
SELECTED WORK

2021-2025

CHARACTER LANDSCAPES



W. REED PUTNAM

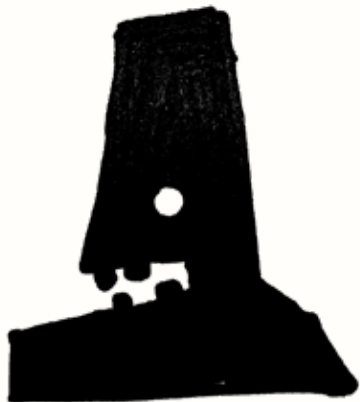
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William Reed Putnam
May 2025

STUDIO 2021-2025

WORK MADE AT UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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PROFESSIONAL 2023-2024

WORK MADE AT MICHAEL VAN VALKENBURGH ASSOCIATES

01 KARST PLANTING

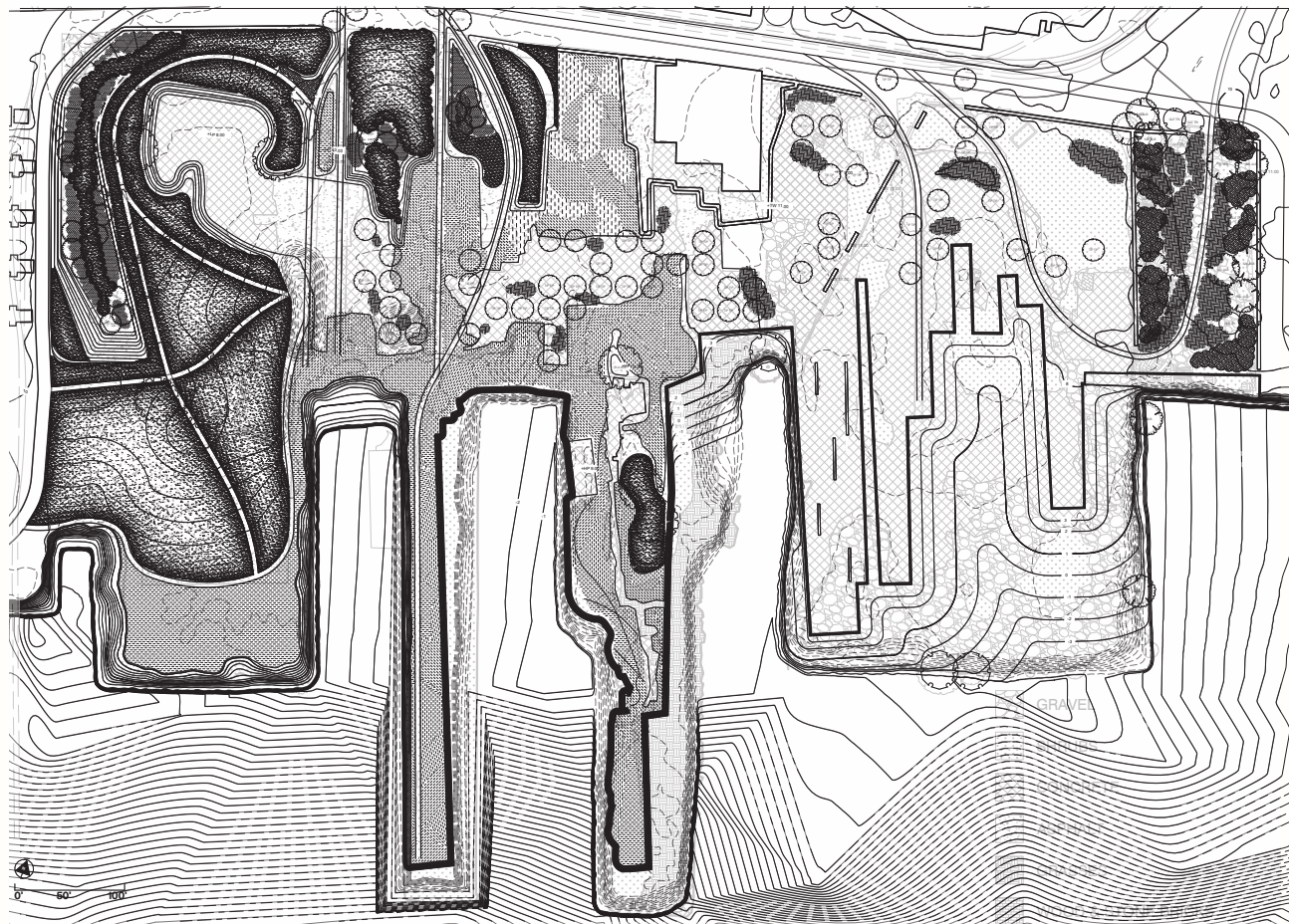


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02 TECHNICAL DRAWING

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Layered plan (grading + planting + materials)



Crayon sketch plan

2025

CUTOUT PIER

FISHTOWN, PA

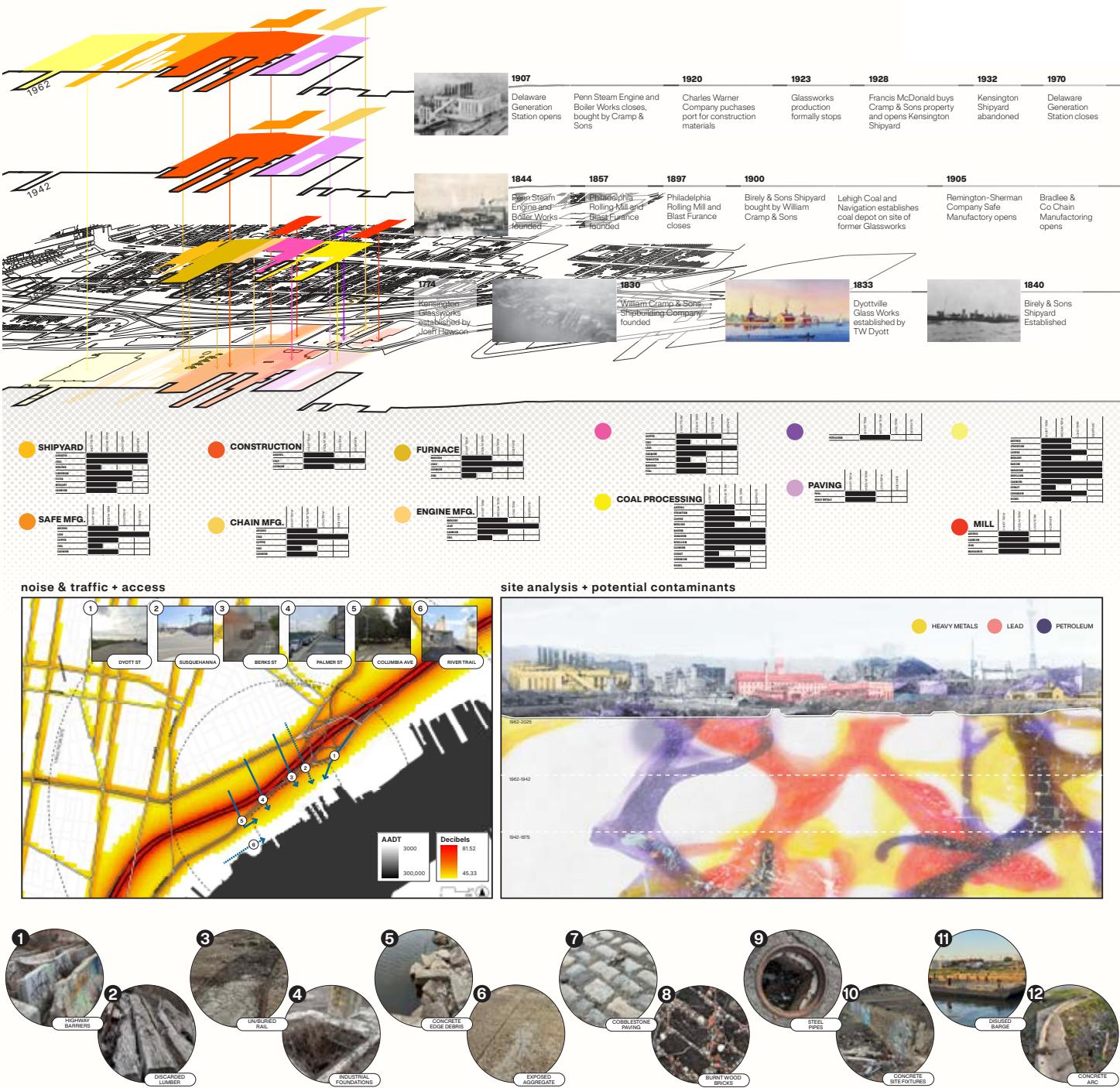
Studio 502

Cutout Pier represents a democratic, collaged approach to park making. Situated along the picturesque, though somewhat overdeveloped Delaware River edge, the park seeks to bring the visitor into the present as well as the past. To respond to centuries of industrial waste and contamination on the site yet provide tree cover and shade in the concrete jungle of Fishtown, soil is mounded onto the site in vulnerable areas to allow for robust planting. Instead of pouring concrete or sourcing new materials, the site recycles itself, using its plentiful jersey barriers as retaining walls, and its unstable concrete edges as seating and topography. The planting schedule works similarly, with a significant portion of its flora being found on-site.

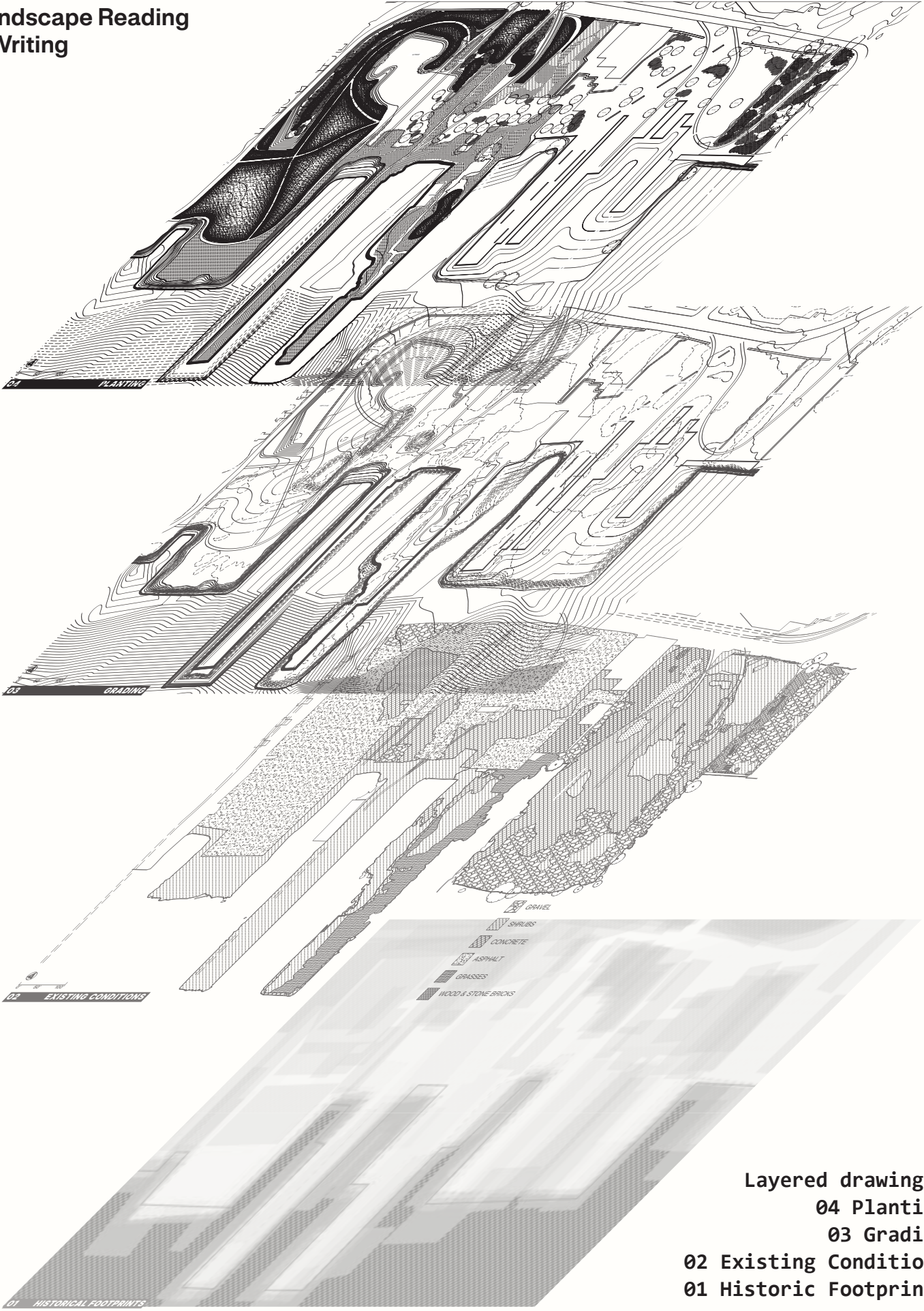
The park's footprint is molded by its history; seen in the unearthed or suggested railroad tracks and surface materials, like locust & stone bricks, exposed aggregate, and when foundations are dug up and used as planting implements. The pier acknowledges its present moment, too – its current proliferation of delinquency and graffiti is incorporated, and encouraged, into the shaping. The park is programmed for the people and will continue to be programmed by the people.

The future of the park? Yours.

Site Research
+ Observation



Landscape Reading
+ Writing





01 BIRCH GLADE
02 RAINBOW GRASSLAND
03 RAMBLE

CUTOUT PIER

2025



Trace paper, crayons, cardboard, wood dowels

CUTOUT PIER

2025

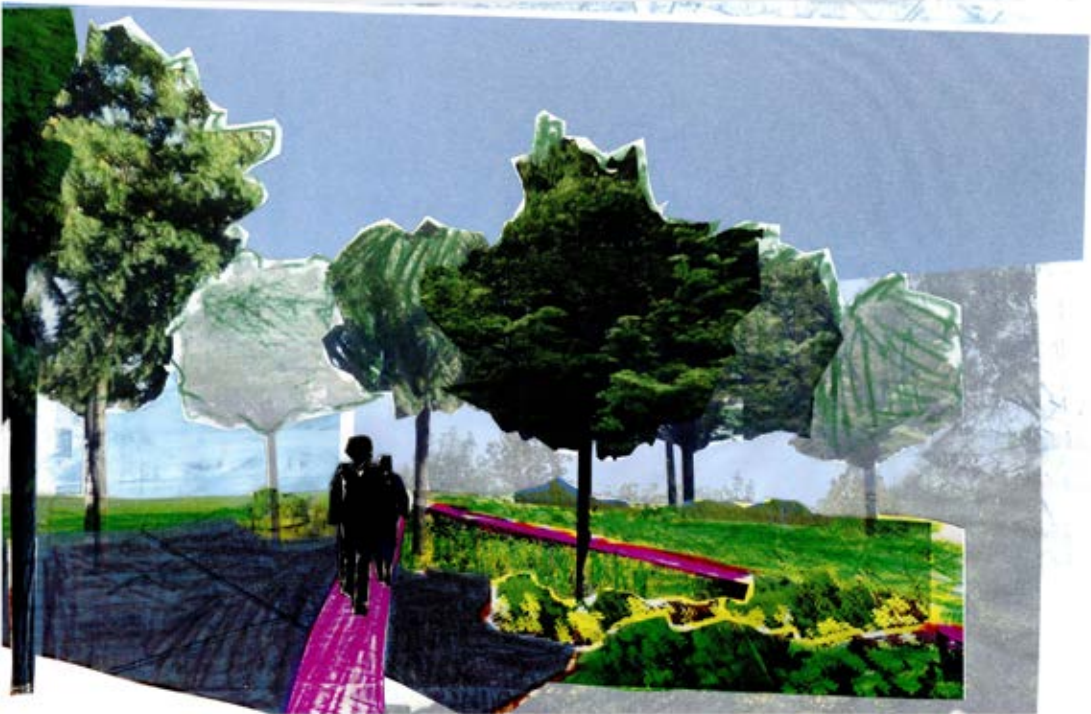
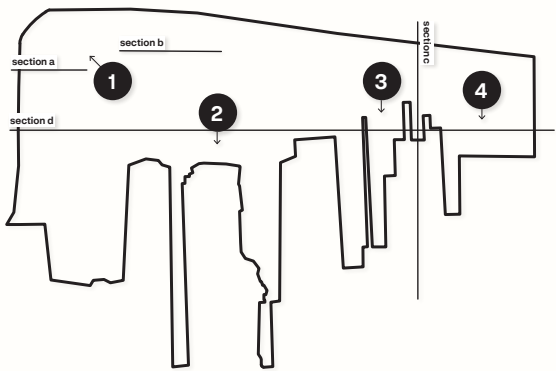


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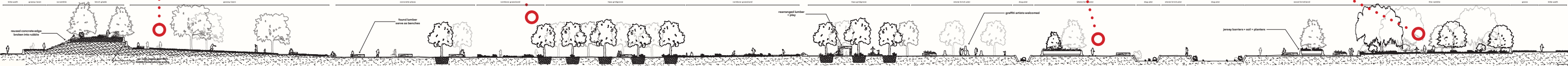


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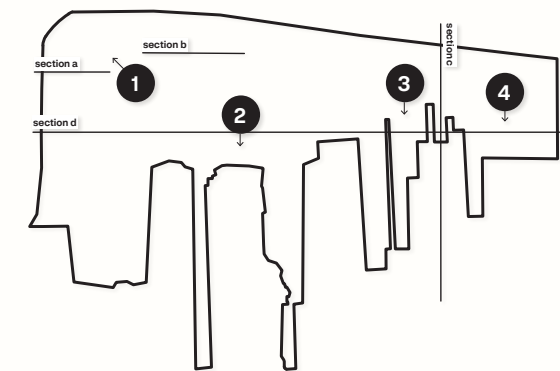
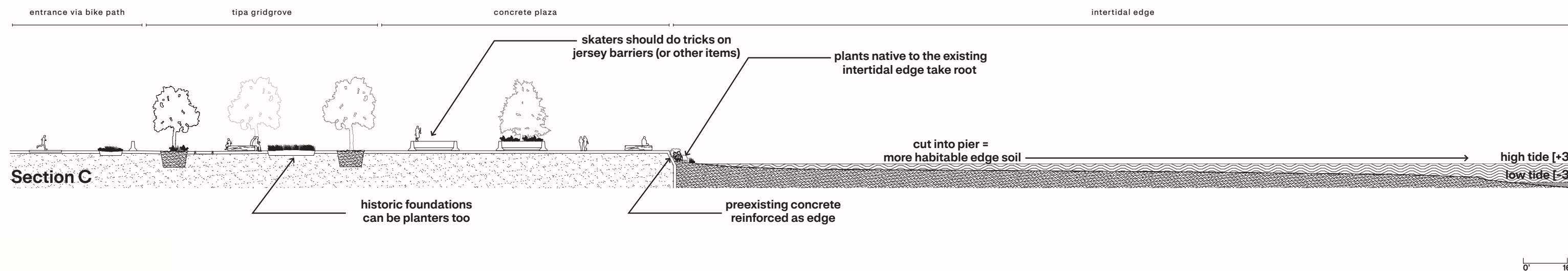
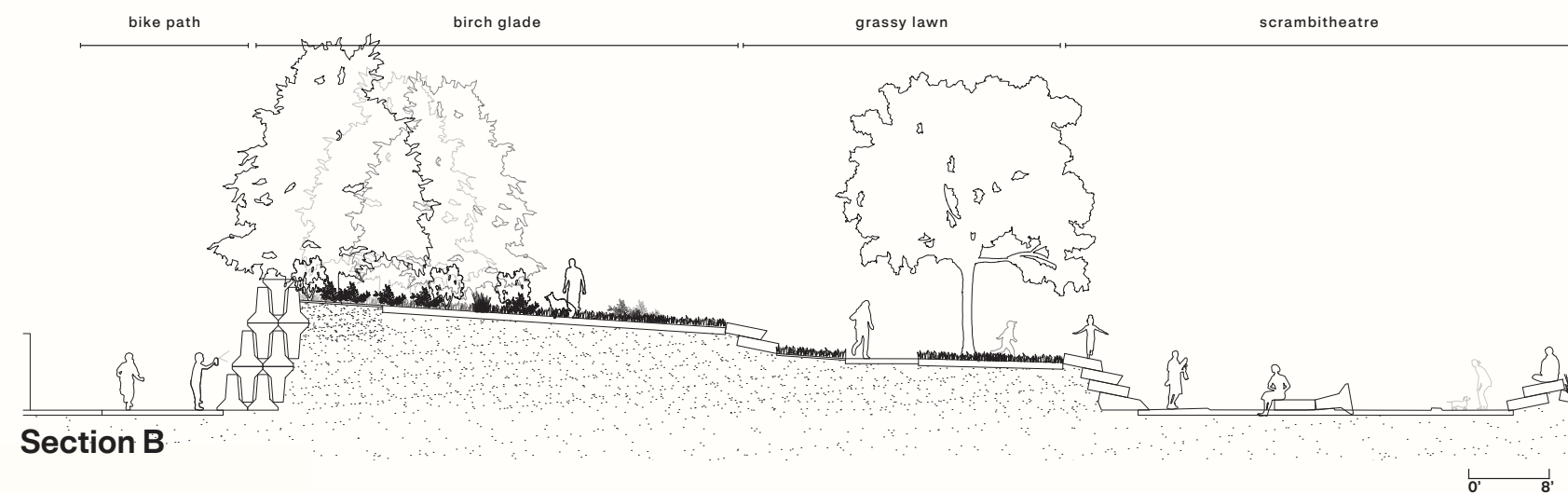
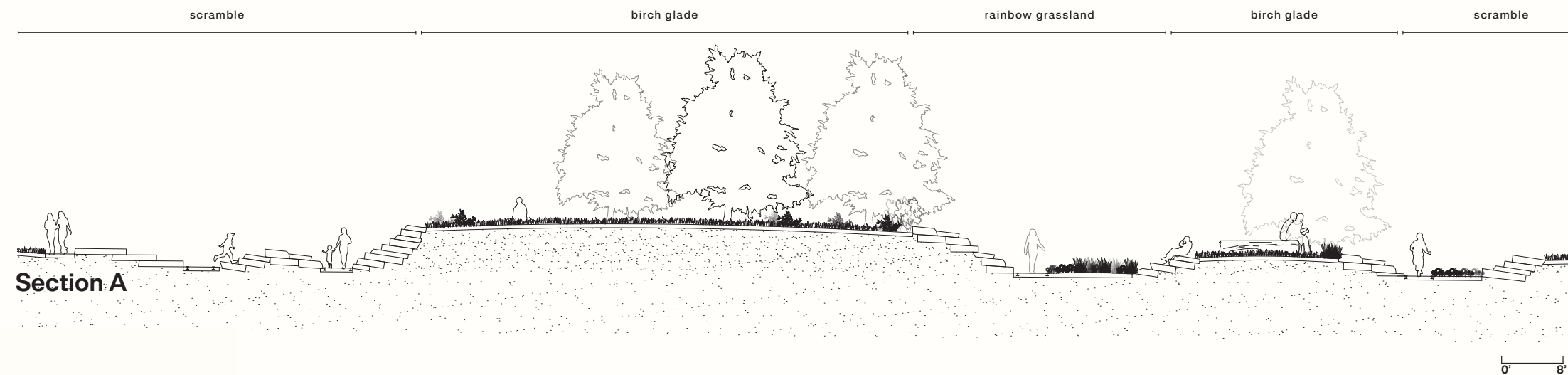
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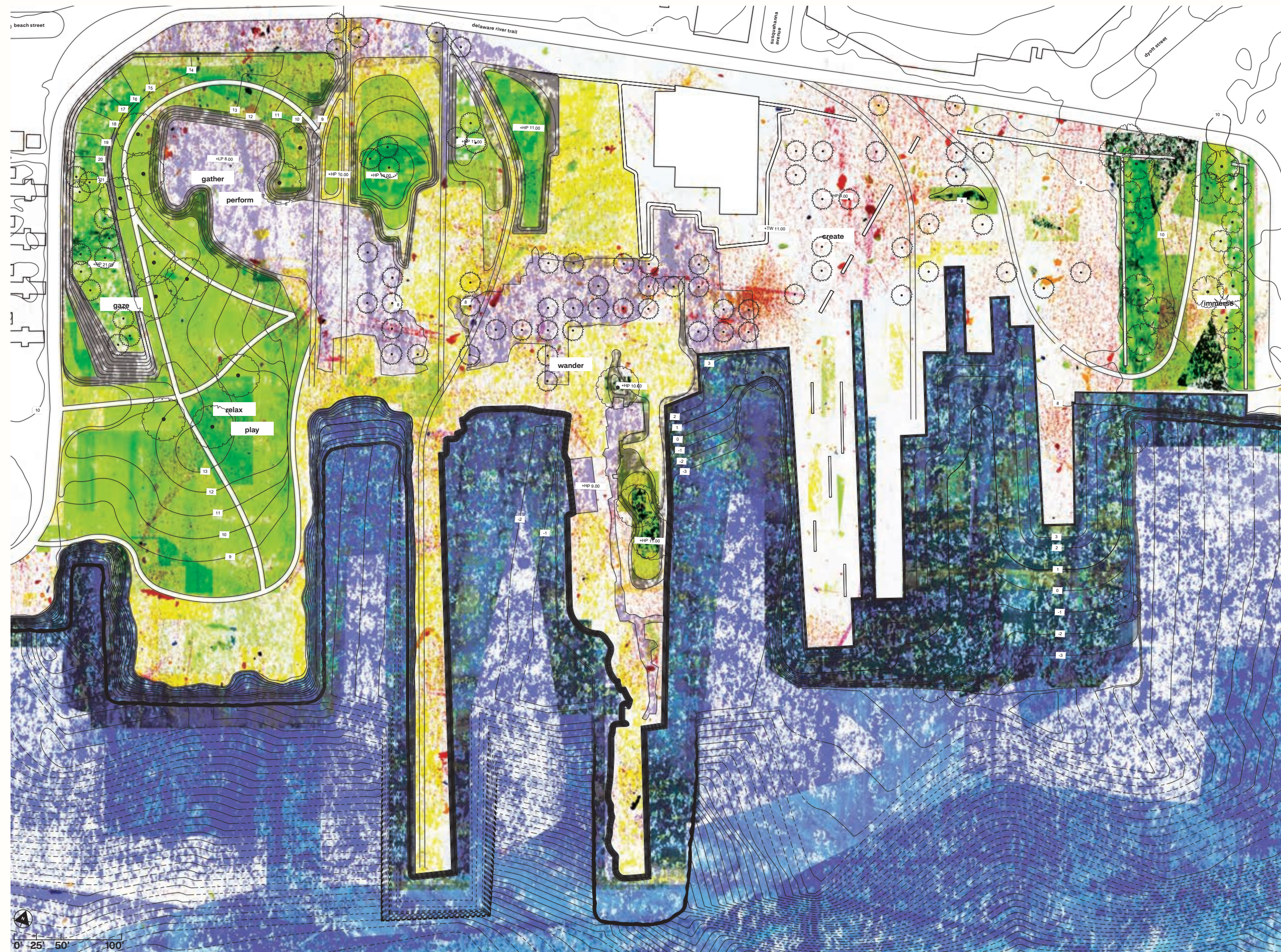


4



Section D





Site Plan

Hybrid drawing textured with crayons and drawn in AutoCAD



Beyond mere form, landscape holds time incarnate. The site model seeks to depict the site history in addition to the intervention. The edge stability and pollution conditions discovered in historic mapping are revealed through layers of black and brown that are hidden below the layers of material above, accumulated from both the design intervention and the existing site conditions.

1. The Breach

Utilizes the existing stone walls and poplars to invite people in; compressed by two Hornbeams that shroud the entrance in mystery. As with the grass, rubble spills out in striations towards the trail.



2. The Alee

Continues the scaffolding of the Hornbeams in a staggered arrangement. The narrowed corridor amplifies the transitional feel of the existing Poplars, and the existing trees are preserved where grading permits.



3. The Lot

The rubble coalesces into a clearing that amplifies the found qualities of the site's existing bowl. Here, the visitor is presented with the opportunity to rest or explore the trails. Hollies - which were pre-existing on site, are planted throughout.



Design Sketches

2024

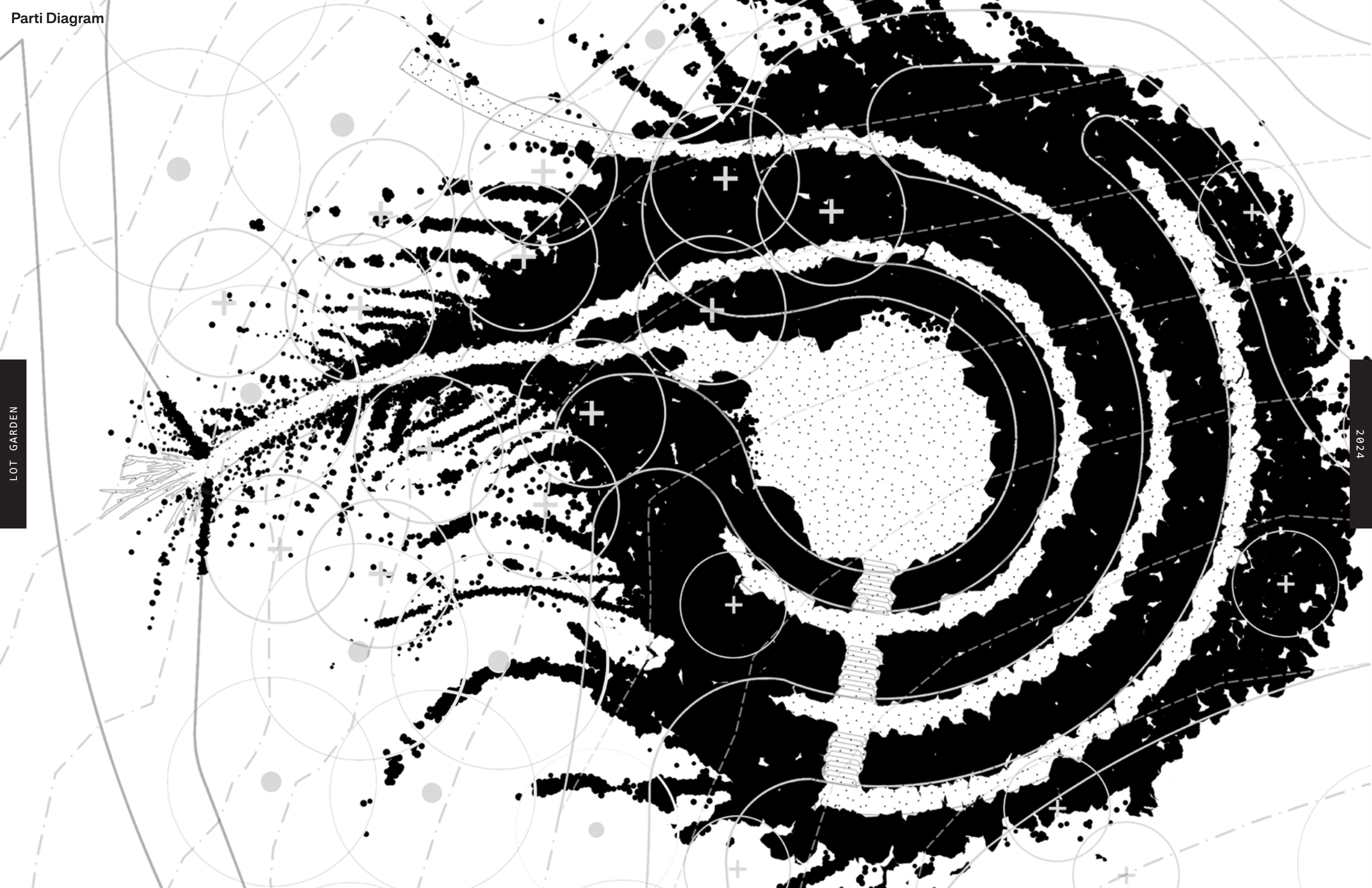
LOT GARDEN

Wissahickon Park, PA
Studio 501

A hiker comes around a bend on Wissahickon Yellow Trail and they witness a breach in the adjacent hillside. Strands of bright green grass seep onto the path, offering an alternative route to the expected dirt trailways of the Wissahickon. An alee of low-canopy Musclewood creates shade and compression, tunneling visitors into an amphitheater of site-origin reclaimed brick and concrete rubble and circling grass paths. Here is the Lot Garden, a new landscape that posits: What if the material expectations of the Wissahickon were disrupted?

In the Lot Garden, detritus becomes topography, grass becomes trail, and trees become frames through which visitors can observe the Wissahickon for its ecologies, contexts, and eccentricities. In creating a simultaneously more manicured and more chaotic landscape, space for comfort, gathering, and wandering is tailor-made for the weirdos who happen to find it.





Parti Diagram

LOT GARDEN

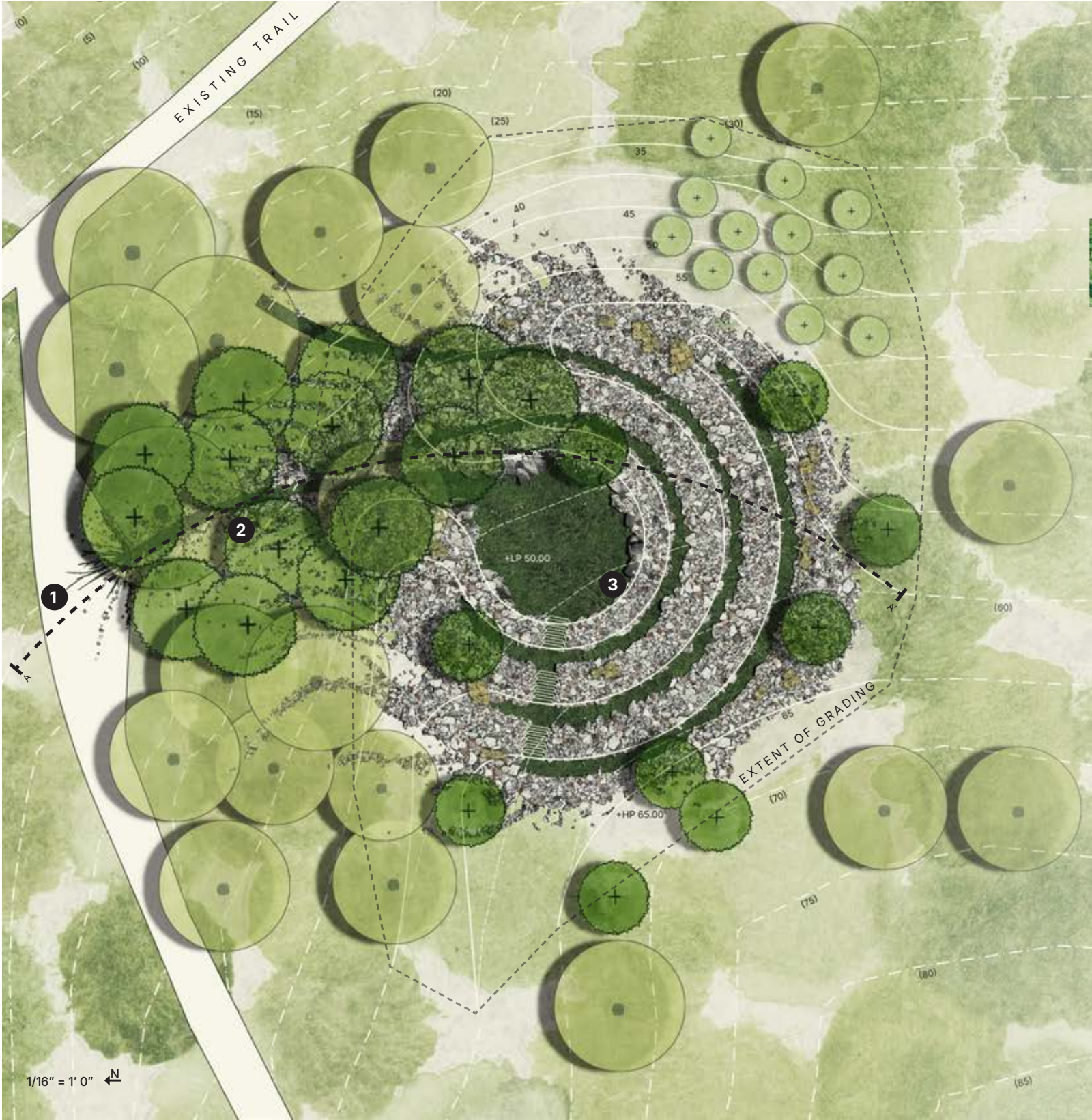
2024



Sketch Model



Sketch Model



Site Plan



	Common Name	Scientific Name	Proposed or Existing	Qty	Ht (est)
Tree	White Oak	<i>Quercus alba</i>	E	n/a	70'
	Tulip Poplar	<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	E	n/a	80'
Shrub	European Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus betulus</i>	P	2	50' (mature)
	Winged Euonymus	<i>Euonymus alatus</i>	E	n/a	5'
	Northern Spicebush	<i>Lindera benzoin</i>	E	n/a	6'
Groundcover	American Jumpseed	<i>Persicaria virginiana</i>	E	n/a	2'
	Christmas Fern	<i>Polystichum acrostichoides</i>	E	n/a	16"
Grasses	Broom Sedge	<i>Andropogon virginicus</i>	E	n/a	3'
	Creeping Red Fescue	<i>Festuca rubra</i>	P	n/a	6"



	Common Name	Scientific Name	Proposed or Existing	Qty	Ht (est)
Tree	American Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus caroliniana</i>	P	13	30'
	Tulip Poplar	<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	E	1	80'
Shrub	Winged Euonymus	<i>Euonymus alatus</i>	E	n/a	5'
	Northern Spicebush	<i>Lindera benzoin</i>	E	n/a	6'
Grasses	Broom Sedge	<i>Andropogon virginicus</i>	E	n/a	3'
	Creeping Red Fescue	<i>Festuca rubra</i>	P	n/a	6"



	Common Name	Scientific Name	Proposed or Existing	Qty	Ht (est)
Tree	American Holly	<i>Ilex opaca</i>	E	10	25'
	Northern Spicebush	<i>Lindera benzoin</i>	E	n/a	6'
Groundcover	American Jumpseed	<i>Persicaria virginiana</i>	E	n/a	2'
	Philadelphia Fleabane	<i>Erigeron philadelphicus</i>	E	n/a	6"
Grasses	Broom Sedge	<i>Andropogon virginicus</i>	E	n/a	3'
	Creeping Red Fescue	<i>Festuca rubra</i>	P	n/a	6"

1. The Breach



burningbush



spicebush

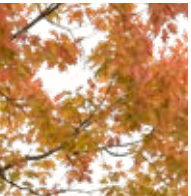


jumpseed



christmas
fern

2. The Alee



white oak



tulip poplar



european
hornbeam



american
hornbeam

3. The Lot



broomsedge



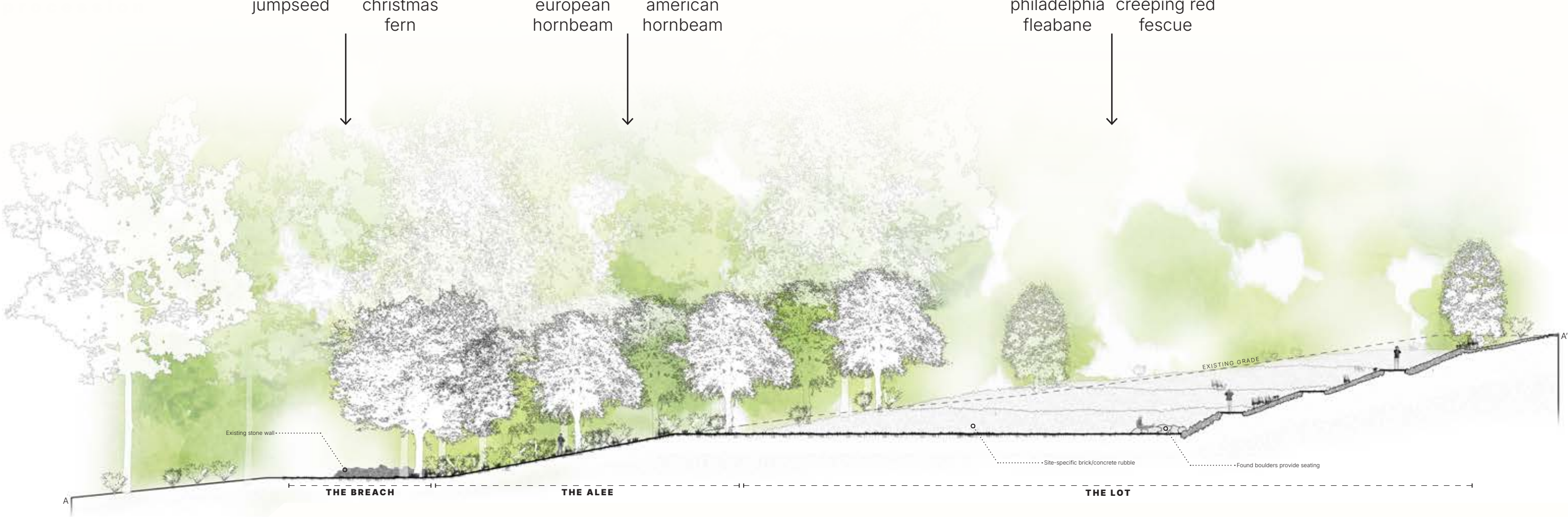
holly



philadelphia
fleabane

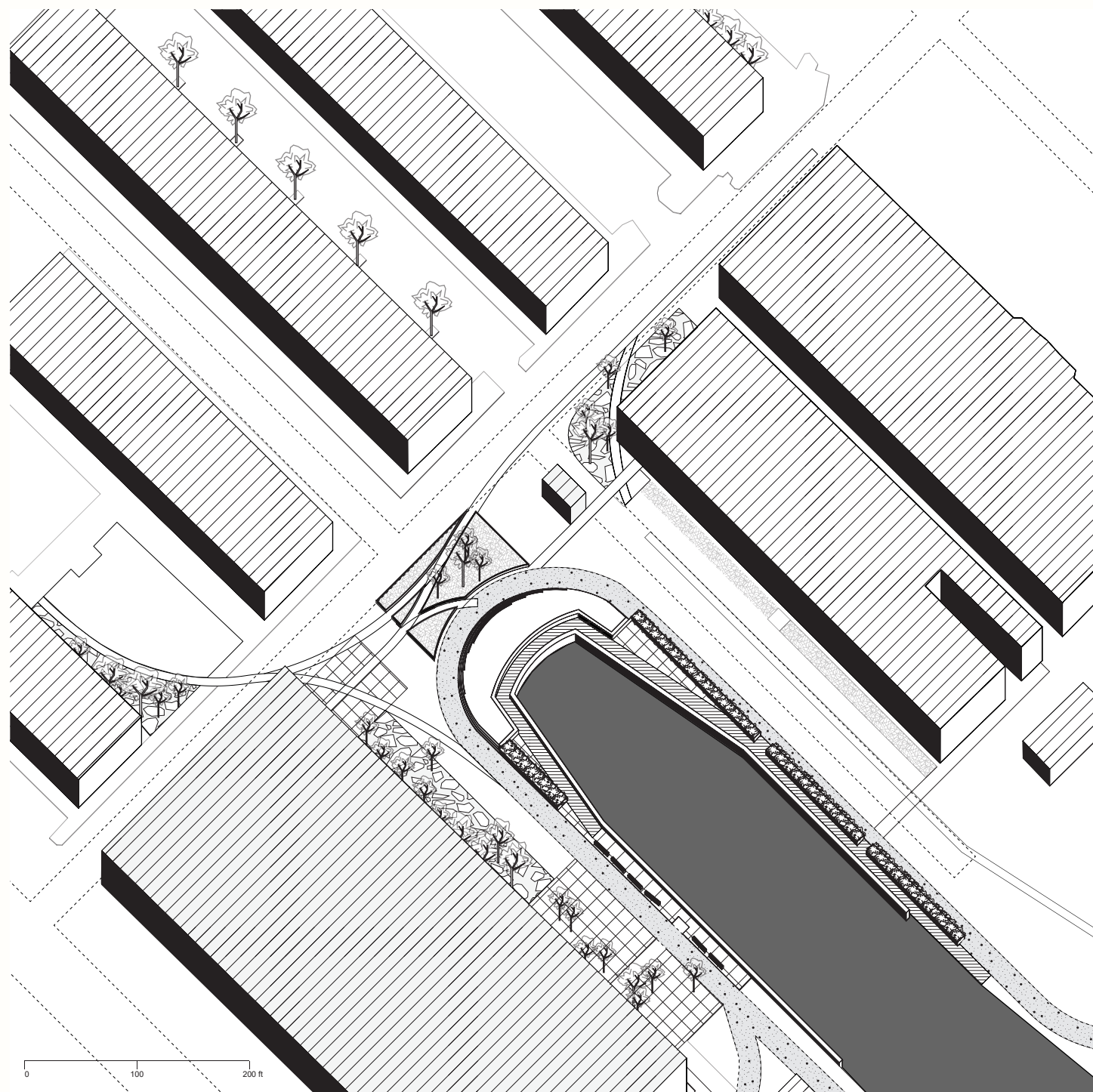


creeping red
fescue



Transect Section





Site Axon

2024

GARDEN STUDY

URBN HQ, Philadelphia, PA
Studio 501

In a comprehensive study of D.I.R.T Studio's URBN Headquarters in the South Philly Navy Yard, I conducted site surveys in order to draw the site in axon and plan. Part of the study was a comic that found humor in the irony of the site: Julie Bargmann's plan used a lot of recycled material, and URBN produces even more waste from fast fashion. Lastly, I made diagrams to understand enclosure, composition, material, as well as the passage of time as understood by the site.

enclosure



transformation 1



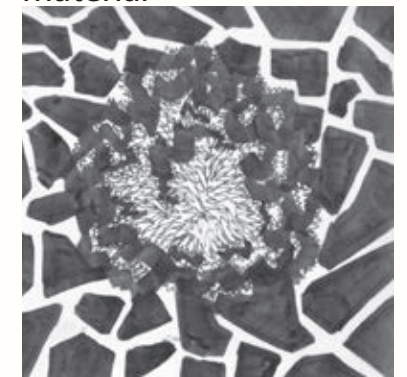
composition



transformation 2



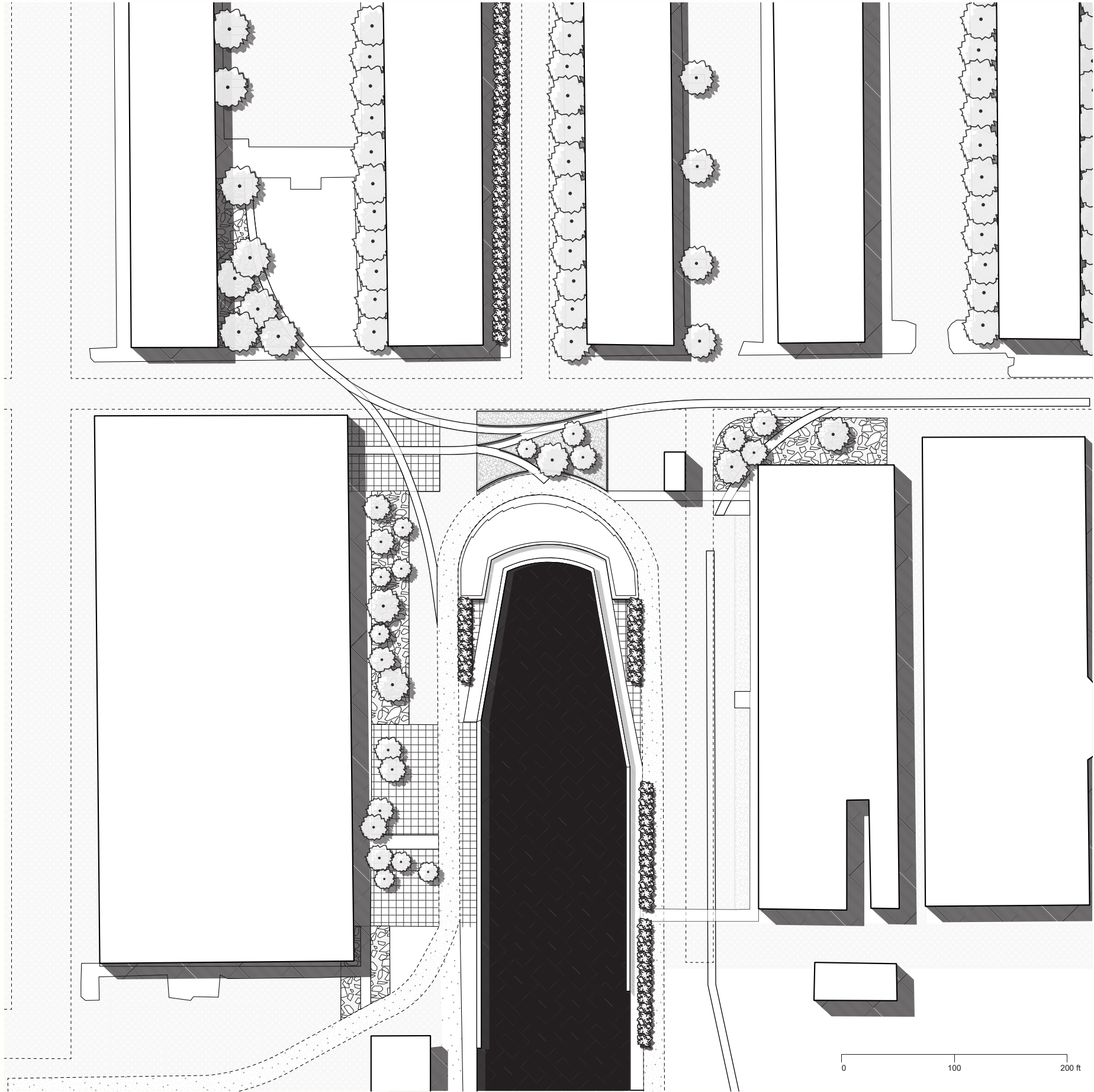
material



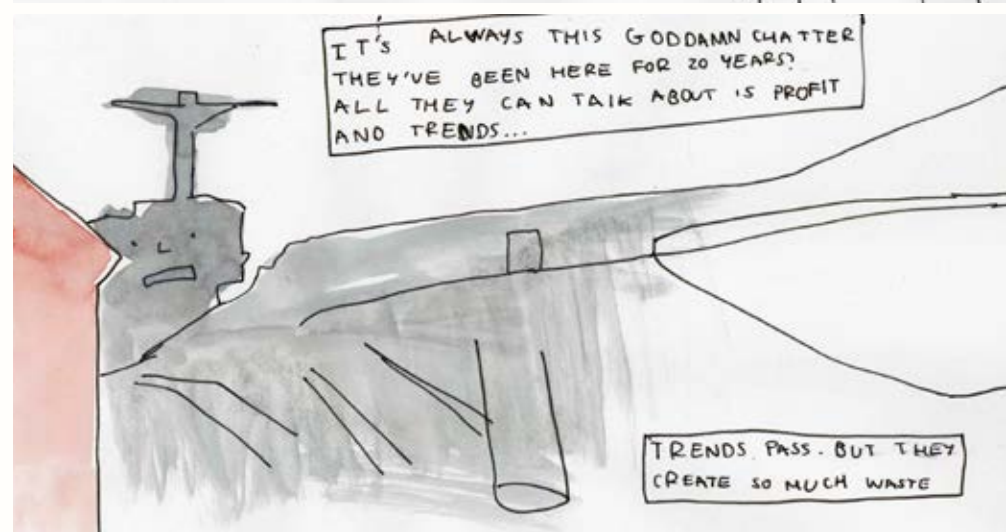
transformation 3



Diagrams
Sharpie/Digital



Site Plan



"Upcycling," watercolor and ink on paper.

A simple model of flour, sugar, and water was traversed using dowel 'feet' by classmates, as demonstrated in the photo on the right. Split into a dry half and a moist half, the model revealed that the impact of footsteps on the wet slope were less severe on the integrity of the landscape. It follows that a healthy hill is likely not a dry hill: in the case of the Wissahickon site, measures should be taken to prevent further erosion.

The model was not invulnerable from disgusting mold, which unfortunately prohibited it from being displayed today.

Erosion Process Model, 2024.
Wood, styrofoam, paper, plaster, flour, sugar, water.



2024
REFORMULATING THE SLOPE

Wissahickon Park, PA
Studio 501

While studying the Wissahickon transect, my project partner and I faced the difficult task of climbing a steep slope to triangulate our trees and create an accurate land survey of the site. A thick layer of deciduous leaves covered the forest floor, and as we sidestepped up the hill, our footsteps pushed the leaves downward, revealing lightly colored dirt, indicative that at least the top layer of soil on our site's hill was quite dry. As I crawled up a particularly steep part of the hill, the very soil gave out, triggering a personal landslide, and I skidded down the hill.

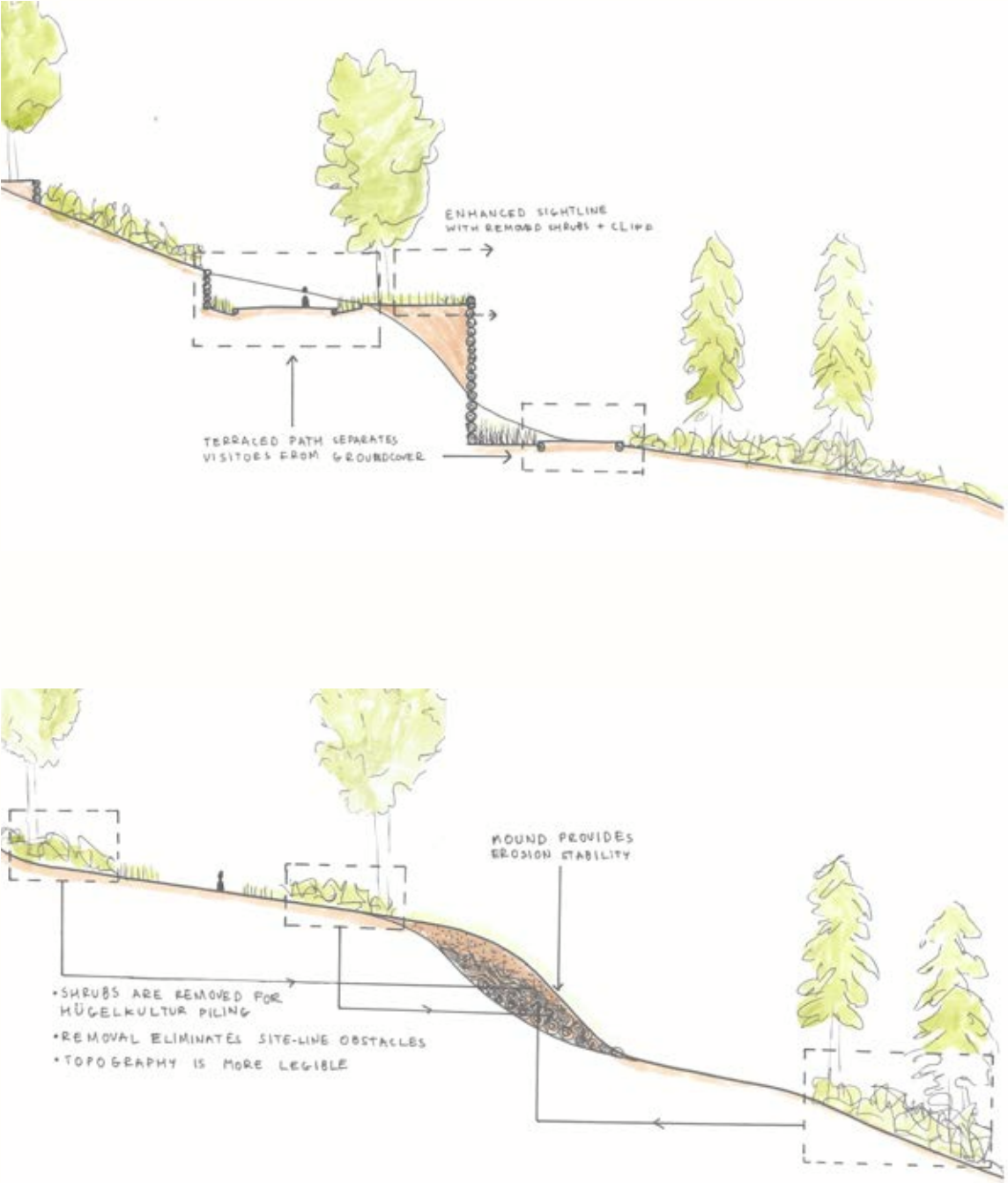
This moment, while comical, came with the realization that the hill was unstable. If it cannot handle my body, what would happen if there was a significant weather event or fallen tree? Might the entire slope be at risk of eroding? Thus, the scope of my design intervention narrowed into an inquisition into the use of sustainable landscape operations to keep people off of vulnerable ground, and reconstruct the slope to properly sustain moisture and build structural integrity.

The designs uses Hugelkultur, a technique of creating 'hill cultures' of layered organic matter, to stabilize and moisten the eroding slope. In tandem, understory vegetation - which currently consists of invasives that block human sightlines and eliminate opportunities for diverse groundcover - is removed in three areas. A retaining wall of logs is implemented to hold the slope in place, and the slope is adjusted to be shallower. The site's parallel paths are subtly raised by just one foot to encourage visitors to stay on the trail while preserving current landscape use cases, and recycled log seating is added to enjoy the improved viewpoints throughout the site.

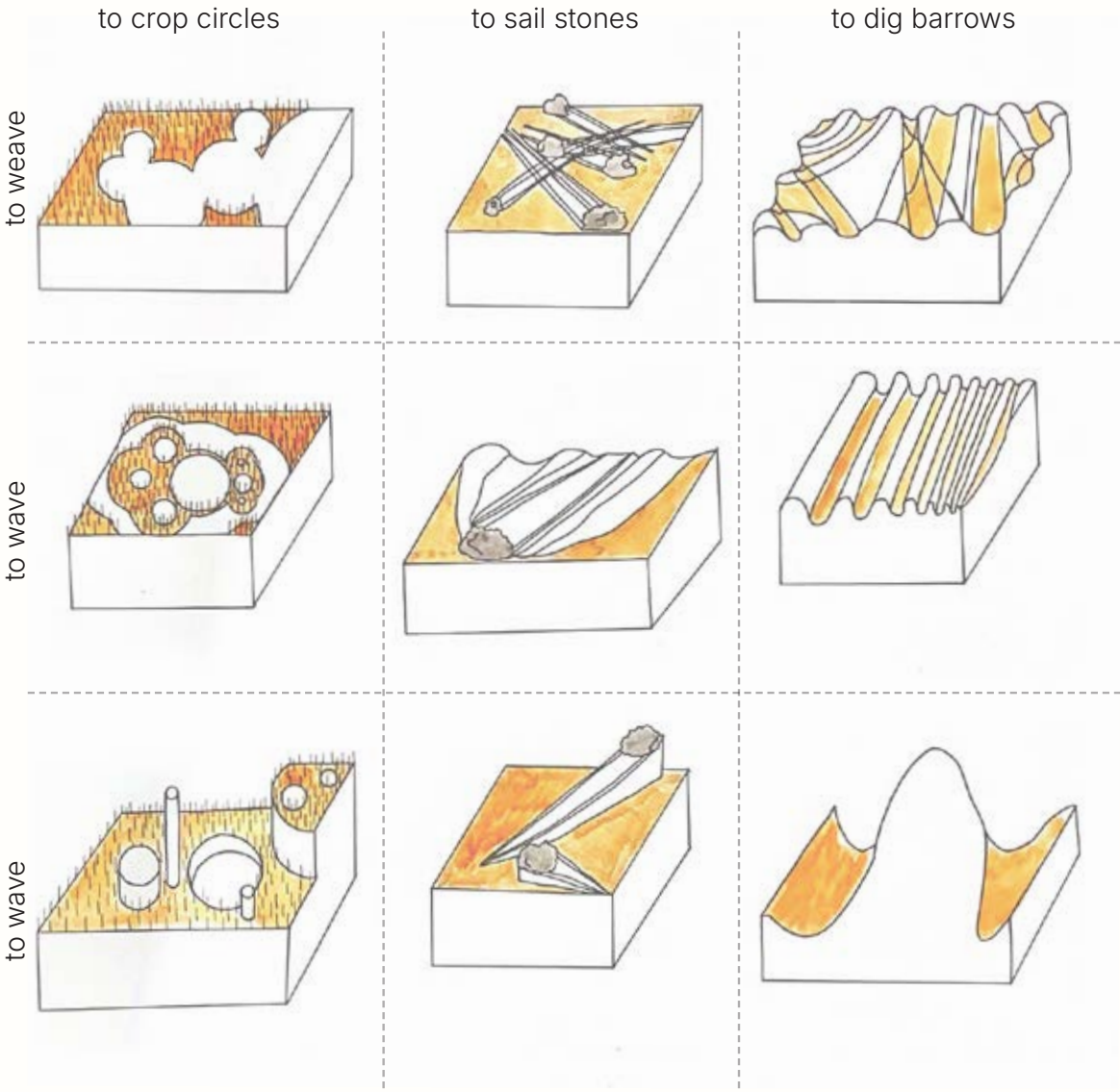


Site Observations + Recommendations

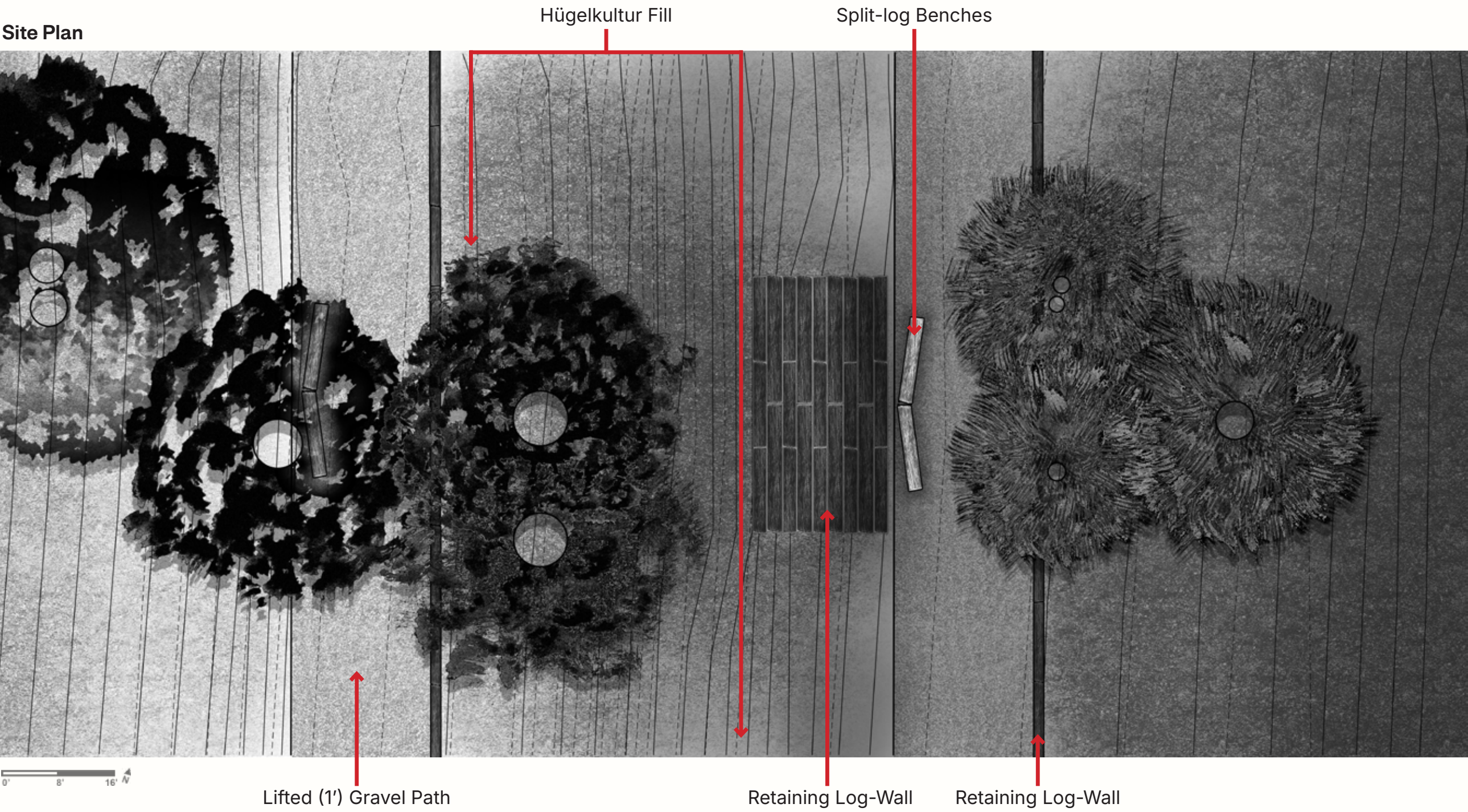


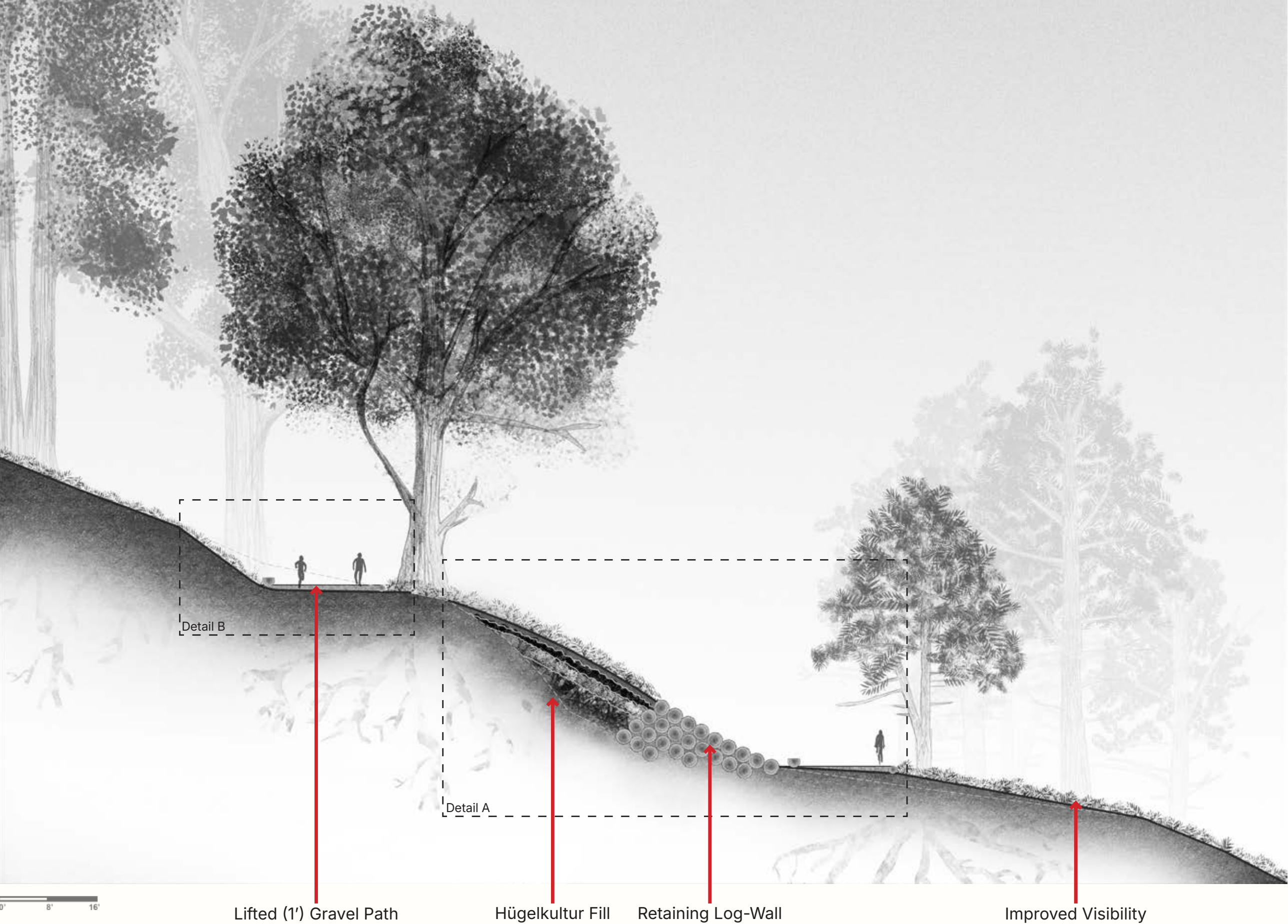


Design Iterations



Landscape Operation Diagrams





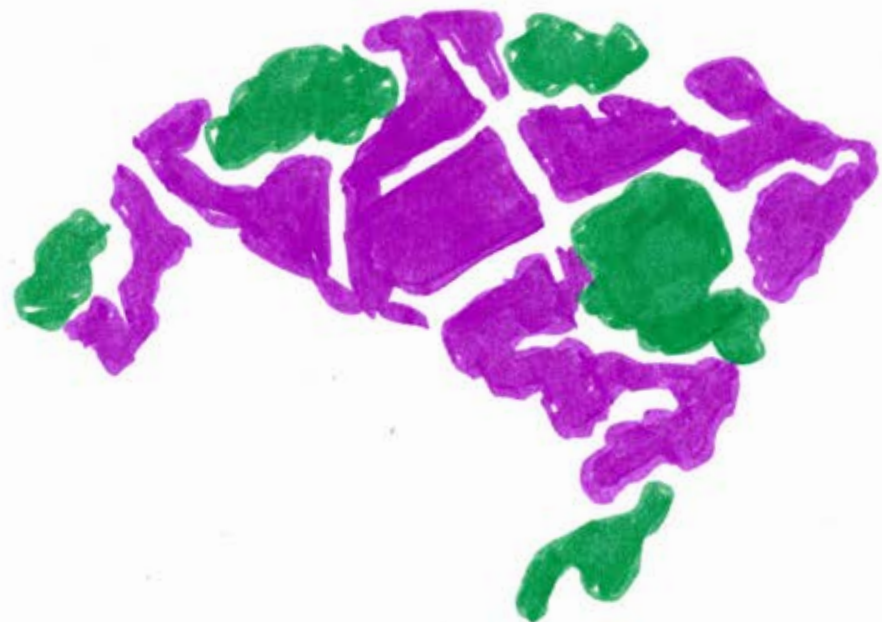
2023

2023

KARST GARDEN PLANTING

Work for Michael Van
Valkenburgh Associates

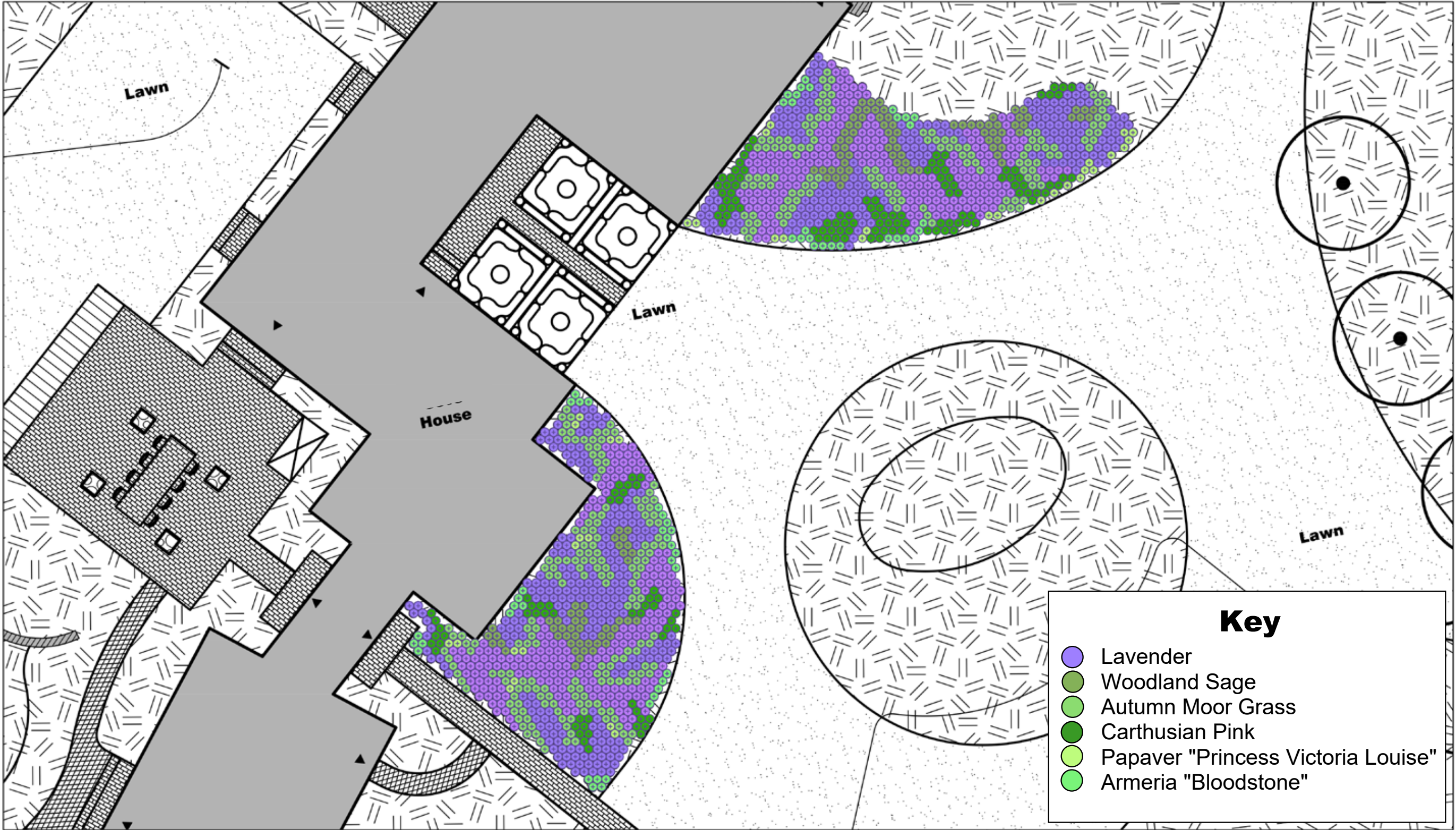
Inspired by karst topography, where plant life permeates limestone in windy striations, I developed a multilayered plant bed full of purple and pink flowers and wavy grasses. I sketched out different variations of karst patterning, then referenced the drawings in AutoCAD to lay out mock plant beds for the client.



Design Sketches

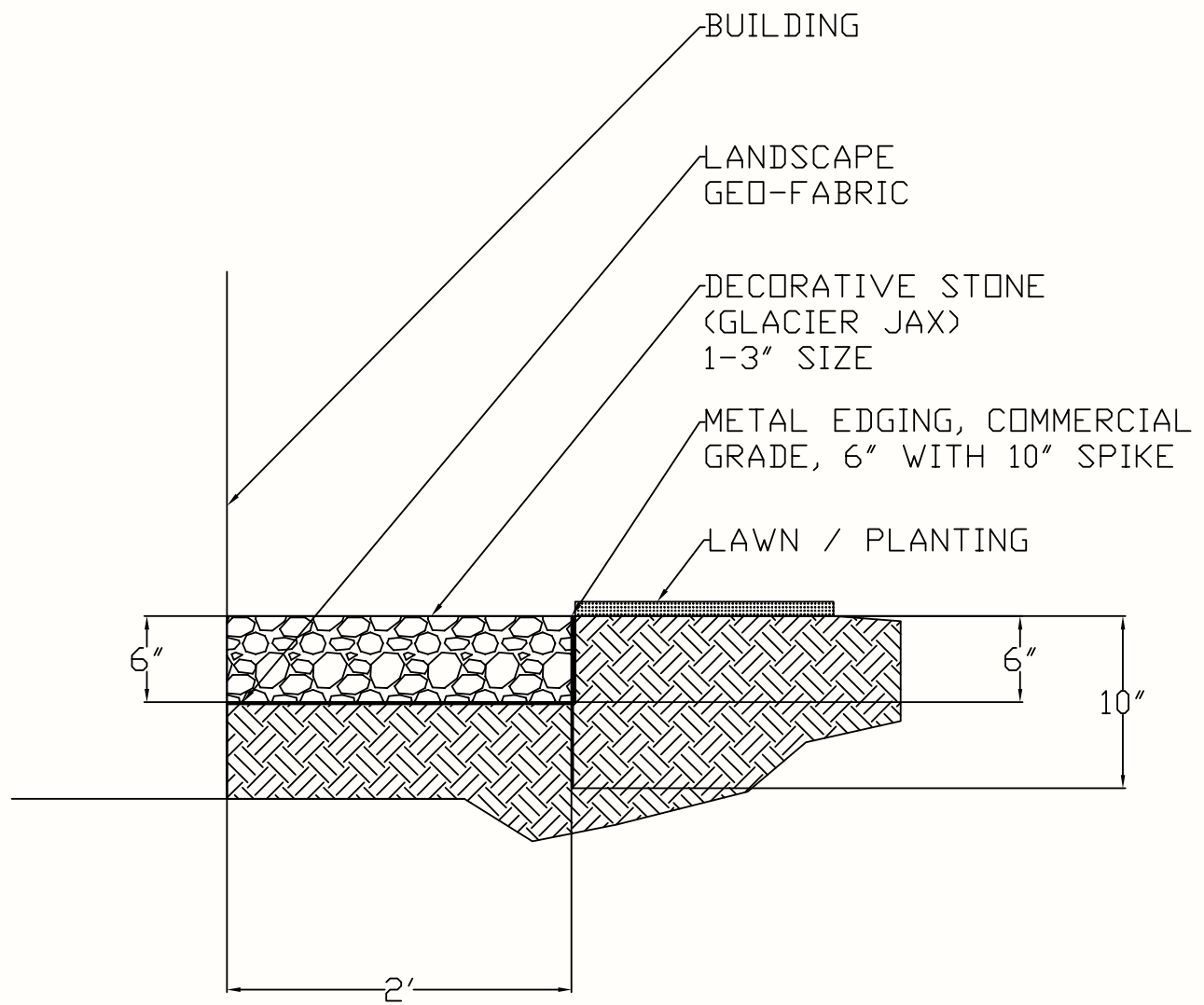


Karst Topography
photo credit: Paul Sanborn



Planting Plan



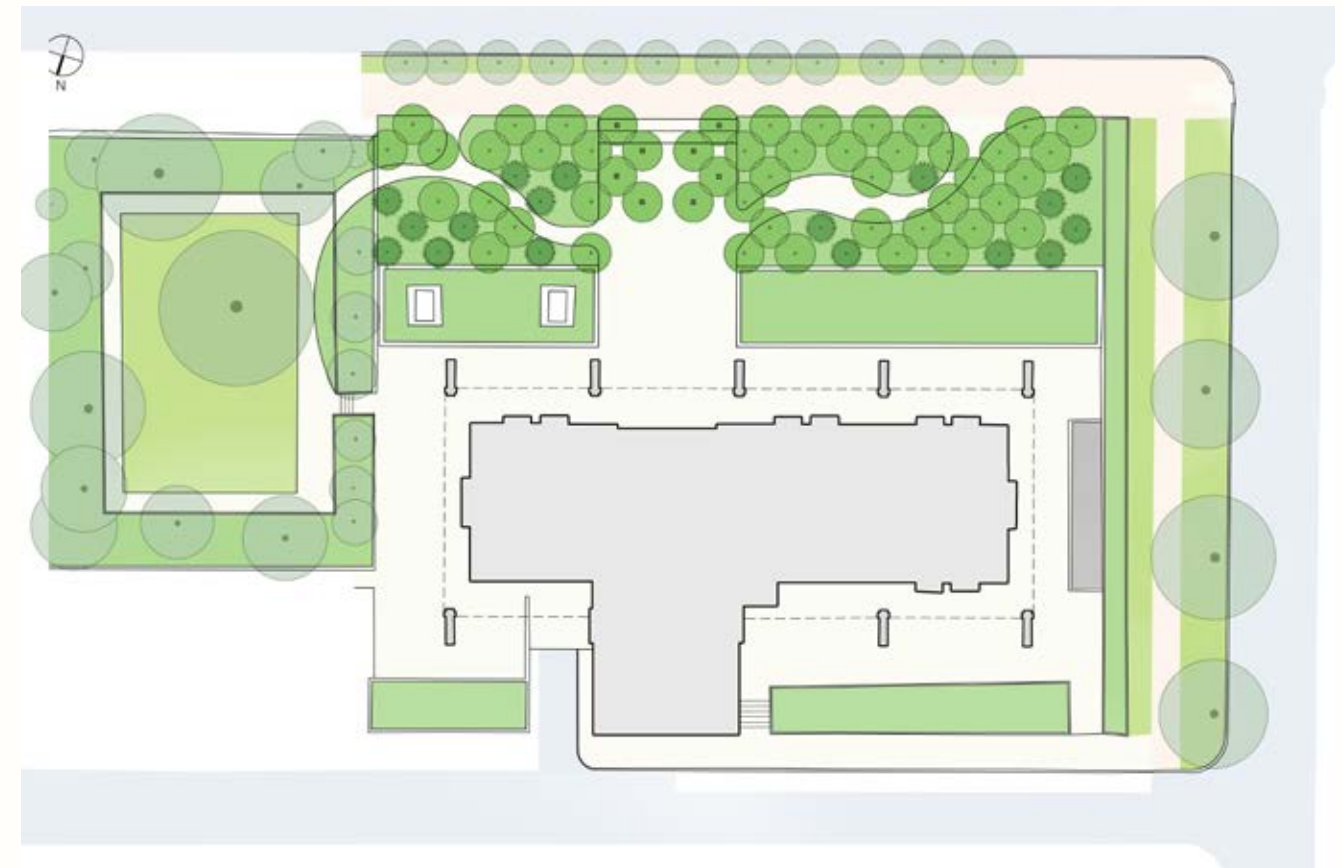


Construction Detailing

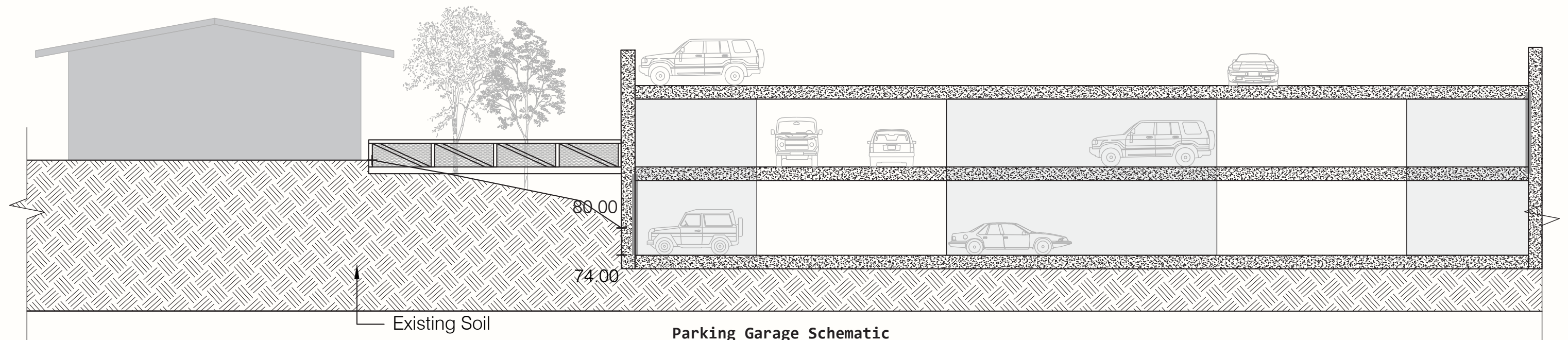
2023

TECHNICAL DRAWING

Work for Michael Van
Valkenburgh Associates



Proposed Planting, Rendered Plan



Parking Garage Schematic

