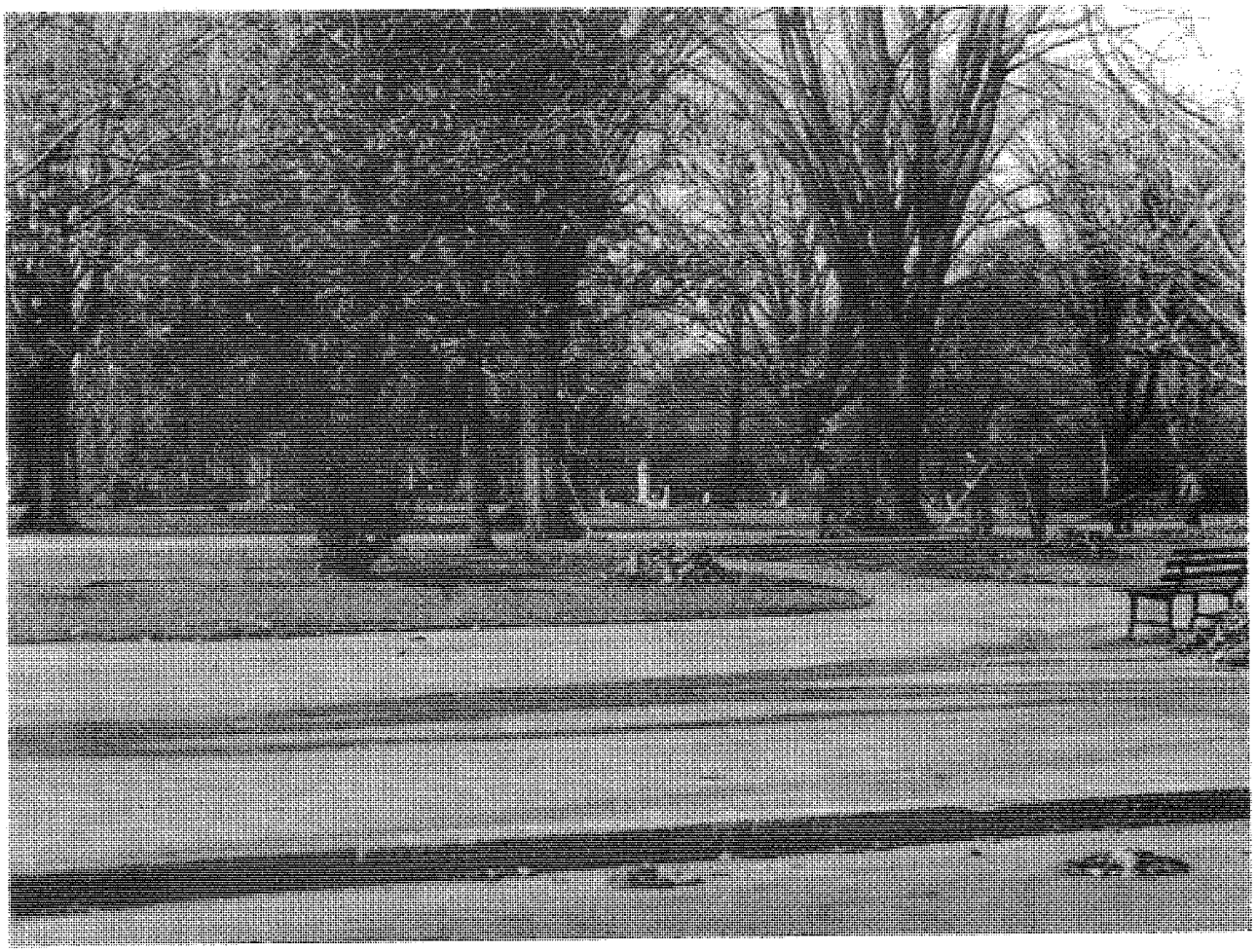
Objective: Improve visual quality. Accommodate active uses. Limit intrusion on surrounding park. Reinstate entry sequence.

Recommendations: Reorganize courts locating as shown on Exhibit 7 to limit intrusion of surrounding areas. Reconstruct surrounding pedestrian paths. Provide five, full-size tennis courts and two regulation basketball courts. Pave all courts in with grass green top coat. Remove high intensity lighting. Replace chain link fences with less obtrusive alternative. Visually enclose Tennis Lawn with tree and shrub plantings as shown. Buffer from Madison Avenue with tree groves. Replant formal trees along walk at west edge of sector. Reinstate decorative shrub plantings in islands.

12. Buffer Edges : Condition, Objective, Recommendations

A dense Buffer Edge made up primarily of flowering shrubs, with trees in some locations nearly surrounded the park in earlier days. Gaps occurred only at the two ends of the Mall and along Madison Avenue at the Tennis Lawn. Each portion of the buffer edge served the purpose of enclosing views of park users in a somewhat different way. The general intent of the buffer edge was to separate the experience of the park from contact with the surrounding city. The historic form of each area is stated, followed by a recommendation for the treatment of each buffer area in the future. Currently the park buffer is generally open to the surrounding city. Remnant shrubs and evergreen trees serve a buffering function in limited locations.





Top: View of Tennis Courts from east, shows terraced courts, chain link fence, remnant shrub plantings and tall light posts.
Bottom: View into park from State Street, shows complete lack of buffer plantings, note men raking fall leaves, bench in foreground and Armsby monument flanked by concrete benches in background, c. 1942. AI-DPR

The primary Objectives in each park buffer treatment are threefold: 1. reinstate the historic division between park and surrounding city by planting to provide visual separation; 2. improve functional elements by rehabilitating the pedestrian paths within and through these buffers, and providing pedestrian lights where appropriate; 3. recognize and accommodate park user perceptions of danger when plantings are very dense and/or close to paths. The first and third objectives are, when approached literally, mutually exclusive. Perception of safety is a real issue although actual crime in the park is no more frequent, and probably less prevalent, than in the surrounding city. A compromise of each, to accommodate the other is attempted in the Preservation Plan and shown on Exhibit 7. Shrub plantings are less dense and farther from paths than in the past. Where both tree groves and shrubs were planted in the past, only tree groves have been recommended. The varied treatment prescribed for each buffer is indicated below.

a. South Lake Avenue Edge

Condition: The historic plan shows dense plantings along the park frontage. Near Madison Avenue tree groves with shrub understory are indicated and along the Lake area these were augmented with Conifer Groves.

Recommendations: Plantings shown are open groves and low shrubs creating a semi-buffered condition. The end of the Lake is buffered by an evergreen grove on the Lake side of the park drive.

b. Park/Property Frontage at Thurlow Terrace

Condition: From South Lake to Thurlow dense plantings of evergreens with a shrub understory buffered the adjacent property. From Thurlow to Englewood a more open treatment with groves and shrub masses existed.

Recommendations: Improve buffering of neighboring property. Retain existing evergreen trees in good health. Plant additional evergreen trees and deciduous trees as shown. Establish shade tolerant ground covers below trees to stabilize soils. As trees mature prune up to 3 to 4 feet. Reduce size of existing cul-de-sac and close end of Thurlow Street. Plant with low shrubs in masses as shown.

c. Englewood Place Edge

Condition: A dense buffer of plantings is indicated along Englewood Place. Evergreen groves currently buffer the southern portion of this edge.

Recommendations: Retain existing plant material in good health. Augment evergreen tree groves as a continuous buffer. Since this edge is only 25 feet wide, a single and double row of trees is indicated. This buffer will be a visually permeable separation from the adjacent structures.

d. State Street Edge

Condition: This edge was densely buffered between State Street and the Park Drive. Groves of White Pine and remnant shrubs indicate both tree and shrub buffers.

Recommendations: Retain existing White Pines. Augment these plantings with more pine along the State Street frontage eventually forming five groves. Close the park entrance at Sprague Place and relocate the Armsby Monument to this area. Plant medium shrubs around the monument. Plant medium shrubs in masses along the park drive.

e. Willett Street Gardens from State Street to Madison Avenue

Condition: Historic documentation indicates a narrow, formal buffer of flowering shrubs along this frontage. The north east corner was a former main entrance. The truncated park drive and resultant parking lot detract considerably from the surrounding park.

Recommendations: Reinstate a shrub border utilizing historically appropriate plant materials. Plant large shrubs at least 15 feet from the park paths. Make planting one shrub deep. This will create a permeable visual barrier while returning the original edge treatment to this buffer. Make pedestrian paths fully functional, creating a pedestrian entry in the northeast corner at the former drive.

f. Madison Avenue from Willett to New Scotland

Condition: This area was densely planted from Madison Avenue to the Park Drive. Extensive shrub plantings remain to signify the former, dense condition.

Recommendations: Renew old shrubs through successive seasons of pruning. Plant new large flowering shrubs along the Madison Avenue frontage while medium flowering shrubs are planted on the Park Drive edge. Large shrubs are to be located 10 to 15 feet away from the path. Utilize historic materials. This treatment will buffer the Madison Avenue traffic but allow open views into the park.

g. Madison Avenue from New Scotland to South Lake

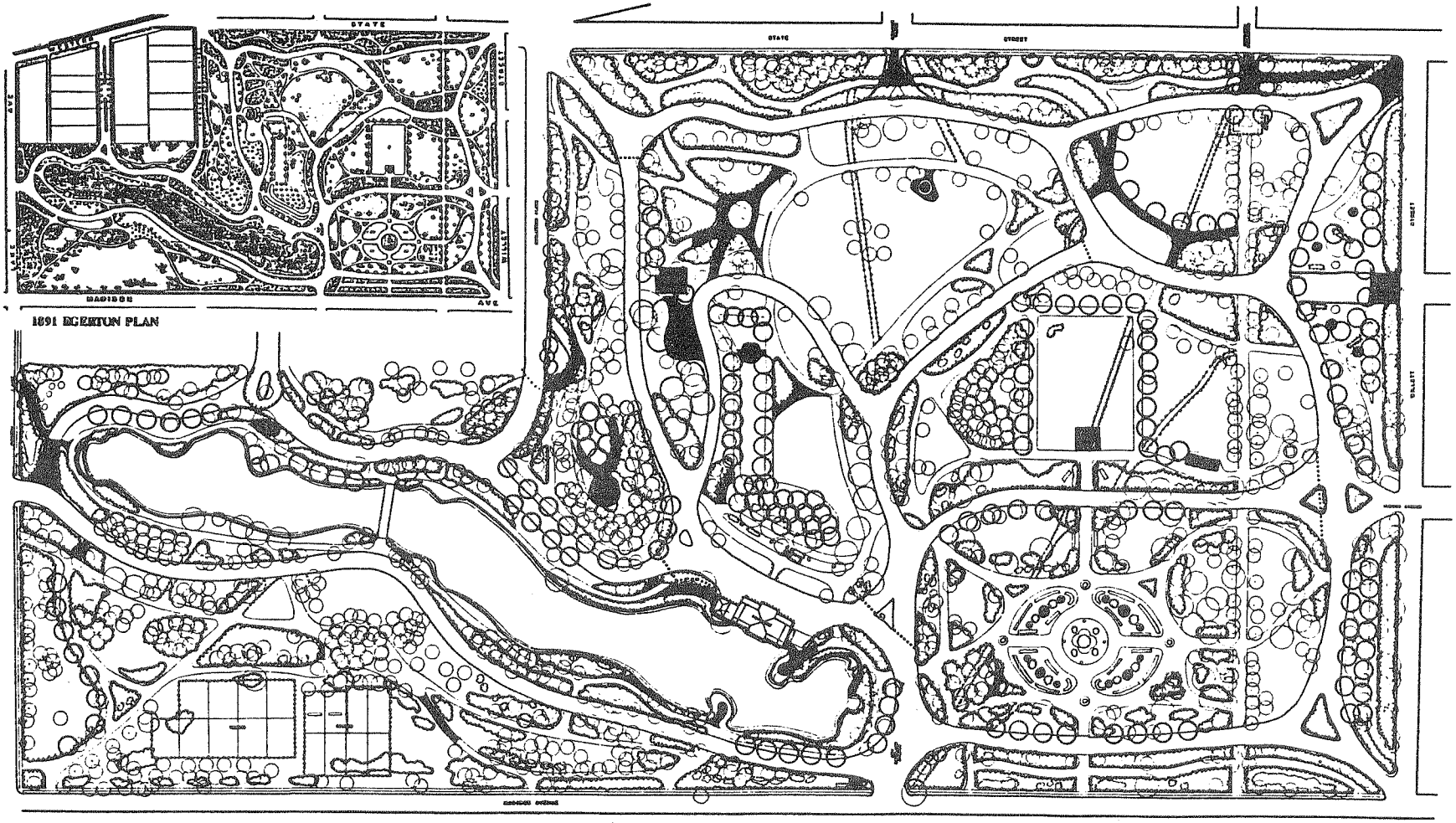
Condition: The frontage along New Scotland was densely planted while the Tennis Lawns were relatively open to view.

Recommendations: Augment existing plantings with tree groves, large and medium shrubs as shown to increase visual separation.

3. Historic Integrity Analysis

Historic Integrity is defined as "Authenticity of a landscapes's historic identity evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the recognized historic period. Retention of topography, vegetation, spatial relationships, circulation systems, furnishings, structures and features all contribute to landscape integrity ...According to National Register criteria, historic resources are considered to possess integrity in at least two of the following seven ways: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association." (Source: National Register of Historic Place, Bulletin #18 "How to Nominate a Designed Landscape to the National Register.")

In assessing historic integrity the entire landscape as well as individual components are considered. Washington Park retains integrity of location because it exists in the same space as it did in the historic period and no lands have been lost to other uses. However, integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association have been diluted or compromised to a variable extent. The bolstering or reinstatement of each of these categories is incorporated in the Preservation Concept in the recommended treatment of each sector and topical area. The Management Concept recognizes these integrity factors as issues to be addressed in future capital projects and maintenance activities.



Historic Landscape Report & Preservation Plan for WASHINGTON PARK

for the WASHINGTON PARK CONSERVANCY, ALBANY, NEW YORK

prepared by KESTENBAUM LANDSCAPES JOINT VENTURE

Patricia M. O'Donnell, Landscape Preservation Planner Joy Kestenbaum, Landscape Historian Charles E. Beveridge, Consulting Historian

0 350 700

1987-88 Scale 1"=100'

HISTORIC INTEGRITY ANALYSIS

4

A comparison between the 1891 Egerton Plan and the 1988 Base Plan was undertaken on Exhibit 4 to determine and spatially locate lost historic elements or features and non-original elements or features. The period of historic significance for Washington Park is the time of its design and initial construction dating approximately from the 1868 with the Olmsted Vaux & Company "Report on the Proposed City Park" and the 1871 Bogart and Culyer Plan to 1908 when Superintendent William S. Egerton retired after a forty year association with Washington Park. The 1891 Egerton Plan is utilized as a primary resource in detailing the specific qualities of the park in its period of historic significance.

Historic Integrity Analysis: Exhibit 4, shows the Egerton 1891 Plan in the upper left corner at a small scale and the 1988 base map, surrounding it, at a scale of 1 inch = 100 feet. The Egerton Plan appears on this exhibit for visual reference to the 1988 base map. The base plan has been annotated with both lost historic and non-original elements and features.

As a general recommendation, the historic integrity of Washington Park, based on the National Register criteria noted above, should be increased in numerous ways as the Preservation and Management Proposal is refined and implemented.

4. Historic Landscape Integrity: Condition, Objectives, Recommendations

The statements related to the Park Sectors and Historic Integrity Analysis are divided into the topical areas addressing each physical element of the park. The historic and existing condition of each set of elements is described first. Then recommendation(s) are presented. These recommendations are graphically depicted to the extent possible on Exhibit 7.

1. Landform and Water Elements

Condition : The topography of the park as built is essentially intact. In some areas erosion and siltation have altered the contour of the land. These areas have been indicated on Exhibit 2: Landscape Composition. These are functional problems that should be corrected as soon as possible. Topographic changes to the park are not mapped, but appear to have occurred in only two locations; in the area of the tennis, handball and basketball courts where terraces for the courts were created and some retaining walls constructed, and in the area at the west end of the Lake where the former road segment was removed.

The Lake has siltation, bank stabilization and margin vegetation problems. Each of these is related to erosion and compaction of soils.

Objective : Reinstate historic topography where lost. Stabilize all park soils. Improve ecological health and appearance of the Lake.

Recommendations : Common Reed, Phragmites communis, is a highly invasive deeply rooted plant that frequently invades wet areas. Eradication becomes more difficult over time as each annual cycle pushes roots deeper. A program of specially timed seasonal cutting has had positive results in Connecticut. Successive herbicide application over several years and heavy machinery removal have also been used. Phragmites should be brought under control and eventually eliminated from the Lake margins.

Stabilization of all soils in the Lake watershed needs to be accomplished prior to any action to remedy the siltation build-up. Investigate each erosion problem. Identify causes and develop a plan of action to control erosion. For example, at the Maple Grove Outlook the placement of a fence and the construction of a new path down to the Lake will aid in stopping the human compaction. After these changes are implemented, lost soils could be replaced and seeded to grass.

Further exploration of these conditions by aquatic biologists specializing in lake ecology would be warranted when the siltation and related aquatic plant growth problems are addressed.

2. Vegetation

Condition: Two types of changes in vegetation are noted on Exhibit 4: Historic Integrity Analysis: 1. the areas of dense planting, which functioned as edge definition for the park perimeter and as decorative accent and/or sector definition in the interior of the park; 2. the planting of formal trees, to enframe a feature or to define and shade a path (formal trees were a key element of the Willett Street Gardens).

The extent of vegetation change is extreme. The park landscape as existing is predominantly mown lawn with trees and remnant shrubs. This landscape is contrasted by both historic and recent groves. The present park, then, is a two part landscape, much less diverse and discrete than it was during the period of historic significance.

In addition the general amount and health of individual trees and groves has declined over time. These more informal plantings were important character elements in the park landscape.

Objective : Over time, reinstate former vegetation, by type in accurate locations. As intended in the historic period, manage vegetation for health and aesthetic appearance. Utilize the historic record and an inventory of existing conditions to develop vegetation renewal capital projects and vegetation management guidelines. Augment trained staff and promote additional training for existing staff.

Recommendations : An aggressive plantings program should be followed to replace from 1% to 2% of the park vegetation each year. This replacement program includes all woody plantings: flowering shrubs, flowering trees, canopy trees, evergreen trees. The amount replaced should be based on the desired park vegetation, rather than its current, depleted state. This annual renewal of plant materials, on varying schedules for each type of woody plant, would insure an appropriate, mixed-age population that is renewed entirely in each fifty to one hundred year cycle.

As portrayed in the Preservation Proposal, the abundance of historic evidence and the trees existing in the park today are a prime source of specific guidance for future tree planting and maintenance activities. A complete tree inventory of the park should be conducted as a database. The park should contain trees of all ages. The work of the Conservancy in mapping the trees should be augmented. A differentiation of several tree sizes by caliper dimension, as well as the health, genus and species of each tree would be an ideal data base to develop an utilize for tree management decisions.

Eight Focal Trees were noted. These trees, and others of similar quality, are visual landmarks in the park. Such trees significantly enhance an area of the park and deserve special attention in a preventive maintenance program. One component of the tree inventory effort would be the mapping of all the older, visually important trees and tree groves.

Top: German Bearded Iris garden at Croquet Lawn stairs, an attractive, new planting in a location that lacks historic precedent, 1988. K/L
Bottom: Recently planted Memorial Grove of Crabapple Tree, trees to small for park use, planted in inappropriate location, note memorial planting recommendations in text, 1988. K/L

Informal plantings should include a range of trees of all ages and historically accurate types in appropriate locations. Formal trees are most effective as single aged stands. Along the Mall, Elms should be planted when Crabapples decline. In other areas, formal trees should also be planted simultaneously and maintained for visual quality as well as general health. These formal plantings can be sequenced with other park plantings over the next two decades.

The planting of memorial trees should be encouraged as one way to continually reforest the park. No plaques or markers should be placed on the tree. Instead, a suitable plaque listing all contributions to a "Tree Trust", a similar entity, should be prominently displayed in the Lake House. Memorial trees should be of historic varieties, planted in correct locations. Donors should understand the conditions and manner of use of their gifts from the outset. An explanatory brochure could explain the memorial tree program or several ways to donate trees or other vegetation to the park.

Tree removals and pruning should be a part of a vegetation management approach to each scenic outlooks. Trees should be removed when in decline. New plantings of historically appropriate trees should be planned with retaining views in mind.

A diverse shrub layer should be reintroduced area by area over time. Utilizing the early plant lists and considering the perceived safety issues, as shown on the Preservation Proposal, dense shrub plantings around the perimeter and within the interior of the park should be reinstated.

A collaborative effort with the City, modelled after the Prospect Park Tree Trust and other similar efforts, could address some park tree needs as a prime objective.

Landscape preservation guidelines can be thoroughly articulated and their application to Washington Park explored. Because the park is listed on the National Register, the historic documentation for treatment of the vegetation as well as other elements within the park should form the basis for future actions. A paraphrasing of current standards for historic landscapes would include the following general guidelines:

1. All projects should be considered as a treatment undertaken in response to the landscape's historic value. Historic design values need to be respected and fully integrated;

2. No historic remains should be altered or obliterated by the proposed action;

3. Plant materials that require removal should be replaced in historic locations with the same materials. Lost plants or plantings should be replaced with the greatest degree of accuracy possible. Contemporary interpretations, new concepts or designs appropriate to other locations should not guide the work. Historic documentation should guide action. The amount of conjecture should be minimized.

4. If complete and accurate historic information is unavailable, actions should be postponed pending further information or should be carried out in such a way as to be completely reversible.

3. Circulation Systems : Vehicular

Condition : Park drives are in generally good to fair condition. Only a portion of the original drives is open to vehicular traffic as shown on Exhibit 1 (Circulation and Built Elements). Drive widening and curbing projects have affected the circulation pattern and covered over or eliminated the cobblestone swales and catch basins of the historic drainage system. Changes in drive openings and closings over

time are recorded on the Analysis Plan. All available areas along park drives are used for vehicular parking both during the day and overnight. Parked cars degrade the visual experience of the park. Vehicular traffic, especially during the morning and evening rush hours is heavy. Cars and pedestrians are frequently in conflict.

Objective : Limit vehicular traffic and parking to reinforce a park-like atmosphere and experience. Rehabilitate drives and related drainage as required.

Recommendations : Alter public access drives and entrances as shown on Exhibit 7. This configuration is intended to allow for all public health and safety access and movement patterns, while discouraging high speed traffic and heavy commuter use. Park user traffic and limited parking is supported. This configuration also allows for the removal of all traffic signals from within the park and the substitution of stop and/or yield signs where necessary.

All public access drives should be curbed. Split granite curbs with a minimum of 8" reveal should be utilized. Curbing will eliminate vehicular compaction of the park landscape.

When drive surfaces require repaving, resurface the asphalt with an imbedded asphalt aggregate (NYSDOT Specifications) to achieve the visual quality of the original gravel drives.

4. Circulation Systems : Pedestrian

Condition : The variations in path surfaces and materials were pointed out in the field reconnaissance text. The general condition of the park paths, other than those few that were recently paved, is poor and impassable in bad weather. Desire paths degrade the visual quality of the park and fail to function in poor weather.

Objective : Bring the pedestrian circulation system to full function. Accommodate desire movements in unobtrusive ways.

Recommendations : Rehabilitate all historic pedestrian paths on their original alignments and widths (average 10 feet). Utilize coursed gravel topped with stone screenings wherever possible. If hard surface paths are required, construct them of asphalt with small gravel imbedded into the surface. When the Mall walk is resurfaced, use this aggregate topping treatment so that it blends with the gravel paths. Construct a few additional paths and in some cases stairs, as shown on Exhibit 7, to accommodate pedestrian movements. Utilize historic path materials on these new paths.

5. Structures

Condition : As shown in Exhibit 3: Park Sectors, the historic Lake House, Refectory, Rustic Shelter, Croquet House, and Drinking Fountain Shelter have been lost. Of the historic structures, only the bridge remains. More recent existing structures include the Lake House, the performance support structure and a bus shelter.

Objective : Make every park structure fully functional. Reconstruct historic structures or sympathetic contemporary ones as park programs and needs create demands.

Recommendations : Detailed recommendations for structures within the park were presented under the Park Sectors discussion. Structures exist in the park to serve park needs. They are secondary resources. In general, any park structure should be a sensitive addition to the landscape of the park. Additional structures if/when constructed should utilize historic structure locations.

6. Monuments

Condition : Five monuments are located in Washington Park. They are in excellent to good condition and may require only cleaning and minor repair in the near future. The Moses Fountain, Burns Memorial and Veterans Memorial are all sited appropriately while both the Willett and Armsby Monuments are located in inappropriate surroundings.

Recent Zelkova tree plantings flanking the Veterans Memorial in an angled line at each side are inappropriate. This memorial is a highly important focal element in the park. It creates a strong sense of entry from Northern Boulevard and functions as a focal object and visual terminus for the mall. Historic illustrations indicate that elms were located behind not around the monument, and proceeded down the mall. They essentially framed, but did not enclose, the formal monument. The pavement panel, four decorative lights and long wooden benches at the corners of the pavement, formed the frame around the monument which was open to the sky, not shaded by surrounding trees.

Objective : Site monuments as appropriately as possible. Conduct regular maintenance to preserve in good condition.

Recommendation : While Washington Park can absorb these five monuments in relatively appropriate ways, the park should not be viewed as a receiving ground for any additional civic monuments or sculpture. Olmsted noted in park writings that monuments gave a decidedly cemeterial feeling to parks and sought to avoid any within public park grounds.

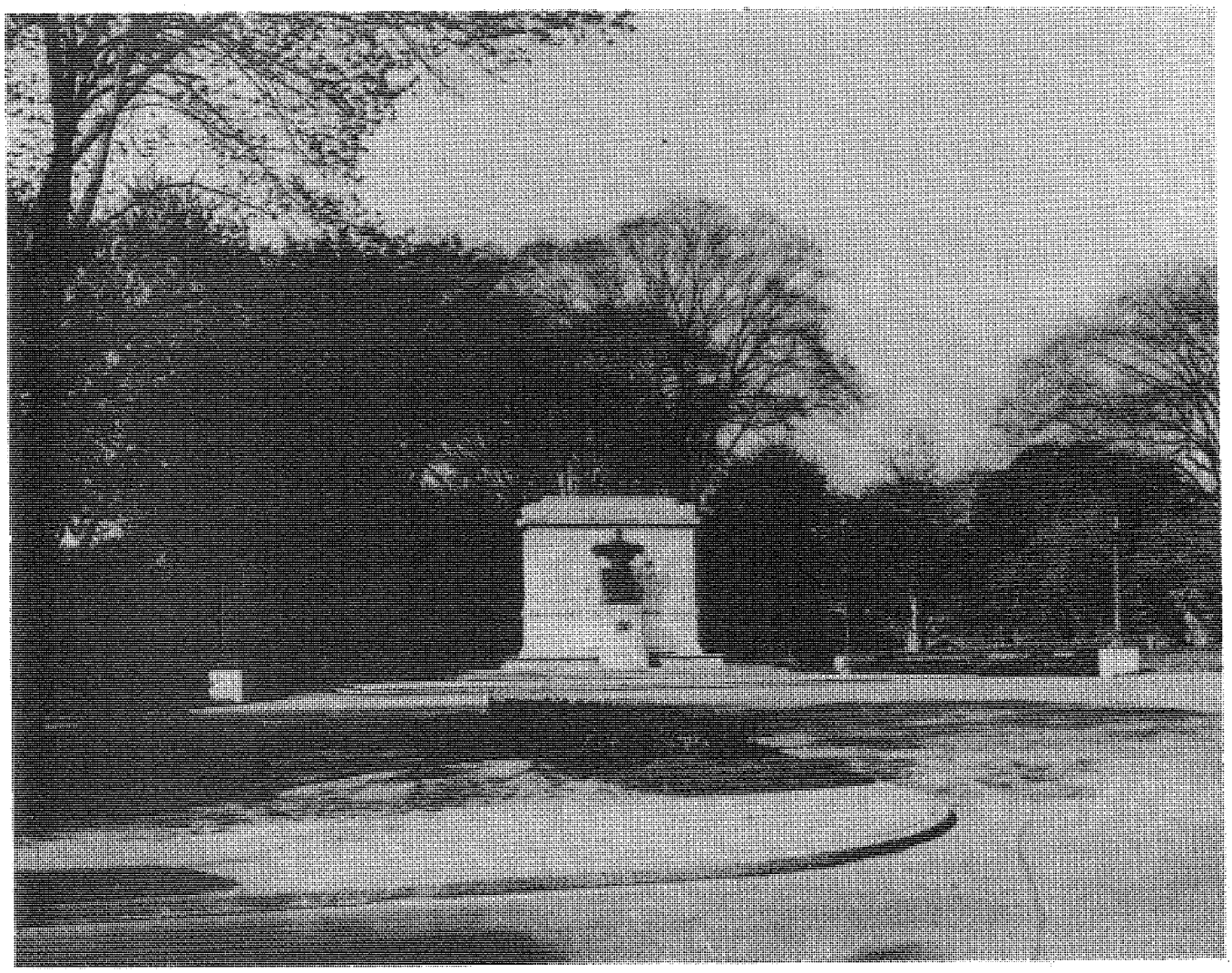
Relocate recently planted Zelkova trees to align along the Mall behind the Veterans Memorial, as shown in historic views. The current configuration, in angled lines at each side, is not appropriate.

The Willett Monument should be relocated to the southeast corner of Hudson Street at the park drive. The area around the monument should be planted in a ground cover. This location will retain the monument in the Willett Street portion of the park while allowing for a somewhat more individual setting.

The Armsby Monument is sited inappropriately, at the corner of a drive intersection at the northeastern edge of the meadow in an area formerly devoted to scenic landscape views. A more suitable location, along the State Street perimeter at the former Sprague Place entrance, is shown on Exhibit 7.

The Burns Monument is surrounded by a simple grass panel and a circular walk pattern. Historic views show 3 to 4 foot shrubs around the outside edge of the walk. Flowering shrubs, such as Deutzia gracilis, should be planted on 6 to 10 foot centers, not as a continuous hedge. This planting would be in keeping with the historic evidence.

The Moses Fountain is a large scale piece with an elaborate setting. An historic period for the bed plantings should be selected for implementation with current horticultural resources. Complete recommendations for this area are described in the Historic Sectors discussion.



View of the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial in the open, with highly articulated surround and background of Mall trees, note recommendations for Memorial and Mall. WPC

7. Utilities

Condition : The subsurface drainage system, water supply and electric supply make up the utility infrastructure of the park. The drainage system appears to be clogged with silt. Overhead electric wiring intrudes in various areas of the park. Water supply to the Lake House is functional. Other supplies for drinking fountains or plant and garden watering were not found.

Objective: Regain fully functional utility systems that are visually unobtrusive.

Recommendation: Perform a thorough investigation of the functionality of the original drainage system. Depending on findings, either rehabilitate the original system or construct a new one.

Replace overhead wires with below ground conduit.

Develop a water supply system that is convenient to park users and maintenance staff.

8. Furnishings

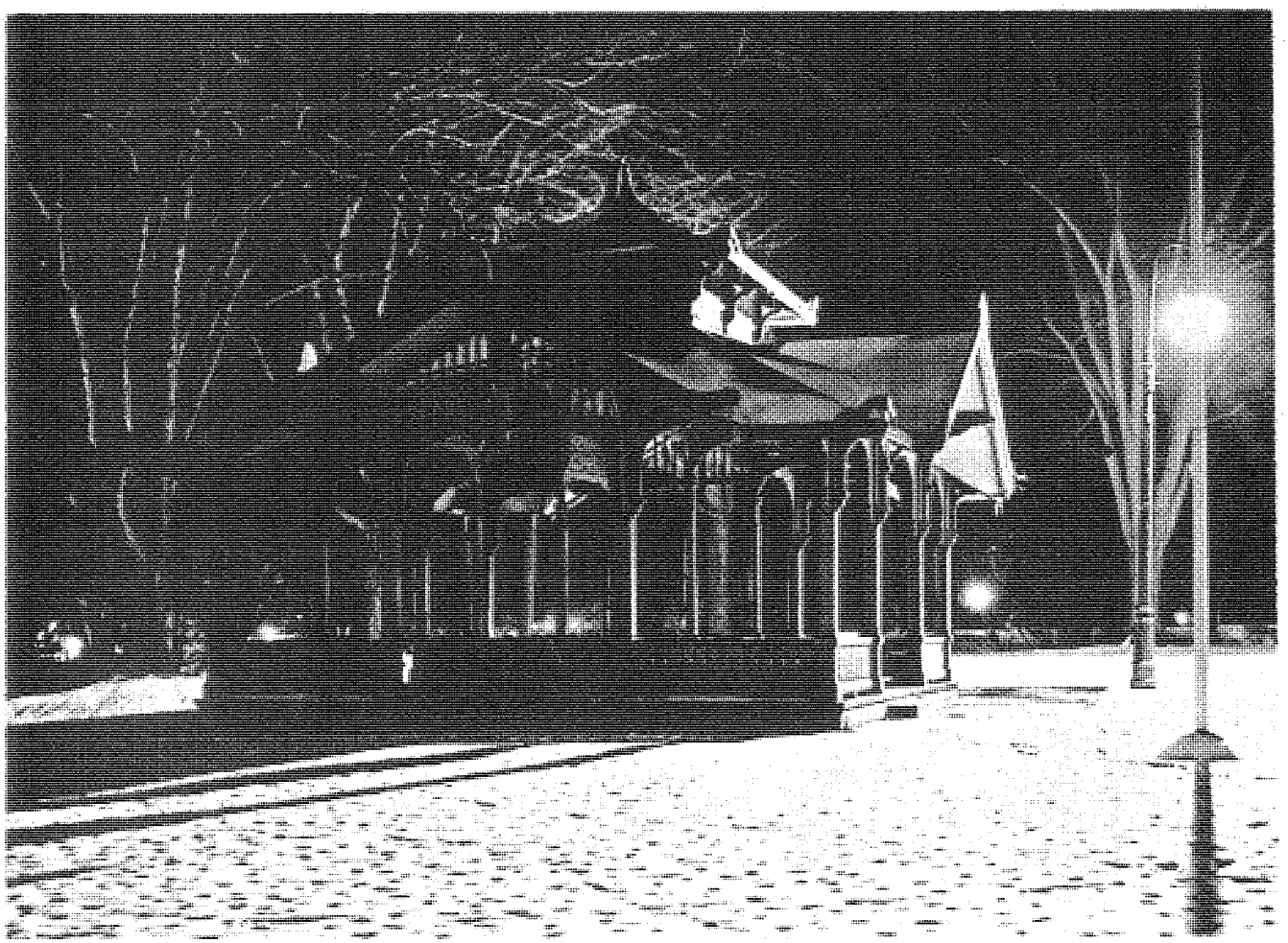
Condition : The park, as seen in historic views, included benches, lights and fences that no longer exist. These park furnishings provided a furnished setting for appropriate park uses. The loss of benches is especially regrettable because concentrations of benches along the Mall, at the King Fountain site, and around the Lake provided places to sit and enjoy the park. No benches are found in these locations today. However, the cluster of benches near the corner of State and Willett Streets is not appropriate to the location.

The lighting of the park with modern street light standards is a detraction from the setting. Fences were utilized in the past to protect plantings and control pedestrians. These applications may be useful today as well. Former fence locations should be discovered to the extent that information exists and replacement should be considered.

Informational and interpretive signage does not exist in Washington Park. A policy regarding the type and location of signs within the park should be developed. Park identification and entry signs are recommended for location at two entrances.

Objective : Utilize historic documentation to develop a vocabulary of appropriate furnishings for Washington Park. Furnish the entire park, locating benches, pedestrian and drive lights, trash receptacles, fences and signage where they will blend with the landscape setting, reflect the historic record and support anticipated levels of park use.

Recommendations : Locations for proposed benches, lights, fences and entry signage are shown on Exhibit 7. Benches are shown around the Lake, at the Lake View Overlook, around the Moses Fountain and along the Mall. Early park benches had wooden slats for the seat and back mounted on metal frames. These light weight benches were stored indoors for the winter. Three early benches still exist in the park and should be used as models for new ones. New bench frames could be more durable with heavier weight iron. Wooden slats should be attached allowing for easy replacement. Dark green or brown paint would be appropriate. They should be anchored in place for year-round use. Since the senior population is on the increase nationwide, consideration should be given to park benches that would be easy the elderly to use. The seat height, contour profile of seat and back and arm rest shape and size should all be considered.



Picturesque view of ornate Croquet Shelter at night, use of this structure as a model for a replacement or new greenhouse facility is recommended, December, 1938. AI-CN

Remove large cluster of benches at State and Willett Streets. Locate benches according to historic record, as shown on Exhibit 7.

Pedestrian lighting is shown along interior park paths at intervals of 100 to 150 feet. This type of lighting is recommended so that the park can be utilized for evening events, for user safety and surveillance. In other historic parks iron light posts are topped with single luminaires ranging in height from 9 to 13 feet. For Washington Park light poles used in Albany should be researched and one selected for the park. Numerous manufacturers produce appropriate historic light poles and vandal resistant luminaires. Cobra head street lighting along public drives should be replaced with fixtures modeled after those at the Moses Fountain, crook-neck fixtures formerly at the Croquet Shelter or other appropriate historic lighting with a mounting height of 18 to 22 feet. Additional Cobra head lighting within the interior of the park should be removed. High intensity lighting at the playing courts should be reorganized and lowered when courts are reconfigured. All light posts should be painted to match benches.

Fences are shown at four locations, Maple Grove Outlook, Lake View Outlook and Elm Grove Outlook for safety and to provide a barrier for movement down the steep slopes, and at the north side of the Moses Fountain sector to funnel pedestrian movements along the main path. Fences shown on Exhibit 7 are located for safety and landscape management considerations. An unobtrusive fence should be utilized. The standard metal 3 rail pipe fence, with a more decorative post, would be a good choice. This type of fence is simple, functional and visually permeable. It is used in several New York City historic parks.

Entry signs are recommended for placement at the three drive entrances: Willett Street, New Scotland Avenue and Englewood Place/State Street. These signs should be no more than 3 feet high, made of metal, stone or wood, with a simple text including: "Washington Park, City of Albany, 1870, designed by Bogart, Culyer and Egerton, listed on the National Register of Historic Places". A metal sign, framed with the same posts and rails used for the proposed fences with a sheet metal surface would be highly durable and attractive. Using a photographic etching process, the text and possibly an historic illustration could be permanently affixed to the surface. This type of signage is durable and attractive. It is widely used in the National Park Service for interpretive signage. Other interior park signage should be very limited. Interpretation of the park's history and natural environment could be developed utilizing some signage but might be more effective as a group of informational brochures.

Trash receptacles should be located throughout the park, especially in areas where people gather and where food or drink is available. Several styles are utilized in other historic landscapes including painted 55 gallon drums, separately or inserted into a decorative iron frame, and painted wire mesh. Paint metal receptacles to match benches and lightposts.

C. Management Proposal

The management of a public landscape includes considerably more than basic maintenance. Considerations range from accommodating large numbers of people attending events, and public awareness of the historic and environmental value of the park, to stewardship of mature trees and the cyclic rehabilitation of the drainage system. The management structure addresses the physical aspects of the park and the use of the park in all its ramifications. Ideally, this structure must be well staffed and funded, and function effectively to achieve optimal conditions in Washington Park. The Parks Department currently responds effectively to crisis situations and perform basic maintenance tasks, but is insufficiently staffed to perform optimally. In addition, decades of limited capital funding have left the

park utilities, circulation system, and furnishings in relatively poor condition. Numerous capital projects will be required over a period of years to bring these elements to a fully functional state.

In order to achieve the vision for Washington Park set forth in the Preservation Plan, an ideal management structure needs to be developed over time as the fabric of the park is renewed. Reaching and retaining the vision for the physical components is dependent on achieving a multi-faceted management structure. The Management Proposal for Washington Park addresses seven aspects:

1. Park Administration;

2. Public/Private Partnership;

3. Fiscal Responsibility;

4. Preservation Plan Implementation;

5. Maintenance Operations;

6. Visitor Services;

7. Security and Policing.

Each of these seven components of management will be briefly discussed from the perspective of the existing systems and then alternatives will be presented and recommendations proposed.

1. Park Administration

Washington Park is one property of approximately 90 acres within a system of city parks that includes grounds of varying sizes. Other parks are small, with the exception of nearby Lincoln Park. Commissioner Richard Barrett and Deputy Commissioner Richard Patrick oversee the Department of Parks and Recreation. Most of the department's efforts are targeted to maintenance operations and responding to crisis situations. A mobile crew of thirty to thirty-five workers addresses the maintenance of smaller parks. In addition, the Forestry Crew responds to crisis situations dealing with all the city's trees. Limited staff and equipment do not allow for preventative maintenance work on the park's trees.

At Washington Park, Foreman Jim Maybo manages a crew of 12 to 15 park workers year round. Approximately ten of these workers are 55 to 70 years of age and five are 25 to 35 years of age. Four or five workers are added to the park force in April and work five or six months. Ten more workers are added for July and August, increasing the work force to about 30. In recent years, a horticulturist has augmented the seasonal staff making the planting of display gardens possible. These staffing levels equate to a full time equivalent worker count of 15.3 to 19.1 persons annually. Staff skill levels are variable. Some on-the-job training would serve to augment existing skills. The work program for the existing staff is primarily maintenance oriented, but has included several in-house project efforts in recent years, including the rehabilitation of stone dust paths in the Moses Fountain sector and the construction of traffic barriers along the South Lake Drive.

The Washington Park force has decreased in numbers over time, but is supported by more power equipment including large and small mowing machinery, leaf vacuums, front end loaders, dump trucks, etc. Adequate storage space for machinery is lacking.

While Foreman Maybo functions as the on-site contact for park maintenance, other aspects of park management reside at the department Hoffmann Avenue offices, with personnel that address Washington Park as a small component of their responsibilities.

Recommendations: The administration of several important historic landscapes in other cities has decentralized to an on-site structure. In the Central Park structure, for example, the Parks Commissioner's role is policy based, authorizing rules and regulations, advocating park issues to the mayor and City Council, approving budget and staffing, entering into legal contracts with contractors, concessionaires and service organizations, including the Central Park Conservancy. The Central Park Administrator reports to the Parks Commissioner and the trustees of the Conservancy for policy, budgetary and planning issues and to the Deputy Commissioner of Operations for operational issues. Quoting from Rebuilding Central Park : A Management and Restoration Plan, "The Administrator supervises and makes decisions regarding restoration planning and construction; the allocation of maintenance resources; and the style, content and level of visitor services, including Park security, sports, events programming and concessions." (Source: Rogers, et al, Rebuilding Central Park: A Restoration and Management Plan, 1987, Copyright, Central Park Conservancy, MIT Press, quote from page 79, park management section pages 75 to 85. While other sources for management of historic park lands exist, they are generally not published and are less readily available.)

Four second tier management positions address operations, in-house and contracted construction, visitor services and horticulture. Staffing for 1984 was broken down into the following categories: Management and Field Support (4), Maintenance (82), Horticulture (21), Preservation (16), Park Operations (25) Visitor Services (27), Security, Communication Center and Night Security, not including precinct police (28), and Park Enforcement Patrol and Park Rangers (31) for a total force of 234, 204 from the Department of Parks and 30 from the Conservancy.

The Central Park force manages 843 acres, an average of one worker per 3.6 acres. Utilizing this same ratio, a simplistic comparison to Washington Park would indicate that its 90 acres should have a force of at least 25 persons on the ground. This number should be calculated as full-time equivalent workers understanding that this may mean a winter force of less and a summer force of substantially more staff. This estimate requires refinement to address the specific needs of Washington Park. It will probably be higher because: 1. the proportion of highly maintained landscape in Washington Park is greater than that of Central Park; 2. the staffing requirements for the park landscape and built elements will depend on preservation plan implementation allowing for additional care of the landscape when newly rehabilitated; and 3. several new staffing categories, not directly involved in park maintenance, will need to be developed.

The development of a separate Washington Park administration, headed by an administrator with a staff to address each component of the management structure is recommended. The administrator's office would be responsible for the coordination of fiscal budgeting, policy development and refinement, preservation plan implementation and other long-range planning, day-to-day and cyclic maintenance operations, programming, interpretation, special events, security, policing and collaboration with the private sector in a defined public/private partnership.

A feasibility study that addresses all aspects of this type of approach should be undertaken. The study report needs to address the route to achieving this structure as a progression from the current situation. This recommendation has ramifications for each area of management discussed under the following headings.

2. Public/Private Partnership

The Public/private partnership between the City of Albany, especially the Parks and Recreation Department and the Washington Park Conservancy and other community groups and individuals, presents opportunities for broad collaboration. The existing framework for such collaboration is basically an open communication between parties and a receptivity on the part of the Department to specific projects. No formal agreement exists. the Washington Park Conservancy is a private member organization that advocates various improvements within Washington Park and undertakes planning projects such as this one, and physical projects through such committees as the gardening committee. There are no paid staff members. Individual members provide volunteer services for specific committees or tasks.

Recommendation: The best models for historic park conservancy structures and functions come from Central Park and Prospect Park in New York City. In each case the Conservancy is a institutionalized private sector organization that is well integrated with the public sector.

The Central Park Conservancy has a staff of 30. Monies are raised from private sources to provide this staff and pursue a wide range of short and long-term projects. The Conservancy Administrator has the role of insuring wise use of all its funds and assuring that these funds are spent for items outside of the city's responsibility. In relation to this extra funding and staffing, the Administrator must also insure that the city continues to provide its fair share of resources, not decreasing the proportional commitment because of Conservancy efforts.

The Prospect Park model includes a tree trust, volunteer coordination and fund-raising for an endowment as well as specific projects.

The primary private sector effort focused on Washington Park should be developed through the Washington Park Conservancy. Other private groups or individuals can function through the Conservancy structure. The board and members of the Conservancy should explore the transformation of their organization into a staffed, funded and endowed structure that can enter into a legal agreement with the city to become the private sector steward for Washington Park. The Conservancy would take on a broad role modeled after the models discussed and information from additional sources.

The Washington Park Conservancy should consider the establishment of special ear-marked funds to support implementation of those sections of the Plan appropriate for private financing.

3. Fiscal Responsibility

The budget for Washington Park is currently integrated with the overall Department of Parks and Recreation budget. No separate costing or accounting exists. This annual budget comes from tax revenues, while capital project budgets may come from city bond funds, state or federal funding programs. The primary source of park funding is City of Albany, through the Department of Parks and Recreation budget and some work of other city personnel within the park.

Funding is also provided by the Washington Park Conservancy, through their projects and services. The Conservancy contributes to the park through volunteer efforts and various initiatives. They raise funds within the community and secure grants to carry out chosen projects.

Recommendation: Fiscal responsibility for all aspects of park management includes all components of the annual budgets and ongoing capital projects. The fiscal structure for the park would be most effectively based in the Park Administrator's Office, with Washington Park as a separate itemized cost center within the Department of Parks and Recreation. As a cost center the park budget can be systematically controlled, evaluated and justified on a cost benefit basis. The annual and capital budgets contributed by the City of Albany and the Conservancy could both be managed through the Administrator's office.

The annual and capital budgets should be developed systematically based on all aspects of park management. Both annual and capital budgets will need to be dramatically increased to achieve the implementation of the Preservation Plan. The annual budget can be steadily increased over time to provide for a larger, well-trained, talented staff that is well equipped. As the Preservation Plan is finalized and a phasing plan developed, cost estimates for the various projects can be undertaken. These estimates will provide a financial framework for the long-range capital project budget. The method of securing this budget can then be strategized and accomplished over time.

4. Preservation Plan Implementation

The Preservation Plan portrayed in Exhibit 7 and described in detail in this document deserves broad review and discussion. While modifications may be made in the future, the basis for discussion and current action is Exhibit 7 as presented and described herein. Implementation of the Preservation Plan will proceed over a period of years. Realization of the plan is dependent on focused public and private support during the entire implementation. The primary factors influencing the speed of implementation are park staffing, volunteer initiatives, annual funding and capital projects funding.

Recommendation: Responsibility for implementation of the Preservation Plan should primarily rest with the Department of Parks through the Washington Park Administrator's Office. A phased schedule, developed from the agreed project priorities of the Preservation Plan, will serve to map the steps to implementation. The Washington Park Conservancy should share this responsibility to the extent that it is capable. A commitment by all involved to a long-term collaboration is required.

Private, non-profit organizations, working on behalf of the public landscape, can function in unique ways. For example, the Central Park Conservancy has often taken the lead on a new direction, such as the graffiti removal program or the development of in-house expertise in horticulture, masonry or carpentry to recreate or restore park fabric or furnishings. The Central Park Conservancy, unconstrained by standard municipal low-bid practice, has undertaken some creative problem solving leading to projects that would be difficult or impossible to carry out in the standard way. The lessons of this private/public partnership can be applied to Washington Park in equally creative ways.

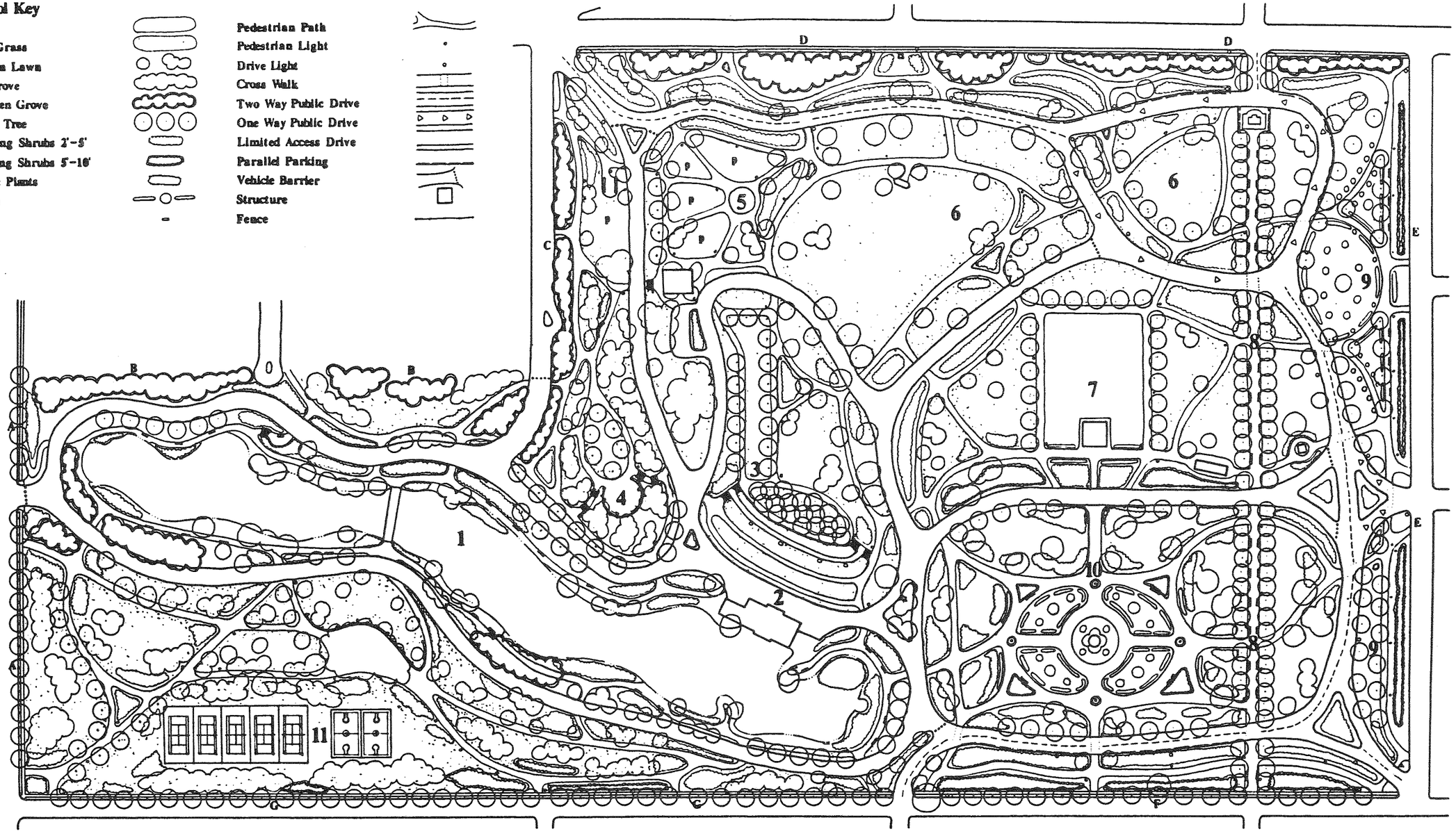
5. Maintenance Operations

Current maintenance activities include some care of park trees and shrubs, annual garden preparation and maintenance, turf maintenance and garbage collection. Tennis, handball and basketball courts and playground equipment are maintained by the park force. Recent in-house rehabilitation projects, such as spring tree and shrub plantings, walk reconstruction and traffic barrier installation have also been performed by the park force.

Symbol Key

- Lawn
- Rough Grass
- Trees in Lawn
- Tree Grove
- Evergreen Grove
- Formal Tree
- Flowering Shrubs 2'-5'
- Flowering Shrubs 5'-10'
- Aquatic Plants
- Garden
- Bench

- Pedestrian Path
- Pedestrian Light
- Drive Light
- Cross Walk
- Two Way Public Drive
- One Way Public Drive
- Limited Access Drive
- Parallel Parking
- Vehicle Barrier
- Structure
- Fence



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Historic Landscape Report & Preservation Plan for WASHINGTON PARK

for the WASHINGTON PARK CONSERVANCY, ALBANY, NEW YORK

prepared by KESTENBAUM LANDSCAPES JOINT VENTURE

Patricia M. O'Donnell, Landscape Preservation Planner Joy Kestenbaum, Landscape Historian Charles E. Beveridge, Consulting Historian

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1987-88 Scale 1"=100'

PRESERVATION & MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL

7

The types of maintenance operations required in a historic public park fall into several categories: grounds keeping, cleaning, repair, rehabilitation and conservation. Each of these operations requires different skills and equipment to achieve. Flexible job title descriptions that accommodate the range of needed skills are necessary.

Recommendations: These recommendations include several concepts that could be undertaken in the short term, including a thorough assessment of existing staff and equipment capabilities and assignments. Eventual reorganization and augmentation of overall maintenance operations should be undertaken in the long term. A new, more effective system will be required to support the implementation of the Preservation Plan and safeguard the required investment of personnel, equipment and funding.

In the short range:

Assess existing park maintenance operations from the perspective of staff skills and equipment capabilities. Consideration of Maintenance Operations includes personnel, equipment and the managing of the work force for daily, weekly, seasonal, annual and cyclic operations. All these aspects should be incorporated un the assessment process. This assessment will serve as a baseline pinpointing additional needs and structuring an optimal system. Achievement of the optimal form will be necessary to safeguard a preserved, fully functional park.

Advocate a higher personnel budget for the Washington Park so that skilled craftspersons, horticulturists, arboriculturists and the like can be hired. This advocacy can be justified by the assessment conducted and needs identified.

Develop a recruiting program for masters and apprentices in needed fields.

Initiate skill building program for existing staff by developing contacts with local horticulture, craft and trade programs providing training for promising staff.

Support summer youth internships in the park to augment crews during the months of most intensive park use. Provide training opportunities so that these jobs have appeal to motivated, talented young people.

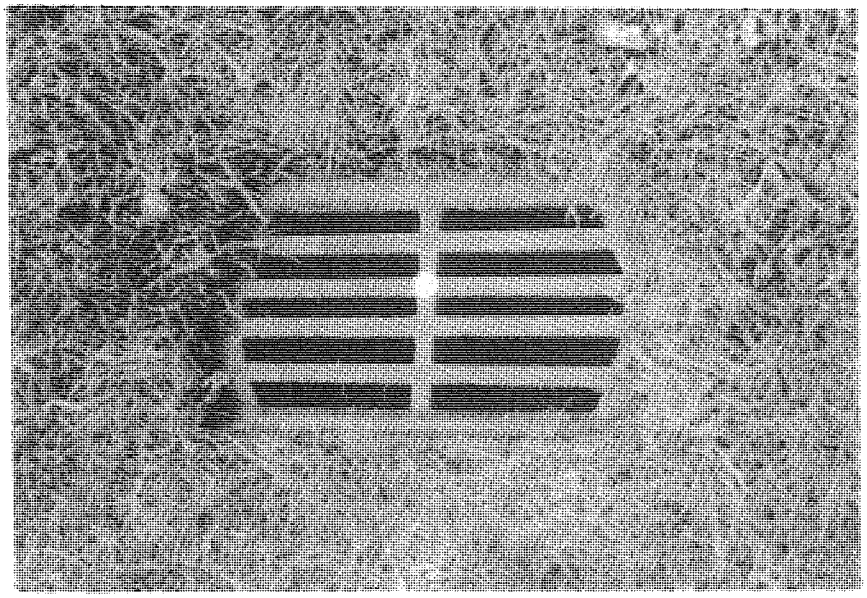
Advocate capital projects funding to secure materials for in house projects that improve the function and maintain-ability of the park.

In the Long Range:

Organize all maintenance operations under a Maintenance Chief who is directly responsible to the Park Administrator. Consider dividing maintenance operations into three types of crews that perform groups of related tasks:

- Grounds Keeping Crew, responsible for care of canopy trees, evergreens, flowering trees, shrubs, ground covers, garden plantings, turf and soil;

- Cleaning and Repair Crew, responsible for garbage collection, path and drive sweeping, furnishings maintenance and repair, courts and playground equipment maintenance, set-up and breakdown of park events, cleaning of catch basins, etc.; and



Top: Drainage grate in former swale now covered with turf, catch basin is silted in, entire park drainage system requires rehabilitation.
Bottom: Spring clean-up shows raking debris from cobblestone swales to maintain effective surface drainage from paths, May 1936. AI-CN

- Rehabilitation and Conservation Crew, modeled after the craftsperson crews in Central Park, responsible for in-house projects to install fences, stabilize lake edges and banks, construct minor structures such as the rustic shelter in the Meadow, conserve statuary, rehabilitate pedestrian paths and drainage swales, construct stone stairs and other such tasks.

Individual crew members may be specialist in one or two areas, such as garden planting and maintenance, tree care, carpentry or stone masonry. The Grounds Keeping and Cleaning and Repair Crews could be organized by park sector working in a sequence from one sector to the next. The Rehabilitation and Conservation Crew would be organized by project, following the phasing of the Preservation Plan as funds for materials are provided.

6. Visitor Services

Visitor services include operation of public buildings and concessions, visitor education and park interpretation, programming of events and entertainment and volunteer coordination. Most of these activities are not park-based at present. City sponsored park events are programmed by the City Arts Office, while other events are permitted through the Recreation Department. The Lake House building is maintained for part-time public use by the park force. Seasonal food and paddle boat concessions operate out of the Lake House. Currently, visitor education, park interpretation and volunteer coordination are minimal activities.

Recommendations: The Conservancy, in collaboration with the City and Department could develop a park-based Visitor Services policy and program initiative. The roles of the private and public sector in this area should be clearly defined. An outline of program needs includes budget, paid and volunteer staff, office and support space, potential audience served and other factors. The provision of Visitor Services should be considered as a phased program, identifying components that can be activated in the short-term and the phases of program growth anticipated. This program area is closely related to achieving the Preservation Plan goals of communicating the vision for the park, developing stewardship of the park, providing for diverse park uses, emphasizing the natural environment and articulating the historic and cultural value of the park.

Develop rules for park behavior and post them at several locations. Posted rules will aid in relieving conflicts between users, making the park use experience more pleasant and deterring vandalism. They will also allow for regular enforcement.

Develop an Urban Park Rangers program. Initially this may be a seasonal program, operating from late spring to early fall. Urban Park Rangers would function as a friendly presence in the park. In other parks these uniformed rangers conduct interpretation and environmental education programs, promote good behavior, issue reminders of park rules, offer first aid and function as auxiliary staff for park buildings. Programs elsewhere can serve as models for Albany. The Urban Park Rangers, aided by experts in various fields, would manage the public education and interpretive programs for the park under the Park Administrator's office.

Review user satisfaction and management oversight with the services providing by concessionaires. Make recommendations for a more effective concession program as needed.

Collaborate on developing an annual calendar of events for moderate and large groups. Manage these events for the well being of the park by determining the functional frequency of events, the areas that

can sustain large crowds, the conditions (such as recent heavy rains) under which events will be cancelled or postponed and other considerations.

Coordination with the Albany Urban Cultural Park system is desirable and encouraged. The Urban Cultural Park could serve as a potential source of capital funding for Preservation Plan implementation as well as other functions that will assist in the realization of park goals.

7. Security and Policing

Existing park policing is performed by frequent City police patrols through the park. Police patrol the park in squad cars and on horseback. Actual criminal behavior within the park appears to be limited. During the course of this project park users have voiced their perception of danger and feelings of insecurity that prevent full enjoyment of the park. While some security presence exists, it could be augmented.

A well-maintained park, full of park users, is the best antidote for perceived danger and insecurity. When a public park is poorly maintained, positive uses diminish with deteriorating conditions. Bringing Washington Park back to a high level of function will do a great deal to improve security.

Recommendation: In Central and Prospect Parks a tiered system of security presence has been adopted. Three components of this system apply to Washington Park. Urban park rangers as visitor services staff function as first tier, creating a friendly presence in the park. These rangers are in walkie-talkie communication with Park Enforcement Patrol Rangers (PEP Rangers). The PEP Rangers are a mounted or foot patrol that functions as a peace keeping force. The PEP Rangers come to the aid of the Urban Park Rangers when park users are unruly, involved in vandalism or minor infractions. The third tier is City Police. Police Officers provide a security presence and, in communication with the two types of Rangers, can be summoned to the site of any criminal activity. The steps to providing this tiered system of security presence should be thoroughly investigated. The first phase of implementation would be establishing a Ranger program. This should be undertaken in the short term.

VIII. FIRST STEPS

The Preservation Plan and Management Proposal for Washington Park is complex and ambitious. Thorough review and consideration of all that this document embodies is the first of the "First Steps". Refinements may be desired and should be made in the future as needed. The implementation of the Preservation Plan and Management Proposal will extend over a period of at least ten years. Phasing of the implementation based on accurate cost estimates should take place over the next year and will be dependent on the initial management assessment tasks described below.

Two major directions should be embarked upon as soon as possible. The first deals with improvement of the physical fabric of the park, implementing recommendations from the Preservation Plan. First projects should address:

- the stabilization of soils especially on steep hillsides and areas that drain into the Lake;

- the rehabilitation of the subsurface drainage system, the renewal and augmentation of the park vegetation initiating the 1% to 2% annual replacement of plantings;

- the reconstruction of portions of the pedestrian circulation system, especially the path around the Lake and the proposed path segments that address desire movements;

- the augmentation of park furnishings, especially benches and trash receptacles.

Each of these projects have been discussed in this report. Implementation should begin as soon as possible.

The second set of early initiatives involve the analysis and restructuring of existing management components. Early initiatives should include:

- the assessment of the Park Management Structure and full consideration of reorganization under a Park Administrator;

- the development of a more effective and formalized Public/ Private Partnership between the City of Albany, the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Washington Park Conservancy;

- the development of Visitor Service Policies and Programs through a collaboration between the Department and Conservancy;

- the initiation of a Park Ranger Program including Urban Park Rangers and Park Enforcement Patrol Rangers.

These initiatives will alter the future course of park management and pave the way for implementation of the Preservation and Management Plan for Washington Park.

In conclusion, the goals for Washington Park are embodied in the myriad proposals stated within these pages. The development of this vision for Washington Park has been a growth process and incorporates the ideas and aspirations of all who contributed. The Preservation Plan expresses a consensus of those affected and concerned and functions as a guide for all future activities and projects within the park. The future of Washington Park is entrusted to the hands of Albanians who understand the unity of past, present and future and who have embarked on an ambitious program to achieve this vision for the park.

IX. APPENDIX: CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF WASHINGTON PARK, ALBANY, NEW YORK

1800 Land south of State Street and west of Knox Street is designated as a city burial ground.

1806 Land between Madison Avenue and State Street, from Willett to Knox Streets, is dedicated as the Middle Public Square.

1809 The name of Middle Public Square is formally changed to Washington Square.

1859 In an editorial in the Albany Evening Journal, publisher Thurlow Weed urges the city to purchase the land west of the Washington Square parade ground, and which included the site of the old State Street burial grounds, in order to create a public park.

1863 David Murray and William Barnes present proposals to the city government suggesting different sites for a park.

1868 Dec.: Olmsted, Vaux & Co. prepares its "Report on the Proposed City Park" for Albany.

1869 The Board of Commissioners of the Washington Park is created by an act of the State Legislature and entrusted with developing, maintaining, and administering Washington Park.

1870 The engineering firm of Bogart, Culyer & Co. is selected to prepare plans and advise in the laying out of Washington Park. R. H. Bingham, city surveyor, is appointed chief engineer and superintendent of the park.

Real estate is purchased to create a linkage between the parade ground and former burial ground property.

1871 Washington Park is first opened to the public, after the area of the old Washington parade ground is laid out.

The Lathrop property, ten acres lying between Madison and Hudson and west of Snipe (Lexington) is added to the park ($36,000). Additional real estate on Knox Street is acquired ($15,000) and Board of Park Commissioners acquires title to sundry vaults ($6,250).

1872-3 Refectory, fountain shelter, and rustic shelter overlooking the meadow are constructed. Swings are placed in park.

1873 After the Board of Commissioners of Washington Park cancels its contract with Bogart & Culyer and dispenses with the services of Bingham, William S. Egerton, formerly assistant to Bingham, is appointed engineer in charge.

Additional lots are acquired in the western section of the park.

1873-4 Lake is excavated and water is introduced.

1874 The croquet shelter and a rustic shelter near State Street are constructed. A deer house and rustic bird houses are built in park. A drinking fountain is placed at the corner of Hudson and Knox Streets.

Skating is introduced on the lake during winter.

1875 Oct.: The work of the Albany iron manufacturer T. J. Sullivan, the Washington Park footbridge spanning the lake is completed.

Boating is introduced; waterfowl are brought to park and lake is stocked with fish.

1876 Jan 6: Built from designs by Frederick W. Brown, the lake house is opened to the public.

1878 25,000 foliage and flowering plants are planted near Willett Street.

1879 Nov. 21: Monument in memory of Dr. James H. Armsby (d. 3 Dec. 1875), a founder of the Albany Medical College and Hospital, is dedicated; Erastus D. Palmer is the sculptor of the bust.

Henry L. King leaves a bequest with which to erect a fountain in the park in memory of his father, Rufus H. King.

Englewood Place is laid out and a new entrance is constructed leading to the lake circuit drive.

1880 Knox Street property, an area of approximately 9 acres, is added to the park.

1881 Electric lights are introduced in the park.

Plans are underway to lay out Thurlow Terrace and a new approach to the park.

1882 The Taylor property at the corner of Madison and Lake Avenues is purchased and conveyed to the Board of Commissioners of Washington Park as an addition to the park.

c.1884 The Evans-Pruyn House designed by Robert Gibson is constructed on Englewood Place at the northern boundary of the park.

1888 Sept. 30: Designed by the sculptor Charles Calverly, the Robert Burns statue is unveiled.

A large "ice palace" in the form of a fort is erected on the plateau at the corner of Madison and Lake Avenues east of the tennis grounds and dedicated with a display of fireworks.

1889 Lawn tennis is first played in the park.

1889/90 Aquatic plants are first featured along the borders of the lake.

1891 The four relief panels of the Burns monument are inserted on the pedestal.

Ogden & Wright, architects, repair the refectory.

City acquires title to 68 acres of land known as Beaver Park (Lincoln Park).

Aquatic garden is started at the eastern end of the lake.

Charles LaDow house, designed by Ernest Hoffman, is built on Thurlow Terrace just north of the park.

1892 A variety of hybrid tea roses is introduced.

2200 linear feet of gutters are laid on drives and walks.

1893 Sept. 29: The King memorial fountain, the work of the sculptor J. Massey Rhind, is finally unveiled.

The first annual chrysanthemum show is held at the lake house.

"Vernon" Begonia and hardy herbaceous plants are introduced.

1895 The lake is drained and cleaned of silt.

1898 The elm leaf beetle is first discovered in the park.

50 new settees (benches) are acquired for Washington Park.

The rustic shelter overlooking the central lawn is provided with a new roof.

The walk approach to the bridge on the north side of the lake is reconstructed and laid in cement.

1899 The Board of Commissioners of Washington Park retires after thirty years of service.

1900 The Bureau of Parks, a branch of the Department of Public Works, is created through legislation to oversee the city's parks.

A vehicular and bicycle entrance is constructed at Knox Street path entrance and a walk is constructed leading from path entrance at Lexington Avenue across driveway towards the croquet ground.

Drinking fountains are placed near bicycle entrance at Knox Street and adjacent to tennis grounds.

1902 Tennis courts are regraded and resurfaced with clay.

Croquet house, well shelter, lake house and swings are repaired and repainted.

Park lake is lowered and edges cleaned.

1903 A steel wire fence is erected on the hill south of the lake bridge and north of the lakehouse on the terraced hill and about the swings, to protect the slopes and to confine or direct the public to the walks or established lines of transit.

1907 A large boulder is placed along the drive near Willett Street by the Sons of the Revolution, Philip Livingston Chapter, in memory of Col. Marinus Willett to commemorate his victories over the British during the Revolutionary War.

1908 Superintendent Egerton ends his public employment after thirty-eight years of association with Washington Park and is succeeded by Philip Bender.

32 new electric lights placed in the park.

1909 New tool house is constructed as an addition to the lake house.

300 shrubs of different varieties are purchased from Ellwanger & Barry nursery in Rochester and planted in the park to replace those which had died in previous years.

25 purple leaf maples and 40 other trees of different varieties are planted in Washington Park.

A new water system connected to the Willett Street main is installed to provide a water supply for the Willett Street flower beds.

A new fountain is placed in the well house near the swings.

Shrubbery along Madison Avenue is cut down to the height of five feet.

King fountain is repaired: stonework is pointed and statues are cleaned.

Wooden flooring of bridge is replaced.

Competition is held for the design of the Soldiers and Sailors Monument.

1912 As a result of interest in city improvement on the part of the Albany Chamber of Commerce, Arnold W. Brunner, architect and planner from New York, is employed as expert advisor to the city in preparation of comprehensive city plan.

Oct. 5, The Soldiers and Sailors Monument is unveiled at the Northern Boulevard entrance to the park; the monument is designed by Herman A. MacNeil, sculptor, and Lord & Hewlett, associate architects.

New tennis courts are constructed.

1914 Studies for Albany, prepared by Arnold Brunner and Charles Downing Lay, is published.

1916-7 Under the direction of the city forester, the trees in the park are labeled.

1919 Poplar trees are removed from the park by the city forester.

1922 Water is drained from lake and bed is cleaned.

1924 Roads in park are resurfaced because of damage caused by automobiles.

1927 $125,000 is appropriated for the construction of a new lake house.

Barricades are placed in the park to block off roads to ensure the safety of children engaging in winter sports.

1929 Oct. 14: The new boat house is dedicated; foundation planting is added around structure.

New concrete roads (20' wide 7" thick) are constructed in park.

1932 Roadways in the park are resurfaced with stone and asphalt.

1933/46 Dayton Stoner, a former state zoologist, and Lillian C. Stoner conduct field studies to document the birds of Washington Park.

1935 100 trees are planted in the park.

1939 225 concrete benches are placed in Washington and other city parks.

1940 Lake is drained to destroy growth of pondweed; the outlet is repaired.

Park features display of 90,000 tulips during Tulip Week, bringing more visitors to the park than during previous 15 years.

Over 100 trees are moved from the center plots of Washington Avenue to the parks, the greatest number planted in Washington Park.

1943 40 trees and shrubs are planted in Washington and other city parks, including magnolia, smoke tree, tulip tree, fire bush.

1944 Victory Garden is planted in park.

1945 Brickwork of several catch basins are repaired.

1948 Common Council passes an ordinance naming the tulip as Albany's offical flower.

1949 The first annual Tulip Festival is held.

Three of the clay tennis courts are changed into hard surface courts.

1950 Severe storm uproots some of the oldest trees in the park.

Old well house is torn down.

1953 Plan to extend Lancaster Street beyond Willet into the park is proposed by officials of the Albany Kiwanis Club.

Old iron fence around east end of lake is replaced by a new six feet high galzvanized fence.

1957 Nine tennis courts in the park are covered with asphaltic concrete.

1958 Isadore Candeub & Assoc. prepare master plan for city.

1958-9 Despite protest by civic groups, a roadway is constructed west into the park as an extension of Lancaster Street and the most easterly roadway transversing the park is widened.

As part of plan to ease traffic, Lancaster and State Streets are made one-way thoroughfares.

1961-4 After planting trees to the park, the Conservation Committee of the Albany Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Inc. studies and identifies the trees in Washington Park.

1968 Public opposition mounts to the use of the park for a crosstown arterial highway.

Park roads are resurfaced with bituminous concrete.

1971 Albany Chapter of Adirondack Mountain Club donates shade bushes and American plane trees, which are planted near Englewood Place on the hill overlooking the lake.

The City receives grant of $70,000 from the federal Bureau of Outdoor Recreation with which to build four hard surface tennis courts and four handball courts and to add fencing and utilities.

1972 Washington Park Historic District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Repairs are made to the bridge at lake.

The first winter Carnival in 87 years is held.

Roads at northern end of park at Thurlow Terrace and Englewood Place are closed to traffic, and entrance road at Lake Avenue is removed and a bicycle path constructed.

Federal grant of $24,000 is earmarked to assist city with revitalizing the park; a new boat concession begins, bicycles are supplied, and a youth recreation program is funded.

10 crabapple trees are planted along Knox Street sidewalk; evergreens, flowering trees and shrubs are planted in the area of the croquet ground.

1973 A scooter patrol is established to enforce traffic regulation and parking arrangements in the park.

1977 Lake is drained and cleaned for the first time in several years.

Park Coalition group urges a weekend ban on motor vehicles.

1978 Albany St. Andrew Society sponsors the cleaning of the Robert Burns monument.

1979 Common Council appropriates $70,000 to repair the exterior of the lake house.

Old lilac bushes along Willett Street and Madison Ave. are cut down and replaced with crab apple and mountain ash trees.

Upon request of Washington Park Neighborhood Association, two interior roads are closed to traffic with chain and post barriers.

Grant is awarded to resurface tennis, handball, and basketball courts.

1984 Friends of Washington Park is established to promote the needs of the park.

High intensity street lights are installed in the park.

Lake is treated with chemicals to kill weeds and algae growth.

Paddle boat concession is started at lakehouse.

1985 Washington Park Conservancy is founded.

The Washington Park Historic District is included within the newly designated Albany Urban Cultural Park.

Park's vegetation is studied and 90 species are identified in the park.

1986 Lake spillway is repaired.

ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

AI-I Albany Institute of History and Art

AI-DPR Albany Department of Parks & Recreation

AI-CN Capital Newspapers Library

K/L Kestenbaum/Landscapes Joint Venture

MK Martin Kanes, Private Collection

NYS-L New York State Library, Manuscript and Special Collections

WPC Washington Park Conservancy Historic Photo Collection or Gerber Collection

WSE Egerton, William S., Public Parks of the City of Albany, New York, 1892

Cover: WPC, View of the Mall with mature Elms, decorative potted palms and park benches, c. 1920.