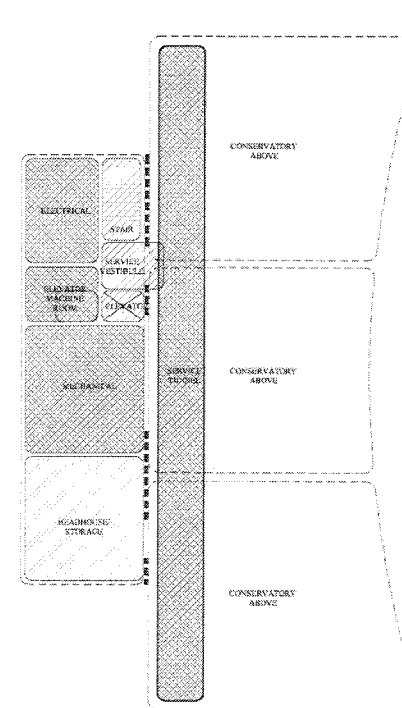
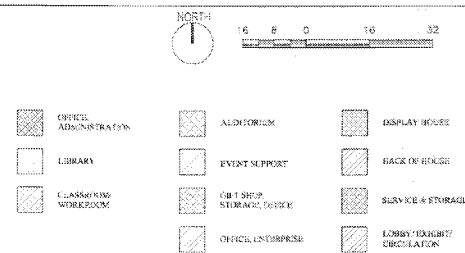


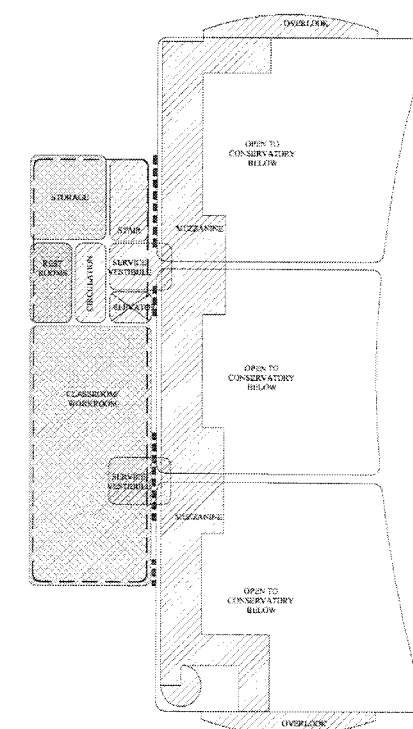
VISITORS CENTER & CONSERVATORY

LONG TERM
October 2004

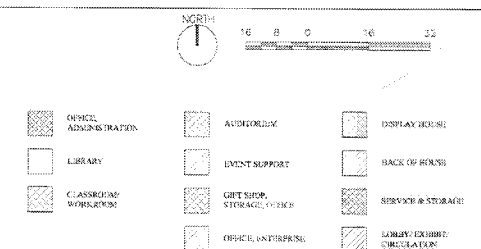


CONSERVATORY ADDITION -
BASEMENT

LONG TERM
October 2004



CONSERVATORY ADDITION -
SECOND FLOOR / MEZZANINE OPTION



Native Wetland Garden

The relocation of the Conservatory to the Visitors Center hub will provide a large area of land to be developed as a new garden in the north-east portion of Brookside Gardens. This move also provides the opportunity to recapture garden area and improve stormwater management for Brookside.

The site of the existing Conservatory is near the confluence of the streams that define Brookside's edge and falls within the 100-year flood plain. Storm water management (SWM) facilities do not exist for this area of the Garden, as it was developed prior to current regulations. The 2001 Draft Master Plan enlarged the existing SWM facility (the Aquatic Garden pond at the north entrance to the Garden) to accommodate proposed new construction and created a new SWM facility near the proposed Event House. The proposed Native Wetland Garden would replace that facility and should be designed to provide stormwater management through innovative techniques, in addition to providing a new garden for visitors' education and enjoyment.

The Master Plan therefore recommends transforming this low-lying area into a Native Wetland Garden. The new garden and associated Forest Boardwalk Loop will provide a link, both physically and through interpreted landscape, to the Brookside Nature Center. The Garden will also enhance native tree planting in this area, and create a fitting terminus for the new formal Water Gardens, which transition to more natural forms as they cascade down the hill from the new Conservatory.

The garden could feature wetland plants native to the region, showcasing the complex nature of plant communities as they transition from dry conditions, through saturated soils, to submergent vegetation. An extension of the existing boardwalk should

be introduced to provide a loop through the wetland and forest areas. A series of boardwalk platforms are recommended, including one at the pedestrian entry to the Nature Center, as shown in the 2001 Draft Master Plan, to provide a place for welcoming visitors, orientation, and interpretation.

Following the relocation of the Conservatory, it is proposed that a Garden House structure, which takes advantage of the existing utilities in this location, be provided in the north-eastern part of Brookside. The Garden House will provide rest rooms, shelter, and orientation information for visitors, as well as storage space for staff. This proposal assumes that the review agencies will allow construction within the floodplain because it represents continued (grandfathered) public use within the footprint of the former conservatory building. In addition to the above functions, a Café may be included in the Garden House.

The Garden House could incorporate a shaded outdoor terrace which would overlook the proposed Native Wetland Garden. Visitors wishing to consume a picnic, or coffee and sweets in the beautiful surrounds of the Garden, could be given this opportunity; at the same time, the Garden House Café could provide Brookside with a chance to generate revenue from the provision of food in the Gardens.

If the Café is added, a variety of management options may be considered by Brookside Gardens. It could become a Garden enterprise function, purchasing pre-prepared snacks. Alternatively, the Café space could be leased out to a business selling a variety of food on the premises on a daily basis. The Café may also be used at limited times or only for special events such as organized morning teas, or on certain days of the week or month.

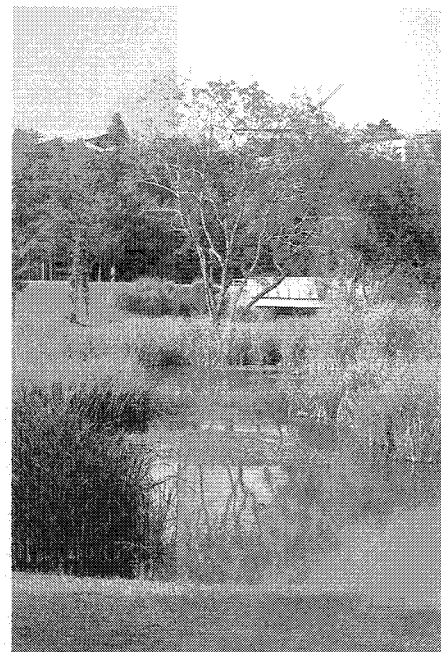
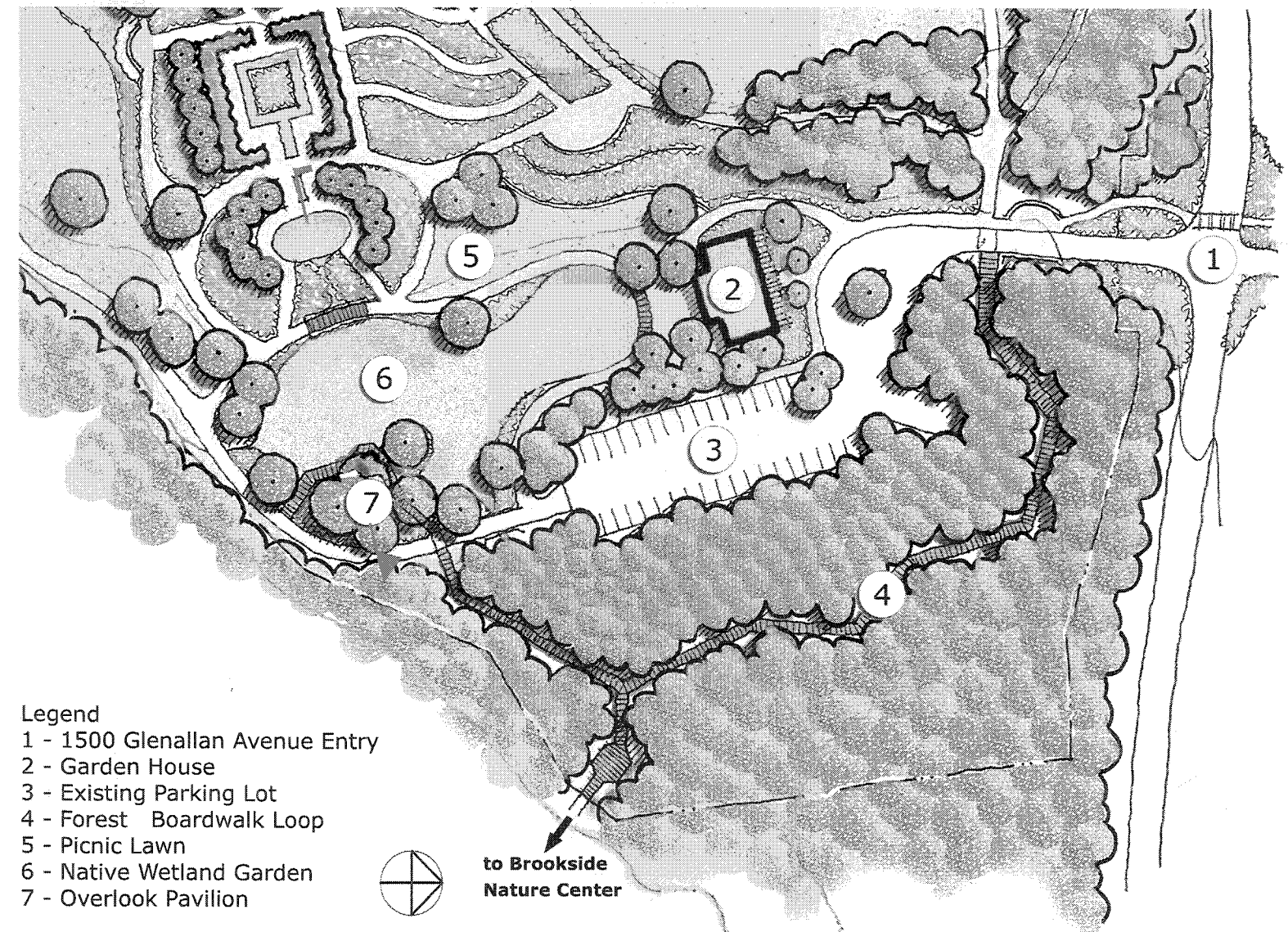
The 1500 Glenallan Avenue entry to the Native Wetland is envisioned as a secondary access point to Brookside. The 2001 Draft Master Plan recommended that renovations of the existing gate be undertaken to de-emphasize its scale so that this entry does not appear to be the main entrance to Brookside Gardens, as it once was. The Master Plan retains this concept and proposes an entry design more appropriate to the Wetland Garden. Renovations might include removing the precast panels and the light fixtures from the top of the pillars, reducing the size of these pillars, and adding signs identifying the Native Wetland Garden and redirecting the general public to the main entry. More natural and native planting should be added to soften the gate and fencing and to provide an appropriate entrance experience.

The Master Plan suggests that the current parking lot on the eastern side of the Gardens be retained to allow for visitor parking and overflow event parking, when required. Four parking spaces will be lost to provide a turnaround and drop-off space in front of the Garden House, reducing the number of spaces from 39 to 35. It is proposed that the parking area be retrofitted to incorporate sustainable design practices such as recycled materials and permeable paving. Especially important in areas adjacent to wetlands and streams, such techniques will help to reduce and filter stormwater runoff and recharge ground water. The Gate House proposed in the Draft Master Plan along the entry drive from Glenallan Avenue is also retained. The Gate House will be used to guide people for events and occasions when the lot is used for overflow parking.

This long term vision for the eastern side of Brookside will bring about a transformation of this part of the Gardens. While the new Conservatory will help to concentrate visitor activities at the hub of the Gardens, this site will be returned to a sustainable and educational native garden, providing visitors with a place in which to walk, learn, or simply relax, and contemplate the environment. The eastern part of the Gardens will create a chance for escape while also providing shelter and sustenance. The proposed native wetland will reaffirm Brookside's connection to the streams which flow at its perimeters, enhancing the theme of water throughout the Gardens, and celebrating the plants unique to this region.



Conceptual Sketch: Section along Formal Garden Axis, through Wetland Garden
October 2004, Not to Scale



Examples of Native Wetlands

Native Wetland Garden
October 2004
Not to Scale