

WEST SLOPES Design Narrative

The west slope remains largely open with occasional tree cover, similar to the makeup of a native oak savanna. New arcing accessible paths navigate the steep slopes between the Hilltop and the outer loop trail at the base of the hill. The path hugs the hillside following the knoll that defines geometries throughout the site. This gracious path leads to a series of landscape interventions including the Communal Firepit, Underhill Memorial, and Mental Health Memorial.

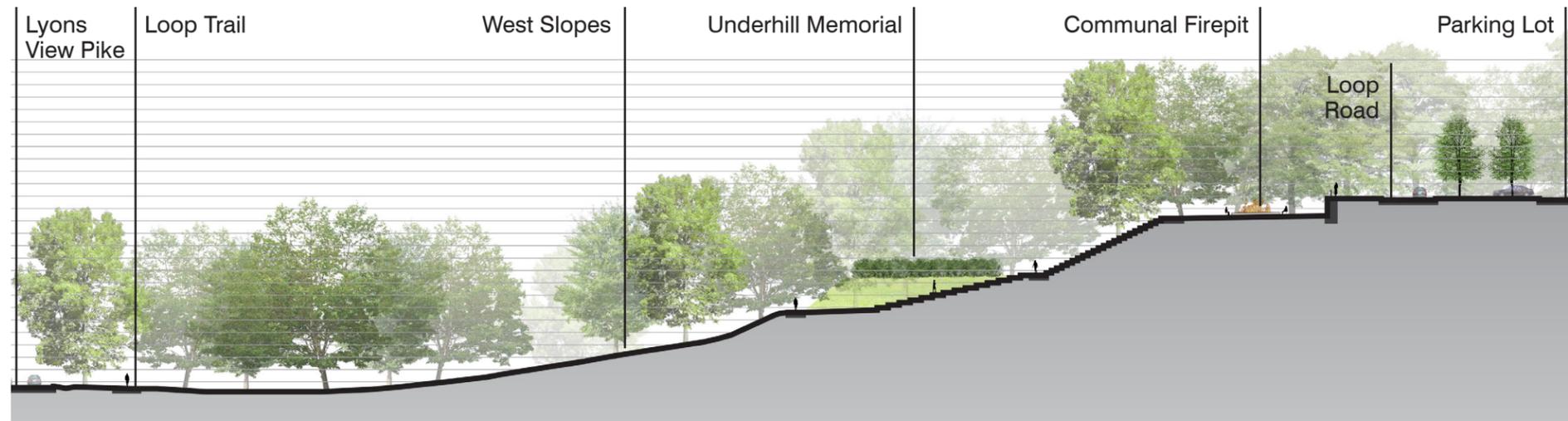
On axis with the Administration Building, the Communal Firepit occupies the existing sunken space defined by the remnant walls of the former coal pit. Sitting atop the steep west slope, tucked into the sunken plaza, the firepit functions as a seasonal gathering space for the community and a popular amenity for sledding enthusiasts during winter months.

Located on the graded terrace of the former Underhill Building, The Underhill Memorial is a proposed remembrance garden that specifically acknowledges the African American patients who came to Lakeshore and addresses the black communities culturally-specific relationship to mental healthcare. The Underhill Building was one of the first state-run care centers to offer mental health services to African Americans. It remained a racially segregated facility for its entire history. Early concepts for the memorial suggest two distinct garden rooms that tell the story

of the facility in the context of segregated care. Each room is defined on the perimeter by a distinct hedge of witchhazel, one spring flowering and the other fall flowering. An underlying groundplane of ephemeral bulbs unite both spaces at specific times of the year, acknowledging the universal human need for mental wellness and the potential for greater equity as we continue to move forward as a society.

To the west, a long curving stair graded into the hillside rises from the outer loop trail at the base of the hill toward a circular grove of trees above. This grove is the Mental Health Memorial, a space that memorializes the patients and employees of the mental health facility while promoting a setting for self-reflection. When rising along the hillside the view ahead is simplified to stair, hill, dense canopy, and sky. Upon arriving to the grove, visitors step inside, surrounded by trees the gaze travels to a circular oculus in the canopy with views only of the sky above. The stately, yet twisted nature of a Bur Oak or Kentucky Coffeetree would provide the ideal sculptural form and interest in all seasons. A meandering path sweeps across the space, connecting the memorial with the broader trail system and parking amenities.

Section Along Central Axis from Administration Building Parking Lot to Lyons View Pike

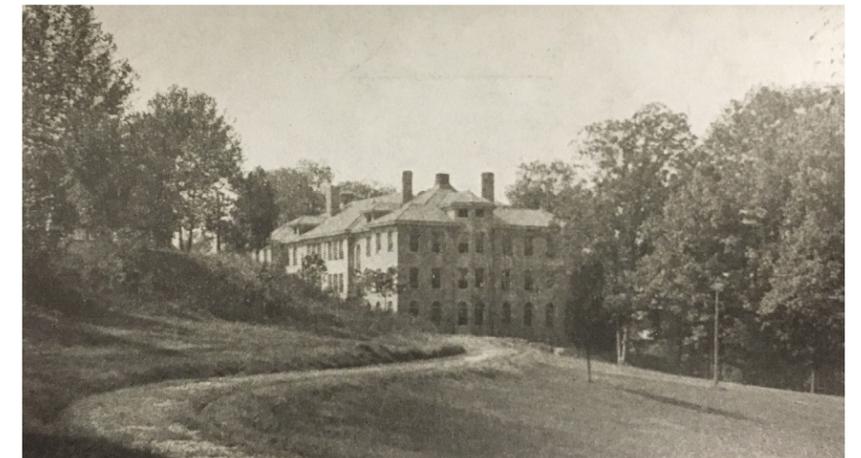


East Slope



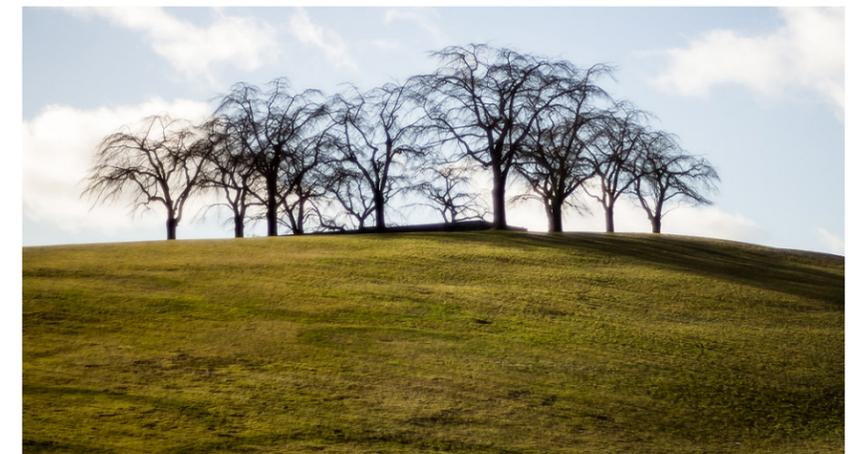
Historic image of the "Eastern Approach to the campus"

Underhill Memorial



Historic image of the black patient ward, the "Heiskell Building-for Colored," originally known as the Underhill Building

Mental Health Memorial



Woodlawn Cemetery, Sweden

WEST SLOPES Site Plan

Legend

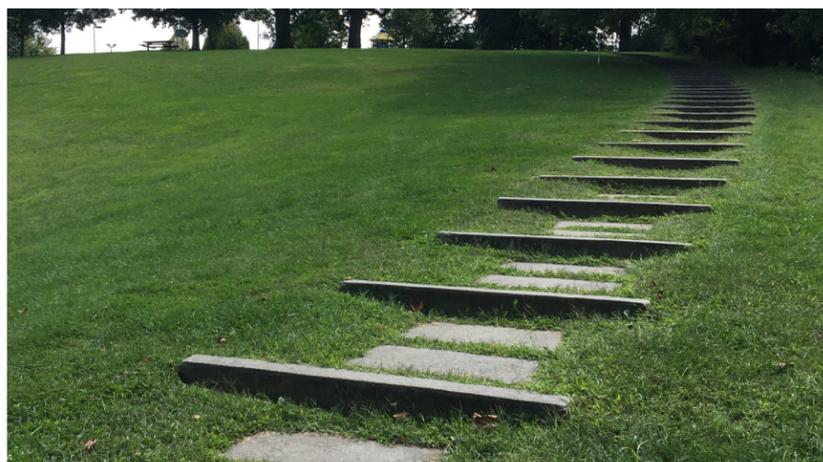
- 1 Communal Fire Pit
- 2 West Slope Paths
- 3 Underhill Memorial
- 4 Mental Health Memorial
- 5 Existing Loop Trail
- 6 Woodland
- 7 Meadow Paths
- 8 Oak Savanna
- 9 Hillside Stair

Underhill Memorial



Deborah Nevins, Millbrook NY

Hillside Stair



Washington Park, Charlottesville, VA

