

MELLON PARK PRESERVATION & MANAGEMENT PLAN

Final Draft
May 2000



prepared for
Western Pennsylvania Conservancy &
R.K. Mellon Foundation

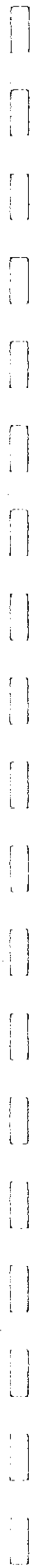
prepared by
LANDSCAPES
Landscape Architecture • Planning • Historic Preservation
Charlotte, Vermont & Westport, Connecticut

Barry Hannegan, Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation

Charles E. Beveridge, PhD, The Frederick Law Olmsted Papers

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter I. History	
A. Introduction.....	1
B. The R.B. Mellon Estate in its Early Years.....	1
C. Initial Work of the Olmsted Firm.....	3
D. The Intervention of Ferruccio Vitale	4
E. The Olmsted Firm Returns	6
F. The Transition from Private Estate to Public Park	8
G. The Site as Park.....	9
Chapter II. Period Conditions	
A. Introduction and Methodology.....	29
B. 1930s Landscape Units.....	30
C. 1950s Landscape Units.....	34
Chapter III. Existing Conditions	
A. Introduction and Methodology.....	59
B. Current Landscape Units.....	59
Chapter IV. Level of Change and Landscape Character	
A. Introduction and Methodology.....	81
B. Level of Change	81
C. Conclusion.....	83
Chapter V. Current Use & Programming	
A. Introduction.....	95
B. General Park Use.....	95
C. User Survey & Results.....	96
D. Pittsburgh Civic Garden Center	97
E. Pittsburgh Center for the Arts.....	98
F. Park Programming.....	99
Chapter VI. Current Park Management and Maintenance	
A. Introduction and Methodology.....	105
B. Mellon Park Management	105
C. Mellon Park Maintenance	105
Chapter VII. Exploration & Selection of Management Structure	
A. Introduction and Methodology.....	109
B. Components of Park Management	109
C. Case Studies	110
D. Alternative Management Scenarios	114
E. Long-Term Management Plan.....	116
F. Interim Phasing of Management Plan.....	118
Chapter VIII. Exploration & Selection of Preservation Treatment	
A. Introduction and Methodology.....	133
B. Exploration of Treatment Alternatives for Mellon Park	134
C. Preservation Treatment Plan	137
D. Treatment Plan Phasing	139

I. HISTORY

A. INTRODUCTION

Mellon Park received its name from its original owner Richard Beatty Mellon. The park retains remnants from the early 20th century Mellon estate and gardens, and incorporates adjacent properties of several neighbors as well. This chapter describes the evolution of the Mellon estate, its transition into a city park in the 1940s and 50s, and major developments in the years that followed. Barry Hannegan, Director of Historic Landscape Preservation for the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation researched and wrote the sections summarizing the Mellon estate and park history. Charles Beveridge, PhD, Series Editor of the Frederic Law Olmsted Papers at American University contributed the sections on the involvement of the Olmsted Brothers firm. LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP served as the compiler and editor for this chapter.

B. THE R. B. MELLON ESTATE IN ITS EARLY YEARS

A plat book of 1904 shows us that in that year Richard Beatty Mellon was living at 6544 Fifth Avenue. This was just one house west of the intersection of Fifth Avenue and Beechwood Boulevard, which at that time was still called William Pitt Boulevard. A photograph of the house at no. 6544 was published in 1905 in *Palmer's Pittsburgh*, and we learn from that image that the Mellons lived in a substantial although hardly grand residence in the Queen Anne style. We know from the plat book that the building occupied an exceedingly small triangle of land barely large enough to accommodate the minimum arrangement of driveways. To the Mellon's west lay the larger property of William Frew, 6516 Fifth Avenue, a much larger house set rather far back from Fifth Avenue and raised on terraces. To the west and south of no. 6516 stretched some ten or eleven acres that were already owned by Mr. Mellon, and it was there that in 1908 construction began on the vast pile designed by the firm of Alden and Harlow that was to be the new home of Richard Beatty and Jennie King Mellon.

The site of the new house was irregular, having an erratic, somewhat hourglass configuration, with extensive frontage on Fifth Avenue, to the north, and toward Beechwood Boulevard to the southeast. The house on its completion in 1911 turned its two principal elevations, joined at an angle of about 145 degrees, toward these two important thoroughfares.

A surveyor's plan of the entire property, prepared in August of 1912 by Edebum Cooper & Co., civil engineers of Pittsburgh, tells us much about the relation of the house to its site and the early treatment of the grounds 9 (Figure I.1). The terraced gardens that extend toward Beechwood Boulevard from just below the southeast elevation of the house were part of Alden and Harlow's original design (Figure I.2) and were clearly thought of as integral to the setting of the house. These very formal areas are aligned on the axis that extended outward from the library and across the intervening house terrace and drive. The garden terraces were thus tightly linked to the actual building; they were evidently intended to be the great set piece of the grounds. The rather unexpected

absence of any planting between the lower margin of the terraces and Beechwood Boulevard suggests that the view from the street, up across lawns to the terraces with the house looming above them was a desired image. Certainly, such a vista must have conveyed the sensations of might, grandeur, and remoteness.

A picture post card (Figure I.3) shows something of this view taken from near the easternmost corner of the lower terrace. The particular post card in question carries a postmark for August, 1914 and, hence, shows the terrace gardens in something near their original condition. Except for several very small conifers near the house, there is no vegetation of size at all visible. The flower beds in the lower terrace appear to be planted with showy annuals, i.e., petunias, geraniums, and cannas. Palms appear set out in several places, notable around the small pool in the upper terrace. The prevailing impression is one of simplicity, openness, and even bleakness. One small discrepancy between the plan of 1912 and the picture post card of 1914 appears in the treatment of the small area of the lower terrace just immediately below the pool of the upper terrace. The plan indicates a simple unbroken flower bed at the base of that wall section, but the post card reveals a small paved area with a stone or concrete bench backed against the retaining wall and flanked by small planting beds containing cannas.

As for the grounds before the other principal elevation, that facing northward to Fifth Avenue, the plan of 1912 indicates a largely open lawn, dappled with trees and defined at its eastern and western edges by irregular plantings of shrubs. The rooms facing Fifth Avenue were the formal reception areas of the house, and that function and the more public nature of the grounds traversed by the principal drive sweeping up from Fifth Avenue might have dictated the rather general, park-like treatment of the north lawn. An anomaly of the plan lies in the distinctive convention for indicating the bank of shrubbery along the south margin of the drive. This hollow rectangular symbol differs from the woolly squiggles used throughout the remainder of the plan to represent shrubs; was there anything in fact about the driveway's shrubbery that set it apart from the rest of the landscape? It falls on axis with the porch of the north facade and would seem to have some design relationship to the house and the view of it from Fifth Avenue. Was this bank of shrubbery a trimmed hedge of some sort?

Directly to the west of the house, the plan of 1912 indicates a garden defined by a horseshoe-shaped arrangement of walks and drives. Separated if not entirely concealed from the house by informal shrubberies, the garden would have been the most private portion of the grounds. That it was a flower garden seems very likely; the appearance of a tea house placed at the end of a transverse path through the garden and nestled against the western boundary wall further argues that the garden was planted as place in which one would want to linger.

Trees indicated in the plan of 1912 are provided with their size but not their type. None of them appear to have been very large; a caliper greater than six inches is rare. This would argue that the trees are newly planted, and that the site, if it did have any significant cover prior to the construction of the house, was cleared in the course of the property's development. A small feature of the plan that is of some interest is the appearance along the walk that entered the property from the northwest corner of two small beds of elongated crescent shape. Might these have been flowerbeds in an anachronistic Victorian taste?

C. INITIAL WORK OF THE OLMSTED FIRM

The Olmsted firm's work on Richard B. Mellon's estate on Fifth Avenue in Pittsburgh began in 1919. The first recorded visit was made by Percival Gallagher, who had been a partner in the firm since 1906. He was one of the two men other than John C. Olmsted and Frederick Law Olmsted who became partners in the firm of Olmsted Brothers prior to 1920. Gallagher's first visit came on October 18, 1919. His principal focus was the plantings of the two-tiered terrace garden below and East of the mansion. He noted that the architects of the house, Alden and Harlow, had drawn up the plan of the garden but that Ernest Guter, Mellon's gardener for eighteen years, had been responsible for most of the planting. The summer heat in the garden made it difficult to grow perennials, although Gallagher noted that in the horseshoe-shaped garden above (west of) the house numerous perennials were thriving. He judged that the brick walks in the terrace garden increased the heat and proposed to replace the bricks with flags of bluestone. Gallagher also proposed to plant a low evergreen hedge around the flower beds in the upper section of the terrace garden. He preferred to use box plants (*Buxus*), but felt they would not grow well and proposed to use yews instead--*Taxus capitata* or *T. cuspidata*. He also judged that the two narrow rectangular beds of bedding-out plants at either side of the upper garden were not in harmony with the rest and should be replaced by a different pattern of beds in that section. As shown on plan no. 14 of November 4, 1919 (Figure I.4), he wished to replace the central walk on the upper terrace with two walks centered on the stairs to the lower terrace, creating a central panel of low bedding plants. To either side he planned square beds surrounded with a low hedge and with much of the interior planted in turf.

Figure I.4 also shows the wooden boxes of flowers, and apparently shrubs, that Gallagher suggested installing on the stairs leading from the drive to the upper terrace garden, to counteract what he viewed as the too great width of the steps. He also proposed changing the material of those steps from concrete to bluestone flagging. He left the grove of trees at the south end of the upper terrace, where there is now the pool, while at the opposite end he suggested constructing a vine-clad arbor of oak "done in the English manner," to introduce additional shade in order to counteract the openness to the sun and heat of the garden.

Gallagher also felt that the terrace garden was too open to the driveway and porte-cochere and proposed to enclose the area above the upper balustrade with "clumps of groups of evergreens like *Juniperus pfitzeriana* and dogwood and even some flowering shrubs."

An additional feature of the upper terrace that Gallagher wished to change was the area of formal pool and wall fountain at the eastern edge of the terrace. He observed that the design was a poor one "since it has no adequate background," adding that in recent years the idea of a pool had been abandoned and the area had been filled with earth and planted with plants from the greenhouse. Figure I.4 shows the Olmsted firm's final proposal for this area, which was to construct a shelter that was flanked north and south by an evergreen tree. Presumably the shelter was to provide a view over the lily pool on the lower terrace. Four dogwood trees were also to be planted along the eastern edge of the upper terrace.

Gallagher noted that the gardener had a number of large bay trees that he set at the corners of the upper garden, with two pyramidal bay trees behind the central wall fountain. There were also round box shrubs in pots on the posts at the entrance to the lower terrace. On the lower terrace, Gallagher approved of the gardener's intention to plant cannas in the panels on either side of the lily pool, although the variety being used at that point, "Wyoming," he thought very good in color but somewhat too large. The canna beds were to have an edging of low bedding plants, while the outside beds of perennials were to be bounded by low hedges, as proposed for the beds on the upper terrace.

As for garden furniture, two curved white benches were set in the curved sections of the balustrade on the lower terrace, and there was a white bench at the north end of the upper terrace. The garden walls had copings and balustrades of "an apple red terra cotta which is the worst feature in its structure," he declared: he hoped to be able to paint the terra cotta with a "modern cement paint," selecting a more neutral color with a "coffee or snuff color or rich pale terra cotta color." Also, on the north side of the high wall of the lower terrace he wished to give backing to the wall by planting one or two broad-headed trees, (dogwood, hornbeam or beech.)

At this time, in 1919, R.B. Mellon was employing the Olmsted firm on two other projects: one was his estate in Watch Hill, Rhode Island, which was apparently the first commission he provided the firm. He contacted them while in Boston in August of 1918, after he had visited Fitchburg, Massachusetts, examining the ball field the firm had recently designed there, and meeting the donor of the field, Alvah Crocker. The other project for which Mr. Mellon engaged the Olmsted firm was Rolling Rock Club in Laughlinville, Pennsylvania. For the latter commission the firm at this time studied plantings to be installed along the golf course that had just been constructed. They also designed the protective planting of hemlocks surrounding the skating pond (now the Bass Pond) that is still a distinctive feature of the landscape of the club.

D. THE INTERVENTION OF FERRUCCIO VITALE

The issue of *Country Life* for December, 1934, carried an article, "Renaissance Garden," which gave an illustrated account of the walled garden on the estate of R.B. Mellon in Pittsburgh. This rigorously formal arrangement of walls, broad walks, lawn tapis, and lush perennial borders replaced the garden of approximately horseshoe shape that appears to the west of the house in the surveyors' plan of 1912. The magazine account credits the firm of Vitale and Geiffert working in collaboration with Gilmore D. Clarke for the garden's design, while Edmond Amateis is named as the sculptor of the three bronze figures that were included in the scheme, and Samuel Yellin is credited with the fine wrought iron grills and gates.

The archives of the Pittsburgh City Department of Engineering and Construction preserve 40 blue prints that document the design and construction of the walled garden in 1929. These prints are based on drawings from the offices of Vitale and Geiffert, and they all bear Ferruccio Vitale's name, appearing alone. The drawings deal chiefly with the hardscape, especially the walls and stairs that are the distinguishing elements of the overall design. Only four of the drawings address planting; three of these specify placement of trees and shrubs (one of which is included as Figure I.5), with

some pencilled revisions, while the fourth is a detailed planting plan for one half of the perennial borders that flank the lawn and the enclosing walls. Eleven sheets are detailed construction diagrams for the various walls and stairs. These were provided to the Pittsburgh Cut Stone Company and are variously dated to August and September of 1929, the months presumably of the actual construction.

All of the plans record essentially the scheme that was actually constructed and that still exists in a severely dilapidated state. A broad, deep rectangle of lawn extends on axis from the bay on the west side of the house. Within that bay was the study of Mr. Mellon who had, hence, a full view of the new garden from his windows. The blueprints carry dates ranging from March through November 1929, and apparently concurrently during the earlier months of that period there were two alternative schemes being considered for the areas at the ends of the lawn tapis.

At the end nearer the house, just outside Mr. Mellon's office, the choice lay between the realized design of a regular octagon of lawn defined by flagged walks and centered on a well head, and a variant of that scheme that called for an elongated octagon, placed perpendicular to the axis of the tapis and having at its center either a lawn panel or perhaps a small pool of rectangular shape with semicircular ends. In either case, this design element provided some foreground interest to the view deep into the garden that opened for the viewer in the house. The polygonal bay itself of the house would seem to have been the inspiration for the octagon that figures in these two proposals.

A comparable choice between two design proposals marked the development of the far, western end of the garden. The built arrangement of fountain (designed by Amateis), fountain pool, and terrace was preferred over the construction of a large garden shelter, a stone loggia that would have had a five-bay elevation of Tudor arched openings toward the lawn, and a return of one bay at each end. The form of the arches is retained in the shallow niches that held Amateis' bronze figures that functioned as terminal features for the long flagged walks flanking the garden. At least the center bay of the loggia was to have been largely filled with some sort of sculptural group. Both schemes incorporated and expanded an existing boundary wall that screened the garden from the neighboring property. An undated blueprint with a plan of the built arrangement carries a notation to retain the old, existing flagging; this perhaps was the flooring of the earlier teahouse.

The appearance of this garden is documented not only by the illustrations in the magazine article of 1934, but also more amply by two privately owned sets of photographs of the property taken in 1931 and in 1935. The earlier group was taken in the spring and shows considerable quantities of seasonal bulbs blooming, as seen in Figure I.6. Although such planting might be considered conventional for a property of this quality, the spring display may have been a specific preference of Mrs. Mellon since an article in the *Pittsburgh Index* for April 8, 1916, mentions that the gardens already contained over 100,000 spring flowering bulbs.

The photographs taken in the full summer of 1935 preserve the image of an exceptionally lush, densely planted garden and estate (as seen in Figure I.7). The abundant use of tender plants, both for bedding and in a variety of containers is especially striking; the large ell-shaped conservatory at the bend of the drive leading up from Beechwood Boulevard must have been kept at full capacity to provide such a quality of seasonal material. Figure I.8 shows the central lawn of the walled garden in 1935, and reveals that the two flanking rows of flowering cherry trees had been reduced to one tree

on each side of the lawn toward the fountain terrace. A note by Ralph Griswold in the files of the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation records that Alfred Geiffert supervised the installation of the garden.

E. THE OLMSTED FIRM RETURNS

The Olmsted firm resumed work for R.B. Mellon at all three sites in the early 1930s. At Watch Hill the firm returned in the fall of 1929, and the firm's plantsman Nelson Wells was heartened to learn that Mr. Mellon considered the work done for him ten years before to be "a perfect landscape development." At the Rolling Rock Club consultation resumed in the spring of 1930, after an interim period of ten years during which several designers were employed on parts of the site, including the landscape architects Marian Cruger Coffin, Ellen Biddle Shipman and Ferruccio Vitale. During 1930 and 1931, the Olmsted firm partner Edward C. Whiting and Nelson M. Wells, a plantsman with a dozen years experience with the firm, provided advice and designs for several aspects of the Rolling Rock landscape, including the plantings on the north and south approach roads, the clearing of allees out from the club house, the planning of the lilac garden, treatment of the grounds near the club house, and the cascade and the pool below and terrace above it.

During the spring of 1931, Whiting and Wells also proposed the addition of a number of planting features at the Mellon estate on Fifth Avenue in Pittsburgh. The major change in the grounds that had occurred since the firm's previous work on the site had been the design and construction of a new formal garden and area of turf on the site of Alden & Harlow's horseshoe-shaped garden west of the house. Several plans for this walled garden by Ferruccio Vitale still survive in the Olmsted firm's archives at the Olmsted National Historic Site in Brookline, Massachusetts, and there are prints at Pittsburgh City Engineers.

During its work in 1931, the Olmsted firm drew up detailed planting plans for four areas of the grounds. These plans are remarkable because of the detail with which they are drawn. In most planting plans, the Olmsted firm indicated the desired planting scheme by a series of balloon-like areas with an indication that within each of these there should be a specified number of plants of the indicated species (sometimes a single species but more often a mixture). However, such plans give no indication of the desired pattern of planting, or placement of plants. The R.B. Mellon estate planting plans of 1931, therefore, are a rare and valuable historic record of design intent by the Olmsted firm. They make possible a much more informed restoration of the several features on the grounds of the estate than has been the case in all but one or two of past restorations of Olmsted-firm designs. It is also remarkable that while the plantings made nearly seventy years ago no longer exist, the areas in Mellon Park where they occurred have not been devoted to other uses. Despite the transition of the site from a private residence to a public park, the areas planned and planted by the Olmsted firm are still available for recovery of the 1931 Olmsted designs. Such restoration would increase the variety of the landscape and expand the experience of park users. It would also be significant as one of a very few complete and accurate restorations of a space designed by the Olmsted firm.

The most extensive and complex addition to the plantings of the estate proposed by the firm in 1931 was the pool and surrounding area near the approach drive along William Pitt Boulevard (now Beechwood Boulevard). The planting scheme is presented in a general way in Figure I.9; sections of it are then developed in a much more detailed way on plans shown in Figures I.10, I.11 and I.12 of June 1931.

Figure I.10 shows the steep area next to the approach drive, with plantings around the proposed series of boulders scattered on the bank, and the steep path and surrounding plantings running from the pool up the hillside in the direction of the mansion. Of special interest is the detailed indication of placement of azaleas, separate species being numbered 3 through 12. The plan also delineates the specific placement of cotoneaster plants along the path and of groups of dark, evergreen taxus plants among the boulders on the bank.

Figure I.11 shows the continuation of azalea plantings in a wide bed outside the path on the north side of the pool. The position of each azalea is precisely indicated. The most remarkable element is the individual siting of the 130 plants of Christmas fern/*Polystichum achrostichoides*, showing them scattered throughout the bed whereas the more general plan in Figure I.9 simply indicates one area near the path for them. This is the kind of detail that makes plans 16 A-G so valuable for achieving an authentic Olmstedian planting.

Figure I.12 shows the planting area east of the path leading to the pool. Here again the basic planting is a mass of azaleas, and the special detail shows the positioning of 80 plants of the Wood Fern (called *Aspidium marginalis* on the plan, and now officially called *Dryopteris marginalis*). Also significant is the placement indicated for the sixteen plants of the Interrupted Fern/*Osmunda Claytoniana*.

The other particularly significant area of planting, the narrow peninsula formed by the switchback of the approach drive near the present-day Garden Center, is elaborated on the plan shown in Figure 1.13. The prime feature of this area is the collection of roses numbered 1 through 9, totaling 255 plants. The indication for specific placement on this plan is for five flowering crabapple trees (no. 11), fifteen quince shrubs (*Cydonia japonica*, no. 12) and four plants of *Viburnum sieboldii* (no. 13).

Also significant is the plan in Figure I.14, which shows how the Olmsted firm proposed to further enclose the approach road near the house and its porte-cochere, and to provide a dense and varied visual barrier to the neighboring houses to the east of the mansion. The planting plan shows, especially, the use of flowering almond trees and pyracantha bushes in the plantation west of the approach road, and of Pin Oaks and Mock Orange/*Philadelphus coronarius* to increase density of planting north of the play house.

A fourth area of extensive planting, on the bank north of the walled garden, is indicated on the plan in Figure I.15. It shows primarily the placement of forsythias/*Forsythia suspensa* and *F. spectabilis* in this area.

A fifth significant area of planting shown on the General Planting Plan no. 15 for the Spring of 1931, Figure I.16, occurs below the wall at the bottom of the terrace garden: there the Olmsted firm

proposed to plant a mass of thirty-five Pfizer juniper/*Juniperus chinensis pfitzeriana*. Each of the detailed sites is also depicted on this overall plan.

Correspondence at the time indicates that for the most part the intended planting scheme was carried out. In his reports of May 1931, Nelson M. Wells refers to completion of planting in the four principal areas: near the pool, near the greenhouse (i.e. the headland of planting near the present-day Garden Center), near the porte-cochere, and north of the garden. He carried out a further inspection in June and reported that "the new plantings appear to be taking hold satisfactorily." Although those plantings have since disappeared, it is clear that at one time they added significantly to the landscape of the R.B. Mellon estate. The documentary record of these small but important Olmsted designed landscapes affords a unique opportunity to reconstruct them to a high level of detail. Reconstruction of these Olmsted plantings should be favorably considered as the Mellon Park planning process moves into implementation.

F. THE TRANSITION FROM PRIVATE ESTATE TO PUBLIC PARK

The death of Mrs. Mellon in 1938 essentially brought to an end the property's existence as a functioning, maintained estate. In 1939, the property is listed in the Pittsburgh *City Directory* as belonging to R.K. Mellon, the son of R.B. and Jennie King Mellon. The Hopkins plan of Pittsburgh published in 1939 records the major elements of the estate, including the conservatory, but does not indicate the play house near the porte-cochere. It seems unlikely that the playhouse would have been taken down during Mrs. Mellon's lifetime, and it may have been too insignificant a feature for inclusion in the Hopkins plan.

The *City Directory* for 1940 lists the Mellon house as being vacant, while the property next door, at 6516 Fifth Avenue, is listed as still belonging to the Frew family. The smaller house at 6544 Fifth Avenue, where the Mellons had lived before the construction of the great house, is listed as vacant. In 1941, the *City Directory* lists all three properties as vacant, and in the following year, the addresses disappear - they are no longer extant as private property. In the absence of explicit documentation, we may assume that all three of these properties had been acquired by the City by 1942.

This bleak history is confirmed and fleshed out by newspaper articles of the time. For a brief period in early 1940, the house was made available to the American Red Cross. The Mellon heirs felt that the use of the house by a charitable, non-profit organization should justify the removal of the house, but not the grounds, from the tax rolls. However, the City disagreed, continuing to levy the full taxes on the entire property. Thereupon, the family decided to raze the house. This began in late 1940, and by May of 1941 all the very rich interior fittings and materials had been removed, allowing for the demolition of the structure itself. What was happening to the gardens is not recorded but can be reasonably guessed at.

The property reappears in the newspapers in October 1942, when the family offered the former estate to the City for use as a park. Among the conditions of the gift were the prohibition of through roads being introduced in the park and the commitment of the City to maintain the grounds in the same

condition that they had enjoyed during the private ownership of the place. On June 28, 1943, the property formerly owned by R.B. Mellon was acquired by the City. The statement of indenture includes among the conditions and restrictions of the transfer of title the following stipulation, "...the present landscaping of the said property shall be maintained in so far and as long as reasonably possible and consistent with the proper use of said property".

G. THE SITE AS PARK

The earliest known evidence of the City's custody of the new park appears in several large drawings dated February 1944 in the archives of the Department of Construction and Engineering. These line drawings are careful plans of the built features of the terrace and walled gardens. Whether these were derived from existing drawings or the sites were measured and delineated anew is not known. There appears to be no change between these plans and the same areas as they were shown in the Olmsted plan of 1931. No planting is indicated.

In September 1945 the Pittsburgh Garden Center, now the Pittsburgh Civic Garden Center, was given space in the garage that had survived the demolition of the other buildings of the estate. As the Center's activities have grown in the last fifty-four years, additions have been made to the former garage, encroaching on and eventually covering the drive and turn around area that originally adjoined the garage to its east.

The first documented alteration to the gardens themselves took place between 1949 and 1951. A plan dated November 16, 1949, calls for the creation of a sizeable rose garden in the beds and borders of the lower terrace facing Beechwood Boulevard. In July of the following year, the Pittsburgh firm of Simonds and Simonds, landscape architects, prepared drawings for the restoration of the pool in the lower terrace and the reconstruction of the balustrade that enclosed the garden along its outer edge. A revision of the planting plan is recorded for August of that same year, while in May of 1951 the completed rose garden was opened to the public. This initiative was taken by the Garden Club of Allegheny County.

The conversion of estate to park may be said to have been fully completed in 1952 when Simonds and Simonds created a new circulation plan for the grounds. Vestiges of the former Frew and Darcie properties are indicated on the 1952 plan along with the notation that these traces are to be entirely erased. This same plan called for the removal of the drive from Fifth Avenue and its replacement, along the same gradient, of a broad foot path, while other walks were introduced to provide a reasonable and direct pedestrian circulation throughout the newly enlarged grounds. All the structures of the estate have disappeared by this date. The most significant loss to the landscape itself is the small oriental pool and grove at the foot of the Beechwood Boulevard drive. Some years ago, Jamie van Trump, Pittsburgh's foremost architectural historian and long-term observer of the social world, witnessed the gradual disappearance of the pond in the years immediately following the city's acquisition of the estate when the pond itself was used as a dump for branches and other debris.

A major effort to give the terrace gardens a new plan that would recall the ornate formality they had before 1939 occurred in 1980 when the Garden Club of Allegheny County, with funding from the

R.K. Mellon Foundation, created a new landscape that relied on the simplest arrangement of beds, border plantings of annuals, and Yew/*Taxus* (Figure I.17). However, since their installation these beds too have reached a stage of serious decline.

One issue in the current Mellon Park is the location within it of both the Civic Garden Center and the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts. These institutions use the park in their various programs. Over the years, the Civic Garden Center has undertaken demonstration plantings that further its role as a horticultural educator. These projects appear to have been carried out without reference to the historic designs for the landscape. In more recent years, the Center for the Arts has used the Park as an installation site for sculptural and other environmental art works. Again, such projects were executed without regard for the existing or historic landscape. In 1994, four acres of the Park in its northwest corner were turned over to a local artist for the installation of a proposed wilderness; a dense planting that was to be augmented by gradual volunteer growth and amplified by complete lack of maintenance. This venture may have proved unintentionally beneficial since it proved to be the catalyst for widespread concern about the deterioration of the entire Park.

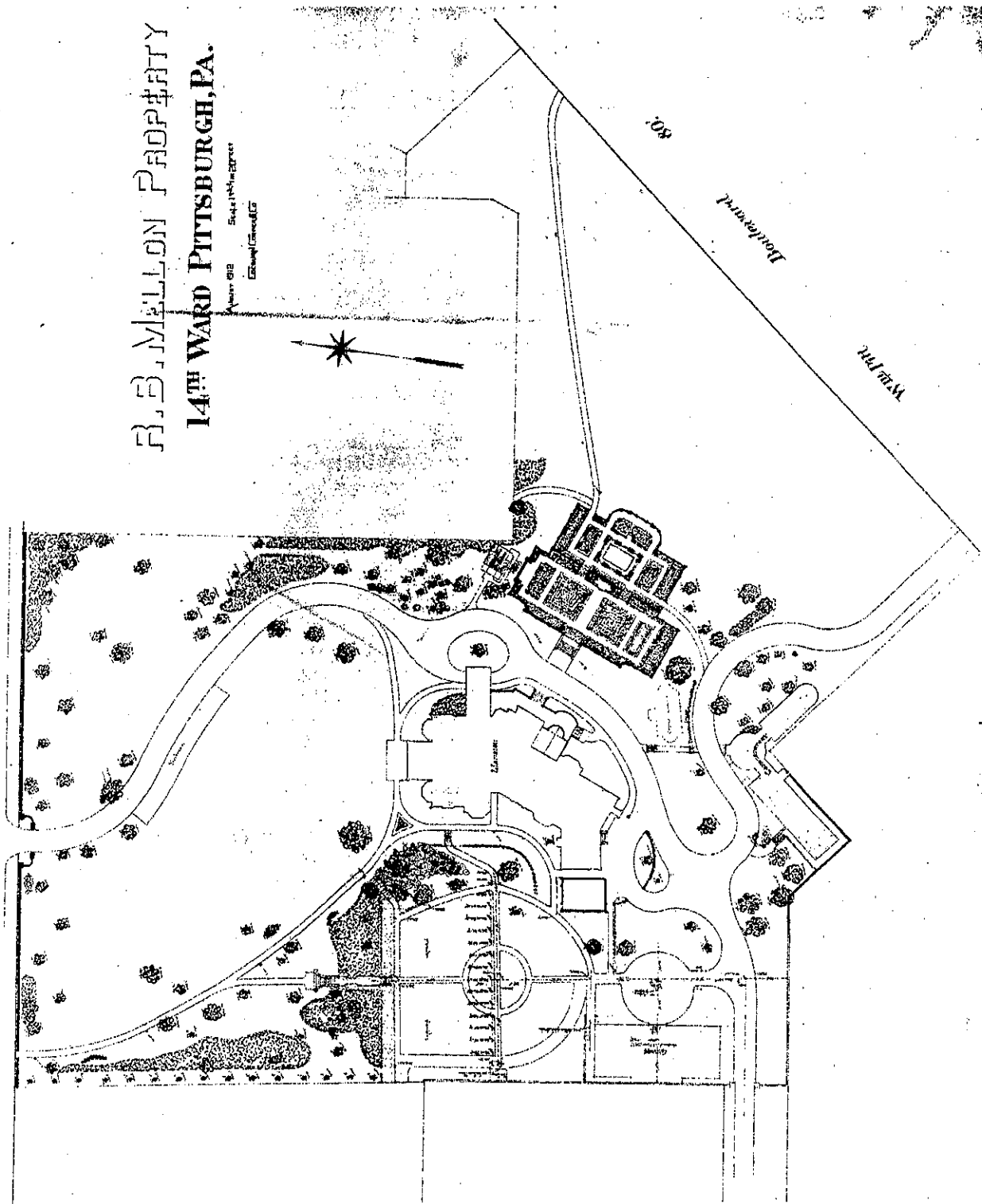


Figure I.1. Edebum Cooper & Co. plan of *R.B. Mellon Property*, August 1912 (courtesy FLONHS National Park Service).

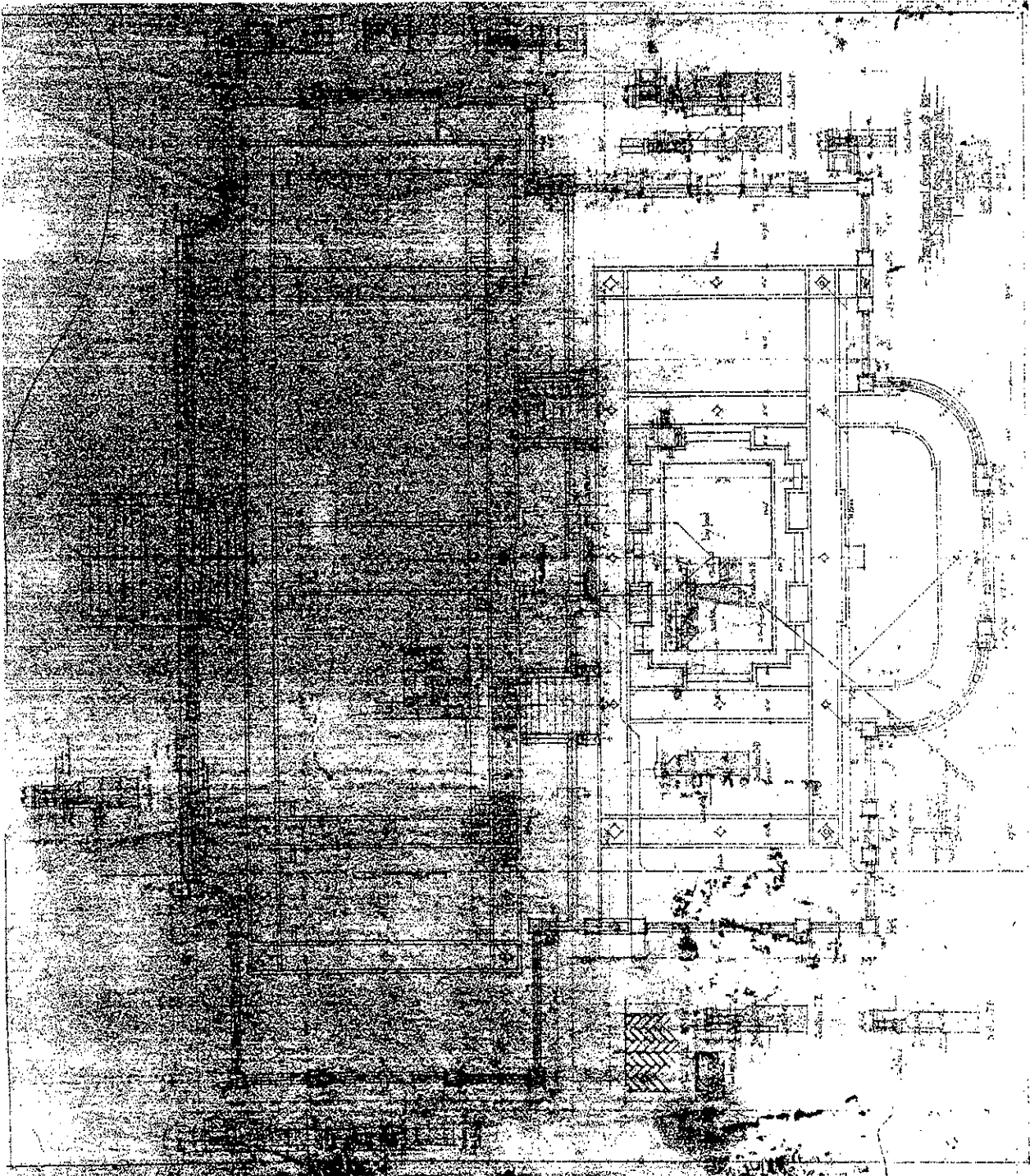


Figure I.2. Alden and Harlow's *Plan & Sections of Garden Walls etc. for R.B. Mellon*, 1911 (courtesy FLONHS National Park Service).

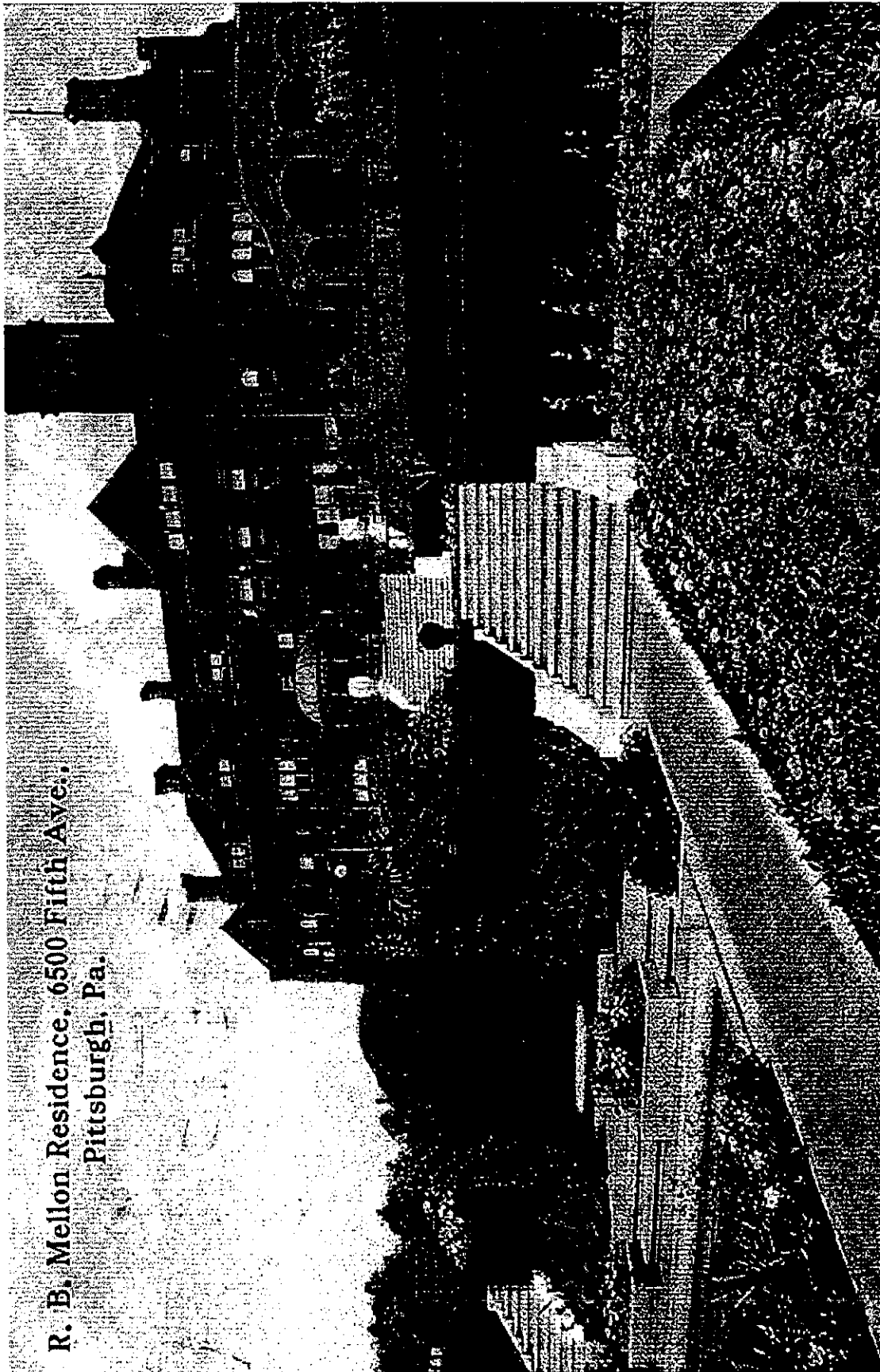


Figure I.3. Historical postcard of R.B. Mellon Residence, 6500 Fifth Ave., Pittsburgh, Pa., postmarked August 1914 (courtesy Pittsburgh History & Landmark Foundation).

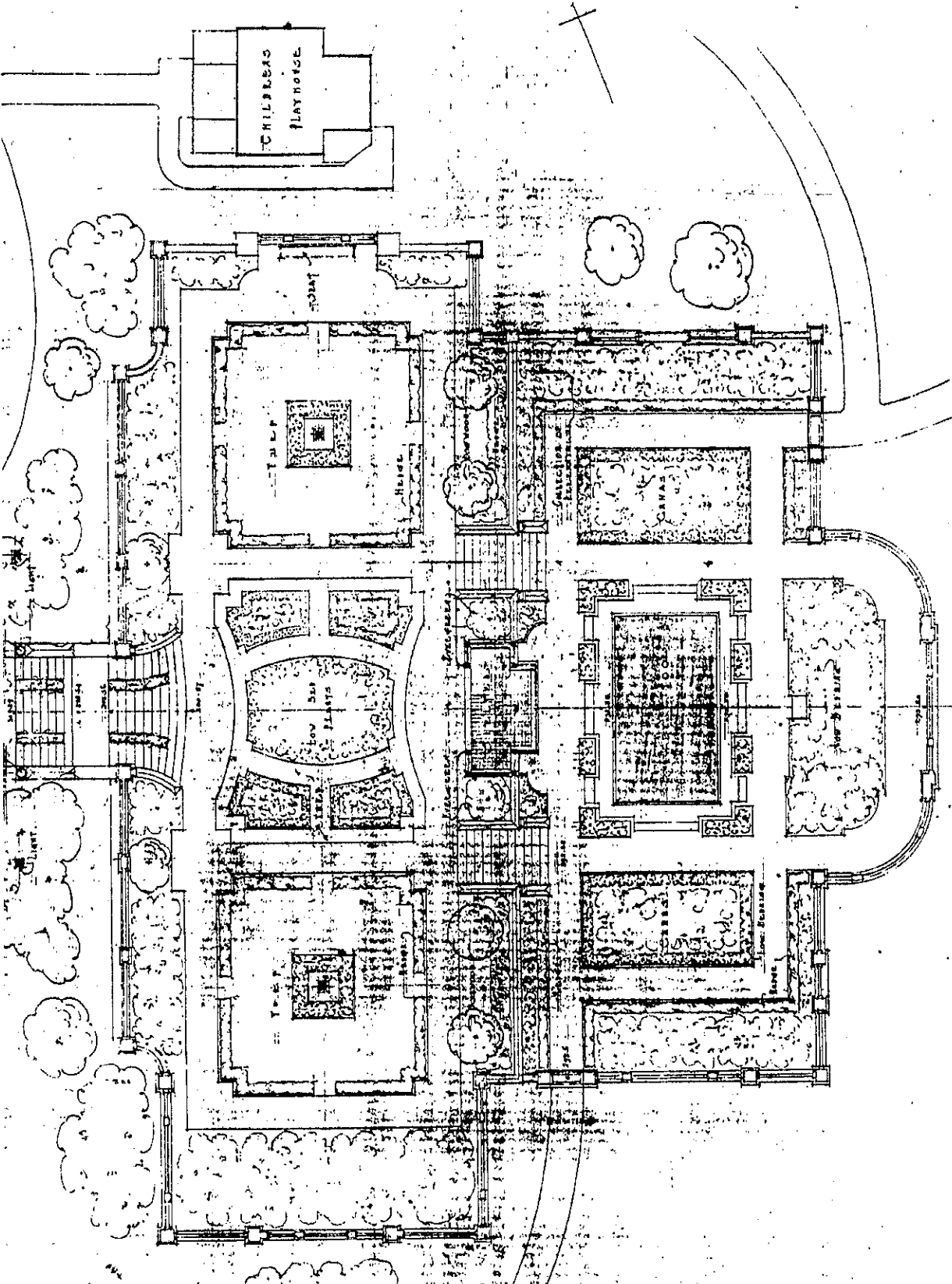


Figure 4. November 4, 1919 plan no. 14 by Percival Gallagher of the Olmsted Brothers firm. (courtesy of FLONHS National Park Service).

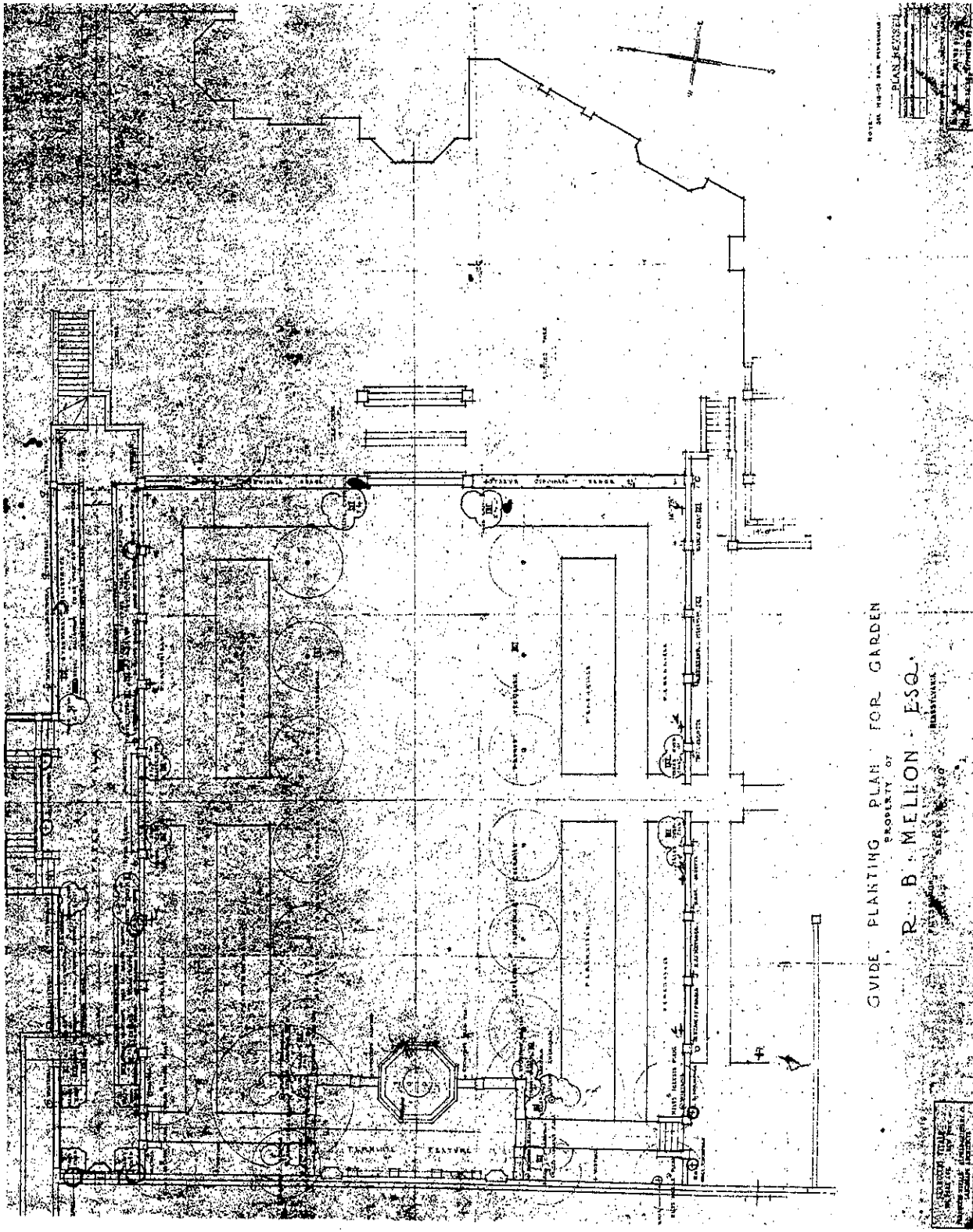


Figure I.5. Vitale and Geiffert *Guide Planting Plan for Garden, Property of R.B. Mellon Esq.*, April 26, 1929 (courtesy FLONHS National Park Service).



Figure I.6. Numerous spring bulbs planted in walled garden, 1931 (courtesy private photograph collection).



Figure I.7. Overlooking the richly planted terraced garden, 1935 (courtesy private collection).



Figure I.8. View of walled garden. Note single pair of cherry trees in lawn, 1935 (courtesy private collection).

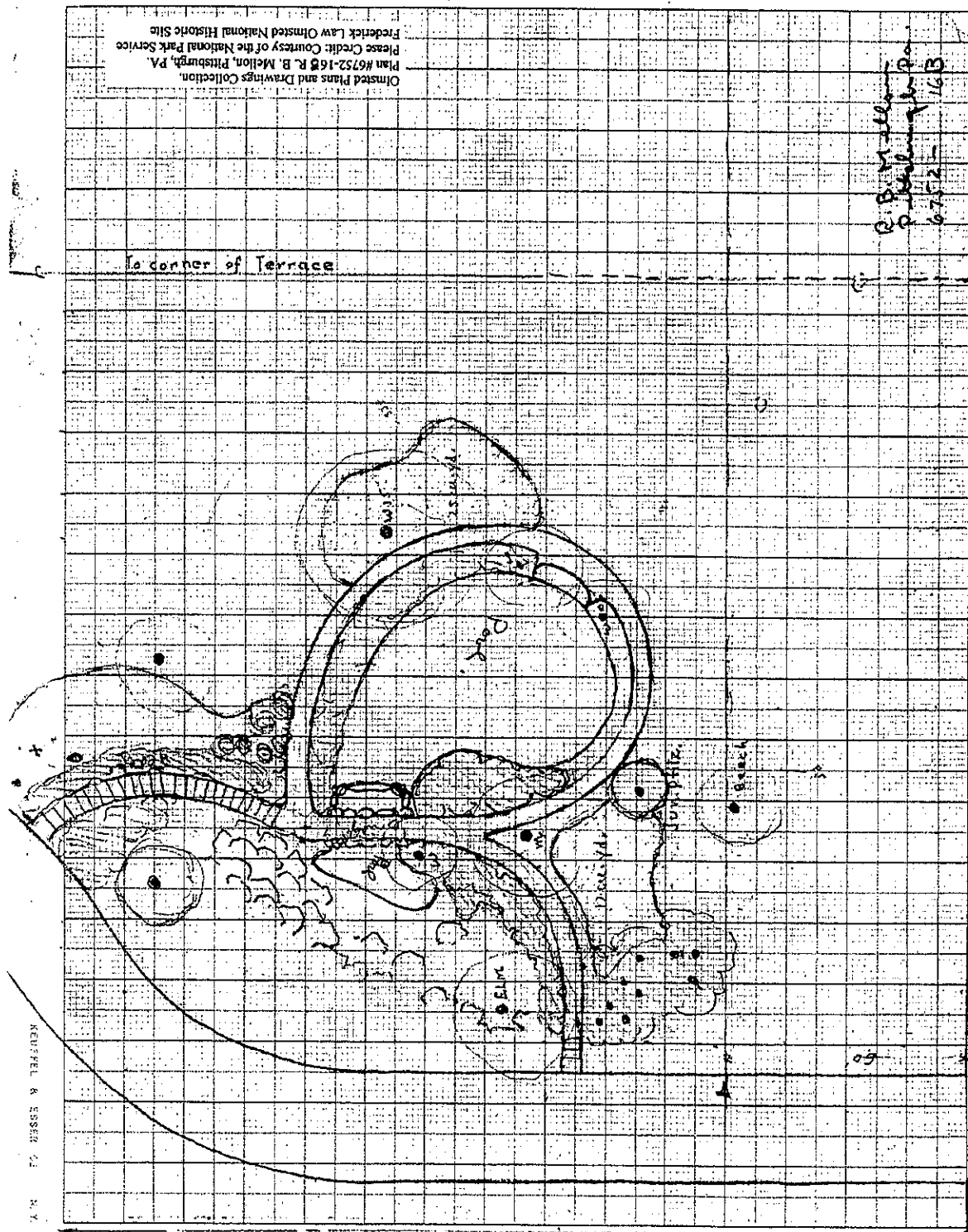


Figure I.9. General planting scheme of the pool on the William Pit Bvd. entrance drive, Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects, 1931 (courtesy FLONHS National Park Service).

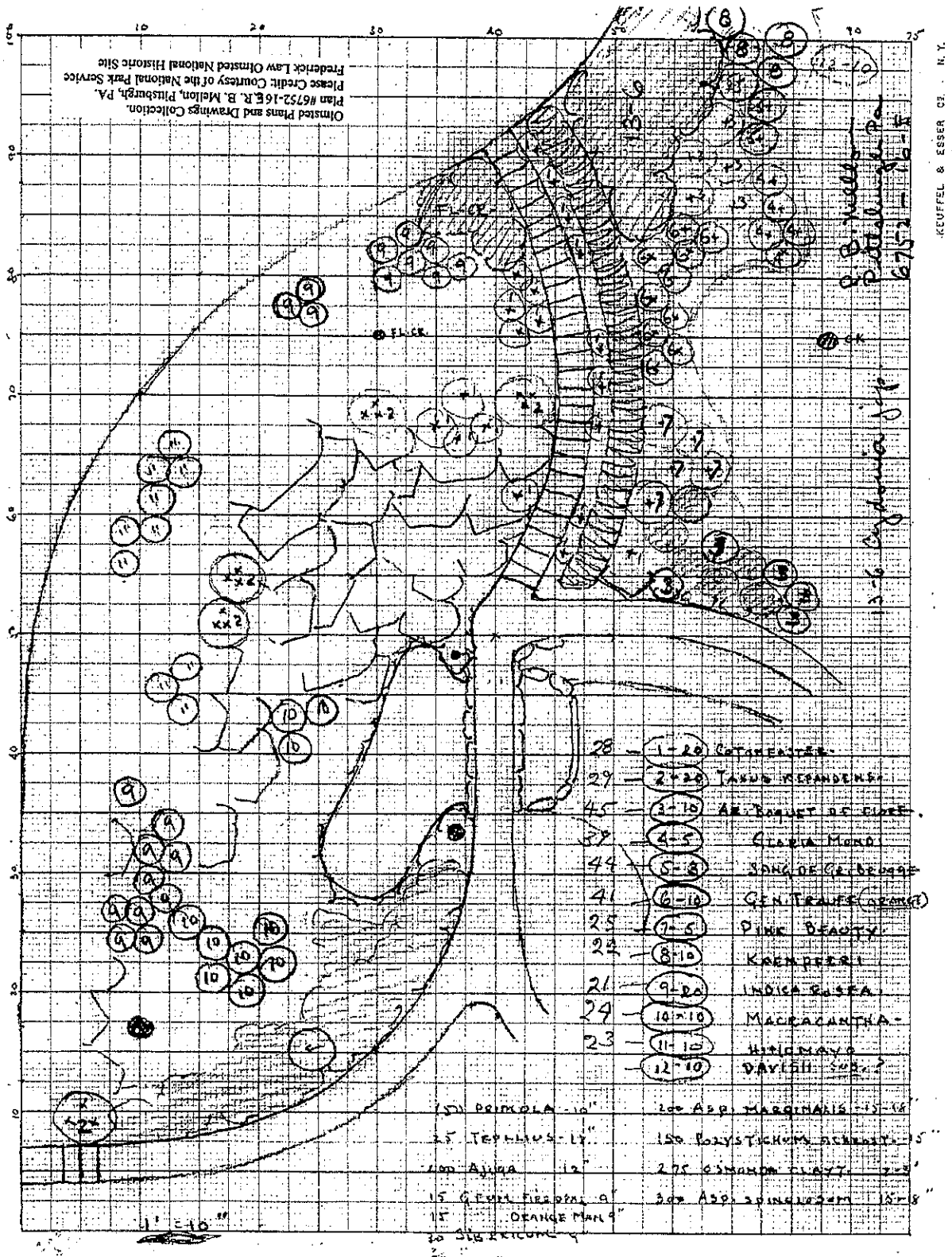


Figure I.10. Detailed planting scheme of the pool (1 of 3), Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects, 1931 (courtesy FLONHS National Park Service).

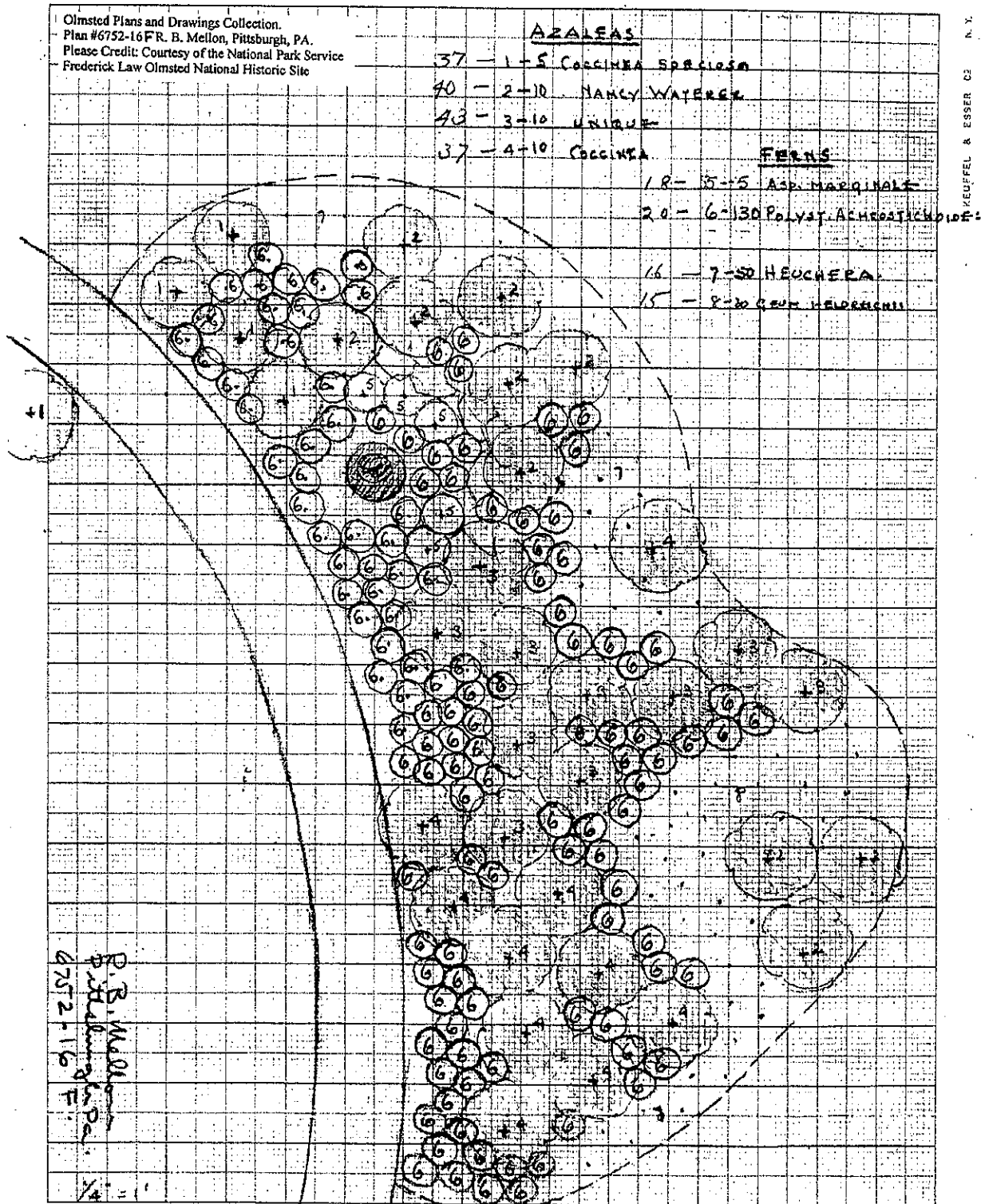


Figure I.11. Planting design detail of the pool (2 of 3), Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects, 1931 (courtesy FLONHS National Park Service).

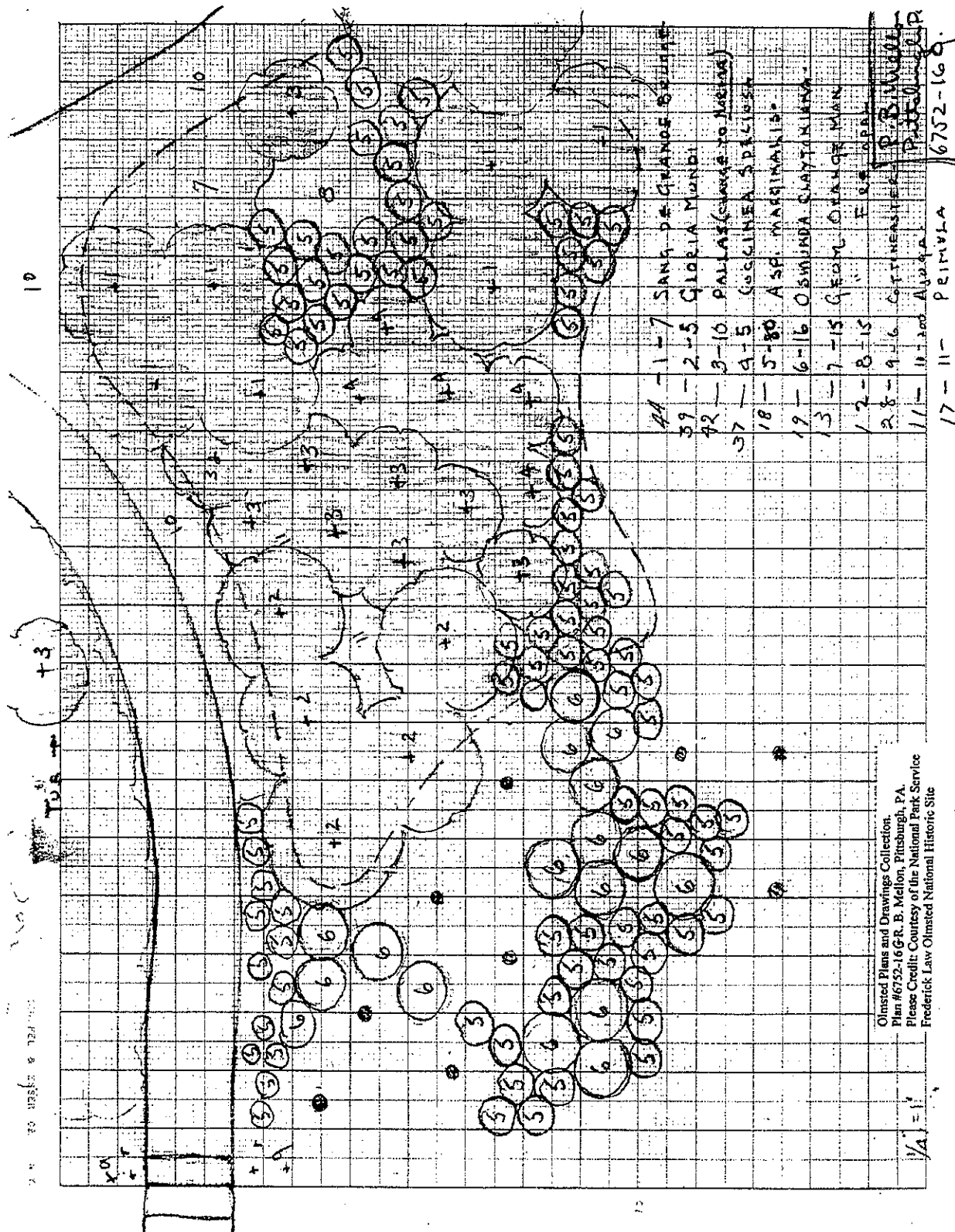


Figure I.12. Planting design detail of the pool (3 of 3), Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects, 1931 (courtesy FLOHNS National Park Service).

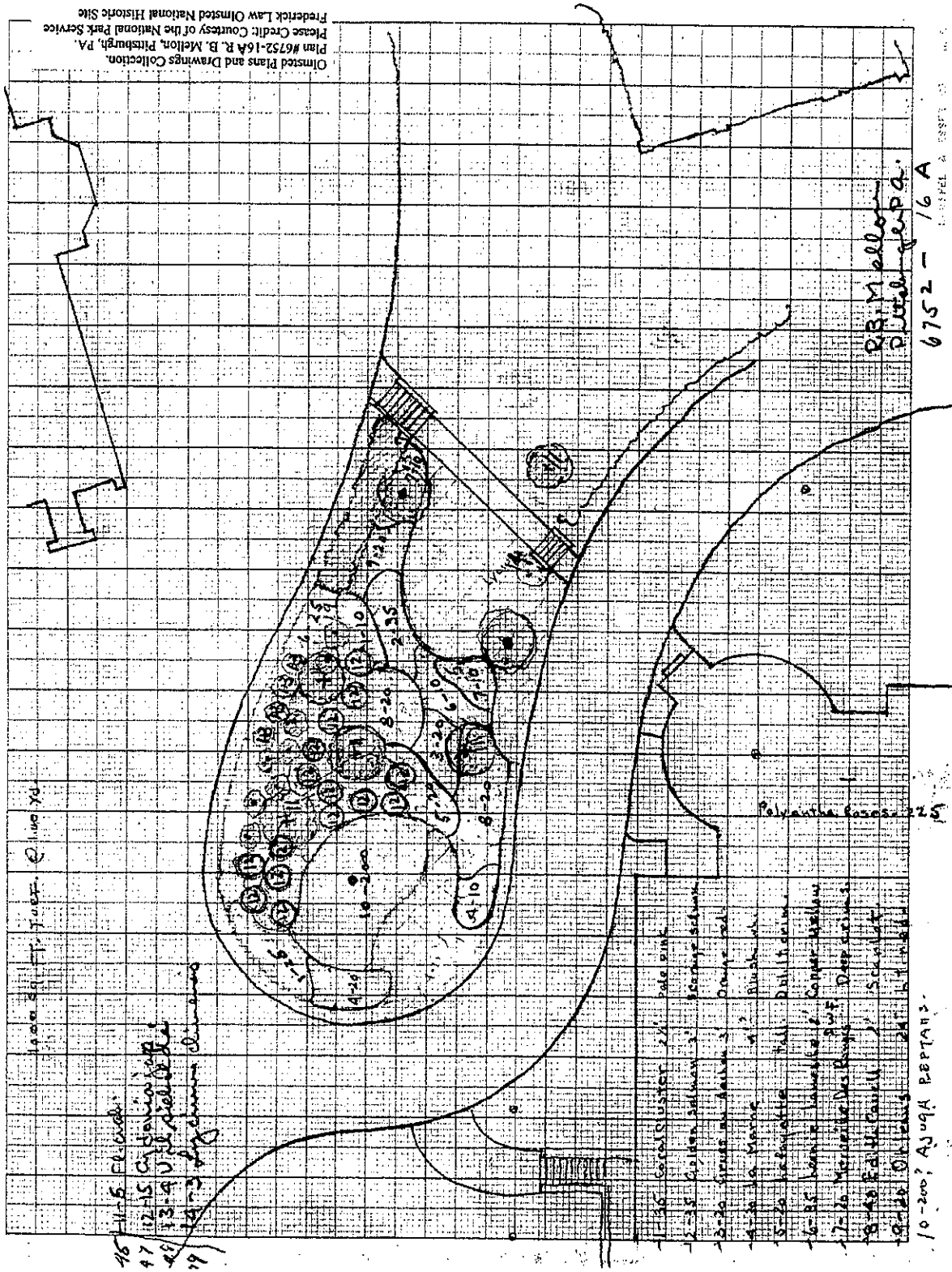


Figure I.13. Planting design in the bend of the drive between the conservatory and service court, Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects, 1931 (courtesy FLONHS National Park Service).

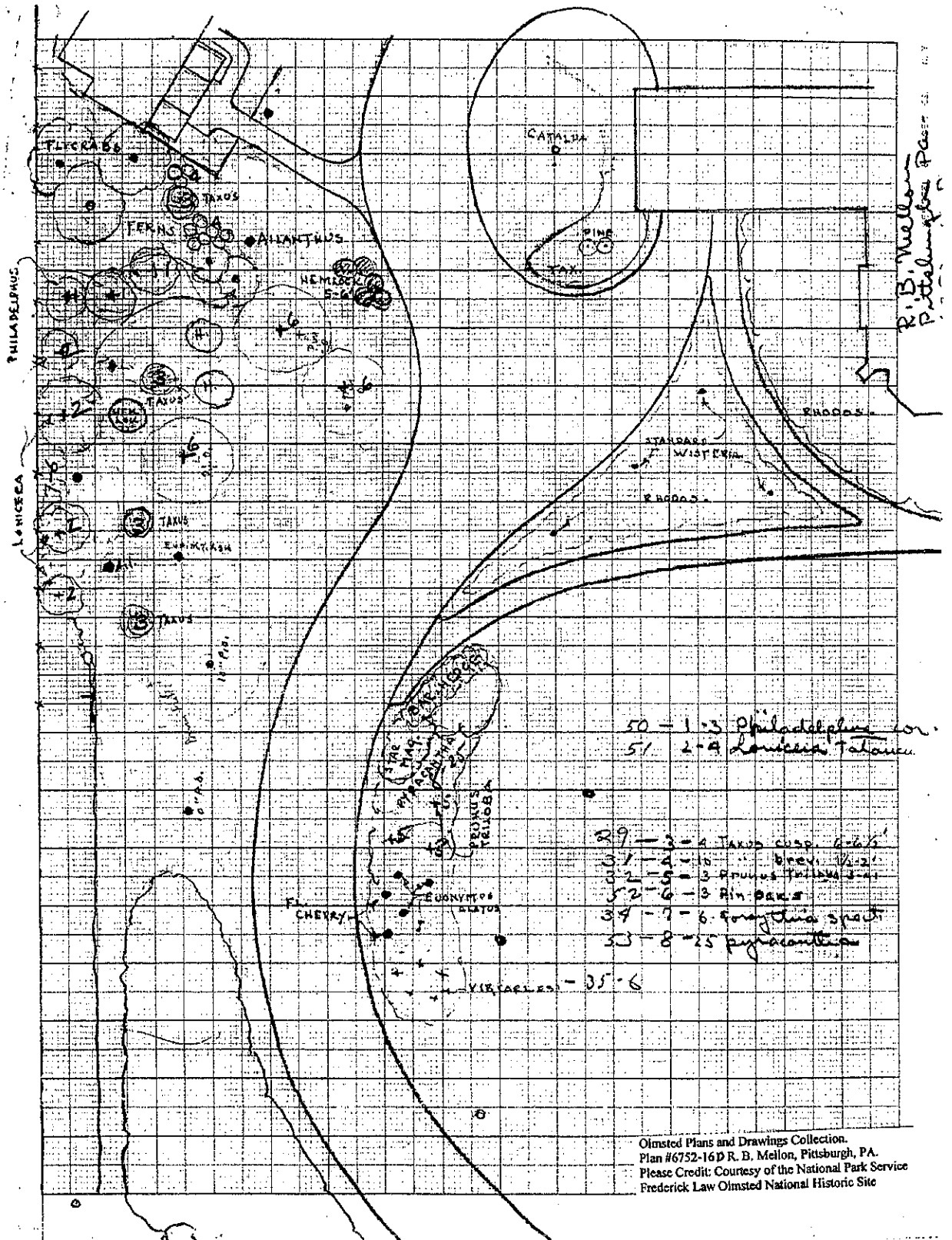


Figure I.14. Planting design near the porte cochere and play house, Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects, 1931 (courtesy FLONHS National Park Service).

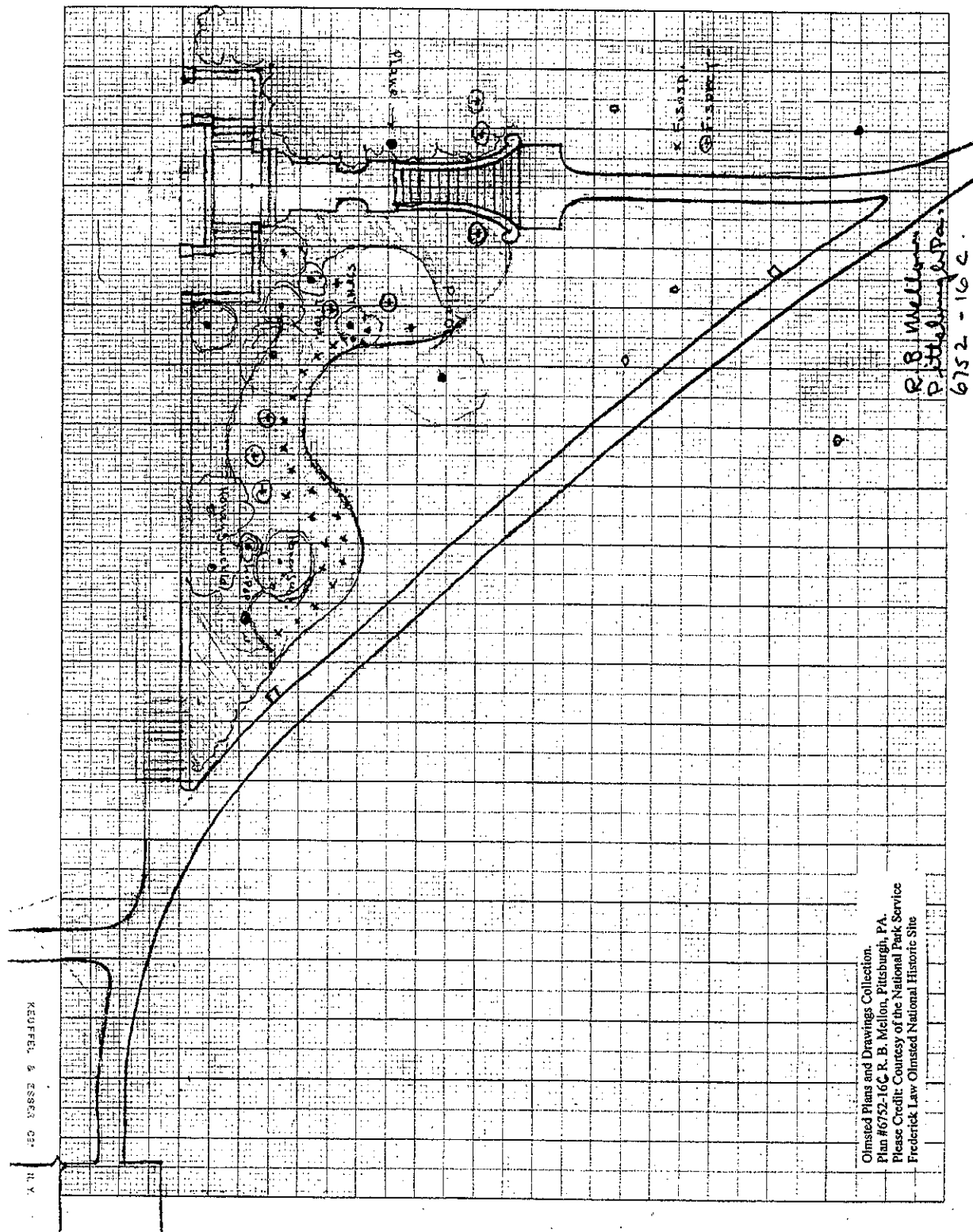


Figure I.15. Planting scheme for the bank north of the walled garden, Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects, 1931 (courtesy FLONHS National Park Service).

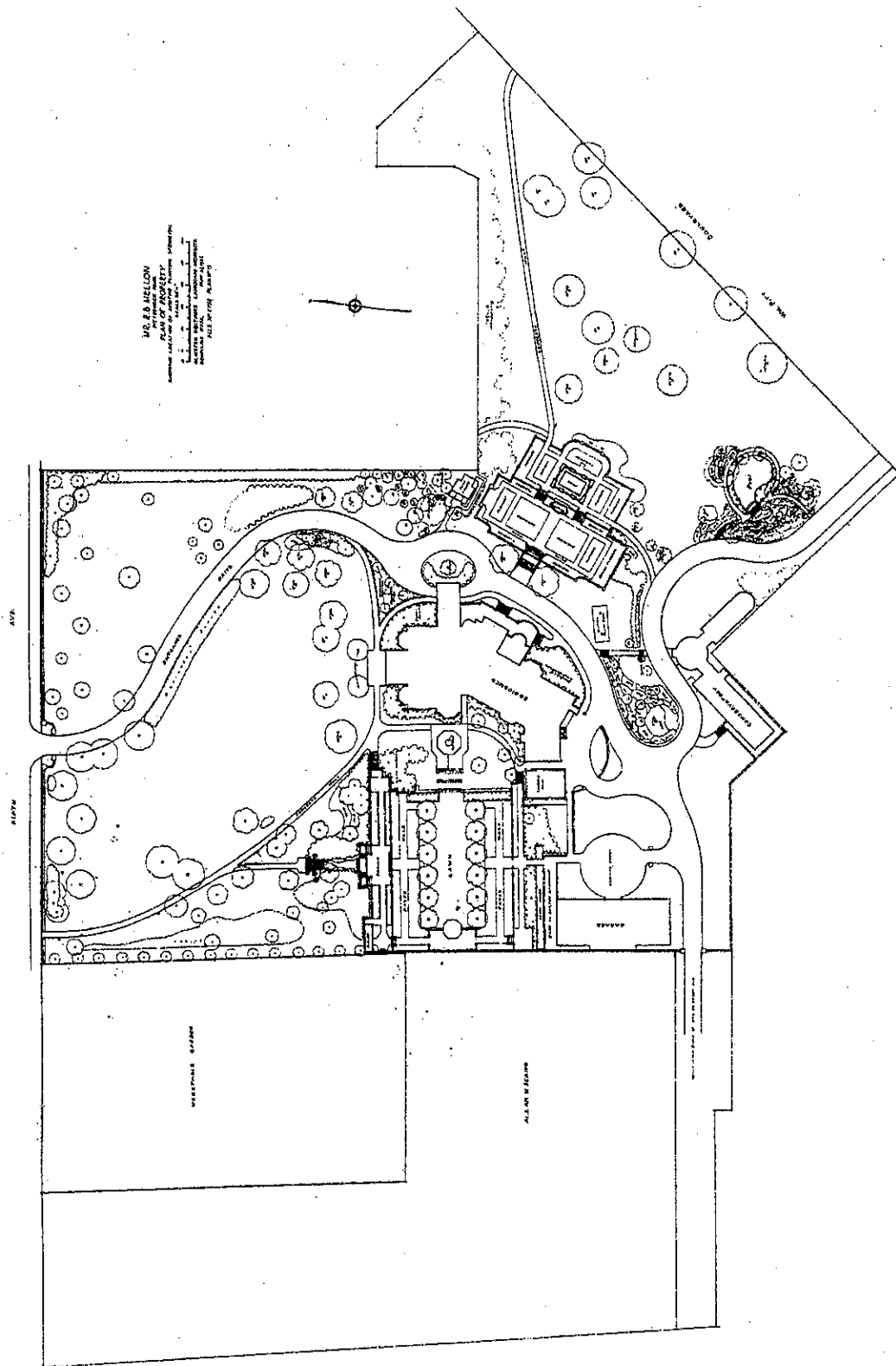


Figure I.16. Mr. R.B. Mellon, Pittsburgh, Penn., Plan of Property showing location of existing planting, spring 1931, Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects (courtesy FLONHS National Park Service).

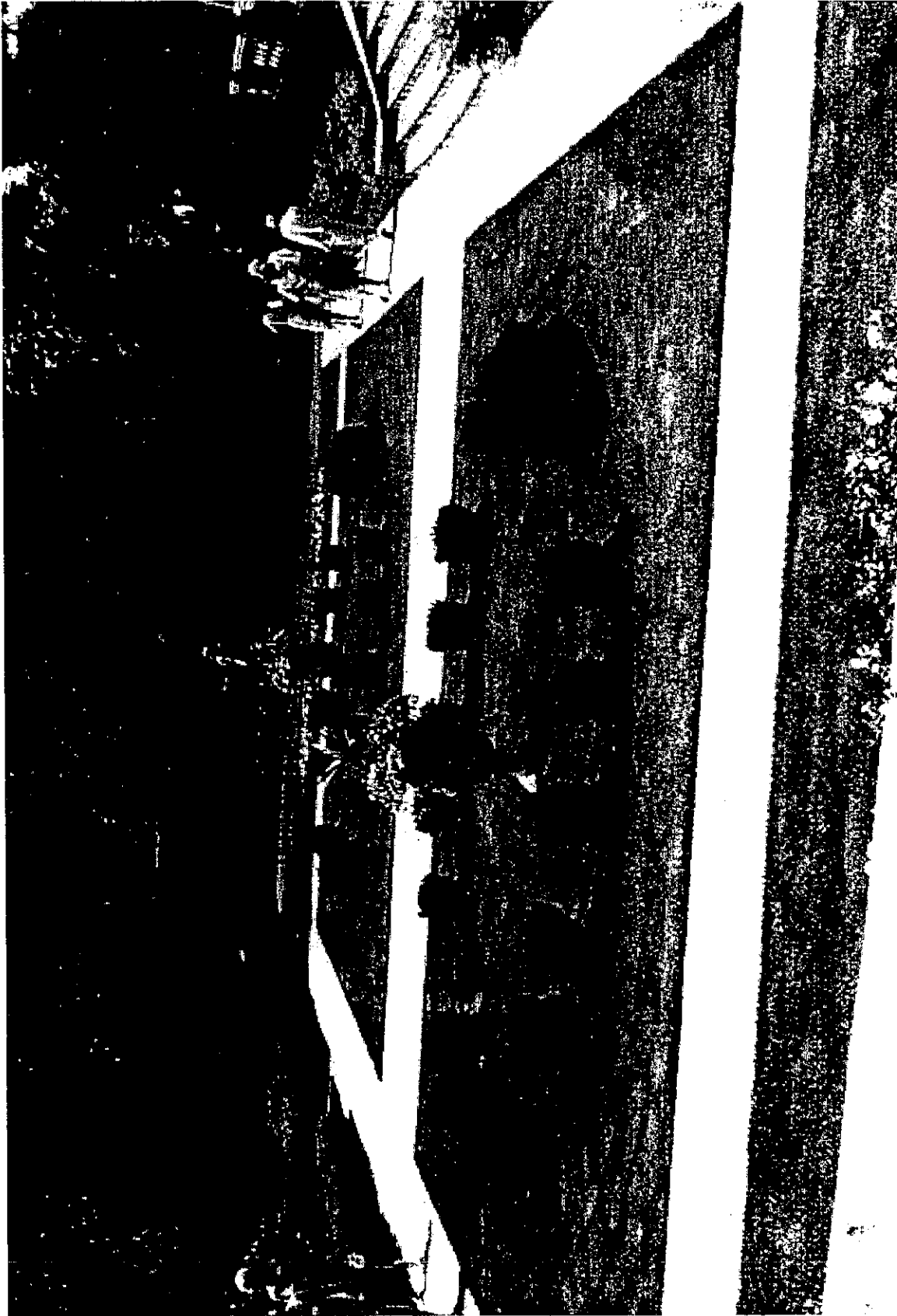


Figure I.17. Newly planted upper terrace in the terraced garden, Garden Club of Allegheny County, 1980 (courtesy Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation).

II. PERIOD CONDITIONS

A. INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the period conditions chapter and its corresponding plans is to capture the character of the periods most historically vital in Mellon estate and Mellon Park history. There are several decisive factors that contribute to the selection of the particular period, such as available historic documentation or the degree of significant change over a certain period. In the history of Mellon Park, there are two such periods that stand out as substantial landmarks in the progression of the landscape through time: the late 1930s and the early 1950s.

The years of the 1930s mark the culmination of all the elements of the Mellon estate landscape. During this time the terraced and walled gardens are fully planted and luxuriant, as are the four areas designed by the Olmsted Brothers. No other significant improvements were made to the estate landscape prior to its transition to a Pittsburgh City park. In addition, extensive primary documentation dating from this period is available. The 1931 plan (Figure I.6) made by the Olmsted firm shows the entire property at that time with the Olmsted designs integrated. Two professional photography collections commissioned by R.B. Mellon capture the estate gardens and house in 1931 and 1935. Although the broader landscape is not seen in these excellent black and white views a 1937 aerial photograph documents the entire property with a good degree of clarity (Figure II.1). Also available are copies of original plans and construction drawings of the gardens, details of the Olmsted designs and correspondence from the Olmsted office.

The early 1950s was selected as an appropriate park historic period because it marks the incorporation and partial redesign of all the areas that are known as Mellon Park today. By this time in addition to the Mellon estate, the Frew and Darcie properties had been obtained by the city and incorporated into Mellon Park as seen in Figure II.2. A plan from the City of Pittsburgh Department of Parks and Recreation made in 1950 records the topography, trees, and existing hardscape elements. Changes to the park made during these years are recorded in a 1952 plan by the Pittsburgh Landscape Architects Simonds & Simonds, Figure II.3.

The chapter is organized into two primary sections, one discussing the period conditions of the 1930s, and the other of the 1950s. To aid in the discussion, the property has been divided into six distinct areas referred to as landscape units. Reference plans showing these landscape units accompany both sections with Figure II.4 for the 1930s and Figure II.5 for the 1950s. The delineation of each unit was based on the capture of related functions and features, which when combined resulted in the shaping of a distinct space. These landscape units have been given names that reflect the dominant feature or function, and though these names change slightly from one historic period to the next, the units are shown as the same for purposes of comparison. The six units are depicted on Figure II.4, *Estate Landscape Units, circa 1930s*, which is drawn over the Olmsted Brothers plan of 1931, and are modified in Figure II.5 *Park Landscape Units*. The landscape areas shown are as follows:

1. (Former) House Site
2. Terraced Garden
3. Walled Garden
4. Fifth Avenue Parkland
5. William Pitt Avenue (Beechwood Avenue) Parkland
6. Garage (Garden Center) and (Former) Conservatory Site

The discussion of landscape units and their character follows the framework set forth in the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes, 1996 (Guidelines)*, which addresses the qualities and physical character of landscapes by looking at the:

1. Spatial organization and land patterns - including views and visual relationships
2. Topography - the shape of the land
3. Vegetation - all types of plantings and vegetative cover
4. Circulation - drives, parking, paths, trails, and steps
5. Water elements and drainage - swales, subsurface drainage structure, fountains, and pools
6. Park use structures - buildings other built elements
7. Site furnishings and objects - sculpture, benches, and other small-scale elements

B. 1930s LANDSCAPE UNITS

The Mellon Property was conceived and constructed as a whole property. The overall spatial organization and circulation of the property are a useful starting point in this period description. The Mellon property has an irregular form. With frontages on Fifth Avenue and William Pitt Boulevard (later Beechwood Boulevard) the property rises from street level to a ridge upon which the house and walled garden were constructed. The sloping topography affords long views from this ridge to across these slopes to the abutting public streets.

The estate circulation system included drives entering from three directions. The entrance drive, so labeled on the plan, climbed from Fifth Avenue and looped through the porte-cochere before continuing southward and eastward to the William Pitt Boulevard entrance. A third drive access extended from the west.

A system of paths provides access from the two street frontages on different alignments than the drives, and also articulated the circulation within the gardens. A walk with stairs connected the conservatory to the house. Near this walk a manhole accessed a tunnel that linked the house, garage, and conservatory. Overlooking the terraced garden was a porch contained with a balustrade. Shown in plan, a wall or balustrade also curved around part of the south end of the home. A fence separated the playhouse from the terraced garden, probably to discourage children from playing on its walls and falling over the balustrade.

1. 1930s House Site

This landscape unit encompasses the house site and its immediate surrounds to include foundation plantings, octagonal terrace with well, rock garden, porte-cochere area, playhouse, croquet lawn, paths, steps and drives, and the planting mass at the curve in the drive. During the 1930s the house was the central feature on the property. It governed the configuration and orientation of the landscape elements. The shape of the house itself was derived from the existing landscape when it was built, as the plan reflects the irregular angle that resulted from a desire to have the north and southeast elevations respectively parallel to Fifth Avenue and Beechwood Boulevard. Much of the property would have been viewable from different the windows and doors of the house. The plan of the house in turn dictated the axial arrangements from the house to the walled and terraced gardens, while both the house and the topography influenced the circulation patterns of the property.

The house sat on a flat terrace on the crest of a hill, with slopes descending to both streets. This location commanded the best view of the property and the neighborhood. It was nearly the highest point in the property, with the walled garden sited slightly higher than the house. The 1931 Olmsted plan shows the foundation of the house planted in rhododendrons and hemlocks, with two ginkgos planted off of the northern extension of the home framing a view of primarily open lawn with trees on the perimeter. Other trees are shown near the building, and the 1950 plan identifies them as ginkgos as well. In the circular drive there was a catalpa (weeping) and more large shrubs, possibly rhododendron. Photographs of the house show it partially covered with vines, with shrubs and trees nearby blending it into the surrounding landscape.

A paved octagonal space, shown in Figure II.6, extends from the house to the west. This terrace was appointed with a central octagonal lawn in which a stone and iron wellhead is centered. Two wooden benches provide for seating in this sunny space. A rock garden, mounded with large, sharp edged boulders adjoins this terrace space to the north. Figure II.7 shows the bed lines of this garden with a mown lawn and single chair at its highpoint on the right-hand side of the image. The design of the rock garden is not seen in any drawings and may have been a creation of the owners and their gardener.

To the northwest of the circular drive a planting area, designed by the Olmsted firm, provided interest near the house and screening from the neighboring lot. This space, against a boundary fence, was filled with a variety of trees and understory plants in a loose naturalistic design and was an area of interest when approaching along the entrance drive. South of this planting was the playhouse, which was directly accessible from the front door and commanded a view over the terraced garden. To the east side of the playhouse, the 1931 Olmsted plan depicts a mass of planting which also served to screen views of the neighboring Frew property. Two elms framed the entrance to the terraced garden. Two clipped plane trees, shown as a rectangle on the plan, provided an architectonic element and may have screened the view toward the conservatory from the house. A small, flat terrace to the south served as a croquet lawn. Here is shown another mass of planting and what might have been some sort of retaining wall where a rock retaining wall stands today, though it is not labeled. Directly south of the home was another Olmsted Brothers planting design located in the space circumscribed by a hairpin turn of the drive, functioning again as an area to provide both nearby interest and screening.

2. 1930s Terraced Garden

The terraced garden was designed along with the house by architects Alden and Harlow in 1911. This garden served as a direct extension of the house into the landscape. It was axially symmetric and forms two principal terraces as it steps down a slope to the southeast. Figure II.8 depicts an overview of the garden and the hillside beyond William Pitt Boulevard.

The garden paths were paved in brick, arranged in decorative patterns, and set with limestone squares and edged with limestone curbs. A wide, central stair served as the transition from the house to the upper garden terrace, shown in Figure II.9, while two narrower stairs led down to the lower one. Two additional access points to the lower terrace connected with paths that led to the Frew property and the conservatory.

Edge planting beds were filled with spring bulbs, annuals and shrubs, while the central panels surrounded by walks contained sculptures organized in decorative boxwood arabesques with mown turf. Exotic plants in pots punctuated steps and walls. Several large arborvitae provided vertical punctuation at symmetrical points in the garden.

There were three water elements in the terraced garden. One small pool on the east edge of the upper terrace, a large rectangular pool in the center of the lower terrace surrounded by a wire mesh fence, and a small third pool located at the base of a wall on the south edge of the upper terrace. This area was a wider paved terrace seen in historic views (though not shown on the initial 1911 plan), and it was equipped with a summer canopy and seating. Another place to sit in the garden was provided by a bench placed on axis against the western wall of the lower terrace. The terraces were separated and retained by red brick walls on (limestone) foundations with dark red terra cotta caps. A combination of brick and open balustrades topped most of the perimeter walls. Urns and pots empty or filled with plants were located at steps, on walls or in planting beds.

3. 1930s Walled Garden

In 1929 a formal, walled garden was designed by Vitale and Geiffert for the area to the west of the house (Figure II.10). Like the terraced garden, it was a geometric, symmetrical extension of the architecture. The walled portion, framed on three side by solid red brick walls capped in white limestone, provided the most enclosed element of the relatively open Mellon property. This garden was focused on an important facade of the house and was specifically centered on the library bay. The west wall separated the garden from the Scaife residence, while the north wall enclosed it from the balustraded terrace on the north, Fifth Avenue and the estate parkland. The south wall contained it from the service areas of the garage and laundry yard. The northern portion of the garden with steps and balustrade afforded views over the parkland to the north toward Fifth Avenue, shown in Figure II.11. The paired limestone steps led down the hill to the scroll stair from 1911, along a curving path, to a pedestrian gate on the avenue. The central space was rectangular with linear beds edging the walls and paths and a double row of trees edging a central lawn panel. The south terrace was open to the garage and service area to the south, though the laundry yard was walled.

The main axis of the walled garden was aligned with the flagstone path and paved octagon which originated near the house. The octagonal form reflected the octagonal bay of the house from which the garden's axis originated. Three sets of broad limestone steps led up to the garden's central lawn.

On either side of the lawn were linear, rectangular planting beds. Two flagstone walks bounded the outside of these beds, followed by another bed of flowering plants and shrubs before the wall. Portions of a stone walk directed movement on a cross axis to traverse the garden across the lawn as the paved walks stopped at the edges of the planting beds. Iron gates were placed at garden wall openings further highlighting this cross axis.

The central terrace, shown in Figure II.10, terminated at the west end in a paved plaza with a fountain and high limestone wall carved with arches and details in a gothic theme. This plaza was also contained by low walls and plantings. Alcoves in the wall contained bronze sculptures of female figures. (Check with Phipps on sculptor, date and details.) In the 1935 photos four vases and frog figurines are placed on the east entry stairs (Figure I.9). Chairs, tables and numerous potted plants were set out on the paved patio between this fountain and the central limestone and brick wall.

Important to the backdrop of the western wall was a row of columnar poplars. While these were on the Scaife property, they were important elements in the view of the garden from the Mellon residence.

The plan of the walled garden was formal and symmetrical. The plantings followed symmetrical patterns as well but were allowed to grow naturally and were planted in profusion to create an informal appearance. By the time the 1935 photographs are taken only two of the twelve flowering cherry trees remain in their rows on the central terrace. Two large elms are present in both sets of photographs and also appear on the 1950 survey, but they are not noted on the Olmsted plan. A yew hedge framed the east edge of the central lawn, though it was not tightly pruned. Yew was also used at bed ends and turning points along with azalea, while rose of sharon created mass and interest along the walls. While the photographs show spring blooms, the planting plan note hybrids of such perennials as peony, iris, anemone, foxglove, monkshood, poppy, delphinium, phlox and columbine. The low interior edge is formed with forget-me-not, arabis and creeping phlox. Heliotrope is shown as an annual for planting in a few locations in front of perennials. These plantings created bloom display through the spring and summer with some extending into the fall.

4. 1930s Fifth Avenue Parkland

The Fifth Avenue parkland consists of the north slope of the property. It is planted informally in lawn and trees. Few of these trees are identified on the 1931 Olmsted plan, though those that remain are called out on the 1950 survey. The parkland served as both a transition and a buffer between the house and the street. The street was lined with a black, eight-foot high, wrought iron fence on a dark red, on foot high, cut, polished granite base. The main entry drive entered through an elaborate gate at the center of the northern boundary and curved to the east as it climbed the grade to the house. A view of the house was glimpsed as one entered, then blocked by a mass of deciduous shrubs as the drive climbed, then reopened. The house would then have been dramatically revealed as one rounded the final bend to reach the porte-cochere. To the west of the drive was a concrete path that began at a gate on Fifth Avenue and led to the scroll stair and branched to the house. A row of fifteen common cypresses bounded the west property line, no doubt forming an effective screen. The 1931 plan shows a mass of planting along the eastern boundary and in the east corner as well.

5. 1930s William Pitt Avenue (Beechwood Avenue) Parkland

The William Pitt Avenue parkland functioned similarly to the Fifth Avenue parkland. Thirteen trees were located on the central lawn in the 1931 Olmsted plan, though judging from the size of the trees in the 1950 field survey, some trees may not have been shown on this plan. A massing of shrubs is shown against the north property line while the south line along the street has a simple, iron fence with two gates, one at the drive, a second at the walk. The concrete walk led from the street to the lower corner of the terraced garden, while the secondary entry drive on the south edge climbed the hill past the conservatory. Located next to the drive was another planting design by the Olmsted Brothers office, this one incorporating a pool. The pool and surrounding plantings provide a garden scale landscape and a destination in this broader parkland of trees in lawn. Paths stepped down from the drive, through rocks and naturalistic plantings to circle the pond and cross it on a small, arched bridge. The design incorporated several existing trees providing a landscape of dappled light. The pool with its carved granite frog and bronze stork was referred to as the "oriental pool", conjuring up a romantic image. Figure II.12, a 1935 photograph, portrays its condition about five years after construction.

6. 1930s Garage and Conservatory Site

The garage and conservatory site housed several service functions, including a circular service court in front of the garage and a walled laundry-drying yard. This portion of the property was also concealed from view, with the conservatory partially visible from William Pitt Boulevard behind a screen planting. This area marked the convergence of the three vehicular drives on the site, the third drive entering from Shady Avenue. The third drive appears to be the service entrance as it traverses a narrow right-of-way from Shady Avenue, though the paving is large cobblestones and a rather grand gate marks the property boundary. The William Pitt Boulevard entrance is simpler. One would think that this entrance would have received a treatment at a level somewhere in between the other two.

Little landscape treatment detail is shown on the 1931 plan, and no period photographs have been located. There is a high, brick retaining wall with a terra cotta cap along a portion of the boundary to the south. This wall is important to the topography holding up a steep grade change at the neighbor. One can conjecture, based on other areas of the property, that the area along the wall to the south was planted in some sort of a screen that block views from the neighboring property.

C. 1950s LANDSCAPE UNITS

1. 1950s Former House Site

The house was demolished and removed between 1940-41. The house site in 1950 was flat lawn, without visible foundation remnants. Foundation plantings and steps near the house were also removed. The dialogue between the house and the landscape was severed and the axial connections and architectural relationships thereby altered. However, the spatial relationship of this central terrace overlooking and providing access to each of the other landscape units remained to a degree.

Vegetation information from this period is only partially complete. The 1950 plan calls out the size and species of all of the existing trees, but few shrubs or understory plants are noted or identified.

For example, in the two Olmsted Brothers planting designs near the house, only the trees are included on the plan. Available evidence does not confirm or deny the presence of earlier shrub and garden plantings to any degree. No 1950s photographs have been located to date. Many of the trees in the house site remained from the 1930 plan, though the catalpa in the circular drive is not shown. Two young trees are shown growing where the house once stood: an 8" elm and a 6" unidentified species. Only one of the ginkgoes on the north edge of the site is identified on the plan, though through LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP recent field verification it is most likely an error of the 1950 plan, as both ginkgoes still stand in 1999.

The circulation configuration also changes during this period. In 1950 the original drive layout remained. In 1952 Simonds & Simonds, Landscape Architects, designed changes that narrowed the north entrance drive from Fifth Avenue to a foot path. The path generally stayed in the old roadbed, though the alignment was straightened. The path was also moved slightly to the east near the house, and a three-way intersection designed with a path leading east to Beechwood Boulevard. The Simonds & Simonds design was likely constructed shortly after the date of the plan. Most of the walk which once surrounded the house had been removed, and the 1952 plan does not show a new one to be added. The octagonal pavement to the west is listed as concrete rather than the stone seen in the photographs from the 1930s. The remaining sidewalks from the estate years included a section of concrete walk on the east edge of the walled garden, the stairs and walk which led to the conservatory, and a 3' walk that partially surrounded the former site of the play house.

2. 1950s Terraced Garden

The terraced garden retained its form and visual association with the Beechwood Avenue Boulevard. Planting areas are identified on the 1950 plan, with no details as to their contents. Oral history indicates that around this time the Allegheny Garden Club replanted the gardens with roses. The lower terrace pool remained, though the central upper terrace pool is not shown. The paths are labeled as brick, probably the original herringbone pattern brick remained, as some portions still exist today. Whether or not any statuary still existed in the garden at this time is unknown, though at least three pieces had been removed and placed in front of the Garden Center.

3. 1950s Walled Garden

Again documentation is limited to the 1950 and 1952 plans where no changes are indicated. None of the cherries from the central lawn remained, but the elms flanking the fountain did. Some of the columnar poplars behind the western wall still existed. Two trees on the rock garden are listed as 30" caliper sumac, though these were more likely the elms that still exist. An 8" caliper pine is shown growing near the rock garden. The planting beds, walks, and eastern hedge in the central terrace were still in their original configuration. The Amateis bronze maidens had been removed from the garden and taken to Rolling Rock, Pennsylvania between 1940 and 1942. The statues were later donated to the City of Pittsburgh by Richard Scaife in 1967 and placed in the Phipps Conservatory at Schenley Park, where they reside today.

4. 1950s Fifth Avenue Parkland

The 1950s mark the integration of the Frew and Darcie properties into the Fifth Avenue parkland. These properties were obtained by the city in the early 1940s and included on the 1950 plan of the park. At this time the houses were gone but the boundary fences still separated the properties and

portions of circulation and foundations remained. These elements were removed in order to create a single expanse of sloping parkland of turf and trees moving uphill from Fifth Avenue.

The 1950 plan is the first source noting the vegetation on the former Frew and Darcie properties. The pattern of the trees is much like that of the Mellon property: primarily large trees scattered on the lawn. A hedgerow existed on the far eastern edge of the Darcie property. The common cypress on the western boundary of the Mellon property had been thinned to a spacing of every 40' rather than 20'. The pattern of trees on the Mellon property remained consistent.

Changes to circulation are seen during this period. The 1950 plan depicts the original layout of all three drives on the three properties. Remaining walks are also shown, though on the Frew and Darcie properties these are limited to remnants including a partial walks and stairways along with pieces of foundation from both homes. Notes on the 1952 plan called for these foundations to be removed and obliterated. The 1952 plan also calls for the removal of the Darcie drive and the transformation of the Frew and Mellon drives into paths. The Frew property path was to follow the original drive configuration until crossing a new east-west path and connecting to the terraced garden. Another new walk connected the Mellon entry drive to the concrete path extending north from the scroll stair.

5. 1950s Beechwood Avenue Parkland

Changes to the Beechwood Avenue parkland were primarily limited to alterations of the vegetation and circulation. The parkland pattern remained though any vegetative screens that may have still separated the parkland from the Darcie and Frew properties were probably removed at this time, along with the fence. In the area of the oriental pool 1950 plan only identifies a clump of shrubs in this area, while the 1952 plan lists six trees at or under 8" in caliper and two 20" caliper trees. The oriental pond is not shown on either the 1950 or 1952 plans although oral history indicates that it remained until recent times and may be extant below fill. The concrete walk from the terraced garden to Beechwood Avenue was removed at this time and replaced with the current asphalt walk configuration.

6. 1950s Garden Center and Former Conservatory Site

Changes in the form of the former garage and service area resulted from the removal of the conservatory and additions to the garage when it became the home of the Pittsburgh Garden Center in 1948. Several other additions expanded the Garden Center to the east in the 1950s and 60s, including a small greenhouse and a raised concrete terrace. On the terrace were placed two statues originally located in the terraced garden. Also added during the early park years was a distinctive brass and stone drinking fountain east of the Garden Center, a feature common in other Pittsburgh Parks from this period. The former Mellon service drive was also altered to provide a loading dock for the Garden Center at the terrace, but the convergence of the three entrance drives remained the same. Vegetation around the conservatory site in the 1950 plan was limited to a single small cherry and some shrubs at the southeastern end of where the building once stood. A row of trees is also depicted north of the Garden Center, but the species is not identified on the plan.



Figure II.1. 1937 aerial view of the R.B. Mellon property (Courtesy of County Archives).

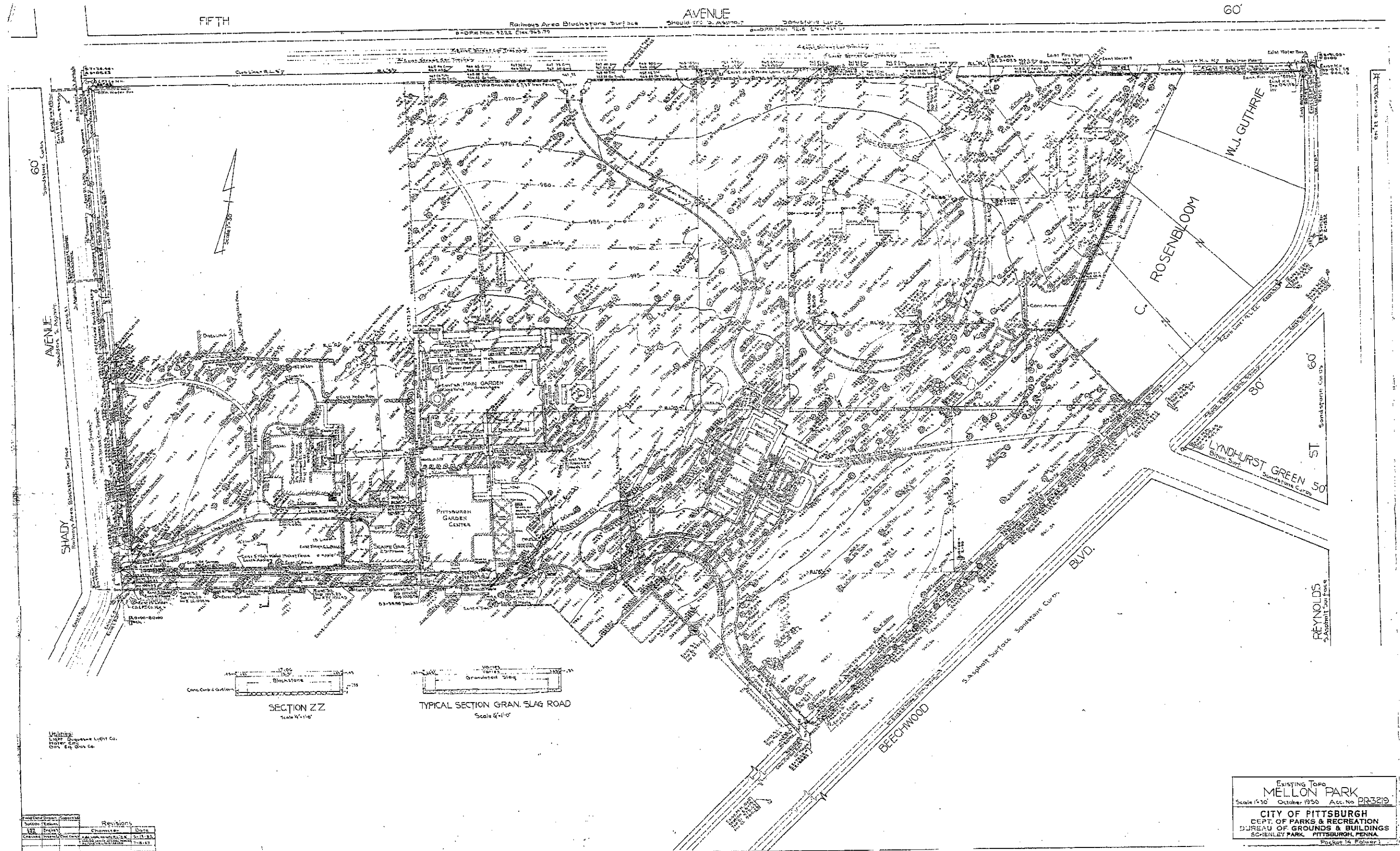


Figure II.2. Plan of Mellon Park, made by the Pittsburgh Department of Parks and Recreation, 1950 (courtesy of Pittsburgh DPW).

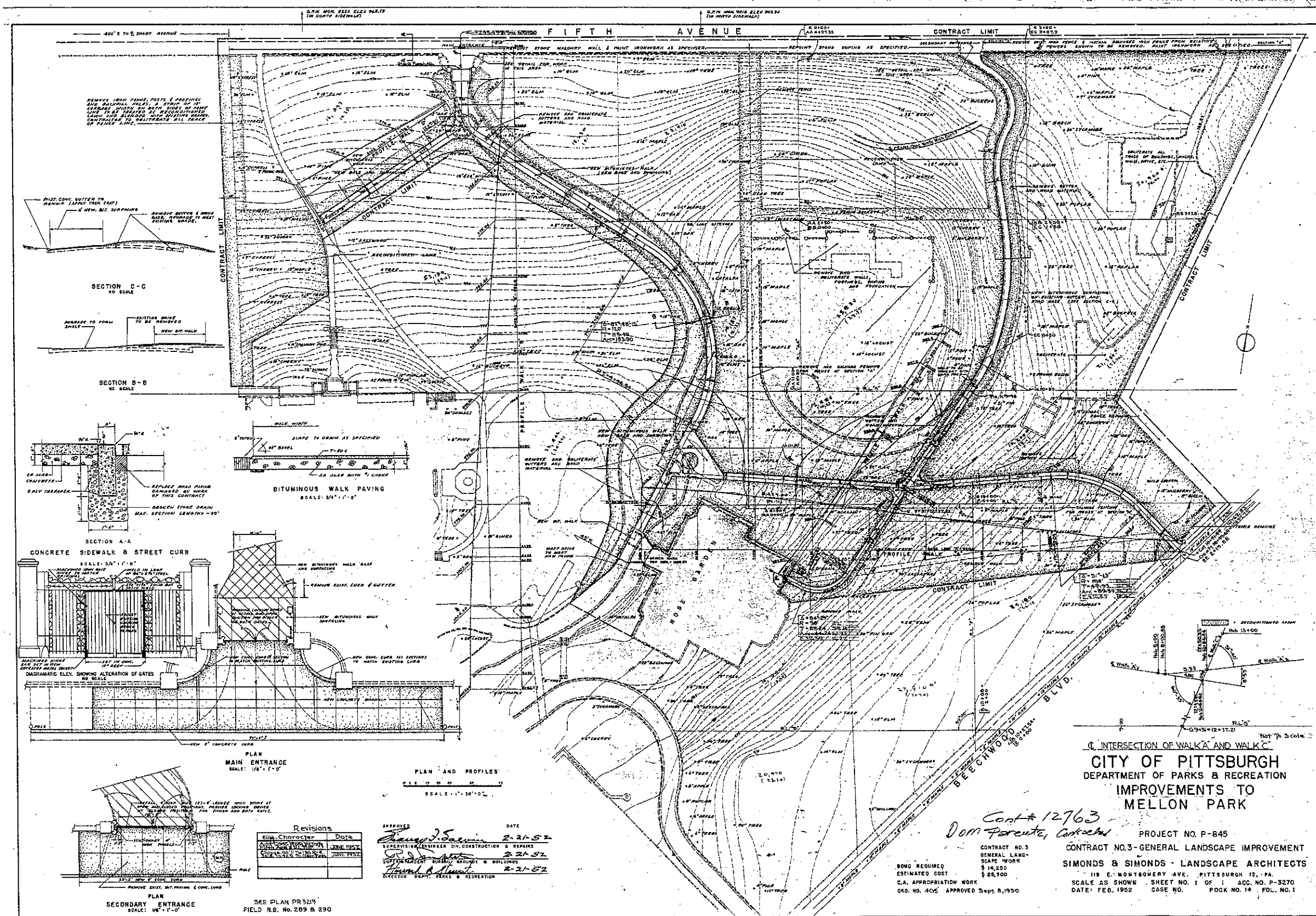
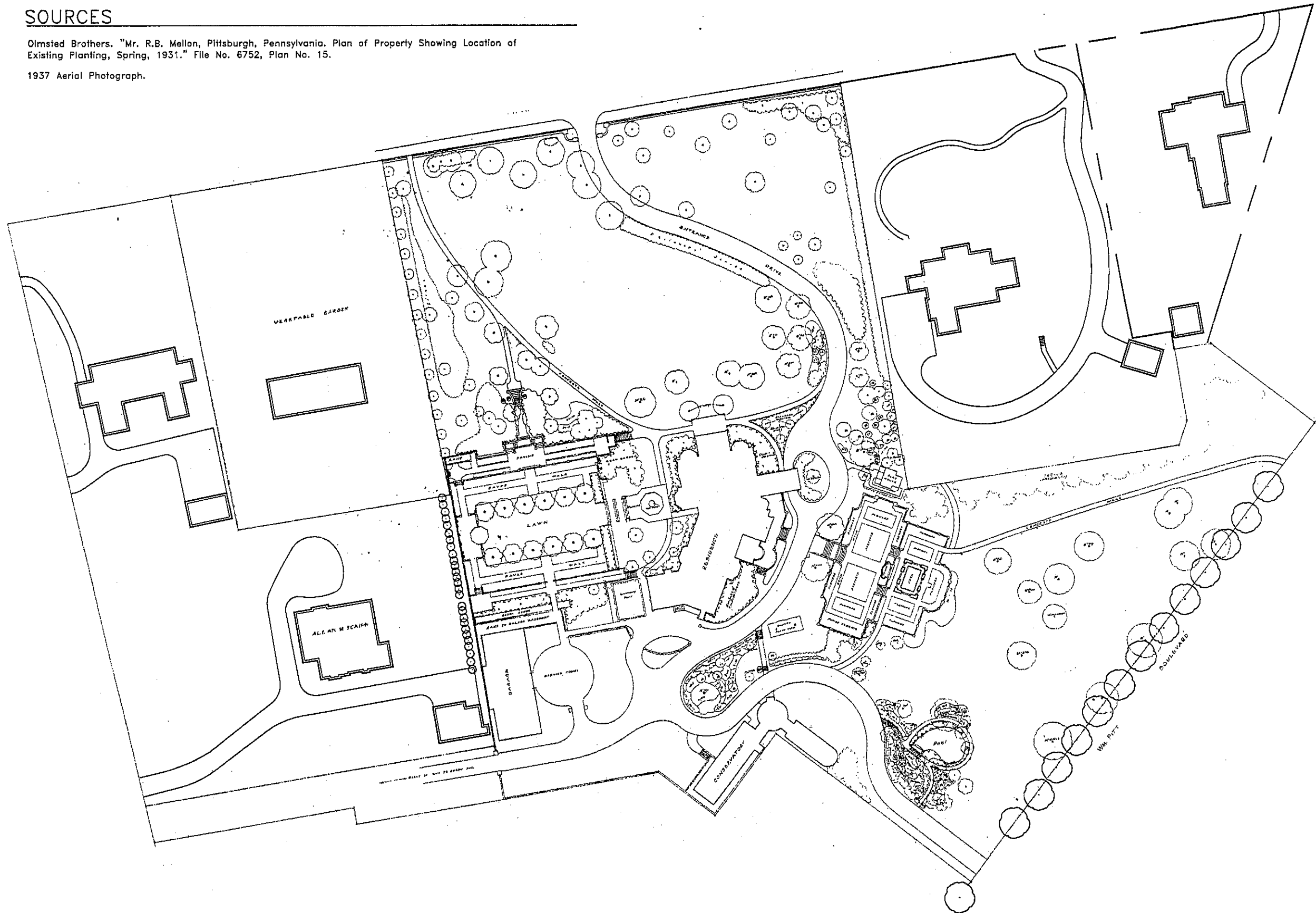


Figure II.3 Plan of proposed alterations for Mellon Park, Simonds and Simonds, Landscape Architects, 1952 (courtesy of Pittsburgh DPW)

SOURCES

Olmsted Brothers. "Mr. R.B. Mellon, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Plan of Property Showing Location of Existing Planting, Spring, 1931." File No. 6752, Plan No. 15.

1937 Aerial Photograph.



R. B. MELLON PARK Historic Landscape Preservation, Maintenance & Management Plan Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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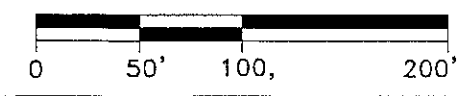
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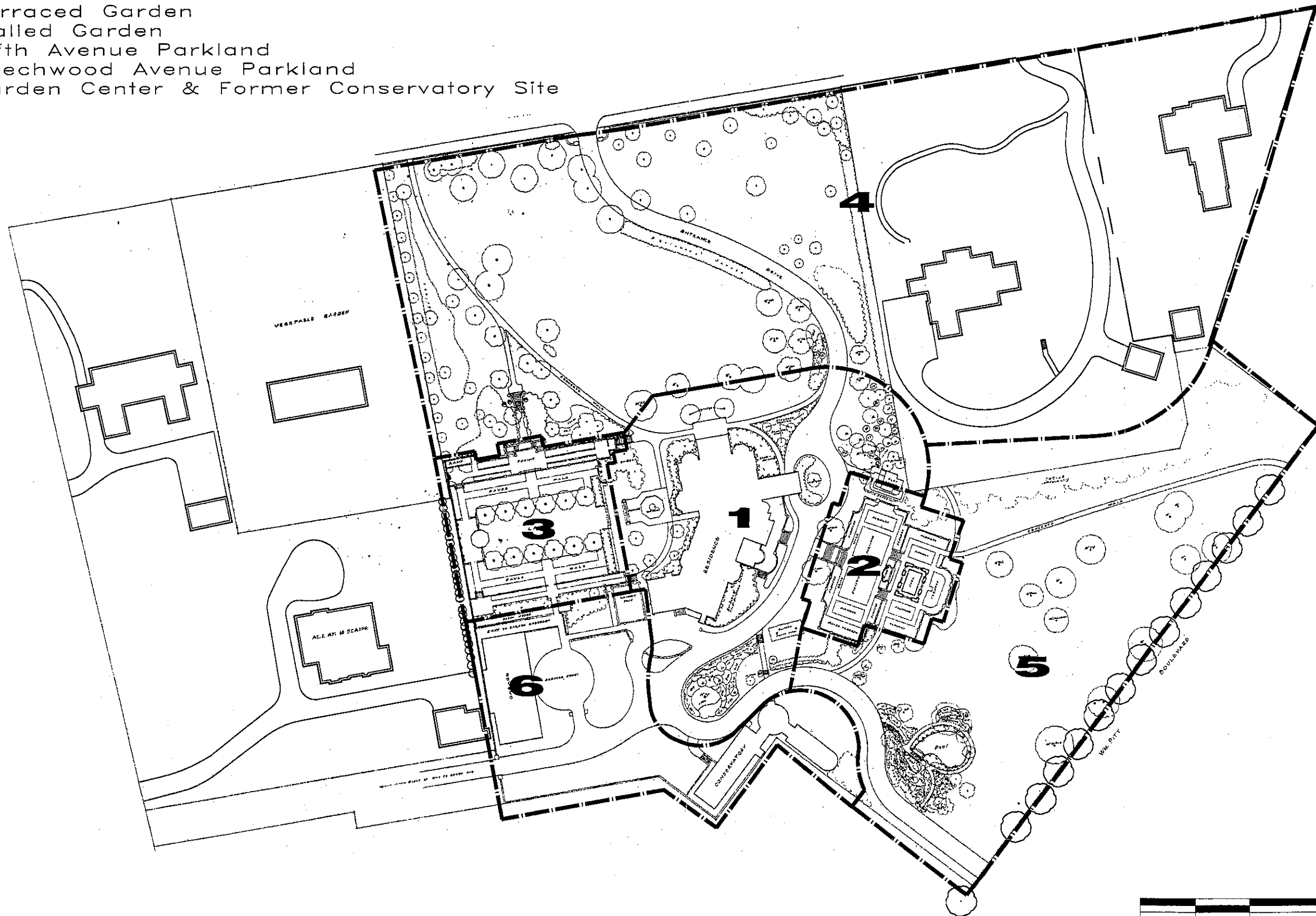
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FIGURE II.4a



LANDSCAPE UNIT AREAS

1. Former House Site
2. Terraced Garden
3. Walled Garden
4. Fifth Avenue Parkland
5. Beechwood Avenue Parkland
6. Garden Center & Former Conservatory Site



R. B. MELLON PARK
Historic Landscape Preservation,
Maintenance & Management Plan
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Client:
Western Pennsylvania
Conservancy
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 South Mill Run, PA 154664

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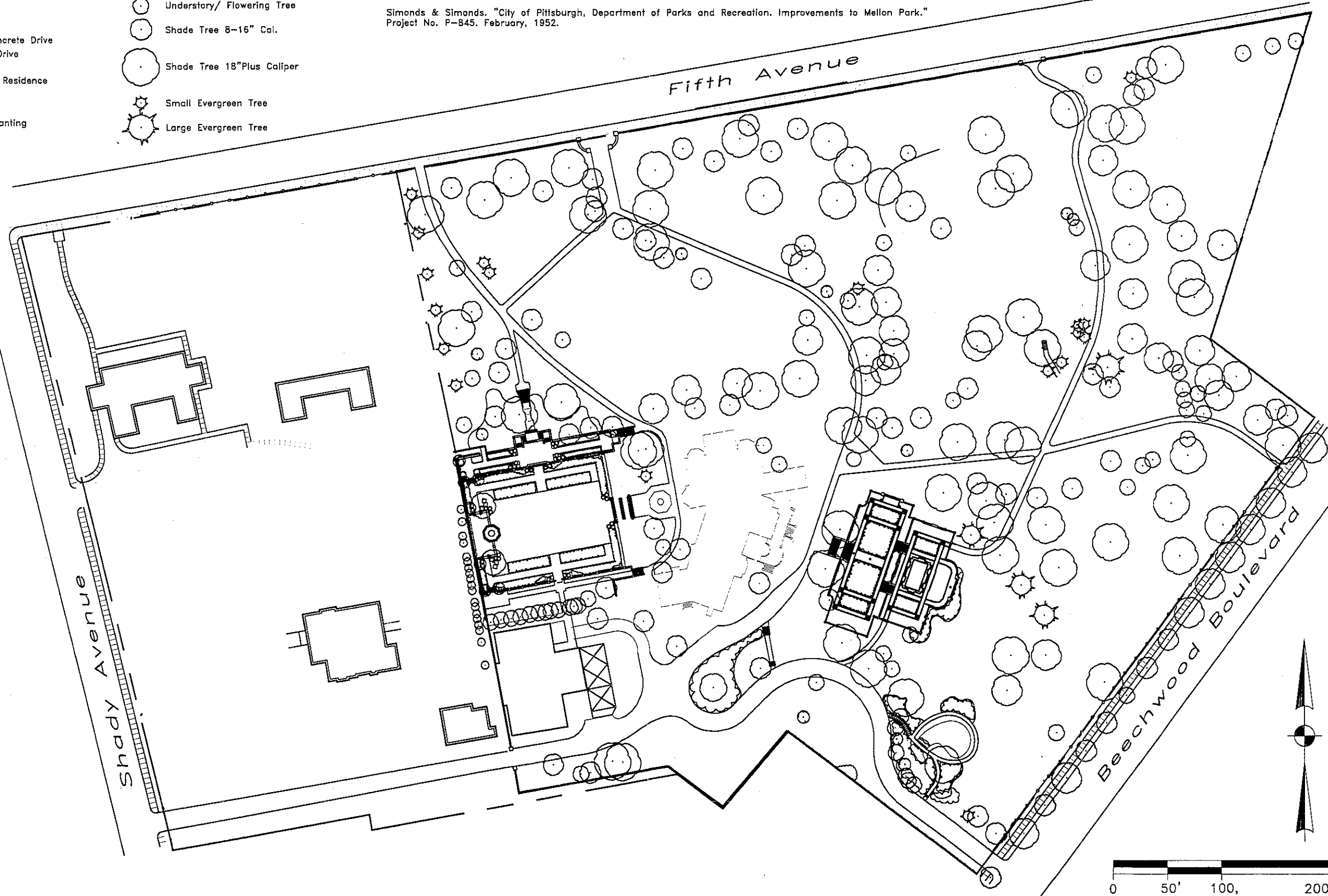
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FIGURE II.4b

SYMBOL KEY

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| | Chain Link Fence | | Evergreen Tree / Garden |
| | Iron Fence | | Evergreen Shrub / Garden |
| | Brick Wall | | Shrub-Individual |
| | Limestone Wall | | Tree Stump |
| | Bituminous Concrete Walk | | Flowering Tree - Garden |
| | Concrete Walk | | Understory/ Flowering Tree |
| | Brick Walk | | Shade Tree 8-16" Cal. |
| | Gravel Drive | | Shade Tree 18" Plus Caliper |
| | Bituminous Concrete Drive | | Small Evergreen Tree |
| | Cobble Stone Drive | | Large Evergreen Tree |
| | Former Mellon Residence | | |
| | Hedge Planting | | |
| | Shrub Mass Planting | | |

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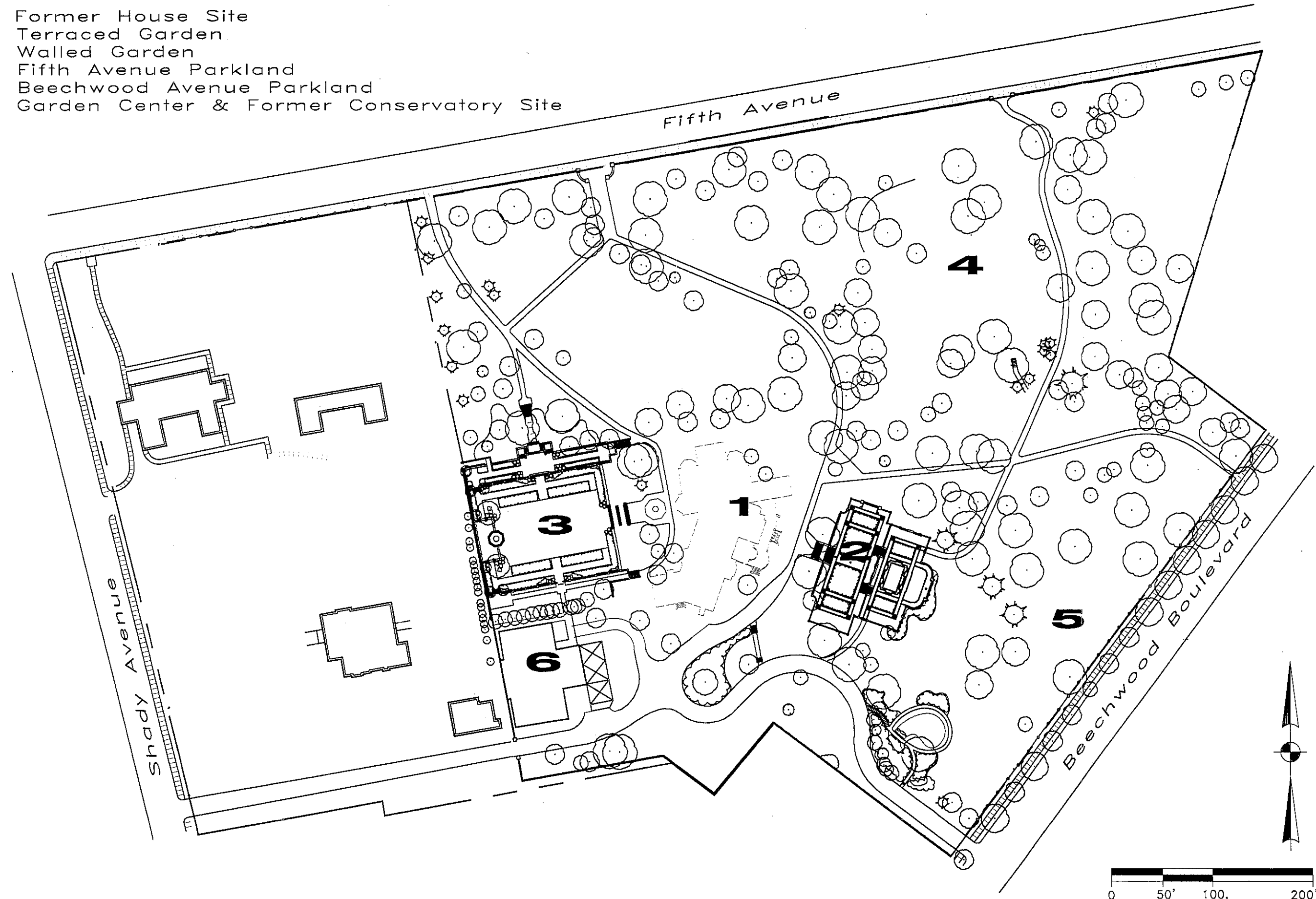
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FIGURE II.5c

LANDSCAPE UNIT AREAS

1. Former House Site
2. Terraced Garden
3. Walled Garden
4. Fifth Avenue Parkland
5. Beechwood Avenue Parkland
6. Garden Center & Former Conservatory Site



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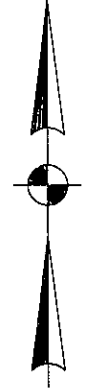
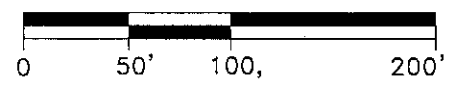
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Drawing No.:
FIGURE II.5b



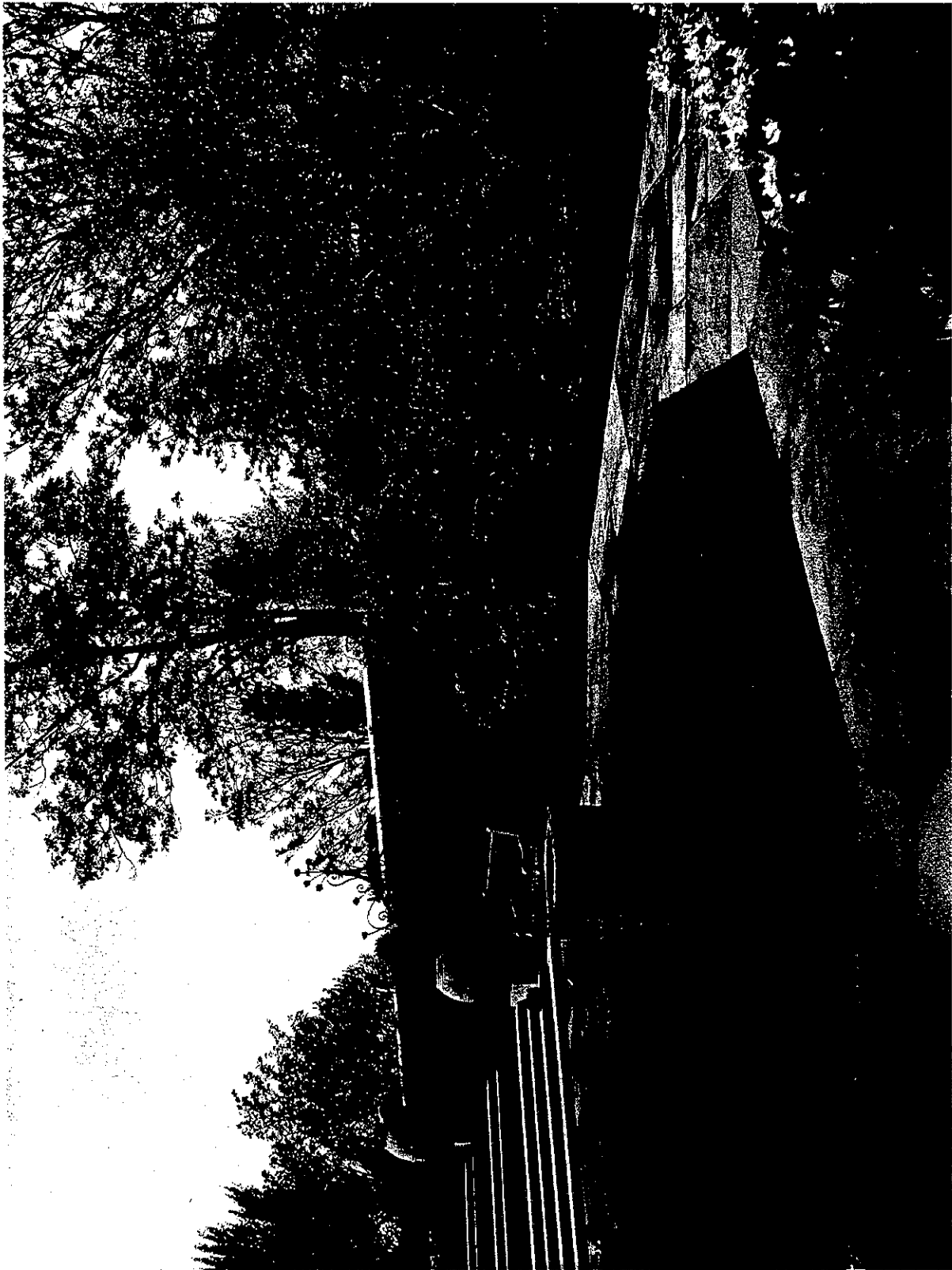


Figure II.6. Stone and iron well between the house and the walled garden, 1931 (courtesy private collection).



Figure II.7. Rock garden overlooking walled garden, 1931 (courtesy private collection).



Figure II.8. The terraced garden looking toward William Pitt Boulevard, 1931 (courtesy private collection).

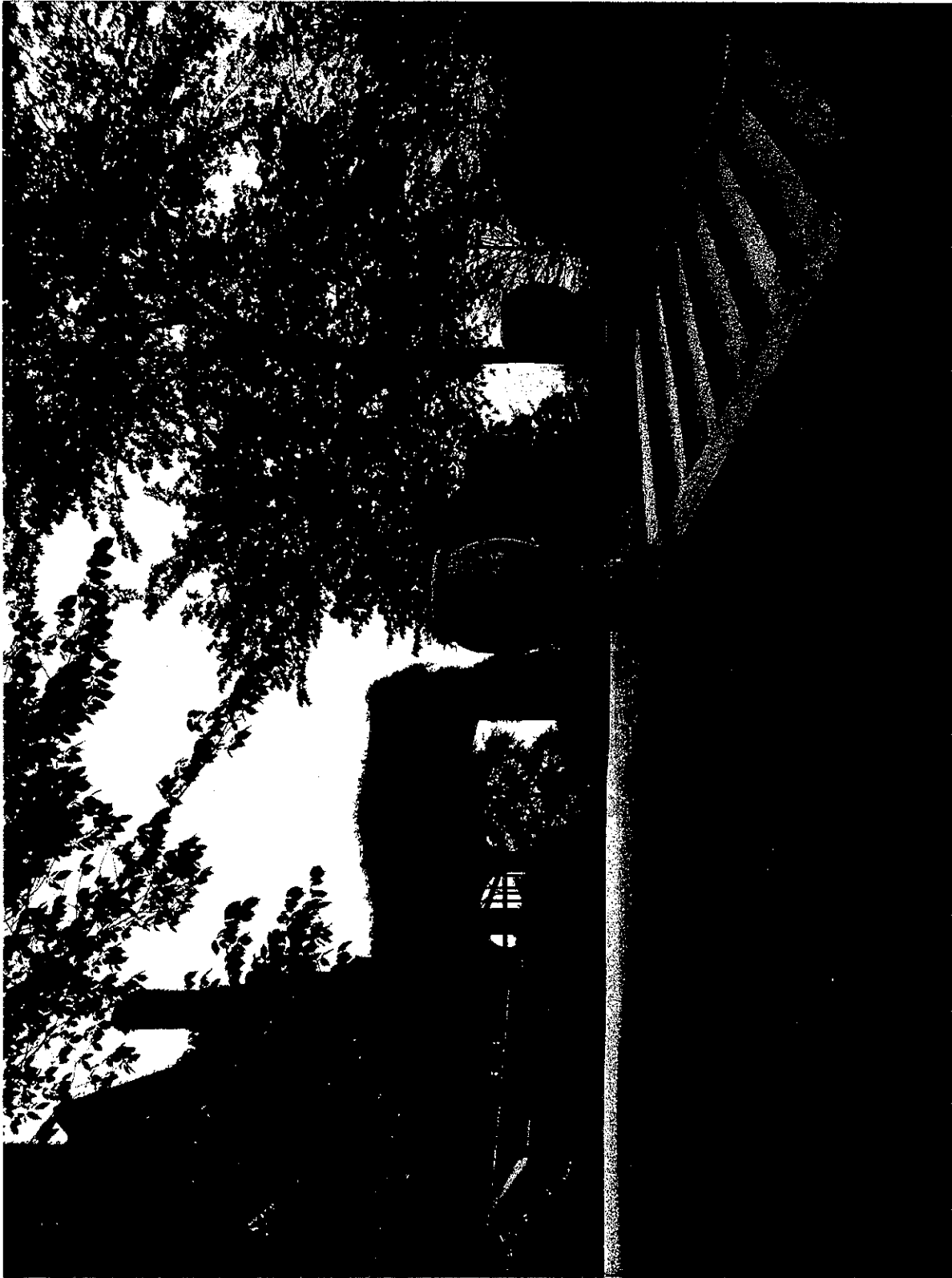


Figure II.9. The transition space from the house to the terraced garden, 1931 (courtesy private collection).



Figure II.10. The walled garden viewed from the house, 1931 (courtesy private collection).

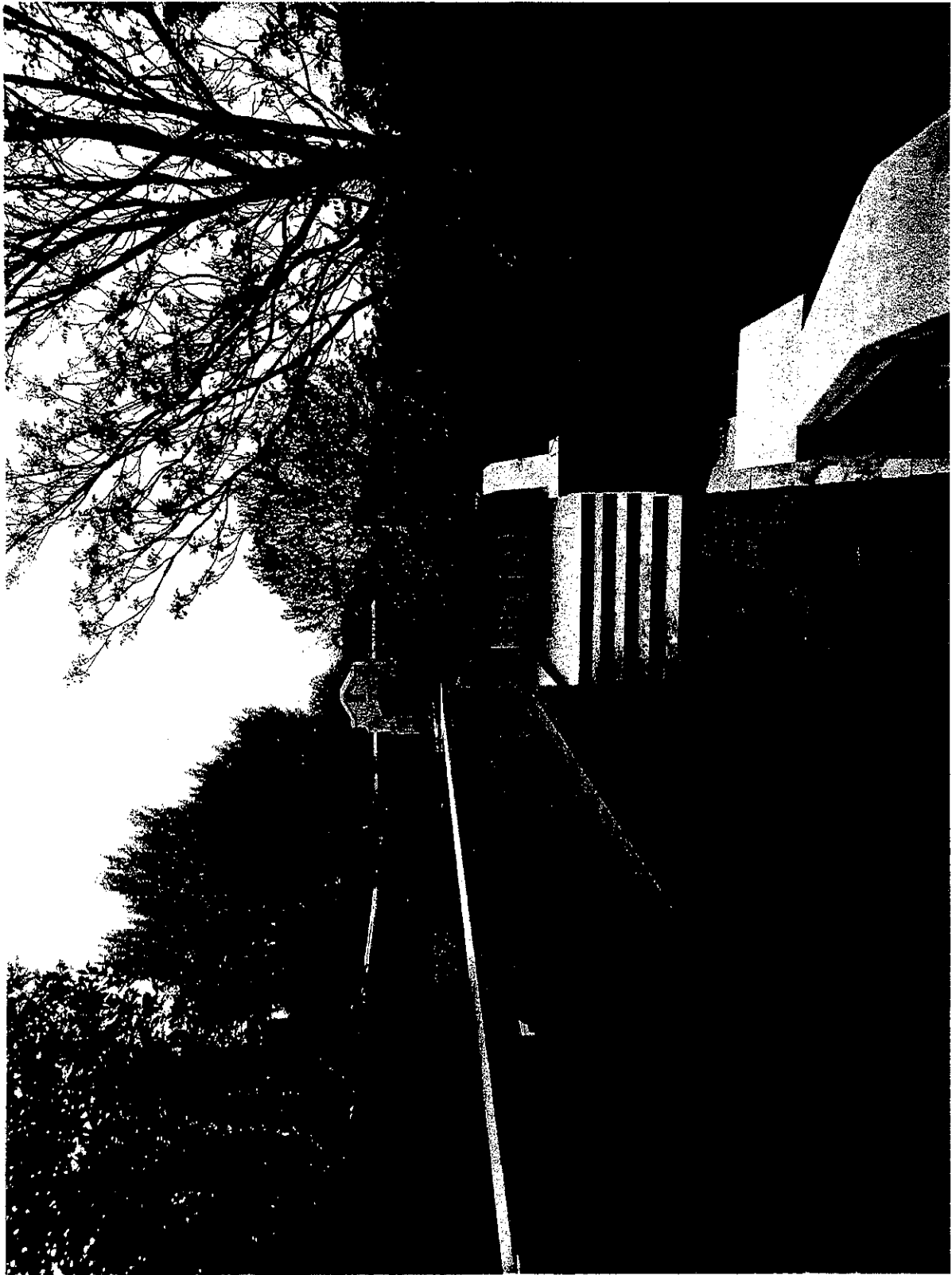


Figure II.11. Steps and balustrade along northern edge of walled garden, 1931 (courtesy private collection).



Figure II.12. The “oriental pool” near the southwestern corner of the estate, 1935 (courtesy private collection).

III. EXISTING CONDITIONS

A. INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the existing conditions at Mellon Park in the summer of 1999. A detailed field reconnaissance was conducted to understand the existing conditions and develop a base plan included here as Figure III.1, *Existing Conditions Plan*. To produce the plan, the information gathered from the site investigation was compared to several other plans of the property made during both the estate and park years. These plans are cited as sources on the *Existing Conditions Plan*. Changes to the park from its historic condition and deterioration of elements, as seen in Figure III.2, *Vegetation Conditions Plan* and Figure III.3, *Built Elements Conditions Plan*.

The following discussion references the *Existing Conditions Plan* and describes landscape's character-defining features. Recent photographs, included as figures, further aid in the description of the site's current condition. This chapter uses an organization parallel to that used in Chapter II: Period Conditions. As in Chapter II, Mellon Park has been divided into six landscape units or areas that are consistent in shape and character with those described in the *Landscape Units Plan, circa 1950*. The character-defining features of each unit are discussed. These landscape units are each distinctive components of the park as it exists today. They vary in size and shape since they are defined by the character and qualities of each distinct space. These landscape units are shown in Figure III.4, *Landscape Units Plan*.

B. CURRENT LANDSCAPE UNITS

1. *Existing Former House Site*

As discussed in the chapters on site history and period conditions, the R.B. Mellon house was demolished before the property was donated and became Mellon Park. Where the house once stood is a simple, well-worn lawn, centrally located in the former estate landscape. The former location of the house is shown in Figure III.5, and during the summer remains of the underground foundation can be detected by patterns of brown grass. From this flat terrace portions of all five of the other landscape units can be viewed. There are also transition zones from the house site to each of the other landscape units. To the west, a slight rise in the topography countered by stairs placed in the lawn leads to the walled garden, as shown in Figure III.6. The Garden Center is on grade with the house site, while the terraced garden, Beechwood Boulevard parkland, and Fifth Avenue parkland are all downhill from the building terrace.

A pair of ginkgo/*Ginkgo biloba* trees frame a view overlooking the north of the Fifth Avenue parkland. Three other large ginkgos, all in excellent condition, are located on the house terrace. To the northwest beside the walled garden are two elms growing on a rocky mound. As seen in Figure III.2, there are two hawthorns/*Crataegus sp.*, two large pin oaks/*Quercus palustris*, and a hedge maple/*Acer campestre* to the northeast of where the house stood. The slope to the southeast has recently been planted with a Norway spruce/*Picea abies*, a yellowwood/*Cladrastis lutea*, and another

ornamental species, while a very large silver linden/*Tilia tomentosa* in excellent condition shades the terraced garden. Also in this vicinity, a rock wall and mulched planting bed partially line the curve of the southeast entry drive, with a single contorted filbert/*Corylus sp.* planted above the wall.

The circulation within this landscape unit includes wide asphalt paths that bound the former house site, which now contains a temporary covered stage. These are lined with light fixtures on fourteen foot poles, spaced approximately every forty feet on alternating sides of the walk. The transition path leading to the walled garden is paved in asphalt and flanked by wooden benches and trashcans. In the middle of the path is a concrete octagon and a granite frog. Continuing clockwise around the house site, a 7' wide asphalt path climbs from Fifth Avenue and passes through two pin oaks before reaching a four-way intersection, at the center of which is planted a hawthorn. At the base of the other hawthorn in this vicinity is a wooden bench and a trash can. The terraced garden is accessed by an asphalt spur and is also flanked by benches and trashcans. An asphalt vehicular drive with stone curbs connects the site with Beechwood Boulevard. In the eddy created by a bend in the drive is a wooden octagonal gazebo, three portable toilets, and a manhole which leads to an underground vault.

2. Existing Terraced Garden

The axially symmetric terraced garden steps down the hillside forming two flat terraces. Glimpses of the Beechwood Boulevard parkland and the hillside beyond can be obtained from certain points within the garden, though the broad views to the parkland and the resulting spatial link are limited by tall shrubs at the perimeter. A high yew hedge/*Taxus sp.* stands at the terminus on the lower terrace, backed by an assortment of arborvitae/*Thuja occidentalis* and magnolia/*Magnolia sp.* The lower terrace is planted in low boxwood/*Buxus sp.* hedges and large beds of perennials. At the center of the terrace is a pool, shown in Figure III.7, which has been filled and planted with thyme/*Thymus sp.* in a crossing pattern. On either edge of the filled pool are beds of roses/*Rosa sp.*, the northern bed containing twelve large plants and the southern bed containing three rose bushes and mixed perennials. The two central beds of the upper terrace, shown in Figure III.8, are each planted with three-foot high yew hedge in a circular pattern and divided in quarters for access into a central mulched bed of marigolds. These hedges form circles approximately twenty-two feet in diameter and are set in a larger square of turf. To the north and south are two secondary beds containing small weeping crab-apples/*Malus sp.* and bedding plants. The bed at the terminus of the upper terrace is planted in annuals and bordered with boxwood. Boxwood hedges and a line of burning bush/*Euonymus sp.* separate the upper terrace from the lower one and block most of the views (burning bush also lines the western wall of this terrace). Boston ivy/*Parthenocissus tricuspidata* climbs the southern wall, and the western and northern sides of the garden are surrounded with mulched planting beds containing of mixture of shrubs and small trees.

The principle brick stairway which descends into the garden along the main axis is flanked by two large arborvitae at its base. The walks in the garden are of a variety of widths, though all are made of concrete and lined with brick. The walk that borders the eastern edge of the upper terrace is partially overgrown by the boxwood hedge. On the south side of the upper terrace is a small plaza containing a rectangular pool and a birdbath. It is paved with bricks with alternating basketweave and modified basketweave patterns. Two brick stairways lead to the lower terrace, which is exited at a flagstone walk to the south and an asphalt path to the northeast, as shown on the plan in Figure

III.3. The filled pool is surrounded by a sunken brick walk in poor repair and accessed by limestone steps. A small nook on the uphill side of the lower terrace is paved in herringbone brick into which has been set three small squares of limestone, likely a remnant of the original paving design. There is also a herringbone brick path around the curved terminal extension of the lower terrace.

The retaining walls of the terraced garden are dark red brick with a dark red terra cotta cap and limestone base. These walls are in fair condition with evidence of both superficial and structural deterioration, including water infiltration, lack of repointing and vertical and horizontal cracking. The majority of the exterior walls of the garden are topped with balustrades containing limestone balusters and rails, brick bases and piers, and terra cotta plaques and pier caps. Repairs to individual balusters have been made with concrete, and in sections of the southern wall of the upper terrace the plaques have been replaced with balusters. One section of balustrade along the top of this wall has been removed completely and replaced with a solid brick wall. The balustrades along the curved terminus of the lower terrace has been removed and not replaced, though the base remains. There is also a large crack in both the base and its foundation along this section. The upper and lower stairs are flanked by concrete wing walls, and the piers of the entry stair are broken and cracked. Terra cotta scrolls are found on two main entry piers and in several locations along the top of the northern walls of both terraces. One of the decorative dolphin scrolls on the lower terrace is broken, as is a red terra cotta sundial mounted on the wall. Site furnishings include a wooden bench and metal trashcan at the base of the axial wall in the lower terrace. Two large stone urns filled with annuals are placed in the center of the round boxwood hedges on the upper terrace, and another stone planter is located in the curved terminus of the lower terrace.

3. Existing Walled Garden

The walled garden is divided by walls into three terraces, each of which are linear and oriented east to west. The large central terrace is slightly higher than the house site and terminates at an octagonal fountain at the far end of the garden, as shown in Figure III.9. The three walls on the south, west, and north sides this terrace serve to screen out the Garden Center, the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, and the Fifth Avenue parkland. Passing through a doorway on the south side of central terrace one rises slightly to another terrace and walk that looks onto the Garden Center. The north terrace of garden is about a foot lower than the central terrace. At the center of this terrace there is a northern extension, shown in Figure III.10, which overlooks the hillside slope of the Fifth Avenue parkland.

The central terrace contains a large rectangular lawn, bordered on the north and south by stone walks. Between the walks and the north and south perimeter walls are beds containing a variety of grasses, perennials, and shrubs. The terminal fountain and pool is bordered on the eastern side by a bed of annuals and flanked on the north and south by two hornbeams/*Carpinus betulus* and two round planters filled with annuals. Against the western terminal wall is growing a mix of small trees, large shrubs, and Boston ivy. Behind the wall but still visible above it are several redbud/*Amelanchier canadensis* and crabapple trees/*Malus sp.* The planting beds on the south terrace contain grasses and perennials, and there are two round planters in the small southwest entry plaza. The planting beds of the northern terrace contain a large variety of shrubs and perennials, and Boston ivy covers portions of the walls.

There are seven points of entry into the garden. Three of these serve as a transition to the former house site, one to the Garden Center, one to the Fifth Avenue parkland, and two to the former Scaife property. The primary entrance is on the east side centered on the house bay, accessed by three sets of steps in the slope of the lawn. This entrance is punctuated by the placement of lion statues on either side of the top step. The secondary entrance is on the north side of the garden, with two sets of limestone stairs leading down to the scroll stair descending the hill. These two stairways are in very poor condition, and show concrete patch repairs. Both the repairs and the stone steps are deteriorated. The three tertiary entries include the straight stairways that descend to the house site and the path and gate which lead from the Garden Center. Again, both stairways are in fair to poor condition. The entrance from the south passes through an iron gate and archway covered with wisteria/*Wisteria sp.* into the central terrace. Decorative iron gates and fences are also found near the northern and northeastern entrances. All the iron work shows loss of paint, surface rust and some damage to detail work. The two fourth-level enhances lead to the parking lot on the Scaife property. The southern entrance passes through a doorway in the wall, and it is now the most frequently used access to the garden. The northern entrance climbs a ramp to the level of the lower terrace.

Circulation in the walled garden runs primarily east-west, though this flow is intersected by a walk along a cross axis at the center of the garden which links the Garden Center to the scroll stair and Fifth Avenue. This stone walk is interrupted by the lawn of the central terrace. The stone walk on the south side of the garden has been reset and mortared in a different pattern, possibly with more recent stone. The other three east-west original stone walks and the north-south terrace along the western wall are deteriorated.

The walls in the garden are in various stages of deterioration. In places the limestone coping has become loose or cracked, allowing water to penetrate downward into the wall, which has caused freeze/thaw damage to the brick and wall. Three of six limestone finials are broken or missing from various entry points. There are pedestals and alcoves on the western terminal wall, though the statues themselves are missing. The detail in the western limestone wall is in fair condition. The limestone at the base of the southwest doorway in the western wall is badly damaged. Along the top of the western wall runs several electrical wires and a metal conduit. The limestone fountain statue is in fair condition, but the wall surrounding the pool is cracked and deteriorating. The low wall that surrounds the small terminal plaza has several cracks in the stucco. There are three green wooden benches in the plaza. The stairs in both entrances leading from the central terrace to the northern terrace are chipped and damaged. The northern walk of the central terrace terminates on the eastern end on a low brick retaining wall that shores up the bank of the old rock garden. The brick piers of an old retaining wall are partially buried there and are fronted by a more recently constructed brick wall. This wall curves around part of the rock garden. It has a large crack patched with concrete, and its coping is loose. Limestone balustrades with an interlocking pattern top the brick wall and line the northern edge of the walled garden. There are many cracks in the balustrade, some of which have been patched with concrete.

4. Existing Fifth Avenue Parkland

The hillside that slopes down to Fifth Avenue is a continuous expanse of lawn scattered with trees. A flat terrace at the top of the hill northeast of the Mellon house site marks the location of the former Frew home. The house site also marks the brow of the hill, where the topography slopes downward

to the east and Beechwood Boulevard. At the bottom of the hill in the northeast corner where the Darcie house once stood the slope lessens and becomes relatively flat.

The dominant vegetative pattern in the parkland consists of variety of large deciduous and evergreen trees scattered across a mown lawn (Figure III.11). Scattered throughout the Mellon portion of the parkland are thirteen small birch/*Betula pendula*., nine of which form an arc sweeping down the hillside toward the drive entry. An asphalt walk runs perpendicular to Fifth Avenue until it branches, then roughly follows the former drive configuration until it leaves the original road bed and passes through two pin oaks. Along this path has been planted two large planting beds labeled with a sign that reads "Daffodil and Daylily Walk". The path has also been lined with four Bradford pears/*Pyrus californiana* and three European hornbeams/*Carpinus betulus*. The concrete walk along the western side branches part-way up the hill leading to the scroll stair and the northeast stair of the walled garden. The avenue entrance of this walk is partially blocked by very large yews on either side. An asphalt walk in very poor condition now leads from the concrete walk over to what was once the entry drive, and it is bordered one side by a row of four crabapples. The western edge of the Mellon property is bounded by a partial row of five common bald cypress/*Taxodium distichum*. Near the approximate boundary of the Mellon and Frew properties are four newly planted trees: a katsura/*Ceridiphyllum japonicum*, a weeping cherry/*Prunus subhirtella*, an ornamental crabapple, and a European beech/*Fagus sylvatica*. The large tree/lawn pattern continues on the Frew and Darcie properties. On the hillside of the Frew property the remains of a curb from an walk or drive leading up the hill to the house can be seen. The Frew drive also changed according to the 1952 design, being narrowed to a six-foot wide asphalt path. It follows the uphill curb (and thus the old drive layout) partway up the hill, and then continues onward to the terraced garden, crossing a path that connects the Mellon house site with Beechwood Boulevard.

Along the former Mellon entry drive are three drain inlets, two of which are now in the lawn. There is a wrought iron fence along Fifth Avenue in front of the Mellon property. The ironwork is moderately rusted and has several broken or bent rungs. The cut and polished granite foundation is cracked and broken at the base of most of the main iron support posts. The central gate panel set within the four large entry columns (Figure III.12) has been removed. At the Frew property line the fence stops and a brick wall with a stone base and limestone coping begin. The wall gradually steps down to the two brick columns at the property entrance. A section of the brick wall on the east side of the entry is missing, though the base remains. The Darcie property is fronted with a simple iron fence set directly into the ground, and at the southern end of the Darcie property is a ten-foot diameter circle of sand.

5. Existing Beechwood Boulevard Parkland

The essential character of the Beechwood Boulevard parkland is similar to the Fifth Avenue parkland. The ridge of the hill sloping down to the Darcie property creates a visual separation of the two parklands. The northern half of the Beechwood parkland slopes evenly toward the street before flattening out just before the fence. The southern half is considerably flatter along the boulevard before it climbs to the conservatory site and terraced garden.

Vegetation in this parkland is the same pattern as the Fifth Avenue parkland: lawn and scattered large trees. Along Beechwood Boulevard but within the fence are a four large old

sycamores/*Platanus occidentalis*, and the remainder of the parkland contains eleven other species of large deciduous and evergreen trees. There are no trees between the fence and Beechwood Boulevard. Near the southwest corner of this landscape unit there is a large elm, a yew hedge, several young maples/*Acer sp.* and elms and some scrub undergrowth. The southern fence also contains a mixture of scrub, a Norway maple/*Acer platanoides*, and a mulberry/*Morus sp.* On the opposite side of the fence just off the property are a large sycamore and a hemlock/*Tsuga canadensis*.

The northern asphalt path in Figure III.13 connects the street to the Mellon home site. The path from the terraced garden cuts across and joins the Frew property drive. The northern boundary of the parkland is demarcated by a wrought iron fence. A more elaborate and larger iron fence in fair condition borders Beechwood Boulevard. It does not have the granite base like the fence along Fifth Avenue, and it lacks any noticeable entry features at the start of the drive. A bollard is located near one side of the entrance, and it looks as though a chain is used occasionally to block vehicular access while still allowing bicycles and pedestrian on the other side of the bollard. The drive, shown in Figure III.14, holds its original configuration, and pieces of the original stone curb and gutter are visible, though much is covered with asphalt patches. It is still used as a vehicular access to the park. Just inside the entry on the northern side is a compacted lawn and gravel turn-around that circles an Austrian pine/*Pinus nigra*.

6. Existing Garden Center and Former Conservatory Site

The Garden Center and former conservatory site are oriented towards the house site. The spaces surrounding the north, east, and south sides of the Garden Center are devoted to circulation and service access. Two spatial eddies are formed in bends of the entry drive where the conservatory once stood. During one's progression along the drive, both become areas of visual focus. The topography near the Garden Center is practically flat, while the area of the conservatory slopes downhill towards Beechwood Boulevard.

A large collection of various dogwood trees/*Cornus sp.* occupy the site of the conservatory, as well as two large trees which continue the pattern of the adjacent parkland. A dense growth of planted shrubs and volunteer species line the fence that marks the boundary. Just west of the conservatory are three narrow planting beds running parallel in the lawn. West of the beds and south of the entrance of the Garden Center is a rock garden that climbs a small slope. At the top of this bank and running along the wall to the southwest entry gate are shrubs, groundcovers, and two large maples. Across the drive next to the south facade of the Garden Center are planting beds filled with shrubs and annuals. These beds continue around to the eastern side of the building and screen the sides of the raised patio. Near the walled garden is a lawn and a small vegetable garden, with a ginkgo nearby. A row of American Linden/*Tilia americana* separate the north face of the building from the walled garden.

Figure III.15 depicts the principle vehicular entry into the park, located next to the Garden Center in the southwest corner. It is marked by massive brick columns topped with large terra cotta globes and large wrought iron gates that open inward onto the property. From the street entrance on Shady Avenue to the corner of the Garden Center the drive is paved with rough ashlar cobble. A sidewalk on the north side of the drive jogs around the entry column and passes through a doorway in the

boundary wall. It continues past the entrance to the Garden Center and wraps around the building, jutting out into the drive where the two intersect (Figure III.16). At this corner the drive changes to asphalt and branches northwest to a loading dock on the building and southeast towards the other vehicular entry. The concrete walk climbs stairs to the raised patio, which is bounded by a brick retaining wall and planter and paved in exposed aggregate concrete. A crossing pattern is formed in the patio paving with brick and smooth finish concrete. A ramp leads down to the basement on the north side, and a path connects with the cross axis of the walled garden. There are no paths in the vicinity of the conservatory site.

Site furnishings include a sign for the Garden Center near the south entrance and a bench and trash can under the ginkgo near the vegetable garden. In the nook of the garden caused by the walls of the walled garden are several utility boxes and poles. Two light poles stand east of the patio and two statues line its walls. An ornate iron arch spans the stairway. Also to the east of the garden center is a continuously running drinking fountain made of brass and stone. It is set in a pavement of the same cobbles as the drive. South of the entry drive is a rock retaining wall and a low walled space with an open gateway.

SYMBOL KEY

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| □ Bench (Wood) | — Chain Link Fence | • Tree Stump | ☁ Existing Wood Edge-Deciduous |
| ◻ AC Unit | — Iron Fence | ◻ Shrub-Individual | — Vines on Masonry Wall |
| • Ballard (Vehcal) | — Brick Wall | ⊙ Flowering Tree - Garden | — Hedge Planting |
| — Drain Inlet | — Limestone Wall | ⊙ Understory/ Flowering Tree | — Shrub Mass Planting |
| • Man-Hole Cover | • Utility Pole | ⊙ Shade Tree 8-16" Cal. | — Evergreen Tree / Garden |
| • Trash Can | • Light Fixture | ⊙ Shade Tree 18" Plus Caliper | — Evergreen Shrub / Garden |
| — Bituminous Concrete Walk | ⊙ Stage/Tent Area | ⊙ Small Evergreen Tree | — Perennial / Annual Bedding Plants |
| — Concrete Walk | ⊙ Temporary | ⊙ Large Evergreen Tree | — Vegetable Garden |
| — Brick Walk | ⊙ Gazebo | — Groundcover | |
| — Gravel Drive | ⊙ Greenhouse | | |
| — Bituminous Concrete Drive | | | |
| — Cobble Stone Drive | | | |
| — Portable Toilet | | | |
| — Sculpture | | | |

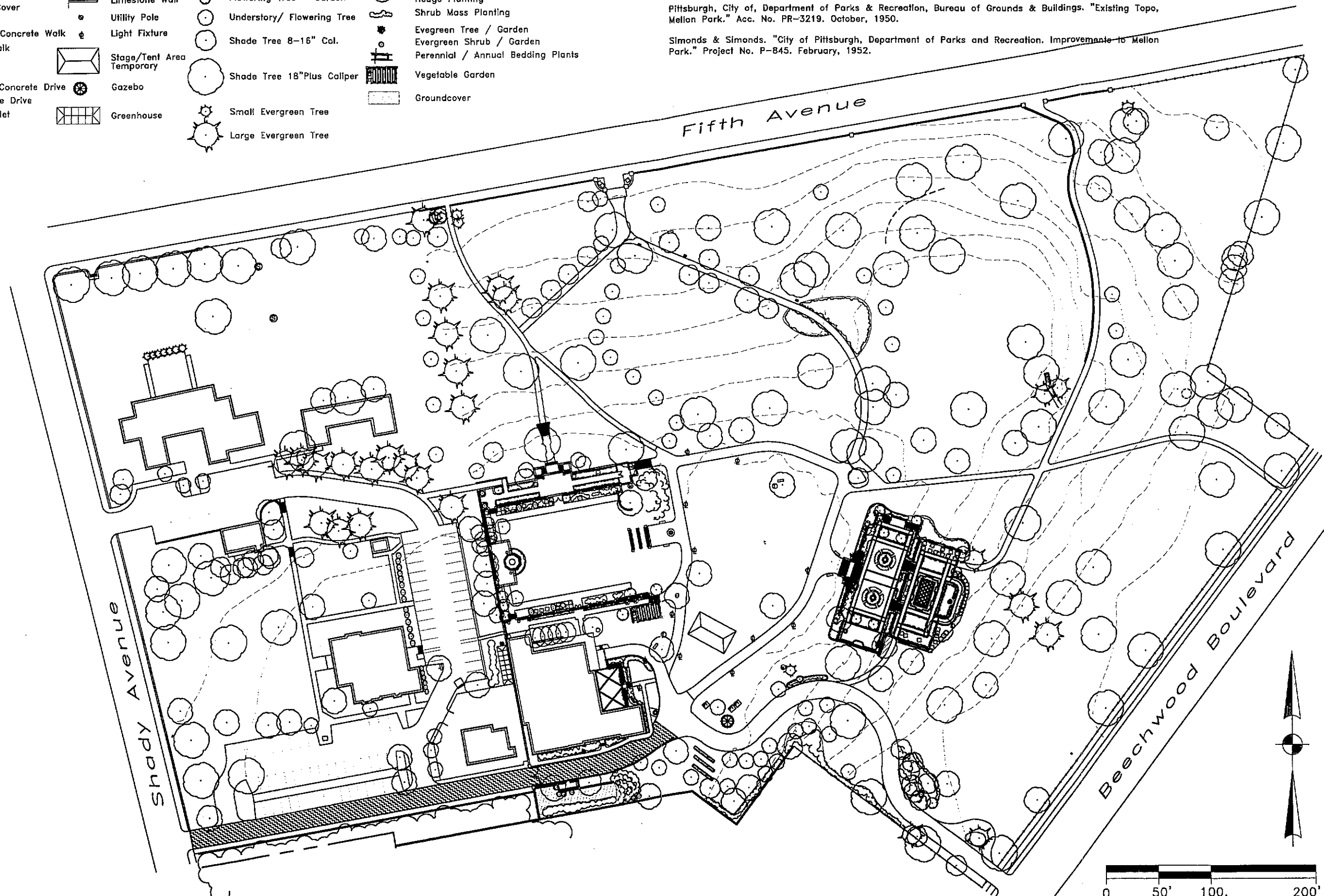
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**EXISTING
CONDITIONS
PLAN**

Issue & Date:
February 2000

Drawing No:
FIGURE III.1

WALLED GARDEN PLANTINGS:

- Trees:**
 Hamamelis spp./Witchhazel
 Betula pendula/European White Birch
 Carpinus betulus/European Hornbeam
 Amelanchier canadensis/Serviceberry
 Magnolia soulangiana/Magnolia
 Malus spp./Flowering Crabapple
 Prunus serotina/Black Cherry
 Pinus strobus spp./Weeping Pine
 Corylus spp./Contorted Filbert
- Shrubs:**
 Manchurian Lilac
 Viburnum Burkwoodii
 Arrowwood Viburnum
 Spiraea
 Euonymus
 Threaded cypress
 Oakleaf Hydrangea
 Summersweet
 Holly (Blue Prin.?)
- Herbaceous:**
 Hosta
 Iris
 Gazania
 Ornamental Grasses
 Daylily
 Peony
 Lilly of the Valley
 Collection of Annuals
- Roses:**
 Coloneaster
 Juniper (several)
 Mugo Pine
 Japanese Kerria
 Yew
 Rose of Sharon
 Glossy Abella
- English Ivy**
Boston Ivy
Ajuga (spp)
Wisteria
Akebia quinata (?)
Lamb's ears

TERRACE GARDEN PLANTINGS:

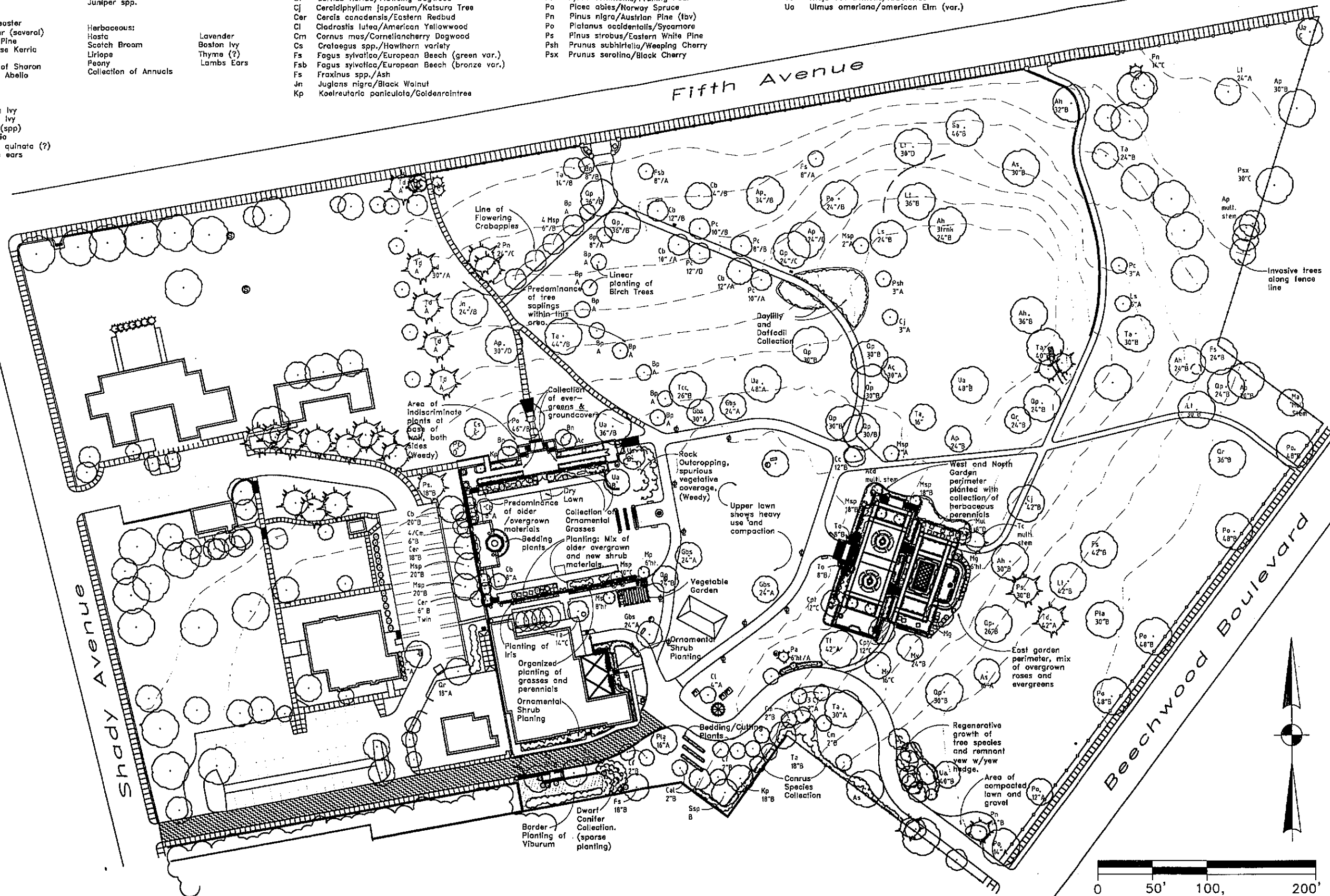
- Trees:**
 Thuja occidentalis/Arborvitae
 Amelanchier canadensis/Serviceberry
 Magnolia soulangiana/Magnolia
 Malus spp./Flowering Crabapple
 Catalpa speciosa/Northern Catalpa
- Shrubs:**
 Burning Bush
 Roses (Collection)
 Rugosa Rose
 Juniper spp.
- Boxwood**
Yew
Spiraea
- Herbaceous:**
 Hosta
 Scorch Broom
 Liriodendron
 Peony
 Collection of Annuals
- Lavender**
Boston Ivy
Thyme (?)
Lamb's Ears

VEGETATION KEY:

- Trees:**
 Ac Acer Campestre/Hedge Maple
 Ach Aesculus hippocastanum/Common Horsechestnut
 As Acer Saccharum/Sugar Maple
 Ap Acer Platanoides/Norway Maple
 Acd Amelanchier canadensis/Serviceberry (verify)
 Bp Betula pendula/European White Birch
 Cb Carpinus betulus/European Hornbeam
 Cal Cornus alternifolia/Pagoda Dogwood (verify)
 Clp Callapa speciosa/Northern Catalpa
 Cf Cornus florida/Flowering Dogwood
 Cj Cercidiphyllum japonicum/Katsura Tree
 Car Caralis canadensis/Eastern Redbud
 Cl Cladostis lutea/American Yellowwood
 Cm Cornus mas/Corneliancherry Dogwood
 Cs Crataegus spp./Hawthorn variety
 Fs Fagus sylvatica/European Beech (green var.)
 Fsb Fagus sylvatica/European Beech (bronze var.)
 Fr Fraxinus spp./Ash
 Jn Juglans nigra/Black Walnut
 Kp Koelerutaria paniculata/Goldenreintree
- Trees:**
 Ld Larix decluda/European Larch
 Ls Liquidambar styraciflura/American Sweetgum
 Ll Liriodendron tulipifera/Tulip Tree
 Ms Magnolia x soulangiana/Saucer Magnolia
 Mg Magnolia spp./Magnolia species
 Msp Malus spp./Flowering Crabapples
 Mul Morus alba/Common Mulberry
 Pla Phellodendron amurense/Amur Corktree
 Pc Pyrus calleryana/Broadford Pear
 Pf Pyrus communis/Fruiting Pear
 Pa Picea abies/Norway Spruce
 Pn Pinus nigra/Austrian Pine (lav)
 Po Pitanus occidentalis/Sycamore
 Ps Pinus strobus/Eastern White Pine
 Psh Prunus subhirtella/Weeping Cherry
 Psx Prunus serotina/Black Cherry
- Trees:**
 Qp Quercus palustris/Pin Oak
 Qs Quercus spp./Oak species
 Rp Rabinia pseudoacacia/Black Locust
 Ss Salix spp./Weeping Willow
 Td Taxodium distichum/Common Baldcypress
 Ta Tilia americana/American Linden
 Tcc Tilia cordata/Littleleaf Linden
 Tl Tilia tomentosa/Silver Linden (verify)
 To Tsugo canadensis/Canadian Hemlock
 Tu Thuja occidentalis/Arborvitae
 Uo Ulmus americana/American Elm (var.)

TREE CONDITIONS KEY:

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



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 Historic Landscape Preservation,
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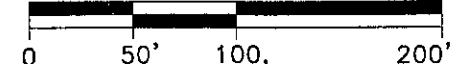
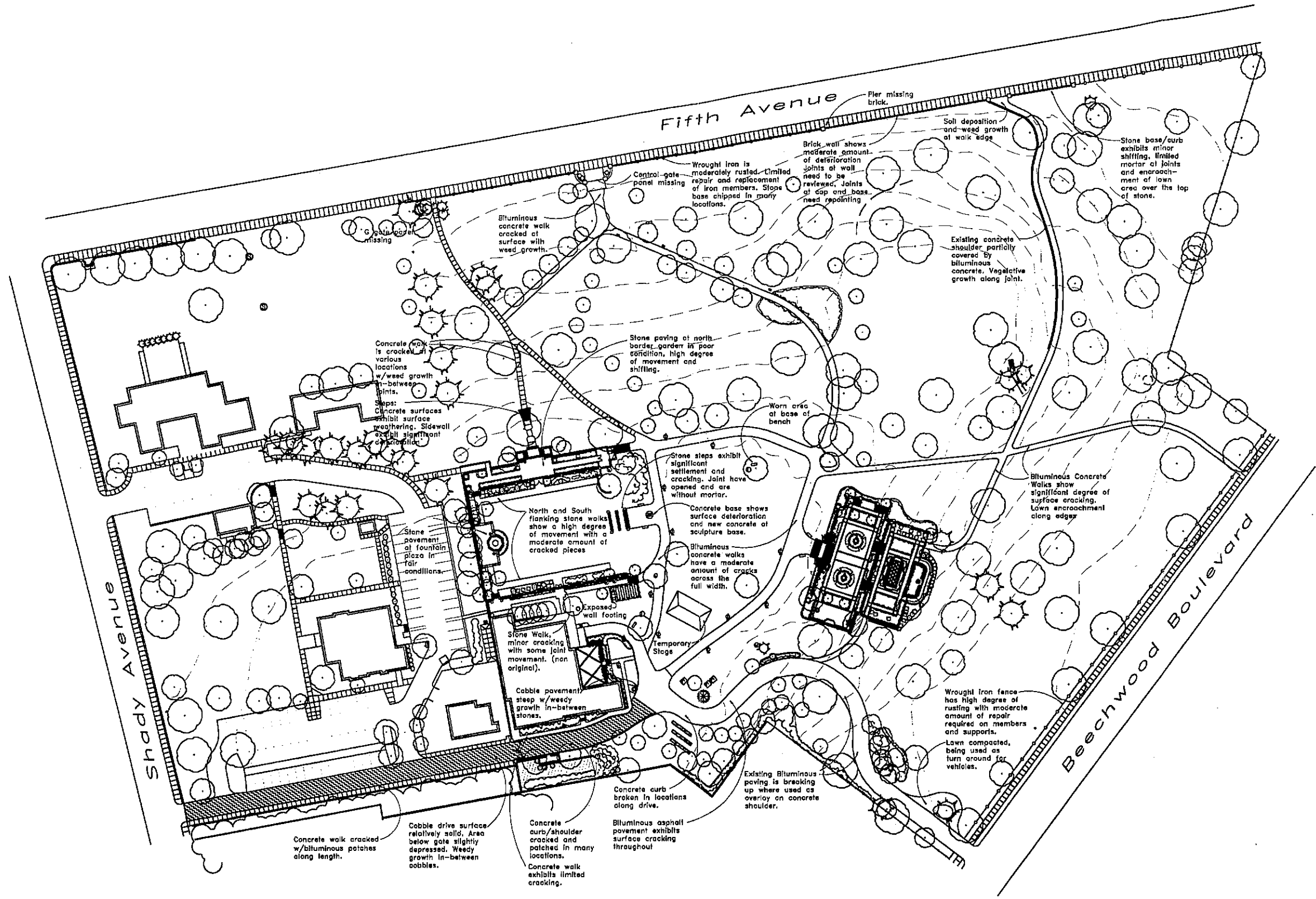
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 VEGETATION
 CONDITIONS
 PLAN

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 FIGURE III.2



R. B. MELLON PARK

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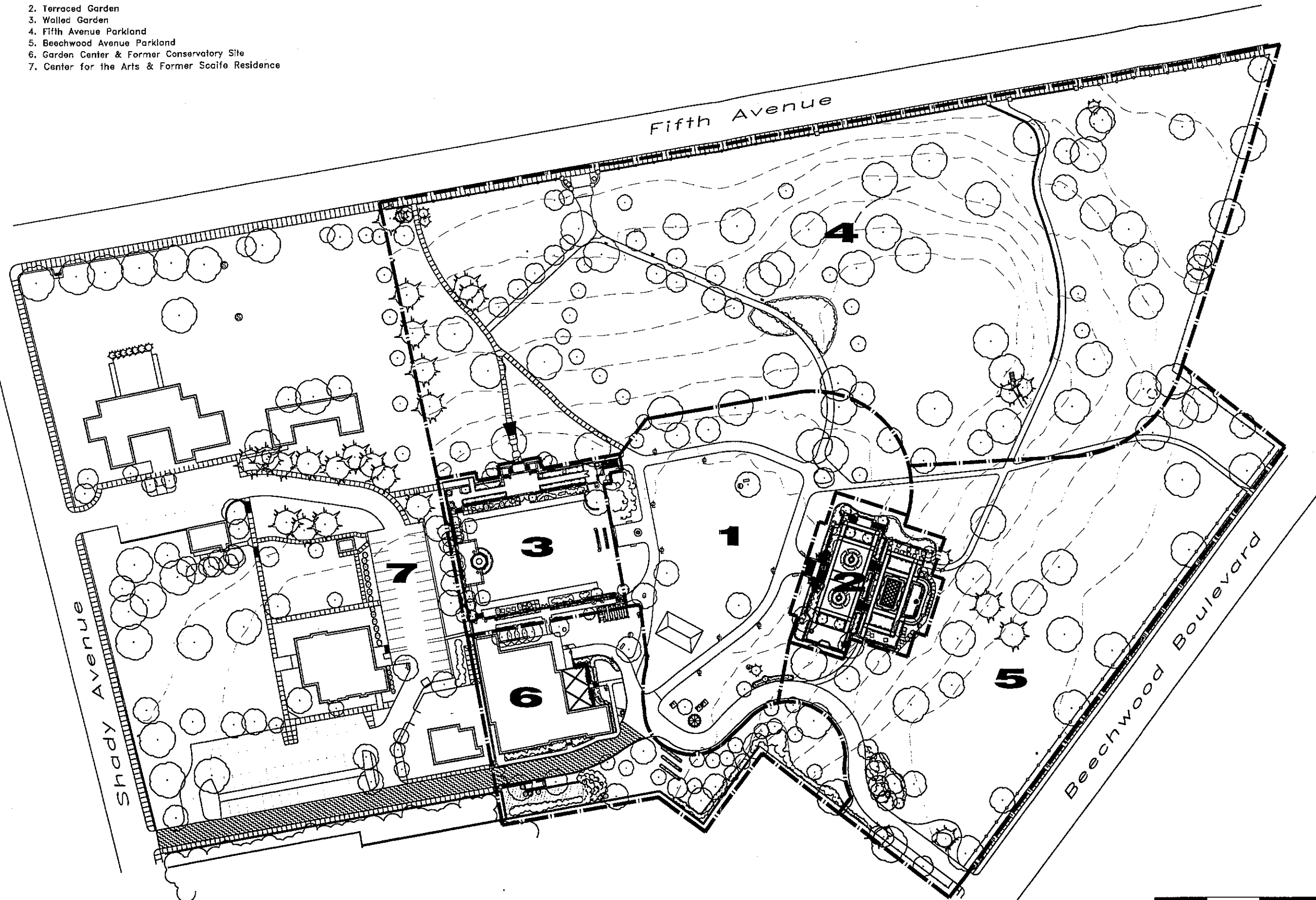
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FIGURE III.3

LANDSCAPE UNIT AREAS

1. Former House Site
2. Terraced Garden
3. Walled Garden
4. Fifth Avenue Parkland
5. Beechwood Avenue Parkland
6. Garden Center & Former Conservatory Site
7. Center for the Arts & Former Scife Residence



R. B. MELLON PARK
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LANDSCAPE UNITS PLAN

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FIGURE III.4

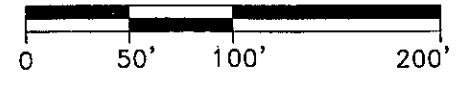




Figure III.5. House site looking south to the temporary stage and garden center, 1999 (LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP).

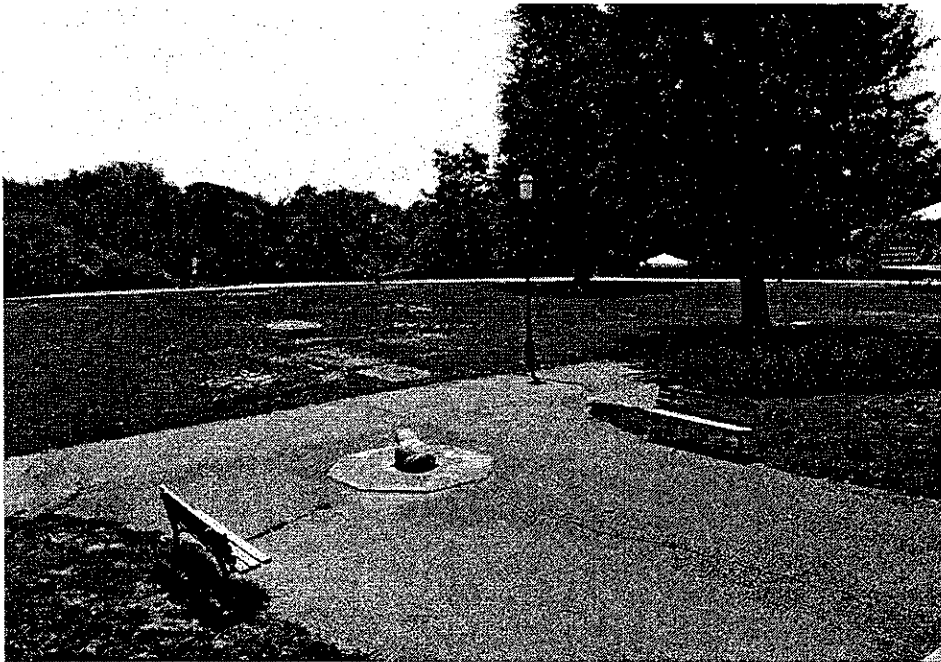


Figure III.6. Entrance to walled garden looking east across house site to the terrace garden entrance, 1999 (LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP).

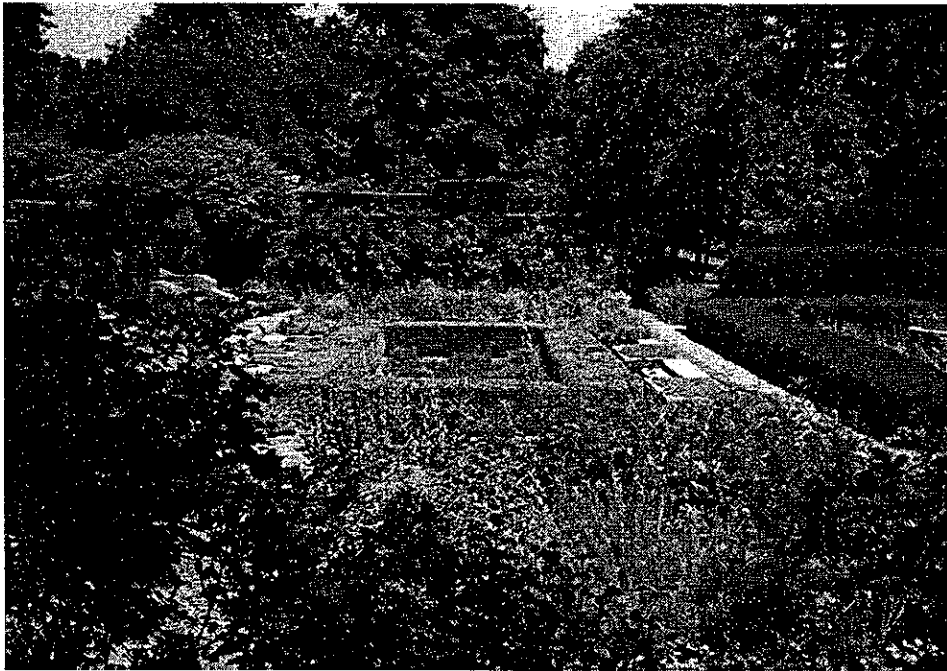


Figure III.7. The lower terrace with filled pool, 1999 (LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP).



Figure III.8. The upper terrace and view towards Beechwood Boulevard, 1999 (LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP).

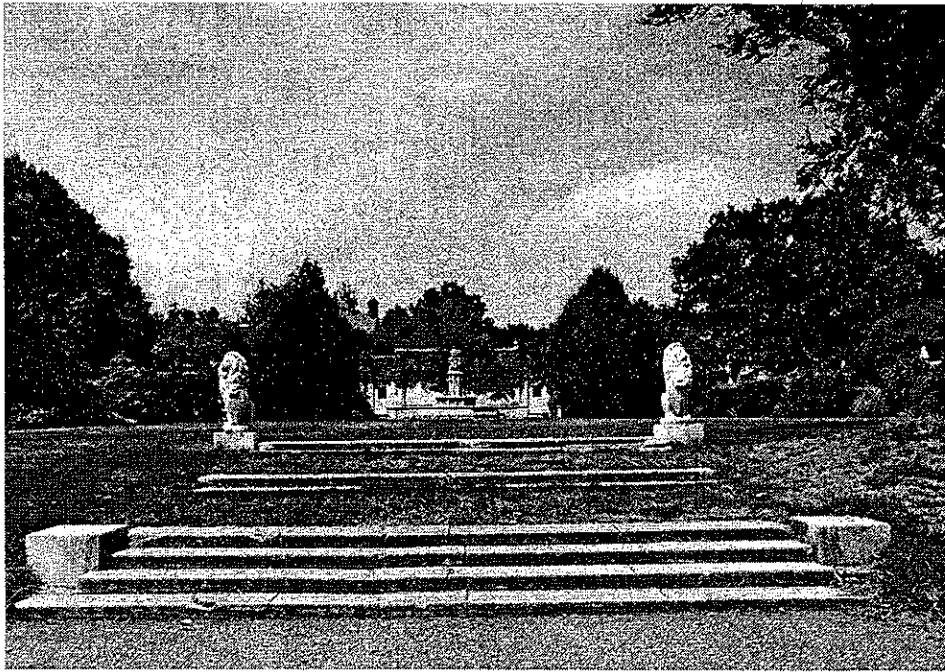


Figure III.9. Entry steps, lawn, and terminus of the central terrace in the walled garden, 1999 (LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP).



Figure III.10. Stone path, balustrade, and western terminus of the north terrace in the walled garden, 1999 (LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP).



Figure III.11. Pastoral parkland along Fifth Avenue, 1999 (LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP).

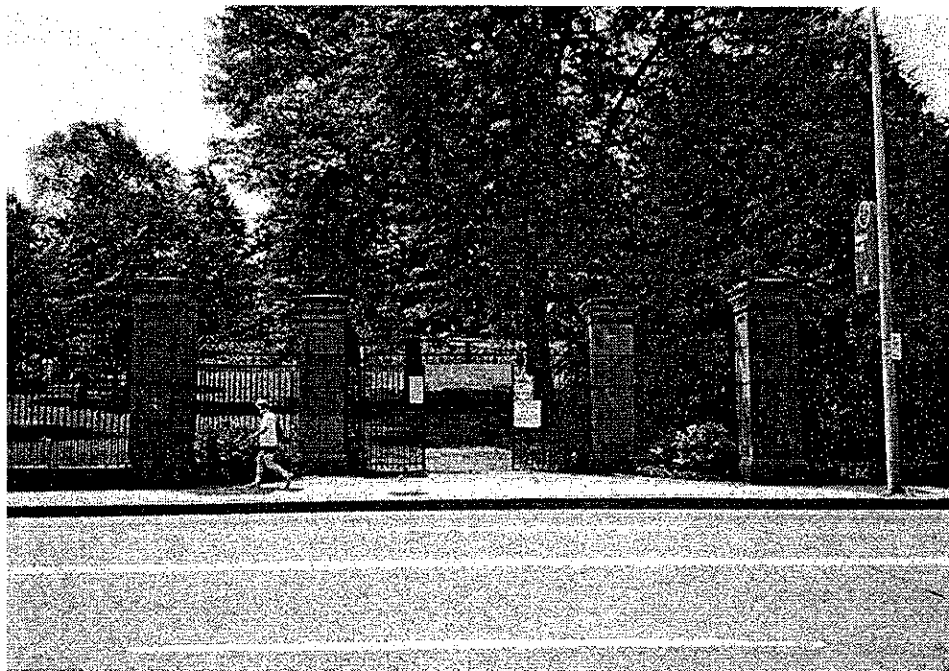


Figure III.12. Main vehicular entrance gate of the former Mellon estate (now pedestrian access only), 1999 (LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP).



Figure III.13. North path and parkland on Beechwood Boulevard, 1999 (LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP).



Figure III.14. Entrance drive towards Beechwood Boulevard, 1999 (LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP).

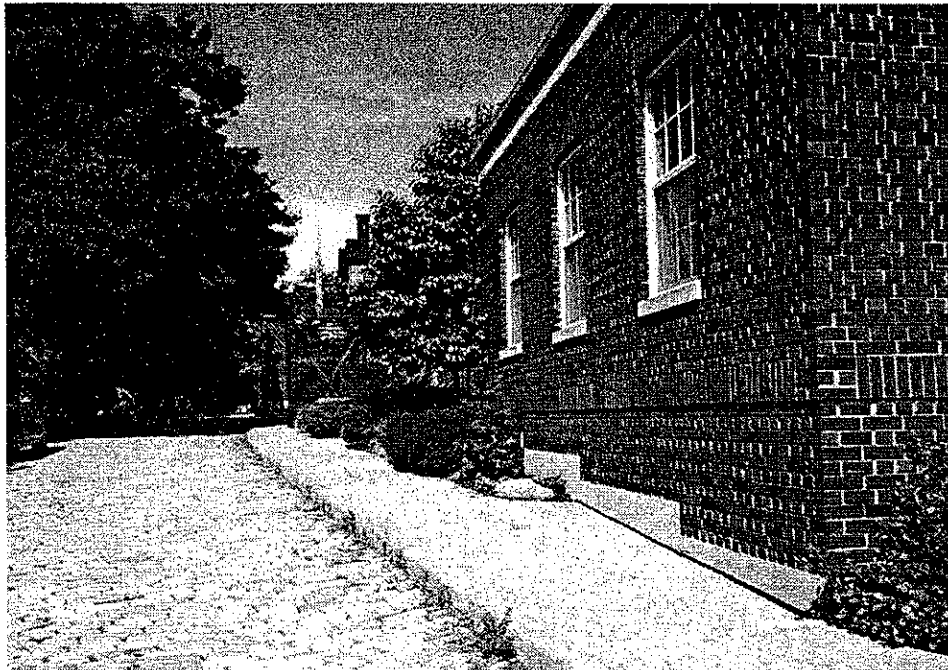


Figure III.15. Cobble drive toward entry gate, Garden Center in foreground, 1999 (LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP).

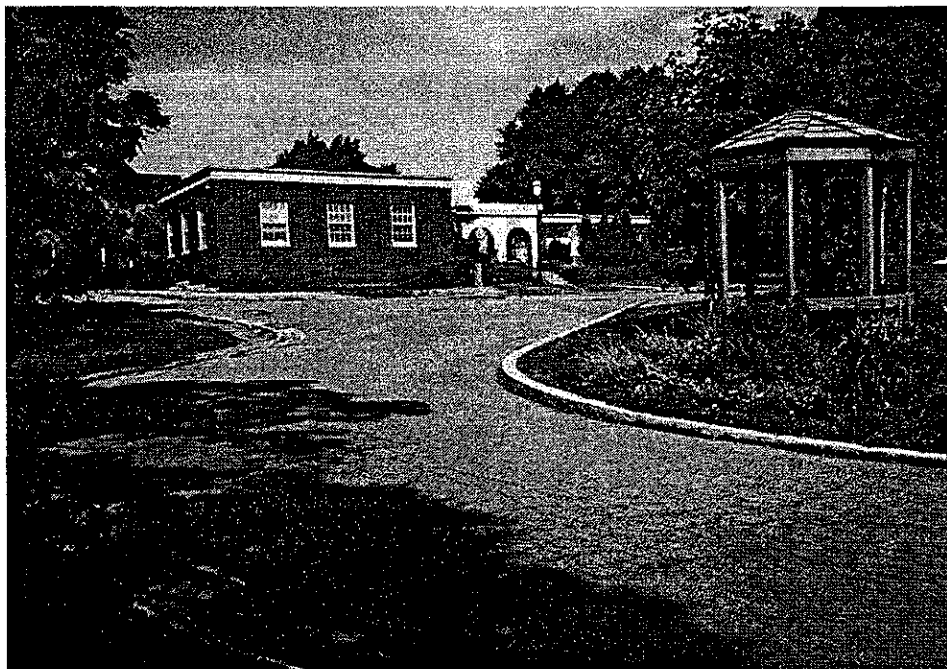


Figure III.16. Intersection of drives and paths from conservatory site, Garden Center in back. Gazebo to the right is in the former house site landscape unit, 1999 (LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP).

IV. LEVEL OF CHANGE AND LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

A. INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter is a discussion of the level of change and the contrasts of landscape character between different periods. The periods contrasted are the Mellon estate of the 1930s with the current conditions (1999), and the early park years of the 1950s with the current conditions. LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP has created three plans to from which the discussion is based: Figure IV.1, *Missing Landscape Elements 1930s to 1999*, Figure IV.2, *Missing Landscape Elements 1950s to 1999*, and Figure IV.3, *Added Landscape Elements 1930s & 1950s*. This chapter attempts to present and discuss the broad changes to the park over time rather than focus on an in depth examination of each individual change between these periods.

B. LEVEL OF CHANGE

1. *Level of Change Since the Mellon Estate Period (1930s)*

The most obvious changes to the Mellon estate since it served as a private property in the 1930s is its change in function to a public park and its evolution as a public park through nearly six decades. Notably, the buildings that once served an assortment of residential functions on the Mellon, Frew and Darcie properties have been removed, with the exception of the Mellon garage, which, along with the buildings once owned by the Scaife family, has been adapted to a public use. Associated with the removal of the buildings has been the loss of or changes to residential landscape elements, such as pedestrian paths, vehicular access drives, vegetation that formed boundaries between the three properties and ornamental vegetation that was in close proximity to the buildings. In the case of the Frew and Darcie properties, there are no remaining elements that provide evidence of the former residential properties other than the fences that line Fifth Avenue and the walk into the property that is a driveway remnant. With the functional shift to public park has come the introduction of new elements, such as benches and trash cans. Contemporary furnishings, such as green, 50-gallon, garbage cans and contemporary benches made of metal pipe, wood and Trex (recycled plastic lumber), serve a function but are purely functional rather than aesthetically pleasing and functional at the same time.

On the Mellon property several important, estate-period features partially remain, most notably the sloped lawns leading to both Fifth and Beechwood Avenues and the terraced and walled gardens. While the original form of both these gardens is certainly recognizable today, many changes are evident on close study and deterioration of walls, walks, ironwork and pools is clear. During the estate years, the terraced garden was meant to be revealed from above. As one descended onto each terrace one could survey the low plantings and pools on the ground plane, which were framed by the walks and terrace walls, as seen in Figure IV.4. These plantings were punctuated by vertical elements including statuary, urns, columnar trees and pedestal planters. Today two of the three pools are gone, as is the statuary while the urns remain in a deteriorated condition. The change of plantings within the garden, which are larger and have grown to above eye level, creates a space that

is more enclosed and isolated, and therefore more subject to misuse and vandalism. Once overlooked from the terraces, the Beechwood Boulevard parkland is now almost completely blocked from view.

The spatial configuration of the walled garden has also been modified due to changes in garden beds and plant material. The effect today is a greater fullness in the remaining garden beds and at the perimeter, but less variety and definition of the space. In the 1930s the central lawn of the walled garden was bounded on four sides, three by planting beds and walls, and the fourth by a low hedge. Vertical interest and massing was created by the canopy of two rows of flowering cherry trees, shown in Figure IV.5. The row of columnar poplars magnified the height of the west terminal wall. The resulting effect was a sheltered, linear outdoor room that focused on the fountain. The trees, planting beds and the hedge-wall on the east side have since been removed, widening and simplifying the garden. Other major changes to the walled garden include the removal of the bronze statues on the west wall and the introduction of a variety of plantings in the remaining beds.

The essential character of the parklands on Fifth Avenue and Beechwood Boulevard has remained constant since the 1950s park period. These are parkland landscapes of large trees scattered in and open lawn, although, as Figures IV.1 and IV.3 show, a significant number of trees have been lost. Fences and walls still front both streets, although one wall section is partially gone and deterioration of both ironwork and stone work is evident. The Beechwood entrance drive configuration remains the same. From the 1930s changes to join the three properties into a park, did, as noted above, alter the former landscapes. The fences and vegetative screens that blocked views of the neighbors have either removed entirely or thinned considerably, as in the row of trees separating the Mellon property from the former vegetable garden. The street trees lining Beechwood Boulevard were also removed, as was the pond and walks installed by the Olmsted Brothers office in the southern end of the Beechwood parkland. A few remnant trees, shrubs and rocks mark where this small garden once stood. Additions to the parklands include a new alignment of paths for pedestrian circulation, which in the Fifth Avenue parkland are partially lined by small ornamental trees and contemporary flower beds. A line of recently planted birch trees also curves through this parkland, contrasting with its historic character.

As one might expect, the residential service core of the Mellon estate has also changed considerably. The conservatory, service court and laundry yard have been removed, and the former garage has expanded several times as the Civic Garden Center. The Garden Center has sponsored a number of new planting additions in this area, including a vegetable garden in the laundry yard, a dogwood collection and several planting beds at the conservatory site, and a rock garden across from the Garden Center's main entrance. Little attention was given to this area on the 1930s Olmsted plan or in the period photographs, so it is difficult to determine what elements from the estate years remain. The exception is the vehicular circulation, which in the Shady Avenue entrance still retains the original cobble surfacing and gated entry. The Beechwood entry drive has been paved in asphalt, but still converges with the original, cobblestone paved, Shady entry drive between the former conservatory and garage sites.

2. Level of Change Since the Early Park Years (1950s)

The level of change in Mellon Park since the early park years (c. 1950s) and today is considerable although different from the changes that relate to the shift from estate to park use. It was during the late 1940s and 1950s that Mellon Park was created by joining several adjacent properties. Much of the residential character was altered at this time in order to create an integrated, unified park. While a few changes have aided in park function, such as the addition of walk segments, many changes reflect the steady decline in the condition of original built elements and vegetation as they age. The removal of the street trees on Beechwood Boulevard is one example while the evident deterioration of brick and stone walls is another. An important accommodation to current uses, the parking lots on the former Scaife property were installed in the 1965.

A set of photographs taken in 1965 document the conditions of the terraced garden, giving a sense of how it looked in these years after the first Allegheny Garden Club replanting (Figures IV.6 and IV.7). While numerous plant material changes had been made in the garden between the 1930s and 1965, the concept of low trimmed shrub and rose borders and generally low, annual planting beds still allowed for views both over and from the terraces. Today many of these shrubs are above waist height or taller, resulting in restricted views. Two pools had been filled by 1965, though the paths still retained their original paving of herringbone brick with cast stone borders and steps. A pair of large elm trees framed the entry stair. Today the elms are gone and the steps are faced in brick, and most of the walks have been repaved with concrete and edged with brick.

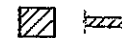

Change throughout the rest of the park since the 1950s is related primarily to vegetation. The pedestrian circulation system established by the landscape architects Simonds and Simonds in the 1950s still remains, with several additions made on the Mellon house site during the 1980s (as seen on the plans, Figures IV.2 and IV.3). These additional walks connected desire lines and eliminated dirt paths worn in the lawn. Some of the vegetative change in the parklands has been due to natural decline and loss of large trees. Some trees have been replaced, but much of the recent planting, especially on the Fifth Avenue parkland, has been limited to a variety of small exotic ornamentals that fail to replace the losses of large shade trees. A row of birch trees has been introduced as part of a temporary art exhibit. In the walled garden, the planting beds flanking the central lawn have been converted to turf. The remaining beds continue to be planted and maintained by the Garden Center. It appears that none of the estate-era plants remain in these beds. Along the west wall a number of young trees have covered much of its surface. Behind the west wall the columnar poplars were removed and replaced with flowering crabs, redbuds and other small trees. Building additions have enlarged the Garden Center, and several Garden Center feature gardens are found now in the center's vicinity, including a rock garden, dogwood collection, and several planting beds.

C. CONCLUSION

This chapter serves to catalogue and illustrate the level of change in Mellon Park from the 1930s estate years and the 1950s early park years. It is interesting to note that a series of losses and additions have been made to the park landscape in the decades from 1950 to 1999. Cumulatively, these changes represent a significant shift in the character of this public landscape. While changes

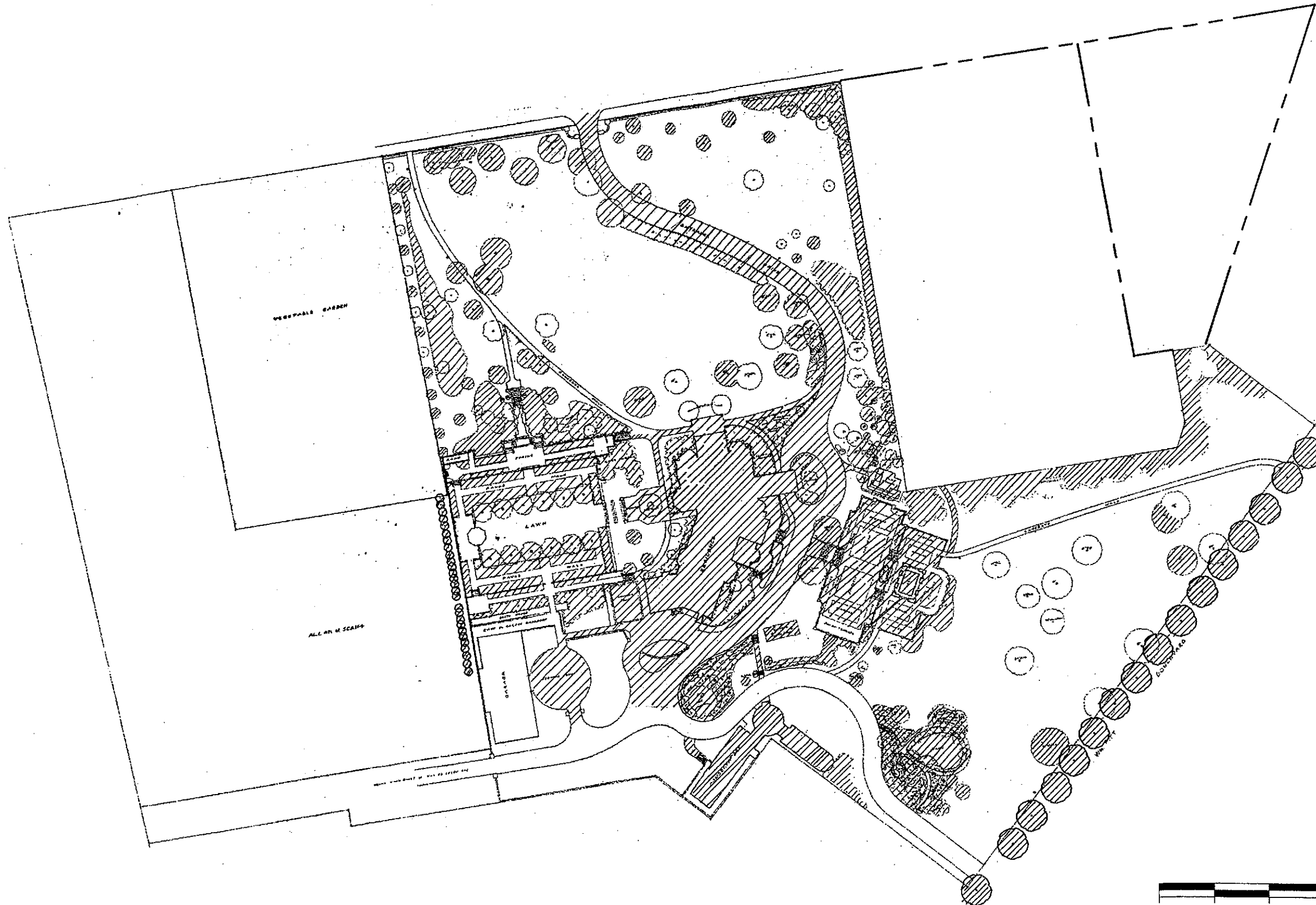
can be clearly identified on a plan, the level of deterioration within the park can be observed upon careful inspection. Many of the remaining elements of the park landscape require a substantial renewal effort. A park is a public landscape for enjoyment of the people. A landscape in a deteriorated state provides a less positive experience for the park user and may even contain safety hazards. The purpose of understanding change is to provide a basis for managing change into the future. Public landscapes all change and Mellon Park will continue to change. However positive change must be planned and lack of action simply continues the cycle of deterioration. The objective is to understand the process of change, to agree on how to proceed into the future and to implement the future plan.

SYMBOL KEY

-  Built Elements Lost Since the 1930s
-  Vegetation Lost Since the 1930s

SOURCES

Olmsted Brothers. "Mr. R.B. Mellon, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Plan of Property Showing Location of Existing Planting, Spring, 1931." File No. 6752, Plan No. 15.



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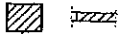



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**MISSING
LANDSCAPE
ELEMENTS
1930s to
1999**
Issue & Date:
November 1999

Drawing No.:
FIGURE IV.1

SYMBOL KEY

-   Built Elements Lost Since the 1950s
-   Vegetation Lost Since the 1950s

SOURCES

LANDSCAPES LA Planning HP. Field survey. July, 1999.

Olmsted Brothers. "Mr. R.B. Mellon, 'Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Plan of Property Showing Location of Existing planting, Spring, 1931." File No. 6752, Plan No. 15.

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ELEMENTS
1950s to
1999**
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Drawing No.:
FIGURE IV.2

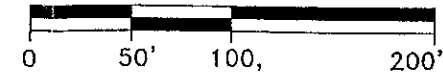
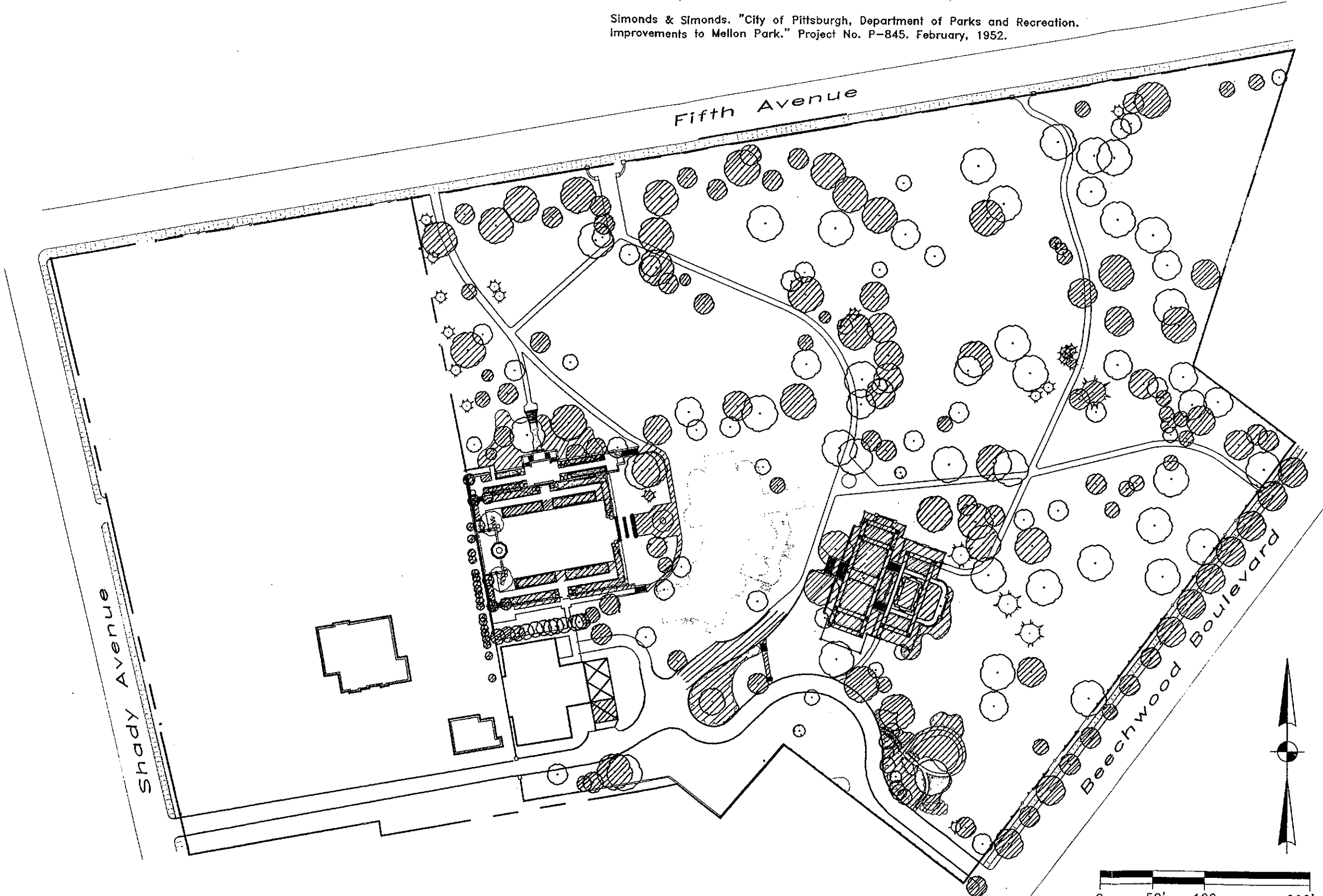




Figure IV.4 Overlooking the upper level of the terraced garden, 1931 (courtesy private collection).

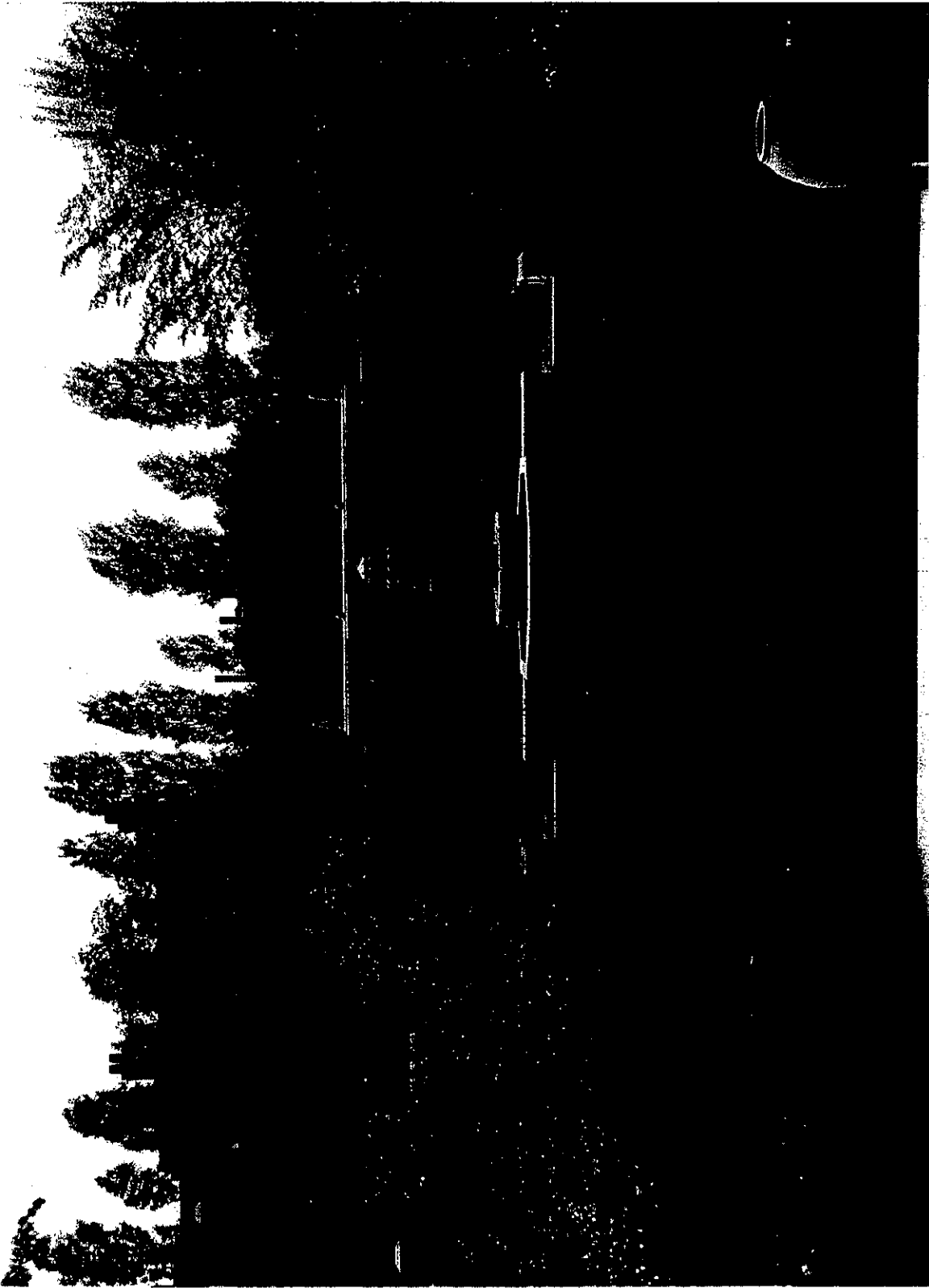


Figure IV.5 The central lawn of the walled garden, 1931 (courtesy private collection).

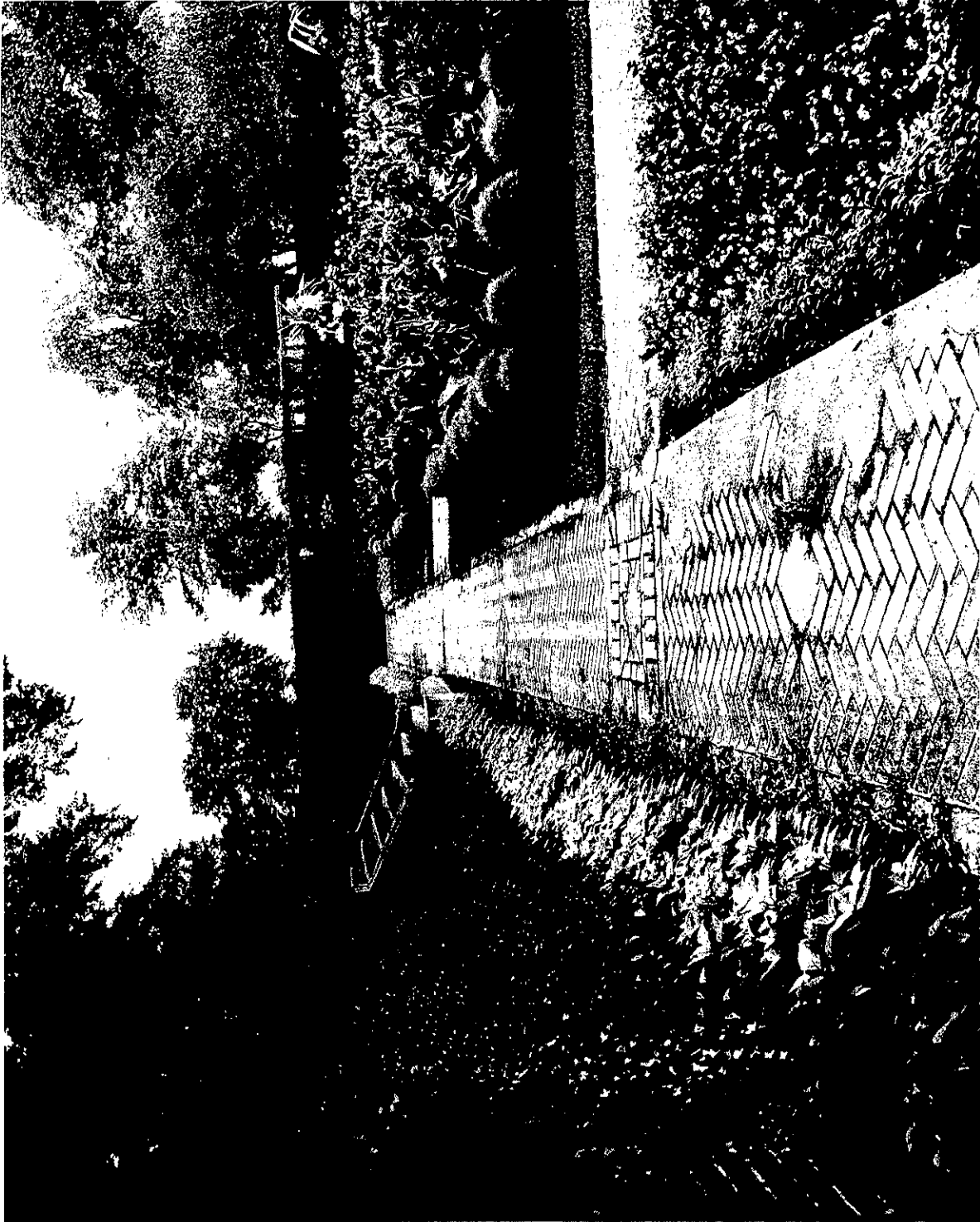


Figure IV.6 The upper level of the terraced garden, 1965 (courtesy of Pittsburgh Department of Public Works).

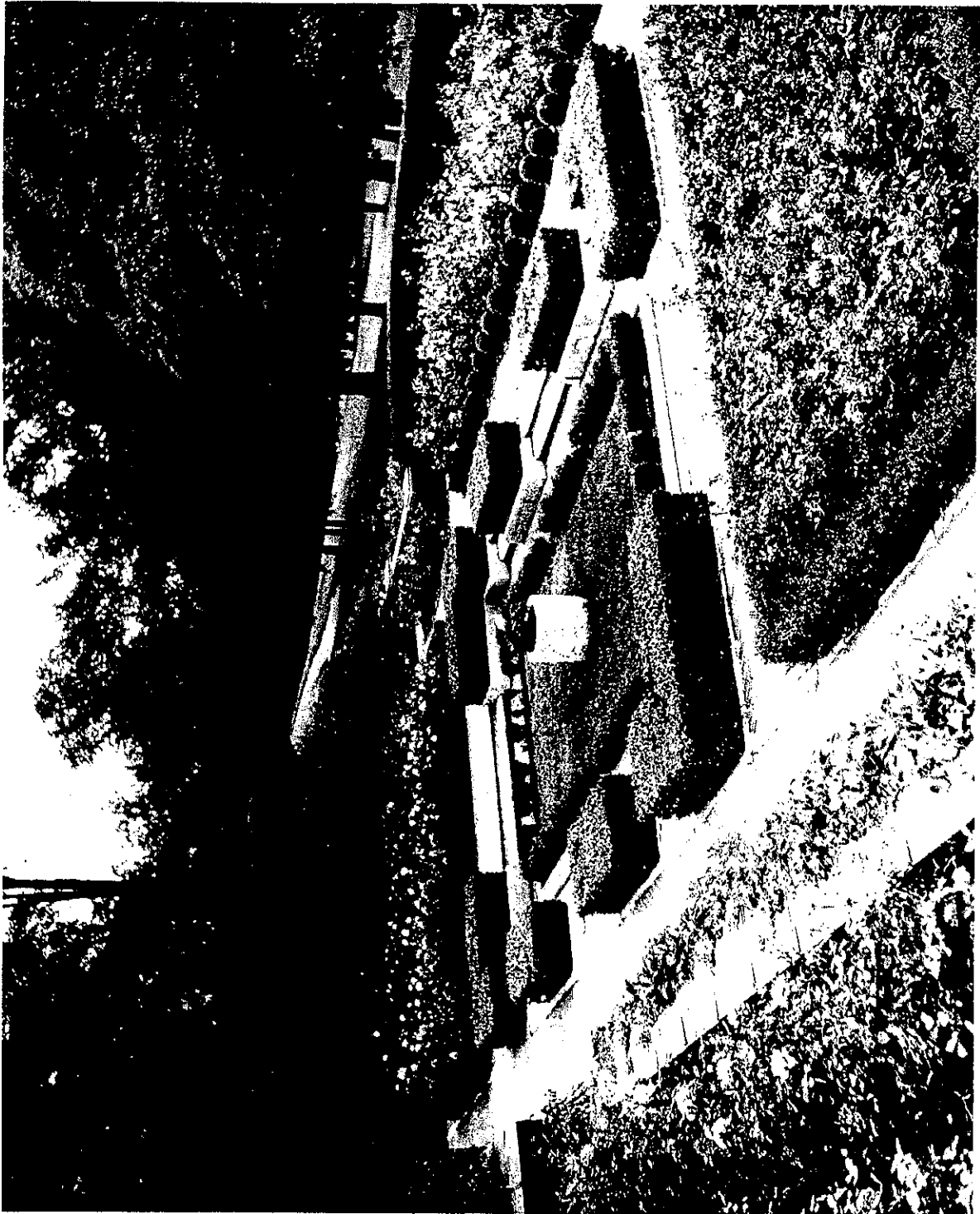


Figure IV.7 The lower level of the terraced garden, 1965 (courtesy of Pittsburgh Department of Public Works).

V. CURRENT USE & PROGRAMMING

A. INTRODUCTION

Current uses in the historic portion of Mellon Park uses include a range of activities. Many people come to recreate in the park, alone, with a group or with a dog. Others participate in programs and classes sponsored by the Pittsburgh Civic Garden Center and the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts. Both of these organizations are housed on park grounds and often use the park for their classes. Programmed public and private events are also held within the park, with permits for events obtained through the City of Pittsburgh Department of Public Works (DPW). In order to understand current park use and user opinions an intercept survey was carried out in the park during the summer of 1999 by the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy. Uses were also observed within the park and are recorded on a plan. In addition, LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP conducted interviews with representatives from the Garden Center, the Center for the Arts, and DPW.

B. GENERAL PARK USE

The uses of the approximately 11 acre historic area Mellon Park generally include walking, hanging out, sunbathing, dog walking, sitting on a bench or on the grass, picnicking or brown-bag lunch, exercise walking or jogging, casual frisbee or catch games, children climbing on the large rocks, caring for, learning from and enjoying the gardens and using the park as an inspiration for art activities. The portion of Mellon Park across Fifth Avenue provides playing fields and courts for sports use.

A park use plan for historic Mellon Park has been developed and is included as Figure V.1, *Current Use: General*. This plan shows observed activities are specific to a particular area. Some uses, such as walking, are not shown. What park observations and this plan reveal is a concentration of activity in the flat terrace where the Mellon house formerly stood. It is a logical place for a range of activity since it is flat, broad and on high ground with good views in all directions. It is also central to the park and equally distant from Fifth and Beechwood Avenues. This broad terrace is a good place to see other people and be seen by them, to meet and greet. The walled garden, an adjacent area, is also well used for casual gathering and hanging out. This use may be due to the close proximity to the house terrace and the ability to view over it, but be removed from it. The terrace garden, like the walled garden, shares a close proximity to the former house terrace lawn and is a separate space. This lower garden area is enjoyed by many for casual strolling and viewing of the plant collections as installed and maintained by both the Western Pennsylvania Chapter of the Herb Society of America and the Pittsburgh Civic Garden Center. The lawn terrace area of the former Frew house is used to a lesser degree than the Mellon house site. It is not directly accessible from paved walks, and is therefore a more isolated and quiet location. Individuals and small groups currently use this area for brown-bag lunches or picnics, as well as for occasional Frisbee or catch games.

C. USER SURVEY & RESULTS

In the summer of 1999 volunteers from the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy conducted a survey of users of Historic Mellon Park. This was an intercept survey, where people using the park were asked to respond to a series of questions. Their answers were recorded on an individual survey form, shown in Appendix A. These responses were tabulated and summarized by faculty and students at the H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Management, Carnegie Mellon University. Questions addressed the overall condition of Mellon Park, frequency of park use, user perceptions, the importance of the park in the users life, activities available and their condition, park activities and facilities users would like to see added, and user demographic information. There were 178 respondents in six age groups (8 respondents were 10-16 in age; 20 were 17-24, 48 were 25-34, 33 were 35-44, 53 were 45-64, and 16 were above 65 in age). The survey group was predominately Caucasian (86%), with some representation of African American (4%) and Asian (2%).

53% of survey respondents used the park daily or more than once a week. 56% stayed in the park for one to three hours. 43% had been using the park for more than five years while another 36% were one to five year users. 24% come to the park alone, while a further 58% come with friends or family. 40% come with a dog. 60% of the respondents get to the park by car and 31% by foot. 35% of the users do not live within walking distance, and an additional 41 % of the users are further than a five-minute walk from the park.

In terms of perceptions, the survey found that over half of the respondents (51%) indicated that Mellon Park is very important to the quality of their life. This group, combined with those who indicated that the park was somewhat important, registered 91% noting the park as very or somewhat important to the quality of their life. 29% of the respondents indicated that the park and its condition was very important to their decision to live in Pittsburgh, with this figure standing at 48% for those 45-64, and 38% for those 65+ 72% of the respondents indicated that the park and its condition was very or somewhat important in their decision to live in Pittsburgh, with this figure rising to 77% for those 25-34, 85% for those 35-44, and 80% for those 45-64.

43% of the park users responding rated the condition of the park as average, below average, or poor. Similar response patterns applied to assessments of the park's cleanliness and safety. For the condition of the park's man-made structures, 68% rated the park as average, below average, or poor. The ratings of the condition of the park, its cleanliness, its safety, and the condition of the park's man-made structures was less favorable for Historic Mellon Park than the results of a similar users survey conducted in the Summer of 1998 of Frick, Highland, Riverview, and Schenley Parks.

When asked to name the parks greatest assets, beauty and nature were cited most frequently, followed by trees, flowers, and gardens. In terms of facilities that users would like to see, the most frequently mentioned facility was restrooms (29%), followed by drinking fountains (19%). Between 4% and 6% of respondents requested more paths, café/vendors, picnic tables, benches and more trees and flowers. Interestingly, while 40% of respondents came to the park with a dog, only 3% indicated that they would like to see a leash-free area for dogs. Concerts (28%) were the most frequently mentioned activity that users would like to see while theatre/art (11%). In terms of the greatest needs of the Mellon Park, restoration of man-made structures (40%) and preservation of natural

environment (38%) were the most frequently selected items. Litter collection, more flowers and trees, better lighting, improved security to deter vandalism, restrooms and drinking fountains were also favored (8% to 4%). This summary is drawn from a full report entitled Historic Mellon Park User Survey, September 1999. The actual Historic Mellon Park User Survey form is included as an appendix. The results of this user survey provide useful information to incorporate in planning the future of Mellon Park.

D. PITTSBURGH CIVIC GARDEN CENTER

On August 12, 1999 LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP conducted an interview with Susan Parker, Executive Director, and Marjorie Radebaugh, Horticulture Education Director, of the Pittsburgh Civic Garden Center. The meeting was held to discuss the various Garden Center programs and understand the center's use of the park and its role in the park's maintenance. The Pittsburgh Civic Garden Center is located in the former Mellon garage, which has been renovated and enlarged several times since it became the garden center in the late 1940s.

The Civic Garden Center offers a variety of classes and educational seminars throughout the year including two certificate courses in landscape and garden design and horticulture. The landscape program of the University of Pittsburgh cosponsors these courses. Each course requires 150 hours of class curriculum. A third certificate program, titled Native Plants in the Garden, is also offered by the Garden Center and requires 80 hours of course time. In addition to these certificate programs, classes are offered in master gardening, practical gardening, advanced horticulture, environmental education, horticulture, pruning, and flower arranging.

The Garden Center sponsors between four and six paid interns throughout the year to assist in garden maintenance. These are students majoring in horticulture, landscape architecture, environmental studies or related fields at various institutions. The grounds of the park provide a hands-on laboratory for learning about a wide variety of plants and their care. There are a variety of theme gardens that have been developed by the center for class use. The summer interns, center staff and several master gardeners provide garden care for theme gardens and annual plantings in various areas of the park. The herb garden, in the lower level of the terraced garden, is cared for by the Herb Society. The daylily and daffodil garden on the Fifth Avenue Parkland is managed by the Linden Garden Club.

The park is used extensively for each of the aforementioned programs and the grounds are planted with various plant species and collections to aid in the instruction of the different courses. Horticultural collections feature specific groundcovers, herbs, ornamental grasses, daylily, daffodil, annuals & perennials, native plants and a variety of woody ornamentals. These small collections occur throughout the park, including areas within the walled and terrace gardens.

E. PITTSBURGH CENTER FOR THE ARTS

On August 12, 1999 an interview was conducted by LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP with Lourdes A. Karas, Arts-in-Learning Director at the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts. The objectives of the interview were to discover how the Center for the Arts used the park for programmed and non-programmed activities and how these activities influenced both the Center for the Arts and the park. The Center for the Arts is located in the former Scaife residence, now a part of Mellon Park. The following is a summary of the findings from the interview conducted in August 1999.

The Pittsburgh Center for the Arts is open seven days a week throughout the year, with the exception of five weeks of down time. These periods include the first two weeks of September, the last two weeks of December and the first week of January. Facilities include the former Scaife mansion and a more recently completed classroom/studio facility also on the property. The arts facility is heavily used and is reaching maximum use capacity within the their current facilities.

The Center for the Arts offers over 600 classes during the year, ranging in length from one day to twelve weeks. They have averaged 5,800 students per year, with 1,500 children participating largely through classes and programs organized with local schools. They are seeking to increase outreach to children striving to serve 3,000 children 1999-2000 school year.

The Center for the Arts sees its location within Mellon Park as very desirable, with the park serving as a valued resource. The Center for the Arts staff and students use the park both informally and for scheduled events and classes. Students use the park informally, taking breaks from classes or waiting to be picked-up. Adults who are delivering students often read, walk, or picnic in the park while children are in class. Seasonally programmed events include the following:

- Outdoor drawing, drama, and other classes in the summer
- Twelve-week summer art camp for children, with outdoor classes and informal uses
- Temporary exhibitions and sculptural installations in the park

Sculpture Exhibitions and temporary installations are generally arranged by Vicky Clark, curator at the Center for the Arts, and often involve art guild members. There are 11 different guilds in the city.

With programmed use nearly around each day and evening, and special events, the Center for the Arts experiences parking difficulties. The parking lots are at this time entirely on the portion of the park that was formerly the Scaife property and are city owned and maintained. The lot has both half-hour and one-hour meters that are monitored by the city. Many staff members park on Shady Avenue, an adjacent neighborhood street, to avoid the time limitations of the parking meters. The Center for the Arts often receives complaints about meters from supporters and students.

The Pittsburgh Recreation Department, Community Education Outreach Program is housed in the third floor of the Arts Center building. This small program serves various neighborhoods with the mobile "Art Cart". The Art Cart is brought to programmed locations throughout Pittsburgh. The Art Cart program does not use Mellon Park.

F. PARK PROGRAMMING

Mike Gable, Assistant Director, Pittsburgh Department of Public Works (DPW), provided information about current programming in a telephone interview with LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP on August 19, 1999 and in subsequent discussions. The Department of Recreation manages event programming in Mellon Park, with the permit process managed by DPW. Permits are required for both private and public events that take place in the park, and are obtainable from the DPW. A current use events plan, *Current Use: Events*, has been developed to show the areas in which events are frequently held, as well as the locations of recent art installations (Figure V.2). Locations for the art exhibits vary for each installation based on desired setting and installation requirements. These sites are located throughout the park and are not concentrated in any particular area or setting. These pieces are intended to be shown for a limited period, after which they are removed and the landscape returned to the former condition. In most cases the work has been removed, however two of the exhibits noted on the enclosed plan have been remained from works installed prior to 1999.

The preferred locations for events both public and private in the park are understandably the same as those for general use: the lawn terrace of the former Mellon house site, walled garden and terrace garden. These three areas are used independently or in combination to accommodate both small private ceremonies and large public gatherings. The lawn terrace and walled garden make up the majority of the level site area having nearly direct access to support facilities in either the Art or Garden centers, parking and vehicular access. These areas are also at the high point within the park and provide pleasing views of the park landscape including the 5th Avenue and Beechwood Boulevard parklands. In both 1998 and 1999 eight major events, exceeding 1,000 people in attendance, were held on the house terrace and in the walled garden. Concessions and vendor tents for these events are often set-up in the walled garden. Electrical service for this is provided via the single control panel at the west garden wall.

Twenty-five permitted events took place in Mellon Park in 1998. Twenty events are anticipated for 1999. A yearly average of twenty events takes place in the walled garden while two or three are held in the terraced garden. Most of the smaller events consist of weddings, where the attendance averaged seventy-five persons.

The DPW does not provide any seasonal displays or holiday lighting in the park. Facilities and equipment for most of the small events are provided by the Center for the Arts or the Garden Center. The large events require the installation of temporary facilities, such as port-o-johns, the cost of which is paid for by the event sponsor. These large events include:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| • May Market | May (3 to 4 day event) | 20,000 attendance |
| • Pittsburgh Pride Festival | May (1 day) | 1,000 attendance |
| • Bach, Beethoven & Brunch | July (4 Sundays) | 2,500 attendance |
| • Citiparks | July (1 day) | (unknown) |
| • A Fair in the Park | September (5 to 7days) | 30,000 attendance |

Visitor services within Mellon Park are limited. Public restroom facilities and drinking water are only available inside the two centers during the operational hours. There are no other facilities, with the exception of one drinking fountain, in the park. During the Bach, Beethoven & Brunch, portable facilities are located in the park but are locked during non-event periods. DPW feels there is a need for permanent facilities in the Park.

R. B. MELLON PARK
Historic Landscape Preservation,
Maintenance & Management Plan
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Client:
Western Pennsylvania
Conservancy
 Route 381
 South Mill Run, PA 15464

Landscape Architect:
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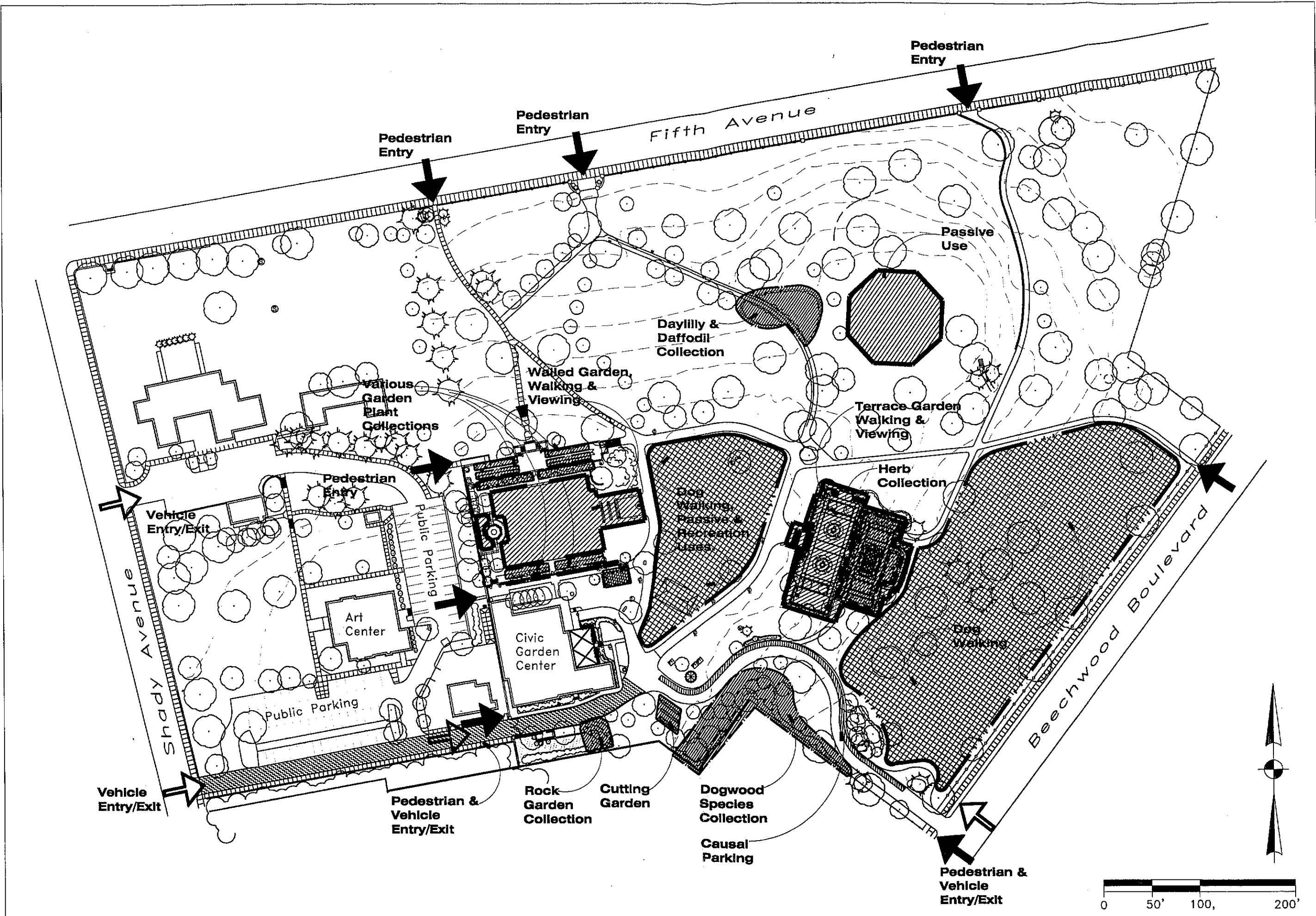
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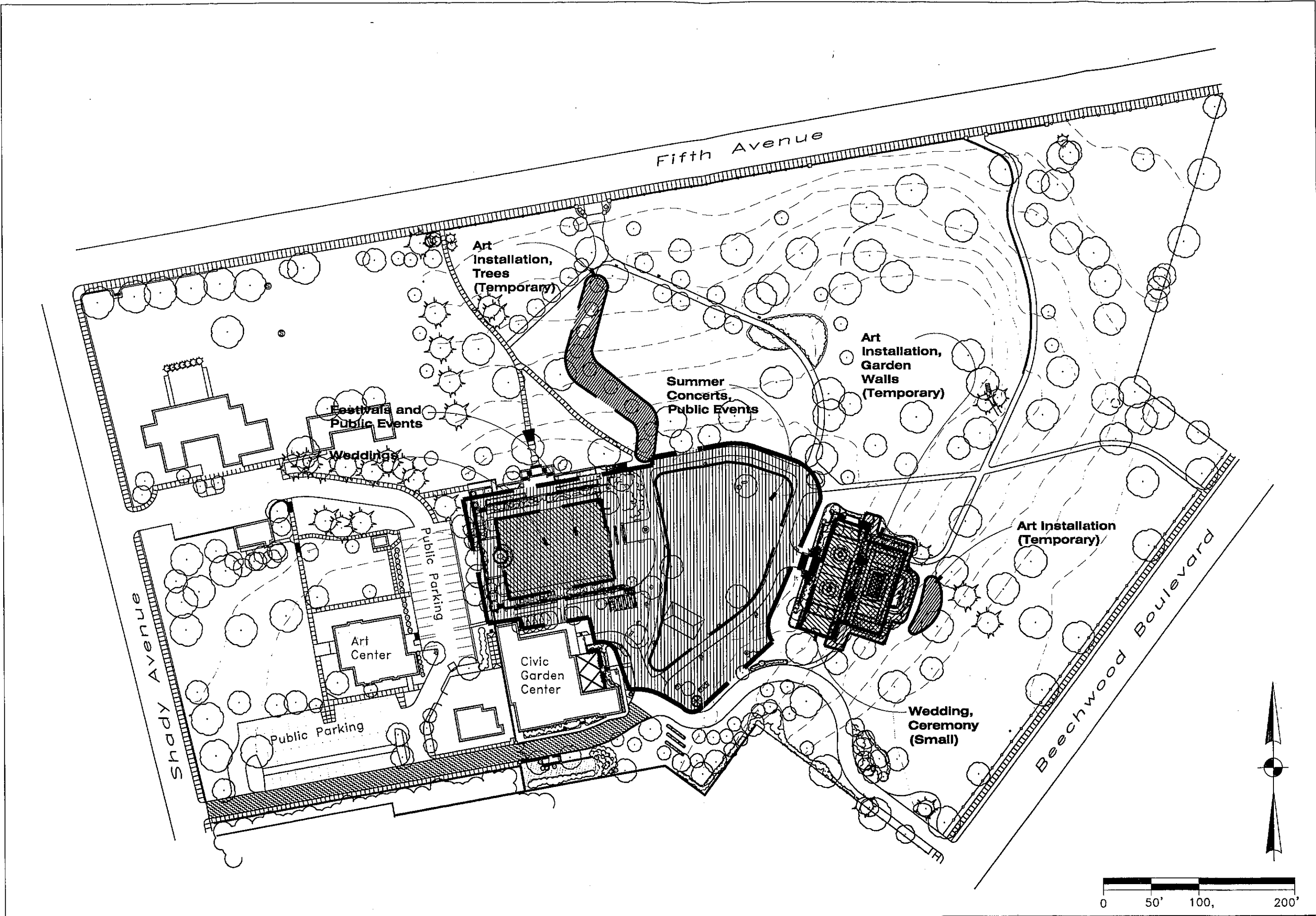
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FIGURE V.1





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Historic Landscape Preservation,
Maintenance & Management Plan
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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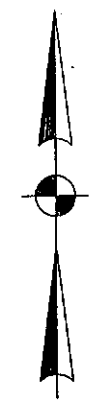
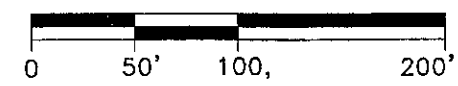
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EVENTS

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FIGURE V.2



VI. CURRENT PARK MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

A. INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

To determine how Mellon Park was being managed and maintained LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP conducted several telephone interviews with Mike Gable, Assistant Director of the City of Pittsburgh Department of Public Works (DPW). Further discussion with Gable was held during a series of management development workshops conducted by LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP in Pittsburgh in September 1999. An objective of these discussions was to identify the DPW management role and maintenance activities within Mellon Park. Input from the Pittsburgh Garden Center and Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, was also sought in regard to ground maintenance activities and responsibilities. The following is a summary of these discussions.

B. MELLON PARK MANAGEMENT

Mellon Park is currently managed by the City of Pittsburgh within an overall system of public park management. All of the parks under city jurisdiction are managed with city-wide park labor crews, with the exception of Frick Park (see Chapter VII for a description and comparison). A diagram of Mellon Park's management structure, developed by the LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP project team, is included as Figure VI.1. There is no designated administrator or supervisor assigned to the park, rather, the park is acted upon by three municipal departments. The Department of Public Works is responsible for basic park maintenance and administration. They are the permitting body and control the budget for operations and capital projects. Capital projects are managed and conducted by the Pittsburgh Department of Engineering and Construction. The Department of Recreation and Parks supervises programming and special events. Two closely involved groups are the Pittsburgh Civic Garden Center and the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts. They hold lease agreements with the City of Pittsburgh to occupy facilities within Mellon Park. Both organizations exert a degree of unofficial management over the park through their respective programs, and maintenance efforts.

C. MELLON PARK MAINTENANCE

The general maintenance of Mellon Park is the responsibility of the DPW. The current maintenance structure for Pittsburgh public parks is divided into regional districts, and Mellon Park falls under District Two. There is no dedicated work force assigned exclusively to Mellon Park. Instead, Mellon Park is rotated into the District Two operational schedule. The Garden Center and the Center for the Arts also assist in park maintenance by way of voluntary and verbal, rather than contractual, agreement.

Geographically, Mellon Park is divided into two sections: the historic/cultural portion bounded by Fifth Avenue, Beechwood Boulevard, and Shady Avenue, and number of facilities for active

recreation on the opposite side of Fifth Avenue. While LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP is concentrating solely on the historic portion, the DPW currently makes no distinction between the two areas of the park in their maintenance plan. For purposes of this report, a division has been made between the two areas with the assistance of Mike Gable. DPW maintenance crews undertake the tasks shown below in their routine maintenance of the park:

Cultural and Recreational Areas	Recreational Area Only
Litter removal/empty trashcans	Line fields, drag infield
Lawn mowing	Blow/sweep basketball courts
Lawn fertilization and spraying	Install/remove nets/basketball courts
Lawn aeration	Blow/sweep tennis courts
General trimming and pruning of trees and shrubs	Install/remove nets/tennis courts
Tree/brush removal	Equipment repair
Leaf removal	
Catch basin cleaning	
Snow removal and salt/sand spreading	
Painting of park structures	
Pavement repair and replacement	
Vandalism/graffiti repair	

The DPW also supplied LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP with maintenance schedules for Mellon Park and some maintenance protocols used for all Pittsburgh parks.

Materials and equipment needed for park maintenance activities is not stored in Mellon Park, nor are any DPW departments housed in the facilities on the park grounds. However, some storage of materials was observed in the garage of the former Scaife property. The DPW provides general maintenance for the areas not under the ongoing care of the Center for the Arts or Garden Center. In particular the areas under continual cultivation by the Garden Center are intentionally not maintained by the DPW, whose care would interfere with the Garden Center’s programmed courses.

Care of the beds planted by the Garden Center is provided by persons enrolled in the master gardening programs and by the student interns. In addition, 20 to 30 volunteers are enlisted for seasonal efforts such as fall bulb and spring annual plantings. The DPW provides regular lawn cutting and snow removal, while tree care and removal comes at the Gardens Center’s specific requests. The Garden Center feels that level of general maintenance by the City has declined over the past several years. For example, they feel the frequency of mowing has decreased, as lawns are left to grow high and then cut too low. Other concerns include damage to trees from mowing equipment and turf degradation and compaction from large public events in the park. Watering of plant materials is done only by the Garden Center and is a challenge to manage, particularly during periods of drought as experienced this year.

Maintenance of the Center for the Arts and its immediately surrounding grounds is done in part by Center for the Arts staff, including shrub care, building maintenance and sidewalk snow removal.

The DPW clears snow from the parking lots and also mows lawns, removes litter, and performs tree maintenance.

The costs for repairs and corrective measures resulting from damaged sustained during a sponsored event (such as damaged vegetation, worn and compacted lawns, and damage to built elements) are currently covered by the DPW. No funds are required of the event permit holder for damage to the park. Previously the DPW attempted a cost recovery program where percentages of materials were the responsibility of the event sponsor, while the DPW provided the labor. The deterioration of the built elements within the park has been observed by the DPW. DPW recognizes that a plan for repair and replacement of these elements is required.

The DPW has several concerns over the nighttime security in the park. Gable suggested during the interview that surveillance might effectively be provided by police vehicle patrols on Shady Avenue, Fifth Avenue, and Beechwood Boulevard. The Garden Center is aware of sporadic acts of vandalism in the park, including the theft of plant materials, people damaging plants (particularly in front of the gazebo and fountain), removal of plant labels, and graffiti and physical damage to stone benches, urns, walls and balustrades. Security concerns of the Center for the Arts in the past have included indecent exposure to a group of children in the park, car break-ins and broken windows in cars in the parking lot.

The high numbers of dogs in the park is an additional concern to the Garden Center. Dog urine damages plants, and dog feces in plant beds and on park lawns is unpleasant and unsanitary. Allowing dogs to run unleashed in the park has resulted in trampling and breakage to plantings. The Center for the Arts also cited instances of children in outdoor classes frightened by doges both on and off leashes.

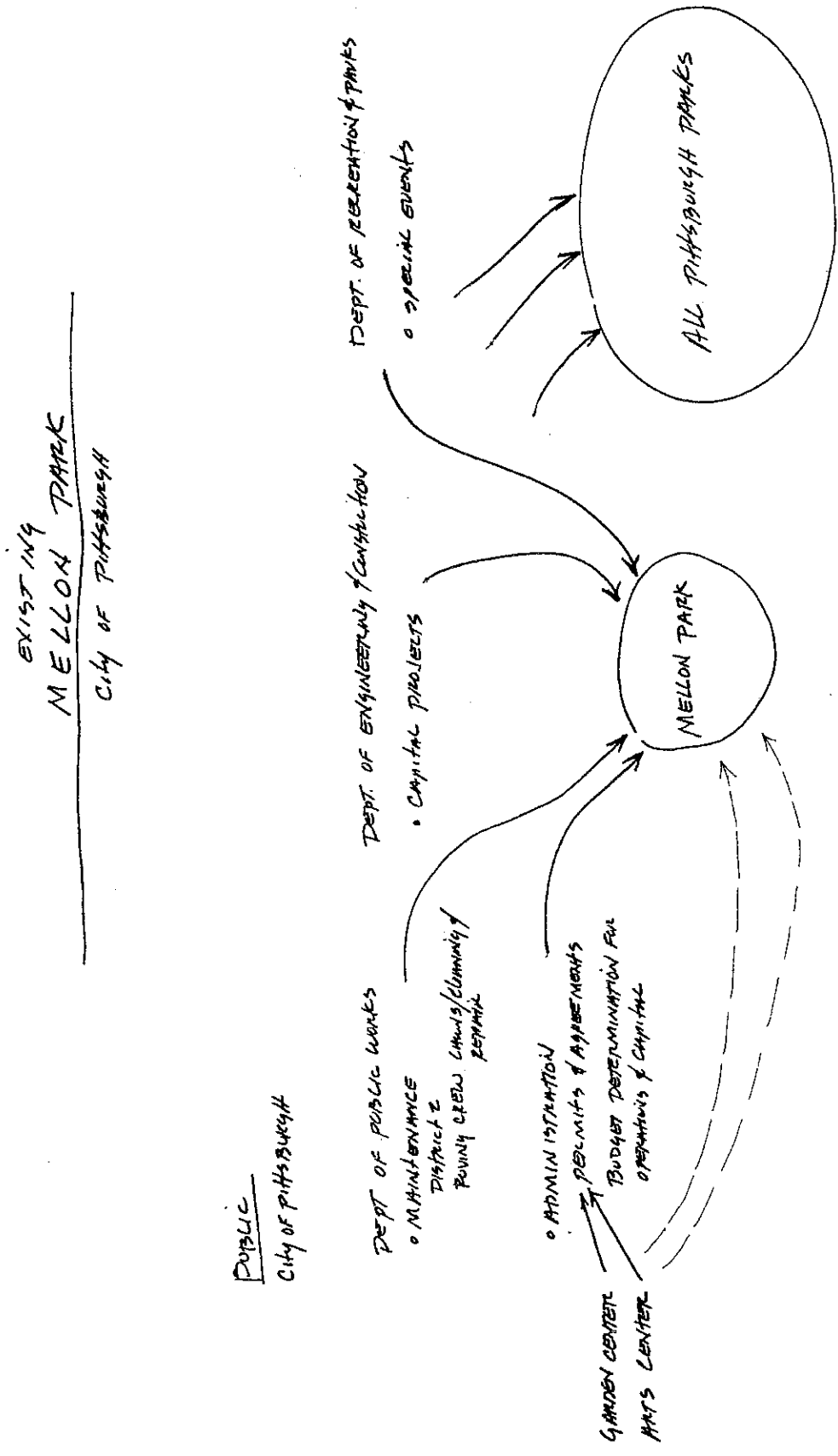


Figure VI.1 Model of Existing Mellon Park Management Structure

VII. EXPLORATION & SELECTION OF MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

A. INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

The primary purpose of a new management structure is to ensure that the potential recapture of historic Mellon Park is properly monitored over the years that follow. It is apparent from the study conducted in Chapter VI that Mellon Park's existing management and maintenance structure would not provide such a guarantee. In exploring other management and maintenance options, LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP has drawn upon a variety of resources in addition to the library of material compiled from previous projects. Tupper Thomas, President and Administrator of the Prospect Park Alliance in Brooklyn, New York and Susan Rademacher, President of Louisville Olmsted Parks Conservancy, Inc. and Assistant Director of Louisville and Jefferson County Parks Department in Louisville, Kentucky, joined the LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP project team in exploring management models. Both Thomas and Rademacher manage successful parks with public/private partnerships similar to the proposed scenario for Mellon Park. In addition to bringing the knowledge and expertise from their own parks or park systems, two other parks were studied; Central Park by Thomas, and Louisville Waterfront Park by Rademacher. LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP also conducted case studies of the not-for-profit organization Riverfront Recapture of the Riverfront Parks System in Hartford, Connecticut, and of the Boston Parks Department in Massachusetts. Two other Pittsburgh parks were also examined with the assistance of Mike Gable, Assistant Director in the Department of Public Works.

The findings from these studies were summarized and brought by the project team to a series of workshops and meetings held in Pittsburgh between the 26th and 29th of September, 1999. The project team charted and diagrammed the management and maintenance structure of each park studied, developed the *Components of Park Management*, and presented the findings to members of the Management Group, Advisory Committee, foundation representatives and municipal department heads.

B. COMPONENTS OF PARK MANAGEMENT

The *Components of Park Management*, seen in the following table, was developed by the LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP project team for the management of a historic park. It was compiled by comparing the characteristics, components and management strategies of successfully operating parks. The components are organized into three categories that address the ongoing care of the park through operations and maintenance, the renewal of park elements as they deteriorate through capital projects, and the accommodation of park users and provision of user services. The individual components are nonspecific ideals that combine to create measuring stick against which other park management scenarios can be examined.

Components of Park Management		
Capital Projects: Ideal Sequence	Operations & Maintenance: Ideal Components	Park Users & Park User Services: Ideal Services
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comprehensive Plan with Historic Basis that Establishes Priorities 2. Project Selection & Scoping 3. Historic Research & Assessment 4. Materials Testing Site Investigation 5. Final Design Review by Stakeholders 6. Construction Documents 7. Construction Administration 8. Construction Record 9. Project Area Management Plan 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Operation Comprehensive Planning 2. Historic Design Review Process 3. Dedicated Work Force 4. Required Skill Levels & Job Titles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grounds Maintenance - Forestry - Horticulture - Equipment Repairs & Maintenance - Construction Trades - Playing Fields - Litter & Garbage 5. Frequent & Cyclic Tasks 6. In-Park Capacity for Basic Tasks 7. Alternate Sources for Specialized Tasks 8. Emergency Staff Response 9. Dedicated Security & Policing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Park Users <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walking (for leisure/exercise) - Dog Walking - Relaxing/Hanging Out - Horticultural Enjoyment/ Education - Picnicking - Reading - Sun Bathing - Art (painting/drawing) - Pick-up Games (catch/Frisbee) 2. Public Information & Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - City & Park History - Environment - Way-finding - Interpretive Elements 3. Permits for Events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Private Events/Rentals - Community Events - Fairs & Festivals - Meeting/Symposia 4. Park Advocacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotion - Community Organization - Volunteers

C. CASE STUDIES

The LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP project team conducted case studies of the management and maintenance structures of eight parks or park systems. The selected parks provided a wide range in the level of private involvement, management strategies, park size, park age, and other factors. In order to provide a means of comparison, a matrix was developed to cross-examine capital expenditures, visitation numbers, acreage, public involvement and funding, private involvement and funding, and the details of any endowments (see *Selected Management Roles*, Table VII.1). The following is a summary of the case studies.

1. Allegheny Commons, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Allegheny Commons was chosen as a case study in order to extend the baseline against which the other parks are compared. Allegheny Commons is a small historic park – 72 acres, 62.5 maintainable – with many similarities to Mellon Park. Both parks are maintained by the Department of Public Works (DPW) and managed under the split system of the DPW and the Department of Parks and Recreation. Like Mellon Park, Allegheny Commons is not maintained by a dedicated crew, but is cared for under the DPW district system. Capital projects for the park is supervised by

the Department of Engineering (DEC) and Construction, and programming is handled by the Department of Recreation (DR). Private involvement in Allegheny Commons is limited and temporary, operating at a task specific basis.

2. Frick Park, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

At 475 acres Frick Park is much larger than Mellon Park, though because to its ravines and dense woods only 52.1 of its acres are maintained regularly. Of the public parks in Pittsburgh, Frick Park is the single exception to the city's established management and maintenance structure. Unlike Pittsburgh's other parks, Frick Park is maintained by a dedicated workforce, comprised of a foreman, clerk, truck driver, tractor operator, nine laborers and one seasonal position. The park and its employees are still managed by the DPW, but the funding for much of the operating budget comes from a privately funded endowment called the Frick Park Trust Fund (FPTF). In the management of capital projects and programming, Frick Park is managed with the rest of the Pittsburgh Parks by the DEC and DR.

3. Louisville Olmsted Parks, Louisville, Kentucky

The beginnings of the public/private partnership of the historic Louisville Olmsted Parks date to the mid 1980s, when an advocacy group was formed to address concerns over deteriorating conditions in the 16 parks and various parkways that comprise 2,000 acres of parkland. These efforts led to the creation of the Louisville Olmsted Parks Conservancy, Inc., which began operations in 1991 as a 501c(3) organization. A three-year master-planning project was then undertaken and completed in 1994. In the five years that have followed, \$10 million has been spent in capital projects, and a \$1.6 million endowment has been established (with a goal to increase the endowment to \$10-15 million).

The organizational structure of the public/private partnership is diagrammed in Figure VII.1. The parks system is supervised by a single position that is funded 50% by the conservancy (with the title of president) and 50% by Metro Parks (with the title of assistant director), a city/county agency. The public side is responsible for maintenance labor, administration, and funding. Recreational programming is also managed by Metro Parks. Capital expenditures are split with the conservancy, as is the planning and design of capital projects. The conservancy is comprised of the president and seven organizational staff positions. The roles of the conservancy include fund raising, public programming, specialized maintenance management. The conservancy also manages Park Champions, an organization of 750 volunteers.

4. Louisville Waterfront Park, Louisville, Kentucky

The Louisville Waterfront Park is a recent 95-acre build-out begun in 1989 with a design competition. City, State, and Federal funds provided for 70% of the \$60 million invested capital. Public involvement in the park is channeled through the City Law Department, Human Resources, and the Louisville Development Authority, responsible for context planning and the stadium. The Department of Public Works maintains the roads and parking lots, though this accounts for only 5% of the maintenance budget.

The bulk of the landscape maintenance is conducted by the Waterfront Development Corporation, a private organization. Their other duties include the management of design (through consultants), construction administration and event and public use programming. In addition to the Waterfront

Development Corporation, Friends of the Waterfront, a citizen run advocacy and volunteer support group has an active role in the park.

5. Riverfront Parks System, Hartford, Connecticut

The Riverfront Parks System is another recent build-out, though the new system did incorporate some existing and historic parks. The Riverfront Parks System is the product of 18 years of work instigated and managed by Riverfront Recapture, a private, not-for-profit organization. Initially Riverfront Recapture was an advocacy group whose primary goal was restoring access to the Connecticut River, long isolated by a multilane freeway and municipal designated for flood control. In its early years the organization received most of its funding through corporate sponsorship, though a deliberate effort was made to include all concerned parties in the planning process, including representatives of the poorer neighborhoods near the river. By the mid-1980s Riverfront Recapture had completed a comprehensive Masterplan for a system of parks along both the Hartford and East Hartford waterfronts. At this point the role of the organization shifted the management and implementation of the plan, as no one else was stepping forward. In the years that have followed the role of Riverfront Recapture has continued to shift, and now that the parks are nearly built a programming has become a primary role of the organization, along with the continuing responsibility of management.

Maintenance of the park system is funded and conducted by the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC), the local taxing authority that provides water and sewer services. The partnership of the MDC with Riverfront Recapture, bound by a service agreement, has been a good match. The MDC has a vested interest in the river, as well as expertise in the management and maintenance of reservoirs and flood-zone lands. To fund the maintenance of the Riverfront Parks System, the MDC raised taxes an average of \$6 per year. In addition to funding maintenance, the MDC funds the ranger program instigated and managed by River Recapture. This ranger program is run by a retired police officer and staffed with 35 part-time positions by individuals who range in age from 16 to 75. The program has been very successful in reducing crime and vandalism in the parks and has led to an increase in park visitation.

Riverfront Recapture maintains its position as manager in the parks system through a lease agreement with the City of Hartford and a management services agreement with the City of East Hartford. These agreements were very controversial when first formed two years ago, though it looks as though these agreements will now be extended with little opposition. Over the 18 years the municipalities have contributed primarily to operating costs of the parks, as most of the capital funds have been provided by Federal and State dollars. This is also true of private funding; the majority has come from corporate sponsorship and has gone towards operating costs. Other increasingly important sources of revenue for Riverfront Recapture, now comprised of 17 full-time positions, include concessionaire contracts and program fees.

6. Prospect Park, Brooklyn, New York

Prospect Park, built in the late 1800's by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux, began its public/private partnership in 1980. Since then approximately \$80 million has been spent on capital projects within the 500+ acre park, which receives over 6.5 million annual visits. Prospect Park is managed by an administrator/president who reports to the Parks Commissioner in the New York City

Parks and Recreation Department and to the Board of Directors of the Prospect Park Alliance. A diagram of the organizational structure is shown in Figure VII.2. There are five management divisions with varying degrees of public and/or private involvement in each (see the diagram for a breakdown of the responsibilities of each division:

1. Operations (staff = 80% city and 20% alliance)
2. Community and Government Affairs (staff = 50% city and 50% alliance)
3. Development and Marketing (staff = 13% city and 87% alliance)
4. Capital and Planning (staff = 8% city and 92% alliance)
5. Finance and Human Resources (staff = 33% city and 66% alliance)

The parks department provides seven full time and three seasonal landscape management positions and nineteen full time and eleven seasonal maintenance personnel, all devoted specifically to Prospect Park. Approximately forty additional full time positions are filled through work welfare participants, a public assistance program. Approximately \$2 million of the operating budget is funded by the city.

The Prospect Park Alliance raised \$4 million in 1998, with foundations being the largest contributor at 34%. Concessions accounted for 13% of the alliance funds. In addition, the park also has a \$2 million dollar endowment. The alliance maintains fifty-one staff positions divided among the five divisions, and coordinates efforts with five thousand volunteers, the Community Committee of Prospect Park, and numerous friends groups.

It is important to note that around the time the alliance was formed the park received drastic cuts in both personnel and funding. While the park still operates on a reduced staff, better management and a strict inspection program has led to drastically improved conditions within the park. The inspection program is run by the Parks and Recreation Department, which hires non-park employees to conduct random and thorough inspections on all city parks. The park administrator is held directly responsible to the outcome of the inspection.

7. Central Park, Manhattan, New York

Central Park is a bit of an anomaly, with annual visits topping 20 million and nineteen years of capital expenditures at \$100 million. However, the management structure that has been responsible for the monumental improvements in the park's condition since 1981 might have application to Mellon Park. Central Park's management structure is depicted in Figure VII.3. Prospect Park and Louisville Olmsted Parks are managed by a single position that answers to both public and private authorities, although the integration of responsibilities is more complete in Prospect Park. In contrast, the Central Park administrator reports only to the Central Park Conservancy, a private organization, and not to the City Parks Commissioner. The conservancy holds a contractual operations agreement with the city, which monitors the conservancy by reviewing all projects, budgets, and staffing.

The Central Park Administrator reports to a private board, and park workers of three conservancy divisions, both public and private, are managed by the administrator. There are a total of five

divisions within the conservancy, as shown below, though only the first three are managed by the administrator:

1. Operations (staff = 40% city and 60% conservancy)
2. Capital ((staff = 4% city and 96% conservancy)
3. Volunteers (staff = 0% city and 100% conservancy)
4. Programs (staff = 0% city and 100% conservancy)
5. Development and Management (staff = 0% city and 100% conservancy)

Central Park has as \$60 million endowment, with a goal of \$150 million. The city provides a \$1 million operating baseline, with \$1-2 million in additional funds if the conservancy exceeds its contract agreement. The Central Park Conservancy raises \$16 million annually for operations, \$9 million in capital, and \$3 million in development costs.

8. Boston Commons, Boston, Massachusetts

Boston Commons was chosen as an example of a small historic park that is managed primarily by a municipality. The Boston Parks and Recreation Department manages the Commons through a devoted Boston Common Administrator. One of the roles of the administrator is to oversee maintenance. Park maintenance levels have improved considerably since the implementation of a citywide park inspection program. The city also coordinates capital projects. Between 1975 and 1996 \$38 million was invested in capital projects for the Commons, with 61% coming from the City of Boston and 37.8% from the state. Only 1.2% of the capital funds came from private sources during this span. More private involvement in the park has come recently with the creation of Boston Common Frog Pond Foundation, Inc., which operates on a lease held with the city. The role of the group is programming and education, and through an agreement with the city it is funded by concessions and rentals from parks vendors and businesses.

D. ALTERNATIVE MANAGEMENT SCENARIOS

Once the LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP project team had thoroughly researched Mellon Park's existing management plan and those of the parks and park systems discussed above, several alternatives were developed for a new management strategy that would maintain capital investments and improvements made in Mellon Park. These alternatives were refined and narrowed through discussions with the management and advisory committees to four possible scenarios. These scenarios vary in the balance of public and private involvement, though all four are structured around some degree of public/private partnership. Each scenario has also been diagrammed for comparison with each other, the other parks studied, and the existing system at Mellon Park.

1. City as manager, private capital projects, friends as citizen advocate

In the first scenario, shown in Figure VII.4, the city maintains its position as manager of the park, whether this be through the Department of Public Works as currently held, or through some other department. A principle change in this model from the current structure is that Mellon Park would receive a dedicated work force overseen by a Mellon Park supervisor. All park operations would be

managed through the supervisor, including maintenance, event scheduling and permitting, volunteer management and park programming.

The role of the private side would be limited and temporary. A not-for-profit group would be formed (or an existing organization utilized) to manage the immediate capital improvements needed in the park, including the raising and management of capital funds, design oversight and construction administration. Upon completion of the initial improvements the organization would dissolve (or the contract would be terminated). One of the goals of the private organization would be to assist in the creation of a neighborhood “Friends of Mellon Park” group. This group would continue after the private organization dissolves as an advocacy group and volunteer labor force, managed by the city.

2. Joint funding, new non-profit, divided responsibility

This scenario features joint responsibility between the public and private sectors, as illustrated in Figure VII.5. This scheme is most similar to the Louisville Olmsted Parks management structure. Under this structure, Mellon Park would be supervised by a single position, as in Scenario 1 above, but the position would be jointly funded: 50% through the Pittsburgh DPW, and 50% through a newly formed not-for-profit organization, such as a “Mellon Park Conservancy”.

The responsibilities managed by the supervisor in this scenario would be divided by tasks between the public and private partners. Through the city, under the title of Administrator, the supervisor would oversee park operations (maintenance and license agreements) and capital projects (design, construction supervision and community participation). The supervisor would also operate as the Executive Director of the private organization, as directed by a board of trustees, which would be responsible for overseeing programs (permits, education and specific events), development and marketing (fund raising, revenue development, marketing and concessions) and citizen advocacy (park promotion and volunteer organization). The responsibilities outlined here could be restructured differently according to the roles of the two partners, but under this system they would remain as both separately funded and managed.

3. Joint funding, existing non-profit, shared responsibility

The third scenario takes the jointly funded supervisor of Scenario 2 and integrates responsibilities of the public and private partners, in a manner similar to Prospect Park. As seen in Figure VII.6, the park administrator position would still be funded by and answer to both the city of Pittsburgh and a private organization and its steering committee (in this example an existing organization rather than a new one). The principle difference between Scenarios 2 and 3 is that the responsibilities overseen by the administrator – operations, capital, programs and development marketing – are not divided between the partners, but shared in both funding and management. The percentage of responsibility and involvement of the two groups would vary in each category, as they do in Prospect Park’s management structure, but each category would contain some level of representation from both parties.

4. Existing non-profit, contract agreement, non profit responsibility

Just as Scenario 1 places most of the responsibility in the hands of the city, Scenario 4 relies primarily on a not-for-profit organization for park management. Under this scenario, the city provides a contractual agreement with an existing or newly formed private organization, similar to

Riverfront Recapture's agreements with Hartford and East Hartford. The organization then assumes the role of lessee and of sole manager, as diagramed in Figure VII.7. This model is also similar to the current management structure of Central Park. Though the city may still provide some services and funding under this scenario, they would do so under the supervision of the private organization.

E. LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT PLAN

In determining which scenario or combination of scenarios described above would be most suitable for Mellon Park, LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP evaluated the specific needs of the park and compared them with the items outlined above in the *Components of Park Management*. LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP also considered the existing Pittsburgh DPW management structure, the changes proposed for this structure in the March 2000 report "A Management Plan for Pittsburgh's Regional Parks" by ETM Associates, and the level of involvement desired by interested private organizations and foundations. Based on these observations, LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP recommends a flexible, long-term management structure for Mellon Park similar to Scenario 3: *Joint funding, existing non-profit, shared responsibility*, described above. The proposed structure should be scaled down to address the needs of this small, historic park.

This public/private cooperative approach is intended to successfully address the three principal components of park management discussed previously in this chapter: to ensure that the historic elements of the park are properly cared for (Operations & Maintenance), that the needs of the park users are effectively and immediately addressed (Park Users & User Services), and that capital projects are properly managed (Capital Projects). A partnership that encompasses these directions can yield impressive results that achieve the desired rehabilitation and restoration while ensuring its sustainability.

Since Mellon Park is relatively small, it can be managed with a modest staff, with a dedicated crew and leader. Under such a plan, Mellon Park would be managed at the park by a jointly funded Superintendent position with the following responsibilities:

1. Schedule and manage revenue generating private events, such as weddings and reunions. Such property rentals are both appropriate and potentially valuable for the park, though only through proper regulatory guidelines and enforcement
2. Coordinate events programmed by the City and supervise event setup and takedown – another source of revenue through the collection of percentage of vendor concessions
3. Coordinate and regulate the outdoor educational programming (held on park grounds) of the Garden Center and the Center for the Arts (though the leases for these tenants would still be held by the City)
4. Schedule and direct park maintenance – both the privately funded horticultural crew and the public funded maintenance crew (as coordinated with the DPW)
5. Manage volunteer program, interface with advocacy groups and community
6. Direct marketing and revenue development, including fund raising and concessions
7. Oversee capital project development, design and construction management

A potential expansion of this plan groups Mellon Park with three other Pittsburgh parks of similar size and historic value, headed by a jointly funded Administrator. Under this united organizational structure, each of the four parks would still be managed by a dedicated Superintendent, though several of the tasks outlined above, addressing event programming, volunteer efforts, marketing and fundraising, could be more efficiently coordinated through the central Administrator. Fund raising efforts in particular would be aided by this collective arrangement. If in the future it is determined an Administrative Assistant is needed, it could likely be handled by a part-time position.

In the long-range plan the maintenance of Mellon Park would be handled in part by the City, which has been developing new performance procedures for basic operations. Under Pittsburgh's proposed regional parks management plan, dedicated park crews are planned for eight geographic areas of the city. This will be done in an effort to reorganize city staff, upgrade skills and provide better service to parks without increasing city positions and costs. The repair of park elements is intended to be addressed by a DPW skilled tradesman crew that addresses all parks. General maintenance provided for Mellon Park by the area crew would include:

1. Cleaning, minor repair and regular preventative maintenance of park structures
2. Tree inspection and care as needed
3. Regular lawn mowing, aeration, fertilization and leaf removal
4. Snow removal

A privately funded horticultural crew would augment the improved base level of city service and be responsible for the landscape maintenance of the restored gardens at Mellon Park. The size of the crew would be increased as restorations proceed. It is estimated that the maximum number of positions required would be 3 FTE's, consisting of two full-time horticulture and landscape staff, with the third position divided among three to four seasonal interns. Duties on the horticultural crew would include:

1. Care of ornamental trees, shrubs, hedges, perennials, annuals and groundcovers (including pruning, weeding, planting, winterizing, etc.)
2. Soil improvements
3. Irrigation and watering
4. Plant fertilization and integrated pest management
5. Hand mowing and edging in restored gardens

The DPW park area crew addressing Frick, Westinghouse and Mellon parks will work in concert with the dedicated in-park staff. The blending of staff efforts will need to be effectively managed with clear lines of communication and responsibility. The following chart outlines the potential staff positions that could be utilized in the long-term plan, their funding sources, and their primary responsibilities:

Position Title	Number	Funding*			Responsibility
		Pu	Pr	Jt	
DPW Parks Crew (3 parks F/W/M)					
Maintenance Personnel	16 Share	X			General maintenance
Four Historic Parks					
Administrator	1 FTE			X	Collective management
Administrative Assistant	1 PTE			X	Collective management
Mellon Park					
Superintendent	1 FTE			X	Site specific management
Skilled Horticulture/Landscape Staff	1 FTE		X		Landscape maintenance
Skilled Support Landscape Staff	1 FTE		X		Landscape maintenance
Seasonal Landscape Staff (3/4 Interns)	1 FTE		X		Landscape maintenance

*Funding: Pu=Public, Pr=Private, Jt=Joint

F. INTERIM PHASING OF MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Mellon Park management approach anticipates a gradual phasing to keep pace with capital improvements and increased maintenance efforts. The recommended first phase of the plan accompanies the first phase of park treatment discussed in Chapter VIII. The objective of this initial phase is to provide an increased level of maintenance skill to the park with minimal changes to the existing management structure. Specific goals include the improvement of current conditions and care for the first round of capital investments. The DPW has fielded its first dedicated regional work crew by substantially enlarging the crew resident at Frick Park, which will also be responsible for Mellon Park and Westinghouse Park.

The LANDSCAPES LA•Planning•HP team supports the reorganization of Pittsburgh’s regional parks as outlined by ETM Associates, and the recommendation to establish a Regional Parks Oversight Committee with public and private partnership representation. The Regional Parks Ombudsperson is to be placed in the Mayor’s Office. The Ombudsperson will function as a line of direct communication between the public/private partnership, and as an organizing agent for projects, funding, maintenance and other initiatives. This Ombudsperson could partially fulfill the role of a Mellon Park Superintendent, for the short term.

In the initial phase the renewal of the park could be overseen by the Ombudsperson. One privately funded position is anticipated in the 1st phase is a full-time skilled horticultural staff person with a primary responsibility for the maintenance of the restored Terraced Garden.

Additional phasing should be planned and implemented as the reorganization the City’s park management structure proceeds and additional capital projects at Mellon Park are planned and carried out. It is recommended that the filling of a jointly funded Administrator/Superintendent position lead to a shift in managerial responsibility to the park and an on-site crew when possible.

TABLE VII.1 SELECTED MANAGEMENT ROLES

Park or Park System	Capital	Users	Acreage	Public Involvement	Public Funding	Private Involvement	Private Funding	Endowment
Mellon Park Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	1994-\$14,000 (5 th Ave. wall repair) \$25,000 (picnic shelter) 1996-\$11,000 (resurface tennis courts) 2000 estimate- \$194 K (5 th Ave. wall repair)	Not Available	33 acres (28.7 maintain- able) 17.5 acres south of 5 th Ave. (12.2 not including Center for the Arts property)	Department of Public Works - Management - Maintenance through DPW 2 nd Division - Permitting - Capital Projects Department of Recreation - Programming Department of Engineering & Construction - Capital Projects	1998 Operating - Municipal \$86K Provided by the DPW, with the DEC providing some capital	Lessees & Group Users - Pittsburgh Center for the Arts - Pittsburgh Civic Garden Center Advocacy - Council District - Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy	Planning funds	
Frick Park Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	1997-\$430 K (playground) 1998-\$ 15,610 (roof on bldg) 1999-\$294 K (playground)	Not Available	475 acres (52.1 maintain- able)	Department of Public Works - Management - Maintenance with dedicated work force: - Foreman - Clerk - Truck Driver - Tractor Operator - Laborers (9) - Seasonal Employees (1) - Permitting - Capital Projects Department of Recreation - Programming Department of Engineering & Construction - Capital Projects	Operating (part endowment part municipal) 1998 - \$361K 1997 - \$314K Provided by the DPW, with the DEC (Department of Engineering and Construction) providing some capital	Partners-in-Parks (coordinated through the Department of Parks and Recreation)	Operating (part endowment part municipal) 1998 - \$361K Endowment through the Frick Park Trust Fund (FPTF)	FPTF through the Mellon Trust
Allegheny Commons Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	1995-\$125 K (playground) 1997-\$188 K (tennis courts, playground) 1998-\$257 K (playground, pool slide) 1999-\$12,000 (lawn renovation)	Not Available	72 acres (62.5 maintain- able)	Department of Public Works - Management - Maintenance through DPW 1 st Division - Permitting - Capital Projects Department of Recreation - Programming Department of Engineering & Construction - Capital Projects	1999 Operating (through Sept only) - Municipal \$52K Provided by the DPW, with the DEC providing some capital	The Garden Club of Allegheny County Partners-in-Parks (coordinated through the Department of Parks and Recreation)	Occasional task specific funds raised by interest groups	

TABLE VII.1 SELECTED MANAGEMENT ROLES

Park or Park System	Capital	Users	Acreage	Public Involvement	Public Funding	Private Involvement	Private Funding	Endowment
Louisville Olmsted Parks Louisville, Kentucky - 16 parks: 5 large & 11 small	1994-1999 - \$10 M	+/- 3 M	2,000 acres	Louisville & Jefferson County Parks (122) - Planning and Design (system wide) -- Supervised by Asst. Director/Conservancy President -- 7 professional staff - Landscape Management (system wide) - Administrator of Parks Services - Forestry - 16 - Horticulture/Landscape - 12 - Athletic Fields - 6 - Central Services (system wide) - Labor Superintendent - Mechanics - 5 - Skilled Trades - 20 - Stores - 2 - Maintenance Operations (4 regions) - Central Region Administrator - 3 (of 5) districts cover all Olmsted Parks - 7 Supervisors - 32 Park Workers - 23 Park Aides (seasonal)	100% Operations - \$1.7 M maintenance 50 % Capital	Louisville Olmsted Parks Conservancy - President, reports to Board of Directors - Organizational Staff (7) - Vice president, Development - Director, Annual Fund - Director, Public Programs - Director, Marketing & Community Relations - Landscape Architect - Business Manager Park Champions (750 volunteers) - Community Advisory Committees (1/park) - Landscape Crews - Park Hosts Louisville Friends of Olmsted Parks (advocacy)	100% Private - \$700K annual budget 50% Capital (matched)	- \$1.6 M endowment (target \$10 M)
Louisville Waterfront Park Louisville, Kentucky	Phase 1 - \$12 M Phase 2 - \$8 M Total Build- out - \$60 M		95 acres	City of Louisville - Law Department - Human Resources (hiring, recruiting) Louisville Development Authority - Context Planning - Stadium Department of Public Works - Roads & Parking Maintenance	City/State/Fed - 70% capital Maintenance - minimal: 5% city	Waterfront Development Corporation - Design (by consultants) - Construction Administration - Public Programs/Events - Landscape Maintenance Friends of the Waterfront - Advocacy & Volunteer Support Group	95% Maintenance - includes security Sources - Revenues - State Funding - Private	
Riverfront Park System Hartford, Connecticut	1981-1999 \$44.5 M	1998 475 K	+/- 300 Acres	1. Metropolitan District Commission (service agreement with taxing authority) - Maintenance - Funds park security (Ranger program -- 35 part time) 2. City of Hartford (lease agreement) 3. City of East Hartford (management services agreement)	1981-1999 Capital - Federal \$27 M - State \$15.5 M (DECD & DOT) - Municipal \$350 K Operating - Federal \$245 K - Municipal \$2.9 M - MDC \$83 M on river clean-up programs (additional)	Riverfront Recapture - Management -- President & CEO and 16 staff, including: - Director of Internal Operations (3 staff) - Director of Programs and Operations (5 staff) - Director of Events and Marketing (2 staff) - Director of Development (2 staff) - Programming	1981-1999 Capital -Corporate \$675 K -Civic Organiza- tions/Foundation \$672 K -Individuals \$723K Operating -Corporate \$6.3 M -Foundations \$1.3 M -Individuals \$1 M -Other income and program fees \$1 M	

TABLE VII.1 SELECTED MANAGEMENT ROLES

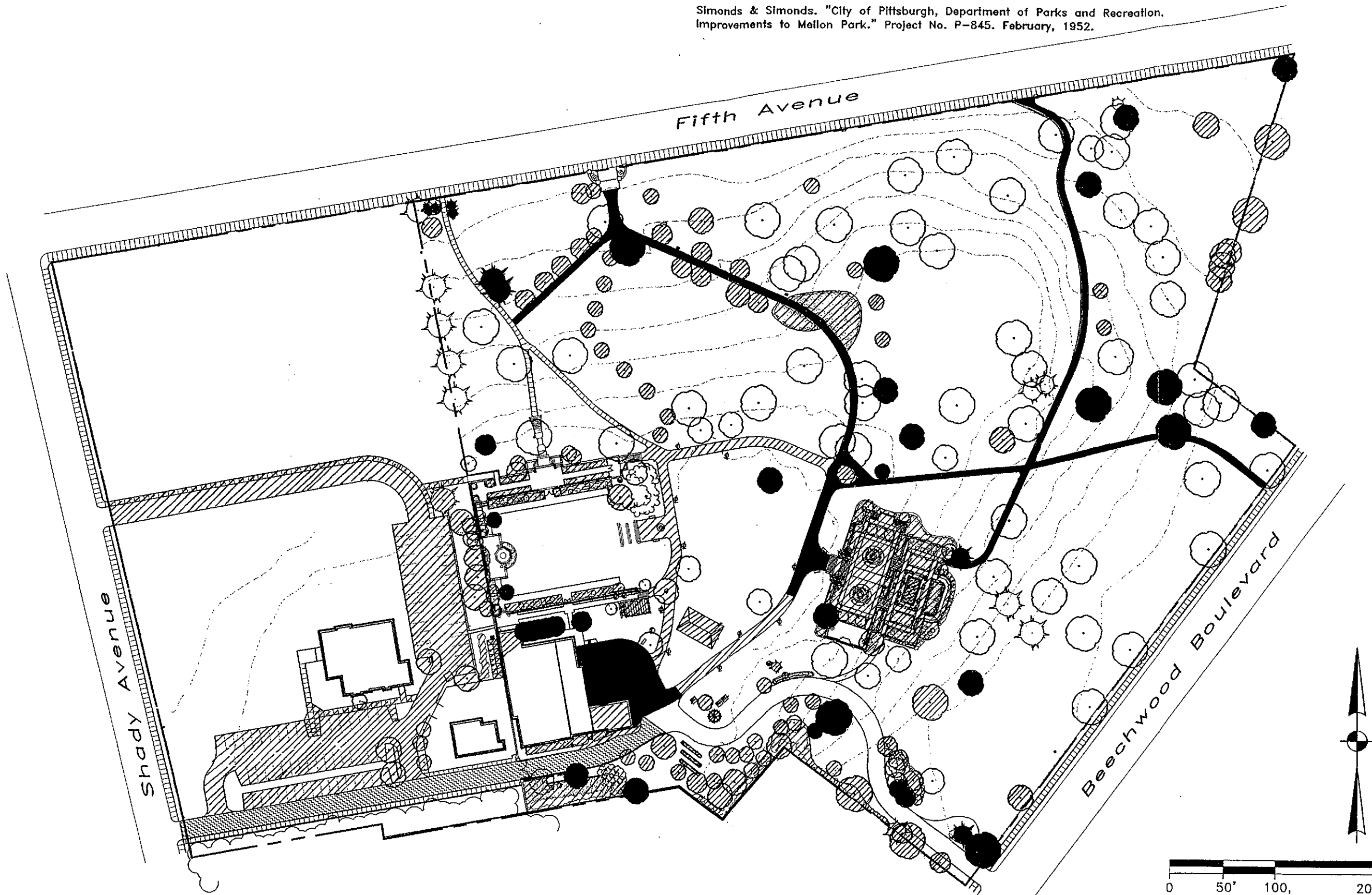
Park or Park System	Capital	Users	Acreage	Public Involvement	Public Funding	Private Involvement	Private Funding	Endowment
Prospect Park Brooklyn, New York	1980-2000 +/- \$80 M	6.5 M	575 acres	New York City Parks and Recreation Department - Public Parks Administrator (reports to Parks Commissioner) - Capital - Maintenance & Operations - Landscape Management – 7 full time, 3 seasonal - Maintenance – 19 full time, 11 seasonal - Public Assistance (work welfare) -- +/-40 full time equivalent - User Services (assorted)	City & Federal - Operating (city): +/- \$2 M - CDBG: \$450 K	Prospect Park Alliance - Prospect Park Administrator – reports to private sector Board - Contract with city for design, construction administration and park planning – 11 staff - Volunteer and Education (with schools, partial city funding) – 7 staff - Programs/Advocacy/Outreach – 7 staff - Marketing/Development/Concessions revenue/Promotions – 14 staff - Administration/Payroll – 5 staff - Operations/Natural Resources – 7 staff - Volunteers – 5,000 - Multiple Friends Groups - Community Committee of Prospect Park – 85 organizations represented	\$4 M (1998) -Individuals %16 -Corporate %10 -Foundations %34 -D&C 16% -Concessions 13% -Interest 5%	\$2 M endowment
Central Park Manhattan, New York	1981-1999 +/- \$100 M	20 M	840 acres	New York City Parks and Recreation Department - Policy making and oversight of budget and Conservancy work - Central Park Administrator does <u>not</u> report to the City Parks Commissioner - City Parks Commissioner reviews all projects/budgets/staffing of Conservancy - City has no program or development oversight - Staffing – 60 DPR employees	\$1 M operating baseline \$1-2 M additional operating if Conservancy exceeds contract requirement	Central Park Conservancy - Contract with City – City workers report to Conservancy - Central Park Administrator reports to private Board - Manages City contract as Senior VP of Operations and Capital Projects (138 staff) - Capital - Operations - Human Resources - Volunteers - VP for Public Programs and Outreach - Public Programming Office - Government and Community Relations - Education Programs - Multiple Friends Groups - Advisory Committees (specific areas/tasks)	\$16 M operating \$9 M capital \$3 M development costs	\$60 M endowment (target: \$150 M) (\$700 K endow-ment = 1 zone gardener)
Boston Commons Boston, Massachusetts	1975-1996 \$38 M	Not Available	50 acres	Boston Parks and Recreation Department - Managing agency - Boston Common Administrator - Coordinates city agency and citizen group activity - Capital Improvements - Maintenance - Inspections	1975-1996 capital 37.8% state 61% city	Boston Common Frog Pond Foundation, Inc. - Operates on a lease with the City of Boston - Funded in part by vendor concessions, rentals and permits for pond use - Provides park programming and education Friends of the Public Garden and Common - Advocates for the preservation of the Common	1975-1996 capital 1.2% private	

SYMBOL KEY

- Built Elements Added Since the 1930s
- Vegetation Added Since the 1930s
- ▨ Built Elements Added Since the 1950s
- ⊙ Vegetation Added Since the 1950s

SOURCES

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**R. B. MELLON PARK
Historic Landscape Preservation,
Maintenance & Management Plan
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**

Client:
**Western Pennsylvania
Conservancy**
Route 381
South Mill Run, PA 154864

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Drawing Title:
**ADDED
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1930s &
1950s**
Issue & Date:
November 1999

Drawing No.:
FIGURE IV.3

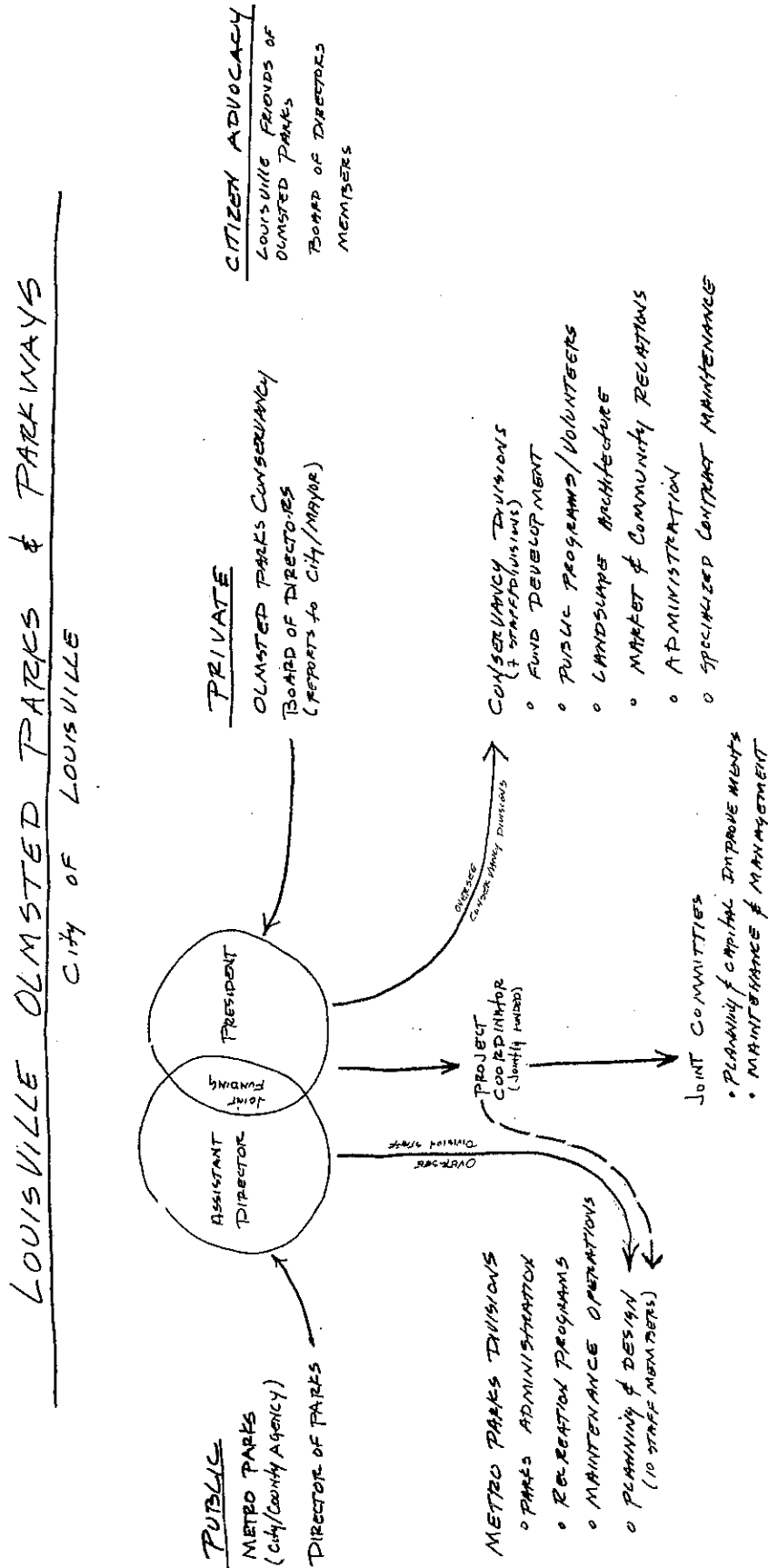


Figure VII.1 Model of Louisville Olmsted Parks and Parkway's Management Structure

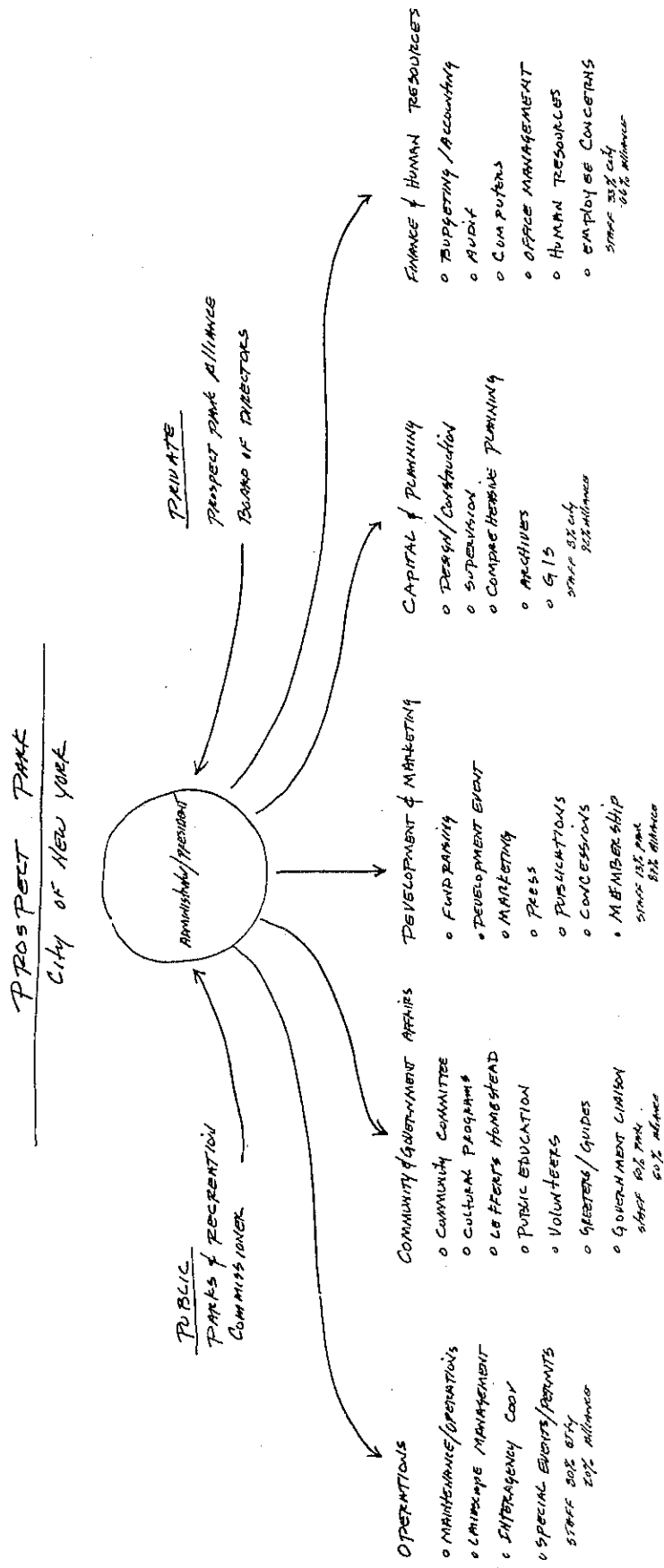


Figure VII.2 Model of Prospect Park's Management Structure

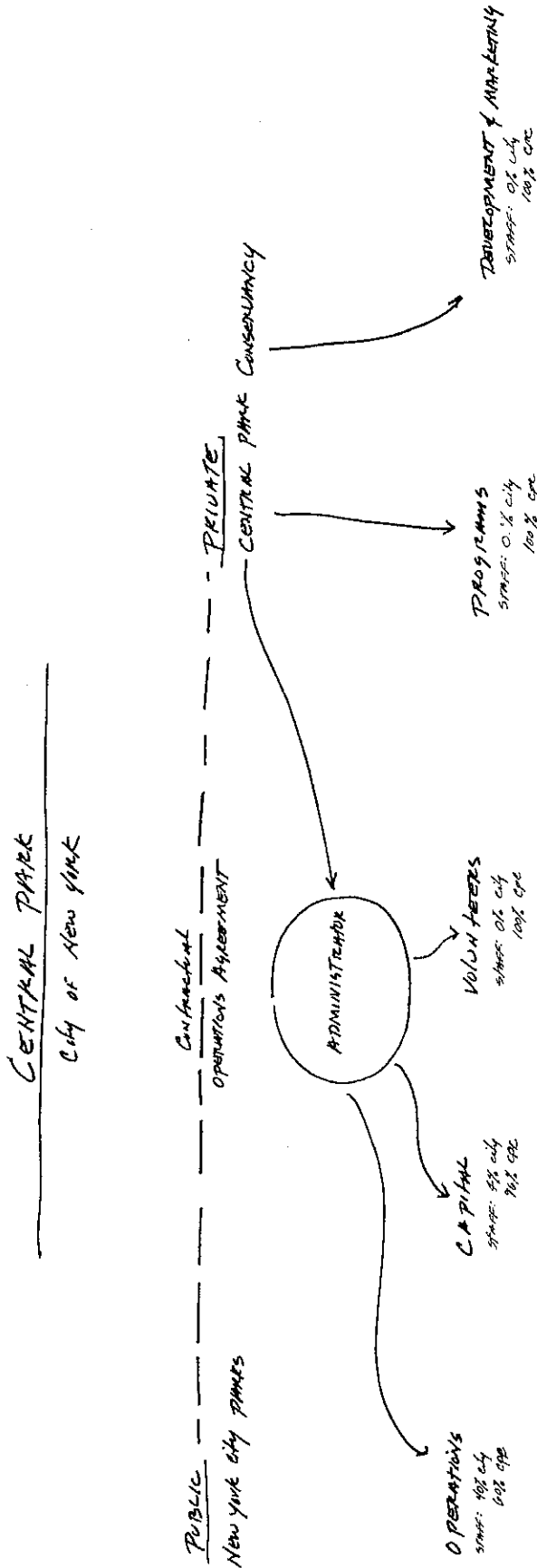


Figure VII.3 Model of Central Park's Management Structure

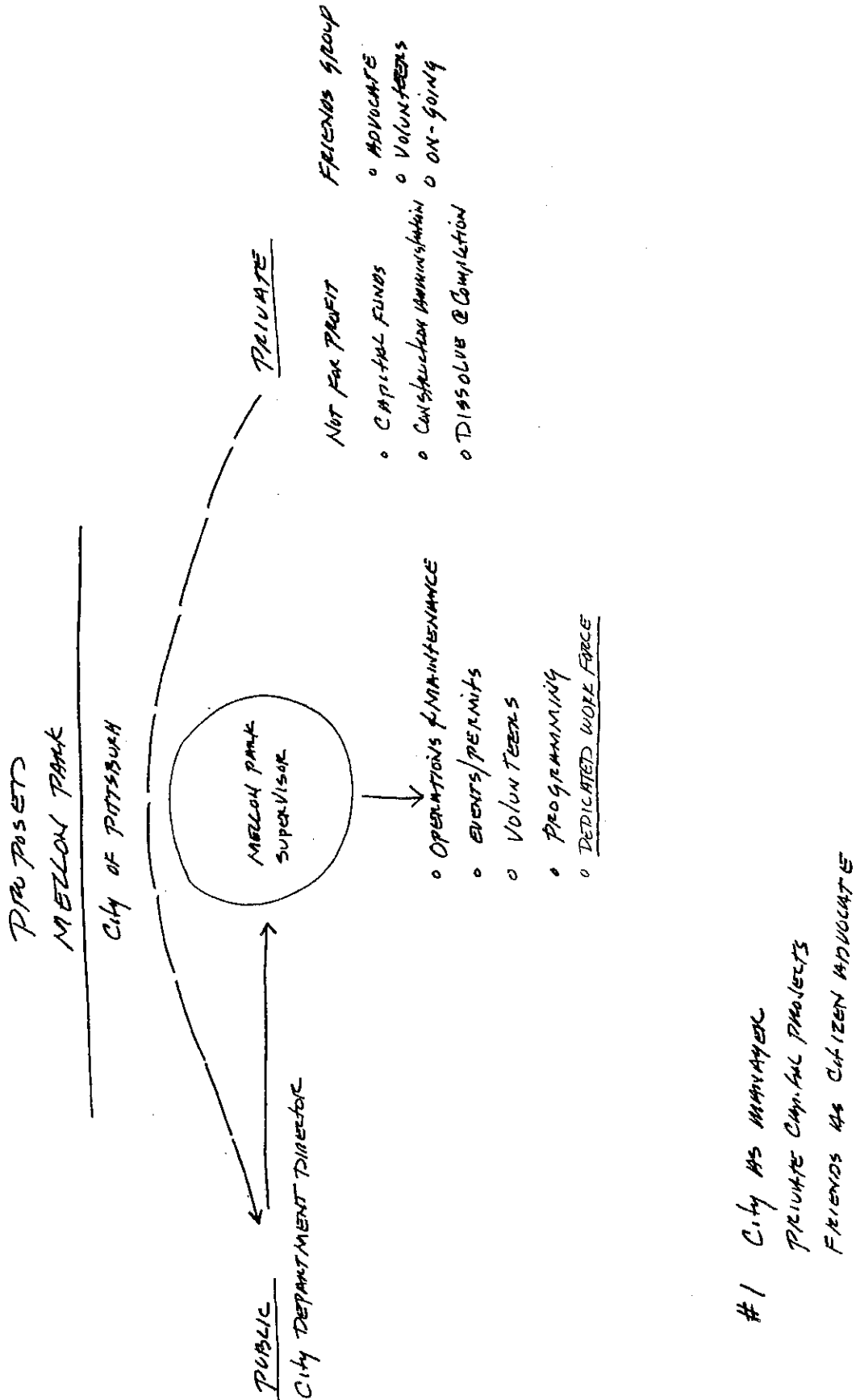


Figure VII.4 Mellon Park Management Model #1

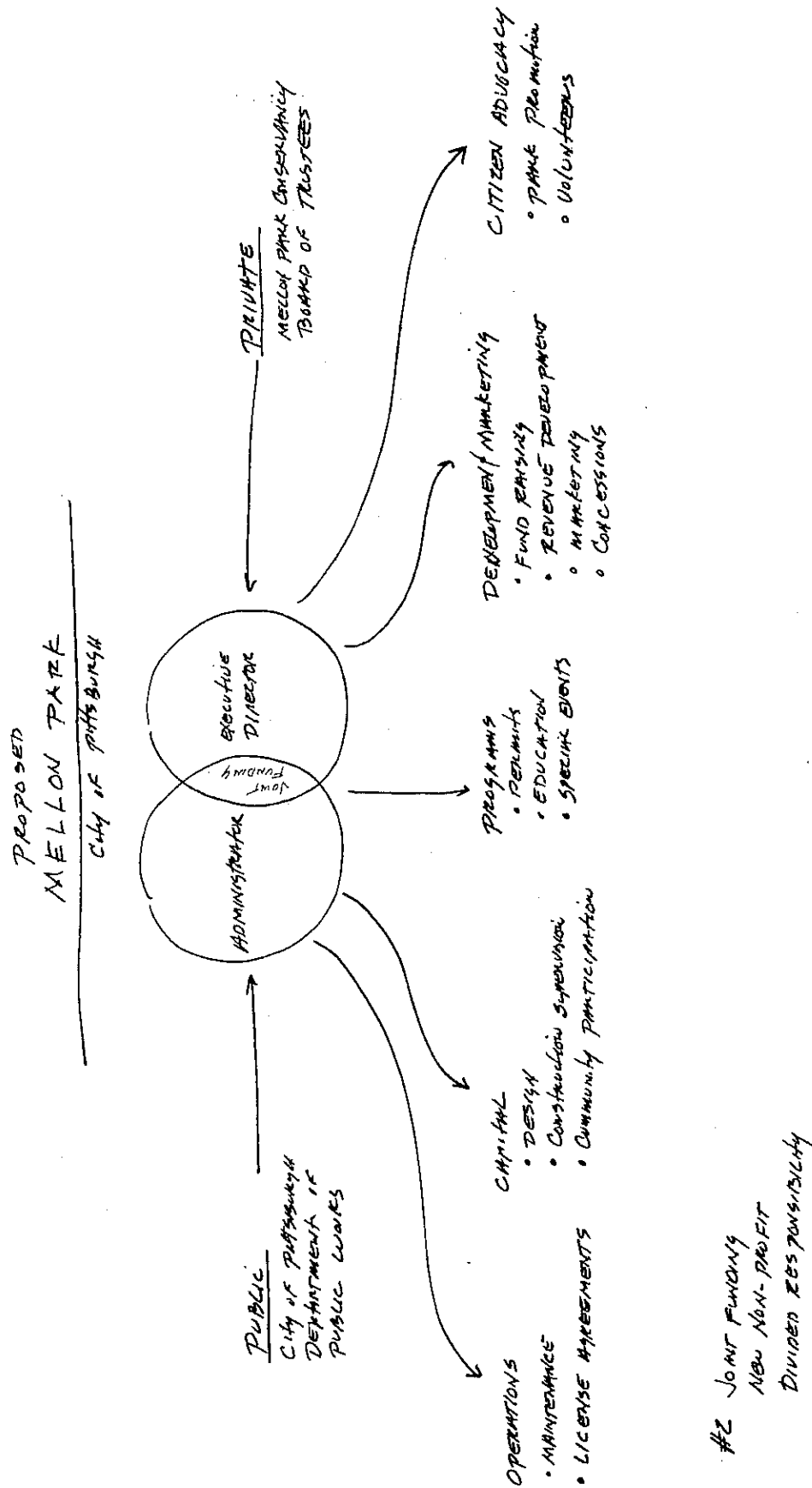


Figure VII.5 Mellon Park Management Model #2

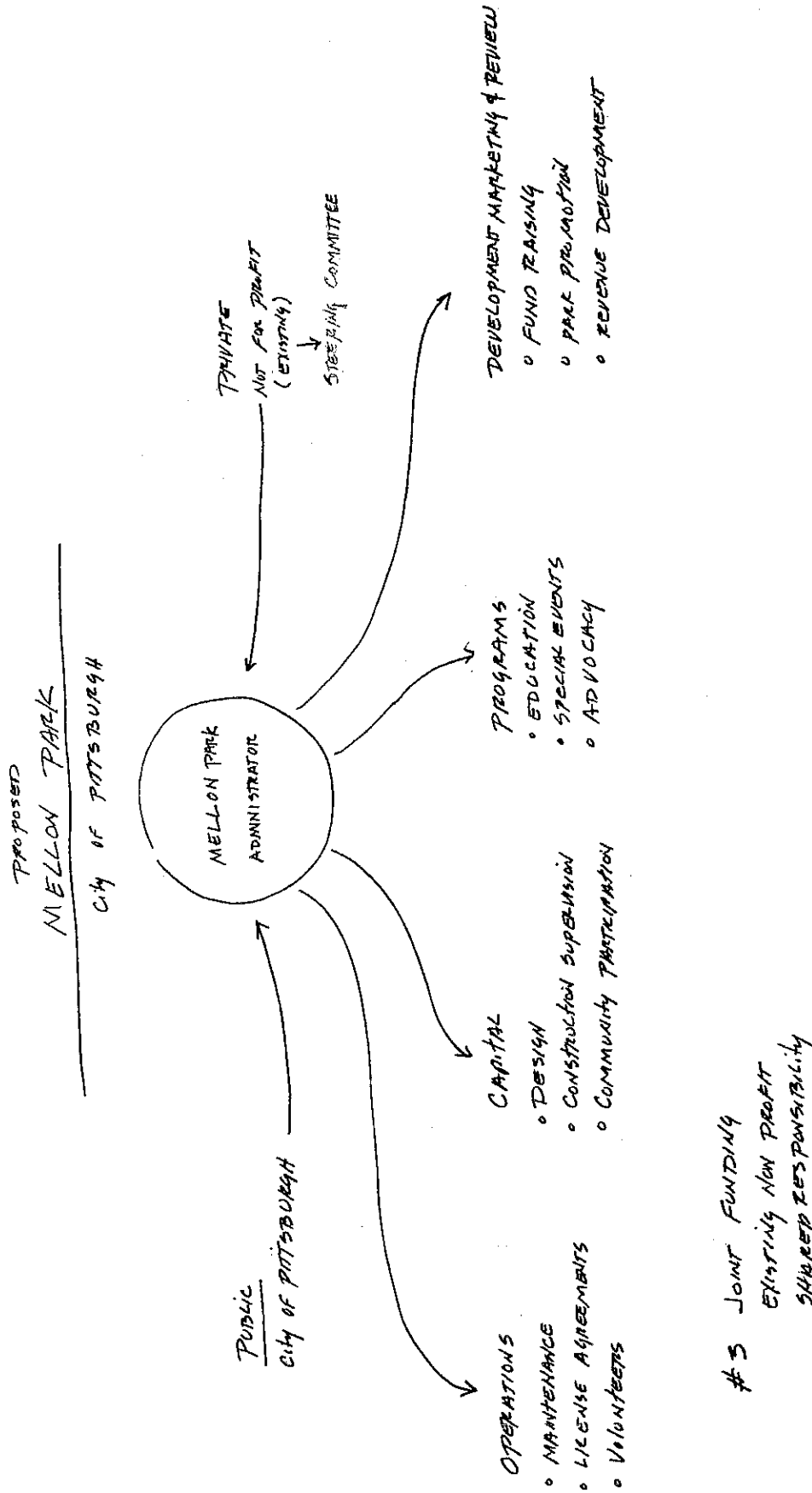


Figure VII.6 Mellon Park Management Model #3

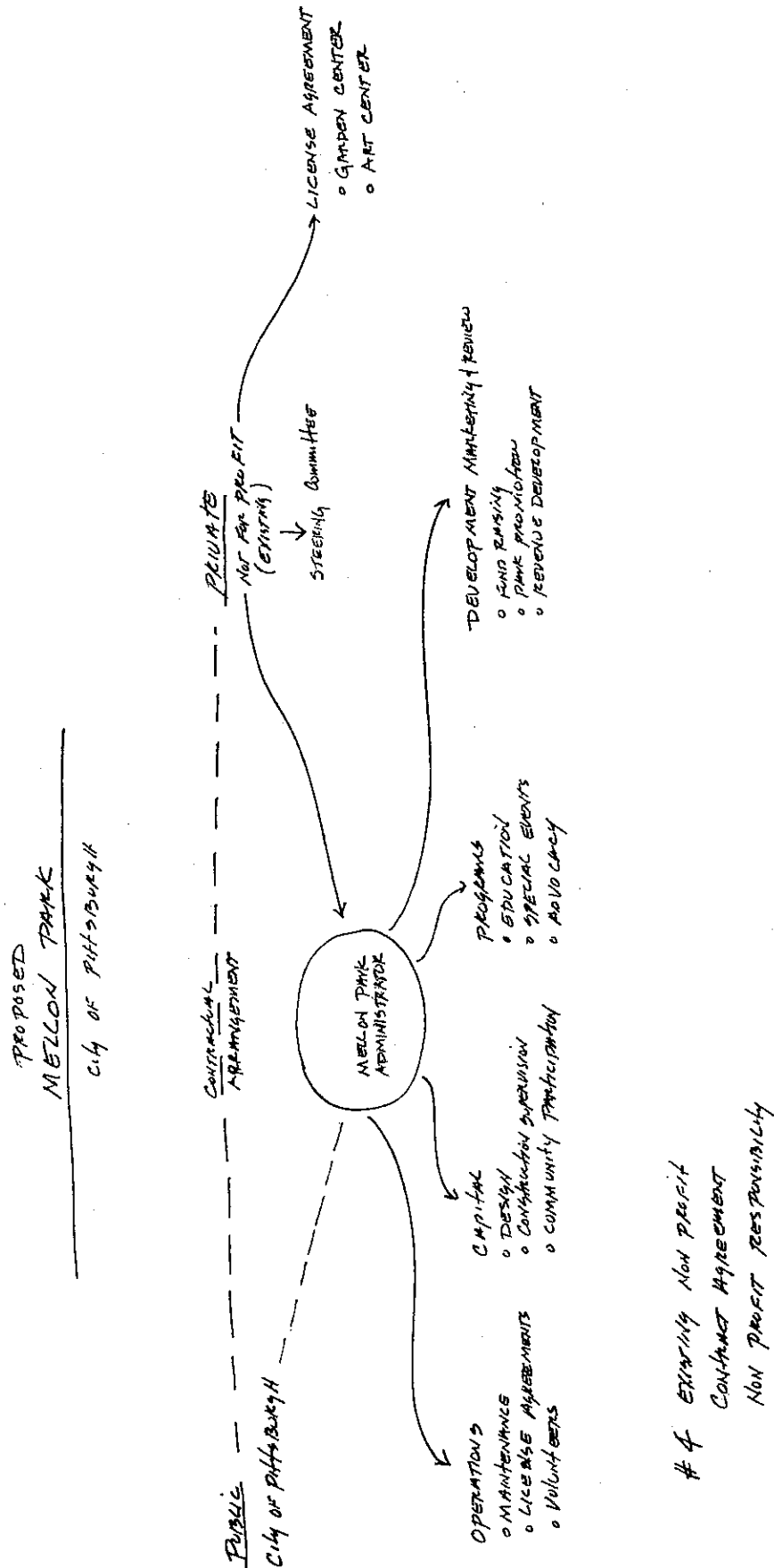


Figure VII.7 Mellon Park Management Model #4

VIII. EXPLORATION & SELECTION OF PRESERVATION TREATMENT

A. INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

The basic purpose of any preservation treatment is to retain the remaining historic character and features, to mitigate negative changes and deterioration when possible, to prevent future such changes from occurring, and to address the range of management issues affecting the property while achieving these purposes. This is accomplished by selecting a treatment approach that is most appropriate for the property and its uses. Treatment looks at the property as a whole and then, based on the level of change, significance, proposed uses, level of documentation, financial resources and management capabilities, establishes a comprehensive framework within which work on individual features may be proposed and implemented. At Mellon Park the exploration of a preservation treatment must address all of these issues. Stated a different way, the selected treatment acts as a preservation “philosophy” which guides decision-making about the scope of interventions and the continuing management of the historic property.

The Secretary of the Interior’s *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Landscapes (Guidelines)* recommends four possible preservation treatments: Preservation, Restoration, Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction. These treatments propose different levels of intensity of activity on a historic landscape. Preservation is a low-impact approach, in which stabilization, repair, and replacement in-kind of character-defining features is emphasized, with minimal change occurring on the property. Preservation is an appropriate choice when many elements are intact, interpretive goals can be met within the existing conditions, or when financial resources or staffing are limited. Preservation can also be viewed as an interim treatment, until such time as additional documentation provides a sound basis for restoration or additional resources are garnered to address more ambitious treatments. Therefore, Preservation, with its goals to retain and maintain the existing historic fabric, is in fact the treatment approach on which the other three, more intensive treatments, are based.

In contrast to Preservation, a Restoration approach depends on considerable documentation so that the historic condition is known and appropriate resources to perform the work with a high degree of authenticity. Sound Preservation underlies this treatment. Restoration treatment seeks to first preserve, through stabilization and repair, all historic features present during the period of significance, and then to replace missing character-defining features in an authentic manner. Restoration may address a landscape unit or an entire landscape. Restoration treatment may also require the removal of subsequently added features, recapturing the overall spaces, form, character and details of the landscape to a high degree of accuracy.

The third treatment, Rehabilitation, emphasizes the modification of the historic property to suit new, compatible uses, implemented in a manner sensitive to conditions during the period of significance. Preservation of existing historic features, character and details is required in Rehabilitation, while contemporary use is accommodated. Rehabilitation “is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving

those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or (landscape) architectural values... When repair and replacement of deteriorated features are necessary; when alterations or additions to the property are planned for a new or continued use; and when its depiction at a particular period of time is not appropriate, Rehabilitation may be considered as a treatment”.

Finally, Reconstruction of a landscape is the most intensive of the treatments, involving a complete re-creation of a missing historic landscape or, perhaps more often, a landscape unit or features within a landscape. It is implemented when a high level of detailed documentation is available to construct an exact replica, without reliance on speculation. Reconstruction is usually chosen to provide an interpretive potential and presentation to the visitor that is not possible at the property without this effort to reconstruct.

Although these treatments differ in the level of activity and change they propose for a property, they share an important commonality: all treatments avoid anachronistic conditions, in which features which never co-existed historically in a landscape are placed together today. In addition, it should be noted that the choice of a limited scope under a preservation treatment for the landscape as a whole does not preclude the restoration or reconstruction of lost or partially remaining individual features or units within the landscape. Furthermore, as noted in the *Guidelines*, a preservation treatment “cannot be considered in a vacuum,” and is affected by the practical and philosophical concerns of the present day and the future. Therefore, the choice and implementation of an overall treatment must consider such real world concerns as new or expanded uses, operational requirements such as access in compliance with the American with Disabilities Act, safety and security, parking, as well as anticipated capital improvements, staffing, and maintenance costs. These issues are considered in the testing of appropriate preservation treatments for Mellon Park.

B. EXPLORATION OF TREATMENT ALTERNATIVES FOR MELLON PARK

Within the history of Mellon Park there are two principal periods of significance: the height of the property as the Mellon Estate in the 1930s, and the early decades of public park use in the 1950s and 1960s. The preservation treatment of Mellon Park should consider both periods. The estate era landscape is significant as a designed landscape with the contributions of Alden and Harlow to the property layout, drives and house siting and the terraced garden, Vitale and Geiffert to the walled garden and the Olmsted Brothers to the several areas they designed. In the 1950s alterations were made in the removal of structures, plantings and circulation elements to suit public park use. Although preservation thinking was not applied at the time, the former private properties were fitted out for park use in an approach similar to Rehabilitation. It was the primary intent during this period to reshape the land as a park, while retaining estate features and character as was provided in the agreement with the Mellon family donors. As new uses were adopted, selected historic features were removed or altered to accommodate these functions. In the process, some of the estate character of the landscape was altered, most notably the entry drive off Fifth Avenue and the drives and plantings around the former Mellon house. In order to restore one must determine what should be restored. The first issue to be addressed is what era, late estate or early park, is most valid as a period to consider. The significance of the landscape is as a design, predating the park. The early park years saw changes to the plantings, while built elements remained. Many of the built elements developed

in the Mellon years remain today, in a deteriorated state, while plantings have been altered several times from both the estate and early park years.

Each of the four possible treatments is worthy of consideration. The following paragraphs examine some of the implications of different landscape preservation treatment options to the future of Mellon Park.

1. Preservation Treatment

Preservation is defined as the act or process of sustaining the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize elements of the property, generally focuses on the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and reconstruction.

Preservation, as a first step, is clearly an appropriate treatment for Mellon Park, as it would involve stabilization of all extant and remnant historic features. A preservation treatment would include the repair of deteriorated built elements, including walks, walls, balustrades, and copings. Similar limited work could be undertaken on the park's plant materials. Aeration, fertilization, and reseeding of lawn areas to return them to full health would be appropriate under a Preservation treatment. For trees, preservation would focus on retaining and protecting extant trees via pruning and fertilization and may extend to their replacement in-kind. For example, replacing the missing elms at entrance to the terraced garden would be an appropriate, limited replacement. In contrast, Preservation would not likely extend to the full replacement of the Olmsted Brothers planting design in the bend of the Beechwood Avenue entrance drive or other missing detailed features.

As a more limited intervention than the other treatment possibilities, the choice of a preservation treatment by itself, and not as a precursor to a more extensive treatment is likely to be insufficient. The level of deterioration found in Mellon Park today requires a more extensive intervention. More comprehensive actions would be more appropriately undertaken under Restoration and Rehabilitation treatments.

Although Preservation is a cost-effective, common-sense approach to protecting a historic property, the actions of protection and stabilization are sometimes too limited to recapture deteriorated or lost elements and bring a park to the level of full use and enjoyment. Work under a Preservation treatment may be too inconspicuous to garner sufficient community notice, support and increased use and respect for Mellon Park.

2. Restoration Treatment

Restoration is defined as the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from later periods. A Restoration can include reconstruction of missing features from the selected historic period. In other words, the goal of a restoration treatment is to provide a highly accurate portrayal of the landscape at a particular point in time.

In the case of Mellon Park, a restoration could be targeted to the early park years and could focus on the designed elements of the landscape. Restoration could target a core area that includes the two

gardens and the Olmsted Brothers work, with the other landscape units in the park focused on rehabilitation to suit current and future park uses. Restoration is a more extensive treatment than Preservation, addressing significant replacement and reconstruction of features.

A Restoration treatment would also be achievable due to the excellent documentation of park conditions in the early years. Restoration treatment requires significant amounts of documentation to ensure accurate replacement with limited speculation to proceed with an accurate, authentic restoration. Actions undertaken as part of a Restoration would include all those recommended under Preservation. In addition, actions could also extend to recreating the framing and enclosure of spaces; replacing missing furnishings such as benches; repairing and replacing damaged balustrades; repairing walls, walks, curbs, and other built elements as necessary; replacing missing plantings in-kind across the park; returning the pools and fountains to function as water features.

As is evident from this lengthy list of possible actions, one element to consider in selecting a Restoration treatment is the level of investment required and the related level of maintenance to properly care for the restored elements. Under a Restoration approach work would be prioritized based on its cost and benefit in evoking historic character and in suiting current park needs and programs. For example, work on pavement, which would improve the appearance of the park overall, might be undertaken prior to a reconstruction of the lost elements.

3. Rehabilitation Treatment

A Rehabilitation treatment again begins with Preservation of the remaining historic elements. Thereafter it responds to contemporary use, programming and maintenance issues. Rehabilitation is defined by the *Guidelines* as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features that convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values. The *Guidelines* also point out that of the four treatments, only Rehabilitation includes an opportunity to incorporate an efficient contemporary use through alterations and additions.

A Rehabilitation treatment for Mellon Park would allow for contemporary functions, such as large events, to be accommodated through the addition of new elements and infrastructure. Additions should be compatible with and not detract from the historic character of the park.

When historic features are missing from the landscape and there is a desire to recapture them, the Rehabilitation approach calls for either the authentic restoration of the features or compatible, in-kind replacement. It is important that if the later approach is taken, the replaced feature is clearly differentiated from the original so that a false historical appearance is not created.

4. Reconstruction Treatment

A Reconstruction treatment is another means for replacing lost landscape features. The *Guidelines* define Reconstruction as the act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location. This approach is applied when Reconstruction of lost elements is important to the public understanding of the property.

Like Restoration, Reconstruction approach requires a high level of historic documentation, through documentary or physical evidence, in order to ensure that reinstated elements of the landscape are accurate. Exact duplication is emphasized, though when necessary, such as when the historic materials used in construction are no longer available, replication is acceptable. Carefully planned alterations to an original design concept are also acceptable when needed to improve accessibility or public safety. The difference between Reconstruction and Restoration is amount of extant historical material. The Reconstruction treatment is adopted when it is necessary to re-create an entire non-surviving landscape or element of the landscape with new material.

At Mellon Park, the Olmsted design elements are well documented but missing today. A Reconstruction of these Olmsted planting and pool designs is recommended. Because much of the Mellon Park landscape remains, an overall Restoration treatment is selected with aspects of Reconstruction to address the Olmsted elements.

C. PRESERVATION TREATMENT PLAN

The treatment recommendations outlined below consider the four alternatives defined in the *Guidelines*, as applicable and appropriate to the needs of Mellon Park. The treatment plan also incorporates the flexibility inherent in phasing. It is dependent upon the cooperation of public and private organizations for its successful implementation.

The treatment plan is depicted in Figure VIII.1, *Historic Restoration & Rehabilitation Plan*. It is based on a combination of Restoration and Rehabilitation treatments, which correspond to individual Mellon Park landscape zones or units. It is recommended that three of the units; the Terraced Garden, Walled Garden and Beechwood Boulevard Parkland, receive Restoration treatments as described in *Guidelines*. The remaining four units will be effectively addressed with a Rehabilitation strategy. The following text describes the recommended treatment for each zone and the highlights particulars that are necessary for treatment implementation.

1. Mellon House Site Rehabilitation

For this area the intent is to develop a more attractive and interesting center of the park that serves the daily uses of walking, sitting, watching and enjoying by improving the path system and adding places to sit. In addition, the former house is interpreted by constructing several elements that demarcate house features – the porte cochere with four corner columns and a frame for a fabric tent cover, a low wall centered on the terraced garden entry, and two low walls with vine trellis elements that interpret the library bay windows and the windows looking out to Fifth Avenue. The historic stone paving and marble wellhead are proposed to be restored as is the rock garden. The need for a public restroom has been addressed by recommending the reconstruction of the small Playhouse where park information and interpretive signs will also be installed. The Olmsted Brothers designed planting on the service drive is proposed to be restored. Additional plantings proposed for this area include vines and groundcovers at the trellis elements and rock garden plantings. The paving will be renewed. Interpretive signs will provide information about the history of the park and its value to Pittsburgh into the future in this area and discreetly placed throughout the park landscape. Some of

the project budget is allocated to upgrading systems that are not as visible but are important to the daily functioning of the landscape. Drainage systems will be rebuilt as needed. Underground electric supply and new light posts are to be added, and a water system installed for landscape maintenance. Electric and water supply upgrades necessary.

2. Terraced Garden Restoration

The Terraced Garden, by Alden and Harlow, architects for the Mellon House, is proposed for restoration to the appearance seen in the 1930s photographs. The level of deterioration is such that selected repair and replacement of walls, balustrades, terra cotta caps, steps and brick paving is anticipated. Three different pools graced this garden and these are proposed for reconstruction. There were also twelve sculptures and four urns in this interesting garden and these are proposed for recasting in economical, weather resistant materials to appear as the originals. The planting beds are full of peonies, lilies and other perennials and ground covers while the decorative parterre beds are enlivened with arabesque hedges.

3. Walled Garden Restoration

Restoration is also planned for the Vitale and Geifert designed Walled Garden to its 1930s condition. Repair and reconstruction of brick and limestone walls, limestone balustrade, limestone steps, flagstone paving has been included in the estimate. The repair and repainting of the highly decorative ornamental iron work, attributed to master iron craftsman Samuel Yellin, is proposed. The central fountain element is very deteriorated and requires reconstruction of the basin and water systems. It is hoped that the three bronze statues from this garden, now at Phipps Conservatory, can be loaned for the making of a mold and recasting, again in durable materials. The garden beds, planted to a rich array of perennials, annuals, groundcovers and flowering and evergreen shrubs, are to be replanted in accordance with the original plans.

4. Fifth Avenue Parkland & Frew Site Event Space

The distinctive granite and iron fence and the sweeping lawns of the Fifth Avenue Parkland are addressed in this area. The damage to the three property fences and walls is intended to be repaired and rebuilt as required. The perimeter fence is also to be completed along the western edge and missing gates will be replaced to allow the park to be closed at night. Paths are intended to be repaved with new connections added, to provide access to the former Frew house site and the adjacent teaching garden. The Frew house area will be accessed the rebuilt historic drive of Fifth Avenue so that it can be used as an open, turf, event space.

5. Beechwood Parkland & Olmsted Pool Garden Restoration

The area along Beechwood Boulevard is to be tree lined once more with the fence repaired and repainted as needed. Overall 31 shade trees are to be planted at the perimeter of this area, adding back lost canopy and street trees. The jewel of this part of the park, the Olmsted designed pool with its bridge and plantings, is proposed for restoration to its 1930s appearance.

6. Park Office, Garden Center Area, Greenhouse Rehabilitation

This former service area contained a Scaife garage, as well as the Mellon greenhouse and garage. The project scope here is directed to the rehabilitation of the Scaife Garage as a new Mellon Park

office and work space for staff. In addition the entry gate is to be repaired so that it can close, securing the park perimeter. An upgraded lighting system is also necessary.

7. Teaching Garden & Arts Center Area Rehabilitation

The removal of the collections gardens and the herb garden from the terraced and walled gardens in the park necessitate replacement. The ideal site for an accessible, teaching garden is the turf plateau along the Fifth Avenue frontage of the Scaife property. The project anticipates the construction of paths, the provision of garden soil and the extension of water supply for hand watering.

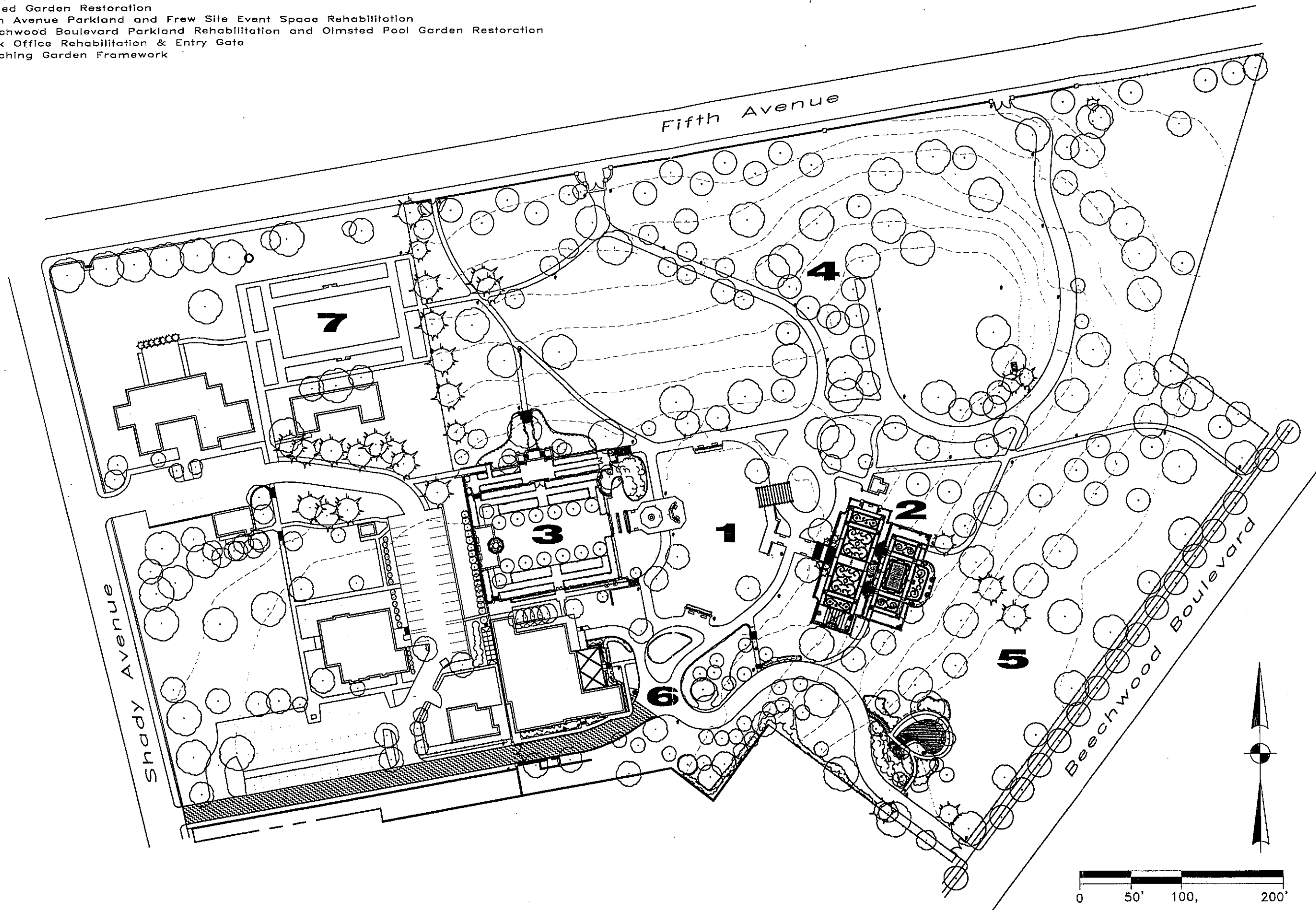
D. TREATMENT PLAN PHASING

The details of the preservation treatment phasing should be coordinated closely with the development of the management and maintenance plan, described in Chapter VII. The phasing possibilities are numerous, though for successful and efficient implementation project requirements should be fully explored before each phase is executed. One possibility is that the treatment of each landscape unit represent individual phases. However, certain tasks impact several units, such as the installation of new electrical lines or other infrastructure, and thus require a concerted project management effort.

The first phase proposed is the restoration of the Terraced Garden as a self-contained, important park landscape unit. The fencing of the park perimeter is also proposed, including the repair of existing fences and gates and the addition of a new fence between the former Mellon and Scaife properties. This measure would improve park security and ensure the longevity of the fences along Fifth Avenue, one of the few visual reminders of the residential, historic heritage of the Mellon Park. In addition the provision of public restrooms should be addressed as soon as possible, along with the provision of work and tool storage space for park dedicated staff.

PROJECT AREAS

1. Mellon House Site Rehabilitation and Interpretation
2. Terraced Garden Restoration
3. Walled Garden Restoration
4. Fifth Avenue Parkland and Frew Site Event Space Rehabilitation
5. Beechwood Boulevard Parkland Rehabilitation and Olmsted Pool Garden Restoration
6. Park Office Rehabilitation & Entry Gate
7. Teaching Garden Framework



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FIGURE VIII.1