

Salem Camp Ground Master Plan

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The Board of Directors of Salem Camp Ground partnered with the UGA College of Environment and Design (CED) to develop a conceptual, sustainable master plan that would expand the number of families who can reside on-site during the annual Camp Meeting, and provide rental opportunities for groups seeking space for reunions and retreats. The goal was to add additional lodging in a manner that reflects the historic nature of the site and does not detract from traditional practices, yet meets modern needs.

In 2018 Fall semester, CED students in Cultural Landscape Documentation undertook historic research, documented existing conditions, identified character-defining features, and crafted design guidelines for buildings and landscapes. Six master plan design scenarios were presented to the Board of Directors, who provided feedback. A weekend design charrette during 2019 Spring semester analyzed this feedback and refined the master plan to address appropriate tent infill locations, auxiliary lodging, rehabilitation of the fire hall and spring, and enhancement of the woods.

These pages contain design guidelines, preliminary infill scenarios and the final conceptual master plan.

ARCHITECTURAL INFILL GUIDELINES

Plan:

- Front gable, rectangular plan with front and rear entrances on short elevations

Square footage and Height:

- One-story: ~1,400 sq. ft. average & ~12-17 feet tall
- Two-story: ~ 1,450 sq. ft. average & ~18-22 feet tall

Materials:

- Roofing: pressed sheet, corrugated sheet, asphalt shingles; typically matte
- Siding: wooden clapboard, wooden novelty siding, vinyl, composite vertical board, fiber cement, concrete masonry units (CMUs), and stucco finish
- Windows: rectangular openings with doors, double hung sash, fixed, and casement
- Ground cover: wood shavings, paved, and raised wooden platforms for exterior & wood shavings, paved, or flooring for interior
- Paint: white, off-white, grey, green, blue-grey, yellow, light brown, red, maroon

Porches:

- Front porches are typically full width
- Rear porches may be full width, a stoop with a partial porch-like covering, or a stoop with an awning supported by brackets
- Supports: squared wooden posts, rounded wooden posts, metal poles; may be open or screened-in
- Roofs: shed and half-hipped are most common, using materials listed above
- Ground cover: wood shavings, paved, wooden platform

Decorative Features:

- Exposed rafter tails, decorative shutters, statement-color trim, wooden lattice trim along porches, and built-in seating and tables on several porches



LANDSCAPE DESIGN GUIDELINES



Maintain shady open spaces



Maintain character of buildings



Maintain a buffer around edges



Minimize designed spaces

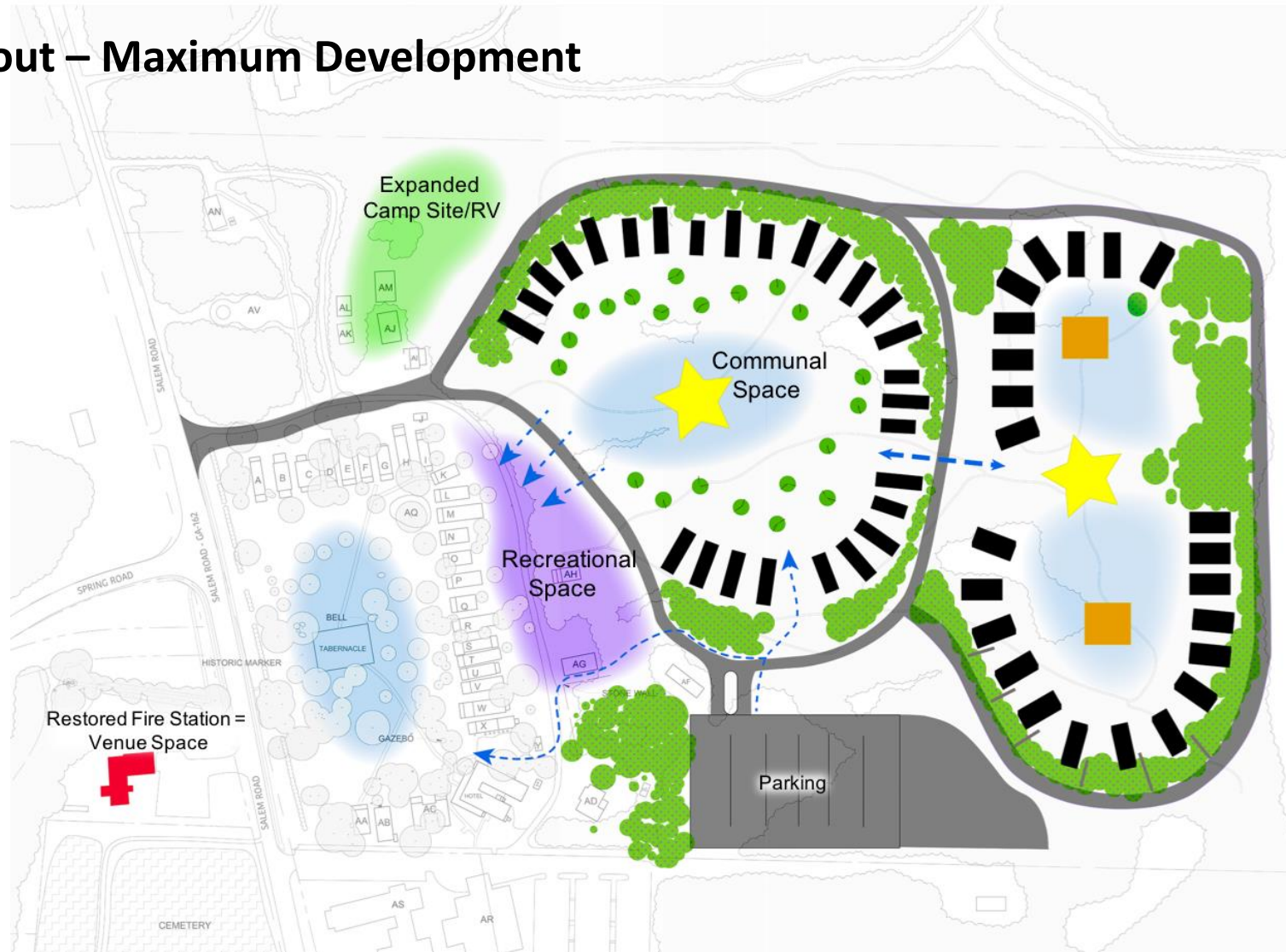


Vegetation types should copy current

1A: Full Build-out – Maximum Development

Using a majority of the available land, 1A aims to increase rentable area by:

- Three new horseshoes of tents will replicate the historic U-shaped arrangement of tents; two-story tents will be frequently used. Includes option for short-term rentals.
- Repurposing the fire station as venue space for weddings, reunions, etc.
- Expanding the RV area to include tent camping and a central fire pit.
- Relocating the entrance to create better flow and more parking
- The current softball field as well as a portion of the surrounding tree cover will become a parking lot. The short-term rental tents will feature a gravel parking pad.



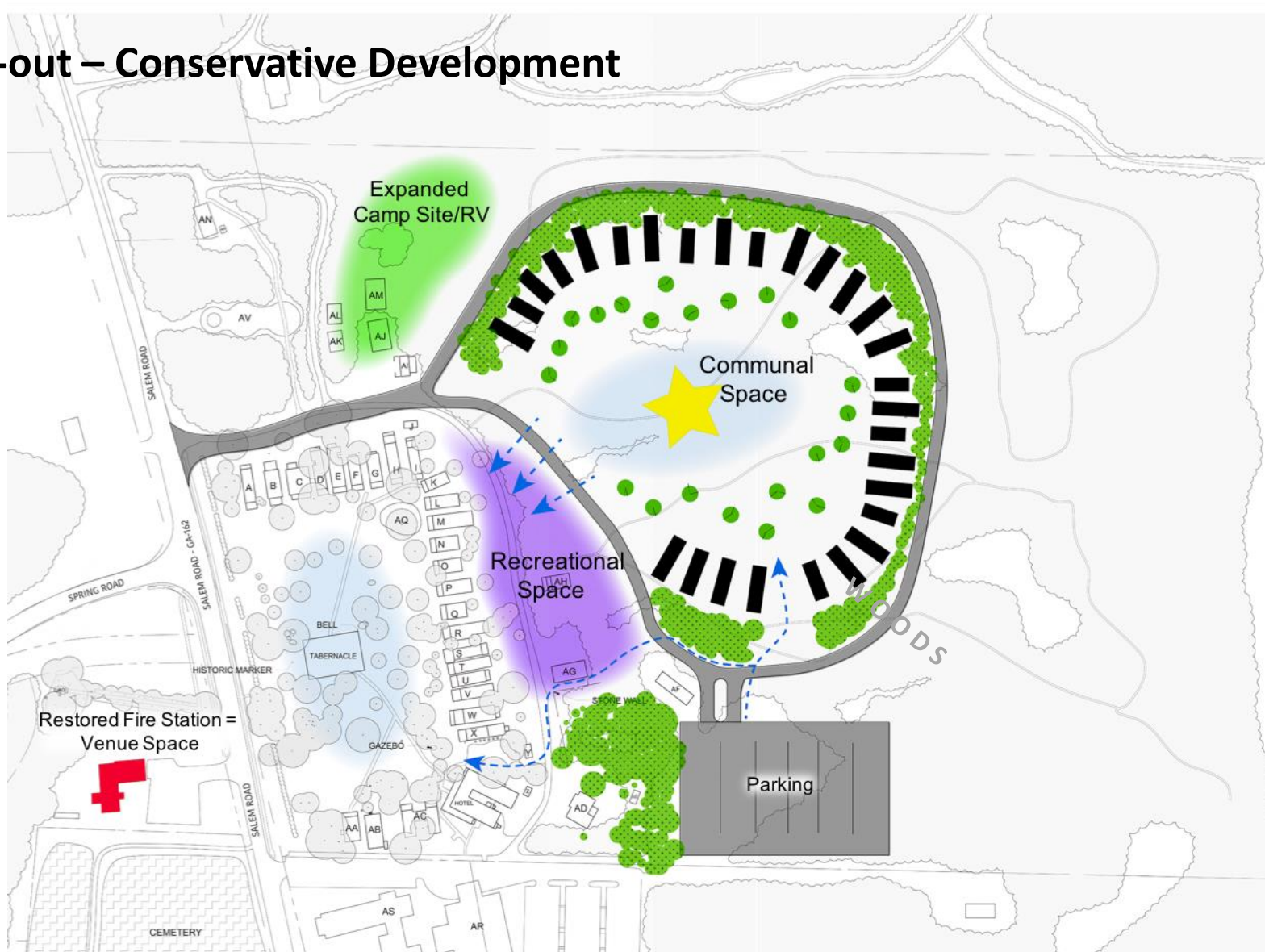
Board feedback included these common responses:

- Too many tents (55% of respondents)
- Tents are too far/too separate from Tabernacle (50%)
- Don't destroy the woods (44%)
- Prefer parking at tents rather than in separate lot (16%)

1B: Full Build-out – Conservative Development

The aim of 1B is to expand the camp considerably while maintaining a more rustic, family feel. It is similar to Scenario 1A except:

- Only one additional horseshoe of tents to be used by meeting attendees.
- A larger portion of woods is protected.
- A repurposed fire station, expanded RV area, and relocated entrance (similar to IA)
- The additional tent group will be arranged with a similar density to that of the historic core; Two-story tents will be limited in order to maintain the character of the historic core.



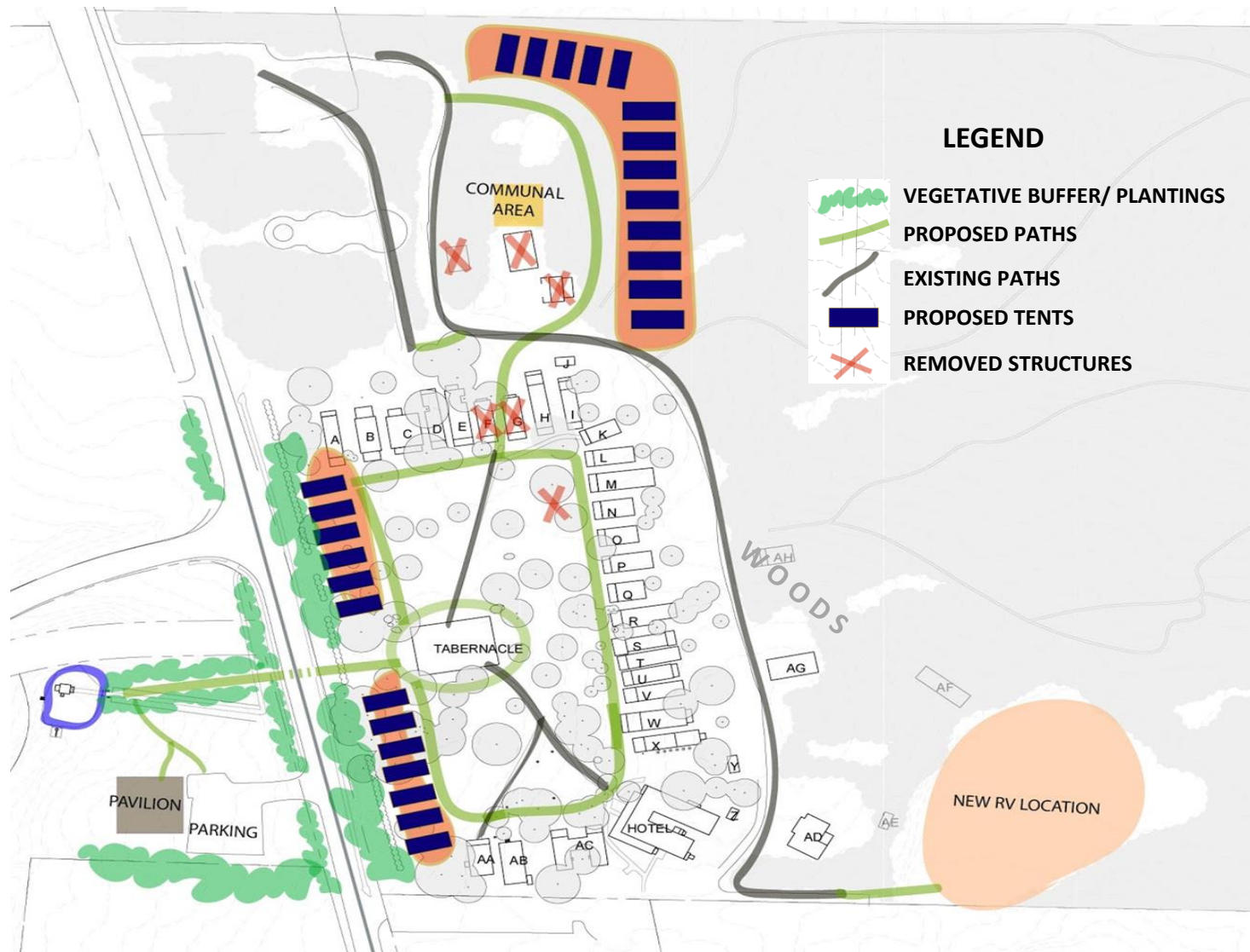
Board feedback included these common responses:

- Better than full build out [Scenario 1A] (16%) [but...]
- Not enough woods preserved (16%)
- Too many tents (22%)
- Want to park by tents (11%)

2: Maintain the Woods

Maintain the woods completely but find non-intrusive locations for additional tents.

- Add 2 rows of tents that are roughly 2,000 sq ft each and 12'-17' tall. Tents will be one-story rectangular tents with a front gable roof. They have entrance on short end of tent and will have front porch. Tents are 10-15 ft apart.
- Add thick foliage for screen behind new tents to block noise and views from road. However, keep view from road to Tabernacle.
- Relocate RV area to softball field and use former RV area for new tents.
- Relocate playground and tents F and G so that a path can lead to new proposed tent area.
- Transform former firehouse into pavilion type area (picnic, gatherings). Remodel to resemble the tabernacle with features such as the open air concept, wood clapboard siding, and rectangular plan with front gable roof.

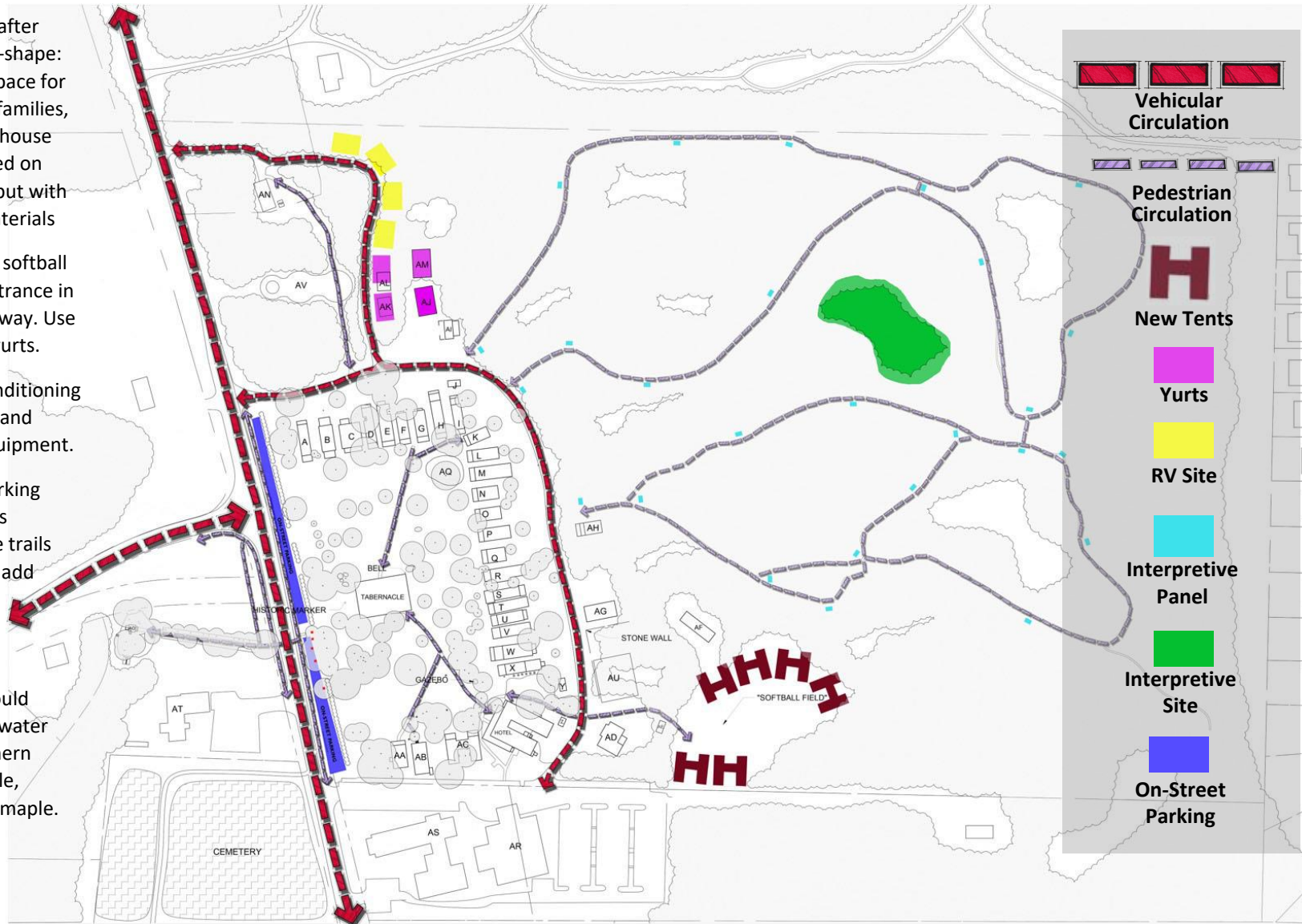


Board feedback included these common responses:

- Don't demolish any tents (33%)
- Like tents along road (28%) vs. No room for tents along road (44%) vs No room for parking at tents along road (44%)
- Dislike tents around RV area (11%)
- Like this plan (22%)
- Like Softball field for RVs (16%)

3: Woods + Tents, Yurts and RVs

- Model future tents after Brown-Ingle tent, H-shape: 2-story tents with space for four, four-member families, 5600sq ft. Add bathhouse near new tents based on current bathhouse but with more traditional materials
- Relocate RV area to softball field; provide RV entrance in northernmost driveway. Use current RV site for yurts.
- Install forced air conditioning system at the hotel and upgrade kitchen equipment.
- Create on-street parking once GDOT bypass is completed. Improve trails through woods and add interpretive panels.
- Remove select damaged trees; future plantings should include a variety of water oak, post oak, southern red oak, crepe myrtle, hickory, and/or red maple.



Board feedback included these common responses:

- Generally good (11%)
- On street parking: Positive (11%) vs Negative (11%)
- "H" tents: Positive (39%) vs Negative (16%)
- Yurts and RVs: Positive (33%) vs Negative (16%)

4: Woods + Tents & Camping Area

- Build new row of tents east of existing road; cluster to match arrangement of original tents, with vehicular alley behind them.
- New bath facility adjacent to new tents.
- Leave woods as is, emphasizing their natural & historic character; trails and open spaces improved.
- Campsite created north of the RV park to be utilized by scouts and other groups.
- Use softball field as grass parking lot.

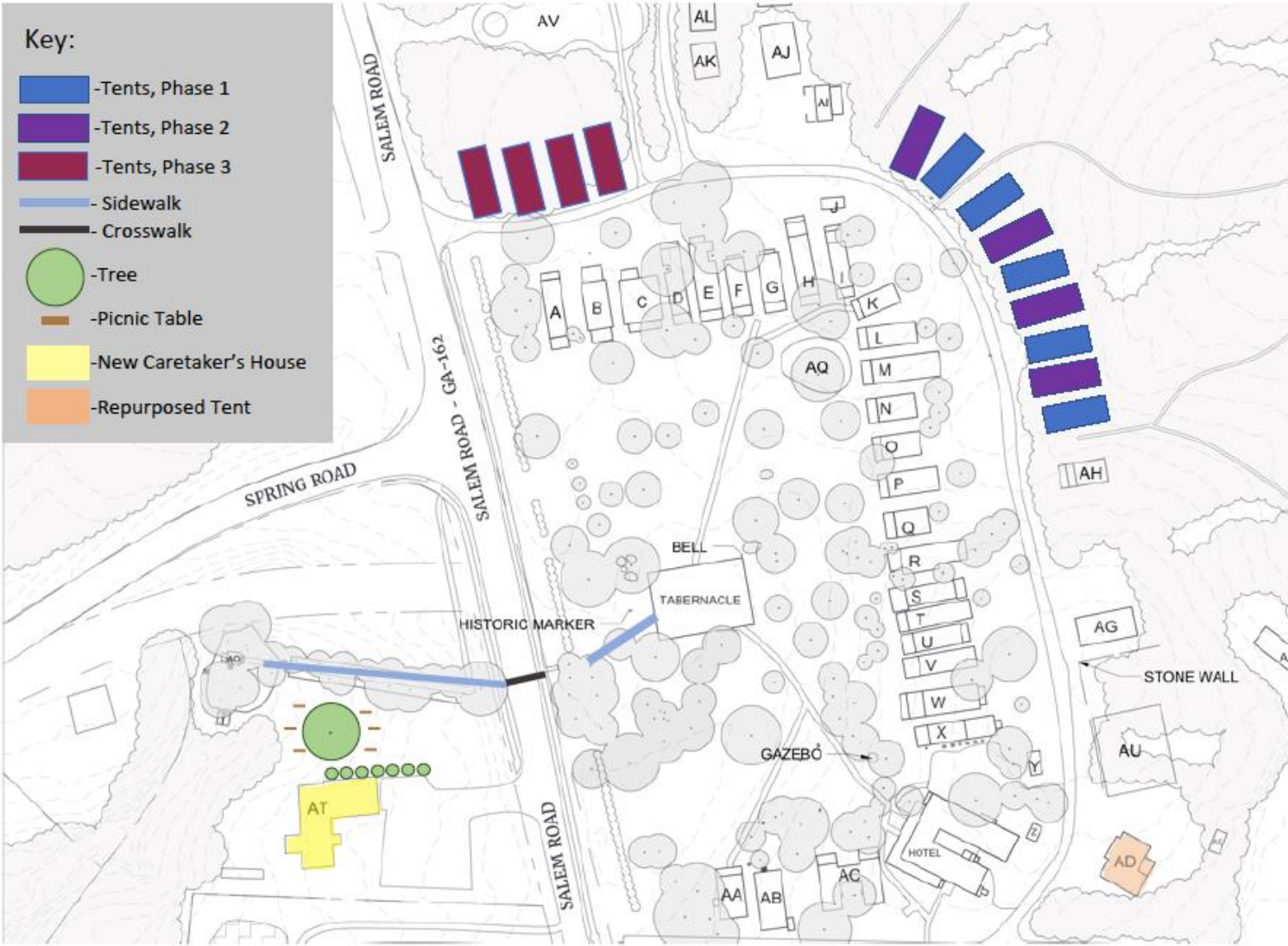


Board feedback included these common responses:

- Overall good design (55%)
- Bath house: Positive (5%) vs Negative (22%)
- Tent locations: Positive (50%) vs negative (0%)
- Liked Trails (5%)
- Liked Softball field for parking (11%)

5: Engage the Spring + More Tents

- Utilize Fire Hall as caretaker's house. The current caretaker's house could then be used as an additional tent.
- Consult DOT about adding a crosswalk connecting the Tabernacle pathway to the spring site. Create a picnic area.
- Add new tents behind the row of 14 existing tents; constructed of similar design and dimension as the existing tents. Two-story tents are permissible provided they do not exceed the height of tent AH and have similar dimensions to historic tents.
- Stagger the construction of new tents on an as-needed basis, rather than constructing all new tents at the same time, they should be added onto every other lot, leaving an open lot between each tent, therefore maximizing the lifespan of the existing vegetation which retains the authenticity of the site.



Board feedback included these common responses:

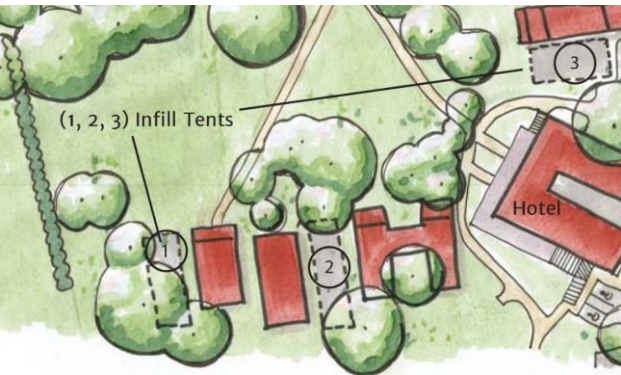
- Fire Hall as caretakers' house: Positive (11%) vs Negative (72%)
- Liked crosswalk to Spring (11%)
- New tent row behind existing: Positive (44%) vs Negative (0%); Need parking behind new tent row (11%)
- Liked Phased Construction (28%)
- Tents on Memorial garden space (Phase 3 on map): Positive (0%) vs Negative (22%)



Salem Camp Ground Master Plan

credit: Frances Arnall, Sarah Hutchinson, Braden Meadows

INFILL TENT SITES

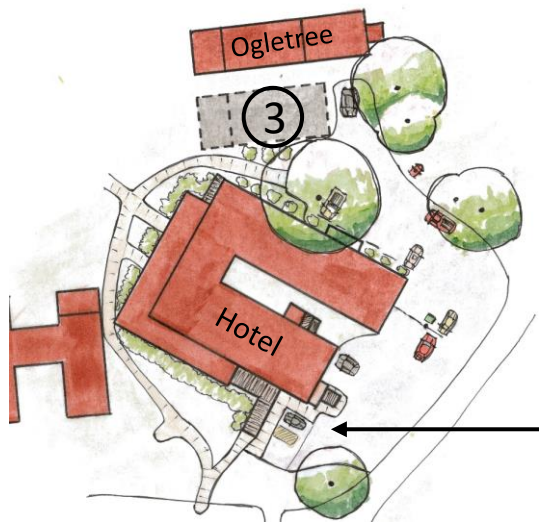


The charrette team identified three potential infill tent sites within the historic inner circle (labeled on the map as 1, 2, and 3). Placing new tents in the vacant spaces between existing structures will help maintain the tight-knit feeling of the campground. Below: the tents shown with red roofs are new infill tents 1 (foreground) & 2. New tents should bear similar features to existing tents: wood siding, muted color palette, a front porch, and about 1400sq.ft. in size.



credit: Brandon Platt





A third infill tent (3) could be located in an enviable spot between the Hotel and the Ogletree tent. Make space for another family to join the inner circle by delineating parking around the hotel rather than allowing cars to park haphazardly.

There is room for 1-2 new handicapped spaces near the kitchen entrance, and a ramp could be added to the porch where only steps currently exist.



credit: Brandon Platt





By mimicking the arrangement of the inner circle, twelve new tent sites have been identified along the back road where only the Ramsey Pavilion and a lone tent exist. A new access road provides parking to the back.

New tents should follow the historic patterns – same front and side setbacks, narrow facades, front porches, pitched roofs – and maintain a variety of mostly one-story tents and a few two-story tents. Tents could be constructed in phased zones (see graphic to right) of families could be allowed to choose any available site location.



credit: Braden Meadows (above) and Frances Arnall (below)





credit: Huttopia White Mountains



SAFARI TENTS AND RV CAMPSITE

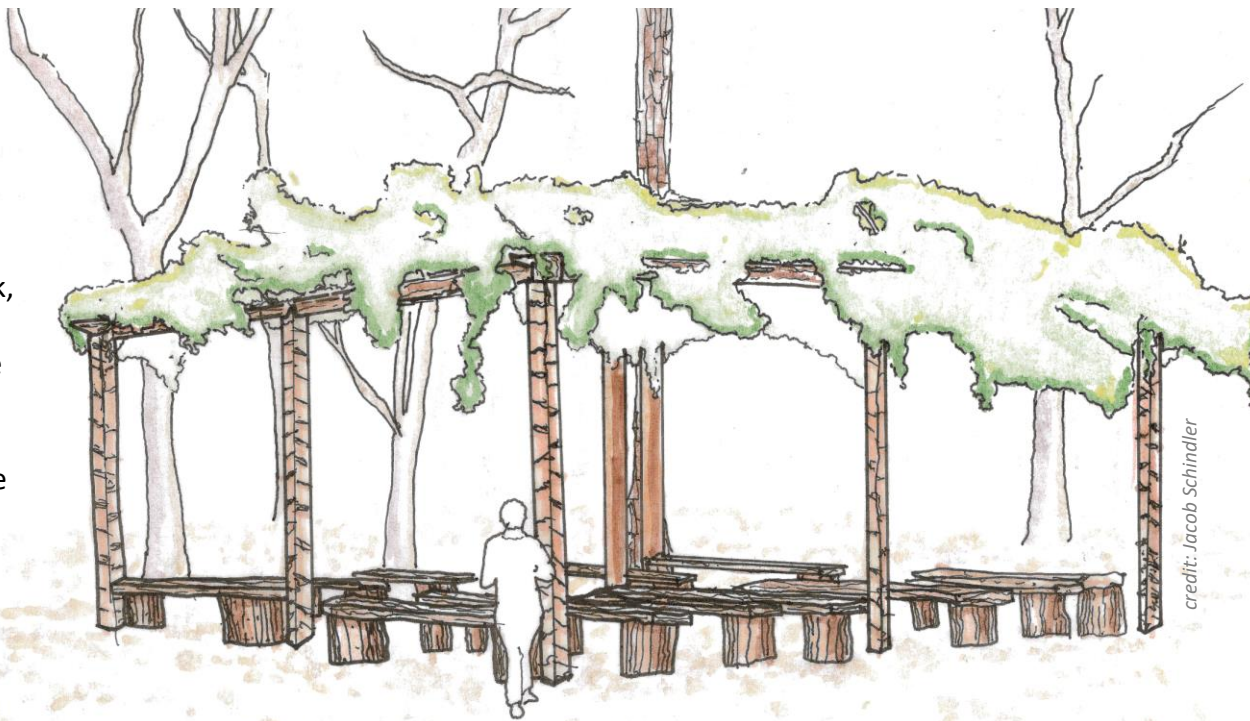
The current RV camping area could be redesigned to make room for more RVs, a larger bathhouse, an outdoor kitchen and safari tents. These semi-permanent platform tents would provide simple yet comfortable shelter for families who want to attend Camp Meeting but are not ready to invest in a built tent. Plus, safari tents present a novel attraction for other groups to rent! Arranging the safari tents as shown creates the same pattern of neighbors as the historic tent row.



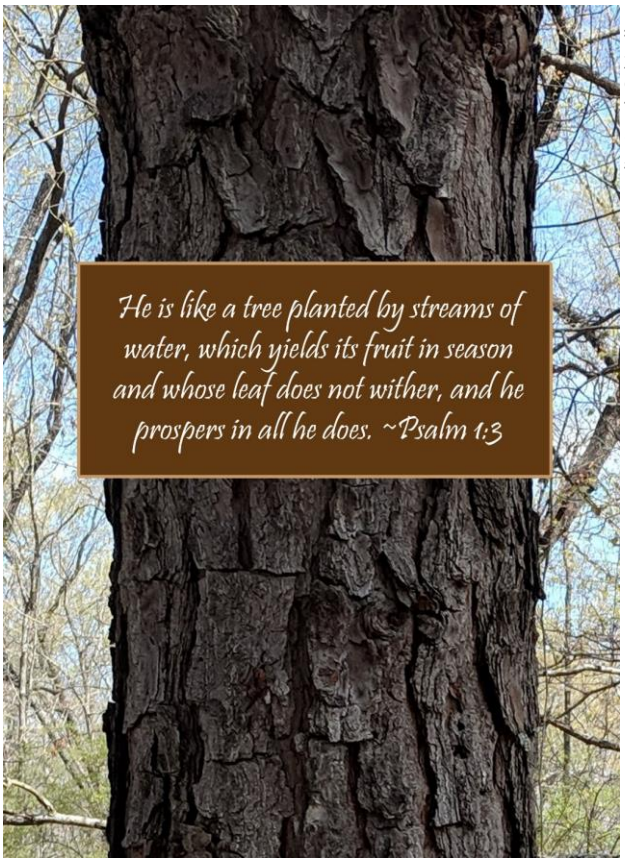
Safari tents can be set up with or without a personal kitchen, but an outdoor kitchen provides a communal gathering space for all campers in this area of the grounds. This would also be useful if a campsite for scouts and other groups was co-located here.

BRUSH ARBOR & TRAILS

The first camp meetings at Salem were held under a brush arbor, harkening back to the Feast of the Tabernacles described in *Leviticus 23: 41-43*. To engage youth, Salem could resurrect this tradition at camp meeting. Throughout the week, young campers would collect brush and limbs to cover a pre-constructed wood arbor (or start one from scratch) as a project. Siting it in the woods away from the main grounds would give kids and teens a place of their own to disconnect from the world and connect with each other and nature.

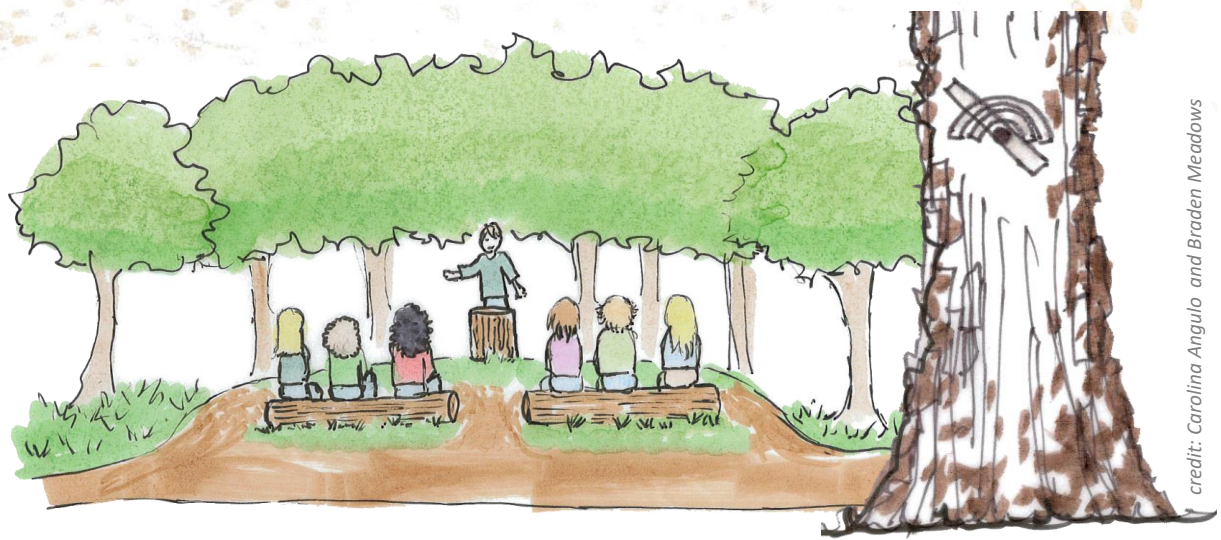


credit: Jacob Schindler



credit: Jacob Schindler

He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither, and he prospers in all he does. ~Psalm 1:3



credit: Carolina Angulo and Braden Meadows

Paths, trees and clearings in the woods could be used for teaching and reflection. Signs that promote disconnecting from digital devices and capitalize on the Methodist ecological tradition of land stewardship tie the importance of the woods to Salem's founding principles.