



Date June 25, 2018

RESOLUTION CLOSING HEARING AND APPROVING THE DESIGNATION OF THE WALKER PLAYGROUND SHELTER, CURRENTLY KNOWN AS THE COLUMBUS PARK SHELTER LOCATED AT 1921 INDIANOLA AVENUE AS A LOCAL LANDMARK.

WHEREAS, the City of Des Moines has received an application from Parks and Recreation Director Ben Page, to designate the Walker Playground Shelter, currently known as The Columbus Park Shelter as a local landmark (the "Walker Playground Shelter") located at 1921 Indianola Avenue as a local landmark. The property is legally described as:

-EXCEPT THE EXISTING TENNIS COURT IMPROVEMENTS LYING WITHIN SAID AREA DESCRIBED BELOW-

A 100 FOOT WIDE AREA LYING 50 FEET EITHER SIDE OF A CENTERLINE AND BEING A PART OF LOT 1, HASKINS PLAT, AN OFFICIAL PLAT, AND PART OF LOTS 5 AND 6 OF THE OFFICIAL PLAT OF THE WEST HALF (1/2) OF SECTION 10, TOWNSHIP 78 NORTH, RANGE 24 WEST OF THE 5TH P.M. AND SAID CENTERLINE MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

COMMENCING AT THE INTERSECTION OF THE NORTHEASTERLY RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF INDIANOLA AVENUE AND THE NORTH LINE OF THE SOUTH 100 FEET OF SAID LOT 6; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG SAID NORTHEASTERLY RIGHT OF WAY LINE, A DISTANCE OF 122 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING; THENCE SAID CENTERLINE RUNS NORTHEAST ALONG A STRAIGHT LINE RUNNING BETWEEN SAID POINT OF BEGINNING AND THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF LOT 19, BLOCK 6, SECOND PLAT OF CLIFTON HEIGHTS, AN OFFICIAL PLAT, A DISTANCE OF 120 FEET TO POINT OF TERMINUS, SAID 100 FOOT WIDE AREA EXTENDS SOUTHWESTERLY TO SAID NORTHEASTERY RIGHT OF WAY OF INDIANOLA AVENUE;

ALL NOW INCLUDED IN AND FORMING A PART OF THE CITY OF DES MOINES, POLK COUNTY, IOWA.

and;

WHEREAS, the application contains detailed references to the historical nature of The Walker Playground Shelter in the application; and,



.....
Date June 25, 2018

WHEREAS, on May 8, 2018, upon review of the application, the Landmark Review Board unanimously recommended to the Plan and Zoning Commission that the application be approved; and,

WHEREAS, on May 17, 2018, the Plan and Zoning Commission, by a vote of 11-0, recommended to the Council approval of the application; and

WHEREAS, the Des Moines Municipal Code section 58-60 requires a public hearing be held to consider the application; and,

WHEREAS, The City provided proper notice of a public hearing on this matter for June 25, 2018 at 5:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers; and,

WHEREAS, due notice of the hearing was published in the Des Moines Register on June 15, 2018; and

WHEREAS, the hearing was held pursuant to that notice.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Des Moines, Iowa, as follows:

1. The public hearing on the application is hereby closed.
2. The Walker Playground Shelter meets the requirements of Des Moines Municipal Code section 58-58 to be designated as a local landmark because the house:

Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; and,

Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

3. The City Council accepts the recommendation of the Landmark Review Board and the Plan and Zoning Commission and grants the application of the Des Moines Parks and Recreation Department to have the Walker Playground Shelter designated a local landmark.



Roll Call Number

Agenda Item Number

58A

Date June 25, 2018

4. The City Clerk is directed to file the designation and description of the Walker Playground Shelter with the community development department and record this resolution as the designation and description of Walker Playground Shelter in the office of the county recorder.

Moved by _____ to grant the application for the Designation of the Walker Playground Shelter as a local landmark.

(Council Communication No. 18- 321)

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Handwritten signature of Thomas G. Fisher Jr.

Thomas G. Fisher Jr.
Assistant City Attorney

This roll call (Roll Call A) can be approved without approving the Certificate of Appropriateness (Roll Call B). The Certificate of Appropriateness (Roll Call B) cannot be approved without first approving this roll call.

Table with 5 columns: COUNCIL ACTION, YEAS, NAYS, PASS, ABSENT. Rows include COWNIE, BOESEN, COLEMAN, GATTO, GRAY, MANDELBAUM, WESTERGAARD, and TOTAL.

CERTIFICATE

I, DIANE RAUH, City Clerk of said City hereby certify that at a meeting of the City Council of said City of Des Moines, held on the above date, among other proceedings the above was adopted.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal the day and year first above written.

MOTION CARRIED APPROVED

Mayor

City Clerk



June 5, 2018

Date _____
 Agenda Item SSA
 Roll Call # _____

Honorable Mayor and City Council
 City of Des Moines, Iowa

Members:

Communication from the City Plan and Zoning Commission advising that at their meeting held May 17, 2018, the following action was taken regarding a request from the City of Des Moines to designate the "Walker Playground Shelter" at Columbus Park, 1921 Indianola Avenue as a local Landmark.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

After public hearing, the members voted 11-0 as follows:

Commission Action:	Yes	Nays	Pass	Absent
Francis Boggus				X
Dory Briles	X			
Chris Cutler				X
David Courard-Hauri	X			
Jacqueline Easley	X			
Jann Freed	X			
John "Jack" Hilmes	X			
Lisa Howard	X			
Carolyn Jenison	X			
Greg Jones	X			
William Page	X			
Mike Simonson	X			
Rocky Sposato				X
Steve Wallace	X			
Greg Wattier				X

APPROVAL of the "Columbus Park Shelter" be designated as a local Landmark.
 (20-2018-4.01)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the “Columbus Park Shelter” be designated as a local Landmark.

The Landmark Review Board and the Plan and Zoning Commission recommendations will be forwarded to the City Council for review in accordance with Chapter 58-60 and Chapter 82-40 of the City Code.

STAFF REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. **Case Overview:** Columbus Park is located at the Indianola Avenue and SE 1st Street intersection. The subject building sits along Indianola Avenue in the southwest portion of park. It was built circa 1931 and consists of two masonry “cubes” separated by an open breezeway, spanned by a common hipped roof.

The Parks and Recreation Department is planning improvements at the park including renovation of the shelter. The scope of work for the shelter includes: converting the breezeway to a four seasons assembly space; repairing the roof, fascia and eaves; restoring window openings; and installing an energy efficient climate control system. Much of the original building materials would be exposed within the interior spaces. The project would create a space with a 60-seat capacity that would be available for rent. The estimated project cost is \$450,000. Construction is anticipated to start this summer and finish in the fall.

On May 8, 2018, the Landmark Review Board unanimously approved the recommendation that the “Walker Playground Shelter” be designated a local Landmark. The Board is comprised of the Historic Preservation Commission and the Urban Design Review Board. The Board meets as needed to review nominations and proposed alternations to landmarks not located within a local historic district.

The Board also reviewed the proposed renovations and is recommending that the City Council issue a Certificate of Appropriateness subject to the following conditions:

1. A 6-over-6 divided light window pattern shall be used as illustrated in the original drawings of the building.
2. Windows and doors shall utilize clear, non-reflective glass.
3. The existing soffit material shall be evaluated to determine if it consists of a beadboard design or “V” groove design.

The Landmark Review Board and the Plan and Zoning Commission recommendations will be forwarded to the City Council for review in accordance with Chapter 58-60 and Chapter 82-40 of the City Code. If the site is designated as a Landmark then any

alteration, new construction, or demolition would be subject to review by the Landmark Review Board and require approval by the City Council.

2. **Size of Site:** 62 feet by 36 feet.

3. **Existing Zoning (site):** "C-1" Neighborhood Retail Commercial District.

4. **Adjacent Land Use and Zoning:**

North – "C-1" & "R1-60"; Use is Columbus Park.

South – "PUD"; Use is a vacant commercial property.

East – "C-1"; Use is Columbus Park.

West – "PUD"; Use is a vacant commercial property.

5. **Applicable Recognized Neighborhood(s):** The subject building is located within the McKinley School/Columbus Park Neighborhood and within 250 feet of the Indianola Hills Neighborhood. All recognized neighborhoods were notified of the meeting by mailing of the Final Agenda on May 11, 2018. All agendas are mailed to the primary contact(s) designated by the recognized neighborhood association to the City of Des Moines Neighborhood Development Division. The McKinley School/Columbus Park Neighborhood Association mailings were sent to Jim Post, 224 East Livingston Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50315. The Indianola Hills Neighborhood Association mailings were sent to Jeni Dooley, 712 Virginia Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50315.

6. **PlanDSM Land Use Plan Designation:** The subject site is designated as "Park/Open Space" on the Future Land Use Map.

7. **Applicable Regulations:** Pursuant to Chapter 82-40(a) of the City Code, the Plan and Zoning Commission is an advisory body to the City Council and is a key factor in the growth and development of the city. Therefore, the Commission reviews all local Landmark and Historic District nominations in accordance with the Historic Preservation Ordinance and for compliance with the City's Comprehensive Plan and forwards a recommendation to the City Council.

Section 58-56 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance contains the landmark purpose statement. Section 58-58 contains the criteria for the designation of a landmark and Section 58-60 establishes the nomination process.

II. APPLICABLE SECTIONS OF THE CITY CODE

Section 58-56 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance contains the landmark purpose statement. Section 58-58 contains the criteria for the designation of a landmark and Section 58-60 establishes the nomination process.

Sec. 58-56. Purpose.

It is declared as a matter of public policy that the protection, enhancement, perpetuation and use of improvements of special character or special historical or aesthetic interest or value is a public necessity and is required in the interest of health, prosperity, safety and welfare of the people. The purpose of this article is to:

- (1) Effect and accomplish the protection, enhancement and perpetuation of such improvements which represent or reflect elements of the city's cultural, social, economic, political and architectural history;
- (2) Safeguard the city's historic, aesthetic and cultural heritage, as embodied and reflected in such improvements;
- (3) Stabilize and improve property values;
- (4) Foster civic pride in the beauty and accomplishments of the past;
- (5) Protect and enhance the city's attractions to residents, tourists, and visitors and serve as a support and stimulus to business and industry;
- (6) Strengthen the economy of the city; and
- (7) Promote the use of landmarks for the education, pleasure and welfare of the people of the city.

Sec. 58-58. Designation criteria.

- (a) For purpose of this article, a landmark or landmark site designation may be placed on any site, natural or improved, including any building, improvement or structure located thereon that possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association and that:
 - (1) Is significant in American history, architecture, archaeology and culture;
 - (2) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
 - (3) Is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
 - (4) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
 - (5) Has yielded or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Sec. 58-60. Procedures.

- (a) The historic preservation commission shall consider the nomination of landmarks and landmark sites located within historic districts, and make a report and recommendation on such nomination to the city plan and zoning commission and city council as provided below. The landmark review board shall consider the nomination of landmarks and landmark sites located outside historic districts and make a report and recommendation on such nomination to the city plan and zoning commission and city council as provided below.
- (b) Notice that an application for designation of a landmark or landmark site is being considered shall be given to the owner of the parcel on which the proposed landmark is situated or which is part of the proposed landmark site in accordance with the following:
 - (1) Such notice shall be served by certified mail, addressed to the owner at his or her last known address as such appears in the records of the county treasurer's office, or if there is no name on such records, such notice may be served by regular mail addressed to "owner" at the street address of the property in question.
 - (2) Such owner shall have the right to confer with the historic preservation commission or landmark review board, as applicable, prior to final action by the commission or board on the application.
 - (3) The historic preservation commission or landmark review board, as applicable, may, in addition, hold the public hearing of the proposed designation by giving notice as required by law.
- (c) After such investigation by the historic preservation commission or landmark review board as is deemed necessary, but in no case more than 60 days after the receipt of the complete application, the application for designation shall be recommended for approval or disapproval. Such recommendation shall be in writing and signed by the chair of the historic preservation commission or landmark review board, as applicable, and shall state the reasons for recommending approval or disapproval. The recommendation may limit itself to the proposed landmark or landmark site as described in the application or may include modifications thereof. Such recommendation shall be forwarded to and filed with the plan and zoning commission, within five days after making such recommendation.
- (d) Upon receipt of such recommendation, the plan and zoning commission shall schedule a public hearing at a specific place, date and time, not more than 30 days after such receipt, by giving notice as required by law.
- (e) Within 30 days after the public hearing, the plan and zoning commission shall forward such application to the city council, together with the recommendation of the historic preservation commission or landmark review board. The plan and zoning commission may adopt the recommendation of the historic preservation commission or landmark review board as its own or may prepare a written recommendation of its own. The plan

and zoning commission may limit itself to the proposed landmark or landmark site or may include modifications thereof. If the modification requires an additional public hearing, the plan and zoning commission shall hold such hearing before forwarding the application to the city council.

- (f) Upon receipt of such recommendation, the council shall schedule a public hearing to consider the recommendation at a specific place, date and time, not more than 30 days after such receipt, by giving notice as required by law.
- (g) The city council, after public hearing, may approve, approve with modification, or disapprove the recommendation of the plan and zoning commission by a majority vote of its membership. If the plan and zoning commission shall have failed to act within the time limit set forth in this section, the city council may, nevertheless, approve, approve with modification, or disapprove the proposed landmark or landmark site as originally proposed or modified by a majority vote of its membership.

III. ANALYSIS

1. Landmark Nomination Criteria: A nomination must demonstrate that the subject building or site possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association and meets one or more of the following criterion.

- (1) Is significant in American history, architecture, archaeology and culture;
- (2) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- (3) Is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- (4) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

(5) Has yielded or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history. The nomination suggests the shelter meets Criterion 2 and 4. The following points from the submitted form make the case for how the shelter "is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history."

- The Columbus Park Shelter was the first park shelter constructed by the City of Des Moines Playground Commission (predecessor to the modern day Parks & Recreation Department). As such, it served as a prototype for subsequent park shelters built throughout the City.
- Columbus Park (formerly Walker Playground) was the City of Des Moines' first planned park. Prior to this time the City's playgrounds were informal gathering spaces, lacking in equipment for recreational use. In the case of the Walker Playground, the land was originally used as a lumber yard and was owned by

prominent local citizen Buffon Stewart (B.S.) Walker. For reasons unknown, the lumber yard gradually shrunk in size and by the 1920s the vacated land was already in use as a playground. This predated the City's formal acquisition of the property in 1929. Following the City's acquisition, planning of a formal park began. Original plans show the shelter in its current location; it is the only remaining structure in Columbus Park from this period.

- Columbus Park and the park Shelter have been a gathering place for residents of Des Moines' south side and were instrumental in the development of Des Moines' Italian-American community:
 - The earliest reference in primary sources to the Italian-America community's connection with Walker Playground is found in 1922 when a flagpole was dedicated by members of the Garibaldi Society, Stemma di Italia, Filia de Italia, South Des Moines Improvement League, and Italian Protective Club. On this occasion, forty aliens received citizenship.
 - In 1931, the completed shelter house was dedicated on June 28th during an annual picnic of the Italo-American Columbus club. The event was attended by approximately 5,000 people, including delegates from the Italian Civic league of Omaha, a royal Italian consular, as well as members of all Italian lodges in Des Moines and the surrounding cities.
 - In 1935 at the request Stemma D'Italia and the Des Moines Columbus Club, the Des Moines City Council formally dedicated the park as Columbus Park. The occasion was formally marked on June 28, 1936 when the Columbus Club presented the City with a bronze plaque for the shelter.
 - Columbus Park and the shelter house hosted Italian-American community festivals for over twenty years.

The following points from the nomination make the case for how the shelter “embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.”

- The Columbus Park shelter was one of Des Moines architect, Amos Emery's earliest commissions. Throughout his career, Amos' work and civic contributions had a substantial impact on the City of Des Moines as it exists today.
- In 1913, Amos graduated Des Moines' West High School and began working for the firm of Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson. In 1915 he enrolled in the University of Pennsylvania where he graduated with a B. Arch. in 1922, his studies having been interrupted between 1917 and 1919 by World War I. Following graduation, Amos worked as a draftsman for George R. Post & Sons in New York City until, in 1923, he returned to Des Moines and became a designer and chief draftsman for Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson. While at Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson, Amos designed the Collegiate Gothic Tower at the University of Iowa Hospital, Iowa City.

- In 1927, Amos became a registered architect and went into private practice with partner John Normile. Works from this period include: the Greenwood Park Rose Garden, the rectory at St. Ambrose Cathedral and this park shelter (at the time known as the Walker Playground shelter).
- The design of the Walker Playground shelter comprises two hollow clay tile/brick volumes spanned by a common roof. The interior of the shelter contains a restroom and changing room (one for each gender) plus a recreation room and office for the adjacent wading pool. A central breeze way served as an assembly space and was planned to contain an open hearth fire place, although current conditions suggest this was never constructed, most likely as a cost saving measure. Outwardly the shelter projects a modest, functional appearance, but closer inspection reveals detail that exceeds what would be necessary for the most utilitarian of uses. Examples include: the attention given to brick patterning and layout (the shelter exhibits multiple coursing types, including: stretcher, header, soldier, and rowlock); and the construction of the soffit, which consists of bead board trimmed with cove molding.
- While ultimately responsible for the design, it is uncertain whether Amos remained in Des Moines to see the project through construction. For reasons unknown, the firm of Normile & Emery was dissolved in 1930. Following the dissolution, Amos spent most of the 1930s in Washington, D.C. During the Great Depression, he was a staff architect for both the U.S. Biological Service and National Park Service. Many of the structures he designed would ultimately be built by Civilian Conservation Corps.
- Amos returned to Des Moines in 1937. It was between 1937 and his death in 1973 that most his contributions to the fabric of modern Des Moines were made. Notable projects include: additions to Register and Tribune Tower; the First Unitarian Church of Des Moines; and the Neil Smith Federal Building.
- In addition to his works around Des Moines, Amos was a member of the Iowa Capitol Planning Commission and served three terms as the president of the American Institute of Architects, Iowa Chapter.

2. **PlanDSM Creating Our Tomorrow:** The PlanDSM Comprehensive Plan was approved on April 25, 2016. The nomination is supported by numerous PlanDSM Goals and Policies including:

Land Use Goal 6

Recognize the value of Des Moines' historic building stock and landscapes and ensure their preservation

LU 35: Encourage expansion and establishment of National Historic Districts, local historic districts, and local landmarks.

Community Character and Neighborhood Goal 1

Embrace the distinct character offered in each of Des Moines' neighborhoods.

CCN1: Celebrate the City's culture and diversity through the creation of vibrant neighborhood nodes and corridors.

Community Character and Neighborhood Goal 4
Protect Des Moines' historic and cultural assets that contribute to neighborhood and community identity.

CCN25: Partner with the historic preservation community to promote Des Moines' rich history through education and outreach on historic structures, districts, and landscapes.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Jacqueline Easley asked if anyone was present to speak on this item. None were present or requested to speak.

Will Page noted that Eric Burkson did a very credible job on the application for landmark designation.

COMMISSION ACTION:

Carolyn Jenison made a motion for approval of the "Columbus Park Shelter" be designated as a local Landmark.

The Landmark Review Board and the Plan and Zoning Commission recommendations will be forwarded to the City Council for review in accordance with Chapter 58-60 and Chapter 82-40 of the City Code.

Motion carried 11-0

Respectfully submitted,



Michael Ludwig, AICP
Planning Administrator

MGL:tjh
Attachments

City initiated request, represented by Park and Recreation Director, Ben Page on property located at 1921 Indianola Avenue.		File # 20-2018-4.01		
Description of Action	Designate the "Columbus Park Shelter" as a local Landmark.			
PlanDSM Future Land Use	Current: Parks and Open Space. Proposed: N/A.			
Mobilizing Tomorrow Transportation Plan	No planned improvements.			
Current Zoning District	"C-1" Neighborhood Retail Commercial District, "GGP" Gambling Games Prohibition Overlay District and "FSO" Freestanding Signs Overlay District.			
Proposed Zoning District	N/A.			
Consent Card Responses	In Favor	Not In Favor	Undetermined	% Opposition
Subject Property	0	0		
Outside Area (200 feet)				
Plan and Zoning Commission Action	Approval	X	Required 6/7 Vote of the City Council	Yes
	Denial			No

Walker Playground Shelter at Columbus Park, 1921 Indianola Avenue

20-2018-4.01



Updated on: 5/10/2018

1 inch = 93 feet

58A

Landmark Nomination Form

Landmark Review Board

IDENTIFICATION:

SITE NAME Walker Playground Shelter, currently known as the Columbus Park Shelter.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION See attached Exhibit "A".

OWNER(S) NAME City of Des Moines

OWNER(S) SIGNATURE _____
(signed owner's letter of support or petition can be attached in lieu of signature here)

OWNER(S) ADDRESS _____
(street address) (city) (state) (zip)

CATEGORY:

STRUCTURAL/ARCHITECTURAL **LANDSCAPE** **ARCHEOLOGICAL**

COMPONENTS Existing shelter house comprising two enclosed, load-bearing masonry volumes
and central breezeway spanned by a common roof.

USE (present) See below. (past) Shelter house for Columbus Park wading pool.
Vacant since wading pool was removed from Columbus Park in 2014. The City of Des Moines Parks & Recreation Department is preparing to renovate the shelter into a four-seasons event space available for rental to the public at below market rate.

DESCRIPTION:

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1931 **ARCHITECT/BUILDER** Amos B. Emery, Architect.

BUILDING TYPE:

Single-family dwelling Industrial Other institutional Religious
Multiple-family dwelling Educational Public Agricultural
Commercial

EXTERIOR WALLS: clapboard ___ stone ___ brick board and batten ___ shingles ___
stucco ___ other Brick and hollow core clay tile.

STRUCTURAL SYSTEM: wood frame with interlocking joints ___ masonry load-bearing walls
wood frame with light members (balloon frame) ___ iron frame ___ steel frame with curtain walls ___
reinforced concrete ___ other ___

CONDITION: excellent ___ good ___ fair deteriorated ___

INTEGRITY: original site moved--if so, when _____
from where _____

Information on alterations, additions (with dates & architect, if known) and any other notable
features of building/site: No known additions. At some point within the building's history the original
window openings were blocked in. The proposed renovation restores these openings to double-hung
windows per the original construction documents.

RELATED OUTBUILDINGS AND PROPERTY: barn ___ other farm structures ___ carriage house
___ garage ___ privy ___ other None.

SURROUNDINGS OF THE SITE: open land woodland ___ scattered outbuildings ___
commercial ___ industrial ___ residential ___ densely built-up ___ other City Park

Prepared by Eric Berkson, AIA Date 4/6/2018

Address 1300 Walnut Street, Suite 201, Des Moines, IA 50309

Telephone (515) 699-1671 Email eberkson@substancearchitecture.com

Organization Substance Architecture

SIGNIFICANCE: (Indicate all sources of information for all statements)

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Walker Playground Shelter was one of Des Moines architect Amos Emery's earliest commissions. Throughout his career Amos' work and civic contributions had a substantial impact on the City of Des Moines as it exists today.

Amos was born in 1895 in Edmond, KS.¹ Around 1901 his family moved to Des Moines where his father Rodolphus Emery worked for the Great Western Insurance Company, eventually becoming the firm's treasurer.² In 1913, Amos graduated Des Moines' West High School³ and began working for the firm of Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson.⁴ In 1915 he enrolled in the University of Pennsylvania where he graduated with a B. Arch. in 1922,⁵ his studies having been interrupted between 1917 and 1919 by World War I.⁶ Following graduation, Amos worked as a draftsman for George R. Post & Sons in New York City until, in 1923, he returned to Des Moines and became a designer and chief draftsman for Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson.⁷ While at Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson, Amos designed the Collegiate Gothic Tower at the University of Iowa Hospital, Iowa City.⁸

In 1927, Amos became a registered architect and went into private practice with partner John Normile.⁹ Works from this period include: the Greenwood Park Rose Garden,¹⁰ the rectory at St. Ambrose Cathedral,¹¹ and this park shelter (at the time known as the Walker Playground shelter).¹²

The design of the Walker Playground Shelter comprises two hollow clay tile/brick volumes spanned by a common roof. The interior of the shelter contains a restroom and changing room (one for each gender) plus a recreation room and office¹³ for the adjacent wading pool. A central breeze way served as an assembly space and was planned to contain an open hearth fire place, although current conditions suggest this was never constructed, most likely as a cost saving measure.^{14,15} Outwardly the shelter projects a modest, functional appearance, but closer inspection reveals detail that exceeds what would be necessary for the most utilitarian of uses. Examples include: the attention given to brick patterning and layout (the shelter exhibits multiple coursing types, including: stretcher, header, soldier, and rowlock); and the construction of the soffit, which consists of bead board trimmed with cove molding.

While ultimately responsible for the design, it is uncertain whether Amos remained in Des Moines to see the project through construction. For reasons unknown, the firm of Normile & Emery was dissolved in 1930.¹⁶ Following the dissolution, Amos spent most of the 1930s in Washington, D.C. During the Great Depression, he was a staff architect for both the U.S. Biological Service and National Park Service. Many of the structures he designed would ultimately be built by Civilian Conservation Corps. Amos returned to Des Moines in 1937.¹⁷ It was between 1937 and his death in 1973 that most his contributions to the fabric of modern Des Moines were made. Notable project include: additions to Register and Tribune Tower;¹⁸ the First Unitarian Church of Des Moines; and the Neil Smith Federal Building.¹⁹

In addition to his works around Des Moines, Amos was a member of the Iowa Capitol Planning Commission²⁰ and served three terms as the president of the American Institute of Architects, Iowa Chapter.²¹

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

1. The Walker Playground Shelter was the first park shelter constructed by the City of Des Moines Playground Commission²² (predecessor to the modern day Parks & Recreation Department). As such, it served as a prototype for subsequent park shelters built though out the City.

(continued on next page)

2. Columbus Park (formerly Walker Playground) was the City of Des Moines' first planned park. Prior to this time the City's playgrounds were informal gathering spaces, lacking in equipment for recreational use.²³ In the case of the Walker Playground, the land was originally used as a lumber yard²⁴ and was owned by prominent local citizen Buffon Stewart (B.S.) Walker.^{25,26} For reasons unknown, the lumber yard gradually shrunk in size²⁷ and by the 1920s the vacated land was already in use as a playground.²⁸ This predated the City's formal acquisition of the property in 1929.^{29,30,31} Following the City's acquisition, planning of a formal park began. Original plans show the shelter in its current location;^{32,33} it is the only extant structure in Columbus Park from this period.

3. Columbus Park and the park shelter have been a gathering place for residents of Des Moines' south side and were instrumental in the development of Des Moines' Italian-American community:

3a. The earliest reference in primary sources to the Italian-America community's connection with Walker Playground is found in 1922 when a flagpole was dedicated by members of the Garibaldi Society, Stemma di Italia, Filia de Italia, South Des Moines Improvement league, and Italian Protective club. On this occasion, forty aliens received citizenship.^{34,35}

3b. In 1931, the completed shelter house was dedicated on June 28th during an annual picnic of the Italo-American Columbus club. The event was attended by approximately 5,000, including delegates from the Italian Civic league of Omaha, a royal Italian consular, as well as members of all Italian lodges in Des Moines and the surrounding cities.^{36,37,38,39}

3c. In 1935 at the request Stemma D'Italia and the Des Moines Columbus Club, the Des Moines City Council formally dedicated the park as Columbus Park.⁴⁰ The occasion was formally marked on June 28, 1936 when the Columbus Club presented the City with a bronze plaque for the shelter.⁴¹

3d. Columbus Park and the Walker Playground Shelter hosted Italian-American community festivals for over twenty years.^{42,43,44,45,46,47,48,49,50}

SOURCES (for primary and secondary sources give complete facts of publication: author, title, place of publication, date, etc.):

1. Emily Cooperman, "Emery, Amos Barton (1895-1973)," Philadelphia Architects and Buildings, accessed April 4, 2018. www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/ar_display.cfm/751795
2. Wesley Shank, *Iowa's Historic Architects* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1998), 59.
3. Emily Cooperman,
4. Wesley Shank, 59.
5. Emily Cooperman,
6. Ibid,
7. Wesley Shank, 59.
8. John Scott and Rodney Lehnertz, *The University of Iowa Guide to Campus Architecture* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2016), 206.
9. Wesley Shank, 59.
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45. "Italian Carnival Here on Aug. 8, 9," *Des Moines Tribune*, July 9, 1936, 10.
46. "Fiesta Opens Here Tonight," *Des Moines Tribune*, August 13, 1938, 9.
47. "Folk Dancing Opens Italian Fiesta," *The Des Moines Register*, August 14, 1938, 12.
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EXHIBIT A - LEGAL DESCRIPTION

Historic Landmark Description of Columbus Shelter

Requested from: Mark Dinges

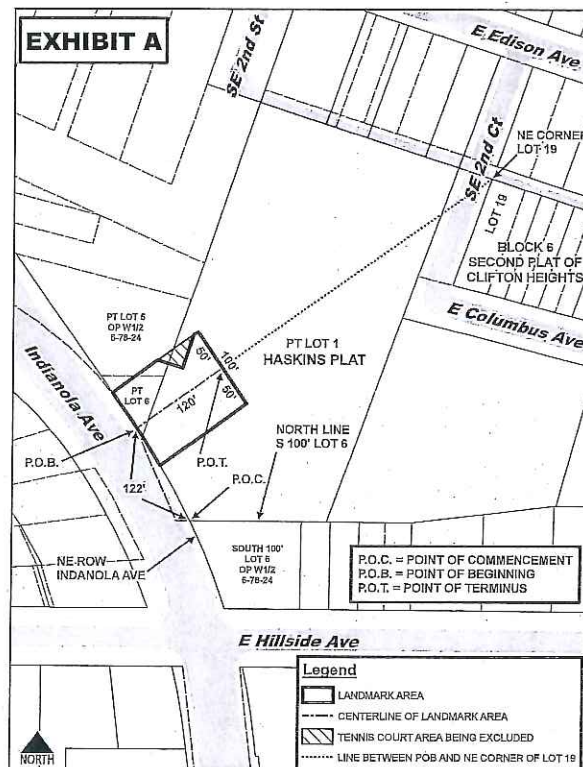
Written by: Stielow, 3/5/18

-EXCEPT THE EXISTING TENNIS COURT IMPROVEMENTS LYING WITHIN SAID AREA DESCRIBED BELOW-

A 100 FOOT WIDE AREA LYING 50 FEET EITHER SIDE OF A CENTERLINE AND BEING A PART OF LOT 1, HASKINS PLAT, AN OFFICIAL PLAT, AND PART OF LOTS 5 AND 6 OF THE OFFICIAL PLAT OF THE WEST HALF (1/2) OF SECTION 10, TOWNSHIP 78 NORTH, RANGE 24 WEST OF THE 5TH P.M. AND SAID CENTERLINE MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

COMMENCING AT THE INTERSECTION OF THE NORTHEASTERLY RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF INDIANOLA AVENUE AND THE NORTH LINE OF THE SOUTH 100 FEET OF SAID LOT 6; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG SAID NORTHEASTERLY RIGHT OF WAY LINE, A DISTANCE OF 122 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING; THENCE SAID CENTERLINE RUNS NORTHEAST ALONG A STRAIGHT LINE RUNNING BETWEEN SAID POINT OF BEGINNING AND THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF LOT 19, BLOCK 6, SECOND PLAT OF CLIFTON HEIGHTS, AN OFFICIAL PLAT, A DISTANCE OF 120 FEET TO POINT OF TERMINUS, SAID 100 FOOT WIDE AREA EXTENDS SOUTHWESTERLY TO SAID NORTHEASTERY RIGHT OF WAY OF INDIANOLA AVENUE;

ALL NOW INCLUDED IN AND FORMING A PART OF THE CITY OF DES MOINES, POLK COUNTY, IOWA.



LANDMARK REVIEW BOARD

Walker Playground Shelter Renovation
currently known as Columbus Park Shelter

May 8, 2018



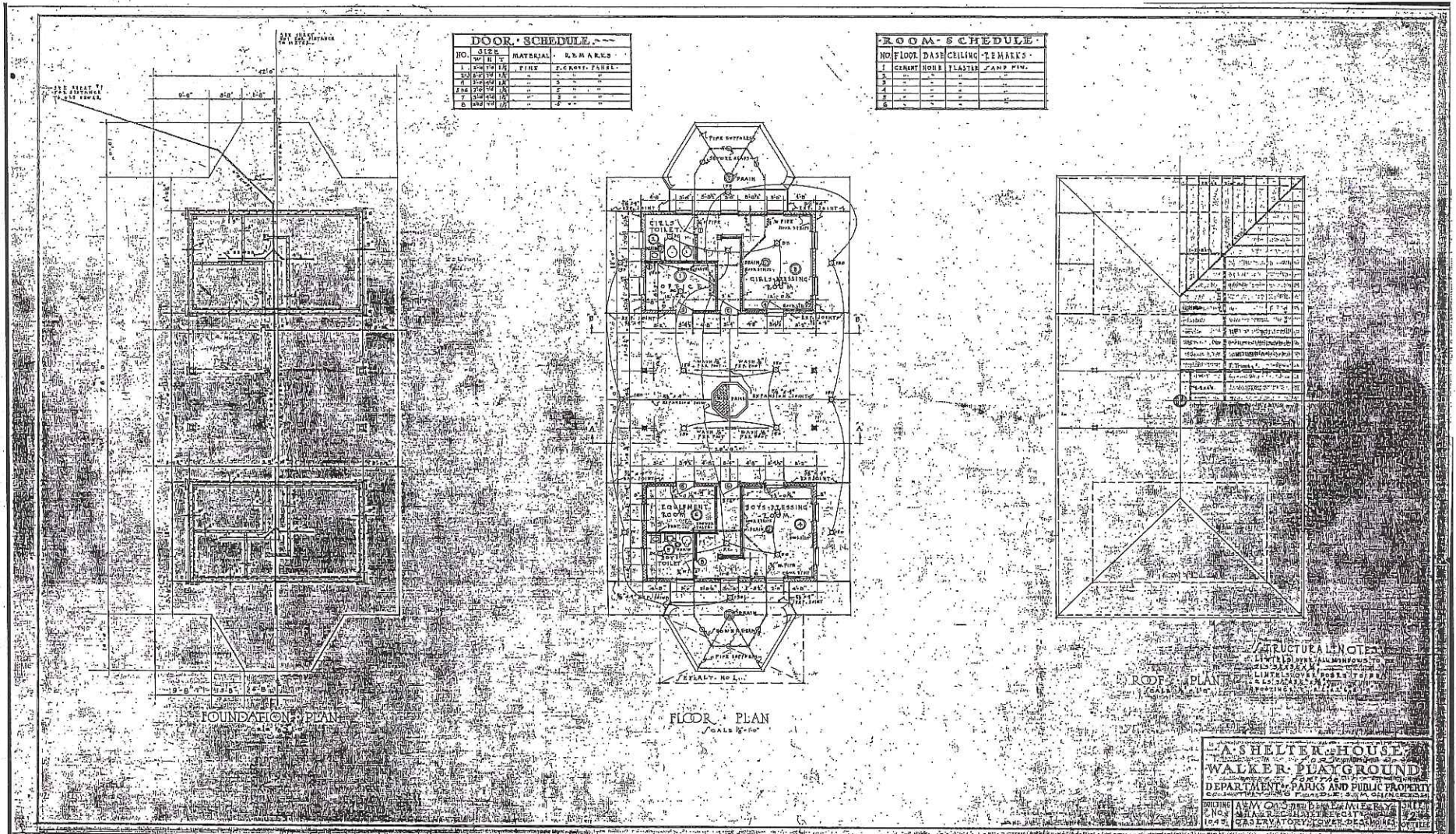
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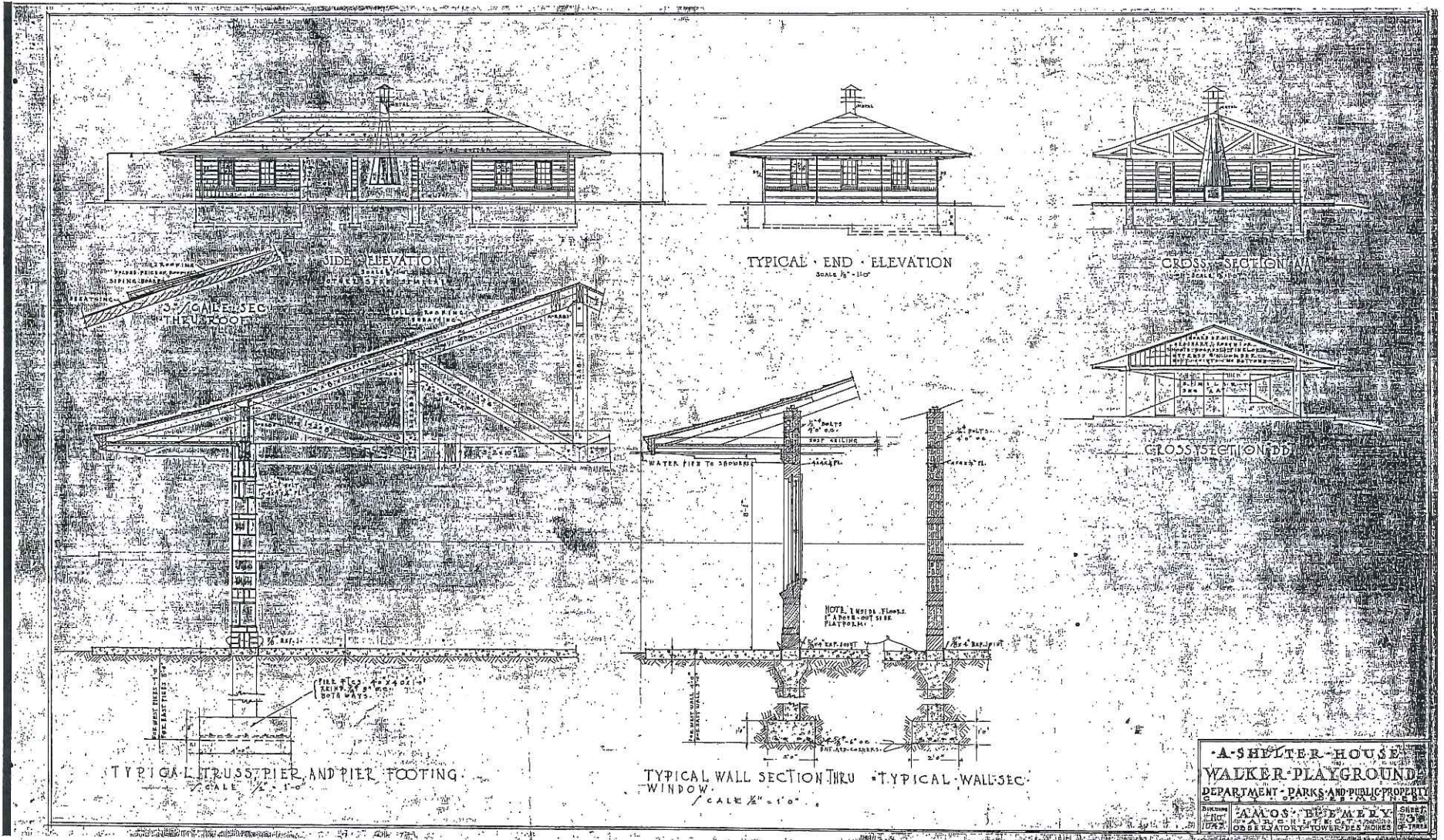
LOCATION MAP



EXISTING CONSTRUCTION DRAWINGS



EXISTING CONSTRUCTION DRAWINGS



A SHELTER HOUSE
WALKER PLAYGROUND
 DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND PUBLIC PROPERTY
 CITY OF DES MOINES
 DRAWN BY: AMOS BEEBEY
 CHECKED BY: [illegible]
 DATE: [illegible]
 SHEET NO. [illegible] OF [illegible]

EXISTING SHELTER



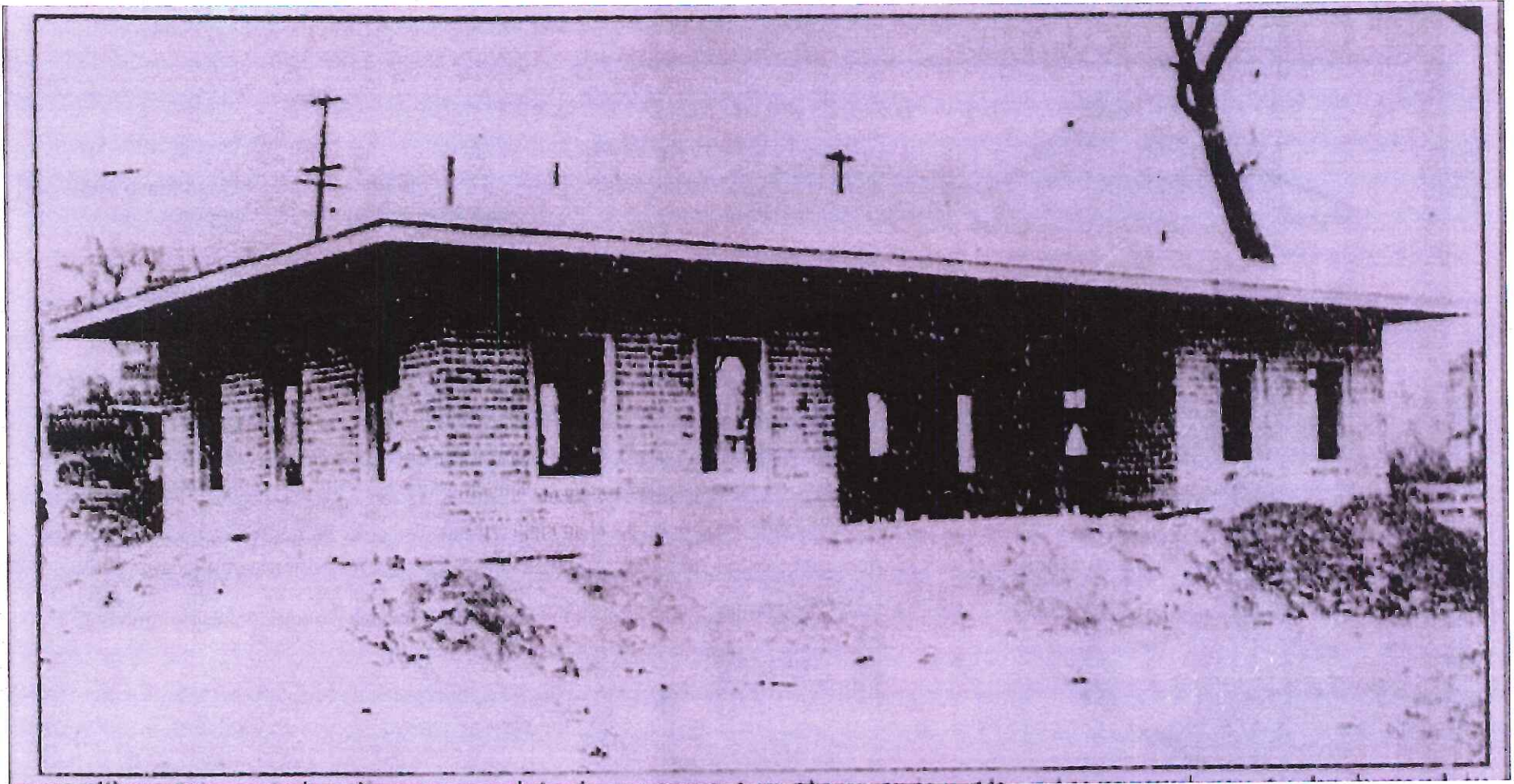
MASONRY & SOFFIT DETAILS

The shelter exhibits multiple coursing types, including: stretcher, header, soldier, and rowlock; and the construction of the soffit consists of bead board trimmed with cove molding.



1931 PHOTOGRAPH

Des Moines Tribune, April 16, 1931



substancearchitecture

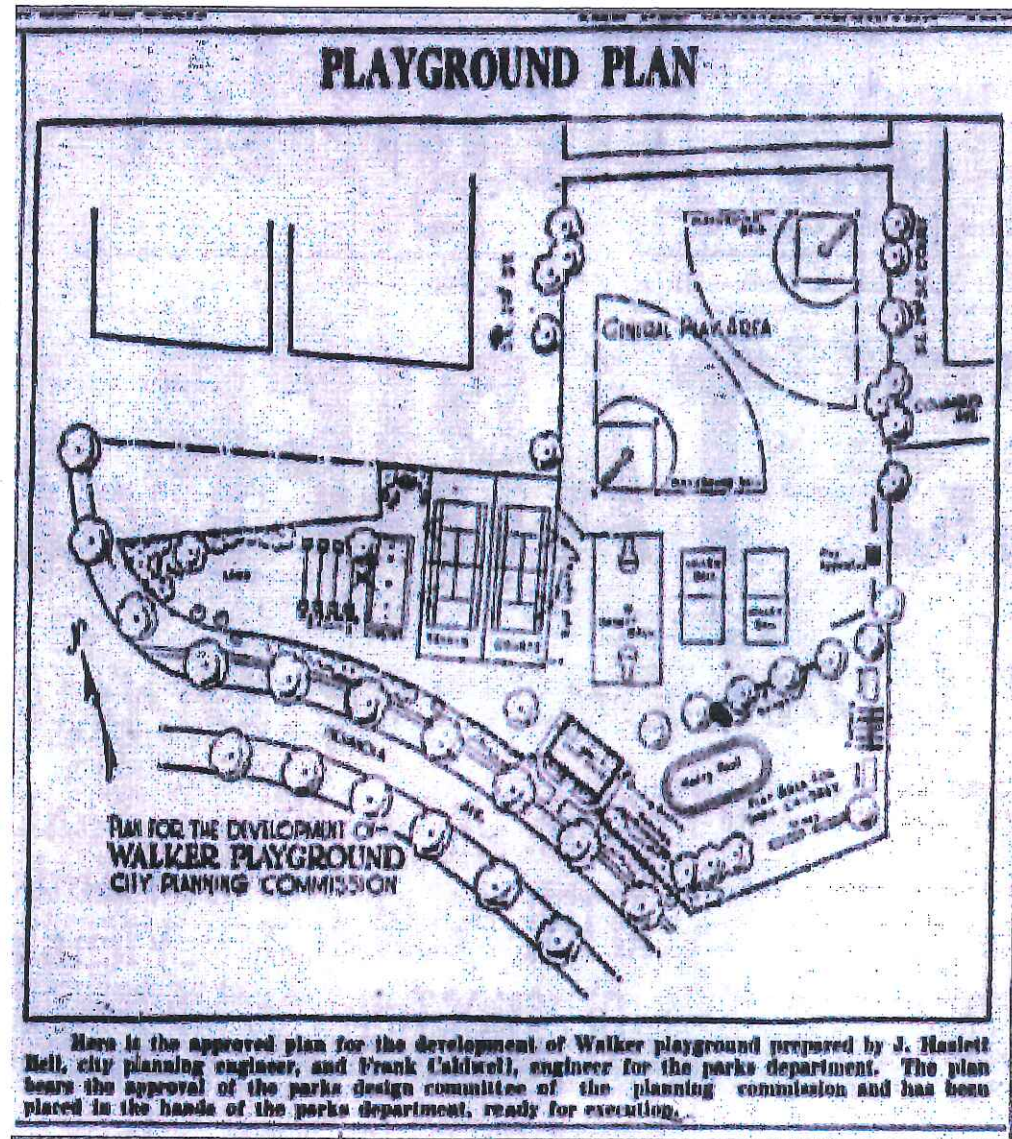


Walker Playground Shelter Renovation
May 8, 2018



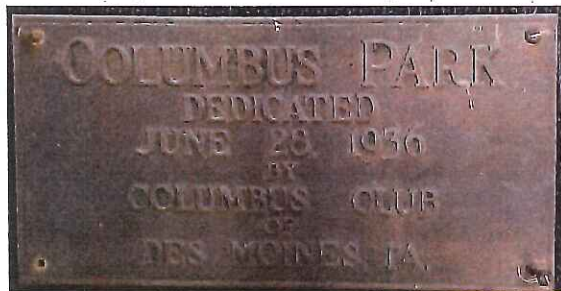
DES MOINES' FIRST PLANNED PARK

Columbus Park (formerly Walker Playground) was the City of Des Moines' first planned park. Prior to this time the City's playgrounds were informal gathering spaces, lacking in equipment for recreational use. In the case of the Walker Playground, the land was originally used as a lumber yard and was owned by prominent local citizen Buffon Stewart (B.S.) Walker. For reasons unknown, the lumber yard gradually shrunk in size and by the 1920s the vacated land was already in use as a playground. This predated the City's formal acquisition of the property in 1929. Following the City's acquisition, planning of a formal park began. Original plans show the shelter in its current location; it is the only extant structure in Columbus Park from this period.

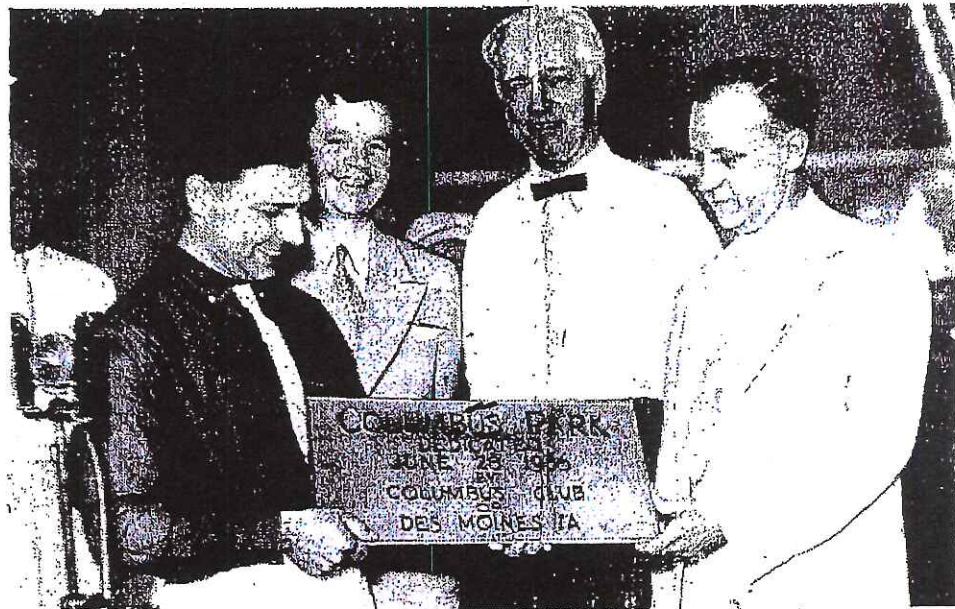


FROM WALKER PLAYGROUND TO COLUMBUS PARK

In 1935 at the request Stemma D'Italia and the Des Moines Columbus Club, the Des Moines City Council formally dedicated the park as Columbus Park. The occasion was formally marked on June 28, 1936 when the Columbus Club presented the City with a bronze plaque for the shelter.



Columbus Club Presents Plaque To City



—Courtesy of Register-Tribune

John Rossi, (left), chairman of Columbus club dedication committee, is shown above as he presented a bronze plaque to Mayor Joseph H.

Allen as E. Lee Keyser. (right) parks commissioner, looks on.

Dr. Walter Kirch, (second from left) was principal speaker at the

dedication exercises Sunday afternoon. The park was formerly known as Walker playground.

ITALIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY FOCAL POINT

Columbus Park and the Walker Playground Shelter have been a gathering place for residents of Des Moines' south side and were instrumental in the development of Des Moines' Italian-American community.

5,000 ATTEND ITALIAN PICNIC

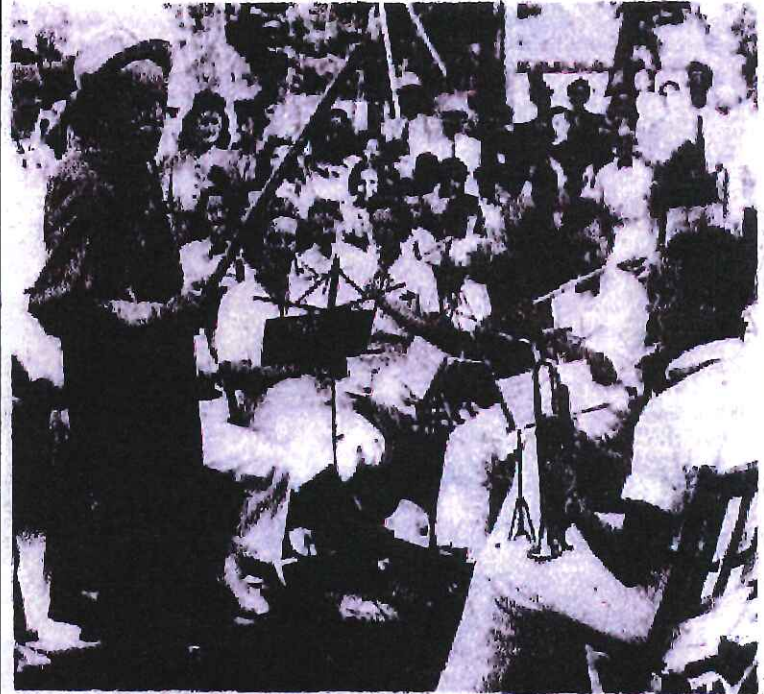
Metcalfe Is Speaker at Walker Park.

More than 5,000 Italians, including a delegation of nearly 200 from Omaha, gathered at Walker park Sunday afternoon for the first picnic of the Italo-American Columbus club and the dedication of a new park shelter house.

The Omaha group, headed by Nebraska's Lieut. Gov. Theodore Metcalfe, arrived Sunday morning on a special train. Lieutenant Governor Metcalfe, who was the principal speaker on the program, was introduced by Col. James M. McNamara, representing

(Continued on Page 14, Col. 6.)

Stemma d'Italia Festival



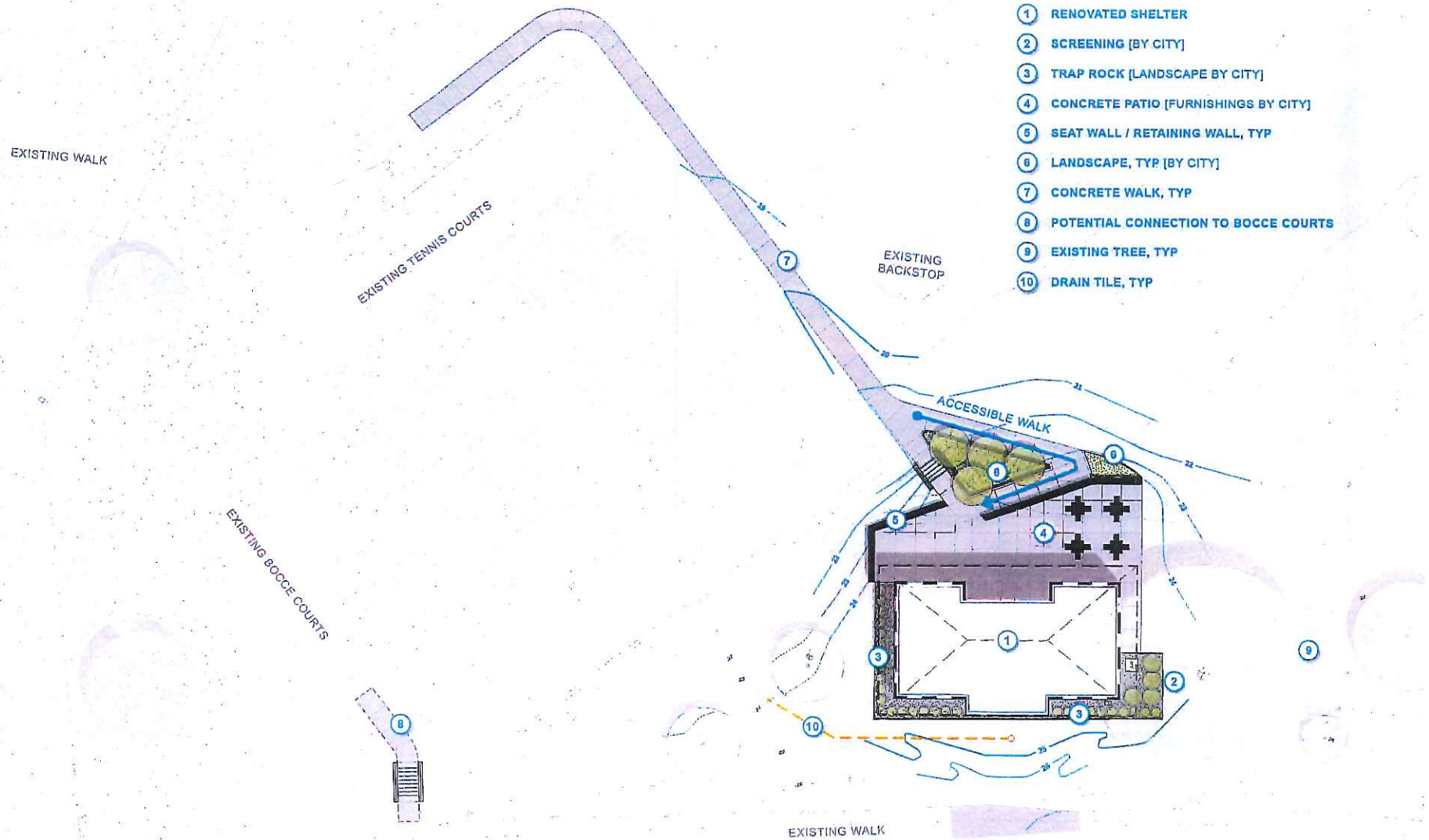
Register Staff Photos.

Eighty-six-year-old Frank DeBluggio, oldest member of the Societa Stemma D'Italia, stepped right up to lead the Callanan playground band Sunday afternoon at the lodge's tenth annual festival at Columbus park. More than 6,000 persons visited the park during the festival, which opened Saturday and closed Sunday night with a fireworks display. In a night address, James Muto traced the history and progress of the organization during the last 41 years.

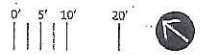
EXISTING SHELTER



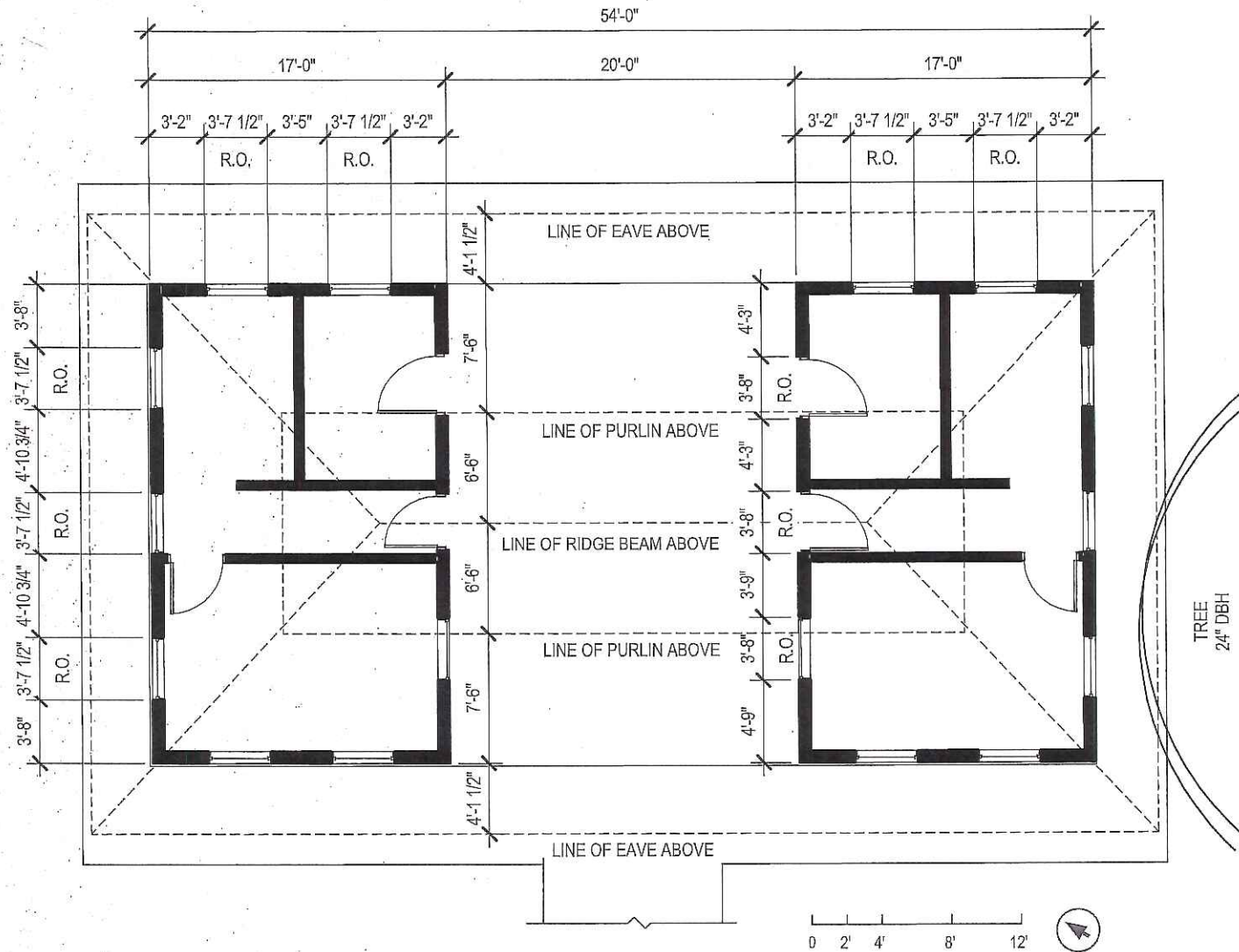
SITE PLAN



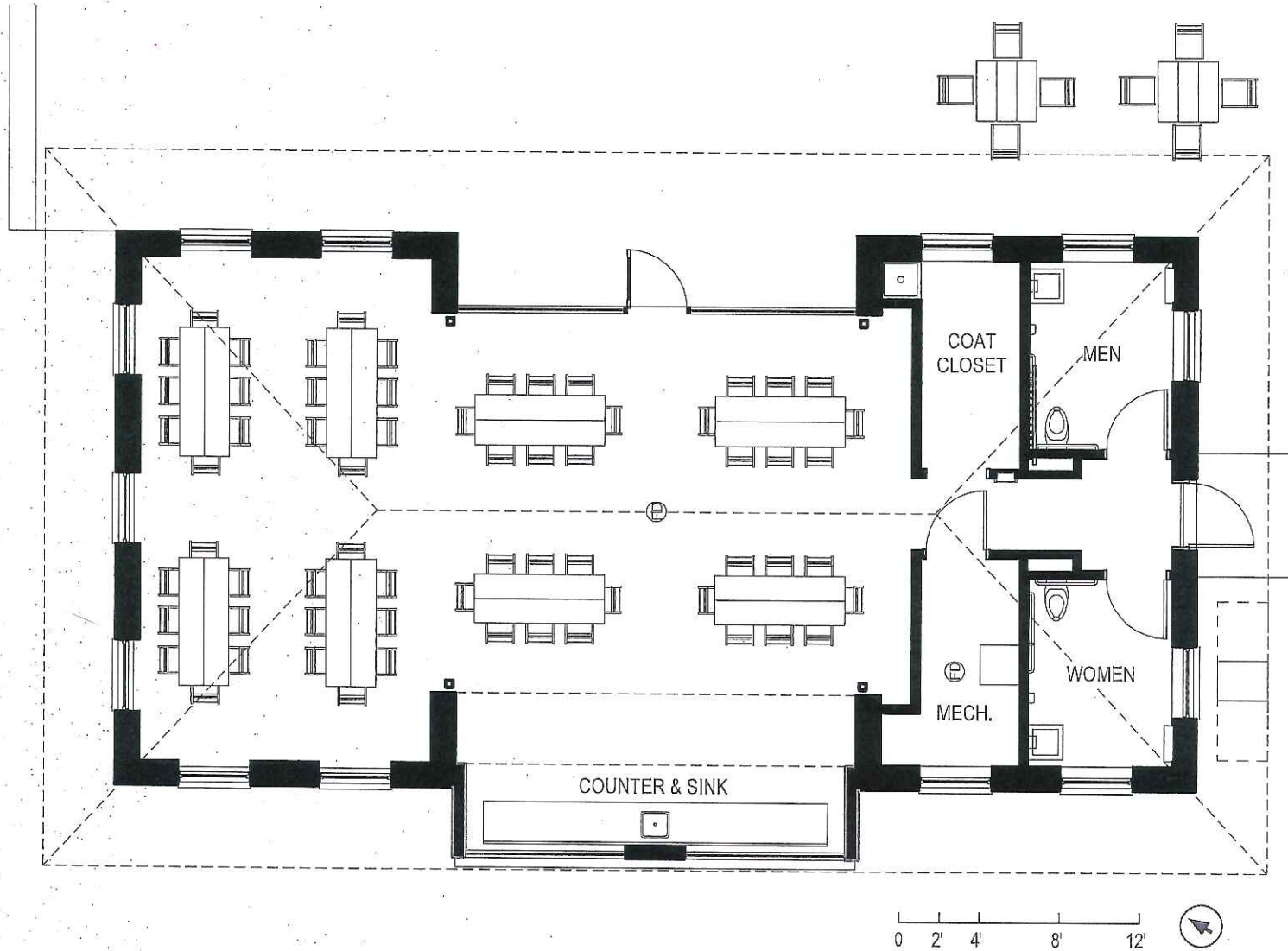
- ① RENOVATED SHELTER
- ② SCREENING [BY CITY]
- ③ TRAP ROCK [LANDSCAPE BY CITY]
- ④ CONCRETE PATIO [FURNISHINGS BY CITY]
- ⑤ SEAT WALL / RETAINING WALL, TYP
- ⑥ LANDSCAPE, TYP [BY CITY]
- ⑦ CONCRETE WALK, TYP
- ⑧ POTENTIAL CONNECTION TO BOCCIE COURTS
- ⑨ EXISTING TREE, TYP
- ⑩ DRAIN TILE, TYP



EXISTING SHELTER - PLAN



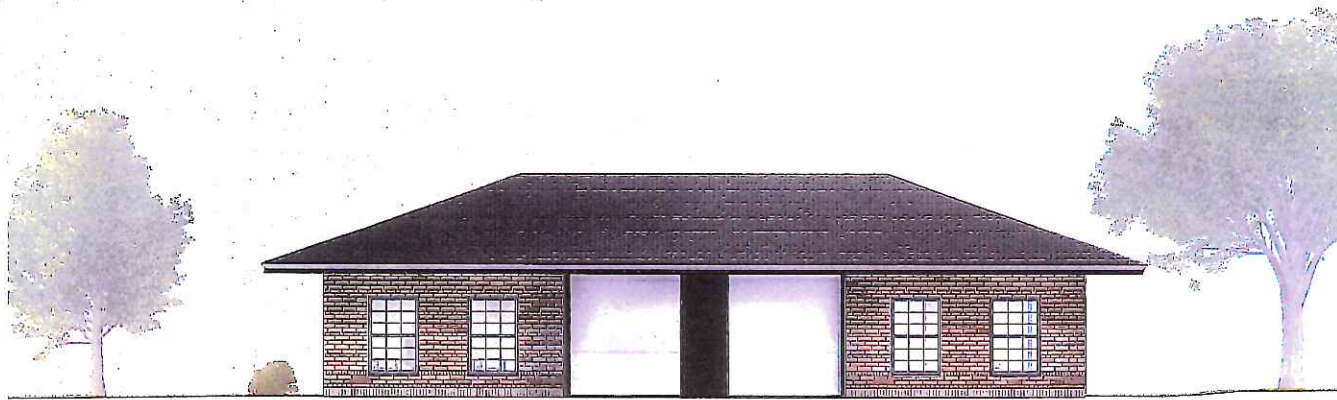
RENOVATED SHELTER - PLAN



ELEVATIONS

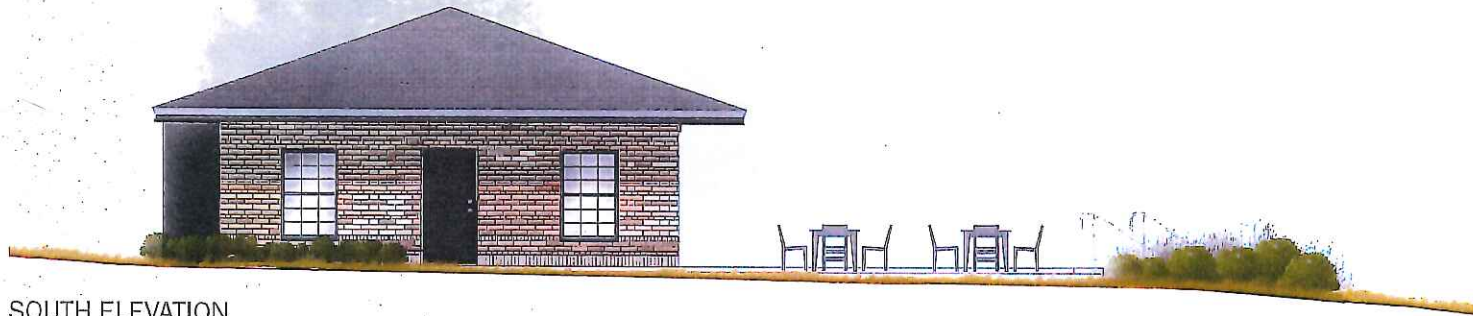


EAST ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION

ELEVATIONS



SOUTH ELEVATION



NORTH ELEVATION

INTERIOR RENDERING



substancearchitecture



Walker Playground Shelter Renovation
May 8, 2018



