

National World War I Memorial

at Pershing Park, Washington D.C.

U.S. World War I Centennial Commission
UU+ Studio | Forge Landscape Architecture
GWWO Architects

**Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting
February 9, 2017**

Agenda

INTRODUCTIONS

BACKGROUND

DESIGN EVOLUTION

CURRENT DESIGN ALTERNATIVE: POOL AND PLAZA

CURRENT DESIGN ALTERNATIVE: SCRIM AND GREEN

ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

CONCLUSION

BACKGROUND

Site Location



Existing Conditions



Existing Park - View Looking Northeast



Existing Park - View Looking West



Existing Park - View of Pershing Statue



Existing Park - View Looking East



Existing Park - View of Kiosk

Project History

- 1957

Approved by NCPC as site for memorial to General John J. Pershing
- 1959

Wallace K. Harrison’s design for the Pershing Memorial approved
- 1974

PADC’s The Pennsylvania Avenue Plan proposes redesign of Pershing Park
- 1979

M. Paul Fiedberg + Partners design of Pershing Park
- 1981

Pershing Park opens / Oehme van Sweden redesigns park planting
- 2014

President Obama signs legislation authorizing the U.S. World War I Centennial Commission (WWICC) to establish a new memorial. P.L.113-291, Section 3091 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2015 re-designates Pershing Park in the District of Columbia, an existing memorial to General John J. Pershing, commander of American forces in World War I, as a national World War I Memorial, and authorizes the WWICC to further honor American servicemen and women in World War I:

a. (3) AUTHORITY TO ENHANCE COMMEMORATIVE WORK

(A) IN GENERAL. The Commission may enhance the General Pershing Commemorative Work by constructing on the land designated in paragraph (1) [Pershing Park] as a World War 1 Memorial appropriate sculptural and other commemorative elements, including landscaping, to further honor the service members of the United States Armed Forces in World War I.

- 2016

National Park Service issues Cultural Landscape Inventory for the PANHS region.
- Pershing Park determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (July 25, 2016)



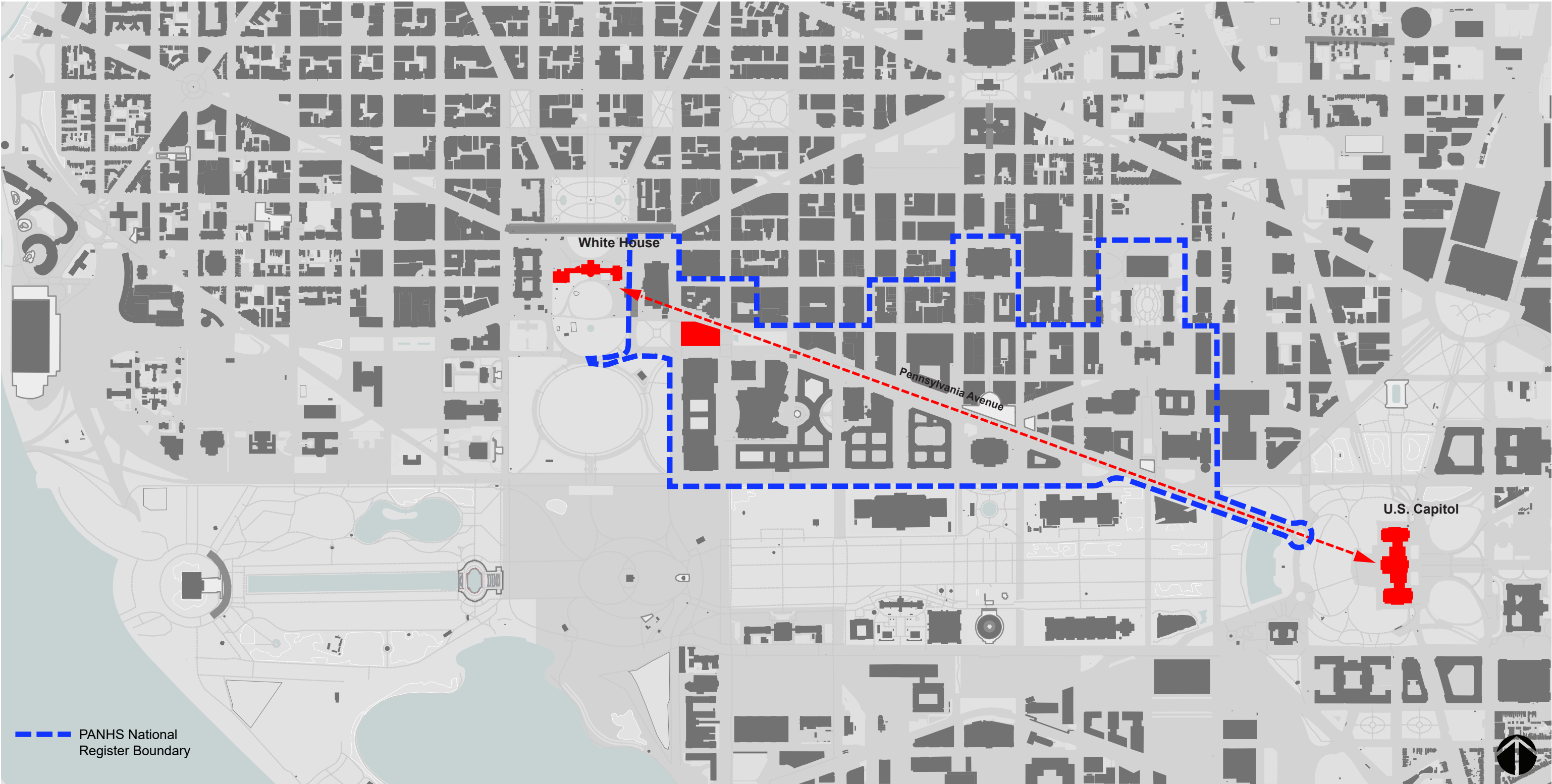
Pershing Park designed by Friedberg + Partners, OvS



The Weight of Sacrifice Competition Design

Site Context

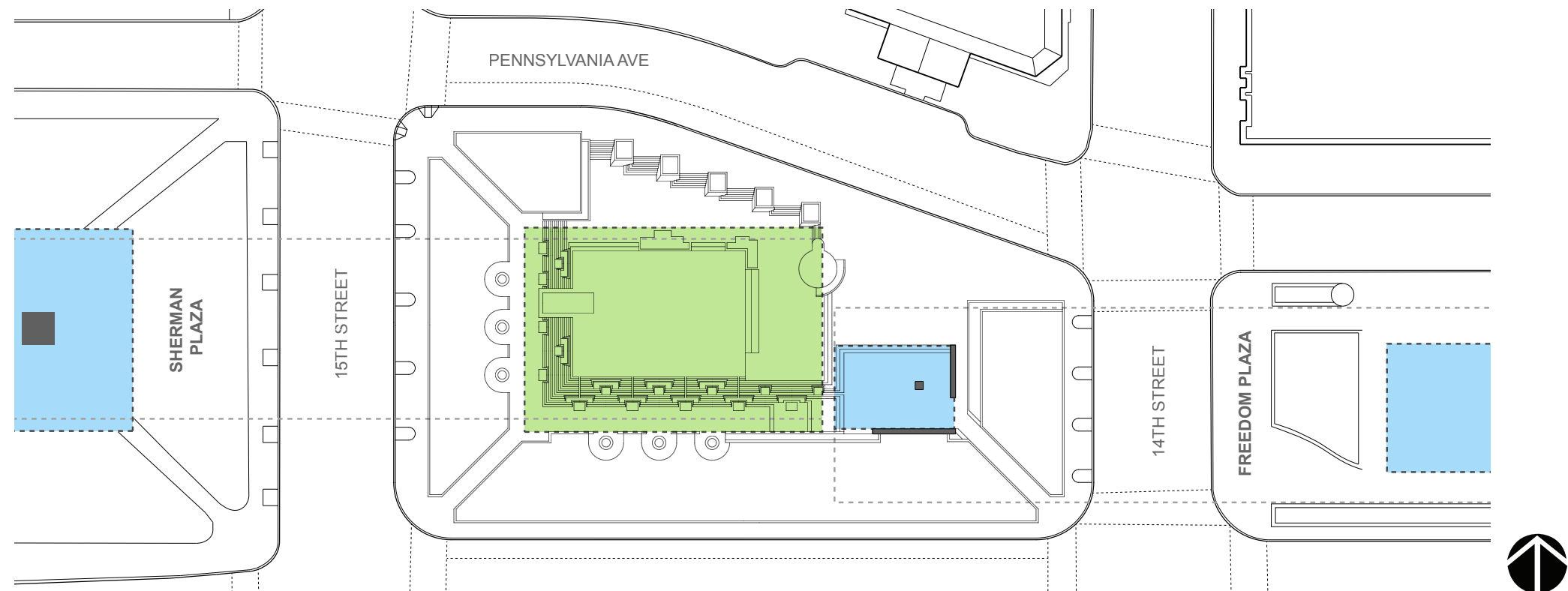
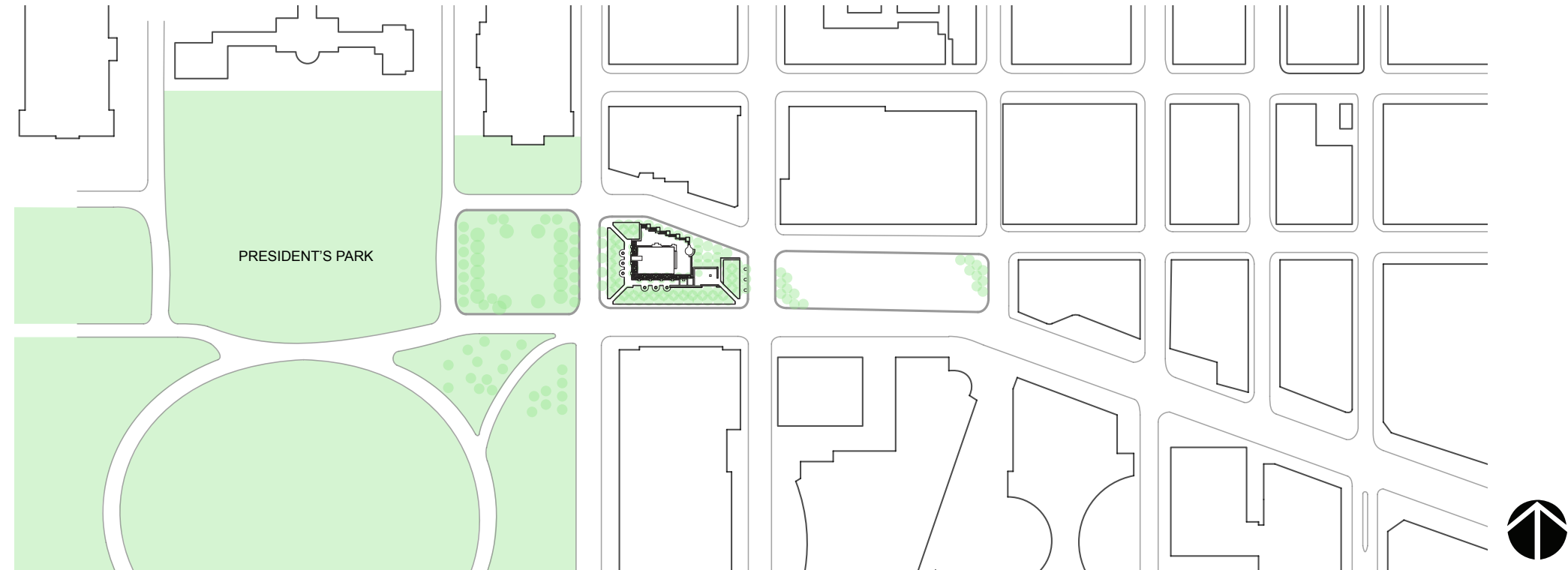
Pennsylvania Avenue



Site Context

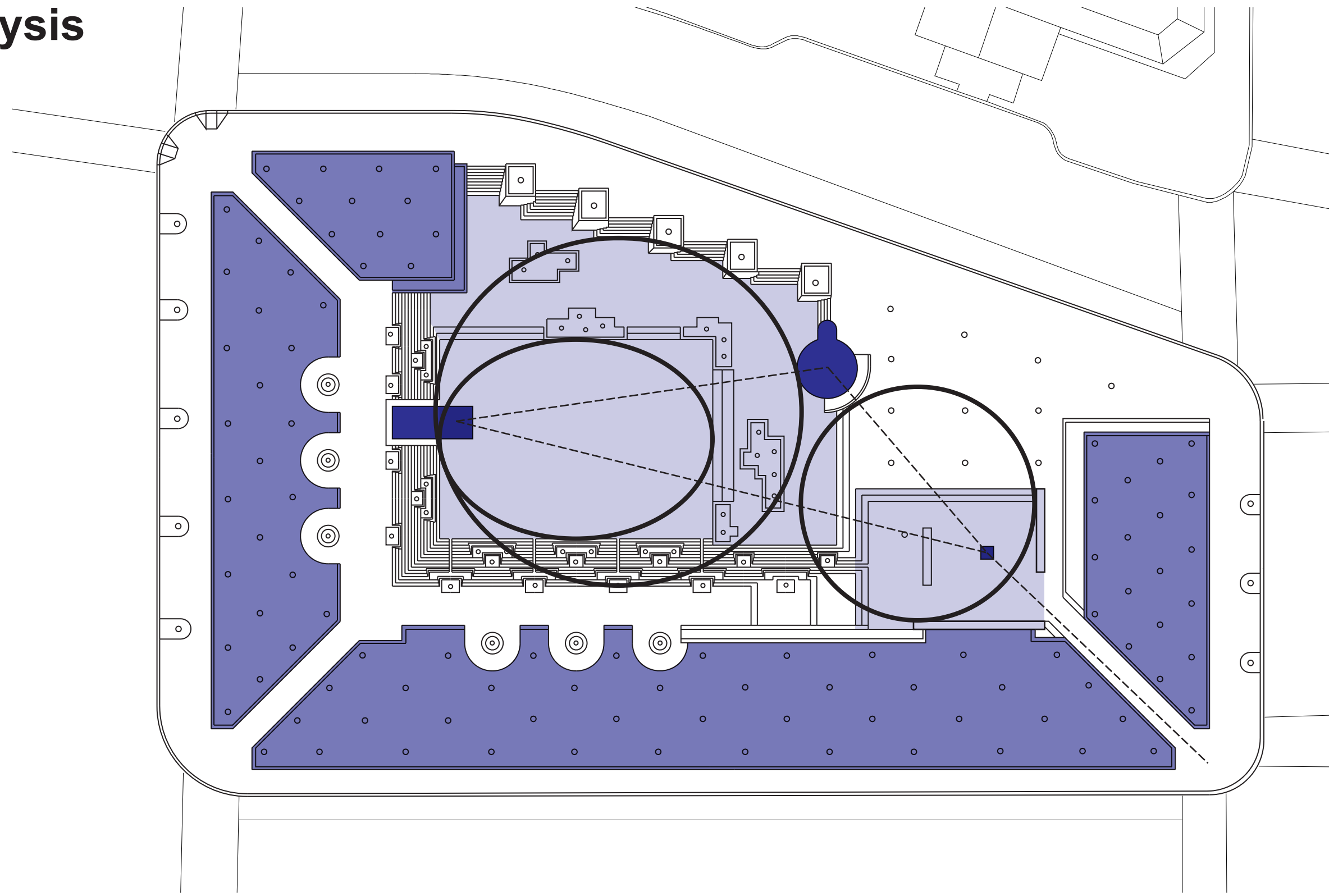
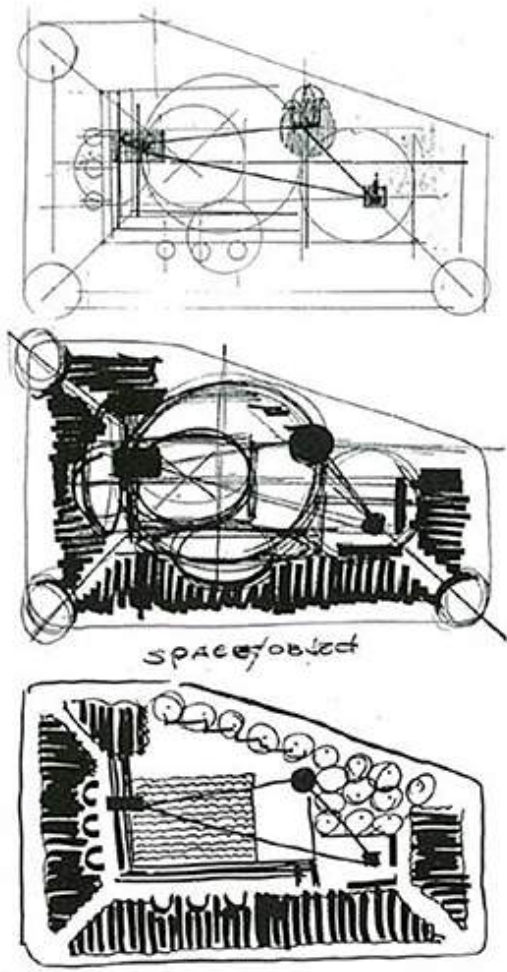
Transitional Landscape

- Site transitions between the primarily planted President's Park to the west and the paved Freedom Plaza across to the east
- Site's trapezoidal plan transitions from the wider square block at General Sherman's Monument to the more narrow rectangle of Freedom Plaza
- Park's central space aligns with the Sherman Memorial and mirrors corner entries to the west
- Pershing Memorial responds to Freedom Plaza to the east with a heavily planted edge
- Both the park and Memorial are buffered from street traffic on 14th St., 15th St. and Pennsylvania Avenue south
- Both the park and Memorial are open to Pennsylvania Avenue north

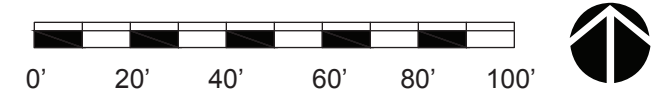


Existing Park Analysis

Rooms and Focal Points



- Enclosure
- Rooms
- Focal points

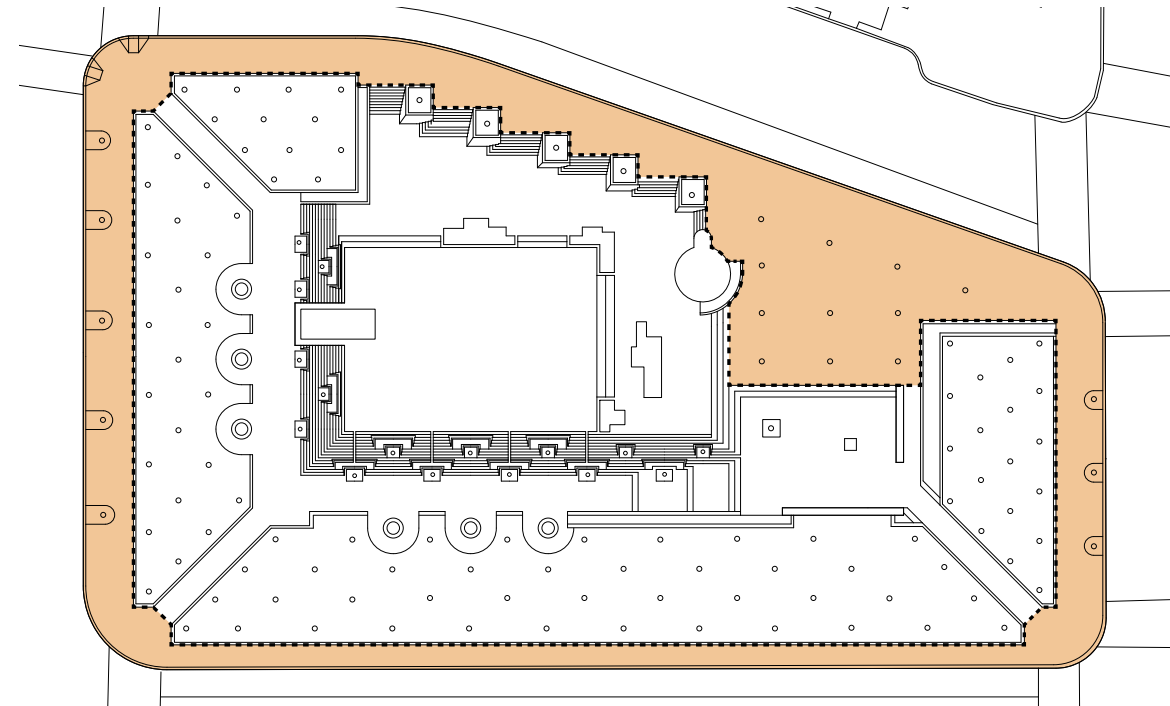


Existing Park Analysis

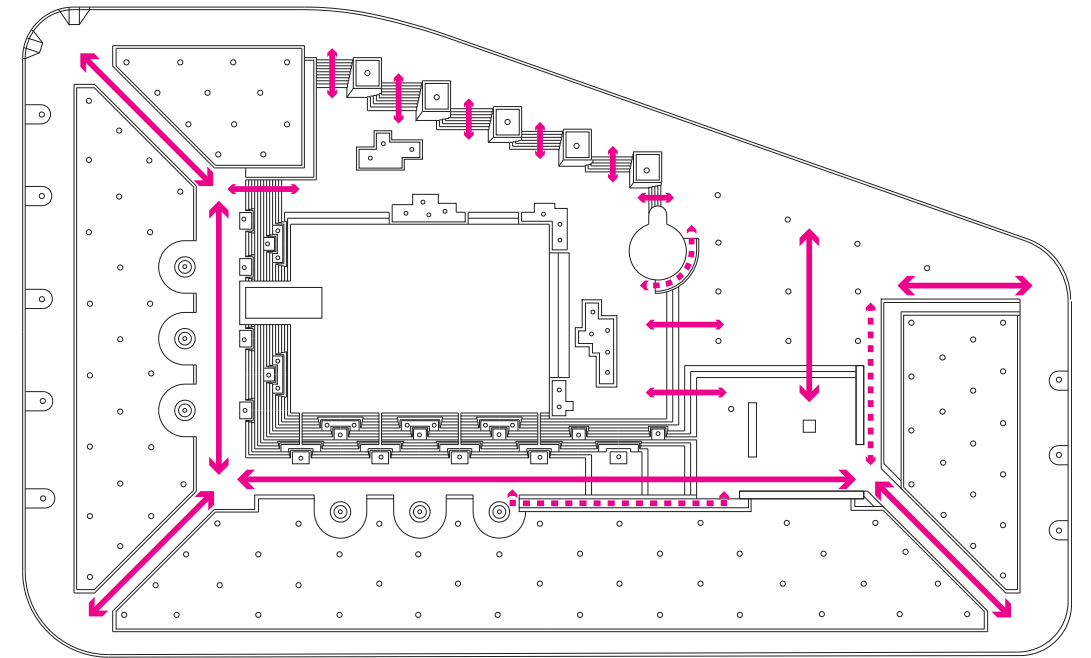
Spatial Investigations

Key observations:

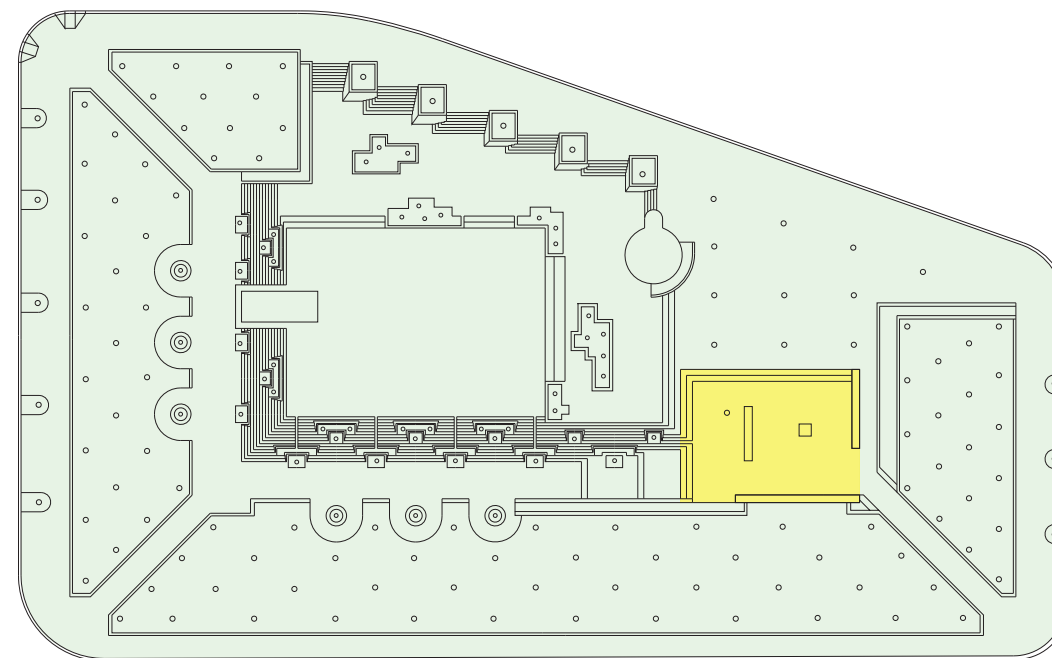
- **PADC Streetscape limits can be accommodated within an authentic rehabilitation scheme**
- **Circulation is omnidirection and unhierarchical**
- **The General Pershing Memorial is a relatively small and distinct secondary space with Pershing Park**
- **Pershing Park includes distinct rooms on clearly articulated levels**
- **The sunken pool is the dominant space within the park, and the focal point around which the park is organized in plan and section**



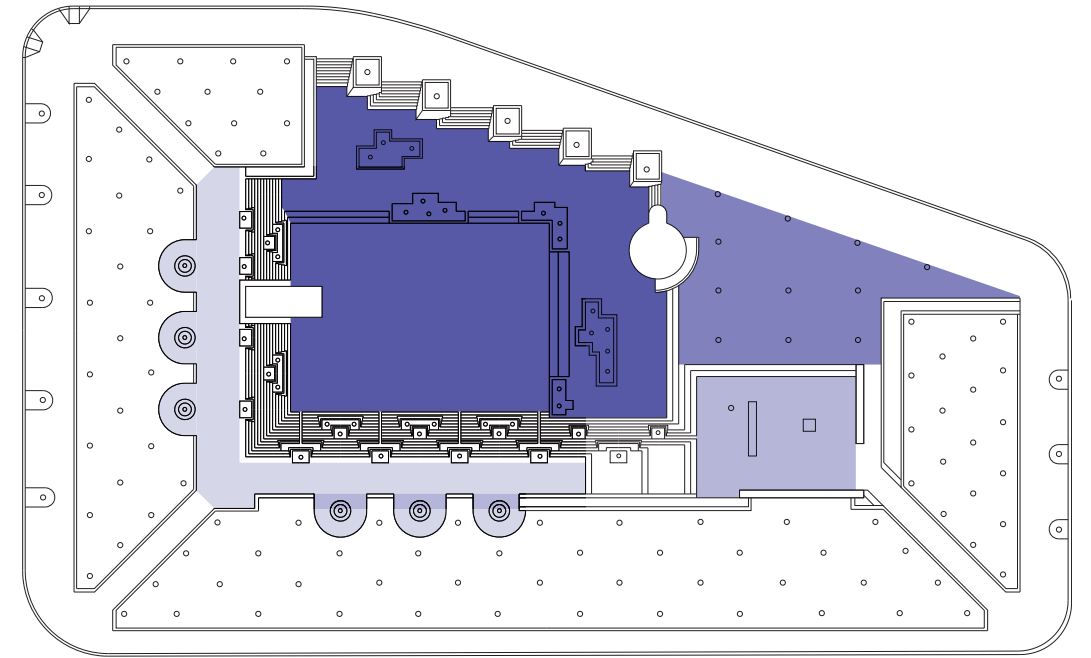
PADC STREETSCAPE LIMITS



CIRCULATION



MEMORIAL



DISTINCT LEVELS

Existing Park Analysis

Planting Investigations

- Visual inventory of existing trees indicates that many trees are missing or in poor health
- Design team anticipates significant replanting will be required
- Thorough arboreal assessment is required to determine which specimens and/or species will require replacement

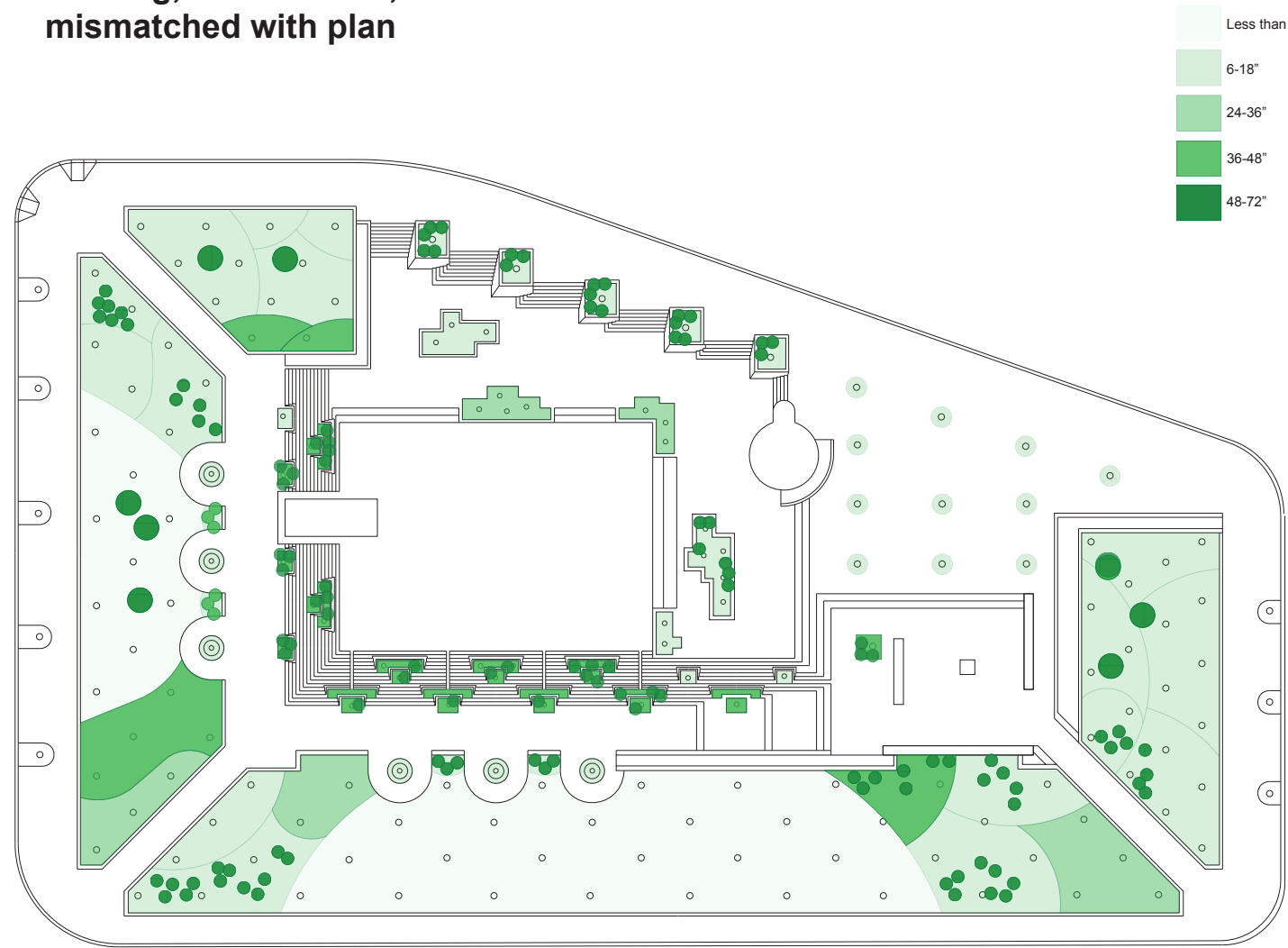


Existing Park Analysis

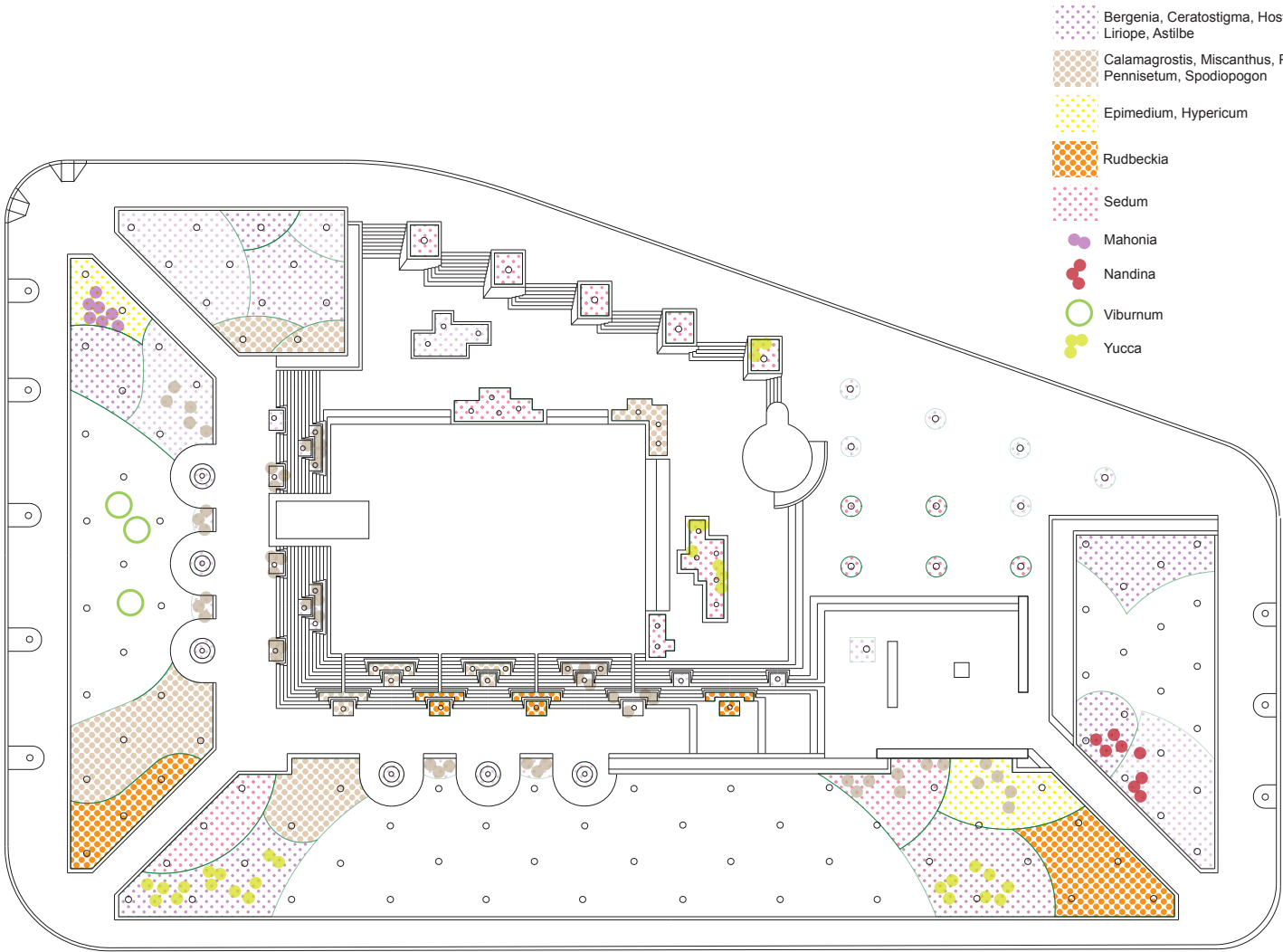
Planting Investigations

Oehme van Sweden planting plan

- Mixed shrubs, perennials, and grasses create layered planting with year round interest
- Existing understory planting missing, inconsistent, and mismatched with plan



HERBACEOUS AND SHRUB PLANTINGS: HEIGHT



HERBACEOUS AND SHRUB PLANTINGS: COLOR



DESIGN EVOLUTION

Competition Design

The competition scheme was selected by the WWICC because it best fulfilled the Commission's key objectives:

- Establish a memorial with weight and gravity commensurate with that of the war memorials on the Mall
- Design a well-integrated park-and-memorial that would facilitate a variety of park uses, and that would harmonize with the surrounding urban space
- Place the memorial as the central or focal feature of the overall design
- Convey the significance of World War I as an event in U.S. and world history
- Convey the scale of American sacrifice, which exceeded that of all our nation's wars other than the Civil War and World War II
- Create the most opportunity to preserve existing features of the park



Memorial Wall

- Central commemorative feature of the Memorial
- Features monumental work of sculpture in bronze bas-relief
- Scale of wall expresses enormity of loss and magnitude of service and sacrifice



Sculptural Artwork

- Work is meant to convey feelings of honor, pride, and loss.
- Narrative depicting five “acts” of the war: the call to arms, the departure, the battle, the aftermath, and the return.
- Central battle scene conveys the courage and heroism of American forces in the war
- Scene of aftermath depicts the physical and mental toll of the war
- Scene of proud return recognizes the accomplishments of American troops, with a parade of soldiers marching into “the American century.”



Adaptation of the Competition Scheme

Consultations with Agency Staff

- **Adaptation of the competition scheme to balance the mandate to transform Pershing Park into an appropriately commemorative National World War I Memorial with the importance of respecting the design of the existing park**
- **May 26, 2016 presentation of design concepts to staff from the CFA, NCPC, NPS, and DC SHPO**

Feedback focused on two main ideas:

- **maintaining existing park spatial organization**
- **interrelationship between commemorative elements on the site**

- **July 22, 2016 presentation of new design concept to staff from the CFA, NCPC, NPS, and DC SHPO**

Modification of Competition Design included:

- **central lower precinct similar to the existing park**
- **retention of basic bermed perimeter layout of the site**
- **substantial changes to existing park topography to improve universal accessibility and increase openness of park to its urban context**

- **Stakeholders and agencies staff appreciated the demonstrated sensitivity to the existing park, and acknowledged the success of the design in its own right as a compelling vision for a new national World War I Memorial**

Section 106 Meeting

September 21, 2016

Design Presented

- Shifts the bas-relief wall west into a sunken central room within the park
- Improves universal accessibility throughout the park
- Increases visual access into and out of the park
- Creates stronger connections with the urban context
- Proposes enduring and maintainable features and materials

Key features preserved:

- Central, lowered precinct
- Basic berm architecture with its attendant benefits (seclusion, enclosure, buffering, etc.)
- Openness and flow within the site and between the site and its surroundings



October 2016 Concept

- Modification of design presented at September 2016 Section 106 meeting
- Removal of street trees along Pennsylvania Avenue preserves viewshed to Capitol



October 2016 Concept

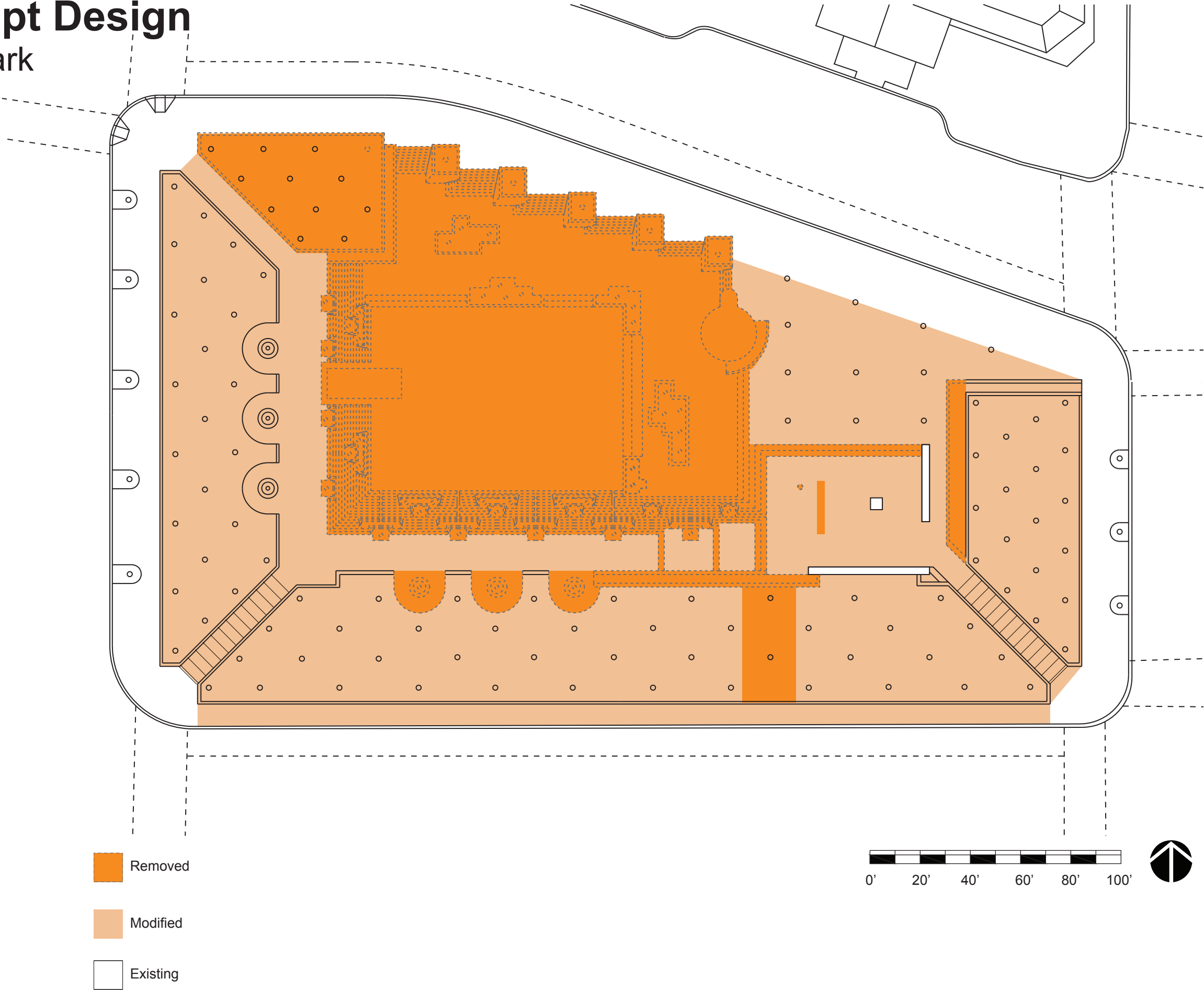


View Looking West

October 2016 Concept Design

Modifications to Existing Park

- Removal of existing park fabric within central room and along Pennsylvania Avenue
- Topographic adjustment across site, including lowered berms and removal of steps between Pershing Memorial and central room



Comments Received from CFA & NCPC

Presentations October 20 & November 3, 2016

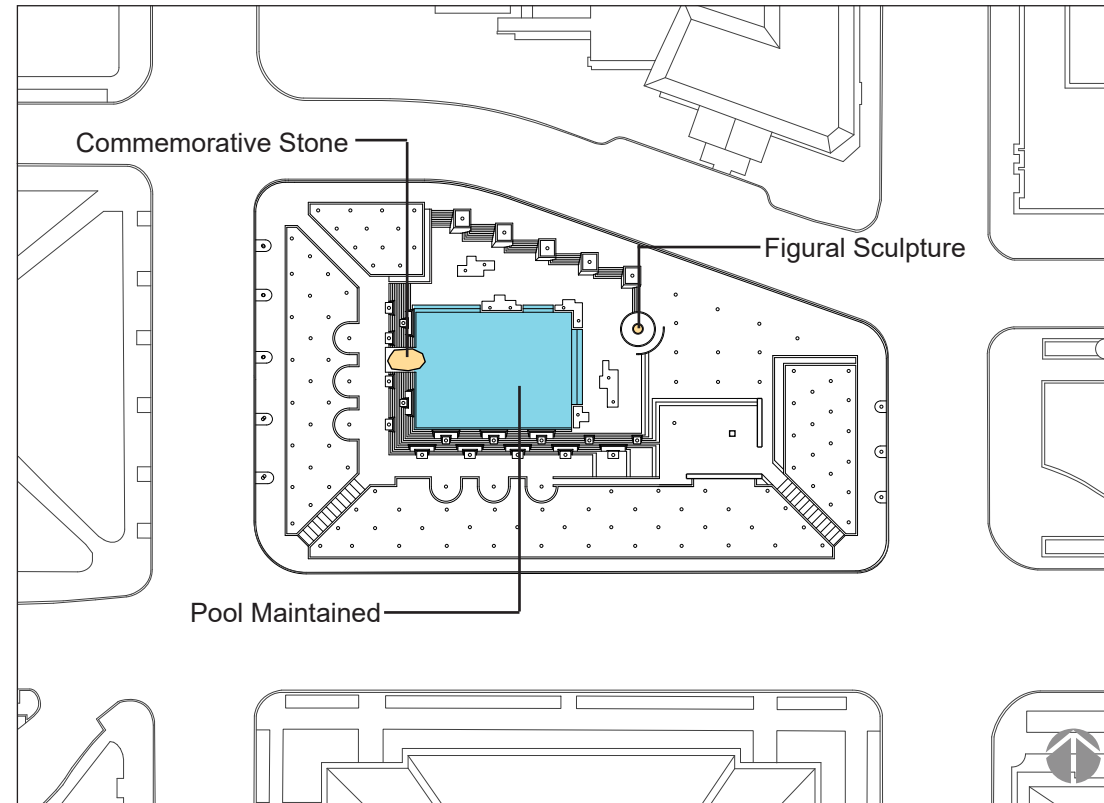
- **Topographic adjustments compromise the sectional shaping of the site, the essential concept of Friedburg's design**
- **Friedburg design and the Oehme Van Sweden planting plan should be reconsidered through careful and respectful interpretation**
- **Show a more direct translation between the existing park and the proposed design**
- **Show clear distinction between elements retained and elements modified**
- **Explore the potential to create a commemorative landscape within an authentic rehabilitation scheme**
- **Denote the limits of the PADC streetscape and show how the streetscape transitions into memorial space**
- **Further develop northern portion of the site to better define the sidewalk zone, increase green space, and create a clear transition between the public street and the memorial area**

Balancing Preservation and Commemoration

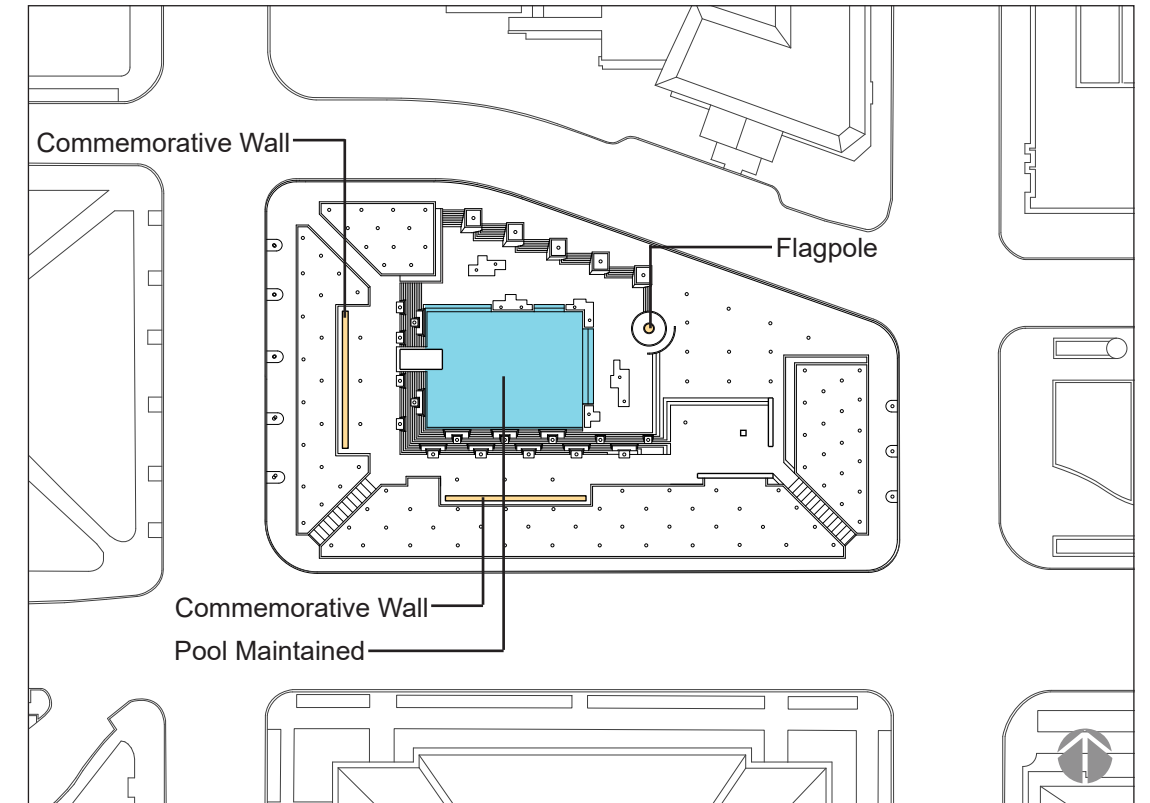
Design Iterations

- Incremental explorations of commemoration starting with minimal changes to existing park
- Iterative process facilitates evaluation of level of modification required to achieve commemorative purpose
- Effort to protect and maintain critical character defining features, according to Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Treatment of Cultural Landscapes:

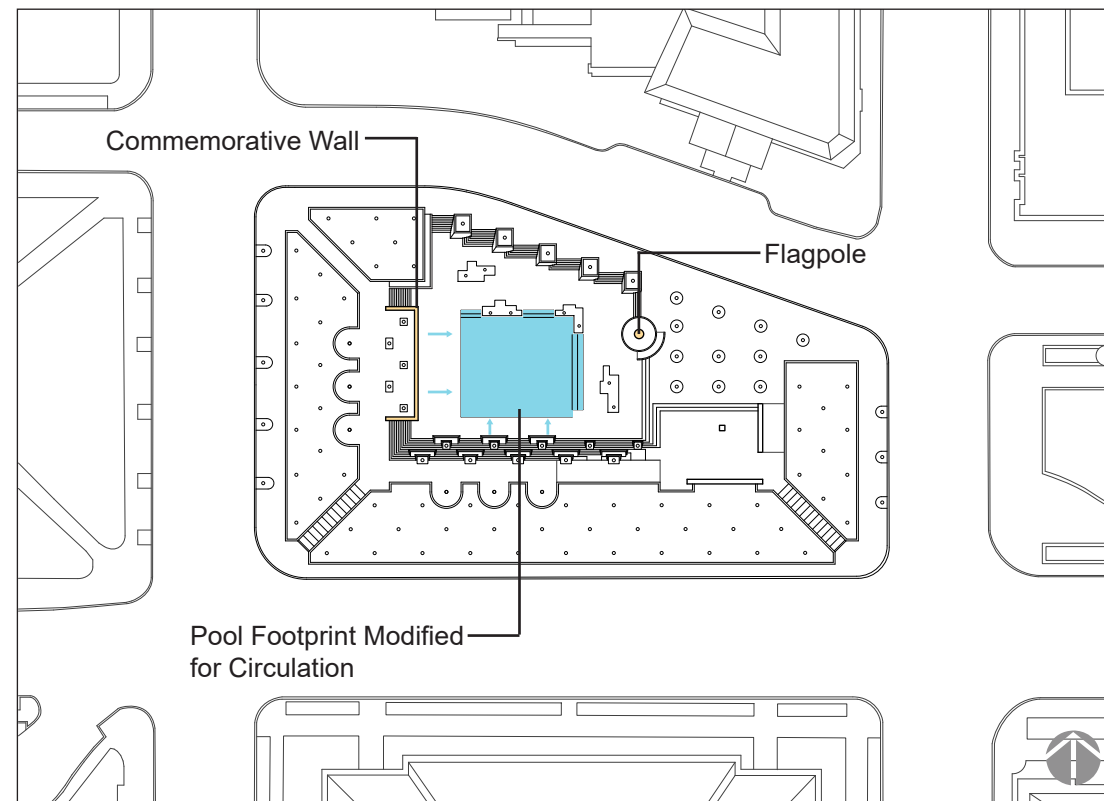
- Views and vistas
- Spatial organization
- Pershing Memorial
- PADC streetscape
- Terraced seating and planters
- Granite materials
- Distinct rooms bounded by steps
- Three focal points
- Water cascade, including sound



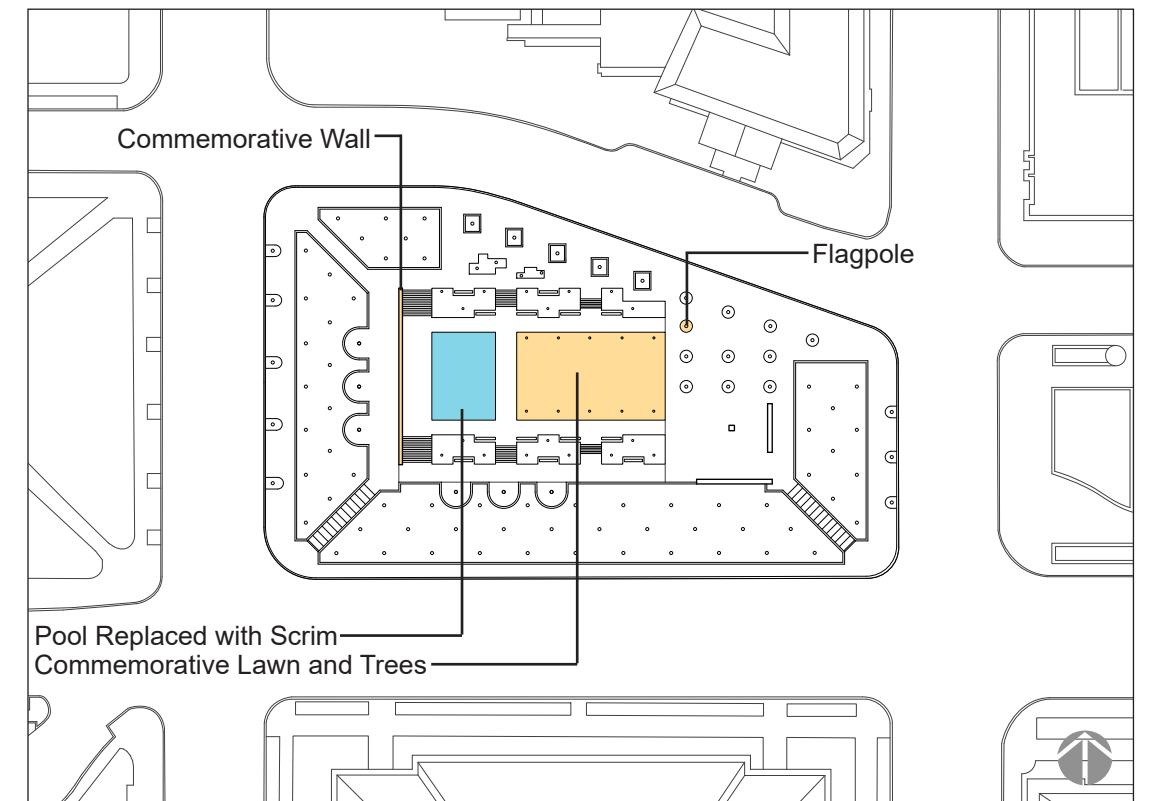
POOL CONCEPT



UPPER WALKWAY CONCEPT



POOL & PLAZA CONCEPT



SCRIM & GREEN CONCEPT WWICC ENDORSED

Pool Concept

Considered & Rejected

- Existing fountain replaced with mass of limestone transported from the Western Front, expressing the enormity of the war and its losses
- Figural sculpture in the round occupies circular plinth at the site of the former cafe kiosk
- Minimal impacts to existing park - changes made to fountain, kiosk, and faces of planters along Pennsylvania Avenue for commemorative purpose



ASSESSMENT

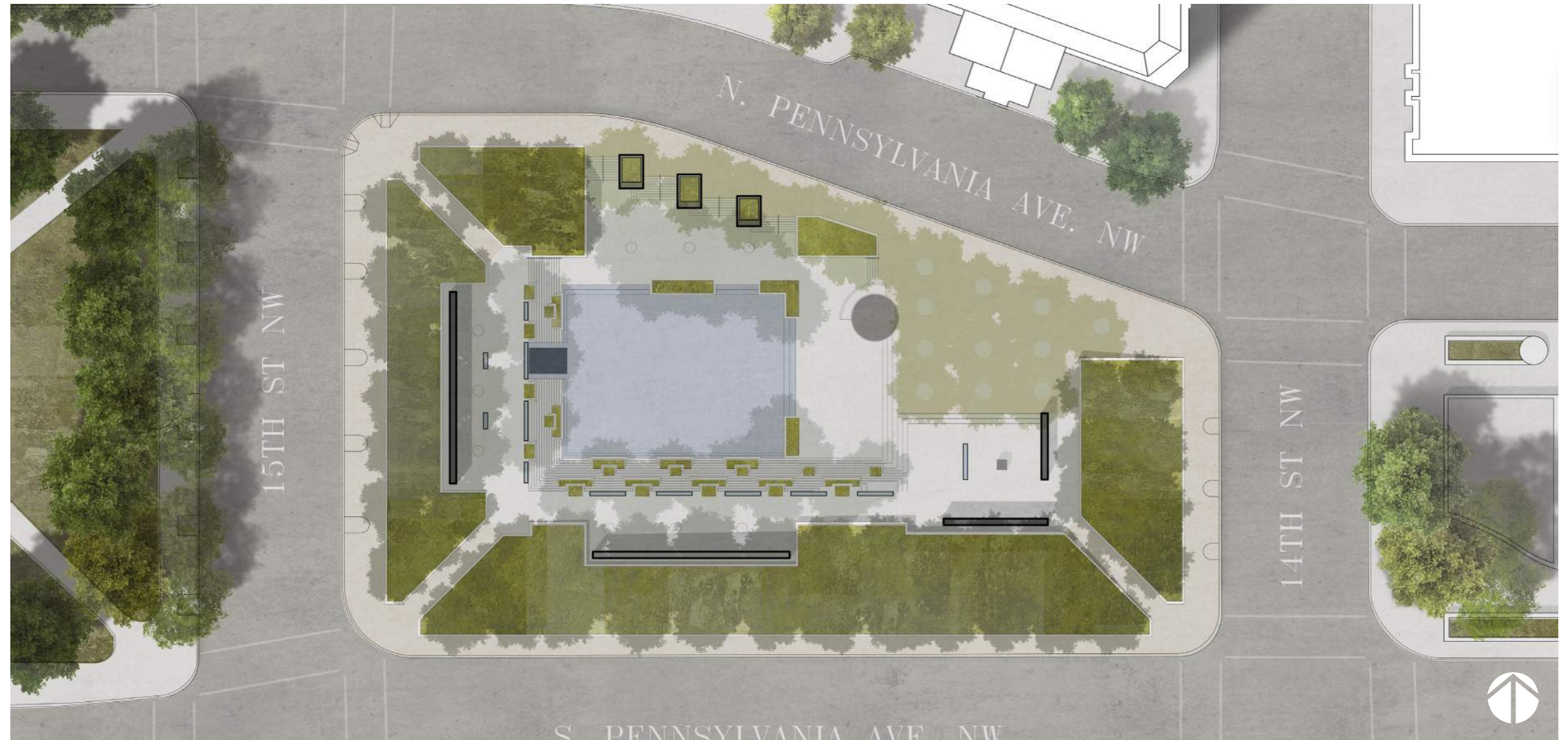
- Redefines the existing fountain and pool as the primary commemorative expression
- Relies on abstraction and interpretation
- Separates the monumental expression from the figural narrative



Upper Walkway Concept

Considered & Rejected

- Reintroduces competition concept of commemorative walls with bas-relief sculpture as main commemorative element
- Two walls positioned along upper walkway, one clad with bronze bas relief and another inscribed with stories of the lost generation
- Walls embrace terraced seating and central pool, restored as a space of peace
- Avoids adverse impacts to the central space - terrace seating, fountain, and pool



ASSESSMENT

- Relegates primary commemorative elements to secondary position within the park
- Elevates walls to highest point in park, increasing disconnection from urban context



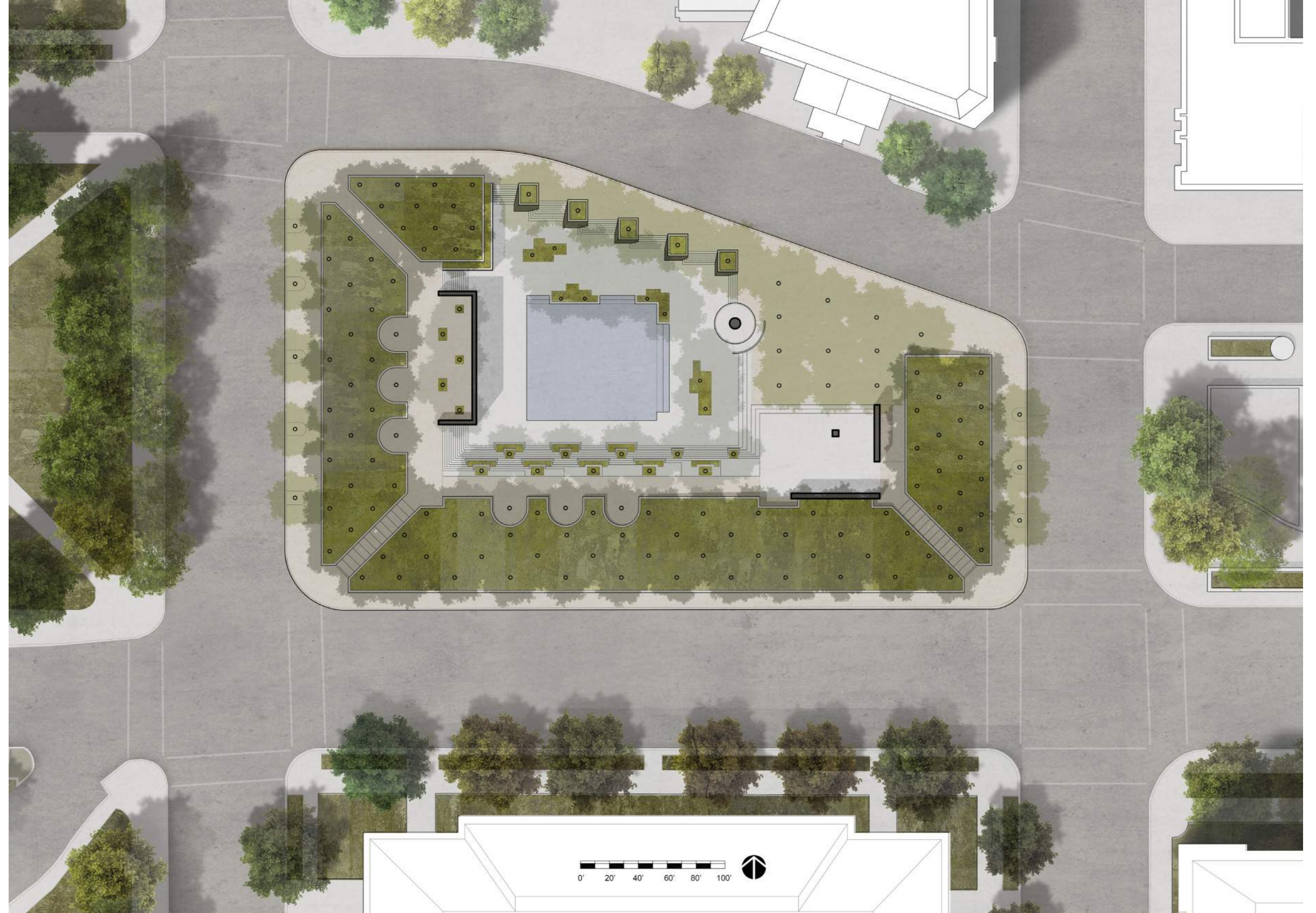
CURRENT DESIGN ALTERNATIVE POOL AND PLAZA

Pool & Plaza Concept

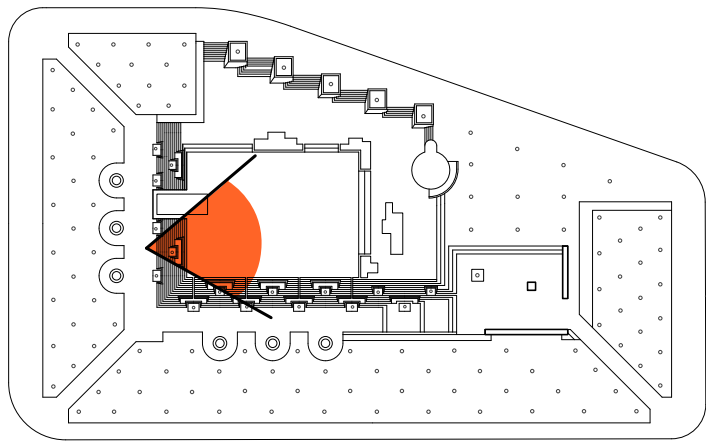
- Concept recognizes that the existing park is spatially organized around the sunken plaza and pool
- For the existing park to operate as a national World War I Memorial, the primary commemorative element must be set within the central room
- Central sunken room adapted to feature bas-relief wall
- Flagpole occupies a circular plinth at the site of the former cafe kiosk
- Vertical surfaces of planters along Pennsylvania Avenue are rebuilt in bronze and inscribed with the stories of the lost generation

ASSESSMENT

- Axial formality of wall challenges informal, omni-directional park
- Maintains substantial historic fabric and overall spatial organization
- Removal of the fountain changes the character of the central space

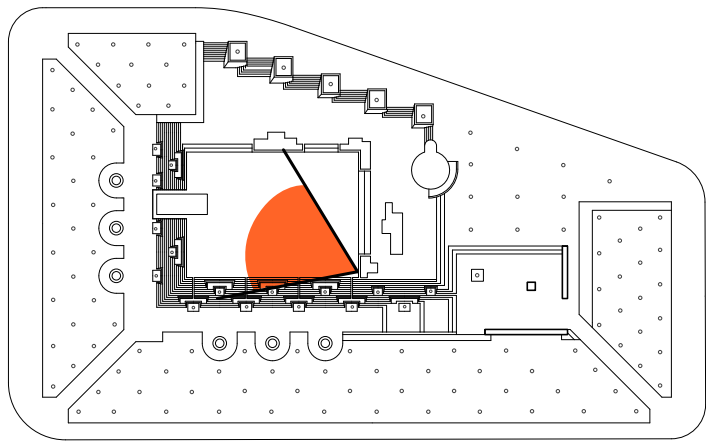


Pool & Plaza Concept



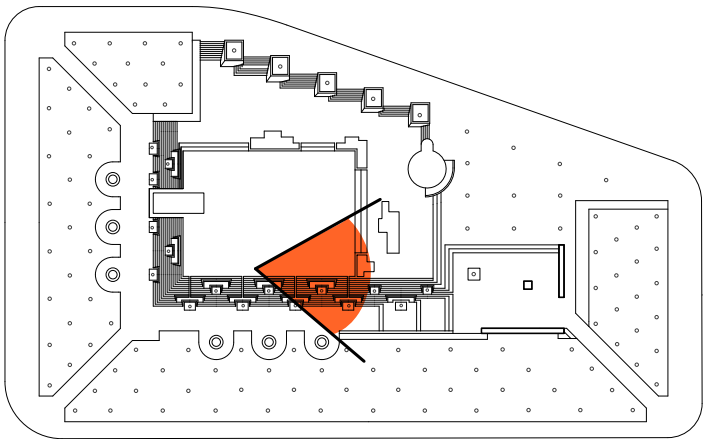
View Looking East

Pool & Plaza Concept



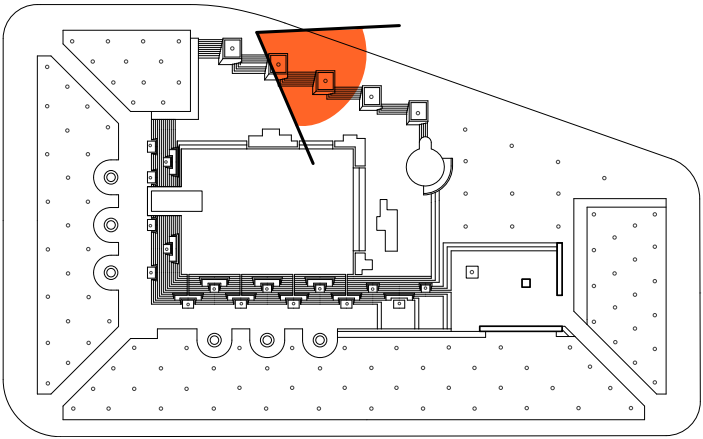
View Looking West

Pool & Plaza Concept



View Looking East

Pool & Plaza Concept

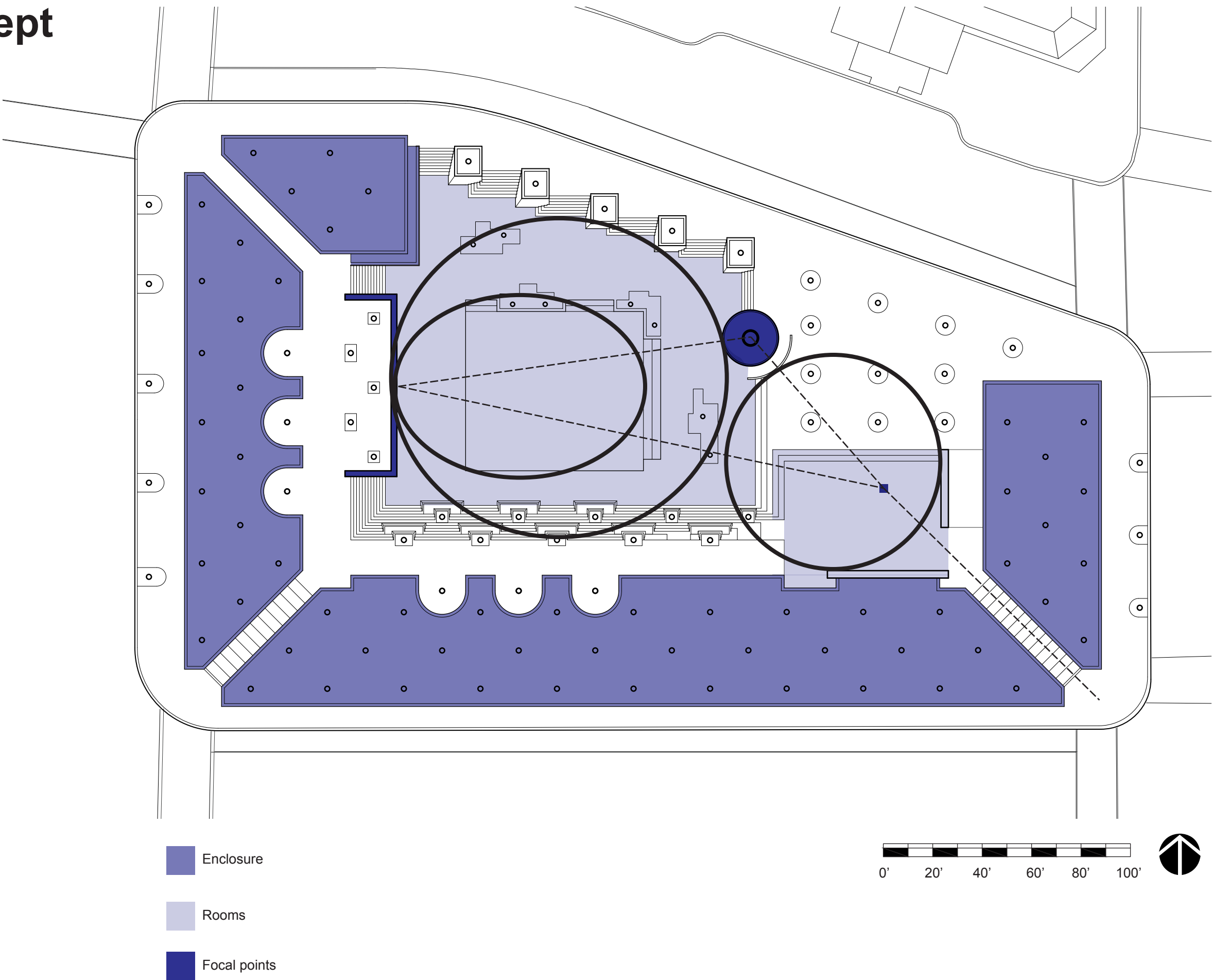


View Looking Towards US Capitol

Pool & Plaza Concept

Rooms and Focal Points

- Bas-relief wall replaces the fountain as the focal point within the central sunken room
- Flag pole on circular plinth replaces the existing kiosk



Pool & Plaza Concept

Tree Planting Plan

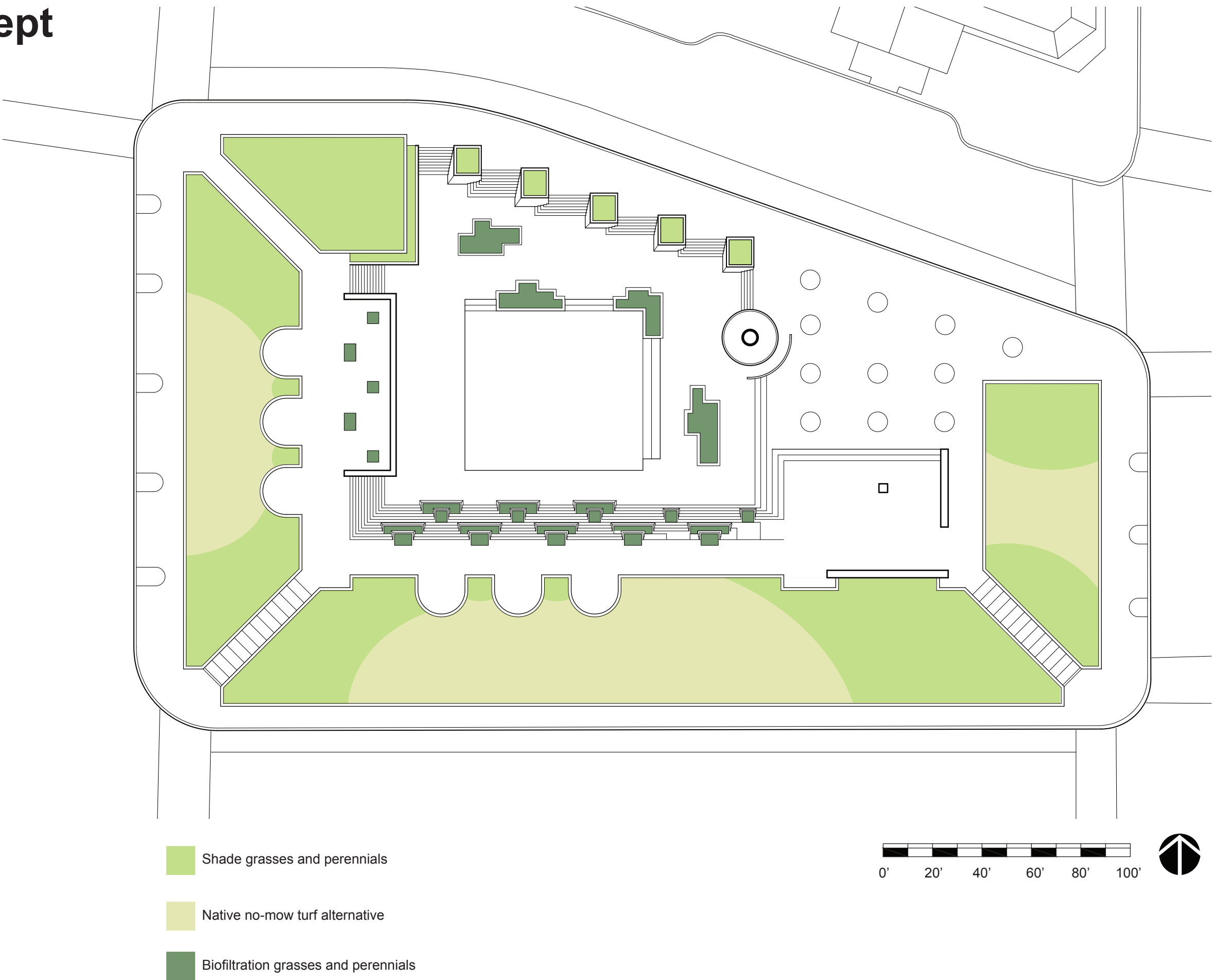
- Spacing of berm planting adjusted to increase soil volume for trees
- Reconstruction is an opportunity to consider replacement species similar in form and character with greater habitat value
- Replacement species selections will also be reviewed with an arborist for disease resistance and appropriateness for soils and climate



Pool & Plaza Concept

Understory Planting Plan

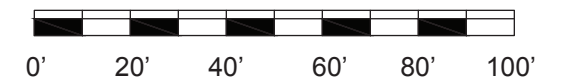
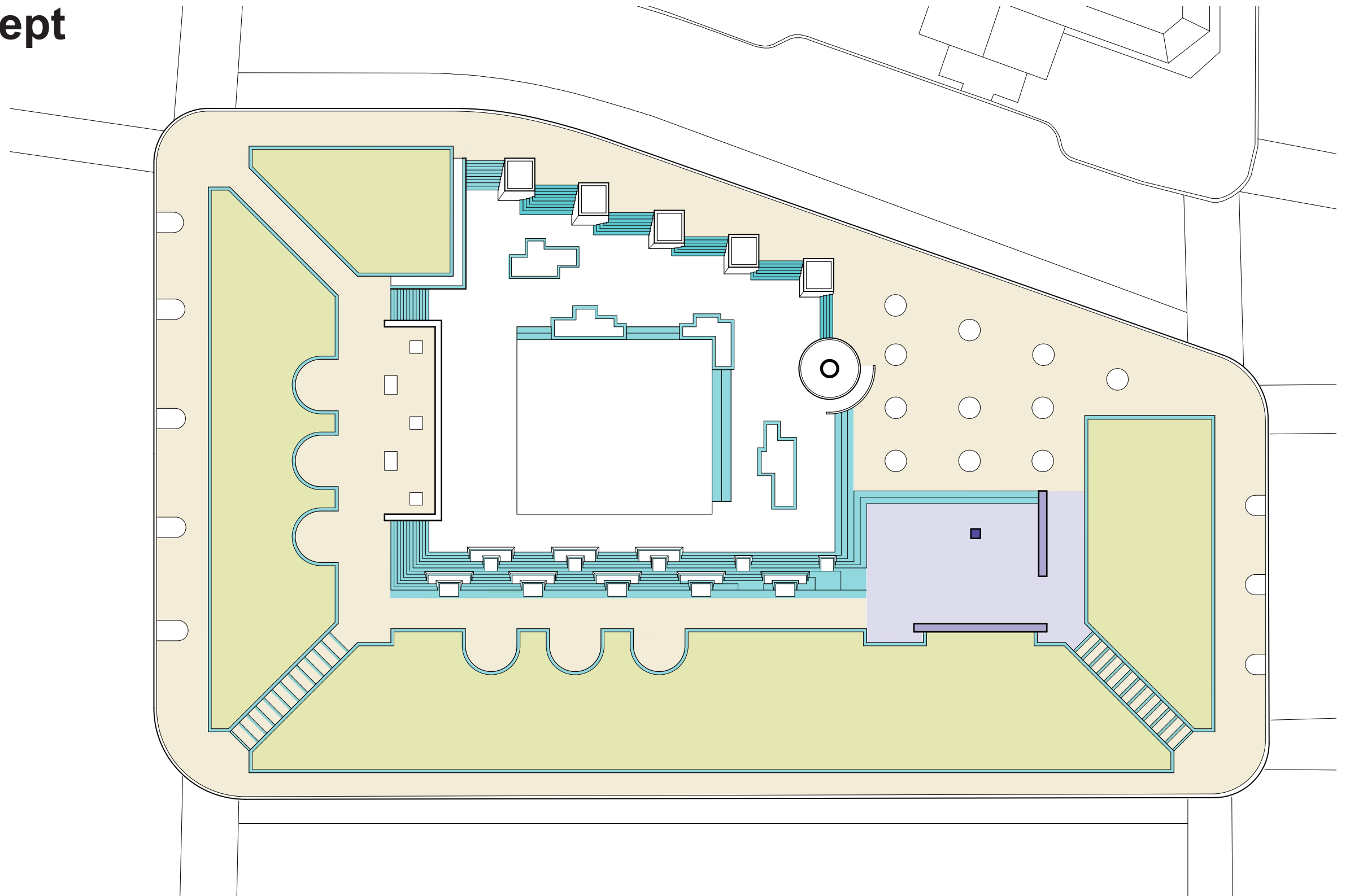
- Understory planting responds to landscape plan created by Oehme van Sweden in form and character
- Planting design modifies species to respond to anticipated variations in soil moisture



Pool & Plaza Concept

Materials Retained

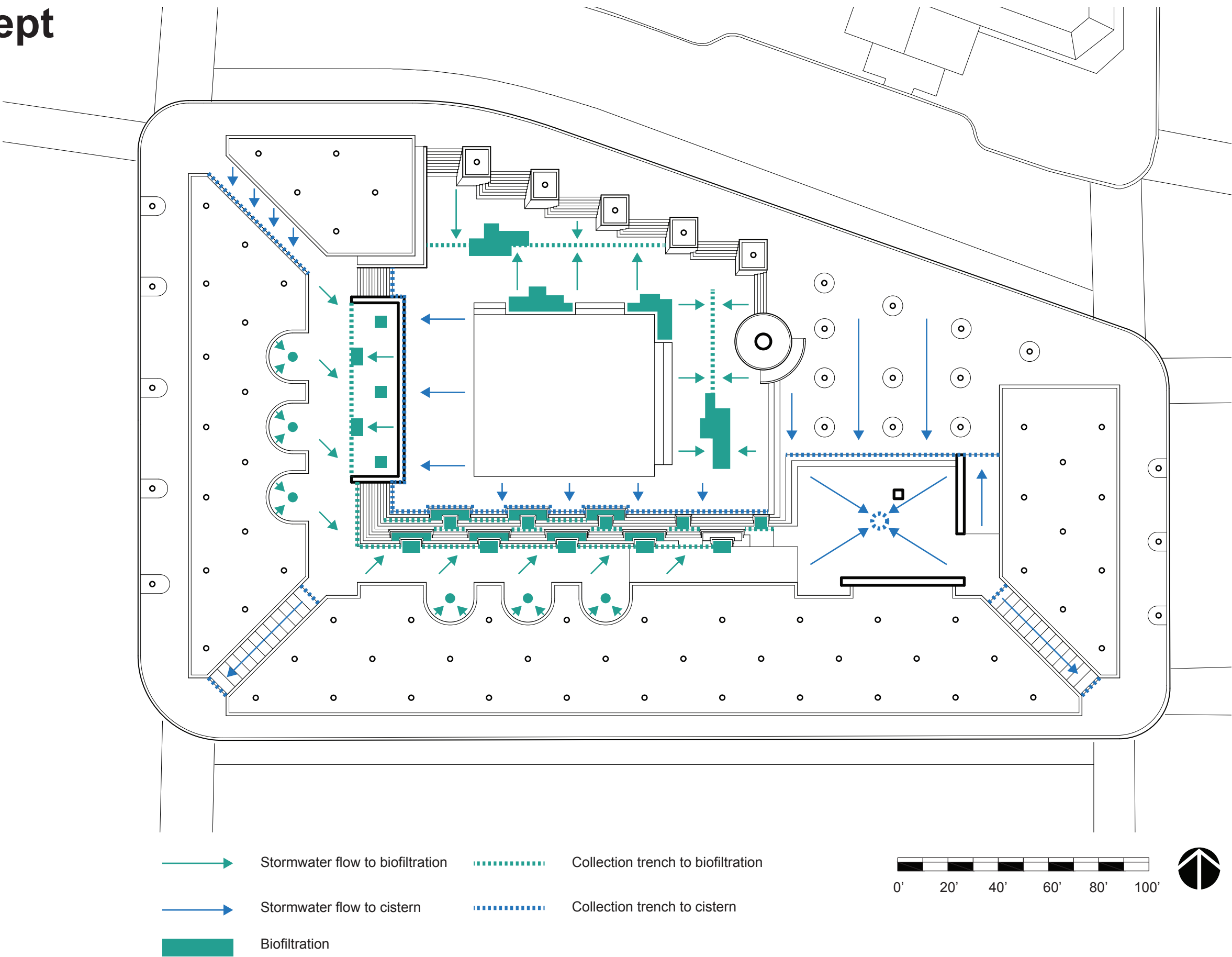
- Existing soils in berms amended in place to provide optimum horticultural conditions
- Existing granite material to be removed, cleaned, and reinstalled
- Pershing Memorial Statue, walls, and paving retained
- Treatment of Pershing Memorial inscriptions for increased legibility will be reviewed with graphic design consultant
- Pennsylvania Avenue pavers retained



Pool & Plaza Concept

Stormwater Diagram

- Where possible, stormwater is directed into planted areas for biofiltration prior to draining to sewer system
- Where biofiltration is not possible, stormwater is directed to a below-grade cistern to be stored and reused for irrigation
- Below grade support spaces for former kiosk offer opportunity to locate stormwater cistern

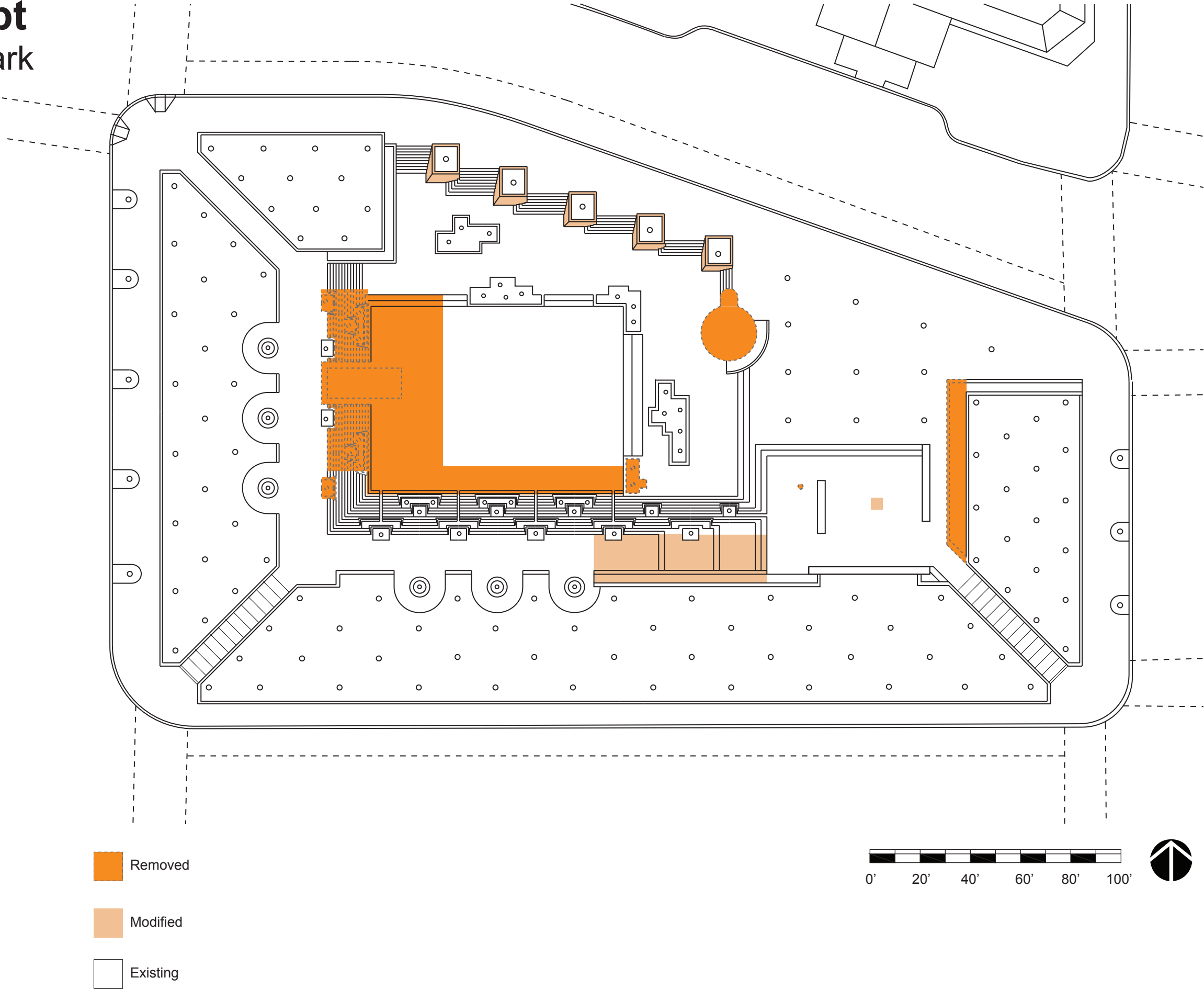


Pool & Plaza Concept

Modifications to Existing Park

Critical character-defining features:

- Views and vistas retained
- Spatial organization retained with modifications to circulation
- Pershing Memorial retained with repositioning of Pershing statue to align with commemorative circulation
- PADC streetscape retained
- Terraced seating and planters partially retained
- Granite materials retained except where replaced by bas-relief wall and Pennsylvania Avenue commemorative panels
- Distinct rooms bounded by steps primarily retained except where replaced by bas-relief wall and universally accessible walkway
- Three focal point organization maintained:
 - Fountain replaced with bas-relief wall
 - Kiosk replaced with Flagpole on plinth
 - Pershing statue repositioned
- Water feature retained and modified to accommodate commemorative circulation
- Cascading water not retained



CURRENT DESIGN ALTERNATIVE SCRIM AND GREEN

Scrim & Green Concept

WWICC Endorsed

- Concept recognizes that the symmetrical bas-relief wall offers the most commemorative impact when set within a space which reflects its dimension, scale, and axuality.
- The scale of the wall in the memorial precinct properly expresses the magnitude of service and sacrifice of American forces in the Great War.
- Flag pole stands near the site of the former cafe kiosk.
- Greater choice of universally-accessible circulation throughout the park.

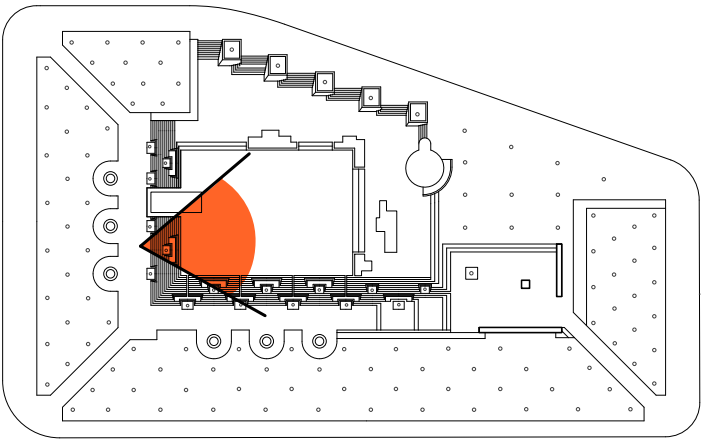
ASSESSMENT

- Pathway and allée create strong linkage between new memorial element and Pershing statue
- Lawn expands park uses
- Removal of steps makes park more accessible
- Raising of the sunken portion of the park makes the space more visible



Scrim & Green Concept

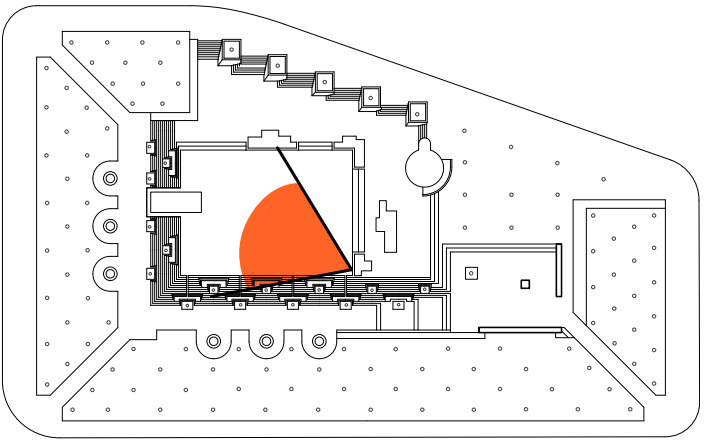
WWICC Endorsed



View Looking East

Scrim & Green Concept

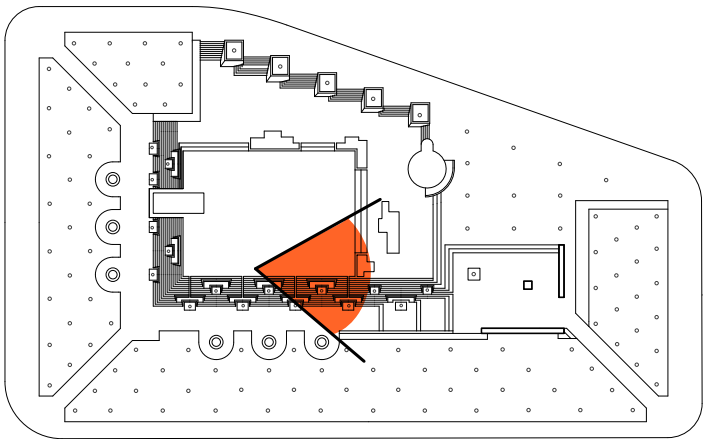
WWICC Endorsed



View Looking West

Scrim & Green Concept

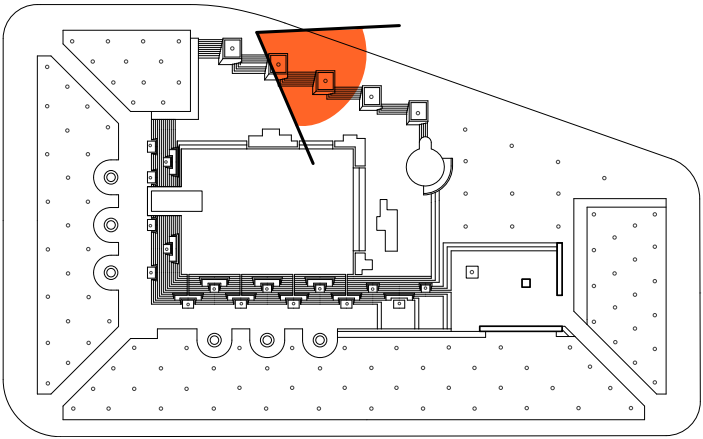
WWICC Endorsed



View Looking East

Scrim & Green Concept

WWICC Endorsed

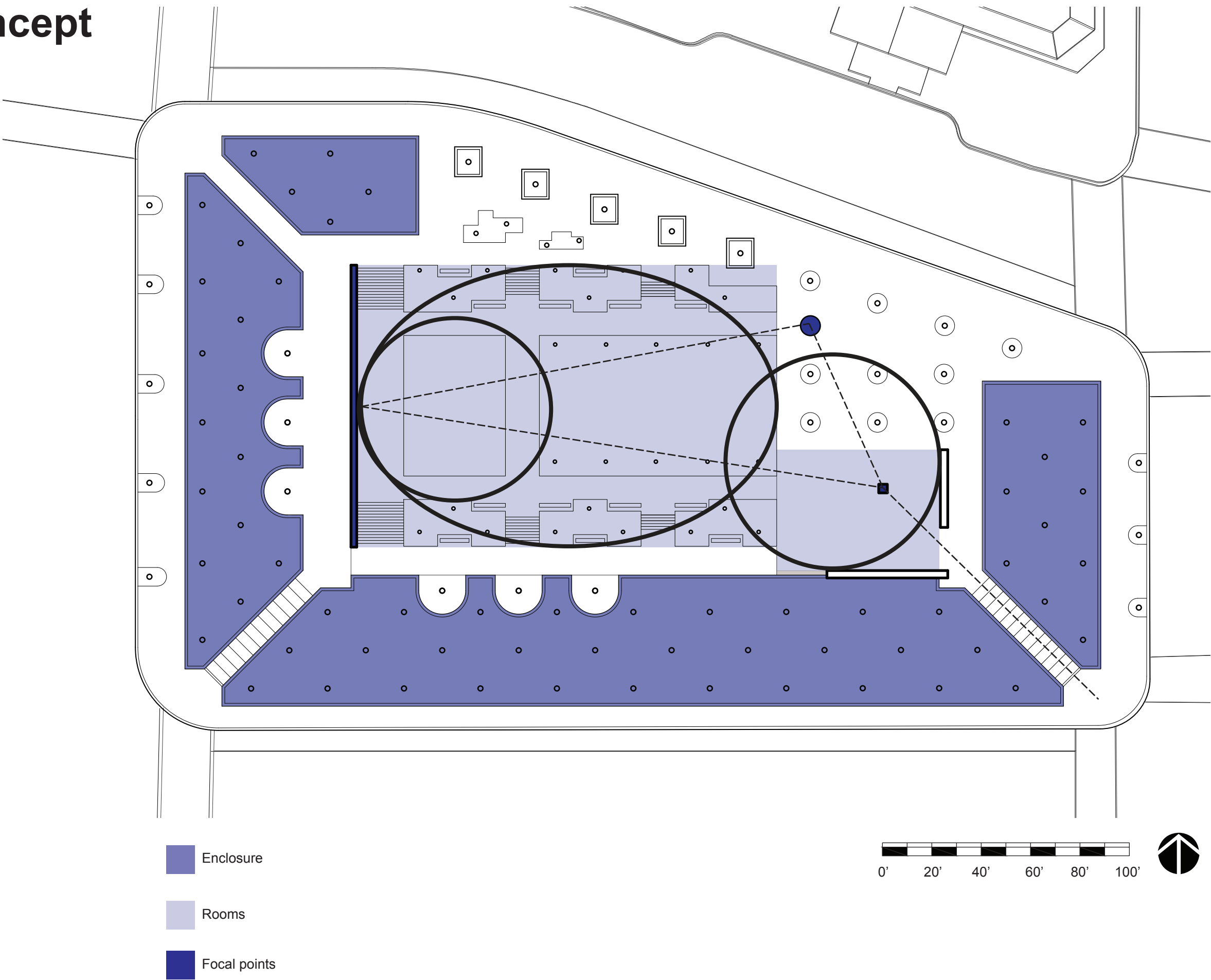


View Looking Towards US Capitol

Scrim & Green Concept

Rooms and Focal Points

- Bas-relief wall replaces the fountain as westernmost focal point within the park
- Flag pole near the circular plinth replaces the existing kiosk



Scrim & Green Concept

Tree Planting Plan

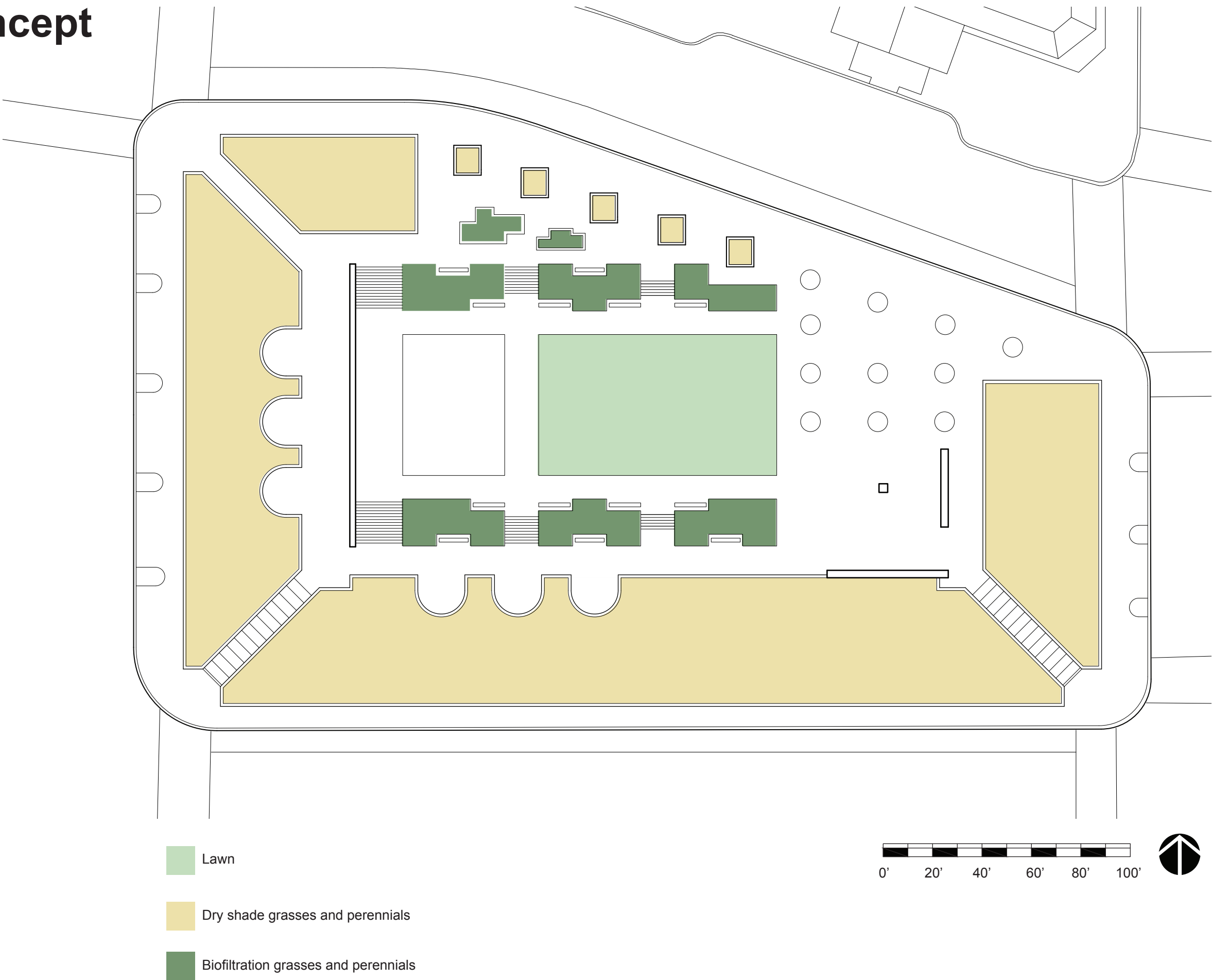
- Spacing of berm planting adjusted to increase soil volume for trees
- Reconstruction is an opportunity to consider replacement species similar in form and character with greater habitat value
- Replacement species selections will also be reviewed with an arborist for disease resistance and appropriateness for soils and climate
- The addition of Red Maples frames the view of the bas-relief wall and reinforces the edges of the Memorial precinct



Scrim & Green Concept

Understory Planting Plan

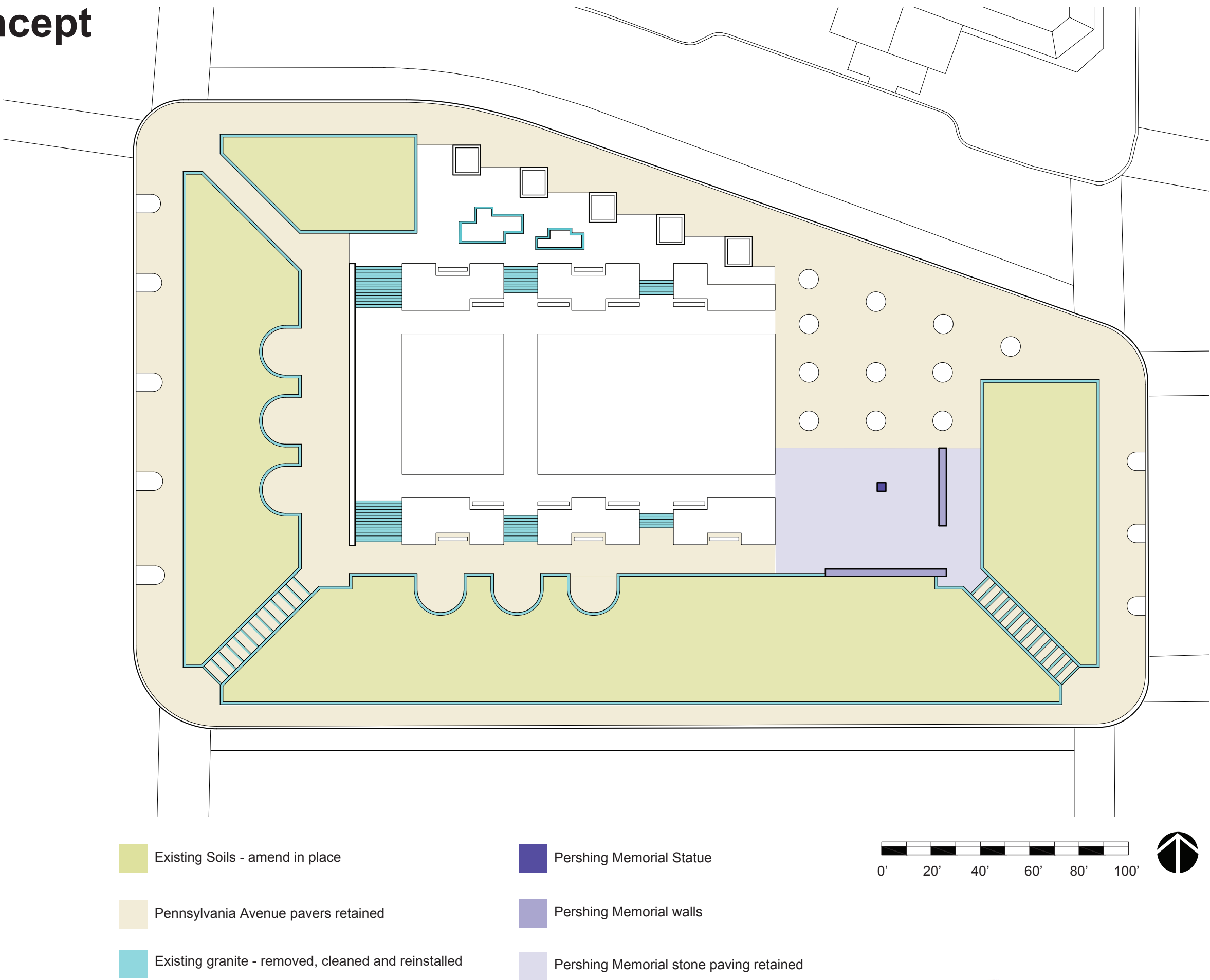
- Understory planting responds to landscape plan created by Oehme van Sweden in form and character
- Planting design modifies species to respond to anticipated variations in soil moisture



Scrim & Green Concept

Materials Retained

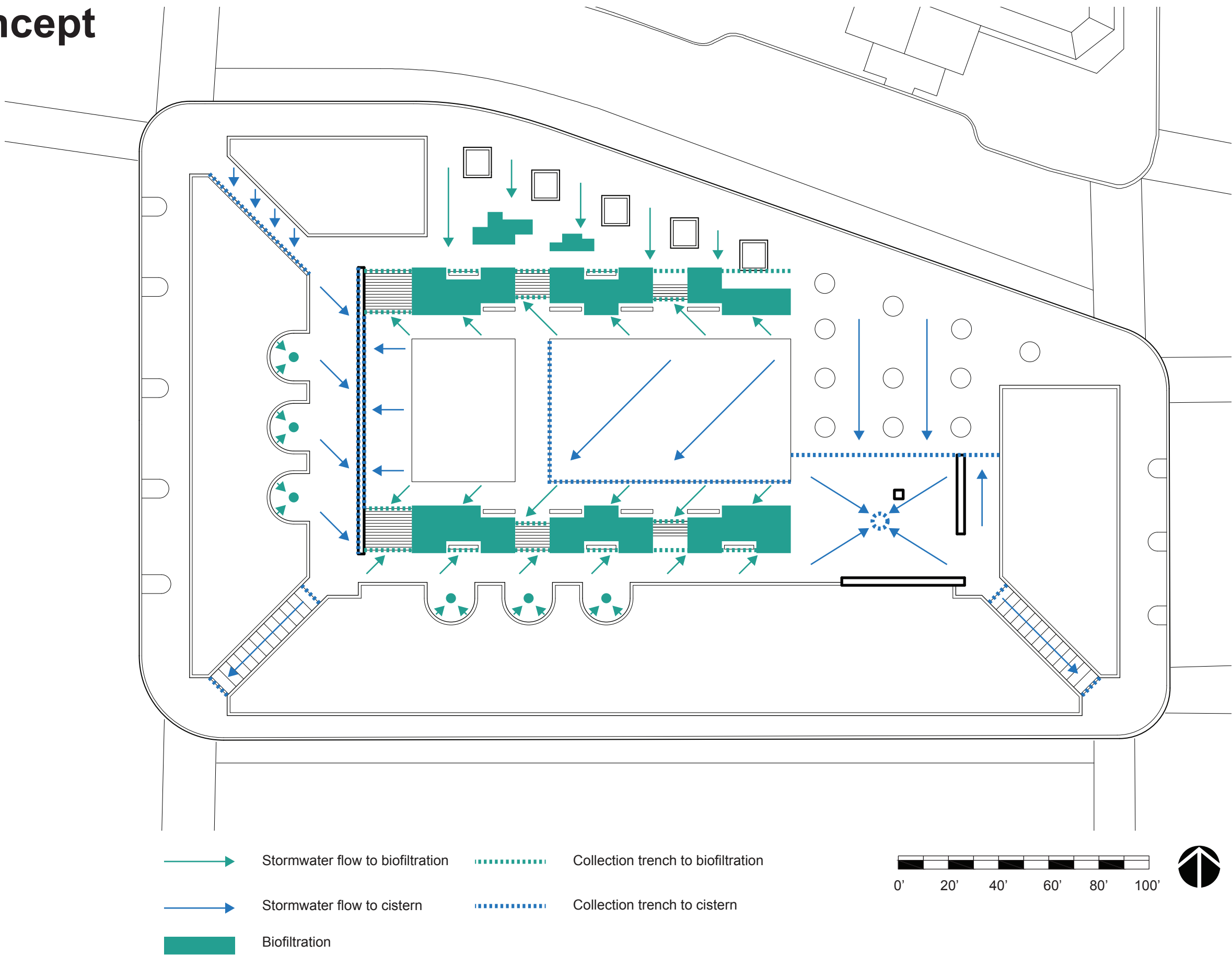
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- Pershing Memorial Statue, walls, and paving retained
- Treatment of Pershing Memorial inscriptions for increased legibility will be reviewed with graphic design consultant
- Pennsylvania Avenue pavers retained



Scrim & Green Concept

Stormwater Diagram

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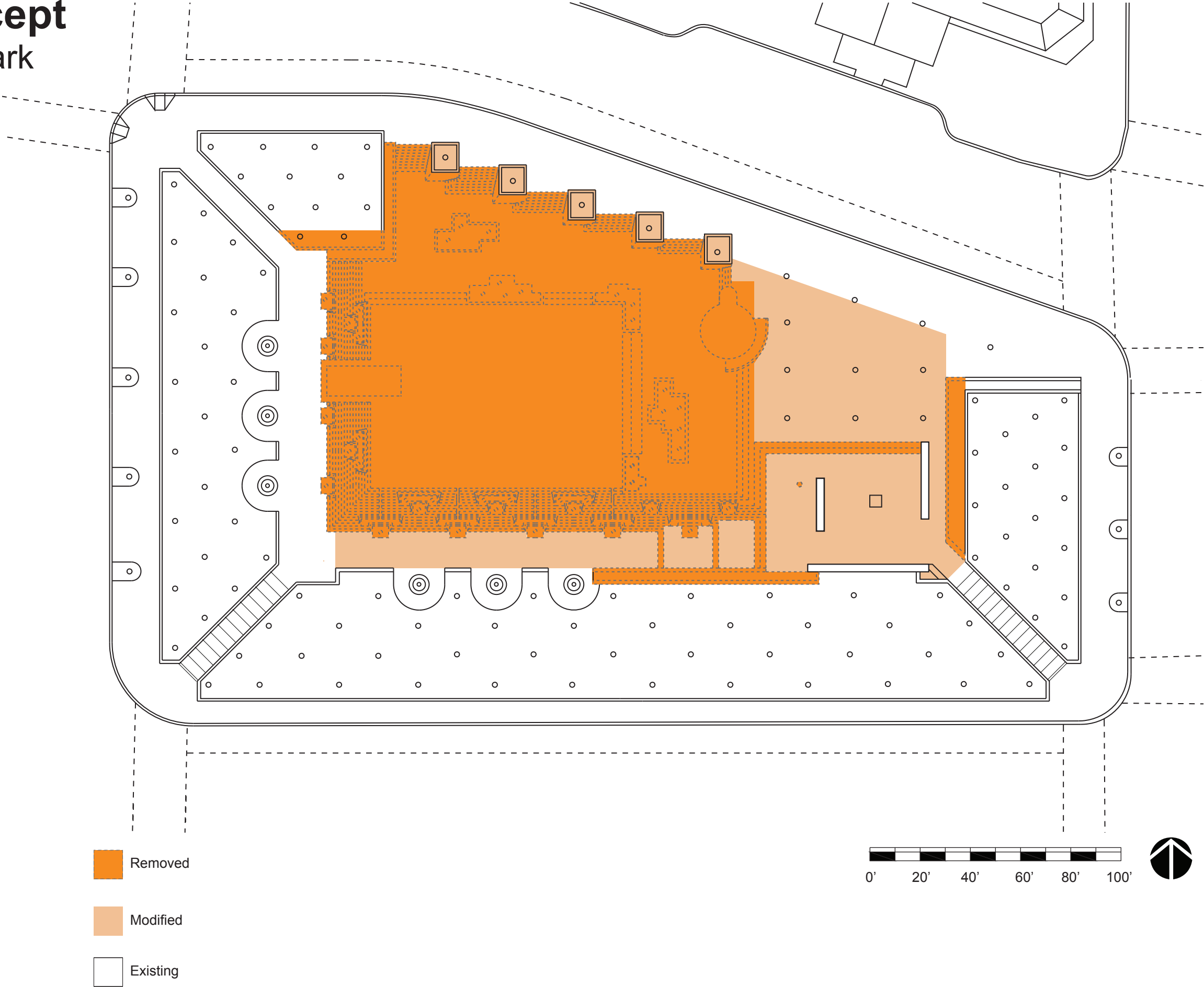


Scrim & Green Concept

Modifications to Existing Park

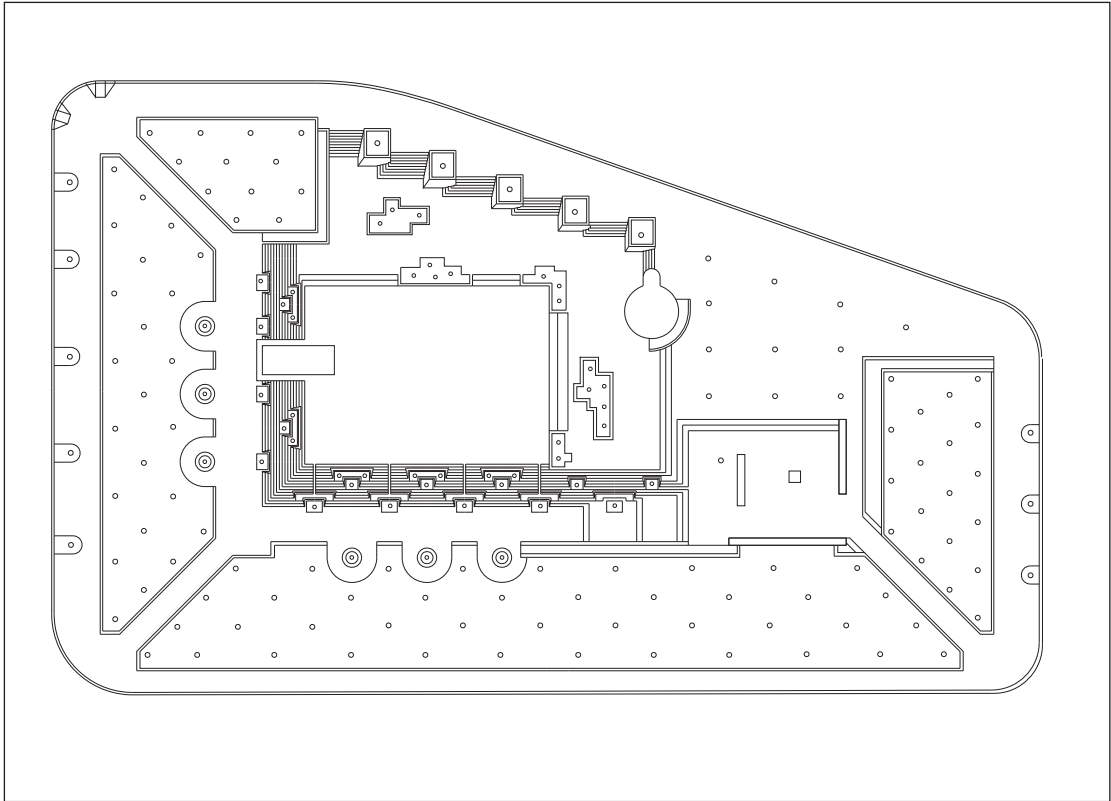
Critical character-defining features:

- Views and vistas retained
- Spatial organization modified topographically and in plan
- Pershing Memorial retained with repositioning of Pershing statue to align with commemorative circulation and slightly lowered in elevation to increase universally accessible pathways
- PADC streetscape retained
- Terraced seating and planters removed
- Granite materials partially reused in new locations
- Distinct rooms bounded by steps removed and replaced with sloped Memorial precinct
- Three focal point organization maintained
- Water feature removed and replaced with lawn and reflective scrim
- Cascading water removed



Concept Comparisons

Plans



EXISTING PARK DESIGN



OCTOBER 2016 CONCEPT



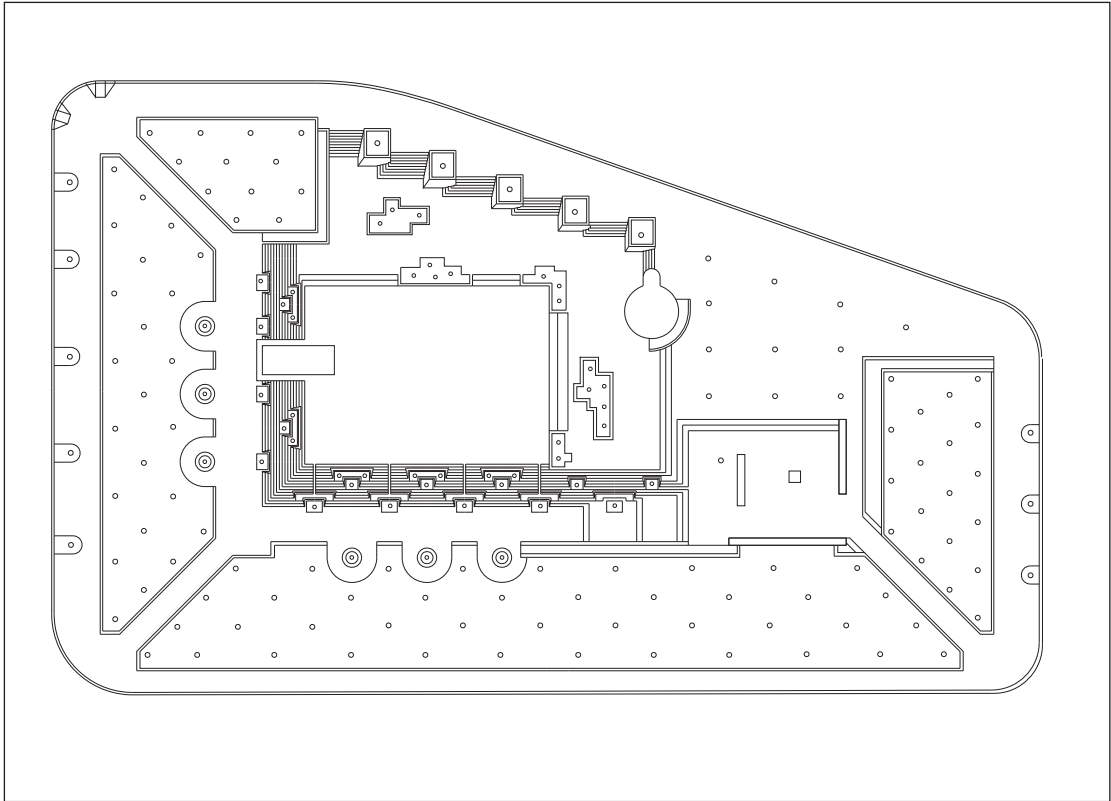
POOL & PLAZA CONCEPT



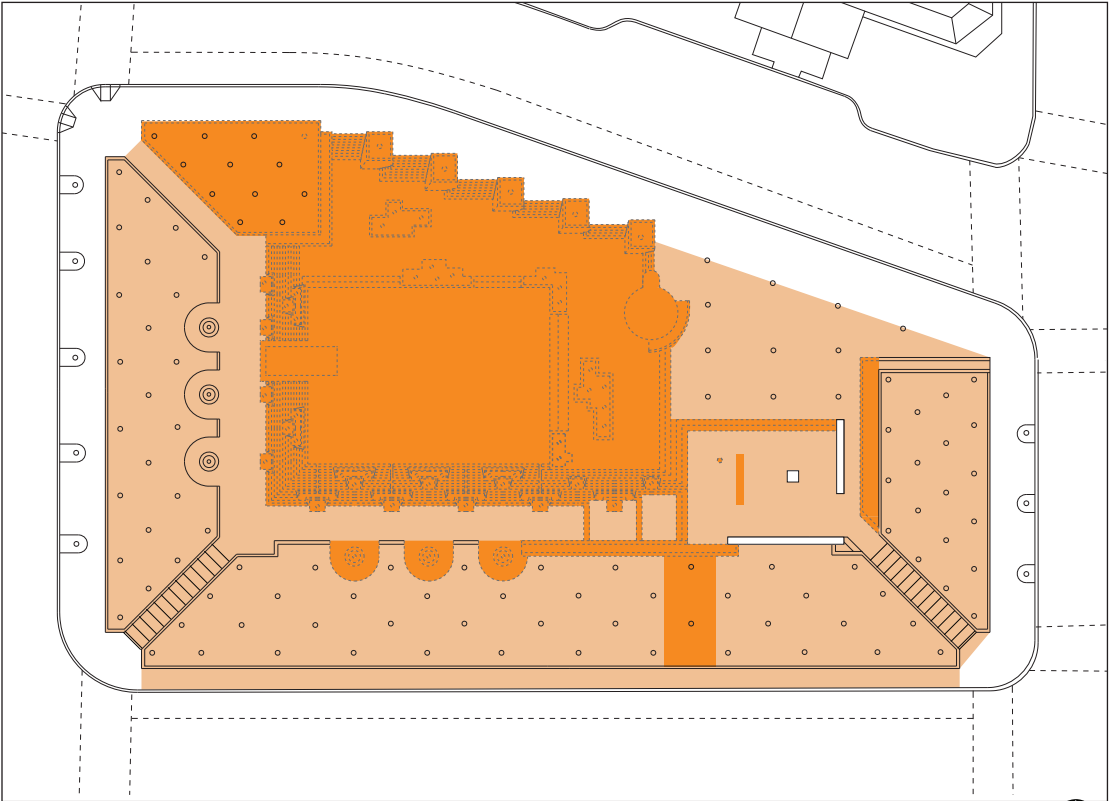
SCRIM & GREEN CONCEPT WWICC ENDORSED

Concept Comparisons

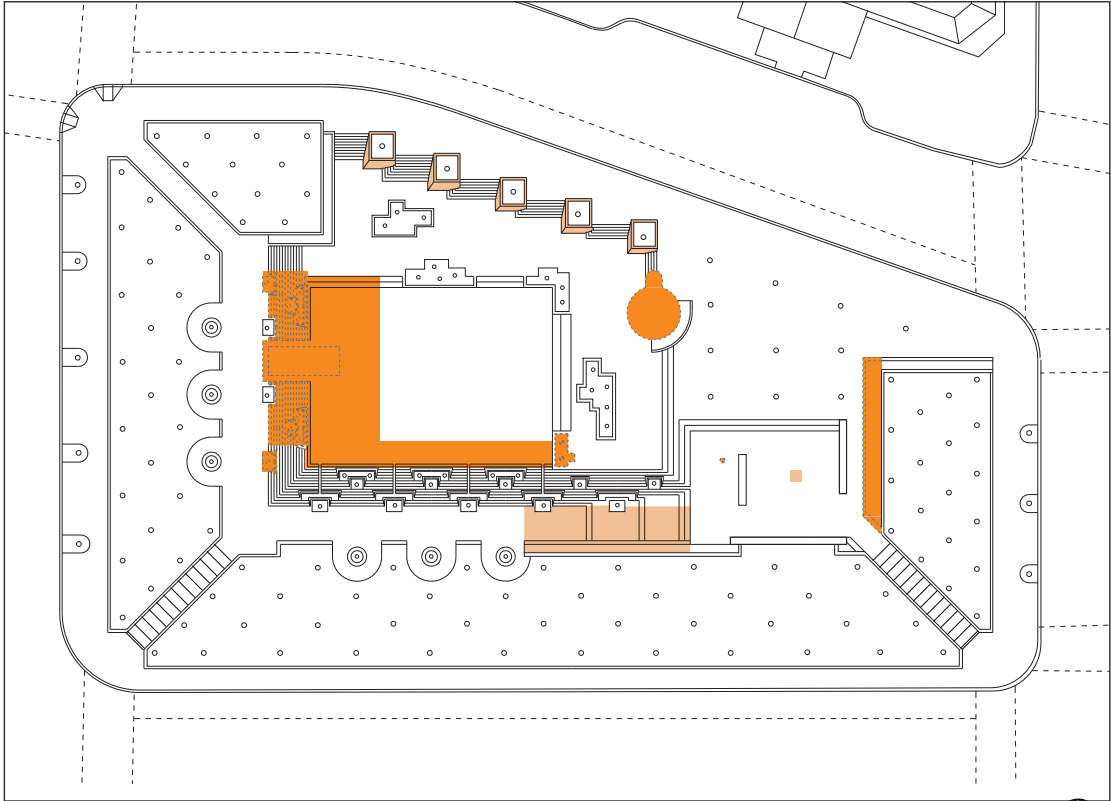
Modifications



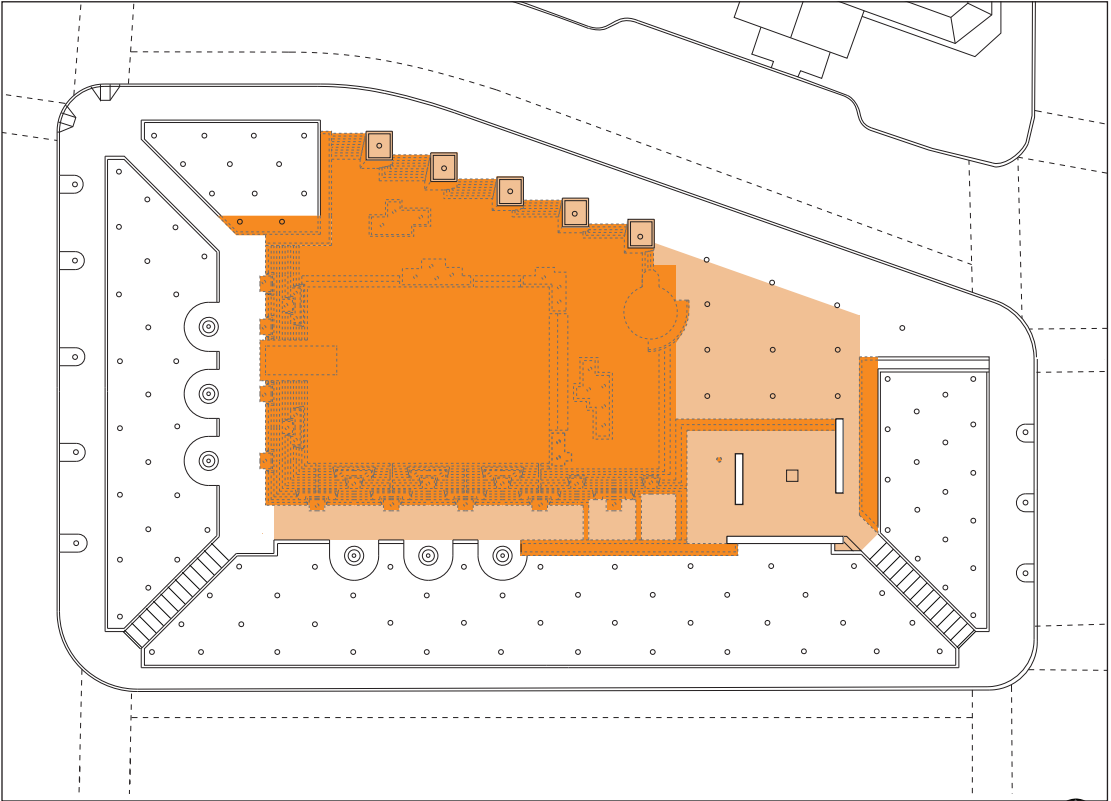
EXISTING PARK DESIGN



OCTOBER 2016 CONCEPT



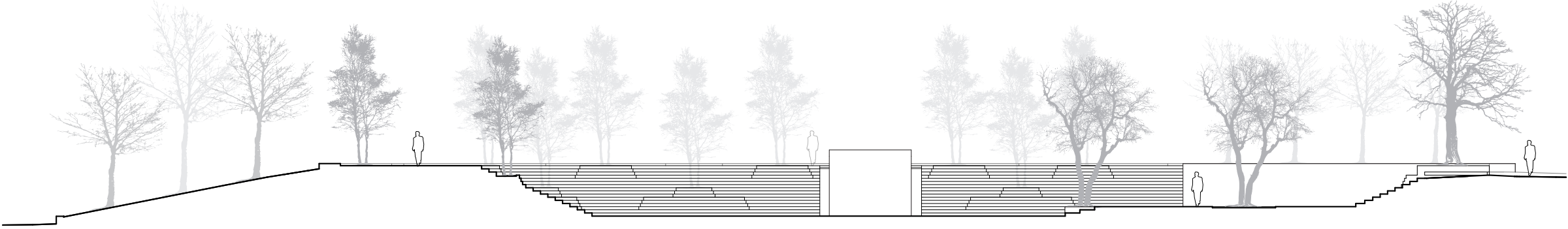
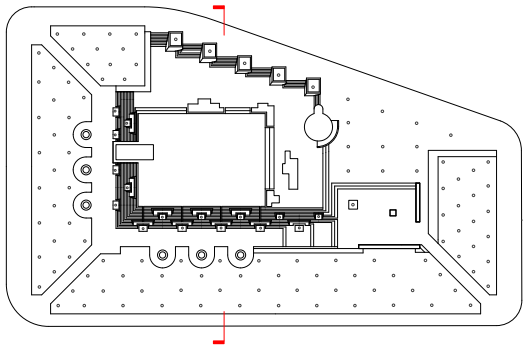
POOL & PLAZA CONCEPT



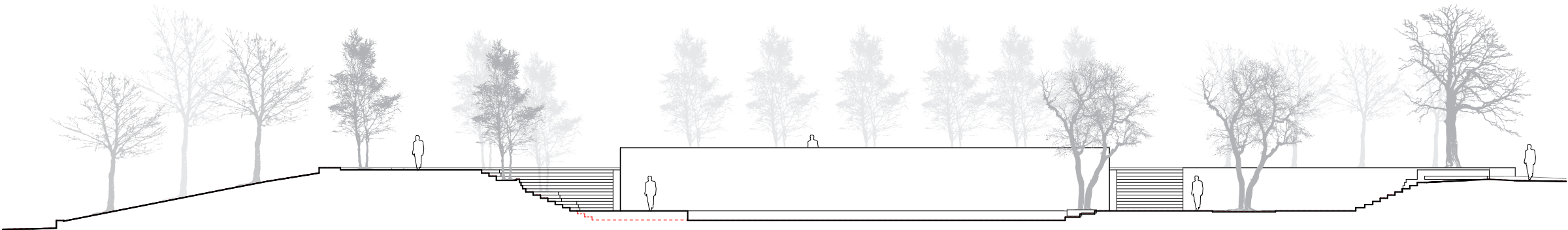
SCRIM & GREEN CONCEPT WWICC ENDORSED

Concept Comparisons

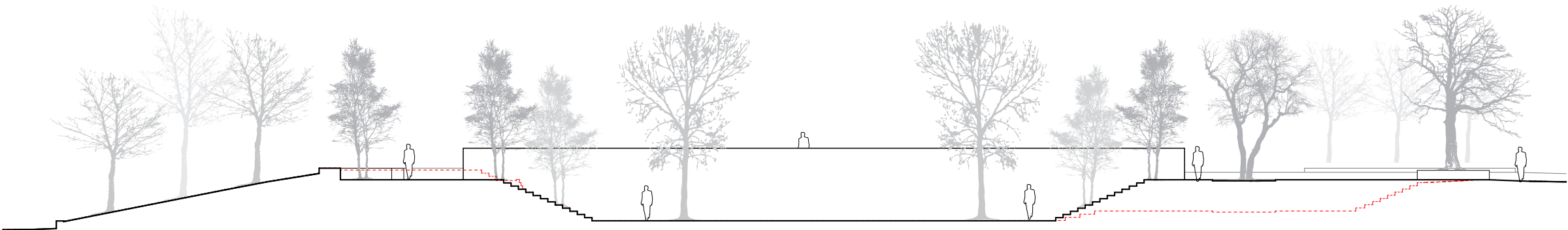
Sections



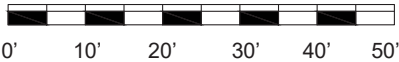
Existing section facing West



Pool & Plaza section facing West

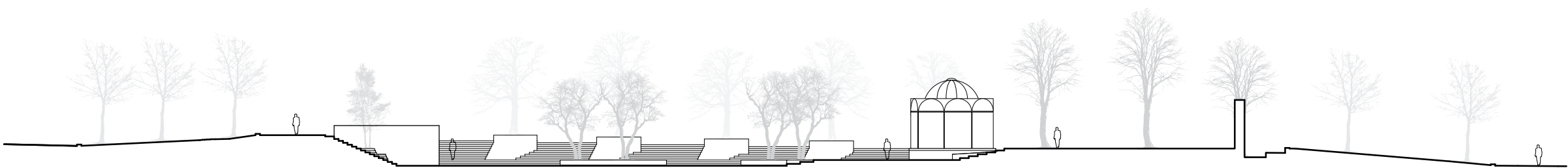
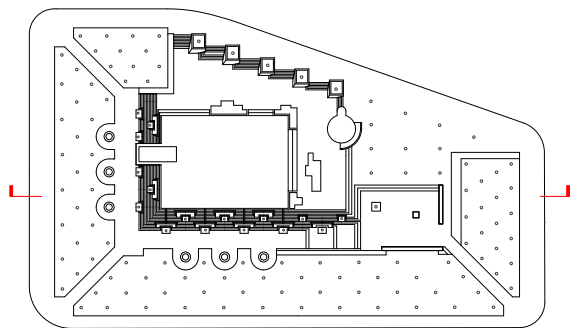


Scrim & Green section facing West

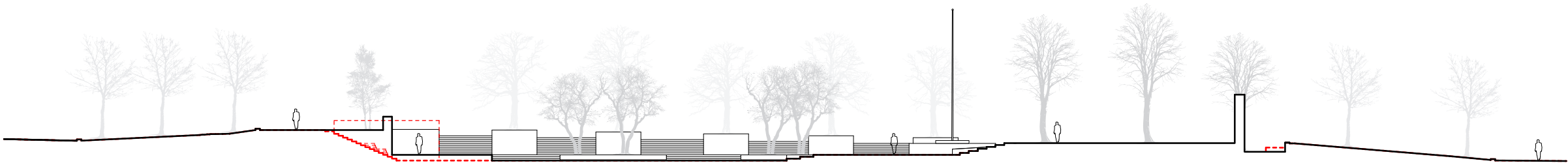


Concept Comparisons

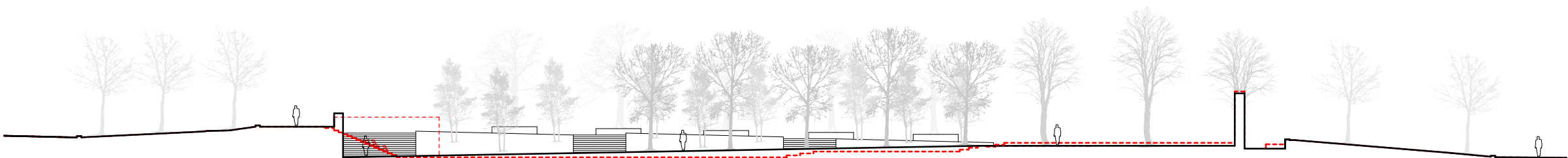
Sections



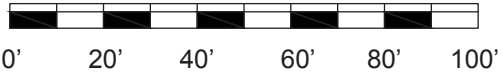
Existing section facing North



Pool & Plaza section facing North

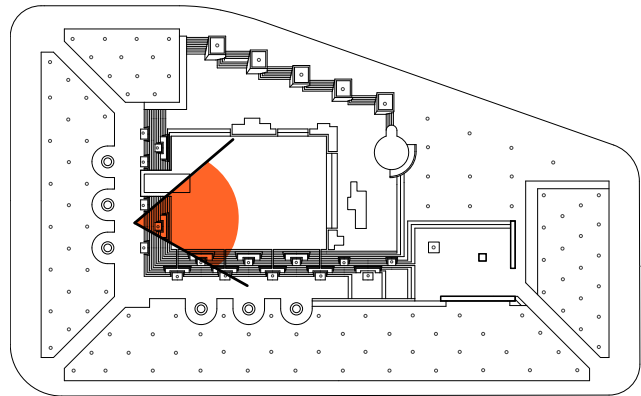


Scrim & Green section facing North



Concept Comparisons

View Looking East



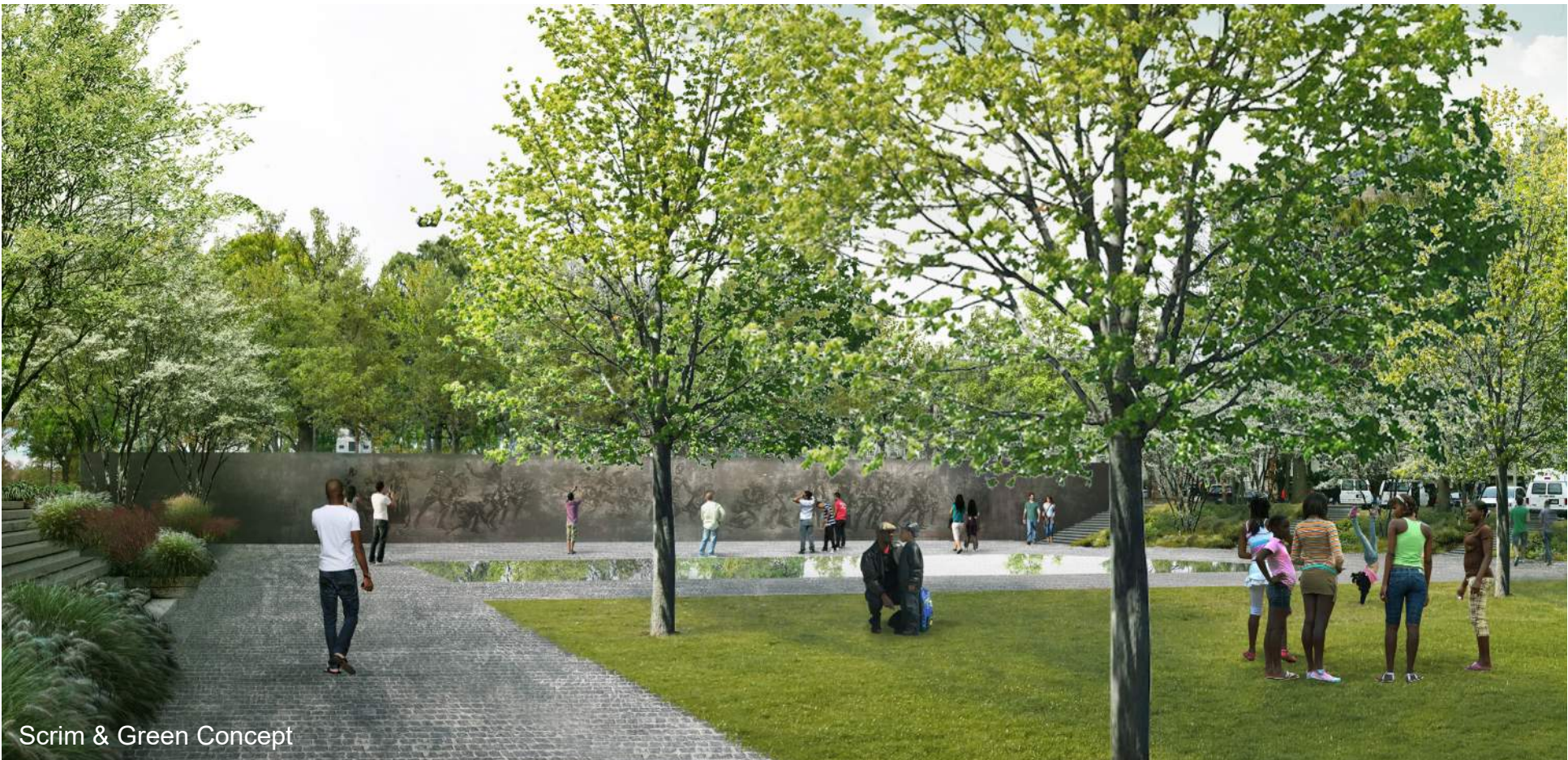
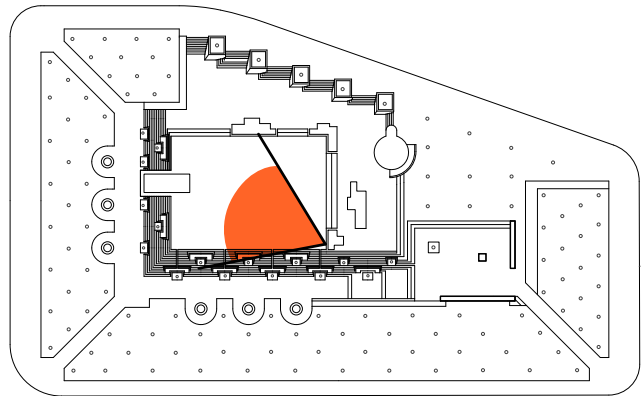
Pool & Plaza Concept



Scrim & Green Concept

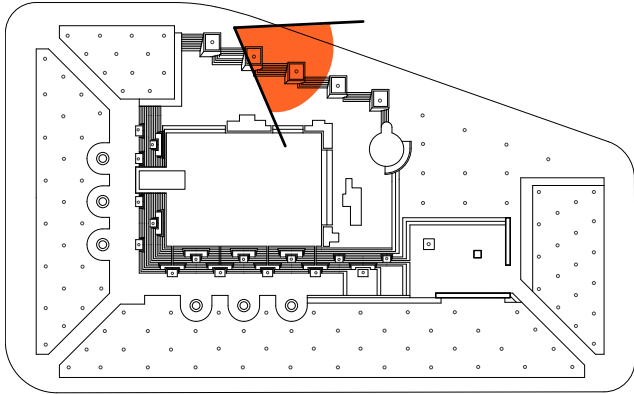
Concept Comparisons

View Looking West



Concept Comparisons

View Along Pennsylvania Ave.



Pool & Plaza Concept

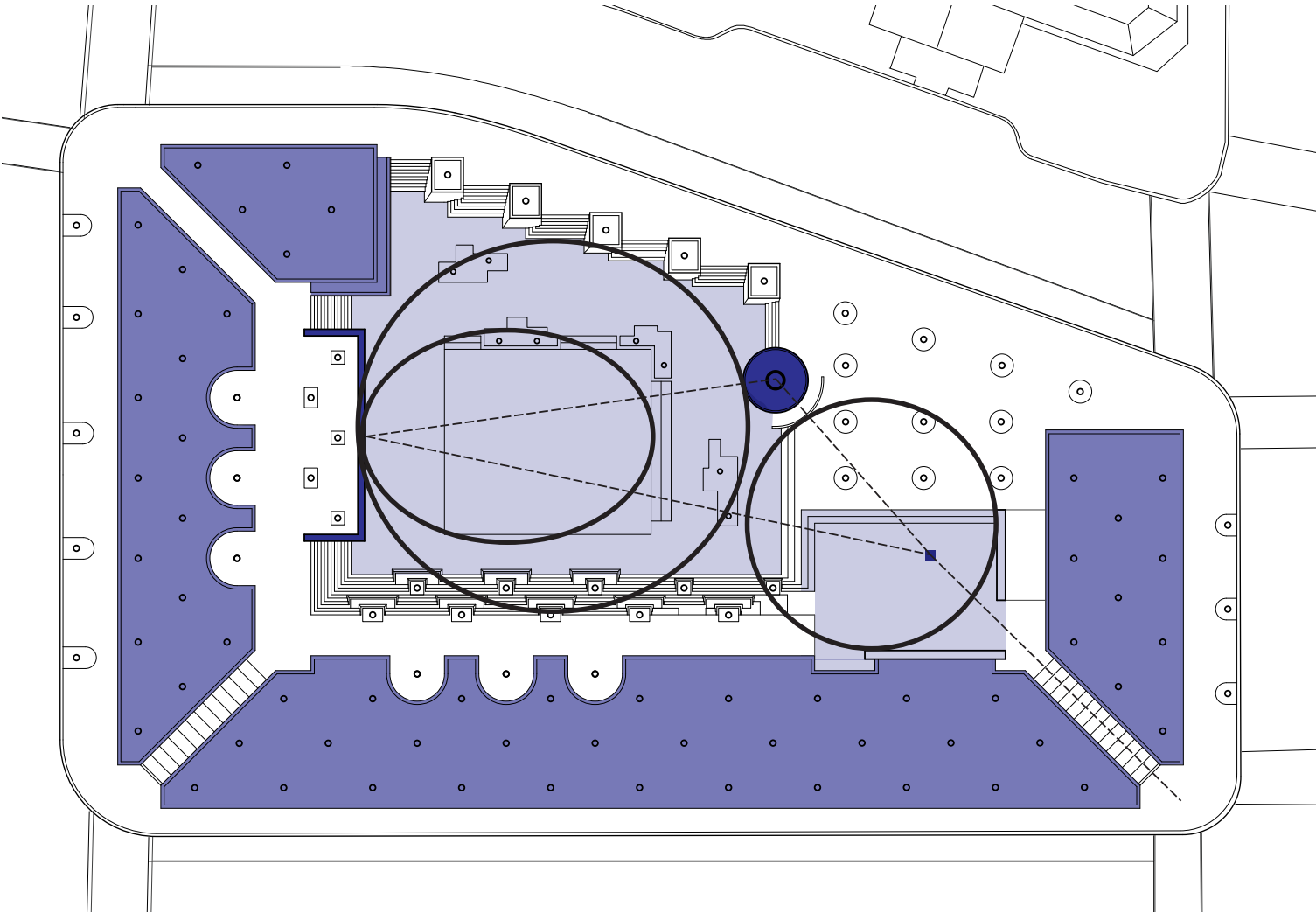


Scrim & Green Concept

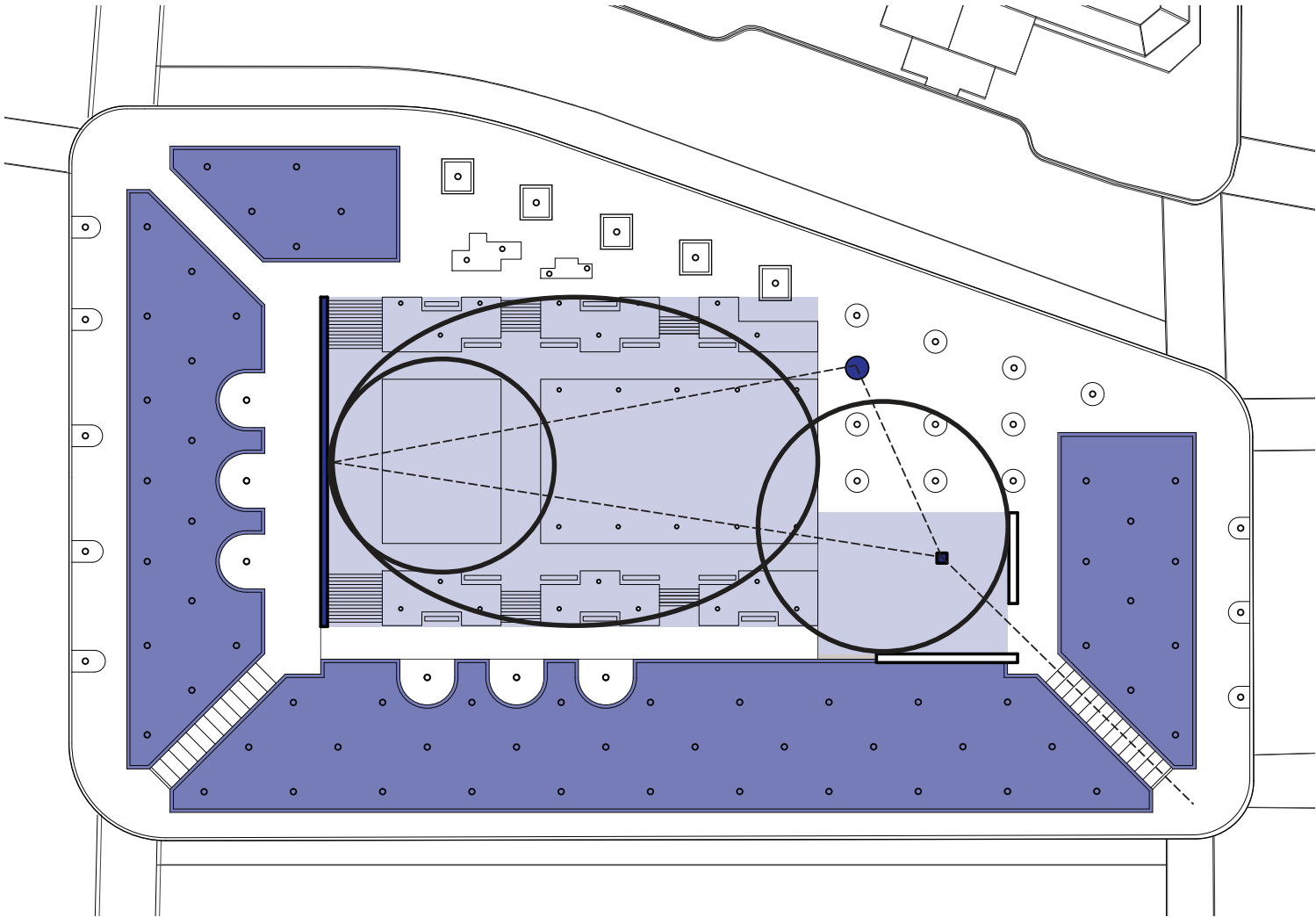
Concept Comparisons

Rooms and Focal Points

Pool & Plaza Concept



Scrim & Green Concept



Concept Comparisons

Tree Planting Plan

Pool & Plaza Concept



Scrim & Green Concept



ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

Historic Preservation Resource Summary

Pool & Plaza Concept and Scrim & Green Concept

Resource	Initial Assessment of Effect	
	Pool & Plaza Concept	Scrim & Green Concept
L’Enfant Plan of the City of Washington		
Reservations	No adverse effect	No adverse effect
Avenues	No adverse effect	No adverse effect
Vistas	No adverse effect	No adverse effect
Pennsylvania Avenue NW-White House Cultural Landscape Contributing Features		
Spatial Organization	No adverse effect	No adverse effect
Circulation	No adverse effect	No adverse effect
Views and Vistas	No adverse effect	No adverse effect
Vegetation	No adverse effect	No adverse effect
Small-Scale Features	No adverse effect	No adverse effect
Land Use	Adverse effect	Adverse effect
Pennsylvania National Historic Site		
Vistas	No adverse effect	No adverse effect
Contributing Object	No adverse effect	No adverse effect
Pershing Park		
Spatial Organization	No adverse effect	Adverse effect
Views and Vistas	No adverse effect	No adverse effect
Built Features	Adverse effect	Adverse effect
Water Feature	Adverse effect	Adverse effect
Vegetation	No adverse effect	Adverse effect
Small-Scale Features	No adverse effect	No adverse effect

CONCLUSION

Thank you and next steps: CFA Meeting 2/16/17, and NCPC Meeting 3/2/17