

LOUIS I. KAHN TRENTON BATH HOUSE AND DAY CAMP AT THE
EWING SENIOR & COMMUNITY CENTER
LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT



FORMER JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER
RESEARCH & EXISTING CONDITIONS SUMMARY

January 2008

For
MERCER COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
FAREWELL MILLS GATSCH ARCHITECTS

By
HERITAGE LANDSCAPES
Preservation Landscape Architects & Planners

LOUIS I. KAHN BATH HOUSE & DAY CAMP AT THE EWING SENIOR & COMMUNITY CENTER



LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

Prepared for

Farewell Mills Gatsch Architects

Prepared by

Heritage Landscapes

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Louis I. Kahn Trenton Bath House & Day Camp at the Ewing Senior & Community Center
Landscape Assessment

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LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

I: Designed Landscape Summary, Scope & Methodology

INTRODUCTION

The Ewing Senior and Community Center, formerly known as the Jewish Community Center, located along Lower Ferry Road, is approximately 4 miles northwest of downtown Trenton, New Jersey. The site is significant for the architecture of Louis I. Kahn, who was commissioned by the Jewish Community Center to design both the architecture and landscape for the recreational facility. The first structure to be built was the bath house and pool facility—both geometric in their volumetric massing. Kahn continued to develop his geometric ideas and designs for the site and aided in the further development of the site through the construction of the community building and day camp area. Today, the beloved facility is used by the local community, though contemporary needs for parking and access are in need of renewal. To accommodate these contemporary needs and resolve current landscape issues, an opportunity has arisen to implement Kahn's designed landscape for the area in response to needed site facilities and amenities.

The rehabilitation of the Ewing Senior and Community Center landscape as designed by Louis I. Kahn and partially executed in 1955 through 1957 raises some interesting challenges and a unique opportunity to implement a modern landscape that is in spatial harmony with the structures it supports. In response to this challenge, Heritage Landscapes has gathered and studied in detail the sequence of Kahn's plans and sketches in order to develop an understanding of the intended character of the architecture and landscape that was proposed and partially constructed. A rich record of Kahn's proposed concepts for the Jewish Community Center exists. The landscape and the architecture together establish spatial relationships and use patterns that vary across the documentary evidence of the design from 1955 to 1958. The review of the sketches informs the range of approaches to be tested in approaching the work needed to address the current landscape. The Kahn-designed landscape materials and sequence inform the range of options to develop an overall plan that addresses the continued use of this historic property.

In 2007 Heritage Landscapes, Preservation Landscape Architects & Planners, was contracted through Farewell Mills Gatsch Architects, LLC (FMG) to complete a landscape assessment for Mercer County/Ewing Township as part of the research component prior to the completion of schematic design for the landscape of the Kahn-designed bath house at the Ewing Senior and Community Center in Trenton, New Jersey. The purposes of this assessment are to examine the historical

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evolution of Kahn's design ideas for the landscape and to identify the existing landscape character and features of the Ewing Senior and Community Center today.

SCOPE OF WORK & LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

The scope of work specifies that the landscape assessment includes researching the landscape design evolution and assessing the existing landscape. Together, these tasks yield a narrative text that includes a landscape design chronology with graphic materials and documentation of the existing landscape with graphic materials. Understanding the design evolution and the existing conditions of the site today will inform the conceptual and schematic design process based on Kahn's plans. Schematic designs will then be carried through design development into construction documents for implementation.

As outlined in the scope of work, Heritage Landscapes began the process of developing this landscape assessment by undertaking historical research to gain a general understanding of the design ideas generated by Kahn over time. Primary sources were sought and reviewed, mainly focusing on the Louis I. Kahn Collection at the University of Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. A wide variety of documentary materials including sketches, plans, construction documents, and photographs were examined and obtained to provide evidence of Kahn's design ideas and evolution over time. Gathered materials were organized chronologically and analyzed to reveal eras of development and shifts within design ideas. Information gleaned from Kahn's sketches, plans, and construction documents is presented in the discussion of the design evolution in Chapters II through VII. A large group of selected images from this research process are also presented in the following chapters that explain Kahn's concepts and design progression in a summary way.

The research phase of this landscape assessment also consisted of a brief literature review to search readily available secondary sources pertaining to the Jewish Community Center. Literature reviewed by Heritage Landscapes included the following:

- Solomon, Susan G. *Louis I. Kahn's Trenton Jewish Community Center*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2000.

The existing conditions of the Ewing Senior and Community Center were documented through a one day on-site field session in November 2007 by Heritage Landscapes staff. Fieldwork was grounded in a review of available historic and contemporary mapping, aerial photographs, and other images. The field team inventoried the site through photography and used field observation skills to identify and document current landscape issues. This photographic inventory captured the general character of the site. The photographs also helped to inform the AutoCAD base map, which is presented as the existing conditions plan. All existing conditions photographs presented in this landscape assessment were taken by Heritage Landscapes staff during the site visit.

It should be noted that throughout this report, several terms are used to specifically reference the landscape and features of the Ewing Senior and Community Center. The term "Ewing Senior and Community Center" is used in referring to the official, present-day site as it exists today, while

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“Jewish Community Center” is used when referring to the site prior to Ewing Township's ownership, specifically during Kahn’s involvement from 1955 to 1958. “Jewish Community Center” is also used when referring to site plans or sketches that exhibit that title. When referring to the structures on the site, the term “bath house” refers to the bath house complex at the swimming pool and “pavilions” refers to the Day Camp, while “community center” and “community building” refer to the large, main recreational building on the property. These terms are used throughout the landscape assessment.

LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT REPORT ORGANIZATION

This landscape assessment is organized into eight chapters, which are based upon design date and design evolution. Chapter I: Designed Landscape Summary, Scope & Methodology offers an introduction to the project scope, methodology, and summary findings while Chapter II: Trenton Jewish Community Center Site Design, 1955 begins with Kahn’s initial design ideas for the site. Chapters III through VII follow Kahn’s design evolution from May 1955 to August 1958. The existing conditions are outlined in Chapter VIII: Trenton Jewish Community Center & Bath House Existing Conditions 2007. Together these chapters capture an understanding of Kahn’s design idea and track the evolution of his ideas over a three year period. Each chapter consists of brief narrative text with graphic materials, referred to as figures. One plan, *2007 Existing Conditions Plan, EC* also accompanies Chapter VIII as an 11” x 17” fold out.

TRENTON JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER LANDSCAPE DESIGN SUMMARY

The Kahn plans, sketches, and illustrations can generally be grouped into four periods that align with shifts in the design concepts and ideas for the original Jewish Community Center campus landscape. These four time periods progress from 1955 to 1958 as follows:

- 1955 to 1956, with the initial site design and building of bath house and pool
- 1956, with preliminary designs for the community building and day camp
- 1957, with further design development of the community building and construction of the day camp
- 1958, with further design development of the community building incorporating 1956 circular schemes

Within each period, significant elements arise that can be traced through the design sequence over approximately three years. These include:

- Relationship among the architecture components including the bath house, day camp and community building
- Relationship of the site elements, exterior play areas, community spaces, utility spaces, bath house entry court, and community green
- Relationship of tree groves to the architectural elements
- Relationship of the placement of the parking at the perimeter

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II: Trenton Jewish Community Center Site Design, 1955

The earliest drawings studied in archival research date to February and March 1955 and capture the community center site as a whole. The Kahn's preliminary designs for the Trenton Jewish Community Center show the Bath House located to the north with the swimming pool adjacent to the west. This group of early sketches shows the evolution of Kahn's initial design concept with a complex organization of square, rectangle and circle forms spatially arranged on the site. The architecture is shown in single and repeated modules that address various site programs elements. The landscape is shown in spatially and proportionally related forms and volumes. The design process revealed in these sketches demonstrates a spatial and proportional integration of buildings, and defined landscape spaces that affirms Kahn's concern for the entire site.

Using the overall plan seen on Figure II.2 as a reference, a site grid that Kahn establishes is seen in terms of spatial delineations and proportional relationships. This plan shows spatial modules of both landscape and architecture. The geometry and proportions of spaces and structures are interrelated. For example, the square form and size of the private parking court, the outdoor theatre space and the paved area around the Bath House are visually equal as is the separate square lawn panel shown in bright green. Also, the size of the pool and surrounding lawn is the same as the size of the grove shown aligned below it. In addition the paved rectangle set off with three turf circles, is aligned to the nine module structure. Each circle is sized to fit within this structure. There are also three rectangular forms, graduated in size but appear proportionally related. These include the entry rectangle with the three circles, the long dimension rectangle of the pool, and the larger scale long dimension rectangle of the green lawn on the right side of the site.

Kahn's drawing set from 1955 show refinements to the pool locations with pencil overlays outlining revised positions and progressions in the design concepts. Functional issues are addressed within the geometries of the plan being explored. The programmatic elements of the community center are incorporated. For example the modular buildings of repeated forms suit various purposes as labeled to include single, double and nine module forms labeled, Bath House, Health Club, Classroom, Office as single modules; Lounges and Future Indoor Pool as double modules, and Gym and Auditorium as nine-module structures. A square, gridded tree grove is clearly shown, while green squiggles probably indicating informal dense planting areas, are related and complementary square and rectangular forms. A vehicular drop-off area is at the Auditorium, while parking is located along the north perimeter along the future Adrian Avenue. The parking extends at the east edge from Gold Street to Lower Ferry along the future Adrian Street. It is helpful to note that each aspect of the property is

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considered in this initial sketch. As the planning and implementation process proceeds, Kahn demonstrates continued consideration of an organizing grid, geometry of forms, proportional relationships and spatial volumes that are introduced in these February and March 1955 sketches.

Plans and sketches showing Kahn's initial 1955 design concept are included as in Figures II.1 through II.4 on the following pages.

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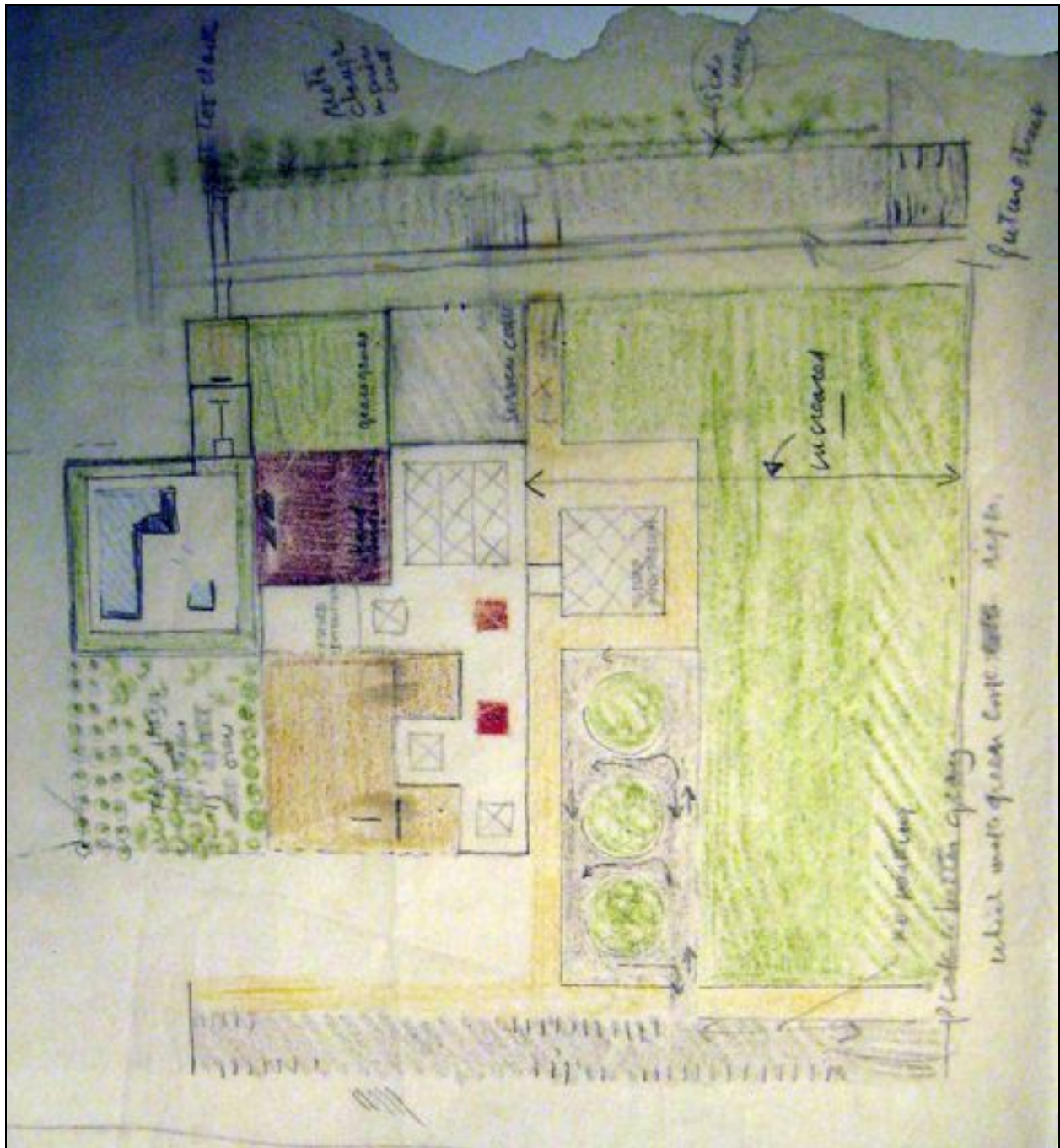


Figure II.1. An early February 1955 plot plan of one of Kahn's preliminary designs for the Trenton Jewish Community Center with the Bath House positioned slightly off the center line of Gold Street with the pool to the south and west. Other areas for recreational facilities are allotted to square and rectangular areas of grass and paving. Parking is located to the north opposite the "future street" later to become Adrian Avenue. A drop-off area is also shown with three grass circles. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-Plot-Plan w Mound-nd-pre-2-15-55-whitened.jpg)

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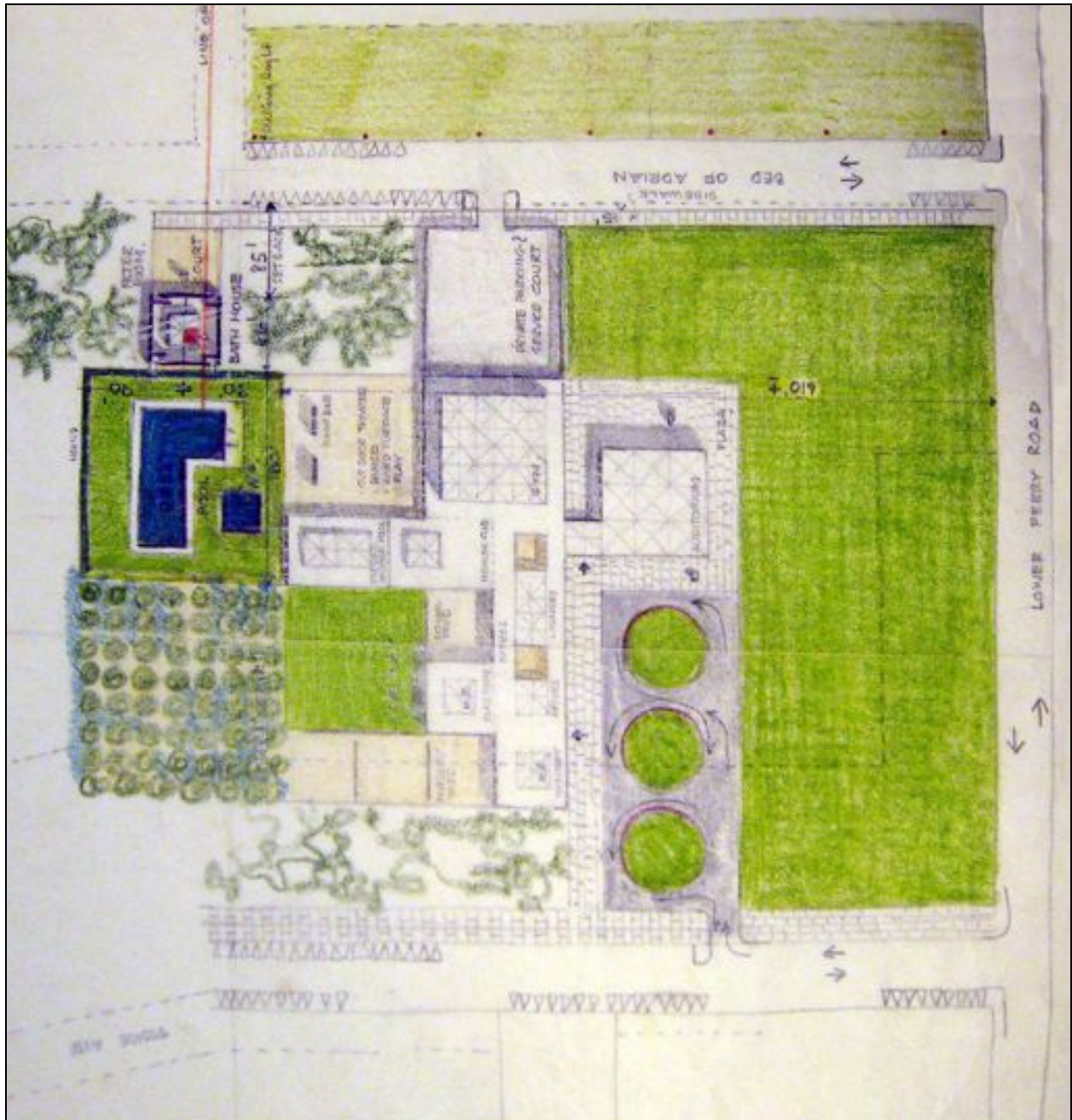


Figure II.2. Plot plan dated March 13, 1955 shows refinements of Kahn's first design of the community center. In addition to the Bath House and pool, other facilities shown on the plan include an auditorium, gym, service court and private parking, hard surface play yard, health club, and others all positioned within a complex arrangement of square and rectangular spaces. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-Plot-Plan 3-13-55-whitened-SC.jpg)

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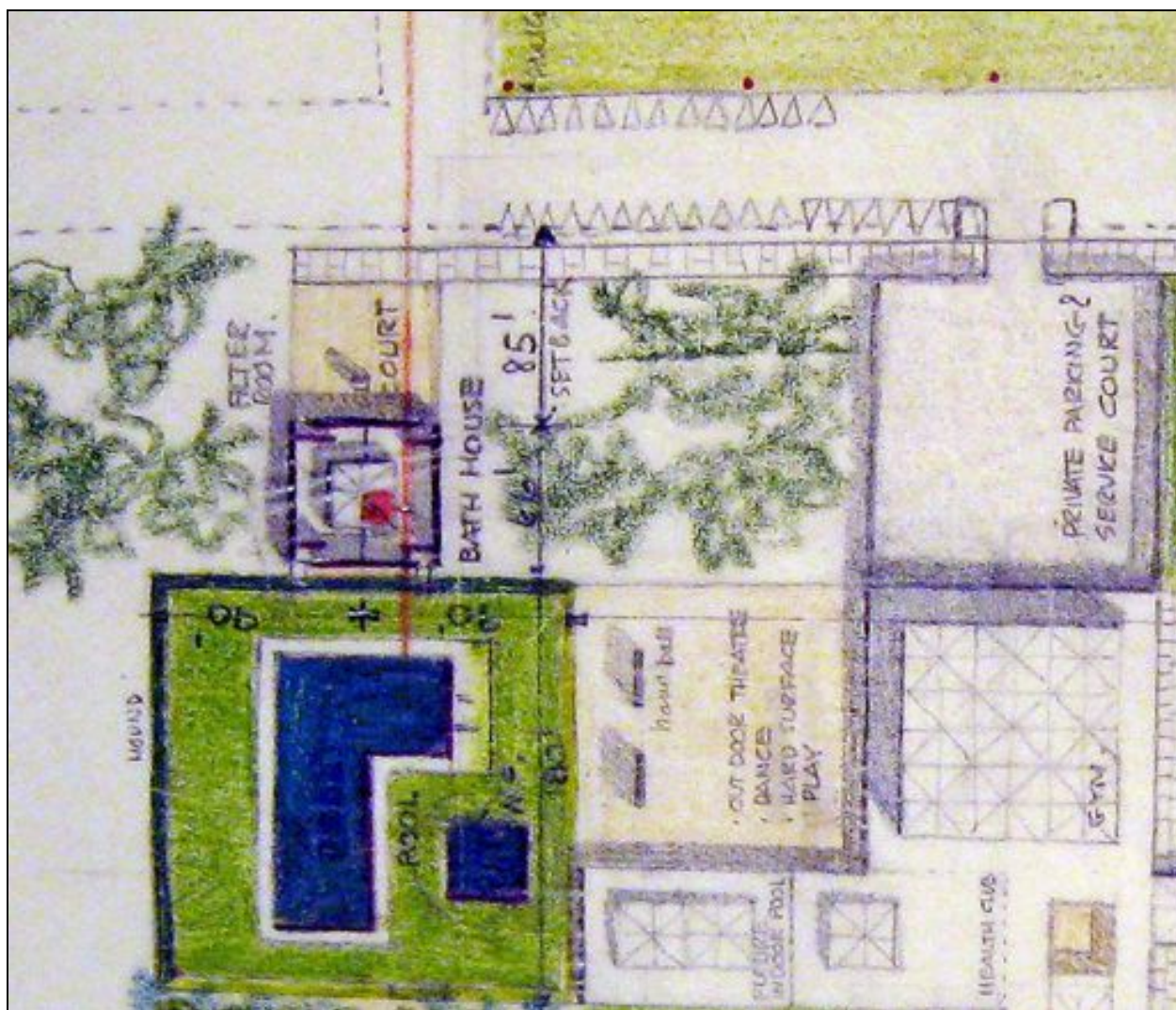


Figure II.3. A detail of the March 1955 plot plan shows the proposed arrangement of the Bath House and swimming pool along Adrian Avenue. The Bath House structure is set back from the road 85 feet with a forecourt and trees to either side. The pool appears to sit on an earth plinth, mounded slightly from the existing grade. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-Plot-Plan-court - 3-13-55-whitened.jpg)

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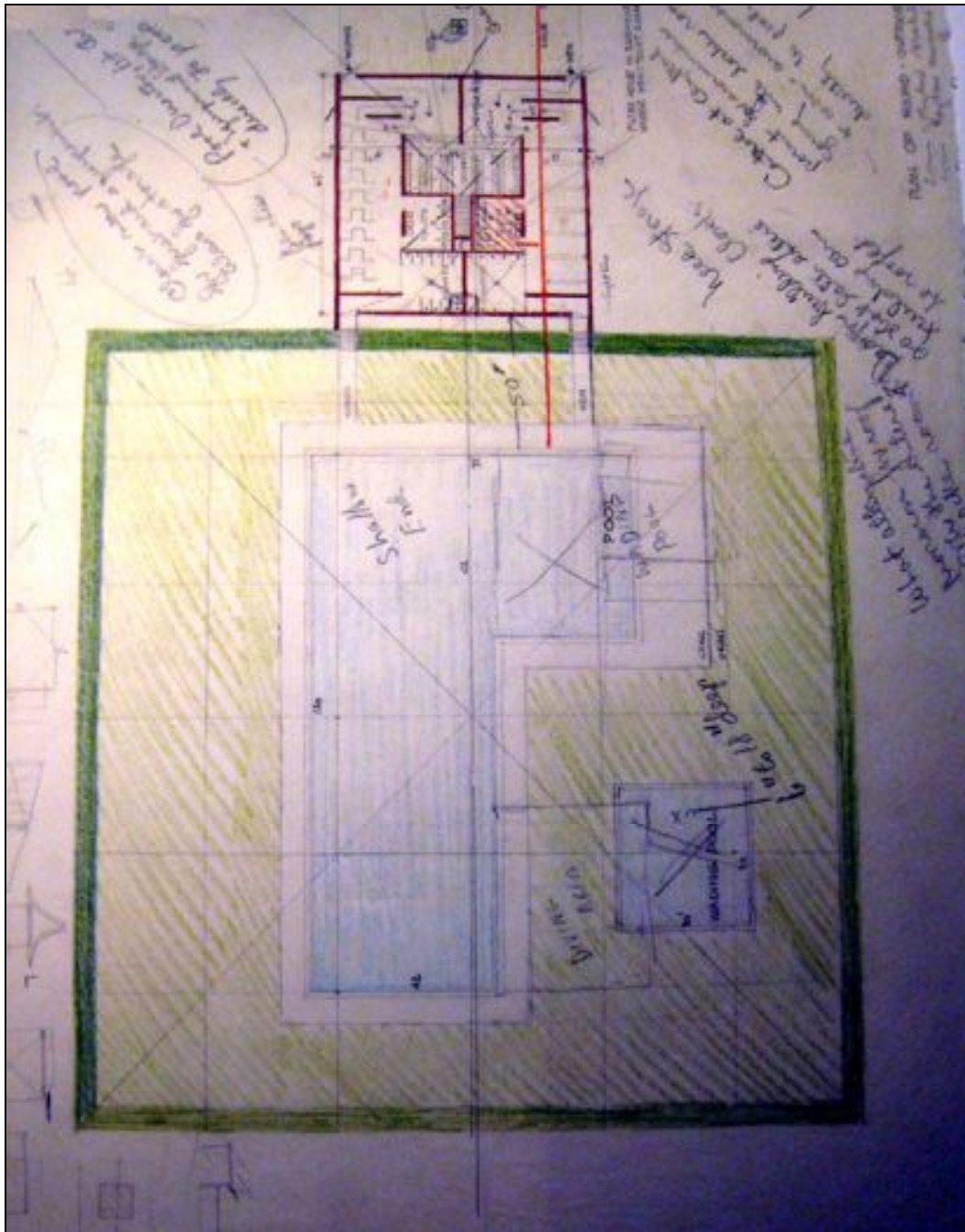


Figure II.4. A detail view of the mounded pool area and adjacent Bath House show additional refinements to the pool locations with pencil overlays outlining revised positions for the diving area and wading pool. The Bath House is proposed as one building divided in half for men and women. Notes regarding the need for additional amenities for the pool area are visible surrounding the plan. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-Plan of Mound-overall-btm-3-13-55-whitened.jpg)

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LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

III: Trenton Jewish Community Center Bath House & Pool Construction Documents, May 1955

The Bath House was the first phase of Community Center construction. The construction drawing blueprint set provides considerable detail for the landscape. There are also Bath House building construction drawings in the archives, but these are not included in this landscape design review. The group of site and landscape detail drawings and as-built photographs are included as Figures III.1 through III.10 and as-built black and white photographs are shown in Figures III.11 to III.15. Prepared in May of 1955 the Bath House and pool construction drawings show revised locations from the earlier studies.

The May 24, 1955 Plot Plan records Kahn's repositioning of the Bath House west of the Adrian Avenue and Gold Street intersection. The plan depicts a layout of four identical structures that together comprise the Bath House. The men's and women's bath houses are housed in two of these 40-foot square structures. The area between the bath houses contains an open court with a twenty-two foot diameter gravel circle and smaller circles of gravel along the building exterior, likely for drainage. The construction documents also show the location of the "Future Community Building" to the south of the Bath House that serves as an organizing element of the landscape in Kahn's design progression after the Bath House and pool construction.

The landscape drawings communicate the evolving community building design in substantial detail. The overall site plan, shown in Figure III.1, places the Bath House and pool south of the intersection of Adrian Avenue and Gold Street with an articulated, large footprint of the "Future Community Building" shown further south. Spatial patterns and geometric forms are developed on a grid specifically for this project scope to address the several scales in the square pool enclosure, the square wading pool, the square and cross forms of the four interlocking modules of the Bath House building and down to the level of the square score pattern of the 4-foot paving module.

The arrangement of the L-shaped swimming and square wading pools is also revised from the previous sketches with a mirror image organization of the large pool. Steps lead up to the pool area from the center of the north Bath House, and the square and L-shaped pools are set on a turf grass plinth, as shown in Figure III.3. The area between the two pools is laid with sod, and the entire facility is enclosed with a seven-foot tall chain link wire mesh fence. A lighting design plan is also drafted for the area surrounding the pools. Construction details show Kahn's design for simple exterior light fixtures, galvanized wire mesh fence, and two different types of gates as shown in

III.1

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Figures III.6 through III.9. Drainage for the Bath House is addressed through circular forms of gravel, shown in Figures III.4 and III.10, which were designed to capture water from the pavement and roof areas and allow it to infiltrate into the ground.

Post-construction photographs taken by John Ebstel show the as-built condition of the Bath House and pool area in 1955. Kahn's massing of the Bath House with oversized concrete block piers at each corner and four pyramidal roof forms are a strong visual statement. The controlled slopes and geometric forms of the pool landscape are also visible. The Bath House central open court is an interesting feature that changes over time. First seen in Figure III.11, the circular area is filled with gravel and what appears to be a small square catch basin, which matches Kahn's construction drawing in Figure III.4. Later, the circular area is filled with large stone pavers and grass, as noted in Figure III.12. Other features depicted in the post-construction photographs include a reception counter and a striking wall mural that combines angular and circular forms. Simple plantings around the buildings do not appear to reflect Kahn's concepts and may be the work of the property owner.

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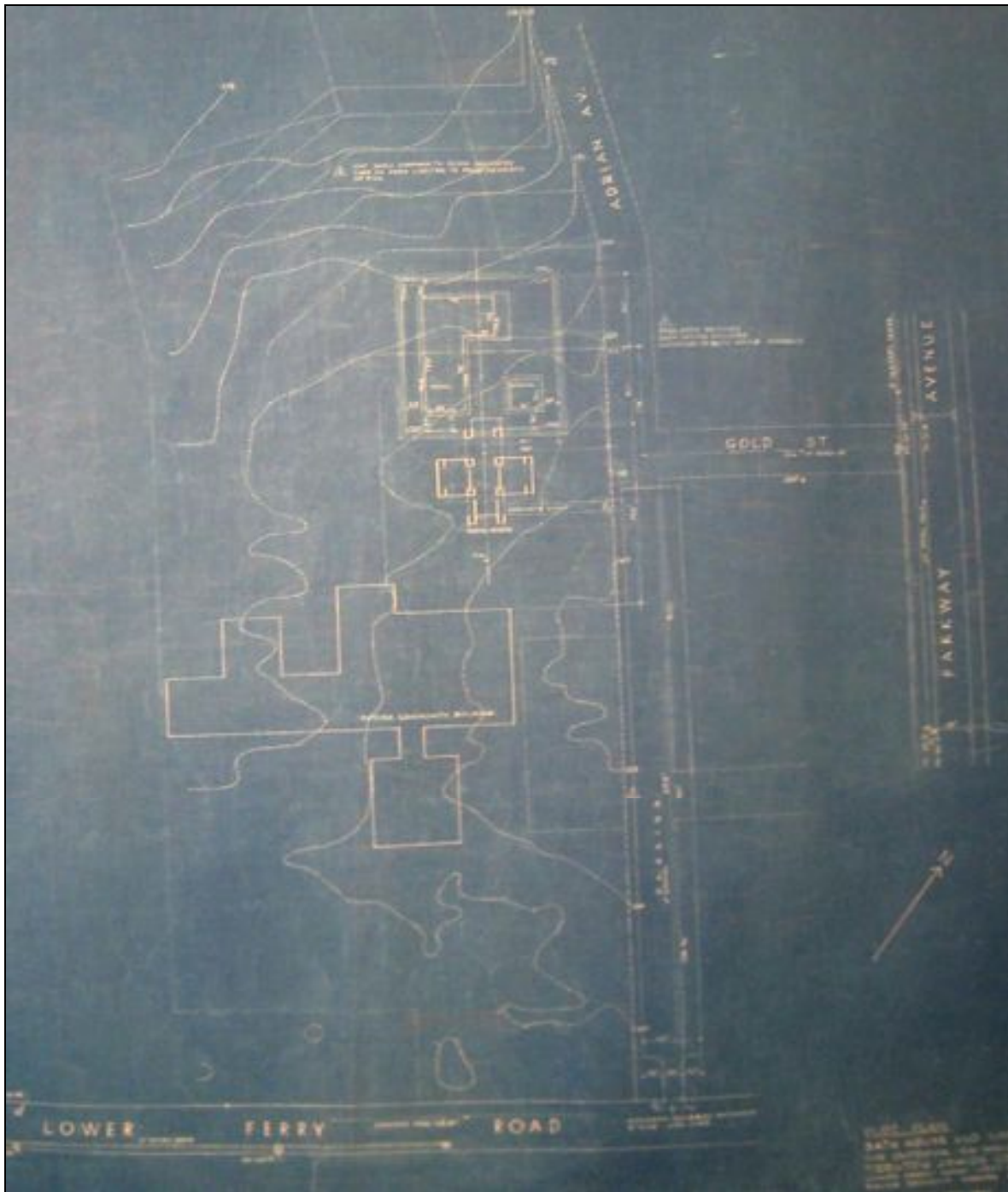


Figure III.1. A May 24, 1955 “Plot Plan” for the construction of the Trenton Bath House shows the context of the site with adjacent streets, graded topography, “Future Community Building” to the south and parking lot aligned with the Adrian Avenue extension, between Gold Street and Lower Ferry Road. Note the relationship between the Bath House and pool and Gold Street. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-BH-CD-plan-5-24-55.jpg)

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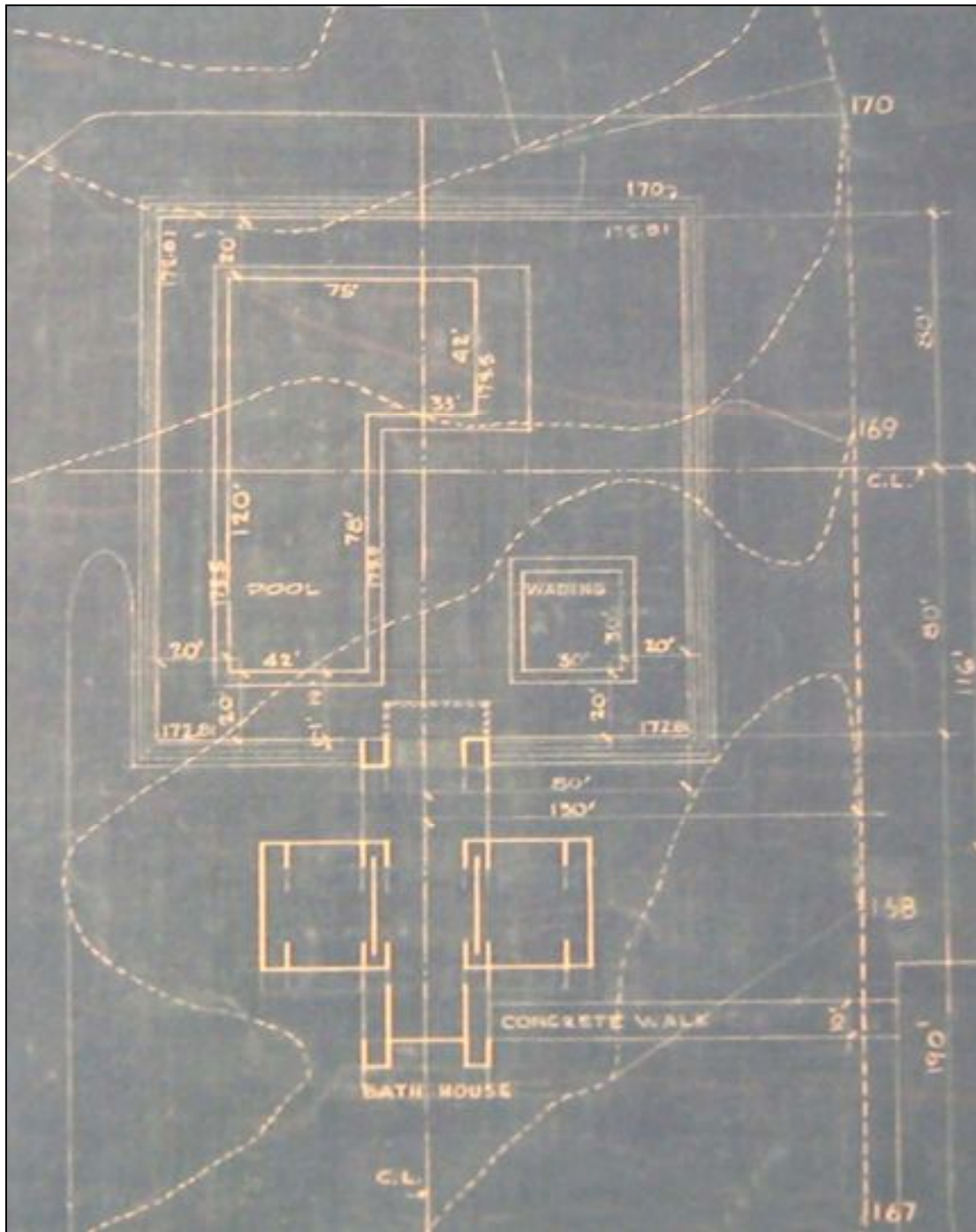


Figure III.2. A detail of the May 24, 1955 “Plot Plan” shows features of the Bath House and pool to be constructed including an L-shaped pool, square wading pool, steps between the Bath House and pool, a three-foot sod mound surrounding the pool area, the Bath House, and a concrete walk linking the facility and its parking lot to the Adrian Avenue extension. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. . (R-KBH-Kahn-BH-CD-topo-dtl-5-24-55-detail.jpg)

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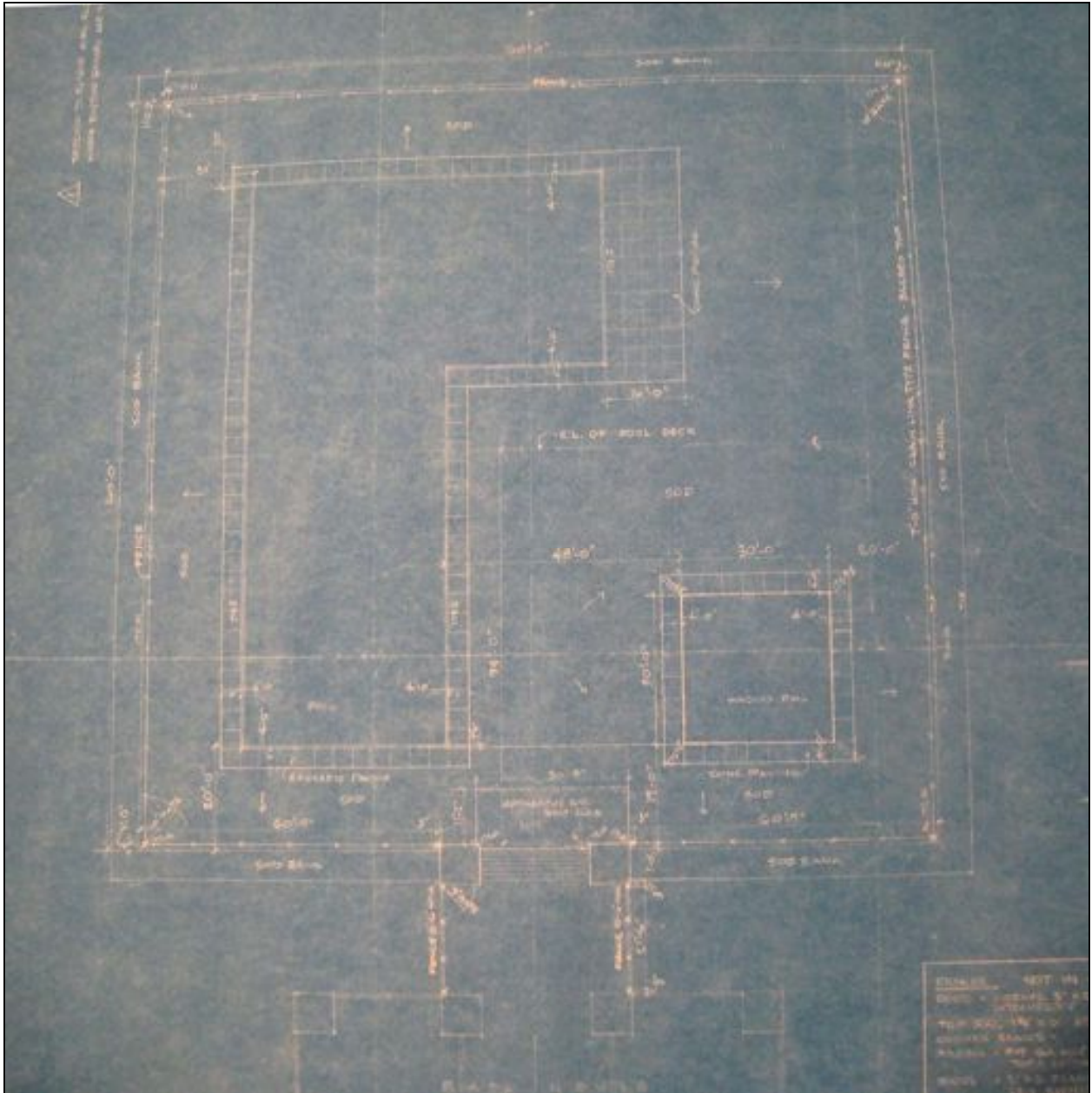


Figure III.3. Construction documents for the pool area shows two pools edged with four feet of concrete paving with even score lines to create a series of squares outlining the pools. The areas between the pools are laid with sod, and the entire facility is enclosed with a seven-foot tall chain-link type fence. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-BH-CD-pool pavt-5-24-55.jpg)

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Figure III.4. A detail of the area at the center of the Bath House shows an open court with a twenty-two foot diameter gravel circle, likely for drainage. Additional features shown on the plan include the women's Bath house on the left, men's Bath house on the right, and a snack bar shown in dashed lines at the top center of the image. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-BH-CD-gravle circle dtl-5-24-55.jpg)

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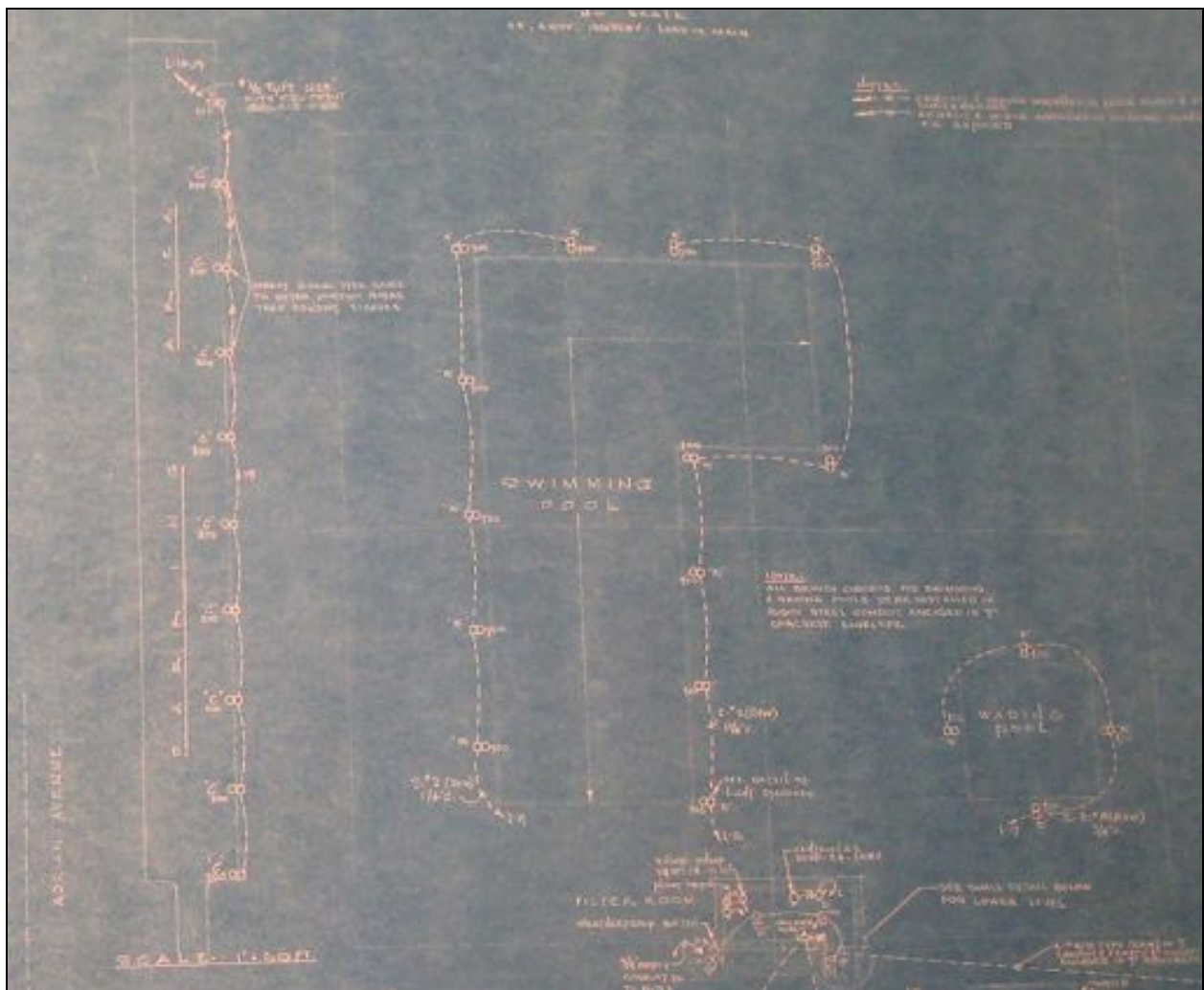


Figure III.5. The lighting plan for the Bath House complex included light fixtures placed equidistantly around the swimming pool, wading pool, and eastern edge of the parking lot. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-BH-CD-lights-pool-park-5-24-55.jpg)

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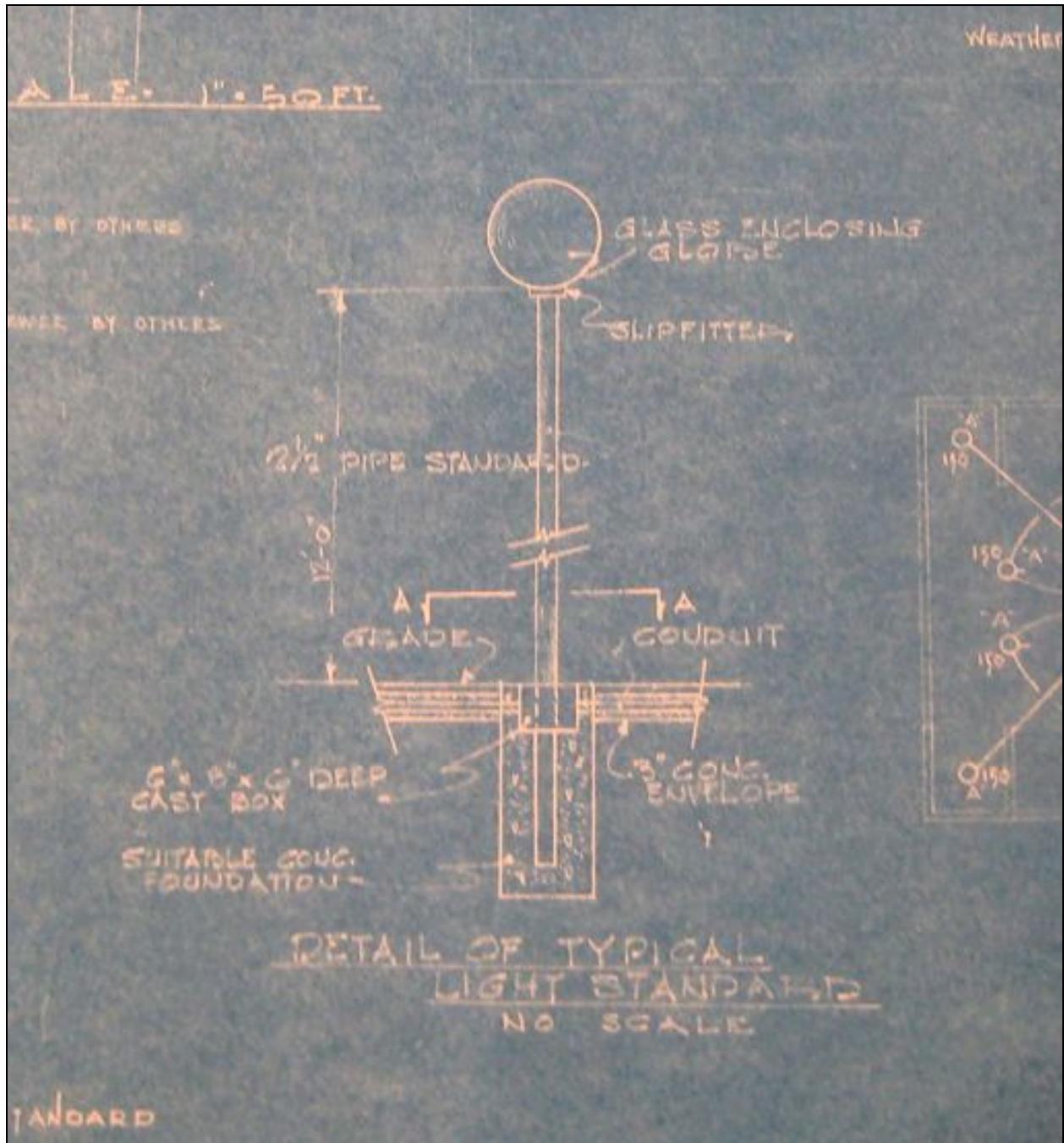


Figure III.6. "Detail of Typical Light Standard" illustrates Kahn's design for a simple exterior light fixture with glass globe and pipe at the Trenton Bath House. Lights were designed to be 12 feet tall and placed within a concrete foundation. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-BH-CD-light elev-5-24-55.jpg)

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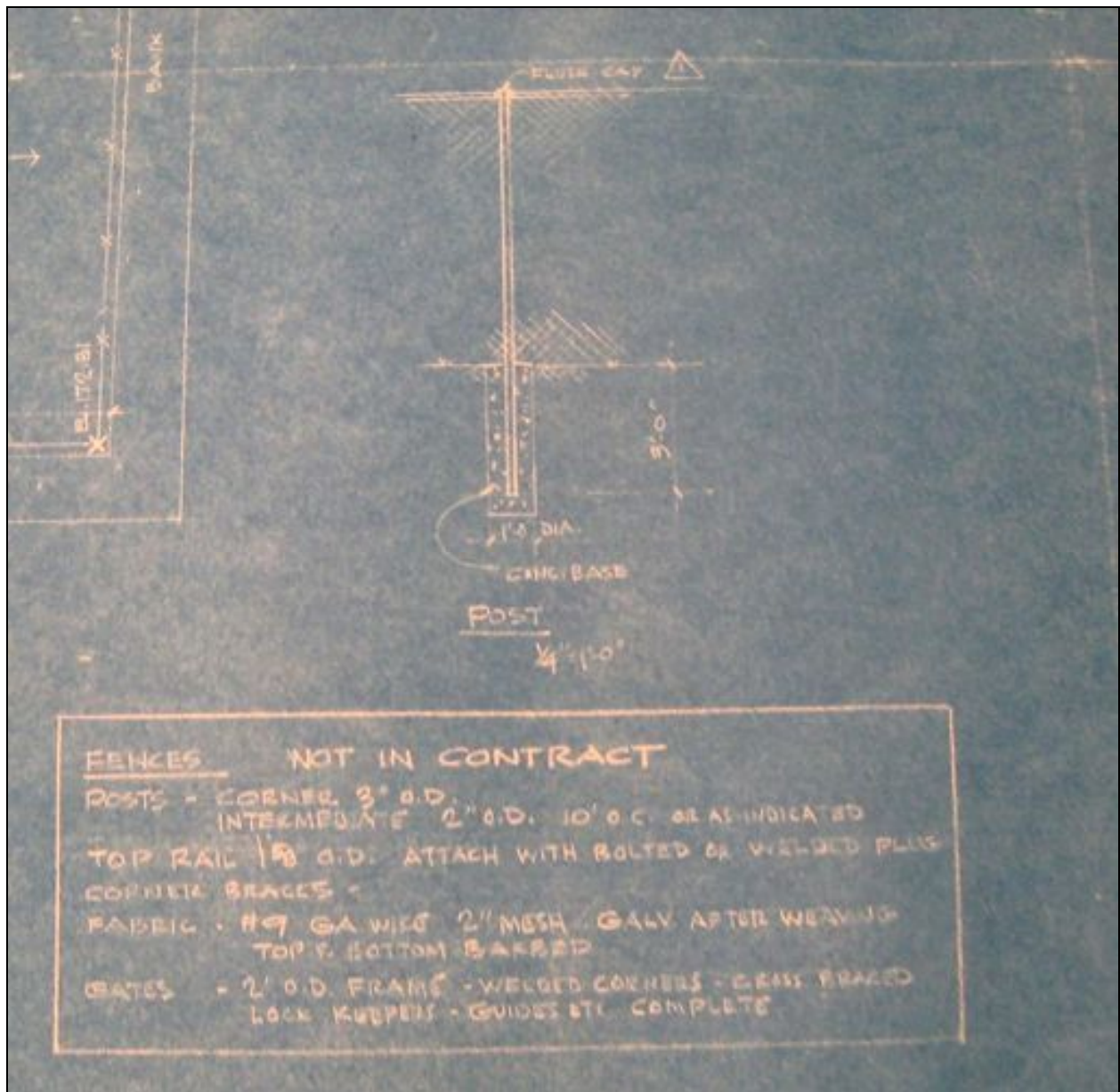


Figure III.7. An elevation of the chain link fence surrounding the pool facility shows metal posts with a 9-gauge galvanized wire to form a 2-inch diagonal mesh for the fence panels. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-BH-CD-fence elev-5-24-55.jpg)

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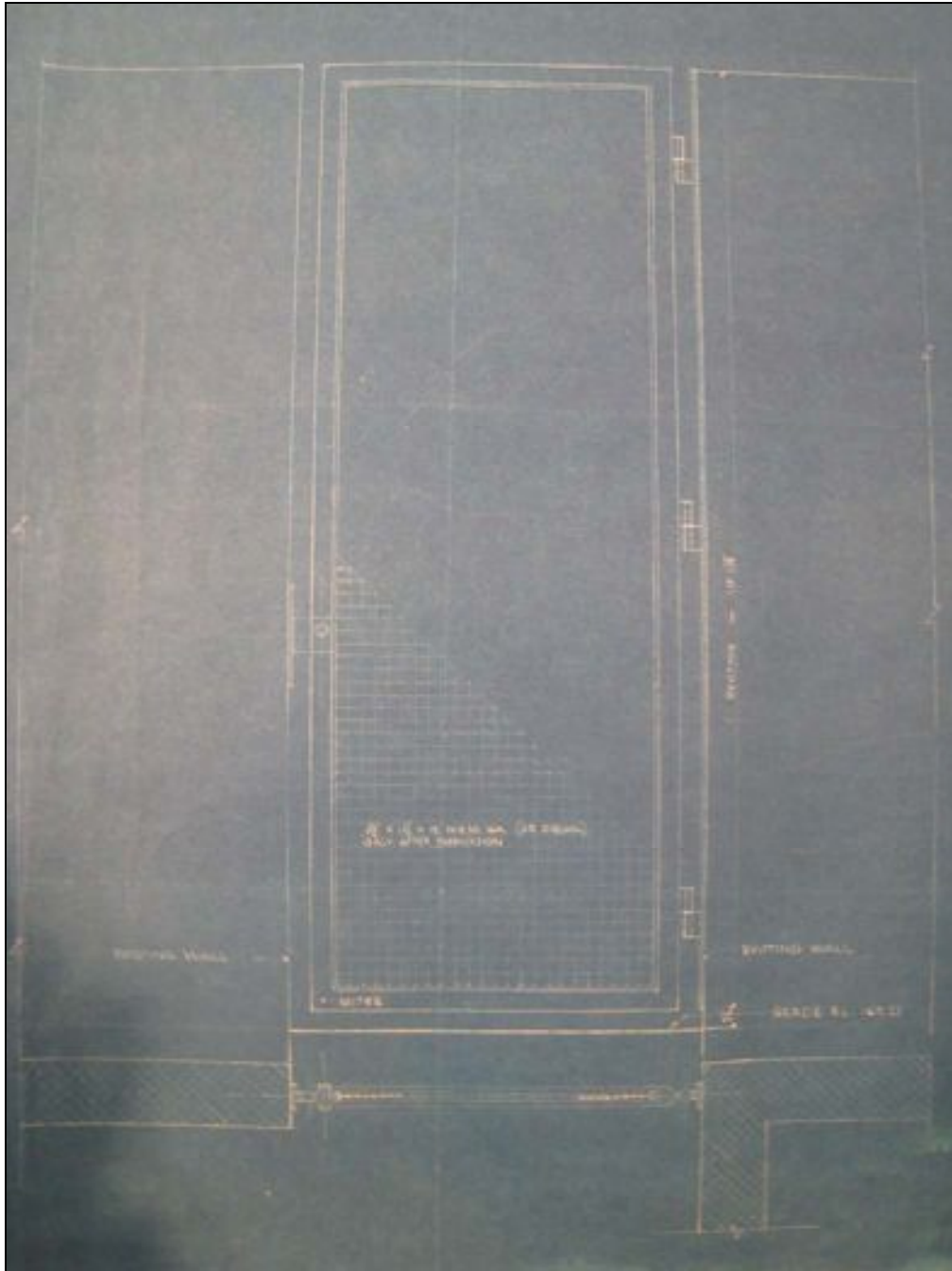


Figure III.8. Kahn's design for gates at the facility incorporated similar materials as the fences, including a metal frame with galvanized wire mesh. Three hinges and a simple latch are used to tie the gate to the Bath House walls. This gate type was intended for use at the Bath House in the southwest and southeast corners of the men's and women's changing rooms, at the entry to either side of the life guard station. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-BH-CD-gate elev-7-25-55.jpg)

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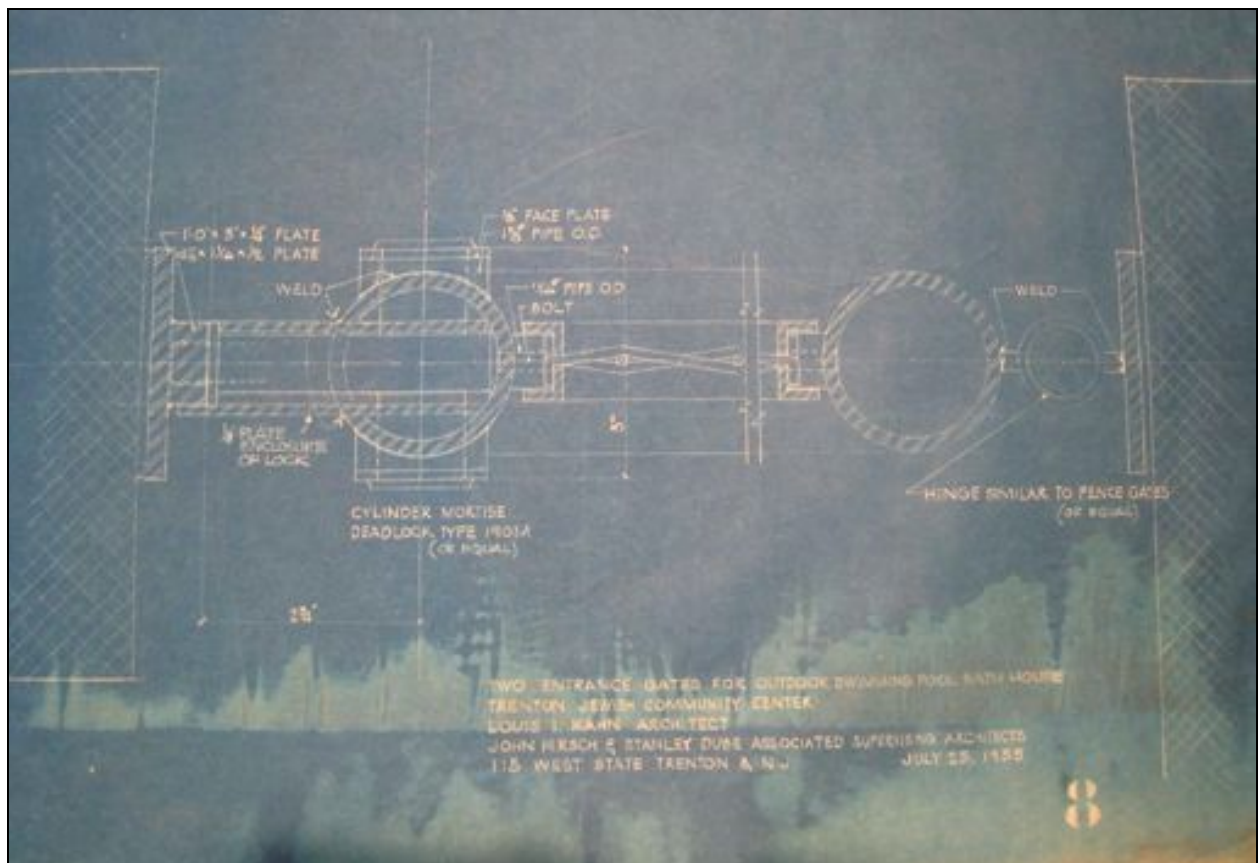


Figure III.9. “Two Entrance Gates for Outdoor Swimming Pool Bath House, Trenton Jewish Community Center” shows a detailed section of the gates at the entrance of the facility. a cylinder mortise deadlock created out of welded metal and pipe is used to secure the gate. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-BH-CD-gate dtl-7-25-55.jpg)

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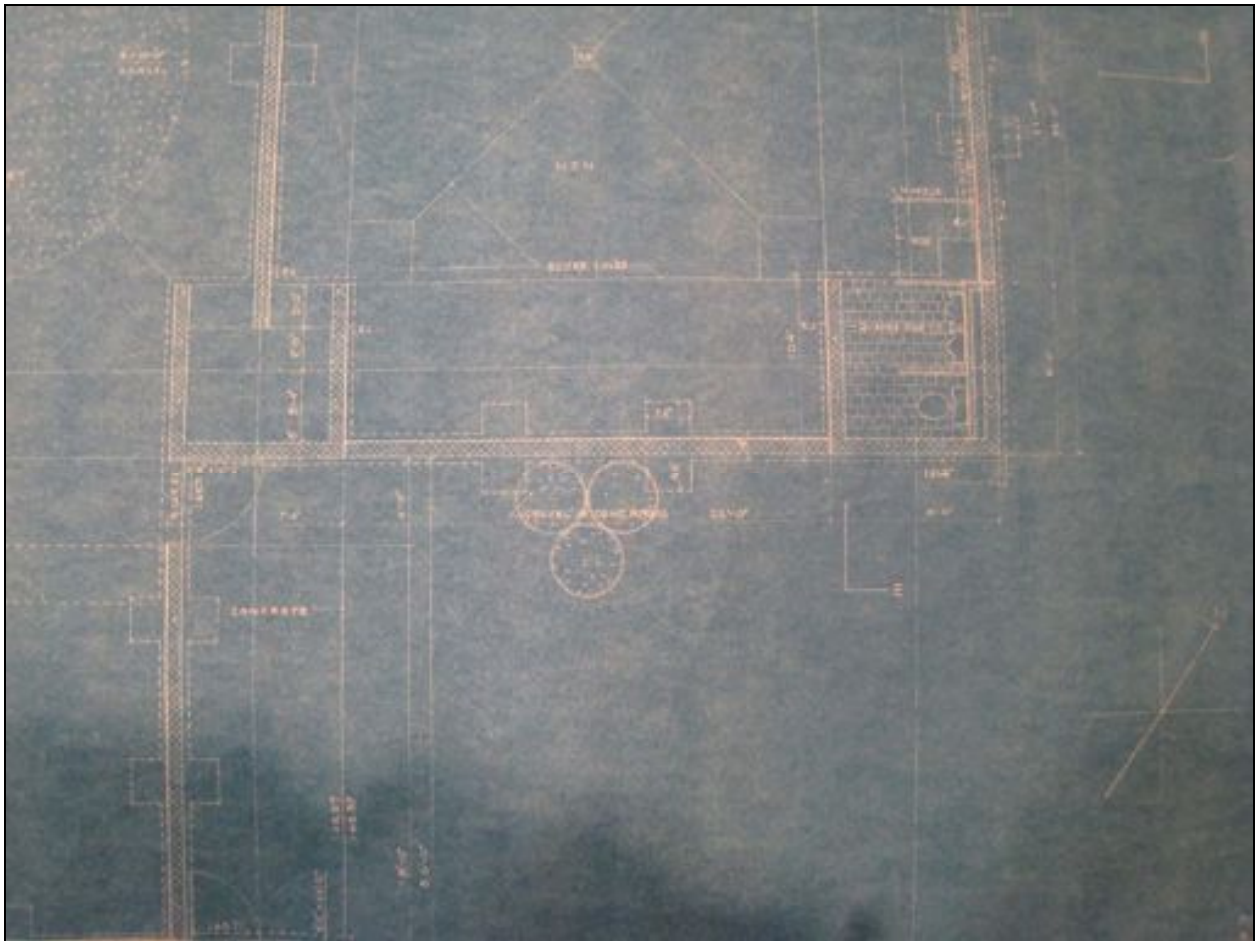


Figure III.10. A detail of the southern vicinity of the men's bath house shows three gravel circles in concrete forms, intended for collection of roof drainage. A roughly north-south concrete walk to the southwest marks the entrance to the Bath House. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-BH-CD-drainage dtl-5-24-55.jpg)

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Figure III.11. A photograph of the Bath House shows the central open court of the Bath House with a circular gravel area and what appears to be a small catch basin for drainage as shown on Kahn's construction drawings in Figure III.4. The pavement surrounding the circle is approximately four inches higher. Courtesy FMG Architects. (R- TBH-Bath-House-gravel-center-FMG-report.jpg)

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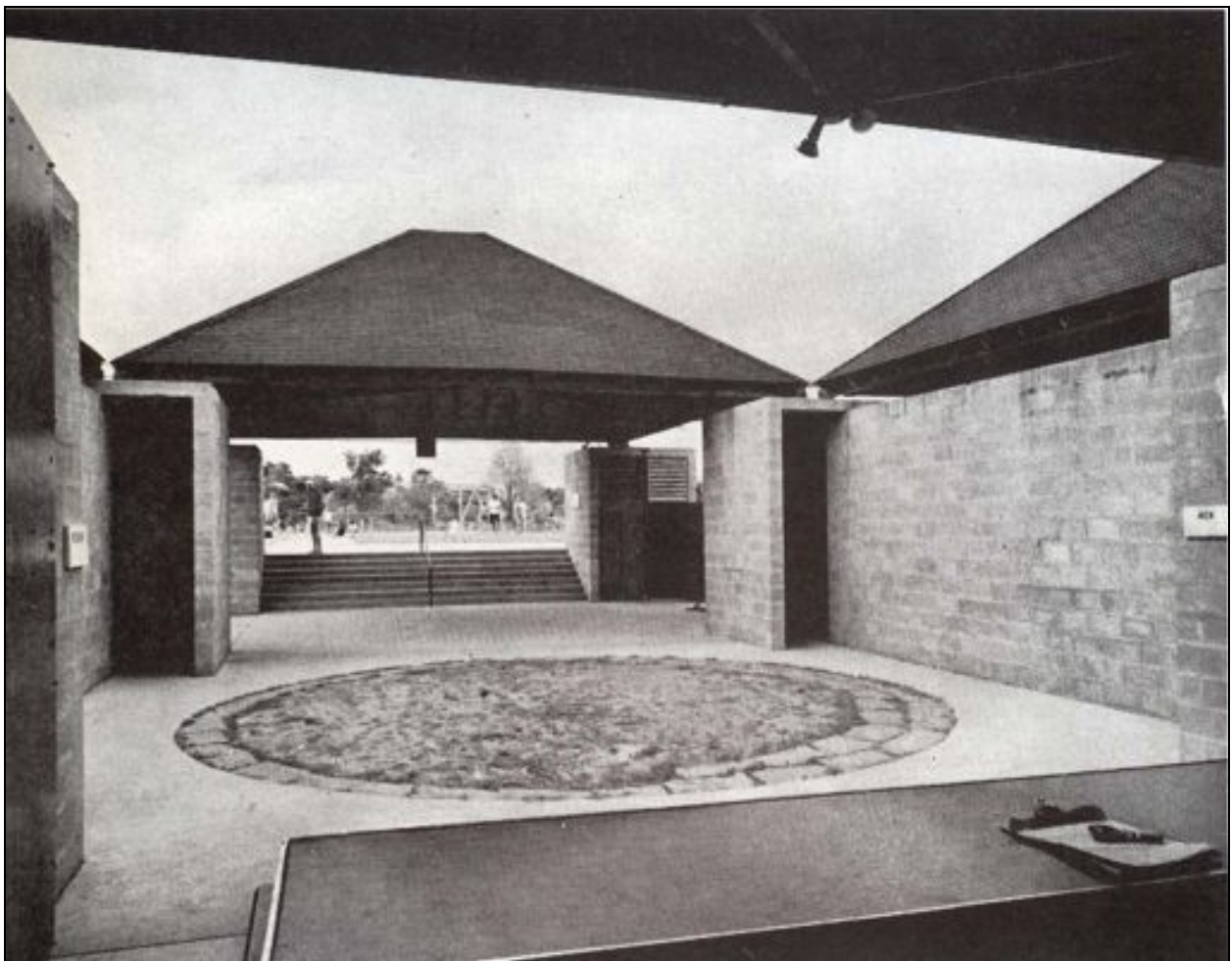


Figure III.12. A later post-construction photograph of the Bath House taken by John Ebstel also focuses on the central open court. At this time, the circular gravel area has been replaced with grass and large rectangular stone paving. This area may have been altered for functionality reasons. The reception counter is in the foreground with the steps leading to the pools in the background. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-John Ebstel photos-A.jpg)

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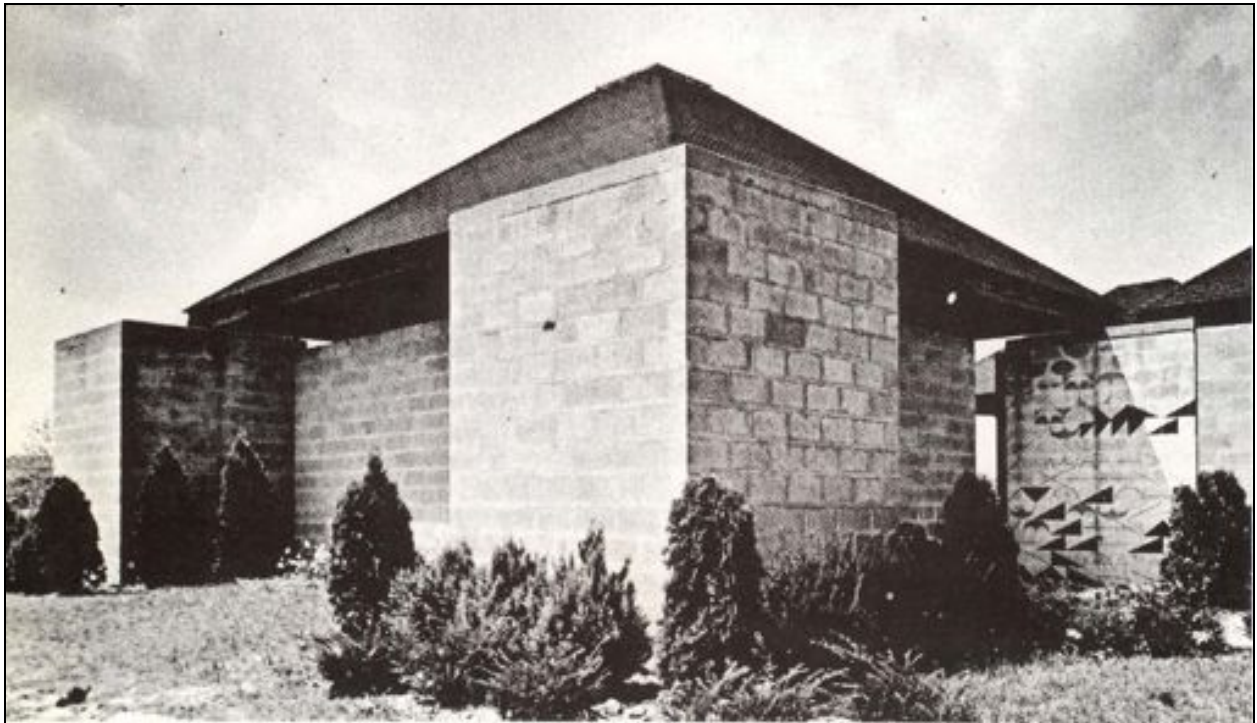


Figure III.13. Another post-construction photograph taken by John Ebstel of the exterior of the Bath House shows the massing of the structure with concrete block piers and pyramidal roof. The solid form of the building is softened by evergreen shrubs and trees that provide a contrasting texture to the smooth building walls. Also note a geometric mural on the right at the entry. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-John Ebstel photos-B.jpg)

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Figure III.14. A post-construction photograph taken by John Ebstel depicts the geometric mural at the entry to the Bath House. Note the change in grade at the entrance. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-Ebstel photo - mural.jpg)

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Figure III.15. A post-construction photograph taken by John Ebstel of the north façade of the Bath House complex shows the massing of the structure with concrete block piers and pyramidal roof. Note the foundation plantings and the gravel walkway in the foreground, connecting the Bath House entry with the parking area. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-Ebstel photo-north facade.jpg)

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LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

IV: Trenton Jewish Community Center Design Sketches, June 1955 to June 1956

Between June 1955 and 1956, a series of Kahn's sketches show his process of creating and designing interrelating forms to develop the aesthetic patterns and functional elements of the site. In these sketches the constructed Bath House and pool group serve as anchors and respond to other site elements. In the first group of sketches an overall modular pattern of squares and octagons is used to shape space. Landscape and building elements are directly related within this patterning of space. These studies explore the overall organization of the property as an expression of a repeated module. In Figures IV.1 to IV.2 Kahn's color sketches depict grid relationships and geometries in a more focused and discernable way than in previous schemes. In one early sketch (Figure IV.1) parking is located along the perimeters of the site, with circular gardens in the interior surrounding an arrangement of squares and octagons. Vegetation is depicted by brown squiggly lines that appear to range in density from north to south. A tighter sketch plan, dated November 1955, relies on a continuous square and octagon pattern (Figure IV.2). Rendered in several colors, it depicts an allocation of individual shapes for the various facilities and amenities of the Community Center. Offices, administration and crafts are labeled on the plan, indicating that the pattern shows a modular building form with equivalent modular landscape spaces located within a controlled grid. Each sketch shows an important site concept—a large central area within the core developed as open space.

The 1956 plans depict a show more diverse set of forms and proportional relationships rather than an overall grid with continuous modules. These plans are organized into zones with building elements shown in octagonal forms, square bathhouse roof forms and landscape elements shown as circles and intervening spaces. Again the Bath House pool area establishes the initial scale and pattern. In both March and June 1956 schemes, Figures IV.3 and IV.4, an arrangement of three large circles and a series of smaller circles are drawn to the south located around a rectilinear pattern of squares, rectangles, and triangles. The circles appear to be open lawn areas, while the spaces between are paved for circulation. The squares and rectangles appear to show multiple module buildings.

An additional large circle located west of the pool is developed as a play area with basketball courts, a handball court, a volleyball court, badminton, and shuffle board. The pool area is shown with an L-shaped grassy area. Other proposed features include two "tilted seating mounds," a snack bar and outdoor dining area, ball fields to the northwest and informal tree groves to the south and formal tree rows to the north. Parking is again located along the east perimeter. Figures IV.3 through IV.6

IV.1

Heritage Landscapes

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present these elaborated geometric and modular design concepts. Figure IV.7 is a further study related to this group that shows modular grid building forms repeating the individual Bath House scale in a larger grouping with a surround of circular forms that are defined spaces.

This group of 1955 and 1956 schemes is particularly relevant to Kahn's development of an organizing grid of geometric forms that reflect concepts of scale and unity across the site.

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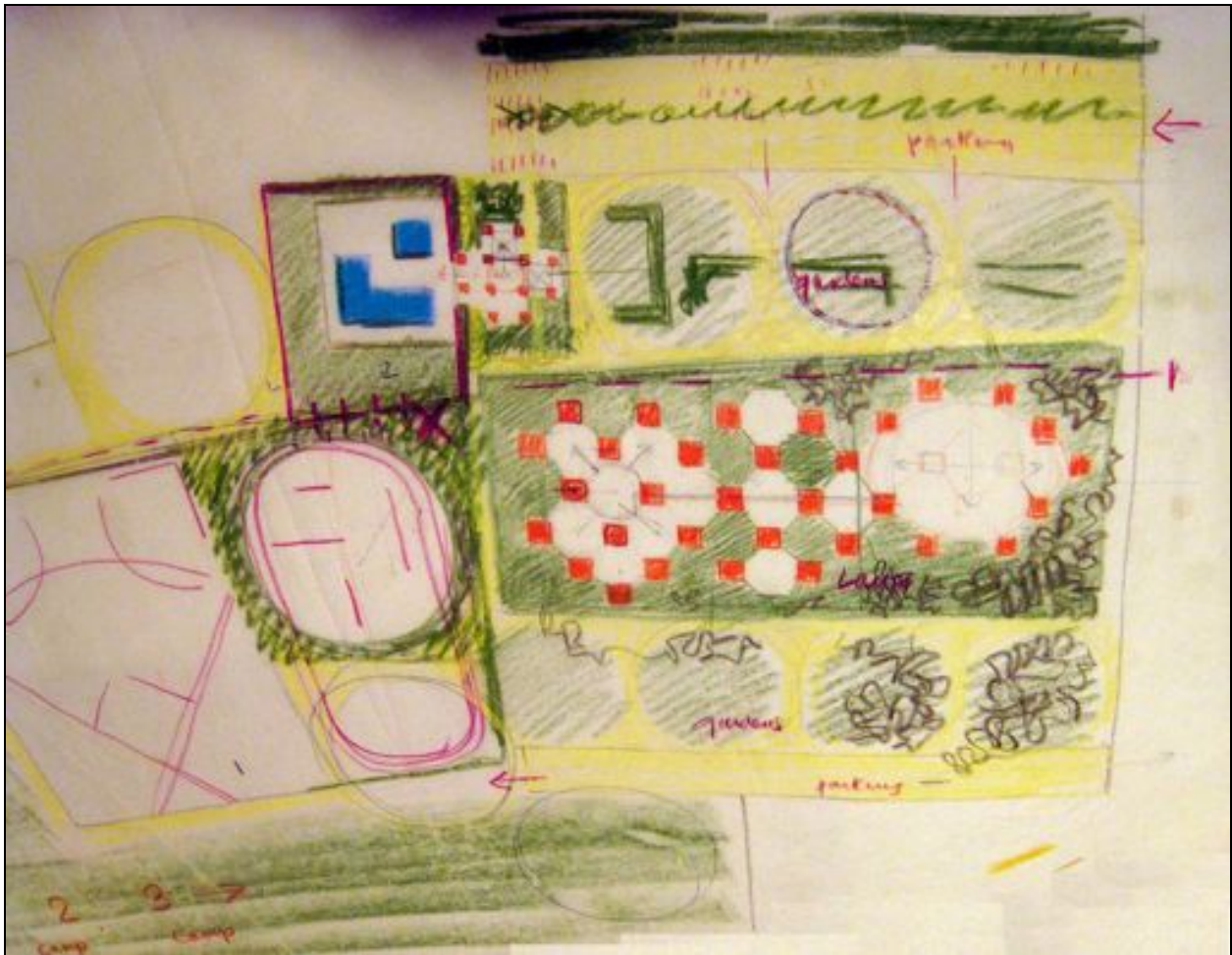


Figure IV.1. Another hand sketch dated June 1955 takes the circular forms and spatial arrangements from the sketch in Figure IV.1 and starts to further develop the organization of the site. Parking is located to the east and west edges of the site, with circular gardens in the interior surrounding an arrangement of squares and octagons. Brown squiggly lines depict the gradation of open to dense trees and other vegetation on the site. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-Hand-Sketch-June 55 3-circle plan-whitened.jpg)

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Chapter IV: Trenton Jewish Community Center Sketches, June 1955 & June 1956

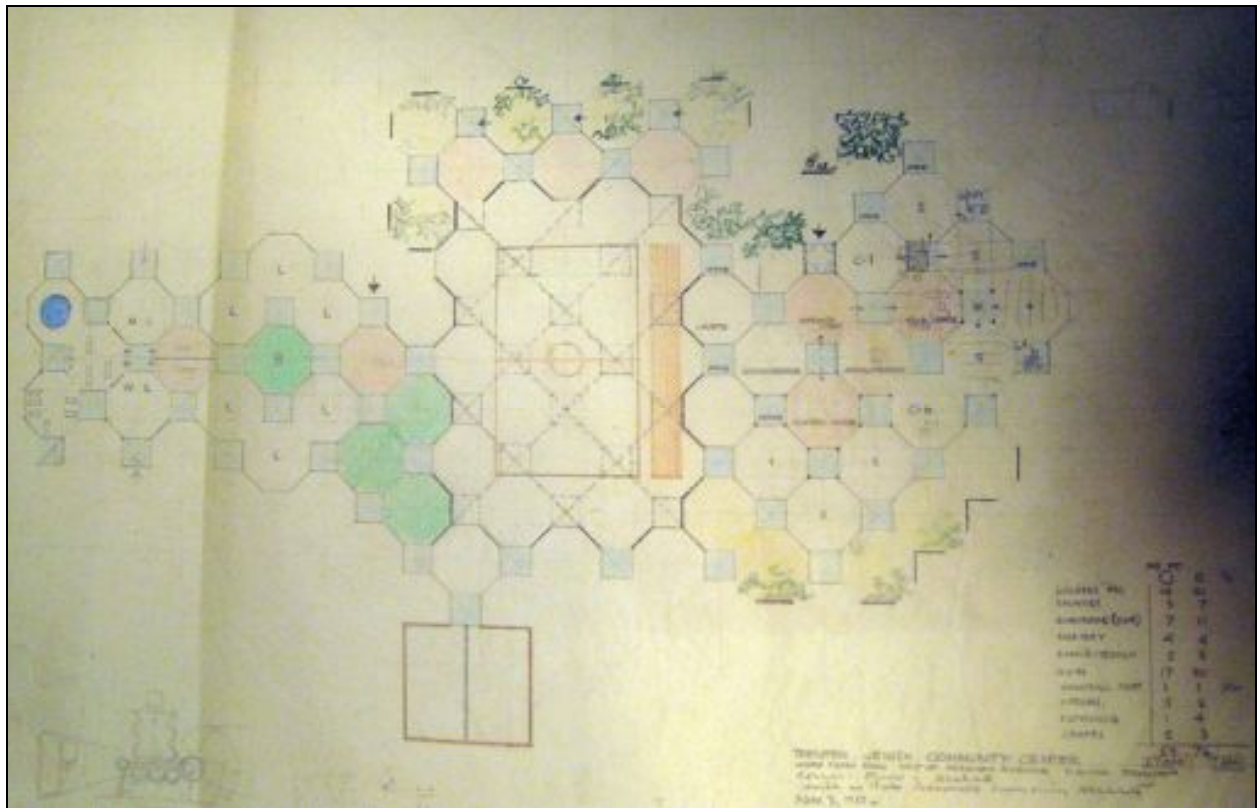


Figure IV.2. “Trenton Jewish Community Center” from November 1955 refines the square and octagon pattern by allocating individual shapes for various amenities and facilities. Offices, administration and crafts are some of the areas labeled on the plan, indicating that the pattern was possibly intended to be the form of a building and related exterior pavement with squiggly green lines as vegetation. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-Hand-Sketch-11-3-55-whitened.jpg)

LOUIS I. KAHN TRENTON BATH HOUSE & DAY CAMP
EWING SENIOR & COMMUNITY CENTER LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT
Chapter IV: Trenton Jewish Community Center Sketches, June 1955 & June 1956

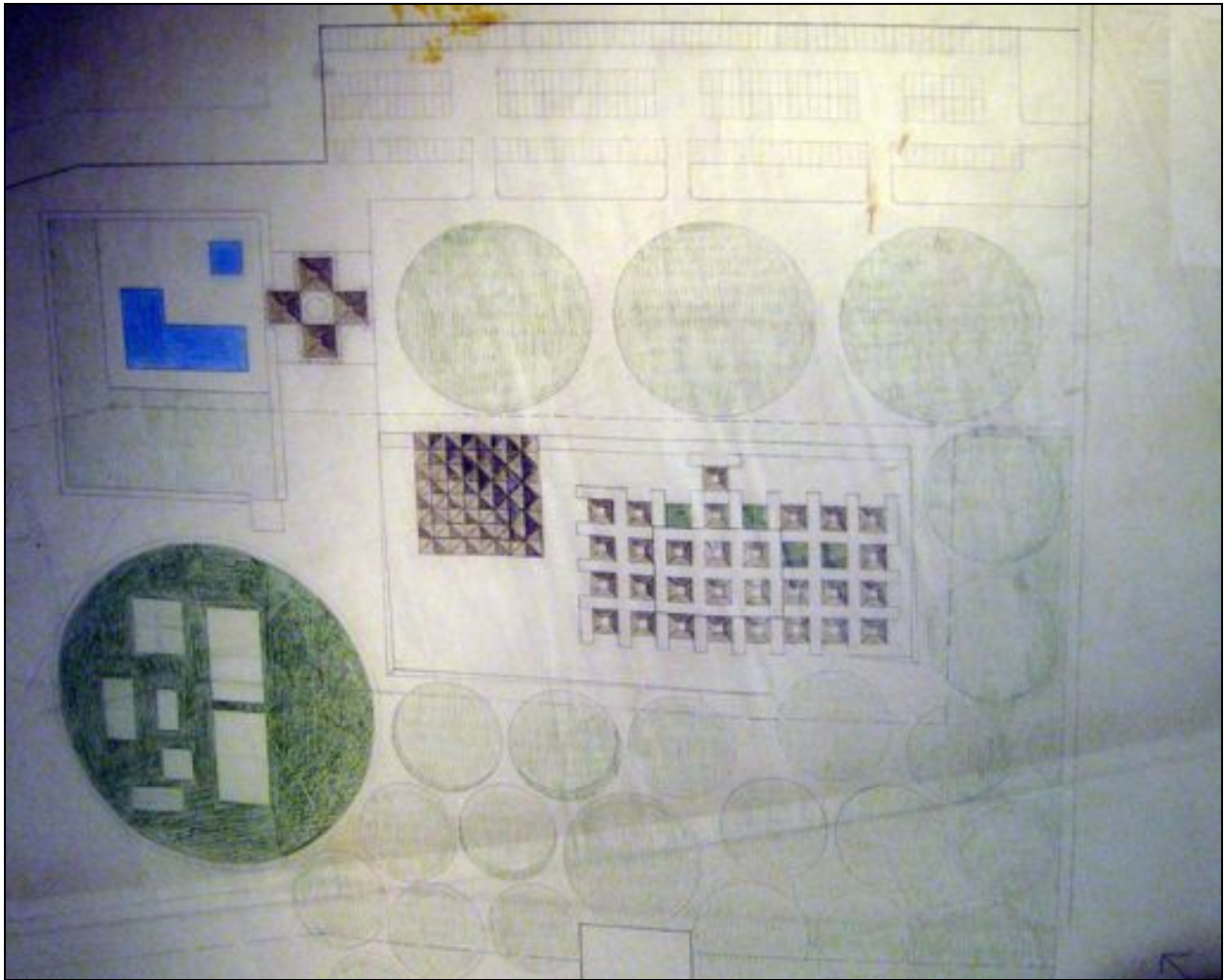


Figure IV.3. A March 1956 plot plan shows a simple arrangement of geometric forms relating to the further development of the area south of the Bath House and pool. Three large circles and a series of smaller circles are located around a rectilinear pattern of squares, rectangles, and triangles. The circles appear to be open lawn areas, while the squares and rectangles likely represent two buildings. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-Hand-Sketch-March 56 plot plan-whitened.jpg)

LOUIS I. KAHN TRENTON BATH HOUSE & DAY CAMP
EWING SENIOR & COMMUNITY CENTER LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT
Chapter IV: Trenton Jewish Community Center Sketches, June 1955 & June 1956

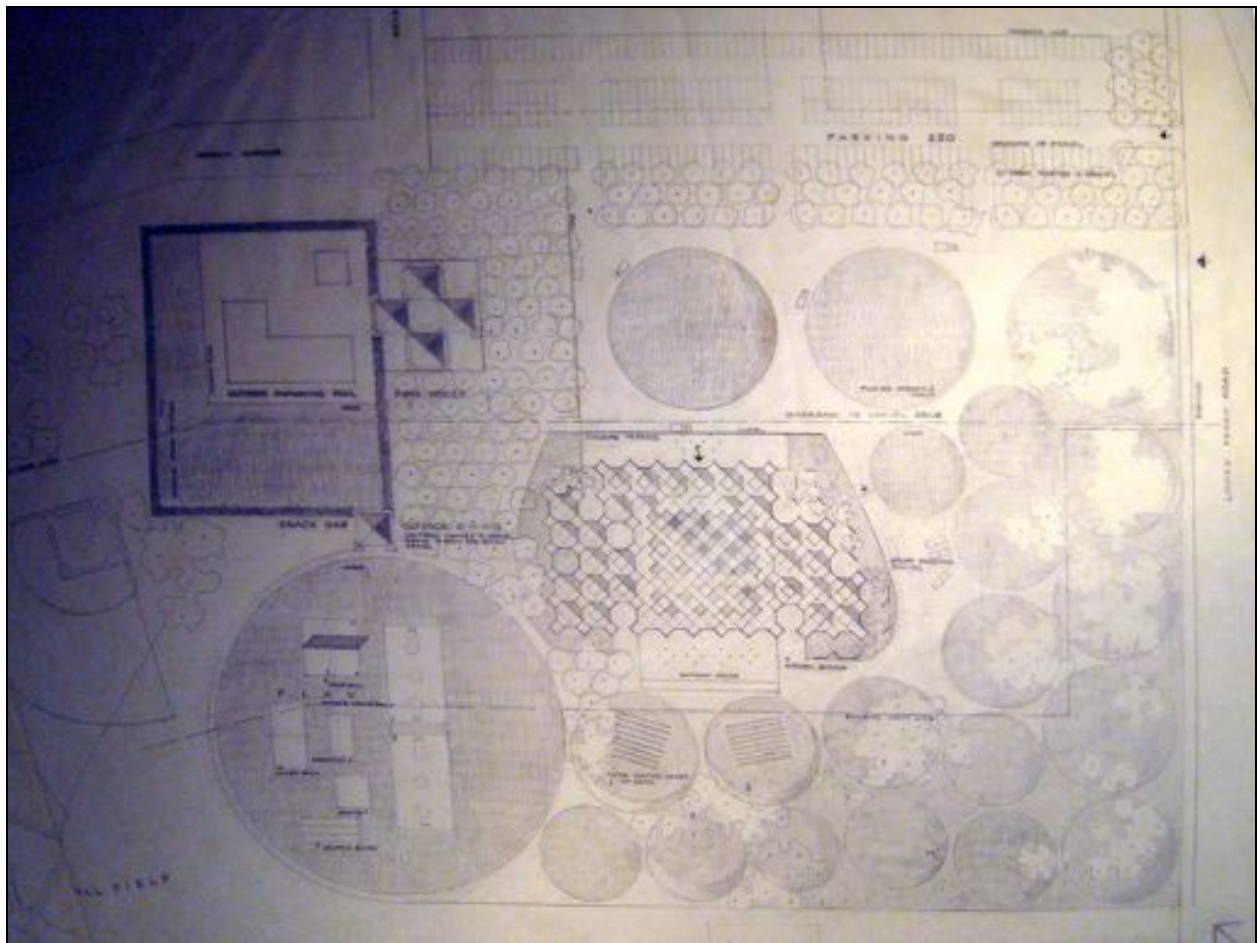


Figure IV.4. A June 1956 plot plan further refines Kahn's geometric layout with circles and squares. In addition, this plan shows a large circular play area west of the pool with sports courts, two "tilted seating mounds," and informal groves of trees scattered through the southern portion of the site with formal tree rows in the northern section. Note also the ball fields to the northwest. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-Plot Plan-6-16-56-overall-whiten.jpg)

LOUIS I. KAHN TRENTON BATH HOUSE & DAY CAMP
EWING SENIOR & COMMUNITY CENTER LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT
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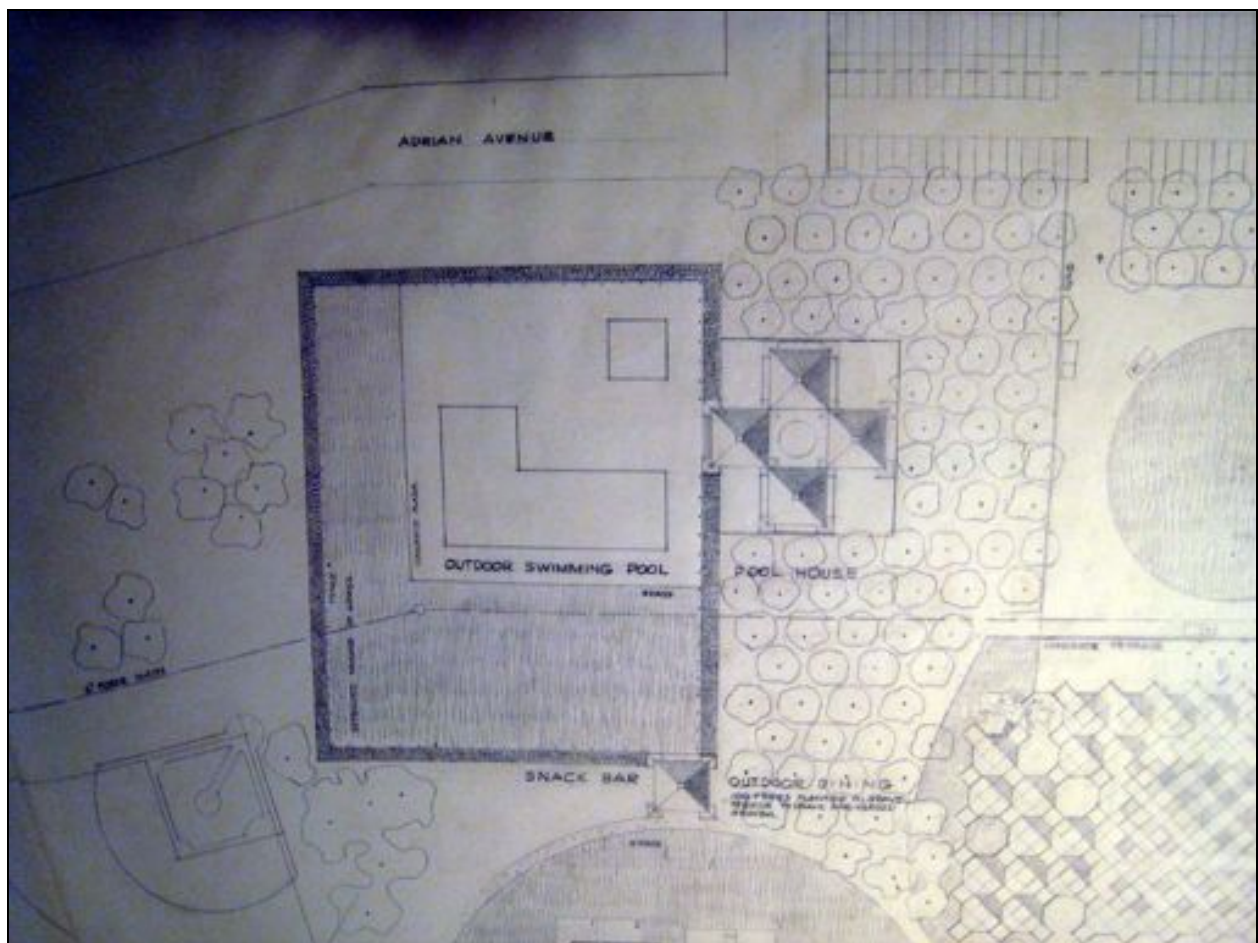


Figure IV.5. A detail of the June 1956 plot plan showing the pool and Bath House areas. A “concrete plaza” surrounds the pool area with an expanded L-shaped grass area to the west. Also shown are a snack bar and outdoor dining area with 100 trees planted in gravel. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-Plot Plan Pool-6-16-56-detail-whitened.jpg)

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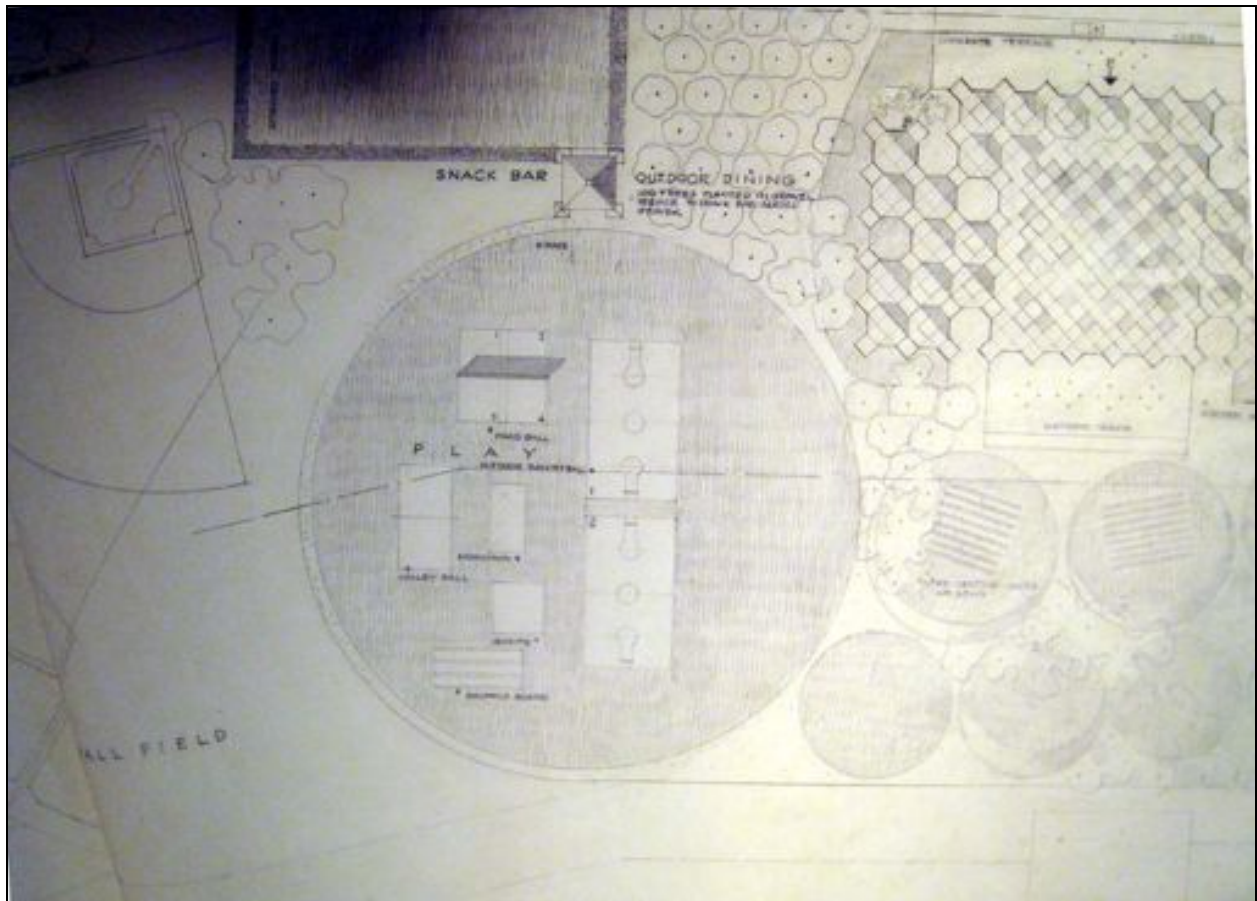


Figure IV.6. Another detail of the June 1956 plot plan shows the details of the circular grassy play area west of the pool. Facilities in the play area include basketball, handball, and volleyball courts, badminton, and shuffle boards. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-Plot Plan bbcourt-6-16-56-detail-whitened.jpg)

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Figure IV.7. A sketch by Kahn shows his process of creating spatial relationships between elements of the site. A series of circles and squares form proportional areas across the site for the development of future facilities for the community center. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-Framed-Hand-Sketch-late 56-early 57.jpg)

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V: Trenton Jewish Community Center Sketches & Day Camp Construction Documents, April 1957

Kahn developed two groups of drawings in 1957, a plan and illustrative sketch for presentation and a set of Day Camp construction documents. These drawings were used for construction that year bringing the second component of the Kahn design to fruition.

With the Community Center plan and accompanying illustrative sketch, the overall community center design moves from a grid patterned geometry with repeated modules to a realistic depiction of rectilinear spaces with horizontal and vertical elements. Prepared for presentation, the plan and perspective sketch, Figures V.1 and V.2, reveal a shift from the previous landscape patterns depicted with circular forms to a schematic plan with rectilinear, grid patterns and forms. The pool area is framed by a three-sided tree bosque with regular rows of trees depicted as a triple row to the east and north and a quadruple row to the west with three rows that wrap east toward the Bath House. Four rows of high branched trees to the north and south of a rectangular community green also serve as part of the Bath House green vertical frame. On this plan the community building is located to the south aligned to the tree grid pattern. The building roof is depicted as repeated modular forms of two types in plan and is seen in the two story and one story building forms shown in the perspective drawing. One roof pattern repeats the form of the Bath House roofs. The wide green space framed by high branched trees shown in the sketch is a defined space with strong vertical and horizontal planes framing the articulated community center roofscape. The Bath House forms are seen through tree trunks and low branches. White un-rendered space surrounds these features. To the northwest of the Bath House, the four buildings and circle form of the Day Camp is set amidst a square grove of trees. On the plan, the entrance to the community center is off Lower Ferry Road with a modest tree grid and row at a vehicular drop off. Parking is depicted as eight rectangular bays to the east aligned with the property perimeter.

The Day Camp construction documents include a layout plan for four buildings arrayed within a defined circular form. The building arrangement creates a trapezoidal open court at the center and wedge shaped spaces at each side. This level circle is seen covered with gravel in post construction views. The defined Day Camp circle is surrounded by slightly ramped earth at varying gradients ranging from about 7 inches to approximately 2 feet above the existing grade. The constructed Day Camp area is loosely framed by informal trees with picnic tables in their shade (Figure V.5).

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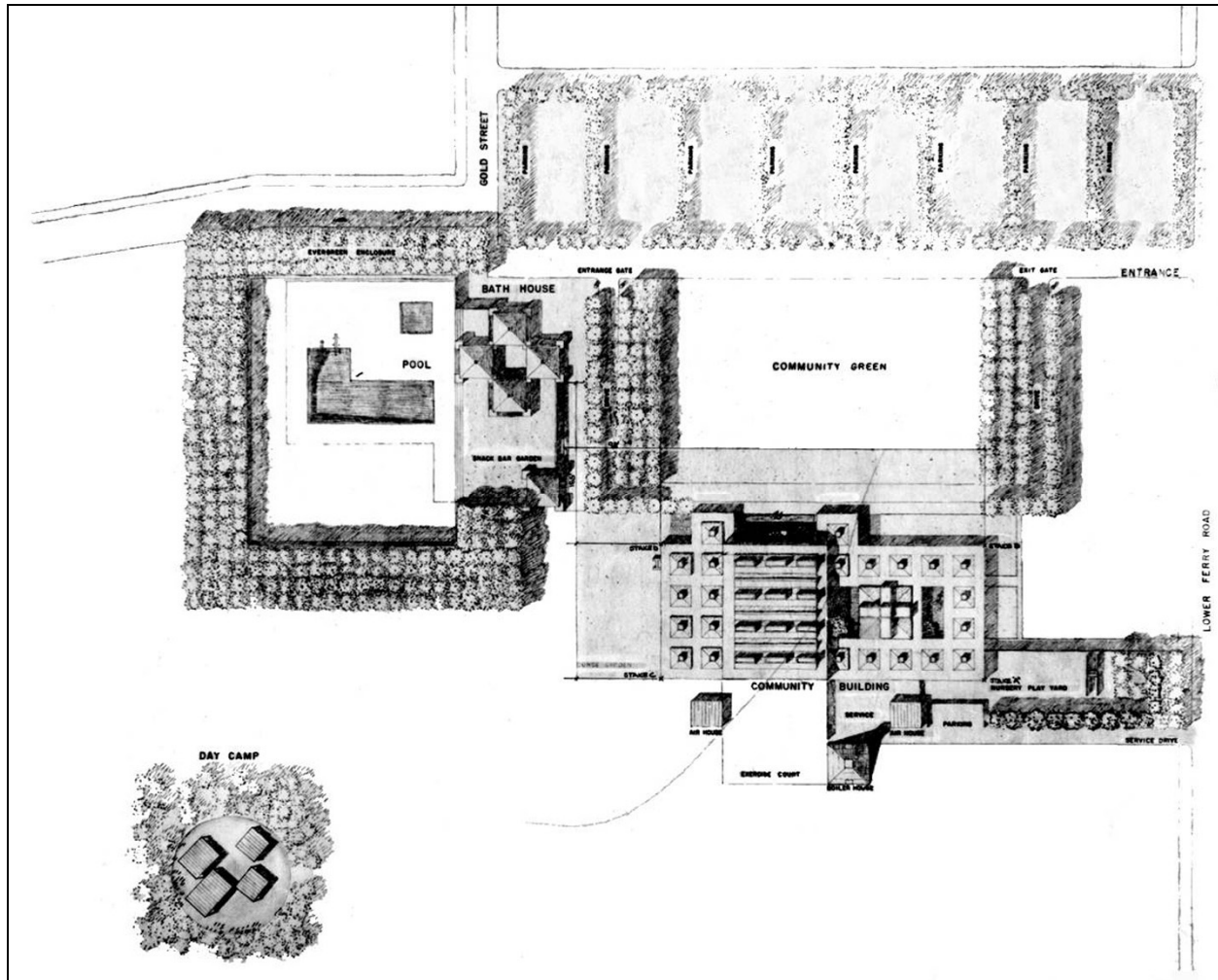


Figure V.1. An overall schematic plan of the Trenton Jewish Community Center from 1957 shows a different spatial organization than previously seen in Kahn's sketches and construction documents from 1955. To the south and southwest of the Bath House are the community building and a community green organized on a rectilinear, grid-like pattern. To the northwest is the circular Day Camp amidst a grove of trees. Tree rows and bosques also surround the parking areas, pool area, and the north and south edges of the community green. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-Kahn Plan 1957 showing landscape.jpg)

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Figure V.2. A rendering of Kahn's more grid-like plan shown in Figure V.1 depicts the community green and community building looking from the parking areas to the west. The Bath House is to the north (right). The green appears level and open turf grass panel edged in concrete and over story deciduous trees. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-Rendering - B&W.jpg)

LOUIS I. KAHN TRENTON BATH HOUSE & DAY CAMP
EWING SENIOR & COMMUNITY CENTER LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT
Chapter V: Trenton Jewish Community Center Sketches & Day Camp Construction Documents, April 1957

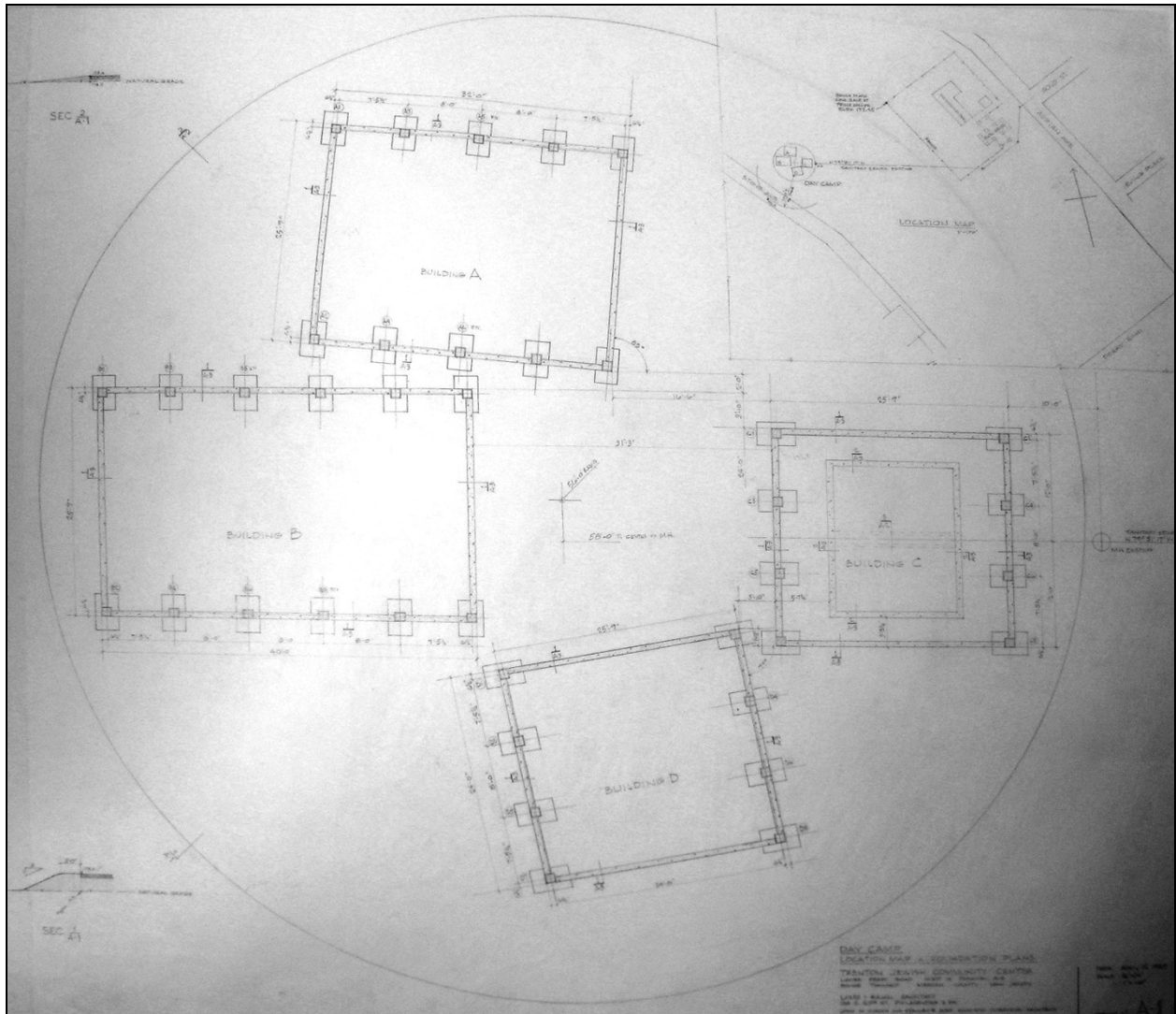


Figure V.3. “Day Camp, Location Map & Foundation Plans” dated April 12, 1957 shows a design for the Day Camp. Positioned northwest of the bath houses, the facility includes four buildings arrayed within a circular elevated area. Note the asymmetrical arrangement of the structures and trapezoidal open area at the center. The ramped earth forms the circle edge. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-Day Camp CD-plan-blwh-4-12-57.jpg)

LOUIS I. KAHN TRENTON BATH HOUSE & DAY CAMP
 EWING SENIOR & COMMUNITY CENTER LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT
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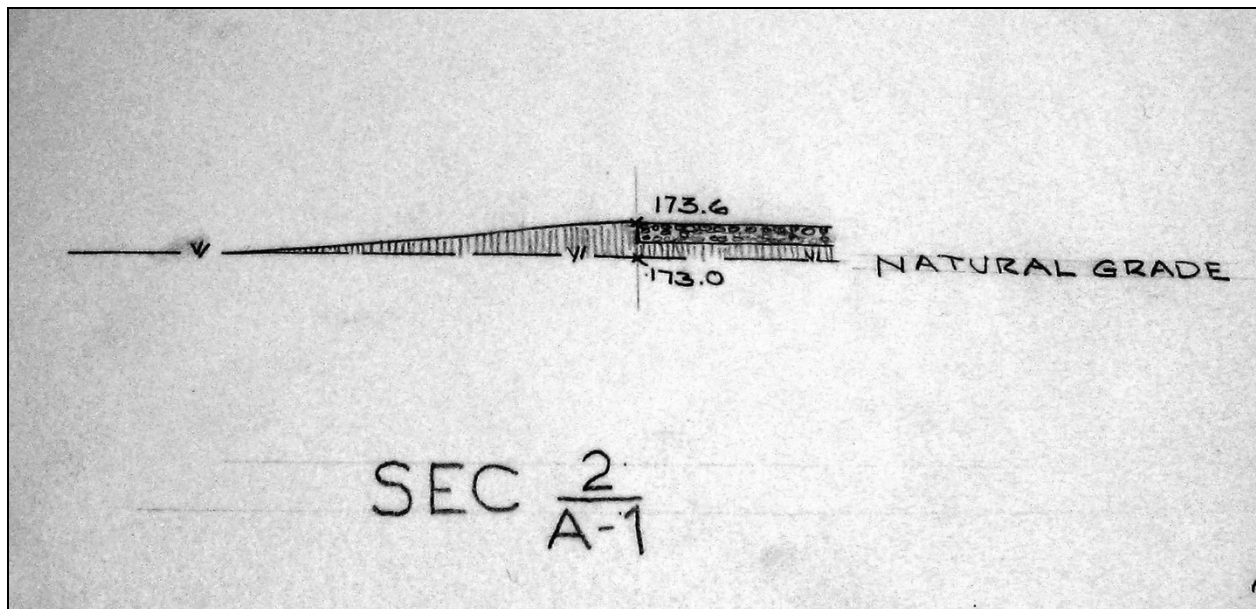
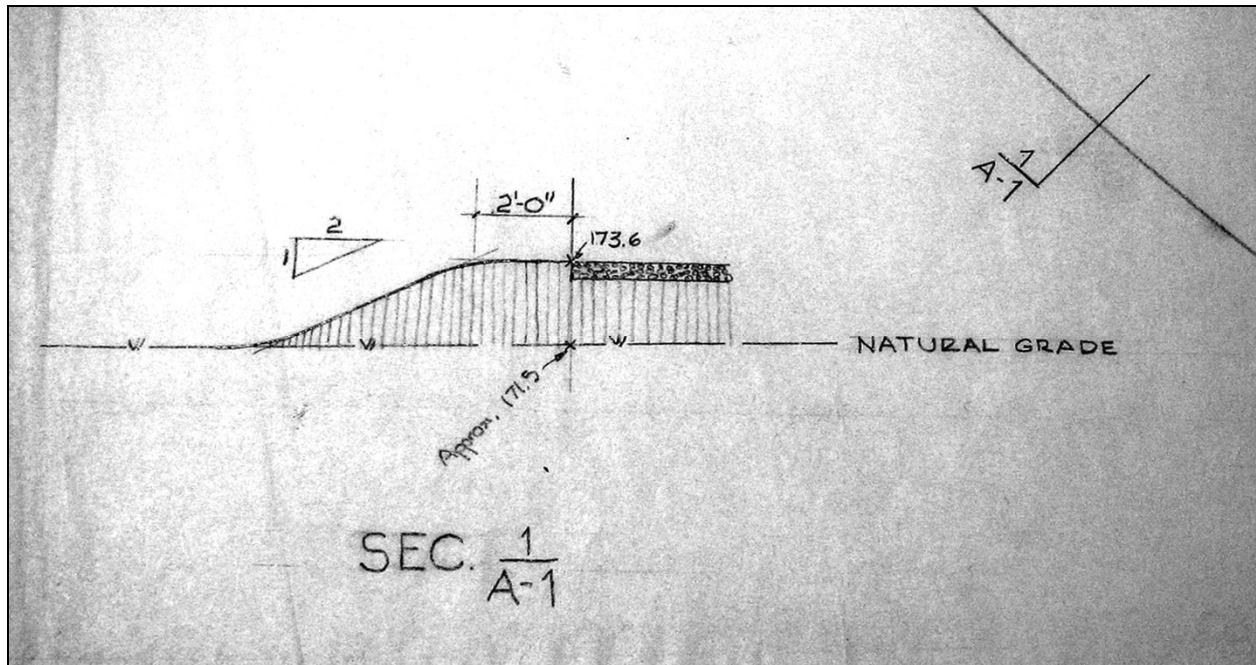


Figure V.4. Two sections of the ramped earth edges of the Day Camp show Kahn's intention of creating a level gravel area above the existing grade with a variable edge. Section 1 from the southern half of the circle has a 50% grade, with a proposed elevation 2.1 feet above the existing grade. In contrast, Section 2 from the northern portion of the circle shows a much more gradual grade change with only 0.6 feet above the existing grade. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-Day Camp CD-Dtl A-4-12-57.jpg and R-KBH-Kahn-Day Camp CD-Dtl A-2-4-12-57.jpg)

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Figure V.5. A post-construction photograph taken by John Ebstel shows the completed Day Camp pavilions at the Trenton Jewish Community Center. Note the gravel surfaced play area and picnic tables sited under the shady tree canopy at the edge of the Day Camp. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-Ebstel day camp photo.jpg)

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VI: Trenton Jewish Community Center Schematic Site Plan & Design Sketches, July 1958

A site plan and perspective sketches from the summer of 1958 document further developments in the design that while similar in many ways, vary from the April 1957 presentation plan and illustrative to a degree. The crisp line drawing site plan, Figures VI.1 and VI.2, shows the locations of the Bath House and pool as constructed and the community building and community green are positioned as shown on the 1957 drawings. However, the open grassy community green rectangle no longer flows under the adjacent tree rows, but is separated by a paved space and punctuated with four equal circular forms, one at each corner. These are labeled as “Drain” and shown with a slight stipple dot pattern, and the adjacent rectangle is noted as “Grass” with the surrounding area labeled “Macadam.” This design sets the turf in the center, framed by the circular drains and the driveway and parking at the east side of the building. The wide tree bosques that vertically frame the green are reduced in this detailed drawing to double rows that extend east to edge the perimeter parking. The bosques around the pool and bathhouse to the east, north and west are also altered with the east and north trees arranged in double rows and the west trees in a quadruple row that end at the pool fence rather than wrapping toward the Bath House. The east perimeter parking layout is shorter and is aligned to the outer drive surrounding the community green. Parking lot tree trunk dots depict a single center row and three trees across each end of the parking. It also appears that the layout shows paving only for the parking lot aisles with a different material, possibly gravel shown for the parking stalls and tree rows. This detailing of the parking lot may have been an aesthetic choice in the design. Today this approach would be considered as an option to full pavement in order to reduce stormwater runoff volume and increase percolation.

The sketches in Figures VI.3 and VI.4 are study perspectives that explore building mass, views and landscape treatment. Figure VI.3 is a study that reflects building forms, including the community center, shack bar and Bath House as shown on the July 1958 plan and on the 1957 illustrative. The perspective along the Bath House side, enlarged as a detail below the overall sketch (Figure VI.3) clearly shows a wall line at the same height as the corner piers, extending to the snack bar structure to the west of the Bath House.

Perspective sketch, Figure VI.4, is a view of the community center frontage from the parking zone looking south along the façade. It shows the varying roof lines of the modular units of the community building depicted in the 1957 sketch. The open ground plane of the parking and macadam drive is punctuated by a rectangular fountain with perhaps a rock or sculpture piece at its

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center. This is also aligned to one entrance of the building. Interestingly this sketch shows a row of trees extending along the building front on the east side of the macadam drive. No trees have been shown in this location in any other drawing. The framing trees to the south side of the center green are shaded into the background of this view. While many elements shown reflect the 1957 design ideas, differences between the plan and illustrative of 1957 and July 1958 are shown in Figures VI.1 to VI.4.

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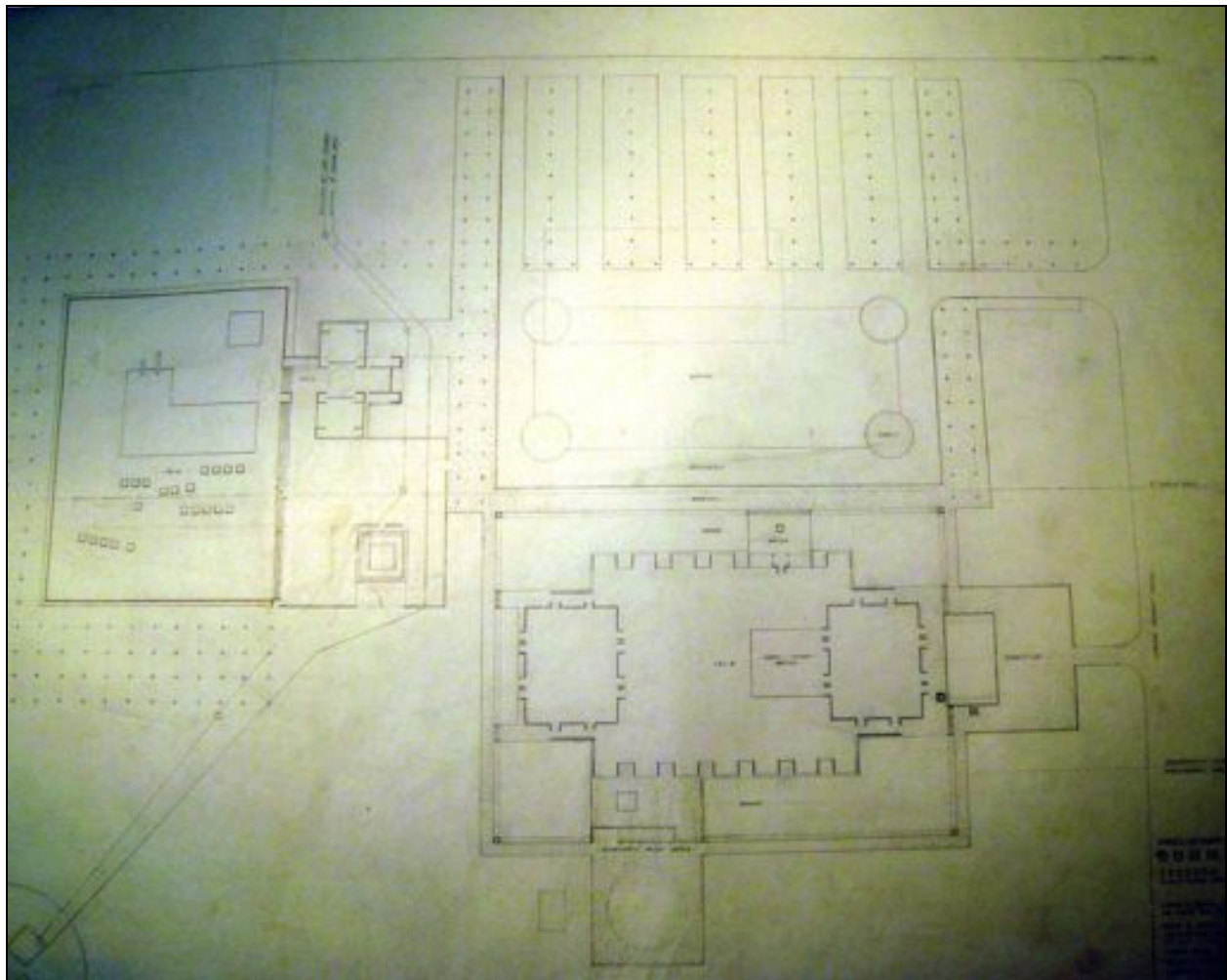


Figure VI.1. A preliminary site plan dated July 23, 1958 shows a refined scheme reflecting Kahn's April 1957 illustrative plan and elevation. The locations of the community building and community green remain the same, though the green is punctuated with four circular forms at the corners. The parking area is to the north with a wide drive surrounding the green. Rows of trees (shown as dots) remain around the pool, parking and community green. Trees are shown planted in gravel. The parking area, shown at the north, above the Adrian Avenue extension, is organized with asphalt driving lanes and gravel parking bays with trees and light fixtures centered between the parked vehicles. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-CC- SK2 Prel-site-plan-7-23-58.jpg)

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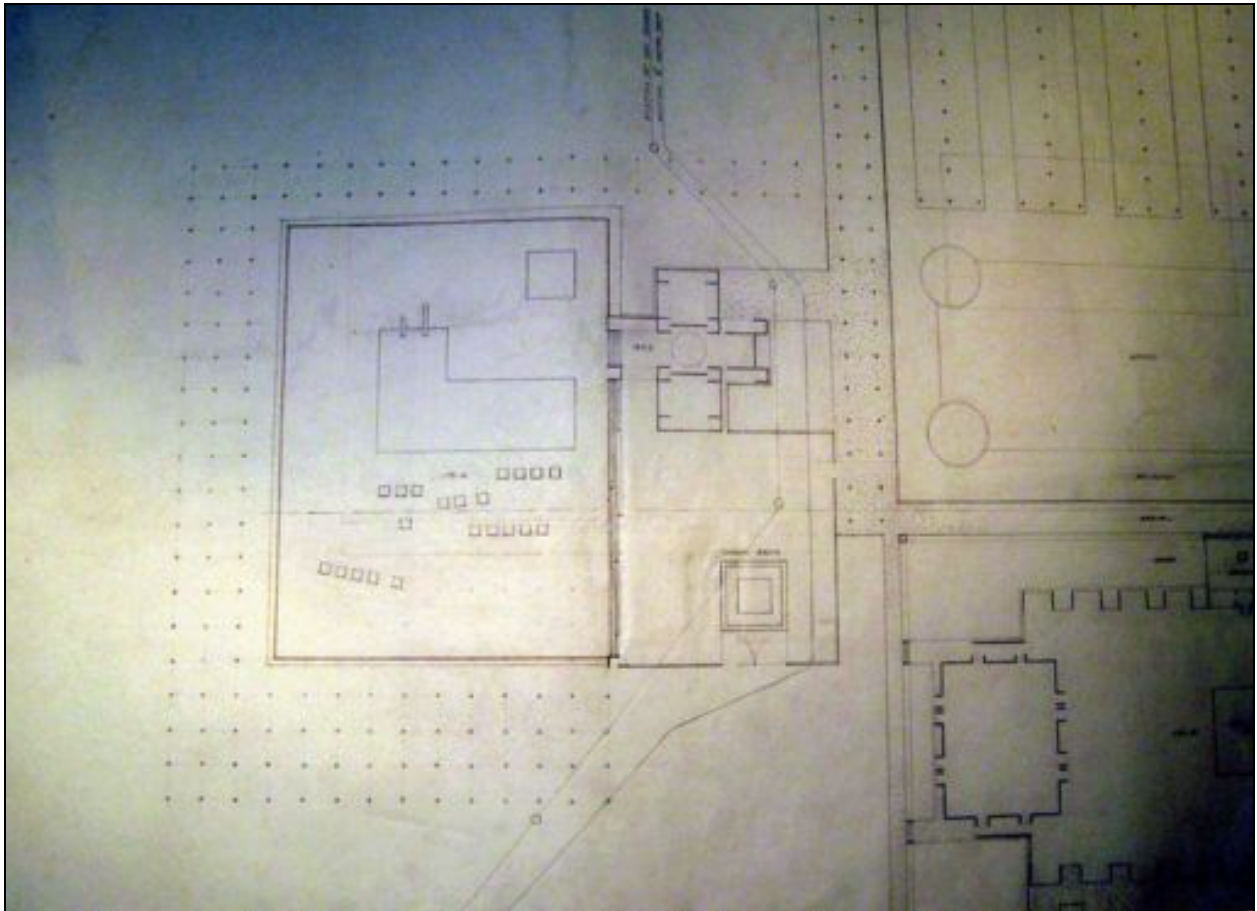


Figure VI.2. A detail of the Bath House area from the July 23, 1958 preliminary site plan shows an enlarged area to the west with a repositioned snack area near the Bath House and number of small squares near the pool. It is likely that the squares are benches or tables within the pool area. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-CC- SK2 Prel-bh-dtl plan-7-23-58.jpg)

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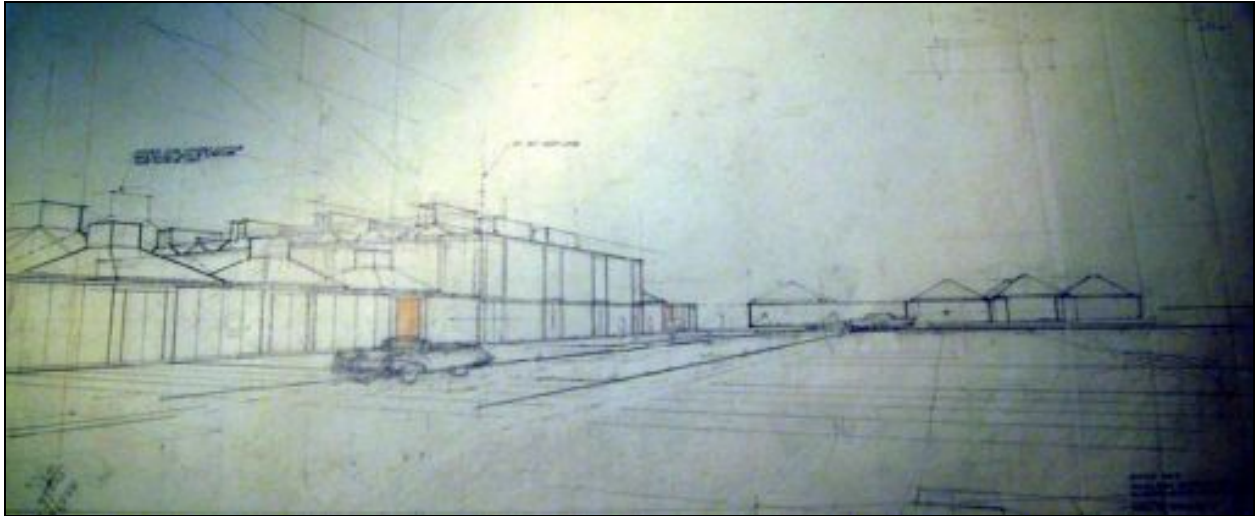


Figure VI.3. Perspective sketches of the July 1958 plan depict the community building, Bath House, community green and adjacent macadam drive looking north and northwest. Varying roof lines and an open ground plane create an interesting composition of building and landscape. Note the continuous wall between the Bath House and snack bar. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-CC- study-3 Elevation-c7-23-58.jpg and R-KBH-Kahn-CC- study-3 Dtl Elevation-c7-23-58.jpg)

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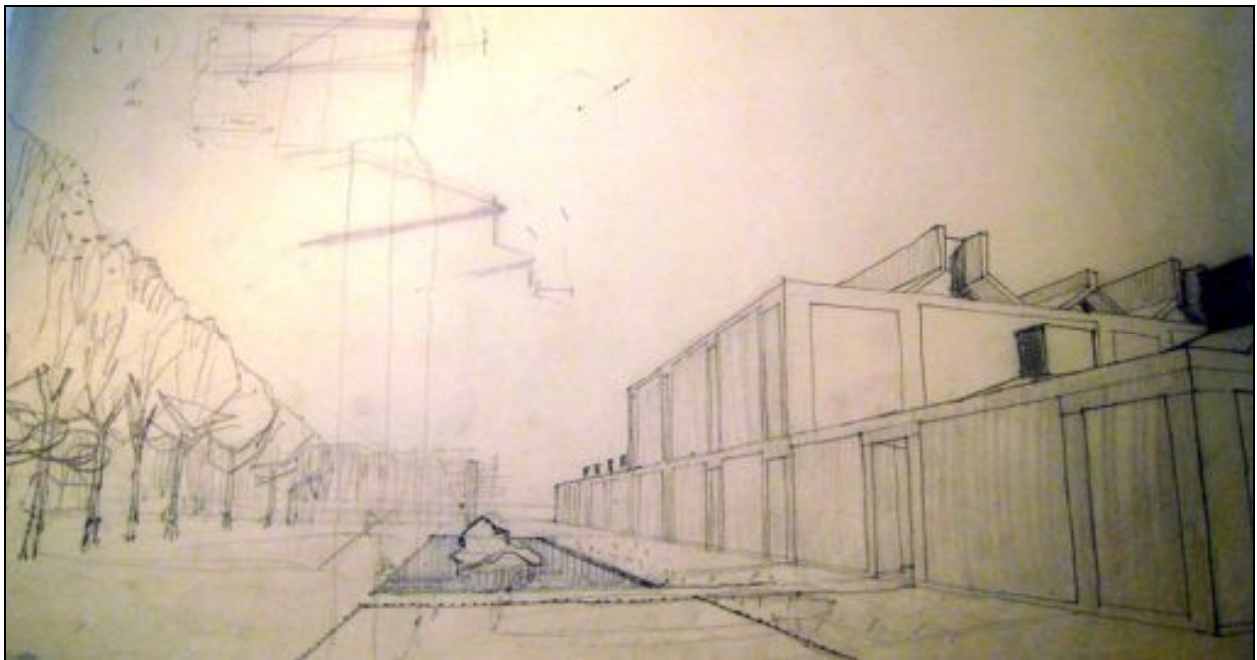


Figure VI.4. A different perspective view looking to the south and southwest shows the front façade of the community building. A rectangular fountain with an irregular feature is located along the center of the building with a grass panel and gravel area with trees to the left (east). Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-CC- study-3 Dtl Elevation-CC-c7-23-58.jpg)

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VII: Trenton Jewish Community Center Unexecuted Construction Documents, August 1958

While the July 1958 documents indicate changes to Kahn's design ideas, only one month later in August 1958, Kahn thoroughly revises the design in a set of construction documents titled "Community Building." These documents are detailed for construction and were provided to fulfill contractual obligations. It is Heritage Landscapes understanding that at this time Kahn was no longer in favor and his work was not intended for implementation. However, these documents record the final evolution of the design ideas in a highly detailed and articulated form.

This group of drawings for the landscape of the site and community building show a reincorporation of visually important circular patterns within a rectilinear gridded scheme. Overall the August 1958 design shows an arrangement that expresses proportional constructs and interpretation of a site grid that reflect a refinement of earlier concepts seen in several sketch studies, rather than a repetition of the design approach and details shown on the July 1958 sketches.

These drawings show a clear construction boundary that includes the community buildings, arrival, parking green space and tree rows that excludes the bath house and pool areas to the south and west. The community green rectangle of the earlier scheme is shown and returns to large circular forms. The community green has a square defined by bituminous concrete paving. Centered in this square are three equal circles marked with spot elevations to show grading with a rise from edge to mid-point of about 30 inches. The circles appear to be low mounds with turf cover. Hatch patterns on the drawings seem to indicate lawn. The fourth circle to the southwest southernmost is labeled "Pool" and is slightly smaller. The paving flows around these forms, and square bollards are positioned to block car movements into the central open area. To the north and south sides of this paved square containing circles, there are seven dots that are noted as "concrete pads for future outdoor lighting". No tree dots are shown in this line or adjacent, but tree dots alternate with concrete pad symbol in the parking area where parking appears to be within gravel stalls with central drives. Alternating trees and concrete lighting pads mark the space between parking stalls. Even though it is beyond the contract work limit line, the bath house and pool area show tree dots on a matched row grid pattern with three tree rows between the bath house and central green, four rows to the west and two to the north. This pattern of a dense tree bosque appears to show, for the first time, a complete tree surround for the bath house and pool with no gaps. Grid organized rows and lines of trees are a prominent feature within the landscape creating regular structure, rhythm and repetition. Other features shown include bituminous concrete drive, bollards between the four central circles,

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gravel areas surrounding the trees, and light fixtures. The parking area is refined along the north side in a north-south arrangement rather than east-west, seen in 1957 and June 1958. This north-south arrangement allows tree rows and concrete lighting pads to enclose the east side of the community green square.

Figures VII.1 through VII.4 are construction documents images and a line drawing of the construction layout, while Figures VII.5 and VII.6 show Kahn's final sketches that portray, in perspective, the layout and details shown on the construction drawings of August 1958. These final sketches show a lively spatial sequence of integrated architecture and landscape design.

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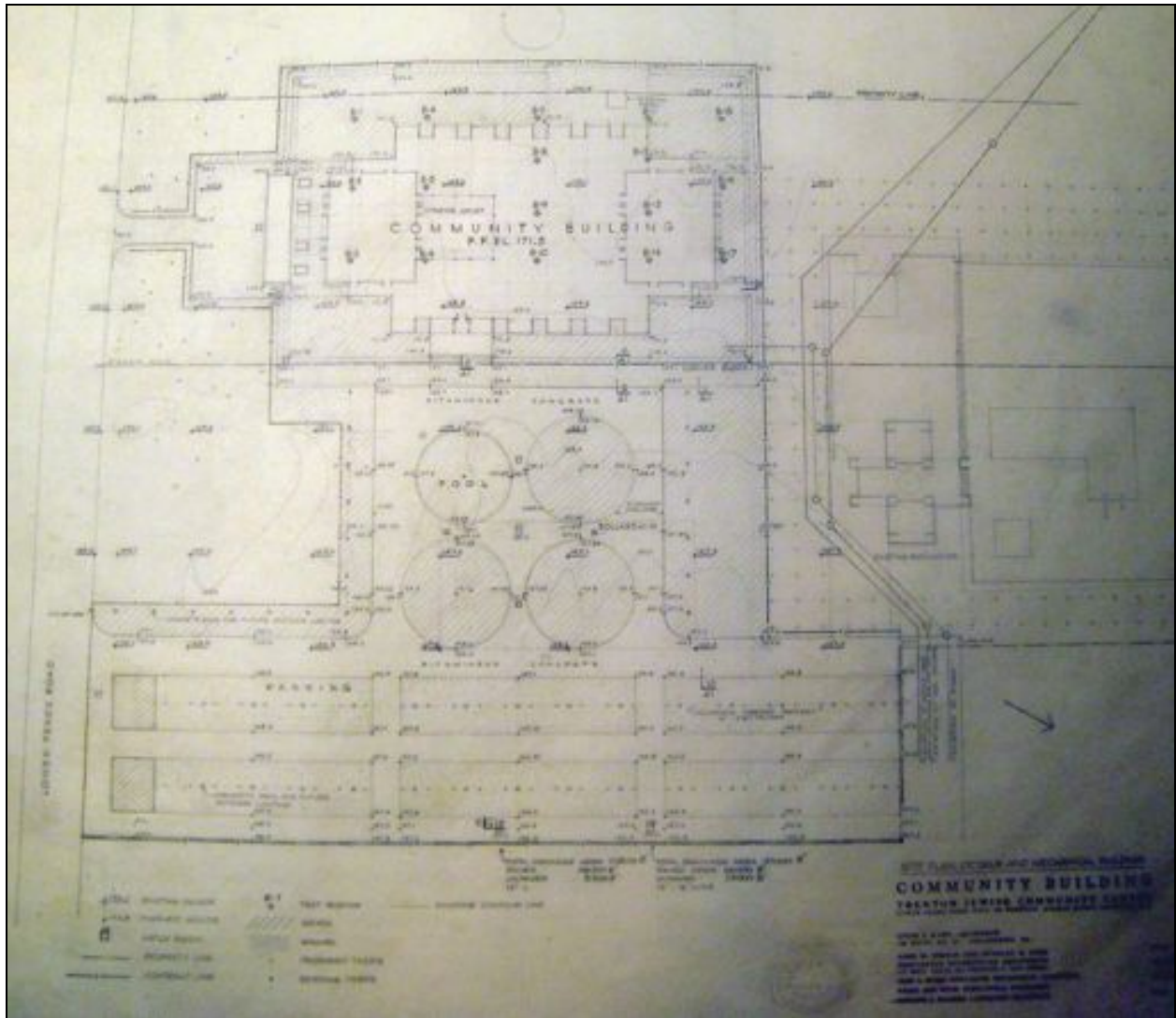


Figure VII.1. “Site Plan, Details, and Mechanical Building, Community Building, Trenton Jewish Community Center” dated August 11, 1958 shows the constructed Bath House and pool, and a similar arrangement of the community building and parking area from the July 1958 sketches. The large community green area is defined as a square with four large circles within it. The southernmost circle is a “Pool” while the remaining three circles are mounded grass. Other features shown include a bituminous concrete drive, bollards, gravel parking areas with trees, and light fixtures. Note the parking is oriented differently from the July 23, 1958 plan. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-CC-CD-plan-8-11-58.jpg)

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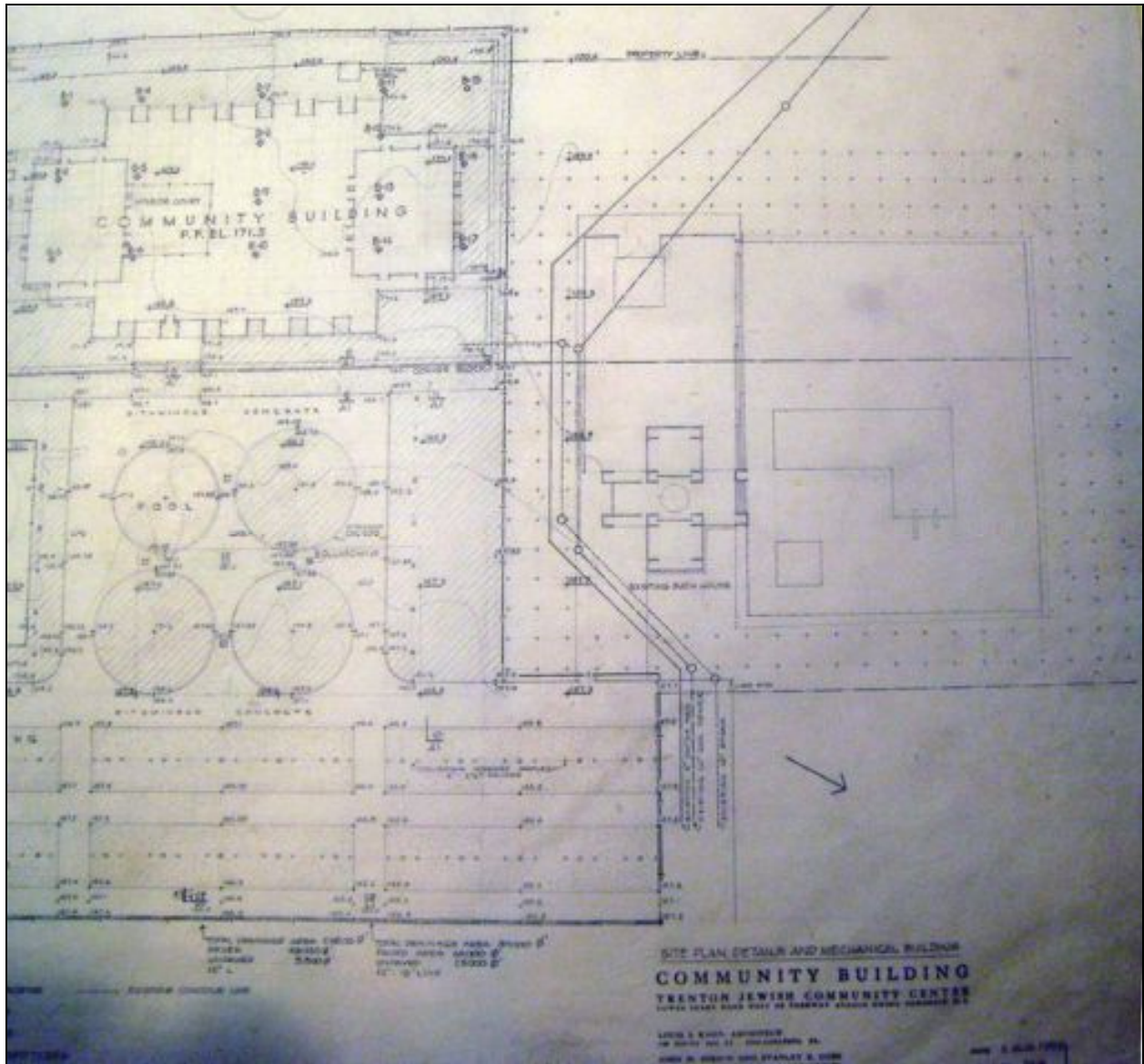


Figure VII.2. A detail of the existing Bath House area of “Site Plan, Details, and Mechanical Building, Community Building, Trenton Jewish Community Center” from August 11, 1958 shows the constructed pool area to the northwest situated in a grid of trees. Utility lines are also shown on the plan. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-CC- CD-plan-bath hs-8-11-58.jpg)

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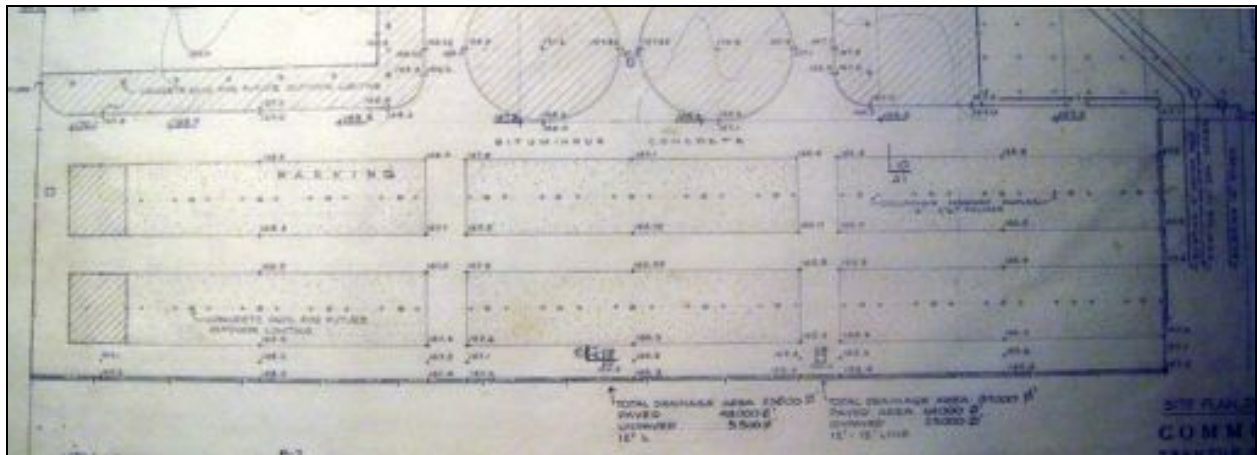


Figure VII.3. A detail of the parking area on the August 11, 1958 plan shows six rectangular gravel areas for parking with bituminous concrete (asphalt) drives between. Each area has parking available to either side with a row of ten columnar Norway maples and five light fixtures at the center of the parking bays. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-KBH-Kahn-CC-CD-plan-parking-8-11-58.jpg)

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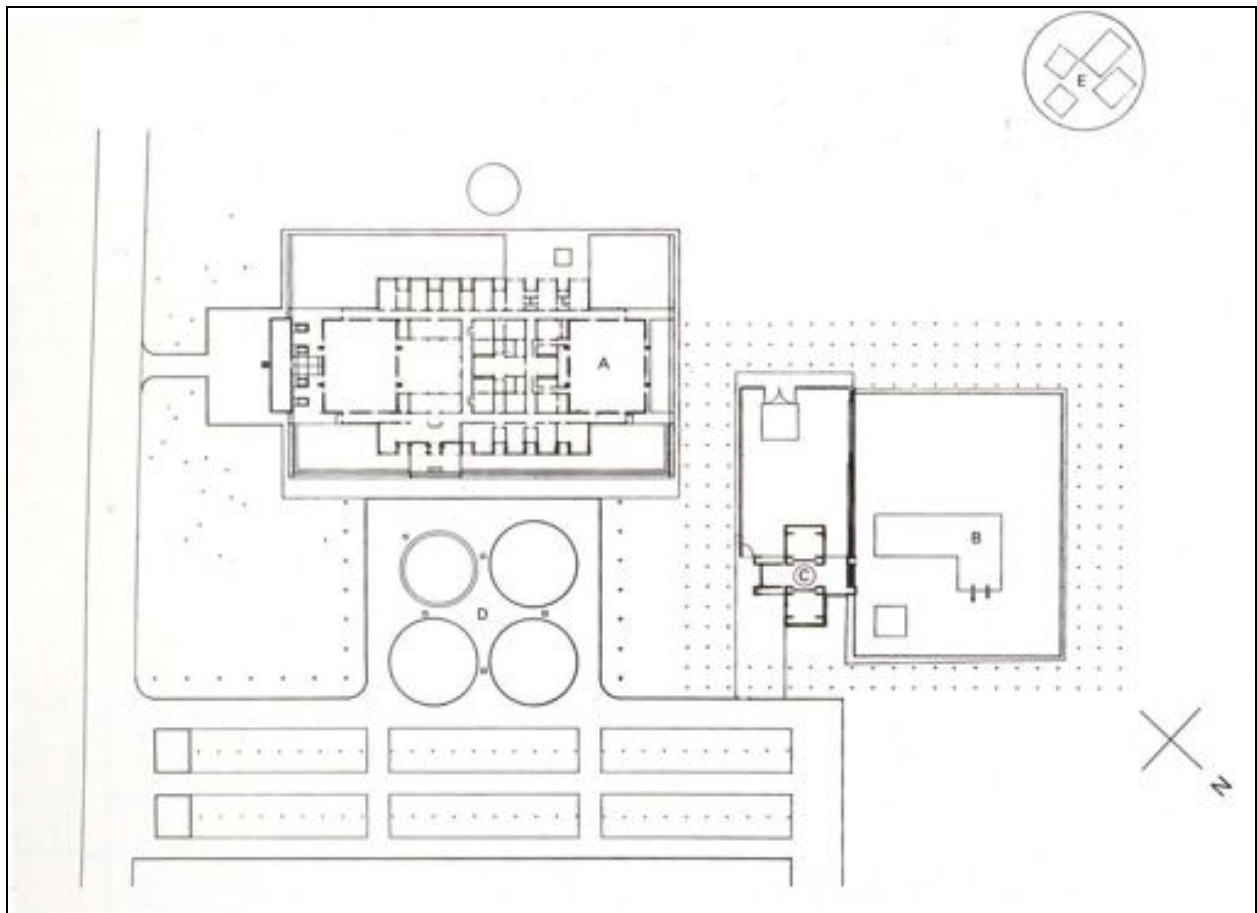


Figure VII.4. This line drawing of the construction document layout shows the layout of buildings, drives, and parking. Major components of the design are labeled, (A) Community Building, (B) Pool area, (C) Bath House, (D) Central Court Area, and (E) Day Camp. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-58-plan-stat.jpg)

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Figure VII.5 and VII.6. Perspective sketches of the central court area. The upper sketch shows the community building to the left with the Bath House at the rear of the image. The lower sketch depicts the community building in the background with the Bath House to the right. Four circles are visible, within the community green. One circle, opposite the community building entry, appears to be a pool and raised edge (left background), while the other three circles appear to be low mounds of earth with limited vegetation. Courtesy Louis I. Kahn Collection, U of PA, PHMC. (R-TBH-perspective-58-B-Icon.jpg and R-perspective 58.jpg)

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VIII: Ewing Senior & Community Center, Existing Conditions 2007

INTRODUCTION

Today, the Ewing Senior and Community Center is reasserting itself as home of the renowned Louis Kahn designed Bath House and Day Camp, and a facility that can aptly accommodate the recreational needs of Ewing Township residents. The facility, formerly known as the Jewish Community Center, will continue to support valuable recreational programs as part of the ongoing needs of the seniors, youths, social groups and residential community members within the architecture of its facilities blended with a more fully articulated and structured landscape.

This chapter briefly describes the character-defining landscape features and expounds upon the existing landscape issues at the Ewing Senior and Community Center. For clarity, the following discussion is organized by character-defining features which include:

- *Spatial Organization, Land Patterns, Land Use & Visual Relationships*
- *Topography & Natural Systems*
- *Vegetation*
- *Circulation*
- *Hydrology & Water Features*
- *Structures, Site Furnishings & Objects*

These character-defining features for the Ewing Senior and Community Center are discussed if they are present in the landscape using existing conditions photographs taken by Heritage Landscapes and the *2007 Existing Conditions Plan, EC*. Individual images are presented as figures at the end of the chapter to serve as documentation of the character of the landscape as it exists today. The plan *EC* graphically presents the character-defining features of the landscape today and is presented at the end of the chapter as an 11x17 fold-out. Combined with the accompanying images and plan, the character-defining features create an illustrated narrative that describes the general overall physical condition of the landscape with some discussion of specific landscape features and associated issues.

2007 EXISTING CONDITIONS & CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

The Ewing Senior and Community Center is sited on an approximate 40-acre parcel of land bounded by Lower Ferry Road to the southeast (project south), rear yards of private properties along

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Parkway Avenue at the northeast (project east) and approximately 400 feet southwest (project west) of the overhead utility corridor. (See Figures VIII.1 and VIII.2) The northwest (project north) border of the property is slightly less contiguous with incursions of privately owned properties. The furthest extent of the project area is at Silvia Street. The spatial organization within these boundaries is somewhat defined by the building masses, tree groves, and expansive parking lot. The first structure to be built was the Bath House and swimming pool, located to the southwest of the intersection of Gold Street with the paper street, Adrian Avenue, which the Township vacated in 2007. The community building, to the south, is the largest building on the site. Smaller notable structures that define the space within the landscape include the Kahn designed Day Camp buildings and other small structures and multiple recreational facilities such as basketball courts, tennis courts, and a ball field, primarily associated with the summer camp programs. (See Figures VIII.3 through VIII.7) Both circulation and vegetation features further define the area; circulation features provide access to the interior of the site and vegetative edges screen and block views. Visually, the site is generally open and expansive; views are predominantly gained across the 2-acre parking lot toward the central core of the site between the Bath House and community building. View sheds toward the site perimeters are mixed although deciduous trees are prominent. The depth of tree growth varies allowing views of adjacent residences and structures. The tree grove along Lower Ferry Road has a high canopy and the road can be seen through the tree trunks. The perimeter of the property to the north east has the least number of trees and residential properties are visually apparent with little significant vegetative cover of the commercial structures at the corner of Lower Ferry Road and Parkway Avenue.

The topography of the site appears to be fairly level with slight changes in grade. The more noticeable changes in topography are at the front entrance to the community building and at the pool. To mediate the change in elevation at the community building, a brick retaining wall with a series of steps and ADA ramp provide access to the building from the parking area. (See Figure VIII.6) The pool is constructed on one of the higher portions of the property, as designed by Kahn, at about 3 feet above the parking lot. A graded slope surrounds the pool area and steps provide access to the Bath House at the lower elevation. Changes in topography are also located at the Day Camp, where the area is set on a slight circular earth plinth as designed by Kahn. (See Figure VIII.7)

Vegetation at the Ewing Senior and Community Center consists mostly of a mown turf grass ground plane with primarily deciduous trees, some ornamental trees at the community building and planting of evergreen shrubs at the Bath House and community building. Deciduous tree masses are located along the property perimeter at Lower Ferry Road and to the south boundaries with clearing for the overhead utility corridor that runs from Lower Ferry Road to Silvia Street. (See Figures VIII.1 and VIII.2) These masses of vegetation in part screen and block views from the property to the surrounding neighborhoods. Another mass of deciduous trees is found north of the swimming pool area. Less dense deciduous tree cover surrounds the structures of the Day Camp area. While the tree groves are likely self-sown, volunteer growth, some larger trees around the Day Camp area look to be purposely planted. Individual trees and shrubs surrounding the Bath House and community building also display purposely planted intentions. Near the snack bar at the southwest edge of the Bath House are several trees planted in a grid configuration, likely influenced by Kahn's design ideas. (See Figure VIII.5) Around the Bath House are irregular shaped planting beds of low evergreen and deciduous shrubs. A line of evergreen shrubs also divides the lawn area between the Bath House and

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parking lot, perpendicular to the Bath House entrance walk. (See Figure VIII.3) At the entrance to the community center are symmetrical plantings of four deciduous trees, two evergreen trees, and many globe-shaped evergreen shrubs. (See Figure VIII.6) Maturing pines are located at the southwest corner of the community building to surround the outside play area.

Circulation at the Ewing Senior and Community Center accommodates both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The entry drive located at the northeast corner of the site is the only vehicular drive. Vehicular access or through traffic from Gold Street is blocked by two w-style guide rails at the intersection of the community center property, one perpendicular to Gold Street and the other to terminus of the entry drive. (See Figure VIII.8) The driveway provides access of the 2-acre asphalt parking lot, which is located along the east face of the community building. The lot is continuously paved with painted parking stalls and several types of light fixtures. The paving surface is in a severely deteriorated condition and has evidence of multiple repairs. (See Figures VIII.9 and VIII.10) The current lot can accommodate 219 cars including 7 handicapped parking spaces. At the southwestern corner of the parking lot, the asphalt drive continues around the community building and heads on a northwest direction beyond the tennis courts. The asphalt gives way to compacted gravel at the southwest corner of the building and continues into the Day Camp where it makes a generous loop and returns east toward the tennis courts. A compacted earth spur connects the drive to the electrical power transfer station to the west. Evidence of parked vehicles alongside the compacted drive is visible by worn turf, compacted depressions and poor drainage. Pedestrian circulation routes are limited linking the parking lot to adjacent facilities in direct alignment. A drop off and wide concrete walk that includes several steps provides access to the main entry of the community building. East of these steps a concrete ramp has been constructed to access the higher elevation of the building. The day care facility located at the east portion of the community building has a drop off with a set of steps directly adjacent to the doorway. Concrete paving links the drive and drop off area. Access to the Bath House and snack bar is via two 5-foot wide walks from the parking lot. The walk to the west which runs from the southwest corner of the parking lot is currently the primary access to the Bath House and pool. A gate is located just west of the snack bar. The walk to the northeast or project east side of the Bath House is not currently used during seasonal operation of the facility. As no other built walks are found in the landscape, other foot traffic likely traverses the lawn areas, as seen in a grass and compacted footpath from the Day Camp area to the community building. (See Figure VIII.2)

Like the community building which supports a variety of active and social activities, the site is host to a variety of exterior recreational activities used both by those attending the Day Camp and pool members. In order to accommodate these uses, numerous structures, site furnishings and landscape objects are utilized. Structures in addition to the Bath House and swimming pools include the Day Camp pavilions designed by Kahn as well as other multiple small out buildings, basketball court, mini golf area, volley ball court, tennis court, and ball field. (See Figures VIII.1 and VIII.2) An overhead utility corridor traverses through the western one-third of the property from Lower Ferry Road to Silvia Street. There are wood utility pole with overhead wires along this easement. Within the pool area enclosure are a series of wood shelters that serve as shade structures. The structures are informal timber construction of 4x4 wood posts and plywood roofs. Small-scale landscape features consist of signs, utilities, light fixtures, fences, picnic tables, trash receptacles, metal guiderails, a clothing donations box, and other objects associated with outdoor recreational facilities such as goal

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posts, back stops, bleachers, tennis nets, and basketball hoops, among others. The pool area is enclosed with an 8 foot high chain link fence running the perimeter of the pool lawn and pavement area, which connects to the Bath House. The southeastern or project south perimeter of the snack bar area is also enclosed with a chain link fence, along with the surrounding snack court area defined, by the grid of planted trees. A section of chain link fencing connects the northeast corner of the community building to the snack bar. A locked gate provides selective access through this location from the front of the community building to the Day Camp area. There is no overall fencing of the site. (See Figures VIII.4, VIII.5, VIII.8, and VIII.10)

VIII.4

Heritage Landscapes

Preservation Landscape Architects & Planners

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Figure VIII.1. The overall spatial organization of a portion of the Trenton Jewish Community Center is depicted in this oblique aerial photograph. The image shows the Bath House, swimming pools, community building, and tennis courts on the left, with the parking lot in the center. The red arrow shows the location of Gold Street. Courtesy Microsoft Live Search Map. (R-Kahn-MicrosoftLiveSearchMap-oblique aerial.jpg)

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Figure VIII.2. A similar oblique aerial photograph shows the western portion of the Trenton Jewish Community Center with the Day Camp, ball fields, and other recreational facilities shown at the center. Note the overhead utilities running across the site, power transfer station at the lower left and tree covered site area to the west, left of image. Courtesy Microsoft Live Search Map. (R-Kahn-MicrosoftLiveSearchMap-oblique aerial-2.jpg)

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Figure VIII.3. Today the front façade of the Bath House faces the adjacent parking lot. A lawn area with a single row of rounded evergreen shrubs marks the halfway point between the structure and parking area. A narrow sidewalk provides access to the Bath House through the shrubs, off frame to the right of the image. Also note the existing snack bar extension on the Bath House to the left. Courtesy Heritage Landscapes. (R-Bathhouse_20071108_045.jpg)

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Figure VIII.4. The snack bar is currently positioned along the western edge of the Bath House and is fairly small in nature. Adjacent to the snack bar is a paved area with picnic tables, trash receptacles, and canopy trees. A 6 foot chain link fence surrounds the area of the pool and snack bar. Note the lower internal fence between the snack bar and pool area. Note the gated entry to the Bath House at the right side of the image. Courtesy Heritage Landscapes. (R-Bathhouse _20071108_072.jpg)

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Figure VIII.5. The paved snack bar area to the west centrally located between the swimming pool and adjacent recreational courts and facilities seen in the background. Overstory deciduous trees appear to be aligned in a grid, probably an influence by Kahn's design ideas. Courtesy Heritage Landscapes. (R-Bathhouse _20071108_001.jpg)

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Figure VIII.6. The main façade of the community building faces an east/northeast direction toward the large asphalt parking lot. The topography changes grades in this location as is evident by a low retaining wall, stairs, and a ramp (right beyond the photo image) that provide access to the building. Vegetation consists of large deciduous trees, shorter evergreen trees, and globular evergreen shrubs. Courtesy Heritage Landscapes. (R-Bathhouse _20071108_079.jpg)

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Figure VIII.7. The Day Camp at the Trenton Jewish Community Center consists of four open-air, pavilion-like buildings constructed of brick and concrete designed by Louis Kahn. Access is provided through a drive loop with many older deciduous trees. Courtesy Heritage Landscapes. (R-Bathhouse_20071108_139.jpg)

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Figure VIII.8. The edge of the property today abuts several private residences to the east and northeast. Gold Street seen at the upper right portion of the image, dead ends with a metal w-guide rail. Courtesy Heritage Landscapes. (R-Bathhouse _20071108_064.jpg)

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Figure VIII.9. The existing large rectangular parking lot accommodates all on-site parking. The lot is located across the east façade of the community building and south of the Bath House. Courtesy Heritage Landscapes. (R-Bathhouse_20071108_161.jpg)



Figure VIII.10. The existing parking lot is severely deteriorated with large cracks and potholes within the asphalt. Several areas have been patched over the years, but the condition of the lot continues to degrade. Courtesy Heritage Landscapes. (R-Bathhouse_20071108_198.jpg)

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