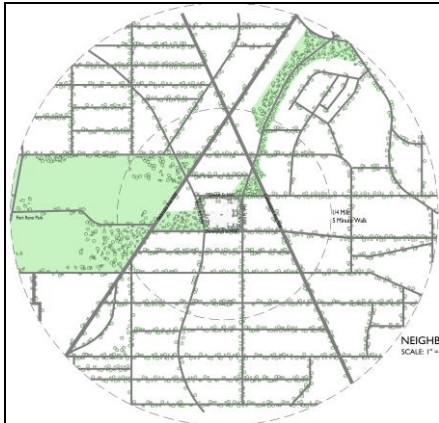


**MURCH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
DESIGN NARRATIVE**

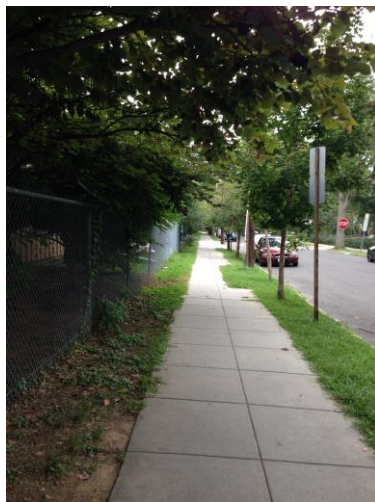
November 10, 2016

Jordan Honeyman Landscape Architecture LLC

School Site: Murch Elementary School is situated between the historic sites of two prominent Civil War defenses that are part of the NPS Fort Circle Parks chain. Ft. Reno Park is located to the west and Ft. DeRussy, in Rock Creek Park, is to the NE. The significant tree canopy that is found along the spine from Ft. Reno, along 36th St. NW to Broad Branch NW and into Rock Creek Park/Ft. DeRussy will be continued through the Murch site with an assortment of species approved by the DC UAF to accommodate existing overhead wires and avoid monoculture.



Streetscape: There are many large existing trees in the public ROW tree strip surrounding the site that will be preserved. There are one or two dominant tree species each on all 4 adjacent streets; however, because of the existence of overhead utility wires, low growing species and species without a central leader will be used to infill bare spaces along the tree strips. The existing street trees are: Davenport St. – Red/sugar maple and Cherry, Reno Road – Willow oak, Ellicot St. – Pin oak and Cherry, 36th St. – Chinese elm. Infill trees include Zelkova, Yoshio cherry, Kwanzan cherry, dogwood and lacebark Elm.



Existing Trees: The site landscape design is configured to preserve as many existing trees as possible. Some of these trees are small and will be moved to other locations within the site plan. Many of the large trees that are on the NW portion of the property are too big to move, and have been incorporated into the design. Tree protection during construction is imperative.



Site Design and Proposed Plantings: Proposed site planting will provide a green context for the new building. This will be primarily accomplished with street trees and existing perimeter trees creating a frame on all four sides with openings at strategic places like entries and walkway access. The zone of native planting that starts from the sidewalk and extends towards the building will create a consistent edge between the public and private perimeter space. Interior plantings will be strategically located to reinforce entry, significant outdoor learning areas and access points and provide shade. Because the site is fairly bare except for the trees, additional new plantings will screen the site from street traffic and noise. The use of low maintenance native and adaptive plantings will offer all season interest and prevent erosion.

Accessible Routes: All pathways on site are accessible. Entry and drop off points are located on all 4 adjacent streets. The previous main entrance from 36th St. is not accessible so a new ADA ramp will be located at the new main entry Davenport St. This 8' wide paved ramp accommodates ADA requirements while the wide steps in this location will handle the large influx of students at drop off and pick up times during the day. A long winding path through the rear site from west to east connects the play structures, soccer field and basketball court to the outdoor learning space and entries from Reno Rd, Ellicot St. and 36th St.

Bluetop Flex Space: There will be permeable Flexipave play area for various activities located in front of the rear entry plaza. This space can be used for outdoor activities, a gathering area, a kickball pitch or just running around space for the students during recess and before and after school. It is adjacent to the basketball court.

Outdoor Learning Areas: Several outdoor learning areas are planned for the site:

- Green Roof Agriculture is located on the cafeteria rooftop. This area can accommodate a large student garden with raised vegetable beds and picnic tables under a large shade structure. An edible garden can ring the perimeter of the space. Habitat for birds and butterflies will be provided. Compost bins and a storage shed are located here. Trees and other plants in colorful containers line this area and will provide shade.
- Outdoor Learning Area can be a Certified Wildlife Habitat and Monarch Habitat garden. The garden will attract birds and butterflies. Paved areas will be provided accommodating picnic tables. The paved area contains a labyrinth and the obelisk that stood on the old school grounds. A garden shed is located also here. A winding pathway around the garden allows students to observe pollinators at work. Illustrative signs could be set up to explain pollinator activity.

- Prek-K Outdoor Learning Area is special outdoor classroom for the very youngest students adjacent to their interior classrooms. A small paved area and artificial turf contains a reading nook and activity areas. The space is surrounded by a garden containing herbs, flowers and edible plants.
- Learning Area adjacent to the media center encourages passive activities. Flowering trees, some of which will be transplanted from other areas of the site, will shade a large paved area with seat walls. Recycled memorial bricks will be used for the lead walk to this area.
- Storm Water Management/Bioretenion areas are located off Davenport St and Reno Road. Waterwise habitat for birds and butterflies will be provided through selective native planting. Low decking and boardwalks will be located adjacent to these areas for wildlife and pollinator viewing.

Play Equipment: Existing play equipment is in good shape and is heavily used, but there are repairs that would need to be made to keep them in place, so it is recommended that all play equipment be demolished. A total of 3 structures will be provided. Requirements for new play equipment will be coordinated with the SIT and DCPS. The 2-5 year old structure (approx.. 963 SF) will be located on the cafeteria green roof, adjacent to the Prek-K classrooms. The contiguous play area for ages 6-10 (approx.. 862-2200 SF) will be located in the existing rear yard location adjacent to the outdoor learning areas.



Site Furniture/Seating: There are numerous places to sit in the existing play yard and there will be a comparable number of seating options in the new scheme. Numerous benches and picnic tables will be will also be arranged around the site, in the outdoor learning area, in the covered pavilion and on the cafeteria roof. Bleachers will line the soccer field and picnic tables will be located on the cafeteria roof. Trash and recycling containers are located throughout the site. Bike racks are located at key entrances on all streets surrounding the site.

Covered Pavilion: A covered pavilion is located in the rear play space. This structure is positioned so that all the play equipment and the basketball and soccer courts are visible from its location.

Green Roofs: There are several green roofs on the site that will act as storm water management facilities. These will include a green roof area on the cafeteria roof and extensive green roofs on the buildings.

Sports facilities: A U-10 soccer field (105'x150' with 10' offsets) will be provided along with a high school size basketball court (50'x34'-6") with 4 goals. The court will be surrounded by a running track. Kickball pitch markings in the soccer field will measure 50' square.

MURCH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS IN THE PUBLIC SPACE NARRATIVE

November 10, 2016

Jordan Honeyman Landscape Architecture LLC

There are number of landscape elements in the public space at Murch Elementary School. New street trees including Zelkova, Yoshio cherry, Kwanzan cherry, dogwood and lacebark Elm will be planted in the tree strips surrounding the site on all four sides. In accordance with DC UFA requirements, since the existing street tree roots are taking up maximum space in the tree strips, structural soil will be placed in the new tree pits and under the sidewalk where new street trees are planted. This will necessitate reconstruction of the public sidewalk on Ellicott, Davenport and 36th Streets in these areas.

Groups of bike racks adjacent to the sidewalk extend into the public space on all 4 streets surrounding the site.

A wood observation deck and wood walkways that lead to the bioretention garden are adjacent to the sidewalk and extend into the public space on Reno Rd. and Davenport St.

Failing retaining walls adjacent to the sidewalk in the public space will be reconstructed on Reno Rd. and 36th Street. Material TBD by DC DGSDCPS.

A small amount of the main permeable entry walk on Davenport St. is adjacent to the sidewalk in the public space.