

The background image shows a large, multi-story brick school building with many windows. In front of the building is an outdoor basketball court with red and green painted areas. There are some trees and a smaller building in the distance. The sky is blue with some clouds.

Community Meeting #2

West Somerville


Neighborhood School

Somerville, MA

AGENDA

- Introductions
- Design Schedule
- Review of Community & Faculty Meetings
- Schematic Designs
- Questions for Discussion

June 14, 2021

An architectural rendering of a three-story brick school building with large multi-paned windows. In the foreground, there is an outdoor basketball court with a red and green surface and a basketball hoop. To the left of the court, there is a small landscaped area with a tree, a blue picnic table, and a bench. A wooden fence is visible on the far left. In the background, another white building and more trees are visible under a blue sky with some clouds.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTIONS

City of Somerville

Arn Franzen, Senior Project Manager, Public Space & Urban Forestry

CBA Landscape Architects LLC

D.J. Chagnon, Principal-in-Charge & Project Manager

Liz Thompson, Staff Landscape Designer

Preliminary Community Meeting (December 2018, held by the City): Collected community input about desires for the schoolyard redesign.

WSNS Staff Input Session (November 5, 2019): Met with school faculty during a Professional Development day to receive input about schoolyard issues and concerns.

Community Meeting 1 (December 11, 2019): Present site analysis and precedents. Present rough conceptual designs based on previous community input process by the City, and develop with list to guide Schematic Designs for future meetings.

WSNS Staff Input Session 2 (January 22, 2020): Met with school faculty to discuss preliminary Schematic Designs under development.

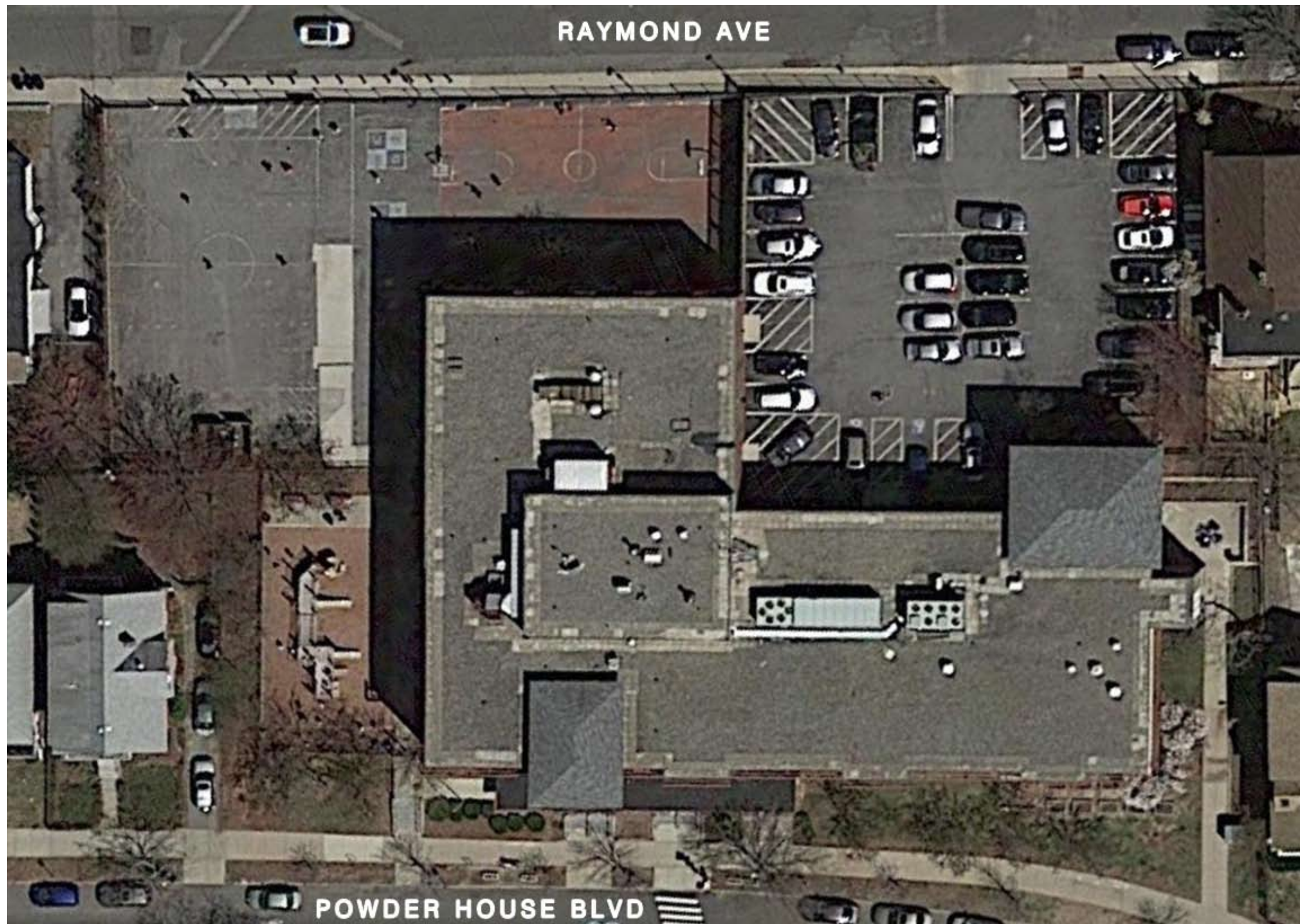
Community Meeting 2 (June 14, 2021): Present Schematic Design Alternatives based on first meeting input. Community review and discussion, with the goal of developing a final Preferred Design Plan.

Community Meeting 3 (September 2021): Present Definitive Design for Schoolyard construction, including features and site furnishings based on community discussion at Meeting 2. With community input, discuss project budget, bidding process, suggested Alternates, and prioritize strategy to maximize budget.

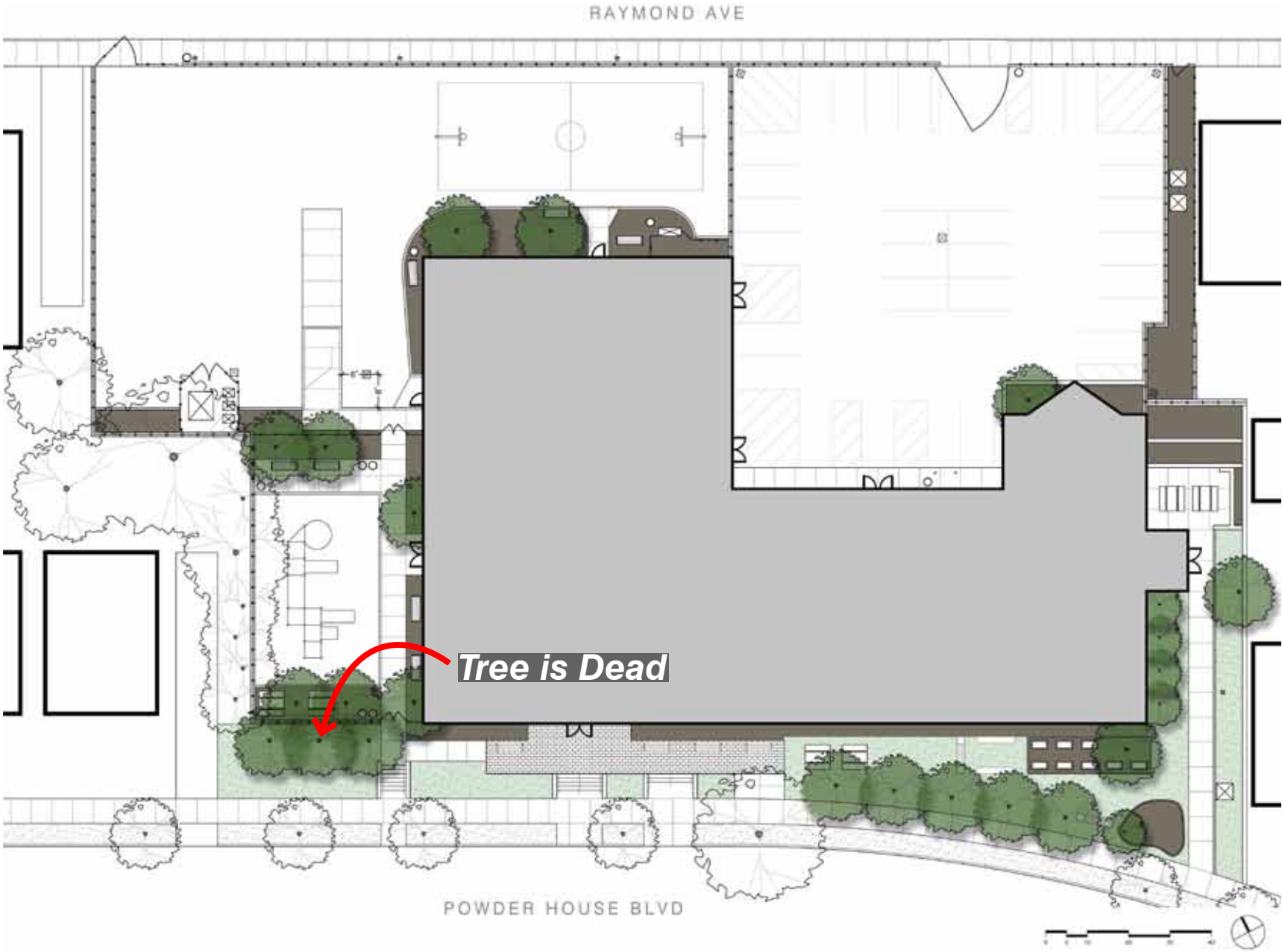
Construction Documents (Fall 2021): CBA will finalize Definitive Design and suggested

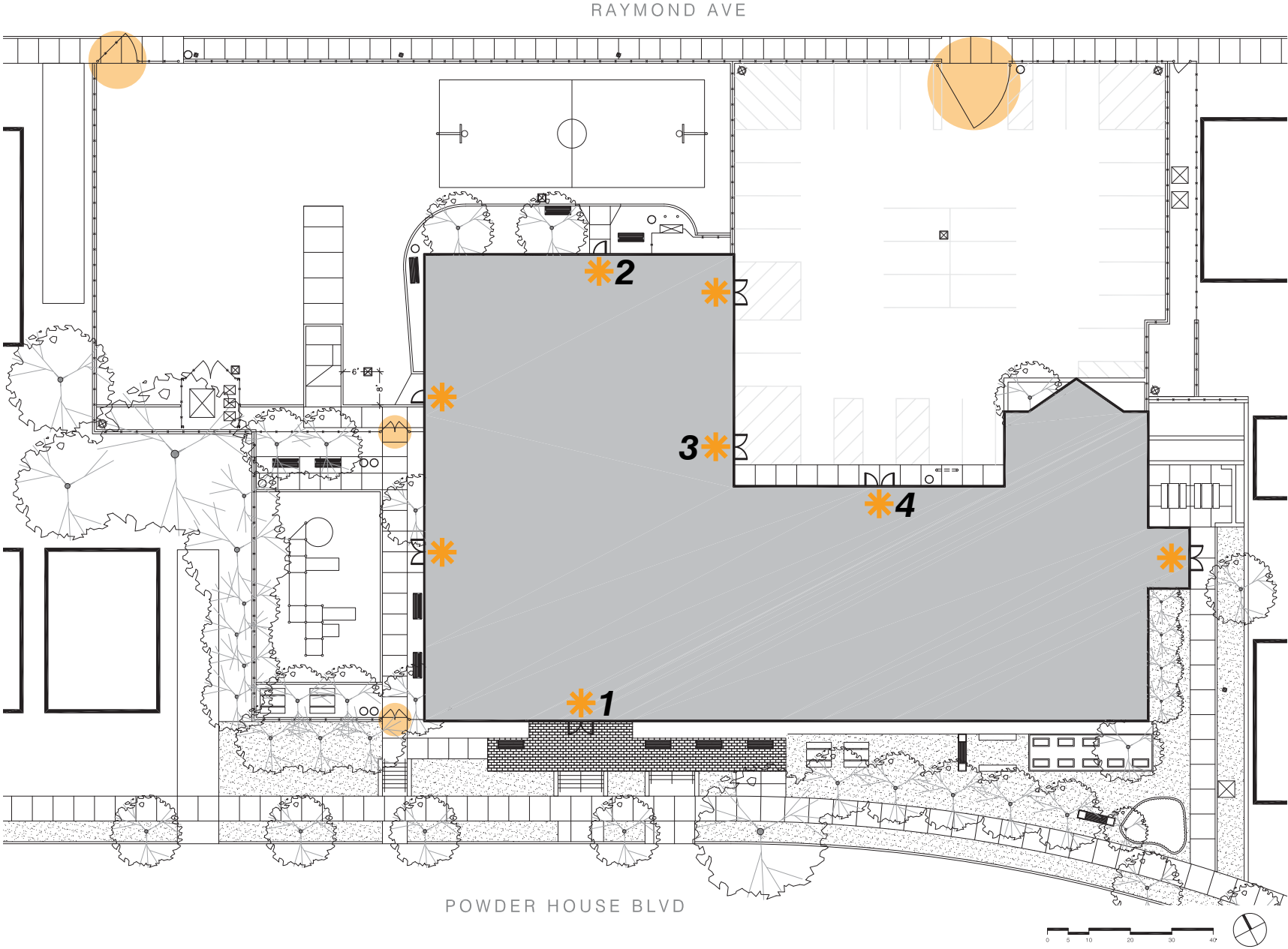
The background image shows a two-story brick school building with large, multi-paned windows. In the foreground, there is an outdoor basketball court with a red and green surface. A basketball hoop is visible on the right side of the court. The sky is blue with some white clouds. The title text is overlaid in the center of the image.

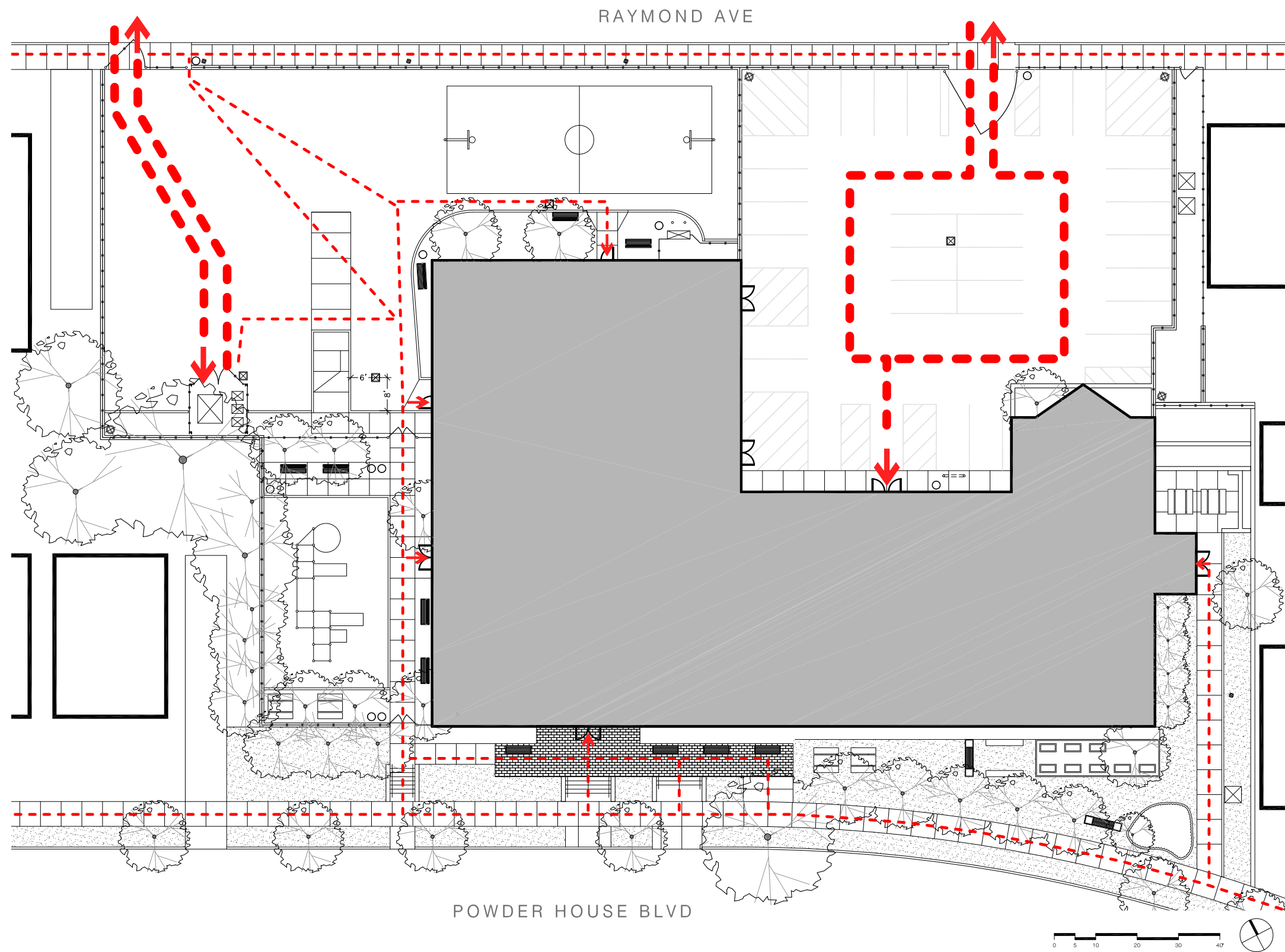
REVIEW OF COMMUNITY & FACULTY MEETINGS

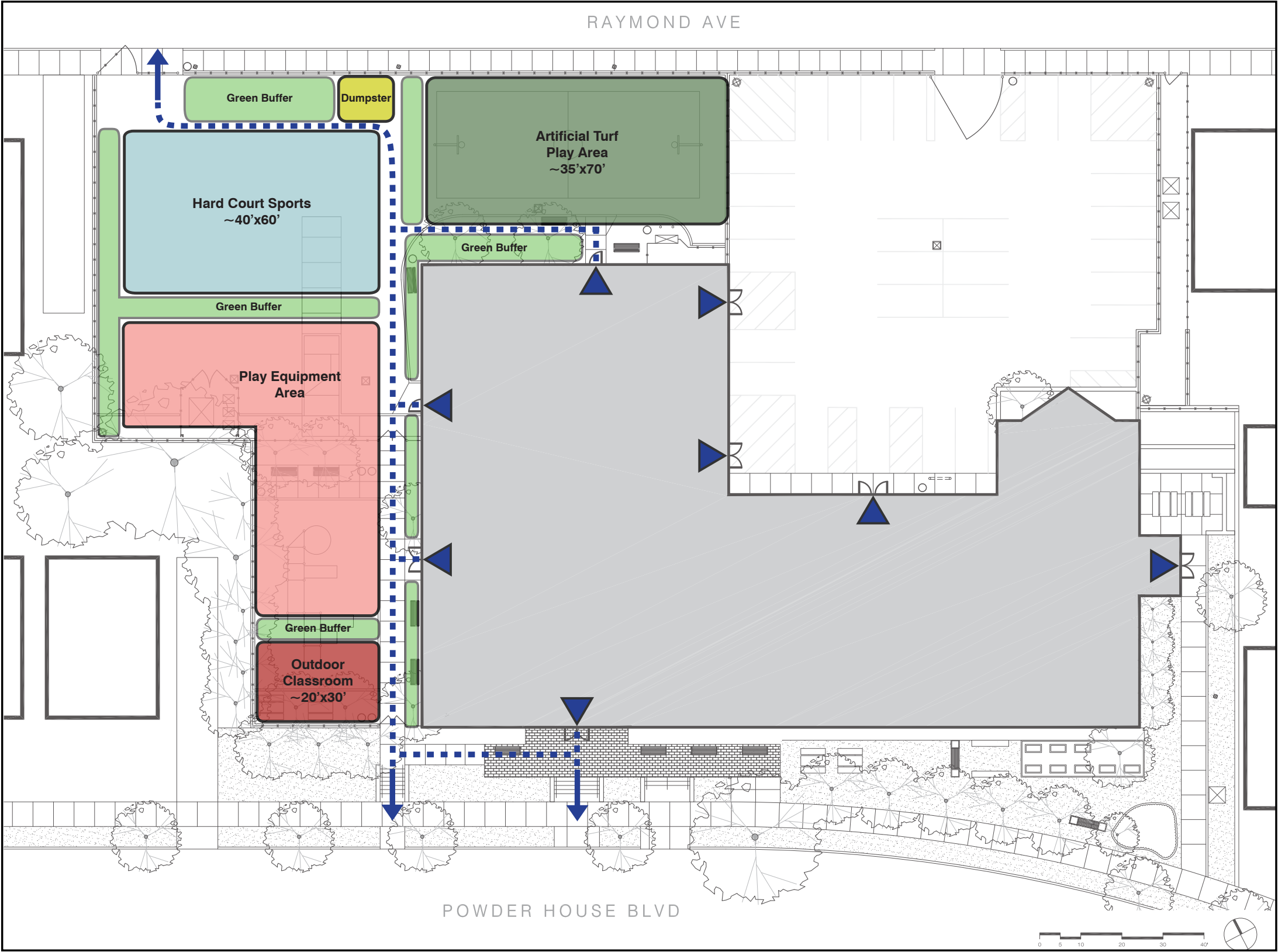


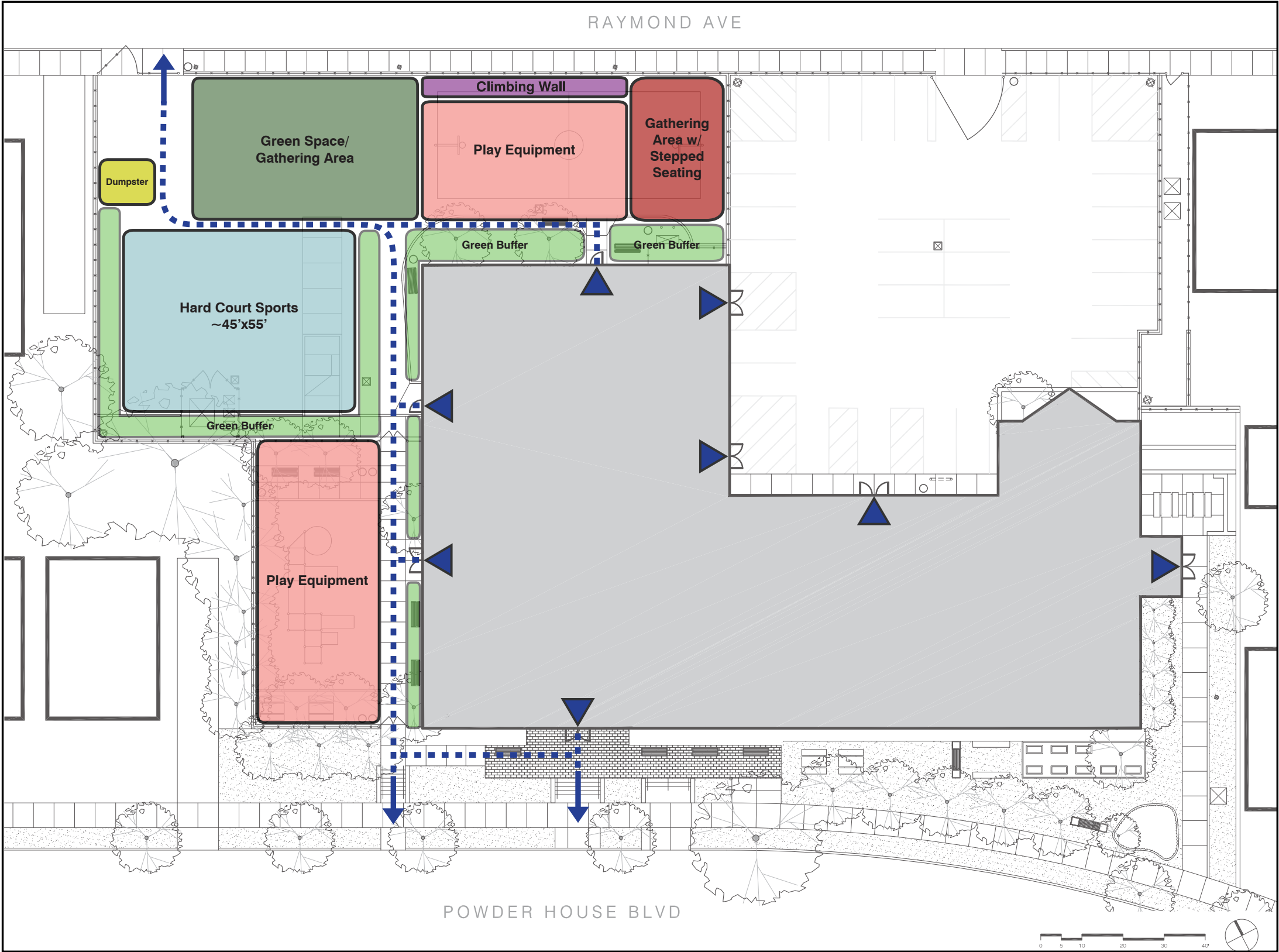


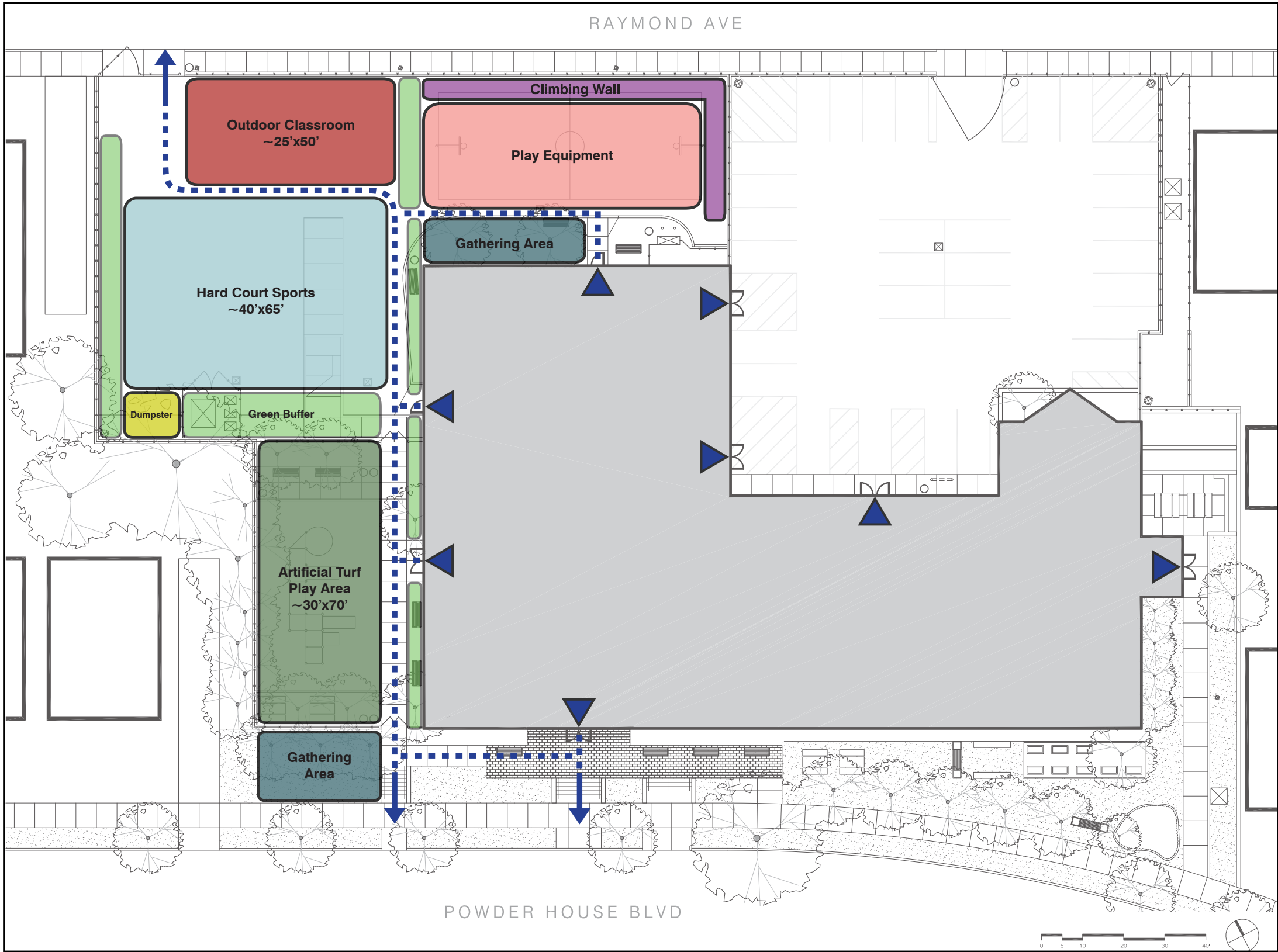












IDEAS FROM MEETINGS

EXISTING CONDITIONS & SITE ANALYSIS

Play Structures:

- Play structure for older kids - maybe a parkour-style
- Foursquare is highly used
- Explore a climbing wall along retaining walls
- Include swings, slides (several), climbers, and upper body / fitness equipment
- Students advocated for climbing walls, monkey bars, swings, and a climbing structure
- Faculty support for rubber as safety surfacing
- Dish swings would be better than individual swings

Natural Play:

- Exploring natural play areas could be incorporated
- Nature play area be wood chip? To be determined

Sports:

- Keep basketball - at least a full half court
- Adjustable basketball hoop so younger kids can use it
- Support for a multisport goal
- Support for synthetic turf for ball sports
- Turf area doesn't have to be as large as the asphalt area
- Hard-court surfaces necessary for fire truck / dumpster
- Paved space for four-square and kickball is a priority
- Direction of balls going back and forth and how that interfaces with other activities and circulation
- Flexible hard court area (multi-sport goals / striping)

Climbing Wall:

- Strong support for the climbing wall idea

Bike Safety Program:

- Be able to accommodate bike safety training program
- Bike circulation path should prioritize school day us
- Schoolyard is a safe enclosed space for learning to bike

Outdoor Classroom:

- Already an outdoor classroom on the east side
- More outdoor classroom space is not a high priority

Green Space:

- Add trees for more shade
- Increase permeable surfaces

Artificial Turf:

- Artificial turf have shredded rubber? To be determined
- There was support for the artificial turf area to be located where the current playground is located. The artificial turf would be cooler located in the shade and the taller fence would keep balls within the school yard
- The City has procured separate funding designated for athletic area design (whether the final design includes artificial turf or not)
- Climbing wall safety surfacing could be artificial turf
- Smaller artificial turf area would be well-used
- General support for an artificial turf area

Possibilities for the Big Wall:

- Climbing Wall
- Stadium Seating
- Stepped levels to create "rooms"
- Play features (such as slide) using the grade change
- Artwork / Murals especially for school spirit

Inclusive Design:

- Involve kids in design process: STEAM edu opportunity
- Protected / shelter-space within play area

Entrances/Access:

- Creating a larger and more defined area for pick-up in what is currently the playground
- More bike parking for kids biking to school

Site Layout:

- Space to eat outside
- Space is open to neighborhood after school hrs
- Design with lineup in mind
- Play equipment should be located in the sun and the turf area within the shaded area of the school yard
- Screen the kindergarten classroom windows
- Create a flexible, multi-use space
- Introduce topography and multiple levels
- Developing spaces that offer protection or separation for kids that prefer quieter activities.

Parking and Vehicles:

- Parking Study is occurring to assess parking resources
- After school program pick-up / drop-off at the upper lot
- Voting happens at the upper lot entrance
- Compromise btwn space as a schoolyard or parking lot
- Dumpster relocated in the upper lot in an unused corner
- Confine / separate parking from the schoolyard
- Add shade trees to the parking lot
- Consider deliveries / fire access, while prioritize kid uses
- Locating the dumpster on the upper parking lot might not easily be accessed when the upper lot is full of cars
- The faculty voiced that the reduction of parking spaces on school ground would be an issue since they already are spilling into neighborhood parking spots
- Two tiers of areas to play would be a supervision issue
- Gym teachers doesn't want an outdoor gym class area

Security/Surveillance:

- All areas need to have high visibility to be easily monitored and discourage drug-use

Other Considerations:

- Pavilion or other shade structure
- Include lighting at levels / appropriate directions
- Keep balls from going above and below fences /gates
- Explore expanding schoolyard out to Powderhouse Blvd
- Equipment storage shed
- Include DPW in the conversation (snow removal)
- Improve parking situation / opportunities in the neighborhood, not the schoolyard
- Request for all-weather features that can be used in rainy or snowy conditions (synthetic turf, canopies or shade structures)

More Classes Outdoors:

- Holding classes outdoors has been a benefit - creating more defined spaces for groups to use would be an improvement
- The “front lawn” of the school along Powder House Boulevard has been used much more, and could use minor upgrades to improve safety and aesthetics
- Maintaining shade and flexibility for areas created are key

Programmatic Requests:

- Having an open space large enough to support a 20'x30' tent is important; placement is flexible, and the tent would not be permanent
- An outdoor bottle filler, rather than just a drinking fountain, is important; students have water bottles to fill
- Kids have been playing a lot of soccer, kickball, and wall ball, as well as bumping a volleyball around, and foursquare remains popular. Open space to accommodate these activities should be available

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BUILDING BLOCKS











CLIMBING TOWER

BUILDING BLOCKS











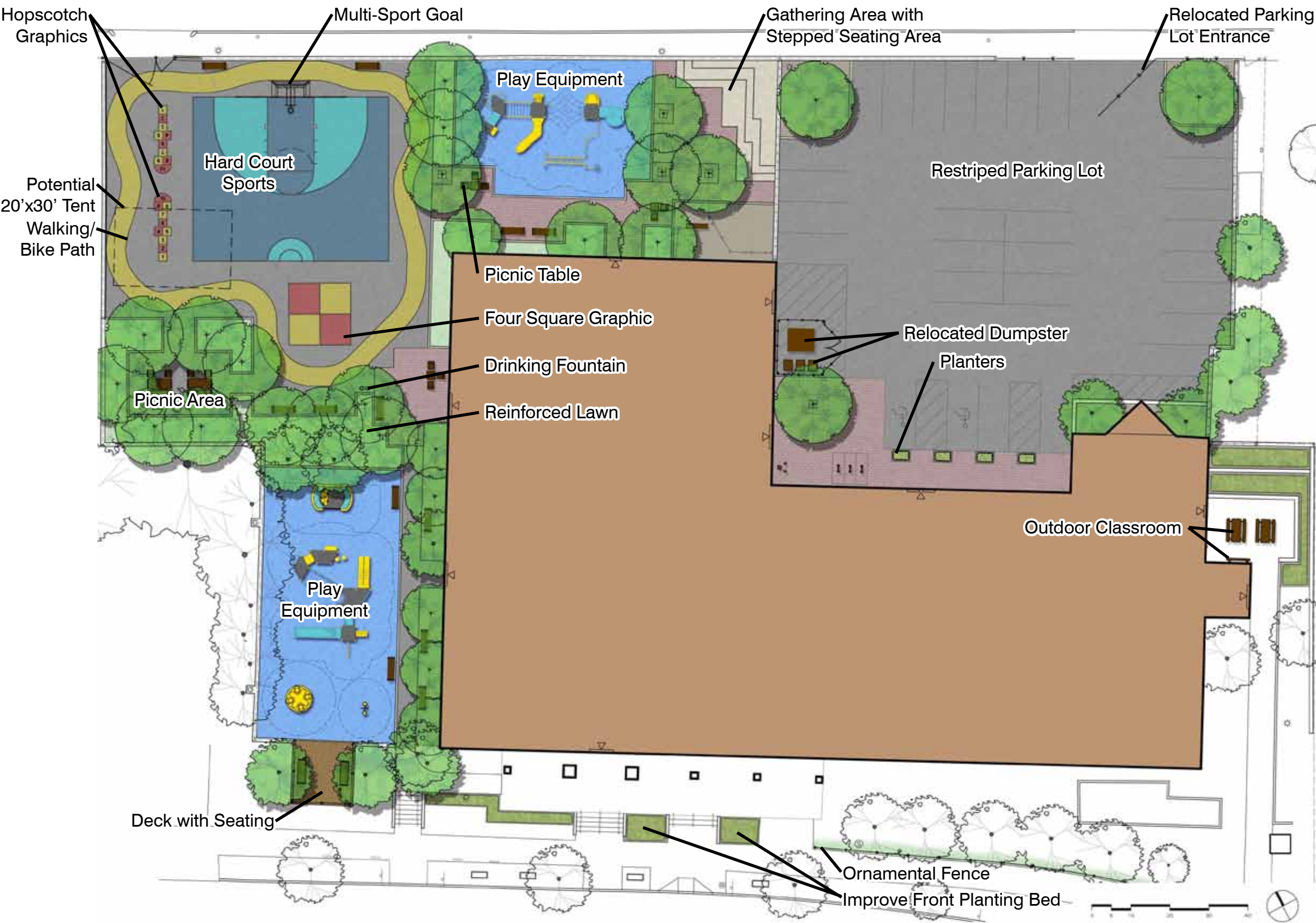


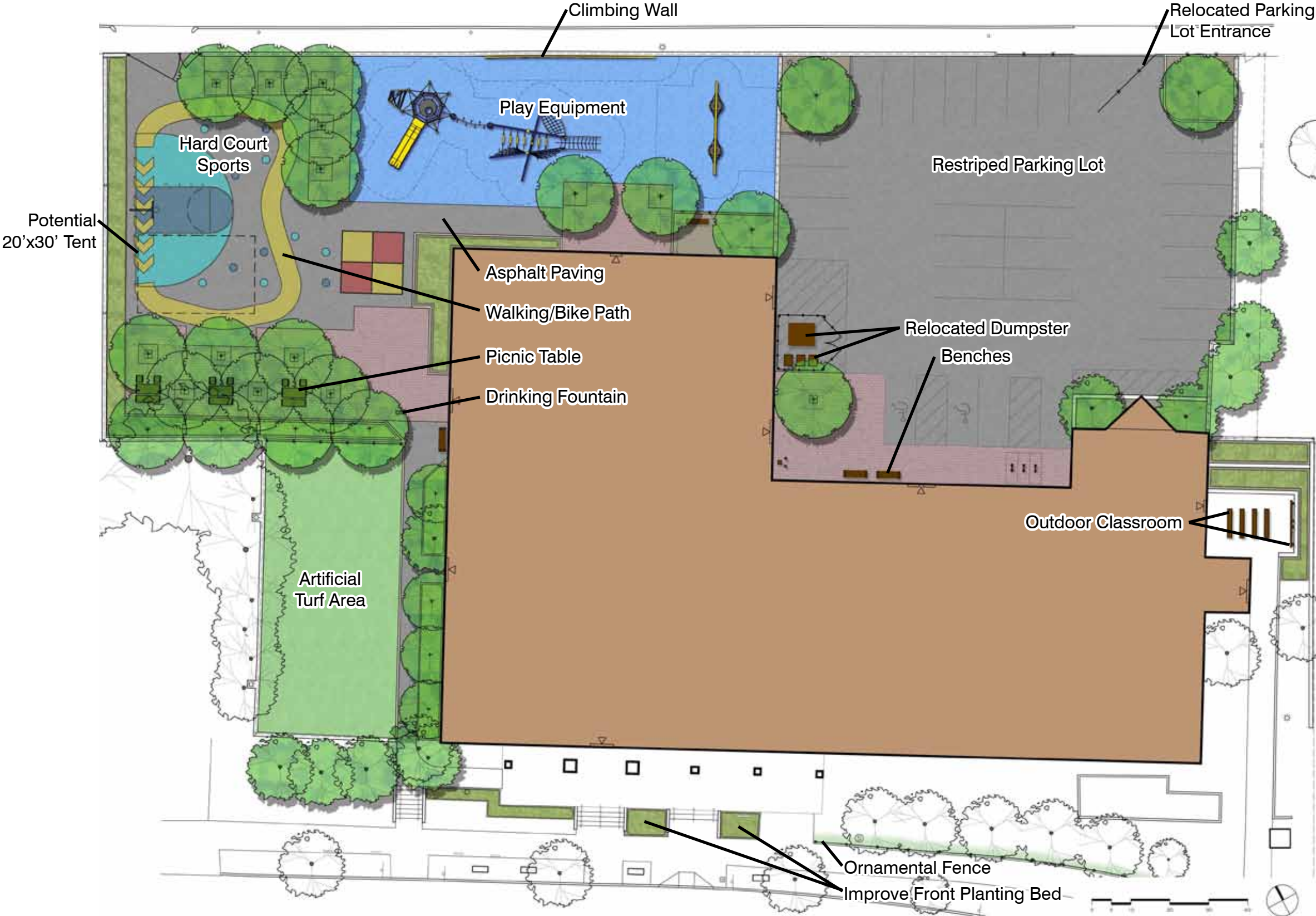
An architectural rendering of a three-story brick school building with large, multi-paned windows. In the foreground, there is a red-surfaced basketball court with white and green markings. To the left of the court, a wooden fence and a green utility box are visible. In the center, a small landscaped area features a tree, a blue picnic table, and a black trash can. In the background, another white building and more trees are visible under a blue sky with scattered clouds.

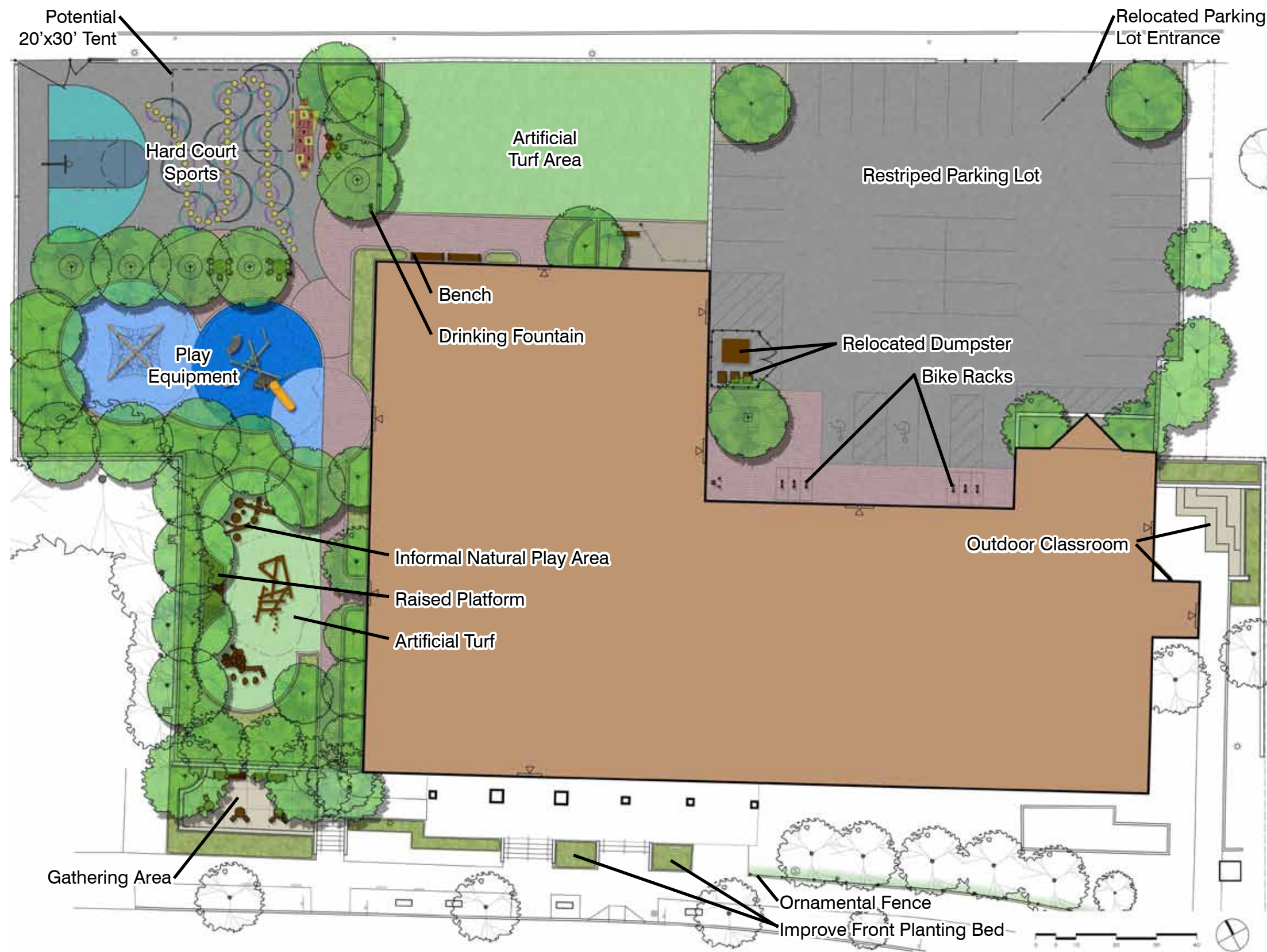
SCHEMATIC DESIGNS

CONCEPT 1

SCHEMATIC DESIGNS







THANK YOU

Other questions, concerns, and ideas? Interested in attending future public meetings and sending more feedback? Please contact:

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email: AFranzen@somervillema.gov

Be sure to sign up for the project email list to receive updates and meeting notices, on the sign-in sheet at the meeting or by emailing Arn!