Rebuilding Belonging in Muncie's First City Park

An Honors Thesis (LA404)

by

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ABSTRACT:

This comprehensive landscape architecture project is a proposed redesign of McCulloch Park in Muncie, Indiana. It is the oldest and largest park in the city. While the park possesses a rich history, it has fallen from its place as a cornerstone of community. In short, this proposal hopes to restore McCulloch Park's significant role in building a sense of belonging in the Whitely and Muncie community by providing more settings and opportunities within the park for recreation, socialization, connection with nature, and the telling and hearing of stories.

The main contents of this report include background and research done to inform the design process and direction; site inventory, analysis and conceptual development; master planning; and more detailed proposals and visualizations for a chosen section of the park that specifically celebrates the contributions, achievements, and stories of the Black community in Muncie.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

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Thank you to my family and friends for always being there when I need to talk, inspiring me to do my best, and reminding me that my value is not only - or even mostly - determined by my work.

Lastly, a special thanks to Muncie. Even though we students make fun of and complain about you, I have experienced incredible struggle and happiness and growth here. You will always be a part of me because of that. Thank you for holding my memories.
(And you have the best sunsets).
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This thesis began with a realization in summer 2017 about my personal mode of being and remembering. I am fascinated by memory—specifically, how it is tied to and influenced by place, and how the resulting relationship with landscape contributes to our sense of identity and belonging. I knew this was a critical part of how I grounded myself in place and community, and figured I wasn’t the only one who feels this. And so, I wondered: how can environmental designers like myself tap into and use that phenomenon to create remembered and valued places? At the time of these early stirrings, I had no idea how this question could turn into a landscape design project and where it should take place. You see, in the practice of landscape architecture, we cannot justify designing projects based only on personal and artistic interests; they have to contain broader significance and purpose. This is the constant challenge I have faced over the last five years of design school, even though it is one I am happy to take on.

This initial curiosity, however, remained with me as I entered the fall semester, when I completed a Research Methods course required by the Landscape Architecture department as the foundation for designing our comprehensive projects. In this class, I researched concepts in environmental psychology and landscape theory such as “place attachment,” “belonging,” and “narrative landscapes.” My advisor Carla Corbin introduced me to the last concept—the idea that landscapes contain and can express a rich and diverse multitude of stories—and it would strongly influence my design approach. This phase was exciting because I had always desired to know more landscape theory, and I loved being able to incorporate theory into this thesis because the process was so much longer than normal studio projects. From this exposure to theories and empirical studies, I began to build a clearer idea of what I wanted to do. In Research Methods, I also looked at related projects and chose and researched a project site—McCulloch Park in Muncie. I thought it would be interesting to work with the idea of landscape as identity and story in a place that’s known as “Middletown,” the most average place in America. Compared to the related projects I found, there is nothing extraordinary about the site and Muncie culturally, geographically, or historically, yet I wanted to focus on creating a sense of belonging for everyday Midwest communities.

Once I chose McCulloch Park as my site and gathered all the information about it that I could, the scope and direction of the project started falling into place and the process accelerated. I selected this site because it is situated among significant features in Muncie (the greenways, the White River, etc.); it is a sort of a bridge between
west and east Muncie; and it holds an interesting history as a very active park crucial to community, especially that of the adjacent Whitely neighborhood. Here was Muncie’s largest and oldest park sitting quite idle, a place I had never even been, when it once hosted all and any sort of community function. From my research, I had come to the conclusion that one of the best ways to make a place a vessel for positive memory and sense of belonging is simply to make it visited! So this became my basic goal: to redesign McCulloch Park with the hope of restoring it to a cornerstone of community, a place where memories and stories are made and held. By the end of the fall semester, I had a 60-page document full of research and other crucial information I would need to begin the design phase.

As one can tell by reading this, the process of arriving to the point where I knew what my intent was and was ready to start the design process took as long as the actual designing of the project. But at the start of the spring semester, I was ready to begin. I made multiple site visits, went to community meetings, interviewed the director of the Whitely Community Council, and made GIS data and maps. These tasks prepared me to conduct site analysis. This is a common and essential phase of design for landscape architects in which conclusions are drawn about various aspects of the site. Opportunities and issues are identified, and a design program and goals are made in response to the analysis. This phase lasted about four weeks.

Next, I developed several design concepts based off of different solutions to the issues and goals identified in analysis, and chose one to refine into a master plan, making sketches, maps, sections, and diagrams along the way. This was a very challenging period for me, perhaps the most challenging, because I was struggling to keep sight of the original ideas and theories guiding this project as more and more “real-world” considerations presented themselves. A large part of overcoming the feeling of being lost was realizing that there were basic things to be addressed in redesigning a park, things that might not be “narrative” or particularly artistic. Yet, I considered how the design of functions such as vegetation and circulation could be used to maximize interaction with nature, give preference to pedestrians, etc. These are simple things known to be beneficial to creating pleasing places, and thus beneficial to getting more people to enjoy the park and form memories there again. I also crossed this hurdle by accepting that some things were simpler than I was willing to think, and by choosing a smaller area of the park in which to focus more intricate design based on my research.
Much of the second half of the semester was spent designing a smaller part of the park in more detail. This is where the concept of narrative landscape really flourished. I was exploring ways to convey the history of the park and Muncie as a whole in a way that would still feel like a vibrant and functioning part of a city park, rather than a memorial. I also needed to decide what history would be told. Through weekly meetings with my mentor, a return to the research done in fall, and lots of sketching, I settled on highlighting moments and aspects of Black history housed in a plaza based on an old factory footprint that was once on site. For several weeks, I continued sketching and meeting with my mentor to refine the concept, from historical content to symbolism to materials to formal design. Although it was challenging, I enjoyed this phase of the project more than master planning because I was able to think more concretely about how to express history and stories, and envision and portray in more depth how people could use and benefit from the design I was proposing. I spent the last couple weeks producing final graphics and writing, and also prepared a verbal presentation and graphic board. What you see here is only the written packet.

This thesis – specifically, the process of designing the focus area – provided me a chance to design with a narrative and symbolic approach to landscape, and yet still left me with many questions: how is meaning imbued in place through deliberate design and over the natural course of time? How can we find that space between meaning that is too obvious and meaning that is too hidden in landscape? Considering the uniquely individual nature of memory and minds, are there really ways to ensure that people experience landscape and narrative according to a designer’s intent? After five years of undergraduate studies, issues such as these have been some of the most captivating. I know that this thesis did not come close to exhausting all the possible solutions, but I am proud of the eight-month-long attempt I made to face these questions. And as I leave Ball State, I know I want to keep exploring them through landscape research and design.
INTRODUCTION
INTRODUCTION:

"As much as a place is rendered real by its geography, environment, demography, social and built structures...and social forms and ways, a place also belongs to time: a period and its happenings, events, memories, and dreams."

- Joseph A. Amato, "Local History: A Way to Place and Home," Why Place Matters

An interest in the value of history, narrative, and memory in forming a sense of belonging is what sparked this comprehensive project. Throughout the research and design process, I have realized that layers of memories, events, and lives accrue over time and, although often not clearly perceptible, contribute richly to a present sense of place. The way to support the building of these layers involves not only reference of the past but, even more so, the creation of active and valued places in present-day communities.

These “big ideas” inspired the proposed renovation of McCulloch Park in Muncie, Indiana. It is the oldest and largest park in Muncie – businessman George F. McCulloch donated the land to the city in 1901, and today it is over 91 acres. Its history is tied strongly to the development of the city during the Gas Boom, and its location along the White River and in the Whitely neighborhood – a historically African-American community – heighten its significance to present-day residents of Muncie. The site was once a cornerstone of community activity: Monkey and bear viewings, community talent shows, car washing days, and many more events occurred frequently, peaking in the 1950s and 60s (Star Press Newspaper Reference Files). However, as the park’s events and amenities dwindled, so too did the use, value, and perception of McCulloch Park (“The City of Muncie’s...”). Although its condition is much improved today, McCulloch Park is still underused, and has great potential to better meet the present-day community’s needs and desires.

At the master planning level, this proposal resolves basic issues in the park surrounding circulation and access, zones, built features, and activities and programming. Two major circulation systems are proposed: one for active recreation, and one for more intimate encounters with the natural environment and art. The bulk of detailed design, however, is devoted to envisioning a new life for the north end of McCulloch Park. This is the most barren area in terms of vegetation, programming, and activity, and yet is a crucial point of access for the Whitely community. It is in this area that the role of history and narrative expression in landscape design is most pointedly explored and used to celebrate the park and Muncie’s black community, as well to support space for the building of belonging for present-day users.
BACKGROUND / RESEARCH:

Introduction

This body of research conducted in Fall 2017 had three primary aims. The first, addressed in two sections, was to build groundwork of theory and principles about sense of place and place identity – mainly, history, story, and the phenomenon of place attachment. The third section involved an initial survey and analysis of significant context and history regarding McCulloch Park and Muncie at large, with the intent that it would be used in the design process of constructing and revealing narratives of place. Together, this research advanced the development of my project proposal by gathering, analyzing, and synthesizing a wide variety of information.

History and Story: Building Landscapes of Identity

This section addressed a) academic foundations for the importance of acknowledging the history and narratives of places, b) the relationship of heritage to place identity, and c) methods of celebrating and expressing stories through landscapes. I entered into this research with a “hunch” that history – of place in general, whether cultural, natural, or personal – plays a significant role in forming people’s sense of identity and belonging to a place and community. From this review, I found it holds merit, and discovered new vocabulary and methods that guided my selection and design expression of various histories and narratives.

In his essay “Local History: A Way to Place and Home,” featured in Why Place Matters, local historian Joseph Amato says that “People of every place and time deserve a history” (McClay 219). He advocates for the importance of studying and celebrating unique local histories as a way to strengthen identity and community in our increasingly globalized world, yet also recognizes that such a history should be grounded in the context of regional characteristics such as dominant ecologies and economies. With this in mind, the specific history of McCulloch Park can grow in significance by relating it to broader regional culture and historical moments. Most notably, I think, Amato believes that “narrative” is the most effective tool for understanding “what a place was, where it stood in the process of becoming, and how it exists in the folds of memory and the unfolding layers of interpretation” (McClay 217). This language conveys the role of time in sense of place: A place and the stories associated with it are not fixed, but always evolving. The question arises, How can a landscape design express various stages of its “becoming?”
Also addressing the concepts of becoming, narrative, and heritage is David Harvey’s essay “Emerging landscapes of heritage” in The Routledge Companion to Landscape Studies. He says that both landscape and heritage are forever in a state of “becoming,” being culturally created, broken down, and recreated. Furthermore, Harvey defines heritage as happening in a “situated contextual and narrative mode of knowing in certain pasts and presents” (Howard 153). In this sense, history is not a series of objective events or items, but something to be experienced and processed to inform the active creation of the present by individuals and communities. Interestingly, Harvey, like Amato, places great value on local heritage because it is often “ordinary,” and is a means for people to be proud of the everyday interactions, memories, and landscapes that define their lives (Howard 156-157). This sentiment is in keeping with Muncie’s identity as “Middletown,” and the various projects continually resulting from this identity that explore and document locals’ lived experiences. In my search for narratives, I not only choose significant, singular events, but also considered the representation of past and fostering of present recurring, ordinary practices and experiences of Muncie’s population, specifically the black community.

The essays discussed above represent only a sliver of the academic body of writing that says heritage is crucial to individual and communal senses of identity; but what empirical evidence has shown this to be true? Stephanie Hawke, working in the International Centre for Cultural and Heritage Studies at Newcastle University, interviewed 27 residents of the North Pennines region to define more precisely how heritage helps form one’s sense of place. The region, like Muncie, is going through social and economic changes as a result of post-industrialism, and people are turning to heritage to ground themselves and retain a sense of pride. Hawke found that three key facets of place identity were influenced by knowledge of heritage: continuity across time, self-esteem, and distinctiveness (Hawke 4). Although Muncie is known as “Middletown” and Harvey supports an “ordinary” heritage, it may also be important to create a feeling of distinctiveness if it is crucial to fostering sense of place. Hawke concludes that “heritage” is expressed in physical form – natural landscapes and the built environment – as well as in human activity – cultural celebrations and personal conversations recalling memories (Hawke 1). This clearly indicates that place, even if its history is richly layered and explicitly expressed, is not fully alive to people until it becomes the stage for meaningful, everyday interactions and a reliquary for personal and shared memories of such experiences. Thus, it was crucial in my design proposal to
not only reference natural and cultural history, but to create spaces to encourage such meaningful human interaction.

Finally, Potteiger's and Purinton's Landscape Narratives takes the concept of landscape as story and storyteller, and provides an extensive discussion of design methods for expressing narrative in the landscape, complete with a sizable repository of project examples. The authors ground their writing in a similar theory to Amato’s and Harvey’s by stating that “Narrative is a very fundamental way people shape and make sense of experience and landscapes. Stories link the sense of time, event, experience, memory and other intangibles to the more tangible aspects of place” (Potteiger ix), yet they make the much needed leap into exploring how such narratives can be actualized in the landscape in implicit yet coherent ways. The authors readily recognize the complexity of narratives ‘as they stand’ in landscapes, and so devote chapters to methods for expressing and interpreting narrative: Naming, Sequencing, Revealing and Concealing, Gathering, and Opening. These methods are based off of traditional garden design, theories such as postmodernism, studies of how communities make their own landscape narratives, and more. The methods most utilized in the design outcome were Sequencing, Gathering, and Opening.

This section of research confirmed that the cultural, the natural, and the personal landscape all play into conceptions of place and identity. In the design, I chose to emphasize cultural landscape the most, also creating opportunities to engage with it personally. The most valuable discovery, however, was the understanding of narrative: Through telling a “story” it was possible to comprehend and convey the multifaceted history of McCulloch Park and the surrounding community so as to strengthen sense of belonging and communal identity.

**Key Dimensions of Place Attachment**

In the field of environmental psychology, the concept of “place attachment” is considered to have a major influence on sense of place and place identity. In Setha Altman and Irwin Low’s introduction to a seminal series of essays titled Place Attachment, they recognize that the concept is “varied and complex... (and) contributes to individual, group, and cultural self-definition” (Altman 4). Despite its multiple dimensions and interdisciplinary nature, “affect, emotion and feeling are central to the concept” (Altman 4), and it has earned noticeable attention from
environmental designers, although there is still much uncertainty around the degree to which designers can “control” or “manipulate” a response as personal and complex as place attachment. Through my readings, I discerned three dimensions of, or influences on, place attachment which were particularly helpful to consider during the design process: Archetypes and symbols; memory; and activity in and shaping of landscape.

:: Archetypes and Symbols
The idea of “archetypal” landscape configurations and activities is appealing to those who think in evolutionary terms: It is believed humans have landscape preferences that come from our biological and evolutionary history. Jay Appleton’s concept of “prospect and refuge” explains why people across many cultures tend to feel most comfortable in and attached to savannah-like landscapes; Paul Shepard believes our geometric preferences come from the relationship of horizon to tree; Bachelard proposes that the pairs of “cellar and attic” and “inside and outside” have guided “human place-making” for thousands of years; and so on (Altman 14).

In a study titled “Place Attachment and Memory: Landscapes of Belonging as Experienced Post-migration,” first-generation migrants to Europe felt comfort in experiencing similar landscapes to those of their native country (Rishbeth 168). Even though a view from a hilltop was not exactly the same in England as in Jamaica, for example, the migrants still found this “archetypal” landscape familiar and supportive of developing place attachment in a foreign place.

Another term for this type of phenomenon might be “landscape symbols,” which, according to Landscape Architecture professor Robert Riley, are not attributes of a particular place, but “generalizable qualities or conditions” (Altman 17) of a regional landscape. These repeated symbols become something on which to hang a sense of identity and form a picture of place. Regardless of uncertainty about evolutionary psychology’s credibility in explaining “archetypes,” these are landscape preferences to keep in mind nonetheless. And what are Muncie’s landscape symbols? The White River, the industrial remains seen in material and form, the gently sloping topography – the design proposal drew on all of these symbols as well of those more specific to the black community’s history.
A second dimension of place attachment – and one very difficult to control or generalize – is the phenomenon of memory. Riley, in the midst of his musings on place attachment, admits, “Whether attachment to the landscape is based upon biology, culture, or individual experience, it is memory that makes it more than a simple stimulus-response phenomenon” (Altman 19). Whatever the physical attributes of a place, it is one’s memories of experiences in the place that primarily determine what it means to a person. While it is disheartening for designers to realize they do not possess perfect power over individual reactions to landscape, we can still work to provide places for positive experiences.

In another essay in Place Attachment, landscape architect Clare Cooper-Marcus discusses the special role of childhood memories in shaping identity (Altman 89). By reviving the life and activity in McCulloch Park, its past was recalled for older generations, and it became once again a place to form positive memories for today’s youth. To reference again the study done on migrants, memory was also at play in reestablishing the migrants’ sense of belonging, and the author concluded that “Memory appears to have a role in supporting an ongoing recognition and working out of how one might belong” (Rishbeth 175). And, memory of place has a collective quality about it: Riley says, “The common landscape is a source of shared meaning and emotion, whether liked or disliked, whether tasteful or ugly, because it is shared experience” (Altman 27).

To summarize, memory is essentially the product (and an influencer) of “experience,” and is more influential than actual landscape on place attachment. Designers like myself can’t control this complex process, but they can design spaces that will be used for social and landscape encounter: if a place is not used, it cannot form or house memories, and will therefore not encourage place attachment. Compared to the past, McCulloch Park is much less active today: by restoring its historic role as a cornerstone of community activity, shared experiences and memories can once again start to build upon the site and encourage storytelling, “story making,” and a renewed attachment to the place.
Lastly, activity in the landscape and autonomy in shaping it are closely tied to the concepts of both archetypes and memory, and often play a key role in forming place attachment. In Place Attachment, Cooper-Marcus and Riley both mention this point. Riley explains that individuals historically had a much larger role in shaping landscape (through farming, logging, etc.); in modern society, however, much of this shaping is done for us, which has certainly altered, if not weakened, our attachment to a particular place (Altman 29). However, community members in the site area have a history of engaging with landscape, at least in some small way, by fishing, gardening, fixing each other’s houses, etc., and the park redesign celebrates and encourage such engagement. Cooper-Marcus, in discussing home and childhood environments, states that, “Control over some portion of the environment is a critical component of self-identity” (Altman 88). In Why Place Matters, Ted McAllister brings a civic-minded perspective to the issue of autonomy, arguing that “democratic” activity in community is key to supporting local place attachment and in making distinct places of pride and ownership (McClay 199). In choosing which aspects of history and communal memory to celebrate in the park redesign, I considered how to creatively make this a flexible representation, responsive to the desires of the community and to ongoing events and experiences.

Middletown History and Culture: Significant Findings

This section of research encompassed a fairly broad survey of natural and cultural history, events, present conditions, etc. relating to McCulloch Park and the city and community of Muncie that I considered important for contextualizing the site. Not all of this history was expressed explicitly through design, but this background initiated the process of “layering” diverse sets of information from across different times in an attempt to understand a place. Read on for a loose narrative of McCulloch Park and Muncie.

According to Dwight Hoover, author of Magic Middletown, Muncie’s history is split primarily into two eras, that of “pre- and post-Gas Boom” (Hoover 1). This first era begins with the Lenape – or Delaware – tribe. They were pushed from their origins in Delaware along various rivers, and reached the White River in present-day Delaware County around the end of the 18th century. The Lenape were not allowed to stay for long, however. The 1818 Treaty of St. Mary’s determined that the tribe would continue west of the Mississippi (Spurgeon 14); and the 600-plus acre Hackley Reserve, which had
been owned by a descendant of the tribe, was soon bought by tradesman Goldsmith Gilbert (Spurgeon 17) and eventually developed into the early town of Muncie (Hoover 1). Unfortunately, few specific details are known about the Lenape’s settlements along the White River, but their memory remains in the names given to this city and county. Flash-forward to 1876, when coal miners working near Muncie discovered a 2,500-square mile natural gas field (Hiller 83). Muncie had been a primarily agricultural society (Spurgeon 17), but one with some small factories starting to take root and its first railroad completed in 1852 (Hoover 1-2). The Gas Boom, however, is rightly credited with transforming Muncie into a flourishing center of industrial production for the better half of the 20th century.

Two of the many factories being built in Muncie at the end of the 19th century, the Whitely Malleable Castings Co. and the Whitely Reaper Works, were located just outside and inside of the present western boundary of McCulloch Park, respectively. Additional land to the east was purchased by William Whitely for factory worker housing, and was developed into what is now the Whitely neighborhood of Muncie. By 1893, both factories were in operation; tragically, in 1894 the Whitely Reaper Plant burned to the ground and was not rebuilt (Hurley Goodall Collection). Now, George McCulloch was a prominent business and civic figure in Muncie at the time. In 1901, McCulloch "informed the Common Council of the City of Muncie by letter that he would make a gift of the grounds known as McCulloch Park to the City of Muncie, the only condition to said gift being that the City of Muncie hold the real estate in trust as a public park for the free use of all inhabitants of the city" ("The City of Muncie’s..." 25). The initial donation included 83 acres and spurred the establishment of the Park Board of Muncie, who called him "The Father of Our Parks." He is memorialized in a 1917 statue located on the southern entrance to the park ("Person Record...").

As Muncie’s first and largest public park, McCulloch Park was historically a bustling and crucial gathering space for the greater community, housing a great variety of amenities. Until around the late 1950s or early 1960s, the park was home to monkeys, a couple of bears, peacocks, burros, and other animals. Additionally, the park hosted large events and clubs such as community "amateur" talent shows, fireworks displays, baseball leagues, and soapbox derbies. Providing access to the White River, certain activities such as fishing and even car washing were tied into the life of the park. McCulloch Park once included a number of beautiful structures, mainly
the old shelter house and baseball grandstand (Star Press Newspaper Reference Files). Muncie residents from several neighborhoods recall their memories in McCulloch Park with fondness, emphasizing implicitly its importance to their communities (Johnson). Over time, however, as structures and activities were lost and as the property was given less attention, McCulloch Park lost its standing as a pillar of community life. Playgrounds, baseball fields, disc golf, and other sports amenities encourage use, but McCulloch Park is still working to undo perceptions of danger and violence and to renew its positive historical image ("The City of Muncie's..." 26). It was clear that a major goal of my project should be to use knowledge of the park's history to imagine its future and guide the "resolution" of present problems, so that McCulloch Park could regain its function as a central community space to the Whitely neighborhood and the city of Muncie at large.

As mentioned above, the history of the Whitely neighborhood and of Muncie's African American community in general is significantly tied to McCulloch Park. To start, McCulloch Park was historically segregated. Whites used the south half of the park, and blacks used the north half ("The City of Muncie's..." 26). After the Reaper Works plant burned down, the Whitely neighborhood became less "useful" and attractive to whites, progressively segregating until eventually its population was 99% African American in 1996 (Hurley Goodall Collection). In the early 1900s, in addition to churches, shops, and Campbell's Auditorium along what was then Broadway Avenue, McCulloch Park served as a central gathering place for Whitely's black community (Goodall 11), and, one might argue, even as a sort of "battleground" or "landmark" for issues and events concerning them. In 1922, the KKK took over and blocked access to McCulloch Park (Goodall 17). In 1924, there was to be a black YMCA just inside McCulloch Park, but this plan was soon given up for a "park expansion and improvement" program (Goodall 20). Reverend J.E. Johnson of the famous 1930 Marion lynching event apparently lived in McCulloch Park for a time (Goodall 27). When a young black man was accused of assault in the 1940s, armed black community members stationed in McCulloch Park to defend him from an angry mob (Goodall 31). And in the mid-1950s, Fire Station #6, located on the north side of the park, hired its first black firefighters (Goodall 41). More of black community history is addressed in the design proposal, but this initial research led me to choose to focus on their place in the greater narrative of McCulloch Park and Muncie in the design outcome.
I touched briefly on the natural history and context of McCulloch Park in this research. Muncie is in the Central Till Plain, an area made relatively flat and rich in topsoil by ancient glacial activity. Once densely forested, the original species composition would have primarily involved beech, maple, oak, ash, and or elm trees ("The City of Muncie's..." 15-17). "Muncie's geology originates from the Middle Paleozoic Era" ("The City of Muncie's..." 19) and mainly includes sedimentary rocks such as limestone and shale. As mentioned earlier, the area was also home to a sizable reserved of natural gas. McCulloch Park drains into the Muncie Creek-White River watershed ("The City of Muncie's..." 21), yet this process is not aided by design: stories of routine flooding along the southern edge of the park abound. Furthermore, the White River's history is tied to the park: The flood of 1913 was the biggest ever in Muncie, and made McCulloch Park "resemble a big lake" (Hurley Goodall Collection). Although McCulloch Park is a beautiful example of early 20th century savannah park design, the design proposal chose to devote some areas to more intensive plantings to aid with stormwater management and recall the marshier past of the riverfront area. Explicit narratives of natural history did not become a focus of the design outcome, although cast sculptures of giant trees – recalling old growth forest - were proposed to replace the entry statue of George McCulloch.

After surveying and analyzing the history of McCulloch Park and greater Muncie, I affirmed that an overarching goal of the project was to portray the narrative of the broader context within the site. Industrialization brought prosperity to Muncie and caused the founding of the Whitely neighborhood and McCulloch Park, but its gradual disappearance and other forces contributed to present-day issues such as environmental degradation (although much improved), unemployment, and social inequality. With this knowledge of Muncie's history, I explored how the past can be a medium to address the needs of and celebrate today's communities.
PROBLEM + PROGRAM
SIGNIFICANCE:

This research and project proposal explores the significance of memory, cultural heritage, and other phenomena in forming place attachment and community identity. In other terms, it investigates the relationship and overlap of “sense of time” and “sense of place,” and their mutual role in building “belonging.” Research on the history and community of Muncie, and exploration of design methods for expressing time, history, and memory through landscape, have together informed the redesign of the underused and undervalued McCulloch Park in Muncie, Indiana. The outcome of this evidence-based design is a reinvigorated public park that represents and interprets community narratives; provides for environmental, social, physical, and other needs; and fosters individual and collective belonging and pride in place.

In globalized Western society, belonging and community is increasingly sought out in virtual realms, and the boundaries and uniqueness of physical spaces seem to be constantly losing importance (McClay). Virtual groups tend to form around political, racial, or other ideological and demographic similarities: In the physical world, however, the ability to choose such characteristics of a community fades, and diversity must be confronted. What is it that unites individuals in a place? At the very least, it is the fact that they are cohabiting, experiencing, and forming memories in that place. This project claims that place matters for the building of a healthy sense of belonging, identity, and community. These senses, as well as feelings of “place attachment” and “sense of place,” are widely agreed upon by psychologists, sociologists, and designers to be enormously important for sustaining personal, societal, and even environmental health.

McCulloch Park is Muncie’s oldest and largest city park. The 91-acre park was once central to community life in Muncie; although it still offers a multitude of recreational opportunities, McCulloch Park is underused and undervalued (“The City of Muncie’s…”). However, the park is strategically located along the White River and White River Greenway, and is a part of the Whitely neighborhood, which has the most active neighborhood association in the city: McCulloch Park is in the perfect position to meet the needs of and celebrate community. Rather than focus on a place with an exceptionally unique cultural or natural history, I chose Muncie, famously known as “Middletown,” to explore how forces of history, storytelling, social and landscape interaction, and more can strengthen sense of belonging and community identity in an “average” American city.
GOALS + OBJECTIVES:

STORY + IDENTITY:
interpret aspects of site/city/regional natural and cultural history;
+ encourage formation and expression of personal memory/experience.
- artistically convey history - through sculpture, material, forms, etc.
- focus particularly on underrepresented narrative of black community
- tie into and complement existing cultural assets of the city

COMMUNITY + HEALTH:
restore the park's role as a cornerstone of recreational + social activity in the city of Muncie.
- provide rec/social outlets for all ages; design for intergenerational use
- create space for solo, small group, and large event activities
- prioritize + improve pedestrian circulation on-site, + connect it clearly to the surrounding context.

ECOLOGY + ENGAGEMENT:
improve the park's ecological value + increase opportunities for human interaction with nature.
- increase ecological function - stormwater mngmt., native habitat, etc.
- in programming, emphasize the existing sense of topo + veg zones
- encourage engagement with landscape - through play, art, trails, etc.

PROBLEM ---------------------PROPOSAL

MCCULLOCH PARK is the largest + oldest in Muncie - yet it is under-used, under-valued, + under-programmed.

WHITELY / EAST MUNCIE: In need of safe + quality open space for recreation + socialization.

MUNCIE AS A WHOLE: In need of a central "City Park" that expresses and celebrates culture, history + ecology.

REBUILD the Cultural, Social, Ecological + Recreational vitality + significance of McCulloch Park

THROUGH the lens of -
. human experience of nature
. community narratives

IN ORDER TO deepen sense of belonging + make McCulloch a true "City Park" for Muncie.

MAGGIE WEIGHNER // 25
ROSS'S LANDING Chattanooga, Tennessee

Ross's Landing, completed in 1992 and designed primarily by EDAW and James Wines of SITE, chronologically structures the history of Chattanooga on one downtown plaza. The designers used a "natural" element - an artificial stream - to guide visitors through the varied cultural history of the region. Colored strips of pavement divide over 400 years of history into thirty-five sections (Potteiger). SITE says of the project, "The combined public spaces and gardens are treated as a microcosm of the region, including its urban grid, mountainous terrain and riverbank configuration...(the sections) evolve chronologically from the city to the organic undulations of the waterfront" ("Ross's Landing..."). As one walks back into time, toward the river, the increasingly organic geometry helps raise awareness in one's senses of change. The success of the plaza seems to lie in the fact that it is still enjoyable and purposeful if one does not follow step by step its narrative: the "story" is laid out for anyone to discover, yet it shapes the space rather than consumes it. In fact, the more one engages with the site elements, the more one comes to find out the history of Chattanooga. This interactive and form-based method of historical expression is much more conducive to producing meaningful and rich space than using only signs and plaques.
VILLAGE OF YORKVILLE PARK  Toronto, Ontario

Designed by Schwartz Smith Meyer Landscape Architects, Inc., this urban park expertly uses its context to inform the compression of northern Ontario’s natural landscape into a one-acre site. The park ignores “natural order” and places plant species from totally different ecosystems and climates on the same grid, a grid that is representative of the Victorian Era hobby of making “collection boxes” of themed objects (Potteiger). This style of organization references Yorkville’s cultural history, and even goes a step farther by basing the grid on the footprint of the Victorian houses that occupied the site before the construction of the subway that runs underneath (“Village of Yorkville...”). The largest “souvenir” in the park is not a plant, however, but a 700-ton piece of bedrock that was deconstructed, transported, and reassembled on site. This rock is a social center of the site, with “a wonderful tactile surface for sitting, and absorbs warmth on cool days...(also), moveable tables and chairs...offer a nice contrast of permanence and flexibility” (“Village of Yorkville...”). Not only does it express natural and cultural history by carefully crafting layers of symbols, but it uses these very symbols to create opportunities for personal reflection and social interaction, for the creation of meaningful memories tied to the identity of self, site, Toronto, and Canada as a whole.
FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT MEMORIAL  Washington, D.C.

This memorial was designed by Lawrence Halprin and completed in 1997. It honors FDR’s presidency by creating a sequential narrative – four main “rooms” represent each of the 32nd president’s terms. On the stone walls of these rooms are selected quotes from FDR (Potteiger). What really brings the memorial to life, however, are the numerous cast sculptures and engravings that visualize scenes from FDR’s life and issues of the era he worked in. The memorial is successful in part because it offers different scales at which to engage with history. Kids love to join the breadline sculpture, whereas teens and adults may go farther by reading the quotes and engravings. Halprin achieved unity between the rooms in material choice and vegetative planting, and yet differentiated between them and created an interesting path by playing with scale and alignment (Potteiger).
SITE BACKGROUND + INVENTORY:

location/setting

Delaware County, IN

Muncie City Limits

McCulloch Park is located in and heavily serves the Whitely Neighborhood.

McCulloch Park (site limits)
Bound by White River (S)
Dr. MLK Jr. Blvd. (E)
Centennial Ave. (N)
and railtracks (W)
Community Centers:
A - Friends of The Conley
B - Roy Buley Center
C - Public Library
D - Huffer Center
E - Motivate Our Minds
F - MOM garden
G - Career Center

Parks/Open Spaces:
1 - Minnetrista Nature Center
2 - Minnetrista lawn/stage
3 - Oakhurst Gardens
4 - Tuhey Park/pool
5 - Canan Commons/stage
6 - Hughes Nature Preserve
7 - John Craddock Wetlands
8 - Philips Outdoor Center

--- The park can meet a wide range of recreational/social needs; tie into the arts + culture trail; and act as a link in the growing chain of "natural" riverfront parks.
The purpose of these very loose and incomplete timelines is not to document every significant event, but rather to convey a basic sense of eras in order to ground the site in its "time-context".


Flood of 1913 -- > affected park

Prime social time -- > animals!

Old shelter house -- > torn down + replaced w/lodge
EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS:

- Out of business
- Community/church
- Business
- Residential

- East central
- Recycling
- Garbage trash
- Lift station
- Fire station
- Orchard
- Shelter
- Kirk
- Hines
- Butler
- Highland (bus)
- Russey
- Park
- Lowell (bus)
- Manor
- Hazel

- Baseball field
- Playgrounds
- B-ball

- White River
- W River Greenway

fig. 3.1
TOPOGRAPHY -
The site is one of the hillier places in Muncie. The high point is near the middle of the park, south of Highland; it is a popular sledding place, and has an old derby track still built into it (figure 3.8). Much of the south and west border of the park is flat and in a floodplain (figure 3.13).

VEGETATION -
Many beautiful old specimen trees live on the site (figure 3.5), though the condition of some is questionable. Also present are younger and scrubbier trees, a large rain garden (figure 3.6), and a brand new orchard. Invasive scrub lines the banks of Muncie Creek and the White River.

BORDERS/CONTEXT -
Many businesses along MLK Blvd. are not in operation, and homes are in poor condition. (figs. 3.2).

ACCESS -
The White River Greenway provides easy pedestrian access from the South and West, but there is not a clear crossing point across the road into the park (figures 3.12, 3.14). Pedestrian access from Centennial and MLK (Whitely) proves difficult.

BUILT FEATURES/AMENITIES -
In the north are a firehouse and lift station, both in operation (figures 3.3, 3.4). Most features are in the south, including an old staircase (figure 3.7), playground (figure 3.9), shelter house and animal ring (figure 3.10), and lodge (figure 3.11).
PROGRAMMING + ACTIVITIES:

PAST:
- soap box derby (leagues)
- baseball (leagues)
- fishing
- washing cars in river
- horse/burro rides
- bear and monkey viewing
- shelters/lodge - vacation/celebrations
- safety town
- playground
- picnics
- local talent shows - acrobatics, singing...
- fireworks displays
- family reunions
- neighborhood parties
- basketball
- miniature train rides
- sledding
- concession stands

PRESENT:
- baseball
- fishing
- family gatherings / reunions
- playgrounds
- basketball
- skateboarding (on derby hill)
- sledding
- disc golf
- orchard/rain gardens
- walking/biking (on Greenway)
- [cruising - sex and drugs?]

The purpose of this word diagram is to use past and present conditions of McCulloch Park to inform and inspire possible activities and programming. Much remains the same and will surely continue in the park, but more intentional programming is proposed in addition.
FUTURE: recreational + social activities

ACTIVE // LINEAR
-walking (active + meditative)
-jogging/running
-biking
-rollerblading/skateboarding
-ice skating
-obstacle course

ACTIVE // SMALL SPACE
-exercise stations
-boxing
-yoga/pilates
-building: art, forts, etc.
-fishing
-climbing trees
-"playground" activities

SOCIAL (+ solo) // SMALL SPACE
-camping
-picnicking/eating
-talking/storytelling
-table games, knitting, etc.
-birdwatching
-reading
-fires

ACTIVE // MED-LG. SPACE
Softscape:
-field sports: ball, tag, etc.
-sledding
-playing with dogs
-baseball
-swimming/waterplay

Hardscape:
-basketball
-skateboarding
-court games: jump rope, hopscotch, etc.
-dancing
-swimming/waterplay

SOCIAL // MED-LG. SPACE
-watching:
  sports
  movies
  concerts/performances
  fireworks
-reunions
-block/neighborhood parties
-festivals/fundraisers/markets
ANALYSIS:

**vegetation** (figure 4.1)

- high-value
- medium-value
- low-value
- bankside scrub

**slope/topo** (figure 4.2)

- <5%
- 5-10%
- 10-15%
- 15-20%
- 20-30%
- >30%
- main ridge

CONCLUSIONS

**vegetation:**
- preserve as many high-med-value areas as possible
- get rid of many low-value areas
- remove invasive bank scrub; plant native stabilizers
- plant wet-tolerant species in floodplain

**slope/topo:**
- place programs requiring large area in flat zone
- prioritize smaller-scale/intimate activities in hilly zone, especially high areas
- be mindful of links/transitions between flat and hilly zones
The contrast of flat and "hilly" creates a sense of two main zones in the park; the flat high points provide a great view of the rest of the site and surroundings.
CONCLUSIONS

historical features / amenities:
- revive/convert use of safety town, lodge, animal ring, shelters in better condition
- let go old ball field, derby track, shelters in bad condition
- preserve valued recreational spaces: play, bball, baseball

circulation:
- minimize auto traffic through site: cut it off
- prioritize pedestrian circulation: multiple routes and scales of path to be based on topo, veg, later programming
- improve pedestrian access into site: link paths to this
circulation + amenity-valuing (figure 4.6)

- improve ped. access
- keep auto access
- internal - rough ped. circ.
- remove vs. keep feature
- restrict auto access
CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT
FOCUS 1: town, country, wilderness

THE TAKEAWAY -->
The idea is too restrictive on recreational activity; but the thought of reserving some areas for ecological restoration rather than activity is good.

ECOLOGICAL-BASED
3 basic distinctions for level of use + development...

Town (purple):
- some hardscape/lawn, larger social + recreational activities, vehicular access

Country (yellow):
- paved paths link "town" areas; gardens, trails, cabins, orchards, etc.; free range

Wild (green):
- areas of focus for preservation +/- or restoration, very little human activity and use (limited motion)
FOCUS 2: past + present culture

THE TAKEAWAY -->
The idea of two basic trail systems sticks; except it makes more sense to have it be a recreational and an arts/culture trail. The historical portion will be condensed into a smaller area.

ARTS/HISTORY-BASED
Two Trails...

Historic (red):
- moves through eras...
  - natural history (yellow)
  - industrialization (green)
  - black history (purple)
  - Muncie today (pink)

Interactive Arts (blue):
- moves through natural areas, celebrates present arts culture, offers opportunities for making +/- or engaging with environmental art
FOCUS 3: community cornerstone

THE TAKEAWAY -->
The level of circulation is getting close to what it should be; the matching of activity type to space responds well to information gathered in analysis phase.

ACTIVITY-BASED
social and recreational...

Light Purple:
active + passive happening in small spaces (walking trails, picnic groves, camping, etc.)

Blue:
some hardscape, flexible space (plaza for performance, court games, elderly/adult hangout to watch kids, etc.)

Light Green:
mainly open space for field games, open play (+ swimming pool in north)

Striped Green:
available for large events/celebrations

* emphasis on relationship of use (i.e. adults watch kids)
DESIGN OUTCOME
**legend:**
- recreational bike/ped trail (emergency vehicle access)
- ped. only paved trail
- ped. only unpaved trail
- vehicular roads
- ped. only hardscape area
- woodland groundplantings: perennial bulbs, etc.
- wet-tolerant: sedge meadow/rain garden

**program/features:**
1 - multiuse field: leave as grass for recreational use
2 - south entry sedge meadow: arts trail + playgrounds embedded
3 - woodland play areas surrounding meadow
4 - kids' base environmental camp/classroom (*old safety town*)
5 - gallery and performance space (*old animal ring*)
6 - "retreat" center and lookout tower (*top of hill*)
7 - reunion shelter (*expanded from existing lodge*) + more sports courts
8-9: main arts trail area (*through meadow, up old staircase, into woods*)
10 - natural swimming pool/ice rink + poolhouse/warmhouse
11 - "Foundry" entry plaza + memorial
BEFORE + AFTER:

**Vegetation**

- Light Green
  - expanded wet-tolerant plantings (sedge meadow)
- Aqua
  - forest undergrowth plantings (perennial bulbs, etc.)
- Green
  - trees added + removed; bankside planted with stabilizing natives

**Circulation**

- Copper
  - internal roadways cut-off and minimized
- Blue
  - extensive pedestrian-cycle network added; accessible by emergency vehicles.
Gray
poolhouse + pool added; lodge expanded; overlook added

Orange
recreational and arts trails added

Black
more sports courts added; natural play added; north plaza space added
**PRIMARY REGIONS DIAGRAM:**

**NORTH - social/recreational**
- foundry plaza
  - north entrance
  - black community history
  - "sculpture park"
  - large event space
  + small gathering spaces
- swimming pool / ice rink
  - natural system
  - recalls quarries
  - gathering house/shelter

(focus area)

**LINK - arts + environment**
- environmental art
  - multi-use "staging" areas
  - ped-only focusing on environmental encounters
- programs: kids' camp and adult retreats
  - art +/- learning, meditation, etc.
  - observation tower
  - reuse of safety town bldg.
- events: summer arts festival visiting artists

**SOUTH - social/recreational**
- traditional recreation
  - add more courts
  - leave playgrounds
- natural play
  - sedge meadow
  - woodland
- old growth forest play sculpture
  - bridges the environs and marks beginning of arts trail
  - replaces McCulloch statue
(moved to Bunch Blvd.)

**arts link:**
- circles are "permanent" artworks/art activities
- line is where temporary art can happen
ROLE OF ART:

examples

>> art that is ephemeral, changes over time, educates about the environment
>> "staging" that can be used for other purposes when no occupied with art

staging

bench converted...
campfire...layout + materials >> art

... to art display area
animal ring >> reflective pool display
I chose to focus on redesigning this northern end of the park because it is extremely underutilized and underprogrammed compared to the southern end; it does not relate well to its street corner context; and it does not serve as a pleasurable parkspace for those who live closest to this section of McCulloch Park.
existing conditions

existing aerial view

no clear ped. entry

excessive auto circulation

underused open space

site section

poolhouse

rows of dogwoods

grove of tulip trees

bike trail

entry road

"room" open lawn "room"

10 20 40’
FOUNDRY PLAZA:

The Whitely Reaper Works Factory was built on what would become McCulloch Park; however, almost immediately after completion, it burned down in 1894. One could even argue that McCulloch Park came into existence partly because of the failure of this factory. It seems appropriate, therefore, to draw upon the form and materials associated with this foundry in the design of a plaza in the northern end of the park that serves as a much-needed social gathering spot, form of organizing the under-programmed section of the park, and a place for celebrating community narratives in Muncie, particularly those of the black community.

Because this was the historically segregated end of McCulloch Park; because it is immediately adjacent to the Whitely neighborhood; and because the Whitely Community Council is building a new community center across the northeast corner of the site, Foundry Plaza focuses on the black community’s stories. The plaza not only recognizes past history, but forms space for varied social and solitary activities, and the further bonding and strengthening of community. One can go to a yoga class in the open lawn, eat lunch with a friend in one of the rooms, or play catch beyond the walls in the woods surrounding the plaza.

In addition to the central open space, Foundry Plaza consists of six “rooms,” each addressing a different theme or aspect of the black community’s history in Muncie. The primary element symbolizing each theme is a cast iron sculptural piece. The rooms vary in scale, seating opportunities, vegetation, etc., but each provides a valuable way to connect with the past (via sculpture and text on walls) and be encouraged to talk about and celebrate the present and future (via prompts and the opportunity to add onto the rooms’ walls as time goes by).
Whitely Reaper Works burned in May of 1894 on land that is now McCulloch Park.

Example of cast iron sculpture.

Cast-iron-making process in a foundry.
**GENERAL NOTES:**

* all historical information regarding African American history taken from Lassiter's and Goodall's *The Other Side of Middletown.*

** smaller perspectives are to be understood as vignettes: they do not show all spatial qualities such as seating and planting. The larger perspectives are more complete in this regard.

---

**1 - COMING + STAYING**

This room discusses the lives of some of the first black residents of Muncie, as well as their stories of arriving: where they came from and how they got here. The sculpture is a kinetic piece inspired by a barber pole, framed by narrow honeylocust trees. In 1860, four out of the five black business owners in Muncie were barbers. On the back wall of the room is etched line work of the country's railroad system in the late 1800s - early 1900s. This is how most African Americans arrived to Muncie, whether by passenger train or freight.
2 - CIVIC PIONEERS

In this room, some of Muncie’s first blacks to hold government and civic positions are chronicled in the steel wall. The sculpture highlights the role of African Americans with the Fire Department, which hired a black firefighter in the 1890s, and then did not do so again until Hurley Goodall’s appointment in the 1950s. The form is inspired by a fire truck ladder, and gradually recedes into the natural topography of the site, leading the eye to Firehouse #6 on Dr. MLK Jr. Boulevard (where Goodall was stationed).
3 - RECREATION

This room focuses on the importance of public parks to the black community's social life, including the history of McCulloch Park (once segregated). The sculpture symbolizes the effective desegregation of Tuhey Pool in 1956 by Roy C Buley and three black boys he brought to the pool to swim. Previously, blacks had to swim in abandoned quarries and rivers; this past is also referenced in the design of the adjacent natural swimming pool. One can reflect upon this history of segregation while hearing children play in the pool.
The atomic structure of iron inspires this collection of stools, attached to embedded tracks in the ground and easily moved to create different configurations for different social needs.

The crystalline structure of cast iron magnified is beautiful, and happens in varied ways (fig. 7.19). Panels of frosted glass create a more intimate interior space apart from the seating, and reflect these patterns onto the ground.

4 - LABOR + INDUSTRY

One of the larger rooms, this space is designed for gathering. It celebrates the role of African Americans in Muncie's iconic industrial heritage, including their fight for the right to organize and the specific Malleable Castings Co (located in Whitely and a major employer of blacks). The patterns and sculptures are inspired by properties of the element iron, which was involved in the making of agricultural and industrial cast iron products.

*see next spread for rendering*
This room has the most intimate scale of them all—which is appropriate to the historical content it memorializes. In 1930, two black boys from Marion, Indiana were lynched. A pastor and mortician from Muncie brought them into town to be properly cared for, and the black community came together to protect them against a white mob. The sculpture symbolizes the two boys being laid to rest via coils of frayed rope. The accompanying text on the walls is meant to encourage thought about how one defends one's community against harm and injustice.
In the 1940s and 1950s, city plans were proposed to essentially make planned ghettos out of the Whitely and Industry neighborhoods. Black residents protested heavily and successfully. This room symbolizes that moment by laying a map onto the ground and creating a seating feature by raising the two neighborhoods. On the walls and spurred on by the “table topics” (fig. 7.33), past and present stories are told about and by the residents of these historically black neighborhoods, asking visitors to express what makes a community what it is.
7 - PRESENT-DAY COMMUNITY

At the end of Foundry Plaza is a terminating point that offers a chance for the current surrounding community to express what is valued to them. A sculpture will be made by casting and combining personally meaningful objects, a process inspired by kitbashing (fig. 7.29) and collage sculpture. Over time, this process can be repeated, with the most recent creation taking a stand on the pedestal, the older ones going on display in the picnic grove of Tulip trees immediately behind.
narrative design details

The plaza walls are three feet tall and slanted at a 30 degree angle. They can then be etched with imagery and text (fig. 7.31-7.32) relating to the "theme" of the room, and easily read at this angle. The wall is also a good height for leaning up against.

"Table Topics" - In almost every room are granite 3'x3' tabletops engraved with questions or prompts relating to the "theme" of the room. These are meant to spark conversation, reflection, and storytelling - to make the past relevant to the present.
8 - Central Open Space

The large, open, sunken lawn provides contrast to the smaller scale of the rooms and the surrounding woods. Here, visitors are free from historical themes: it is the perfect space for holding large community gatherings and classes, or just lounging in the sun.
CONCLUSION
Over the course of an entire year, it is easy to lose sight of a project vision, and to believe that the details of what I have proposed have nothing to do with what I was researching eight months ago.

But looking back, I see this isn’t true. I set out with the intention of exploring attachment and landscape, memory and landscape, history and landscape – because these were intersections I found fascinating, both professionally and personally. And what I found was a whole language of “narrative” and “belonging” that drove the design outcome of this proposal for McCulloch Park. I successfully drew on concepts discovered from my research such as sequencing narratives and providing places for people to insert their stories and themselves into landscape. And I learned that if I want to create places people are attached to, have positive memories of, and embed their stories into, I simply need to create places where people want to be.

McCulloch Park used to be this kind of place, full of activity and culture and community. Currently, however, it has no vigor because people simply aren’t there. And now, I hope this proposal puts forth a vision of what it can again become: A place to recreate, connect with nature, make and enjoy art, spend time with others, learn about one’s history and community, and above all, make and tell stories. A place where the crucial feeling of belonging can be slowly rebuilt and valued by the people who come.
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"Person Record: McCulloch, George F." Minnetrista Heritage Collection, edited by Susan Smith, Minnetrista.


DEFINITIONS:

TERMS 1-5:

- Community identity: Refers to a communal pride in shared values and experiences.
- Place attachment: A concept originating in environmental psychology that refers to the emotional bond between person and place, highly influenced by personal experience and memory.
- Place identity: Refers to those aspects of personal or community identity having to do with place (i.e. being from a fishing town, preferring landscapes one grew up in).
- Sense of belonging: The feeling that one “fits” or is “supposed to be” in a particular place and/or community; supports feelings of purpose.
- Sense of place: The feeling that a place has its own distinguishable identity and character.

* Note: Although all of the definitions vary slightly, these concepts are at the heart of the research and goals of this project proposal; terms are paired and interchanged throughout the proposal. The key point is that these “senses” are understood to be environmental and social factors that contribute to positive feelings towards and relationships with place, community, and self.

TERMS 6-10:

- Cultural history: Refers to any human-caused or human-initiated event or process (economies, farming, styles of dancing, etc.).
- Landscape Narrative: A term used extensively by Potteiger and Purinton in Landscape Narratives; in this proposal, it refers to how stories, events, processes, etc. are apparent in or deliberately expressed through landscape.
- Middletown: The name given to Muncie by sociologists Robert and Helen Lynd in the 1920s. The Lynds determined that Muncie was the ideal example of the “average” American town; countless studies of Muncie have followed in the wake and spirit of their original work.
- Natural history: Refers to any naturally occurring event or process (geologic, astronomic, ecological, etc.).
- Temporal: Having to do with time and its passing.

** Note: The seasons, memory, history, etc. are inherently temporal; a landscape symbol, social interaction, etc. is not.
DELIMITATIONS + ASSUMPTIONS:

DELIMITATIONS:

• I will not address the details of economic development or benefits of the park redesign.

• Flood prevention and relationship of the park to the riverfront is a concern of the project, but drainage and grading plans will not be produced in detail for the entire site.

• Although expression of the site’s natural history will likely involve measures of ecological restoration, the project will not focus in excessive detail on topics such as biodiversity and green infrastructure.

• A telling of the “entire” history of McCulloch Park and surrounding communities will not be attempted; rather, crucial eras and/or moments will be chosen for representation.

• Although several neighborhoods surround McCulloch Park and it is used by the whole city, I will only focus on getting to know the Whitely neighborhood’s needs, desires, and goals in depth, as the park is technically in this neighborhood.

ASSUMPTIONS:

• The issue of underuse and negative perceptions toward McCulloch Park can be addressed and alleviated through changes in programming and site design.

• The demographic composition and trends of the surrounding communities will remain unchanged.

• The psychological and sociological components of this project – such as sense of belonging – are assumed to be beneficial to personal, societal, and environmental health of Muncie residents. Research will not focus extensively on proving this.

• The natural and cultural history of a broader area will be assumed to apply to the site.

• The proposed design outcome will be feasible for the City of Muncie and/or eligible for funding through grants.
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2.6: Central Till Ecoregion <epa.gov>
2.7: White Settlers <sycamorelandtrust.org>
2.8: Gas Boom <Ball State Libraries>
2.9: Black Migration + Civil Rights <Ball State Libraries>
2.10: Deindustrialization <google.com>
2.11: Rails to Trails <google.com>
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6.15 : Animal ring conversion

FIGURES 7 .......................................................... Focus Area (54-69)
7.1 : Enlarged plan
7.2-7.5 : Existing conditions
7.6 : Site section
7.7 : Foundry Transformation
7.8 : Foundry Plaza plan enlargement
7.9 : Whitely Reaper Works <Ball State Libraries>
7.10 : Foundry casting process <google.com>
7.11 : Cast iron sculpture <antonygormley.com>
7.12 : Coming + Staying Perspective
7.13 : Barber pole
7.14 : Civic Pioneers Perspective
7.15 : Firetruck ladder
7.16 : Recreation Perspective
7.17 : Tuhey Pool
7.18 : Iron atom <google.com>
7.19 : Iron crystal <google.com>
7.20 : Iron atom moveable seating
7.21 : Iron crystal shadow panels
7.22 : Black union workers <Ball State Libraries>
7.23 : Labor + Industry Perspective
7.24 : Community Uprising Perspective
7.25 : Shaffer Chapel
7.26 : Neighborhoods Perspective
7.27 : Muncie map
7.28 : Present-Day Community Perspective
7.29 : Kitbashing <instagram.com/jameskerestes>
7.30 : Slanted walls detail
7.31-7.32 : Etched steel <pinterest.com>
7.33 : Table topics detail
7.34 : Main Room Perspective