



# ROCK HILL

## LANDSCAPE TREATMENT PLAN

**Prepared by**  
AECOM Technical Services  
Charlottesville, VA

**Prepared for**  
The City of Charlottesville  
Charlottesville, VA

March 2012



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## **Project Team**

AECOM Technical Services  
410 East Water Street, Suite 600  
Charlottesville, VA 22902  
434-872-0050

Roger Courtenay, Principal in Charge  
Rachel Evans Lloyd, Project Manager and Historic Landscape Architect  
Laura Bandara, Project Designer  
David Bennett, Historical Landscape Architect  
Adriane Truluck, Historical Landscape Architect

## **Acknowledgements**

The City of Charlottesville  
RK&K  
Dovetail Cultural Resources, Inc.  
MACAA

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

In preparation for the construction of a new interchange at McIntire Road and Route 250 Bypass in Charlottesville, VA, the City of Charlottesville (City) requested a rehabilitation plan for the Rock Hill property located within the project area, in accordance with the stipulations of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Federal Highway Administration, the City, Virginia Department of Transportation, Virginia State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

Rock Hill is a historic landscape near the downtown Charlottesville area, and approximately 0.4 of its 8.066 acres will be affected by construction of the Route 250 Bypass Interchange. Evidence of its design history remains in the landscape features such as boxwood, oak trees, stone walls, a stone building, the entrance drive, and terraced hillside. The garden also provided the setting for its institutional use beginning in the late 1950s. These landscape features are tangible evidence of its design significance and can convey to the public the role this landscape has played in Charlottesville over time.

Rock Hill is a historic designed landscape: “a landscape that was consciously designed or laid out by a landscape architect, master gardener, architect, or horticulturist according to design principles, or an amateur gardener working in a recognized style or tradition. The landscape may be associated with a significant person(s), trend, or event in landscape architecture; or illustrate an important development in the theory and practice of landscape architecture.”<sup>1</sup>

Management of this landscape plays a critical role in preserving the character of the historic garden. This plan provides guidance for the treatment of the garden according to the Secretary of the Interior’s *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. This plan provides information to help preserve the historic character of the landscape, with guidance for the ongoing management of landscape features and systems, and recommendations for the preservation and rehabilitation of the historic garden. The scope of this plan is focused on the landscape and does not address specific guidance for the management of historic buildings. The emphasis of this plan is on the management required to meet historic landscape preservation goals, and is based on best preservation management practices.

## Project Purpose

This project is intended to preserve and rehabilitate the Rock Hill landscape, a former residential garden landscape believed to have been built in the early twentieth century. The landscape is currently occupied and managed by the Monticello Area Community Action Agency (MACAA), and small portions of the landscape will be affected by the construction of the Route 250 Bypass

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<sup>1</sup> Preservation Brief 36: Protecting Cultural Landscapes: Planning, Treatment and Management of Historic Landscapes. <http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief36.htm>. Accessed July 2011.

interchange. The MOA established for the Route 250 Bypass interchange project requires the creation of a Treatment Plan (III.B.1.A) to provide recommendations for rehabilitating the garden's stone terraces, stairs, walls, and other landscape features.

The MOA stipulates that the City shall continue to work with MACAA to establish a property interest for the Rock Hill landscape gardens beyond the property required for roadway appurtenances. Therefore, long-term preservation of the landscape will be addressed as part of this plan. Specific requirements in the MOA also include the reconstruction of the outer wall along the new road (III.B.1.B) and the installation of vegetation (III.B.1.C) to screen the interchange from Rock Hill.

### **Project Scope of Work**

The City requested the development of a Treatment Plan for the Rock Hill landscape in tandem with the establishment of a schematic design for the Rock Hill landscape. The project area includes the land within the Rock Hill property (surrounded by the rock wall), with a concentration on the historic garden areas. The plan documents the existing conditions of the Rock Hill landscape, including topography and landforms, natural systems, vegetation and plantings, circulations systems, structures, and other major features on site, and compares these to known historic conditions. The archival research and documentation of the landscape's history was undertaken by Dovetail Cultural Resource Group. This documentation serves as the basis for treatment recommendations for the preservation of Rock Hill, including the reconstructed section of the outer wall. This project was undertaken with landscape preservation oversight from AECOM's historical landscape architect, David Bennett, who meets the Secretary of Interior's Standards for historic landscape preservation design.

### **Project Methodology**

Typically, a Treatment Plan for a designed landscape is based on thorough documentation of the landscape that includes a clear portrayal of its historic appearance and evolution. The evidence for the depiction of the historic landscape might be in the form of historic maps or plans, historic photographs, or contemporary narrative descriptions by the designer or other observers. In the case of Rock Hill, however, very little documentation exists on the historic character of the designed landscape during the period of significance, and there is little evidence to convey conclusively who the designer or designers actually were. In the absence of the typical historic documentation, the analysis and recommendations in this Treatment Plan are based on available information that includes photographs post-dating the period of significance, limited narrative descriptions of the landscape over its history, and older aerial photographs that provide minimal details due to poor resolution. Therefore, treatment recommendations and guidelines for this plan were developed with a conservative approach in order to maximize the preservation of extant landscape features that appear historic, whether or not it can be proven that they date to the period of significance.



The development of the Treatment Plan was undertaken in the following steps:

- Review the site history by Dovetail Cultural Resource Group and incorporate summary information of the site history as necessary.
- Review evaluation and analysis by Dovetail Cultural Resource Group and incorporate summary information of site evaluation.
- Review landscape documentation (HALS photographs) by RK&K.
  - RK&K engaged the services of Rob Tucher, principal photographer, Historic Documentation Company, Inc., to undertake photographic documentation according to the National Park Service (NPS) Historic American Landscape Survey (HALS) standards. The photographs were taken in spring 2010, before efforts to clear the landscape were underway.
- Undertake field surveys to observe the Rock Hill landscape and document with photographs.
  - AECOM undertook two field surveys to document and photograph the Rock Hill landscape. These field surveys involved a site visit to update the base map based on observed conditions, and to take existing conditions photos. The first field survey, on February 8, 2011, was undertaken by Rachel Lloyd, Project Manager, Laura Bandara, Project Designer, and Adriane Truluck, Cultural Resources Specialist. An additional field survey to document changes in landscape conditions was conducted by Laura Bandara on March 25, 2011.
- Confirm the list of character-defining landscape features to the extent possible.
- Establish a treatment approach for the Rock Hill landscape.
- Prepare treatment guidelines and recommendations for the management of historic landscape resources.

## **Summary**

Several conditions make it very difficult to assess the historic landscape at Rock Hill: the weak documentation for the garden's condition during its period of significance, poor maintenance of the gardens over time, and clearing work within the landscape that has removed substantial amounts of vegetation and likely resulted in the destabilization of historic structures. However, the treatment outlined in this plan focuses on the preservation of features remaining in the landscape that provide insights into its character during its important historic period.

## 2 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

### Introduction

This historical overview represents a summary of the “Historic American Landscapes Survey: Rock Hill Estate” (3.8.12) completed by Dovetail Cultural Resources Group. The overview focuses on the documentation of physical changes in the Rock Hill landscape over time, and provides the basis for an analysis of the historic landscape. For the full description of the property’s development over time, refer to the “Historic American Landscapes Survey: Rock Hill Estate” (3.8.12).

Rock Hill is a 8.066 acre remnant of what was once a much larger property. The original house dated to the 1820s. The estate was owned by a series of people, including local architect Eugene Bradbury (from 1909 to 1928) and the Reverend Henry Porter (from 1930 to 1947) who was the pastor of the First Baptist Church. By 1947, the property had been reduced to its modern boundary and current size of just over eight acres, and—according to a 1956 local newspaper article— included a magnificent garden with “hundreds of azaleas” in a range of colors, rhododendron, pink and white dogwood, magnolia, multiple varieties of boxwood, “native hardwoods,” pine, yew, and “all the conventional flowering shrubs” as well as the stone wall surrounding the property and the garden terraces.<sup>1</sup> In 1959, the property was purchased by the Charlottesville Education Foundation for use as a school for white children only. The establishment of the school was part of the Massive Resistance movement in Virginia that resulted in the creation of “segregation academies” in the 1950s and 1960s. The school used the Rock Hill house as administrative offices until it burned down in 1963. The other buildings, such as the classroom buildings, lunchroom, library, and gym, were all built for Rock Hill Academy.<sup>2</sup> The property is currently occupied by MACAA, as it has been since the early 1990s.

The additional historical information documented below provides the basis for the evaluation and analysis of the landscape, and supports the treatment guidelines and recommendations. Historical information about the evolution of the Rock Hill landscape creates the rationale for the preservation planning recommendations and supports the interpretation of the landscape for the public.

### Brief Summary of the Rock Hill Physical History

Archival research suggests that there are four historic periods of development associated with the Rock Hill property.<sup>3</sup>

The first period covers the years from 1821-1863, when the property was first established as a farm of approximately 60-70 acres of land. First called “Rock

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1 “Rock Hill, 10-Room Dwelling of the Gibbs, Built to Last,” *The Daily Progress*, June 11, 1956.

2 Department of Historic Resources Intensive Level Survey (DHR ID# 104-5137, dated August 17, 2007.

3 Dovetail Cultural Resource Group, “Historic American Landscapes Survey: Rock Hill Estate”, March 8, 2012.

Hill” in 1828, the property was owned by the Leitch family, and it was during this period that a large residence was constructed. Descriptions of Rock Hill include the report that the house and other improvements to the property included stonework, and that James Leitch directed his enslaved laborers to clear fields and harvest timber from the land.<sup>4</sup> Legal complications regarding the disposition of the property followed, and it was finally sold to James Fife in the late 1830s. Tax figures suggest that Fife made improvements to the land and built (or improved) a house on the property. Later, a notice of sale in 1860 provides a more elaborate description of the property, suggesting that it was “enclosed by a rock fence,” and was divided by a “well-ditched out creek.”<sup>5</sup> The notice described additional conditions of the property:

“The improvements consist of a handsome stuccoed house with six rooms. A colonnade porch in front and in the rear. The one in front extending the whole length of the house. A brick kitchen with two rooms; also a framed house for servants; a new barn with four apartments and all other necessary outhouses. A spring of the purest water near the house, shaded by magnificent oaks and other trees, affording a delightful retreat in hot weather. The stream from this spring united with the stream from another spring, and is then conducted to the barn yard...nurturing stock within the enclosure.”<sup>6</sup>

As suggested by Dovetail Cultural Resources Group in “Historic American Landscapes Survey: Rock Hill Estate” (3.8.12), this description of Rock Hill’s first period of development suggests it was an ordered agricultural property that was relatively more elaborate and had a higher tax value than farms of similar size in the area.<sup>7</sup>

The second period of development for Rock Hill covers the years 1866 to 1908, beginning with the property’s sale to wealthy merchant George Dillard. Later owners, the Flannagans, maintained an orchard, a vineyard, and a potato field on the land. However, their financial difficulties resulted in the further subdivision of the property, and Mrs. Flannagan maintained a 22.6 acre parcel that contained the house, garden, and orchard.<sup>8</sup>

A later deed for Rock Hill suggested a quarry existed on the property (now known to have been located south of the current Rock Hill property boundary). The deed gave the owner, George Sinclair, the right to remove stone “for the purpose of improving Rock Hill,” suggesting that Sinclair may have been responsible for

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4 Dovetail Cultural Resource Group, “Historic American Landscapes Survey: Rock Hill Estate”, March 8, 2012, 5.

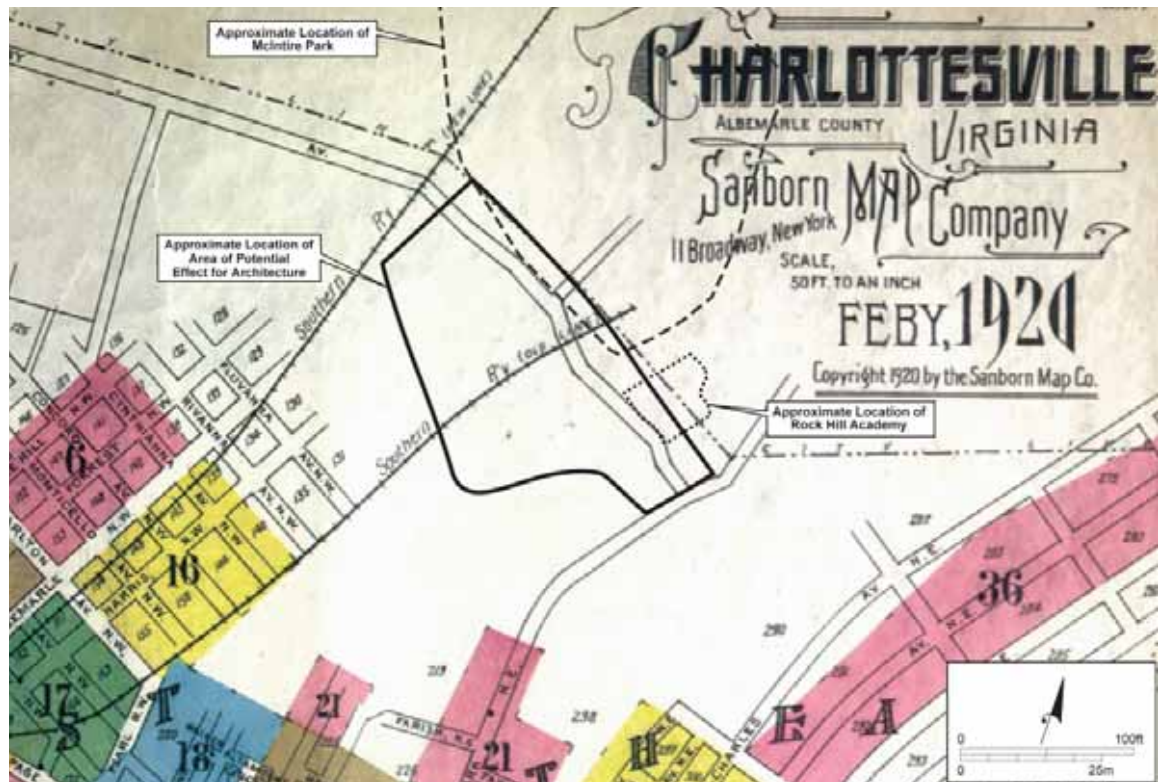
5 Dovetail Cultural Resource Group, “Historic American Landscapes Survey: Rock Hill Estate”, March 8, 2012, 6.

6 Dovetail Cultural Resource Group, “Historic American Landscapes Survey: Rock Hill Estate”, March 8, 2012, 6.

7 Dovetail Cultural Resource Group, “Historic American Landscapes Survey: Rock Hill Estate”, March 8, 2012, 6.

8 Dovetail Cultural Resource Group, “Historic American Landscapes Survey: Rock Hill Estate”, March 8, 2012, 7.

1920 Sanborn map of the Rock Hill area. (Source: John Milner Associates, 2007).



some of the stone work on the property.<sup>9</sup> By the time of the Sinclair ownership, the house was likely an eclectic mix of architectural styles including elements such as colonnaded porches from Early Classical and Greek Revival as well as smaller modifications such as a decorative roof cresting that reflected Second Empire and Queen Anne influences. Sinclair subdivided the property more than once, and in May of 1909 conveyed the property to Eugene Bradbury. By this time, the Rock Hill property had been reduced to its current size of 8.066 acres. This second period of development thus concluded with the transition of the property from farm to residential estate. Its location near Park Street and the Charlottesville downtown area likely influenced its subdivision, and this subdivision reflected the increasing trend of suburban residential development that characterized many American cities.<sup>10</sup>

The third historic period at Rock Hill dates from 1909 to 1959. This period included what is likely the most intensive development of the residential landscape, and the final evolution of the designed garden for which the property is known today. Owners during this period included Eugene Bradbury, Henry Porter, John Gibbs and their families, among others.

Eugene Bradbury was a prominent local architect who designed at least 40 buildings in the Charlottesville area. There is no documentation to suggest that Bradbury completed any changes or additions to the landscape at Rock Hill,

<sup>9</sup> Dovetail Cultural Resource Group, "Historic American Landscapes Survey: Rock Hill Estate", March 8, 2012, 8.

<sup>10</sup> Dovetail Cultural Resource Group, "Historic American Landscapes Survey: Rock Hill Estate", March 8, 2012, 8.





Historic photograph of Rock Hill, date unknown. (Source: Steering Committee Presentation by Daniel Bluestone, March 19, 2008).

**EXECUTOR'S SALE  
ROCK HILL**

Sold to settle estate of the late  
**Dr. Henry Alford Porter**  
Located at  
**501 East Rugby Avenue**  
Charlottesville, Virginia

Residence, all household goods, consisting of rare antique furniture, silver, lustre, porcelain, Wedgwood, and Oriental rugs.

AT  
**AUCTION**  
**TUESDAY October 21, 1947 10:30 A. M.**  
*Residence Will Be Sold at 11:00 A. M.*

Three-story stone-stucco residence. Located on acreage tract consisting of 7.7 acres, entirely enclosed by beautiful stone wall. Private lake, and terraced garden. Shrubbery consisting of hundreds of boxwood, yew, blue spruce, original oaks, maples.

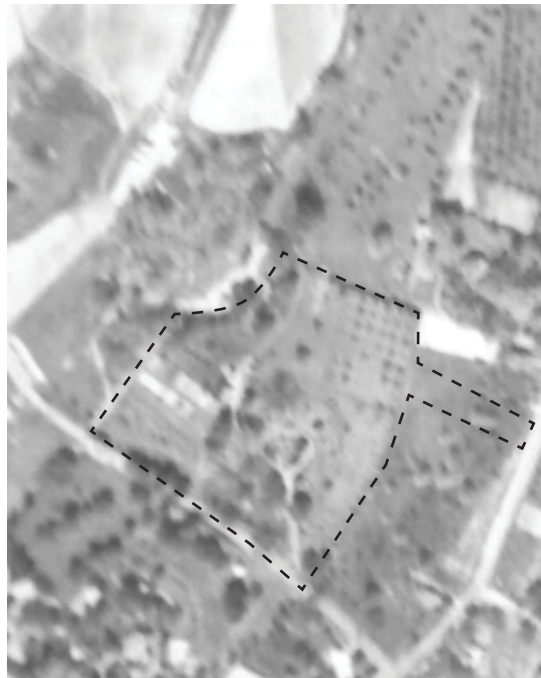
**House entirely furnished with rare antiques.**

**Write for Catalogue**

*For Information Call or Write*

The Peoples National Bank of Charlottesville and C. Armonde Paxton, Executors    OR    Hopkins Brothers, Auctioneers, Lynchburg, Virginia. Phone 1122

Estate sale flyer, 1947 (Source: Steering Committee Presentation by Daniel Bluestone, March 19, 2008).

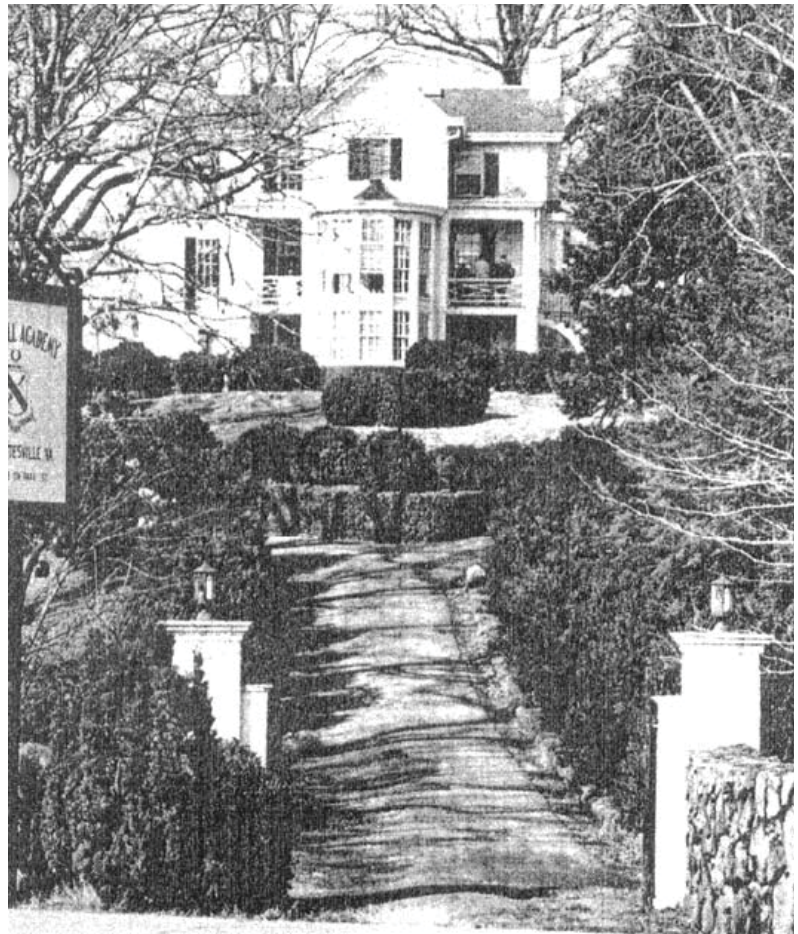


1937 aerial photograph of the Rock Hill area with current boundary. (Source: John Milner Associates, 2007).

although he certainly would have been knowledgeable about landscape design, having worked with accomplished landscape architects such as Warren Manning.

Two years after Minnie Bradbury (Eugene Bradbury's ex-wife) sold Rock Hill, Henry Porter and his family bought the property. The house was a two-and-a-half story, three bay residence with light-colored stucco. The increase in tax value of the property during the Porter's tenure suggests their investment in new development, possibly including the addition of the stone garage that still stands today. A historic aerial photograph suggests that the stone retaining walls and terraces were in place by 1937, and a notice of auction in 1947 lists a "beautiful stone wall," a private lake with a small island, terraced gardens, and hundreds of shrubs and trees such as boxwood, yew, blue spruce, "original" oaks, and maples on the property. Other landscape features known to be in place during the Porters' tenure include the orchard in the northeast corner of the property, the driveway with a circular turn-around at its northern terminus, a small triangular raised planting area at the entrance drive, and what appear to be larger areas of trees and shrubs. The stuccoed brick entrance gates at the south eastern corner of the property appeared to include lights at the top of the larger posts. However, recollections by local Charlottesville residents suggest there were additional changes to the designed landscape not visible in historic aerial photographs; these changes may have included the creation of a gold fish pond, and a waterfall flowing around a Japanese rock garden near the southern edge of the

*Rock Hill, c. 1960.  
(Source: Albemarle  
Charlottesville  
Historical Society)*







*Historic photograph of the Rock Hill pond, c. 1960s. (Source: Steering Committee Presentation by Daniel Bluestone, March 19, 2008).*



*Photograph of the Rock Hill entrance, date unknown.*

property.<sup>11</sup> Later descriptions from 1956 note “hundreds of azaleas in a wide color assortment. Rhododendron, pink and white dogwood, magnolias, boxwoods of several varieties, native hardwoods, pines, yew and all the conventional flowering shrubs...”<sup>12</sup>

In 1952, the City of Charlottesville condemned two sections of the Rock Hill property in order to construct the Route 250 Bypass, resulting in the eventual demolition of portions of the stone boundary wall and perhaps the Japanese rock garden and waterfall if they still existed at that time.

In 1959, the fourth period of development at Rock Hill began with the purchase of the property by the Charlottesville Education Foundation, marking the property’s transition from a private residential landscape to an educational facility. By 1961, three new classroom buildings and a lunchroom building had been constructed along the top of the hill, facing east towards Park Street. Other substantial changes to the property include the loss of the historic house by fire in 1963, partial infill of the pond, and construction of a new parking lot and gymnasium on the former orchard site. Additional changes over the next 30 years would include the final removal of the pond, an expansion of the parking lot, and an enclosure of the connections between the classroom buildings. By this time, the historic driveway had been cordoned off, and a new entrance to the property was installed from Park Street to the new parking area.

## **Landscape Context**

Rock Hill’s historic significance stems from its use as a residential designed landscape. Of particular importance was its ownership under the Porters, who appeared to have undertaken substantial improvements to the landscape sometime between 1930 and 1947, possibly involving the labor of many out-of-work Charlottesville citizens during the Great Depression.<sup>13</sup> It is unknown at this time exactly who was responsible for the design and construction of the garden features. It is unknown whether Rev. Porter or Mrs. Porter provided the design guidance for the garden, or if they hired a professional landscape architect or garden designer. No mason or gardener has ever been positively associated with the creation of the garden features. It seems possible that the garden was created over time, with involvement from several owners, including the Porters, Bradburys, Sinclairs and Gibbs, if not others as well. However, the garden appears to have reached its zenith under the Porters, and they are generally credited with its design and construction. Unfortunately, no plans or other drawings remain from that period. Dr. Porter has traditionally been credited with the design of the landscape, although no known documents support this supposition. Dr. Porter was, however, a member of the Charlottesville and Albemarle Beautification Committee, a group that worked with the local Garden Club to provide new plantings around area highways and parks, and

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11 *The Hook*, “Burned and Bypassed: Rock Hill has a ghost of a garden.”

12 Dovetail Cultural Resource Group, “Historic American Landscapes Survey: Rock Hill Estate”, March 8, 2012, 12

13 Suggestions that the Porters spent nearly \$90,000 on the construction in the landscape have not been substantiated.



he may have derived knowledge about landscape design from this committee.<sup>14</sup> Certainly the creation and maintenance of a large and beautiful house and garden would have supported his position as a pastor of the First Baptist Church and a leader in the community.

The Rock Hill landscape's design context is rooted primarily in the Colonial Revival and Picturesque traditions. Other area garden built during this time by prominent landscape architects such as Charles Gillette also contain features similar to Rock Hill's such as the boxwood plantings, terraced gardens, and extensive shrub plantings. Gardens at local country estates designed by Gillette are evidence of this design tradition and provide the design context for Rock Hill. However, Rock Hill appears to exhibit a more eclectic design approach, with landscape elements combined in a hybrid style that reflected aspects of the Colonial Revival and Picturesque traditions. The garden also incorporated the vernacular landscape elements—such as the orchard—left over from the property's immediate agricultural past. The rough cut stone walls, the pond, and woodland trails evoke Picturesque landscape design, while the rectilinear terraced gardens and boxwood-lined driveway reflect the Colonial Revival garden practices current at the time. The central house surrounded by gardens and terraces within a naturalistic woodland context reflects some Beaux Arts landscape design traditions that remained popular in the United States through the 1940s.

Another possible significant historic context for the garden (to consider for the future) is its use as a school during Virginia's Massive Resistance movement of the 1950s. Under Criterion A, a landscape may be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) if it is "associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history." The Rock Hill landscape was the setting for a private school that occupied the site as part of the movement that resisted school desegregation after the Supreme Court *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision in 1954 by limiting enrollment to white students only. In the face of public school closures in Charlottesville (such as Lane High School and Venable Elementary School), private schools such as Rock Hill Academy opened to continue the education of white students. Other so-called "segregation academies" throughout Virginia included John S. Mosby Academy in Warren County, Tomahawk Academy in Chesterfield County, Huguenot Academy in Powhatan, Amelia Academy, Isle of Wight Academy, Brunswick Academy, and several others.<sup>15</sup>

As a historic designed landscape, Rock Hill is an important piece of Charlottesville's history. The landscape features which convey this history are described in greater detail in this report.

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<sup>14</sup> Dovetail Cultural Resource Group, "Historic American Landscapes Survey: Rock Hill Estate", March 8, 2012,14.

<sup>15</sup> The full context for Massive Resistance and the Rock Hill Academy has not been fully developed at this time and was not within the scope of this project to explore. However, this historic context for the cultural landscape may be investigated in the future, and may help shine light on this controversial, complicated and dark period of Charlottesville's past.

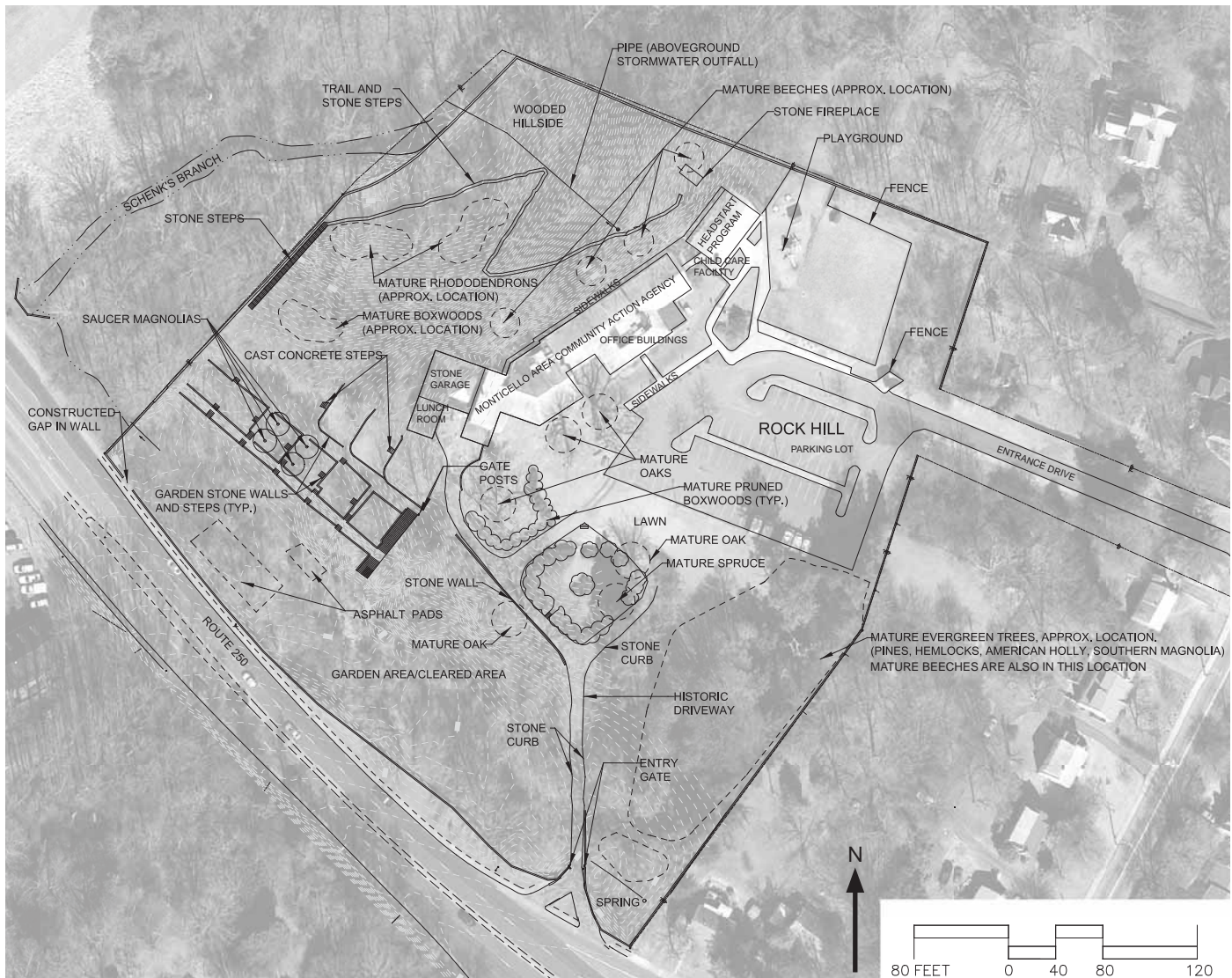
### 3 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The following description of existing conditions documents the types of features and systems present in the Rock Hill landscape in 2011 as well as general information about the condition of those features and systems. The Rock Hill landscape has been the subject of extensive clearing (vegetation removal) in the months preceding the creation of the Treatment Plan, which has effected the condition of many features in addition to the trees and shrubs cut from the property. HALS documentation of the Rock Hill landscape provides further evidence for the condition of landscape features mentioned below.

#### Overview of Existing Conditions

The hilltop and north section of the Rock Hill landscape is occupied by the buildings, playground, associated structures, and parking area used by MACAA. The southeast, southern, and western portions of the property appear to retain some historic vegetation and structures, with a significant portion of the property occupied by invasive plant species and other aggressive plants. This vegetative growth was temporarily arrested by recent clearing efforts, but has since

*Existing  
Conditions  
Plan*





returned. For the purposes of this discussion, the property has been divided into three areas: the developed area, which includes MACAA and its associated structures in the northeastern portion of the property; the garden area, which covers roughly the southern half of the property, including the terraces; and the woodland area, which is located in the northwestern portion of Rock Hill.

The Rock Hill landscape is in fair to poor condition overall; although some landscape features are in good condition, many structural and vegetative elements throughout the Rock Hill landscape are in danger of failing or are in hazardous condition due to long-term lack of maintenance and other issues. Information gathered during site visits on February 8 and March 25, 2011 appeared to indicate that site clearing, coupled with recent rainfall and related soil erosion, have hastened the deterioration of both the stone terraces and some possibly historic vegetation throughout the property. In the case where a lack of maintenance or management appears to threaten specific landscape features, the condition is noted with the discussion of landscape features below.

The landscape features documented for this report are categorized by landscape characteristic, including:

- Topography and Soil Conditions
- Vegetation
- Buildings and Structures
- Views and Vistas
- Small-scale Features

The list of features below is not exhaustive, but concentrates on select features within specific categories.

### **Topography and Soil Conditions**

The Rock Hill landscape is typical of the rolling, sloped terrain of the Piedmont. The missing house was built near the crest of the hill, in an area which is currently occupied by a parking lot. Two sets of terraced gardens (see “Buildings



*Terraced gardens on the hillside after clearing (March 2011).*

and Structures,” below, for more information on the terraces) extend roughly 220 feet down the southwestern face of the hillside to a level area adjacent to the Route 250 Bypass. As a result of the construction of the Route 250 Bypass, a small area of the Rock Hill property adjacent to the terraces was lost.

Steep slopes dominate the woodland area; the topography in the woodland area appears to have been largely unmodified with the exception of steps located to negotiate the steep slopes.

Several rock outcrops were noted in the woodland area, and two small rock outcrops are present east of the terraces in the garden area. These appear to have been exposed recently, with little or no vegetation surrounding them to retain soil. Soil deposition due to erosion during recent rains is evident in this area as well. Erosion, often caused by a lack of adequate vegetative cover, is present in several areas of the site. Soil compaction, as a result of driving heavy vehicles through the landscape or piling heavy materials on the soil for example, has an equally negative impact on the landscape and has clearly occurred on different areas within the property.

### **Vegetation**

The vegetation at Rock Hill appears to have undergone major transitions in the last two years, as substantial clearing has changed its character during this period. The garden area has perhaps undergone the most dramatic clearing, although the woodland area has been subjected to vegetation removal as well. The developed area includes more recent vegetation additions, although substantial mature oaks occupy the top of the hill near the parking area.

Much of the landscape at the bottom of the slope in the garden area appears largely denuded of large trees and shrubs, likely as a result of recent clearing work.

#### ***Mature Trees and Shrubs***

##### ***Oak (Quercus sp.)***

There are several large oaks (greater than 12” in diameter) on the property. One mature oak adjacent to the retaining stone wall northwest of the entry drive circle has large logs placed on its root zone, which could threaten its health and longevity. Other large mature oaks are located north and east of the entry drive circle.

##### ***Blue Spruce (Picea sp.)***

There is a large blue spruce present in the eastern boxwood circle along the historic driveway. It is possible that this dates to the historic period, as spruce was mentioned in a 1947 estate sale advertisement for Rock Hill.

##### ***Hemlock (Tsuga sp.)***

These trees were observed both adjacent to the eastern rock wall, (where it was likely planted as a screen tree) and mid-slope in the woodland area.





*Level terraced area (recently rototilled) at the garden terrace (March 2011).*



*View to cleared area at the bottom of the slope, taken from the historic driveway. (March 2011).*



*Pine (Pinus sp.)*

Pine trees were observed adjacent to the eastern rock wall, likely introduced as screening trees.

*American Holly (Ilex opaca)*

There are several large American hollies in the garden and woodland areas of the property, including a small grove of hollies in the northern portion of woodland area now threatened by a downed tree on/adjacent to them.

*Rhododendron (Rhododendron sp.)*

A grove of mature rhododendrons is present at the toe of the slope in the woodland area. Several rhododendrons appear to be badly damaged by recent tree felling at the top of the slope; logs have been left along the slope and have crushed several rhododendrons.

*Mature oak near entry drive circle with heavy debris at its base (March 2011). Heavy debris piled on tree roots can damage mature trees.*





*Rhododendrons near the stone steps (February 2011) and (March 2011).*

***Boxwood (Buxus sp.)***

Several large and likely historic boxwood line the former driveway, and a cluster of boxwood grows in the center of the circular drive; all of these appear to have been at least occasionally maintained. Some appear to suffer from chlorosis. There is a cluster of boxwood at the top of the slope in the woodland area; the condition of some of these plants may be threatened by recent clearing.

***Beech (Fagus sp.)***

A few large beech trees are clustered along the eastern side of the historic drive way, and four additional beeches are planted in a row on the hill along the northwestern side of MACAA building.

***Southern magnolia (Magnolia grandiflora)***

The magnolia was observed adjacent to the eastern rock wall, likely introduced as a screen tree.

***Saucer magnolia (Magnolia x soulangeana)***

There are four large saucer magnolia trees planted on the garden terraces, two on each terrace level.

***Recently Introduced Vegetation***

Other vegetation observed at Rock Hill appeared less likely to be historic, given the size, species, or growth rate of the plant.

- Redbuds (*Cercis canadensis*) – Small redbud trees were noted to the west of the terraces.
- Tulip poplars (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) – Tulip poplars were found throughout the property, and in abundance in the woodland area. This fast-growing species is one of the first to volunteer in agricultural or garden landscapes that have been left fallow; its size is not a reliable indicator of its age.
- Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) – This invasive species was observed in large numbers in the southern portion of the property.
- Beech saplings (*Fagus sp.*)– These were observed in the woodland area.



*Boxwood planted  
at the driveway  
(March 2011).*



*Debris laid on  
boxwood in  
woodland area  
(March 2011).*





- Ironwood (*Carpinus caroliniana*) – These trees were observed intermixed with the hollies in the woodland area.
- Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis sp.*) – One plant was noted along the western wall near the location where the wall begins to curve away from Schenk’s Branch.
- Periwinkle (*Vinca minor*) – A groundcover layer of periwinkle (an invasive species) was present throughout the woodland, as well as on the terrace slopes.
- Recent shrub plantings (most with tags still attached) were noted throughout the rock terraces. Species included Andromeda (*Pieris japonica*), rhododendron, azalea, unidentified evergreens, hollies, and others.
- Daffodils (*Narcissus sp.*) – Several clumps of daffodils are present in and along the terraces, along the southern slope and in the woodland area.
- Nandina (*Nandina domestica*) – Nandina shrubs were noted on the eastern side of the driveway.



*Saucer magnolia*  
at terrace  
gardens (March  
2011)

### **Circulation**

Circulation throughout Rock Hill includes vehicular and pedestrian circulation systems, such as the vehicular entrance drives from the 250 Bypass and Park Street, and the parking area; and pedestrian circulation systems such as stone-paved paths and concrete sidewalks.

#### ***Historic driveway***

An asphalt driveway that was used historically to enter the property extends from the Route 250 Bypass at the southeastern corner of the property and curves up the hillside to the former Rock Hill house location. The driveway is

surfaced in asphalt and lined with stone, and ends at a circular turn-around. The accumulation of soil and debris on the driveway is the consequence of soil erosion, which may result from lack of maintenance. A low triangular planting bed divides the entrance drive at the Route 250 Bypass.

***Stone steps***

There are two sets of stone steps in the woodland area. There are stone steps along the western wall that descend from the garden area into the woodland area, which are roughly 100 feet long from top to bottom. The treads are typically 4-feet long and 2-feet deep with a rise of approximately 6 to 8 inches. Another set of stone steps, whose treads are similar in dimension to the first, negotiates the steep western slope of Rock Hill, creating a meandering switchback path. Both sets of steps have a stone edging on one side, with substantially deteriorating mortar. Additional stone steps are discussed with their associated stone terrace walls under “Buildings and Structures.”

***Parking lot***

The asphalt-surfaced parking lot is located at the crest of the hill, and occupies approximately ¾ acre in the northeastern quadrant of the property.

***Entrance drive***

A new two-lane asphalt paved entrance driveway enters the site from Park Street through the stone walls in the northeast corner of the property.

*Historic driveway  
(March 2011).*





**Sidewalks**

A 4-foot-wide concrete sidewalk lines the back (western) side of the MACAA buildings. On the eastern side of the building, there are 6-foot wide concrete walks abutting the northern and western sides of the parking lot with walkways branching off to the building entrances.



*Stone stairway to woodland garden area. Note mortar deterioration (February 2011).*



*Curvilinear switchback path in woodland garden area. (February 2011).*

*Asphalt paved parking area (Source: RK&K, HALS photographs).*



### **Buildings and Structures**

There are several buildings and structures on the property. The buildings are located in a linear configuration on the hilltop. The only actively used buildings appear to be those associated with MACAA programs. Most are constructed of brick or concrete; however, one stone building is located near the southern end of the row of buildings. The major structures include the substantial stone retaining walls that create the garden terraces and the stone perimeter walls that line the property. These random rubble masonry stone walls include local varieties of slate, schist, gneiss, and green stone.

#### ***Lunchroom***

A vacant frame and concrete block building (c. 1959) is located at the southern end of the line of buildings at the top of the hill. It has an above ground basement due to the sloping terrain. Most of the windows were broken, and the overhang of the flat roof shows extensive deterioration.

#### ***Stone garage***

A historic one-story stone garage (c. 1930) is located adjacent to the southwestern corner of the MACAA buildings. The building has a stone exterior and hipped slate roof. The window casings and door appear to be rotting, the gutters appeared to be overflowing with debris, and areas of failure were noted on the roof overhang. There is moss and woody vegetation growing on the stone walls, although the walls themselves appeared to be in good condition.

#### ***Office building***

This brick-clad office building (c. 1959) was formerly a library. It is located to the east of the stone building. A covered breezeway lies between the two buildings.

#### ***One story office building***

This building (c. 1959) historically contained classrooms.





***One story office building***

This building (c. 1959) historically contained classrooms.

***Child care facility***

This building (c. 1959) historically contained classrooms.

***Perimeter stone wall***

The Rock Hill property line is defined by an uncoursed rubble masonry wall, approximately 4.5-feet high, with some variation in height along its length. A portion of the original wall adjacent to the Route 250 Bypass was removed and rebuilt when the bypass was constructed. In the woodland area, there is a large gap in the western wall created by a downed tree outside the property; it is located near the bottom of the stone steps before the wall curves toward the slope. A second large constructed gap is located along the southern wall.

***Lower terraces with stone retaining walls***

There are two sets of uncoursed rubble masonry terrace walls located in the garden area. For the purposes of identification in this report, the lower (southern) terraces have been numbered 1 through 5 from east to west. Terraces 1 through 4 are roughly 40 feet by 40 feet, while terrace 5 is approximately 80 feet by 40 feet. The retaining walls of the terraces range in height from approximately two to four feet. Sections of the walls appear to have been constructed with two different types of stone and mortaring techniques, and the stone work appears to have been laid in contrasting patterns. These different patterns may indicate that the construction was undertaken during different time periods or by different craftspeople.

*Perimeter stone wall (March 2011).*



Crumbling mortar and dislodged stones were noted on both site visits. In particular, on the February 8, 2011 site visit, the southern wall on terrace 1, adjacent to the steps, appeared to be in danger of failing. On a March 25th site visit, the same wall had collapsed, posing a threat both to safety and to the structural integrity of the remainder of the terrace wall.

Along the eastern wall at terrace 2 adjacent to the steps, the retaining walls are deteriorating, and there appear to be other areas of potential wall failure throughout the terraces. Vegetation removal around the walls appears to have led to a weakening of the masonry; erosion and poor drainage may have also contributed to the generally poor condition of the retaining walls.

*Contrasting stonework on terrace wall (February 2011).*





***Upper terraces with stone retaining walls***

There are three uncoursed rubble masonry wall terraces located north of the lower terraces. The walls support three grass-covered terraces measuring approximately 35 feet by 45 feet, each with a rounded corner on the southwest edge. The walls are approximately two feet high and 150 feet long. Unlike the lower terraces, these have cast concrete steps rather than mortared stone steps. One set of steps, which was present during an archeological assessment in 2007, is now missing.



*Deteriorating terrace  
1 stairs and walls in  
February, 2011.  
Note the wall  
condition on the right.*



*Failure of the same  
terrace 1 wall in  
March 2011.*



**Stone steps between terraces**

Most of these mortared stone steps are between two and three feet wide, and have between three and five treads. Mortar failure and stone slippage was noted during the winter and spring 2011 field surveys.

**Stone fireplace**

Located in the woodland area, the stone fireplace appeared to be intact, although deterioration of the flagstone base was noted.

**Entry gate**

Two columns mark the historic entry to the Rock Hill property. The columns are constructed of brick finished with stucco into which the name has been inscribed and painted white. The columns have cast concrete caps. The stucco on both columns is deteriorating. The mortar between the western column and stone wall appears to have completely deteriorated, and there is now an approximately two inch gap between the two.

*Upper terraces. Note missing stairs on central terrace. Building in upper left is an unused lunchroom likely associated with Rock Hill Academy (March 2011).*



*Entry gate columns (RKK).*



### ***“Zen” Garden***

A “Zen” garden has been recently constructed at terrace 3, where the earth has been covered with sand and rocks placed in specific locations on the sand. The sand is edged with brick, which is further surrounded by disks sawn from logs set in a bed of mulch.

### **Views and Vistas**

#### ***Views to Schenk’s Branch***

There are views to Schenk’s Branch from the woodland garden area, and obscured views from the southwestern portion of the garden area.

#### ***Views to McIntire Park***

There are views to McIntire Park from the woodland garden area, and obscured views from the southwestern portion of the garden area.

### **Small-scale Features**

#### ***Unidentified small-scale feature***

There is what may be a water pump in the woodland garden area, near the rhododendron grove.

#### ***Pipe***

A long above-ground pipeline stretches across the woodland area towards Schenk’s Branch.



*“Zen” garden located on a garden terrace (March 2011).*



*View towards  
Schenk's Branch.  
(Source: RK&K).*



*View towards  
McIntire Park.  
(Source: RK&K).*





## **Conclusion**

The preliminary documentation of the landscape conditions and systems at Rock Hill suggests that there are areas of the landscape that are well-used and maintained, such as the parking area, but that other areas with a higher concentration of historic features (such as the garden and woodland areas) are deteriorating rapidly. Vegetation and many of the stone structures appear to be undergoing the greatest amount of change at this time. The deterioration is likely due to a combination of factors, including age, weather, lack of maintenance, activities such as vegetation clearing, structural failure from erosion, mortar deterioration due to moisture and lack of maintenance, and fallen trees.

Because it is unknown at this time how extensive the changes to the property have been in the years preceding the MOA, the age of many landscape features and systems is not perfectly understood. The condition of remaining historic features appears to be changing rapidly. HALS photographic documentation undertaken for this project provides an important record of the landscape before recent vegetation clearing was undertaken, and, coupled with historic plans and photographs (not found despite extensive research), may provide new clues about the nature of the historic vegetation that has been removed in recent months.

## 4 ANALYSIS

This summary evaluation of Rock Hill's significance and integrity is based upon the information contained in several documents including:

- Draft "Historical Summary of Rock Hill Landscape," 2011, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources' "Intensive Level Surveys for Rock Hill"
- "Revised Environmental Assessment: Route 250 Bypass Interchange at McIntire Road, City of Charlottesville, Virginia, 2009" by the United States Department of Transportation and Virginia Department of Transportation
- "Phase 1 Cultural Resources Investigation: Route 250 Bypass Interchange at McIntire Road, Charlottesville, Virginia" by John Milner Associates, 2007

The historic property's importance to the City of Charlottesville has been made clear by the demonstration of community interest in its preservation. Rock Hill has been the subject of multiple recent newspaper articles and various activities by volunteer groups who have undertaken vegetation clearing and other clean-up projects during 2010 and 2011. The property's prominent location on the Route 250 Bypass has ensured its visibility not only by its neighbors, but also by those who drive past it on a regular basis. This informal recognition of Rock Hill's historic importance is a factor in the decision to preserve the property.

However, eligibility for the National Register is the official standard used to recognize a property's significance and integrity. According to the *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register a cultural landscape must be significant to American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture and must possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and meet at least one or more of the following criteria:

- A. [Be] associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. [Be] associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. [Embody] the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.<sup>1</sup>

### Local Historic Importance of Rock Hill

Local historians and preservation experts have suggested several possible areas of significance for the Rock Hill landscape. Some of these historical associations may have local importance without rising to the level of National Register significance. These areas of local historical interest include:

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<sup>1</sup> NR Bulletin 15, accessed in April 2011 at [http://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/nrb15\\_2.htm](http://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/nrb15_2.htm).

- *Its ownership by Eugene Bradbury.* Eugene Bradbury was a prominent local architect who designed numerous important buildings in the area. He may have made architectural modifications to the missing Rock Hill house.
- *The residential garden's complexity.* According to local historians, the former residential garden's original design was one of the "most complex" in the City of Charlottesville.<sup>2</sup> However, with little intact historic vegetation and no historic plans, it is difficult to determine how complex the complete landscape design may have been. The density of features, such as terraces and walls, is not an indication of design complexity by itself. A former owner's daughter noted the "stone parterres" surrounding the entire property, and an architectural historian suggested that the terraces were used for crops and flower gardens.<sup>3</sup> But these suggestions have not been substantiated, and do not provide enough evidence to support the claim that the landscape design was exceptionally complex in relationship to the design of other local gardens.
- *The stone used in the garden may have been quarried on site.* Local historians have suggested that the stone for the walls and terraces may have been quarried on the site.<sup>4</sup> However, no physical evidence remains to suggest that stone for the garden was quarried on the current Rock Hill property. The quarry was likely across the Route 250 Bypass on property now occupied by the Charlottesville Rescue Squad.
- *Its association with other important Charlottesville residents.* Local architectural historians have noted that Rock Hill is "important as the home of the violin playing brother of Jefferson's master builder, James Dinsmore."<sup>5</sup> While perhaps of local interest, this association would not qualify the property for listing on the National Register under Criterion B, which requires a closer personal association with people of significance. In addition, it appears based on research undertaken for this report and described in greater detail in the draft "Historical Summary of Rock Hill Landscape," 2011, that this connection with James Dinsmore may be incorrect.

## Landscape Significance

The historic design significance of the Rock Hill landscape is due largely to the design and construction of the substantial residential garden landscape. Although no professional landscape designer or gardener has been associated with the creation of Rock Hill gardens, its organization suggests that someone familiar with the garden styles of the era was involved with its construction over time. Owner Rev. Porter was a member of the City's Beautification Committee, suggesting his possible knowledge of landscape and garden design. It has been suggested that Porter may have used the landscape as a private "public works" project by employing local Charlottesville residents during the Depression Era,

<sup>2</sup> "Unhidden Treasure: Rock Hill estate gardens revealed" *The Hook*, Monday Oct 11, 2010 in issue #0941.

<sup>3</sup> "Burned and Bypassed: Rock Hill has a ghost of a garden" *The Hook*, Thursday Nov 4, 2010 in issue #0945.

<sup>4</sup> "Unhidden Treasure: Rock Hill estate gardens revealed" *The Hook*, Monday Oct 11, 2010 in issue #0941.

<sup>5</sup> "Burned and Bypassed: Rock Hill has a ghost of a garden" *The Hook*, Thursday Nov 4, 2010 in issue #0945.



although no clear evidence to support this claim has been discovered at the time of this report.

A “heavily crafted garden,” Rock Hill was designed in an eclectic style that mixed elements of Colonial Revival and Picturesque traditions, which remained popular through the 1940s in the United States.<sup>6</sup> According to the Cultural Landscape Foundation, the Colonial Revival style employed

“well-ordered geometric gardens using primarily the garden forms of Dutch and British Renaissance gardens, made popular in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The design style incorporates elements such as parterres, allées, precisely laid walks, planting beds with crisp edges of low walls, formal boxwood parterres, and a four-way cross plan. ... This style of garden was employed predominantly in conjunction with Colonial Revival houses.”<sup>7</sup>

Colonial Revival elements are visible in the simple boxwood parterres which front the missing house, as well as the linear terrace gardens on the southern slope. The Picturesque style makes some appearance in the terraces through the rough-hewn character of its walls and stairs. Landscape historian Elizabeth Barlow Rogers notes that the origin of the term *Picturesque* developed from the process of composing sketches or paintings with a foreground, mid-ground and background. She explains, “Picturesque meant scenery that because of its boldly projecting outcrops of rock, contrasts of dark and light, [and] compositional groupings of trees...was...naturally suitable for picture making....”<sup>8</sup> According to the Cultural Landscape Foundation, the Picturesque style

...sought to evoke [a] “natural” landscape appearance of rougher terrain and dramatic asymmetric composition in contrast to the axial geometry of earlier Renaissance and Baroque landscapes, such as Versailles. While British landscape critics distinguished the “Beautiful” (as seen in the rolling pastoral designs of Lancelot “Capability” Brown) from the wildly dramatic “Picturesque” (replete with ravines, dead trees and artificial ruins) America combined these alternative approaches to the “natural” landscape aesthetic within the term, “The Picturesque.” .... As part of the Beaux Arts era, [the Picturesque style] continued to thrive until the 1940s as the larger landscape setting for many estate-scale Neoclassical dwellings and associated formal garden complexes. ... American designers often placed formal gardens... adjacent to the house (or linked to it by terraces and pergolas), locating these Beaux

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6 Dovetail Cultural Resource Group, “Historic American Landscapes Survey: Rock Hill Estate”, March 8, 2012.

7 “Colonial Revival,” The Cultural Landscape Foundation, accessed in March 2011 at <http://tclf.org/content/colonial-revival>.

8 Elizabeth Barlow Rogers, *Landscape Design: A Cultural and Architectural History*, (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2001), p. 252.

Arts features within a greater Picturesque naturalistic designed landscape context.<sup>9</sup>

Analysis of the Rock Hill garden design suggests that there were three main areas of the historic landscape which show evidence of different styles and which may have been constructed over time. The wooded hillside on the western portion of the property evoked a picturesque landscape, with its clusters of dark rhododendrons and American hollies, rock outcrops, rough stone staircases, large trees, and views to McIntire Park and hills surrounding the property. Much of the southern portion of the property was more Colonial Revival in style, with rectilinear terraced gardens, ornamental trees and shrubs, and a boxwood-lined driveway, although the missing pond and clusters of flowering shrubs referenced picturesque garden traditions. The northern section of the landscape was the domestic area, dominated by an orchard in the northeast—an area that today contains a level grass field and a parking lot.

At the center of this landscape was the Rock Hill house. Although no known plans remain to describe the building, historic photographs suggest that the house contained architectural elements often associated with Early Classical or Greek Revival styles, such as the colonnaded porches. Modifications during its history added Second Empire details such as the two-story bay window. Eugene Bradbury may have been responsible for the changes in the building and landscape that reflect the Colonial Revival style. The house no longer exists.

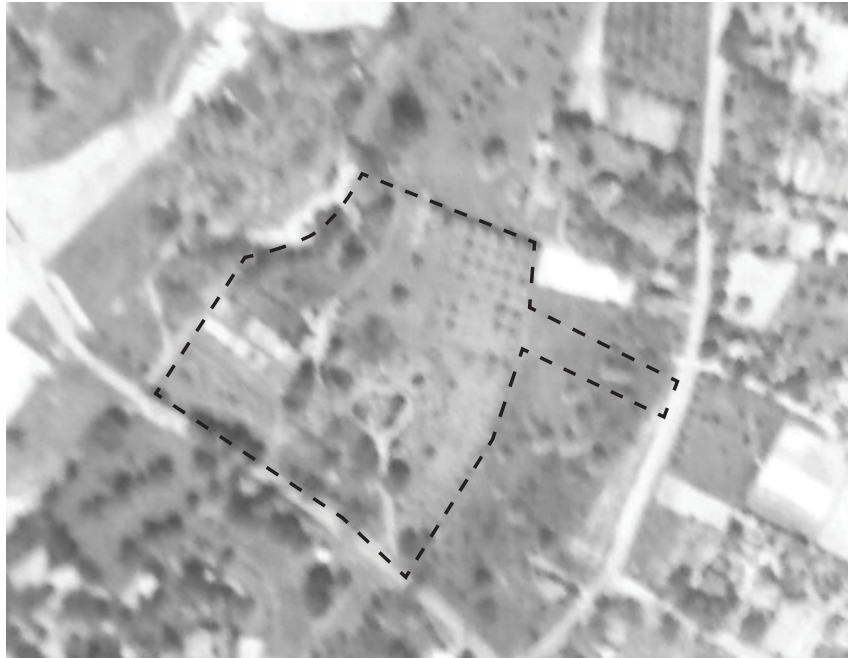
Substantial stone masonry features unite the landscape; these include the remaining garage, the perimeter stone walls that mark the property boundary, the outdoor stone fireplace, stone-lined paths, and the stone retaining walls and steps that make up the terraced gardens. Along with the rock outcrops that dot the hillside, these stone features dominate the landscape and provide the underlying framework or armature for the historic landscape design, in conjunction with the main drive and pathways.

The aerial photographs on the following pages provide the basis for the analysis of the historic landscape of Rock Hill. The 1937 photo clearly shows the entry drive and circular drive, as well as the terraces and the missing orchard in the northeast corner of the property. There are groups of trees or other vegetation throughout the property, but the largest concentration of these is at the southeastern property line and the southeast corner. Much of the property appears to be maintained in lawn. Other features are evident, but difficult to identify with certainty due to the limits of the photograph's resolution. There appear to be a row of trees fronting the road along the southern property boundary, on either side of the entryway from (the now missing) Rugby Road. A curvilinear path or other feature (now missing) appears to skirt the eastern edge of the terraces and continues to the northern property boundary.

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<sup>9</sup> "Picturesque," Cultural Landscape Foundation, accessed in March 2011 at <http://tclf.org/content/picturesque-0>.

1937 Aerial photo of Rock Hill. Note terraces and entry drive.



The 1957 aerial shows a great increase in the amount of tree and/or vegetative cover, along with the (newly-built) Route 250 Bypass. The circular driveway remains evident, along with the orchard in the northeast. It looks as though a wall may have been constructed around the orchard, and a rectangular shape—likely the terraces—is visible in the southwest portion of Rock Hill.

Much of the rock wall which bounds the property is visible in the 2008 aerial, as is the circular driveway and boxwoods which line it—all features which remain from the early twentieth century. The terraces are also visible in the photograph. Prominent features built in the later twentieth century are located centrally in

1957 Aerial photo of Rock Hill







*2008 Aerial photo of  
Rock Hill*

the landscape and include the garage, MAACA buildings and lunch room—built during the Rock Hill Academy era—and the parking lot. The orchard is missing, replaced by a field maintained in mown lawn. The site is more densely vegetated than it was in 1937, although the vegetation appears similar to the growth evident in the 1957 aerial.

Many garden features remain that may convey the significance of the landscape's design. At this time, it is not clear exactly when the landscape features were constructed or by whom. However, preliminary historic evidence suggests that landscape features associated with the property's design significance under Criterion C include:

### **Buildings and Structures**

The remaining building and structures built of stone materials unify the landscape. A variety of masonry techniques characterize many of these stone structures; however, these landscape features maintain a similarly rough-hewn appearance that seems to blend the Colonial Revival and Picturesque qualities for which the landscape is significant. The brick and stucco gate posts are one exception to this character, although fitting for the entrance to the highly maintained landscape, and a visual reflection of the architecture of the missing house. It is unknown when the gate posts were constructed, and it is possible that they pre-date the remaining stone garden features. The garden steps along the upper terraces appear to have been replaced over time with concrete steps; however, a large flight of stone steps lines one edge of the garden along its western wall.

Character-defining buildings and structures:

- Stone garage
- Gate posts

- Stone boundary wall (although portions of the southern wall were rebuilt in a new location after the construction of the Route 250 Bypass)
- Stone retaining walls
- Stone steps
- Stone outdoor fireplace

### **Vegetation**

Like the stone buildings and structures, the vegetation was both highly maintained and manipulated—the boxwood hedges—and more naturalistic in character—the woodland plantings such as the rhododendrons. Large mature oaks appear to have framed the former house, and some of these remain. Other mature trees include beeches within the woodland area and large evergreen trees such as hemlocks along the eastern perimeter of the landscape. No orchard plantings remain from the period of significance. The full extent and character of historic vegetation is difficult, if not impossible, to determine due to the lack of original planting plans, surveys, and historic photographs, and because of the extensive vegetation clearing undertaken in the last few years.

Character-defining vegetation:

- Boxwood
- Mature trees such as beech, oak, American holly, spruce, hemlock, pine, and southern magnolia.
- Rhododendron
- Wooded hillside

### **Circulation**

Historic circulation features traverse the entire property and include the original entrance drive from the missing Rugby Road, the garden paths near the terraces, and the switchback woodland path. The switchback woodland path includes low stone steps as it negotiates the hillside.

Character-defining circulation features:

- Entrance drive with stone edging
- Garden paths
- Woodland path
- Stone steps

### **Topography**

The design of the garden manipulated the existing topography through the creation of terraces on the southern side of the landscape. In the woodland area, the slope appears to have been preserved in its original condition. Rock outcrops remain as well, and may have enhanced the Picturesque qualities of the landscape.

Character-defining topography:

- Terraced hillside at garden area
- Steep slopes with path in wooded area
- Rock outcrops

## Missing Features

- House
- Pond
- Azaleas
- Orchard
- Dogwoods
- Flowering shrubs

## Period of Significance

The proposed period of significance is 1909 to 1959, which appears to include the construction of the primary design interventions and the end date of its use as a residential garden.

## Summary of Integrity

The integrity of the Rock Hill landscape has been the subject of debate within the State Historic Preservation Office, as well as among architectural historians in the Charlottesville community. The NPS defines integrity as the faithfulness of a landscape's historic identity, substantiated by the continued existence of physical characteristics that were present during its period of significance.<sup>10</sup> An evaluation of historical integrity is based on a quantitative and qualitative analysis of both historic and existing conditions data to determine if the characteristics and features that distinguished the landscape during the historic period remain.

Although the landscape retains many elements of its historic design, substantial losses and intrusions have affected the property. The burning of the Rock Hill house in the 1960s is perhaps the greatest loss, as the house was both the physical and social center of the property. The alteration of the original Rugby Road on the south edge of the Rock Hill landscape during the construction of the Route 250 Bypass also resulted in a loss of design integrity for the 1940s era garden; the original stone wall was reconstructed in a new location somewhat north of its original alignment and incorporated into the garden design. Portions of the pond were filled shortly after this. Other losses include the removal of the orchard and several outbuildings, as well as the (likely incremental) loss of ornamental plantings such as azaleas and dogwoods. Substantial new additions to the landscape include the buildings added along the top of the hill during the school's tenure; a new driveway entrance from Park Street; and a large paved parking area in the former orchard location. Small additions include utilities, such as a pipeline in the northwest corner of the property, a "Zen" garden at the terraces, and an asphalt paved area, once used as basketball courts (adjacent to the former pond location, which is now completely filled in).

The seven qualities of historic integrity defined by the National Register program are *location, setting, feeling, association, design, workmanship, and materials*. Initially developed for evaluation of buildings, these were later adapted for cultural landscapes.

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<sup>10</sup> Preservation Brief 36: Protecting Cultural Landscapes. <http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief36.htm>.



- *Location* is the place where a historic property was constructed or where the historic event occurred. Rock Hill retains its integrity of location.
- *Setting* is the physical environment of a historic property or landscape. As defined by the National Register, “whereas location refers to the specific place where a property was built or an event occurred, setting refers to the character of the place in which the property played its historical role. It involves how, not just where, the property is situated and its relationship to surrounding features and open space.<sup>11</sup> Rock Hill retains a moderate level of integrity of setting. Major intrusions include the addition of the Route 250 Bypass in place of the historic Rugby Road that originally lined the southern boundary of Rock Hill. However, the adjacent McIntire Park has changed relatively little since the period of significance, and the historic neighborhood in the Park Street area also retains much of its historic character. The stability of these surrounding landscapes helps retain Rock Hill’s integrity of setting.
- *Feeling* is a property or landscape’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. Rock Hill does not retain integrity of feeling, in part due to its transition from a residential landscape to an institutional landscape. This feeling is concentrated in the northern section of the landscape where the newer buildings, parking lot, and play area are located. The integrity of feeling in the garden area and woodland area is more intact, although is compromised by the overgrown and unmaintained quality of the landscape in these areas. The areas that have been cleared are completely denuded or now covered by invasive vegetation, and thus also compromise the integrity of feeling.
- *Association* is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property or landscape. The association between the Porters and the garden is the closest relationship relating to the significance of the site although it is compromised by the loss of their house and many of the landscape design interventions credited to them.
- *Design* is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property or landscape. Rock Hill retains a moderate to low level of integrity of design. Many of the major components of the historic garden design remain, such as the terraces, the entrance drive, the perimeter stone wall, the wooded hillside, and some possibly older vegetation. However, the absence of the house is a major loss, as the relationship between the house and garden was a vital component of the Colonial Revival landscape. Other major losses include the removal of the pond, orchard, and other outbuildings.
- *Workmanship* refers to the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory. Evidence of workmanship at Rock Hill is concentrated in the extensive stonework throughout the landscape. Although the original masons who built the walls, paths, steps, and stone garage are unknown, it is likely that a variety of people worked on the property during its history as there appear to be different masonry methods used throughout the property. Rock Hill retains

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11 National Register Bulletin 15.

a moderate level of integrity of workmanship, as lack of maintenance and deterioration have affected the rock walls and stairways.

- *Materials* are the physical elements that were combined during a particular period of time and in a particular configuration to form a historic property or landscape. Rock Hill retains low integrity of materials—with the obvious exception of its stone features—due to its loss of buildings and garden vegetation, an increase in invasive vegetation, and the intrusion of new contemporary materials such as the asphalt parking area, plastic play equipment, signs, and buildings.

The Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) originally concurred with the City of Charlottesville’s recommendation in the Phase II Intensive Level Survey that the property did not retain sufficient integrity to be eligible for listing on the National Register. However, subsequent information provided by Section 106 consulting parties led the DHR to concur that enough of Rock Hill’s designed landscape remains to convey its significance and that it still retains sufficient historic integrity to warrant its listing in the National Register. Although the property’s integrity is not particularly high due to neglect, subsequent losses, and intrusions, Rock Hill is now eligible for the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register under Criterion C for its association with landscape architecture of Colonial Revival Design.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> John Milner Associates, “Phase 1 Cultural Resources Investigation Route 250 Bypass Interchange at McIntire Road,” 2007, 102.

## 5 TREATMENT

The intent of treatment is to manage the effects of proposed changes to the historic Rock Hill landscape and to preserve remaining character-defining features. Although some areas of the landscape have been altered substantially over its history, it retains sufficient integrity to be eligible for listing in the National Register and management that is consistent with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* will ensure that it remains eligible for listing.

The proposed Interchange will result in some changes for the Rock Hill property, permanently affecting approximately 0.4 acres of its 8.066 acres. In order to protect the historic landscape from a loss of integrity, the MOA stipulated that the rehabilitation plan for the Rock Hill property “provide an accurate restoration planting plan for the gardens as well as recommendations for rehabilitating the garden terraces, stairs, walls, and other landscape features.” In addition, the MOA noted that the outer rock wall will be disassembled and reconstructed to a similar height and depth of the existing wall, “along a revised Rock Hill Landscape property boundary, northeast of the shared-use path (SUP) and Route 250 Bypass westbound off-ramp proposed by the undertaking.” The MOA further stipulated that the interchange will be screened from the Rock Hill landscape.

The treatment recommendations in this section of the report provide guidance for both the landscape rehabilitation of Rock Hill, and for the use and stewardship of the landscape.

### Treatment Approach

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties defines four possible treatment approaches to historic landscapes: preservation, rehabilitation, reconstruction, and restoration. Each treatment option was weighed based on its possible application to the landscape's condition. The treatment approach for the Rock Hill landscape currently includes its use by the current owner, MACAA, but will include the addition of interpretive features and the ramp associated with the Route 250 Bypass Interchange.

- Preservation is defined as: “the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction.”<sup>1</sup> The preservation approach is the foundation of the Treatment Plan because there are many historic landscape features remaining at

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<sup>1</sup> *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes, Preservation*, accessed online in April 2011 at [http://www.nps.gov/hps/hli/landscape\\_guidelines/preserve/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/hps/hli/landscape_guidelines/preserve/index.htm).



Rock Hill that convey its history; these features should be preserved and maintained, as they contribute to the historic character of the landscape.

- Rehabilitation is defined as: “the act or process of making possible a compatible use through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions of features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.”<sup>2</sup> Rehabilitation is the central treatment approach proposed for the Rock Hill landscape. This approach is stipulated in the MOA and is appropriate for the property at this time as the landscape will be impacted by the addition of an interchange ramp, which is being designed to minimize degradation of the remaining historic landscape features.
- Reconstruction is defined as, “The act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location.”<sup>3</sup> Because reconstruction involves recreating historic structures, it is not considered a viable option for treatment at Rock Hill. Due to a lack of detailed design plans for the missing buildings and landscape features, it would be impossible to accurately reconstruct missing features at this time.
- Restoration is defined as, “The act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period.”<sup>4</sup> This approach poses several significant problems for its application to the Rock Hill landscape. First, the contemporary features and systems in the landscape are heavily used by the current owners, MACAA. Removing these features, such as the parking lot and buildings constructed after the period of significance, would render the site unusable by its owners. Second, the standards used to guide a restoration treatment approach state, that “when contemporary alterations and additions are not planned, Restoration may be considered as a treatment.”<sup>5</sup> Therefore, given the planned alterations, this option was not considered a viable treatment approach. If additional information about historic features is gleaned in the future, it may be possible to restore elements of the landscape—such as the orchard or plantings—but at this time, there is insufficient documentation to support such a restoration.

According to the Department of the Interior’s Guidelines for Rehabilitation of Cultural Landscapes, the standards for rehabilitation include:

- A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.

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2 *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards, Rehabilitation*, accessed online in April 2011 at [http://www.nps.gov/hps/hli/landscape\\_guidelines/rehab/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/hps/hli/landscape_guidelines/rehab/index.htm).

3 *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards, Reconstruction*, accessed online in April 2011 at [http://www.nps.gov/hps/hli/landscape\\_guidelines/reconstruct/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/hps/hli/landscape_guidelines/reconstruct/index.htm).

4 <http://www.nps.gov/history/tps/standards/four-treatments/treatment-restoration.htm>.

5 <http://www.nps.gov/history/tps/standards/four-treatments/treatment-restoration.htm>.

- The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
- Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
- Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
- Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
- Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
- Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
- Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
- New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
- New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in a such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

### **Treatment Concept**

The goal of treatment at Rock Hill is to manage the alterations proposed for the landscape in a way that preserves the historic character of the garden and preserves its character-defining features. This Treatment Plan proposes a two-phased approach to the preservation of the landscape. The first phase addresses immediate preservation demands in the face of proposed changes in the landscape, including new uses such as interpretation. The second phase addresses longer-term management of the property by the current owner or once a new steward of the property has been identified, such as the City. Phased treatment recommendations are supplemented by treatment guidelines listed below.

### **Guidelines for Treatment**

Guidelines for treatment describe how to accomplish needed changes in the landscape without compromising its historic character. The guidelines outlined below are intended to complement the treatment recommendations, and to establish a general method for landscape preservation at Rock Hill.



## **Topography**

- Temporarily stabilize soil erosion with erosion control blankets, and/or by hydroseeding denuded areas.
- If grade changes are required, attempt to resolve grading through fill rather than cut in order to protect potential subsurface cultural resources.
- If land disturbing activity must be conducted in an area where archeological evaluations have not been completed, land disturbing activity should not take place before an archeological evaluation can be completed.

## **Vegetation**

Because garden landscapes require intensive maintenance and upkeep, vegetation management is a critical aspect of managing the Rock Hill landscape. Vegetation management strategies must be considered in conjunction with the management of cultural and historic resources, as well as access, safety and interpretation.

### ***Trees***

- Engage a certified arborist to assess the age and condition of mature trees on the property.
- Consult with an arborist to determine ways to restore health and prolong the life of character-defining vegetation.
- Follow any tree maintenance recommendations developed by certified arborists to protect the long-term health of mature trees.
- Develop a removal plan for hazardous trees and trees in poor condition through the services of a certified arborist experienced with historic trees and gardens.
- Remove hazard trees using a method that minimizes potential impacts on known and potential archeological and cultural landscape resources under the guidance of an historical landscape architect and an archeologist.

### ***Vegetation removal***

- Undertake vegetation removal according to the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*, available on line at <http://www.nps.gov/history/tps/standards/four-treatments/landscape-guidelines/index.htm>.
- Removal of invasive species in the vicinity of archeological and cultural resources should be undertaken by hand; in a way to minimize ground disturbance and threats to existing vegetation; and only after existing resources and landscape features are protected.

### ***Invasive vegetation***

Disturbed sites may be overwhelmed by invasive vegetation, which can lead to the degradation of the historic character of the landscape. This process is already underway at Rock Hill, and thus invasive vegetation management should be considered. Invasive vegetation management is a complex and often challenging process, one which will have to be accounted for in relation to both maintenance needs and labor capacity. Invasive vegetation is currently present through much—if not all—of the Rock Hill landscape. The rampant growth of this

vegetation threatens the historic character of the site. Long-term management commitment and a consistent approach with regular follow-up are critical to the successful control of invasive plants.

- Do not remove existing vegetation (invasive or not) without a plan for its replacement.
- Engage a qualified professional to develop a historic landscape maintenance plan.
- Engage management staff or other qualified professional to research sustainable strategies for invasive vegetation eradication and control, and to update these on a regular basis as new research becomes available.
- Eradicate disruptive invasive vegetation through sustainable methods. Consider the use of appropriate herbicides if necessary.
- Develop a list of predicted invader species, and develop sustainable strategies to prevent their colonization of cleared areas.
- Avoid vegetation management in areas which may have archeological or cultural landscape resources until further cultural resource analysis and investigation has been completed.
- Undertake ecologically-sound removal practices which minimize ground disturbance and will not damage other resources.
- Select non-invasive plants for new plantings .

#### ***New planting***

- When replacing character-defining vegetation in the future, attempt to match the species or cultivars currently on the site.
- When replacing character-defining vegetation in the future, consider using native species with similar characteristics to the missing historic plants to manage and maintain the site in more sustainable ways.
- Select plants that are not diseased or infected with any plant pathogen in order to avoid threats to existing plant communities.
- Undertake installation of new plants in areas of known or potential sensitive cultural or archeological resources using minimally-damaging planting techniques. Recommended techniques include the minimization of ground disturbance through the installation of small plants and saplings when possible; the installation of plants by hand; avoiding planting trees on steep slopes; selecting planting locations that do not conflict with or threaten existing, desirable plants; and the protection of existing plants and other resources. Acceptable planting techniques include repairing and mitigating damage to resources caused by planting.
- Any grass seeding should occur at the proper time of year, and with a seed mixture that is based on an understanding of existing soil and light conditions, hydrology, and potentially historic plants.

#### **Circulation**

- If necessary, design new pathways or other pedestrian circulation systems that are compatible in character with the historic circulation systems.
- New paths in the landscape should meet Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) standards for accessibility.

- If necessary, rehabilitate a limited number of historic paths to meet ADAAG standards for accessibility. This rehabilitation may include limited regrading of path areas, or re-setting stones to minimize excessive lippage, etc.

## **Buildings and Structures**

### ***Stone walls, terraces, building, steps and fireplace***

- Undertake stone wall demolition, repair, and construction under the supervision of masons or historic architects experienced with historic stone masonry.
- Undertake any required mortar repair according to the standards outlined in the NPS Technical Preservation Services *Preservation Brief 2: Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Masonry Buildings*, available online at <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief02.htm>.
- Stabilize walls and steps after careful analysis of their structural conditions. Follow the stabilization recommendations of a professional architectural conservator, structural engineer and/or stone mason experienced with historic stone masonry.
- Match existing mortar when replacing, duplicating, or repairing historic mortar. Consult with qualified professional to undertake mortar analysis, including sand color and gradation.
- Match historic stone when replacing or repairing historic stone.

### ***Entry gate***

- Repair stucco according to guidelines in *Preservation Brief 22: The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stucco*, available online at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief22.htm>.

### ***Asphalt paved area***

- Protect existing trees adjacent to asphalt paving according to guidelines developed by a qualified arborist.

### ***New buildings***

- If it is necessary to add buildings in the future, they should be located in areas of the landscape that have lost integrity or that are out of the main view shed of the historic garden area.
- New buildings should be compatible in scale, design, and materials with the historic landscape.

## **Interpretive Materials**

This plan proposes the addition of a new wayside exhibit to interpret the history of the site.

- Design the wayside exhibit to be sympathetic in scale and design with the historic landscape.
- Ensure the exhibit is fully accessible.



## Treatment Recommendations

The following preservation phases organize the proposed treatment recommendations into short- and long-term activities.

*Phase 1: Short term preservation* – This phase takes a program-based approach to address the immediate requirements of the MOA, including the need to interpret the Rock Hill landscape for the public, screen the road and interchange from the historic property, and move the southern perimeter stone wall to accommodate the proposed ramp.

*Phase 2: Long term preservation* – This phase employs a resource-based approach to address enhanced interpretation of the landscape, guidelines for stabilization of existing garden features, and a possible new program. Enhanced accessibility and sustainability may be addressed during this phase as well. Opportunities for additional research and surveying of the property to support interpretation are identified. The recommendations for this phase provide a basis for preservation activities to be undertaken by present or future stewards of Rock Hill.

Treatment recommendations include detailed actions that may be taken to protect the character-defining features of the Rock Hill landscape. The basic process for treatment includes the following:

- Identify, retain, and preserve: this basic action involves identifying, retaining, and preserving the characteristics, qualities, and features in a historic landscape that are important to defining its character (for example, topography, vegetation, circulation, or structures).
- Retain and maintain: these actions describe the measures that are undertaken during the process of treatment work to protect and maintain the identified character-defining feature (for example, tree pruning, slope stabilization, removal of vegetation from historic structures).
- Repair: when the character-defining features are in poor condition, then repair is recommended (for example, repointing failed mortar joints on masonry structures, etc.).
- Replace: if the feature's condition is too poor to repair, then replacement, usually in-kind (with the same form, color, detail, material, character of the original) is recommended.
- Design for missing features: when an entire character-defining feature is missing, and adequate historical information is available to successfully reproduce it for interpretive purposes, then the feature may be installed. If historical information is not available to adequately describe the feature, then a new contemporary interpretation of the feature may be undertaken in a new design (for an example of this approach, see "pond" in "Phase Two - Long Term Preservation," below).

## Phase One – Short Term Preservation

The first phase of treatment will be program-based, focused on the immediate preservation requirements described in the MOA, as necessitated by the proposed changes related to the Route 250 Bypass Interchange, and the implementation of additional programming, such as interpretation.

Phase 1 goals include:

- Accommodate the new road on the southern side of the property, including disassembling, moving, and reconstructing the southern stone wall along a revised Rock Hill Landscape property boundary, northeast of the SUP and Route 250 Bypass westbound off-ramp.
- Install vegetation to screen the view of the road from Rock Hill.
- Interpret the historic landscape through a new wayside exhibit adjacent to the SUP located on the southern side of the property.

The following recommendations address the Phase 1 goals and are organized by landscape characteristics.

### ***Topography***

The hillside topography and terracing are important character-defining features in the landscape. Treatment goals for topography are focused on protecting these features as well as potential subsurface features through controlled grading activities.

- Preserve the hill and terraced topography. Do not regrade the terraces or alter the topography of the hillside. However, grading may occur within the easements required for roadway construction.

### ***Buildings and Structures***

#### ***Stone boundary wall***

The stone boundary wall marks the Rock Hill property boundary, and – with a few exceptions – is in good to fair condition. The stone boundary wall is a character-defining feature, and the goal for treatment is to preserve the majority of the wall, with the exception of the southern portion of the boundary wall that will be moved for the construction of the interchange ramp. In this area, the goal is to reuse the



*Southern boundary wall, near western gate post (February 2011).*

stone from the existing southern boundary wall to construct a new wall within the adjusted property boundary.

- Demolish sections of the stone wall in the south, southeast and southwest of the Rock Hill property that will be affected by the interchange ramp (see plan for locations).
  - Consider salvaging stone from the demolished wall and retain it for use on the realigned wall northeast of the SUP and Route 250 Bypass westbound off-ramp.
  - Consider stockpiling salvaged stone during the construction period on paved areas, if possible, such as along the historic driveway. Minimize the stockpiling of stones under trees or near other features that could be damaged.
  - If any salvaged stone remains unused after the reconstruction of the southern boundary wall, consider retaining it for future use on the property. Consider long-term stockpiling of the unused stone in an unobtrusive location with the property owner's permission.
- Reconstruct the southern boundary wall.
  - Match the height (approximately 4 feet 6 inches tall) of the existing stone wall that runs along the Route 250 bypass.
  - Match the depth of the existing stone wall (approximately 1 foot).
  - Match the uncoursed rubble masonry character of the existing stone wall, including mortar treatment and stone placement.
  - Create a curving alignment of the wall where it ties into the gate posts adjacent to the driveway (see plan) to resemble the alignment of the existing wall.
  - Tie in to the existing wall on the western boundary at an angle (see plan) to resemble the alignment of the existing wall.
- If it is necessary to use new stone during the construction of the boundary wall, match the existing historic stone to the extent possible.
- Retain and preserve all other sections of stone walls within the property. See guidelines under "Guidelines for Treatment" above for additional information about the preservation of stone walls.

### ***Vegetation***

During its heyday, the garden at Rock Hill was reported to have extensive vegetation, including flowering trees, shrubs, and evergreens. Mature trees such as beech, oak, American holly, spruce, hemlock, pine, and southern magnolia, and shrubs such as rhododendron and boxwood exemplify the residential garden design. The existing vegetation at Rock Hill, although compromised, provides some of the evidence for what existed during the period of significance. The treatment goal is to preserve the remaining vegetation and protect mature plants to assist their continued survival to the extent possible. The MOA calls for the addition of screening vegetation to protect the landscape from the visual intrusion of the Bypass and Interchange. New plantings also provide an opportunity to evoke the historic character of the garden landscape. Therefore, this plan recommends the addition of new trees and shrubs along the relocated stone wall on the south side of the garden.



- Install small and medium sized ornamental shrubs along the new alignment of the southern stone wall. Use flowering shrubs to evoke the ornamental character described in historic accounts of Rock Hill. These shrubs could include azaleas and others mentioned in plant lists for the historic property.
- Install trees along the new alignment of the southern stone wall to provide screening.
- See plan for planting locations.
- Coordinate invasive vegetation removal with the construction of masonry walls and soil erosion control measures.
- Retain and maintain all character-defining vegetation, such as boxwoods, flowering shrubs and healthy mature trees, that are not required to be removed due to construction activities.
- Preserve and maintain healthy, mature trees.
  - Discontinue stockpiling material under trees.

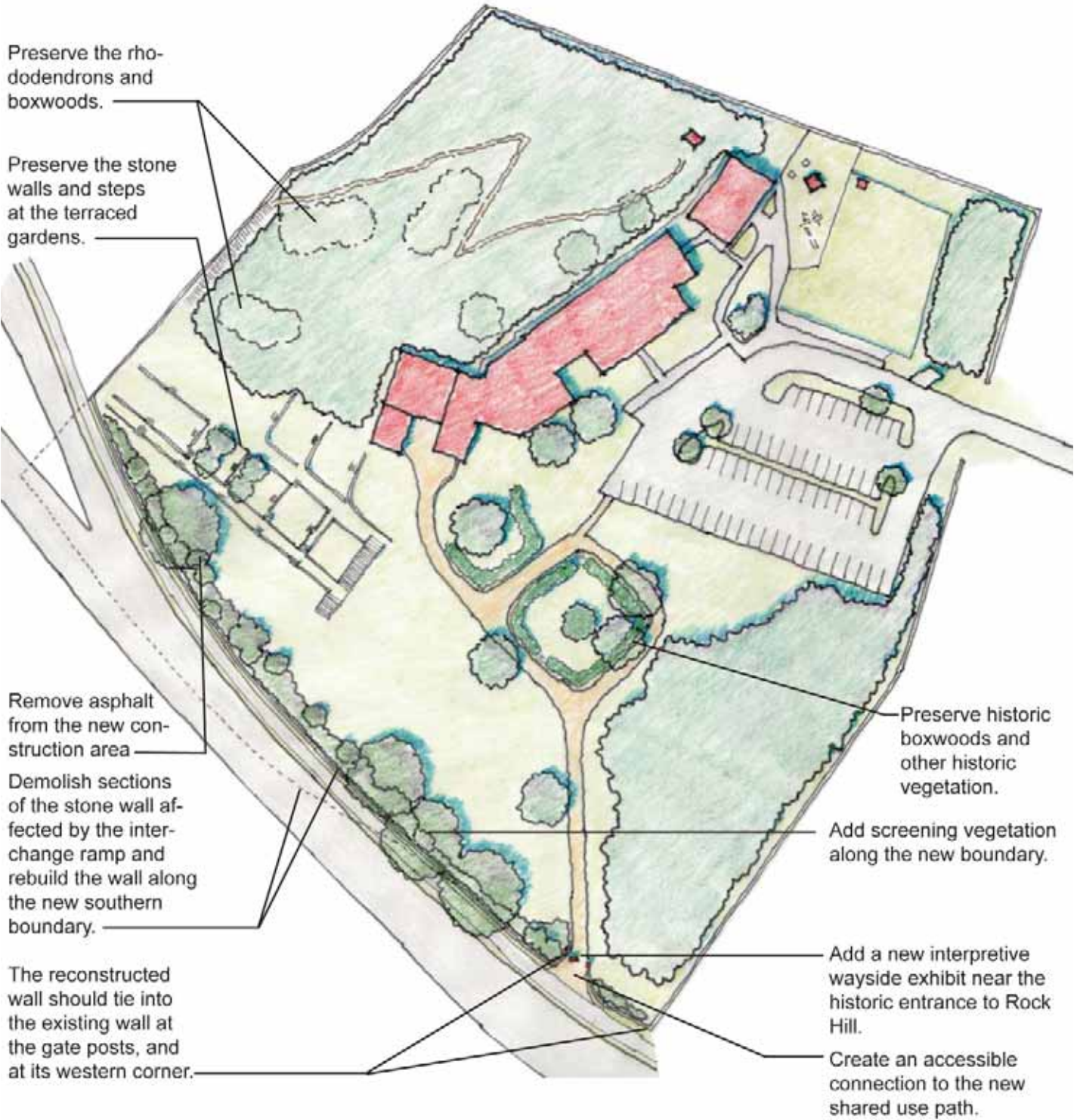
***Interpretive Materials***

Interpretation is an important proposed new use at the Rock Hill landscape. This plan proposes the addition of a new wayside exhibit to interpret the history of the site.

- Install an interpretive wayside exhibit at the historic driveway (see plan) to enable the public to view the interpretive materials for Rock Hill and to see into the landscape.

Other actions that are not directly called for in the MOA but that may be undertaken in conjunction with Phase 1 activities could include the following:

- Regrade the historic driveway at its intersection with the SUP to provide a smooth connection to the SUP. The intent of minor regrading would be to prevent a vertical gap between the SUP and the historic driveway.
- Remove the asphalt surface south of terraces (see plan for location). Replace asphalt with grass or plantings as specified by the planting plan. Sections of the asphalt surface are located within the ROW for construction, and will need to be removed to construct the new stone wall.



Phase 1 Treatment



## **Phase Two – Long Term Preservation**

The second phase of treatment will require continued research to support the enhancement of the historic character of the landscape and to provide additional interpretation opportunities at Rock Hill. Of particular importance is the need to undertake all treatment projects under the direction of appropriate specialists including historical landscape architects, historical architects, archeologists, and qualified technicians and artisans. It is necessary for qualified professionals and technicians with cultural and natural resources maintenance experience to plan—and in some cases, execute—landscape management efforts.

Phase 2 goals include:

- Stabilize stone walls, steps, paths, historic trees, and other historic vegetation as well as the erosion-prone areas in the southern half of the property.
- Undertake additional research and surveys, which were outside the scope of this effort, to support preservation and interpretation (e.g. archeological surveys or context studies for the school's history).
- Further interpret the historic landscape.
- Enhance site accessibility.
- Enhance site sustainability.
- Consider additional programming.

### ***Buildings and Structures***

#### ***Buildings***

The missing house is a critical lost feature which would be difficult if not impossible to replace, although its location could be interpreted. The stone garage is believed to date to the period of significance, but other buildings at Rock Hill convey the history of the Rock Hill Academy. Although the property is not currently eligible for the National Register because of associations with the Massive Resistance movement, it is possible that future research may suggest that Rock Hill is eligible under Criterion A for its educational use, and that the extant buildings provide an important tangible link to this history. Therefore, this plan recommends retaining the collection of buildings at the top of the hill for future interpretation of this period in the landscape's history. If no historic context for these buildings is established, then it may be possible to mitigate their appearance in the landscape.

- Consider painting the non-historic buildings a dark color to minimize their appearance from McIntire Park and from within the Rock Hill landscape.
- Consider interpreting the role of the newer buildings during the period of Massive Resistance through information in wayside exhibits or other interpretive materials.
- Consider adding new shade-tolerant evergreen vegetation on the west (woodland) side of the buildings to screen the buildings from McIntire Park. These plants may include rhododendrons that have a historic precedent in the landscape.
- Consider interpreting the missing house through the addition of a surface installation located along the approximate outline of the missing building



footprint. The surface installation could be a simple wood, stone, or concrete line in the landscape that depicts the size and shape of the historic house.

- Retain and repair the stone garage.
- Avoid adding new buildings into the landscape.
  - If it is necessary to add new buildings, consider screening new buildings with appropriate vegetation that is compatible with the historic vegetation.

#### *Pond*

Although the historic pond is missing, it may be possible to create a new storm water management feature in the approximate location and shape of the missing pond to help interpret the character of the historic garden.

- Consider installing a new pond in the approximate location of the historic pond.
- If it is not possible to install a new pond, consider designing and constructing a stormwater feature (dry detention pond or rain garden) to evoke the missing pond and to provide sustainable storm water management on site.

#### *Stone terrace retaining walls and steps*

The stone terrace retaining walls and steps contribute to the landscape's significance as a Colonial Revival garden. They are in fair to poor condition, and are failing in some locations. The goal of treatment is to stabilize, preserve, and rehabilitate these character-defining features.

- Fence off damaged walls and steps so they can be evaluated, repaired, and protected from further damage.
- Maintain the size and shape, location, and materials of the existing walls and steps.
- Repair retaining walls that are in poor condition. See guidelines under "Guidelines for Treatment" above for additional information about the repair of stone walls.

#### *Stone steps between terraces*

- Retain and repair stone steps between terraces.
- Retain concrete steps between terraces unless additional documentation demonstrates that they post-date the period of significance. Replace with stone steps that match the existing stone steps if possible.
- See guidelines under "Guidelines for Treatment" above for additional information about the preservation of stone steps.

#### *Stone fireplace*

- Retain and repair this fireplace, as needed. See guidelines under "Guidelines for Treatment" above for additional information about the preservation of stone terraces.

#### *Entry gate*

The entry gate, its posts inscribed with the name "Rock Hill," is an important symbol of the property's history as a stately residence. The treatment goal

for this character-defining feature is to repair it so that it is stabilized and more closely resembles its historic appearance.

- Retain gate posts at the former entry to Rock Hill.
- Retain undamaged stucco, brick, and concrete material.
- Repair damaged stucco, brick or concrete.
- Retain historic name inscription and match repaired inscription to it.
- Consider replacing the lights that were located historically on the gate posts with a model that resembles the historic lights (see historic photograph below right).
- Consider replacing the gates based on historic documentation such as photographs.

### **Vegetation**

The Phase 2 goal for vegetation is to continue to protect the site from damaging invasive vegetation; preserve historic vegetation; and, to the extent possible, add new trees and shrubs that evoke the character of historic vegetation. At this time, no historic planting plan dating to the period of significance has been found. Limited historic photographs document the character of certain areas within the landscape, and suggest that small masses of flowering shrubs such as azaleas may have been placed throughout the garden area. As of yet there is no historic evidence for flower gardens or vegetable gardens at Rock Hill. The historic vegetation at the terraced gardens is unknown. Some of the mature trees may remain from the period of significance, and are character-defining features of the landscape. If more information is discovered about the historic planting at some time in the future, it may be possible to restore elements of the garden vegetation.

- Consider adding new shrubs and trees in historical locations, such as along the hillside in the garden area, along the historic driveway, in the historic orchard location, and near the historic pond location.
  - Historic vegetation reportedly included azaleas, boxwood, yew, spruce, and other deciduous trees.



*Left: East gatepost, 2011. Note damaged stucco, brick and concrete, with partially damaged inscription.*

*Right: Photograph of west gatepost, post-1955, exact date unknown.*

- Develop historically-based planting plans to mitigate erosion.
  - Lawn may be an appropriate ground cover that provides some erosion protection.
  - Shrub massing may also prevent erosion along steep slopes.

### *Rhododendrons*

The rhododendrons are an example of the picturesque features of the woodland area of Rock Hill, and appear to be mature. They are character-defining features. The goal of treatment is to preserve the remaining rhododendrons, and assist their continued survival to the extent possible.

- Preserve rhododendron grove in woodland area of Rock Hill. Do not remove them or pile debris on them.
- Replace rhododendrons as necessary with plants that match the existing.

### *Boxwood*

The boxwood are an example of the Colonial Revival character of the garden area of Rock Hill, and likely survive from the period of significance. They are character-defining features. The goal of treatment is to preserve the remaining boxwood, and assist their continued survival to the extent possible.

- Preserve boxwood at the historic entry of Rock Hill and at the circular turn-around near the missing house location.
- Preserve naturalized boxwood in the woodland area of Rock Hill.
- Plant boxwoods along the historic entrance drive, and in other locations where boxwoods were historically located. See historic photographs for possible locations.
- If it is necessary to replace boxwoods, use varieties and cultivars that match the existing.
- Prune boxwoods to retain their shape and health.
- Monitor boxwoods for disease and pests and treat as necessary.

### *Archeology*

It is likely, based on the information provided by the cultural resources report by John Milner Associates, that subsurface resources exist to provide additional information about the conditions of the historic landscape. The goal of recommendations for cultural resources is to preserve these resources until they can be investigated by professional archeologists.

- Conduct archeological research to investigate the location of missing features in the landscape, including shrub beds, the pond, buildings, or other historic features.
- Protect identified cultural resource areas from disturbance. See “Topography” recommendations Phase 1 above.

### *Circulation*

Enhanced accessibility is a worthwhile goal at Rock Hill, although this goal is difficult to achieve, given the steep topography. Efforts to rehabilitate aspects of the landscape’s circulation may focus on increasing the accessibility of the landscape without damaging its historic character. It may be possible to provide



modest interventions with ramps or new paths that provide access to various locations throughout the landscape that were previously inaccessible.

- Preserve existing circulation systems, such as stone steps, the historic driveway, and sidewalks to the extent possible.
- Consider minimizing the appearance of circulation features that post-date the period of significance, such as the parking lot.
  - Consider reducing the size of the parking lot if possible, and replacing paved areas with new vegetation.
  - Screen the parking lot from the garden area with additional vegetation as necessary.

### *Driveway*

The driveway from the 250 Bypass to the missing house location is a remnant of the historic landscape, flanked by the gate posts. Although this driveway is no longer used, it should be preserved as a character-defining feature and for possible pedestrian access into the landscape in the future.

- Stabilize and preserve the driveway. If it is necessary to repave the driveway, use paving materials that do not detract from the historic character of the garden; match the existing paving if repairing sections of the driveway.
- Stabilize and preserve any remaining stone curbing; replace missing stones if necessary with new stone that matches the historic.
- Clear debris and soil from driveway.

### *Stone steps*

- Repair crumbling mortar between stone steps.
- Inspect all stones for damage and deterioration.
- Retain and repair all stone steps.
- If it is necessary to replace stone or mortar, match historic materials as much as possible.

### ***Views and Vistas***

Views to Schenk's Branch and McIntire Park are currently obscured by vegetation. It may be desirable to maintain this screening in the future after the development of the Meadowcreek Parkway.

- Retain vegetation between Rock Hill and Schenk's Branch and McIntire Park.

### ***Small-Scale Features***

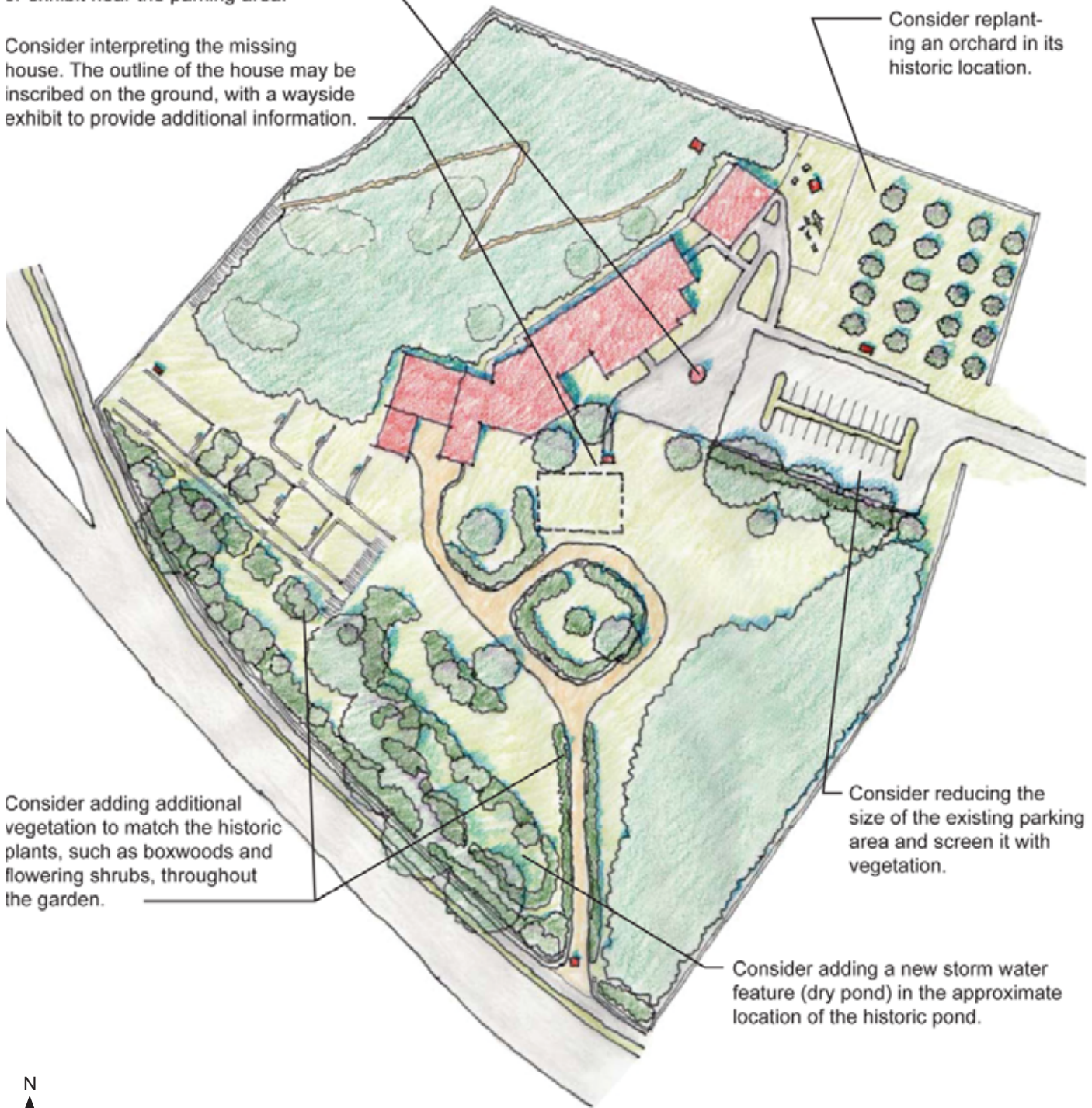
Small-scale features provide insight into the use and design style of the Rock Hill landscape. Treatment goals for small-scale features are focused on protecting and preserving any historic features.

- Retain and preserve historic small-scale features, such as historic lights, gate posts and other features. Repair these as necessary while maintaining their historic character.

Provide interpretive material at a kiosk or exhibit near the parking area.

Consider interpreting the missing house. The outline of the house may be inscribed on the ground, with a wayside exhibit to provide additional information.

Consider replanting an orchard in its historic location.



Consider adding additional vegetation to match the historic plants, such as boxwoods and flowering shrubs, throughout the garden.

Consider reducing the size of the existing parking area and screen it with vegetation.

Consider adding a new storm water feature (dry pond) in the approximate location of the historic pond.

*Phase 2 Treatment*

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