

# Schenck's Island & Merwin Meadows Master Plans

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT  
MEETING

APRIL 28, 2019



MILONE & MACBROOM



# TODAY'S AGENDA

1-1:15

- Greetings and Introductions
  - Wilton Staff & SIMM Committee
  - Design Team
- Overview of Project & Today's Desired Outcome

1:15-1:30

- Summary of Public Meeting No. 1
- Analysis & Inventory

1:30-2:00

- Presentation of Concept Master Plans

2:00-2:50

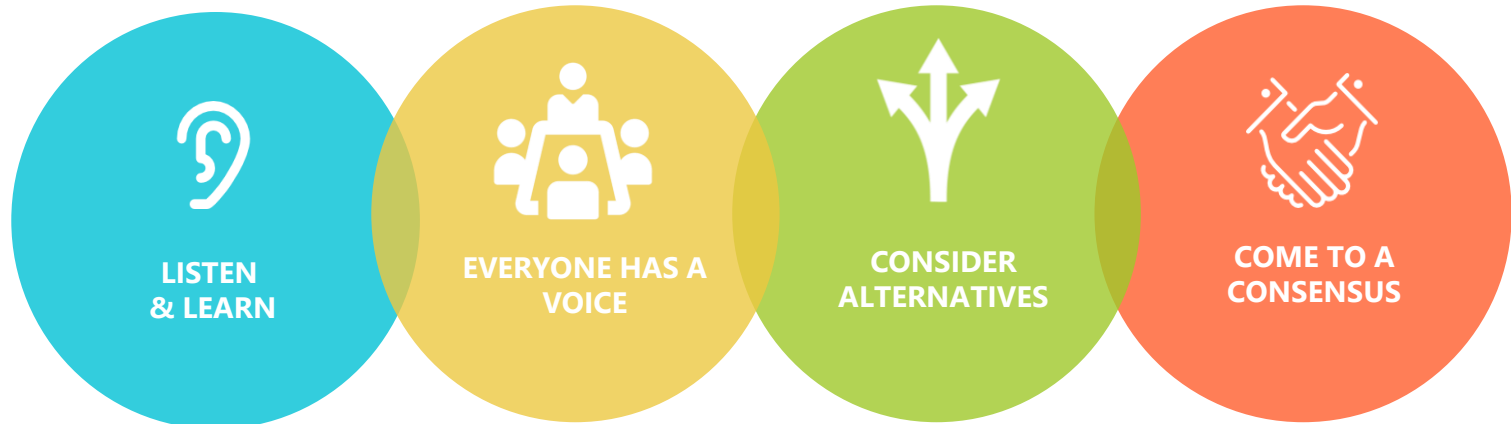
- Public Input
- Breakout sessions

2:50-3:00

- Wrap-up
- Summary of the day's activities/outcomes
- Next Steps in master plan process

# A COMMUNITY VISION

- Refresh/Renovate/Reimagine Parcels
- Develop Complimentary Uses
- Encourage Stewardship
- Promote Community & Economic Benefits





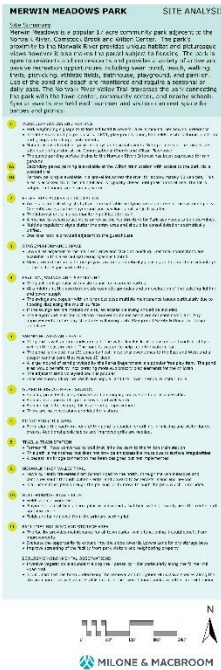
# PUBLIC MEETING NO.1



## MERWIN MEADOWS PARK EXISTING CONDITIONS

52 LOVERS LANE  
WILTON, CONNECTICUT

MARCH 24, 2019



## SCHENCK'S ISLAND PRESERVE

OLD RIDGEFIELD AND RIVER ROAD  
WILTON, CONNECTICUT

MARCH 24, 2019

EXISTING CONDITIONS

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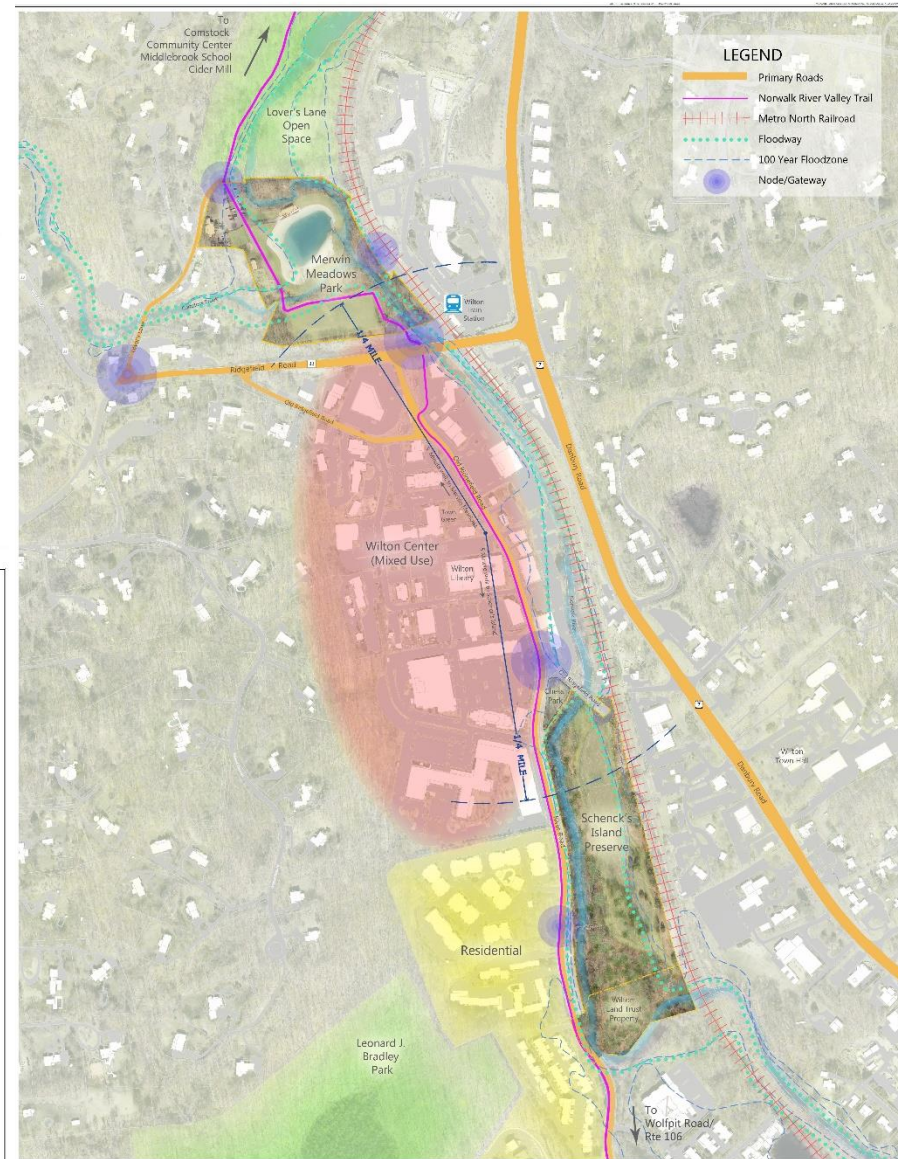
EXISTING CONDITIONS

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## WILTON CENTER - CONTEXT MAP

### EXISTING CONDITIONS

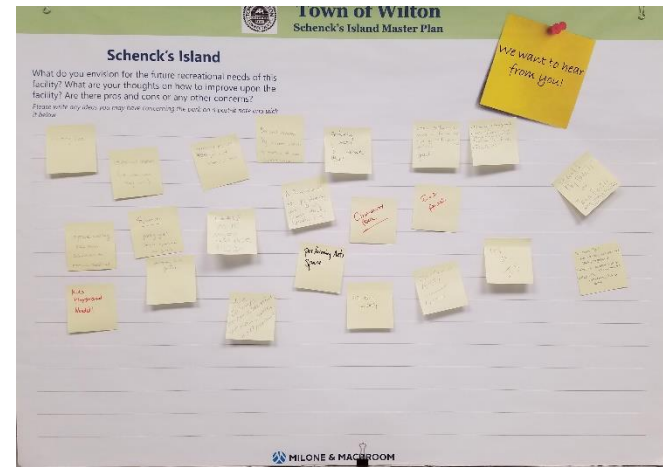
OLD RIDGEFIELD AND RIVER ROAD  
WILTON, CONNECTICUT

MARCH 24, 2019





# ANALYSIS & INVENTORY ENGAGEMENT EXERCISES





# ANALYSIS & INVENTORY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

- Schenck's Top Comments
  - **Community**
  - **Nature**
- Overall discussion: Improve & protect natural features while incorporating community access, events and culture.
- Merwins Top Comments
  - **Structures & Amenities**
  - **Recreation**
- Overall discussion: Park looks dated. New activities and amenities to improve draw and appeal



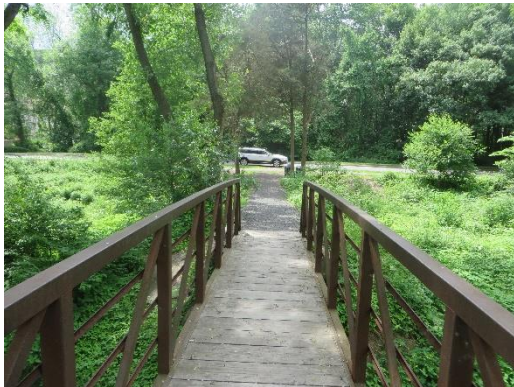
# ANALYSIS & INVENTORY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

- **Wilton Center**

- Primarily serves Wilton residents, not a regional destination
- Unique opportunity with parks bookending the center but connections need to be improved
- Utilize proximity of NRVT and parks to engage and activate the perimeter of the town center
- Wilton Center can embrace parks through shared parking, on street cafes, sidewalk sales, walkable connected events
- Wayfinding can be understated but needs improvements



# SCHENCK'S ISLAND





# **SCHENCK'S ISLAND CONCEPT MASTER PLANS**

- Preserve & enhance habitat
- Remove Invasives
- Promote access, connectivity, views
- Improve for community events & groups
- Develop year round uses/appeal





#### SCHENCK'S ISLAND PRESERVE

CONCEPT PLAN A

##### 1 REDESIGNED PARKING LOT AND PARK ENTRY

- Install Pedestrian scale light fixtures on Old Ridgefield Road
- Install entry sign at River Road to better identify Schenck's Island access
- Improve layout, parking and circulation
- Install permeable pavers in parking stalls, Hardscape surface can provide staging area for large community events
- Provide restroom facilities

##### 2 EXPANDED ENTRY AND PICNIC LAWN

- Provides event space and improves transition into park; Improvements include:
  - Picnic pavilion with stone paver terrace which provides a flexible gathering space for an outdoor classroom, picnic or event performances
- Accessible path connecting Old Ridgefield Road, parking, nature play and meadow observation tower

##### 3 NATURE THEMED FREE-PLAY AREA

- Utilize slope for boulder scrambles, slides, and climbing elements
- Selectively clear vegetation
- Provide accessible trail meandering through play elements with connection to main path
- Install protective screen fence along rail line

##### 4 MANAGED MEADOW AREA

- Control invasives particularly mugwort. Reach out to agricultural stations and ag science researchers for potential management study plots
- Protect with discreet perimeter fencing
- Provide educational signage to explain different management techniques, improvements, plants and wildlife
- Install bird boxes to promote desired species
- Install sculptural elements to activate the space in new and varied ways; promote local artists; rotate installations to keep draw overtime

##### 5 MEADOW OBSERVATION TOWER

- Meadow observation tower with accessible ramp provides a unique point of view across the two meadow areas for bird watching, educational gatherings, art gazing and general enjoyment of the park

##### 6 EDUCATION SHED AND INTERACTIVE EXHIBIT STATIONS

- Shed provides a repository for tools, maps, & info for the outdoor exhibit stations
- Exhibits provide a fun and educational opportunity throughout the park to encourage visitors to explore, learn about, and engage the parcel if desired
- Exhibits can highlight site habitat, conservation and stewardship and should include a digital aspect to allow for updates, seasonal changes, and varied format
- Exhibits should extend to River Road and beyond to encourage use of the NRYT and local businesses

##### 7 RIVER RESTORATION PLANTINGS

- Extend Trust Unlimited efforts along the river to further enhance the ecology, habitat and health of the river and park

##### 8 MANAGED SUCCESSIONAL FOREST

- Promote successional shrub and tree species along eastern edge of meadow
- Management should allow select species to grow but not overtake the area
- Provide viewing station for upper slope into meadow
- Preserve cedar grove
- Provide new east west trail connection allowing for varied walking loops and access to habitat edges

##### 9 OFF-LEASH DOG RUN

- Provide fenced area for off-leash dogs on upper plateau of park outside of floodplain
- Easy access from nearby residential complexes via the pedestrian bridge
- Allows dedicated area for off-leash use so that the remainder of the park remains enforced on-leash
- Due to limited access most users will be walking from nearby keeping use to a minimum compared to a dedicated community dog park which should be programmed elsewhere in town
- Install swales at western perimeter to slow runoff in storm events

##### 10 RIVER ROAD GATEWAY

- Enhance River Road/NRYT gateway to better identify access point and welcome visitors into the park
- Improvements include paver entry with benches, painting the bridge steel structure a vibrant color, clearing invasives and planting natives, providing access to the river and floodplain shelf

##### 11 CHESS PARK

- Provide river access to better link Chess Park and Schenck's picnic area
- Promote free play at the river's edge between the two parks

##### 12 RIVER ACCESS ALONG THE NORWALK RIVER

- Boulder seating
- Fishing Access

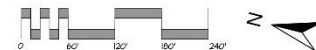
##### 13 PROMOTE SHARED PARKING ACROSS FROM OLD RIDGEFIELD ROAD ENTRANCE

## SCHENCK'S ISLAND PRESERVE

## CONCEPT PLAN A

OLD RIDGEFIELD AND RIVER ROAD  
WILTON, CONNECTICUT

APRIL 28, 2019



MILONE & MACBROOM









#### SCHENCK'S ISLAND PRESERVE

#### CONCEPT PLAN B

##### 1 IMPROVED ENTRANCE AND PARKING

- Provide pavement markings for pedestrian path on Old Ridgefield Road
- Slightly enlarge the gravel parking area to provide additional parking and for food trucks during special events
- Provide a restroom facility

##### 2 STAGE & AMPHITHEATER SPACE

- Create a mounded grassy landform with a large flat area in the front
- This would serve primarily as an amphitheater for events but would also be a sculptural element in the landscape
- Install a permanent structure to serve as a performance stage as well as a sheltered gathering space for Outdoor Classroom or Club activities

##### 3 EXPLORATORY PLAY ELEMENTS

- Scattered throughout the Park would be artistic and playful elements made of natural materials to be discovered along the trail and newly cleared small open trails

##### 4 ECOLOGY & EDUCATION

- The mown perimeter path would remain
- Add boardwalks in areas that tend to hold water
- Informational signage and opportunities for investigation and engagement would be incorporated throughout the site to highlight and describe the various habitats, wildlife and environmental systems found in the Preserve
- Install a permanent trail map at the park entrance that highlights the natural and man-made features of the Preserve. Include information on how the park is managed and maintained and what the community can do to support those efforts
- Include a fun sign to remind the dog walkers to remove their dog's waste from the park and how it is harmful to the waterway
- Add signage and destination points to observe the Vernal Pools, Cedar Grove, Meadow, and other special features
- As the landscape and habitat changes with the seasons, there is always something new to discover and observe year-round
- Make an effort to engage visitors vicariously to support the management, maintenance and vitality of the environment

##### 5 MANAGED MEADOW

- Maintain the meadow but continue to research and develop a manageable long-term strategy to better combat the most aggressively invasive plants
- Include an unobtrusive perimeter fence near the edge to discourage pets from the area
- Add bird houses to promote nesting
- Promote pollinator plants and high value native shrubs to enhance wildlife habitat

##### 6 STREAM CHANNEL

- Establish trails to access the water at specific locations
- Coordinate with Trout Unlimited's plans and create opportunities for dog access and passive seating tucked along the riverbank
- Establish a management plan to remove aging and fragile trees and invasive species, and to establish a landscape restoration and management plan

##### 7 PICNIC GROVE

- The Picnic Grove is very popular and would be maintained
- Provide seating that is accessible to all ages and abilities
- Add a cut stone or flat boulder landing to get down to the water
- Consider more colorful and whimsical furniture to create more of an whimsical aspect to the park
- Enhance viewpoints to the river, River Road and Chess Park. As with the overall concept for the Preserve, establish a plan for the removal of invasive plants

##### 8 ART EXHIBITS

- Another attraction for the preserve would be in establishment of changing art installations
- These could be coordinated in conjunction with a local museum or through the community's own arts programs or school programs

##### 9 METRO NORTH EDGE

- Make the edge planting denser with native trees and shrubs
- Create strategic viewpoints into the property that highlight interesting features

##### 10 RIVER ROAD FOOTBRIDGE

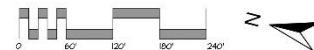
- Create a more defined paver plaza entrance and improve the grading and pathway to the footbridge
- Paint the bridge a fun color to pop in the landscape
- Create a landing with access to the river

## SCHENCK'S ISLAND PRESERVE

## CONCEPT PLAN B

OLD RIDGEFIELD AND RIVER ROAD  
WILTON, CONNECTICUT

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**MILONE & MACBROOM**







# MERWIN MEADOWS

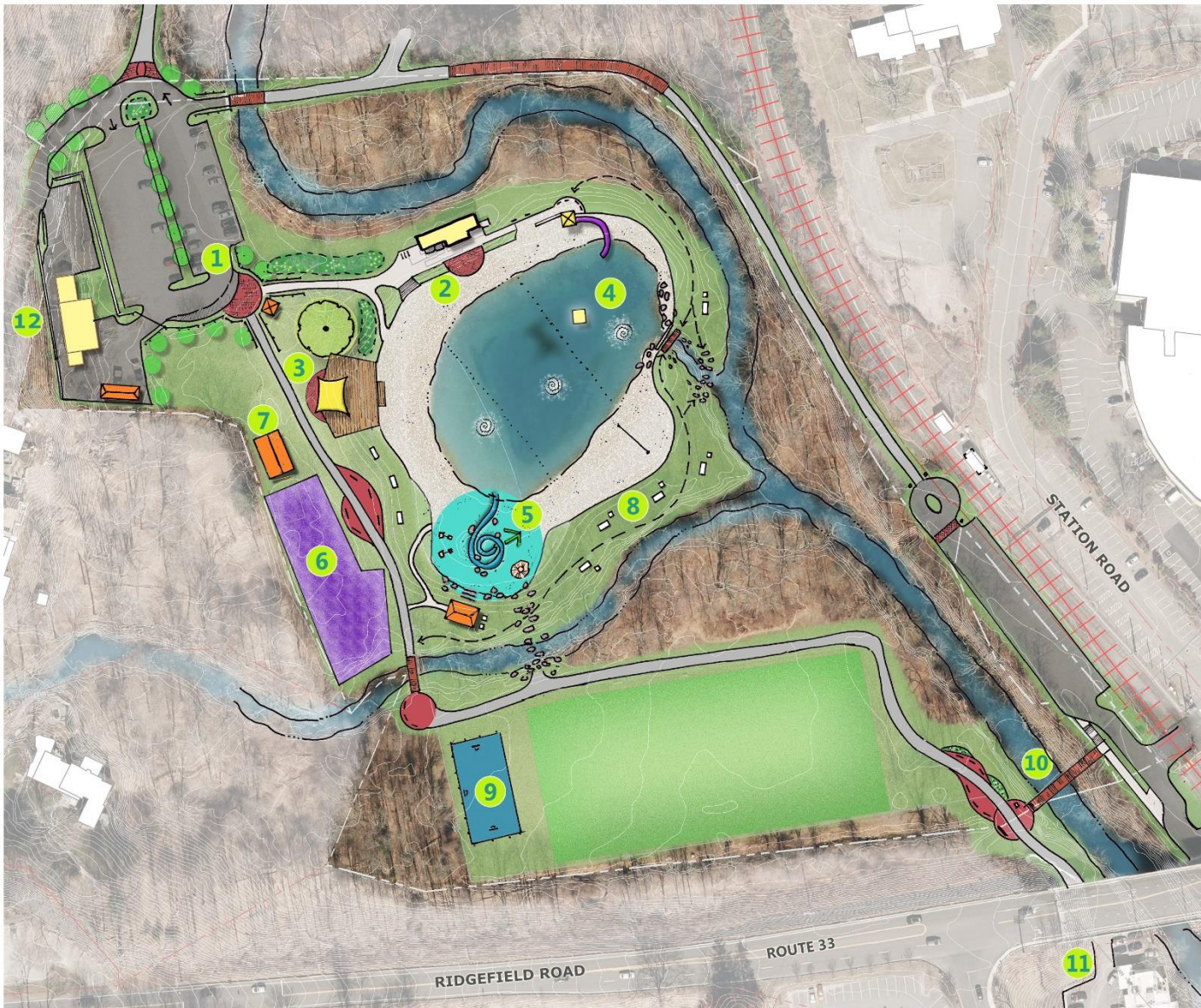


# **MERWIN MEADOWS**

## **CONCEPT MASTER PLANS**

- Reinvigorate & update the park
- Improve appeal of pond and beach
- Expand other recreational opportunities
- Enhance connectivity
- Protect river and forested areas



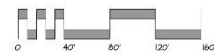


## MERWIN MEADOWS PARK

### CONCEPT PLAN A

52 LOVERS LANE  
WILTON, CONNECTICUT

APRIL 28, 2019



MILONE & MACBROOM

## MERWIN MEADOWS PARK

## CONCEPT PLAN A

- 1 IMPROVED PARKING LOT & PARK ENTRY**
  - Expand parking east/west footprint to allow for perpendicular parking stalls
  - Extend center island north to better designate one way circulation and gain additional parking spaces
  - Identify NRVN north entry/exit with paver apron and signage, preserve stone wall remains
  - Allow for food truck pull-off space at south end
  - Improve pedestrian entrance with paver treatment, stone walls, ornamental fencing, and landscaping
  - Provide park entry station for staff to better monitor, manage and direct visitors
- 2 GUARDHOUSE IMPROVEMENTS**
  - Add hot water
  - Upgrade entire facility including bathrooms, showers, exterior finishes and paint
  - Provide dry concessions window with sink, refrigerator, and ice machine
  - Remove series of ramps, stairs, and steps creating one single level with new upper paver terrace bump-out overlooking pond. Provide cafe seating with umbrellas
- 3 POND DECK / PERFORMANCE SPACE**
  - Multifunctional space with paver terrace, shade sail and composite deck overlooking the pond
  - Space can be used daily as lounge & sun deck and stage for event performances that can be viewed from both the open lawn and beach
  - Flush access provided from the NRVN from the west and stair access directly to the pond beach
  - A Floating movie screen can be set in the pond or on the beach for a unique night event on the deck
- 4 POND IMPROVEMENTS**
  - Line south west edge of pond with stone surface to provide stable and "muck" free entry
  - Install aerators in pond, vary the spray height and allow play under, consider lighting during events
  - Water slide tower provides older kids and strong swimmers a fun element that activates what is today an underutilized space
  - Naturalize pond outlet and bridge area with boulders and plantings. Allow onto boulders for pond and river access
  - Install floating or water filled raft for play element in deeper water
- 5 INTERACTIVE WATER PLAY AREA**
  - Dedicated play area for small children with interactive elements that allow them to dig, spill, collect, splash, turn, twist, explore, learn and socialize
  - Center main element is a spiral trough that fills by kids using movable weir boards at the pond edge. Kids control the flow creating or stopping the spiral "stream". Buckets, sand diggers, and interactive sluiceway provide additional elements for kids to use their imagination
  - Sand mound to remain as free play element
  - Stepping stones and boulders within slope allow for extended play and exploration continuing up and over the lawn berm onto access to Comstock Brook
  - Shade/Picnic shelter overlooks the play area providing access from stepping stones and accessible ramp
- 6 UPDATED PLAYGROUND**
  - Provide a new exciting universally accessible playground with unique play elements and structures
  - Utilize poured-in-place rubberized surface with underdrains to provide stable and colorful play surface
  - Expanded the play area to both the east and west. Utilize west slope towards river for change in topography
- 7 PICNIC PAVILION**
  - Updated and enlarged pavilion shifts slightly to the north
  - Maintain electrical feed, outlets and lights
  - Location between playground and lawn/court space is ideal for daily use and rentals
- 8 PERIMETER PICNIC BERM**
  - Expand berm to allow for dedicated walking trail and space for picnic tables & grills
  - Install new picnic tables and grill stations
  - Enhance native vegetative buffer along river
- 9 PAVED COURT SPACE**
  - Multi-use paved court with basketball hoops as well four square striping
  - Install fence on 3 sides to keep balls from rolling away
- 10 PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE AND PLAZA**
  - Construct previously designed pedestrian bridge from Wilton Train station
  - Provide terraced plazas along NRVN with benches, wayfinding signage, and landscaping
- 11 ROUTE 33 OVERPASS**
  - Add lighting and art work to activate the space and create a signature Wilton gateway
- 12 PARKS MAINTENANCE YARD**
  - Limit access through Merwin parking lot, Expand paved lot at front of barn to accommodate staff parking and equipment, construct stone wall with screen fence
  - Build new garage facility at rear yard with heated maintenance bays & storage
  - Improve fencing and screening around perimeter









## MERWIN MEADOWS PARK CONCEPT PLAN B

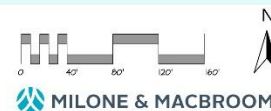
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### MERWIN MEADOWS PARK

### CONCEPT PLAN B

- 1 VEHICULAR ACCESS AND PARKING**
  - Redesign parking to maximize available spaces
  - Provide drop off area and plaza space to define the entrance and serve as a meeting point
  - Direct pedestrians via wood rail fencing and landscaping
  - Consolidate the various Regulatory signposts onto one large new park sign
- 2 PLAYGROUND RECREATION AREA**
  - Relocate the playground and provide direct access from the Park's entry plaza
  - Elevate the area slightly to protect from flooding and install colorful poured in place safety surfacing
  - Construct a rain garden depression along the stream side of the playground
  - Plant a tight row of columnar trees or evergreens to help to screen the maintenance storage area and continue with hedge planting along the perimeter
  - Install a new slightly larger pavilion equipped with lights and power
  - Potential to be used as stage space, therefore regrade and enlarge the adjacent lawn area to provide seating space for smaller events
  - Support the steeper slope with large stacked boulders
  - Include benches to overlook the pond
  - Install a new paved multipurpose ball court with colorsealed surface, player benches and adjustable basketball backstops.
- 3 WATERFRONT AMENITY IMPROVEMENTS**
  - Guests visiting the pool will be directed there visually through new rail fencing and landscaping near the Entry Plaza
  - Install a raised deck or plaza space with benches and the check-in station
  - Renovate the existing building to include food and beverage service. This should continue on a limited hour basis in the off season as well.
  - Update the restrooms for full accessibility and for hot water
  - Add an addition for beach furniture and equipment storage
  - Add a new changing room facility
  - Add deck space with tables, chairs and umbrellas which would overlook both the pond and stream
  - Widen the paved circulation space as part of the building renovations and create a small paved plaza with benches
  - Provide chaise lounges along the beach
- 4 NATURALIZED BANK**
  - Regrade and slightly broaden the grassy berm to create more usable space
  - Add movable seating
  - Create views and access to the stream with selective clearing
  - Create a boulder and planted transitional edge along the pond's eastern edge
  - Incorporate marginal plants with help filter sediment and clean the water
  - Use small pumps to circulate the water through the stones
  - Provide cut or flat stones to allow direct access into the water as well as boulder outcroppings and a swimming dock projecting into the water
- 5 STREAMSIDE SHADED GROVE**
  - Incorporate additional trees along the southern berm
  - Provide improved grilling equipment, picnic tables and Adirondack seating
  - Selectively clear for views towards the multipurpose field and event space across the stream
  - Provide stepping stone access down to the water
  - Maintain broad level sand area for volleyball but otherwise enlarge the grassy berm where possible
  - Regrade and broaden the lawn to be used as flex space. Potentially for Tai chi, yoga or painting classes
  - Create a low-key sand based play and seating area on the beach
  - Continue utilizing the sand mound
  - Incorporate opportunities to climb, slide, scramble and explore on the sand and slope
- 6 MULTIPURPOSE FIELD**
  - Raise and reconstruct the field for improved drainage and more multipurpose use during the seasons
  - Frisbee, miscellaneous ball games, winter skating or hockey rink, community events and performances
  - The pedestrian bridge connection from the train station parking lot will be critical to provide convenient access to events on the field
  - Improve the stone/wood trail for limited vehicular access
  - Widen a section for parking or as a turn around area to be utilized by coaches with equipment and parent drop off. The area can also accommodate an ice cream truck or a coffee and hot cocoa vendor during special events
  - Clear the level area north of the field to create a performance space or to provide accessible parking during community events
  - Create a small stone/dust plaza space adjoining the trail coming from the primary park area
- 7 NORWALK RIVER VALLEY TRAIL**
  - Re-route the trail along the low side of the field adjacent to the small channel. Enhance the new trail on both sides with naturalized tree and shrub plantings
  - Continue the trail through the adjacent woodlands
  - Provide boulders or benches sporadically for seating and relaxing
  - Incorporate pole or bollard lighting to increase usable times
- 8 RIDGEFIELD ROAD ACCESS POINT**
  - Make the experience of this passage more welcoming by illuminating the underpass and possibly painting the overpass support structure
  - Add wayfinding signage for the NRV and Merwin Meadows Park
- 9 METRO NORTH PARKING ACCESS POINT**
  - Add wayfinding signage for the NRV and Merwin Meadows Park
  - Provide occasional clearings or low vegetation to make the trail feel safer and provide views to and from the Park
  - Portions of the existing trail must be rebuilt to withstand occasional flooding

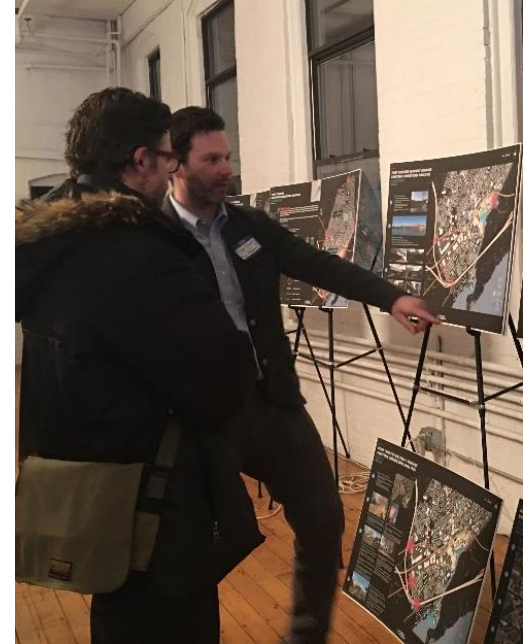








# BREAKOUT SESSIONS





## NEXT STEPS

- Organize what we heard today
- Refine Concepts Into Draft Master Plan
- Develop Master Plan Estimates
- Town and SIMM Committee feedback
- Finalize Master Plans



**Thank You!**

