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Sponsored By:

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Worcester Art Museum

Institute Park: A History and a Future

This *Interactive Qualifying Project*, submitted to the faculty of Worcester Polytechnic Institute in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Degree of Bachelor of Science, was completed by the team members listed below:

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Abstract

Institute Park in Worcester, Massachusetts is only a shadow its former self. It has a rich history that it does not easily reveal. The goal of this project was to provide a detailed analysis of Institute Park's history and to assess the community's interest in the park's future. We have used available historical documentation, a survey, interviews, and field research to gather data. From that data we have formulated recommendations for improvements to Institute Park.

Executive Summary

Institute Park is an important part of the city of Worcester. It began as a gift from Stephen Salisbury III to the city in 1887. During the next 18 years, with the care and generosity of Mr. Salisbury, the park was transformed into an area that became very useful to the community. Over the years, the people of Worcester have spent a countless number of hours in the park enjoying the fresh air and open space. When given to the city, Institute Park, named for Worcester Polytechnic Institute upon Mr. Salisbury's request, was little more than an open field with Salisbury Pond adjoining it. Extensive amounts of landscaping, various structures and monuments were added to the grounds, enhancing the overall attractiveness of the park. However, with the death of Mr. Salisbury in 1905, the park lost a great majority of its funding and a steady decline resulted.

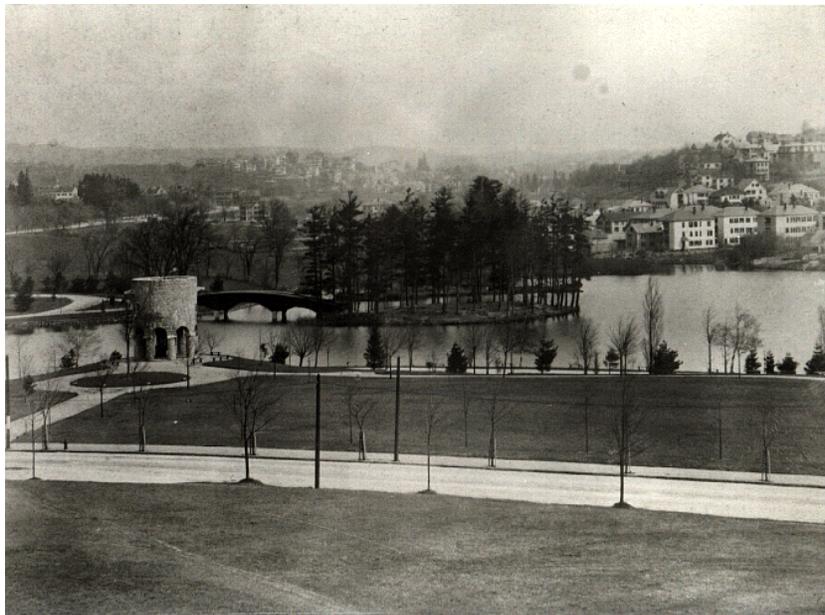


Figure 0-1: Institute Park c.1900 From: www.wpi.edu/Academics/Library/Archives/Founders/salisbury.html

The physical appearance has changed dramatically. The size of the park has also fluctuated, starting at 18 acres, increasing to 25 acres, and then being reduced back to 18 acres. Through the years, almost all of the structures that once stood in the park have been torn down and the land has not been cared for like it was in the past. The once clean Salisbury Pond, part of the headwaters to the Blackstone Canal, is now very polluted, due mostly to the abuse that industrialization and urbanization inflict upon a city. The Worcester Parks Department, the

Salisbury Pond Task Force, and the Massachusetts Audubon Society are doing their best to repair the damage, but it is a very slow process. However, the physical park still remains and the citizens of Worcester continue to use it.

The purpose of our project was to research the history of Institute Park and to show the role that it has played in the history of Worcester. Our goal was to take the historical information we find and use it to make informed recommendations on ways to improve Institute Park. By implementing these recommendations, we believe that the usage of the park will increase and Institute Park will be a better place.

During the course of the project, we explored many of the historical resources that Worcester has to offer. Our main sources of information were the Worcester Historical Museum, the Worcester Public Library, and the Archives at WPI's Gordon Library, with other information coming from the American Antiquarian Society and the library at the Worcester Art Museum. Upon collecting all possible information, a timeline of the history of Institute Park was constructed.

Visuals were an extremely important part of our project. It was more important for us to show evidence of Institute Park's decline than to talk about it. We found pictures of Institute Park from the late 1800's and early 1900's at the Worcester Historical Museum and the Archives at WPI's Gordon Library. For comparison, we went into the park and took pictures from approximately the same viewpoint as the historical pictures. By comparing the two sets of pictures, it allowed us to show others how much the park has changed and why more work should be done to improve the park.



Figure 0-2: Pictures of Institute Park taken from same location: 1905 (WHM) and Present Day

When making recommendations on ways to improve the park, we knew it was important to obtain the community's opinion. They make the most use of the park, so it would not be fair to exclude them from the scope of our project. We constructed a survey and administered it to the community surrounding Institute Park, the people most likely to use the park. Observations within the park were scheduled over a two week period. Our goal was to document the amount that the park was used, what it was being used for, and what the changes the community recommended.

The products of our project were the timeline of the history of Institute Park and the recommendations for improvements to Institute Park. Our plan was that the timeline and the recommendations would be used in some way to impact the future of Institute Park.

The recommendations that we have made are grouped into three categories: landscape, utilities and structures. The landscape recommendations deal with changes to the land in the park. Some examples are: the continued cleanup of Salisbury Pond and the addition of walkways within the park. The utilities recommendations are services that can be added in the park to benefit the public. Examples include the reopening of bathrooms in the park and the addition of a parking area. The structural recommendations deal with the addition or improvement of structures within the park. The addition of picnic tables, trash cans, two new Stone Towers, a new bridge, and the improvement of the bandstand are examples of structural recommendations we have made.

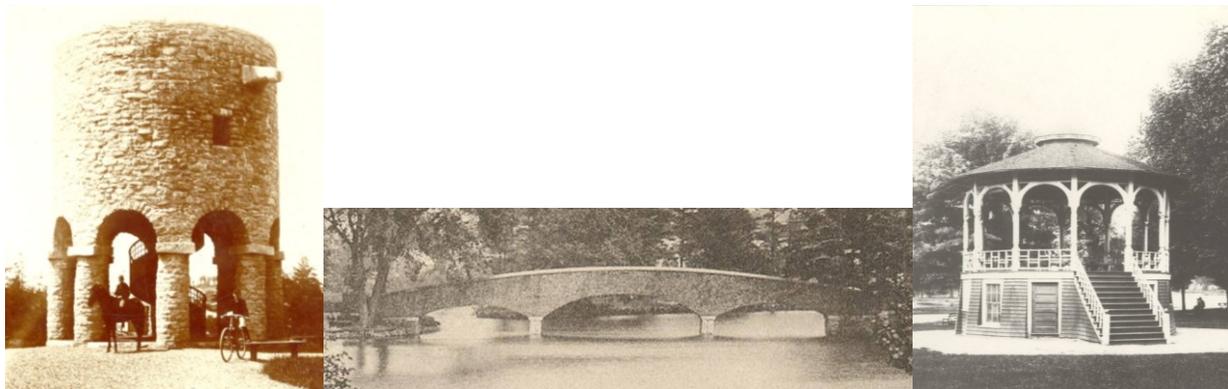


Figure 0-3:

Old Stone Tower (WHM)

Bridge on Salisbury Pond (WHM)

Old Bandstand (WHM)

By improving Institute Park, the city will be continuing with its plan to revitalize Worcester. One of the city's major projects, Gateway Park, is adjacent to Institute Park. The Gateway Park plan calls for the redevelopment of a former industrial site into a commercial and residential area. Institute Park provides the open space necessary for the redevelopment plan. By

revitalizing the two adjacent areas, it would make the northern section of Worcester a more desirable place to live and work than it currently is.

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1 Introduction

A park is a piece of land that has been put aside for public use. It serves for recreational and ornamental purposes and the protection of important environmental resources. The image of a park may bring to mind open grasslands, shade trees, winding footpaths, park benches, memorial monuments or maybe even a sparkling body of water. Throughout American history, parks have served as a place for social gathering and recreation for people of all ages. For this reason, public parks have truly become a piece of Americana. Urban parks can provide fields for baseball games and picnics, paths for strolling or leisurely jogs, ponds for fishing, swimming and boating, and even small buildings for other means of entertainment. As development occurs and cities grow, the importance of urban parks increases. Urban parks not only provide for the recreational needs of the city, but also provide a place of fresh air and green grass to escape from the dirty air and black asphalt of the inner city (Cranz, 1982).

Parks have played a key role in the development of Worcester throughout the past 150 years. Beginning with Elm Park in 1854, the first purchase of land by a city in the US intended for use as a public park, the city of Worcester now has a parks system that extends to 53 parks, occupying approximately 1250 acres (Worcester, 2003). One ramification of having these open areas of natural beauty is the need to maintain these landscapes. When a park becomes neglected, and falls into disrepair, usage of the park and overall attractiveness of the park begins to decline. Institute Park, located in the northern end of Worcester, Massachusetts, is a prime example of such an occurrence. Stephen Salisbury III, a wealthy businessman, originally donated a tract of 18 acres to the city in 1887 (Salisbury, 1887). What came to be known as Institute Park was intended to serve as an open campus for the students of Worcester Polytechnic Institute where they could free themselves from their daily busy lives and indulge in their natural creativity (Tymeson, 1965). Mr. Salisbury was responsible for the care and upkeep of the park when the park was first donated. All work done on the grounds had to be approved by him and the majority of the work was paid for by Mr. Salisbury (Coombs, 1983). Upon his death in 1905, control of the park was passed fully to the city of Worcester. The Parks Commission has been responsible for maintaining the park, but the funding has not been available to fully maintain the area. Over time the appearance of Institute Park has declined, which has led to diminishing usage of the park by the community. The structures that once stood on the grounds could not be

properly maintained and many had to be removed. The green space has fared well, but some corners of the park, as well as Salisbury Pond, are showing substantial signs of disregard.

The condition of the park has been noted for many years by the surrounding neighbors of the park. With the help of WPI students and the Navy, Salisbury Pond was dredged in 1974 as part of a major cleanup project but the full effect of the project was never realized (Nemeth, 1975). A donation was made to the city for the construction of a modern bandstand there and the project was completed in 1989. Original plans included a bandstand, a roof and a sound system but only the first part was ever fulfilled (Magiera, 1989). In 2001, students from WPI performed a water testing Major Qualifying Project on Salisbury Pond and developed ways for the pond water quality to be improved but nothing yet has developed (Farren and Hawley, 2001). Currently, a memorial to honor the firefighters lost in the warehouse fire of 1999 will be erected on land adjacent to the park. These instances show an interest from WPI and the local community to improve the park, but no major action has taken place to fully restore the park to a condition similar to its original splendor.

Another issue is: What exactly would the community like to see done with the park? Local urban designer Daniel Benoit and the Worcester Art Museum have expressed an interest in researching the history of the park and examining the community's opinion on Institute Park's future. The goal of this project was to provide the sponsors with a detailed analysis of Institute Park's history and to assess the community's interest in the park's future. We have used available historical documentation, a survey, interviews, and field research to accomplish our goals. With the data collected, we have formulated recommendations for improvements to Institute Park.

2 Background Chapter

This section provides background information about our project. It starts with a concise history of the city of Worcester, to give a better understanding of its background and its current status. Next it provides an outline of the Worcester Parks Commission. The chapter then follows up with a discussion of what an urban park actually is and the importance of parks to the city. Finally it concludes by developing a short history of Institute Park to help explain in some detail the area in the city being targeted by this project.

2.1 History of Worcester

Worcester, Massachusetts, is a city of approximately 172,600 residents, making it the third largest city in New England, after Boston and Providence (City of Worcester, 2003). The current city covers an area of 38.5 square miles, including seven main hills: Belmont Hill (Bell Hill), Green Hill, Vernon Hill, Grafton Hill, Airport Hill, Bancroft Hill, and Pakachoag Hill. This is the reason for Worcester's nickname "the City of Seven Hills." Worcester is also known as "the Heart of the Commonwealth," which comes from its distinctive location in the center of Massachusetts (see Figure 2-1). The city also provides highways and railroads connecting Boston and Springfield, Massachusetts, Hartford, Connecticut and Providence, Rhode Island. Worcester is one of two cities in the United States to receive the distinction of being an "All-American" city five times. "All-American" is a community recognition award given by the National Civic League and recognizes civic excellence in which community members, government, business, and organizations work close together regardless the size of the community (National Civic League). Worcester also has the distinction of being the first city in the U.S. to set aside land through the use of government money for use as a public park. This park, Elm Park, established in 1854, still exists today in the city (City of Worcester, 1997).



Figure 2-1: Worcester, Massachusetts (from: Mapquest, 2003)

The city of Worcester saw a long and treacherous road in its journey to become a city. The first effort to settle in Worcester was set up by the Massachusetts General Court in 1668 (Erskine, 1981). It was proposed that 8 square miles be established for a plantation at Quinsigamond Pond, known today as Worcester. The area was to be overseen by settlers who willingly agreed with the plan proposed by the Massachusetts General Court until it could be permanently settled. Another task the settlers had to accomplish was to promulgate the Christian faith throughout the land. Ultimately nothing took shape there and the original settlers, to whom the land was granted, never took any action.

The second attempt to settle in Worcester was in 1674. A section of land eight square miles was purchased from the natives around Quinsigamond Pond (Erskine, 1981). At this time the area was to be known as Worcester. The land was given in exchange for two coats and four yards of cloth, equivalent at that time to about 12 pounds. The inhabitants of the area were not very accepting of the idea of the white settlers living on their land. The end result was King Philip's War. King Philip was the son of Massasoit, the Wampanoag leader who had previously befriended the Pilgrims in Plymouth. The war with the natives pulled many of the settlers out of Worcester to aid the war effort so eventually Worcester was abandoned. Upon return of the inhabitants to the land, the natives burned the remnants of what was left of establishment in Worcester.

It was not until the third attempt that seeds of settlement finally took in the grounds of Worcester. In 1713, Jonas Rice resettled in Worcester on what is known as Union Hill (Farnsworth and O'Flynn, 1934). There he began what was to be the start of the city of Worcester as it is today. Along with him, other members of his family took to the land in the following years and at last Worcester began to thrive. Shortly after settlement, religion became prominent in the area. The first real church in Worcester was built in 1762 and was known as the

Old South Church. The church provided for the needs of the city not only as a church, but also as Worcester's town hall until 1835. From then on its only purpose was as a church until it was torn down in 1887 to make room for the new city hall (see Figure 2-2) (Southwick, 1999).



Figure 2-2: Worcester City Hall, circa 1900 (from: Grosvenor, 2003)

During its beginning, Worcester was governed by committees and officers appointed by the General Court in Boston. However, the people of Worcester wanted to govern their own affairs and upon petition, on June 14th, 1722, Worcester was granted township and allowed to select its own representatives and conduct its own town government (Erskine, 1981). In 1731, Worcester was chosen by an act from the General Court to be the County Seat. This brought court business to the town, in addition to economical business and people from all around. With time, many successful farms and businesses were established in and around Worcester. The population of the town grew until 1741 when the town was broken up and the area known as North Worcester became Holden (Erskine, 1981). Worcester continued to grow, and upon a petition in 1847 to the state legislature, Worcester was chartered as a city on February 29th, 1848 (Southwick, 1998).

Throughout the 19th century, Worcester saw much growth in population, as well as in industry and prosperity. With the advent of the Industrial Revolution, the need for waterways became an important concern. Worcester saw a boom in the construction of mills, which harnessed the power of flowing water. In 1822, plans began for the construction of a canal from Worcester to Providence. The purpose of the canal was to provide Worcester with a waterway that would connect the bustling city to the Atlantic Ocean and provide a route for fast transportation of goods. The plans were approved and construction of the canal began. In 1828, the 45-mile long Blackstone Canal was opened (Farnsworth and O'Flynn, 1934). Soon other

needs for water emerged, leading to the construction of many small man-made ponds. In 1834, Stephen Salisbury II dammed a brook known today as Weasel Brook to provide a body of water to supply a small wire mill he had built for Ichabod Washburn (Erskine, 1981). This small mill was the center of what became Washburn and Moen's Northworks complex. The company became a major steel wire company on the local and national level. The pond that was created was named after Salisbury and is still known as Salisbury Pond. The pond's shape changed slightly with the construction of a street and parking lot over its end where water first entered the complex and though it still exists today, it does not provide power for the complex.

Mill Brook not only provided a means of power for Washburn's Mill, but many other mills over time. Mill Brook was also one of the headwaters of the Blackstone Canal. The water ran out of North Pond, known today as Indian Lake, down through Salisbury Pond, and eventually winding along by Lincoln Square down to where the canal turnaround basin off of Thomas Street (O'Connell, 1979). Ultimately, water from Salisbury Pond aided the flow of the Blackstone Canal. Though it was certainly not the main headwater, it was an important contributor to the canal.

By the beginning of the 1830's, the use of steam engines and railroads became a more efficient means of transportation. A rail system made more sense to the city and soon the use of the Blackstone Canal was phased out. With the establishment of several main tracks leading to cities such as Boston, Providence and Springfield, Worcester became the crossroads for a major rail system. The first railroad station built in Worcester was the Foster Street Station built in 1835 (Erskine, 1981). In 1875, Union Station opened, combining the many railways running into the city (Southwick, 1998). A second Union Station was built in 1911 to accommodate the increase of rail traffic into the city. The current Union Station (see figure 2-3) was rehabilitated in 1999 after the building had fallen into disrepair.



Figure 2-3: Union Station, 1999 (from: Grosvenor, 2003)

Worcester was well known as the city of diversified industries, housing many mills, factories and other businesses of varying style (Farnsworth and O’Flynn, 1934). Gristmills, saw mills, textile mills, various manufacturers, printers and railcar makers were a few of the many businesses that made Worcester their home. One of the most notable businesses in Worcester history was the Washburn and Moen Company, which was founded by Ichabod Washburn in 1835. Once the predominant manufacturer of steel wire and wire products in America, Washburn and Moen provided Worcester citizens with many jobs and accounted for much of the prosperity in Worcester during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Later known as the American Steel and Wire Company, the company is most famous for its manufacture of barbed wire. Barbed wire was integral in the development of the Western United States as an area to raise livestock. Expansion of the business required that the company have three main sites in the city: the Northworks in northern Worcester, the Southworks in Quinsigamond Village, and the Centralworks between the two. Along with a successful wire industry in the city, Worcester also had a successful knife company. The Coes Knife Company’s claim to fame is the monkey wrench, patented in 1841 (Davistown, 1999).

Worcester is also a prominent home for many schools of higher education. The first established in Worcester was the College of the Holy Cross, which was founded in 1843 and not only provided a liberal arts education but also was the first Jesuit college in New England (Southwick, 1998). In 1849, the Oread Institute, one of the first colleges for women in the country, was established by Eli Thayer, though it does not exist today (Southwick, 1998). Worcester Polytechnic Institute (formerly named the Worcester County Free Institute for

Industrial Science) was founded in 1865 and provides an engineering-based education to its attendees. It is one of the first technical schools established in the United States (Erskine, 1981).

Currently, Worcester is home to: Holy Cross, Clark University, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Assumption College, Becker College, Worcester State College and Quinsigamond Community College, as well as the University of Massachusetts Medical School and the Massachusetts School of Pharmacy. The city serves as a great center for higher education in the state of Massachusetts. The Worcester Consortium, an affiliation between the schools in the Worcester area, allows students and faculty to work openly with members of other institutions and provides a broad range of educational services to all.

Religion has played a vital role in the city of Worcester from its beginning right up through the present. From the time of the Old South Church, until the present, Worcester has seen countless church and religious groups make their home in the city. In 1834, the first Catholic Church was built in Worcester on Temple Street (Erskine, 1981). With growth of the religion in the area, a larger church was needed and in 1846 St. John's Church was built on the Temple Street site where the previous church once stood. The city is now home to many churches such as Catholic, Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Armenian and Pentecostal.

As Worcester developed, the need for preservation of open green space within the city became more and more evident and beginning in 1854, steps were taken to preserve what little space was left. In 1854, land was purchased by the city for the purpose of providing a park area for recreation and relaxation in the city (Erskine, 1981). The land purchased was known as the New Common and was an unattractive piece of land along Highland Street. In 1874, efforts were made by the city to make something out of the land and the formation of Elm Park began. Elm Park was the first of many parks to follow in the city such as Institute Park in 1887, Green Hill Park in 1903 and Salisbury Park in 1912 (City of Worcester).

The city was shaped largely from the ethnicity and diversity of the inhabitants of its neighborhoods. In 1930, the Federal Census showed that there were a great number of foreign-born groups that lived in Worcester (Farnsworth and O'Flynn, 1934). Some of the more predominant ethnicities were the Swedes, the Irish, both French and non-French Canadians, Lithuanians, Italians and Polish just to name a few. The industrial revolution brought many immigrants into the city to work at the mills. The Blackstone Canal, and later the railroads, created a large need for workers, which attracted immigrants to the area.

Worcester became divided into many neighborhoods separated by ethnicity or class. In general, the west side of the city was the white-collar neighborhoods and the east side was the blue-collar neighborhoods. The division created much debate between the groups, one being the need for and usage of park areas within the city. The white-collar group had a very different opinion from the blue-collar on how the parks should be used. The white-collar group, headed by Parks Commissioner Edward Winslow Lincoln, argued that the park was a place of beauty and should not be used for much physical activity, while the blue-collar group wanted to use the parkland for sports and leisure activities. Lincoln's vision of the Worcester parks was similar to the European public gardens that he had seen, used solely for ornamental purposes. This upset the blue-collar groups who wanted room to play and relax after working hard days in the mills and factories.

This debate went on for much of the 1870's and early 1880's, when the only public park areas in the city were Elm Park, located in the white-collar west side, and the Commons, located downtown. However, over the next quarter century, various petitions and donations were made to acquire various parks located all over the city. These parks then began to serve the public with both the ornamental and recreational needs for all of Worcester's citizens. Utilization of the park grounds varied from neighborhood to neighborhood depending on what the community, or donator, felt the park should provide. The uses of the parks were a result of the growth and difference that existed within the city. To this date, 47 parks exist within Worcester, and they continue to provide for the various needs of the city.

2.2 Worcester Parks System

The City of Worcester established a Parks Commission in the year 1866 in order to "have the sole care, superintendence, and management of the public grounds belonging to the city" (Moore, 1996, 1). With the Parks Commission, the city was able to put into place a series of special acts that authorized the purchase of land specifically for use as public open space. These acts resulted in the creation of Elm Park (1884), the Worcester Common (1885) and Cristoforo Columbo Park (1887) (Moore, 1996).

Until 1885, the Parks Commission was separated into the Commissioners of Public Grounds and Shade Trees and the Commissioners of Parks. However, the city was able to receive special legislation to combine these two groups into one three-member board of the Parks

Commission, which had jurisdiction over all public grounds throughout the city. A separate playground commission was created in 1913, when the parks commissioners were given the ability to set aside land in public parks for use as playgrounds. This arrangement only lasted four years until 1917, when the city again requested and received permission to abolish both the board of parks commission and the playground commission and combined them into the “Parks and Recreation Commission.”

The system of the Parks and Recreation Commission lasted until 1975, when an ordinance was passed that allowed for the creation of the position of commissioner of parks, who was made the head of the Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Commission. Currently, the Parks Commissioner is Michael O’Brien and the Deputy Commissioner is Robert Antonelli. What follows is a flow chart of the organization of the city Parks Commission:

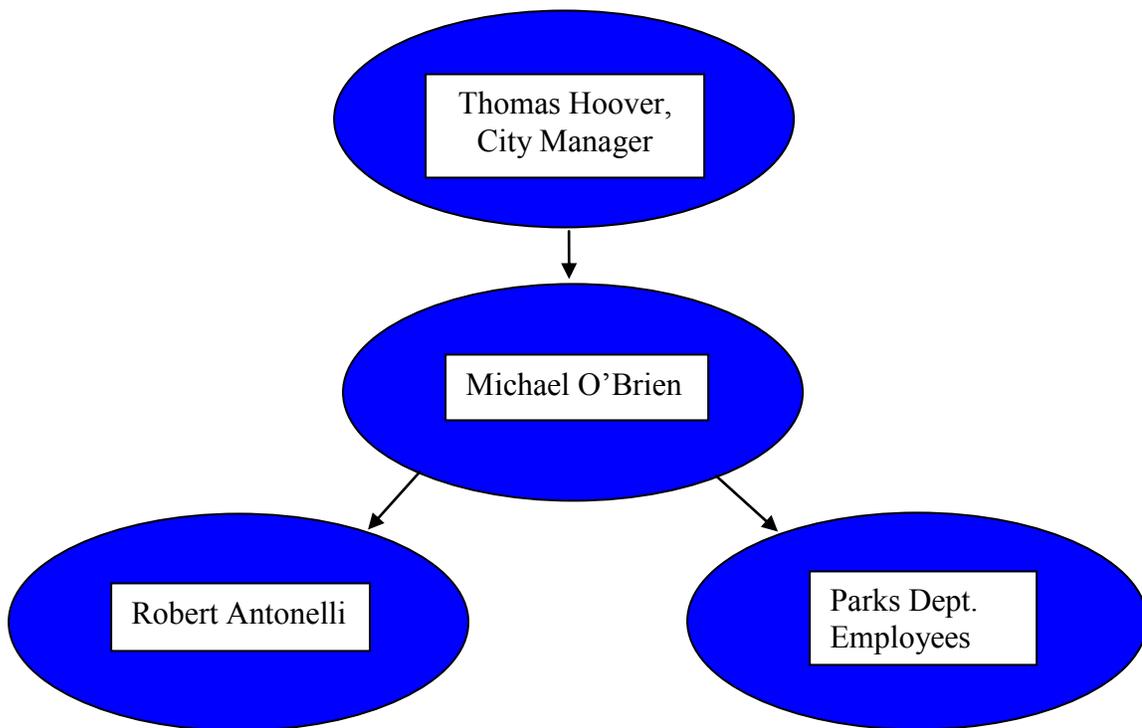


Figure 2-4: Parks Commission Organization

2.3 Urban Parks

Institute Park is an example of an urban park. What is an urban park? An urban park is a natural, open space within a city. As a park, it should provide access to the outdoors. But, it is more than that: “A park’s goals should include not only providing people with access to fresh air and nature for their recreation but also a place where they can meet and enjoy each other’s company” (Cranz, 1982, 3).

Urban parks are clearly public places. Yet, they differ from other public places in the urban environment, such as downtown open spaces, plazas and lobbies of office and government buildings, water treatment or health services facilities. “While these other places are mostly occupied with the ‘business’ of work and life, parks are essentially divorced from the task-oriented part of a day or week” (Law, 2000, 2). An ideal park is a means to escape the city and establish a sense of country. “The parks that Americans built to improve their cities derived not from European urban models but from an anti-urban ideal that dwelt on the traditional prescription for relief from the evils of the city – to escape to the country” (Phillips, 1996, 3). Parks are pleasure grounds with fresh air, green grass, shady trees, sparkling water, and sunshine: a piece of the country within the city.

Urban parks are also social places. Parks are open to everyone, no matter their age, ethnic background, or social grouping. Parks can offer various types of social interaction, whether it is with family, friends, or strangers. Parks generally provide open spaces for various sports and recreation; playgrounds for children; paths for strolling or running; benches for relaxing and observing; and bandstands, pavilions, or amphitheaters for public performances. Parks may offer solitary experiences as well. An individual could stroll through a park and find it much easier to ease his/her mind in a completely different setting than the unnatural workplace of the city. The natural setting can create soothing feelings or even a true sense of balance (Law, 2000).

Early social reformers saw urban parks as a means for breaking barriers between classes in the cities. The open space and serenity of a park in the city brings tranquility and rest to the mind. “In this setting, the sense of community and fellow feeling would revive, competitive clamor would be muted, and class division would fade as each visitor by his mere presence contributed to the pleasure of the others, all helping to the greater happiness of each” (Boyer, 1978, 238). Frederick Law Olmsted, distinguished landscape architect of the late 19th century,

believed that an urban park's rural scenery "would calm the 'rough element of the city' and 'divert men from unwholesome, vicious, destructive methods and habits of seeking recreation'"(Rosenzweig, 1983, 128).

2.4 Institute Park



Figure 2-5: Institute Park

(from: Yahoo Maps, 2003)

Institute Park, now approximately 18 acres in size, is a tract of land located in the north end of Worcester (see Figure 2-5). When it was created in 1887, as a donation to the city by Stephen Salisbury III, it also totaled approximately 18 acres but over time that size has varied (Coombs, 1887). At its largest, the park accounted for 25 acres stretching between Salisbury Street and Grove Street. This section will discuss the history of the park and the changes seen there in the past 116 years.

2.4.1 History of Institute Park

Stephen Salisbury III was the descendant of a wealthy and successful family in the history of Worcester. His grandfather, Stephen Salisbury I, set up one of the earliest stores in the city and began the flourishing existence of the Salisbury family business in Worcester (Erskine, 1981). His son, Stephen Salisbury II inherited his father's business interests and practices and also began giving back to the city from their family's wealth (Farnsworth and O'Flynn, 1934). Stephen Salisbury III however was not so dominant in the respect of business; he was more of an enthusiast of the arts. Being a well educated man, he traveled much of Europe learning from their fine institutions and upon his return to Worcester, and his inheritance of his family estate, Stephen Salisbury III spent much of his time giving back to the community that was home to his family's thriving success. When Stephen Salisbury III donated the land for Institute Park in 1887, he had a specific idea for the usage of the park. It was his intention to create an area that

could serve as a campus to the students of the Worcester Free Institute of Industrial Science, known today as Worcester Polytechnic Institute, as well as a public park for all citizens of Worcester (Tymeson, 1965). Given as a gift to the city, there was no cost for purchase of the land and originally there was little cost on maintenance of the park as well. This was due to the fact that Mr. Salisbury held it as a stipulation that the city could have the land as long as he could supervise the physical changes and work done in the park (Coombs, 1983). He undertook the financing of the creation of many of the structures, and limited the implementation of flowers and shrubbery to allow the most open space on which park visitors could roam. All this was done at his own expense. Repair and upkeep of the park was always necessary and Mr. Salisbury was always willing to fund such activities. Upon Mr. Salisbury's death in 1905, full maintenance and upkeep of the land was passed to city's parks commission, but Institute Park received less attention without Salisbury's love for the park and his generous funding.

The park began as a tract of 18 acres that had once been farmland and pasture (Coombs, 1983). Salisbury took it upon himself to pay for the grading of the land and the construction of many paths that led to every corner of the park. Once completed, many structures were erected on the site. Among these were a boathouse, a tower (see Figure 2-6), a bandstand, a bridge to one of the islands in Salisbury Pond (see Figures 2-6 and 2-7), and four gazebos, all financed by Mr. Salisbury. Of these, only three gazebos still remain. In 1912, the park grew to a size of about 25 acres when the Worcester Art Museum donated a piece of land on the Grove Street side of Salisbury Pond. In 1964, most of that addition was given away to become the Grove Street Fire Department Headquarters. The rest of the addition is now residential area.



Figure 2-6: A view of Institute Park, circa 1900 (including the Norse Tower and the bridge)
(from: Grosvenor, 2003)



Figure 2-7: Another view of Institute Park, circa 1900 (including the bridge)
(from: Grosvenor, 2003)

2.4.1.1 Brief summary of events in Institute Park

In 1892, Stephen Salisbury III oversaw construction of the Norse Tower. It was almost an exact replica of the Old Stone Windmill in Newport, Rhode Island. The Institute Park tower stood 30 feet high and 23 feet in diameter. The tower was only open for 15 years until a fence was built around it due to its deteriorating condition. It reopened in 1929 after the top 18 feet were torn down and reconstructed, but it was only able to stay open for 10 years because it once again became a hazard (Worcester Sunday Telegram, 1954).

In 1892, a 127 foot long 12 foot wide bridge was put in the park under direction of Stephen Salisbury III. The bridge connected the park to the island located in Salisbury Pond. The bridge stood there for 30 years until fire destroyed the bridge in 1922 (Worcester Magazine, 1988).

In 1954, the causeway at Grove Street was constructed. That action made it necessary to drain Salisbury Pond for four months. At that time, while the pond was drained, the bottom was cleaned of all the garbage that had been thrown into the pond over the years (The Evening Gazette, 1954).

In 1970, work began to try and clean up Salisbury Pond. Causes for pollution included: drainage from I-190, drainage from upstream industrial sites, occasional overflow of Worcester's sanitary sewer system, and the increased presence of weeds and algae in the pond. WPI students started the process by finding the sources of pollution. In 1972, the Salisbury Pond Task Force was created. They criticized the city government for not taking action, but the Task Force could

not make a significant change. A group of WPI students joined the effort again in 1973, providing a detailed analysis of the condition of the pond and making recommendations that would improve the quality. Progress began in 1974 when the city enlisted the help of a Navy team to dredge the pond and get rid of polluted sediment in the pond bottom. The team was successful in removing 5000 cubic yards of sediment, but in order to be effective, another 15,000 cubic yards had to be removed as well. That never happened, allowing the pond to revert back to its polluted condition. Significant progress was never made from that point on (Nemeth, 1975)

In 1989, the first phase of a new bandstand was built for summer concerts held in Institute Park. The project began as a gift of \$100,000 by Nathan Sneiderman, a Worcester resident and president of Bigelow Waste Co. The plans called for three phases of construction, including a backstage area with dressing rooms and rest rooms and an acoustically designed roof and state-of-the-art light and sound system. To date, the last two phases have been too expensive to complete (Magiera, 1989).

In 1990, a local Boy Scout, Ryan E. Turncliff, decided to restore a gazebo on the Park Avenue side of Institute Park as his Eagle Scout project. The gazebo was in very bad condition, but with the help of many volunteers, the task was accomplished and the improvement was well appreciated (Sheehan, 1990).

2.4.2 Cultural impact of Institute Park

Given as a gift to the city, there was no cost for purchase of the land and originally there was little cost on maintenance of the park as well. This was due to the fact that Mr. Salisbury held it as a stipulation that the city could have the land as long as he could supervise the physical changes and work done in the park (Coombs, 1983). He undertook the financing of the creation of many of the structures, as mentioned above, and limited the implementation of flowers and shrubbery to allow the most open space on which park visitors could roam. All this was done at his own expense. Repair and upkeep of the park was always necessary and Mr. Salisbury was always willing to fund such activities. When Mr. Salisbury passed on, Institute Park received less attention without his love for the park and generous funding.

The cultural impact of the park could be seen very clearly in the early 1900's during the lunch hour of the workers from the Washburn and Moen Wire Company. During nice weather, the park was full of workers that enjoyed the beautiful setting and atmosphere that Institute Park provided (Rosenzweig, 1983). Another aspect of the park that must also be considered is the

neighborhood and environment in which Institute Park exists. Having not only thriving businesses and residences next door, but also a thriving institution (Worcester Polytechnic Institute originally Worcester Free Institute for Industrial Science) on its doorstep, the park was intended for all members of the community regardless of social status. The facilities and environment the park provided were for both the wealthy business owner and his or her less well-to-do workers, as well as the nearby students. Presently, the park receives the most use in the summer when the Central Massachusetts Symphony Orchestra performs there on the existing pavilion (Magiera, 1989). However, the activity now cannot compare to the activity seen by the park in the past.

3 Methodology

The goal of this project was to provide our sponsors and the community with details of Institute Park's physical, environmental, and cultural history and to assess the community's interest and wishes for the park's future. Once we finished collecting data, we used it to create a list of possible improvements that could be feasible for the park in the future. This chapter is meant to provide the reader with certain knowledge about the research methods we used and why we chose these methods. We conducted a survey to assess the current usage of the park and the community's interest in the park's future. We also conducted a complete historical analysis of milestones and events involving Institute Park, and then related these events to human interaction with the park. We performed naturalistic observation in order to view the current use and condition of the park. Finally, we interviewed people that have useful historical and background information about the park's history and current projects relating to the park.

3.1 Historical Analysis

Historical analysis played a large part in the development of this project. The purpose of the project was to define a clear history of Institute Park, including all important events and milestones involving the park. We noted how the condition of the park changed over time, and then how the condition affected the usage of the park. We also looked to see if the park's changing condition caused any changes in the activities that occurred within the park.

The major product of our historical analysis was a timeline of the important dates in the history of Institute Park. The timeline spans from the year the park was first created, 1887, to the present day. To construct the timeline, the group explored many sources of information within the city of Worcester. Our two major source locations were the Worcester Public Library and the Worcester Historical Museum.

In the local history section in the Worcester Public Library we located the annual Worcester City Documents (annual reports of all the city government including the Parks Commission) in order to get a year-by-year documentation of Institute Park and the changes made to it. The City Documents were essential to the creation of our timeline. The Worcester Public Library also had a collection of old newspaper articles that dealt with Institute Park ranging from 1887 to present. The information we collected was mainly from the folders titled,

“Institute Park” and “Parks”. Most of this information was used in compiling the background section of our project.

The Worcester Historical Museum was another valuable source of documents for our historical analysis. We searched through their collection of old newspaper articles and found a great deal of useful information dealing with Institute Park and Salisbury Pond. The Historical Museum also had maps of the park’s section of Worcester dating from 1886, 1897, 1910 and 1922, which allowed us to see changes within the park. Most importantly, the Historical Museum supplied us with many pictures of Institute Park ranging mostly from its early years. These pictures provided visual evidence necessary to show how the park has undergone transformation since 1887. The librarian at the Historical Museum, Robyn Christensen, was generous enough to scan these pictures of park structures and landscapes for us so that we could use them in our report.

The WPI Gordon Library was also a very important source of information for our project. Information on the history of the city of Worcester and urban parks for the background was obtained from several book sources. The WPI Archives was also very helpful in providing us with scanned images of the park.

Many of our sources suggested that the American Antiquarian Society (AAS) would have additional information that may be of use to our research. We looked at the Salisbury Family Papers, a collection of journals, notes, receipts, letters and other documents kept by the Salisbury family over time, for notes and correspondence from Stephen Salisbury III relating to Institute Park, but found nothing of use. We also looked into the work recorded at the AAS by the architect Stephen C. Earle, the designer of all the early structures in the park. Nothing of park connection was found on this as well. Any documentation that we found at the AAS had already turned up from our research at the Worcester Public Library and the Worcester Historical Museum.

3.2 Surveys

In this project surveys were used as tools to extract information from the community around Institute Park and other park users. The survey gathered information such as, what types of usage the park sees during the year, in what seasons, and what would encourage increased usage by the community. The survey inquired what, if any, understanding the community

possessed about the park's history. The nature of the survey and the research into the background of surveys showed that getting our survey out to as many people as possible that may use the park or may have a special knowledge of the park would return the greatest and most helpful information available.

3.2.1 Survey Construction

Based on research of survey construction, the survey was designed to maximize the information obtained and to take a small amount of time to complete. We titled the survey, "Institute Park Survey," so it would be obvious to everyone what the subject of the survey was. We also placed at the top of the survey a quick description of the nature of the project and the role the survey information would play in it. In order to keep the time it takes to fill out a survey minimal, we used mostly closed-ended questions with only a few open-ended questions. The first few questions are mainly to find park user demographics in order to categorize the person taking the survey. Then the questions begin to focus on the park. Asking a few park based questions to see if people know of or about Institute Park, the survey then splits the audience taking the survey into two groups: users and non-users. Each group is then directed to answer a different set of questions than the other group. These questions are asked specifically to extract desired information from each respective group. Both groups however are finally asked what they think would help improve the park for usage. Following is the survey we constructed:

Institute Park Survey

This survey is being administered by a group of WPI students as part of an academic project. The project is focused on research of past conditions and usage of Institute Park, as well as consideration of present usage to help facilitate future needs within the park. The intention of this survey is to gather information about Institute Park and to account for the current usage of the park. Results of this survey will be considered for future planning and recommendations within the park. All results from this survey will be used only for this purpose and may be passed along to other organizations working on the same topic. If you have previously completed this survey, please disregard and do not submit an additional survey.

- 1) What age group do you fit into?
25 and under 26-40 41-60 61 and over
 - 2) How close do you live to the park?
Within ½ mile Within 1 mile Within 2 miles Beyond 2 miles
 - 3) How long have you lived at your current residence?
 - 4) Do you have any children? If yes, what are their ages?
 - 5) Do you know where Institute Park is? YES NO
 - 6) What role do you believe Institute Park has played in the history of Worcester?
 - 7) Have you ever used the park? If YES, how often? If NO, skip to question 13.
 - 8) What activities have you done while in Institute Park?
 - 9) During the year, when do you use the park the most?
 - 10) Would you use the park more if improvements were made?
 - 11) Do you have any suggestions for improvements to the park?
 - 12) Have you ever used any of the other parks in Worcester?
- Only answer questions 13 and 14 if you answered NO to question 7.
- 13) Why haven't you used the park?
 - 14) Is there anything that could be done to make you want to use the park?

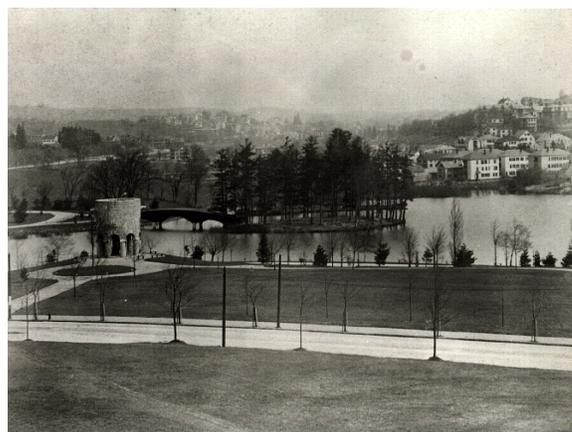


Figure 3-1: Institute Park Survey

Once the survey was constructed, professional criticism was sought for the survey. Professor Kent Rissmiller, a professor in the social science department at WPI, reviewed the

survey. He had some minor suggestions but felt that the questions were appropriate and well arranged. We redesigned the survey and prepared for implementation.

3.2.2 Survey Administration

The process of administering surveys included door-to-door, face-to-face and drop box methods. Surveying people within the park was a key method in reaching the audience of current park users. Other groups that were surveyed were the residents who live in the historical district between Park Avenue and Massachusetts Avenue, students who attend WPI, two organizations: the Worcester Historical Museum and the Worcester Art Museum, and lastly individuals from different organizations who have special ties to the project.

For the members of the community we surveyed in the park, the method of face to face surveying was used. While in the park, we approached individuals that were walking, sitting and playing in the park and asked if they would be interested in participating in our survey. We approached as many people as we could on a one-to-one basis to try and get a positive response from a large number of park users. The surveys were administered verbally and the group member recorded the responses on a survey sheet. We walked around the park at different times in hopes of obtaining information from various types of park users. On Tuesday April 15th, in the morning between 9 am and 10 am we administered three surveys to two people out walking their dogs and one woman out walking through the park. On Thursday April 17th, in the afternoon during one in-park survey session we administered seven surveys to a group of young men playing Frisbee. Lastly on Friday April 18th, in the evening we administered two surveys to people sitting at one of the benches looking out over Salisbury Pond.

At the Worcester Art Museum, we spoke with the director, James Welu, who invited us to a staff meeting on April 8th. We gave a brief presentation of our project and handed out the survey to all present. We explained the importance of the project and invited all workers to take surveys to give to others that have interest or input about the park. We left a drop box at the museum director's office for anyone bringing in additional surveys. We later went back in just over one week and gathered the returned surveys.

3.3 Observations

To evaluate the current use of Institute Park, naturalistic observation was performed in the park. These observations only reflected the use the park receives in the spring. It can be expected that the park would see more use in the summer and less in the winter.

We formed a two-week observation schedule that would have a rotating order of time and observer to help us spread observations throughout the week at different times of day. It was a rotating schedule and every group member participated (See observation schedule in Appendix).

During observations we recorded the following categories on a record sheet (see record sheet in Appendix): the day of week, time of day, weather conditions, activities that people performed in the park, approximate age of persons, number of people, and length of time in the park. The record sheet was a simple way to keep the data organized for easy analysis of our observations.

The first two weeks of observations were dampened due to cold weather, sleet, and snow, so we extended our observations to a three-week time span in hopes to see more activity.

3.4 Interviews

This section provides details on whom we have interviewed and why we interviewed them. Information that we gathered from these people will be included in the results chapter.

Early on in our research, we contacted Professor John Zeugner, a history professor at WPI. We interviewed him because of his interest Worcester history. Our interview with Prof. Zeugner focused around historical analysis. We wanted to know how to conduct a historical analysis and where we could get started. From him we gathered a list of sources, people as well as books, where we would be able to start our historical analysis.

Much of our research for the historical analysis was done at the Worcester Historical Museum. There we contacted the director, William Wallace. We interviewed him to see what information he could provide us about the history of the park, what various sources the Historical Museum could provide, and any other sources he could refer us to.

We called the Worcester Parks Department to set up an interview with the Parks Commissioner Michael O'Brien. Upon doing so, we were referred to the Deputy Parks Commissioner, Robert Antonelli, and were told that he would be able to provide us with more

appropriate assistance. In our interview with Mr. Antonelli we asked about what he could tell us about the history and use of Institute Park, as well as any current plans, such as the grant that was recently received to clean up Salisbury Pond.

We had an interview with James Welu, the director of the Worcester Art Museum, our other sponsor. We wanted to explore his interests in our project and WAM's past involvement with the park. We also wanted to see if he could help us in distributing our survey to his neighborhood as well as at the museum. He was very helpful and invited us to attend a staff meeting at the Art Museum.

The group also met with Deborah Cary and Donna Williams from the Massachusetts Audubon Society. Since Salisbury Pond is home to many forms of bird life, the Audubon Society has a large interest in the park. Ms. Cary and Ms. Williams were able to provide us with helpful information about the environmental aspects of Institute Park. They also provided us with a few contacts for us to look into.

From these interviews we gained a great deal of information concerning the nature and scope of our project as well as the feasibility of the recommendations we make. These interviews provided more contacts for our survey and our project in general.

4 Results

This section presents the results of our research methods. The results of each section will be discussed separately, then analyzed and connected for the final conclusion and recommendations.

4.1 Historical Research

Institute Park was created in 1887 as a gift of Stephen Salisbury III, a wealthy landowner and businessman, to the city of Worcester. Salisbury took a section of his own land, approximately 18 acres, and donated it to the city for use as a public park. The details of the gift are stated in a letter dated June 20, 1887, written by Salisbury to the mayor of Worcester at the time, the Honorable Samuel Winslow. First, the actual area being given is described:

With a view of promoting, to some extent, the accomplishment of what is desired by very many of our citizens, I offer to give the city a tract of land situated on the northerly side of Salisbury Street, bounded as follows: Beginning at a point marked by a wooden post painted white and set in the ground about 470 feet eastwardly from the intersection of Boynton Street with Salisbury Street; thence running northwesterly about 1900 feet to Park Avenue; thence running northerly about 565 feet on Park Avenue to a point marked by a wooden post painted white, and set in the ground; thence running eastwardly at nearly a right angle with Park Avenue to a point on the shore of Salisbury Pond at high water, and marked by a wooden post painted white, and set in the ground; thence running southwesterly and following the shore of Salisbury Pond at high water mark, excepting that a fill of flowage shall be permitted on the Salisbury Street side of the pond, and near the intersection of Park Avenue, so that the water at that point shall be at least 160 feet distant from the line of Salisbury Street; otherwise following the curvatures of the shore at high water mark to a point on the shore of said pond, at high water mark, designated by a wooden post painted white and set in the ground, which shall be the northerly extremity of a straight line projected at a right angle from the point first mentioned upon Salisbury Street, thence running southerly upon this line to the place of beginning. This tract of land is supposed to contain 18 acres. (Salisbury 1887)

Salisbury goes on to detail the conditions that he has attached to the gift:

The gift is made subject to a grant to the Worcester Polytechnic Institute of a portion of the forgoing declared tract, which is hereafter disclosed, and is also subject to the following provisions:-

The conditions of this gift are that this area shall be called Institute Park, in recognition of the usefulness of the Worcester Polytechnic Institute to the material interests of the city and county; that the Worcester Polytechnic Institute shall, from and after twenty years from the date of this gift, have the right to erect a building or buildings of attractive exterior, and to occupy the same for educational purposes, upon a portion of said tract 200 feet by 150 feet, lying at least 60 feet from Salisbury Street, upon the

highest portion of the area now offered, opposite land now belonging to the Institute, and extending east and west in its longest dimension. The area thus set apart is bounded and described as follows: Beginning at a point with said tract, 50 feet westerly from the west line of the estate of J. Henry Hill, upon Salisbury Street, and 60 feet northerly from the north line of said street; thence running westerly in a straight line running 200 feet to a point 60 feet distant from the north line of Salisbury Street; thence running northerly at a right angle to the line last described, 150 feet to the place of beginning, which will form a parallelogram of 30,000 square feet, granted to said Institute, together with a right of free access from the public way, and such facilities of ingress and egress for carriages and foot passengers, as may be necessary for the full use and enjoyment of this land thus granted to the Institute for all purposes for which grant is made, and in such manner as may be mutually agreed upon by the Park Commissioners and the Trustees of the Institute; that such location and the dimensions thereof may be changed for another site and area within said tract upon consultation and agreement between the City and said Institution, at a time when such a proposition can be legally entertained; that until the lapse of 20 years, and until the Worcester Polytechnic Institute elects to erect buildings within this Park, the portion of land granted to the Institute shall be improved in common with other portions of said tract, and that the officers and students of the Institution shall always have the same rights and no more to the use of the Park as other inhabitants of the city, except as regards a future use and occupation for educational purposes of the portion of land granted or agreed upon according to the terms of the grant. (Salisbury, 1887)

With the acceptance of such a generous gift, the city wasted no time in making improvements to the park. By the end of 1888, stone walls had been constructed along the banks of Salisbury Pond, giving the park more of a finished and refined feel. This was the beginning of many improvements to be made within the park in the years to come.

4.1.1 Park Improvements

By 1889, major improvements to the park had begun. However, the city was not responsible for these improvements. Stephen Salisbury took it upon himself, financially, to make these refinements to the land that had once belonged to him. In one year's time, a boat house had been constructed (see Figure 4-1), along with the grading of the land, excavation of the cove where the boat house was constructed, and the addition of stone coping to the previously mentioned stone wall around Salisbury Pond. All this was done at a cost of \$5451.67 to Mr. Salisbury (Lincoln, 1889, 371).



Figure 4-1: Boathouse on Salisbury Pond c. 1900

(WHM)

In a letter dated February 10, 1890, written to Edward Winslow Lincoln, the Chairman of the Parks Commission, Salisbury states:

My dear Sir,

Permit me through you to offer to the acceptance of the Parks Commission the Boat House that I have erected upon Institute Park, together with such improvements in grading of the land and curbing of the pond adjacent to the Boat House as I have been allowed to make.

It is my hope that the Park and the Boat House will prove sources of advantage and enjoyment to our citizens. (Salisbury 1887)

Again, the gift was graciously accepted by the city and Salisbury continued to make improvements, and they truly were enjoyed by the citizens. An excerpt from the Evening Gazette clearly illustrates this fact:

A philanthropist would be immensely pleased to view Institute Park during the noon hour of a hot day, and see the crowd of girls and men from the shops in the neighborhood enjoying their noon meal in this cool and pleasant spot.

Before the 12:05 whistle blows the crowd begins to arrive, from Washburn & Moen's, the envelope shops, electric light station, and the many other establishments north of Lincoln Square. After eating, a good romp is indulged in by the girls, running and racing about, with now and then a scream of laughter when some mishap, a fall perhaps, occurs to one of their number. Some of them wander about in pairs or groups, exchanging girlish confidences, or indulging in good-natured banter with their masculine shop-mates. Occasionally a boat is secured by some gallant youth, who rows a load of laughing maidens about the pond, the envied of their less fortunate friends.

The younger men try a game of baseball or a little general sport, jumping, running, etc., while their elders sit about in the more shaded spots, smoking their pipes. But when the whistle blows previous to 1 o'clock there is a general stampede to the shops and in a few minutes all of those remaining can be counted on one's fingers.

Mr. Salisbury must feel a deep pleasure in seeing his gift to the city appreciated by his poorer fellow-citizens to such an extent. This park directly reaches the people for

whom such places are made, the working classes, whose homes are often-times in a neighborhood where green grass and trees do not abound. (Gazette, 1890)

The improvement of Institute Park continued on and by the end on 1891, the cooperation between the city's Park Commission and Mr. Salisbury had been responsible for a considerable amount of work once again. Work had begun on gravel paths going through the park to facilitate the use of horse-drawn carriages. The grading of the land continued and many trees and shrubs were planted in the park. Another structure was added to the park (see Figure 4-2), "mainly for the purpose of a band-stand, but which also supplies in the basement story the very great convenience of a refreshment room" (Lincoln, 1891, 513). The work done during this year was much more expensive than had been done in previous years, and in all, the city of Worcester spent \$540.29, while Mr. Salisbury was generous enough to account for \$10,789.49 worth of work (Lincoln, 1891, 514).



Figure 4-2: Bandstand in Institute Park (1898) (WHM)

Also during this year, ten separate groups of trees and shrubs were planted within Institute Park. In total, approximately 250 plants were placed on the grounds. This improvement not only worked for the aesthetics of the park, but it also improved the overall quality and functionality of the park. Some of the trees planted, specifically American White Pines, "were mostly planted to the north of Rumford Avenue, in which location they will serve for a wind-break besides supplying a most appropriate and tasteful fringe to the more exposed portion of the park" (Lincoln, 1891, 517).

Construction of some of the most notable structures to occupy Institute Park began in 1892. “Early in the spring of 1892, the Commission was asked by Hon. Stephen Salisbury if there would be objection to the carrying-out, at his individual expense, of certain plans which he cherished for the further development of Institute Park. He was quickly assured that nothing could afford the Commission great pleasure than to facilitate, in every way possible, such generous purpose” (Lincoln, 1892, 489). The Stone Tower in Institute Park, a replica of the Old Stone Mill at Newport, Rhode Island, a bridge to one of the islands in Salisbury Pond, a bathhouse, and four pavilions were constructed during the course of 1892.

The Stone Tower was “located on the highest point of land directly north of the Polytechnic Institute” (Lincoln, 1892, 489). A plateau was built up for the tower to be placed upon. When constructed, the tower was made “from granite-rubble and its walls are upheld by arches which in their turn rest upon piers eight feet in height. The structure itself is twenty-three feet in diameter with a clear elevation of thirty feet. There are three small windows at varying altitudes; and at the top, two gargoyles protrude a considerable distance, discharging rain water upon the rocky bed below. A winding iron stairway inside provides for ascent to the floor at the summit, where will be found seats arranged upon three sides; the space remaining being surrendered to the landing of the stairway” (Lincoln, 1892, 490) (see Figure 4-3).



Figure 4-3: Two different pictures of the Stone Tower (1898) (WHM)

The construction of the foot-bridge on Salisbury Pond now allowed people to occupy the island without having to get a boat from the boat house and rowing over to it. The bridge “has been thrown across from a point by the big tree near the northerly line of the Park, at Rumford

Avenue, which happily supplies a most pressing need. Including the abutments that jut out into the water several feet, the total length of the bridge is one hundred and twenty-seven feet; its width is twelve feet. . . .The bridge is arched in style and its sides are boarded and then covered with fancy shingles. The island has been well furnished with seats and, in every possible way, provision is made for the enjoyment and repose of those who are likely to seek such a pleasant place of resort” (Lincoln, 1892, 491) (see Figure 4-4). It is important to note here that in 1892, the island and Salisbury Pond are not a part of Institute Park and still belong to Mr. Salisbury.

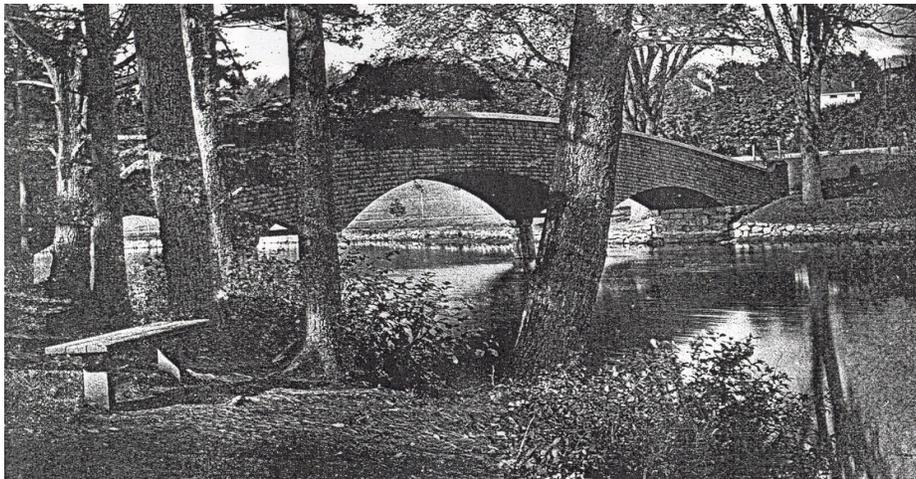


Figure 4-4: Bridge in Institute Park c. 1900 (WPI Archives)

The next improvement made was the construction of "a substantial building for purposes of common necessity and convenience" (Lincoln, 1892, 491). This building would come to be known as the bathhouse. "Its dimensions are 23 1/2 by 14 feet 10 inches, and its height one story. A partition separates it into halves, whereof one is intended for a tool-house and the other will be devoted to purposes of common ease and comfort" (Lincoln, 1892, 491). This building would be adapted for use as restrooms for the park’s patrons.

Finally, four pavilions were constructed within the park. Two were located on the east side, closest to Washburn and Moen, and two were located on the west side, adjacent to Park Avenue. These pavilions were built to serve "the combined purposes of shelter and summer-house, each one-story in height and seventeen feet square" (Lincoln, 1892, 490). These pavilions were most useful when there was a sudden downpour or when the afternoon sun became too hot.

Once these structures were completed, the majority of the work that went into the park in the following years involved general maintenance and planting. Trees were replaced and the land was re-graded. In 1897, a fountain was added to Salisbury Pond, adding to the aesthetic

character of the park. In a statement written in 1897 by the Parks Commissioner, Edward Winslow Lincoln, it is clear how the work done to the park has made it a desirable place to go:

If the increasing number of visitors to this park each year is indicative of the public appreciation of Mr. Salisbury's munificence, he must certainly feel highly gratified. While there is no apparent lack of appreciation of the other parks in the city, it can safely be asserted that no one park has so large a number of visitors in a year as Institute Park. The features that contribute to its popularity are many. It is of easy access. It has many natural beauties of land and water, as well as interesting artificial embellishments.

Visitors on foot find its winding walks inviting and pleasing, and the firm, smooth, and finely constructed drive that skirts the borders of the pond, is greatly appreciated by cyclists as well as visitors in carriages.

On July 4, 1901, the Walker Ice Company (see Figure 4-5), located on Salisbury Pond, burned down. After the fire, it was decided that the buildings would not be replaced, much to the delight of Mr. Salisbury. As a result, the land on which the ice houses once stood was graded and grass was planted. This land would become part of Institute Park in 1911, increasing the size to 25 acres.



Figure 4-5: Walker Ice Houses, with Northworks complex in back right c. 1898 (WHM)

4.1.2 End of an Era: The death of Stephen Salisbury III

Stephen Salisbury III died on November 16, 1905. Institute Park no longer had the financial support it needed in order to be properly maintained. As early as one year after Mr.

Salisbury's death, it is noted that stone tower and the bathhouse were in need of maintenance that they never receive. The decline of Institute Park would continue. In 1907, a fence was placed around the stone tower because its condition had deteriorated so much that it began to fall apart and was unsafe for usage. It is also noted in 1907 that approximately 20,295 square feet of driveway would be closed and the bandstand and bathhouse were in need of repairs. The only improvement that can be noted during this period is the addition of gasoline lamps on the pond walkway in 1911. While he was alive, Mr. Salisbury took it upon himself to see that the park received proper care, but with his death, proper care was no longer given.

4.1.3 Connection of Past and Future of Institute Park

The connection between the past and the future of Institute Park is a connection very easily made. One connection that has already been expressed in the background is that Salisbury Pond was part of the headwaters to the Blackstone Canal. The city of Worcester already has plans to uncover a section of the Blackstone. The goal is to bring back a very important part of Worcester's history and Salisbury Pond has a piece in this. Daniel Benoit has expressed his vision for this area, which includes linking Institute Park and Salisbury Pond to the already underway Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor project within Worcester. The Blackstone Heritage Corridor project is focusing on preserving the industrial history along the Blackstone River. The goal of the project is to preserve the land along the Blackstone River by creating a park-like area spanning the entire river-way from Worcester all the way to Narragansett Bay.

Institute Park also plays a role in a redevelopment project that is currently underway. One of the city's major projects, Gateway Park, is a 55-acre area that is adjacent to Institute Park. The Gateway Park plan calls for the redevelopment of a former industrial site into a commercial and residential area. The Gateway Park LLC corporation was formed to head the project and MassDevelopment has played a large role in furthering the development. The city has already developed a master plan for the area and environmental studies have been done on the proposed sites. Institute Park provides the open space necessary for the redevelopment plan. By revitalizing the two adjacent areas, it would make the northern section of Worcester a more desirable place to live and work than it currently is. WPI has a share in this project as one of the main contributors to the funding and as a major landowner in the area. Figure 4-6 illustrates the

plan created for Gateway Park. The buildings in red are new developments and the tan are existing buildings.

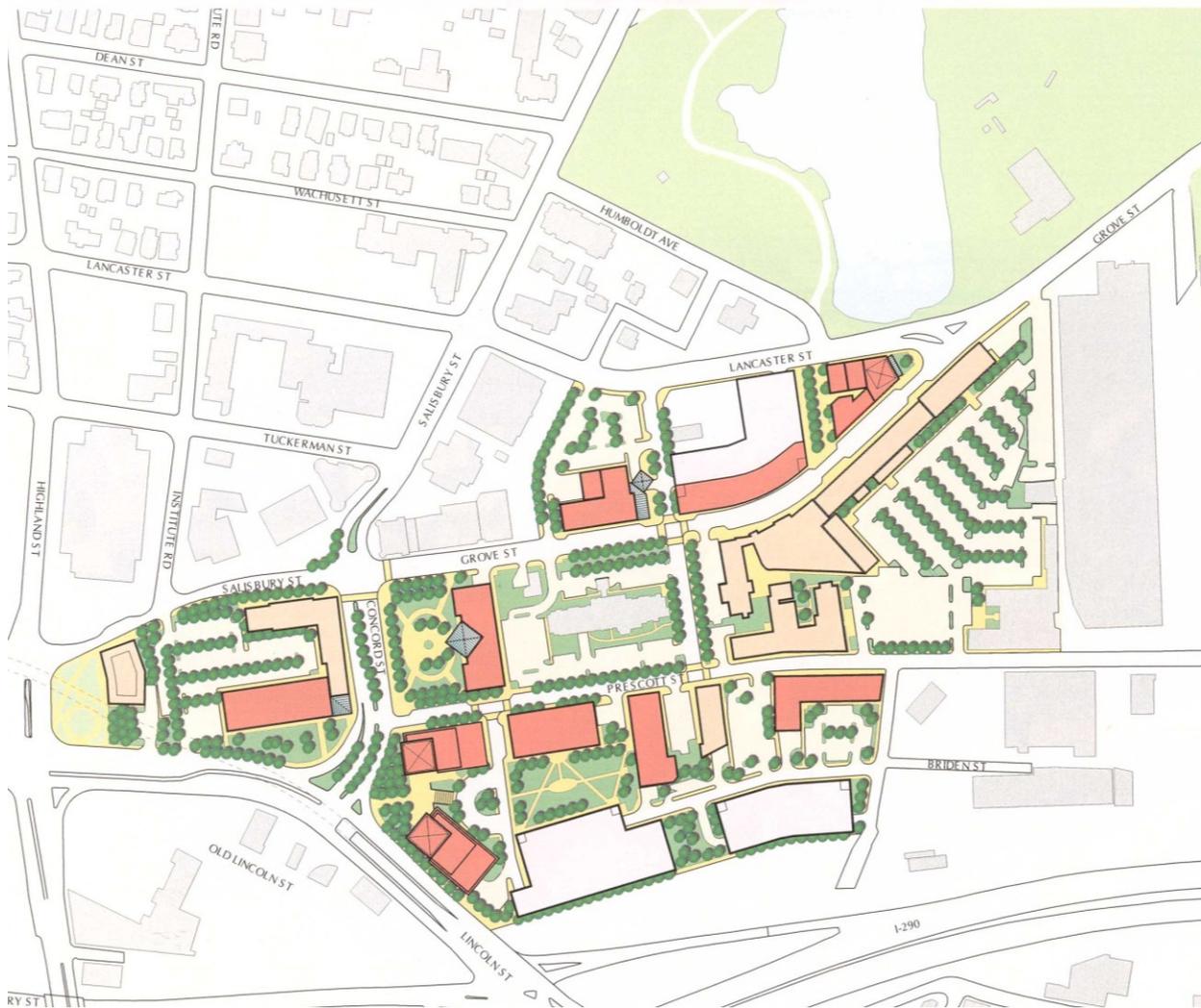


Figure 4-6: Gateway Park Plan From: Wallace Floyd Design Group

4.2 Interviews

The interviews performed in this project were performed strictly to extract information about either, the parks history and current usage status, or the interest and connection of certain individuals and group to the park. Many of the interviews led to further contacts related to the project and were utilized to the best of our ability. Below is a summary of the interviews we performed with certain people about the project.

4.2.1 Robert Antonelli

Our group met with Robert Antonelli, the Deputy Parks Commissioner for the City of Worcester, on March 26th. The goal of our meeting was to find out the Parks Department's opinion of Institute Park and to see if a master plan existed for the park.

Mr. Antonelli informed us about a 319 grant that the City had received most recently for the cleanup of Salisbury Pond. The number, 319, refers to Section 319: Non-point Source Management Program of the Clean Water Act of 1987. This program was set up by the United States Environmental Protection Agency to fund innovative non-point source management strategies. The Salisbury Pond grant deals with the construction of catch basins in the headwaters of the pond to prevent the further build up of silt and washout waste in Salisbury Pond.

Mr. Antonelli also mentioned a Heritage Tree Grant that the city received for the preservation of a grove of European Beech trees located in the park near the intersection of Park Avenue and Salisbury Street. The money set aside in the grant was for the care and maintenance of the grove of trees and the project was completed in 2001.

We asked Mr. Antonelli if he could tell us about the connection between the park and the former park land where the fire station currently exists. He responded by telling us that the land was given to the city for the fire department in the 1960's and the playing field next to the fire station was declared a separate park area in 1982 by the parks commission. Therefore, the tract of land across Salisbury Pond from the park along Grove Street was no longer considered Institute Park. He mentioned that the Fire Fighters Memorial to honor those lost in the 2000 warehouse fire was to be placed on a grass section of land adjacent to the fire station, not in Institute Park. Though not connected directly to our project, Mr. Antonelli mentioned that if we wished to know more about Salisbury Pond, we should contact the Worcester Department of Public Works who now controls the pond.

At the end of the meeting Mr. Antonelli expressed his interest in our project and told us that we were welcome back if we required further information. He also recommended that we talk to him about our recommendations. He would be able to inform us about the feasibility of our improvements.

4.2.2 Kent Rissmiller

Our group met with Professor Rissmiller, a professor in the Social Science Department at WPI, on March 26th. We brought our survey with us in hopes that he could give us guidance as to whether the survey was well constructed and appropriate to seek out the information we desired.

Prof. Rissmiller began by telling us what kinds of considerations we would have to take into affect to survey such a scope as we intended to. He made light of the fact that we had little time to complete our survey and recommended that we get moving on it as soon as we can. He then reviewed our survey and commented that it was well arranged and that breaking it up for park users and non-users was a good way to approach it. He suggested that if we intended to give out the survey at any place of large circulation, such as a shopping center, that we should have a different survey than the one for face to face surveys in the park. He also recommended that we make the in-park surveys like interviews, where all we need to do is ask questions of the park-goers rather than take up their time with writing. He feels this will increase the response quality. Based on his suggestions we reworked the survey to be applicable to any environment and to be easy and quick to complete.

4.2.3 William Wallace

Our group met with William Wallace, the director of the Worcester Historical Museum, on March 28th. When we sat down with Mr. Wallace we asked him what he could tell us about the history of Institute Park and we asked him for any additional sources we might look into.

Mr. Wallace's first remark to us was that we could find a good amount of documentation on the park in the folders located within their library. He then brought in Robyn Christensen, the head librarian of the Historical Museum's library and introduced her to us. She then went about gathering the folders on Institute Park and Salisbury Pond. From there, Mr. Wallace began to detail to us his understanding of the park and related the information we sought to find with what he could provide for us.

As he began to run off a list of current events that he recalls are offered in Institute Park, he commented on the summer concerts held in the park and also the big issues that were raised during the planning and construction of the current band stand. His final recommendation to us was that we visit the American Antiquarian Society and look at the Salisbury Family Papers to see if there is any mention of park work in the papers of Stephen Salisbury III.

4.2.4 James Welu

Our group met on April 3rd with James Welu, the Director of the Worcester Art Museum. The intention of the meeting and interview was to try and clarify the interest of the Art Museum in our project as well as to establish a connection for ourselves with a local resident in the park community. We hoped to find that the Art Museum would provide us with additional contacts and individuals who have interest in our project and input about their opinion of the park currently.

Mr. Welu began by telling us that he believed the park was deeded to the Art Museum when Stephen Salisbury III died. He wanted to know the accuracy of his belief and he also wanted to establish an understanding of the museum's connection to the park. He pointed out that the fire station, which resides across Salisbury Pond from the park was built on land that the Art Museum gave to the city.

Mr. Welu then began to explore his consideration for the park in the future, and what kind of work he would like to see done there. He mentioned that he would like to see the park kept as a 1900's turn of the century park, preserving the history of the park as well as the factory age it existed in and also revealing its purpose as an open campus essentially for WPI. He mentioned that the park holds a lot of history, but does not reveal that history to its users. He would like to see the park maintained and made more appealing and fitting for the period in which it was created.

Mr. Welu also made mention of the incorporations of monuments in the park. He recalled that there was a proposal for the city's Vietnam War Memorial but it failed. It was easy to see that the style of the memorial and the park did not mesh. He also noted that the Firefighters' Memorial was proposed to be in the park. We made him aware that the monument will reside in the grass area next to the fire station. His response was that he simply hopes the monument reflects the park's history and is similar to things that were made during the park's era of creation. His biggest complaint about the park concerned the bandstand, which he felt was inappropriate in style and poorly reflected anything about the park. He recommended that something more fitting of the 1900's be placed there for a bandstand rather than the current pavilion. Mr. Welu suggested the idea of reconstructing the old bridge that was once in the park as a way to recreate the way the park had looked in the past.

We closed by mentioning our survey and Mr. Welu gave us the opportunity to attend a staff meeting at the Art Museum. We would then be able to administer the survey to the Art Museum Staff and explain our project to them. He also gave us some additional contacts and informed us that we were welcome to look through the Art Museum Library for any additional information.

4.2.5 Donna Williams and Deborah Cary

Donna Williams and Deborah Cary work for the Massachusetts Audubon Society at the Broad Meadow Brook Wildlife Sanctuary. We met with them on April 3rd to find out what interest the Audubon Society might have for park improvement, as well as what activities they could offer relating to the park. We spoke mainly with Ms. Williams because she is the most connected to the area we are focusing on in our project. Ms. Williams began by telling us what she knew about the activities offered in the park and concluded with comments and recommendations for us to consider.

Ms. Williams mentioned to us that in the past the Audubon Society has given canoe tours of Salisbury Pond. The activity was open to the public and brought in quite a crowd. She also mentioned that the tour was part of a rotating set where a different pond was selected each year. She mentioned that the tours would be returning to Salisbury Pond this year.

From there, Ms. Williams began to explain the significance of the Salisbury Pond waterway to the local birds and wildlife. She provided us with contact information for a few local bird watchers and explained in as much detail as she could about the bird life and how the park affects it. We asked if cleaning up the park or pond would negatively affect the bird habitat. She responded, saying that cleaning the area would probably draw more life in.

When asked about her opinion on any park improvements she would like to see, she mentioned:

- Storm water management to cleanup pond.
- Dredging the pond.
- Restoring the granite wall that goes around the pond.
- Deepening the pond would bring in more fish life.
- Additions of spotting location for observers.

She commented that though cleaning up the park and pond may drive off some wildlife, it might be necessary to maintain the life that is there now. She remarked that the only thing that should not be done to solve a problem would be to use park space for parking. She would like to see the land and pond preserved and cleaned up, not lost.

4.3 Naturalistic Observations

This section reports the results that we have received from our observations at Institute Park. The results are organized chronologically for ease of flow and consist of pertinent information relating park usage. Trends can be traced as you follow through the observations and most often the trends are simple and straightforward. The three variables that should be considered, and were documented during our observations, are the time of day, weather, and activity. These categories can then be analyzed separately revealing the trends even more clearly. Below is the list of the observations we witnessed. Following is a discussion of each category and the main information gathered from the category that will be considered in our report. Each one ties in some way to the other, and almost all activities in the park are interwoven.

4.3.1 Time of Day

Most of the activity in the park occurs during what is considered the business hours of the day. There is a sign at the entrance to the park off the end of Boynton Street, which tells the open hours for public use of the park. The sign, posted by the Parks Commission, declares that the park is only open from 5am to 10 pm. Though our group did not observe during all open hours of the park, we feel the hours that we observed were the most appropriate period for our observations. The trend seen in terms of usage versus time is such that the park saw more usage in the afternoon than it did early morning or late evening. Most people used the park in the earlier part of the day simply because that is when most people are out in general.

4.3.2 Weather Conditions

Many of the observations we made during the initially decided time period were in less than comparable conditions. Many of our observations were done in either rain or snow conditions which tend to keep park users out. Though the nicer days did tend to draw in quite a

crowd of people, more so than normally, we noticed that the regular users would be in the park all the time with the exception of during rainy times.

4.3.3 Activity

The activities that park users participate in while in the park are usually general activities and repeated by many other park users. The occurrence of an activity that isn't ordinary for the park does occur but there is a list of general activities that tend to be done there. That list of activities includes walking, jogging, walking dogs, and sitting on the benches. Other activities such as taking pictures, playing Frisbee, playing tennis do occur, but on a less frequent basis.

4.4 Survey

We dispersed our survey to a selected population that included people we interviewed in Institute Park, residents of the Mass. Ave. neighborhood, WPI students, and the staffs of the Worcester Art Museum (WAM) and Worcester Historical Museum (WHM). The results below are from a total of 67 surveys that were collected from a total distribution of 115.

Out of a total of 67 surveys, 54 of these people are park users. Out of that group of people, the survey found several different uses.

<u>Activities</u>	<u>% of users</u>
Walking/Jogging/Running	54
Summer Concerts	37
Lunch/Picnic	22
Read/Photo/Sketch/Paint	11
Sports/Recreation	9
Misc. Events	
(Salisbury Sampler, Charity Walks, Audubon Tours, etc)	9
Sitting/Getting Sun	7
Bird Watching	6
Walk Dog	6

From that same group of 54 users, we were able to gather suggestions for improvements that could be made to the park that may increase their usage.

<u>Improvement</u>	<u>% of users</u>
Clean up Salisbury Pond	72
Restrooms	48
Picnic Tables	44
Defined Walkways	35
Parking Area	26
Better/Improved Bandstand/Pavilion	24
Better/More Lighting	20
Playground	17
Gardens/Flora	11
More/Repair Benches	6
Sculptures/Artwork	6
Bridge to the Island	4
No change	13

We also grouped the above recommendations for improvement into 3 different categories: landscape, utilities, and structures. In that form, the survey showed that 74% wanted landscape improvements, 59% wanted utility improvements, and 57% wanted structural improvements.

Out of these 54 park users, we found that 65% of them do not know anything about the history of the park. Out of the 35% who do, we found that they do not know a lot about it. Most of them are only able to make ties between the park and Stephen Salisbury III, WPI, or the WAM. Nobody mentioned any of the unique structures that the park does or used to have. This is not bad, but shows that the park reveals little about its history.

From the 19% of completed surveys from non-users we gathered a few responses as to why they do not use the park. We received answers such as: “I don’t live in the area,” “It’s not appealing,” “I don’t know,” “I’ve never heard of it,” “Lack of opportunity,” “No time,” and “I use other parks closer to home.” In general most of those who have not used the park are people

whom do not live close to the park. From the same group of non-users we gather that the general feeling is that the park needs to be “cleaner and more attractive” because “it looks dump and unsafe.”

5 Conclusions and Recommendations

From the research and results we have collected, we have formulated recommendations for improvements to Institute Park. We believe that these improvements can make Institute Park a better place and will make people want to use the park more.

5.1 Landscape Improvements

5.1.1 Salisbury Pond

A majority of the people that we have spoken to and surveyed about Institute Park make a connection between the park and Salisbury Pond when asked about park improvements. The local community sees the pond as an eyesore when it comes to the park scene and would like to see it cleaned up. A good deal of the silt and wastewater spillage into the pond has caused it to become shallow and polluted. According to the survey, 72% of the people would like to see the pond cleaner and clearer, but that could only be made possible by stopping all pollution and dredging the pond. With the 319 grant that the city has received for the management of waterways flowing into Salisbury Pond, the first necessary step towards pond cleanup is already in action. Once the poor water qualities that are running into the pond have been reduced, the pond could then be drained and dredged to remove all the buildup in the pond. In addition to removing buildup in the pond, the restructuring of the wall that surrounds the pond would create a cleaner and more defined shoreline for the pond. With the removal of the buildup from leaves and silt deposited in the pond, much of the plant life in the pond could be removed making the pond more open and giving it better appearance. Though there are people from Massachusetts Audubon and Regional Environmental Council concerned that the removal of the plant life and the changing of the pond typography may cause the animal, fish and bird life in the area to struggle, most of the population we spoke with would rather see the pond improved than to see the quality of living in the pond remain or worsen than its current situation. In fact, cleaner and deeper water would improve fish life in the pond, which would also affect the animal and bird life in the area in different ways. Leaving some areas of growth within the pond and its surrounding would be an easy compromise, as long as the other considerations of dredging and wall reconstruction are taken into affect. With a deeper, cleaner, clearer Salisbury Pond, Institute

Park would have a much bluer and pleasing backdrop, which eventually could be used for boating, fishing, skating and other recreational activities. Figure 5-1 shows the current state of Salisbury Pond compared to what it once was.



Figure 5-1: New and old photos of Salisbury Pond Old: (WHM)

5.1.2 Walking Paths

Institute Park was once full of groomed, winding walkways that would take park patrons all around to different attractions. Today Institute Park is a large field area with a few trees and small structures interspersed in it. Though activities and structures within the park will help to draw new users to the park and more frequently, the construction of foot paths would help guide the users while in the park and give them a more secure sense of order in the park. As it seems now, most of the structures in the park appear to be just randomly dispersed in the park. Walkways would provide a nice, level and maintained path for park users to explore. Looking at maps of the park from its earliest years, it is easy to see how the walkways gave order to the park and also how they gave routes for park traversing. The redevelopment of some of the old paths and some new ones to cater to the already evident usage routes of park users now would

revitalize the old appearance of a park with beautiful walkways while also providing for the needs of the community as a whole. Figure 5-2 shows the proposed walking path locations. They are basically the same as the original, with a few exceptions. Figure 5-3 shows the comparison between the old paths and what currently exists.

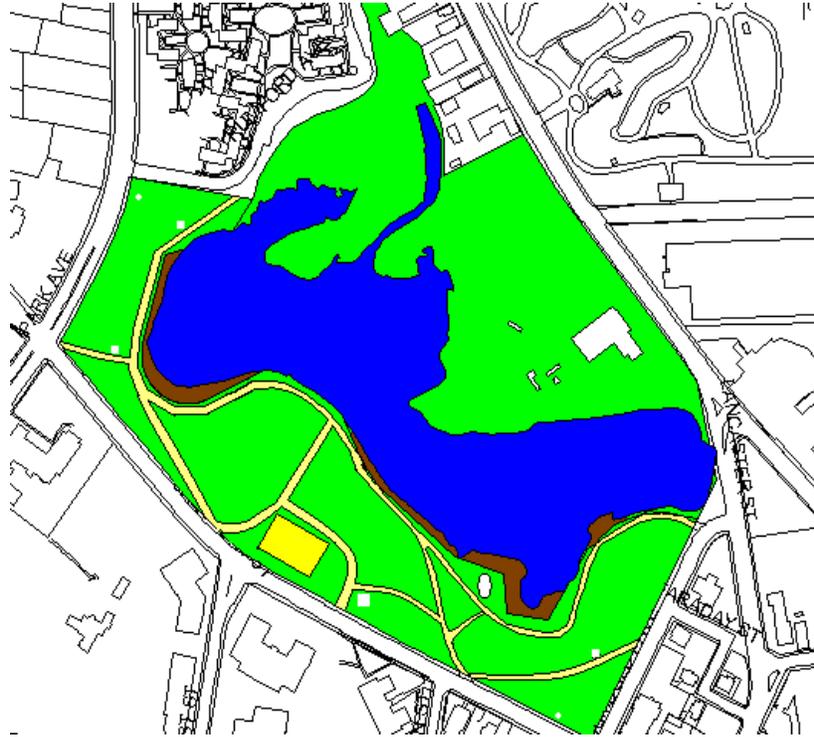


Figure 5-2 Walking Paths



Figure 5-3 Old and new photos of walking paths along Salisbury Pond Old (WHM)

5.1.3 Plant Life/Trees

Today Institute Park is home to many trees and small shrubs. Over time the introduction of some flowers and other less desirable plants has occurred in the park. Historically the park was designed to have trees only, and not shrubs and flowers due to their required upkeep and

also because Stephen Salisbury, when designing the park, felt that they did not belong there for they would provide a distraction in the park. Salisbury Pond has also become home to a number of plants that did not naturally exist there when the park was designed. Based on our research, our recommendations would be to remove much of the smaller vegetation in the park to open it up, mainly along the pond edge, and also to maintain, and replant if need be, the trees there. Many of the trees in the park are beautiful for the area they are growing in, but there are trees that also need to be removed due to age and disease. The trimming of trees and removal of trees in poor condition in the park would help open the park more and make it more visually appealing. In the recent past, many trees have been planted there in honor of people and organizations but the types of trees that were planted do not fit the park historically. The park still is home to a grove of European Beeches, as well as many oak and pine trees, but the integration of newer and smaller flowering trees has changed its original appearance. We recommend that any other trees planted in the park be of similar type to the older trees in the park. Trees should also be planted along Salisbury Street and Park Avenue to create a border between the street and the park. Though there are many nice open spaces now in the park, other places have become far overgrown. The best solution would be to thin where the trees are too grown in and the replant where the trees are too scarce.

5.2 Utilities Improvements

5.2.1 Restrooms

Many of the parks in Worcester have buildings that provide restrooms for park users. A very large percentage of those restrooms however are no longer open for use by the public on a regular basis. This not only limits activity in the park from time to time, but it also keeps users from being in the park for extended periods. Institute Park is an example of such a case. Our research into park usage currently finds that the lack of bathroom facilities has been an issue for many of the users of the park in the past. Our survey showed that 48% of park users would like to have access to restrooms in the park. They express the desire to be able to use facilities while in the park which could increase their usage time if they wouldn't have to run home every time they needed to use the bathroom. Seeing that the building for the old restrooms still stands, it would be easy to reuse it but the need for plumbing and upkeep still remains as an issue. The cost for reopening the restrooms would possibly stretch from \$5,000 to \$40,000 and would take quite

a bit of planning by the city to complete. If the job could be dealt with privately it would be easier and much more effective but that isn't the case right now. Vandalism and maintenance of the restrooms would also raise the cost for the city but it would provide a much-needed presence in the park that the community would like to have. Figure 5-4 shows the building that was once used for bathrooms in Institute Park.



Figure 5-4: Bathhouse in Institute Park

5.2.2 Parking Space

Ever since the park was built, it never had an area for parking. Through our surveys and observations, we have found that most park users walk to the park from either their work or homes. Many of the individuals that we have spoken to about the parking issue have expressed that they do not wish to see park land lost for the use as a parking area. There is a section in the park near the tennis courts that lies between the old restrooms and the tennis courts. The Parks Department has a gate to enter the area and probably uses it for access to the facilities there. We recommend that if the Parks Department wishes to provide a parking area for Institute Park that they consider this area for a few parking spots. It does not need to be paved, but if gravel was put down, it would serve the purpose sufficiently. Vehicles occasionally park in the grass in that area already so if they mark it off with posts it would improve the parking situation dramatically. This is not a crucial recommendation, but in attempt to attract park users who do not live close to the park, it would help to build in a small parking area. Figure 5-5 shows the area where parking could most easily be added to the park.



Figure 5-5: Proposed Parking Area

5.2.3 Lighting

Survey results show that lighting in the park needs improvement. The park is extremely dark after dusk. With increased lighting, vandalism can be decreased and people who pass through the park after dusk will feel safer. Even though parks are closed at night, many WPI students pass through Institute Park during those hours to get home.

5.3 Structures

In the past, Institute Park has been distinguished by the structures that occupied its space. In our opinion, bringing back some of those structures would help to make Institute Park more noticeable and bring more people into the park.

5.3.1 Picnic Tables

When people use a park it is based on what the park has to offer its users. For people looking to have lunch in a park, Institute Park offers nothing more than a fair amount of open green space ideal for placing a blanket down for a picnic. 44% of surveyed users of the park feel that picnic tables would be a welcome addition. Park users have mentioned that if there were tables in the park, they would have somewhere to go for lunch in good weather, which would attract them to the park. As a side-effect, this may also draw those users out into the park more regularly for additional uses. Our recommendation is to place a few small groups of two or three tables around the park in different locations. To place two or three tables near the grove at the

Humboldt Ave. entrance to the park, or along the shoreline of Salisbury Pond near the Sniderman Pavilion, or even near the grove of European Beeches in the park that are being preserved near the corner of Salisbury Street and Park Ave. would take little planning work, and cost no more than \$300 dollars per bench for material. The alternate locations would give users a variety of scenic areas for their background and this could also draw in other users that may need a table for other activities. Figure 5-6 shows the areas where picnic tables should be added:



Figure 5-6 Picnic Table Locations

5.2.2 Bandstand

Sniderman Pavilion is not a desirable facility for many outdoor performances. It is very small and doesn't provide any cover. It would be better to have a facility that provides more performance space perhaps for a large orchestra and a roof to protect performers from any inclement weather conditions. It would also be in best interest to provide a backstage area to facilitate theatre productions. A better facility would attract more performers to the park. Also, it is a popular opinion that the pavilion is an eyesore. It doesn't match the character of Institute Park at all. It would be more fitting to build a bandstand in early 19th century style, so that the park does not lose the original character that it still holds. Sniderman Pavilion clashes with the structure of the gazebos and bathhouse that still exist. Figure 5-7 shows the old bandstand and the current Sniderman Pavilion. The new bandstand should take on the historical aspects from

the old bandstand and combine it with the size of Sneiderman Pavilion. However, the structure should not be too big because the community has shown opposition to this in the past and are more than likely to do so in the future.

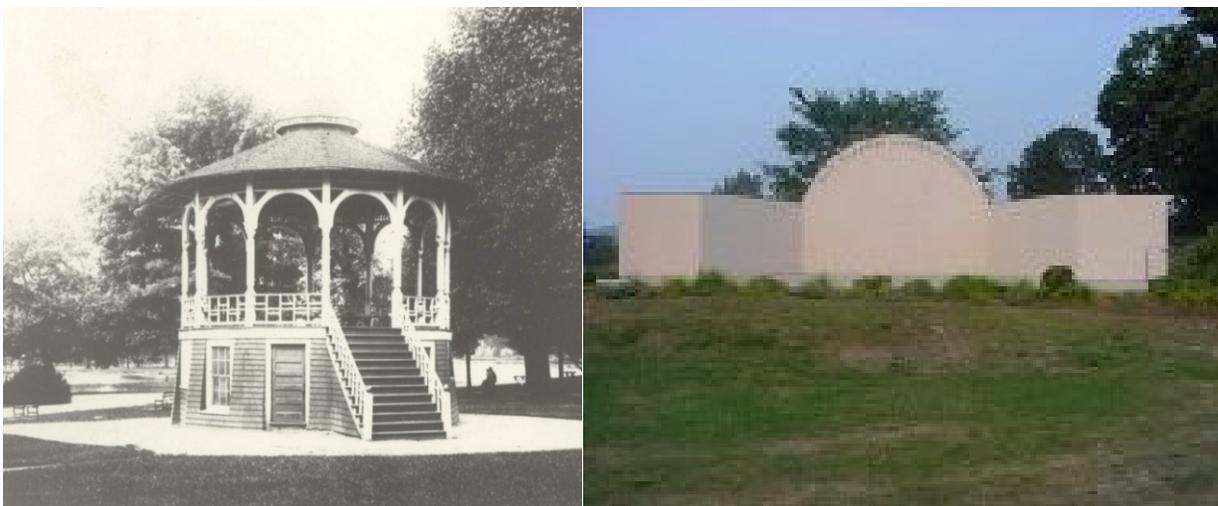


Figure 5-7 Old and current bandstands

5.3.3 Playground

Originally, in 1912, the Worcester Art Museum gave a tract of land on the Grove Street side of the pond to the city. Part of that area was set aside for use as a playground. In 1964 that land was transferred for use as the Grove Street Fire Department Headquarters. Sometime after, a playground was rebuilt in the current area on the Park Avenue side of the park. That playground used to consist of a playground center, one slide, six large swings, and a sandbox. Currently the Institute Park playground consists of a total of four small toddler swings. These swing sets are in poor condition.

To attract children to the park, we recommend that a full playground center be rebuilt in the same area where the current swings stand. That location is sufficient because of its location near Park Avenue. The majority of Institute Park's surrounding residential area is located across Park Avenue. We recommend a playground similar to the one in Elm Park, which is very popular and receives much use. A complete playground area would cost around \$10,000. This would provide a public playground for residents and day cares in the Institute Park area and could help alleviate any overcrowding at the Elm Park playground. Figure 5-8 shows what remains of a playground in Institute Park. Only a few swings exist, which do not fulfill the need expressed by the community.



Figure 5-8: Swings in InSTITUTE Park

5.3.4 Park Benches

The current condition of the park benches in Institute Park is poor. Most of the concrete footings are cracking and crumbling and some wood from the seats are missing or cracking. A group of the existing park benches are still arranged around the site of the old bandstand. If you were to attend a concert at Sneiderman Pavilion and sat at those park benches you would find it very awkward.

Our results show that if the existing park benches receive some maintenance and that some new benches are added and oriented toward the pavilion, the benches will be more useful compared to the current benches. Benches should either be orientated toward the pond or toward the pavilion. Figure 5-9 shows the orientation of benches around the site of the old bandstand. Figure 5-10 shows the deteriorating condition of most of the benches.



Figure 5-9: Bench locations



Figure 5-10: Poor condition of bench

5.3.5 Bridge

A structure that could be brought back to the park is a bridge that goes over to the island in Salisbury Pond. This structure is not only functional, but it also does a great deal for the aesthetics of the park. Adding the bridge to the park would now open up more of the park that is now very underused. Most activity in Institute Park takes place in the central and eastern sections of the park, but by adding this structure, the western section of the park, closest to Park Avenue, would see increased usage.

In terms of design for the bridge, there should be a mixture of old and new features. The bridge should have three separate sections, like it did in the past (see Figure 5-11), but instead of having the sides enclosed, they should be open (see Figure 5-12).

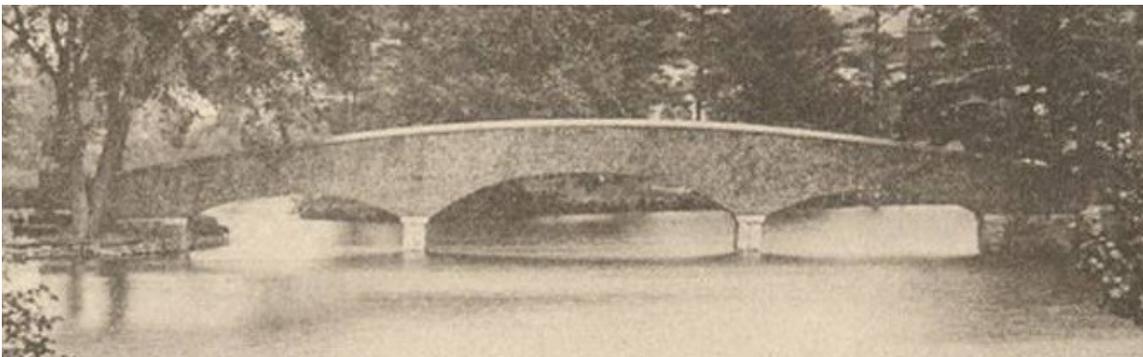


Figure 5-11: Old bridge in Institute (WHM)



Figure 5-12: Example of how new bridge can look

From: www.tradepartnersuk-usa.com/images/BTO/Large/Coulson_lg.jpg

In order to stay with the theme that Stephen Salisbury and Stephen Earle followed in the late 1800's, the bridge should be constructed from a mixture of stone and wood. However, it would be best to have the main load-bearing structure made from steel, and then have a façade of the other materials. Since the bridge would be built on the spot where it once stood, then the dimensions should be similar to the old bridge. The dimensions of the old bridge are as follows: 127 feet in length and 12 feet in width. The center span was 45 feet long, while the two end spans were 32 feet 6 inches each. This bridge would be a terrific addition to the park. The bridge could possibly serve as a memorial through private funding.

5.3.6 Tower

Another structure that could be brought back into the park is the Stone Tower. However, this structure should not be put on the spot where it once was and it should be smaller than the previous one. Based on the interests and needs of bird watchers that frequent the park, it would be best to put up two separate towers, one on the east side of the park and one on the west side of the park. Putting a tower back on the knoll directly opposite West Street would not serve this purpose well. The trees have since grown and the view is blocked (see Figure 5-13).



Figure 5-13: View from site of the old tower

The sites that we propose are much better suited to serve the towers' purposes. On the east side of the park, one tower would be erected on the site where one of the gazebos once was. This location is best because it is on top of a hill and there aren't many trees blocking the view (See Figure 5-14).



Figure 5-14: View from proposed site on east side

On the west side of the park, the second tower should be placed along the shoreline, directly down the hill from the tennis courts. This spot also provides an excellent view of Salisbury Pond (See Figure 5-15).



Figure 5-15: Views from proposed site on west side

The size of the towers would have to be changed in order to make them less obtrusive to the landscape of the park. The former tower was 30 feet high and 23 feet wide. We suggest that the size of the towers be reduced to 15 feet high and 15 feet across. As far as the design of the towers, taking cues from the old tower would be best. Having a frame constructed from steel and then surrounded by stone masonry allows for strength, as well as traditional styling. The outward appearance of the towers should remain the same, with the arches and pillars on the bottom section and then the solid stone on top, but one part that should be removed is the pair of gargoyles on the tower (see Figure 5-16). They once served for drainage, but now a better system can be installed.



Figure 5-16: “Gargoyles”

5.3.7 Entrance and Signs

There are a few more, less intensive, structures that should be put in the park. Several signs should be posted to let people know that the area is Institute Park. There is one sign already, located near the beech tree grove on Salisbury Street near Park Avenue, but more could be put in. Also on these signs can be some historical information about Institute Park. As shown by this project, there is a great deal of history to Institute Park, but not many people are aware of it. Putting up these signs will help people to understand more about the park and hopefully this would allow them to appreciate it more.

The park would benefit from an actual “entrance,” similar to the one that Elm Park has (see Figure 5-17). Something like this would definitely make Institute Park more noticeable and we believe that this would increase the usage of the park.



Figure 5-17: Entrance to Elm Park From: www.worcestermass.com

5.4 Recommendations:

Our study shows that Salisbury Pond is very polluted and unattractive to park patrons.

Recommendation: Sometime after the proposed catch basins are installed and less silt and cleaner water are flowing into Salisbury Pond, the pond should be dredged and the granite wall surrounding the pond should be repaired and rebuilt.

Institute Park lacks much definition that winding paths give to many other parks (Elm Park for example) and many trails or being worn into the grass where there is heavy traffic.

Recommendation: Create groomed dirt paths in heavy traffic areas and that lead to all of the structures in the park.

Many shrubs and bushes have grown up around the parks edge hindering the view across the pond in many places.

Recommendation: Remove plant life besides trees that are along the water's edge.

With heavy traffic on Park Avenue and Salisbury Street it is hard for park patrons to escape the city.

Recommendation: More trees should be planted along Salisbury Street and Park Avenue.

Our study shows that many park users have had to cut their recreation/leisure time because the park has no sanitary facilities.

Recommendation: Make necessary repairs to open up the existing bathhouse.

Institute Park provides no parking and parking in the area is limited. This prohibits many park users who cannot walk to the park from driving there.

Recommendation: A small section of park land near the tennis courts should be made into a parking area.

The park is very dark at night and many WPI students and other citizens passing through in the evening feel unsafe. The darkness also leaves it vulnerable to vandalism.

Recommendation: Increase the lighting in the park.

People often use Institute Park during their lunch breaks and for picnics, but there are currently no picnic tables.

Recommendation: Picnic tables should be placed near the grove at the Humboldt Ave. entrance to the park, along the shoreline of Salisbury Pond near the Sneiderman Pavilion, near the playground area near Park Avenue, and/or even near the grove of European Beeches in the park that are being preserved near the corner of Salisbury Street and Park Ave.

Park users leave much litter in the park.

Recommendation: Place trash barrels in locations throughout the park.

Sneiderman Pavilion is not desirable to many performers because it is small and has no roof.

Recommendation: Add a roof and more stage area to Sneiderman Pavilion or build a new bandstand.

Institute Park does not have a complete playground facility for children.

Recommendation: A playground center, slide, and large swing set should be built in the area where the existing swing set is.

Many of the park benches are in poor condition and there are very few orientated around the pavilion.

Recommendation: Repair the old park benches and add some new benches orientated toward the pavilion and along the waterfront.

Institute Park lacks identification.

Recommendation: Post “Institute Park” signs at corners and entrances to the park.

Recommendation: Build an entranceway on Salisbury Street similar to the one in Elm Park.

Institute Park used to have many unique structures that added to its character. Now there are only the Tremont Columns and Sneiderman Pavilion.

Recommendation: A bridge to the island in Salisbury Pond could be reconstructed (possibly a memorial).

Recommendation: One or two observation towers could be built for looking across the pond and observing wildlife (possibly memorials).

Recommendation: Local artists could use a section of the park as a sculpture park to display artwork.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Description of Sponsoring Agencies

Worcester Art Museum

The Worcester Art Museum, founded by Stephen Salisbury III, opened in the spring of 1898. The institution was created "for the benefit of all the people." Today, the internationally renowned collection consists of more than 35,000 works of art representing more than 50 centuries of creative spirit.

The Art Museum is one of the largest in New England. The museum began from the Salisbury Family collection and quickly grew. In 1898 the Museum opened the first New England gallery solely devoted to the permanent display of American portrait miniatures. The Asian collection, established with the 1901 bequest of John Chandler Bancroft's Japanese prints, now includes textiles, prints, ceramics, sculptures and paintings representing the major periods of Persian, Chinese, Indian and Japanese art. Today there are 35 galleries that house works of art ranging from paintings and sculptures to goldwork, pottery and photographs. Highlights include important works by Piero de Cosimo, Andrea del Sarto, El Greco, Hals, Gainsborough, Goya, Turner, Renoir, Monet, Cezanne, Gauguin, Matisse, Braque and Kandinsky. Temporary exhibitions presenting drawings and prints from Durer to Warhol reflect the depth of the Museum's treasured works on paper.

As a benefactor of Stephen Salisbury III, the Art Museum would like to preserve any connection that Mr. Salisbury still has with the city. Institute Park is a very important part of this.

Daniel R. Benoit

Daniel Benoit is an architect who currently owns his own firm located at 287 Park Avenue in Worcester. He was formerly employed by the City of Worcester from 1993 to 1998. He was employed by the City Development Committee and had a part in such projects as the Worcester Centrum, Convention Center, Medical City, Union Station and the Common Outlet mall.

Currently, he is working on a project to redevelop the Blackstone Canal in Worcester. His interest in this project lies in the connection of Salisbury Pond to the Blackstone Canal and the future development of the area. Mr. Benoit would also like to see Institute Park transformed into the area that it once was. It is his feeling that Institute Park is one of the most neglected areas in Worcester and that there are many improvements that should be made.

Appendix B: Observation Schedule

	Monday March 31st	Tuesday April 1st	Wednesday April 2nd	Thursday April 3rd	Friday April 4th	Saturday April 5th
8am	Lenny					Joel
9am		Lenny				
10am			Joel			
11am				Mike		
12pm					Lenny	
1pm	Mike					Lenny
2pm		Mike				
3pm			Lenny			
4pm				Joel		
5pm					Mike	
6pm	Joel					Mike

	Sunday April 6th	Monday April 7th	Tuesday April 8th	Wednesday April 9th	Thursday April 10th	Friday April 11th
8am					Mike	
9am				Joel		Mike
10am			Lenny			
11am		Mike				
12pm	Joel					
1pm					Joel	
2pm				Lenny		Joel
3pm			Mike			
4pm		Joel				
5pm	Lenny					
6pm					Lenny	

	Saturday April 12th
8am	
9am	
10am	Lenny
11am	
12pm	
1pm	
2pm	
3pm	Mike
4pm	
5pm	
6pm	

Appendix C: Observation Record Sheet

Record Sheet

Observer: _____

Date: _____

Start Time: _____

Weather Conditions: _____

Finish Time: _____

Observed Activities:

Time: _____

Activity:

Time: _____

Activity: