

# Appendix :

# Landscape History

Source:

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## Dix Park Master Plan, Discovery Phase: Historical Data Report

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## INTRODUCTION

Suzanne Turner Associates (STA) compiled this Historical Data Report as a component of the Dix Park master planning process. STA's process for this Report included two site visits, conducting research using primary and secondary sources about the site's landscape evolution—including a visit to the North Carolina State Archives, conferring in-person and by telephone with the North Carolina State Archaeologist, and conducting background research utilizing the STA library, which contains contemporary and rare books relevant to landscape movements; historic landscapes such as plantations, cemeteries, parks, and gardens; horticulture; the Deep South; and other subject matter.

Within the perimeters of the design team's Discovery Phase, STA's exploration has focused on creating an understanding of the site's historic landscape layers; synthesizing our findings for a non-historian audience of stakeholders, decision makers, and designers; and determining which layers—in the context of the master planning process—will be of the greatest significance to the City of Raleigh and to the design team.

In the following pages, STA offers recommendations regarding a Cultural Landscape Report for Dix Park, a statement regarding the significance (both historical significance and significance to park planning) of the A. J. Davis drawings of Dix Hospital, recommendations regarding archaeological hotspots and sensitive areas on the site, and lastly, summaries of nine landscape layers that comprise the site. Certainly, there are more than nine landscape layers that have formed the Dix Park site over its lifetime; however, STA's task has been to determine which layers hold the greatest significance—either in and of themselves, or as they relate to the way the site has evolved. It is important to note that these nine layers are not necessarily presented chronologically; rather, each layer represents a theme that has played out on the site either during a single period, or repeatedly during the site's history.

The thematic landscape summaries are intended to help readers gain a general understanding of the significance of each layer, to help readers gain insight into the level of complexity that the Dix Park site—and all landscapes—contain, and lastly, to help park decision makers consider what aspects of each layer may demand more targeted and in-depth exploration, whether in the form of a Cultural Landscape Report or in the physical and programmatic expressions of the park design.

## MEMO

### A Cultural Landscape Report for Dix Park: Rationale

*The Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) serves two important functions: it is the principle treatment document for cultural landscapes and the primary tool for long-term management of those landscapes. A CLR guides management and treatment decisions about a landscape's physical attributes, biotic systems, and use when that use contributes to historical significance.*

*—Robert Page, “A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports”*

#### Understanding a Cultural Landscape Report

The Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) was developed by the National Park Service (NPS) as a tool to use in planning and design, and management decisions for the properties in the NPS system. It has become a model for use with other cultural landscapes that are not owned by the NPS.

#### *When should the CLR be commissioned?*

Under ideal conditions, the CLR will be commissioned and completed prior to the start of master plan development. Because of the vagaries of political processes, funding sources, sympathetic municipal administrations, external threats to the site, etc., the best sequencing of events is often not possible, and both the CLR and master planning processes occur simultaneously. When this is the case, communication between both teams is critical so that sensitive site elements are identified from the outset and are avoided for major development in the planning process, and so that accommodations for their preservation and interpretation are included as a part of the plan.

#### *Standards for CLRs*

A CLR must establish preservation goals for a cultural landscape. The goals must be grounded in research, inventory, documentation, and analysis and evaluation of a landscape's characteristics and associated features. The content of a CLR provides the basis for making sound decisions about treatment, use, and management. Information about the historical development, significance, and existing character of a cultural landscape is also valuable for enhancing interpretation and maintenance.  
(Page)

Standards developed by the NPS are clearly listed in the document, “Cultural Landscape Report Standards,” which is accessible online: [www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online\\_books/nps/cl\\_reports.pdf](http://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/nps/cl_reports.pdf). Of note in this list is the fact that once the CLR has been completed, the National Register documentation

must be revisited and amended to address cultural landscape resources that have been identified in the CLR.

*Flexibility as a quality of CLRs*

According to the National Park Service's guide to CLRs,

The scope and level of investigation for a CLR varies depending on management objectives. A CLR is a flexible document, the scope of which is determined by the needs of park management, type of landscape, budget, and staffing requirements. Management decisions should be based on a comprehensive understanding of an entire landscape so that actions affecting an individual feature can be understood in relation to other features within a property. Management objectives may, however, require a CLR to focus on a portion of a landscape or an individual feature within it, or to be prepared in phases.... Before any treatment decisions are made, Part I of a CLR, titled, "Site History, Existing Conditions, and Analysis and Evaluation," must be prepared. (Page)

A CLR goes beyond the legal boundaries of a site in evaluating changes to geographical context, features, materials, and use (Page).

*Multi-disciplinary nature of the effort*

The compilation of a CLR is a collaborative effort, requiring input from experts in many disciplines, as well as clear communication and coordination with the clients. This communication component is critical so that the CLR is focused to meet the priorities of the client in terms of phasing, funding, and other variables.

A CLR may include information spanning numerous disciplines in order to evaluate a landscape's historical, architectural, archaeological, ethnographic, horticultural, landscape architectural, and engineering features, along with ecological processes and natural systems. ("A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports")

*A Cultural Landscape Report for Dix Park*

*Reasons to embark on CLR project for Dix Park*

1. To establish continuity in management from one generation to the next, or from one administration to the next;
2. When documentation of the landscape is incomplete;

3. When management of landscape is destined to be bureaucratic, with frequent personnel turnovers, thus creating the absence of a landscape historian/advocate for stewardship of significant landscape features;
4. When new historical resources or documents become available making it possible (and imperative) that current narratives be updated and often revised;
5. When cultural perspectives concerning the landscape type (i.e., mental institution) have shifted dramatically over time, causing public judgment of the “highest and best use” to shift as well;
6. When there has been no archaeological investigation of the landscape and it holds the promise of significant subsurface resources that may need protection, and ultimately professional investigation when funding becomes available;
7. To provide credible documentation for the landscape’s history to facilitate the establishment of its significance based upon the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes;
8. To promote the role that a landscape has played in the community’s history so that both good and bad examples of land use and management demonstrated by the site’s changes over time can inform future decision-making;
9. To ensure that as portions of the landscape that have lost their historical integrity are redeveloped, the narratives embedded in these portions of the landscape are not lost, but rather inform and influence the planning of the redevelopment project;
10. To provide a permanent and public record that documents the role played by landscapes, particularly publicly-owned ones, in the development of a locale’s culture and “sense of place;”
11. To develop the historical narratives embedded in the landscape so that these stories become an integral part of local history as it is developed in scholarly literature and public history both on-line, in tourism promotions, in schools of all levels, and for public consumption, so that the relevance and import of cultural landscapes in community experience is explained and fostered;
12. To serve as a guide for all kinds of future planning projects so that appropriate protections are in place, ensuring decision-making that is harmonious with the

landscape's constraints and opportunities as evidenced by the past conflicts of culture and natural/ecological systems.

*Issues to be dealt with in developing a Cultural Landscape Report for Dix Park*

1. Large size and complex ownership of various parcels over time;
2. Need to have institutional archives (Dix Hospital) processed and catalogued;
3. Enormity of information available because of public ownership for over a century;
4. Urgency to develop oral histories to increase the number of first-hand accounts because of the advanced age of some of the key personalities;
5. Development pressures for Dix park site and its context so that decision-making precedes careful analysis and consideration of cultural history;
6. Sensitivity of most narratives associated with the landscape's history, creating the tendency for its interpretation to become didactic and moralistic rather than experiential and viewed in the broader context of its cultural development.

*Sensitive themes*

1. Removal of Indigenous Americans, lack of attention to their potential existence on the site;
2. Conflict in local population over the American Revolution and loyalties;
3. Human chattel slavery as means to large-scale agriculture;
4. Treatment of marginalized members of the community through history;
5. Use of enslaved labor to construct public institutions;
6. Violence, physical destruction, hatred and familial division caused by Civil War;
7. Use of mental patients as unpaid agricultural labor;

8. Prevalence of graft in administration of public institutions;
9. Irresponsible disposal /burial of human remains and deceased patients;
10. Desecration of natural resources—stream channelization, changes to natural topography causing erosion, accommodation of desired transportation routes rather than maintaining stability of natural systems, lack of vegetative management resulting in loss of diversity in plant and wildlife species, no program for removal of exotic invasive vegetation;
11. Use of landscape for municipal duping with no determination of appropriateness of site conditions for this use.

### *Recommendations*

Dix Park is a highly significant cultural landscape, and because its redevelopment is imminent, it warrants the immediate commission of a CLR in order to “minimize loss of significant characteristics, features, and materials... and to record actual treatment as it is planned and implemented” (“Cultural Landscape Report Standards”).

The research and writing for the CLR should be phased to correlate with the processing of the documentation from Dix Hospital that is presently in the process of being archived in the State Archives. It should also include an oral history segment that gleans any actual site information from those still living who have direct experience and memory of some of the key uses of the Dix landscape including agricultural, recreational, and therapeutic uses.

Because of the wealth of scholarly resources at the area universities, the investigators of current research projects could be engaged as authors of specific sections of the CLR, drawing upon the experts in various aspects of the site’s landscape development.

The process of creating the CLR must be integrated with the work of the master planning team. Municipal agencies affected by the document must be informed about what a CLR is and why it is being done. A call for documentation that relates to the landscape, particularly historic photos, should be disseminated so that as much imagery and narrative as exists can be used in compiling the CLR.

The Dix Park Advisory Committee, and especially the Legacy sub-committee should be relied upon as resources and as conduits to historical information, as well as sounding boards for initial drafts of the portions of the report that include the narrative history of the Dix landscape.

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## MEMO

### Drawings Associating Architect A. J. Davis with the Hospital Landscape: The Significance for Dix Park

#### *Introduction and Davis's formative experiences*

The architectural work of architect A. J. Davis (1803-1892) was demolished, for the most part in 1950s, and the physical link to a man who was “one of the nineteenth century’s most widely acclaimed architects,” is no longer evident at Dix (Peck 6). Because of his national prominence and his progressive design ideas vis a vis the landscape, his legacy at Dix needs to be analyzed and acknowledged in some way—either in the master planning, or certainly in the interpretive narrative that accompanies the transformation of the former hospital site into a world-class urban park.

Davis’s style fell out of fashion after the Civil War, and by the twentieth century, he was forgotten. In 1992, the Metropolitan Museum of Art staged an exhibition of Davis’s work<sup>1</sup> which was accompanied by the publication of the first comprehensive volume devoted to the architect’s work. Since 1924, the Museum has held in their collection more than five thousand drawings and watercolors by Davis<sup>2</sup>. These events put new emphasis on the significance of Davis’s work, and were perhaps responsible for North Carolina’s exhibition and publication on the architect in 2000. *A Romantic Architect in Antebellum North Carolina* is described in the Foreword to the book as,

a tribute to North Carolina’s leaders during the several decades prior to the Civil War who labored to take a sluggish and backward state and make it among the most progressive in the United States. Those leaders...stroved to create the finest system of public education in the nation, constructed the then-longest railroad in the world, and created institutions for the care of the blind, insane, and deaf. They also commissioned one of the nation’s preeminent architects, Alexander Jackson Davis, for the design of their public and private edifices. (Peck, 7)

Davis trained as an artist, and his drawing skills were described as “versatile, expressive, and hauntingly beautiful” (Davies 18). He never traveled to Europe and relied on books for his knowledge of the important buildings, paintings, and cultural movements. He used the library of Ithiel Town, a highly successful New York architect and enthusiastic proponent of Greek Revival architecture, with whom Davis would in 1820 form the partnership of Town and Davis. Town was also an accomplished civil

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<sup>1</sup> Consultant curator for the Metropolitan show and publication was Jane B. Davies. A reference librarian at Columbia, the life and work of Davis and the romantic movement in American nineteenth-century architecture was the focus of her career from the late 1950s (a time when no one was studying Davis), until her death in 2000. She worked on a critical biography of Davis for over thirty years but did not complete the study. She was considered the pre-eminent scholar of the architect’s work and her introduction to the 1980 reprint of Davis’s *Rural Residences* was praised by *the Journal of Architectural Historians*.

<sup>2</sup> Other archives of Davis’s work include the New York Historical Society, the Avery Library at Columbia University, and the New York Public Library.

engineer; in 1820 he received a patent for a new system of constructing wooden bridges, the Town Lattice Truss (Bivens). Town's architectural library of 11,000 volumes was "by far the finest architectural library in America," (Davies 18), and "extraordinary," (Bivens), as was his generosity in sharing it with young architects, including Davis (Davies 14-15).



Figure 1: A. J. Davis, Rear elevation for Herrick Villas in Tarrytown. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. 1855-59. (Peck)

#### *Davis's association with Andrew Jackson Downing*

Of particular note for the Dix Park project is Davis's association with A. J. Downing (1815-1852). Davis left his partnership with Town in 1835, and for the most part practiced alone, except for another year with Town in 1842-43, when they worked together on the North Carolina State Capitol in Raleigh. In 1838, Davis wrote and illustrated a book, *Rural Residences*, that included many of his drawings for residential cottages. The following year, in 1839, Davis began a collaboration with A. J. Downing that lasted until 1850. Davis drew most of the architectural illustrations for Downing's books and his monthly magazine, *The Horticulturist*.

Downing's first book, *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening* (1841), is credited with exposing the American public to the ideas and images of the picturesque movement in landscape design. The book went through numerous printings, and continued its influence far beyond the tragic accidental death of Downing in a drowning on the Hudson River. The treatise included many views of Davis' recent picturesque houses. Davis historian Jane Davies asserts that "Davis's work had a strong

influence on Downing and his books” (Davies 20). Of course, far more analysis and criticism has been devoted to Downing’s work because he was so prolific and successful as an author and designer. Landscape historians credit Downing with promoting a national style of landscape gardening that broke away from European precedents and standards, and that more clearly expressed the nation’s values of moderation, simplicity, and civic responsibility. In many ways, these were qualities of Davis’s architectural work as well, and by way of Downing’s subsequent pattern books, Davis developed a strong reputation and became “the leading American designer of romantic country houses” (Davies 20).

Davis’s specific contributions to the theory of the relationship between architecture and landscape architecture include the following:

***Breaking buildings out of the box***, opening the box in all directions, both upward and outward. Davis added elements that connected interior and exterior, reaching out to the natural landscape beyond, like verandas and porches, balconies, bay windows, projecting architectural bays, towers, skylights, large windows, and other innovations for the time. In the preface to his *Rural Residences*, he “decried the ‘bald and uninteresting aspect of our [rural] houses...not only in the style of the house but in the want of connection with its site—in the absence of...well disposed trees, shrubbery, and vines...” (Davies 14).



Figure 2: A. J. Davis, “View N.W. at Blithewood,” Annandale-on-the-Hudson. Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University. New York, ca. 1841.(Peck)

***Developing early versions of some of the central themes of modernism*** like a “masterly control of proportion and scale,” a scenic sense of harmony of buildings with their settings, an exceptional concern for spatial flow, an exceptional skill in composing volumes in asymmetrical schemes creating a complexity of compositions that reached its climax in Lyndhurst (1865).

***Translating the prevailing British romantic and picturesque aesthetic into language appropriate to the American scene***, taking the scale, detailing, and materials of the English country house and adapting these to the more modest and somewhat wild condition of the American countryside.

In his design for the North Carolina Hospital for the Insane, it is unclear without further research where Davis's hand stopped and where someone else's may have taken over. Based upon what is known of some of his amazing renderings of other projects, his conception of the landscape seems to be very much in concert with the principles espoused in Downing's *Treatise*, including the following:

- *Application of sound site planning principles in selection of building location, scale of façade to viewing distance from the road below, and modulation of scale to that of the human individual in the housing wings.*
- *Layout of main approach road so that it complements and accentuates the sensuous quality of the existing topography.*



Figure 3: Plan of a country house and its landscape from Downing's *Treatise on...Landscape Gardening*, left; aerial of Dix site, right. Note similar quality of roadway design and tree canopy to Downing's prototype from 1841 publication.



*Figure 4: Cottage residence from Downing's Treatise, showing landscape composition framing the view of the cottage and the curving road leading the eye of the visitor through the site and around to the structure. Use of rock in foreground emphasizing the ruggedness of the American scene.*

- *In developing garden and planting spaces, delineation of architectonic elements leading from the building to harmonize with the building's geometry. The use of irregular tree and shrub clumps farther away from the architecture, creating the sense of a more natural arrangement of native tree species and understory and extending the length of the view using perspective.*



*Figure 5: Front of Dix Hospital demonstrating use of more formal, architectonic garden elements as extension of building. Not Davis's design, but demonstrates the principle. North Carolina Division of Archives and History (Davis 23)*

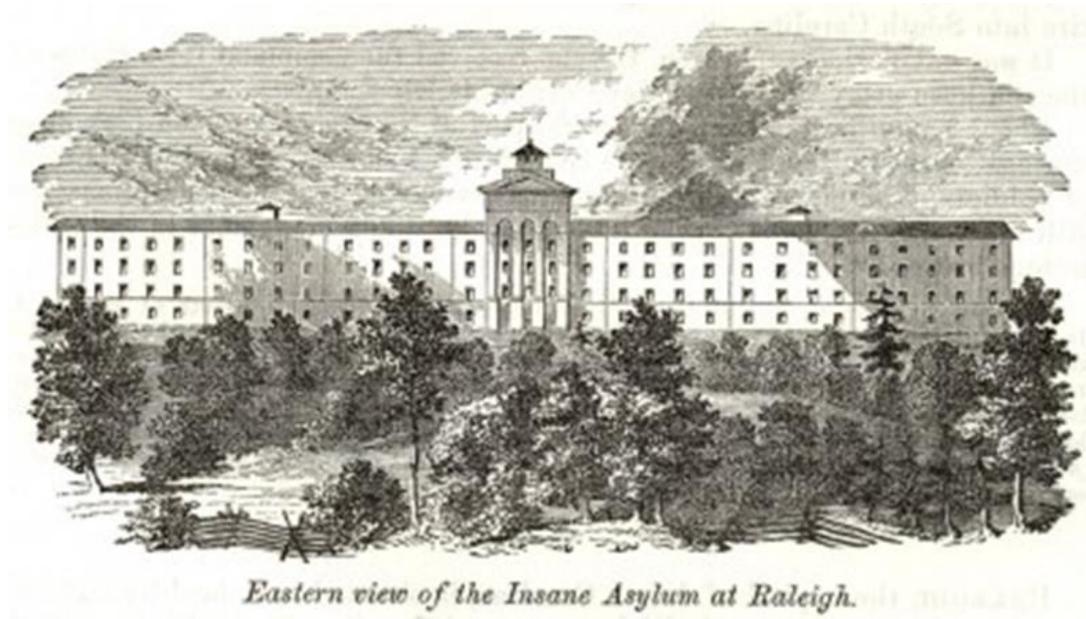
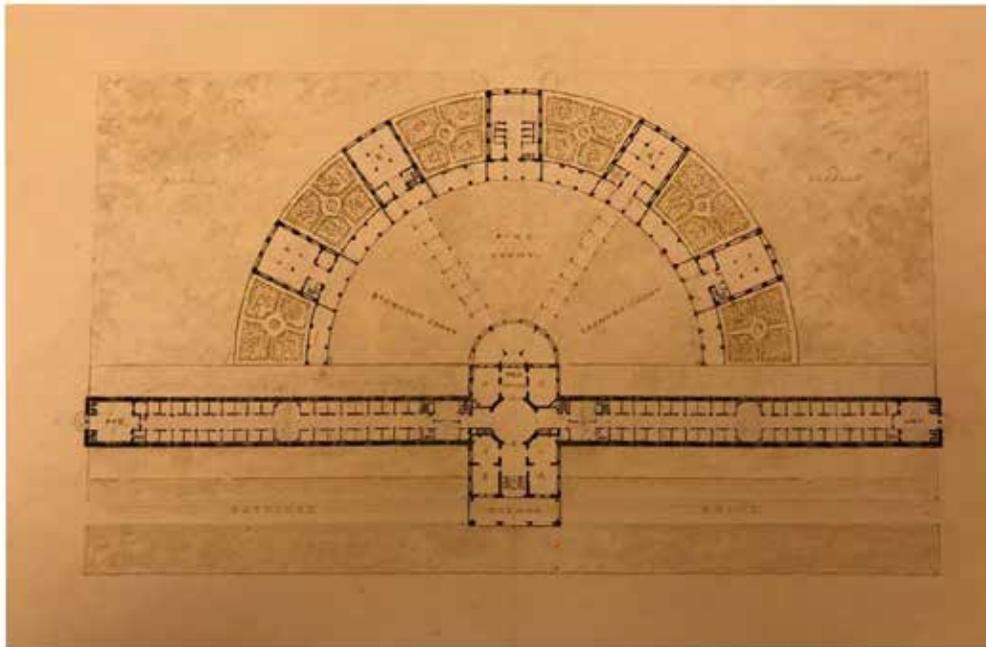


Figure 6: Early engraving of main façade of Dix Hospital, illustrating picturesque arrangement of tree plantings, use of rustic fence against road, romantic composition as result of Davis’s building design and subsequent landscape treatment.

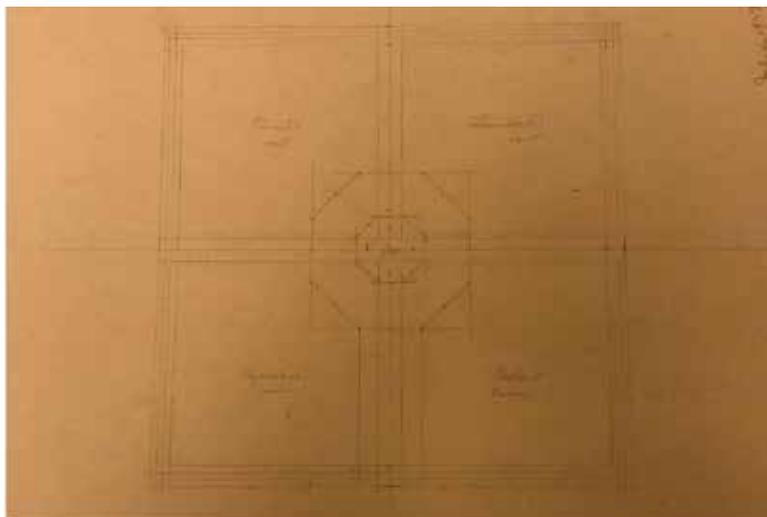
- Provision of windows for landscape views and air circulation for all patient rooms.



Figure 6: From Downing’s Treatise, the view from a drawing room window.



*Figure 7: Davis's drawing of plan and landscape treatment of North Carolina Hospital for the Insane, illustrating use of geometry radiating out from the building to compose garden spaces. Gardens provide views from various patient windows and outbuildings between gardens. More naturalistic landscape treatment is suggested beyond these formal semi-circle of parterre gardens. Alexander Jackson Davis Architectural Drawing Collection (1827-1884) New York Historical Society Museum & Library*



*Figure 8: This drawing, also by Davis, was found on the back of Figure 7, and perhaps suggests an alternative allocation of garden spaces for various populations of the Hospital, including the physicians, patients, and staff. Alexander Jackson Davis Architectural Drawing Collection (1827-1884) New York Historical Society Museum & Library*

*Statement of significance*

The association of A. J. Davis with the design of the Dix Hospital and its landscape, demonstrated through historic drawings, is the most significant aspect of the Dix Park site in regard to design history, and it would have had national significance if Davis's hospital building had survived.

*Recommendation*

Davis's abilities and application of integration of landscape and architecture could be utilized and celebrated in the design approach to new buildings for the park. What form the nod to Davis's legacy takes is largely dependent upon the design team and the writer of an interpretive program.

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## MEMO

### Archaeological Hotspots and Sensitive Areas at Dix Park

#### *Findings and Assessment*

The following assessment regarding archaeological hotspots and potential archaeologically sensitive areas at Dix Park are based on telephone conversations with the North Carolina State Archaeologist, John Mintz, and on an informal archaeological walk-through of the park site that took place on November 13, 2017.

1. The hospital cemetery is the one known hotspot. It is possible that graves have drifted over time due to erosion and substandard burial practices.
2. The Spring Hill Plantation family graves and associated enslaved graves, if they exist, are not likely on Dix Park property; they are more likely on the Spring Hill Campus (North Carolina State University) property.
3. After walking the site and reviewing a recently discovered hospital cemetery map, though it is not impossible, there is less concern that random graves will be discovered, both from the hospital- and plantation-era.
4. Other hotspots are likely random and widely dispersed over the entire site. These hotspots could contain archaeological findings from:
  - a. Indigenous American hunting or inhabitation, waste disposal, and burial sites
  - b. Antebellum-era inhabitation, such as laundering sites, wells, waste pits, agriculture, and enslaved housing sites
  - c. Civil War-era Union encampments
  - d. Hospital-era inhabitation, such as laundering sites, waste disposal, gardening and agricultural remnants, etc.
  - e. Landfill debris
5. It is highly probable that dispersed hotspots will only be located once construction begins.

#### *Recommendations*

Searching for suspected hotspots is not feasible using traditional archaeological excavation, but newer technologies, such as ground penetrating radar to identify anomalies in the ground in areas that were not layered with landfill, such as the hospital cemetery, should be further explored.

Further evaluation by archaeologists of map overlays will assist in identifying where additional the historic sites may have been located in relation to modern structures. For example, in Louisiana,

archaeologists often see cemeteries in the middle of agricultural fields, because historic plantation inhabitants buried people far from the main house and agricultural buildings. As more documents are analyzed, targeted searches for building foundations, like the hospital-era greenhouse, could be also accomplished using mapping and probing.

The North Carolina State Office of Archaeology website contains information regarding State standards and guidelines for archaeological findings discovered during construction. While this project is not federally funded, it's history is rich and complex; so even in absence of requirements applicable to federally funded sites, it is imperative that park designers, park officials, project managers, and construction crews are familiarized with best practices in the likely event that artifacts are uncovered throughout the planning and implementation process:

- <https://archaeology.ncdcr.gov/programs/forms>
- <https://archaeology.ncdcr.gov/about/frequently-asked-questions>

Finally, during the construction phase, it is recommended that the City consider include having an archaeologist on site for any high probability areas.

## SIGNIFICANT LANDSCAPE LAYERS: THEMATIC SUMMARIES

### 1. *Landscape as Hunting Grounds and Tribal Dwelling [pre-historic period – 1700s]*

Research pinpointing Indigenous American presence on the Dix Park site, specifically, is not readily accessible and requires in-depth investigation. Additionally, given the site's development and evolution over time, especially certain portions of the land—including land adjacent to Rocky Branch Creek—used as a solid waste landfill beginning in 1957 and ending in 1972 ("Feasibility Study" ES2), archaeological evidence may be challenging to recover, though not impossible.

Based on the data and evidence that is accessible, it is likely that from the pre-historic period to the timeframe between the mid-1500s to the 1700s, nomadic Indigenous Americans utilized this land as hunting grounds, and tribal Indigenous Americans possibly inhabited the land more permanently.

10,000 B.C. – 8000 B.C.

"The earliest inhabitants of what is now North Carolina were the Paleo Indians of the Clovis Culture, who made beautifully flaked stone Clovis points. ... Clovis points date back 10,000 to 12,000 years ago and are infrequently found at various locations throughout North Carolina" (Harris). It is known that Paleo Indians were nomadic and hunted large animals, small game, and wild plants; due to their nomadic culture, this group left "no evidence of permanent dwellings in North Carolina" ("NC American Indian Timeline").

1000 B.C. – A.D. 1550

Woodland culture American Indians began to "settle in permanent locations, usually beside streams" ("NC American Indian Timeline"). They practiced a mixed subsistence lifestyle that included hunting, fishing, and gathering food "when deer, turkeys, shad, and acorns were plentiful" (Claggett). They also "began farming to make sure they had enough food for the winter and early spring months... They cleared fields and planted and harvested crops like sunflowers, squash, gourds, beans, and maize" (Claggett). They engaged in planting and harvesting "in the rich fertile river bottoms along major Piedmont waterways and their tributaries" (Harris). Woodland Indians also create[d] pottery and also develop[ed] elaborate funeral procedures, such as building mounds to honor their dead" ("NC American Indian Timeline"). "Archaeological evidence suggests that Woodland Indians were much more committed to settled village life than their ancestors had been. ...these Indians tended to live in semi-permanent villages in stream valleys" (Claggett).

A.D. 700 – 1500

The next major group of Indigenous Americans to migrate into present-day North Carolina were the Mississippians, who created "large political units called chiefdoms, uniting people under stronger leadership than the Woodland cultures ("NC American Indian Timeline").

A.D. 1500 – 1700s

“Most of the Indian groups met by early European explorers were practicing economic settlement patterns of the Woodland culture. They grew crops of maize, tobacco, beans, and squash, spent considerable time hunting and fishing, and lived in small villages” (Claggett).



*Figure 9: Arrowheads found in the Piedmont region of North Carolina by Ron Harris*

In 1550, before the arrival of the first permanent European settlers, more than one hundred thousand Native Americans were living in present-day North Carolina. By 1800, that number had fallen to about 1800;” this was a result of both aggressive European settlement and exposure to diseases the Europeans brought with them, to which the Indigenous population had no immunity (Claggett).

Considering the general history of the Indigenous Americans in North Carolina and in particular, in the Piedmont, it is possible that Woodland Indians would have occupied land near the Rocky Branch Creek and Walnut Creek. It is also possible that these Indigenous Americans would have been growing tobacco, though more research must be conducted to verify these possibilities.

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## 2. *Landscape as a Source of Wealth [1750 – 1850]*

“In contrast to other southern states, large plantations were rare [in North Carolina], and agriculture was less dependent on slave labor than in the Deep South—a condition that made North Carolinians reluctant to join the other states of the Confederacy” (*Bright Leaves*). Given this information, it is significant that Colonel Theophilus Hunter, a prominent figure who had been an officer in the North Carolina militia during the American Revolution and who helped determine the Wake County boundaries established in 1770, obtained 2,500 acres in grants in the Granville district of what was then Johnston County (Kerr). The land was south of Crabtree Creek and included portions of Rocky Branch Creek and Walnut Creek. Hunter utilized this land for a plantation, and by 1790, he was the second largest slaveholder in Wake County (Kerr).

Early investigations have yet to reveal what was farmed at the Spring Hill Plantation. It is plausible that tobacco was the major cash crop, both because Indigenous Americans may have farmed tobacco there prior to Hunter obtaining ownership of the land, and also because during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, tobacco was prevalent in North Carolina’s agricultural economy, whereas cotton and rice did not grow as successfully as they did in Virginia and South Carolina: “Farms in North Carolina were disadvantaged by the quality of soil in the coastal plains, which was unsuitable for growing grain on a large scale, and most farmers scraped by at subsistence levels until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century” (*Bright Leaves*). However, it cannot be stated definitively what was grown on the plantation; while the soil in coastal North Carolina did not suit growing cotton or rice, the Piedmont region would have better accommodated these crops.

At Hunter’s death in 1798, he was buried “in a clump of cedars near the present house” (“Spring Hill”). He willed his land, his slaves, and fortune to his seven living children (Will of Col. Theophilus Hunter, Sr.). The home and original 2,500-acre plantation property went through a small series of owners or occupants: Hunter’s eldest son Henry Hunter inherited this property (Will of Col. Theophilus Hunter). When he died in 1810, his half-brother, Theophilus Hunter, Jr. was appointed guardian of the site while Henry Hunter’s widow continued to occupy the home (Theophilus, Jr. Guardianship papers). After she remarried in 1814, Hunter, Jr. moved into the house with his family.

Theophilus, Jr. built the presently standing two-story Spring Hill House in May 1816 (“Spring Hill” NR). “An early painting of Spring Hill shows the original home attached by a room or rooms to the residence later built by Theophilus Hunter Jr.” (“Spring Hill”).



*Figure 10: Painting of Spring Hill showing addition. Photo held by North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, reprinted in Dictionary of North Carolina Biography (Kerr)*

“The house was surrounded by the 2,500-acre plantation, with slave houses located west of the house. A small garden storage house in the rear yard is all that remains of the outbuildings. (“Spring Hill” NR). In 1840, when Theophilus Hunter, Jr. died, he willed his property to his three unmarried daughters, Jane, Maria Louisa, and Emma. His will stipulated that the house could not be sold, as long as any one of the daughters remained unmarried (Will of Theophilus Hunter, Jr.) When her two sisters married and divided the property, Emma, who never married, retained ownership and occupancy of the Spring Hill home (Wake County Book of Deeds, Books 24, 33, and 219).

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“Will of Col. Theophilus Hunter, Sr.” 15 July 1798. North Carolina State Archives.

### 3. *Landscape as a Product of Laborers [1750 – 1973]*

The Dix Park site is layered with stories to honor and celebrate, and, like most American landscapes, it also contains complicated stories. Indeed, some of its most honorific historic qualities and remnants arose at the hands of less honorific practices, or in some cases, practices that contained two sides to one coin.

It is known that slavery occurred in association with the plantation. “The majority of slaves in North Carolina worked as farm laborers. The work week was five and a half days, sunup to sundown. Children and the elderly often worked in the vegetable gardens and took care of livestock.” (Winer). Former slave Sarah Louise Augustus, quoted by Samantha Winer in “A brief history of slavery on North Carolina,” reflected in a WPA oral history project that, “My first days of slavery (was) hard. I slept on a pallet on the floor of the cabin and just as soon I was able to work any at all I was put to milking cows” (Winer).

While the crops grown at Spring Hill Plantation are not known, it can be ascertained that the Spring Hill Plantation was prosperous, given that the property expanded from 2,500 acres to 5,000 acres during its lifetime, and considering Hunter, Sr.’s slaveholdings, and later, Hunter, Jr.’s expanded slaveholdings. Col. Theophilus Hunter Sr.’s will lists the names of fifty-six enslaved people who were willed to his seven children and grandchildren at the time of his death (Will of Col. Theophilus Hunter, Sr.). Hunter, Jr.’s will lists the names of sixty-five enslaved people who he willed to his three daughters (Will of Theophilus Hunter, Jr.). Some of this prosperity surely can be attributed to those slaves who worked the land. Initial research has not revealed documentation of how the Hunter family treated its enslaved persons.

In addition to the enslaved laborers on the plantation, an enslaved workforce participated in constructing the 1856 hospital building that occupied the site and was operable well into the 2000s. Multiple contractors on the site, including Williams, Cosby, and McKnight, used documented slave labor on their projects; this documentation provides evidence that enslaved laborers helped build the hospital (“Hospital for the Insane.” *NC Architects and Builders*). Furthermore, it is documented that Stewart Ellison, an African American who was born into slavery and who, between the ages of thirteen to twenty, worked as an enslaved carpenter for a free mulatto carpenter, spent eighteen months working on the hospital’s construction. After his emancipation, Ellison was elected to the North Carolina legislature in 1874 (“Ellison, Stewart”).

Yet another example of the landscape as a complicated product of unpaid laborers is controversy surrounding hospital patients as unpaid laborers on the hospital’s working farm and its grounds.

For years, patients at state hospitals had performed low-level jobs without pay. The hospitals’ rationale was that work was therapeutic and that the free labor saved money that could be used for patient care. Others disagreed. Calling it ‘systemic exploitation’ and ‘institutional peonage,’ patient advocates argued that the practice violated the Thirteenth Amendment’s prohibition against involuntary servitude. They also maintained that receiving payment for work was

therapeutic and that creating a work record would help patients get jobs in the future. (O’Rorke 139).

While the practices likely and intentionally provided patients with a form of therapy, opponents to these practices advocated that patients needed to be paid for what was, as much as it was therapy, also labor that benefitted the state and the hospital grounds. “The 1973 federal court hearing in *Sauder v. Brennan* required that patient workers in institutions for the mentally ill and mentally retarded be paid in accordance with the minimum wage and other provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act” (Carson 58). “Consequently, in 1973 Dix began paying patients eighty cents an hour” (O’Rorke 139). According to Carson, this marked the end of “extensive use of patients at the Dorothea Dix farm” (Carson 58). In weighing the benefits and consequences of these practices, Carson noted that a 1976 issue of *Hospital and Community Psychiatry* “supports the benefits of general work therapy for patients and thus the worth of horticultural therapy. Although contributors mention a number of problems with paid work programs...they unanimously agreed that work is indeed therapeutic” (57).

The contribution of enslaved laborers and patients to the creation of the buildings and upkeep of the site is a layer of the landscape that is rarely considered; in the case of the Dix Park site, it is one that may be worth exploring further, as a way to bring to light the contributions of people who are often marginalized but who none-the-less contributed to historically significant buildings and landscape.

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#### 4. *Landscape as Encampment [1865]*

In May 1861, one month after the Civil War had already begun, North Carolina was the second-to-last state to leave the Union, and “Though the state had officially joined the Confederacy, North Carolinians remained divided over whether to support the Union or Confederate war efforts throughout the Civil War” (Williard). Four years later, when the Civil War brought Union troops to the Confederate state of North Carolina, the Dix Hill hospital in Raleigh experienced a part of that impact. On April 13, 1865, the Union Fourteenth Corps, under the command of General William T. Sherman, camped on the hospital grounds (O’Rorke 14). They stayed for only one night; however, “Gen. Joseph A. Mower’s Twentieth Corps, numbering 17,000 men, replaced them, camping around the asylum from Rocky Branch southwest to Rhamkatte Road,” where they remained until the end of the month; troops also occupied the Spring Hill home, not yet purchased by the hospital, but by then owned and occupied by Wake County sheriff William N. High (O’Rorke 14). There is documentation that the Union troops pillaged the hospital and its grounds:

The troops used wood from fences for firewood and confiscated produce and livestock. The gasworks were damaged, and because of the difficulty in getting replacement parts from the North, patients and staff were reduced to using the hospital’s meager supply of candles. In addition, the hospital could not replace the missing wooden roof of a water reservoir because of the scarcity and high price of lumber, a circumstance that also curtailed the building of new fences. (O’Rorke 14)

The timing of the Union occupation of the hospital and Spring Hill home is significant in the larger context of the Civil War and for the hospital’s history. First, the presence of Union troops brought a radical change to the hospital: “Hospital officials accepted the first African American patient, a soldier, on April 13, 1865, by order of federal provost marshal” (O’Rorke 16). Second, John Wilkes Booth assassinated President Abraham Lincoln on April 14, 1865.

Union troops in Raleigh did not learn about Lincoln’s death immediately. Instead, “on April 17, Sherman, after ordering soldiers to stay in camp and bolstering the guard around Raleigh, announced the news to his men. That night about two thousand troops, including some from the Dix camps, marched Raleigh” (O’Rorke 15). Tensions between Union troops and hospital officials would have been high, and likely continued to rise directly following Lincoln’s assassination. It was under these heightened tensions that “On May 15, the provost marshal directed the hospital to admit another black patient, a Raleigh woman. By October, the hospital had admitted nine more African Americans” (O’Rorke 16).

According to O’Rorke, hospital Superintendent Fisher wrote of the new patients that “their presence in the wards continues to be a source of serious annoyance to the other patients, and a fruitful source of embarrassment to those in authority” (O’Rorke 16). Fisher also “complained that if he had to set aside two wards for black patients, one for males and one for females, it would reduce the space available ‘for

those for whom the building was originally intended” (O’Rorke 16). In addition to Fisher’s frustrations over the Union soldiers plundering fences and the direction to admit African American patients, “He deplored the theft of the asylum’s garden produce. The garden’s yield, once used to feed patients, had been taken by Union soldiers and civilians” (O’Rorke 16).

The current Dix Park site contains a boulder with that are believed to have been made by Union soldiers during the period of encampment.



Figure 11: Civil War engravings on Dix Park boulder. Suzanne Turner Associates 2017



Figure 12: Civil War engraving of a "J" on Dix Park boulder. Suzanne Turner Associates 2017

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### 5. Landscape as a Burial Ground [1750 – 1972]

Portions of the Dix Park site have historically served as burial grounds, both informally and formally. The Spring Hill home land adjacent to the Dix Park, and currently part of the Centennial Campus of North Carolina State University, contains the grave of Theophilus Hunter, Sr., who was buried there in 1798 “in a clump of cedars near the present house” (“Spring Hill”). His grave, the oldest known marked grave in Raleigh, was not marked until 1940 or 1952, when the U.S. War Department provided a marker in recognition of his military service. According to the Spring Hill National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination form, “The marker was unveiled at a memorial conducted...May 5, 1940” (“Spring Hill” Historical Significance 1). However, according to cemeterycensus.com, the grave marker is inscribed with the words, “Erected by Caswell-Nash Chapter D.A.R. Raleigh, N.C. 1952,” indicating that the exact date that the grave was marked must be verified (“Theophilus Hunter Grave”).



*Figure 13: Theophilus Hunter Grave MVVA 2017*

When Hunter, Jr. died in 1840, he was buried near his father’s grave; Hunter, Jr.’s wife, who preceded him in death, was also buried nearby (“Spring Hill” Historical Significance 2). Neither Hunter, Jr. nor his

wife's grave is presently marked. The National Register of Historic Places Inventory for the home states that "Slave houses were located at some distance to the west of the house;" with knowledge of the family members buried there and knowledge of the slave dwellings, it is reasonable to hypothesize that slaves may also have been buried on the Spring Hill site adjacent to the Dix Park site, and it is reasonable to hypothesize that some graves may have drifted at various points in the site's history.

Within the bounds of the park site, there is an existing burial ground for hospital patients. "The cemetery was established soon after the founding of the hospital and was in constant use until the early 1970s," when it became "the final resting place for the many impoverished patients who were laid to rest on the grounds of the facility which treated them" (asylumprojects.org). Located on almost three acres, the cemetery contains over 900 graves that were, for many years, unmarked. When it was first established, "Laborers fenced the asylum cemetery and placed marble posts, connected by chains, along the line of graves. They attached a tag, with name and date of death, on each grave" (O'Rourke 40). "The hospital carpenter made the coffins until late 1945. Afterwards they were purchased locally... for \$50.00 each, averaging 50 per year" (cemeterycensus.com). During the Depression, when families often could not afford a burial, the hospital sent unclaimed bodies to three area funeral homes to be embalmed. "Since the hospital had the only refrigerated morgue in Raleigh, all the bodies were kept there until claimed. If unclaimed they were buried in the cemetery" (cemeterycensus.com).

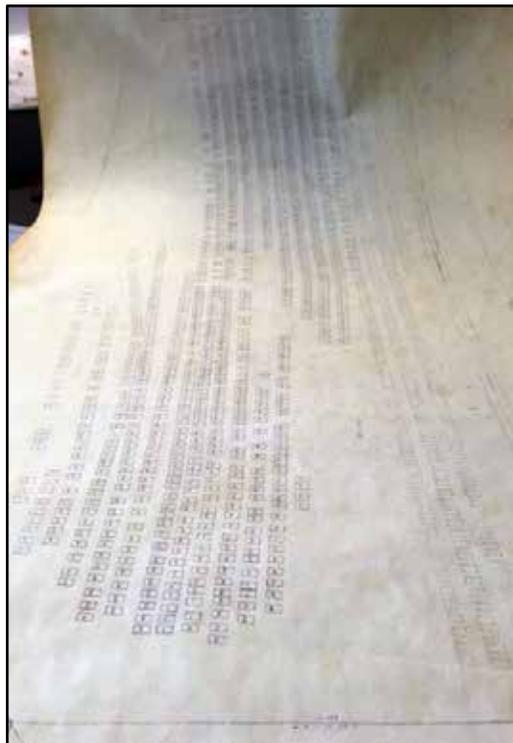
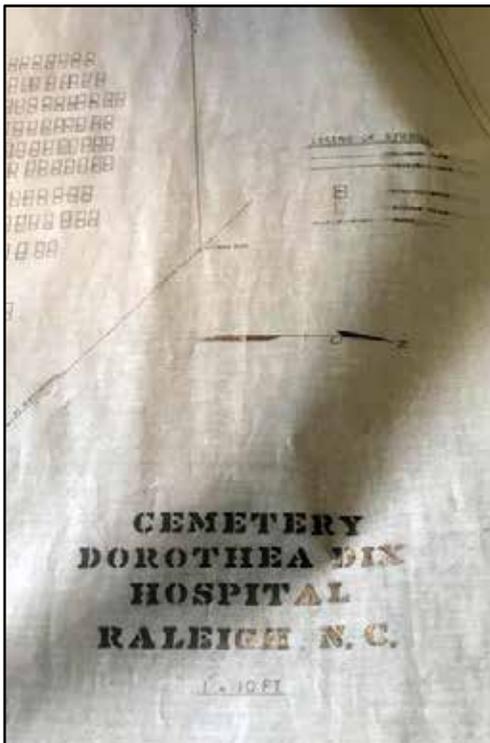


*Figure 14: Dix Hospital Cemetery MVVA 2017*

Cemeterycensus.com states that “The cemetery had declined due to erosion, vandalism and the elements of time. Garbage trucks drove over the cemetery edges to reach the next door landfill.” When the cemetery closed in 1972, the hospital physical plant manager

...noticed that erosion had exposed part[s] of wood he felt sure was caskets. Markers had slid away from depressions in the ground that suggested graves. There were no trees except pines. Employees used kitchen forks to poke the ground locating caskets that had drifted. Staff covered the exposed coffins with soil and seeded the area. A chain link fence was installed along the boundaries... Many of the graves were unmarked. With the passage of time, many graves had deteriorated significantly so that the graves collapsed leaving depressions in the soil. Boundaries were difficult to identify. (cemeterycensus.com)

In 1991, “Over 750 of the 958 graves were identified. New markers were installed with the name of the patient and the date of death” (cemeterycensus.com). In 2017, park officials located a map (pictured below; photos by Suzanne Turner Associates) in the hospital—presumably created during the 1991 effort to identify and mark the graves. Officials also located a survey, produced by Faye McArthur of the Dorothea Dix Community Relations Department, listing the names of individuals buried in the cemetery.



*Figures 15a and 16b: Details of map discovered by park officials in 2017. Suzanne Turner Associates 2017*

In a *News & Observer* editorial published in 2015, a columnist made the following plea:

Whatever happens to the Dix campus, whether Raleigh turns it into a racetrack, a casino or a Southern version of Central Park, the souls demand to be remembered...

I'm not asking for the Dix land to be frozen in time, preserved as a 19<sup>th</sup>-century relic. But in all the excitement over what comes next, let's create some permanent reminder of the sufferers who passed through the property we now own. History is too eager to forget them." (Shaffer)

Shaffer's argument highlights the passion surrounding some of the more difficult narratives inherent to the Dix Park landscape. The issue he raises about the memory of mentally ill patients also applies to considerations about the memory of the enslaved who may have been buried nearby or even on the site, as well as those who helped build the hospital. This issue fits into a larger national conversation. For instance, in her book *Shadows of the Slave Past*, Ana Lucia Araujo explores the complexities and controversies surrounding the memorialization and, more often, the lack of memorialization of landscapes (in the US and beyond) that contain "narratives of enslavement," such as unmarked burial grounds discovered in the process of development. She also addresses "invisible sites of slave labor" and how "slavery is acknowledged or neglected in public spaces in the United States" (Ater).

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### 6. Landscape as a Dumping Ground [1950 – 1972]

Old Raleigh Landfill #11, used for dumping solid waste and operated by the city from 1957 to 1972, was located on the Dorothea Dix Hospital campus where the current soccer fields are located, as well as other portions of the site (“Feasibility Study ES-2”). “Based on an aerial photograph dated October 1959..., it appears that the [soccer field] site was wooded and used for agricultural prior to the landfill activities” (“Environmental Site Assessment” 6).



Figure 16 1959 aerial photo with soccer field site outlined in dashed line, from "Feasibility Study"

According to a report compiled by the City of Raleigh, in May 1956, the City made an agreement with the hospital

to use its land (approximately 50 acres) for a dump. The agreement between the City and Dorothea Dix Hospital was that: Garbage and waste "... will be covered with dirt by the City."

At this time the City began a semi-open dump operation, which involves simply the dumping of garbage and some moderate compaction. Garbage was periodically covered. ("Old City Landfill" 1)

As the map below indicates, the landfill surrounded the hospital cemetery on three sides, raising the possibility that with land erosion and shifting, some of the patient graves may have drifted over time into the lower lying lands.

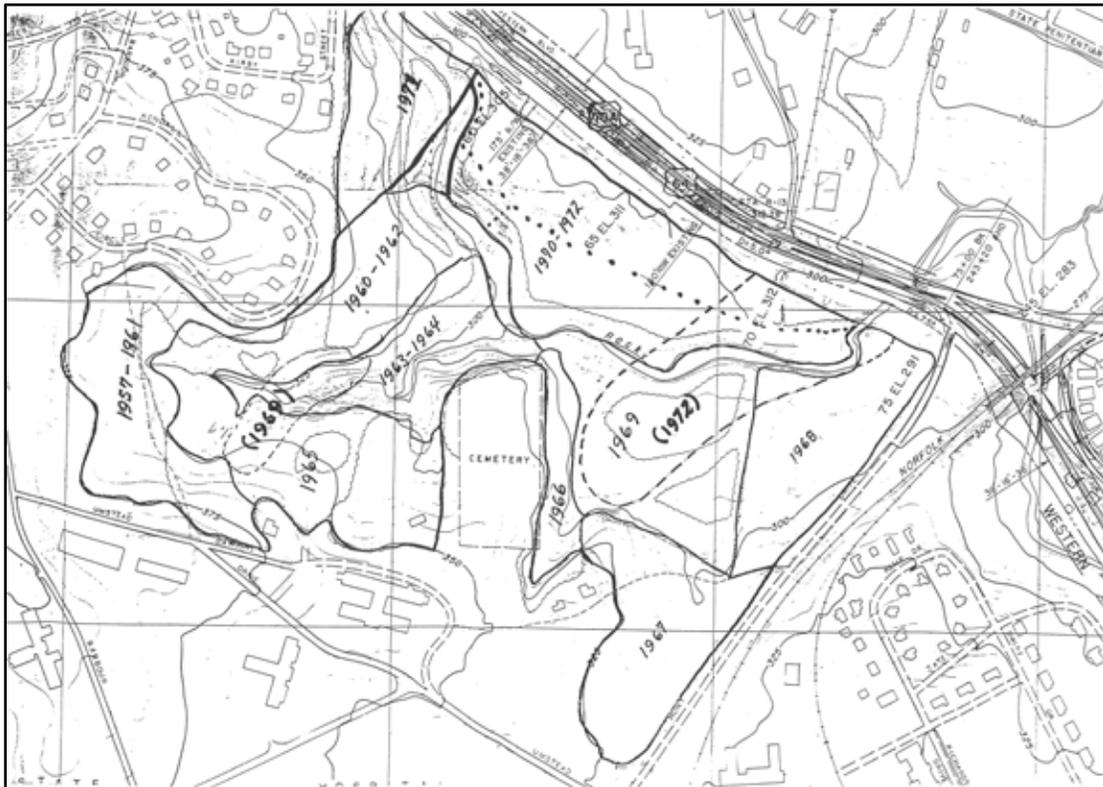


Figure 17: Map outlining the perimeters of the landfill, with divisions drawn to indicate the years during which various portions were used. (“Old City Landfill Information”)

In 1966, ten years after the landfill opened, Raleigh began attempts to upgrade the site, “approaching a sanitary landfill type of operation” (“Old City Landfill” 1). However, issues arose that precluded the site from being fully upgraded. According to the 1973 report, “the original site, by today’s standards, should never have been used for a landfill... Technology and awareness of the conditions relative to solid waste disposal were, at that time back in the middle fifties, not generally recognized or considered” (“Old City Landfill” 3). Specifically, the property’s soil cover was not sufficient, and the landfill was in a “marshy, low area, jungle-like with dense vegetation” where there was “not suitable separation of waste from ground water; finally, the site received run-off from adjacent higher ground.” (“Old City Landfill”). Because of these findings, the City “expended \$70,000 to bring in soil cover and for fertilizer and seed” with plans to intercept “surface run-off by terracing, dikes, ditches; thus, controlling the movement of water into the stream to prevent further erosion of stream banks” (“Old City Landfill” 3).

City Council Minutes dated April 6, 1982, note that a “Mr. Jordan questioned if this area could be seeded and let kids [soccer leagues] practice soccer on the site. In 1997, the city provided “18 soccer fields for Capital Area Soccer League with [a] long-term lease of 60 acres of Dorothea Dix Hospital property at Western Boulevard and Hunt Drive” (“Dorothea Dix Timeline”). At this time, “Fill dirt was added above the capped-off landfill to construct the existing soccer fields” (“Feasibility Study 26). As part of the

process, an Environmental Site Assessment was completed; the assessment report states, “Evidence of subsidence was observed on the site as indicated by several low lying areas of standing water. Documents obtained from the state and city records indicated that the trash and soil cover was not compacted very well, and that erosional problems have occurred since shortly after the landfill was closed” (“Environmental Site Assessment” 1).

In the early 2000s, during the construction of the Raleigh Convention Center, which opened in 2008, earth and construction debris moved from the Convention Center site was also dumped above the site of the former landfill (“Feasibility Study” 26).

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## 7. Landscape as a Therapeutic Setting; Landscape as Medicinal [1850 – 1975]

At its founding in 1850, the hospital was officially called “The Insane Hospital of North Carolina,” unofficially called “Dix Hill,” after Dorothea Dix’s grandfather, referred to on early maps as the “Lunatic Asylum,” and “then subsequently renamed twice: changed in 1899 to the State Hospital at Raleigh, and in 1959, to Dorothea Dix Hospital,” (“Dorothea Dix Timeline,” passim). While the hospital’s name changed many times, the intentionality behind some of its therapeutic methods were firmly proclaimed from its inception; these included using the landscape—by way of agriculture, horticulture, gardening, and passive experiences in nature—as therapy.

In the 1840s, mental health activist Dorothea Lynde Dix “became a determined campaigner for reform and was instrumental in improving care for the mentally ill in state after state” after she first observed the standard but inhumane treatment of mentally ill women in Boston in 1841 (McKowan). In Dix’s 1848 plea to the General Assembly of North Carolina, Dix quoted the physician Thomas Kirkbride, who was also an advocate for the mentally ill:

‘The proper mental and physical employment of the insane...is of so much importance... Whatever it may be, it must embrace utility, and it is well to combine both physical and mental occupation. Active exercise in the open air, moderate labor in the gardens, pleasure grounds, or upon the farm, afford good results... Sedentary employments are not in general favorable to health.’ (Dix)

In her plea, Dix criticized the act of imprisoning the mentally ill, noting that, “In nearly every jail in North Carolina, have the insane at different times and in periods varying in duration, been grievous sufferers (“Memorial Soliciting a State Hospital”). She went on to relay stories of what she had witnessed or what had learned from others through their first-hand accounts:

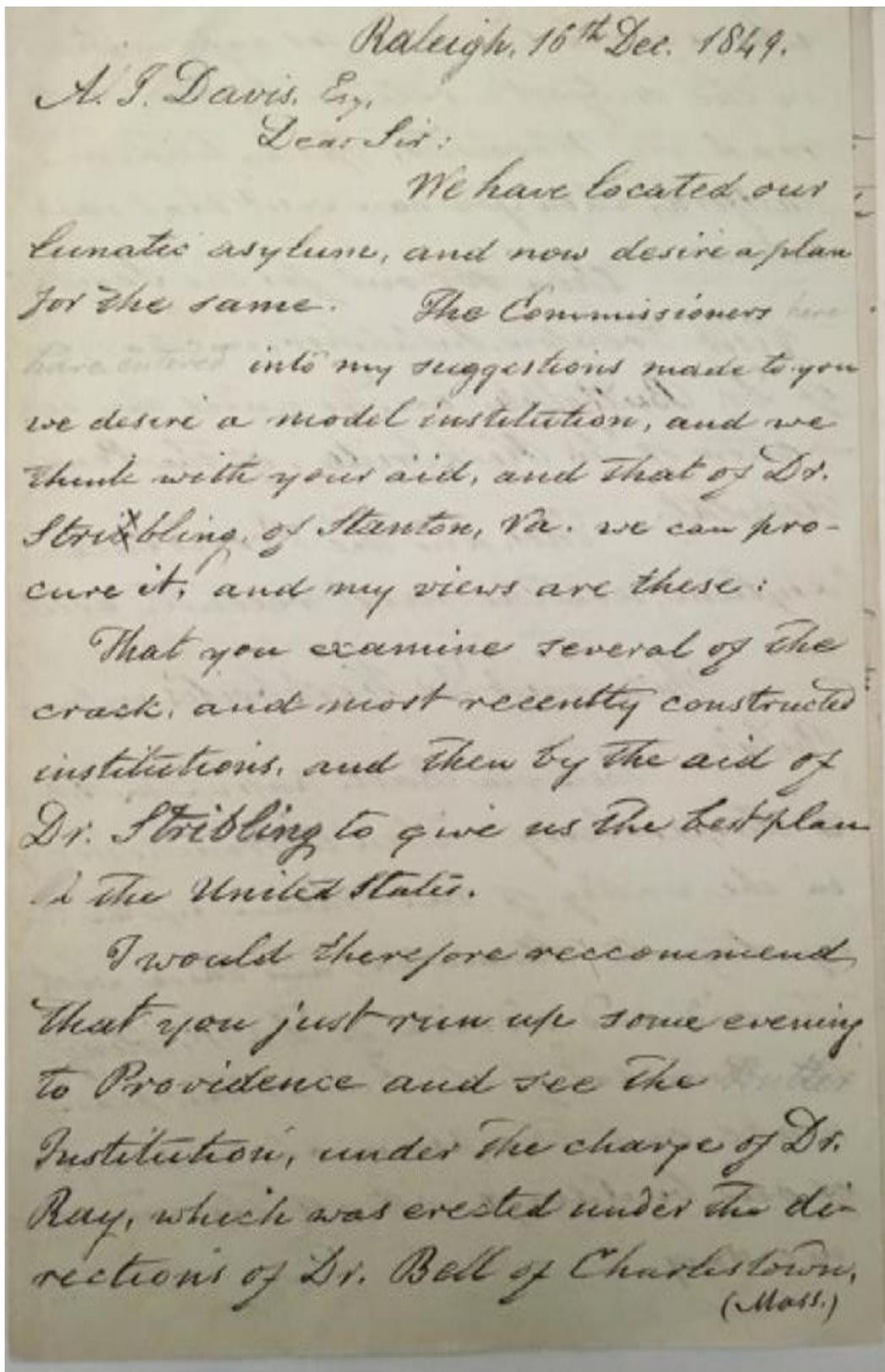
In Halifax County...a maniac was confined in the jail; shut in the dungeon, and chained there. The jail was set on fire by other prisoners: the keeper, as he told me, heard frantic shrieks and cries of the madman, and ‘might have saved him as well as not, but his noise was a common thing he was used to it and thought nothing out of the way was the case.’ The alarm of fire was finally spread; the jailer hastened to the prison: it was now too late; every effort...to save the agonized creature, was unavailing. He perished in agony, and amidst tortures no pen can describe... (Memorial Soliciting a State Hospital”)

“If County Jails must be resorted to for security against the dangerous propensities of madmen,” Dix proclaimed, “let such use of prison-rooms and dungeons be but temporary” (“Memorial Soliciting a State Hospital”). In her speech, Dix also spoke about the moral treatment of patients, stating that,

Uniform firmness and kindness towards the patient are of absolute obligation...

Whatever it maybe, it must embrace utility, and it is well to combine both physical and mental occupation. Active exercise in the open air, moderate labor in the gardens, pleasure grounds, or upon the farm, afford good results... Sedentary employments are not in general favorable to health. The operations of agriculture seem liable to the least objection. (“Memorial Soliciting a State Hospital”)

The following year, A.J. Davis was asked to design the North Carolina Hospital for the Insane “in the forefront of national trends” (Bisher 294). This included not only the design of the building, but also the design of the grounds that would be conducive to the kind of therapy Dix had advocated for. In December of 1849, the former North Carolina governor, John Motley Morehead, wrote to Davis, directing him to “‘examine several of the crack, and most recently constructed institutions’ and ‘give us the best plan in the United States’” (Bisher 294). In 1850, after Davis toured asylums in Providence, Rhode Island, Worcester and Springfield, Massachusetts, and Hartford, Connecticut, “Davis was to confer in Philadelphia with Dr. Thomas S. Kirkbride, a leading influence in American asylum planning, and tour the Trenton, New Jersey asylum built under Kirkbride’s direction” (Bisher 294-5). Davis went on to design an asylum that “exemplified Kirkbride’s theories of treatment...with spacious grounds for therapeutic gardening and farming” (Bisher 295). With the hospital and other buildings, he designed in the region, “Davis had given the Carolina Piedmont a body of architecture vital to the state’s changing self-image and to the American picturesque movement as a whole” (Bisher 295).

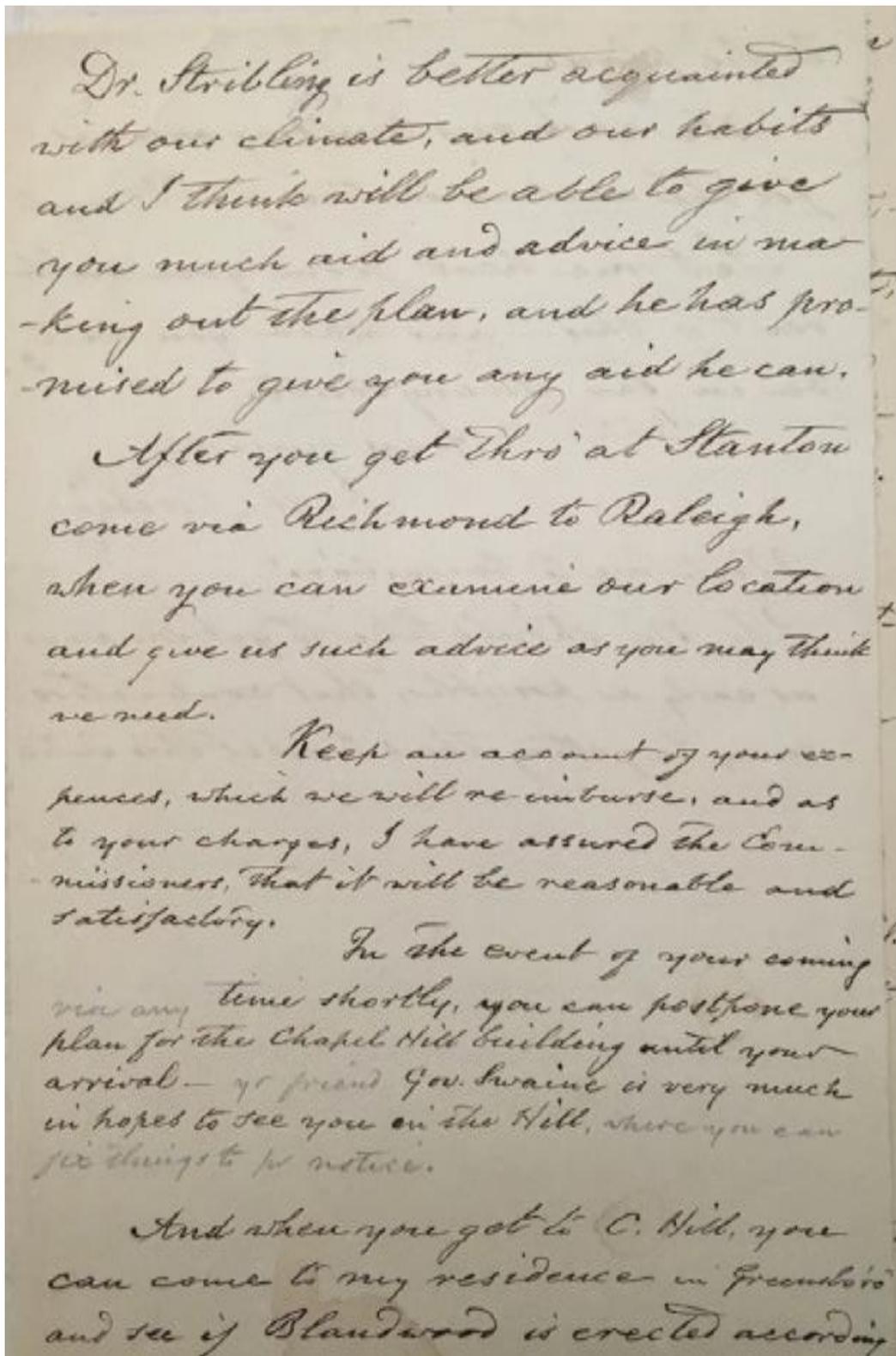


Raleigh, 16<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1849.  
A. J. Davis, Esq,  
Dear Sir:  
We have located our  
Lunatic asylum, and now desire a plan  
for the same. The Commissioners  
have entered into my suggestions made to you  
we desire a model institution, and we  
think with your aid, and that of Dr.  
Strickling, of Stanton, Va. we can pro-  
cure it, and my views are these:  
That you examine several of the  
crack, and most recently constructed  
institutions, and then by the aid of  
Dr. Strickling to give us the best plan  
in the United States.  
I would therefore recommend  
that you just run up some evening  
to Providence and see the  
Institution, under the charge of Dr.  
Ray, which was erected under the di-  
rections of Dr. Bell of Charlestown,  
(Mass.)

Figure 18 1849 letter Governor Morehead wrote to A. J. Davis, New York Public Library

who visited Europe for information  
on the subject) - return by the rail  
road, via Worcester, Springfield, and  
Hartford, when you can visit that insti-  
tution. Then set out for the South,  
visit Trenton, Institution, in charge  
of Dr. Buttolph erected under the di-  
rection of Dr. Kirkbride, of the Penn.  
Hospital. This, and the Providence  
asylum, are the most recently erect-  
ed. Then visit Dr. Kirkbride's asylum  
Philad. Then via Balt. pass up the r.r.  
to Harper's Ferry, - then to Winchester  
in the valley of Va. Thence up the Val.  
by stage to Staunton, and there with  
the aid and advice of Dr. Stirling  
the Principal of the Inst. at that place  
make out the plan and drawings  
of our building, with all the minutiae

Figure 19 1849 letter Governor Morehead wrote to A. J. Davis, New York Public Library



Dr. Stribling is better acquainted with our climate, and our habits and I think will be able to give you much aid and advice in making out the plan, and he has promised to give you any aid he can.

After you get thro' at Stanton come via Richmond to Raleigh, when you can examine our location and give us such advice as you may think we need.

Keep an account of your expenses, which we will reimburse, and as to your charges, I have assured the Commissioners, that it will be reasonable and satisfactory.

In the event of your coming via any time shortly, you can postpone your plan for the Chapel Hill building until your arrival - yr friend Gov. Swaine is very much in hopes to see you on the Hill, where you can see things to yr notice.

And when you get to C. Hill, you can come to my residence in Greensboro and see if Blandwood is erected according

Figure 20 1849 letter Governor Morehead wrote to A. J. Davis, New York Public Library

to the plan.

We wish our building arranged  
for the accommodation of 250 inmates

Let me hear from you on the  
rec<sup>d</sup> of this - and when you will  
be in the Sunny South.

Yours sincerely,  
J. M. Morehead

Write me to Greensboro?

P.S. We should like to get the plans  
as early as possible, that contractors  
may be getting their timber this winter.

Richmond to Stanton  
Richmond to Bolmwood by canal packet.  
Bolmwood to Scottsville up the far river  
Scottsville to Stanton 40 miles by stage.

of

Figure 21 1849 letter Governor Morehead wrote to A. J. Davis, New York Public Library

Therapeutic use of the landscape was not only part of the national conversation about mental healthcare and its facilities; it fell within a larger landscape movement that had begun in England and spread to other parts of Europe and to the United States:

During the 1850s, the picturesque styles spread quickly... Architectural books proliferated. Downing's *Cottage Residences* alone ran through nine printings and sold over sixteen thousand copies by 1861... North Carolina newspaper articles and popular speeches urged residents to reject old-fashioned building forms and improve their rural architecture by adopting Downing's ideals—and thereby to elevate public morality, stability, and prosperity. While most North Carolinians paid little attention to such messages, the picturesque style gained increasing popularity among the planter and merchant class that resided along the arteries of trade. (Bisher 296)

When Dix Hospital was being developed, Central Park, today among the most widely recognized picturesque landscapes in the United States, was brewing in Frederick Law Olmsted's psyche—a park for New York where those stuck in dark and crowded tenements might come and experience the rural landscape that they had no access to, and thereby restore their health both physical and mental. Olmsted said that there should be a feeling of relief upon entering, a “sense of enlarged freedom.”

But prior to 1858, when Olmsted's ideas for Central Park moved from the mind's eye to paper, in Raleigh, decisions pertaining to the Dix Hospital were also influenced by the picturesque movement. This is indicative of both how powerful the picturesque movement would be in the States and how uniquely at the forefront Raleigh's decision makers were being, regarding mental health treatment and landscape design. An 1851 report to the legislature of commissioners for the hospital states that,

‘They selected a site for the said building and after carefully examining the whole country in the vicinity of Raleigh, they chose a location west of the city and about one mile distant, on a hill near Rocky Branch to provide a water supply. This location has a commanding view of the city and is believed to be perfectly healthy.’ (“Dorothea Dix Timeline)

The first purchase for the hospital site was 129 acres, obtained in June of 1850 (“Decisions about Dix property”). Three months later, the state hospital commission purchased 53 additional acres (“Decisions about Dix property”). Davis's design for Dix Hospital, depicted in his original drawings now housed in the New York Historical Society's archives, and built on these original 182 acres and including courts at the front and back of the main building, with numerous smaller courts and garden spaces, also reflected the picturesque movement and its influence on treatment for mental health.

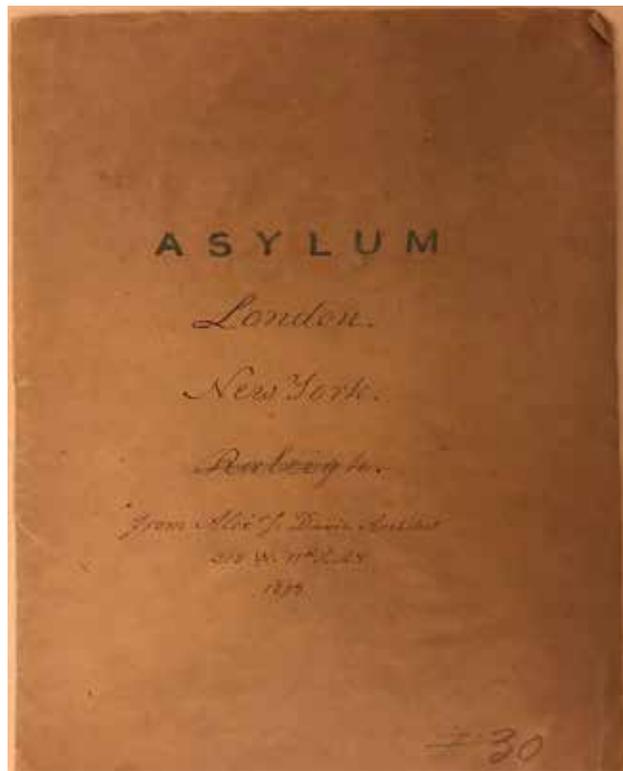


Figure 22 Asylum Booklet. Alexander Jackson Davis Architectural Drawing Collection (1827-1884)  
New York Historical Society Museum & Library

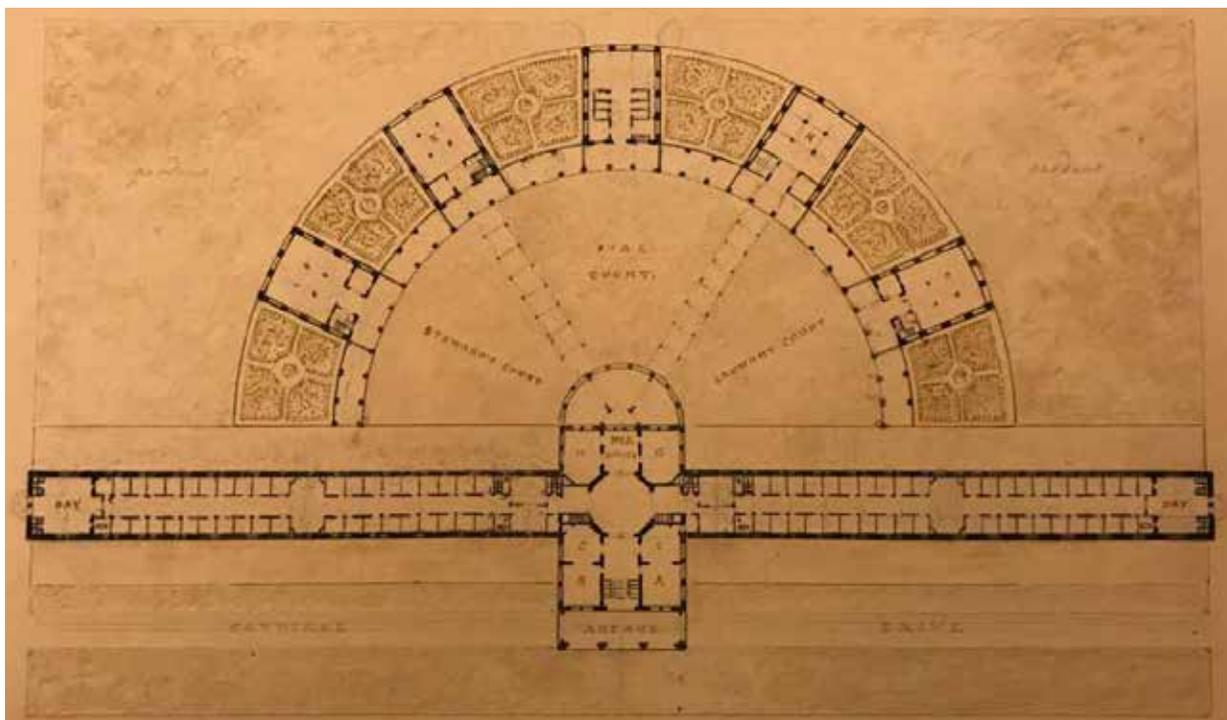
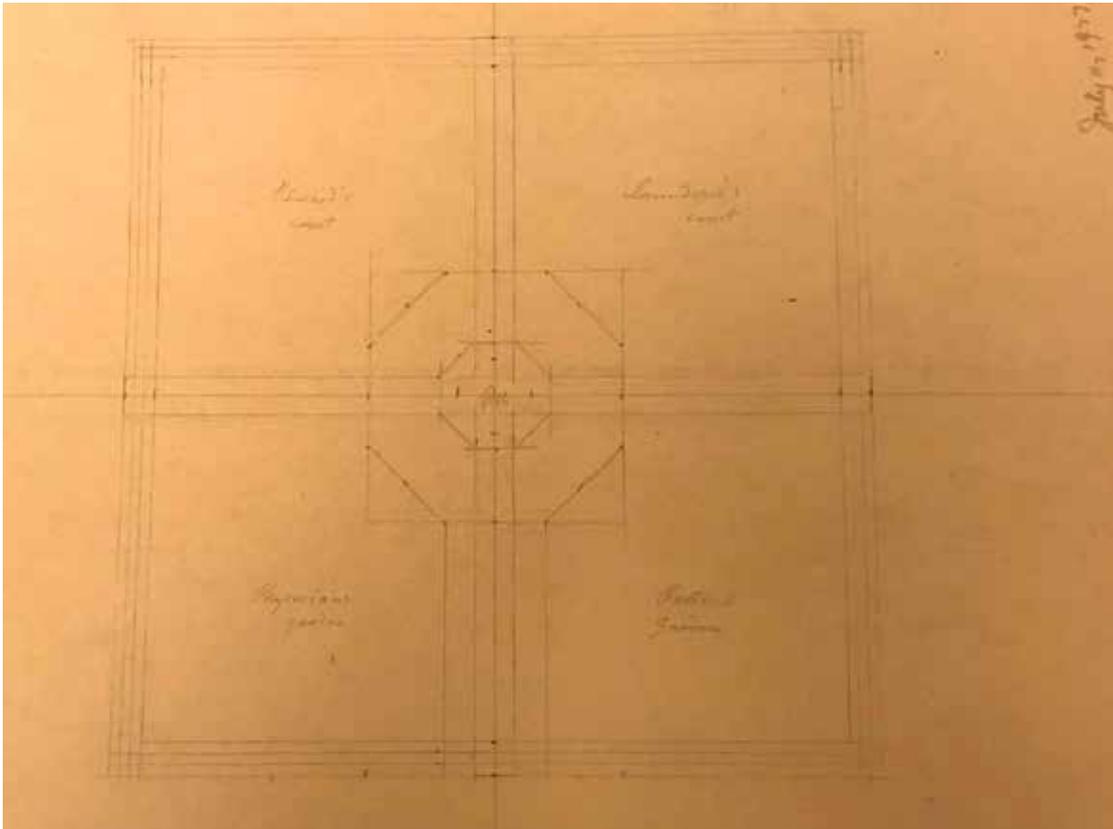


Figure 23 North Carolina Hospital for the Insane, A. J. Davis drawing referencing gardens and adjacent outdoor amenity space.  
Alexander Jackson Davis Architectural Drawing Collection (1827-1884) New York Historical Society Museum & Library



*Figure 24: North Carolina Hospital for the Insane, Sketch found on the back of garden drawing (previous image). Alexander Jackson Davis Architectural Drawing Collection (1827-1884) New York Historical Society Museum & Library*

Another picturesque landscape feature original to the site is

The notable grove of large oak trees forming a solid tree cover on the...expansive landscape fronting Dix Hill. The oaks and under-story foliage of dogwoods distinguish the central and western portions of the landscape, which cascades gently down to the flat, grassy swale of the large eastern ‘finger’ ending at the Umstead Drive entrance... A sparse network of curvilinear drives winds through the Grove: chiefly Boylan Avenue, which curves up from the Dorothea Drive entrance... The Grove has been a feature of Dix Hill since the beginning, but reached its present appearance in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century” (“Dix Hill”).

It is unclear whether A. J. Davis designed the grounds alone, or whether he worked with a landscape architect:

No documentation can be found to show that a landscape design was commissioned at a particular date to create the overall campus plan that existed since the 1920s. No evidence has been found to indicate that A. J. Davis would have been requested to design the grounds although he would have been capable of doing so” (“Dix Hill” 8:9).

Currently, the campus design, along with the hospital's original building are both attributed to Davis. According to the National Register of historic Places Registration Form,

Nationally-important architects Davis and A. G. Bauer worked on the campus in the 1800s, and noted North Carolina architect C. C. Hook shaped it in the 1920s. The cultivation of the "Grove" in front of the hospital throughout the period of significance indicates not only aesthetic sensitivity but also the belief that tranquility of nature was an important component in the healing process. The overriding importance of Dix Hill is its campus design, of which the landscape is a vital and unifying element. ("Dix Hill").

In addition to The Grove, in approximately 1915, an octagonal gazebo was added to "the flat grassy swale where the canopy of oaks on Dix Hill begin" ("Dix Hill"). In 1923, an entrance gate at Boylan Avenue made of "Low stone curving walls on each side...just before the bridge over Rocky Branch" was added; the same year, at the Umstead Drive, "Stone piers with cast-iron gates at the outer corners of Umstead Drive bridge over Rocky Branch" were added ("Dix Hill" 8:1).



*Figure 25: Image of The Grove with the circa 1915 gazebo City of Raleigh 1993*

The hospital admitted its first patient February 22, 1856 ("Dorothea Dix Timeline"), and "As of October 31, 1857, the hospital housed 138 patients (80 males and 58 females)," and "By 1860, the census had reached 179, and the hospital was nearing its capacity for male patients with 114" (O'Rourke 12).

In keeping with the hospital's founding philosophy, Superintendent Fisher used what is now known as occupational therapy to keep patients active. Male inmates cultivated the garden and farm, cut wood, and helped prepare food, while women sewed and knitted. Fisher was

particularly concerned about idle time spent indoors during inclement weather and suggested in his legislative report of November 1, 1858, that a workshop be built for crafts and repairs...

Fisher, in addition to recognizing the benefits of activity, understood the effect of the hospital's environment on patients, or as he put it, 'pleasant influences of small embellishments.' Attractive walks, beautiful landscaping, and a carriage drive would, according to Fisher, soothe the disordered mind. In addition, handsome grounds would impress the public and reduce misconceptions about the institution... He asked the legislature for funds to hire a manager to implement a comprehensive beautification plan...

Superintendent Fisher supervised the completion of other projects, including construction of a wooden barn...and erection of a permanent fence along the property's northern and eastern boundaries. In addition, workers built a smokehouse; a stable for six horses and four cows, with grain storage above; a barn for storing corn; and an ice house. The garden and farm flourished, providing food for patients and staff, and grain for livestock. These improvements helped the hospital to become largely self-sufficient. (Dix 12-13)

The determination to provide therapy to patients through interaction with the landscape, which also benefitted the hospital, remained central to the hospital's treatment approach. In 1892, Dr. George L. Kirby, who had served on the board since 1889, became the next hospital superintendent. "Managing the insane, Kirby said, required employment, amusement, and diversion. Nervous tension needed to be expressed" (O'Rourke 36).

Like his predecessors, Kirby improved the hospital grounds for economic, therapeutic, and aesthetic reasons. The food produced at the asylum, much of it by unpaid labor, reduced hospital expenses. Workers, by clearing brush, filling gullies, and cutting trees, converted idle ground into productive farmland...

Patients trimmed and felled trees to beautify a portion of the grounds known as 'the grove.' The hospital built two summerhouses and placed six swings and seventy-five benches, made of iron and oak, around the grove to create a park for patients...

To combine utility and beauty, the superintendent proposed planting an Osage orange hedge along part of the hospital boundary. It was to be 'thick and impenetrable' to keep patients in and sightseers out. (O'Rourke 39-40, *passim*).

Fifty years after the acquisition of the original 182 acres, in March of 1907, the state added 1,140 acres to the hospital property, increasing its total acreage to 1,332 acres. ("Decisions about Dix Property"). With the increased acreage, using the landscape prescriptively as a form of therapy, and as an economic boon to the hospital, was realized in more ways. In 1912, a vineyard with 1,850 grape vines was planted on the property ("Dorothea Dix Timeline").

O’Rorke’s book on Dix Hospital notes the entries of a female patient who was hospitalized in 1911. The patient “reveals the profusion of asylum activities,” including, “making shirts, overalls, underwear, and burial robes in the sewing room, and shelling beans in the kitchen,” embroidering, drawing pictures, making centerpieces, listening to music, and attending dances (44 passim). “While walking the grounds, she enjoyed the summerhouse and liked gathering vegetables and ‘toothbrushes’ in the garden” (44).

By the 1960s, the Dix Hospital property had significantly increased in size. “The 1,853-acre hospital farm consisted of 832 acres of cropland, 287 of improved pasture land, 695 wooded acres, 26 acres of roads and lots, and 13 acres of ponds” (O’Rorke 97). The expansive farm included

1,280 swine, including 180 brood sows; 225 cows, 104 of which were milkers; and 8,000 layer hens. Two hundred patients worked the farm, along with twenty-one hospital employees. The farm produced all the hay and silage and 30 percent of the grain needed to feed the animals and had its own mill to mix the food. The farm also provided 35percent of the food for patients and staff.

Farm labor was just one of numerous jobs that patients performed as part of work therapy and occupational therapy, though one staff member said that the farm workers were the happiest. (O’Rorke 97).

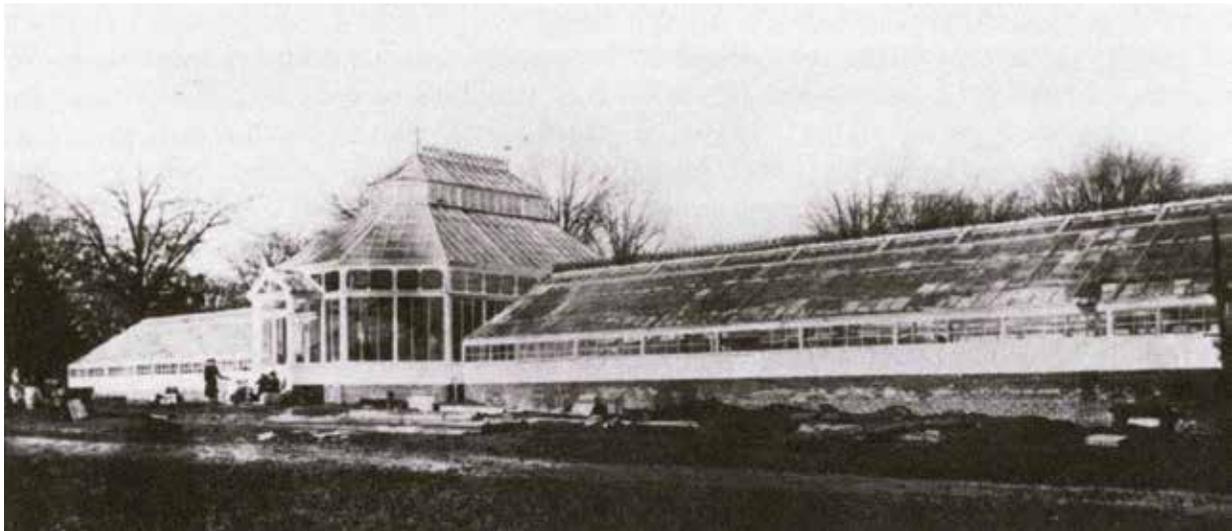


*Figure 26: Dix Hospital cows and pasture. City of Raleigh 1941*

In addition to the working farm, gardening and “walks in good weather, usually with thirty patients assigned to one staff” were also part of the occupational therapy program in the 1950s and 1960s (O’Rorke 98). However, it is not clear whether gardening and horticulture were distinctly prescribed

therapies, and further investigation with permission to review medical transcripts and records may be necessary to confirm the practice as a formal means of therapy.

In a thesis written in 1977, Douglas Robert Carson wrote that “Dorothea Dix Hospital has pioneered informally in horticultural therapy” (38); the specification of the work being “informal” is likely derived from the lack of evidence showing that the hospital employed a specialized horticultural therapist as part of its core staff, and from interviews Carson conducted with former staff members. Carson, acknowledges the hospital’s success in using farming as part of its therapy (41-42). However, of the greenhouse, he wrote that it “was run for a long while by a man named Brawdy Johnson” and he reports, by way of interviews with patients and hospital staff, that “It seems as if little was done through the greenhouse to help patients” (44). Instead, “Brawdy supplied the governor with a fresh carnation each day. Cut and potted flowers for the governor’s mansion and for state affairs” and for “the offices of higher administrators at the hospital” were grown in the greenhouse (45).



*Figure 27: Greenhouse at Dix Park. 1914 Report of the Board of Directors and Superintendent of State Hospital, reprinted in O’Rorke*

The wood-framed glass greenhouse, located behind the Kirby Building, and purchased sometime in the early 1900s, likely between 1913-1914 (O’Rorke 98; Carson 42), was in use until 1957 when the “building was torn down and a new but smaller, rooting house with fiber glass sides was built behind Kirby building” (Carson, 45). This event is significant, in that, “Along with the destruction of the greenhouse came the end of the rose garden that Brawdy had planted” along the front of the McBryde building “(45-46). While the formality of the approach to using horticultural therapy is in question, Carson wrote that “As long as there have been patients at Dorothea Dix Hospital, there have been various gardening attempts from individual patient efforts to actual organizing of garden therapy” (46).

While the horticultural pursuits Brawdy had overseen ended in 1957, just a year earlier, “In July 1956, the first assignment was given. Patients chopped grass from the edge of sidewalks. Eventually, the

desire to build a garden grew. The grounds' maintenance staff brought in a tractor in the Spring of 1957 and plowed up an area of land behind Broughton building" (46). When a social anthropologist who was lecturing at the hospital took notice of the informal garden, a hospital nurse, Ophelia Whitney, "thought that if Otto Van Murry thought that this was so great for patients, it had to be therapy," (47), and in 1958, she laid out four different gardens on the property. However, "Occupational therapy soon discovered that these garden plots and their own were duplicating efforts;" in addition, they could only work with the patients during the hottest parts of the day, and "Since many patients were on Thorazine..., they could not tolerate sun due to the drug" (47). As a result of these issues, occupational therapy ended its gardening program. Two years later, in 1960, the nursing staff also abandoned its informal efforts at gardening therapy (47). Throughout the 1960s, the farm remained in operation; in fact, "By 1967, the farm enterprise was expansive" (55). Patients also participated in grounds maintenance, such as planting shrubs, mowing lawns, and planting trees throughout the grounds (Carson, 48-49). But again, this effort, which included doctors who "specifically assigned [patients] for this therapy," ended in 1965.

Summarizing his findings and analysis, Carson focused again on the successful farm, noting two contrary facts that illustrate the changing nature of and attitude toward horticultural therapy. First, he reflected,

The Dorothea Dix Hospital farm, over the years, had provided a self-sustaining food supply for the hospital. Patients and staff worked side by side in the farm and derived many benefits in food and therapy from such labor. In this sense, a natural, inborn, horticultural therapy program was in operation at Dorothea Dix farm from the earliest days of its existence." (50)

Then, Carson offered that, "By 1971, the thinking had changed on the therapeutic worth of the farm. 'The traditional role of the farm in the Department of Mental Health has changed from a therapeutic endeavor to primary emphasis on supplying adequate and higher quality food" (56). Furthermore, Carson noted that the consensus among hospital officials was that, as it was being executed at Dix Hospital after 1970, there was "no therapeutic worth in farming" and, perhaps related to the advocacy and policy changes that required patients to be paid, "by 1974, there was little use of patients at Dorothea Dix farm" (56). Two years later, North Carolina State University obtained ownership of the farm (56).

In considering the landscape, and, horticulture and farming, as forms of therapeutic medicine, another related landscape theme is worth stating more explicitly, though it has already been implied: the landscape as a source of food, or better, nourishment. Carson wrote that

Patients officially had access to the crops which were grown on the farm. Charlie Creech [former staff member in charge of patients in the Adams building (55)] tells the story of one hundred patients eating watermelons and cantalopes [sic] outside of Adams building with 'never a mess left behind.' Patients also used to pick and eat peaches from a huge Alberta peach orchard that stretched from Adams building to Cherry building. The patient of ten years stay at Adams

building said that 'you could go down into the fields and eat watermelons and cantalopes [sic] and tomatoes if you didn't get caught.' (52)

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## 8. *Landscape as a Place of Transcendence and Recreation [1950 – 2011]*

While horticultural therapy in a more formal capacity faded over time, outdoor recreation, both passive and active, were other components of occupational therapy that took advantage of the grounds and seems to have come into favor by the 1950s or 1960s. In his thesis, Carson wrote that in 1976, “existing all over Dorothea Dix property are solitary groupings of trees and white iron chairs and benches” (93). Echoing the pastoral beginnings of the hospital, he advocated for creating “‘pockets of beauty’ to which patients could walk and relax in comfort and privacy. Bird feeders could be hung from trees to attract wildlife” (93).

Focusing on the more active uses of the landscape, according to O’Rorke, in the 1950s and 1960s, patients had access to “sports and games, including tennis, miniature golf, croquet, badminton, horseshoes, and shuffleboard. The tennis courts and miniature golf course were next to the female wind of the main building, while the pitch-and-put three-hole golf course was across the road from Haywood Gym” (O’Rorke 98).

These uses for the Dix Hospital property are not original; in fact, as early as 1913, there were proponents for transforming the site into a park that reflected the popular picturesque landscapes of the day; by this time, Central Park had been in existence for fifty-five years. In addition, the City Beautiful Movement, which sought to beautify cities through monuments and parks, was well underway. A report by Charles Mumford Robinson entitled “A City Plan for Raleigh” called attention to

how Raleigh, as a thriving and modern municipality, is situated in regard to large parks and real playgrounds, is to feel a thrill of expectation. For Raleigh is situated in a beautiful rolling country, with pleasantly diversified scenery of wood and clearing, and in the park enthusiasm of recent years to United States has taken the world’s lead in the extent efficiency and beauty of municipal parks. But ‘Wide-Awake Raleigh’ needs some stirring here...

...but within sight are the handsome grounds of the State Insane Asylum, to show sane people how their park ought to increase with its growth in area and population. (“Dorothea Dix Timeline”)

Five years after the report’s suggestion that the Dix Hospital site would serve as a “handsome” park, “In 1918-1919, workers created a third entrance [to the hospital grounds] by building a concrete-and-steel bridge across Rocky Branch that connected with a city street leading to Boylan Heights. Local citizens had requested the new entrance to link the lovely asylum grounds with the recently developed Boylan Heights suburb” (O’Rorke 55).

The pursuit of the Dix Hospital site as a landscape to support recreation that is both passive and active is a topic that requires further research. Today, the existing soccer fields stand as one primary example of recreational usage. There are other recreational uses, both informal and formal that occur on the site today and could be documented to contribute to the historic evolution of the site as a park setting that has emerged organically over time.

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## 9. *Landscape as Infrastructure*

### *Introduction*

When thinking of the landscape, the average person frequently overlooks how humans utilize natural resources to meet infrastructure needs. More often, we think of individual features of the landscape, such as trees, topography, and water, as elements of the natural or scenic beauty of a place, forgetting that these are also the very features that must be continually manipulated and managed to meet infrastructure needs and wants—at once, to the immediate service of humans and to the detriment of the landscape. The desecration of natural resources for the purpose of meeting human infrastructure needs is no less true of the Dix Park site, where, in response to evolving infrastructure requirements, the landscape has been manipulated and managed and manipulated all over again.

For the purposes of this Report, STA will focus on two dynamic infrastructure components and, ultimately, their interrelationship as it relates to the physical shaping of the land: transportation and water. In short, stream channelization and changes to natural topography have both caused erosion, for the sake of accommodating water needs (such as clean drinking water and abundant water supply for laundering, cooking, and basic health and sanitation), and transportation routes (such as railroads, bridges, and roads), have resulted in the instability of natural systems, loss of diversity in plant and wildlife species, and no program of removal for exotic, invasive vegetation.

When the Dix Hospital site was first being selected, State “Legislators directed the [hospital] commissioners to buy at least one hundred acres of land near a railroad with a good water supply” (O’Rorke 4); state officials were wisely considering a location that could accommodate a large institution that would shelter many people. When the hospital commissioners identified and purchased the property, they boasted that it had “‘beautifully undulating ‘grounds, ‘an abundant supply of water,’ and offered a ‘commanding view of the city’” (O’Rorke 4). This “abundant” water supply would prove to be problematic over time. Likewise, the North Carolina Railroad ran through the site. Thus, from the beginning, the hospital has negotiated to accommodate transportation in exchange for access to goods and services, and they have negotiated the issues that have arisen as a result. In fact, issues related to water, land erosion, and transportation access would continue to occur on the chosen site through time.

### *Water, water, everywhere: Rocky Branch and springs*

According to O’Rorke, as early as 1850, problems relating to water existed, which forced manipulation of the land and water sources:

Nearby springs provided drinking water, and it was thought that Rocky Branch, about 350 feet away at the foot of a hill, could supply water for washing, water closets, and steam. The distance

and difference in elevation between the hospital and the branch created engineering difficulties. As an alternative, the hospital hired a Mr. W. Bird to dig a well next to the boiler. At the time of the superintendent's report, Byrd had been stymied by a layer of rock. (7)

By 1857, under Superintendent Fisher's leadership, the hospital had addressed a major need—the delivery of clean water to the hospital. Fisher "was especially proud" of the system implemented:

Water for lavatories, water closets, and steam heating came from Rocky Branch, where two cement-lined brick reservoirs held approximately 1,800 gallons each. Three-inch iron pipe, running through as trough, carried water from these containers to a steam-powered Worthington fire pump that propelled the water up to sheet-iron tanks holding 15,000 gallons in the attic. This system not only met the hospital's daily needs, but also provided extra water in case of fire. Beginning in 1858, the hospital obtained drinking water from 'a never failing spring' near the hospital's male wing. Workers hollowed out and walled the area around the spring and it became a popular spot with patients." (O'Rorke 13-14)

However, even as Fisher's effort to supply water could be deemed successful, it created new problems. Twenty years later, in 1875, the water supply remained a major issue: "Located in the bottomlands below the asylum, the spring that provided the hospital's drinking water often had to be cleared and drained. Water for other purposes came from Rocky Branch (O'Rorke 27). Problems were caused by the manipulation of Rocky Branch in parts of the stream that were not located on hospital property:

...the owner of the land adjacent to the hospital, through which the Rocky Branch flowed, deepened his section of the stream. An inadvertent consequence was the replacement of the once firm stream bed with sand. For years afterward, sand clogged the hospital's water race and troughs whenever it rained. The state took various steps to improve the asylum's water system, including using convicts to widen and deepen a canal from Rocky Branch in 1979. Finally, in 1881 the legislature authorized the purchase of the land and right-of-way needed to construct dams and install pipes to ensure a consistent water supply from Rocky Branch. (O'rorke 27)

From early in the hospital's history, the human shaping of a water system that worked to artificially manage the water for very real needs, coexisted with the hospital's philosophy that nature was a healing element for patients, and the two did not always complement one another. Rather, the overall impact was that the Rocky Branch stream would continue to be diminished into near disappearance.



*Figure 28: Manmade interventions at Rocky Creek. MVVA September 2017*

In 1889, North Carolina Agricultural and Mechanical College (now North Carolina State University) opened, and Raleigh saw the construction of Pullen Park, including bathhouses (O’Rourke 32). With this development, there was concern at Dix Hospital that “sewage from the college and drainage from the bathhouses would pollute Rocky Branch, the water source for the hospital’s lavatories, water closets, and steam heating” (O’Rourke 32-33). However, it was later discovered that the bathhouse water “was not a contaminant, but pollution was coming from the school” (O’Rourke 33).

Almost ten years later, in 1896, “investigators found further cause for concern. Seepage from a nearby sewer was polluting the asylum’s well water” (O’Rourke 33). The seepage was responsible for a major health event; “During the previous two years, typhoid fever, a disease caused by contaminate drinking water, had been the leading cause of patient deaths. Because of this and the increasing contamination of Rocky Branch, the hospital dug three new wells” (O’Rourke 33).

“Wake Water Company dammed Walnut Creek on hospital property in 1913, creating Lake Raleigh. In exchange, the water company gave the hospital up to fifty million gallons of water a year. By 1918, the directors had allowed the City of Raleigh to heighten the dam, build a filtration plant, and lay pipes across hospital property to Camp Polk. The City, in turn, gave the asylum free filtered water and \$2,000 a year” (O’Rourke 52).

#### *Transportation for goods and services*

As hospital officials continually worked to create an efficient, abundant, and sanitary water system, they also worked to accommodate utilities to provide for patients and staff in other ways, and which ultimately depended upon transportation through the site:

...the board decided in December 1890 that the hospital should burn coal, rather than wood, for heat. Three months later, they granted a fifty-foot-wide-right-of-way to the North Carolina Railroad. The track crossed the asylum property and adjoining land... The railroad, in turn, gave the hospital a token payment of one dollar and build a switch and sidetrack for coal and freight deliveries (O’Rorke 33).

The hospital’s dependency on the railroads to provide coal and other supplies continued, and twelve years later, in 1912, “the hospital gave the Raleigh, Charleston, and Southern Railroad a right-of-way across asylum property, and the railroad in return agreed to lay a spur for delivery of coal to the hospital” (O’Rorke 52).

Negotiating railroad right of ways eventually transitioned into leasing land in such a way that accommodated automobile traffic. “In June 1941, the board approved leasing a right-of-way across asylum grounds to the government that connected a Norfolk and Southern Railroad spur to the old Caraleigh Mills. To minimize disruption of hospital traffic, workers completed a steel-and-wood bridge over the railway in September” (O’Rorke 69).

While bridges to provide for automobiles impacted the natural resources later in the site’s history, bridges were built throughout the hospital’s lifetime: “Patients graded a hill near the Rocky Branch bridge. The main road leading into the asylum from Raleigh crossed the bridge, and in the mid-1890s, inspectors discovered that it was unsafe” (O’Rorke 40). Patient “graded and macadamized the entrance road, and patients cut down and graded the unsightly hill near the bridge” (“Dix Hill” 8:9).

The manipulation and management of natural resources, and in particular, resources that impacted the natural water elements on the Dix Park site are not unique to the 1800s and early or mid-1900s. Rather, engineering the land and water has been continuous. In 2004, a property study of the Dorothea Dix campus evaluated transportation projects underway or planned during that period and their impact on the site. One project, which was eventually implemented, was the “realignment and expansion of Western Boulevard,” turning the road into a “four lane divided road along the northern edge of the campus, further separating the Boylan Heights district from the campus” (“Dix Property Study Location” 02-16). Not only did the expansion disrupt connectivity between the neighborhood and the grounds, it also required “the relocation of Rocky Branch Creek” (“Dix Property Study Location” 02-16), once and for all, engineering the water feature nearly out of existence.

Infrastructure as a landscape layer is emphasized within this report to draw attention to the complexities that come with providing for intensive human use of a site. With the master planning effort, an opportunity exists to consider the role of water on the site with a long view—one that takes into account the history of the hospital and its original context within the period of picturesque landscapes and, at the time, the progressive therapy that viewed nature having the capacity to heal.

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## Precedents Investigation: Preserving Landscapes Ahead of Associated Buildings

### Fort Sheridan, Chicago, IL

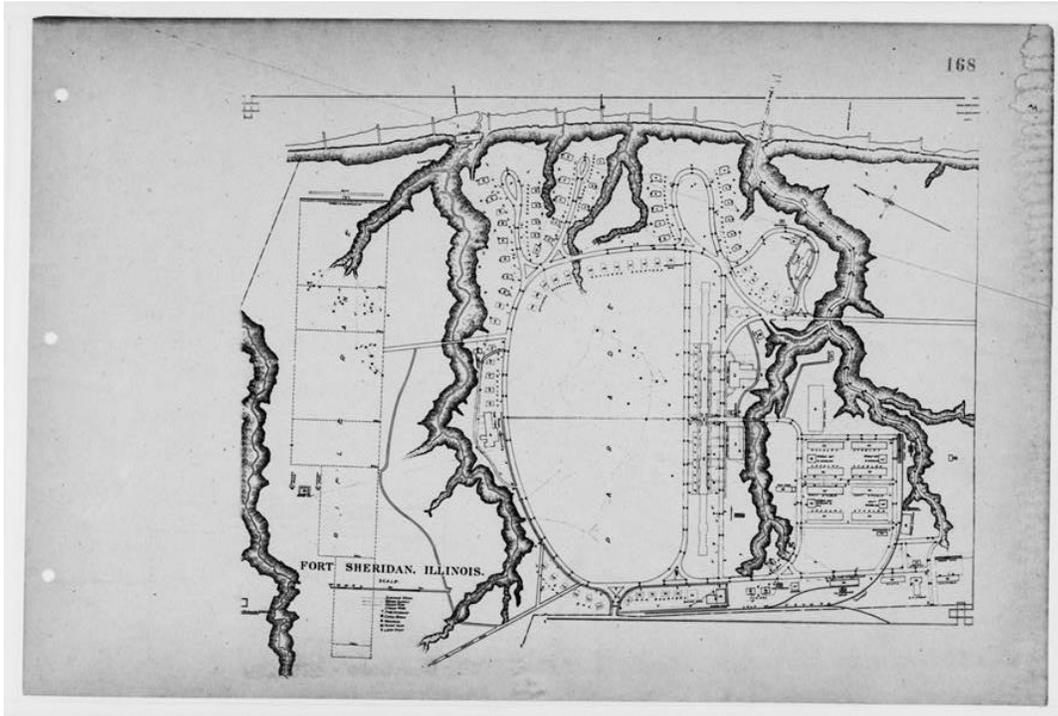


Figure 1 Fort Sheridan, HABS photo 062572

#### Key Points

- Fort Sheridan, a turn-of-the-century fort first recommended for decommissioning in 1988 and finally decommissioned in 1993, offers an example in which preserving a significant landscape and its intended character may be equally as crucial and beneficial for historic and contemporary purposes, if not more crucial, than preserving the site's associated and fully intact buildings.
- Fort Sheridan is one of the last U.S. forts to have been designed by a private architecture firm, Holabird and Roche in 1896): “Holabird and Roche, like many other Chicago architects of this time, were completely at ease with combining poetry with pragmatism” (Smith 20). Therefore, the architects had the holistic vision to address the buildings not merely as individual structures, but as components of the practical uses of the site, and the site's overall aesthetics. They brought landscape architect Ossian Cole Simonds in to design its landscape as the foundational element for decisions about how and where buildings would be situated.

- The resulting landscape demonstrates such an integral relationship between buildings and open space, that preserving the most critical aspects of the design's open spaces has been highly prioritized in the redevelopment that began in the mid-1990s.
- Yet the landscape design was a priority even earlier than the 1990s, as the core of the original fort remained so remarkably intact. In 1979 it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and it was placed on the list of National Historic Landmarks in 1984. Simonds was greatly influenced by Olmsted, but he also developed his own distinct style, which consisted of a combination of using native flora with picturesque layouts. These two principles are evident in the site's landscape character.
- While many of the buildings are of high historic and cultural significance, remain intact, and have been preserved at Fort Sheridan, the site's "Cultural Resource Management Plan," written in 1997, states the following critical assessment and recommendation: "The boundaries of the National Historic Landmark District are valid as they now stand and should remain unchanged in the future. The designation of contributing and noncontributing historic buildings within the Historic District is valid unless the buildings have severely compromised integrity or are in extremely deteriorated condition." (CRMP 19)
- In addition, the "Cultural Resource Management Plan" draws attention to the integrity and significance of the landscape, stating: "In its September 1993 *Literature Review, Architectural Evaluation, and Phase I Archeological Reconnaissance of Selected Portions of Fort Sheridan*, the Louisville District Army Corps of Engineers evaluated the significance of the historic designated landscape and recommended that the significant features of the Historic District be recognized. The recommendation is embraced in this Management Plan." (CRMP 19)
- The "Cultural Landscape Management Plan" went on to state that the fact that "The significant historic features of O. C. Simonds, which were integrally designed with the architecture" were "not recognized in the National Historic Landmark nomination form," was a "deficiency." (CRMP 19).
- Finally, of major significance to the Dix Park landscape, the "Cultural Landscape Management Plan" evaluates 94 "contributing structures" included in this site's Historic District, as well as its "noncontributing" structures, as outlined in the National Historic District nomination form. In evaluating the 94 contributing structures, the plan makes recommendations for various treatments, from preservation to restoration to demolition. The plan makes its recommendations "based on the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings," but are more specific in some areas, and provide greater flexibility in others, because of the unique historic qualities of the district. These recommendations occur on pages 22-50 of the plan and include building descriptions, conditions, and recommended alteration guidelines.
- The "Cultural Landscape Management Plan" recommends the demolition of nine contributing buildings located in the Historic District, and provides its reasoning. Included among these nine buildings are the Post Hospital #1, built in 1893 and Post Hospital #2, built between 1905-1906. Building #1 is described as, "a three-story central block flanked by two single-story wings" (CRMP 45). Building #2 is described as "large and E-shaped" and ranging "from one to two

stories in height...The rough-faced limestone foundation supports exterior walls of cream-colored brick set in a common bond” (CRMP 46). Regarding the condition of these buildings, the plan states that, “There was a section, connecting the two buildings, that was removed in 1958. ... A large veranda, which had a decorative balustrade and once wrapped around three sides, and a wide central front porch, which had a pedimented entry, have been removed from Building #1” (CRMP 46). Finally, the plans alteration guidelines state the following:

The hospital at the Fort followed the Pavilion Plan for hospital design. This type of plan dominated hospital design for over 100 years from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century to the mid 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Integral to the plan were individual wingggggggs containing the wards, which were connected to a central section for services and circulation. The wards had windows on the long sides for maximum ventilation. It was believed at the time that fresh air and natural ventilation was the most important recuperative factor that could be provided for patients. The verandas around the Fort Sheridan hospital originally contributed to this concept. The hospital has been greatly altered by the removal of these verandas, the removal of the center section that connected the original pavilions, and the demolition of one of the wards.

Because the integrity of the buildings has been severely compromised by the removal of important historic features and by unsympathetic alterations, because not enough remains of its historic fabric to express the building’s original use, and because the siting of these structures conflicts with the economic viability of the community, it may be demolished. (CRMP 46)

- The measured, balanced approach to preserving the most historically significant and intact buildings at Fort Sheridan, as well as its historically significant open spaces and overall landscape design, especially during the site’s redevelopment which was intended to create (and did succeed) an economic investment in the area that further activated and connected the communities surrounding the original site, provides a relevant precedent for Dix Park. This precedent illustrates the value of placing great significance on the open space and what its design can do to activate the future Dix Park in an economically viable way. Furthermore, the case can be made that if the restoration of a building that does not have historic integrity, according to the Secretary of Interior’s “Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings,” is prioritized for restoration, it sets a negative precedent for Dix Park that the built environment now and in the future can and should detract from opportunities for Raleigh and its citizens to capitalize on the benefits of a historically significant landscape and the original intent of its site selection and views, potentially hindering the economic viability and community use of a world-class open space.

### *Geographical Context*

“The Great Glacier came out of the north and enveloped most of the State of Illinois. For hundreds of years, during the Wisconsin Glaciation period, this glacier continued to push southward, accumulating debris in its path. The glacier eventually melted, but left in its place what is known as the Valparaiso, or more commonly, the Highland Park Glacial Moraine. ... This site, chosen by General Henry Phillip Sheridan, was favorable for the purposes for which it was enlisted with its deep ravines, open spaces, heavily forested valleys, and easy access to rail and lake transportation.” (Smith 8)

### *The Site*

“Fort Sheridan is an army installation occupying 712.4 acres of land in Lake County, Illinois, approximately twenty-five miles north of downtown Chicago, Illinois and fifty miles south of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. It is located in the County of Lake nestled among three different Villages: the Villages of Lake Forest and Highland Park, two of the most affluent communities in this country, lie to the north and south respectively, and the Village of Highwood, a blue collar community, lies [sic] on the Fort's western border... Located in the center of Fort Sheridan is a 230 acre National Register Historic District and National Historic Landmark District - an area containing historic and natural resources so significant that it is considered by many to be second only to the Presidio in San Francisco.” (Smith 2)

“The 230 acre National Register historic district is contained within the Bartlett and Hutchison ravines to the north and south, Sheridan Road to the west, and the lakefront to the east. (See map. Appendix A, p.77) Designed by the Chicago based architectural firm of Holabird and Roche, the original site stands almost complete today with its stables, pumping station, warehouses, barracks, water tower, officers' quarters, fire station, hospital, guardhouse, non-commissioned officers' quarters, gun sheds, and morgue. Despite the many changes in its function and new construction over the past century, the core of the original Fort remains remarkably intact. For this reason it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980 and on the elite list of National Historic Landmarks in 1984.” (Smith 6).

### *Distinctive and Significant Landscape Features and Preservation*

“...the distinctive buff-cream brick buildings constructed during the first twenty years of the Post's existence along with associated landscape features...provide its major significance. The original post as constructed remains almost complete today...These buildings by design, usage, and relationship to one another are typical of the military traditions and values of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century army, exemplifying among other things the importance of the horse and the mule to the army, the separation of rank, the growing attention paid to the needs of the soldier, and the pomp and ceremony connected with military life at this time. Arranged around the parade grounds and enclosed by two large ravines, the district is a compact one. It evokes a sense of the old army and possesses strong associative values with United States military history especially that period between Fort Sheridan's inception in the late 1880's and the onset of World War I.” (HABS Survey)

“In a 1994 assessment of the Fort the Army Corps of Engineers Construction Engineering Research Laboratories (CERL) division, under direction of the U.S. Army, conducted an architectural survey of the property...and determined that four other sites were eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. These four sites include the museum, still within the historic district boundaries, and the cemetery administrative offices, and non-commissioned officer's quarters along Westover Road.” (Smith 7)

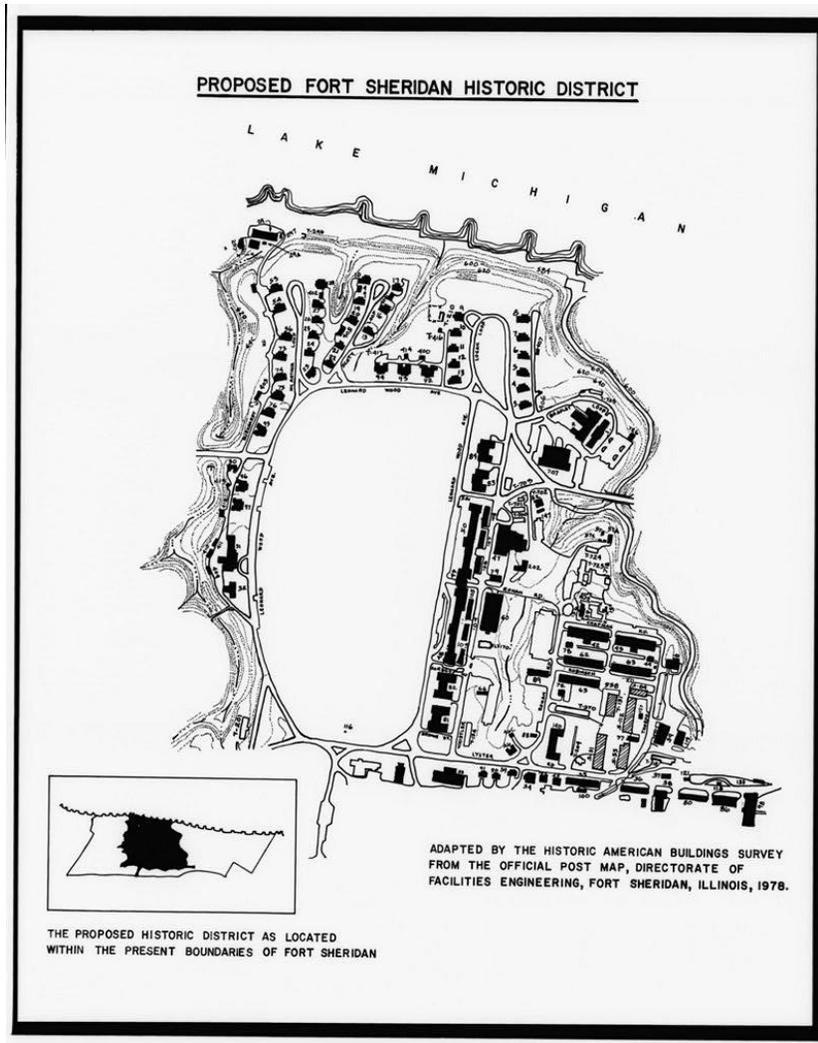


Figure 2 Fort Sheridan Historic District, HABS photo 062573.

“To a certain extent, several of the district edges are significant. These edges, made up of ravines to the north and south, and the lakefront to the east, formed historically separate areas that contained distinct land uses and, as a whole, provided the original Fort with an advantageous location, both aesthetically and with regard for ‘their value to infantry and cavalry training’. While these edges, if viewed separately, may not constitute historic landscapes as defined by the National Register guidelines, they may be considered as such when assessing the site as a whole, and as decisions are being made that adversely affect the areas in the future.” (Smith 7)

“Within the historic district there is a total of 154 structures - 66 contributing structures designed by Holabird and Roche, 27 contributing structures designed between 1896 and 1910 (designed according to plans set by the Quartermaster General), and 61 intrusive structures. The structures designed by Holabird and Roche constitute one of the few military installations to be designed by a prominent architectural firm for in 1896, just seven years after construction was begun at Fort Sheridan, the federal government decided that all military bases must be built according to plans established by the Quartermaster General. Therefore, Fort Sheridan was one of the last military bases to be designed by a private architectural firm that could provide a practical base to meet military needs as well as beautiful

structures. Periods of extensive use, primarily those of World War I and World War II, saw construction on unused parcels of land within the Fort's boundaries." (Smith 21).

"As a result of Section 106, a Programmatic Agreement (PA) was jointly written by the U.S. Army, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Illinois State Historic Preservation Office, and the Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois." The PA was written to confirm that every step will be taken to assure that the property continue to meet the Secretary of Interior's Standards during the transfer of the property from federal to state and local and finally private hands." (Smith 34).

Among four items included in the PA, the second item stated that "The Army will, to the extent feasible, prepare a marketing for the NHL district and any other NRHP eligible properties located on Fort Sheridan in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office. In order to facilitate the most comprehensive plan, additional properties and issues are to be studied by the Army as possible additions to the protected elements. Such possible additions include the African-American WAC presence on the base, possible Native American incarcerations at the site, and the further landscape designed by Ossian Cole Simonds." (Smith 33-34)

#### *Ossian Cole Simonds: Role and Vision for the Landscape Design*

"Although an exceptional design firm, Holabird and Roche decided to hire Ossian Cole Simonds to design the landscape portion of the site. Simonds was one of the founding partners of Holabird, Simonds and Roche, but left the firm in 1883 to pursue his career in landscape architecture. Simonds' gained insight into the work of other landscape masters through literature and visits to various parks and cemeteries throughout the country; but perhaps the greatest influence on his landscape designs was Frederick Law Olmstead [sic]. Simonds adopted Olmstead's [sic] technique of enhancing the natural landscape and incorporated it into his own style of design. Gradually, Simonds developed his own landscape design philosophy that could be broken down into two principles: (1) an emphasis on the use of native flora and; (2) the use of "picturesque" principles in the layout of landscapes. Both of these were successfully executed in the design for Fort Sheridan." (Smith 23-24)

"While the architects were designing buildings that were distinctive and appropriate for their military uses, Simonds was suggesting their most appropriate location, as well as the roads and paths that would connect them. Simonds' primary goal was to "carefully fit roads, houses and garden features into the landscape of wooded ravines, preserving as much as possible of the native character and downplaying the visual impact of human intrusions. Simonds' design hand is seen primarily in four sub-areas of the Fort: The parade ground, the cemetery, the three Loops (Logan, Scott and MacArthur), and the ravines and bluffs." (Smith 24)

"It was Simonds' decision to place the parade ground where it is. Level enough for drills and cavalry, yet possessing enough slope to avoid a quagmire after a hard rainfall, Simonds decided to make use of the large area between the Hutchison and Bartlett ravines as the central parade ground. Trees natural to the area were planted heavily and in an informal fashion along the east and west edges of the parade ground, but were placed in a more rigid, military fashion along the barracks at the south edge. Simonds made a point of retaining as many of the natural plant species as was possible, and of only planting trees that were familiar to the area." (Smith 25)

“Simonds' final parade ground provided enough space for drilling and review and captured the essence of the nearby prairie landscape achieving the latter result by using a technique called ‘broad view.’” He used “irregular masses of trees and shrubs to create an indefinite border that made the open space seem to extend beyond its original boundaries. Roads and walkways were routed in broad curves around the edges of these openings, creating an ever-changing perspective as one drove or walked around the space.” (Smith 25-26)

“Simonds then created ‘a curving romantic looped streetscape to wind around the officer's residential landscape near the bluffs of Lake Michigan on the east.’ The size of the three loops was determined by the amount of space between the ravines that separated them. Planted on the grassy areas in the center of each loop were trees arranged in structured formations.” (Smith 25)

“During the construction of Fort Sheridan, Simonds was also the superintendent of Graceland Cemetery, and therefore, had a very good feel for how the cemetery at the Fort should be designed. He secluded it at the very north end of the grounds where it would be separated by Jane's Ravine. A 1905 drawing (not available to the writer) shows the design as a bisected circle within a circular space, circumference water lines and curvilinear paths or roads creating a serenely secluded place. One follower writing of Simonds' cemetery landscaping, described Simonds as a man ‘who approached each project with the skill of an engineer, the soul of a poet and the touch of an artist.’ His dominant theme was seclusion, privacy and sanctuary, notably in cemetery vistas.” (Smith 26)



Figure 3 Fort Sheridan Water Tower and Parade Ground, HABS photo 062569.



*Figure 4 Fort Sheridan residential loop, HABS photo 062564*

#### *Outcomes of Preserving the Landscape*

“In 1988, when the Federal Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission included Fort Sheridan on a list of 86 domestic bases to be shuttered, the site's trio of affluent neighbors [Lake Forest, Highland Park, Highwood] saw opportunity. For over a century, the base had been the only interruption in the pearl-strand of leafy towns running 20 miles up the shoreline from Evanston to Lake Bluff. ‘This was a chance to do something really great,’ recalls David Limardi, who became Highland Park's city manager in 1993, the year Fort Sheridan closed. (He left the post in 2011.) The closing was an opportune time, he says, to recapture some of the natural openness and sense of remoteness that had been whittled away as the population of the North Shore boomed” (Rodkin).

“Open space and historic preservation were two things everybody agreed were important there,” says Steve Mandel, a member of the Lake County Board who was on the Highland Park City Council when Fort Sheridan was being decommissioned. A local redevelopment authority determined that the northern part of Fort Sheridan would remain open land under the auspices of the Lake County Forest Preserve” (Rodkin).

“Early on, ideas were floated for a college campus and a retail district. But the ‘interest in preserving the open space that Fort Sheridan represents’ prevailed, Mr. Mandel recalls.” (Rodkin).

“...the only nonresidential buildings within Fort Sheridan are a nonprofit music school and a small art gallery, both in vintage military buildings” (Rodkin).

“We had something beautiful and historic that needed to be protected; that was the main goal.” Fort Sheridan's restored historical buildings and 54-acre parade ground are picturesque and its housing secluded in a way that little on the densifying North Shore is anymore (Rodkin).

### *Present-Day Preservation*

A Chicago Tribune article dated May 17, 2017 states that the Fort Sheridan Forest Preserve will close for one year, “as officials look to implement a master plan for the preserve that includes \$1.9 million worth of improvements... The only areas not affected by the construction are the parade grounds and the historic district, which will remain open to visitors... The Fort Sheridan Cemetery will also remain open during construction...” (Abderholden). The master plan focuses on providing thoughtful recreational access to users.

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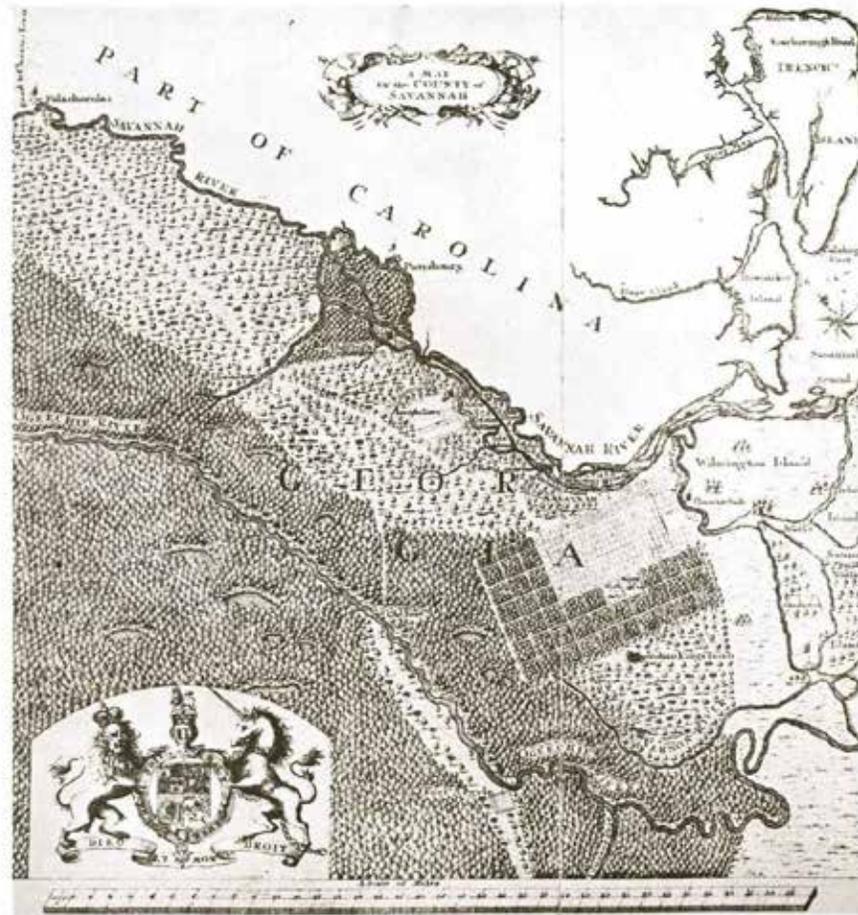
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## Ellis Square, Savannah, GA



1741-1758  
*A Map of the County of Savannah*

*Figure 5 First Drawing of Savannah, attributed to Oglethorpe. Reprinted in Garden History of Georgia.*

Of Savannah, Georgia's original 24 public squares, and one of its largest, "Ellis Square was one of the first plotted in 1733. Since 1872, it was home to the City Market where farmers sold crops directly to shoppers" (Bynum). Just as Fort Sheridan's preservation and redevelopment illustrate decision makers thoughtfully prioritizing an investment in protecting a historic landscape and its greater design intent, while also repurposing open space *over* protecting historic, but significantly compromised buildings, the revitalization of Ellis Square provides a related scenario.

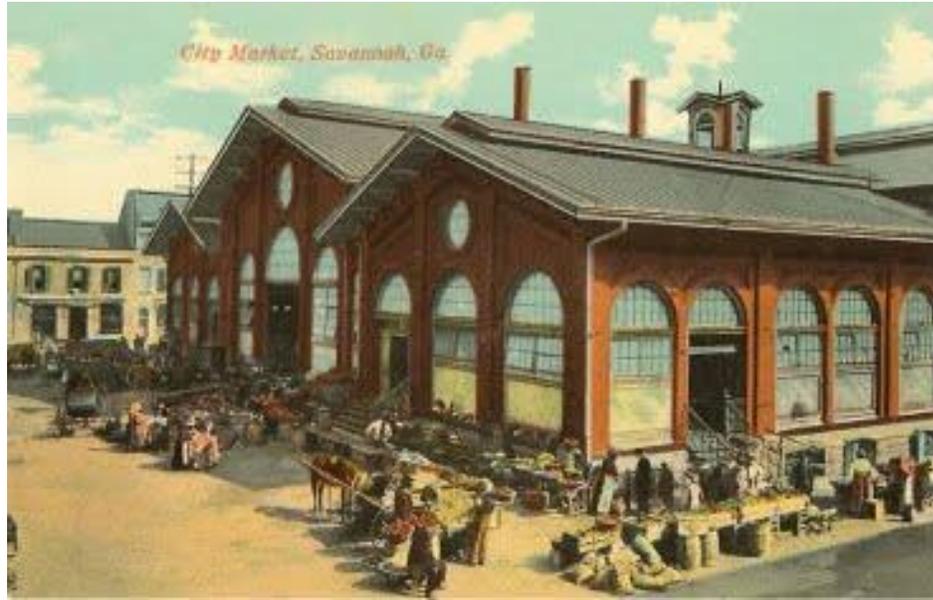
The major relevance of Ellis Square as a precedent for Dix Park and the case for demolishing what remains of the Dix Hospital follows: In Savannah, Oglethorpe's landscape plan is so significant in how it envisions the connectivity of spaces in the city and how that connectivity impacts the creation of community, that *the intent of the landscape plan* is more important than any building, historic or otherwise.

While the square was built upon only thirty years after the square was laid out, the city market *buildings respected the landscape intent* of Oglethorpe’s plan. Once the use of those buildings became less relevant to lifestyle changes in the 1950s, planners made the error of prioritizing a building on the space that had already been occupied by built structures. However, the new building did not respect the intent of the squares in Oglethorpe’s plan.

In the case of Dix Park, it is important to determine whether the restoring Dix Hospital, which lacks its historic integrity, would hinder or help the original landscape intent of Davis’ plan for the site and the present-day use of the future park. Part of the original intent was to enable patients residing at the hospital to heal from advantageous views of the city and the pastoral grove that would front the hospital. In other words, the original intent was to connect people to the landscape. In today’s context, restoring the building, which would not be occupied by tenants with the particular need patients had, would in fact hinder the connection between users and those sweeping views, whereas demolishing the compromised hospital and opening the space for park users would meet the original intent of Davis’s landscape plan.

#### *Key Points*

- Oglethorpe’s plan was first executed in Savannah in the 1730s, and the distinctive historic landscape plan guided city decisions for how Savannah developed through the nineteenth century. As the city expanded, development attempted to replicate the public square typography.
- However, what is especially interesting about Ellis Square is that contrary to Oglethorpe’s original plan, it “did not remain an open space square for very long” (Simpson). Instead, the square was quickly dedicated to the built environment: “In 1763 the first of three markets was built over Ellis square, it burnt down in the fire of 1796. The second market shared a similar fate, it burnt down in the fire of 1820. In 1822 the third and final iteration of this market was built” (Simpson).



*Figure 6 Postcard depicting the City Market as it appeared in 1822*

- The city continually invested in placing the market at the site of this public square. The success of the market at this location indicates that this use fit the contemporary needs. In addition, the market did not entirely close the square to civic use: the building, “a three part open air Italianate brick structure,” that maintained a relationship to the landscape (Simpson), became a prominent gathering space in Savannah. “This market was a vibrant part of Savannah’s social fabric, not only did local farmers and butchers sell their wares here, but the sight also held social functions, including an annual ball” (Simpson).
- During the twentieth century, the rise of the automobile pushed development in a different direction: “several [three in all] of Savannah’s historic squares were paved over for highway access” and parking (CNU). “Liberty and Elbert squares were bisected by a major street to allow traffic to pass unimpeded – and remain that way today” (Bynum). In 1954, the city approved a plan to pave over Ellis square and the market to build a parking garage. “For two years a divided city debated the market’s fate. Downtown business owners wanted to torn down so they could have more parking, preservationists wanted to see the site preserved for history” (Simpson).
- While siting a parking lot at this location served a utilitarian purpose, meeting the need for desired downtown parking, it effectively ended the opportunity for the space to function as a gathering space, something it had accomplished in the past.
- More recently, the city returned to its original landscape plan as a guide for development decisions. Among them, in 2006, the city demolished the garage located on Ellis Square and made plans to reclaim the landscape as a public square with the intent of restoring the site’s original community-oriented function, adapting it programmatically for contemporary needs. The project was completed in 2010.

- While the precedent for a city market existed at the site, and a long-time precedent of a built structure over Ellis Square, in this scenario, the 1950s-era utilitarian city investment of a parking garage was demolished in favor of a new plan that prioritized returning the built-upon but historic space to an open public square that would not be restored to its original plan but that *would* respect the original intent Oglethorpe’s landscape plan, while also repurposing the square programmatically to meet contemporary civic needs: “In studying Ellis Square’s historic conditions, planners Sottile & Sottile considered the role of the city’s old public market—which had been torn down to build the twentieth-century parking facility. The market served both as a destination and permeable connection between adjacent uses and neighborhoods. In contrast, the garage was a utilitarian destination, both impermeable and unpleasant for those seeking to move across the ward.” (CNU)
- The reasoning behind the decision is clearly borne of the significance of Savannah’s original landscape plan: “Oglethorpe’s plan of squares and streets for Savannah is ‘so exalted that it remains as one of the finest diagrams for city organization and growth in existence,’ claimed the Philadelphia planner and author Edmund Bacon. The American Society of Civil Engineers has designated Oglethorpe’s plan a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark, and 1994 the Savannah city plan was nominated by the Federal Interagency Panel the UNESCO World Heritage List. ... The Squares are the heart of the plan.” (Erwin)

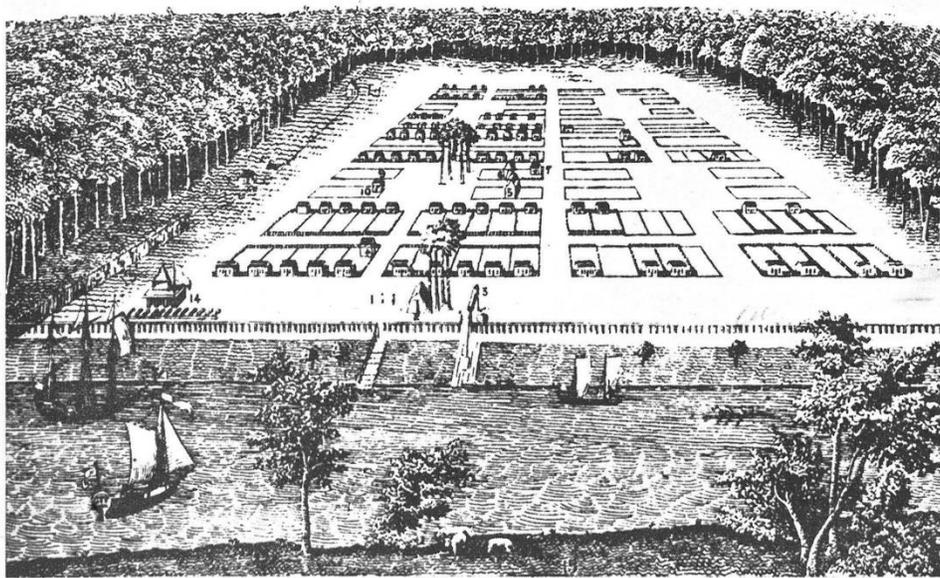
### *Oglethorpe’s Landscape Plan*

“On July 7, 1733, Oglethorpe had a plan and plot drawn of Savannah, and land allotments were made to the colonists. Each male inhabitant of full age participating in the allotments became possessed of a town lot sixty feet in front, ninety feet in depth, a garden lot embracing five acres...” (Rainwater 7).

With sixty by ninety-foot lots, “...garden development had to conform to their narrow limits” (Rainwater 21). “When an important residence occupied one of the four trust lots facing each public square, the mansion was set back from the street; a strip of formal planting or a small formal garden enclosed by a wrought or cast iron fence or a balustraded wall, occupied this space” (Rainwater 7).

“The area of the original Savannah plan was included in a [National Historic Landmark](#) District designation in 1966. This district received further protection in 1973 when a Historic Review Board was established. The appointed members of the board see that the buildings surrounding the squares are visually compatible and appropriate in scale, and thus they define the plan.

As a synthesis of planning ideals that respond to social, military, environmental, and philosophical needs, the Savannah plan stands out among American colonial town plans. The plan continues to adapt favorably to contemporary needs by providing a model for new urban developments.” (Rieter)



A VIEW OF SAVANNAH AS IT STOOD THE 29<sup>th</sup> OF MARCH 1734.

A Drawing by Peter Gordon

By permission of the Wymberley Jones DeRenne Georgia Library

The four Trust Lots facing each square were later occupied by public buildings or by important residences.

Figure 7 Drawing of Savannah in 1734, reprinted in Garden History of Georgia. Ellis Square is the square shown at the bottom right of the grid.

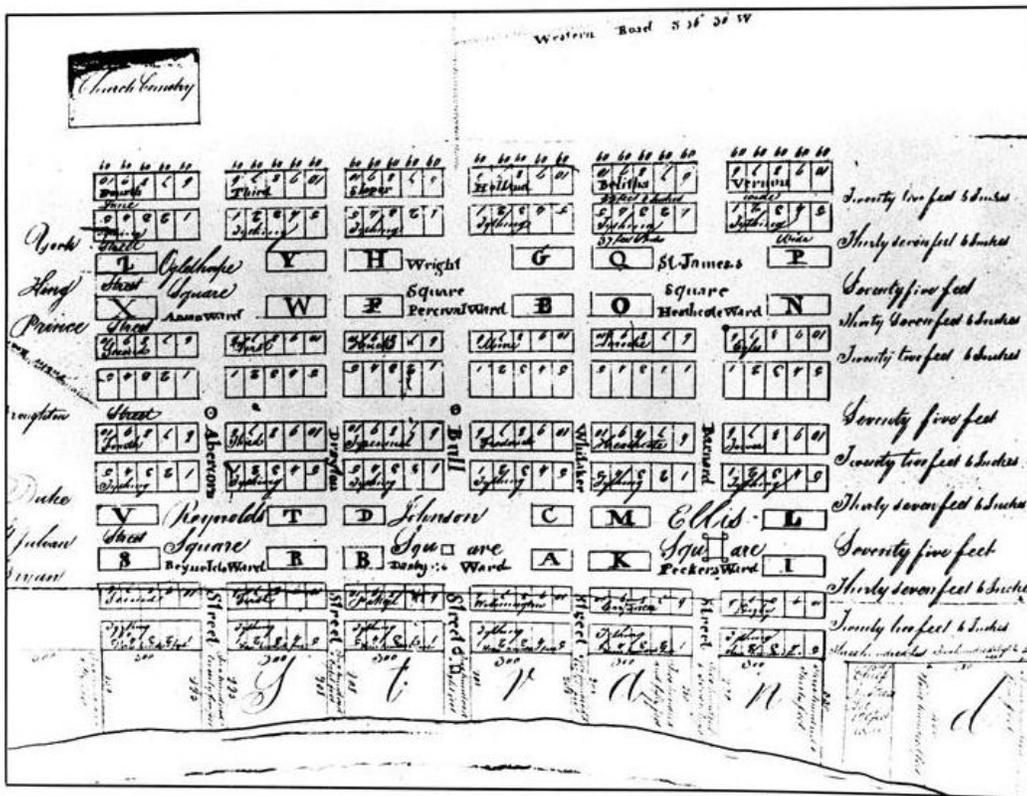


Figure 8 Savannah City Plan (Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia Libraries)

### *Influence of the Oglethorpe Plan on Savannah's Nineteenth-Century Development Patterns*

“Until the mid-nineteenth century, the city plan was regularly expanded by the addition of wards into the common until a total of twenty-eight wards had been created. According to urban historian John Reys, ‘Savannah . . . used the power gained through municipal ownership of the common to shape growth in the public interest. The decisions to do so . . . produced America's most unusual city plan.’ All but four of these repeated wards had the characteristic squares.

With the reclamation of Ellis Square in 2010, twenty-two squares remain, each approximately one acre in size. A park system also runs along the Savannah River on top of the bluff; Forsyth Park culminates the plan on the south while the intervening streets and avenues have center or side tree lawns. The result is an urban forest of unsurpassed beauty and utility. Savannah's squares form a public outdoor extension of the restricted living space of the narrow urban lots. Many of the squares are further adorned by monuments commemorating various aspects of the city's history.” (Reiter)

“By 1954, a significant number of important, 18th and early 19th century buildings had been torn down and replaced with modern, commercial buildings that was hoped to bring shoppers back downtown. U.S. Congress launched its urban redevelopment program, also known as urban renewal that same year which encouraged cities to ‘be cleansed of their ugly past and reclothed in the latest modern attire.’ In 1954, the Savannah city government approved the demolition of the Old City Market, built in 1870 on Ellis Square to serve as the central marketplace for Savannah. Ellis Square was one of the original six squares laid out by Oglethorpe and held four public markets between 1733 and 1954. According to the City of Savannah, the Ellis Square Market sets...an all-time record for total income in 1940, thanks to the automobile for transporting purchased goods. But ironically, the lack of parking spaces sparked plans to raze the historic building.” (Credle 1)

### *Twentieth-Century Ellis Square Revitalization*

The parking garage at Ellis Square was demolished in 2006, along with “other surrounding garages [that] were removed and replaced with an underground facility that allowed a new park to be built, spurring private development on adjacent empty parcels.” CNU

“After extensive public input, a plan was developed to create an urban plaza that could accommodate a variety of uses. The result is a dynamic public space that includes a visitor center, restrooms, an interactive fountain, a variety of seating options, and space for music and other performances.” (“Ellis Square”)

“The project provided the basis for a long-term revival of the historic Decker Ward neighborhood” (CNU). Decker Ward was the neighborhood adjacent to Ellis Square, and it was laid out in his plan along with the square.

“Rather than dictate a large-scale repurposing through a single developer, the plan supports a vital private realm through the generous and thoughtful planning of the public square. Within four years, the \$34 million public investment in redeveloping Ellis Square attracted 50 new private homes, 35,00 square feet of retail space, 80,000 square feet of office space, and 150 new hotel rooms.” (CNU)

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## **Fort Sam Houston**

### **Presidio**



**suzanne turner ASSOCIATES**  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

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DOROTHEA DIX HOSPITAL CAMPUS AND ITS HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES:  
A FRAMEWORK FOR DIX PARK DECISION MAKING  
March 19, 2018

*I. Introduction*

*Preservation as a Civic Responsibility*

As stewards of the landscape that will become Dix Park, the City of Raleigh and the various partners who are shepherding the project have the responsibility of incorporating the landscape's past into plans for its future. The methods of *preservation* ensure that the landscape will be inventoried and assessed, and that the resultant findings will be factored into planning and design decisions.

Although specific methodologies prescribe the way that buildings, landscape elements, and natural systems are inventoried and analyzed, the hallmarks of the process for both architecture and landscape are the determination of *significance* and *integrity*. Significance requires that, based upon rigorous research and documentation, an evaluation of relative importance will be made about the landscape. This statement of significance must have *context*, and that context can be considered from a local, regional, and/or national perspective.

*Definitions: Significance and Integrity*

The simple *Oxford English Dictionary* definitions of "significance" follow: 1. "The quality of being worthy of attention; importance;" and 2. "the meaning to be found in words or events;" these definitions are easily applicable to landscapes. Still more specific to cultural landscapes, the National Park Service lists several ways that a place can be significant:

1. Association with events, activities, patterns

2. Association with important persons
3. Distinctive physical characteristics of design, construction, or form
4. Potential to yield important information<sup>1</sup>, specifically archaeological resources.

If the exploration of contexts surrounding a cultural landscape finds it to be significant enough to be considered for preservation, the second criteria to determine a preservation approach is *integrity*. Aspects of integrity include original location, character of the setting, design (form, plan, space, structure, style), materials, workmanship, feeling (intangible potential to evoke sense of past period in time), and association (direct link between property and the reason for significance). Again, the *Oxford English Dictionary* definitions for “integrity” provide clear language for how we might understand integrity as it applies to cultural landscapes: 1. “the quality of being honest...” and 2. “the state of being whole and undivided.”

## *II. Dorothea Dix Hospital Campus: Exploring Context, Significance, and Integrity*

### *The Contextual Questions*

In the case of the future Dix Park and former hospital campus, a critical question addressing context is this: Just how important is the landscape of the former Dix Hospital campus, when evaluated against other landscapes in Raleigh, in its geographic and cultural region where the Piedmont meets the coastal plain, in the Southeastern US, and nationally? Another contextual question that can provide insight as to the site’s relative significance is thematic; that is: How does the site compare to other historic campuses of residential institutional settings — other hospitals established as a result of Dorothea Dix’s advocacy, other historic mental institution campuses, and other institutional campuses where people with specific disabilities are housed for long-term treatment?

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<sup>1</sup> [www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb16a/nrb16a\\_II.htm](http://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb16a/nrb16a_II.htm)

## *Dix Hospital Campus' Significance*

Though careful and in-depth research is necessary, *preliminary* research of the Dix Hospital landscape suggests that the site meets all four of the above-listed pathways to significance:

1. Association with events, activities, patterns: The site is associated with a multi-layered series of events and cultural patterns that represent important moments or movements in American history, including occupation by Indigenous Americans, antebellum agriculture with its associated enslaved labor force, possible engagement during the Civil War, and some of the earliest efforts to house and treat the mentally ill of the state with a progressive approach characterized by respect and dignity.
2. Association with important persons: The landscape is associated with Dorothea Dix, a nationally famous woman pioneer in the field of healthcare for the mentally ill. The physical evidence of this association is mostly eroded, because of the destruction of the main building and its dramatic vistas, and later brutal alterations to the landscape with the addition of buildings that are unrelated to the scale and character of the original campus.

The association that is still evident in the landscape is with the architect A. J. Davis, designer of the main building in 1856. We do not have documentation that Davis was instrumental in the shaping of the overall site plan for the hospital, but given its appearance, it is in lock-step with what either Davis or another follower of the picturesque aesthetic would have done—that is, to follow the mandates of the site's natural topography and create a sequence that unfolds a series of varying compositions while climbing to the top of Dix Hill and the destination of the hospital. This sympathy to the site's landscape character survives intact on much of the site, particularly the portion that serves as foreground to the main hospital complex; the later construction of the railroad trestle eviscerated the flow of the natural topography creating a long, straight line.

3. Distinctive physical characteristics of design, construction, or form: As suggested above, the landscape is a strong exemplar of a site plan based upon the principles of the American picturesque. This movement in design was a translation of the earlier English pastoral approach introduced by designers such as Capability Brown, Humphrey Repton, William Kent, and others. The American version of the style became widely embraced, particularly in the Northeast through the publication of A. J. Downing's *Treatise* (1841), which went through multiple editions for decades after its publication and Downing's untimely accidental death in 1852. The last printing was in 1921, attesting to the pervasiveness of the book's popularity. Beginning the most significant collaboration of his career, Davis joined Downing in 1839, designing and drawing illustrations for Downing's books as well as his popular journal *The Horticulturist*. "Together they popularized the ideas and styles of the picturesque."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> [www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/davs/hd\\_davs.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/davs/hd_davs.htm)

4. Potential to yield important information through archaeology: Perhaps the least appreciated aspect of this landscape’s significance is its ability to reveal information about the site and the larger Raleigh community’s cultural history. For a parcel with such probable layers of use and occupation, there has been no archaeological investigation. Not only does the landscape hold the known graves of patients of the hospital, but there remains the possibility of other burial sites from previous occupations. It is only recently that history and historical archaeology have recognized the value of places where marginalized parts of the population lived, worked, and died — and in effect shaped the landscape.

The most significant aspect of the Dix Hospital site’s history is its origin as a result of the lobbying, lectures, and work of reformer Dorothea Dix. She used her life experience of domestic travel to discover the underbelly of the young nation’s attitude toward the mentally ill, and from travel abroad, she was exposed to progressive ways to care for this sector of the population. The hallmark of her approach was treating the patients with dignity and respect.

Because North Carolina was experiencing a period of progressive leadership, Dorothea Dix successfully lobbied the legislature to fund the state mental hospital. In addition to her success in getting the hospital funded, Dix’s vision for the dignified treatment of patients — rooted in practices that relied heavily on the designed natural environment — directly impacted what the campus grounds would become.

Architect A. J. Davis was selected to design the facility. Davis is a significant figure in American design history in his own right, but he was introduced to the American design and horticulture community through the numerous illustrations that he provided for Downing’s popular periodical, *The Horticulturist* (July 1846 – July 1852), and most importantly his illustrations for Downing’s 1841 “A treatise on the theory and practice of landscape gardening, adapted to North America; with a view to the improvement of country residences.” This volume was responsible for introducing the picturesque landscape design approach to the middle-class American public, many of whom were beginning to live in suburban enclaves outside industrial cities where the amenities of rural life could still be created through landscape design.

What Davis produced was a composition of architecture and landscape that took full advantage of the expansive site's situation and natural elements by placing the buildings on the brow of Dix Hill overlooking the tiny capital city of Raleigh. Davis' plan embodied the principles promulgated by Dr. Thomas S. Kirkbride and Dix, giving each dormitory room a view to the landscape and access to fresh air and adequate sunlight. Gardens were an integral part of the architectural scheme, with two alternatives drawn by Davis. The larger landscape, that served both as the foreground to the view of Dix from below and as the setting for approach on horseback and carriage, illustrated the tenets of the American picturesque — the adaptation of English romanticism to the rugged American landscape.

The stamp of Davis' design for the main building and the planning decisions that organized the rest of the surrounding landscape created a place where the landscape compliments the architecture. There are more formal plantings immediately extending from the building, as shown in Davis' sketch of the parterre. Beyond the reach of the geometry of the architecture, the landscape takes on the appearance of the rural countryside, expressed by clumps of trees and shrubs that permeate and frame undulating open spaces. Circulation is sinuous and somewhat meandering as illustrated in Downing's treatise. The composition creates a kinetic experience in which the view of the building unfolds gradually and in different views as one climbs the hill to the hospital's entrance.

Documentation has not yet been found to describe who was responsible for conceiving the hospital's landscape design. Perhaps it was Davis himself, for the building and its foreground approach sequence seem to be deliberate. The fact that authorship of this landscape is not known has no bearing on its significance. It had a designer; we just don't know who it was. And we don't know when the various components were installed. But each of these elements — the accentuation of the topographic undulation by placement of tree groves, the delineation of open spaces in a range of sizes, the overall road system lined with avenues of hardwood tree allées — represent intentional and thoughtful design moves.

### *Dix Hospital Campus' Integrity*

Unlike Davis' building, this landscape of the picturesque survives largely intact as far as the experience of the viewer and visitor is concerned. Because of the quality of this designed landscape and the fact that it survives intact enough to convey its design intent, it warrants preservation. It establishes an overriding character for the Dix site that has managed to persist despite its erosion at certain parts by the addition of later and less significant buildings that sit squarely within the overarching landscape composition.

Unlike Davis' building, the surrounding and framing landscape possesses the qualities of integrity, including location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Despite the loss of trees and planted areas over time, resulting from attrition, poor maintenance, and storms, the structural quality and character of this landscape persists and is legible.

### *III. Conclusion*

#### *Preservation Recommendations*

The Dix landscape, with its several layers of history, must be recognized as the principal surviving aspect of the site. The neglect of the Dix cultural landscape demands archaeological investigation. A plan for archaeology needs to be conceived based on archival documentation, the identification of sites with minimal disturbance from modern intrusion, and the places where adjacency to natural features would suggest early human occupancy and industry.

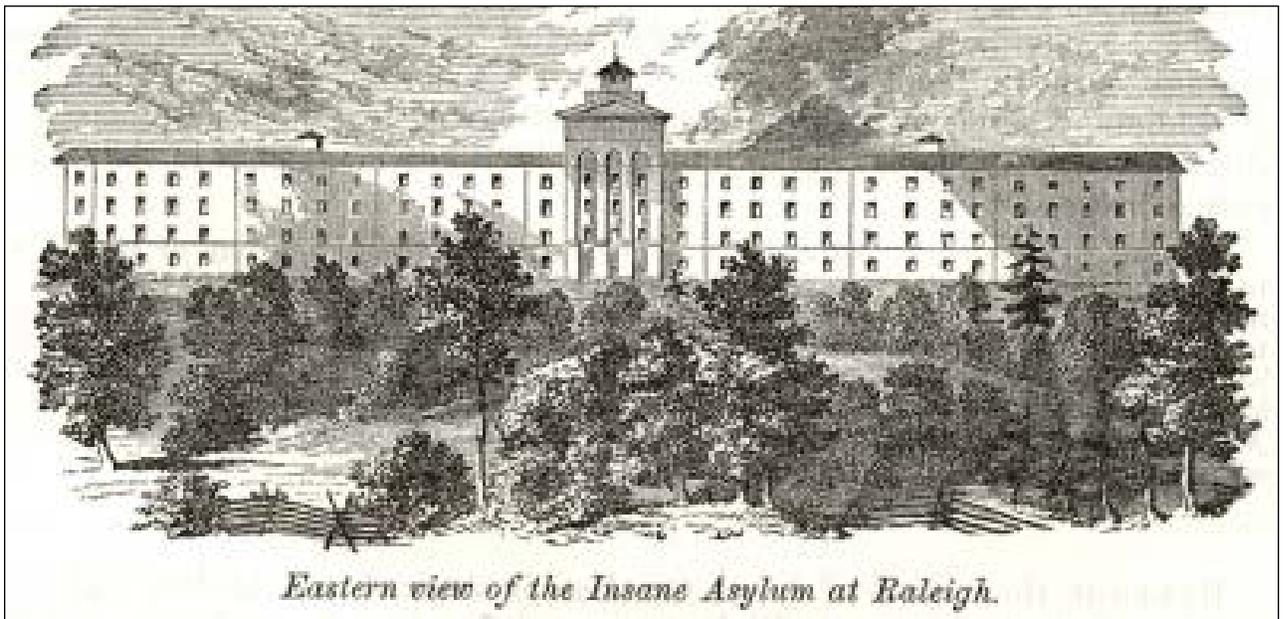
The site needs to be interpreted, preserved, managed with best practices, and reinforced with a program of plant documentation and replacement in kind. The preservation of this picturesque landscape, representative of the late antebellum and postbellum period of American landscape history, is far more significant than any individual architectural survivors. And the placement of buildings over time without understanding and respect for this overall picturesque character, detracts from the pure expression of the most significant historic landscape quality.

# The cultural landscape of Dix

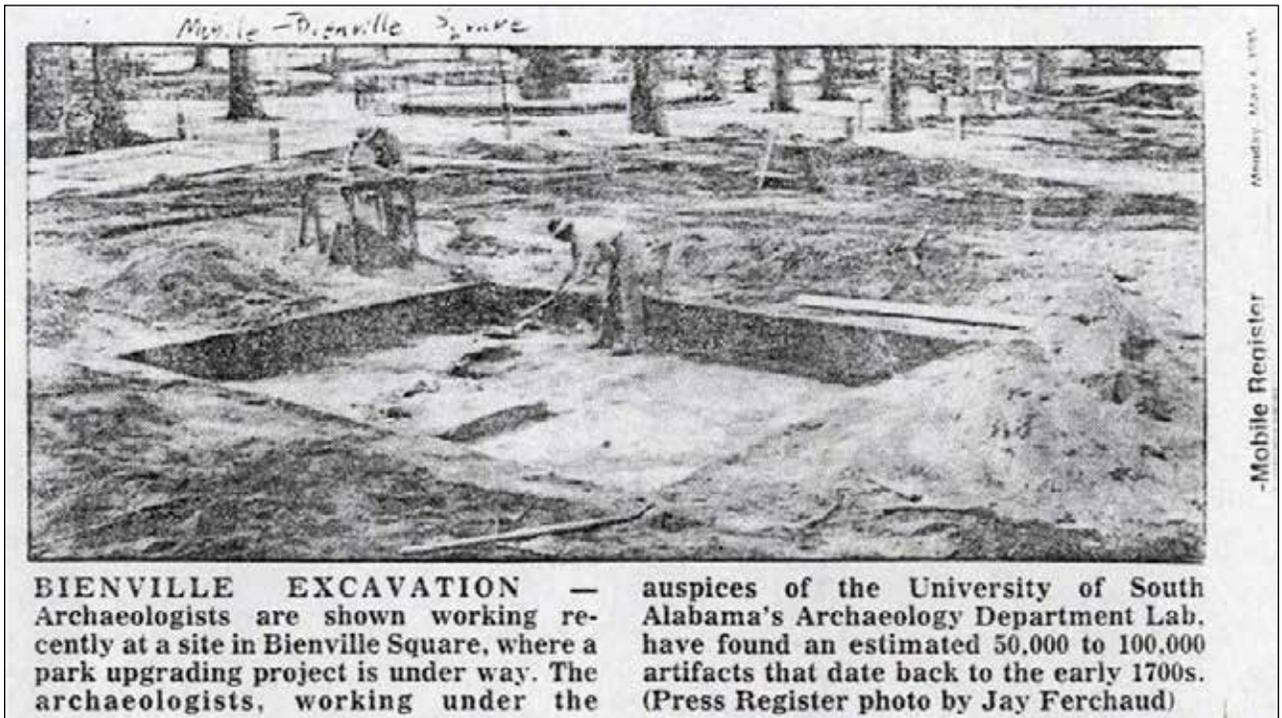
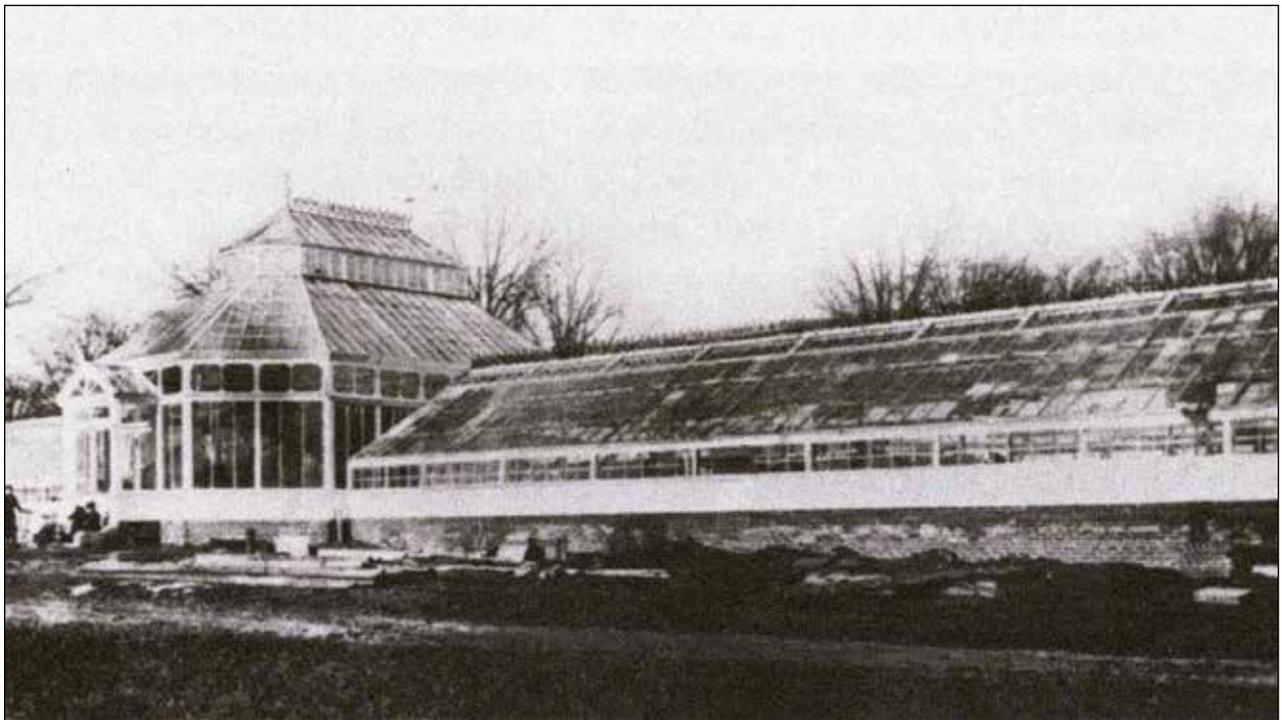






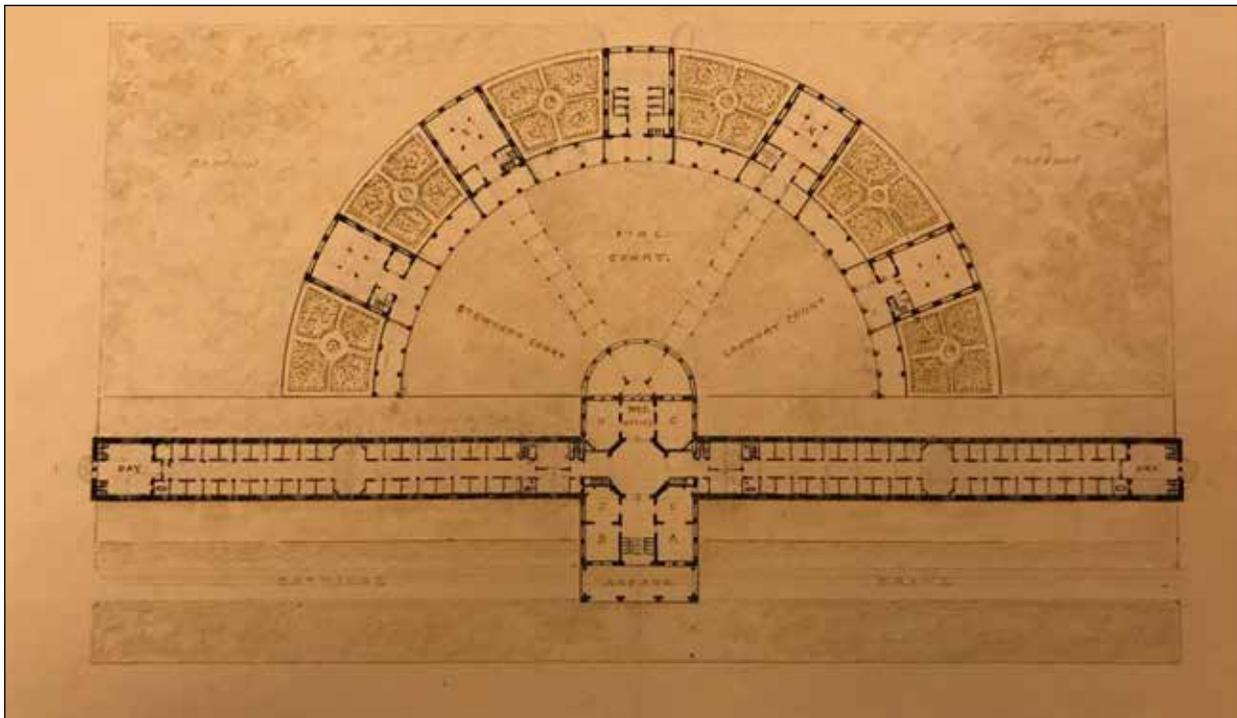




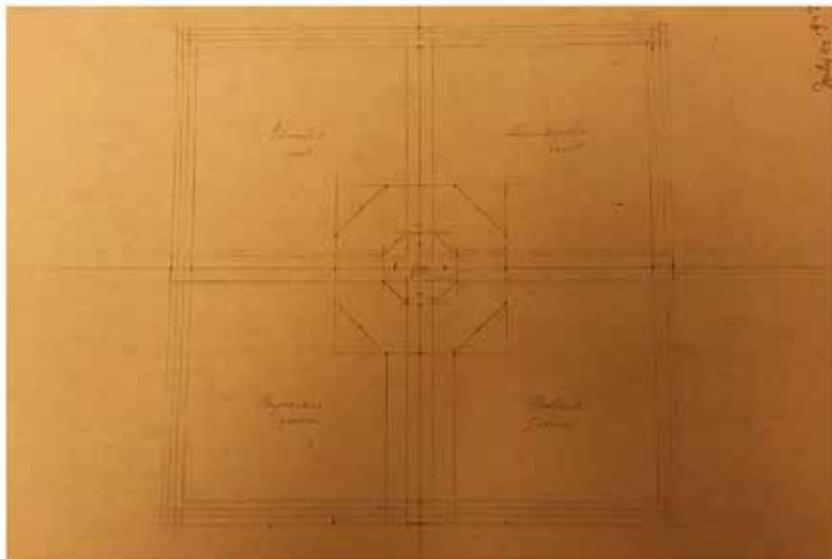








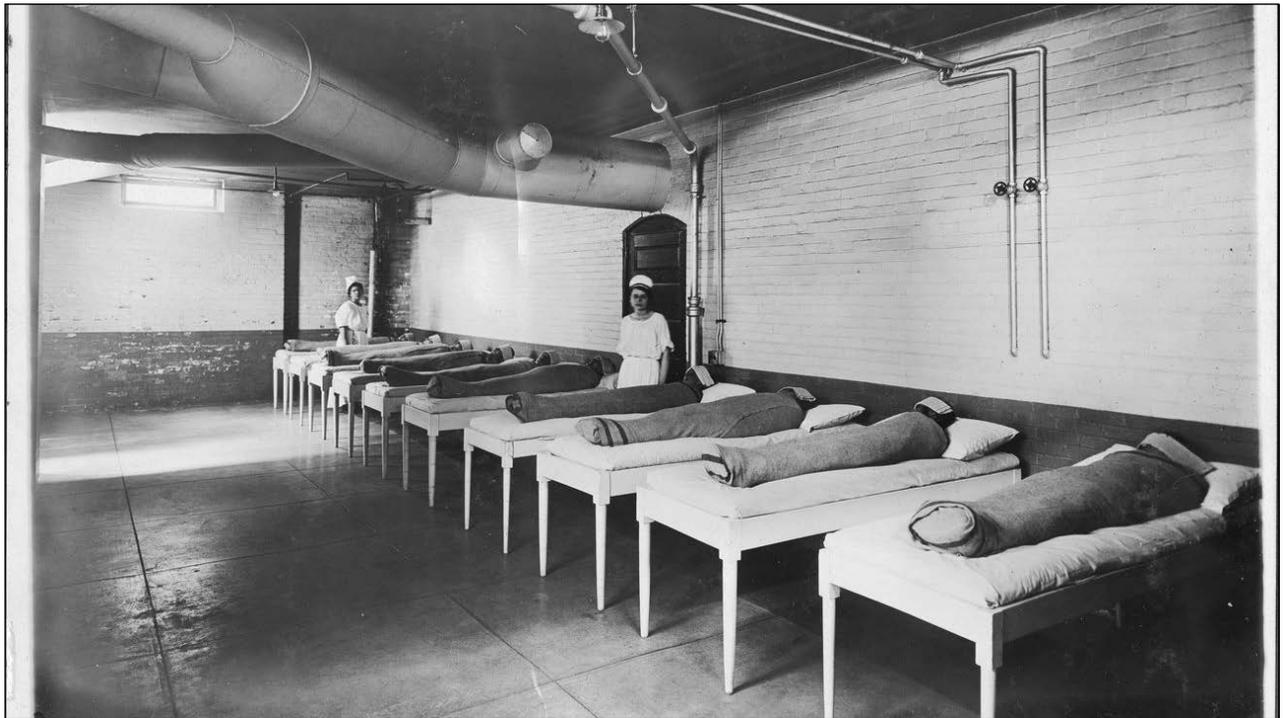
North Carolina Hospital for the Insane  
Sketch found on the back of drawing on Page 1

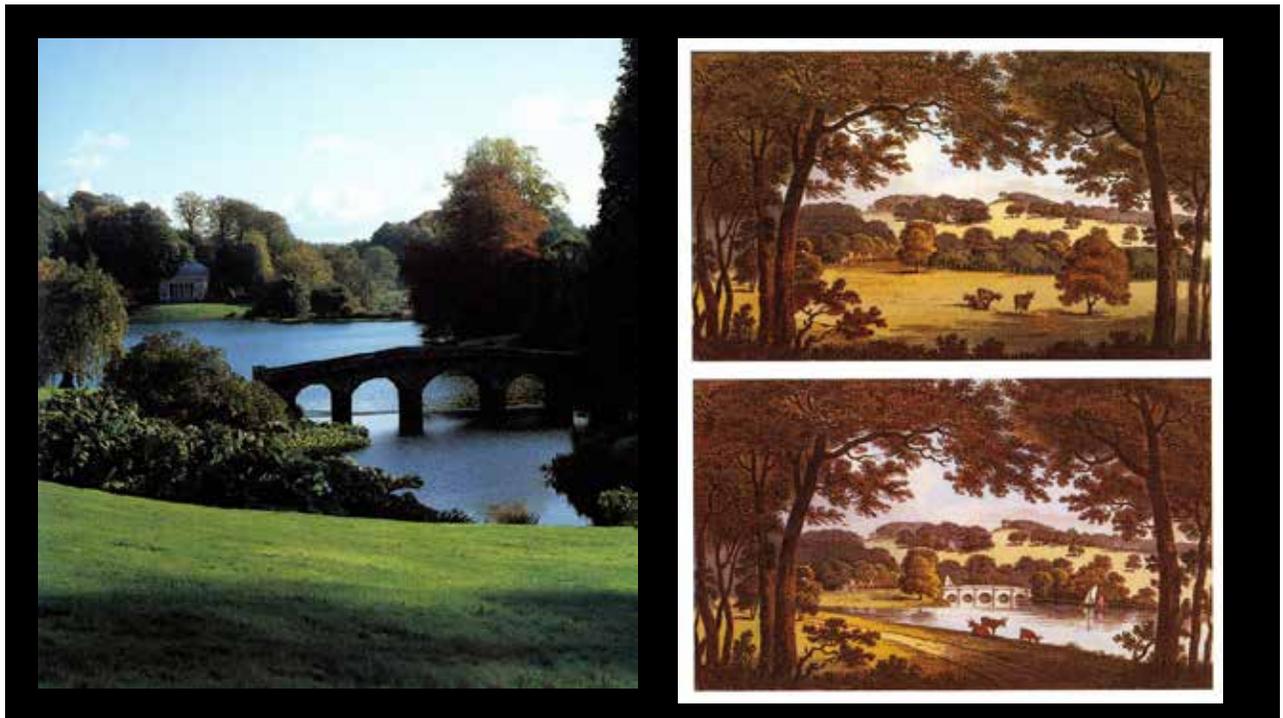
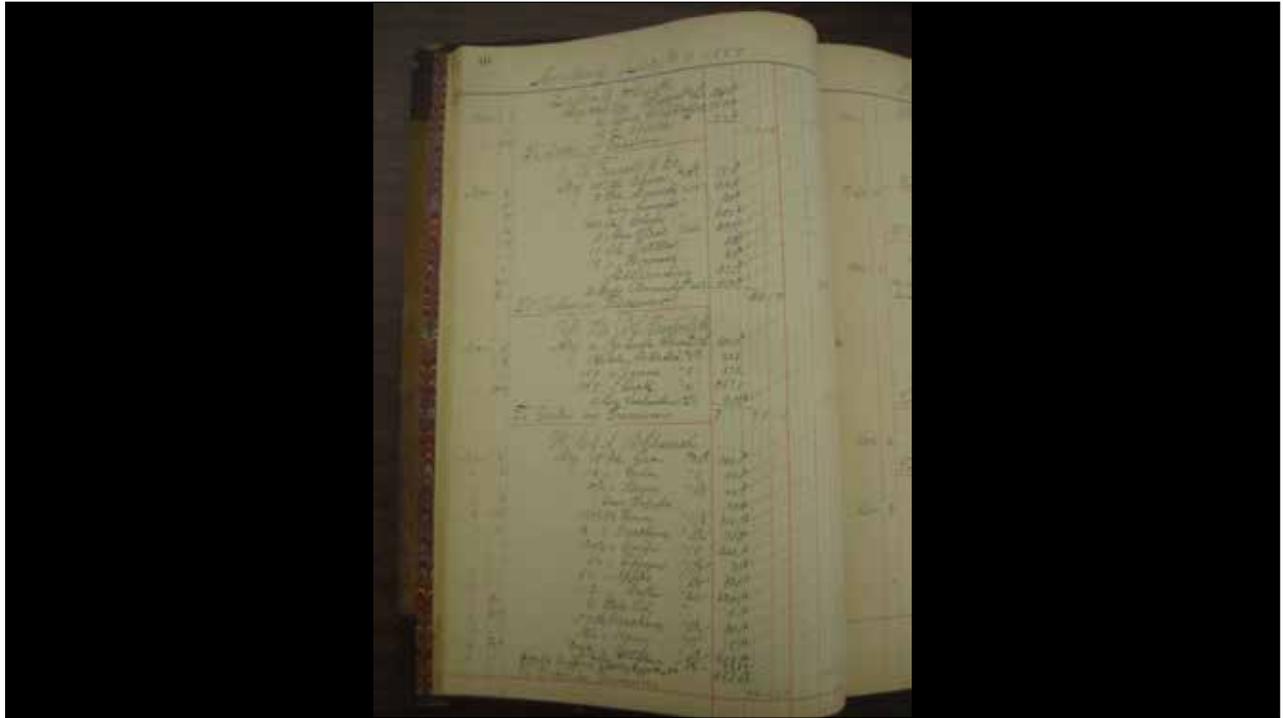


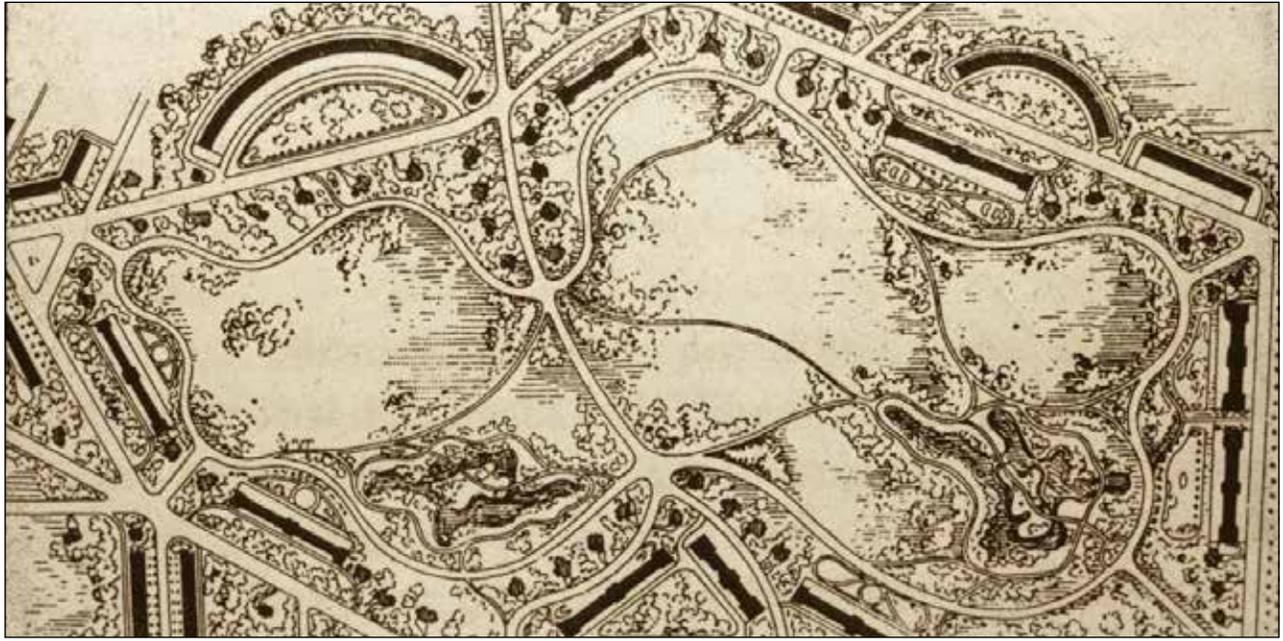
Alexander Jackson Davis Architectural Drawing Collection (1827-1884)  
Accessed: 20 September 2017. New York Historical Society Museum & Library













## Umstead Drive Rehabilitation

A. J. Davis and A. J. Downing



A.J. Downing, View from the breakfast room window at Wodeneth, looking West. Catera: Historic Gardens and Landscape Archive, 1876.

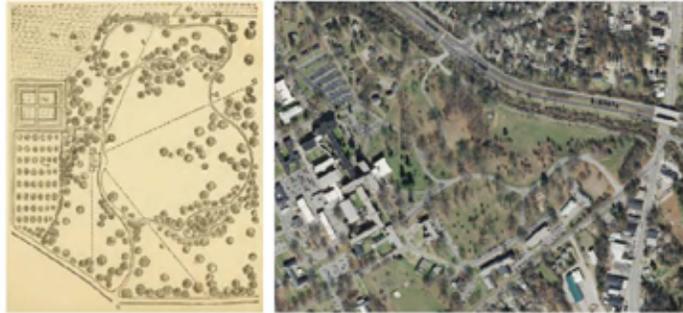


A.J. Davis, Rear elevation for Herrick Villas in Tarrytown, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1835-39.

AJ Davis and AJ Downing began a partnership in 1839. Downing introduced the American public to the picturesque movement in his first book, *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening* (1841), using many of Davis's illustrations. Note a similarity in composition and scale between Downing and Davis in the illustrations above.

# Umstead Drive Rehabilitation

AJ Davis + North Carolina Hospital for the Insane



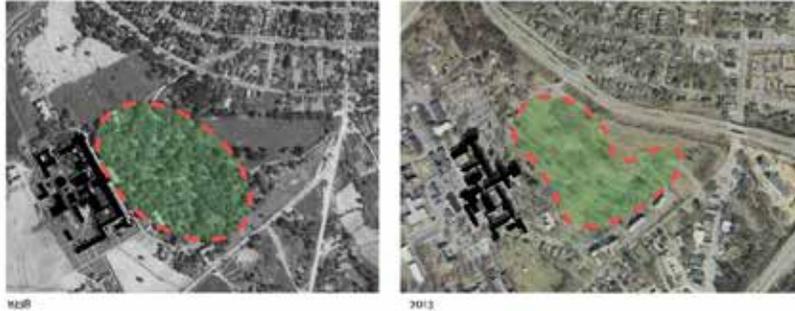
Plan of a country house and its landscape from Downing's *Treatise on...Landscape Gardening*, left; aerial of Dix site right. Note similar quality of roadway design and tree canopy to Downing's prototype from 1841 publication.

It is unclear if AJ Davis designed part or all of the hospital grounds. Principles of Downing's *Treatise* appear in other Davis projects and may be suggested in the layout of the main approach along Umstead Drive to the hospital.



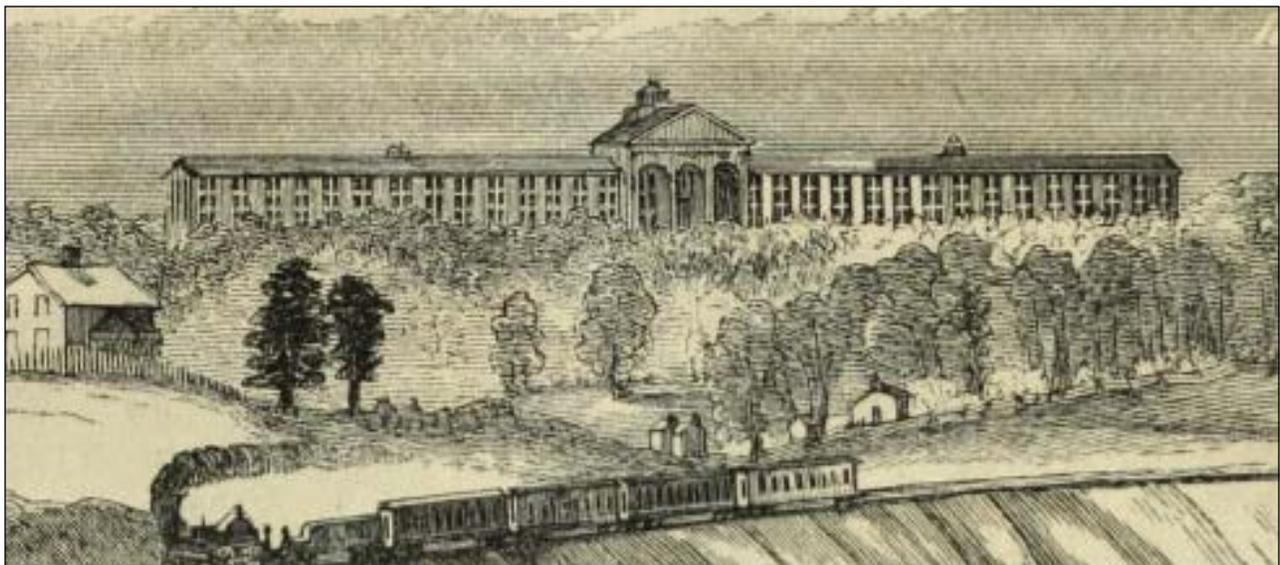
# Umstead Drive Rehabilitation

## The Grove



According to the National Register of Historic Places application...  
“The cultivation of the ‘Grove’ in front of the hospital through the period of significance indicates not only aesthetic sensitivity but also the belief that tranquility of nature was an important component in the healing process.”

Today, the Grove is used as a neighborhood park by Boylan Heights residents and is a favorite sledding hill.



Grove, 1857









Central Park, 1870s









## MEMO

**To:** Adrienne Heflich, MVVA  
**From:** Suzanne Turner, STA  
**Date:** 5/2/2018  
**Pages:** 5  
**Subject:** Preservation, Funding, and Management Mechanisms for Cultural Landscapes

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The MVVA team posed the question: What funding and management mechanisms have been employed for cultural landscapes?

To provide guidance, STA is sharing 14 links to resources that may be useful. Most of these documents are National Park Service documents, with a few exceptions. One document is published by The Trust for Public Land. One is a publication of The National Trust for Historic Preservation. One addresses grant opportunities through the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training. Finally, one is published by Resources for the Future, an independent, nonpartisan think tank.

The documents are grouped according to how they address issues concerning (1), overall protection of cultural landscapes (including a link to case studies), (2) strategies for addressing buildings, including archeology by way of stabilization and structural engineering and sustainability approaches, (3) funding mechanisms, and (4) management strategies.

Documents linked in this Memo are also provided to MVVA as PDF documents, with the exception of link 12, which links to a website that should be reviewed in full.

### Protecting Cultural Landscapes

1. “Protecting Cultural Landscapes: Planning, Treatment and Management of Historic Landscapes”:  
[www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/36-cultural-landscapes.htm](http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/36-cultural-landscapes.htm)

This NPS Preservation Brief 36, written by Charles A. Birnbaum in September 1994 as part of its Technical Preservation Services, provides a clear and comprehensive overview of what STA

considers best practices for documenting and planning for cultural landscapes. It includes the following sections:

1. Introductory Definitions for cultural and historic landscapes
2. Developing a Strategy and Seeking Assistance for Landscape Preservation
3. Preservation Planning for Cultural Landscapes, including an explanation of the major components of a Cultural Landscape Report
4. Developing a Historic Preservation Approach and Treatment Plan
  - a. Defines the four basic treatments for cultural landscapes
  - b. Explains the process of landscape interpretation, which complements treatment
5. Developing a Preservation Maintenance Plan and Implementation Strategy
6. Recording Treatment Work and Future Research Recommendations
7. Summary of References

In the case of Dix Park, STA recommends that a landscape architecture firm experienced in creating Cultural Landscape Reports (CLRs) coordinate the effort, working with a local landscape historian who will be engaged to follow the NPS CLR guidelines in researching the landscape history over time. The local historian, will, ideally, spend substantial time visiting local and state archives to obtain as much historic documentation as is available, as well as consult with local archaeologists and experts in areas related to slavery, historic agricultural practices, and other themes relevant to the site. We consider the CLR a high priority and an early component in providing for treatment and management practices. CLRs typically take a year, or up to two years, to complete, when led by an experienced professional. Funding for CLRs is often raised by park conservancies or is provided by a combination of public and private funds. Grants may also fund CLRs.

2. “How to Preserve Cultural Landscapes”: [www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/cultural-landscapes.htm](http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/cultural-landscapes.htm)

This document includes “In-depth case studies that examine the planning and execution of treatments to preserve historic landscapes.” All projects included “successfully apply the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties.”

3. Within this document, STA especially recommends reviewing the case study for Reynolda Gardens in Winston-Salem, NC: [www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/currents/reynolda/intro.htm](http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/currents/reynolda/intro.htm).

This extensive garden rehabilitation plan “evaluates the original design intent within the context of the landscape’s contemporary use and stewardship.” This case study includes detailed information on the project funding and long-term management of the site.

## Archaeology, Stabilization and Structural Engineering, and Sustainability

STA recommends investigating linking future park preservation investments to archaeology, both on the landscape, and in considering the buildings, by way of focusing on stabilization and structural engineering. Sustainability is another strategy to investigate for strategies related to obtaining funding as well as for the general management and wellbeing of the park.

In planning for the existing buildings at Dix Park and whether they should be rehabilitated fully, or whether to adaptively reuse building facades or other building remains, funding for preservation that focuses on building stabilization and structural engineering can be considered. To better weigh these two approaches (rehabilitation versus stabilization/structural engineering), the following document is recommended:

4. Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:  
[www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/stand.htm](http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/stand.htm)

Of interest in this document is the statement that, "The Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility." The document elaborates, among many factors related to economic and technical feasibility, that, "Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities, and where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence."

Among the items to consider, this document also addresses archeology: "Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken."

5. Overview of the Federal Archeology Program: [www.nps.gov/archeology/sites/FEDARCH.HTM](http://www.nps.gov/archeology/sites/FEDARCH.HTM)

This link contains additional links to articles, technical assistance, and additional links and may provide insight into how the City of Raleigh and MVVA can explore Dix Park's archaeological heritage as part of the park plans.

6. "Ruin Stabilization in the Southwestern United States" is a short NPS book last updated in April 2007: [www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online\\_books/archeology/10/chap1.htm](http://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/archeology/10/chap1.htm)

The book provides technical information on the process of stabilization, showing examples of NPS buildings that have been stabilized but not fully restored. The book notes that "The ruins stabilization program of the National Park Service is concerned with the preservation of historic and prehistoric architectural remains."

The book delineates both “stabilization” and “ruins stabilization” from building preservation, restoration, and reconstruction, when dealing with sites where “construction and maintenance personnel of local, State and Federal agencies charged with the care of land on which there are historic structures worthy of preservation in an “as is” condition” and it seeks to respond to “the urgent need for getting this information from Federal into State and regional channels where it may serve a useful purpose for all who attempt to preserve historic structures.”

7. “Cultural Landscapes: Sustainability”:

[www.nps.gov/subjects/culturallandscapes/sustainability.htm](http://www.nps.gov/subjects/culturallandscapes/sustainability.htm)

This document includes links to NPS case studies that “model sustainable maintenance practices or sustainable treatment design in cultural landscapes.” It also includes a link to an article that explores integrating resilient systems into cultural landscape management practices, noting five components: diversity, redundancy, network connectivity, modularity, adaptability, and resiliency in action.

#### Funding Mechanisms

8. The National Trust for Historic Preservation published a document entitled “Landscape Preservation Today: From the Back Room to the Ballroom” in 2015:

[forum.savingplaces.org/viewdocument/landscape-preservation-today-from](http://forum.savingplaces.org/viewdocument/landscape-preservation-today-from)

This document includes sections on funds and grants—noting that the National Endowment for the Arts’ Design Arts Program is “the most generous—and most competitive—grant funding source in the field”—and legislative activity.

9. Resources for the Future, a self-described “independent, nonpartisan think tank” created an issue brief in January 2014, called “Private Funding of Public Parks, Assessing the Role of Philanthropy”:

[www.recpro.org/assets/Library/Parks/private\\_funding\\_for\\_public\\_parks\\_jan2014.pdf](http://www.recpro.org/assets/Library/Parks/private_funding_for_public_parks_jan2014.pdf).

The author notes that, “In this issue brief I discuss the various ways that private donations are paying for parks in the United States and evaluate the pros and cons of park philanthropy. I examine the roles conservancies and other nonprofits play in major urban parks. In some cases, these organizations act primarily as park advocates; in others, they partner with government to provide particular services and programs or invest in capital improvements; and in still others, they have taken on major roles in park operations. In some cities, the for-profit sector works with nonprofits in parks. I also look at other, more direct donation-based approaches, including the new “crowdfunding” movement.”

10. NPS’s Technical Preservation Services’ document outlining Tax Incentive for Preserving Historic Properties: [www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm](http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm).

This document has been updated as recently as December 2017. It notes that “The National Park Service and the Internal Revenue Service administer the program in partnership with State Historic Preservation Offices.” STA recommends that the City of Raleigh contact its State Historic Preservation Office to further investigate available tax credits and how they may be utilized toward preserving the Dix landscape.

11. The NPS Annual Reports Archive: [www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives/reports.htm](http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives/reports.htm).

This document is included because it provides the Federal Tax Incentives annual reports for 2004 to 2017. A cursory search for the word “landscape” in each report yielded only one result in 2012, with mention of an unnamed project in Cambridge, MA.

12. The National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT) offers grant opportunities: [www.ncptt.nps.gov/grants/preservation-technology-and-training-grants/](http://www.ncptt.nps.gov/grants/preservation-technology-and-training-grants/).

NCPTT was founded in 1994, and its mission is to advance “the application of science and technology to historic preservation. Working in the fields of archaeology, architecture, landscape architecture and material conservation, the Center accomplishes its mission through training, education, research, technology transfer and partnerships.”

#### Management Strategies

13. “Public Spaces/Private Lands: The Triumphs and Pitfalls of Urban Park Conservancies”:  
[www.tpl.org/sites/default/files/files\\_upload/ccpe-Parks-Conservancy-Report.pdf](http://www.tpl.org/sites/default/files/files_upload/ccpe-Parks-Conservancy-Report.pdf)

This document, published by The Trust for Public Land in February 2015, includes information on the two founding conservancy models, what makes a conservancy successful, as well as case studies of six park conservancies. This booklet also includes information on institutional models that are not park conservancies.

14. “Best Management Practices Used at Urban Parks in National and International Locations”:  
[www.nps.gov/nationalmallplan/Documents/National%20Mall%20Plan%20-%20Best%20Management%20Practices%20Used%20at%20Urban%20Parks%20in%20National%20and%20International%20Locations.pdf](http://www.nps.gov/nationalmallplan/Documents/National%20Mall%20Plan%20-%20Best%20Management%20Practices%20Used%20at%20Urban%20Parks%20in%20National%20and%20International%20Locations.pdf)

This comprehensive document published by the NPS in 2007 is included because it provides clear articulation of best practices for landscape standards, design, visitor information, maintenance, and events management in public parks that can be referenced for Dix Park. The document also includes an overview of a few park sites, including four in the United States: Central Park, Golden Gate Park, Millennium Park, and Piedmont Park. These overviews identify land ownership, management responsibility, and major uses for the parks, as well as other information.





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## The Cultural Landscape of Dix Park

Suzanne Turner Lecture  
4/12/2018 in Raleigh, NC

### Introduction/Opening Remarks

Welcome; Introduce Herpreet Singh, STA researcher/communications

I'm happy to be able to meet with you, the most knowledgeable and passionate people when it comes to the history of the Dix site and to the role that history might play in the upcoming transformation of an institutional complex to a public park for the broad Raleigh community.

#### Format:

I will talk for about 30 minutes. I would like to be able to have questions and comments after that point to take full advantage of your being here with us.

We are here to report back to you after several trips for research and reconnaissance, and analysis of our findings. We have been in constant contact with Adrienne at the MVVA office, working hand in glove with the design team so that they have the benefit of our research findings, and so that when they have a question we can target our work.

### Role of History in Design Process

There is no time better to be working in history. In a climate of fake news, the relevance of history is being constantly tested.

History is a community process: *If we can't make history relevant and meaningful to the younger generations, then it's not working. It is only through understanding the past that we can prepare for the future.* And if the significant concepts that are identified about this place are not somehow incorporated into the design of the park, we will have failed in our mission.

We are all working towards a **plan that creates a park unlike any other park**. The quality that will distinguish Dix Park is that it will be built upon the rich tapestry of deposits of meaning in this landscape—in other words, **the design will be rooted in the place that is Dix Hill**.

The site is in a way a **time capsule** containing evidence of some of the major moments and movements that have made Raleigh the special place that it is today. **It is Raleigh's Rosetta Stone.** In other words, **Dix is an important cultural landscape.**

*So, what does that mean?*

## **Cultural Landscapes Defined**

Cultural landscapes surround us. According to the National Park Service (NPS), “the components of cultural landscapes include human-modified ecosystems such as forests, prairies, rivers and shores, as well as constructed works, such as mounds, terraces, structures, and gardens.”

The NPS has always focused on buildings or places where important events or activities took place, where important persons were involved (“Washington slept here.”), or that were important examples of a particular kind of design style or type of construction.

This approach tended to associate significance with the lives of the elite of early America. The term cultural landscape is broader in concept and more inclusive and suggests the kind of place where people have imbued their surroundings with a distinctive character that identifies it as special, that expresses the identity of the people who shaped it.

The term **cultural landscape** has become much more widely used to refer to those **places where people have lived and worked and played.** But unlike some of the clear examples of landscapes that almost announce their meaning and significance, much of the story of the human encounters that occurred at Dix is hidden—not really legible to the casual viewer.

## **Cultural Layers at Dix**

**Consider the layers** of human use that we suspect have left an impact at Dix. It is a place that the earliest Americans—**the Indigenous Americans**--must have been drawn to because of its attractive natural situation—a high point of great strategic advantage, enabling a view for miles--, with a source of water and therefore abundant wildlife, a valuable landscape of subsistence at least seasonally, with an elevation that would have provided a great sense of security.

As **Europeans moved into the region as permanent settlers**, the alteration of the land for agriculture became a setting of **human exploitation of an African labor force** to produce a commercial crop. This is one of the layers about which we hope more information will be discovered.

As the plantation land was transferred from **private ownership to that of the state**, the development of the **North Carolina Hospital for the Insane** represented a move toward

a more progressive and **humanitarian treatment** for the state’s population suffering from mental illness.

It was developed **not as a place of confinement as much as a place for healing**. Agricultural use again characterized the use of a portion of the land, but in this case it was seen as a means of **therapeutic occupation**, joining food production with ornamental horticulture—as a way for patients to feel the well-being and satisfaction of working with their hands, of being outside in nature, of producing foodstuffs—and most importantly of experiencing the **structure and routine** and seasonality that comes with farming.

### **Significance Defined**

The bottom-line purpose of historical research for any cultural landscape is to be able to determine and articulate whether a place is significant, and if so, why?

The Oxford English Dictionary definitions of “significance” are: “The quality of being worthy of attention; importance” and “the meaning to be found in words or events.”

For cultural landscapes, significance requires that, based upon rigorous research and documentation, an evaluation of relative importance will be made about the landscape.

As one of the thirty or so mental hospitals instigated by Dorothea Dix, *with* a building by one of America’s important architects of the time, Alexander Jackson Davis, there are clear reasons to consider Dix significant. But neither of these connections are at all visible on the site today.

In addition to Dix and Davis, this landscape is rife with layers of major periods in Raleigh and American history, again layers that are not visible except by the most sophisticated of specialists, like landscape archaeologists or highly experienced ecologists.

I’ve already dissed the NPS’s initial narrowness and elite bias in emphasizing the preservation of places associated with important people, places, and design, but in their fourth and final criteria, they wisely acknowledged the sensitive nature of landscapes like Dix.

**This criteria for significance is the “potential of a site to yield important information, specifically archaeological resources.”**

If one simply imagines how many people have occupied this site over the course of its existence, how much detritus has been produced by their lives and their industry, where that garbage would have been deposited prior to the introduction of municipal services like trash pickup and offsite landfills, one comes to understand that this landscape has absorbed the remains of generations of people who lived upon it. Without the discovery of these remnants—these artifacts—the earliest stories of habitation remain incomplete.

Perhaps most significant are the gravesites of those who have been buried in this landscape without the benefit of a marked grave like that that was afforded to some of the patients and employees of Dix Hospital.

## **Integrity Defined**

If the exploration of contexts surrounding a cultural landscape finds it to be significant enough to be considered for preservation, the second criteria to determine a preservation approach is integrity.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* definitions for “integrity” provide clear language for how we might understand integrity as it applies to cultural landscapes: “the quality of being honest...” and “the state of being whole and undivided.”

NPS lists aspects of integrity such as original location, character of the setting, design (form, plan, space, structure, style), materials, workmanship, feeling (intangible potential to evoke sense of past period in time), and association (direct link between property and the reason for significance).

**So, these are the basic concepts—the broad definition of cultural landscape, the determination of significance, and the assessment of integrity—that guide the decision-making process for the landscape’s cultural resources.**

## **Dix Park as a Cultural Landscape**

There are advantages to working on Dix Park versus many other cultural landscapes: The state and the Conservancy have both done outstanding work documenting some of the site’s history. The site has more timelines than I’ve encountered for a project, with so much excellent research and analysis invested in documenting the Dix Hospital story, especially in the careful and comprehensive *Haven on the Hill* by Marjorie O’Rorke. So, it is both a privilege and a daunting challenge to approach a piece of land that is as **packed with meaning** as Dix is.

It is fortunate that the life and work of **Dorothea Dix** has been well chronicled and that the architectural work of **Alexander Jackson Davis** has also been given a great deal of attention by architectural historians.

### **The Research Experience**

Research is always an adventure, and this has been no exception. There have been **strokes of luck and some disappointments.**

The most positive event was the discovery of the **A. J. Davis drawing set for the building. We of course had the elevation and plan that you are all familiar with,**

**from the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.** But based on what I'd seen of Davis's other drawings of public buildings, I felt that more drawings had to exist, and I had a hunch that they were somewhere being well taken care of.

I'd struck out in so many places—I even tried to contact a gentleman recommended to me as a former archivist and expert on all things A. J. Davis, living in a retirement home and who had an email address. He never responded to me. I gave up.

But fortunately, the people at Michael's office did not. Having the advantage of being in New York, MVVA sent someone who will forever remain my hero (as soon as I recall his name), who found them at The New York Historical Society.

The other positive occurrence that I felt was synchronistic was the opening of the exhibit at **the National Building Museum in DC on St. Elizabeth's Hospital in DC, which opened in 1855** and was also founded through the efforts of Dorothea Dix.

The images from this exhibit provide a visual of not only a Civil War encampment on hospital grounds, but more importantly, they give us a sense of what the daily life and the extremes of that life might have been like at Dix.

As we learned about the situation of the records of Dix Hospital—that they were indeed at State Archives, but in various phases of being catalogued, and with lots of restrictions because of privacy of patient records, an understandable constraint—we realized that this means of documenting the details of the landscape's evolution would have to wait.

I had hoped to gain insight as to the process of building the hospital—who had designed and laid out the landscape beyond the building, particularly the beautifully sinuous entry road. The answer to this is still a mystery, and not the only as yet unsolved mystery.

*There are many unanswered questions about this landscape's history but one of my main take-aways for you today is that **there is so much yet to discover about the Dix property**, that it will be a project of the volunteer and academic communities for years to come. There is good reason that all these auspicious universities with great archives and resources surround the park site.*

**Research is never finished.**

## **Archaeology Mandate**

**We know then, that archaeology should be a requirement of this process, and it holds the potential to yield exciting discoveries. The process of archaeology can be an early participatory event, so that children and all in Raleigh have the opportunity to experience this form of discovery. LIDAR is planned, so that we have information to start with the areas that are most likely to yield information.** This is technology, that discovered more than sixty thousand Mayan ruins hidden beneath the ground in Guatemala, uses laser light imaging pulses for detection and ranging.

*But what exists on the site that still holds significance and has enough integrity to warrant preservation and rehabilitation?*

## **Significance of Dix's Picturesque Landscape**

The Dix landscape is a strong exemplar of a site plan based upon the principles of the American picturesque. This movement in design at the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was a translation of the earlier English pastoral approach introduced by designers such as Capability Brown in 1763, Humphry Repton, William Kent, and others.

The pastoral approach was applied to park design in places such as Birkenhead Park in England, the world's first publicly funded park, designed by Joseph Paxton in 1844 and opened in 1847.

The American version of the style became widely embraced, particularly in the Northeast through the publication of A. J. Downing's *Treatise* (1841), a bellwether for landscape history, which went through multiple editions for decades after its publication and Downing's untimely accidental death in 1852. The last printing was in 1921, attesting to the pervasiveness of the book's popularity.

Beginning the most significant collaboration of his career, Davis joined Downing in 1839, designing and drawing illustrations for Downing's books as well as his popular journal *The Horticulturist*. "Together they popularized the ideas and styles of the picturesque."<sup>1</sup>

What Davis produced was a composition of architecture and landscape that took full advantage of the expansive site's situation and natural elements by placing the buildings on the brow of Dix Hill overlooking the tiny capital city of Raleigh. Davis' plan embodied the principles promulgated by Dr. Thomas S. Kirkbride and Dix, giving each dormitory room a view to the landscape and access to fresh air and adequate sunlight. Gardens were an integral part of the architectural scheme, with two alternatives drawn by Davis.

The larger landscape, that served both as the foreground to the view of Dix from below and as the setting for approach on horseback and carriage, illustrated the tenets of the American picturesque—the adaptation of English romanticism to the rugged American landscape.

The stamp of Davis' design for the main building and the planning decisions that organized the rest of the surrounding landscape created a place where the landscape

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<sup>1</sup> [www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/davs/hd\\_davs.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/davs/hd_davs.htm)

compliments the architecture. There are more formal plantings immediately extending from the building, as shown in Davis' sketch of the parterre. Beyond the reach of the geometry of the architecture, the landscape takes on the appearance of the rural countryside, expressed by clumps of trees and shrubs that permeate and frame undulating open spaces. Circulation is sinuous and somewhat meandering as illustrated in Downing's treatise. The composition creates a kinetic experience in which the view of the building unfolds gradually and in different views as one climbs the hill to the hospital's entrance.

### **Integrity of Dix Landscape**

And so, both the entry road and the tree plantings are elements that survive with a degree of integrity.

Documentation has not yet been found to describe who was responsible for conceiving the hospital's landscape design. Perhaps it was Davis himself, for the building and its foreground approach sequence seem to be deliberate. The fact that authorship of this landscape is not known has no bearing on its significance. It had a designer; we just don't know who it was. And we don't know when the various components were installed. But each of these elements—the accentuation of the topographic undulation by placement of tree groves, the delineation of open spaces in a range of sizes, the overall road system lined with avenues of hardwood tree allées—represent intentional and thoughtful design moves and warrant preservation.

### **Dix Park Preservation Approach/A Call to Action**

Our research is not history for history's sake. Preservation is a civic responsibility: to help communities gain a sense of ownership over landscapes so they become stewards, and to reveal, understand, and honor multiple stories and experiences, including marginalized histories.

**A call to action:** As stewards of the landscape that will become Dix Park, the City of Raleigh and the various partners who are shepherding the project have the responsibility of incorporating the landscape's past into plans for its future.

The site needs to be interpreted, preserved, managed with best practices, and reinforced with a program of plant documentation and replacement in kind. The preservation of this picturesque landscape, representative of the late antebellum and postbellum period of American landscape history, is far more significant than any individual architectural survivors. And the placement of buildings over time without understanding and respect for this overall picturesque character, detracts from the pure expression of the most significant historic landscape quality.

And we have begun a wish list of topics that we hope there will be more information found on, including the WPA/CCC work at the site (particularly a summary of what was included and images); oral histories with individuals who have institutional memory and who will not live forever: doctors and nurses and other laborers who worked at Dix, scholars who have done major work on its history, descendants of families associated with the land when the plantation existed.

## Cultural Landscape Interpretation Precedents

**Preservation** does not stifle the creative process of planning and design; rather, it guides it. Through an appreciation of the site's multiple layers, one fulfills the same kind of due diligence that the analysis of the watershed and its change over time serves. You must know this landscape in all of its dimensions before you give it a new layer. This project will define Raleigh for generations to come. It will be your legacy.

Across the world today, park-building is occurring at an unprecedented rate, public and private investment is at an all-time high, and community ownership of these plans is a given.

The possibilities are limitless. There has never been a better time to creatively integrate the stories of a place's past into planning for its future.

Here are some examples of how a cultural landscape's history can be celebrated with new overlays—some temporary, and other's not. These examples utilize new technologies, new modes of learning, and innovative ideas about how to make landscapes more visible through art.

Chinese dissident, Ai Wei-wei's installation at Alcatraz, contrasted experiences of freedom and imprisonment through art, creating metaphors for the expressions of beauty and freedom that exist where there appears to be no beauty or freedoms.

Central Park, as we understand it to have been in the 1870s, has undergone much layering, some permanent, and some temporary. It has housed a literal memorial for John Lennon. It's been reinterpreted abstractly with a Christo and Jeanne-Claude installation that expressed a blooming landscape against a winter landscape: "The grid pattern on city blocks surrounding Central Park was reflected in the rectangular structure of the commanding saffron colored poles while the serpentine design of walkways and organic forms of the bare branches of the trees were mirrored in the continuously changing rounded and sensual movement of the free-flowing fabric panels in the wind"  
([christojeanneclaude.net/mobile/projects?p=the-gates](http://christojeanneclaude.net/mobile/projects?p=the-gates))

And this is to say nothing of the potential application of virtual reality technologies... Because of new technologies, new modes of learning, innovative ideas about how to make landscapes more visible through art, there has never

been a better time to creatively integrate the stories of a place's past into planning for its future.

## **Conclusion**

We began by looking at St. Elizabeth's. And we will end there. The GSA determined to use the site as a campus for homeland security. They intended to restore the main building. As with most restoration projects, the structural issues proved overwhelming. The decision was made to save the skin.

I show this not because I agree with the decision, so much as to imagine the design possibilities the space suggests, even though the integrity to restore did not exist.

Consider this 11<sup>th</sup> century Cistercian monastery in Spain, where a remnant of an original wall has been stabilized and integrated with a new, tasteful, understated building where traditional Spanish weaving is done. The building integration is such that the focus is on the juxtaposition between past and present, but the layer of the past retains its power.

If this image alone does not demonstrate that power, consider the way stabilization has been employed at the same monastery. The original siting of the building and the dominance of some of its windows and archways were originally primarily to bring the attention of inhabitants and visitor to the view outward. So rather than restore an impressive, unmatched 11<sup>th</sup>-century building that lacked the integrity to merit restoration, stabilization was employed to emphasize the significance of that building: to frame a view and create a modern-day experience of that view that is imbued with history.

## **Audience Questions + Responses**

Responses from Susan Turner (STA), Kate Pierce (City of Raleigh), and Adrienne Heflich (MVVA)

Q. Are there precedents for preserving cemeteries?

A. Raleigh Cemetery Advisory Board is researching best practices. A group has been hired to do GPR to confirm the boundaries of the Dix cemetery. The city sees the cemetery as an opportunity to integrate the cemetery into the park for the public to learn from it, rather than to fence it off, and the precedent of cemeteries as the first parks serves as an inspiration for this approach.

Q. What knowledge exists about the agricultural practices and outbuildings at Dix? Is there any exploration into the working aspects, such as the tools used?

A. Information was shared about British manuals on agricultural tools that could serve as a reference for the tools that were likely used at Dix.

Q. What is known about the dairy building associated with the hospital?

A. The June 13 community meeting will focus on Dix buildings and what is known about them, as well as their significance and integrity.

Q. What are your (STA's) thoughts on the buildings and the removal of some buildings, especially since the site was more like a village than an institution?

A. The June 13 community meeting will focus on the Dix buildings. Generally speaking, buildings should not just serve as placeholders. But the larger question is whether there are cases when preserving the landscape based on its integrity has a higher value than preserving individual buildings.

Q. Are there concrete examples for telling stories that have been buried? Is anyone talking to the people who once lived on the property?

A. There is oral history work underway, led by Dr. Bobby Allen.

Q. If there is an unmarked cemetery associated with the Spring Hill Plantation, can the site be disturbed?

A. (From audience member) It is a felony if you find an unmarked cemetery and continue to disturb it.

Q. Do we have information on the slaves who built the hospital?

A. Ernest Dollar is doing research specific to the slaves associated, in various ways, with the site.

Q. Can you comment on the viewshed as an artifact?

A. It was all important, because it was about beginning to connect the inside with the outside, using more and more terraces as one's eye moved away from the building and into the picturesque and pastoral points of view. When the state legislature purchased the property in the 1850s, they quoted the views from the site as being valuable. Viewshed protection is a high priority for the city.

Q. Is the location of the greenhouse known?

A. It was located roughly where the Harvey building is today.

Q. Is there merit in moving buildings out of their original context?

A. (Susan's response) If you don't have to move it, don't move it. But if you do have to move it in order to save it, you can sometimes create the opportunity to give it new life.

Q. Are marginalized homeless and those overcoming addiction a part of the layers and the larger discussion?

A. Yes. Healing Transitions is still on the site. The city is considering challenges and opportunities, including asking whether people will live on this site. The city believes that the park holds the opportunity to "treat" people differently, inherently because of its history.

Q. What should happen to the Spring Hill 100 acres?

A. There's a potential partnership that exists to bridge the boundary. It has a rich past and potential future to be reconciled. The chance exists to deal with things that have been avoided for so long.



