

The Master Plan Principles

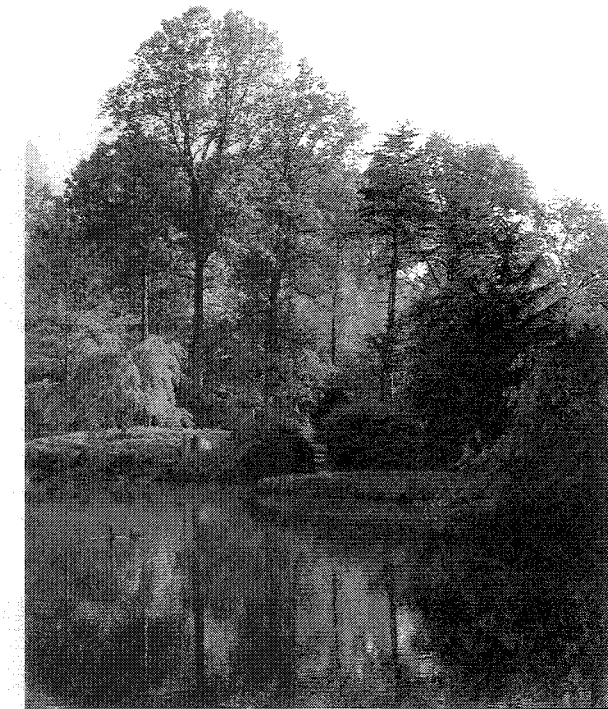
Eleven Master Plan Principles were identified during the original master planning process, defined during work sessions with key stakeholders, and outlined in the 2001 Draft Master Plan. These Principles remain valid today, and are as follow:

- Maintain visitors' sense of ownership by respecting the scale of the Gardens, and by renewing, not replacing, existing gardens.
- Clarify pedestrian circulation by clustering visitor service facilities near parking, and strengthening visual and physical connections throughout the Gardens.
- Reinforce the Visitors Center entrance as the primary entrance to Brookside Gardens.
- Create a garden experience that is universally accessible.
- Provide a suitable location for revenue-generating events such as weddings and conferences, in a garden setting which is clearly integral to Brookside Gardens, but in which event activity can be separated to reduce its impact on general garden usage.
- Provide parking adequate to the needs of both garden visitors and event participants through minimal expansion of the main parking lot and staff parking area, the addition of overflow parking areas, and a program of remote parking during periods of peak visitation.
- Provide sufficient and appropriate propagation, maintenance, and support facilities through reorganization and expansion in their current location.

- More thoroughly integrate water, streams and stream valleys, the Gude Garden ponds, Aquatic Garden ponds, and Formal Garden water features into the garden experience.
- Employ sound, sustainable design practices when designing and implementing the new and renewed features of the Master Plan. These include the reuse of existing facilities and materials, using recycled materials, minimizing the amount of impervious surface, using innovative stormwater management techniques, and native plants.
- Realize all improvements while maintaining a ratio of 1/3 developed to 2/3 undeveloped land within Wheaton Regional Park, without a net loss in tree cover. Trees lost due to development will be replaced at a 2:1 ratio per acre.
- Establish a written set of Site and Architectural Design Guidelines to direct and ensure the quality of future projects at Brookside. Guidelines should describe the scale and garden and architectural styles appropriate for Brookside, as well as the quality and type of materials recommended for use. The Design Guidelines should also establish a review process and entity, such as a Design Review Board, by which garden and architectural projects are reviewed beyond those required by law.

In response to the Planning Board review, a twelfth principle has been formulated during the Master Plan revision, and is as follows:

- Make complete use of earlier investments by phasing development of the property. Maintain installed buildings and infrastructure, along with required improvements, throughout a complete life cycle prior to phasing out.



THE MASTER PLAN AS REVISED

Visitors Center Renewal and New Conservatory

The Master Plan regards the area surrounding the Visitors Center as the heart of Brookside Gardens, playing the primary role in guiding, informing, and serving visitors. The Plan recommends ultimately replacing the existing, aged Conservatory with a new central Conservatory, integrally connected to the Visitors Center. This relocation, from the eastern edge of the property to the site center, will resolve a myriad problems created by the split facility; it will consolidate visitor services, eliminate the need for multiple gift shops, remove a failing structure from the flood plain, and facilitate the development of the new wetland garden. An integral part of Brookside, the proposed Conservatory addition will be an exciting, flexible and universally accessible space attached to the Visitors Center. The expanded facility will not only bolster the services already available in the Visitors Center, it will also furnish the link currently missing between the Visitors Center and the Formal Gardens.

The Master Plan also suggests that a permanent tent site be located to the north of the Auditorium to provide a fixed location for outdoor events. Currently outdoor events are held at a number of locations at Brookside, impacting garden use by the general public. The proposed tent site would take the form of terraces in the lawn area which currently slopes down from the Visitors Center to the Aquatic Gardens. These grass terraces would become an integral element of the Gardens, allowing daily use outside of scheduled events. The tent site can incorporate permanent footings for a custom designed tent structure owned by Brookside Gardens or, alternatively, can allow for standard tents to be set up by outside vendors. Service access to the tent site and events space is proposed along a sunken path to the north of the Auditorium, preserving views from the Auditorium, and along a retro-fitted path to the south of the Visitors Center.

The Visitors Center is a significant building at the heart of Brookside, however in its current form it fails to serve the Gardens' needs in a number of ways:

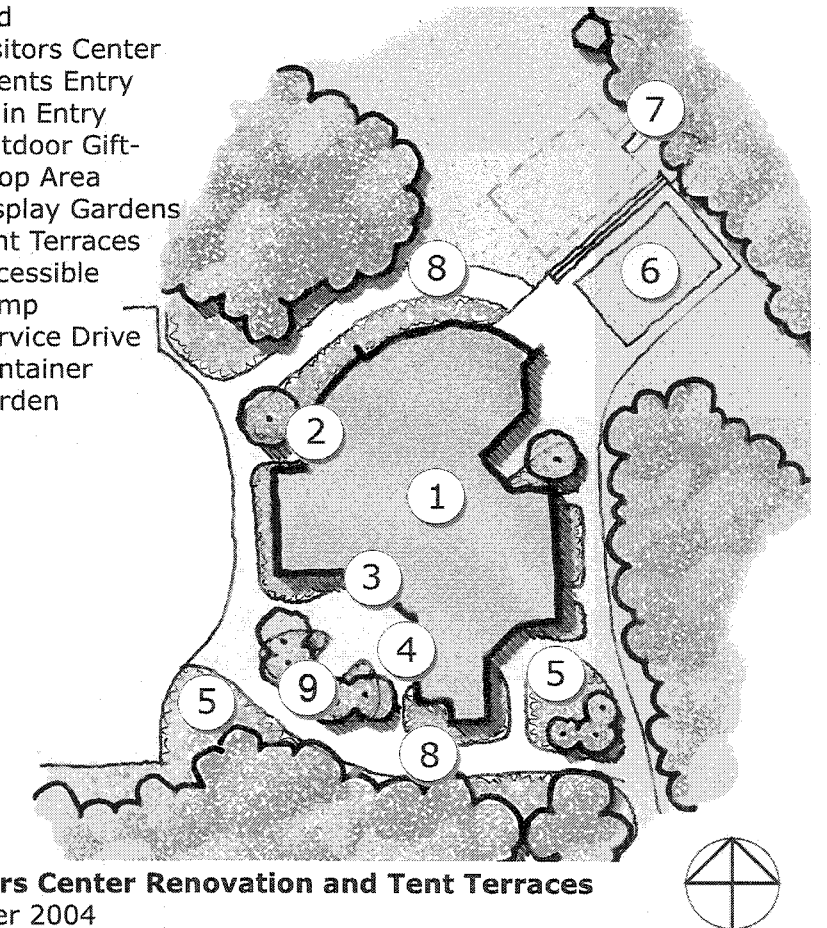
- The two entries and confusing interior circulation lead to a break down in way-finding for visitors.
- The intended exit path into the Gardens themselves is unclear, again contributing to a confusing experience.
- There is a lack of storage for the entire building, and in particular the Gift Shop, which does not have enough floor space or an outdoor sales area.
- The auditorium has no vestibule space and the entry location and size make circulation difficult given the increased demand for events and use by outside groups.

Improvement of the Visitors Center to address these issues is to occur in two stages. Near-term renovation of the Visitors Center will improve the Garden's ability to both welcome the public and host special events. This renovation creates two distinct sections of the Center; one for events, and one for staff and daily visitors' activities, which can continue undisturbed when an event is scheduled for the Center.

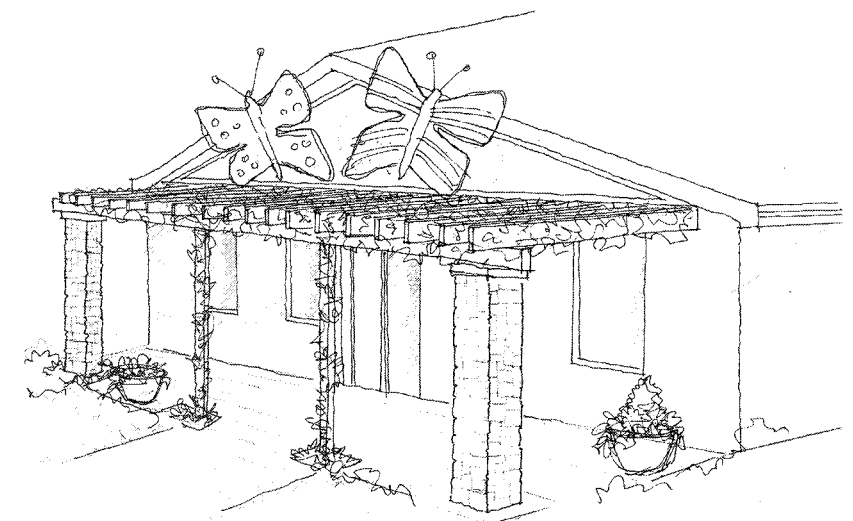
The renovation will create a distinct event-focused entry and lobby on the north-west side of the Visitors Center, an elegant pre-events space leading to the existing Auditorium, and a new service drive. At the same time, the public will be invited into the Center's primary entrance on the south-west side of the building, and then be better oriented to garden walkways. Furthermore, the near-term reorganization of the Visitors Center prepares the way for the future new Conservatory.

Legend

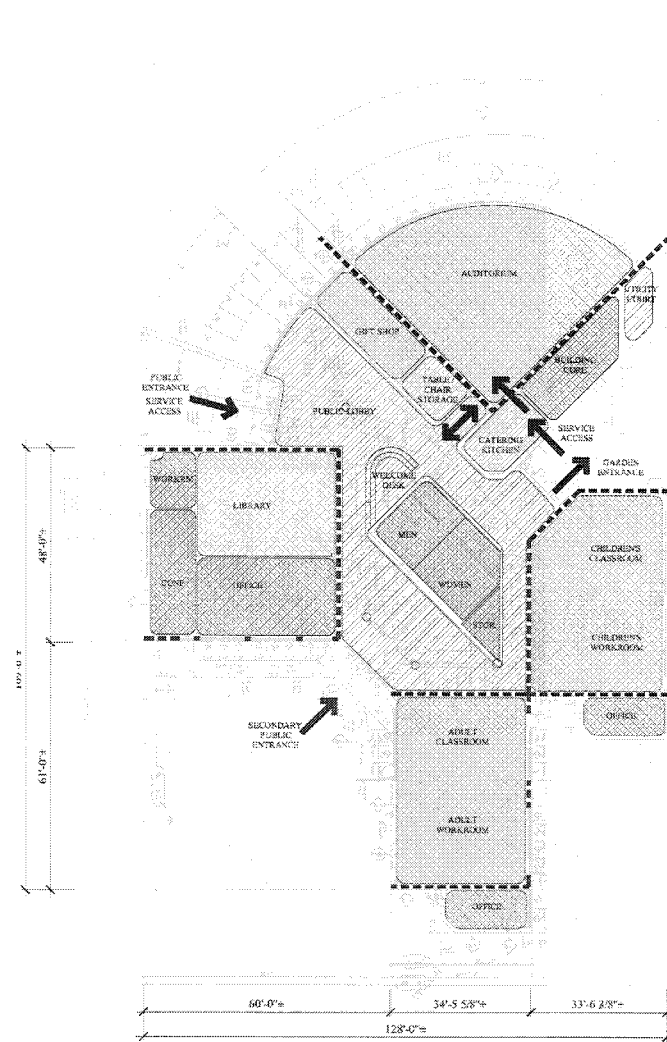
- 1 - Visitors Center
- 2 - Events Entry
- 3 - Main Entry
- 4 - Outdoor Gift-Shop Area
- 5 - Display Gardens
- 6 - Tent Terraces
- 7 - Accessible Ramp
- 8 - Service Drive
- 9 - Container Garden



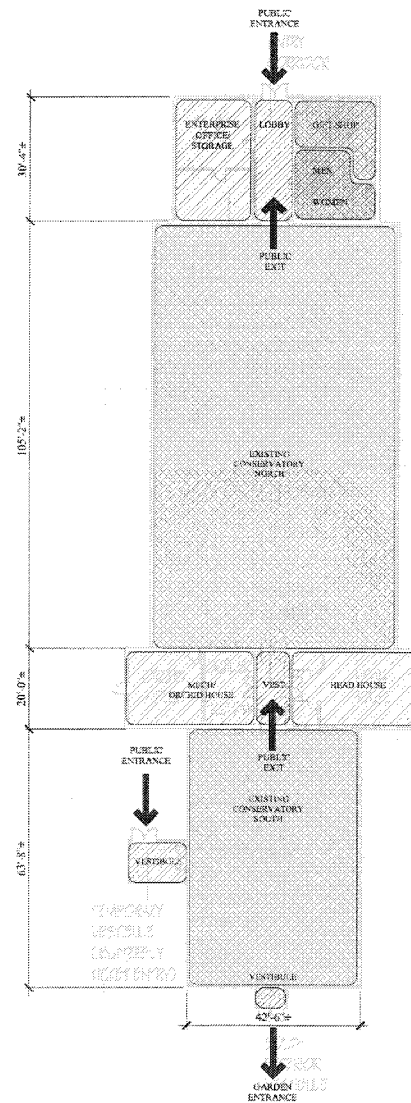
Visitors Center Renovation and Tent Terraces
October 2004
Not to Scale



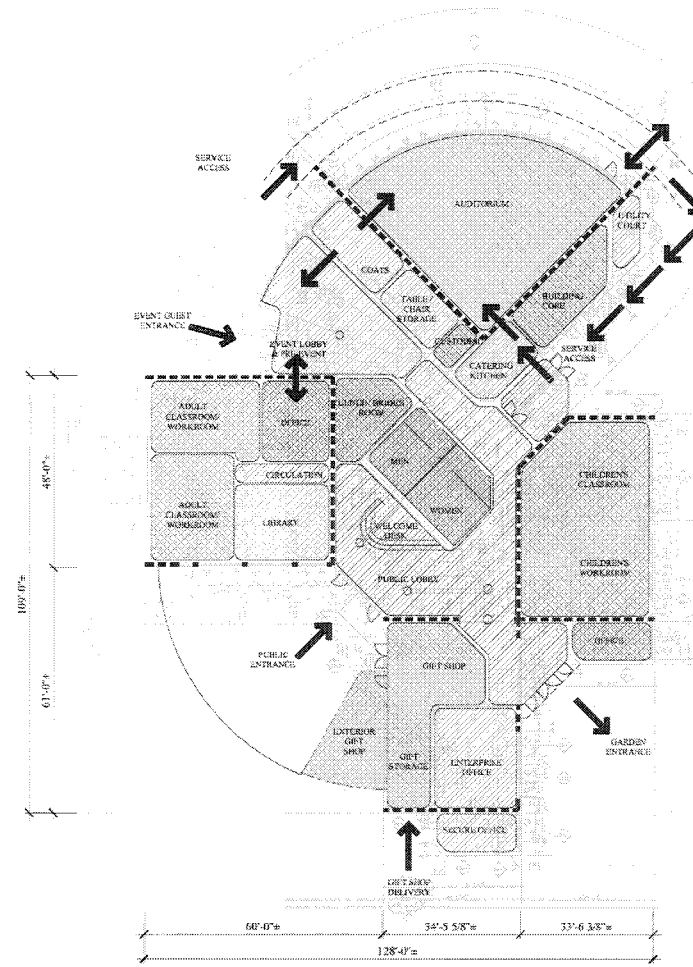
Sketch of Conservatory Improvements



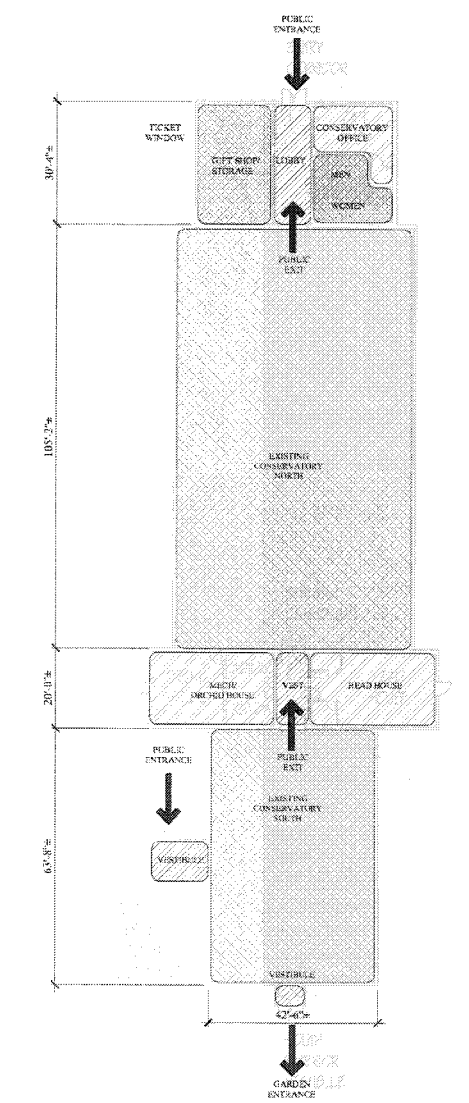
VISITORS CENTER



CONSERVATORY



VISITORS CENTER



CONSERVATORY

EXISTING

October 2004



- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

NEAR TERM

October 2004



- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |