

LANDMARKS COMMISSION APPLICATION

LC

Complete all sections of this application, making sure to note the requirements on the accompanying checklist (reverse).

If you need an interpreter, translator, materials in alternate formats or other accommodations to access these forms, please call (608) 266-4635

City of Madison
Planning Division
126 S Hamilton St
PO Box 2985
Madison, WI 53701-2985
(608) 266-4635



1. LOCATION

Project Address: 614 E. Gorham St. (James Madison Park); including, 300 (Gates of Heaven), 622 1/2 (Hoover Bathhouse), 640 (Connor House), 646 (Collins House), 704 (William's Dora Collins House), 720 (Lincoln School)) Aldermanic District: 2

2. PROJECT

Project Title/Description: James Madison Park Master Plan

This is an application for: (check all that apply)

☒ Alteration/Addition to a building in a Local Historic District or Designated Landmark (specify)**:

☒ Mansion Hill ☐ Third Lake Ridge ☐ First Settlement
☐ University Heights ☐ Marquette Bungalows ☐ Landmark

☐ Land Division/Combination in a Local Historic District or to Designated Landmark Site (specify)**:

☐ Mansion Hill ☐ Third Lake Ridge ☐ First Settlement
☐ University Heights ☐ Marquette Bungalows ☐ Landmark

☐ Demolition

☒ Alteration/Addition to a building adjacent to a Designated Landmark

☐ Variance from the Historic Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 41)

☐ Landmark Nomination/Rescission of Historic District Nomination/Amendment
(Please contact the Historic Preservation Planner for specific Submission Requirements.)

☐ Other (specify):

3. APPLICANT

Applicant's Name: Zia Brucaya Company: Urban Assets
Address: 807 E. Johnson Street, Madison WI 53703
Telephone: 608-819-6566 x3 Email: Zia@urbanassetsconsulting.com

Property Owner (if not applicant): City of Madison Parks Division
Address: 210 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Rm 104 Madison WI 53703

Property Owner's Signature: Sarah Lerner

Digitally signed by Sarah Lerner
Date: 2018.09.17 08:36:28 -05'00'

Date: _____

Legistar #:

DATE STAMP

CITY OF MADISON

SEP 17 2018

11:53

Planning & Community
& Economic Development

Preliminary Zoning Review

Zoning Staff Initial:

Date: / /

DPCE USE ONLY

NOTICE REGARDING LOBBYING ORDINANCE: If you are seeking approval of a development that has over 40,000 square feet of non-residential space, or a residential development of over 10 dwelling units, or if you are seeking assistance from the City with a value of \$10,000 (including grants, loans, TIF or similar assistance), then you likely are subject to Madison's lobbying ordinance (Sec. 2.40, MGO). You are required to register and report your lobbying. Please consult the City Clerk's Office for more information. Failure to comply with the lobbying ordinance may result in fines.

4. APPLICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS (see checklist on reverse)

All applications must be filed by 12:00pm on the submission date with the Preservation Planner, the Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development, Planning Division, located at 126 S Hamilton Street. Applications submitted after the submission date or incomplete applications will be postponed to the next scheduled filing time. Submission deadlines can be viewed here: https://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/planning/documents/LC_Meeting_Schedule_Dates.pdf



September 17, 2018

Landmarks Commission
City of Madison
126 S. Hamilton St.
Madison, WI 53701

LETTER OF INTENT: INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION – JAMES MADISON PARK MASTER PLAN

To whom it may concern,

This letter outlines a request for informational review of the proposed James Madison Park master plan. The following entities comprise the project team:

- Client: City of Madison Parks Division
- Landscape Architecture: Saiki Design
- Architecture: Destree Design Architects
- Public Engagement: Urban Assets
- Civil Engineering: Burse Surveying and Engineering
- Shoreline Engineering: Baird

Property Location

James Madison Park is a 12.36-acre lakefront community park located at 614 E. Gorham Street in downtown Madison, on the shores of Lake Mendota. The park property includes six buildings that are City Landmarks and on the National Register of Historic Places. As a designated "community park," James Madison Park serves a diverse range of park users of all ages and backgrounds, including neighborhood residents, UW students, and residents and visitors from throughout the greater Madison area.

Parks within a one-mile radius of James Madison are Reynolds Field Park and McPike Park to the east, and BB Clark Beach to the south. Located 1.4 miles to the northeast is Tenney Park, also a landmark site.

Project Scope

The City of Madison Parks Division issued an RFP for the James Madison Park Master Plan and Shelter Design in September 2017. The project scope outlined in the RFP included:

- Review of existing conditions and regulatory requirements affecting planning and development.
- Robust neighborhood and community engagement informed by the City of Madison Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative (RESJI), including two benchmark progress reports to gauge the effectiveness of the engagement process.
- Twelve on-site park observations at various times of day and year.
- Evaluation of the existing shelter and programming opportunities, and development of three shelter concepts to include: renovation of the existing shelter; development of a new shelter; and a combined renovation and expansion of the existing shelter.
- Development of a final proposed shelter schematic.
- Development of three conceptual park master plans, including the conceptual layout of paths, park amenities, structure locations, shoreline treatments and other facilities.

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- Development of a final proposed park master plan.
- Development of a park master plan report for review and approval by the Board of Park Commissioners.

The proposed master plan, informed by extensive site analysis and developed in response to input from the public, city agencies, and state and federal agencies from November 2017 to date includes the following:

- A naturalized shoreline.
- A reconfigured single-loaded parking lot.
- On-site stormwater improvements, including an emergent wetland with integrated educational elements.
- A lake-front access path.
- Several new waterfront access points.
- A consolidated activity zone including basketball courts, a volleyball court, and larger playground.
- A revitalized beach area.
- An updated accessible path system.
- Outdoor spaces for shelter use.
- Spatial improvements around Gates of Heaven.
- An identified lot for a future historic home consideration.

The proposed shelter schematic includes the following:

- A facility to support neighborhood functions such as; café, voting, multiple special events, community room, paddle vendor tenant and parks division on-site needs.
- Enhanced spatial relationship with the Hoover Boathouse.
- Siting of new Shelter to enhance access street side and lake side access.
- Roof terrace and shelter structure that will be designed to address the Secretary of the Interior's standards for the treatment of historic properties with guidelines as it relates to new construction.

Existing Conditions and History

James Madison Park offers a variety of active and passive recreation opportunities. Amenities include two basketball courts, a sand volleyball court, two playground areas, picnic tables, pier, paved paths, grand lawn, small beach, landscaped gardens maintained by volunteers, and canoe/kayak launch and storage.

The park is used extensively for informal recreation such as walking, yoga, sun bathing, fishing, Frisbee, picnicking, etc., and is also reserved for events, classes and private parties. The two reservable spaces at James Madison Park are the main park shelter, built in 1979, and Gates of Heaven Synagogue.

There are two small parking lots at the park; a 28-stall lot on the west end adjacent to Gates of Heaven and the basketball courts; and an 8-stall lot located within the right of way at the end of Blount Street, adjacent to the Mendota Lake House B&B.

James Madison Park is home to the following six buildings that are City Landmarks and listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

1. Gates of Heaven Synagogue, 300 E. Gorham Street
 - a. Built in 1863, designated in 1974
2. Bernard-Hoover Boat House, 622 E. Gorham Street
 - a. Built in 1915, designated in 1976
3. Irene and Robert Conner's House, 640 E. Gorham Street
 - a. Built in 1920, designated in 1993

4. Anna and Cornelius Collins' House, 646 E. Gorham Street
 - a. Built in 1908, designated in 1993
5. William and Dora Collins' House, 704 E. Gorham Street
 - a. Built in 1912, designated in 1975
6. Lincoln School, 720 E. Gorham Street
 - a. Built in 1915, designated in 1978

The City of Madison sold the three residential buildings and Lincoln School while retaining ownership of the land. Owners must meet the established historic preservation requirements for each property.

A thorough "Historical Overview and Illustrated Site Chronology" was prepared by Cornerstone Preservation as part of the master plan process. This document is [linked here](https://www.cityofmadison.com/parks/projects/james-madison-park-master-plan) [https://www.cityofmadison.com/parks/projects/james-madison-park-master-plan] and a hard copy is attached to this application.

City and Public Input

Public engagement has been central to the development of the James Madison Park master plan and shelter design. The engagement process was informed by the City of Madison RESJI tool and has involved a mix of outreach strategies designed to collect input from a diverse cross-section of residents and stakeholders throughout the City of Madison. A primary goal of public engagement for the James Madison Park master plan has been to overcome common inequities in planning processes by conducting outreach to a variety of stakeholders, at a variety of times and locations, using a variety of engagement tools.

Using the following tools, the team has made over 20,000 individual contacts and received over 1,000 comments. These comments have been reviewed and categorized to inform the development of the proposed master plan and shelter design:

- Website, email, social media, flyers, mailings to over 8,000 addresses and 10,000 social media followers
- Online survey with 215 responses
- Paper comment cards posted at 17 locations around Madison (51 cards received)
- 3 public meetings with 120 participants (January, February and May 2018)
- 1 pop-up input session at the park with 10 drop-in conversations about the three master plan concepts
- 460 park users observed during 12 park observations held at varying times of day and year
- 16 intercept interviews at the park
- 6 focus groups with 62 participants
- 5 meetings with a 17-member stakeholder group

In addition to the public engagement process described above, the design team has met with the following City of Madison staff and regulatory agencies to receive guidance on the master plan:

- | | |
|---|---|
| • City of Madison – Parks | • City of Madison – Fire |
| • City of Madison – Planning | • City of Madison – Development Assistance Team |
| • City of Madison – Engineering | • Dane County Parks |
| • City of Madison – Traffic Engineering | • Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources |
| • City of Madison – Madison Metro | • State Historic Preservation Office |
| • City of Madison – Zoning | • U.S. Army Corps of Engineers |
| • City of Madison – Police | |

For additional clarification of the master plan context and vision, please refer to the attached site photos; "Historical Overview and Illustrated Site Chronology"; and proposed master plan and shelter design diagrams.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Zia Brucaya". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Zia" and last name "Brucaya" clearly distinguishable.

Zia Brucaya, AICP
Urban Assets





James Madison Park Master Plan
Historical Overview and Illustrated Site Chronology
Review Draft

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

James Madison Park is a carefully conceived and constructed shoreline and greenspace that bears little resemblance to the fairly bucolic residential setting of a century ago, or to the boatyard ambiance of the place fifty years earlier. The south shore of Lake Mendota was again something very different when the area was home to an earlier Native American culture. The waterfront now occupied by James Madison Park is a historically significant public space that tells a rich story about community planning and development. As part of preparing the James Madison Park Master Plan, the history of this waterscape has been considered for the themes it provides. This essay provides a historical summary of the property and an administrative history of the park. It is followed by a site chronology that details pertinent events with dates and references.

Tay-cho-pe-ra

The Four Lakes region that included Lakes Mendota and Monona had been home to Native American populations for thousands of years prior to settlement. It was known to its earlier inhabitants as *Tay-cho-pe-ra*. The Ho-Chunk (until recently referred to as Winnebago) was the most prominent tribal community when immigrants and easterners began to arrive in Wisconsin. Their ancestors are attributed with the mound groups that proliferate in the area as reminders of a presence that was deeply connected to the land and the waterways of the region.

Remnants of interconnected villages and large garden sites were still in place in the mid-19th century and mound groups remained in abundance all along the Mendota shore. Built on top of the earth, animals, birds and geometric shapes were arranged to convey metaphysical content and cultural lore. Immediately a curiosity to settlers, information collected by early Wisconsin archeologists Increase Lapham and Charles E. Brown continues to provide an excellent basis for ongoing research. More importantly, the sites hold spiritual significance to members of Wisconsin's tribal communities and are protected by law; once inventoried they are not to be disturbed. While possibly the result of previous ground disturbance, there is no evidence of mounds or pre-settlement artifacts at the James Madison Park site.

An Early Madison Lakefront

As the founder of the paper city that would become Madison, James Duane Doty played a key role in providing the waterfront parcel that much later would become part of James Madison Park. With the establishment of Madison as the Territorial Capitol in 1836, Doty donated a central public square as the Capitol site and also provided a property on Lake Mendota that was intended to be the foot of a canal spanning the isthmus. The Mendota site was bounded by Franklin, Hancock and Gorham Streets. The canal never was built, but the City retained the property.

Frederick Briggs was the first settler to establish a business in the immediate vicinity. He built a steam powered saw mill near North Butler Street just west of the land Doty donated. Briggs' enterprise on the Mendota waterfront was underway as construction began on the first Capitol in 1837. He prepared wood for boat building, and made the scows used to transport the stone for constructing the building over the ice from a site near what is now Maple Bluff. East of the public land, John and Peter Lindstrom established a soft drink factory in 1857 on the waterfront at North Blair Street. The brothers built a substantial building that housed the factory on the lower level and provided accommodations for both families above. Two years earlier, in 1855, Charles Bernard purchased the lakefront property east of Lindstrom's at 622 Gorham. He initially set up business as a tailor, but also established a fishing station on the lake.

Steamboats and Industry

By the 1860s, the City had installed a large dock on the public property and this waterfront slice of Madison became a place dominated by boat building, dockage, repair and storage. Over the next fifteen years, Bernard established a successful boat building operation, crafting both small rowboats and large excursion steamers. His business was just one of several along Gorham Street dedicated to the boat trade. Bernard also joined a number of other boatmen in running his steamers to points across the lake. The boats served both recreational and practical needs in providing transportation from the city dock to both scenic destinations and places around the city,

James Madison Park Master Plan
Historical Overview and Illustrated Site Chronology
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including the University. While Madison was seeing greater planned commercial and residential development on the other side of the square, this part of the City was assuming the slightly happenstance appearance of a dockyard.

Adding an industrial quality to the waterfront, a large ice harvesting operation was in place by the mid-1860s at North Butler and North Hamilton Streets. In 1888 Conklin & Sons purchased the existing facility and expanded it significantly by constructing a huge ice harvesting and refrigeration facility, in addition to operating a stable to keep horses used in delivery of ice. By 1888 the former Lindstrom Bottling factory closed and went into use as a rooming house, likely offering accommodations to the seasonal workers involved in the Conklin operation.

Sailing on Water and Ice

The Mendota Yacht Club was established in 1903. The group began holding races from a pier behind 618 E Gorham Street, the residence of Captain George Patterson, skipper of the steamship *Mendota*. In 1907 the group leased the old bottling factory, remodeled the building and established its headquarters in this location. Members, including Lew Porter (known for the role he played in constructing the Capitol), kept their boats off the docks installed by the club. The Yacht Club provided an important social setting for a number of Madison's most prominent residents until its membership slipped off with World War I. The building was offered for sale in 1919. While it assumed a number of new uses over the next two decades, parts of it typically remained in use for boat building, storage and repair.

Along with constructing boats of all sizes and types, Charles Bernard was also renowned as a builder of Ice boats and is largely credited with introducing the sport to Madison. This tradition was carried on by his son, William, who took over his father's business following Charles' death in 1907. In 1911 William rebuilt the original boathouse. However, after a fire that originated at (and also destroyed) the Conklin Ice House, Bernard's Boathouse was rebuilt again in 1915. At nearly the same time that both Bernard's and Conklin's rebuilt their facilities, residential and public projects were underway that began to elevate the stature of the neighborhood.

Neighborhood Revitalization, ca. 1915

With construction underway on the state's new Capitol between 1907 and 1917, the Mendota waterfront began to assume a new prominence due to its proximity to the Capitol Square. This was emphasized by the diagonal alignment of the new building with the lake on North Hamilton Street. Nationally prominent Boston planner John Nolen prepared a developmental plan for Madison that was published in 1911. In it, he embraced the diagonal approaches the Doty plat established for the Square and showed full deference to this feature in his recommendations. Without calling it out specifically, the Nolen Plan provided for residential development along the Mendota shoreline on Gorham Street. There is a graphical reference to the public property Doty had donated to the City, but no call for a park in this area. Already established and shown in the plan, Tenney Park provided a waterfront park on the Mendota shoreline about a mile east at the Yahara River.

As both Bernard's Boathouse and the Conklin Ice House were being rebuilt following the 1915 fire, two important public projects also were taking place. The Second Ward School, where young Frank Lloyd Wright attended seventh and eighth grades, was demolished to make way for the new Lincoln School. Also, the 1882 Madison Waterworks plant was rebuilt in its original location across the street from the lake in the 600 block of Gorham Street. Both buildings were designed with evident civic pride, drawing on motifs associated with the progressive and purposefully Midwestern example provided by the famous Chicago architects Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright, once just a neighborhood kid.

The celebrated Madison architectural firm of Claude and Starck designed Lincoln School in 1915. The building features elements and details that are in keeping with the firm's successful adaptation of the Prairie style, combined with ornamental details influenced by Sullivan. Architect Louis W. Claude had come by his sensibilities honestly, having shared time in Sullivan's Chicago studio with Wright. In addition to Lincoln School, Claude and Starck also designed several substantial masonry residences for this neighborhood early in the 20th century. Of the

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three houses that were later acquired for the park, the two earlier Claude and Starck residences are notable for a use of materials, massing and general features that are evocative of the Prairie houses Wright developed in his Oak Park Studio. The Cornelius and Anna Collins House at 646 E. Gorham (1908) and the William and Dora Collins House at 704 E. Gorham (1912) are considered among the finest examples the firm's residential work. The Robert and Irene Connor House at 640 E. Gorham Street (1920) is also thought to have been designed by Claude and Starck, despite its Colonial Revival style not being fully consistent with the firm's other projects.

First Steps toward a Park

In 1916 Wilbur W. Warner, who operated a popular State Street music store and resided at 516 E. Gorham, bequeathed \$75,000 to the City to purchase the Conklin Ice House property as a downtown park. As part of the agreement, the City was to contribute \$25,000 to the purchase of two blocks of lakefront between North Franklin and North Butler Streets. Although things were in place to proceed, James Conklin decided he was unwilling to sell. Despite this, Warner seemed to have instilled the idea that a park at the Conklin site would be an excellent future use of the property. The City acquired some property at the foot of North Franklin Street in 1928 as a small first step toward the acquisition of public land adjacent to the original city property.

The Mendota Yacht Club sold former the Soda Factory in the 1920s, and by the early 1930s the building was owned by Madison attorney Timothy Brown, who leased its principal public space to the 33rd Division of the Naval Reserve until the group became fully deployed in World War II. During Brown's period of ownership, portions of the building continued to be used for boat building. In 1943, Brown rented it as a social club for service people based at the Truax airfield. However, the arrangement was short-lived as that same year, Mr. and Mrs. James Patton acquired the former Yacht Club property to serve as their residence.

Conklin Park (1939 - 1963)

The establishment of Conklin Park finally occurred in 1939 after the purchase and demolition of the Conklin Ice House. At just the same time, a proposal for a Boat Harbor and Armory located at the Conklin site was advanced by Ladislav Segoe in his *Comprehensive plan of Madison, Wisconsin and environs* (1939). The Segoe Plan analyzed and suggested traffic patterns through and around the city and also provided recommendations for the placement of new public buildings. Local political intrigue was thick in the advancement of the plan for the Armory and Auditorium at the Conklin site, as the idea stood in direct opposition to plans that Frank Lloyd Wright had just proposed for "Olin Terraces" on Lake Monona. The idea for the Armory was eventually set aside and the City implemented a much less grand scheme that provided a small swimming area and facilities that supported the use of the waterfront for boating and sailing.

The Bernard Boat Company changed hands in 1940, and Harry Hoover took over the operation in 1943. Hoover installed a 200 foot dock into Lake Mendota and operated the Hoover Boat Line. Like Bernard's, it was an incredibly popular neighborhood venue that contributed to a predominant atmosphere centered on boats and boating. The Mendota Yacht Club, although without a headquarters, continued to sail and stage races from the shoreline in this area and use it for boat storage. Property that had been owned by the Tracy Boat Company on Gorham near North Franklin was purchased by the City in 1941 and in 1947 a concrete boat ramp was installed at the foot of North Hancock Street and the swimming beach in this location was moved to the foot of North Franklin Street.

Through the 1950s the Conklin Park boat ramp was used as a staging area for the regattas of the Mendota Yacht Club and the Four Lakes Ice Yacht Club. Over the years, ice boating had grown in popularity as a winter sport and races frequently were held at Conklin Park. In 1953, the Mendota Yacht Club installed a rail system at the former site of the Tracy Boat Company for moving larger boats in and out of the water. During this time, the Patton residence served as an unofficial club house for the Yacht Club. James Patton was a dedicated sailor, who enthusiastically hosted regattas and other events at his lakefront property. Other changes in the neighborhood included the City's 1956 acquisition of the William and Dora Collins House at 704 E. Gorham, which soon became

**James Madison Park Master Plan
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the headquarters of the Madison Parks Department. Also, Lincoln School was closed in 1963 and space in the building was provided to the Madison Art Center for its operations and exhibits.

James Madison Park (1963 – present)

After rededicating the park as James Madison Park in 1963, the City set out to acquire the full stretch of Mendota waterfront on the north side of Gorham Street from Conklin Park to the eastern boundary of the Lincoln School property. The City secured partial federal funding through a HUD Open Space Acquisition grant, and from 1967 into the 1970s, negotiated the purchase of properties in the 600 block of East Gorham, including the Bernard-Hoover Boathouse in 1968. Following Mrs. Patton's death, the City acquired the former Lindstrom Factory/Yacht Club in 1970. The building was demolished almost immediately, and the swimming beach was established in its current location at foot of North Blair Street.

The Gates of Heaven Synagogue was moved and placed in James Madison Park in 1971. This event followed the 1969 demolition of Mapleside, a historic stone house on University Ave. This incident galvanized a grass-roots preservation movement that led to the decision to relocate the historic synagogue rather than allow its demolition. The loss of Mapleside had another important outcome, which was the 1971 establishment of the Madison Landmarks Commission. The Commission immediately began to identify, evaluate and designate historic Madison properties, including the buildings associated with the James Madison Park. During the 1970s, the City established Landmark status to Gates of Heaven Synagogue (1974), William and Dora Collins House (1975), the Bernard-Hoover Boathouse (1976), and Lincoln School (1978).

While extending exceptional care to the Park's historic features, when it was time to construct a new Park Shelter the City opted for a modern building. Designed in 1979 by Madison architect Kenton Peters, the shelter was placed just south of the beach, with sufficient space provided for a winter ice rink on its north lawn. The hemi-cyclical concrete building is partially enclosed within a hillside berm. The exterior stairs from street to beach level on either side are enclosed in cylindrical shafts that have been nicknamed "silos" by neighbors. With the exception of its enclosed stairs, the building is fairly non-obtrusive from the street. It opens to its full height facing the water and its modest interior provides restrooms and a small public space with a concession area. Characterized as an example of Brutalism, an architectural idiom popular through the 1960s and 1970s, the shelter won the Excellence in Architecture award from the Wisconsin chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1980.

After serving as the headquarters for Madison Parks Department for a number of years, the William and Dora Collins House was leased to a private vendor in 1985 and was operated as the Collins House Bed and Breakfast. The leasing arrangement with the city specified the historic preservation stipulations in place for the landmark building. Simultaneously, after having been fully documented, designated as a city landmark and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the City established a ground lease for Lincoln School with Madison's Urban Land Interests in 1985. The interior of Lincoln School was rehabilitated as twenty-eight one and two bedroom apartments. The project also satisfied the requirements of the Landmarks Commission by carefully preserving the character of the building exterior.

In 1992 the City purchased the Irene and Robert Conner and the Anna and Cornelius Collins Houses, located at 640 and 646 E. Gorham Street. At nearly the same time, the Bernard-Hoover Boathouse was rehabilitated with partial funding from a Wisconsin Department of Transportation grant. A lot was purchased by the city to improve access to the boathouse in 1995, and in 1997 the Mendota Rowing Club established a lease to rent the boathouse through 2011. The agreement subsequently has been renewed to 2022. The last significant change to the park occurred in 1999, when a memorial to volunteers who fought in the Spanish Civil War (1936 – 1939) was erected near the Synagogue. It was dedicated to the 45,000 international volunteers who fought for the Spanish Republic, including the 2,800 Americans that served in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. It is inscribed with the names of the 37 Wisconsin soldiers that participated.

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Today James Madison Park provides the downtown community and visitors with an exemplar lakeshore park with many recreational opportunities including basketball and volleyball, swimming, boating, fishing, slacklining, and a playground area with nearby adjacent parking. Restrooms and a small activity space are provided in the shelter and the Bernard-Hoover Boathouse, leased by the Mendota Rowing Club, is semi-public building with nearby canoe and kayak launch sites and storage. The picturesque Gates of Heaven Synagogue, monumentally situated at the west end of the park, is available to rent for events and is a very popular wedding and meeting venue. The historical ambiance on the east end of the park harkens to the early 20th century and is largely a result of preservation efforts established to retain significant historical structures owned or acquired by the City as part of developing James Madison Park.

Administrative Documentation and Related Property Restrictions

The City of Madison Parks Department retains pertinent scanned and indexed archival materials relative to the history of the site and the development of James Madison Park. Extending all the way back to early documentation concerning the original Doty (or Pritchette) Plat, resources include deeds related to the acquisition of Lincoln School property in 1867, when it was first purchased for the Second Ward School, and again in 1914 when another parcel was added. Property records related to the acquisition of the Conklin property and other sites from the late 1930s through the fifties also are included. These transactions are fairly straightforward, without carrying restrictions concerning land use.

With the establishment of James Madison Park, numerous deeds were generated through transactions with property owners on Gorham Street. Because partial funding came through a federal grant, stipulations were in place, but only for a time. Many of the properties purchased between 1966 and 1970 drew on funding from the HUD Open Space Acquisition (grant WIS-OSA-13) under Title 7 of 1961 Housing Act. The grant contract restricted land use to park, recreational, conservation, natural, historic or scenic uses. These use restrictions were removed in 1983 by Section 126(b) (2) and (3) of the Housing and Urban-Rural Recovery Act, and no longer apply.

Madison Mayor William Dyke's establishment of Madison Landmark Commission in 1971 has had a significant impact on the development of James Madison Park, mostly in the care that continues to retain the authenticity of the park's historic structures. With the designation of Landmark status, modifications made to the exterior of the buildings require the approval of the Commission. The preservation restrictions associated with these properties remain in place today and have been written into the documentation surrounding more recent property transactions related to the lease and sale of the buildings.

Between 1974 and 1993 the Landmark Commission designated Landmark status for the following properties associated with James Madison Park (with links to nomination papers):

- [Gates of Heaven Synagogue, 302 E. Gorham Street \(1974\)](#)
- [William and Dora Collins House, 704 E. Gorham Street \(1975\)](#)
- [The Bernard – Hoover Boathouse, 622 E. Gorham Street \(1976\)](#)
- [Lincoln School, 720 E. Gorham Street \(1978\)](#)
- [Anna and Cornelius Collins House, 646 E. Gorham Street \(1993\)](#)
- [Irene and Robert Conner House, 640 E. Gorham Street \(1993\)](#)

The Landmark Commission restrictions were first itemized in the September 11, 1974 notice of designation for the Gates of Heaven Synagogue (Ref. #1409654). Accordingly, the property would be subject to

... restrictions as set forth in Section 33.01 (5) of the Madison General Ordinances, to-wit: (1) That all building permits for the altering or reconstructing of the exterior of said dwelling (sic) shall be submitted to the Landmark Commission of the City of Madison, Wisconsin for approval. (2) That all permits for the demolition of said dwelling shall be submitted to the Landmark Commission of the City of Madison, Wisconsin for approval.

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The same language was used to convey City Landmark restrictions on April 14, 1975 relative to the William and Dora Collins House (Ref. #1424970), the Bernard-Hoover Boathouse on October 31, 1980 (Ref. #1686777), Lincoln School on October 31, 1980 (Ref. #1686775), the Anna and Cornelius Collins House on February 17, 1993 (Ref. #2440184) and the Irene and Robert Conner House, also on February 17, 1993 (Ref. #2440185). Additionally, the Landmarks Commission published *Landmarks and Historic Districts in Madison: A Guide for Property Owners* (1989), which provides a more detailed discussion of the Commission's expectations for the owners of landmark buildings in Madison.

By 1998 the City had demonstrated even further dedication to the long term preservation of these buildings by securing National Register of Historic Places designation for the historic buildings associated with James Madison Park. The Gates of Heaven was the first building to be listed in 1970; its listing on the National Register preceded its designation as a City Landmark.

- Gates of Heaven Synagogue (1970)
- William and Dora Collins House (1974)
- Lincoln School (1980)
- The Bernard – Hoover Boathouse (1981)
- Anna and Cornelius Collins House, listed as part of the Fourth Ridge Historic District (1998)
- Irene and Robert Conner House, listed as part of the Fourth Ridge Historic District (1998)

As publically-owned buildings these designations come with compliance standards related to their ongoing care as based on the Standards of the Secretary of the Interior for Rehabilitation of historic properties, which “provide direction in making appropriate choices in planning the repairs, alterations, and additions that may be part of a rehabilitation project. . . . The Standards for Rehabilitation are regulatory for the Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program and are the Standards most often used by local historic district commissions nationwide. “

When the City purchased the Irene and Robert Conner and the Anna and Cornelius Collins Houses located at 640 and 646 E. Gorham Street in 1992, both properties carried Wisconsin DNR Program restrictions, per the DNR Stewardship Fund grant S-ADLP-191 (Ref. #2389055 and 2379293). However, the program restrictions were removed from both properties in 2012 (Ref. #4984586 and 4986783). Additionally, in 1995 when the City acquired the open land at 628 Gorham Street the purchase was partially funded by a \$75,000 DNR Lake Protection Aids Grant #LPT-31, under which land use cannot be "inconsistent with the protection or improvement of a lake's water quality or its natural ecosystem." Also, the property was to have public access, and the sale or lease of the land would require DNR approval. (Ref. #2695637).

While it retained ownership of the land, the City sold the residential properties associated with the park in 2012. Deeds including historic preservation covenants were executed for the William and Dora Collins House (Ref. #4913197 and 4913198), the Anna and Cornelius Collins House (Ref. # 4941909 and 4940519), and the Irene and Robert Conner House (Ref. #4988016 and 4988017). The requirement that current owners meet the established historic preservation requirements was stipulated for each property. Items (1) and (2) from the HISTORIC PRESERVATION COVENANT are excerpted below:

- (1) The OWNERS agree to assume the cost of continued maintenance and repair of the PROPERTY in accordance with the recommended approaches in the Secretary of the Interior's standards for rehabilitation and associated guidelines, or substantially similar standards of the CITY, so as to preserve the architectural and historical integrity of the features, materials, appearance, workmanship , and environment in order to protect and enhance those qualities that make the property eligible for listing in the National Register and (/or) the State Register.
- (2) The OWNERS agree that any alterations that affect the architectural or historical integrity of the PROPERTY must have the prior written approval of the CITY, The OWNERS shall neither construct, demolish, alter, nor remodel any portion of the PROPERTY, including any structures, buildings, or objects thereon that are not named herein as specific exclusions without prior written approval of the CITY. The

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OWNERS shall not construct any new building or structure on or move any existing building or structure to the PROPERTY, nor erect fences or signs on the PROPERTY, without the express written approval of the CITY.

The City of Madison Parks Department's collection of scanned archival material also contains pertinent design drawings for the expansion and development of both Conklin and James Madison Parks. Although not itemized in the index, the graphical material includes numerous sets of plans and drawings for buildings, landscape and shoreline treatments that illustrate an evolution of design concepts for the property. The material carries great value for future interpretive use.

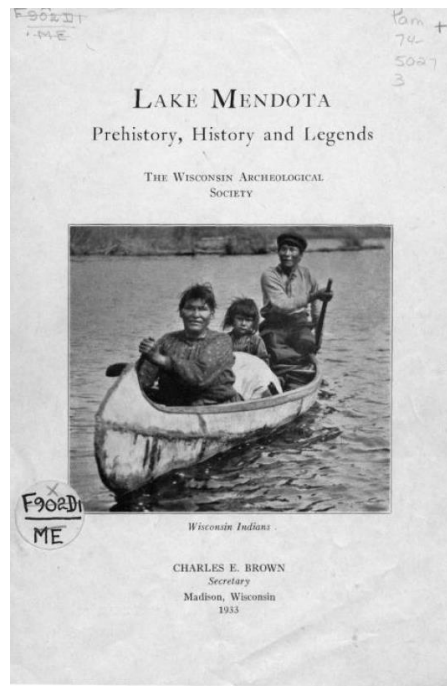
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ILLUSTRATED SITE CHRONOLOGY

Prehistoric Tay-cho-pe-ra

Before and even during European settlement, the Four Lakes region was home to a thriving and long-lived Native American culture. Between 1921 and 1945, Charles E. Brown published a series of pamphlets through the Wisconsin Archaeological Society. The small printed booklets record folklore based on oral tradition and also provide documentation for mound groups and village sites along the Mendota lakeshore.



Cover of Charles E. Brown pamphlet, *Lake Mendota, Prehistory, History and Legends*, 1933

Excerpts from Brown's Booklet *Lake Mendota, Prehistory, History and Legends* provide some great insights into the area as it was known to its earliest inhabitants.

The Four Lakes region was known to the Winnebago Indians as Tay-cho-pe-ra. . . . The Winnebago Indian name for Lake Mendota or Fourth Lake is Wonk-shek-ho-mik-la, meaning "where the man lies." The name Mendota, given to this lake in 1849 by Frank Hudson, a Madison surveyor, is a Sioux Indian name meaning "the mouth of the river." The Prairie Potawatomi called the lake Manto-ka, "snake maker," referring perhaps to the early abundance of rattlesnakes at different places along its shores.

. . . . Winnebago Indian villages and camps were located at a number of places on the shores of Lake Mendota before and after white men came to this region. Their dome-shaped wigwams consisted of a framework of bent saplings covered with strips of bark or rush matting. They grew corn at all of their villages. . . . In 1837 one of their large villages was located on the shores of a large marshy area, now Tenney Park, on the east shore of the lake and the adjoining lake shores. It had several hundred inhabitants. Its name is given as Chee-nunk, "village". . . . Another village was located on the banks of the Yahara river and the adjoining lake shores, on the north shore of the lake. This was Ne-o-sho. One of its planting grounds was on the lake shore lawn of the State Hospital and another at the eastern boundary of Morris Park. Some Indian corn hills remain at the latter locality and traces of some at the former place.

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... About one thousand Indian mounds were formerly located about the five Madison Lakes. Many of these have been destroyed in the cultivation of land, in road building and the growth of Madison. There were about 350 mounds on the shores of Lake Mendota. Mounds or mound groups remain on the campus of the University of Wisconsin, in Burroughs Park, at Maple Bluff, Bernards Park, the State Hospital and the State Memorial Hospital grounds, Morris Park, Fox Bluff, Kennedy Pond, West Point, Camp Sunrise, Mendota Beach, Merrill Springs, Black Hawk Country Club, Eagle Heights, and on Picnic Point. Some of these are permanently preserved and are marked with descriptive tablets, others are being protected.¹

Madison historian David Mollenhoff also described the pre-settlement era in *Madison: A History of the Formative Years* and assimilated the documentation provided by Charles Brown and others to create a map of the Madison area noting the location of villages and mound groups, even as pertinent to the site of James Madison Park.

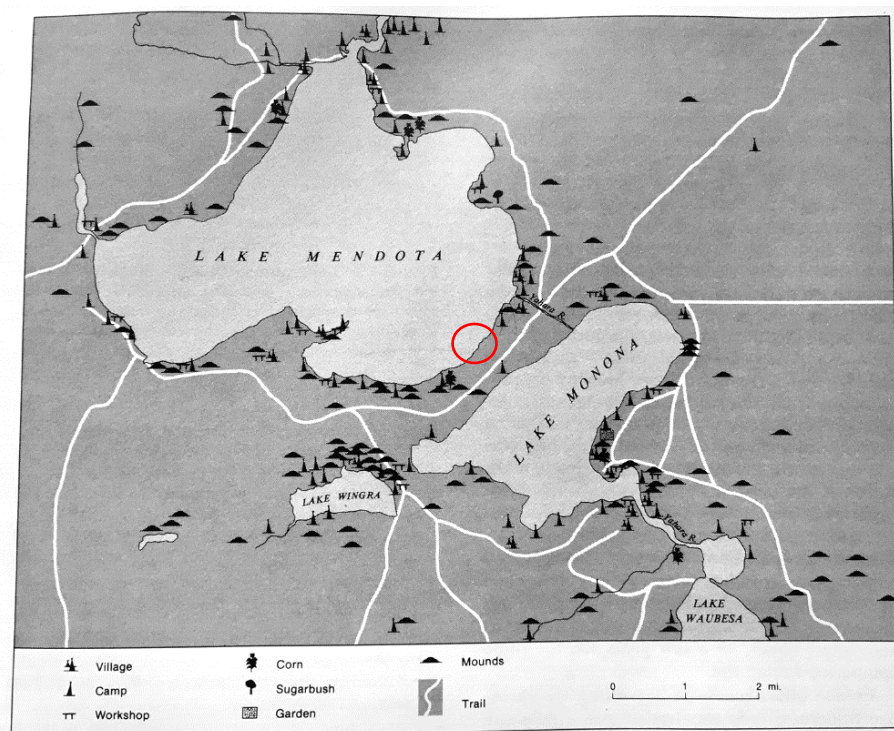


FIGURE 1.8. INDIAN FEATURES. This map showing trails, camp and village sites, mounds, cornfields, and other Indian-created features is based upon a compilation done by Charles E. Brown, a well-known student of Madison-area Indian life. The map is a compelling visual reminder that for thousands of years, Indians found Madison a good place to live.²

Based on analyses of 19th and early 20th c. surveys, historian David Mollenhoff did not identify signs of Native American culture in the immediate area of James Madison Park, whereas the landscape of Tenney Park was known to be the site of a large Ho-Chunk village.³

¹ Charles E. Brown, *Lake Mendota, Prehistory, History and Legends*, (Madison: The Wisconsin Archeological Society, 1933). [Folklore Pamphlets, 1921-1945, Turning Points in Wisconsin History.](#)

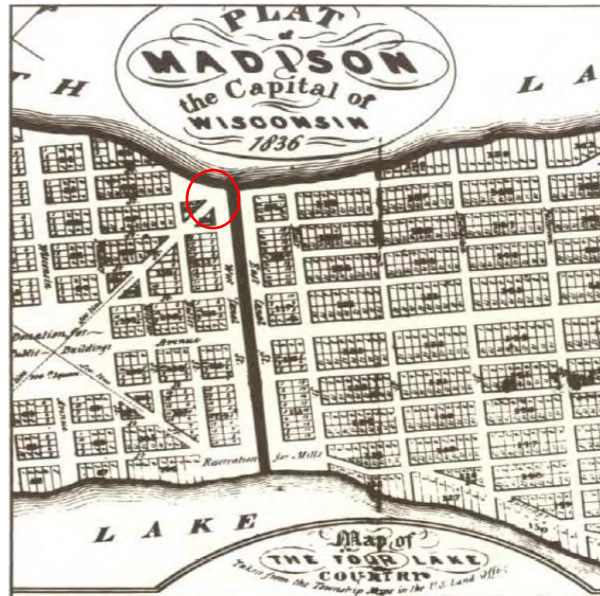
² David V. Mollenhoff, *Madison: A History of the Formative Years* (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., 1982), 13, Figure 1.8. "Chapter One, Foundations: Prehistory to 1846" provides an excellent overview of the geology, habitat and earliest occupants of the area.

³ Both Charles Brown and David Mollenhoff refer to the principal indigenous occupant of the area as Winnebago. With the adoption of its most recent constitution in 1994, the *Wisconsin Winnebago Tribe* changed its name to the

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- 1836 A site on Lake Mendota, north of the Capitol Square and bounded by Franklin, Hancock, and Gorham Streets was provided as city property in Doty's 1836 plat for Madison. Doty intended it be used for a harbor at the north end of a canal that would cross the Isthmus. Although the canal was never dug, the parcel became the property of the city.⁴



Section of Plat of Madison, 1836, SHSW WHi (X32) 8775 ⁵

- 1837 Frederick Briggs built a steam-powered saw mill near North Butler and East Gorham Streets; it provided wood for the construction of buildings and boats. Large scows built in this location were used to transport limestone blocks from the quarry at McBride's Point (Maple Bluff) for the construction of the first Capitol.⁶
- 1839 The first sailboat used on Lake Mendota, *Lady of the Lake*, was launched.⁷
- 1853 Charles Bernard, Sr. arrived in Madison and offered his services as a tailor.⁸

Ho-Chunk Nation of Wisconsin. The name Ho-Chunk comes from the word *Hochungra*, meaning "People of the Big Voice" or "People of the Sacred Language," which is how the tribe has referred to itself traditionally.

⁴ Mollenhoff, *Madison: A History of the Formative Years*, 19-26; Madison Parks, "James Madison Park History," January 20, 2016.

⁵ Detail of the 1836 Doty Plat [WHi (X32) 8775] as printed in *The Old Marketplace Neighborhood: A Walking Tour* (Madison Landmarks Commission and the Old Market Place Neighborhood Association, 1991), 2.

⁶ Donald J. Sanford, *On Fourth Lake: A Social History of Lake Mendota* (Madison: Commodore's Press, 2015), 140; *Madison Democrat*, April 1, 1906, *Wisconsin State Journal*, May 12, 1936. Sanford's "Chapter Seven, James Madison Park" provides excellent historical information and photographs that document activities at the site for over a century.

⁷ Don Sanford, [Mendota Yacht Club – The first 30 years](#) (2006).

⁸ Bernard-Hoover Boathouse National Register of Historic Places, Reference #81000036; Madison Landmark Nomination: Bernard-Hoover Boathouse (1976).

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- 1854 James Conklin established a business in Madison selling firewood and coal.⁹
- 1855 Charles Bernard purchased the property at 622 E. Gorham and built a “fishing station,” while continuing work as a tailor.¹⁰ The first building constructed at the site was L-shaped.¹¹
- 1857 John and Peter Lindstrom established a soft drink factory on the Mendota waterfront at North Blair Street. It was a fairly substantial frame building with the factory on the lower level, and the two brothers living upstairs with their families.¹²
- 1863 Shaare Shomaim (or Gates of Heaven) Synagogue was constructed by Madison’s first Jewish congregation at 214 W. Washington Ave. The small one-room building, designed by August Kutzbock, was the first synagogue built in Wisconsin.¹³
- 1875 Charles Bernard had established his business as a boat builder as listed in the Madison City Directory.¹⁴
- 1870s The sixty-five foot long, one hundred fifty passenger steam yacht *Mendota* made daily trips around Lake Mendota from a large pier located behind the city property. “The *Mendota* ran to Pheasant Branch, Picnic Point, the university, the Insane Asylum, McBride’s Point, and elsewhere upon request. Home pier for the *Mendota* was between Hancock and Franklin Streets in what is now James Madison Park. . .”¹⁵



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The steamer *Mendota* (in 1879) on the grounds of what is now the Mendota Mental Health Institute

⁹ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 138.

¹⁰ Bernard-Hoover Boathouse National Register of Historic Places, Reference #81000036.

¹¹ Madison Landmark Nomination: Bernard-Hoover Boathouse (1976).

¹² Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 125.

¹³ Old Synagogue / Shaare Shomaim Synagogue National Register of Historic Places, Reference #16103. In 1971 the building would be relocated to the corner of N. Butler and E. Gorham.

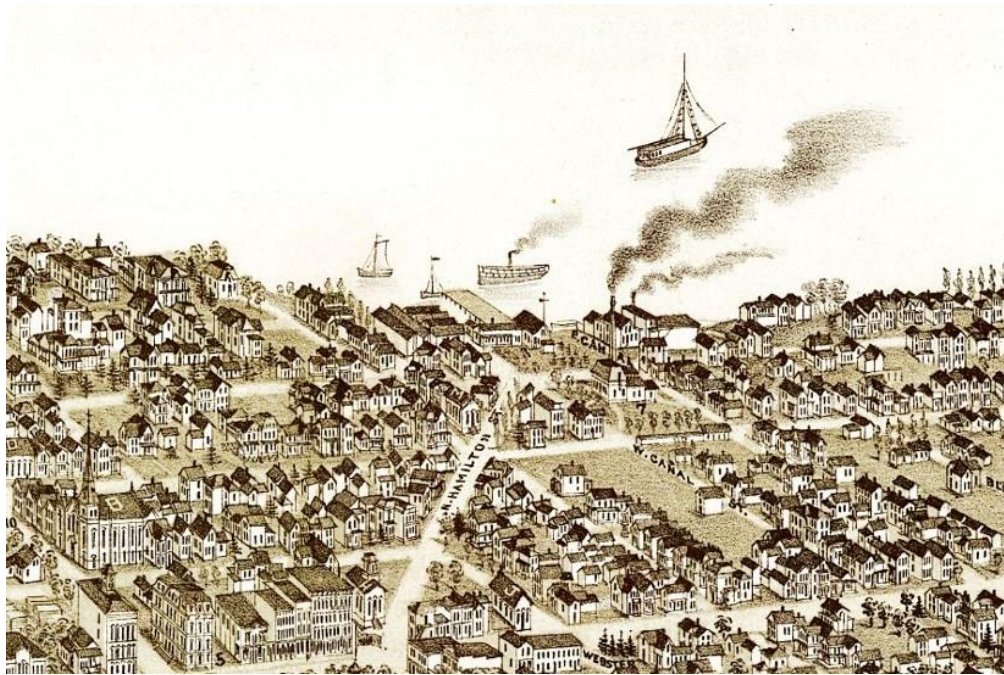
¹⁴ Bernard-Hoover Boathouse National Register of Historic Places, Reference #81000036

¹⁵ Mollenhoff, *Madison: A History of the Formative Years*, 130.

¹⁶ Andreas Dahl, *Sunday School Picnic at Mendota Steamboat Landing*, 1879 [WHi (D31) 582] Description: “Norwegian Sunday School Picnic at Mendota steamboat landing. Small lake steamer *Mendota* could reach speeds of up to 18 mph. The barge *Uncle Sam* was 75 ft. long by 25 ft., and was either towed about the lake or anchored at the picnic grounds at McBrides Point. The *Mendota* made regular trips to Picnic Point, the University, Pheasant Branch, and the Insane Asylum.”

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- 1876 Captain George A. Patterson became Captain of the Steamboat Mendota, a position he held for over thirty years.¹⁷
- 1879 Young Frank Lloyd Wright (1867 – 1959) began a period of residence in Madison, living with his parents and sisters in a no longer extant house at 802 E. Gorham. He attended the nearby Second Ward School for seventh and eighth grades.¹⁸
- 1882 Madison's first municipal water pumping station was constructed facing E. Gorham Street at 311 N. Hancock. The building and equipment would be replaced in 1917.¹⁹



Lithographic View of Madison published by Norris, Wellge & Co. of Milwaukee, 1885;
detail showing lakefront along Gorham Street

- 1886 James Conklin purchased an existing Ice House at the foot of North Hamilton Street in the 300 Block of East Gorham. Conklin & Sons began operation of a large ice harvesting, storage and delivery operation.²⁰
- 1887 Frank Lloyd Wright left the family home on Gorham Street for Chicago.²¹
- 1888 The Lindstroms closed their bottling business at 409 N. Blair Street and the building went into service as a rooming house for many years.²²

¹⁷ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 131; *Wisconsin State Journal*, April 27, 1883 and June 18, 1944.

¹⁸ [Historic Madison, Inc. of Wisconsin, "Frank Lloyd Wright"](#) identifies the address of the Wright property; See also Paul E. Sprague, editor, *Frank Lloyd Wright and Madison: Eight Decades of Artistic and Social Interaction*, "Frank Lloyd Wright's Madison Networks" (Madison: Elvehjem Museum of Art, 1990), 1 – 2.

¹⁹ *The Old Marketplace Neighborhood: A Walking Tour* (1991), 6.

²⁰ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 138 – 139; *Capital Times*, August 5, 1966; Mollenhoff, *Madison: A History of the Formative Years*, 265.

²¹ Sprague, ed., *Frank Lloyd Wright and Madison*, 2.

²² Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 125.

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The Lindstrom Soft Drink Factory at 409 N. Blair St., circa 1895

- 1890 Charles Bernard built his first steamboat, *Anne*, which began operation as an excursion boat from the docks behind the Bernard Boathouse.
- 1893 Charles Bernard built the steamboat, *Columbia*, likely christened in reference to the Columbian Exposition of that year.
- 1899 The Conklin Ice House burned, claiming a barn and 16 horses.²⁴
- 1900 The Ice House was rebuilt; the new building was 180 feet long, 170 feet wide and 22 feet tall.²⁵
- 1903 The Mendota Yacht Club was established and thirteen boats were registered. Races took place behind the home of Captain George Patterson, the skipper of the steamship *Mendota*. He had a pier behind his home at 618 E Gorham St.²⁶
- 1905 Charles Bernard built the steamboat, *Wisconsin*.
- 1907 The Mendota Yacht Club leased and remodeled the Lindstrom bottling building to use as its headquarters and began to organize sailboat races on Lake Mendota. The *Wisconsin State Journal* calls the Mendota Yacht Club “Madison’s Summer Social Center.” Members included George Burrows, William Freeman Vilas and Lew Porter.²⁷

²³ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 125.

²⁴ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 138; *Wisconsin State Journal*, October 30, 1900.

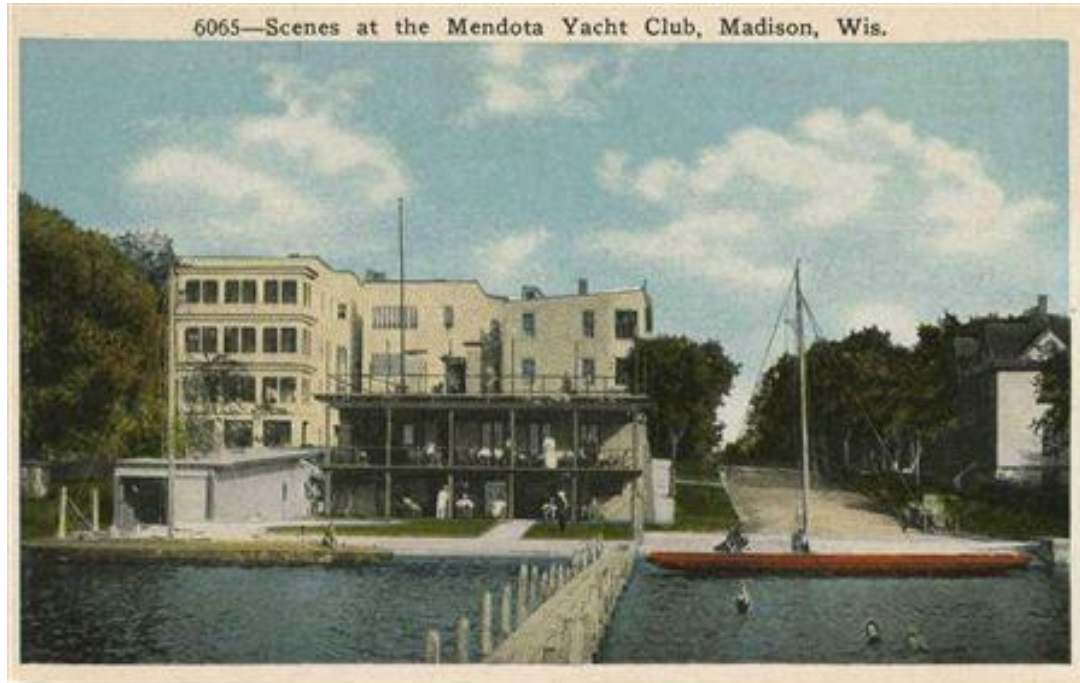
²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 125.

²⁷ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 125 – 126; Sanford, *Mendota Yacht Club – The first 30 years* (2006).

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- 1907 Charles Bernard, Sr. died; In addition to having built row boats, steamers and operating a ferry service to points around the lake, Charles was also well-known as a designer and builder of ice boats. Following his death, his son William took over and expanded the business.²⁸



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The Mendota Yacht Club, circa 1910

- 1908 The Cornelius and Anna Collins House was constructed at 646 E. Gorham. It was designed by Madison architects, Claude and Starck. The house is an example of the eclecticism popular in early twentieth century architecture, and includes features drawn from the Prairie style, Tudor Revival and American Craftsman.³⁰

According to author Donald Sanford, prior to 1910 a boater passing along the lakeshore between North Blount and North Butler Streets would have found a fairly industrial area. He describes the setting:

*In those days, you'd hear the sounds of boat builders at the foot of North Franklin Street. At the Bernard Boathouse, the sounds of hundreds of excited passengers could be heard boarding the Columbia or Wisconsin, punctuated by the occasional toot of a steam whistle. . . .*³¹

- 1911 The John Nolen Plan suggested residential development on the Lake Mendota waterfront along Gorham Street north of the Capitol Square. Tenney Park, on Lake Mendota at the Yahara River, is shown as an important municipal park in the plan. At this time, there was no thought given to the development of a park in this area of the city.³²

²⁸ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 120.

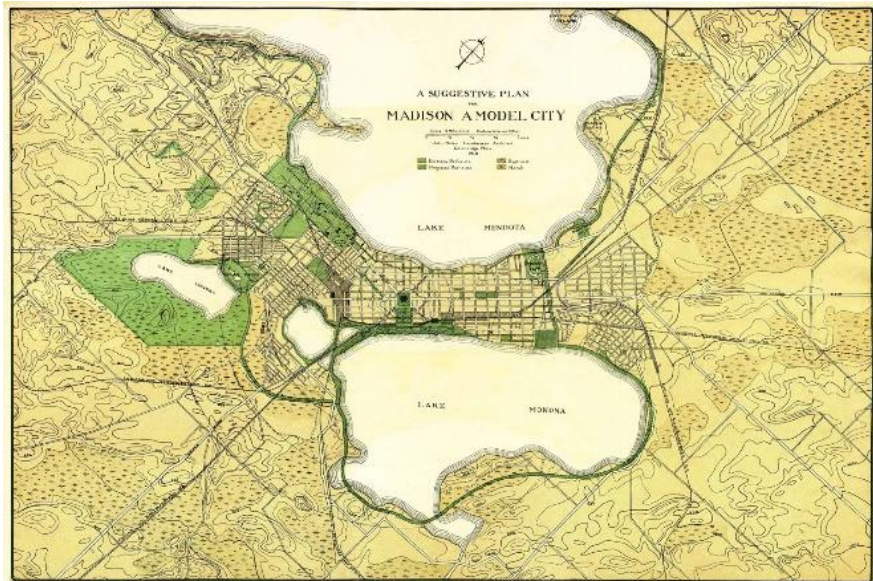
²⁹ Sanford, *Mendota Yacht Club – The first 30 years* (2006).

³⁰ Madison Landmark Nomination: Anna and Cornelius Collins House (1993).

³¹ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 117.

³² [Nolen, John \(1869-1937\), *Madison : a model city, Boston, Mass.: 1911*](#). Mollenhoff, *Madison: A History of the Formative Years*, 341 – 352.

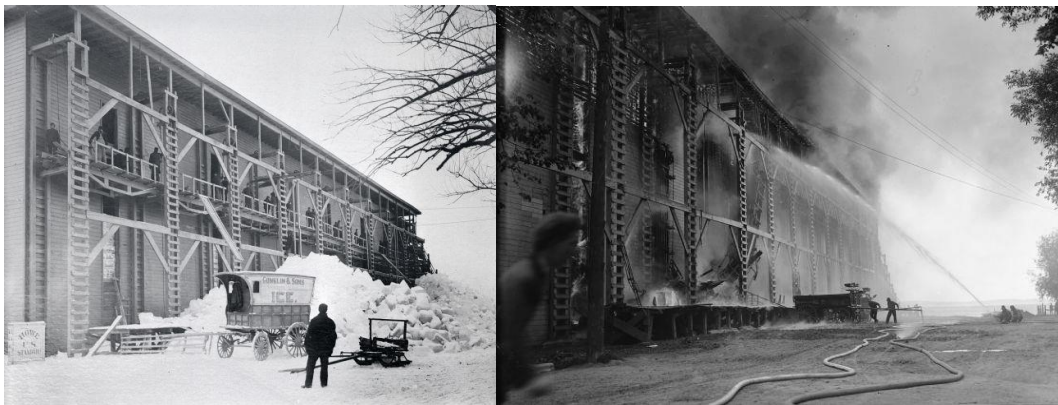
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John Nolen, *A Suggestive Plan for Madison: A Model City*, 1911

- 1911 The Bernards replaced the original building with a larger frame structure in the same location.³⁴
- 1912 The William and Dora Collins House was constructed at 704 E. Gorham. Designed by Claude and Starck. It is considered one of the finest examples of their work and features the hallmarks of the Prairie style.³⁵
- 1914 The Mendota Yacht Club hosted the Northwestern Regatta, considered a great accomplishment for the young organization. After the US entry into WW I, interest in sailing began to subside and membership fell off.³⁶



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The Conklin Ice House in operation, circa 1912, and a photo of the fire that burned the Ice House on June 17, 1915

³³ Nolen, John (1869-1937), *Madison: a model city*, Boston, Mass.: 1911.

³⁴ Madison Landmark Nomination: Bernard-Hoover Boathouse (1976).

³⁵ Madison Landmark Nomination: William Collins House (1975).

³⁶ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 126.

³⁷ Conklin Ice House on Lake Mendota in its heyday (left) [WHS Image ID 117662]; Photoart House, Several men try to extinguish the fire at the Conklin Ice House that destroyed the building [WHS Image ID 35793].

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- 1915 The Conklin & Sons Ice House facility was destroyed in a fire and rebuilt in the same location.³⁸ The Bernard Boathouse was destroyed after it was ignited by a spark from the Conklin Ice House fire.³⁹ It was reconstructed in the same location and remains in place today at 622 E. Gorham.⁴⁰



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Shoreline view showing Bernards Boathouse following its reconstruction (left). The Mendota Yacht Club is on the waterfront to the right.

- 1915 Lincoln School, designed by Claude and Starke, was constructed at 728 East Gorham, formerly the location of the Second Ward School.⁴²
- 1916 Wilbur W. Warner bequeathed the City \$75,000 for a park on the Conklin Ice House property (two blocks of the lakefront between North Franklin and North Butler Streets). The City was to contribute \$25,000, but James Conklin was unwilling to sell despite prodding from the editorial page of the *Wisconsin State Journal*. While the City did not accept the money, Warner provided an impetus to the discussion concerning the long-term development of the property.⁴³
- 1917 The Madison Water Works pumping station building was built along East Gorham Street at 311 North Hancock, across the street from the Lake Mendota shoreline. It was Madison's sole source of municipal water until 1923. The building was designed by Madison firms Balch and Lippert (Architect) with Mead and Seastone (Engineers).⁴⁴

³⁸ Mollenhoff, *Madison: A History of the Formative Years*, 265.

³⁹ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 145.

⁴⁰ Madison Parks, "James Madison Park History," (2016).

⁴¹ Photoart House, View of Lake Mendota Shore, Madison (1915) [WHS Image ID 40024].

⁴² Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 119.

⁴³ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 118; *Wisconsin State Journal*, "Two New Parks Provided For in Warner Will," May 3, 1916; *Capital Times*, March 3, 1969.

⁴⁴ *The Old Marketplace Neighborhood: A Walking Tour* (1991), 6.

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- 1919 The Mendota Yacht Club offered their building for sale.⁴⁵
- 1920 The Madison Association of Commerce lobbied for the construction of a boat harbor to be located at the foot of North Blair Street, with the larger goal that Lake Mendota could eventually become a center of competitive sailing.⁴⁶
- 1920 The Robert and Irene Connor House was built at 640 E. Gorham Street; it is thought to have been designed by Claude and Starck. Irene Connor was the daughter of lumber magnates Anna and Cornelius Collins who lived next door.⁴⁷
- 1922 Tormad Tofte opened a boat building, repair and rental business in the former Mendota Yacht Club Building.⁴⁸



Bernards Boathouse, ca. 1915

- 1923 By this time, the Mendota Yacht Club had “faded into oblivion”⁵⁰
- 1928 The City acquired property at the foot of N. Franklin St., including several older boat building and repair facilities that had been in operation over the years.⁵¹ This was a first step toward the acquisition of parkland adjacent to the city property.
- 1928 Willis E. Gifford purchased the Mendota Yacht Club building and opened the Madison Boat Company. Gifford sold boats from large distributors, operated a rental service and managed a water taxi.
- 1929 Although the Madison Boat Company unfolded with great promise, residential neighbors complained about the noise and need for parking and Gifford put his inventory and the property up for sale.⁵²

⁴⁵ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 125.

⁴⁶ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 141.

⁴⁷ Madison Landmark Nomination: Irene and Robert Connor Residence (1993).

⁴⁸ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 127.

⁴⁹ [Mendota Rowing Club, History of Bernard – Hoover Boathouse](#) [WHi 3495].

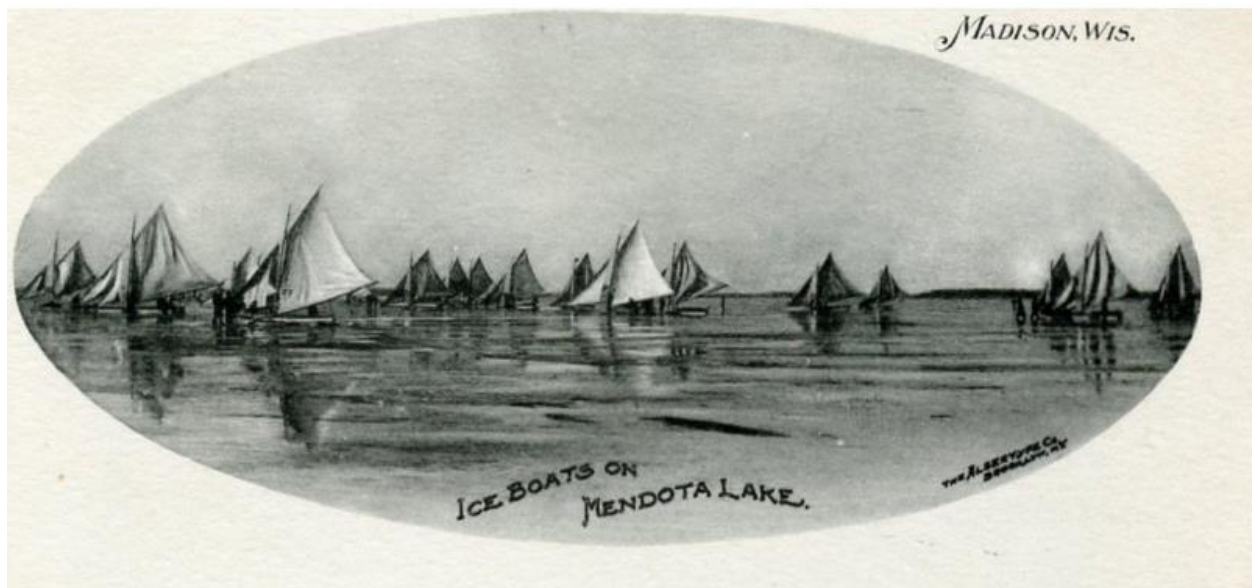
⁵⁰ Sanford, *Mendota Yacht Club – The first 30 years* (2006).

⁵¹ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 118.

⁵² Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 127.

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- 1929 Tormad Tofte built the 24' sailboat *Bretonne* for Madison Attorney Timothy Brown; the boat was destined to become a "legendary champion" in local racing.⁵³
- 1929 Don Tracy established the Tracy Boat Company in some of the buildings located at the foot of N. Franklin Street.
- 1930 Timothy Brown purchased the Mendota Yacht Club, intending to use it as a rental property.
- 1931 The local 33rd Division of the Navy Reserve established an Armory in the old Yacht Club and remodeled the interior.
- 1932 A life guard was stationed at the beach at the North Hancock Street Pier.⁵⁴
- 1933 The Mendota Yacht Club was re-organized in the spring of 1933 and hosted the ILYA regatta that year.⁵⁵ Without a facility, the club used a crane at the Tracy Boat Company to launch the boats.



Post card view of "Ice Boats on Mendota Lake"

- 1939 The city purchased the Conklin property. The Ice House was demolished and new amenities included a parking lot, swimming beach and boat launch. It was referred to as Conklin Park.⁵⁶
- 1939 A Plan for the Conklin Park Site was developed as a part of Ladislav Segoe's Maser Plan for Madison; the effort was in collaboration with Madison Architect William Kaeser, who had worked as a part time planner for the City in the mid-1930s. Kaeser designed the Armory proposed for this location.

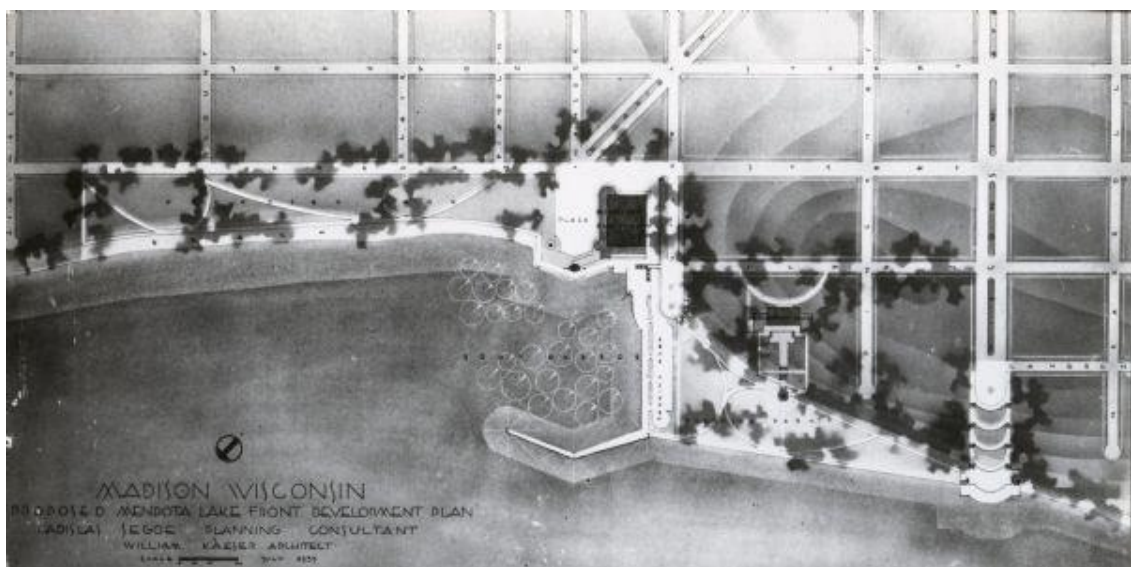
⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 137.

⁵⁵ Sanford, *Mendota Yacht Club – The first 30 years* (2006).

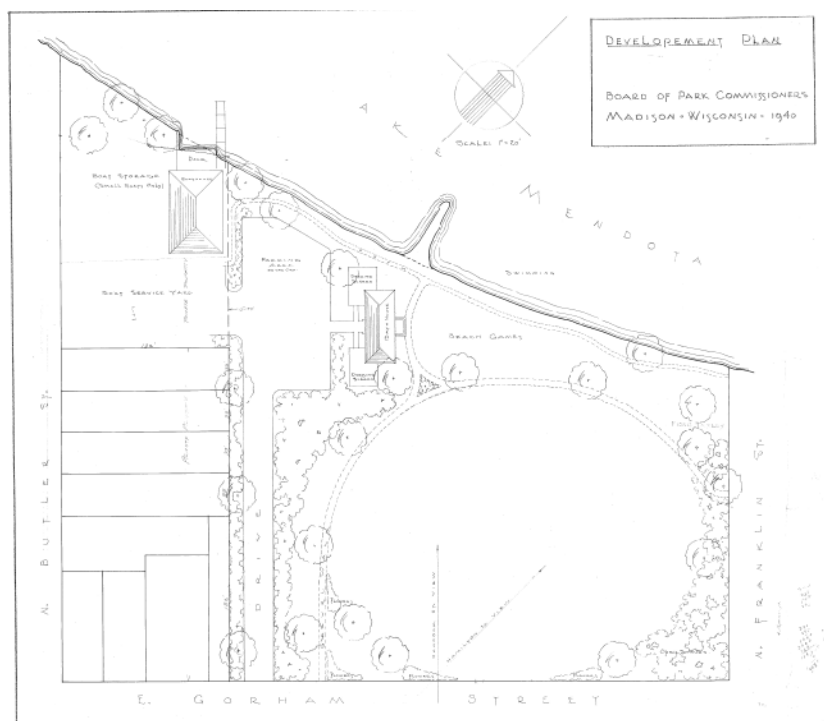
⁵⁶ Madison Parks, "James Madison Park History," (2016); Minutes of the Madison Board of Park Commissioners, May 22, 1939; Mollenhoff, *Madison: A History of the Formative Years*, 265; Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 118; *Capital Times*, August 8, 1966.

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Proposed Mendota Lake Front Development Plan, Ladislav Segoe, Planning Consultant, William Kaeser, Architect, July 1939



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The Development Plan for Conklin Park approved by the Madison Board of Park Commissioners, 1940

⁵⁷ Proposed Mendota Lake Front Development Plan, Ladislav Segoe, Planning Consultant, William Kaeser, Architect, July 1939, [WHi (D48) 11850]. Published in David Mollenhoff and Mary Jane Hamilton, *Frank Lloyd Wright's Monona Terrace: The Enduring Power of a Civic Vision* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999), 106, and Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 142.

⁵⁸ City of Madison, Madison Parks, "James Madison Park - Development Plan 1940-01-01" (electronic file).

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- 1940 William Bernard sold the boat house, boats and docks to Bergs Sporting Company.⁵⁹ Bergs operated two tour boats on the lake, the old *Mendota* and the *Badger*.
- 1941 The last members of Naval Reserve 33rd were sent to active duty in the Pacific and vacated the property, which was still owned by Timothy Brown.
- 1941 The City of Madison purchased the land the Tracy Boat House Company occupied on Gorham near North Franklin Street. The re-emergent Mendota Yacht Club contributed funds toward the purchase with the understanding the property would be the beginning of a public boating facility.⁶⁰
- 1943 Benny Berg of Bergs Sporting Company sold the boathouse property to Harry Hoover, who became sole proprietor.⁶¹ During his tenure, Hoover installed a 200 foot dock into Lake Mendota and operated the Hoover Boat line.⁶²
- 1943 The Truax Field Instructors Club rented the Yacht Club building from Brown to serve as a recreational facility for civilian and enlisted instructors working at Truax Field. This was a short-lived venture, as the same year the property was sold to Mr. and Mrs. James Payton, who remodeled it to serve as their residence.⁶³
- 1946 The Madison Marina Foundation (with involvement of Mendota Yacht Club) secured signatures of more than 2,700 people in support of a public boat harbor between North Butler and North Franklin Streets.⁶⁴
- 1947 A concrete boat ramp was installed at the foot of N. Hancock Street and the swimming beach in this location was moved to the foot of N. Franklin. For a time, the ramp was used as a staging area for the regattas of the Mendota Yacht Club and the Four Lakes Ice Yacht Club.⁶⁵



Iceboating and sailing were very popular organized activities on Lake Mendota for many decades. The Bernard family was instrumental in popularizing iceboating in Madison.

- 1953 The Mendota Yacht Club installed a rail system at the former site of the Tracy Boat Company for moving boats in and out of the water.

⁵⁹ Madison Landmark Nomination: Bernard-Hoover Boathouse (1976).

⁶⁰ Sanford, *Mendota Yacht Club – The first 30 years* (2006).

⁶¹ Madison Parks, "James Madison Park History," (2016).

⁶² Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 123, Madison Parks, "James Madison Park History," (2016).

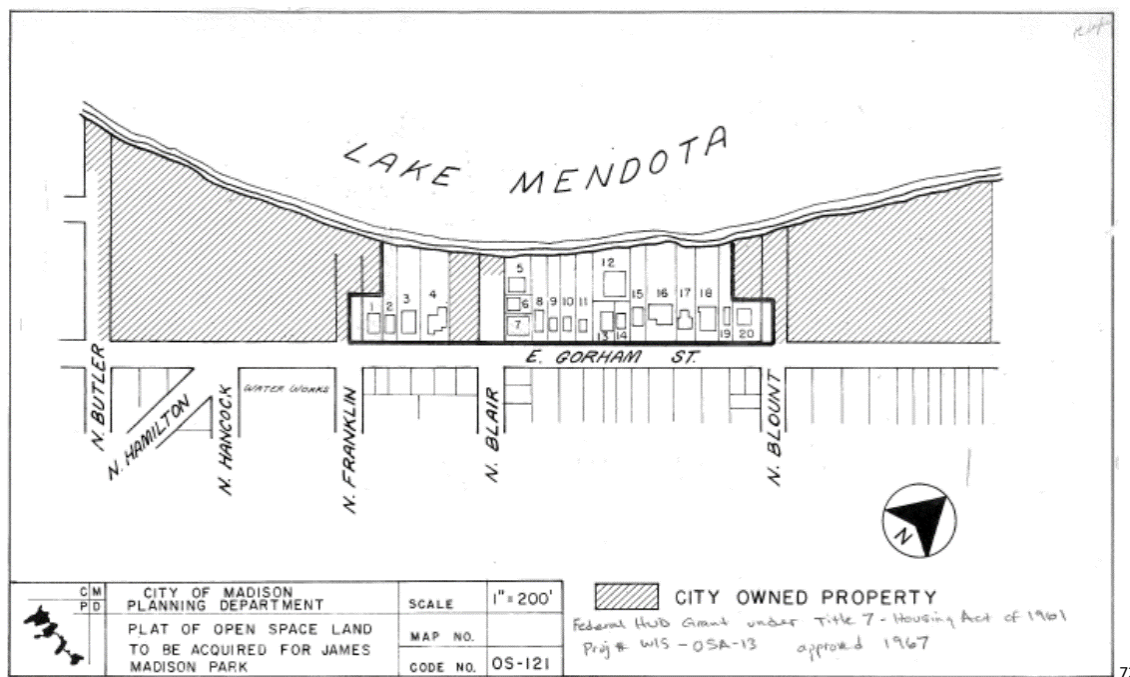
⁶³ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 129, 130.

⁶⁴ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 143.

⁶⁵ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 137.

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- 1956 William and Dora Collins House was acquired by the City for \$71,000, which included additional land.⁶⁶
- 1959 Mrs. Payton remodeled her home to function as two apartments following the death of her husband and continued to reside there.⁶⁷
- 1963 Conklin Park is renamed “James Madison Park.”⁶⁸
- 1963 Harry Hoover closes boat house business and auctions off his boats and equipment.⁶⁹
- 1963 Lincoln School was closed.⁷⁰
- 1964 Lincoln School became the home of the Madison Art Center and other arts groups.⁷¹
- 1967 Federal Open Space Acquisition Grant Documentation was filed to secure funding for intended property purchases along Gorham Street.



City of Madison Planning Department, “Plat of Open Space Land to be acquired for James Madison Park,” approved 1967

⁶⁶ *Wisconsin State Journal*, “Proposals for homes at James Madison Park,” August 11, 2011.

⁶⁷ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 130.

⁶⁸ Madison Parks, “James Madison Park History,” (2016). *Wisconsin State Journal*, “It’s James Madison Park Now: Conklin Area’s Name is Changed,” June 6, 1963.

⁶⁹ Madison Landmark Nomination: Bernard-Hoover Boathouse (1976).

⁷⁰ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 119; *Capital Times*, January 5, 1965.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² City of Madison, Madison Parks, “James Madison - 1967 Federal Open Space Acquisition Grant WIS-OSA-13” (electronic file).

James Madison Park Master Plan
Historical Overview and Illustrated Site Chronology
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- 1968 City of Madison acquired the Bernard-Hoover Boathouse property from Harry Hoover in December.⁷³
- 1970 The City of Madison acquired the former Lindstrom Factory/Yacht Club/Payton House and demolished the building as part of expanding James Madison Park. Around this time, the swimming beach established in current location at foot of N. Blair Street.⁷⁴
- 1970 The Gates of Heaven Synagogue was threatened with demolition. The Gates of Heaven Foundation was formed to save it and the group placed it on the National Register of Historic Places. It was owned at that time by the Fiore Coal and Oil Company.⁷⁵
- 1971 Using a \$60,000 grant from HUD, Gates of Heaven Synagogue was moved about one mile through Madison to James Madison Park. It had been jacked up and placed on 96 aircraft wheels on July 16th and was set on its new foundation on July 19th.⁷⁶



Gates of Heaven Synagogue on the move, July 1971

- 1974 The 1912 William and Dora Collins House at 704 E. Gorham was added to the National Register of Historic Places. It was noted as being in use by the Madison Parks Department.⁷⁷
- 1974 At the City's request, the Mendota Yacht Club was asked to relocate its rail system from James Madison to Burrows Park.⁷⁸

⁷³ Madison Parks, "James Madison Park History," (2016); Madison Landmark Nomination: Bernard-Hoover Boathouse (1976).

⁷⁴ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 130, 137.

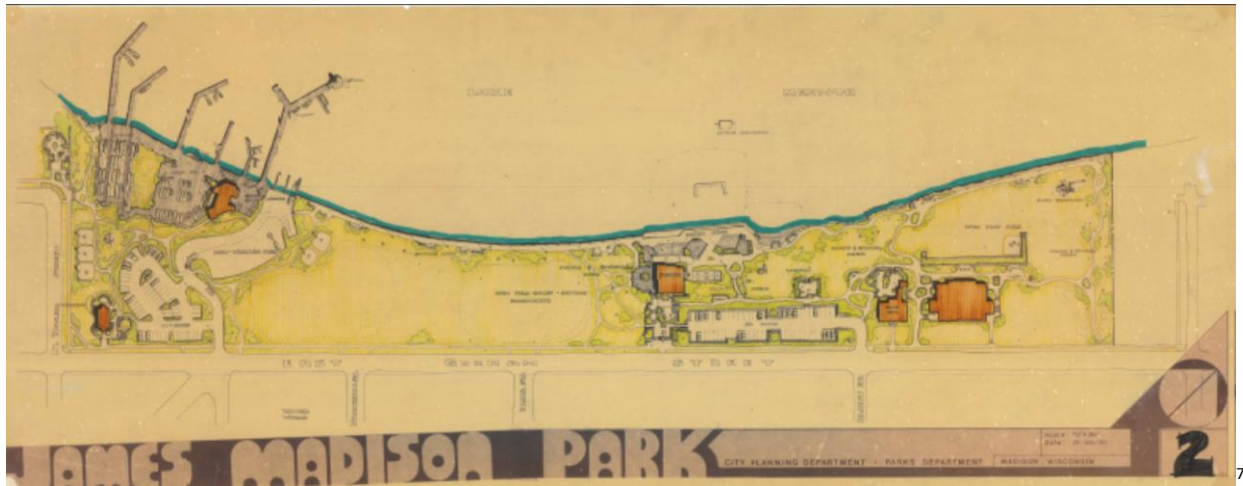
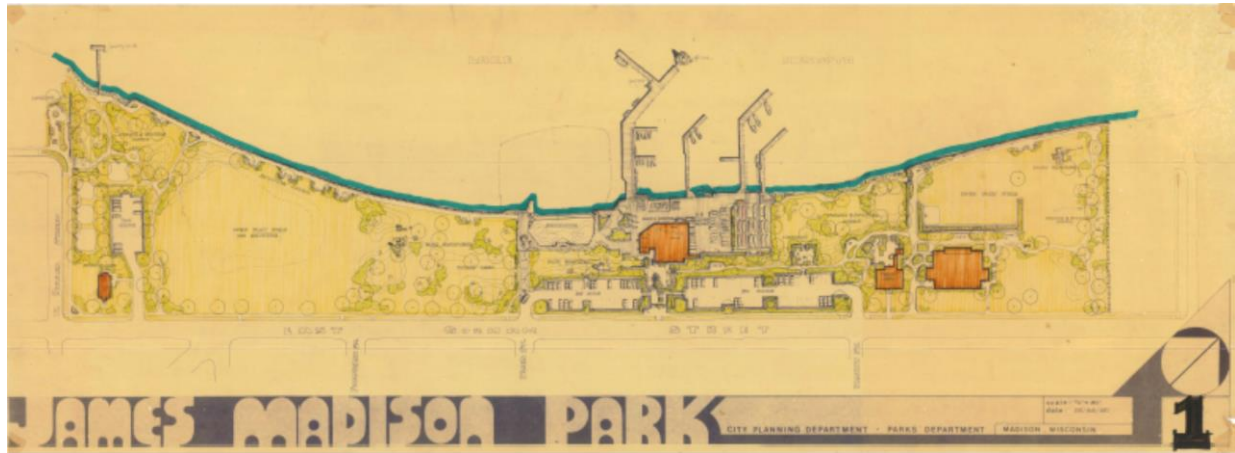
⁷⁵ [Old Synagogue / Shaare Shomaim Synagogue National Register of Historic Places, Reference Number: 16103](#)

⁷⁶ Madison Parks, "James Madison Park History," (2016). *Newsletter of the Tenney Lapham Neighborhood Association*, "Gates of Heaven Celebrates 25 Years in James Madison Park," July - August, 1996.

⁷⁷ [William and Dora Collins National Register of Historic Places, Reference #74000067](#).

⁷⁸ Sanford, *Mendota Yacht Club – The first 30 years* (2006).

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Parks Department Site Plans for the Potential Development of James Madison Park, 1971

- 1974 Gates of Heaven was designated a City of Madison Landmark on May 20th.⁸⁰
- 1975 William and Dora Collins House was designated a City Landmark. It was noted as being in use by the Madison Parks Department.⁸¹
- 1976 The Bernard – Hoover Boathouse was designated a City Landmark. It was noted as being in use by the Mendota Sailing School.⁸²
- 1976 The City water pumping operation at Nichols Station was suspended.⁸³

⁷⁹ City of Madison, Madison Parks, “James Madison Park - Master Plan Option 1 1971-11-24” and “James Madison Park - Master Plan Option 2 1971-11-24” (electronic files).

⁸⁰ [Madison Landmark Nomination: “Old Synagogue/Shaaare Shomaim Synagogue” \(1971\).](#)

⁸¹ [Madison Landmark Nomination: William Collins House \(1975\).](#)

⁸² [Madison Landmark Nomination: Bernard-Hoover Boathouse \(1976\).](#)

⁸³ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 137.

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- 1978 Lincoln School was designated a City Landmark. At this time it was occupied by the Madison Art Center.⁸⁴
- 1978 The City announced that it would be closing the sailboat storage facility it operated adjacent to the old Hoover boathouse.
- 1979 The James Madison Park Shelter, designed by Madison architect Kenton Peters, was built.⁸⁵
- 1980 James Madison Park Shelter won an Excellence in Architecture award from the Wisconsin Institute of Architects.⁸⁶
- 1980 Lincoln School was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.⁸⁷ Since the Madison Art Center was leaving the School to relocate to the Madison Civic Center, the building faced an uncertain future.⁸⁸
- 1980 The Madison Waterworks pumping station (Nichols Station) on East Gorham between N. Franklin and N. Hancock Streets was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.⁸⁹
- 1981 The Bernard-Hoover Boat house was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.⁹⁰
- 1984 The former Lincoln School was converted into privately owned 28-unit apartment building, known as Lincoln School Apartments. The project was managed by Madison's Urban Land Interests.⁹¹
- 1984 The former Madison Waterworks pumping station was renovated as Nichols Station Apartment and Condominiums by Madison developer Gary DiVall.⁹²
- 1991 The Madison Landmarks Commission and the Old Market Place Neighborhood Association published a walking tour brochure that includes the properties on Gorham Street adjacent to James Madison Park.⁹³
- 1992 The Bernard-Hoover Boat house was leased by the Mendota Rowing Club.⁹⁴ The building was rehabilitated with partial funding from a Wisconsin Department of Transportation grant.
- 1992 The City of Madison acquired the residences located at 640 and 646 E. Gorham Street (the Irene and Robert Conner and the Anna and Cornelius Collins Houses).⁹⁵

⁸⁴ [Madison Landmark Nomination: Lincoln School \(1978\).](#)

⁸⁵ Madison Parks, "James Madison Park History," (2016); Minutes of the Madison Board of Park Commissioners, Sept. 12, 1979.

⁸⁶ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 130.

⁸⁷ [Lincoln School National Register of Historic Places, Reference #80000123.](#)

⁸⁸ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 119.

⁸⁹ [Madison Waterworks/Nichols Station National Register of Historic Places, Reference #80000125.](#)

⁹⁰ [Bernard-Hoover Boat National Register of Historic Places, Reference #81000036.](#)

⁹¹ Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 119.

⁹² Sanford, *On Fourth Lake*, 137; *Wisconsin State Journal*, February 28, 1984.

⁹³ [The Old Marketplace Neighborhood: A Walking Tour](#) (Madison Landmarks Commission and the Old Market Place Neighborhood Association, 1991).

⁹⁴ Madison Parks, "James Madison Park History," (2016).

⁹⁵ *Wisconsin State Journal*, "Proposals for homes at James Madison Park," August 11, 2011.

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- 1993 Madison Landmarks Commission designated the Anna and Cornelius Collins House (1908) and the Irene and Robert Conner Houses (1920) as City Landmarks.⁹⁶ The Madison Waterworks building, or Nichols Station (1917), also was designated a City Landmark.⁹⁷
- 1993 Boat storage adjacent to the Boathouse was removed from James Madison Park.
- 1995 A lot was purchased to improve access to the boathouse.⁹⁸
- 1998 The Anna and Cornelius Collins and the Irene and Robert Conner Houses were listed on the National Register of Historic Place as part of the Fourth Ridge Historic District.⁹⁹
- 1999 Monument to volunteers who fought in the Spanish Civil War (1936 – 1939) erected near the synagogue.¹⁰⁰
- 2011 The City accepted proposals for the long term lease of the residences at James Madison Park (640 E. Gorham, 646 E. Gorham, and 704 E. Gorham).¹⁰¹
- 2017 The City of Madison Parks Department began a Master Planning process for the future development of James Madison Park.



Contemporary Aerial shot of Madison looking SW from just off James Madison Park on Lake Mendota.
Madison Aerial #1 - m2photography

⁹⁶ [Madison Landmark Nomination: Anna and Cornelius Collins House \(1993\)](#). [Madison 0Landmark Nomination: Irene and Robert Connor Residence \(1993\)](#).

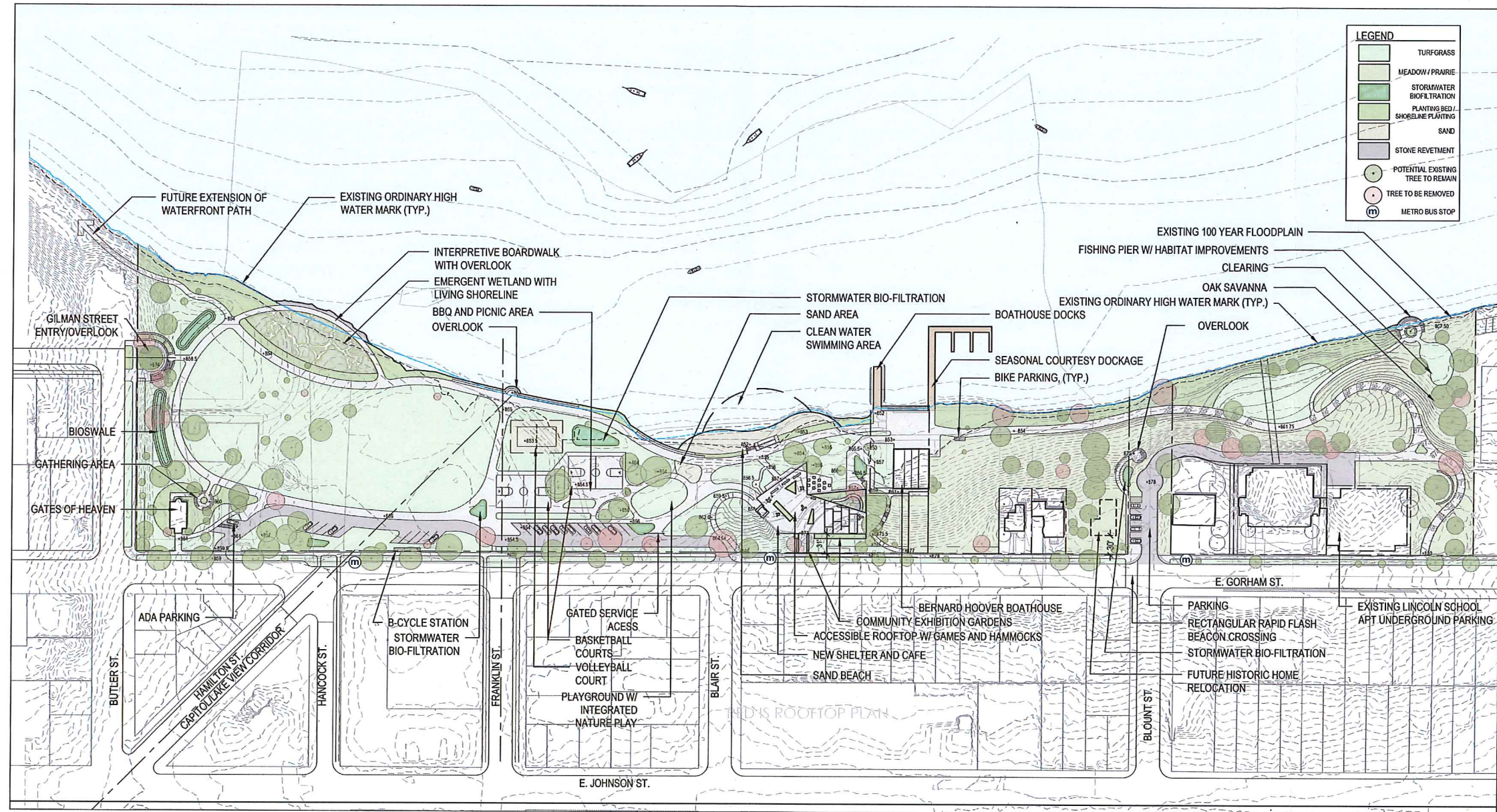
⁹⁷ [Madison Landmark Nomination: Madison Waterworks/Nichols Station \(1993\)](#).

⁹⁸ Madison Parks, "James Madison Park History," (2016).

⁹⁹ [Fourth Ridge Historic District National Register of Historic Places, Reference #9800167](#). The district is roughly bounded by Lake Mendota, N. Brearly, E. Johnson, and N. Franklin Streets.

¹⁰⁰ Madison Parks, "James Madison Park History," (2016). *Capital Times*, "Hundreds Honor Special Veterans: Spanish Civil War Remembered," November 1, 1999.

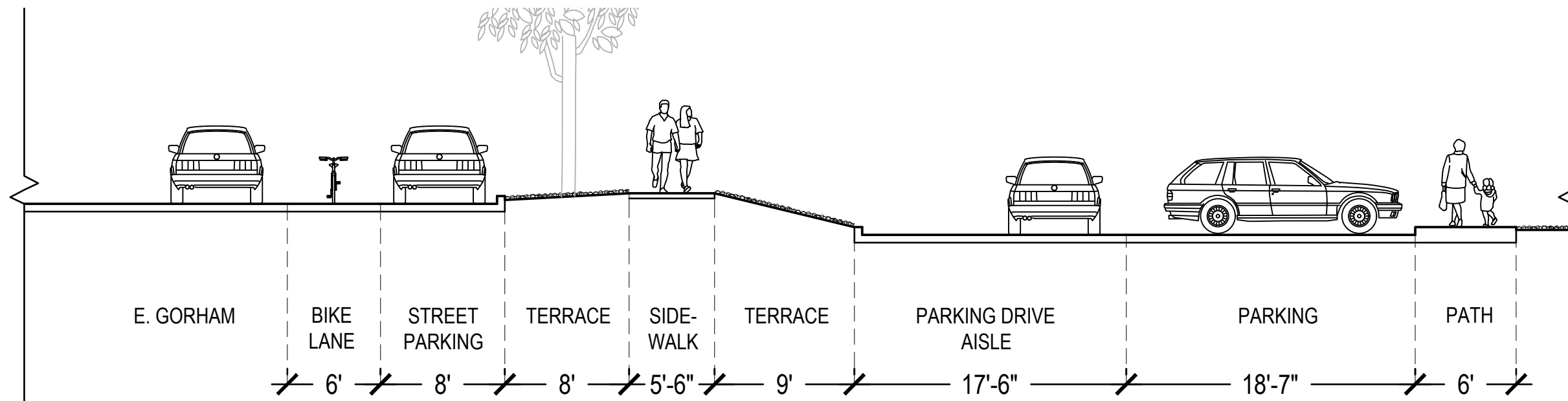
¹⁰¹ *Wisconsin State Journal*, "Proposals for homes at James Madison Park," August 11, 2011.



D JAMES MADISON PARK MASTER PLAN - PRELIMINARY PREFERRED OPTION
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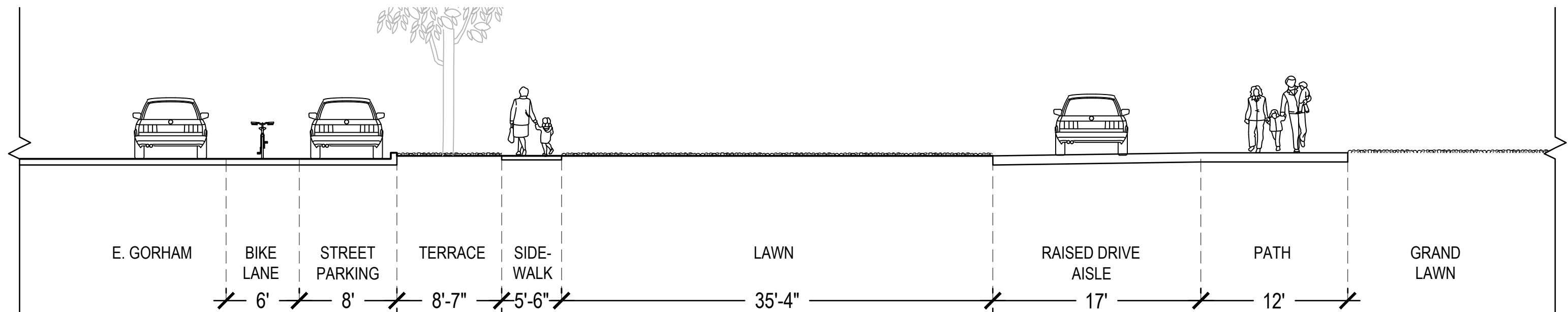
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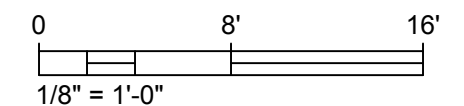
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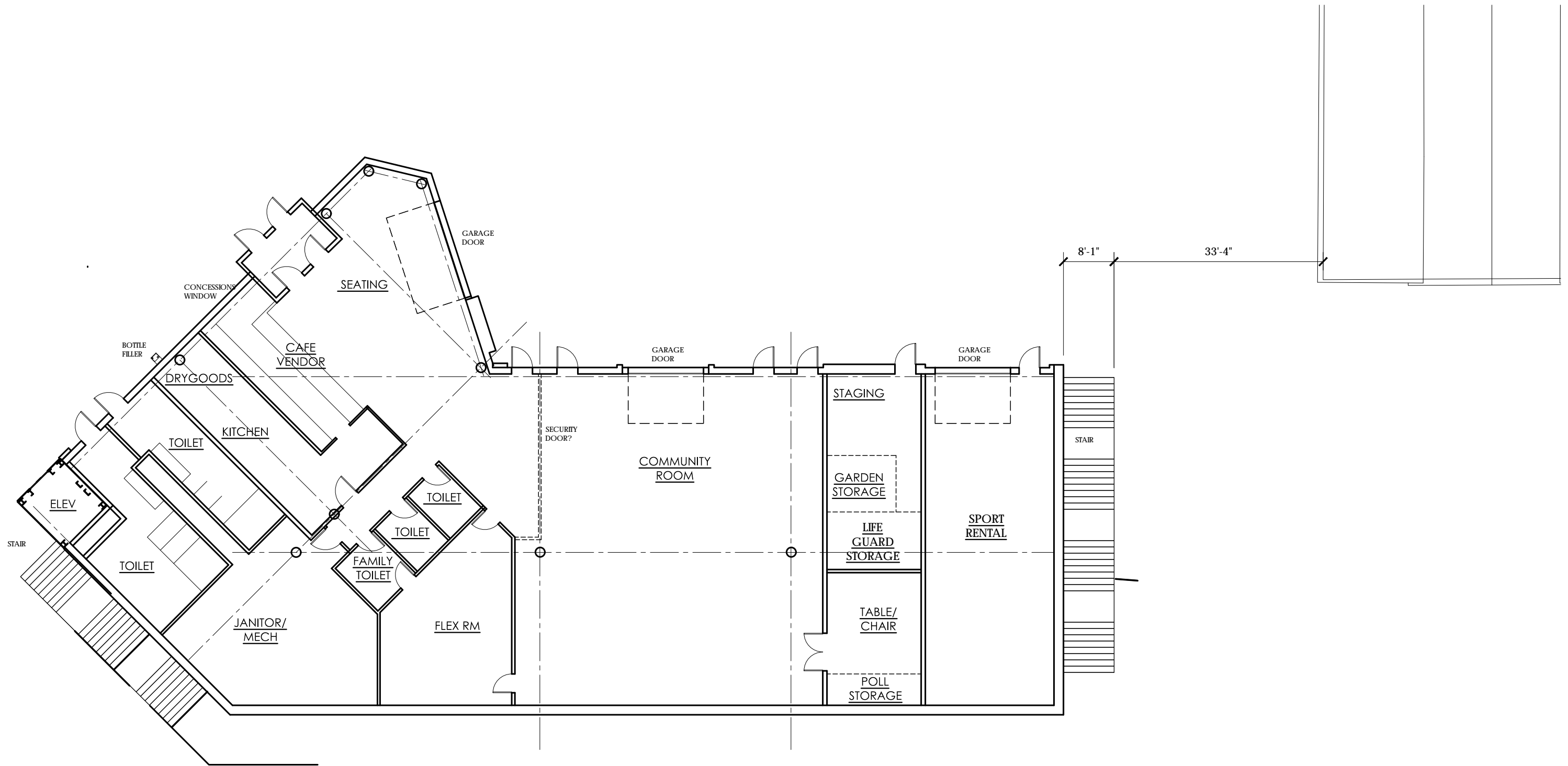
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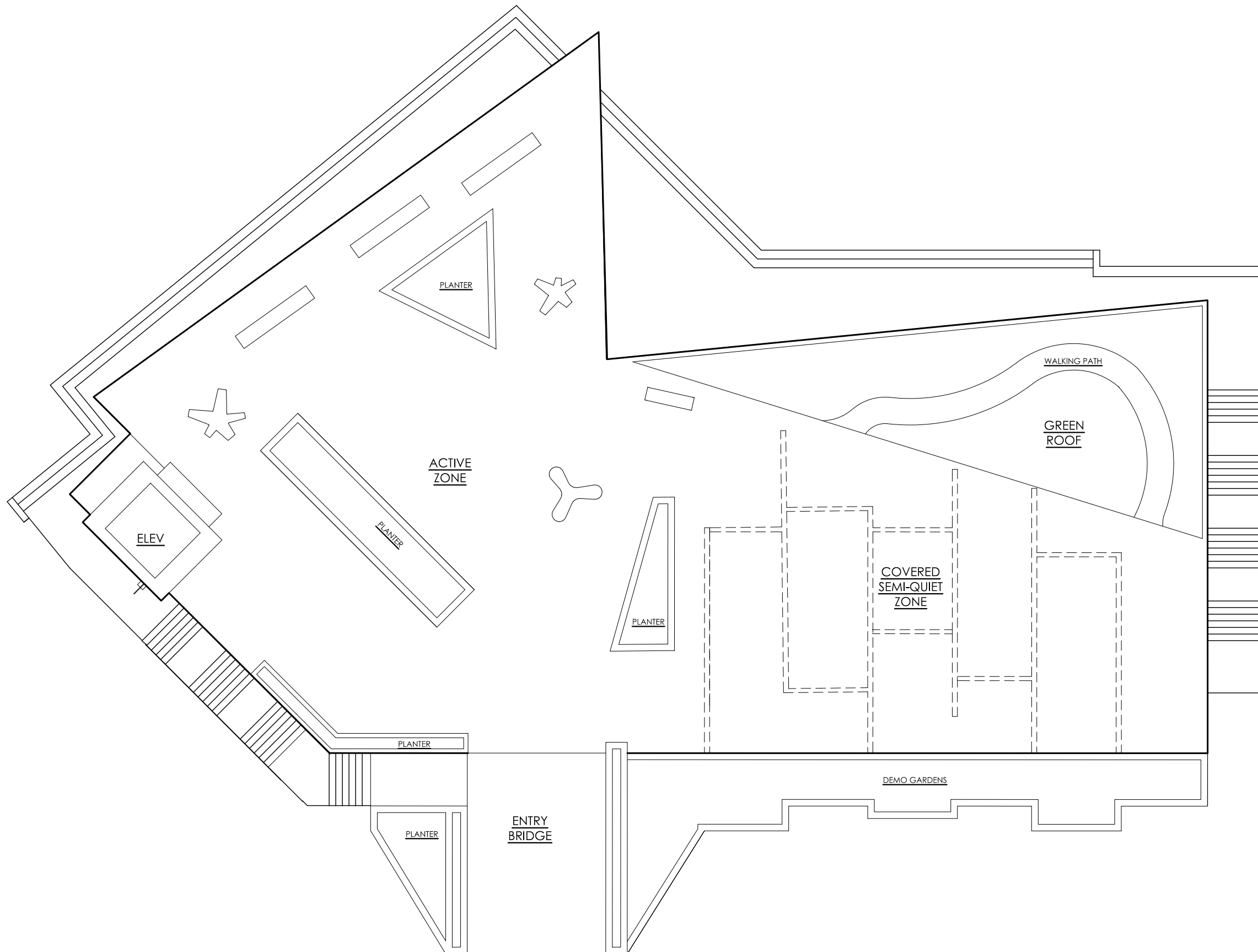


2 SECTION 2: CAPITOL / LAKE VIEW CORRIDOR

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James Madison Park

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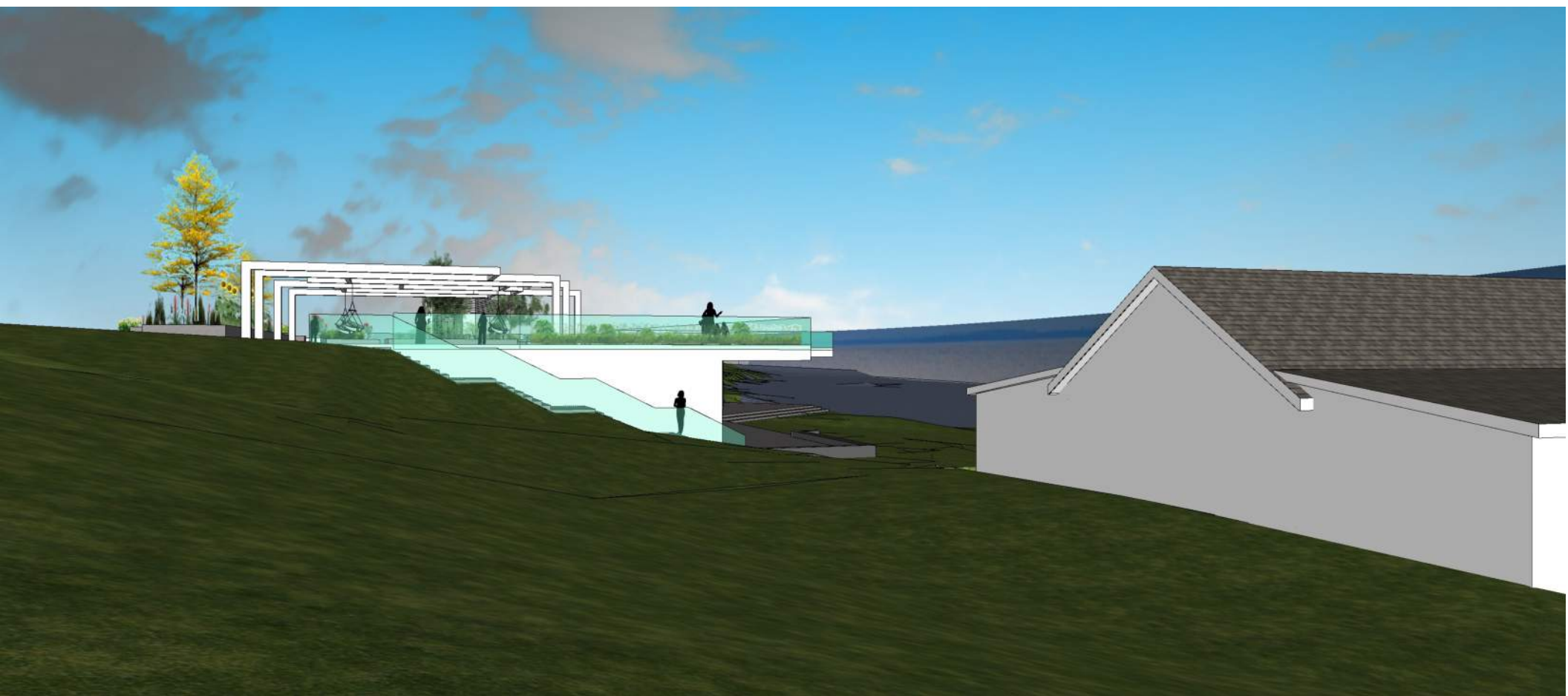
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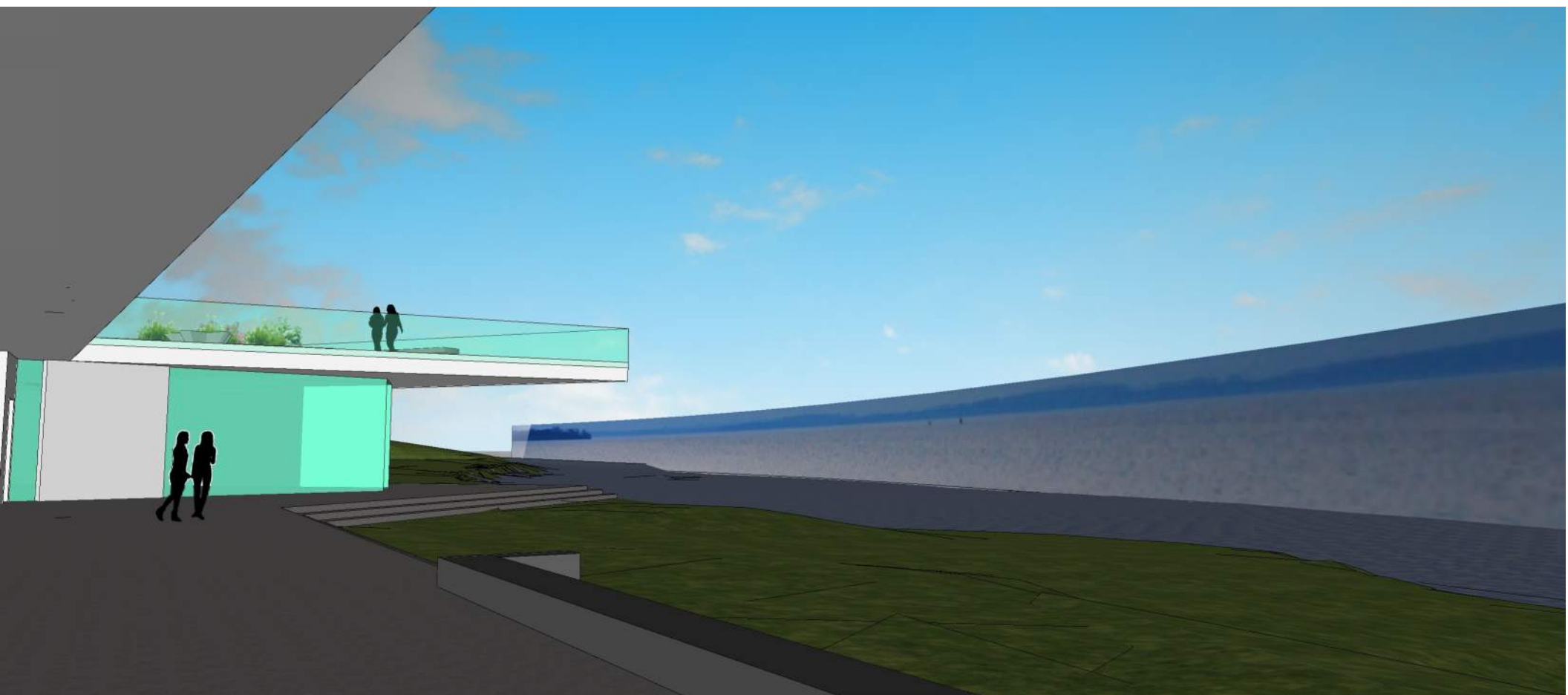
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