

**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)



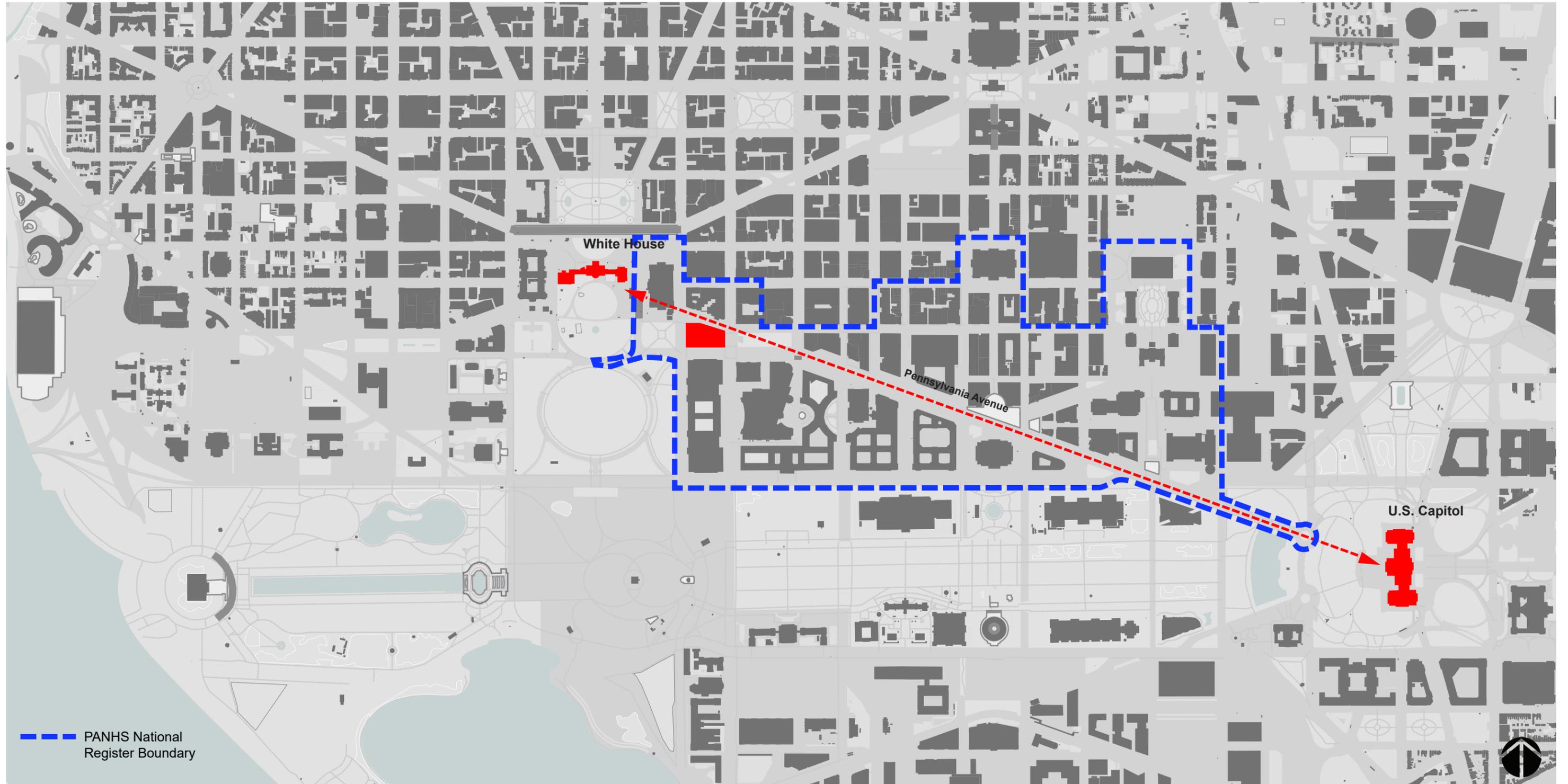
Pershing Park designed by Friedberg + Partners, OvS



The Weight of Sacrifice Competition Design

# Site Context

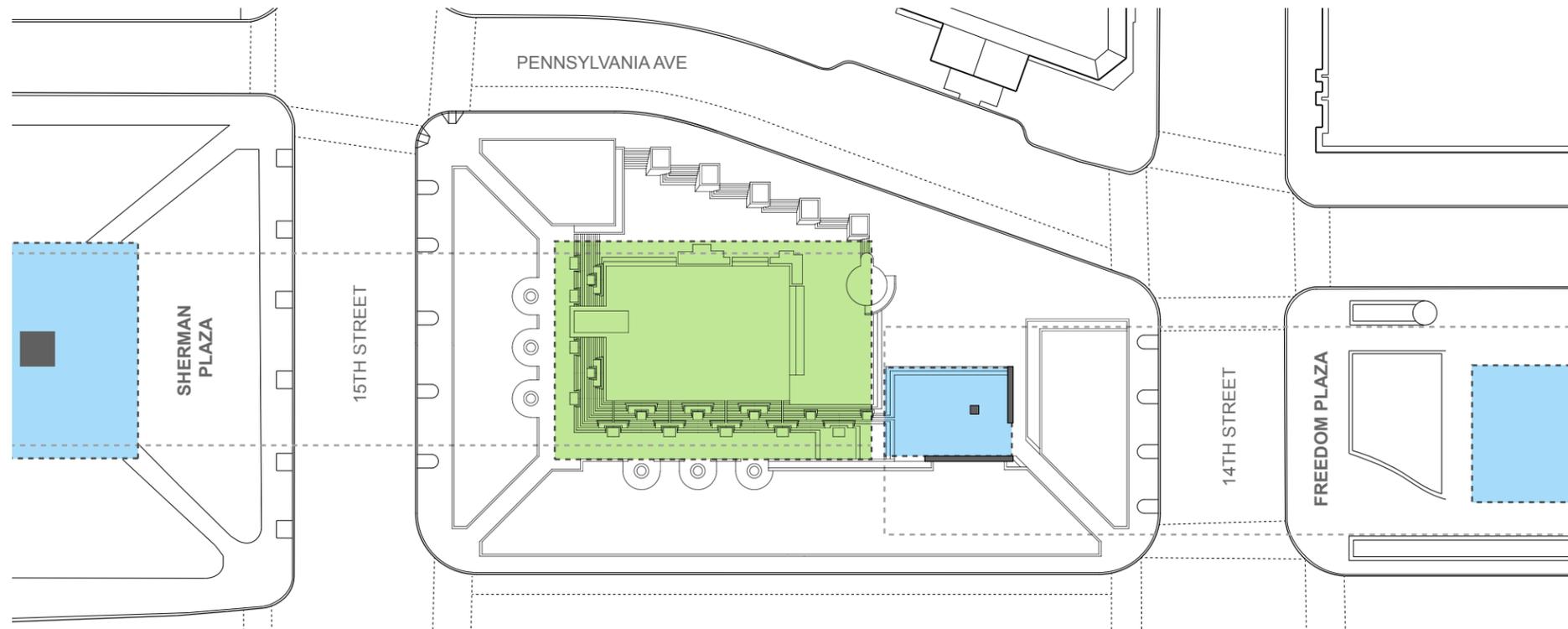
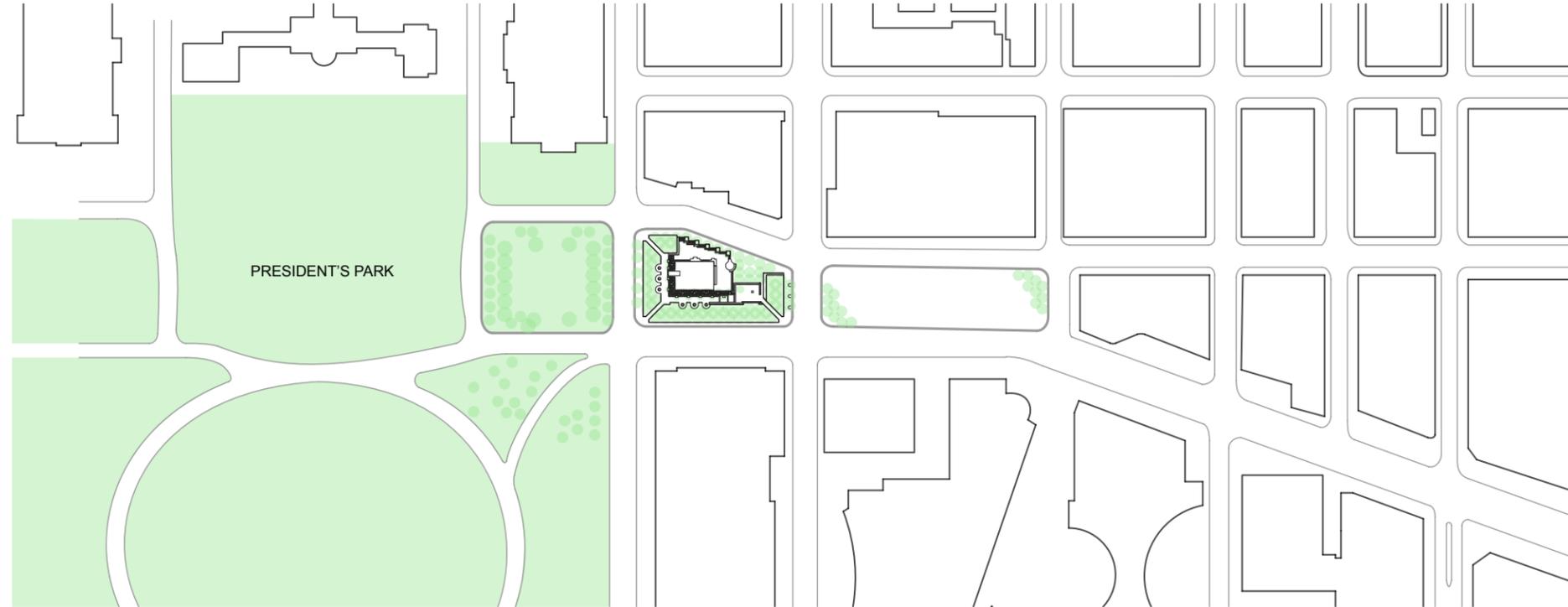
## Pennsylvania Avenue



# Site Context

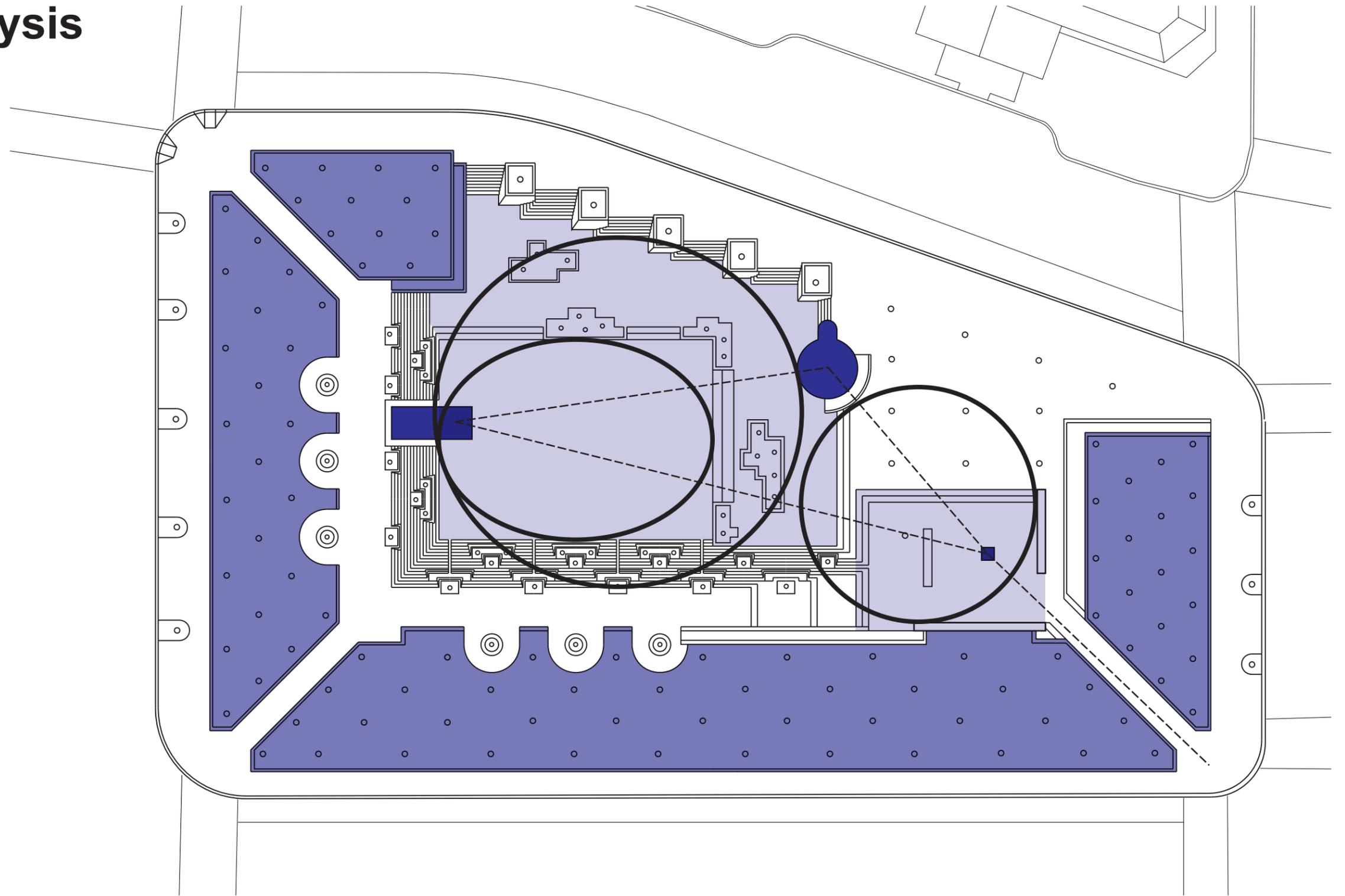
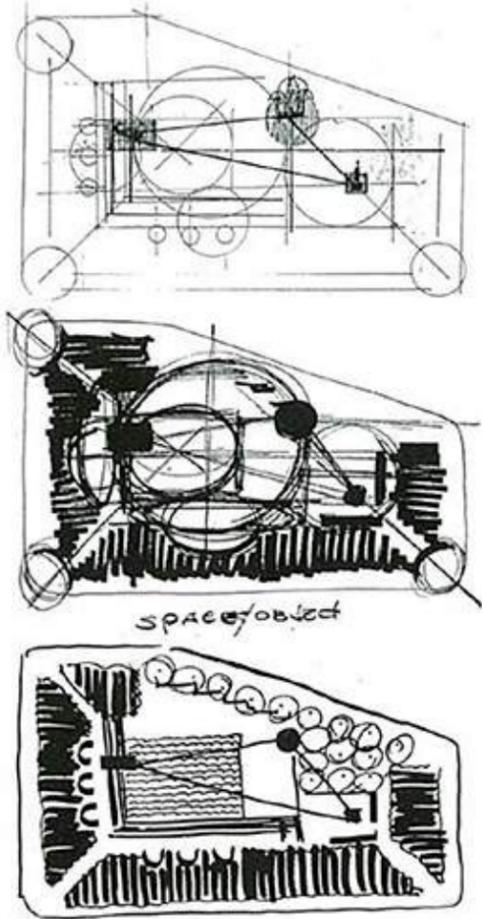
## Transitional Landscape

- 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

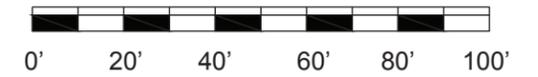


# Existing Park Analysis

## Rooms and Focal Points



-  Enclosure
-  Rooms
-  Focal points

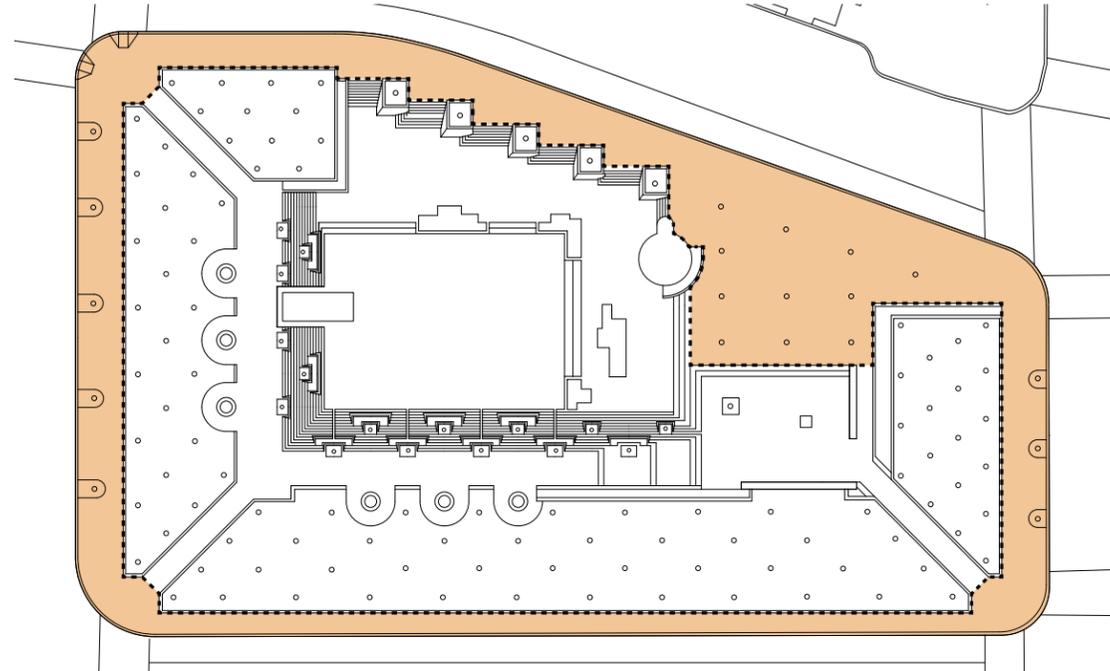


# Existing Park Analysis

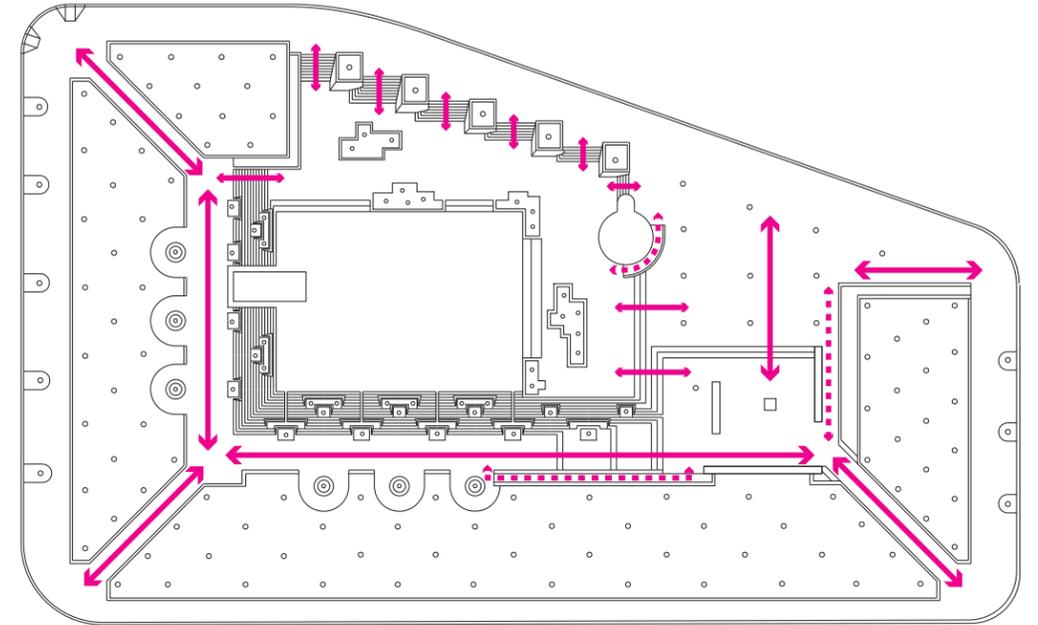
## Spatial Investigations

### Key observations:

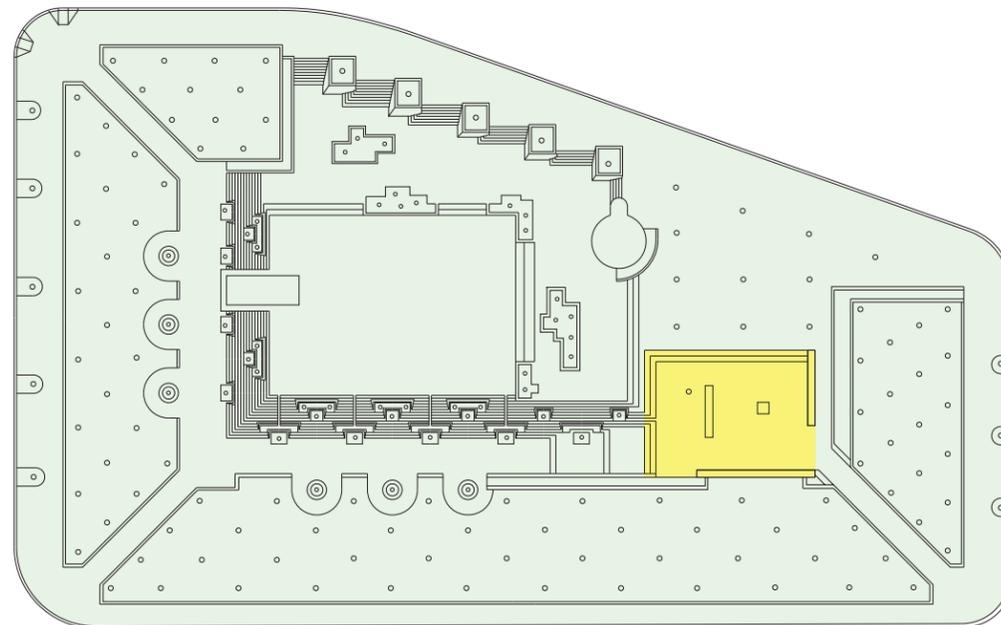
- PADC Streetscape limits can be accommodated within an authentic rehabilitation scheme
- Circulation is omnidirectional and unhierarchical
- The General Pershing Memorial is a relatively small and distinct secondary space with Pershing Park
- Pershing Park includes distinct rooms on clearly articulated 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



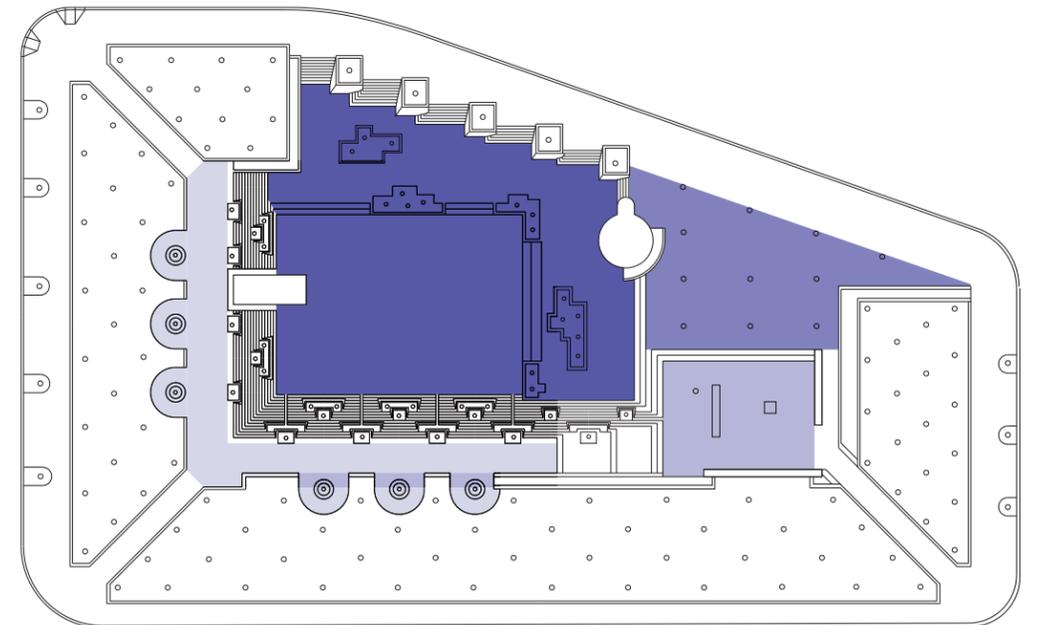
PADC STREETScape LIMITS



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



Missing tree



*Gleditsia triacanthos* - Thornless Honeylocust  
Deciduous canopy tree producing dappled shade  
Planting exhibiting signs of extreme stress



*Betula nigra* - River Birch  
Multi-trunk deciduous shade tree  
Planting near end of life span, exhausting soil volume



*Lagerstroemia indica twilight* - Lavender Crepe Myrtle  
Multistemmed flowering understory tree  
Planting exhausting soil volume



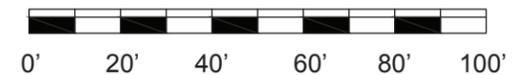
*Fagus sylvatica purpurea* - Copper Beech  
Low-branching specimen shade tree  
Tree missing



*Quercus phellos* - Willow Oak  
Pennsylvania Avenue Street Tree  
Planting exhibiting moderate stress



*Quercus borealis* - Northern Red Oak  
Deciduous shade tree  
Planting appears mostly healthy



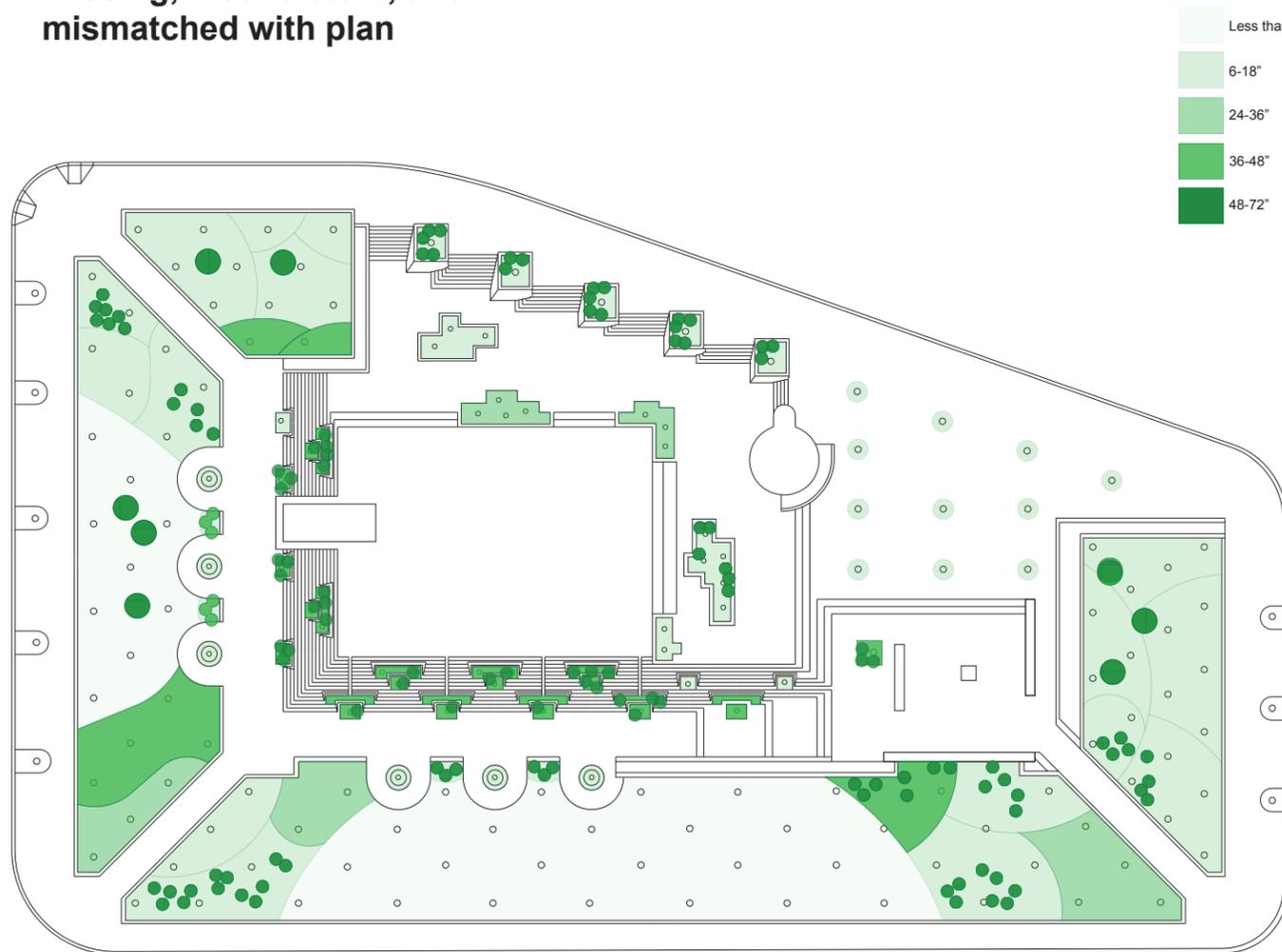
*Quercus imbricaria* - Shingle Oak  
Deciduous shade tree  
Planting appears mostly healthy

# Existing Park Analysis

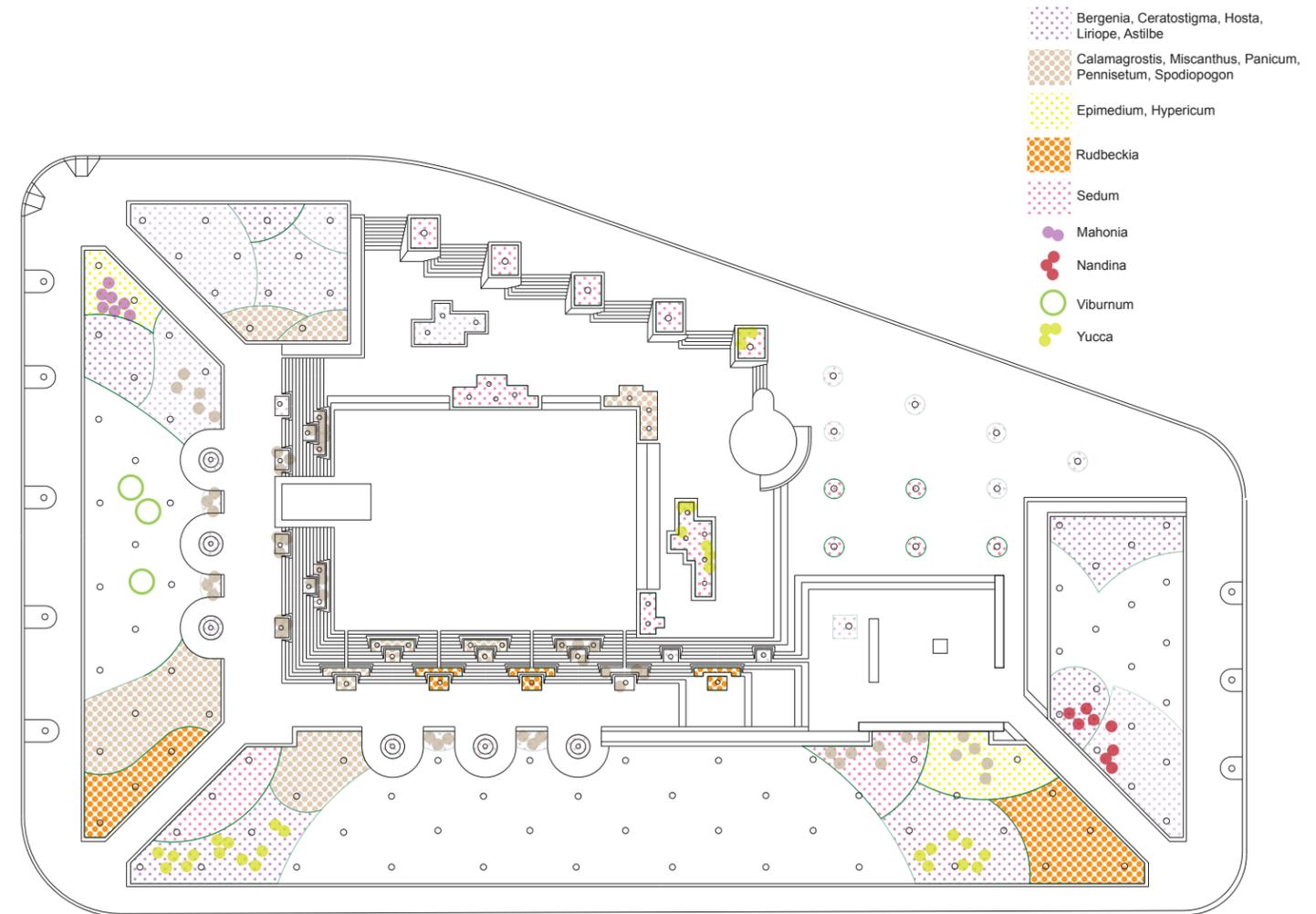
## Planting Investigations

### 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

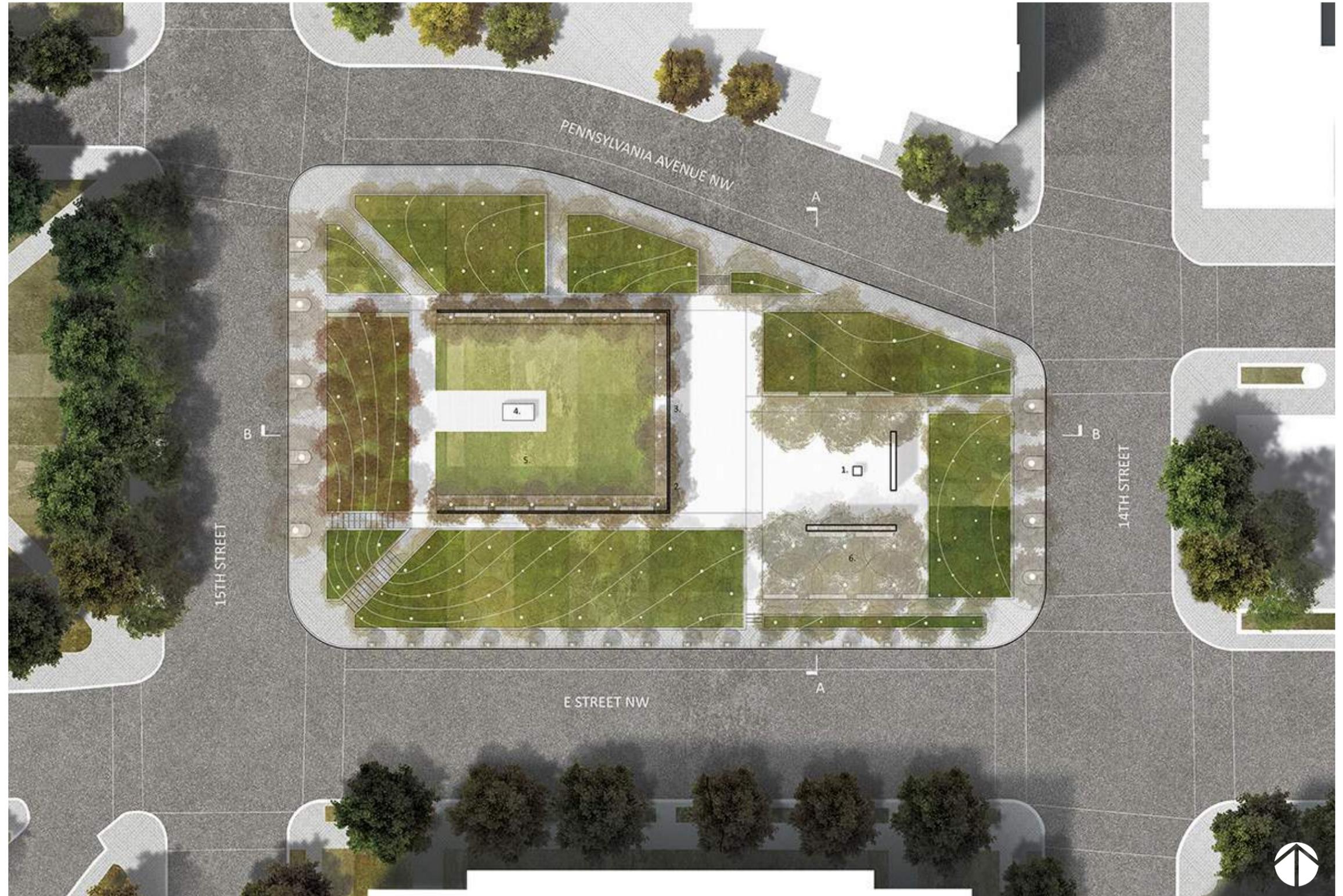


# DESIGN EVOLUTION

# 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

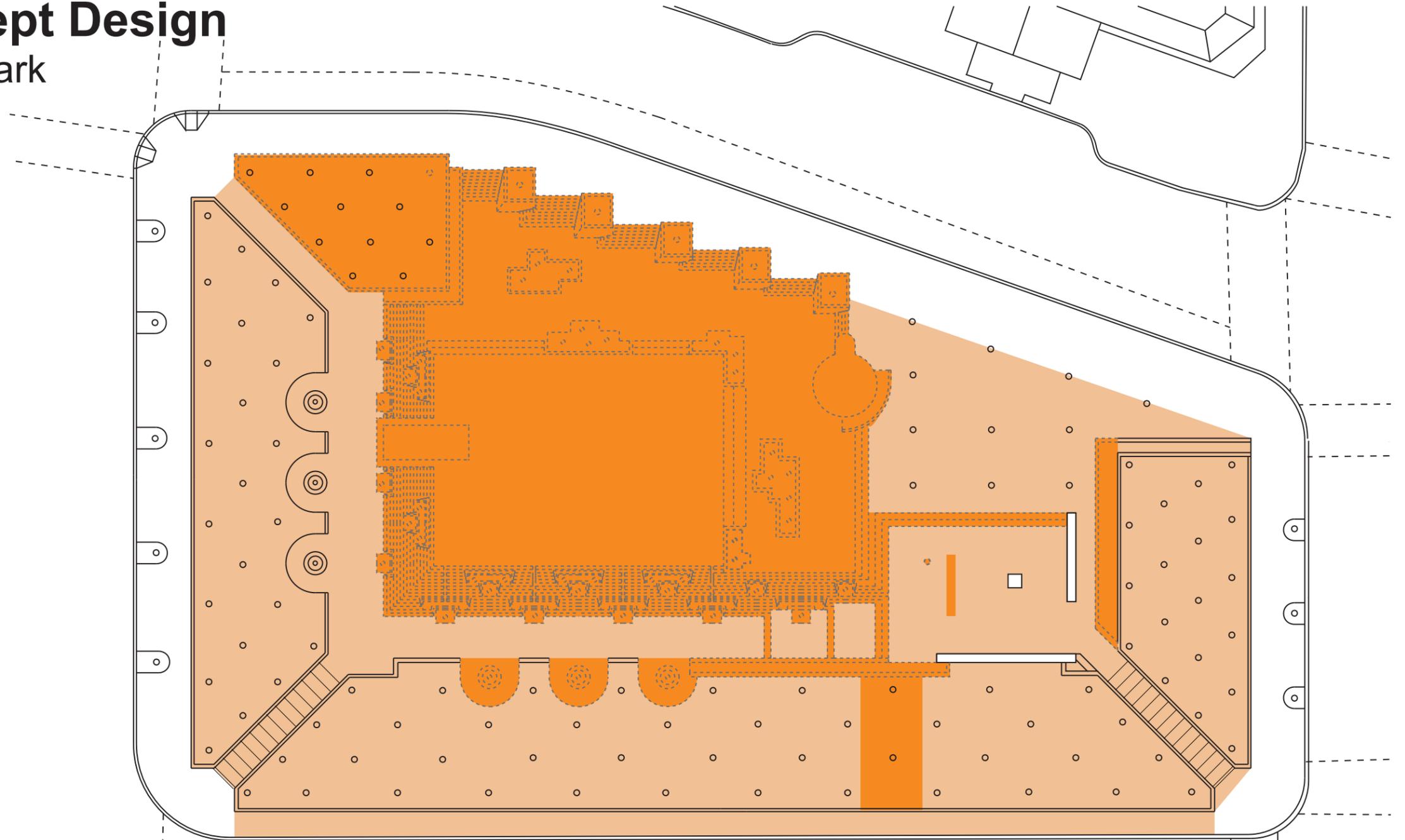


View Looking West

# October 2016 Concept Design

## Modifications to Existing Park

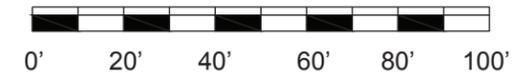
- Removal of existing park fabric within central room and along Pennsylvania Avenue
- Topographic adjustment across site, including lowered berms and removal of steps between Pershing Memorial and central room



Removed

Modified

Existing



# Comments Received from CFA & NCPC

Presentations October 20 & November 3, 2016

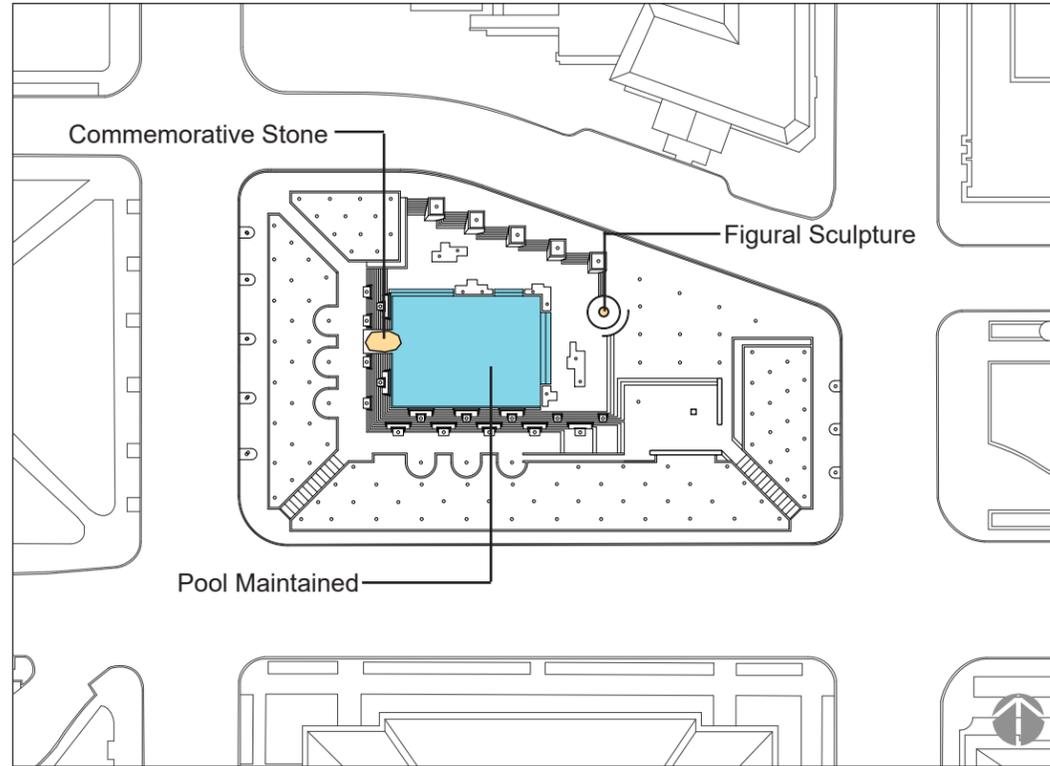
- **Topographic adjustments compromise the sectional shaping of the site, the essential concept of Friedburg's design**
- **Friedburg design and the Oehme Van Sweden planting plan should be reconsidered through careful and respectful interpretation**
- **Show a more direct translation between the existing 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

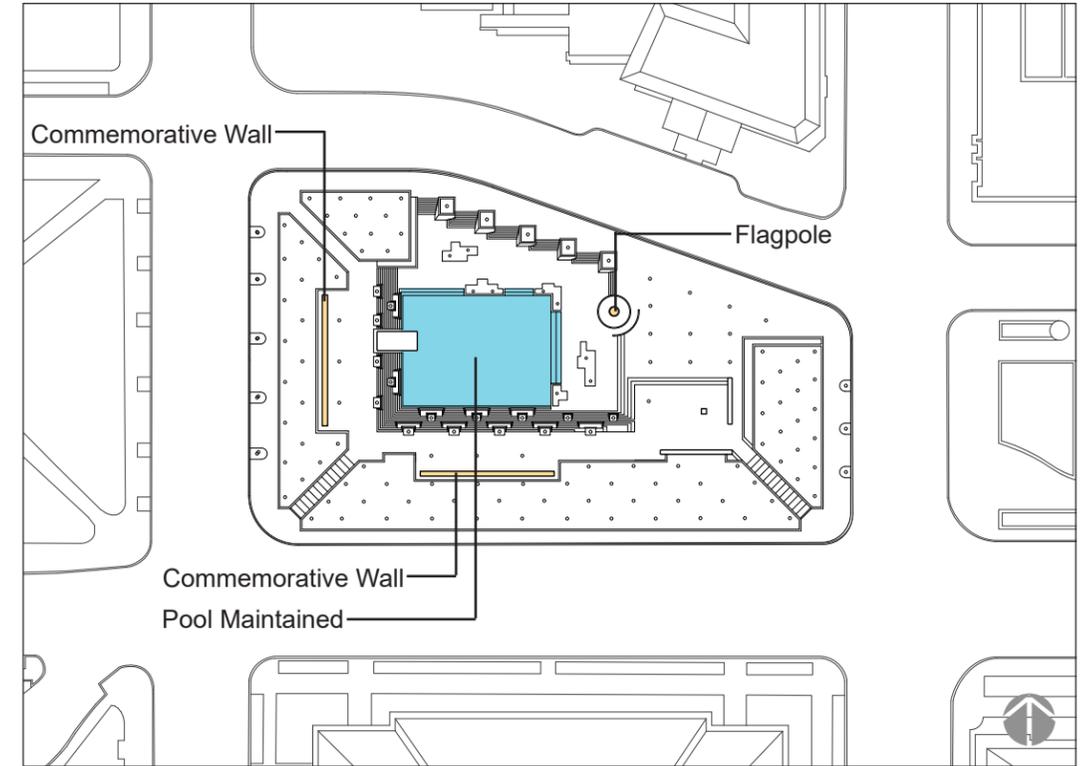
## Design Iterations

- 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:

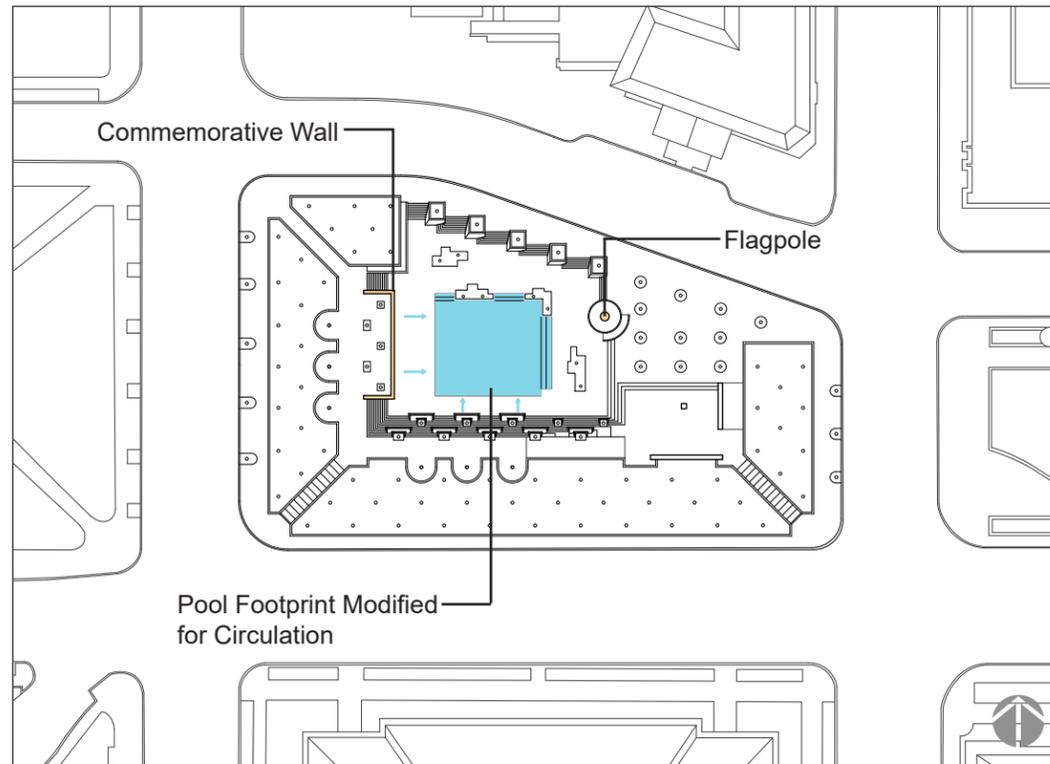
- Views and vistas
- Spatial organization
- Pershing Memorial
- PADC streetscape
- Terraced seating and planters
- Granite materials
- Distinct rooms bounded by steps
- Three focal points
- Water cascade, including sound



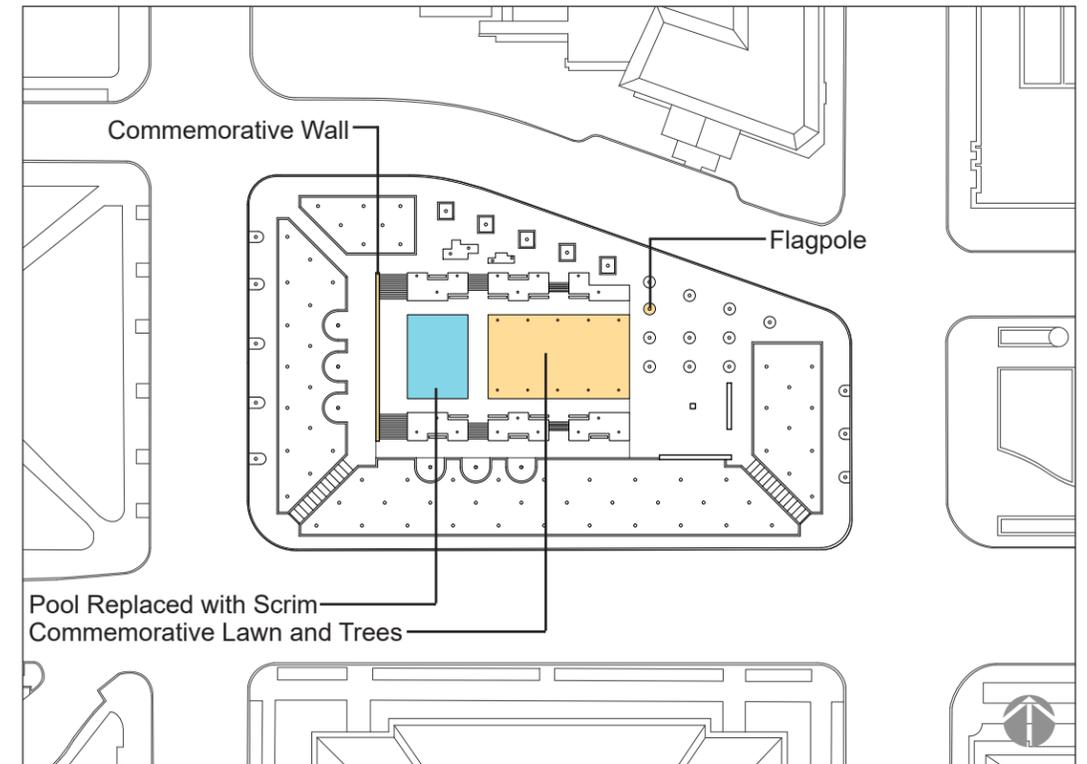
**POOL CONCEPT**



**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

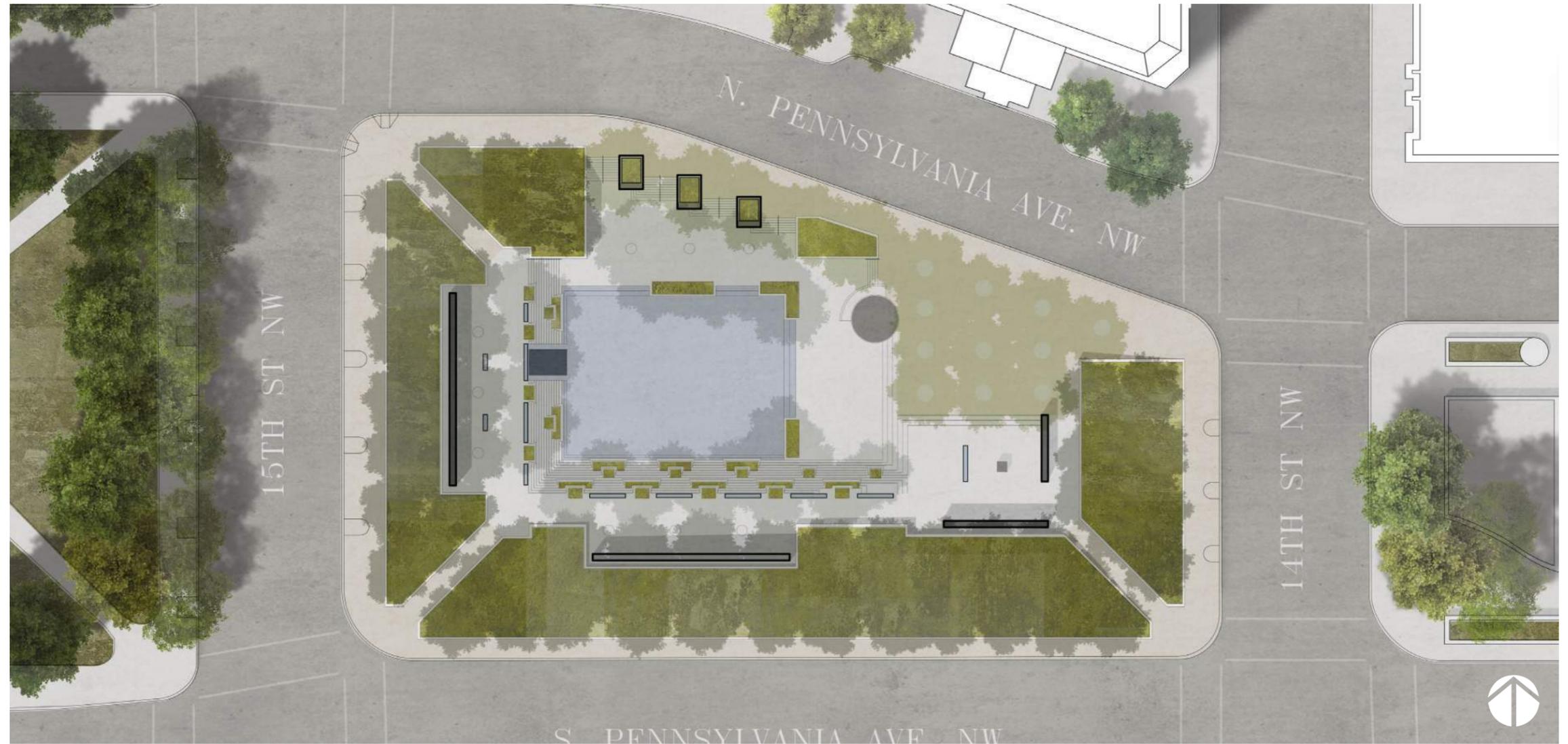
- Redefines the existing fountain and pool as the primary commemorative expression
- Relies on abstraction and interpretation
- Separates the monumental expression from the figural narrative



# 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

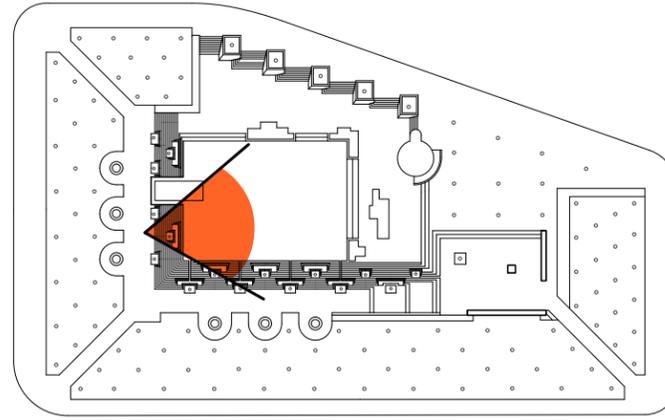
- Concept recognizes that the existing park is spatially organized around the sunken plaza and pool
- For the existing park to operate as a national World War I Memorial, the primary commemorative element must be set within the central room
- Central sunken room adapted to feature bas-relief wall
- Flagpole 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

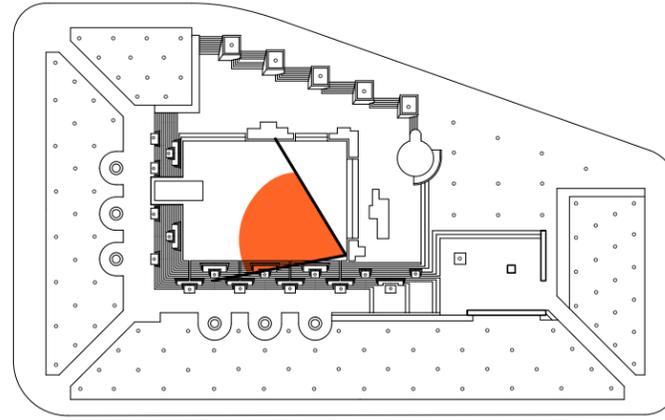


# Pool & Plaza Concept



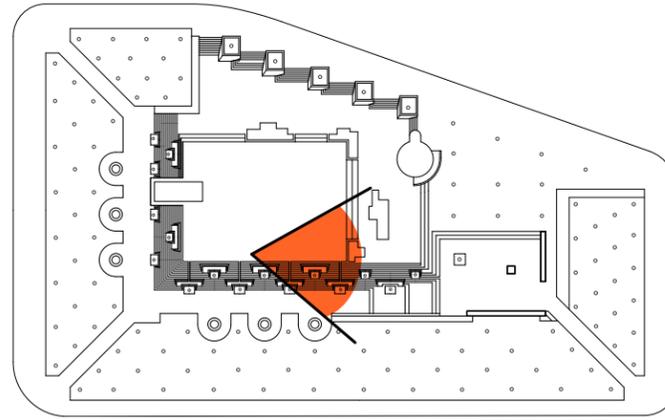
View Looking East

# Pool & Plaza Concept



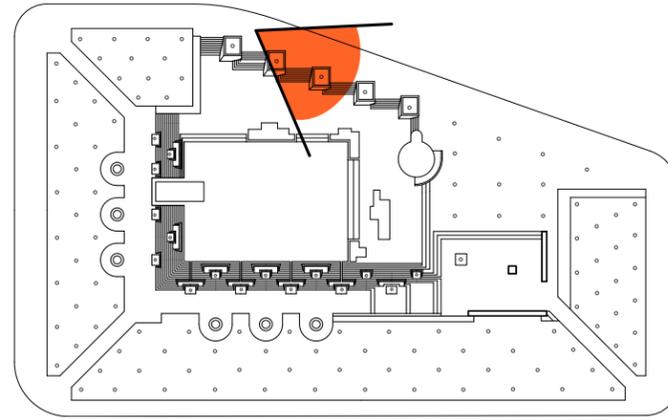
View Looking West

# Pool & Plaza Concept



View Looking East

# Pool & Plaza Concept

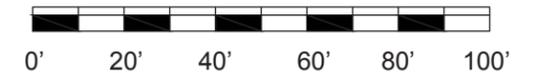
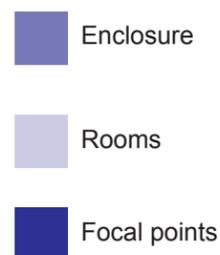
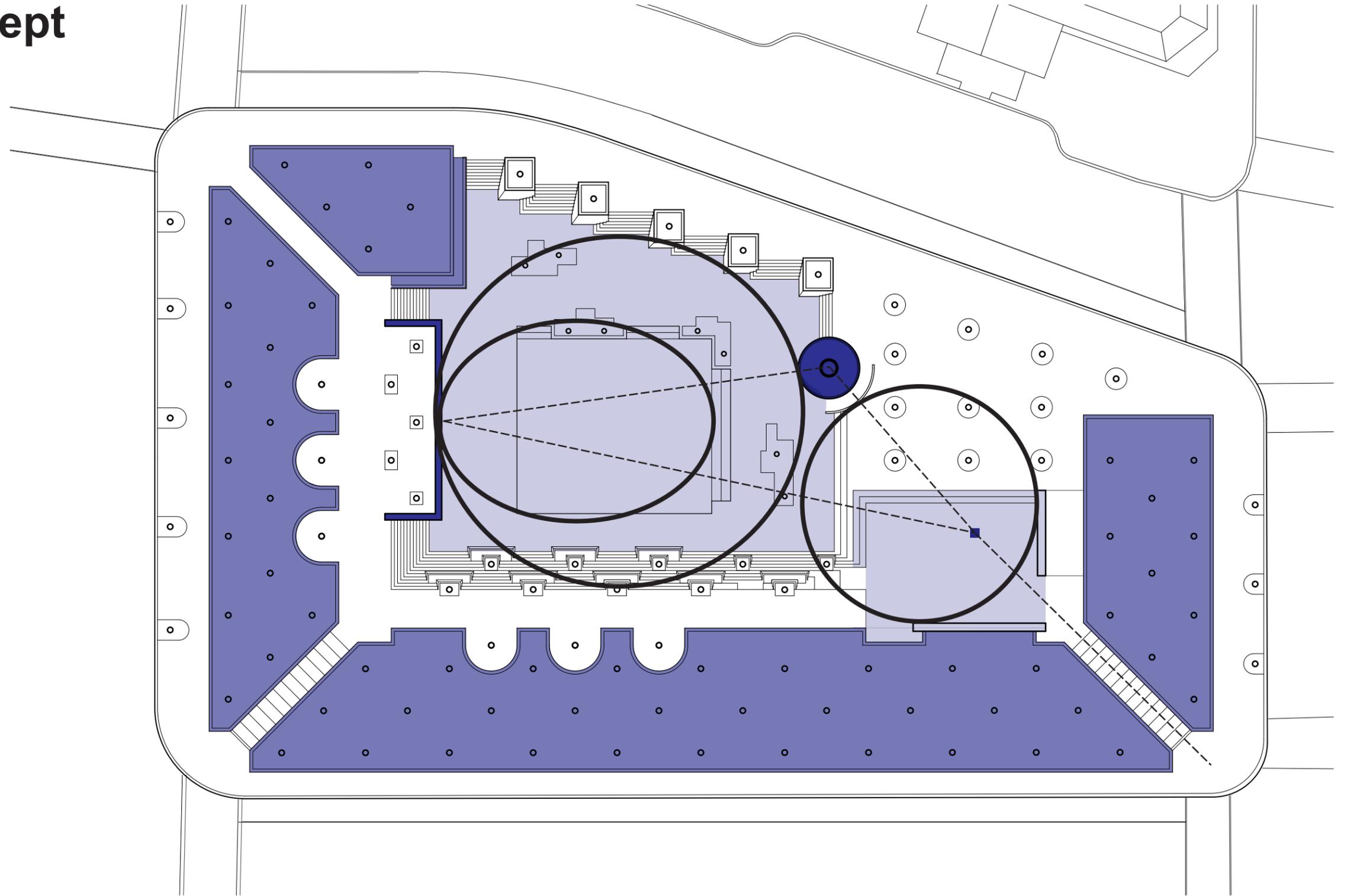


View Looking Towards US Capitol

# 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



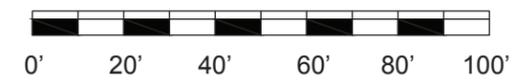
# Pool & Plaza Concept

## 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



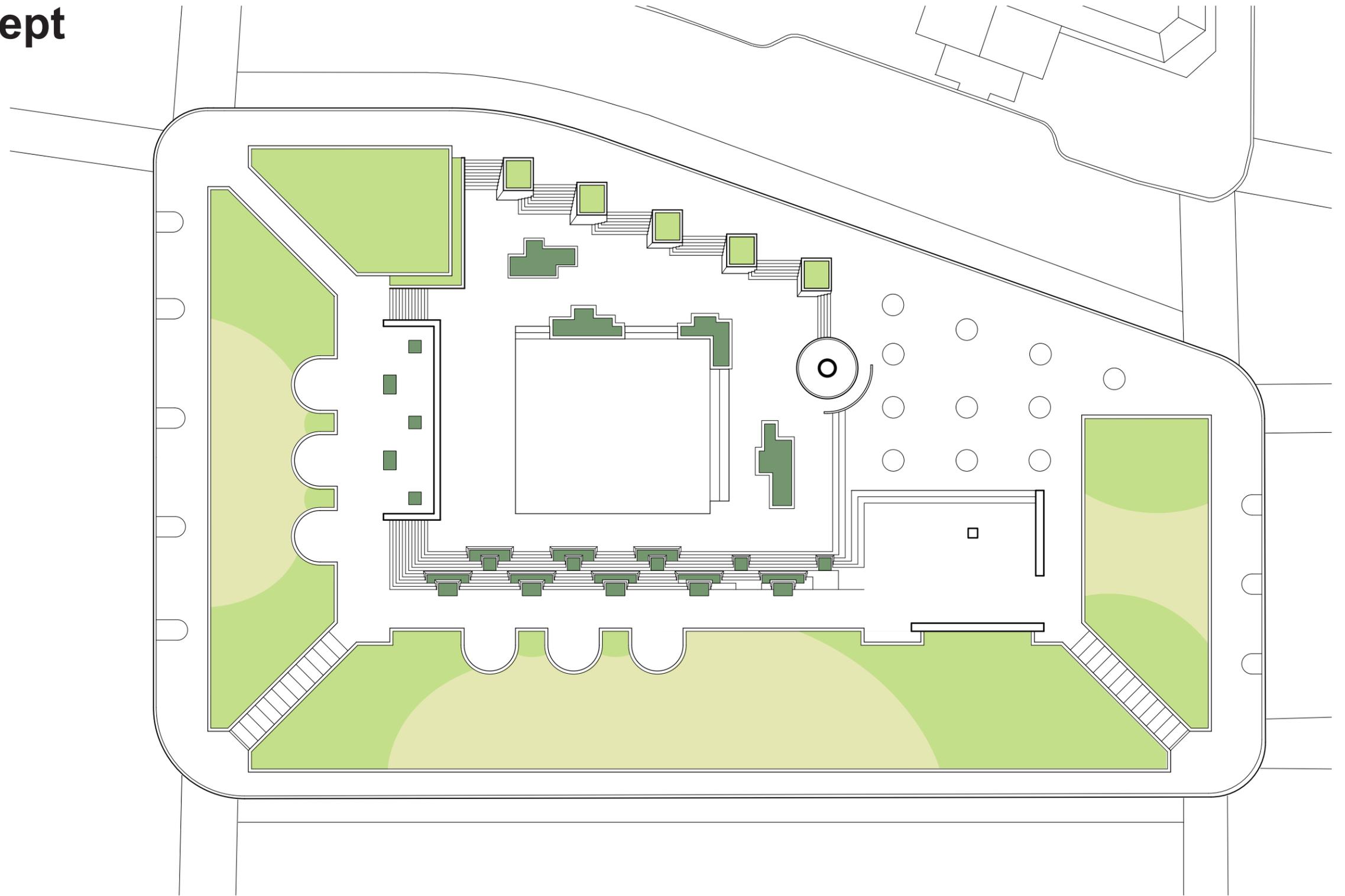
	Honey Locust replaced with species similar in character and form		Existing Willow Oak to remain
	Red Maple - <i>Acer rubrum</i>		Existing Northern Red Oak to remain
	Crape Myrtle replaced with multi-stem, flowering tree similar in character and form		Existing Shingle Oak to remain



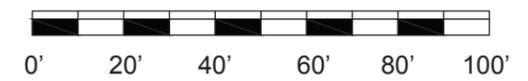
# Pool & Plaza Concept

## 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



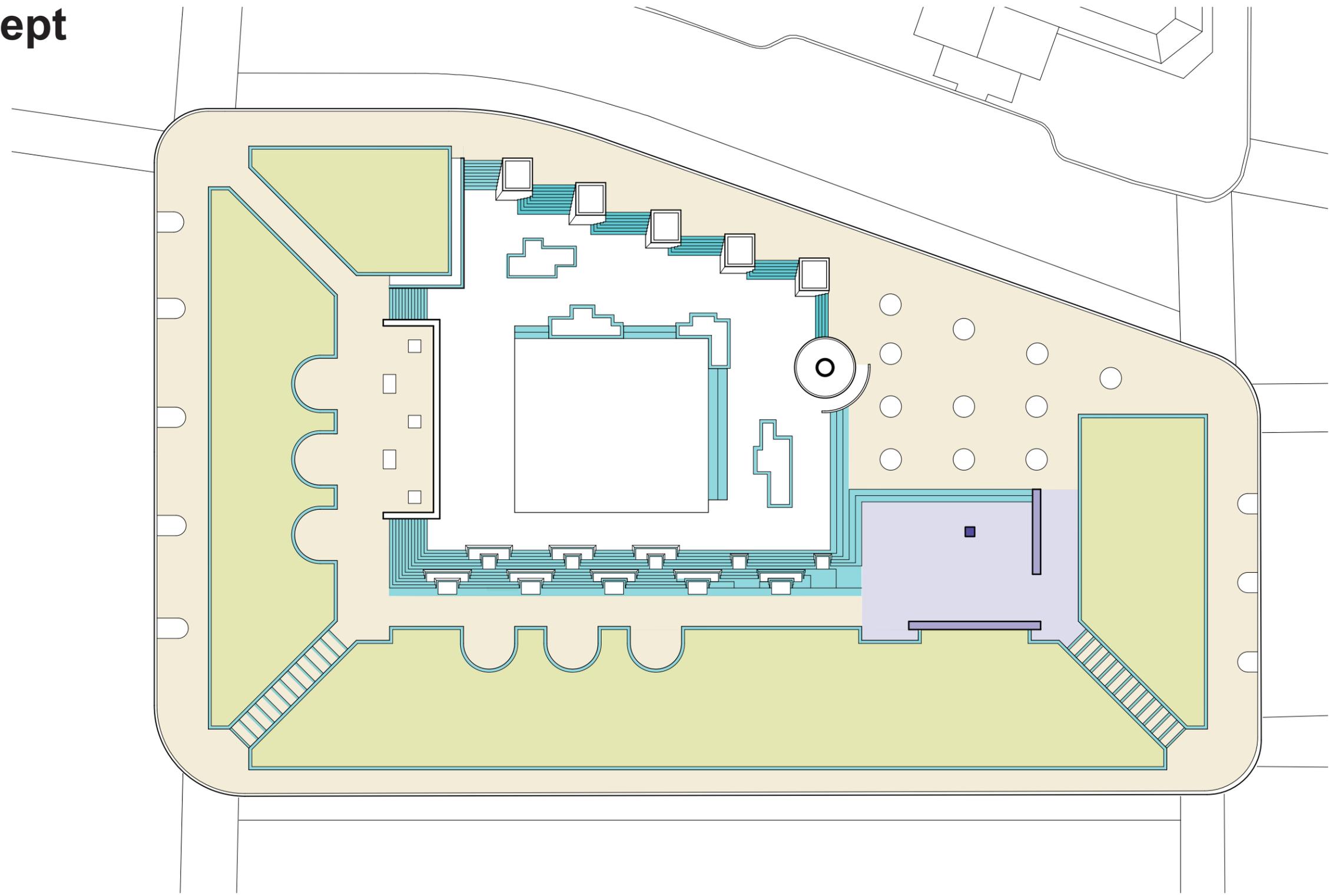
-  Shade grasses and perennials
-  Native no-mow turf alternative
-  Biofiltration grasses and perennials



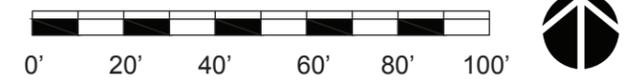
# Pool & Plaza Concept

## 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



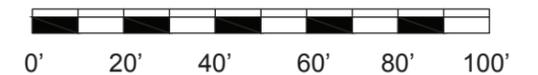
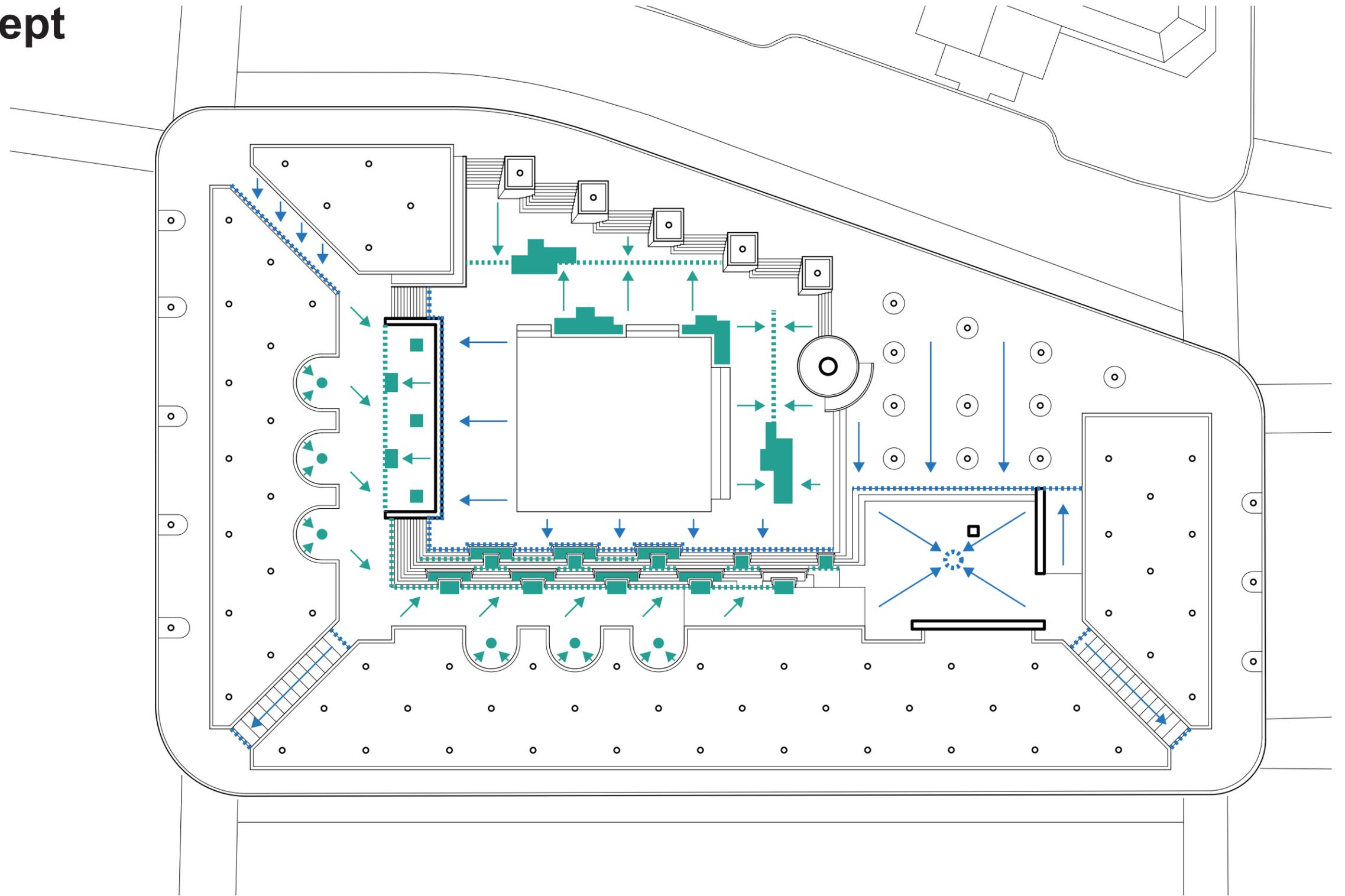
 Existing Soils - amend in place	 Pershing Memorial Statue
 Pennsylvania Avenue pavers retained	 Pershing Memorial walls
 Existing granite - removed, cleaned and reinstalled	 Pershing Memorial stone paving retained



# 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

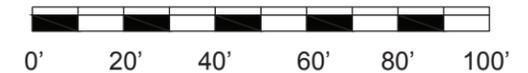
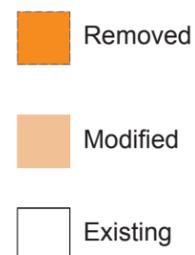
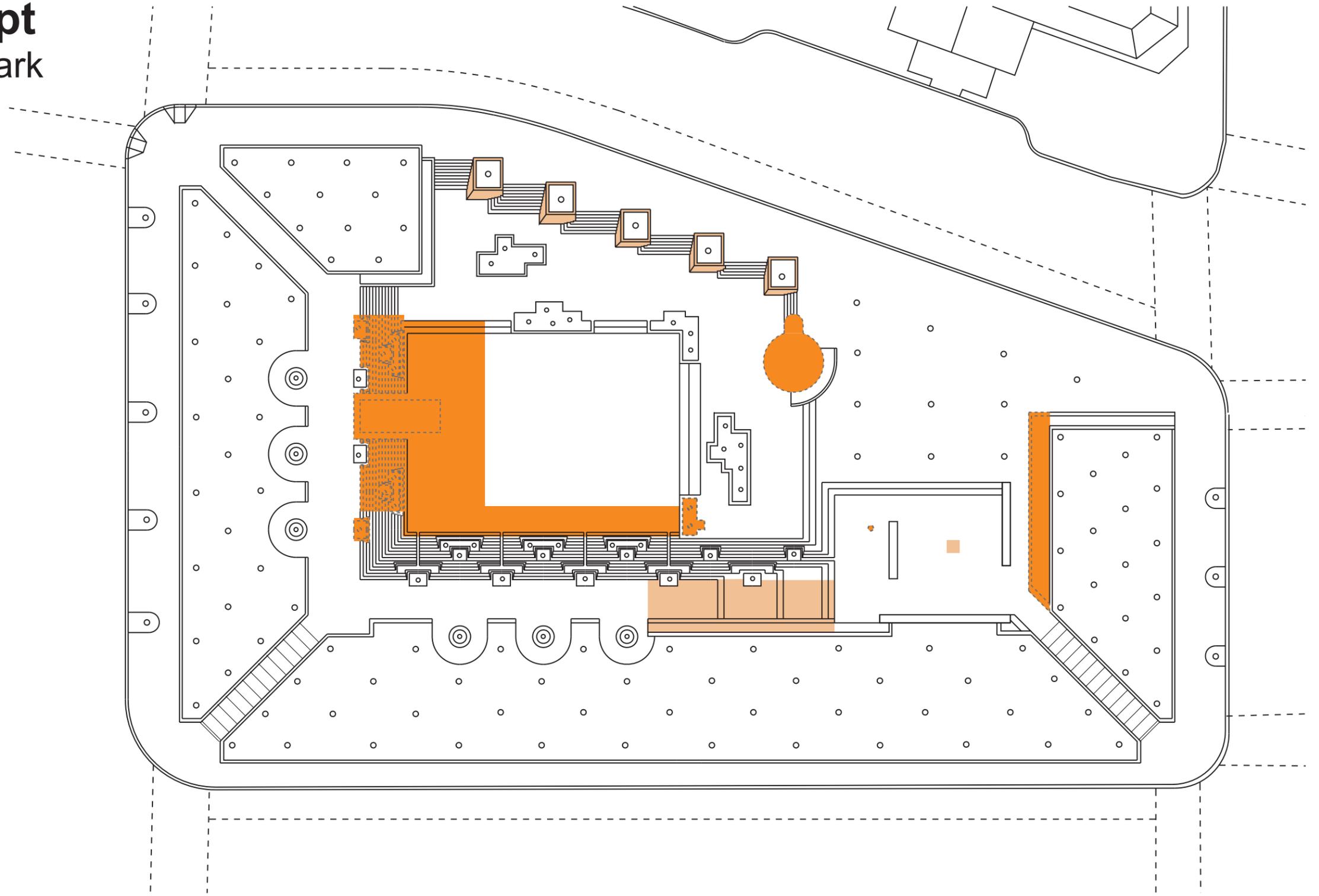


# Pool & Plaza Concept

## 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 axially.
- 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.

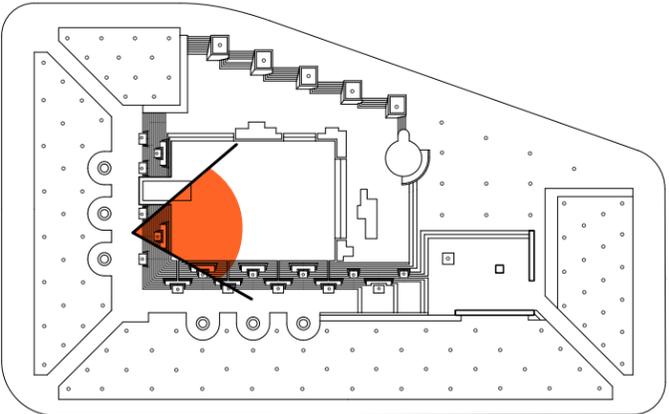
## ASSESSMENT

- 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

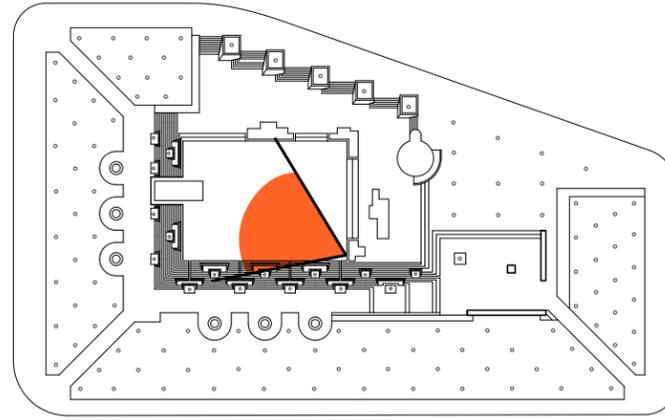
WWICC Endorsed



View Looking East

# Scrim & Green Concept

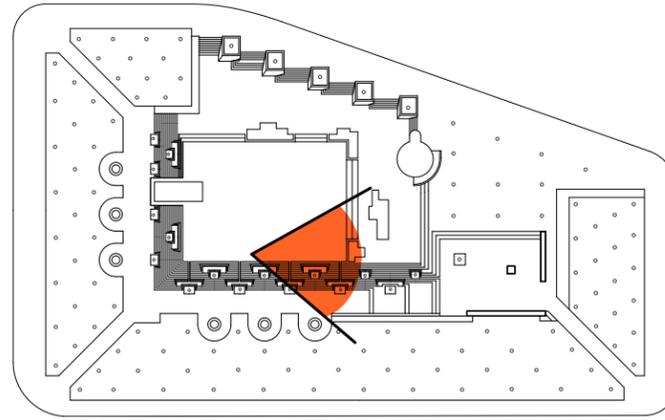
WWICC Endorsed



View Looking West

# Scrim & Green Concept

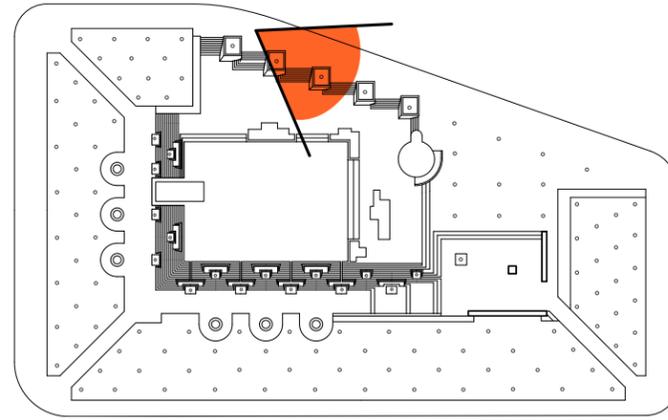
WWICC Endorsed



View Looking East

# Scrim & Green Concept

WWICC Endorsed

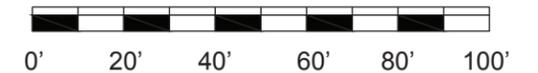
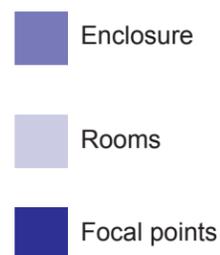
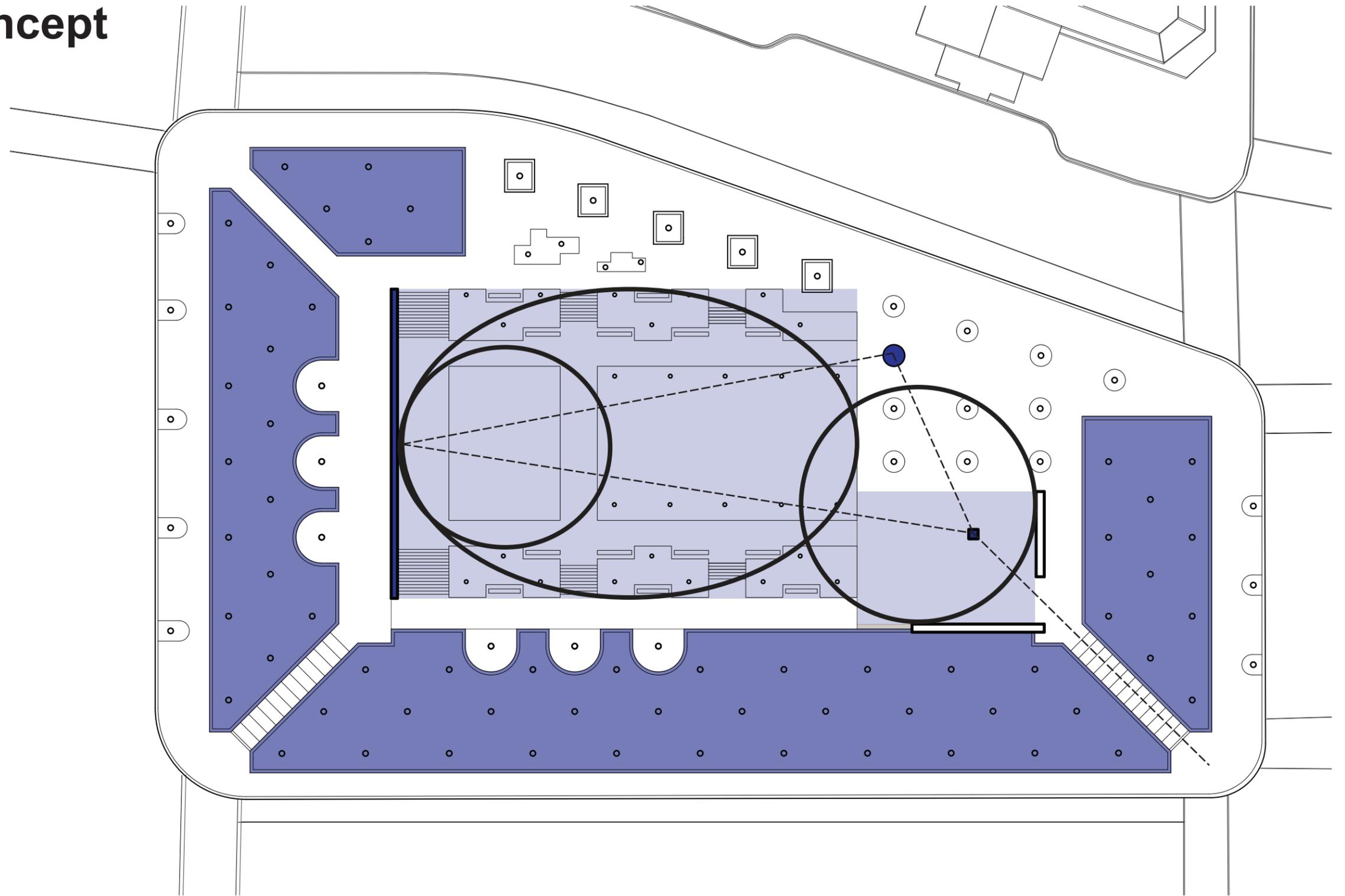


View Looking Towards US-Capitol

# Scrim & Green Concept

## Rooms and Focal Points

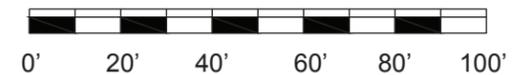
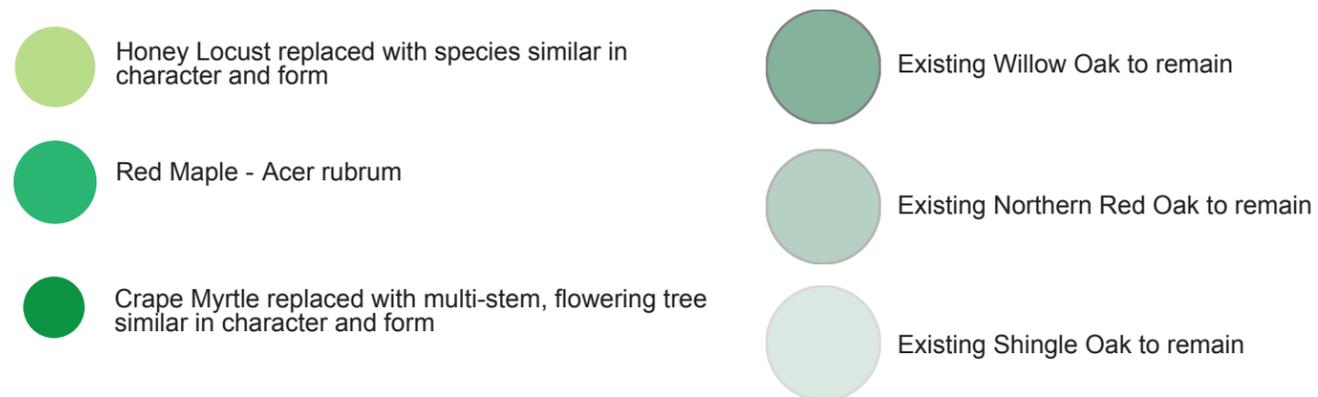
- Bas-relief wall replaces the fountain as westernmost focal point within the park
- Flag pole near the circular plinth replaces the existing kiosk



# Scrim & Green Concept

## Tree Planting Plan

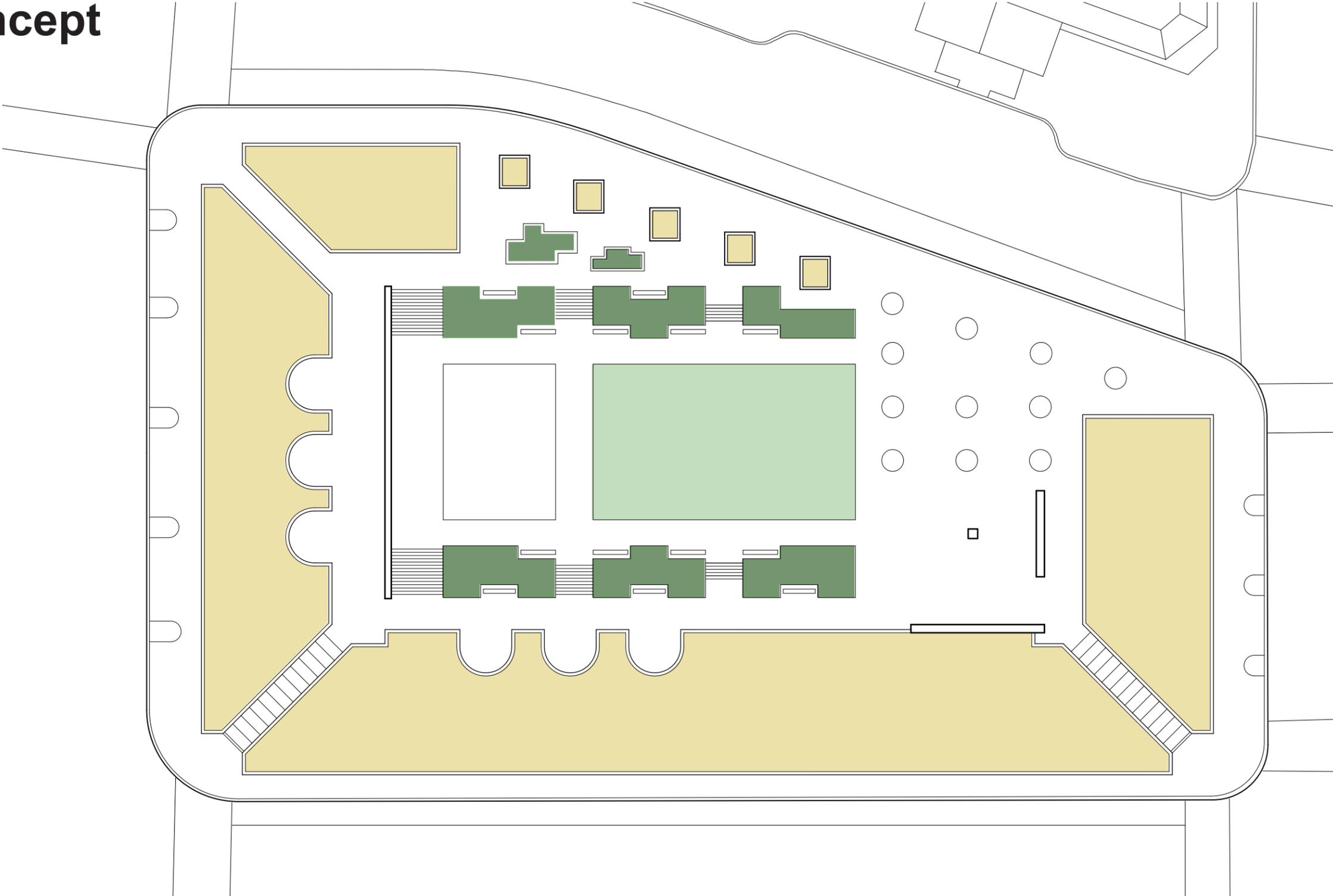
- Spacing of berm planting adjusted to increase soil volume for trees
- Reconstruction is an opportunity to consider replacement species similar in form and character with greater habitat value
- Replacement species selections will also be reviewed with an arborist for disease resistance and appropriateness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



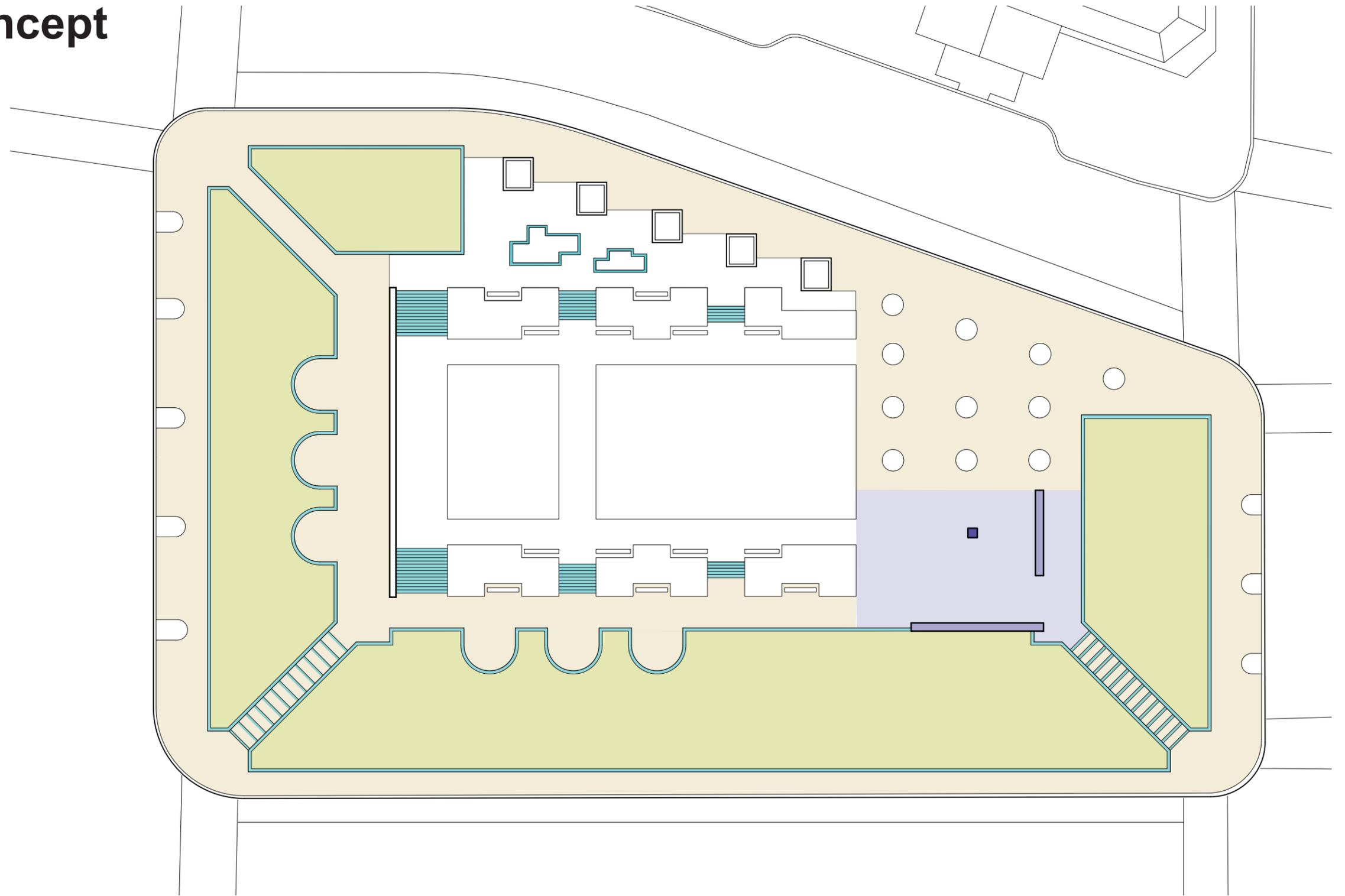
-  Lawn
-  Dry shade grasses and perennials
-  Biofiltration grasses and perennials



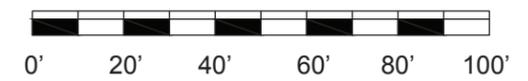
# Scrim & Green Concept

## 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



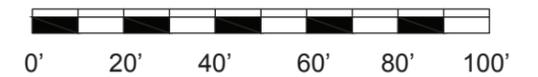
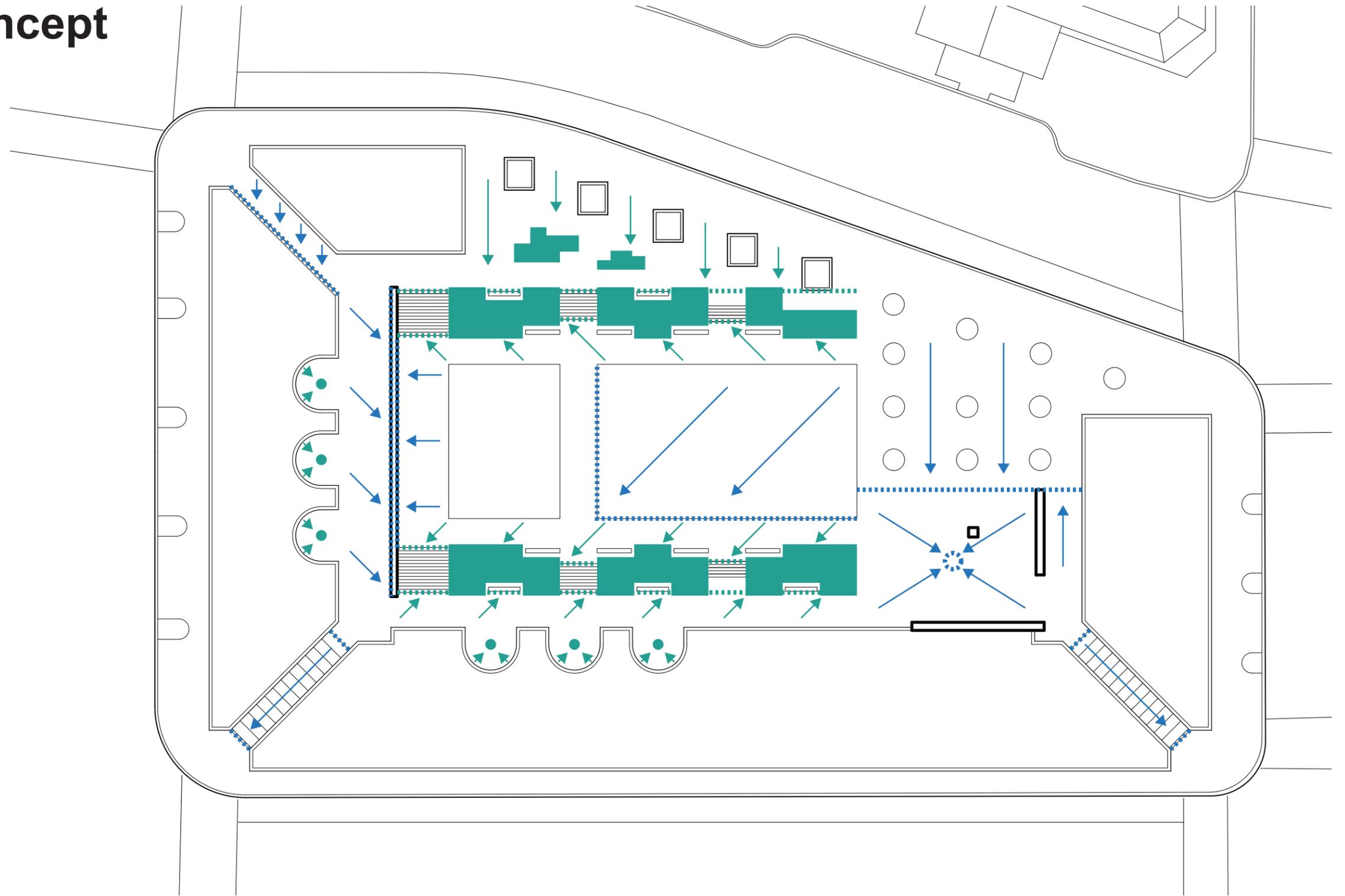
- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  Existing Soils - amend in place                     |  Pershing Memorial Statue                |
|  Pennsylvania Avenue pavers retained                 |  Pershing Memorial walls                 |
|  Existing granite - removed, cleaned and reinstalled |  Pershing Memorial stone paving retained |



# Scrim & Green 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

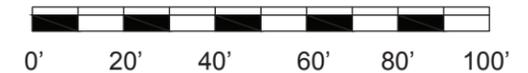
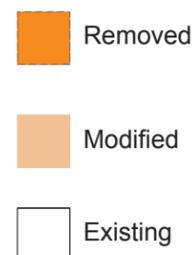
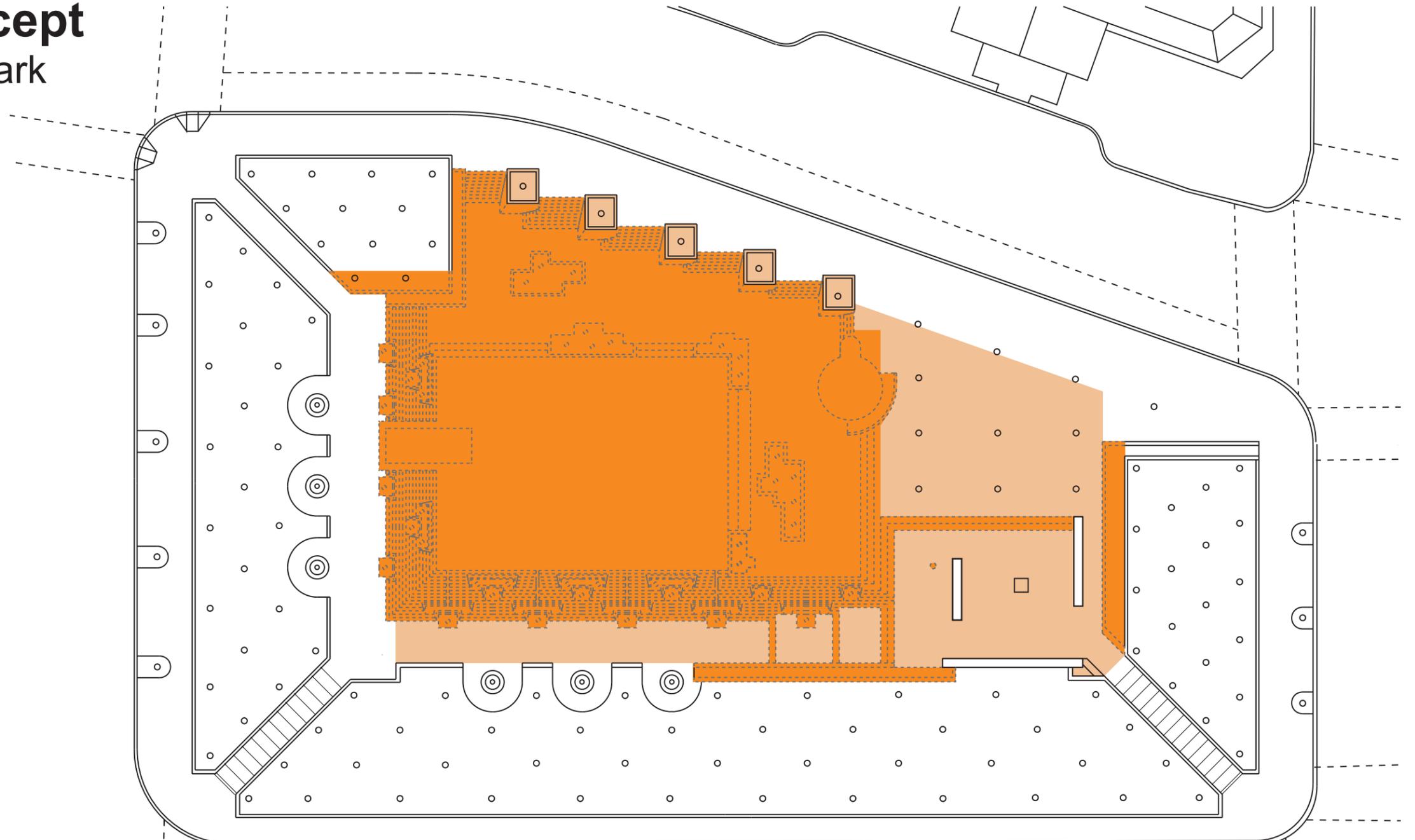


# Scrim & Green Concept

## Modifications to Existing Park

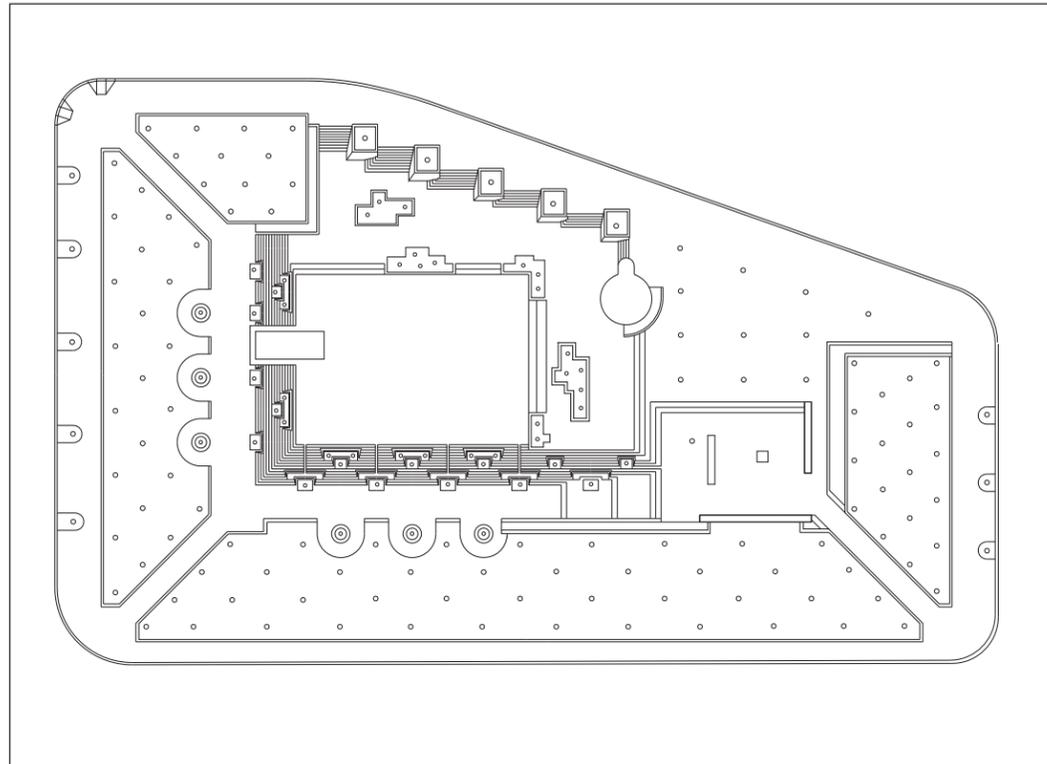
### Critical character-defining features:

- 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

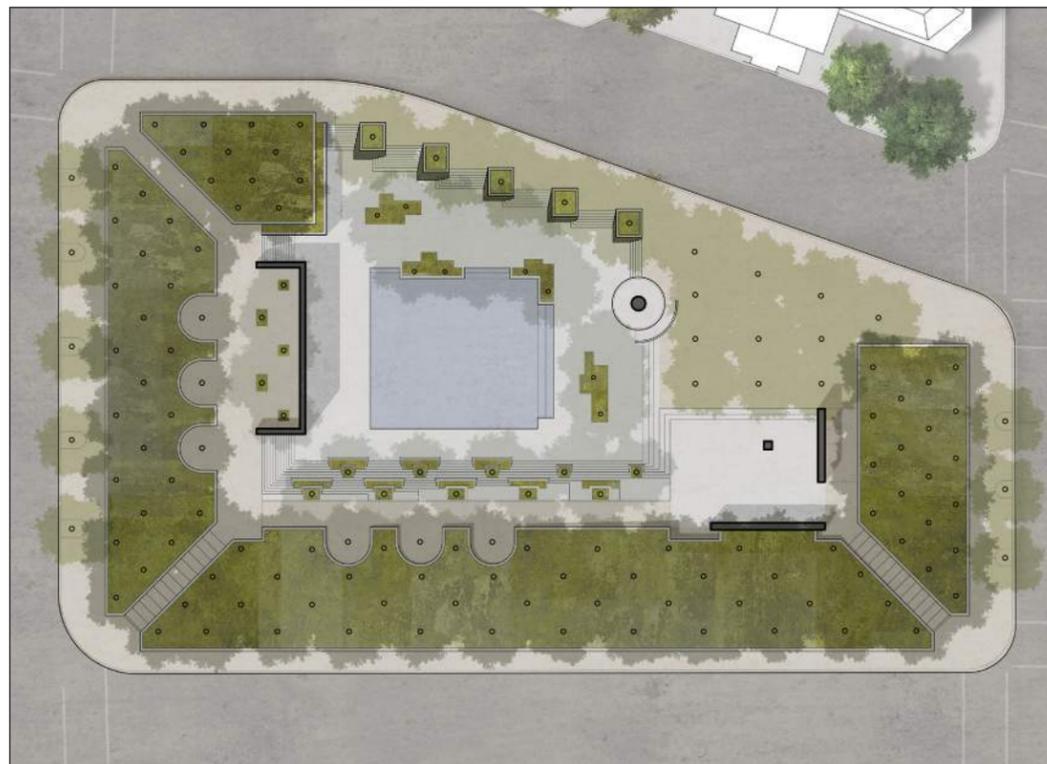
## Plans



**EXISTING PARK DESIGN**



**OCTOBER 2016 CONCEPT**



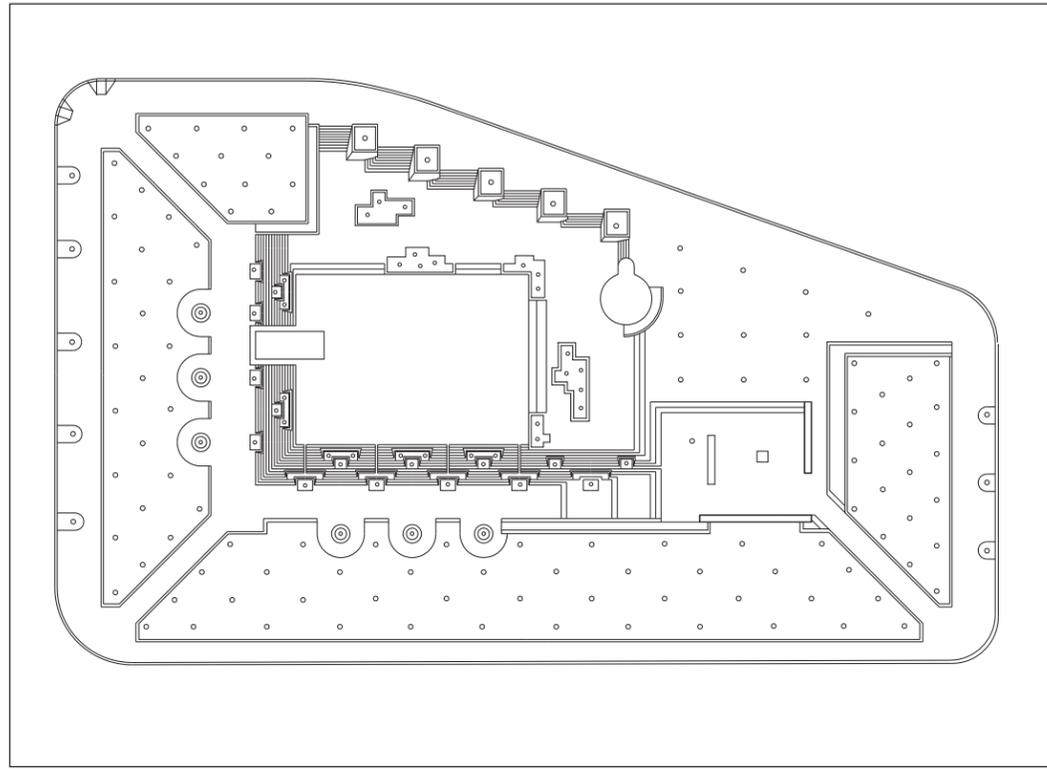
**POOL & PLAZA CONCEPT**



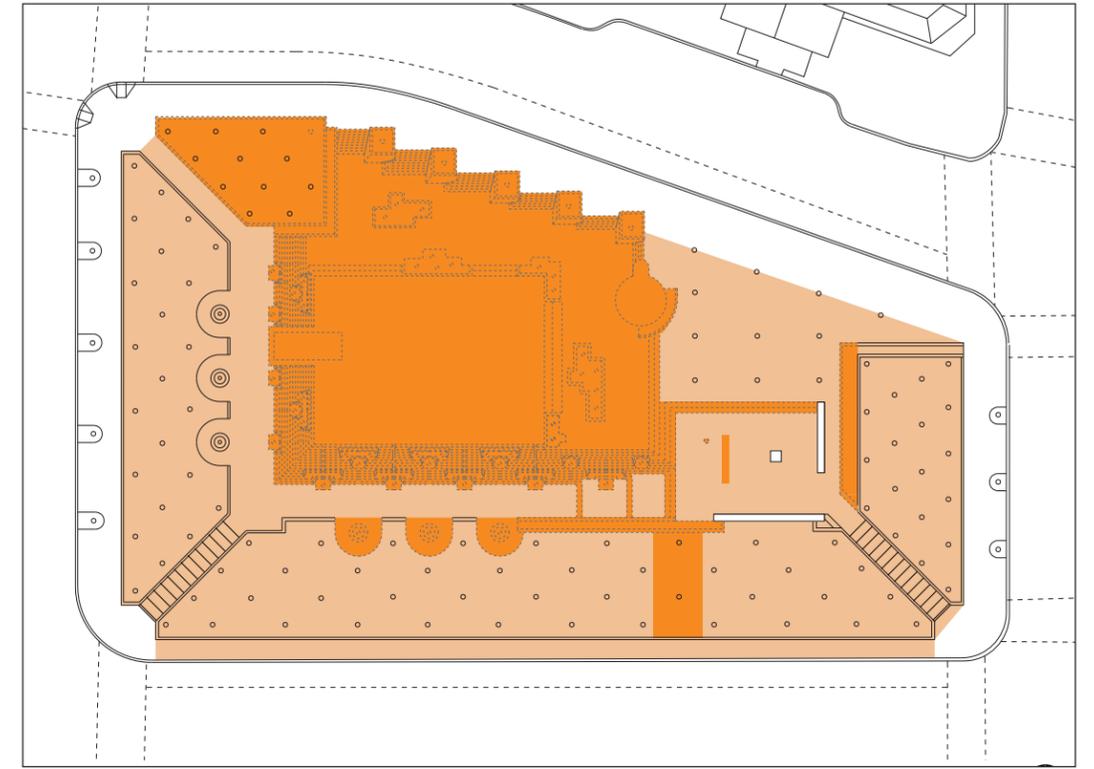
**SCRIM & GREEN CONCEPT WWICC ENDORSED**

# Concept Comparisons

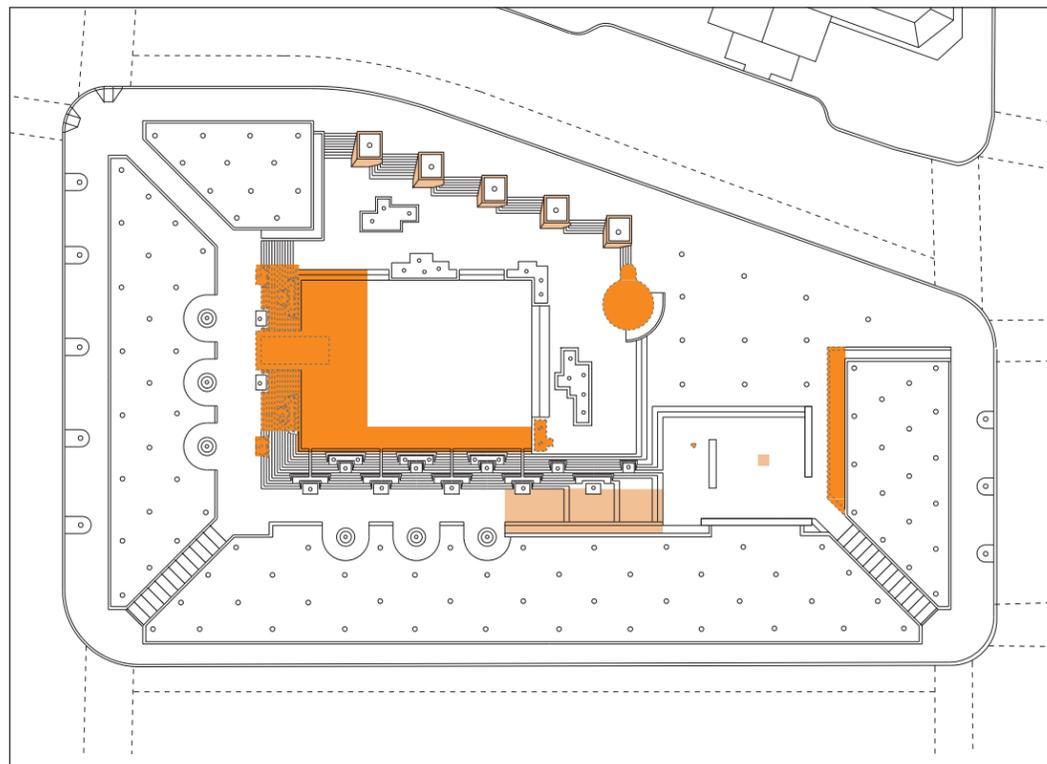
## Modifications



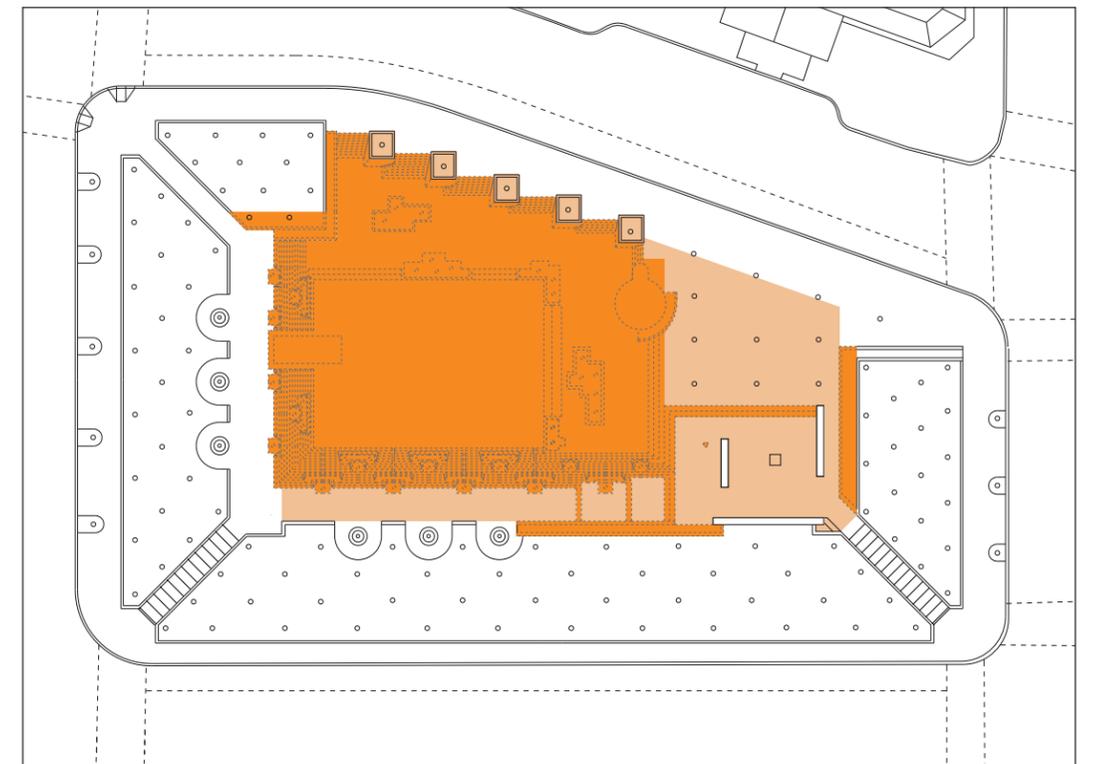
EXISTING PARK DESIGN



OCTOBER 2016 CONCEPT



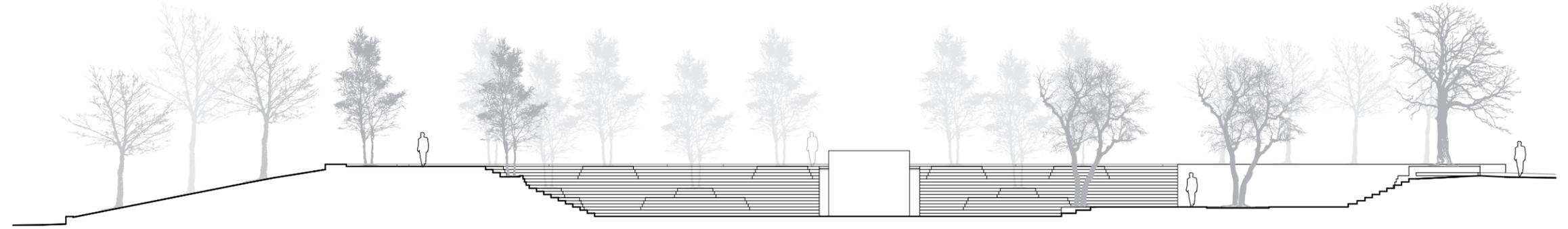
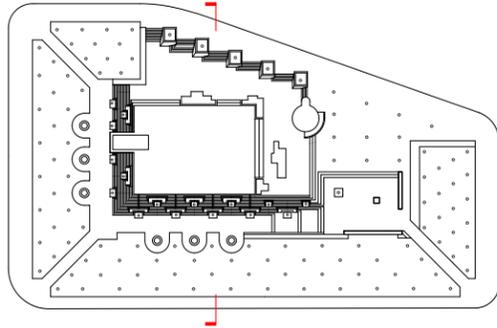
POOL & PLAZA CONCEPT



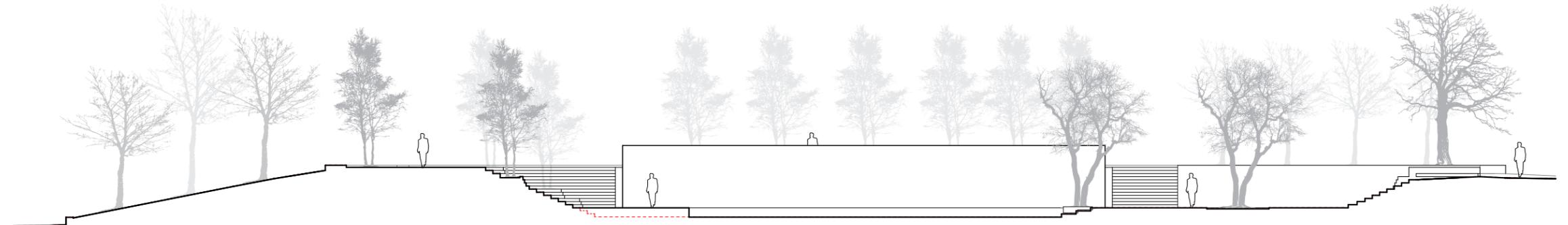
SCRIM & GREEN CONCEPT WWICC ENDORSED

# Concept Comparisons

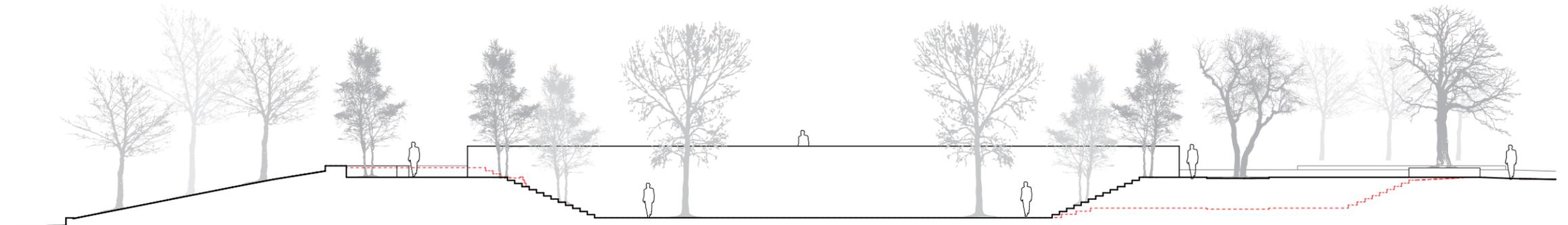
## Sections



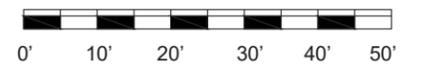
Existing section facing West



Pool & Plaza section facing West

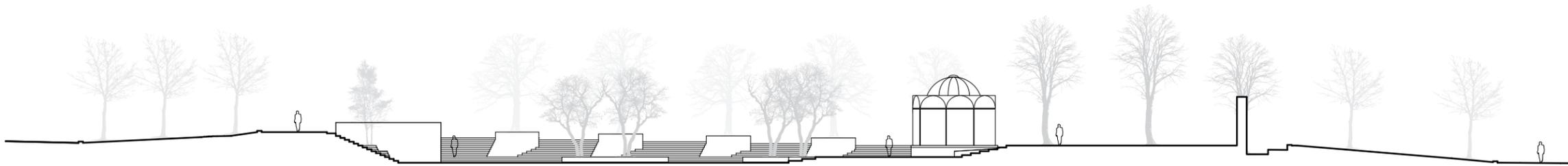
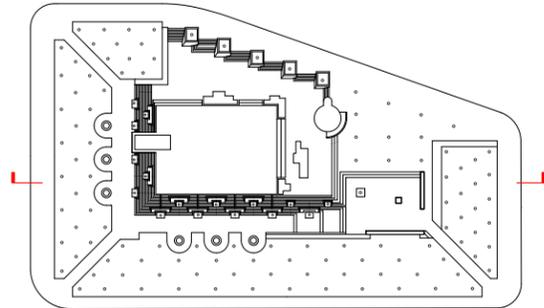


Scrim & Green section facing West

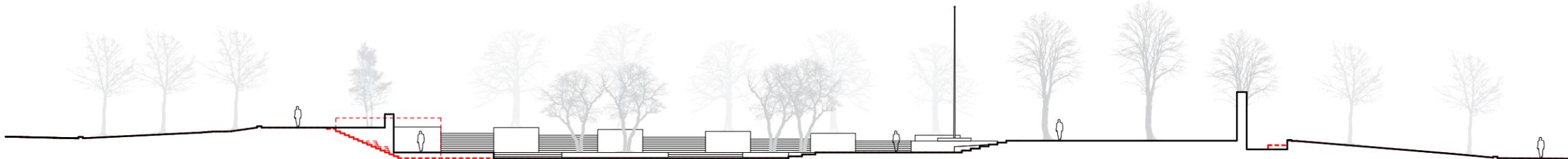


# Concept Comparisons

## Sections



Existing section facing North



Pool & Plaza section facing North

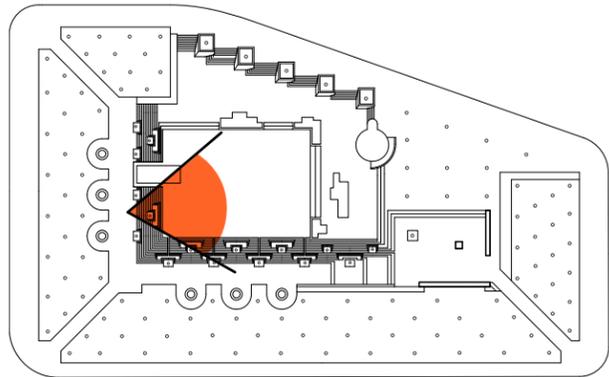


Scrim & Green section facing North



# Concept Comparisons

View Looking East



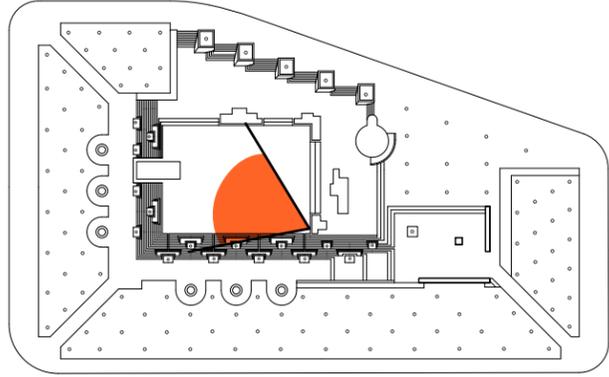
Pool & Plaza Concept



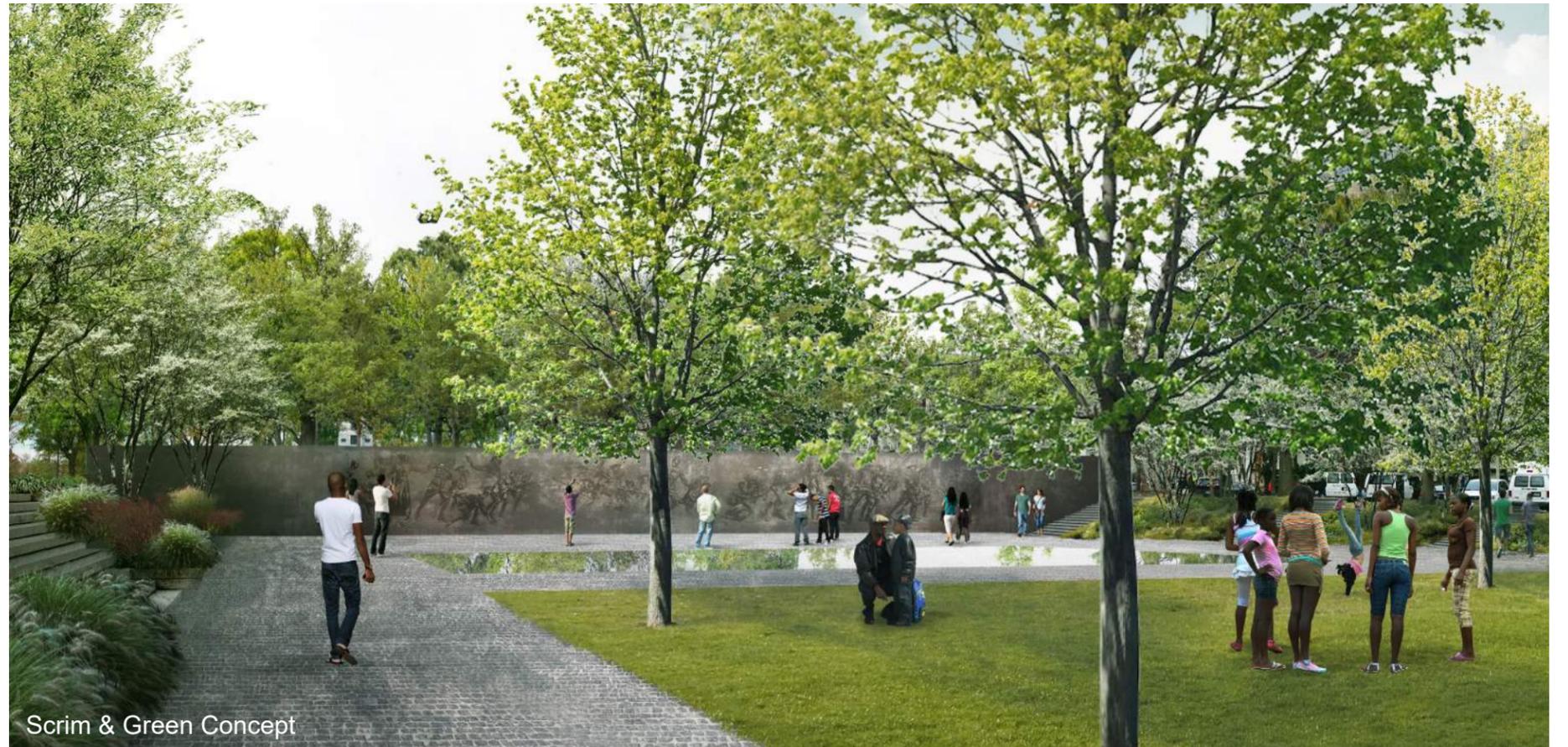
Scrim & Green Concept

# Concept Comparisons

## View Looking West



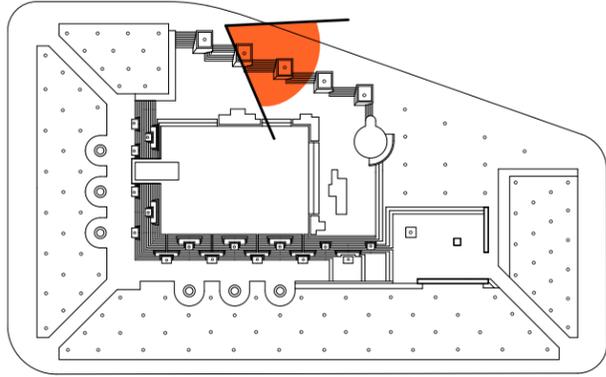
Pool & Plaza Concept



Scrim & Green Concept

# Concept Comparisons

## View Along Pennsylvania Ave.



Pool & Plaza Concept

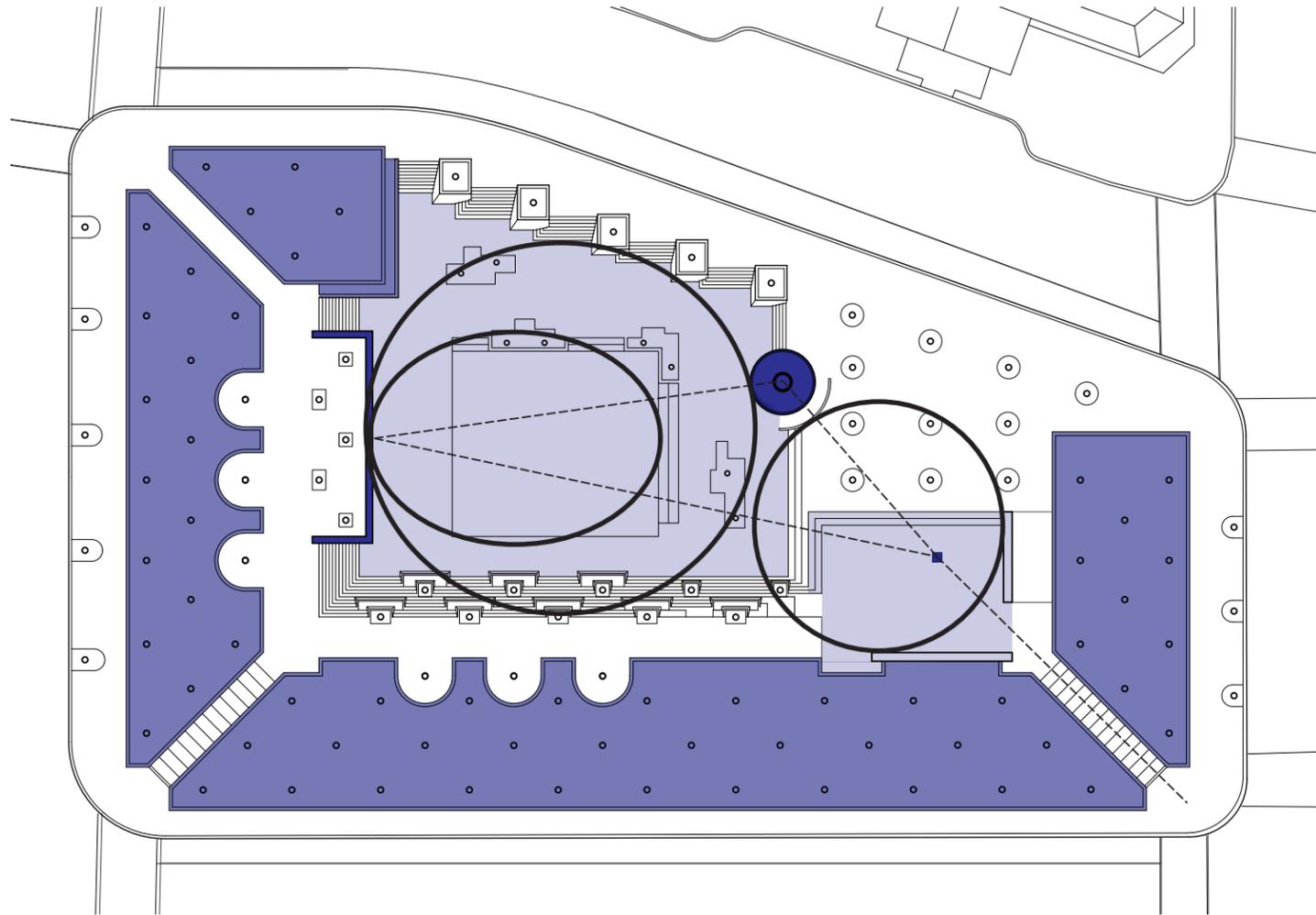


Scrim & Green Concept

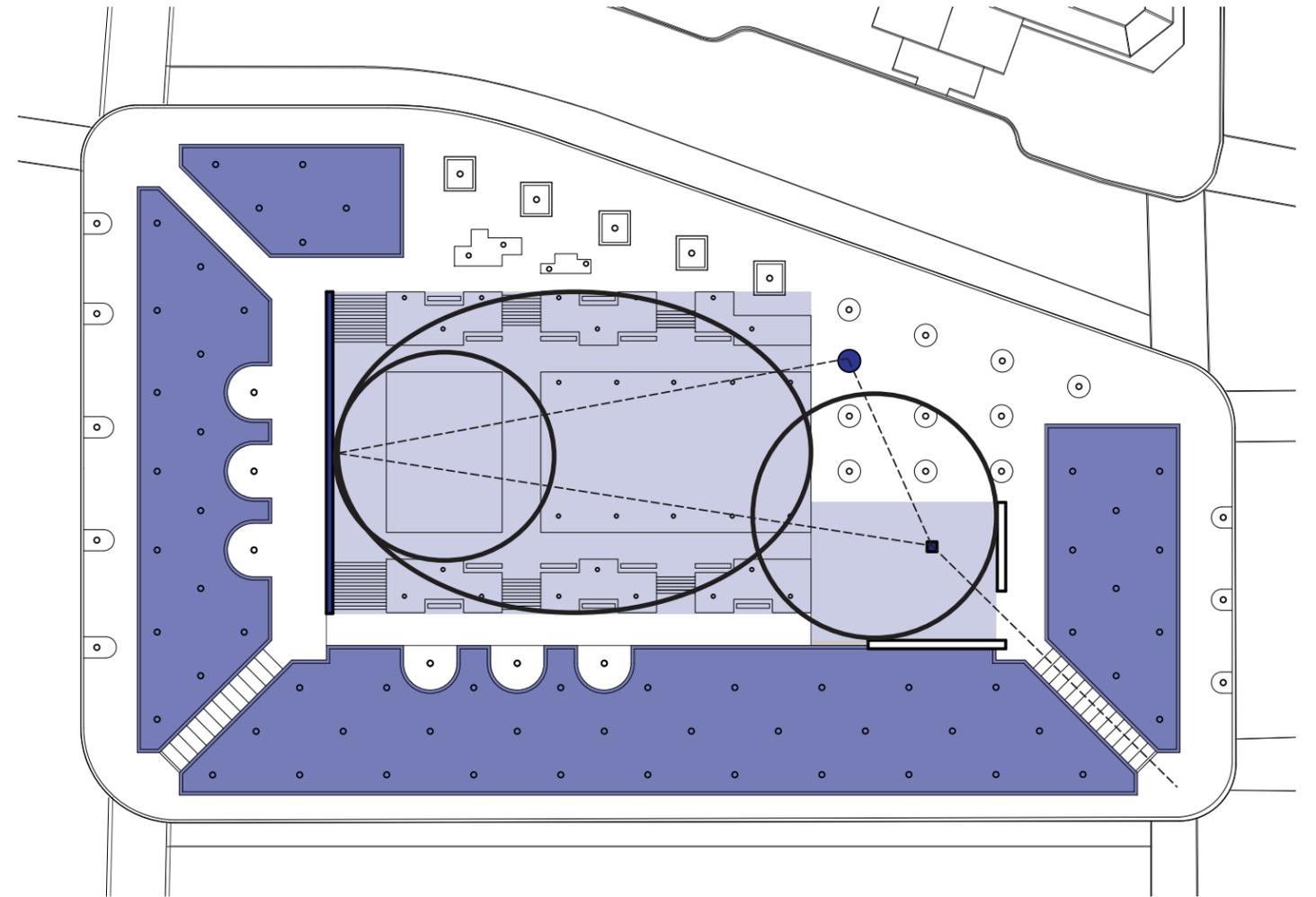
# Concept Comparisons

## Rooms and Focal Points

Pool & Plaza Concept



Scrim & Green Concept



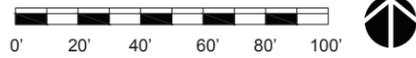
# Concept Comparisons

## Tree Planting Plan

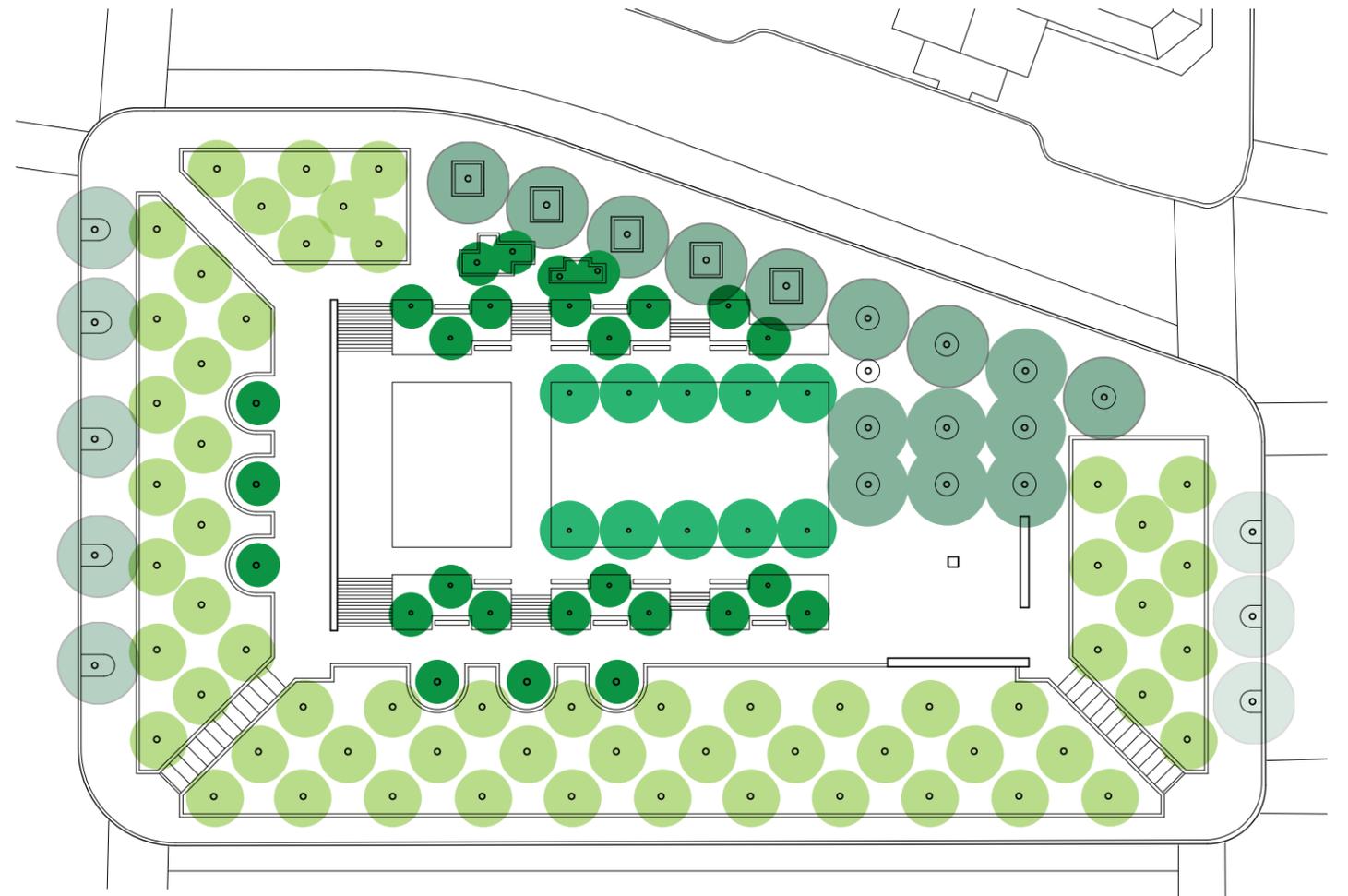
Pool & Plaza Concept



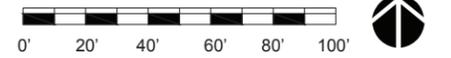
- Honey Locust replaced with species similar in character and form
- Red Maple - Acer rubrum
- Crape Myrtle replaced with multi-stem, flowering tree similar in character and form
- Existing Willow Oak to remain
- Existing Northern Red Oak to remain
- Existing Shingle Oak to remain



Scrim & Green Concept



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- Red Maple - Acer rubrum
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# 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
<b>L'Enfant Plan of the City of Washington</b>		
Reservations	No adverse effect	No adverse effect
Avenues	No adverse effect	No adverse effect
Vistas	No adverse effect	No adverse effect
<b>Pennsylvania Avenue NW-White House Cultural Landscape Contributing Features</b>		
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
<b>Pennsylvania National Historic Site</b>		
Vistas	No adverse effect	No adverse effect
Contributing Object	No adverse effect	No adverse effect
<b>Pershing Park</b>		
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