



TOT LOT PARK

PARKS AND RECREATION 2.5

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PARKS AND RECREATION

General Principles

Neighborhood parks and open spaces, in a traditional community setting, are usually located primarily within the residential areas, where the lower-density building types exist, and are deliberately fronted by buildings to lend these places both spatial definition, as well as the added security of being “overlooked” by the adjoining residences. Their main reason for being is typically to provide opportunities for leisure and casual recreation, and their landscapes often reflect that, consisting of open lawn, paved paths, landscape groupings and trees, and various park shelters. For the most part, these types of parks require only a limited amount of maintenance, due to their typically naturalistic configurations, and native plantings. In general, each neighborhood should have a minimum of one neighborhood park, ideally located within a short walking distance of any given residence.

In addition to these types of passive parks, there are also parks that incorporate active recreational uses, which are then formally integrated into the composition of the overall park design, though for a neighborhood-scale park, all other conditions and considerations typically remain the same. Many urban forms of open space also exist, though these are usually located exclusively in neighborhood and community centers, and are often more intimately scaled and primarily hardscaped. These typically fall under the category of square, plazas and formal greens.

Ideally, there should be some means of formally connecting all of the parks and open space within the community, this is usually accomplished through a network of streets, avenues parkways, boulevards, and/or greenswards, capable of comfortably and safely accommodating both pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as vehicles. When connected through a continuous parkway network, this is often referred to as an “emerald necklace.”

Observation

There is a scarcity of well-designed open space within the community that is easily accessible and accommodating of the community’s needs and desires, in either the town center, or within the residential neighborhoods.

Discussion

There was a significant amount of community discussion regarding parks and open space. Though there was a clear distinction made between parks and open space to incorporated into the neighborhood residential fabric, and that associated with the beachfront and beach walk, there was clear agreement that both were considered essential elements to fully enjoying life in Surfside. Nonetheless, the neighborhood parks and open space were of a particular focus during the charrette process.



TOT LOT PARK



VETERANS PARK



TENNIS COURTS AT VETERANS PARK

Most citizens wanted better access to the Indian Creek waterway and expressed a desire for more opportunities and facilities related to fishing and kayaking, both at the 96th park and through the development of “street end” pocket parks fronting the Creek, though this latter idea was challenged by some of the residents living adjacent to these areas and who have become used to treating this right of way as a personal adjunct to their own property.

Veteran’s Park was considered to be under-utilized and poorly located for the uses currently located there, and needs to be rethought. In general, they wanted the lighting to be improved at all the parks, and some provision for parking, though there was heated disagreement regarding the inclusion of bathrooms at the children’s playground park at the intersection of 90th Street and Hawthorne Avenue.

A park proposal was requested for the vacant lot adjacent to the bridge to Indian Creek Village, as well as better connections between all of them, in the form of a designated bike path and/or jogging trail/circuit incorporated into the existing neighborhood street network. And lastly, many dog owners expressed a need for a dog park and suggested turning one or both of the pump stations into a dedicated dog park would be a good idea.

A dedicated effort was made on behalf of the 96th Street Park, attracting tremendous public input. Francisco Llado, a charrette team member, worked exclusively throughout the process on this one issue, working closely with the community and functioning as an essential, yet efficient, conduit through which that community input was focused and channeled.

Specific issues to be addressed included the desire for a single, clear entrance to the park, located well away from 96th street, for both safety reasons and to control access and security. View sheds and transparency from the street through the park to Indian Creek were to remain, and residents requested a large multi-purpose field, as well as a basketball court and a small racquetball court. They also called for two playgrounds and places for parents to watch their children. Parents also wanted a park building to hold small events, and a final important component desired was a small boat launch and possibly a mooring for the Town’s marine equipment.

Specific Recommendations

Turn the pump stations at 93rd Street and Byron Avenue and 89th Street and Dickens Avenue into dog parks

Again, as per community input and request, a specific proposal was put forth regarding the reclamation and adaptive reuse of this under-utilized public property to create a new fenced-in pocket park, to be dedicated for use by pet owners to walk and exercise their dogs, in a way that would minimize their impact on the other residents.

Create pocket parks at each of the street-ends on Indian Creek

Ongoing debate notwithstanding, it is recommended that these public right-of-ways be sensitively reclaimed for community access to, and viewing of, Indian Creek. The consensus opinion was in favor of passive, discreetly landscaped areas, where local residents can sit and quietly enjoy the water. Some street ends may also accommodate limited additional functions, such as fishing and/or kayak launches.

Create a jogging and cycling “String of Emeralds”

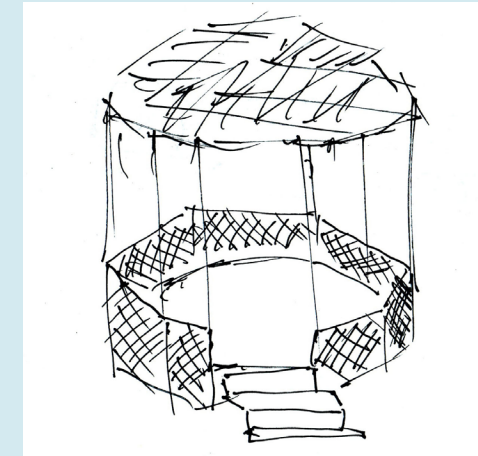
Design street sections and on-street pathways along Bay Drive, and other surface streets, to safely connect the 96th Street Park, other smaller pocket parks throughout the community, Veteran’s Park, and the Beach walk, to create a “string of emeralds,” or “emerald necklace,” effectively linking all of the community’s open space assets into a single, unified network of parks and recreational amenities.

Downtown Plazas

Though urban open space and public realm was not specifically discussed as part of the community input on this topic, it is strongly recommended that both the existing streetscapes, as well as the proposed new downtown plazas, be considered an important and integral part of the Town’s overall open space network. These elements are not only critical to the ongoing success of the downtown merchants, they are crucial to maximizing the resident’s full benefit and enjoyment from living in a compact, mixed-use, and walkable community, wonderfully and uniquely situated along a beautiful ocean beach, in a delightful subtropical climate.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Discussion concerning the parks, especially the 96th Street Park, was lively and informative. A major concern for residents was how to incorporate more recreational facilities or spaces into the park, as well as to improve landscaping and to add boat slips for kayak storage.



PUMP STATION AT 93RD STREET & BYRON AVENUE



PAVILION AT 96TH STREET PARK

96th Street Park

A highly specific concept plan was developed and presented during the charrette which incorporated all of the community's inputs and requests, and which was vetted by the residents and the 96th Park Committee during the charrette process. In addition to the specific briefing and ongoing input from the citizens, a proposal was put forth to use the small support and event pavilion as an iconic entrance feature, to more eloquently celebrate the entry experience into the community along 96th street, when approaching from the west.



3D MODEL AERIAL OF PROPOSED PARK CONFIGURATION

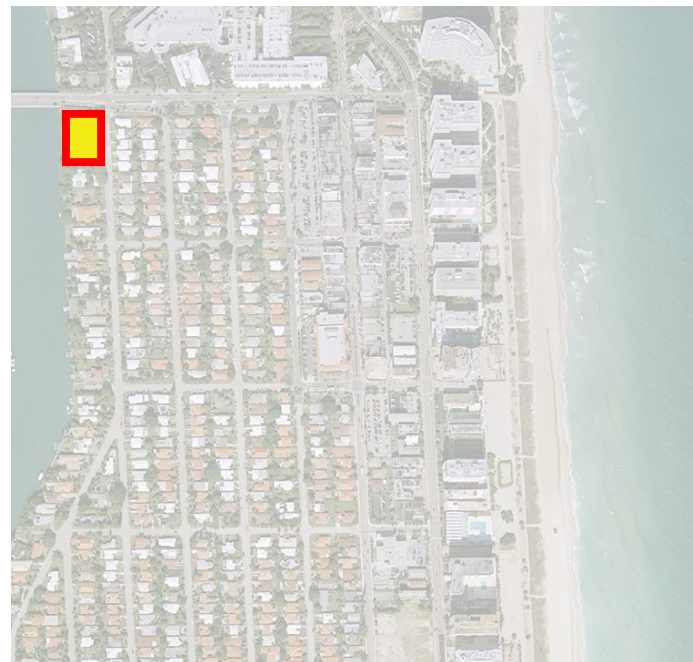
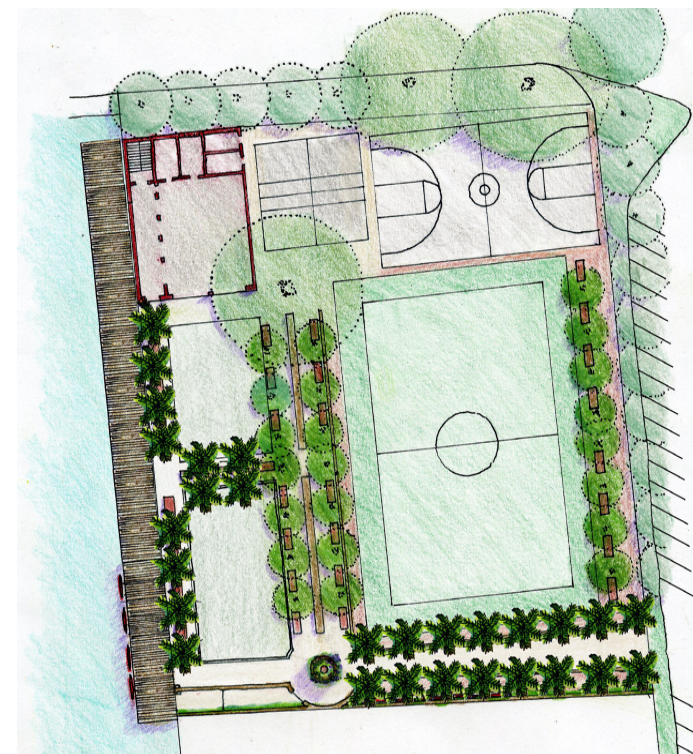


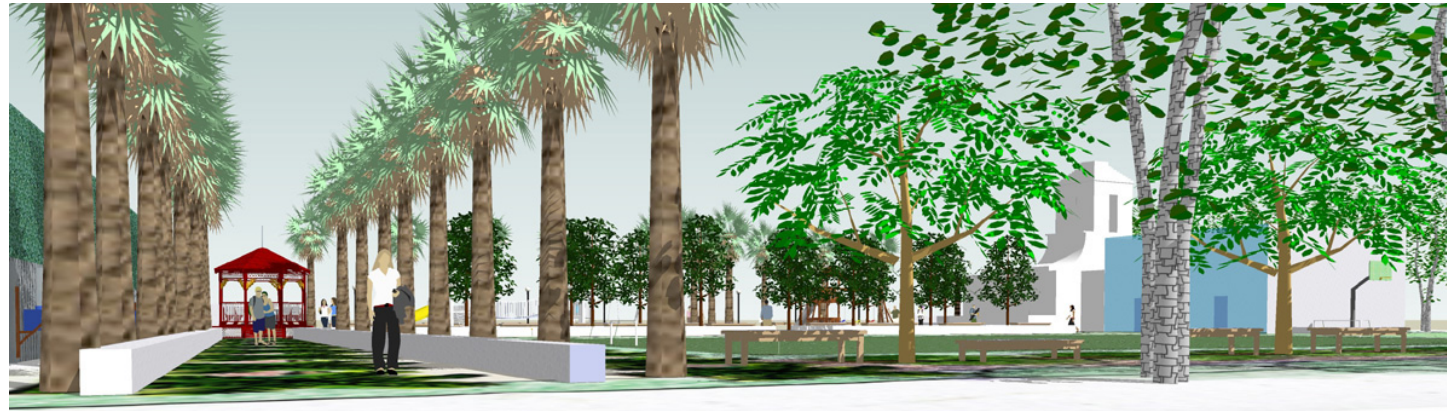
DIAGRAM SHOWING THE PARK'S LOCATION WITHIN THE NEIGHBORHOOD



ILLUSTRATIVE RENDERED SITE PLAN



EXISTING CONDITIONS



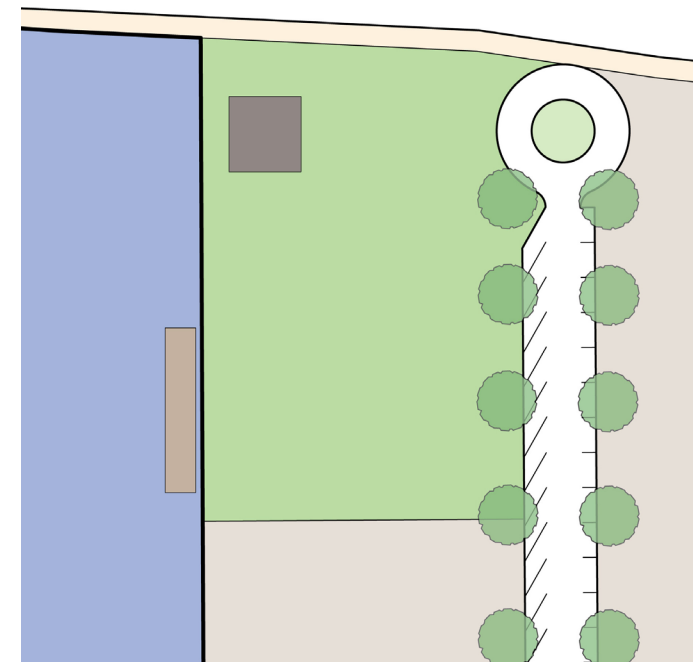
PERSPECTIVE AT ENTRANCE LOOKING WEST TOWARDS GAZEBO



VIEW OF DOCK WITH KAYAK STORAGE FACILITIES



Indian Creek elevation of enhancements to 96th Street park, clearly showing proposed new park structure, which will help mark and celebrate Surfside's front door from the west.



PARKING DIAGRAM

Plenty of parking is provided on-street. Visitors will drive north on Bay Drive and if they can't find a space on the East side of the street they can turn around at the roundabout at the end of Bay Drive and park in one of the angled parking spaces on the west side of the street.

Tot Lot Park

Recommended improvements to this existing park are mostly related to issues of access and control, through the use of an attractive fence and gate with child-proof latches, and two small pavilions, appropriately and tastefully designed to complement the nearby residential properties, and which would house a single, unisex toilet, with the other pavilion providing equipment storage.

Other features include a discreet fountain and landscaped seating area outside of the fenced tot lot, adding a civic feature to the neighborhood, and enhanced provision for on-street parking.

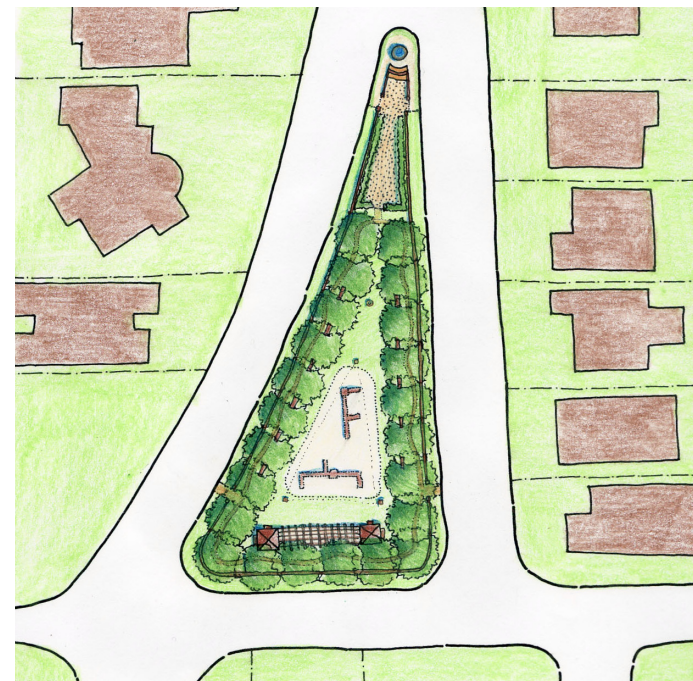
Moving the entrance to the south side also increases parking locations along the East and West side of the park.



PERSPECTIVE SHOWING PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO TOT PARK



DIAGRAM SHOWING THE PARK'S LOCATION WITHIN THE NEIGHBORHOOD



ILLUSTRATIVE RENDERED SITE PLAN



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Indian Creek Park & Garden

Located at the entrance to Indian Creek Village, the Club – current owner of the, at present, empty lot – has expressed a willingness to consider converting it into a park for general use by both communities, providing additional opportunities for leisure and casual recreation along the Bay front, in addition to the proposed street-end parks.

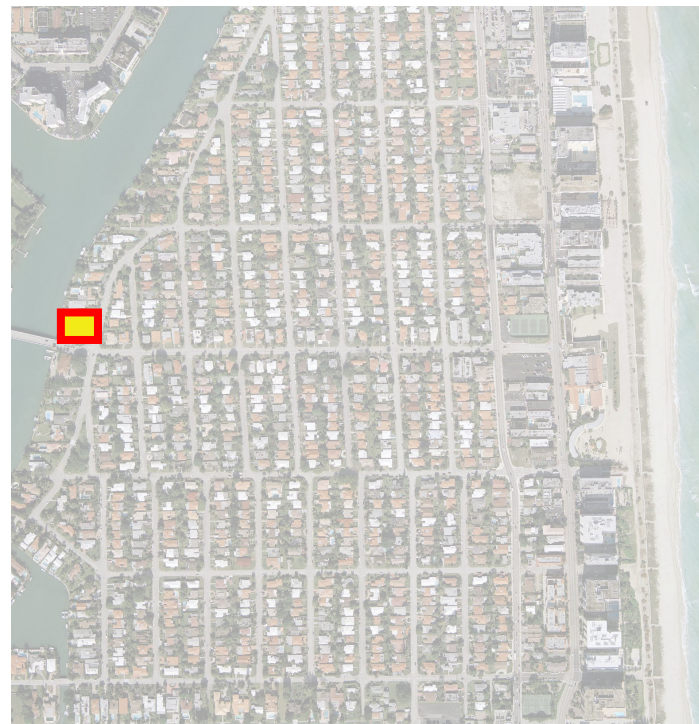
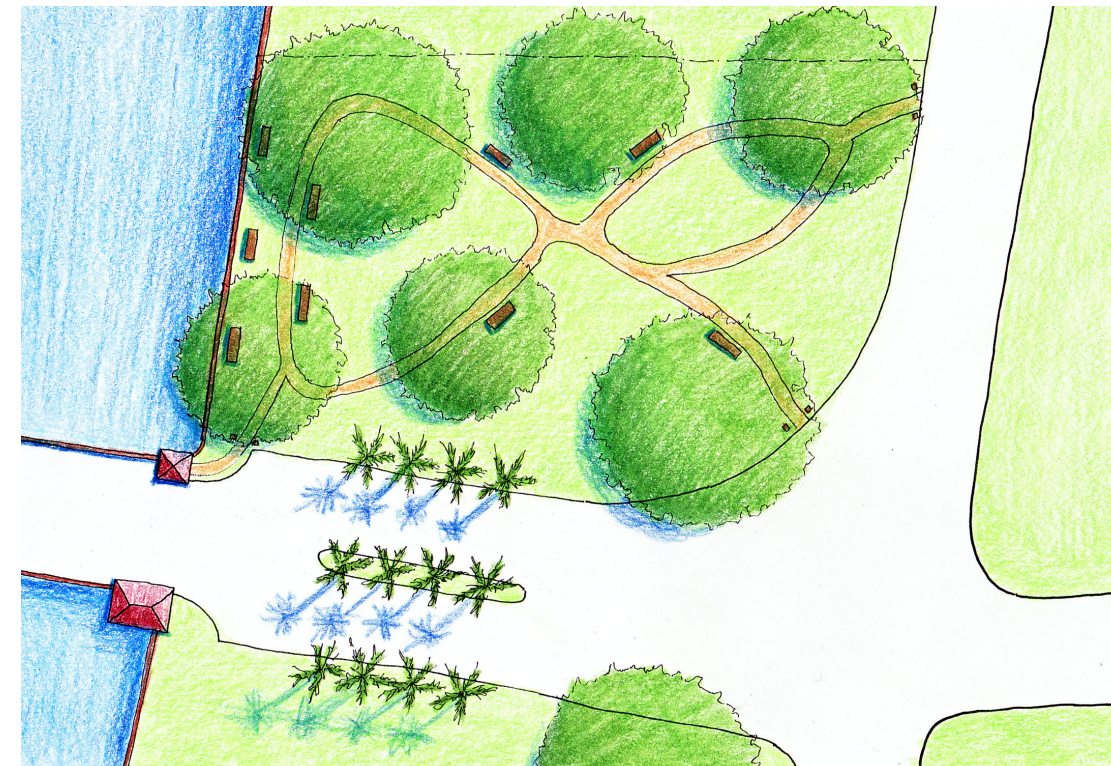


DIAGRAM SHOWING THE PARK’S LOCATION WITHIN THE NEIGHBORHOOD



EXISTING CONDITIONS



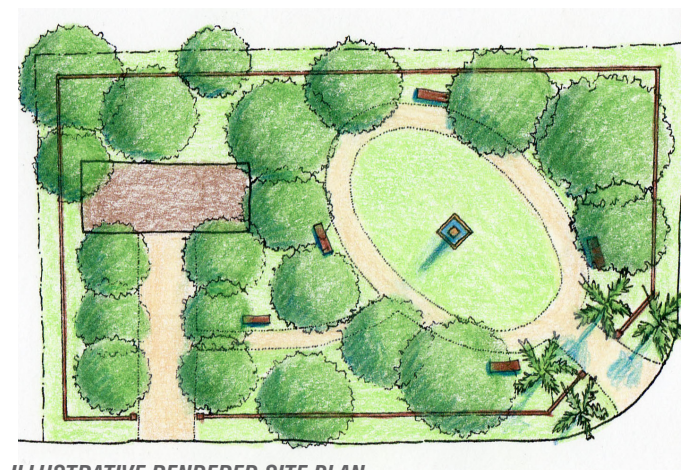
ILLUSTRATIVE RENDERED SITE PLAN SHOWING A SIMPLY ELEGANT CONFIGURATION, INTENDED FOR QUIET CONTEMPLATION.

Dog Parks (Convert Pump Stations)

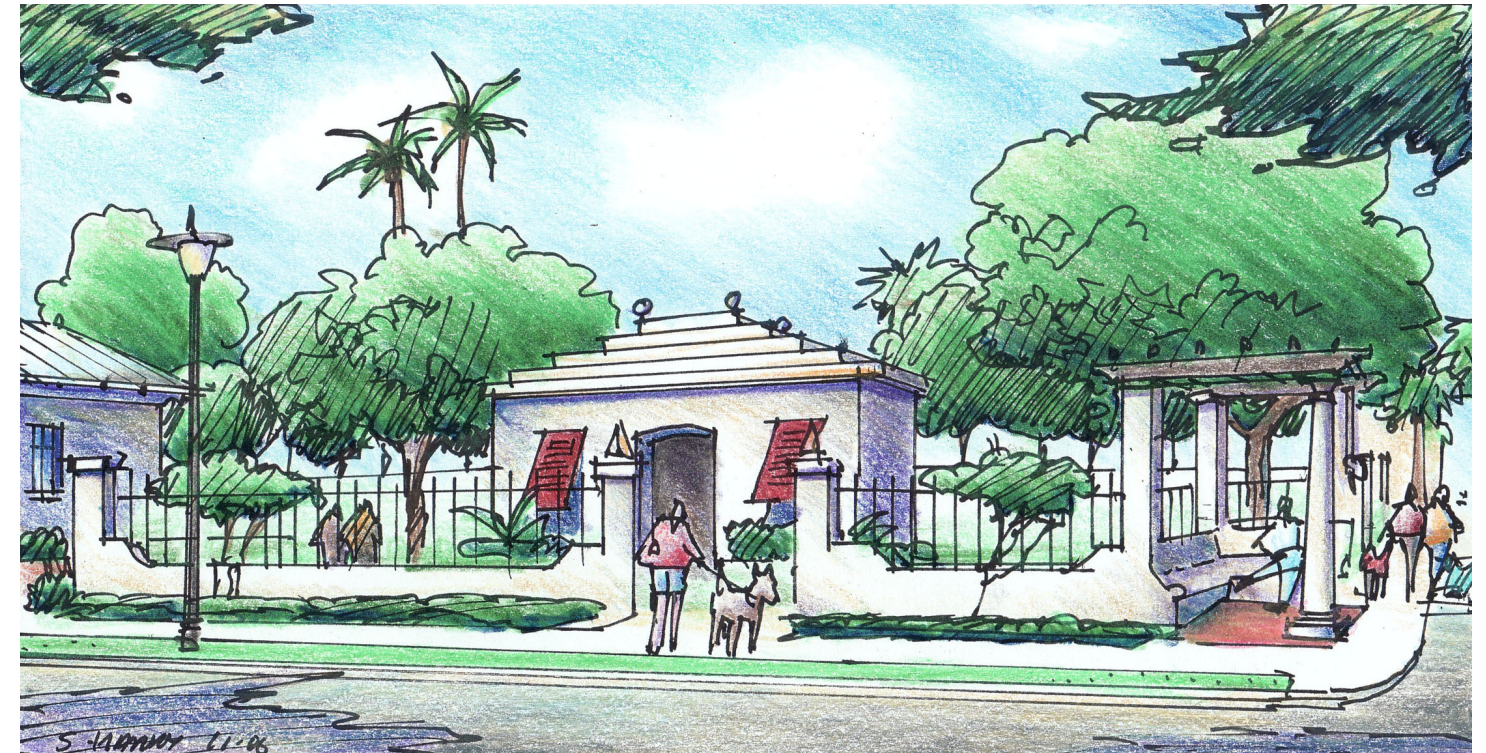
Again, as per community input and request, a specific proposal was put forth regarding the reclamation and adaptive reuse of the under utilized public properties at 93rd Street and Byron Avenue, and at 89th Street and Dickens Avenue, to create a new fenced-in pocket park, which could be dedicated for use by pet owners to walk and exercise their dogs, in a way that would minimize their impact on the other residents.



DIAGRAM SHOWING THE PARK'S LOCATION WITHIN THE NEIGHBORHOOD



ILLUSTRATIVE RENDERED SITE PLAN



PERSPECTIVE SHOWING PROPOSED ENHANCEMENTS TO PUMP STATION PROPERTIES



EXISTING PUMP STATION AT 89TH STREET AND DICKENS AVENUE

Veterans' Park

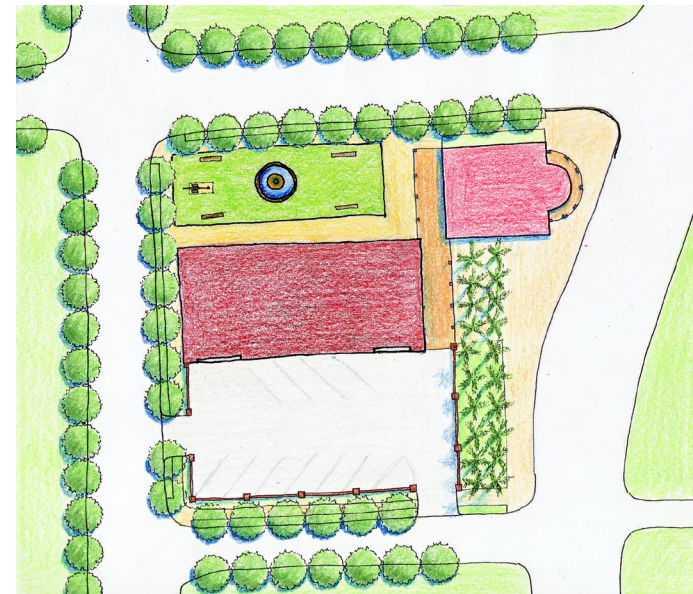
Veterans' Park was widely considered a missed opportunity and under-utilized asset in the Town's property portfolio. Though currently housing a tennis program and the Veteran's memorial, the location and setting was not considered ideal for either use. Therefore, it is recommended that the tennis program be relocated to a more conveniently accessible location for broader community use (the current proposal is that it be part of the new Civic Center), and that the Public Works Department - a discreetly functioning municipal department, currently occupying very high-value land in the Civic Center district -- be relocated here.

As part of that move and the redesign of the park to accommodate the new use, it was proposed that a new iconic Town entrance structure, to house the Public Works Administration, be situated such as to provide an appropriate new civic setting for the Veterans' memorial and as well as formal visual termination for the deflected northbound Collins Avenue traffic, for visitors entering the town from the south.

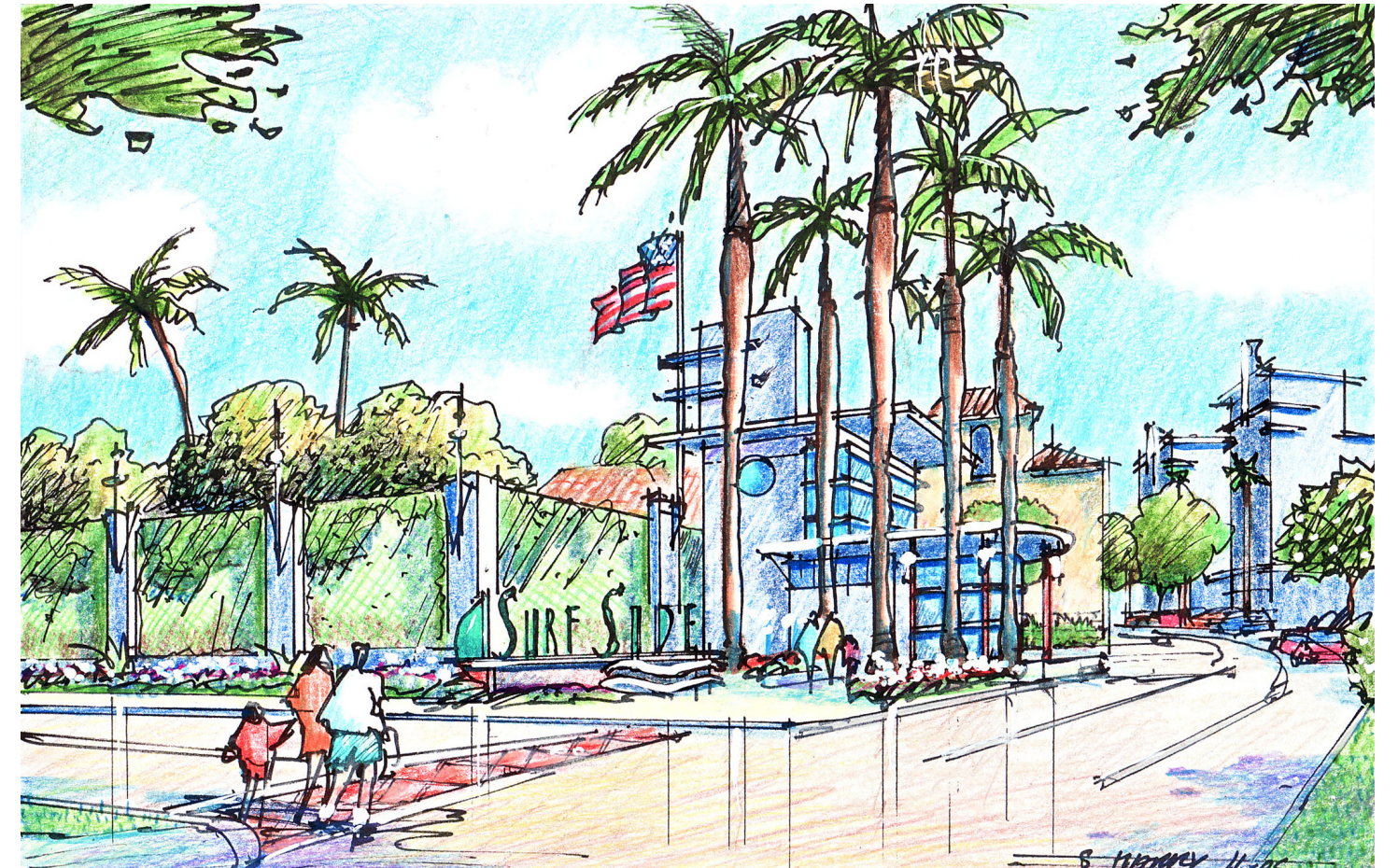
The new Veterans' park would enjoy a quieter more reflective setting.



DIAGRAM SHOWING THE PARK'S LOCATION WITHIN THE NEIGHBORHOOD



ILLUSTRATIVE RENDERED SITE PLAN



THIS PROPOSAL TAKES ADVANTAGE OF THE DEFLECTED VISTA, TO CELEBRATE THE ENTRANCE TO SURFSIDE WHEN APPROACHING FROM THE SOUTH.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Beach Walk

General Principles

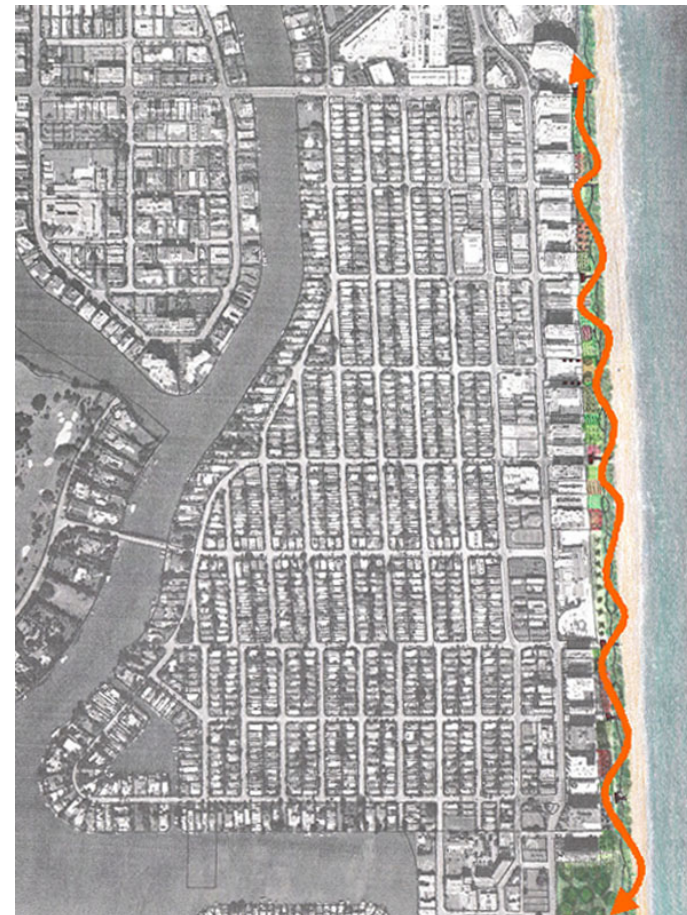
An appropriate and sustainable balance between beach access and recreational utilization, and beach protection, must be considered. To that end, access points which traverse dune systems should be limited in number and carefully planned. Beach paths which parallel the shoreline, and which provide both emergency access as well as recreational opportunities, need to be strategically situated and designed as to maximize their utility and recreational aspects with minimal cost and impact to the natural systems. In general, natural areas should be planted with native species and in a manner that is not susceptible to erosion, and which -- ideally -- will promote the establishment of a viable and effectively sustainable ecotone over time.

Observation

The beach walk represents an under-realized natural and recreational amenity in its current state, and lacks a coherent design and/or appropriately sustainable planting scheme. This has resulted in an undefined zone between the existing beachfront properties, and the beach proper, which is creating spatial confusion and diluting value, along the entire beachfront as a whole.

Discussion

The residents of Surfside would like to see the beach walk built similarly to, and connected with, the one in Bal Harbour. They like the idea of a meandering pathway open to pedestrians as well as bicycles. They would also like to see the Surfside beach walk incorporated into a larger regional linear beachfront park network.



THE BEACHWALK, PLAN VIEW INDICATING A LANDSCAPED MEANDERING PATH TRAVERSING THE ENTIRE NORTH-SOUTH LENGTH OF SURFSIDE.



CURRENT HARD PACK CONDITIONS



PROPOSED CONCEPTUAL HARD PACK AND BEACH WALK LANDSCAPING AS SHOWN IN AN EARLIER STUDY

Specific Recommendations

Update the beach walk consistent with residents’ stated desires and with the recommendations outlined in the Town of Surfside Conceptual Design Report; pedestrian beach path, as produced by Coastal Systems International. In summary:

The hard-pack should remain open to emergency and maintenance vehicles. Next to the hard-pack, create a meandering path through a maritime forest planted with native trees. Open views to the ocean in key locations. Plant a coastal strand, consisting of shrubs and grasses, located between the beach dune and the maritime forest. The existing beach dune will separate the beach from the planted zones and protect them from erosion.

The recommended beach planting scheme is as follows:

- Maritime forest
 - Sea grape
 - Gumbo limbos
 - Pigeon plum
 - Myrsine
 - Wild coffee
- Coastal strand
 - Wax myrtle
 - Saw palmetto
 - Cocoplum
 - Sea lavender
 - Inkberry
 - Bay cedar
- Beach dune
 - Beach bean
 - Railroad vine
 - Dune sunflower
 - Seapurslane
 - Sea oat
 - Blanket flower



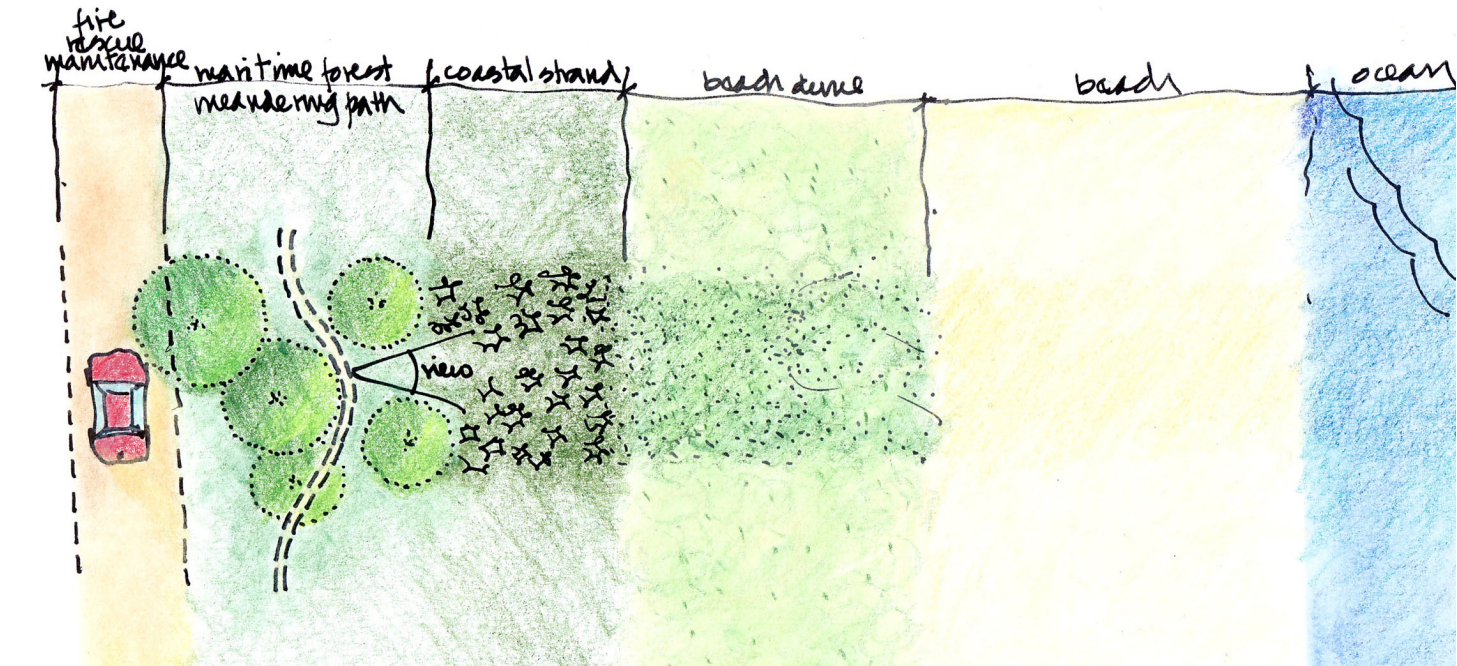
BEACHWALK LANDSCAPING SECTION DIAGRAM



BEACH WALK



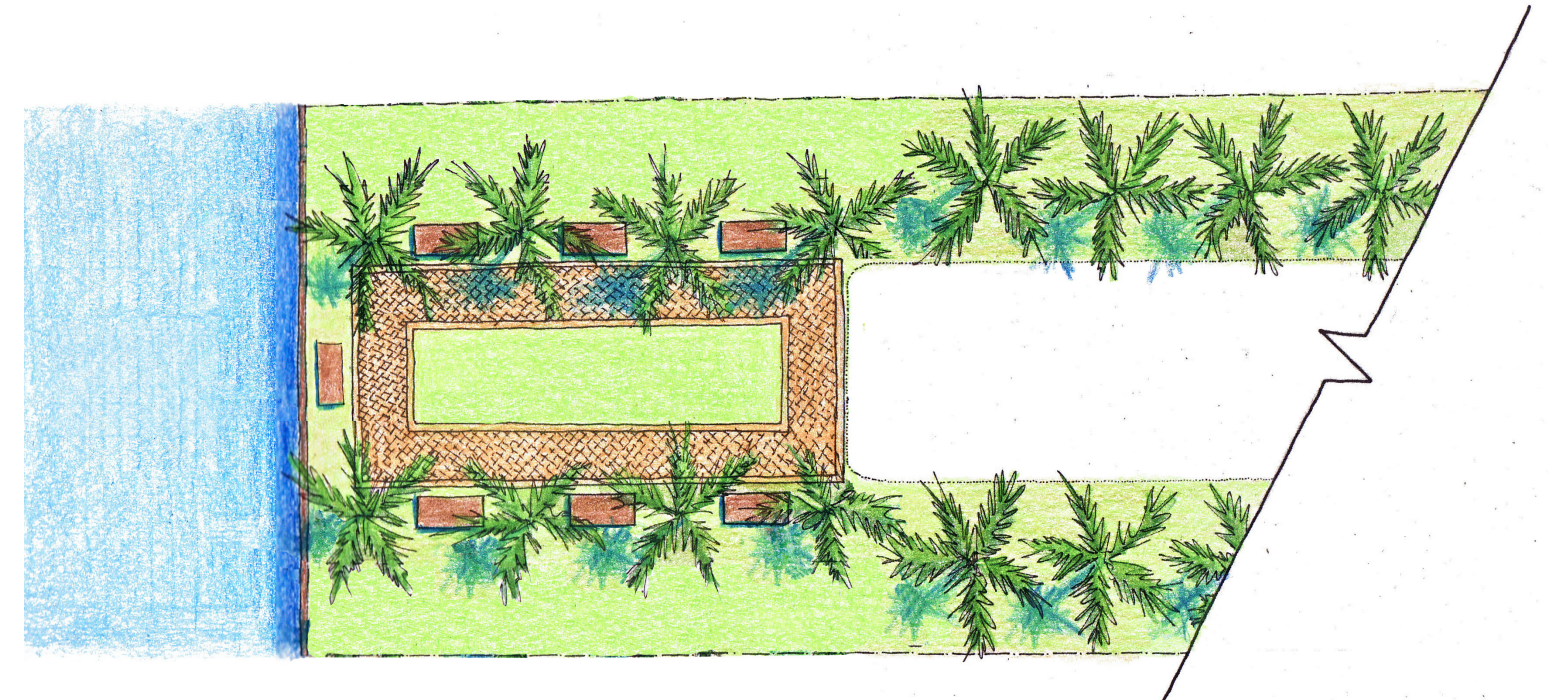
HARD PACK



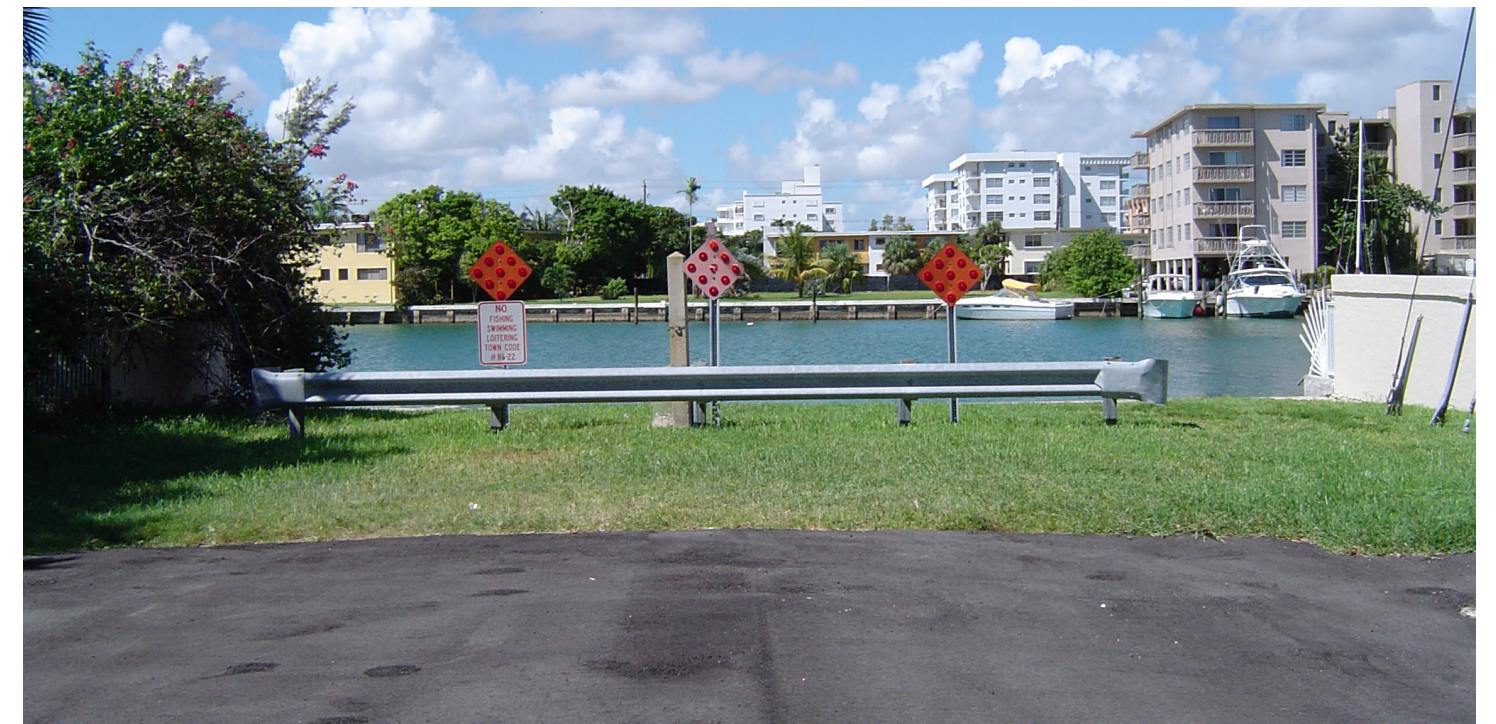
BEACHWALK LANDSCAPING PLAN DIAGRAM

Bay-Side Pocket Parks

Bay-side pocket parks, located at the western terminus of east-west streets, can provide a more intimate setting for admiring the bay views. These parks would also be more closely affiliated with the actual streets that they terminate. Some parks could support limited fishing and kayak launching.



ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN OF A TYPICAL BAY-SIDE STREET-END PARKS



Existing street-ends and associated ROW provide an unrealized opportunity for more immediate and intimate connection with the Bay Side.

Beach-Side Pocket Parks

The proposed beach-side plazas also provide an opportunity to introduce a more elegantly accessible transition between the existing street ends and the beach, more effectively linking the residential neighborhoods west of Collins to the waterfront. The plazas are also designed to offer informal gathering places at beach entrances, and provide much needed resident amenities.



ILLUSTRATIVE RENDERING, LOOKING TOWARD OCEAN, SHOWING PROPOSED BEACH-SIDE PARKS WITH CASUAL SITTING AREAS AND IMPROVED RESIDENT AMENITIES.



EXISTING STREET-END

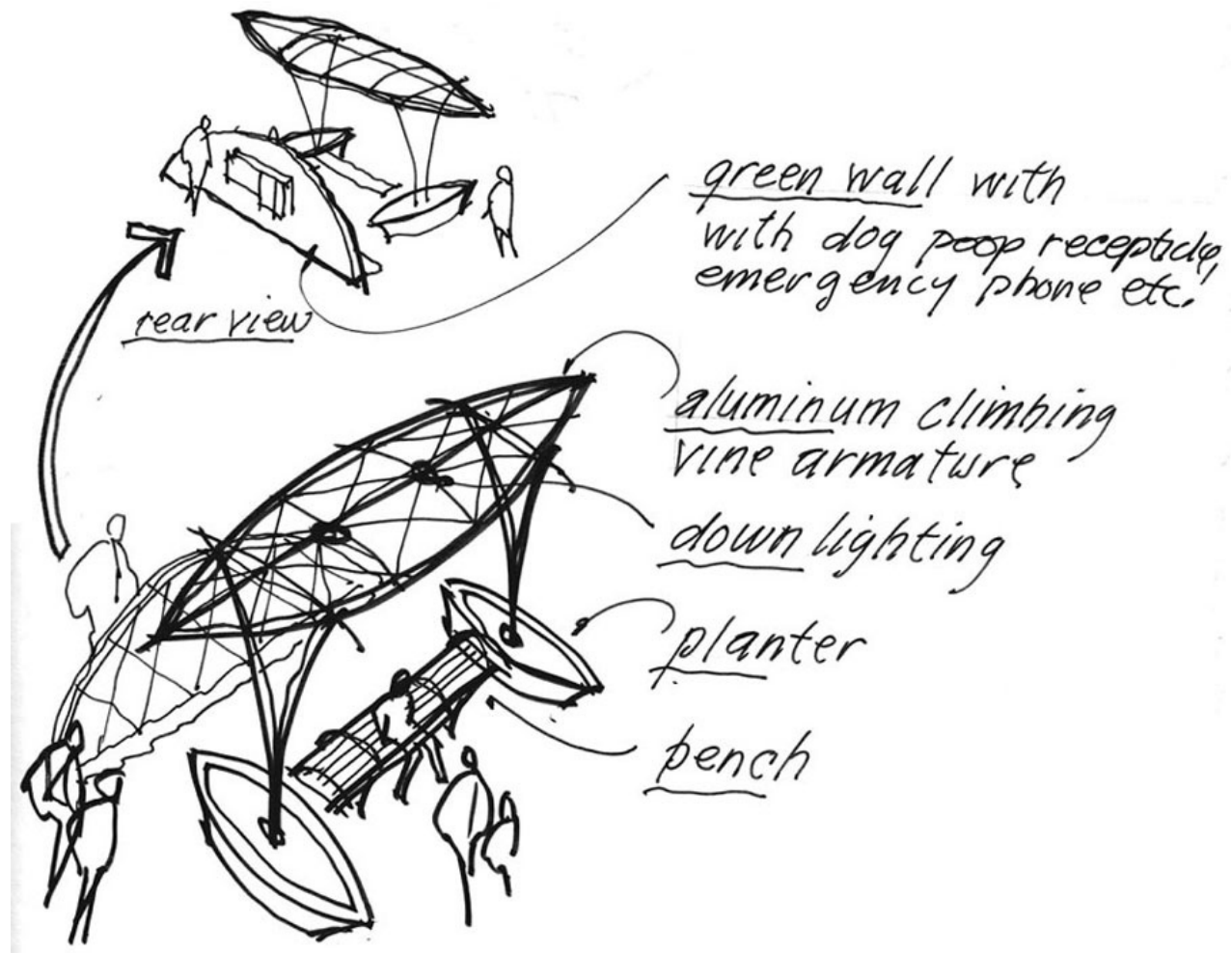
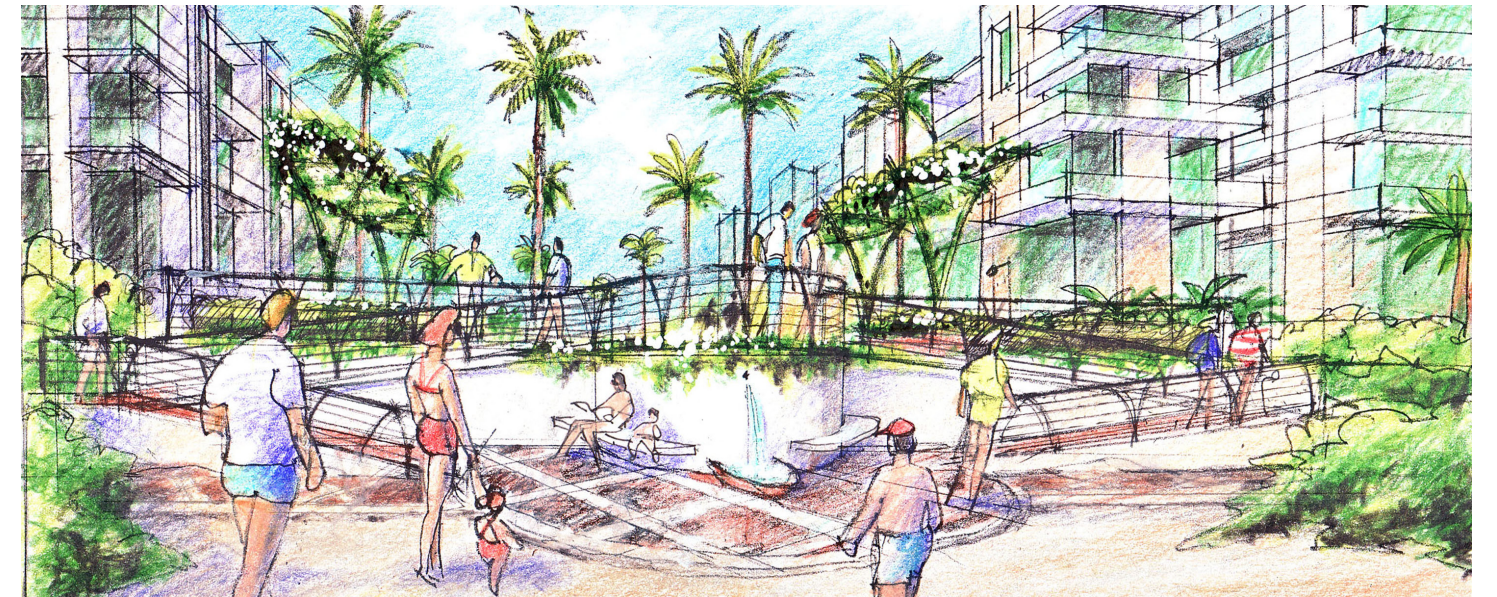
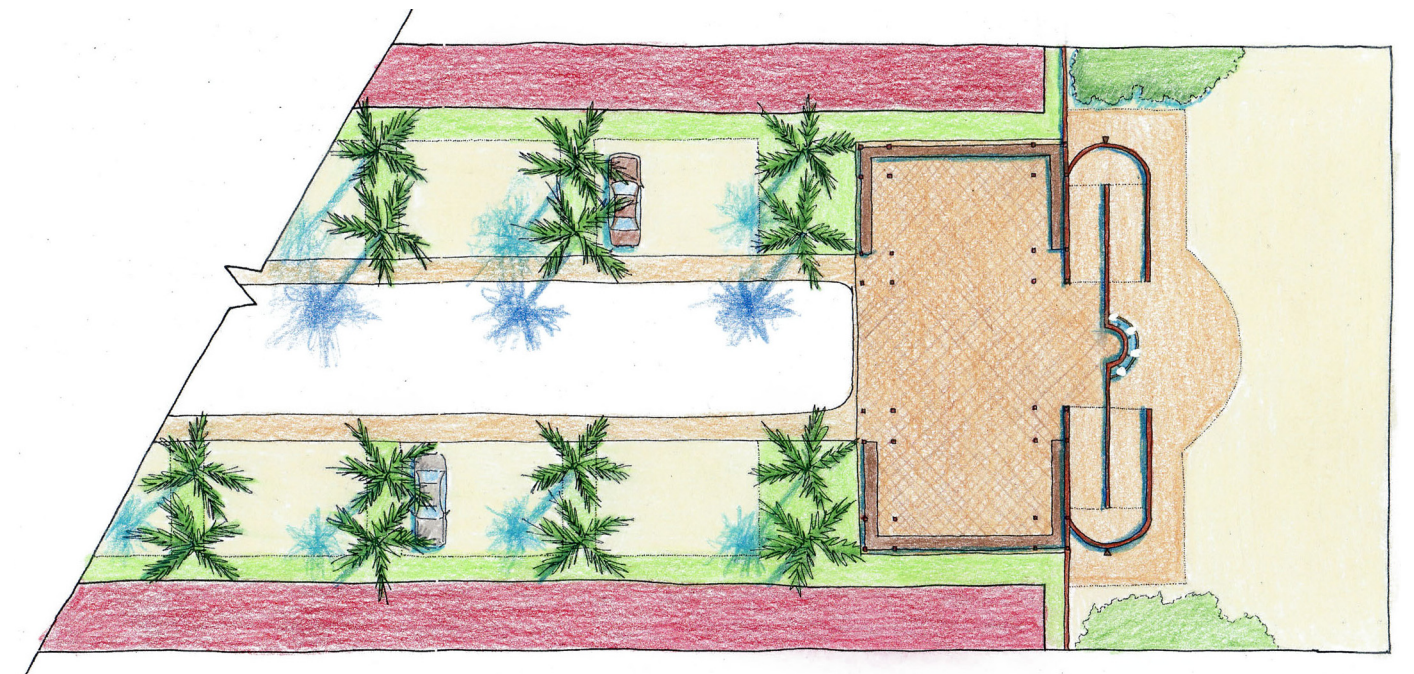


DIAGRAM OF BEACH-END PARK FURNITURE



ILLUSTRATIVE RENDERING OF PROPOSED BEACH-SIDE PARK, LOOKING TOWARD PLAZA AND SHOWING FOOT WASH, IMPROVED ACCESS, INCLUDING ADA-COMPLIANT RAMPS, CASUAL SEATING AND BEACH OVERLOOK, ETC.

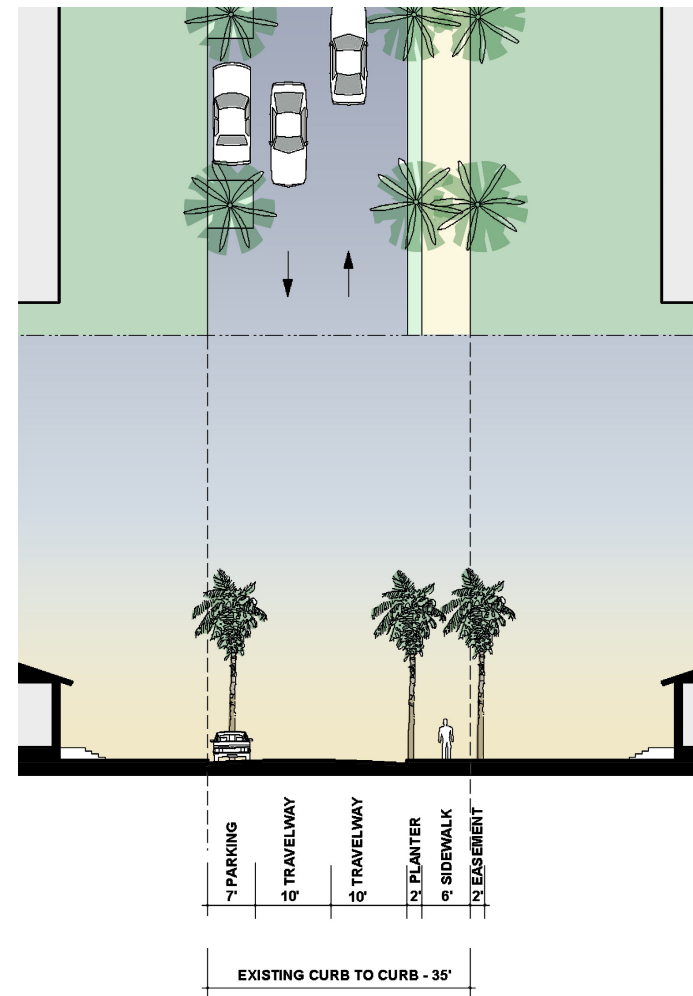


ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN OF TYPICAL BEACH-SIDE STREET-END PARKS

Walking Boulevards - Connecting The Parks

An “emerald necklace” of networked parks, open space, and community amenities is proposed to run throughout Surfside, from 96th Street Park to Veterans’ Park, and connecting to both the Beach Walk and the communities of Bal Harbour and North Beach, creating a full pedestrian loop in and around Surfside and connecting to the regional bike network.

Bike paths along Harding Avenue will also help tie the commercial district into this comprehensive pedestrian/bicycle network. Condo owners will now have two fantastic walking/cycling options available to them.



ABOVE: BAY DRIVE STREET SECTION, SHOWING INTEGRATED PEDESTRIAN PATH

RIGHT: ILLUSTRATIVE NETWORK PLAN SHOW ROUTE OF COMPREHENSIVE, COMMUNITY-WIDE BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN “EMERALD NECKLACE.”

