



**TOWN OF PALM BEACH**  
Planning, Zoning & Building Department  
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**PLANNING, ZONING, & BUILDING DEPARTMENT**  
**PZ&B Staff Memorandum: Landmarks Preservation Commission**

TO: LPC Chairperson and Members

FROM: Wayne Bergman, MCP, LEED-AP  
Director PZ&B

SUBJECT: ZON-22-107 (COA-22-037) 2185 S OCEAN BLVD (COMBO)

MEETING: DECEMBER 13, 2022

**ZON-22-107 (COA-22-037) 2185 S OCEAN BLVD—PHIPPS PARK (COMBO)—SPECIAL EXCEPTION WITH SITE PLAN REVIEW AND VARIANCES.** The applicant, the Town of Palm Beach, has filed an application requesting Town Council review and approval for a Special Exception with Site Plan Review for modifications to an existing 20.6-acre Municipally Owned and Operated Park and Recreation Center (Phipps Ocean Park) including modifications to the parking lot and pedestrian ways, the relocation of the existing Little Red Schoolhouse, the construction of sports courts, restroom facilities, beach pavilions and an educational facility including variances to exceed the maximum building height in the R-B zoning district and variances to reduce the minimum required Ocean Bulkhead Line setback requirement for new structures. Landmarks Preservation Commission will perform design review of the application.

Applicant: Town of Palm Beach  
Professional: Raymond Jungles, Inc, Fairfax, Sammons and Partners, LLC, and Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.  
Representative: Harvey E. Oyer, III, Shutts and Bowen, LLP, and the Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach

**HISTORY:**

The Phipps Park property was originally platted as part of the Palm Beach Estates in 1920. Named after the property owner, Bessesmer Properties, Inc., a corporation of the Phipps Family, and descendants of Henry Phipps Jr, who was a successful businessman and philanthropist. Henry Phipps Jr. was also one of the pioneer investors in Florida real estate. At one time, the Phipps family owned one-third of the land on the island of the Town of Palm Beach.

In 1948, the approximate 20-acre property was donated to Palm Beach County as parkland and





stands as one of the most significant gifts in county history. Almost 10 years later, in 1957, Palm Beach County deeded Phipps Ocean Park to the Town of Palm Beach, who has maintained stewardship of the park ever since.

The Park is currently developed with recreational pathways, pavilions, beach access paths, public restrooms, and tennis courts. In addition to these amenities, Phipps Park houses municipal functions including the Palm Beach Fire Rescue Station No. 3 and Public Works buildings, and a significant historic and cultural asset, the Schoolhouse.

Constructed in 1886 to educate the growing numbers of pioneer children, the Schoolhouse originally sat approximately seven (7) miles north of its current location, on the western side of the island. After the Schoolhouse ceased operation in 1901, it became a tool shed on the John S. Phipps property. In 1960, the Schoolhouse was partially dismantled and relocated to Phipps Ocean Park. The Schoolhouse was landmarked in 1979. As such, the entire Phipps Ocean Park is now under the review of the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC), as an authority for historic structures and properties and as an advisory body to the Town of Palm Beach Council. The Schoolhouse sat vacant until 1989/1990 when the Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach entered a 99-year lease with the Town, restored the building, and began operating a living history program for school children. The current application is to expand upon the educational, cultural, and environmental landscapes that the Phipps Ocean Park offers to the community.



1 HISTORIC PHOTO OF WEST



2 WEST ELEVATION



3 CORNER VIEW OF WEST & NORTH SIDES

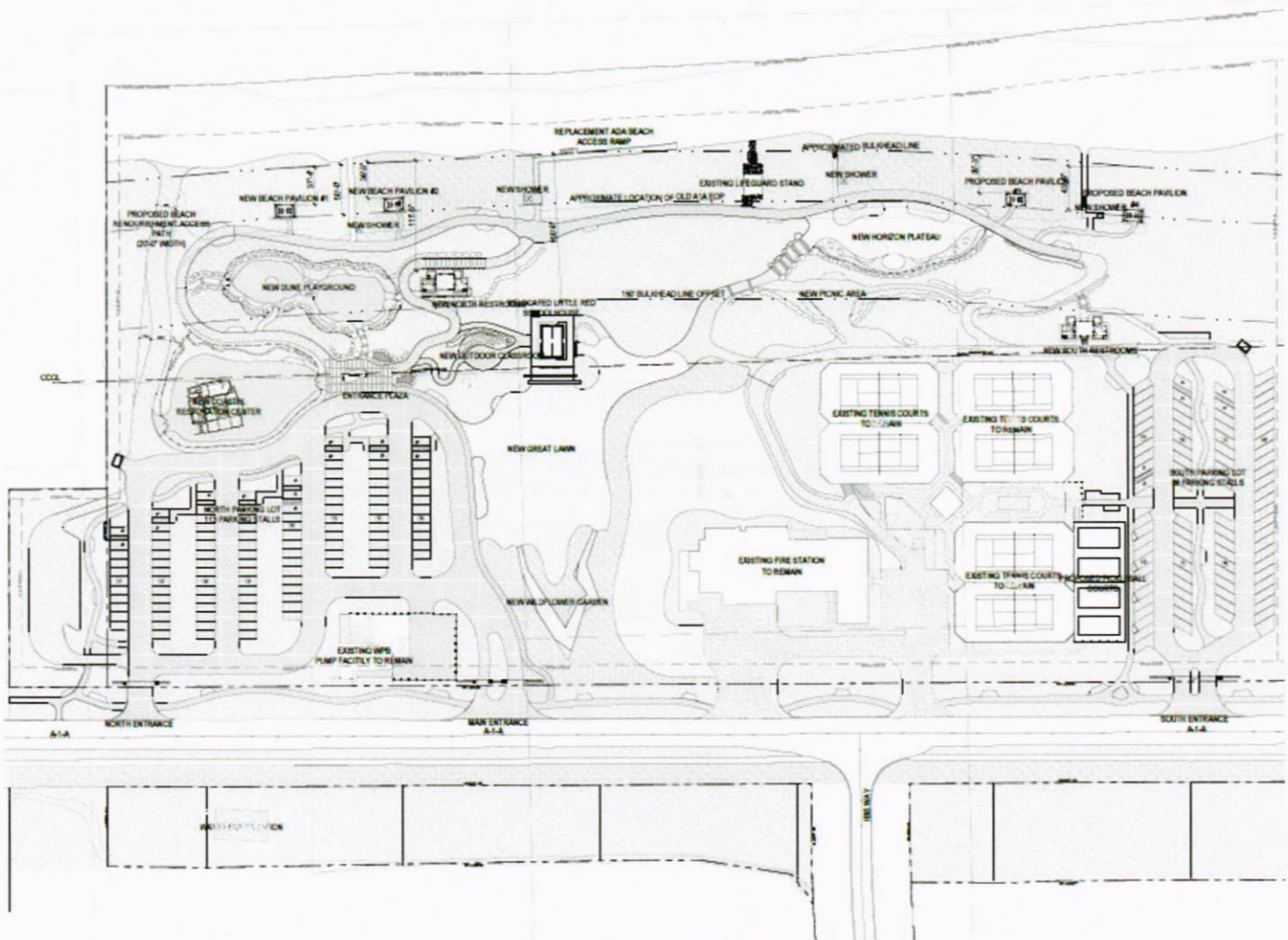


4 NORTH ELEVATION

### THE PROJECT:

The applicant has submitted plans, entitled "PHIPPS OCEAN PARK", as prepared by Raymond Jungles, Inc., Fairfax, Sammons and Partners, LLC, and Kimley-Horn and Associates Inc., dated September 26, 2022.

The subject property consists of approximately 20.2 acres and is located at the intersection of South Ocean Boulevard and Ibis Way. Phipps Ocean Park maintains 1,203 feet of ocean frontage. The property has a Future Land Use designation of Recreation with a Zoning classification of Low Density Residential (R-B). The proposed site plan is shown below. A colored version will be presented to the LPC at the November 16, 2022, meeting.



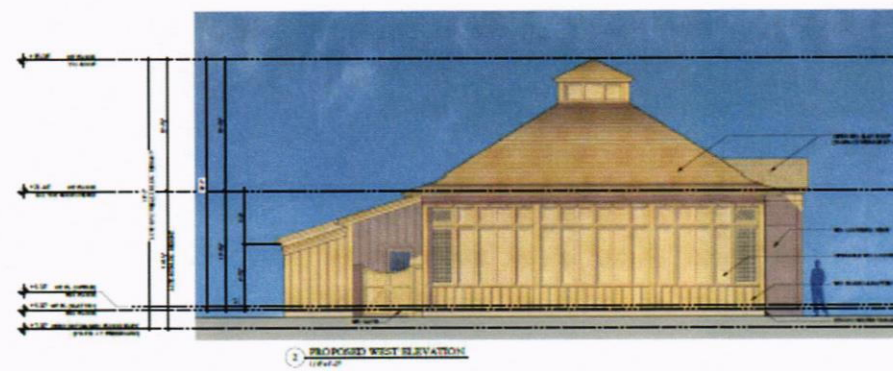
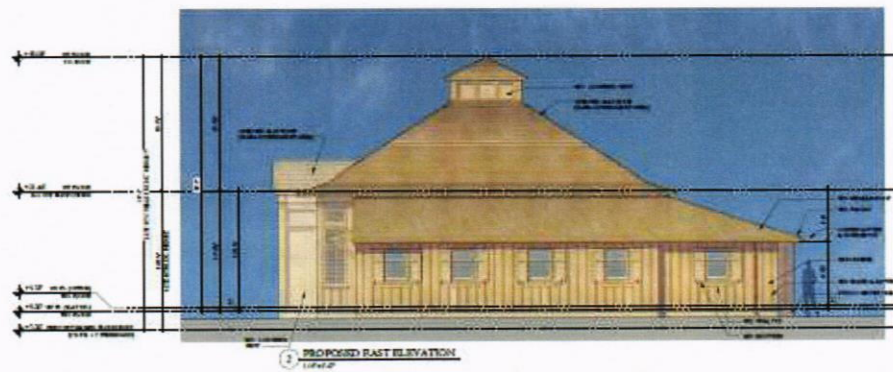
## Proposed Site Plan



The proposed scope of work is as follows:

A Special Exception (SE) with Site Plan Review to modify the Park's Master Plan. Specifically, the Park will be comprised of 15 main areas. A summary of the areas are as follows:

- **Main Entrance:** A 4,930 square foot area defining the main entrance which allows open views across the Great Lawn displaying the Little Red Schoolhouse ("Schoolhouse") in the back.
- **Gold Coast Gateway:** A 4,070 square foot area defining a walkway accessed from the parking lot, shaded and framed with a large Strangler Fig and water features.
- **Dune Playground:** A 5,000 square foot dune playground area which offers recreational opportunities for children of all ages.
- **Outdoor Classroom:** A 4,200 square foot outdoor classroom strategically located in a space meant to educate and entertain while being immersed in nature.
- **Little Red Schoolhouse:** The 633 square foot historic pioneer-era schoolhouse will be relocated, elevated, and restored and located in a 2,300 square foot area with planting areas that gives hands-on learning experiences about the historic landscaping, resiliency, and sustainability.
- **Great Lawn:** A 19,450 square foot area surrounded by trees with open views of the Little Red Schoolhouse, Gold Coast Gateway, and the Great Lawn.
- **Wildflower Garden:** A 13,000 square foot area with a natural rainwater basin and planted with native species that thrive in moist conditions.
- **Horizon Plateau:** A 19,000 square foot area which serves as a gathering space for the Park offering activities, sheltered picnic areas, and open views of the Atlantic Ocean, the mangrove to the west, and the Lake Worth Lagoon.
- **New Picnic Area:** A 3,650 square foot shaded area with tables and seating spaces.
- **Coastal Restoration Center:** A 2,399 square foot building in a 12,400 square foot area which serves as an initiative to educate visitors about native species.
- **Parking Lots:** A north and south parking lot with a total of 201 parking spaces.
- **A1A Treatment and Park West:** A 100,000 square foot area with large trees planted along A1A to create a dense landscaped perimeter.
- **New Bathrooms:** Two restroom buildings totaling 1,662 square feet for visitor use.
- **New Beach Pavilions:** Four (4) beach pavilions totaling 912 square feet located on the crest of the coastal ridge offering sweeping views of the Atlantic Ocean.
- **New Pickleball Courts:** Four (4) pickleball courts located adjacent to the westernmost existing tennis courts.
- The existing **Fire Station, tennis courts, and Public Works** buildings will remain with no changes.



Proposed Coastal Restoration Center (CRS)



## **STAFF ANALYSIS**

### **Zoning**

Below is a summary of the subject application with regards to Zoning Code compliance and variance requests.

<b>Site Data</b>			
<b>Future Land Use</b>	Recreation	<b>Lot Size (SF)</b>	896,700 SF
<b>Zoning District</b>	R-B	<b>Base Flood Elevation</b>	Required: 8 feet Existing: NC Proposed: NC
<b>C-O-R</b>	4.72' NAVD	<b>Flood Zone</b>	Zone X, Zone AE8, and Zone VE-10
<b>Lot Coverage</b>	Required: 269,010 SF (30%) Existing: 15,455 SF (1.72 %) Proposed: 23,181 SF (2.59%)	<b>Zero Datum for point of measurement</b>	P317 – Elevation=17.13” NAVD88

<b>Surrounding Properties / Zoning</b>	
<b>North</b>	2100 Condo at Sloan's Curve/Planned Unit Development (PUD-B) and Beach Area (BA) Zoning District
<b>South</b>	Reef Condo/Medium Density Residential (R-C) Zoning District
<b>East</b>	Atlantic Ocean/Beach Area (BA) Zoning District
<b>West</b>	Ibis Isle Subdivision/ Low Density Residential (R-B) and R-C Zoning Districts

Pursuant to Chapter 54, Historical Preservation, it is the purpose and intent of the LPC to enforce as a matter of public policy, the protection, enhancement, and perpetuation of properties of special, notable, aesthetic, or architectural character or historic interest or value in the interest of health, prosperity, safety, and general welfare of the people residing within and around the Town. Chapter 54 applies to the Phipps Ocean Park application with regard to the Landmarked Schoolhouse structure, in addition to, the criteria specified in Code Section 54-122, which speaks to new construction. As proposed, the new construction under review includes the proposed Coastal Restoration Center (CRC), new bathrooms, and new beach pavilions. Below are the standards the LPC has been directed to take into consideration for application compliance:

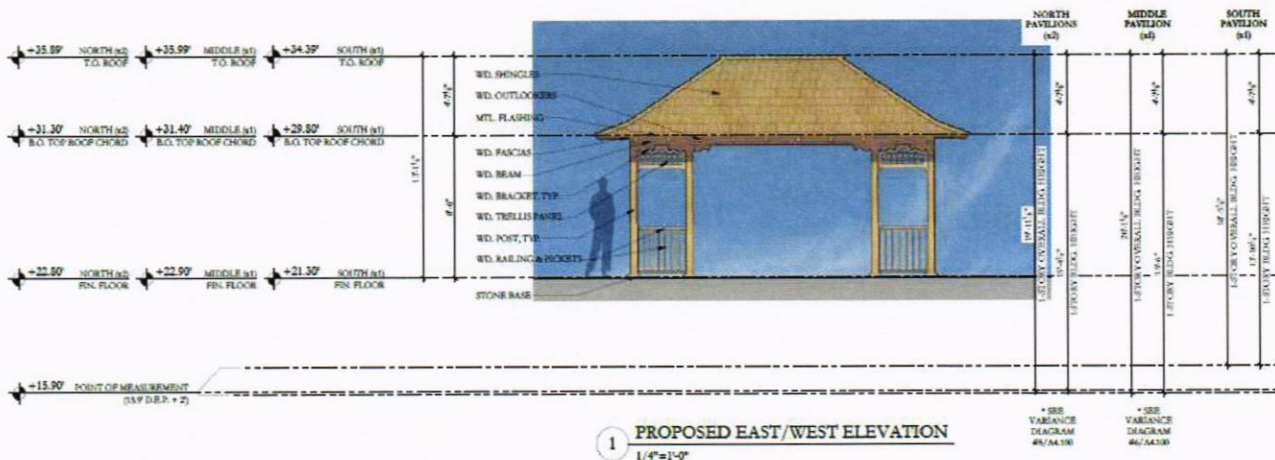
Sec.-54-122

- (a) The following aspects of new construction shall be visually compatible with the buildings and environment with which the new construction is visually related:
  - (1) The height, the gross volume, and the proportion between width and height of the facade;
  - (2) The proportions and relationships between doors and windows;
  - (3) The rhythm of solids to voids created by openings in the facade;
  - (4) The materials used in the facade;
  - (5) The texture inherent in the facade;
  - (6) The colors, pattern and trim used in the facade; and
  - (7) The design of the roof.
- (b) Existing rhythm created by existing building masses and space between them should be preserved.
- (c) The landscape plan should be sensitive to the individual building and its occupants and needs and should be visually compatible with the buildings and environment with which it is visually related.
- (d) A new street facade should blend directionally with other buildings with which it is visually related, which is to say, when adjacent buildings have a dominant horizontal or vertical expression, that expression should be carried over in the new facade.
- (e) Architectural details should be incorporated as necessary to relate the new with the old and to preserve and enhance the inherent architectural characteristics of the area.



The table below details the variance request for the construction of the new structures proposed at Phipps Ocean Park.

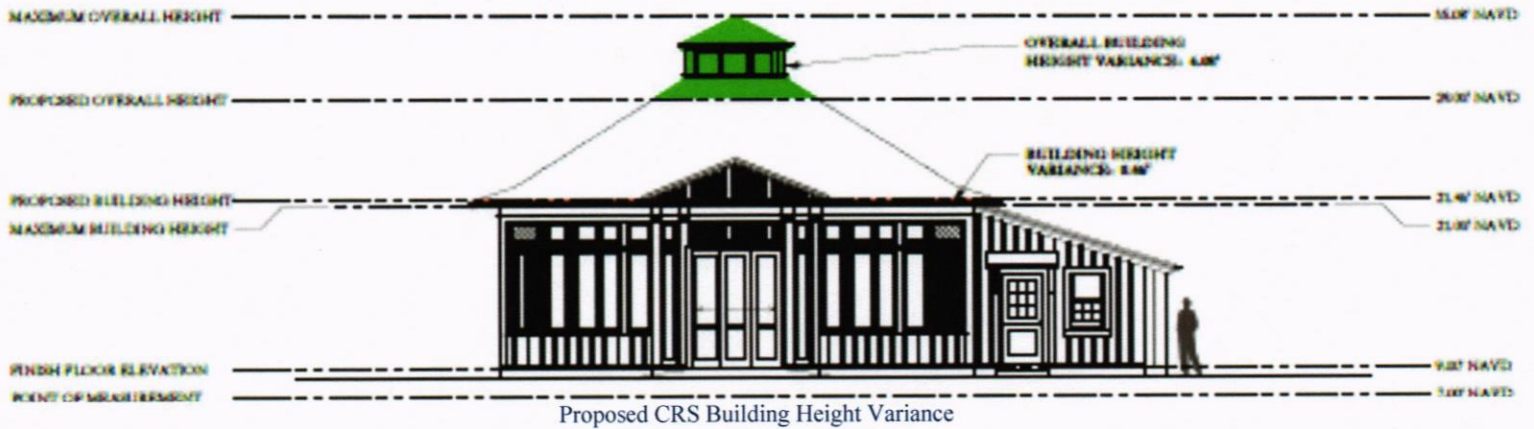
	Required	Proposed
Sec. 134-1702	No structure of any nature that is to be constructed on land situated southward of Southern Boulevard (State Road No. 80) shall be constructed closer than 150 ft. from the designated ocean bulkhead line.	<p><u>To allow a reduction in the ocean bulkhead line from 150 ft. for the beach pavilions as follows:</u></p> <p><u>Variance 1:</u> Beach Pavilion #1: reduce to 37.3 ft. (- 112.7 ft.)</p> <p><u>Variance 2:</u> Beach Pavilion #2: reduce to 36.25 ft. (- 113.75 ft.)</p> <p><u>Variance 3:</u> Beach Pavilion #3: reduce to 36.25 ft. (- 113.75 ft.)</p> <p><u>Variance 4:</u> Beach Pavilion #4: reduce to 43.5 ft. (- 106.5 ft.)</p> <p><u>Variance 5:</u> To allow a reduction in the ocean bulkhead line from 150 ft. to 111.4 ft. for the North Restroom. (- 38.6 ft.)</p>
Sec 134-893(b)(10)(a)	Height and overall height for one-story buildings, the maximum building height is 14 ft.	<p><u>To allow an increase in the building height from 14 ft. for the beach pavilions as follows:</u></p> <p><u>Variance 6:</u> Beach Pavilion #1: increase to 15.4 ft. (+ 1.4 ft.)</p> <p><u>Variance 7:</u> Beach Pavilion #2: increase to 15.4 ft. (+ 1.4 ft.)</p> <p><u>Variance 8:</u> Beach Pavilion #3: increase to 15.5 ft. (+ 1.5 ft.)</p>



Proposed Beach Cabana Height Variance Diagram



Sec 134-893(b)(10)(a) Height and overall height for one-story buildings, the maximum building height is 14 ft. **Variance 9:** To allow an increase in the building height from 14 ft. to 14.5 ft. and overall height from 22 ft. to 28.1 ft. for the Coastal Restoration Center. (+ 6.1 ft)



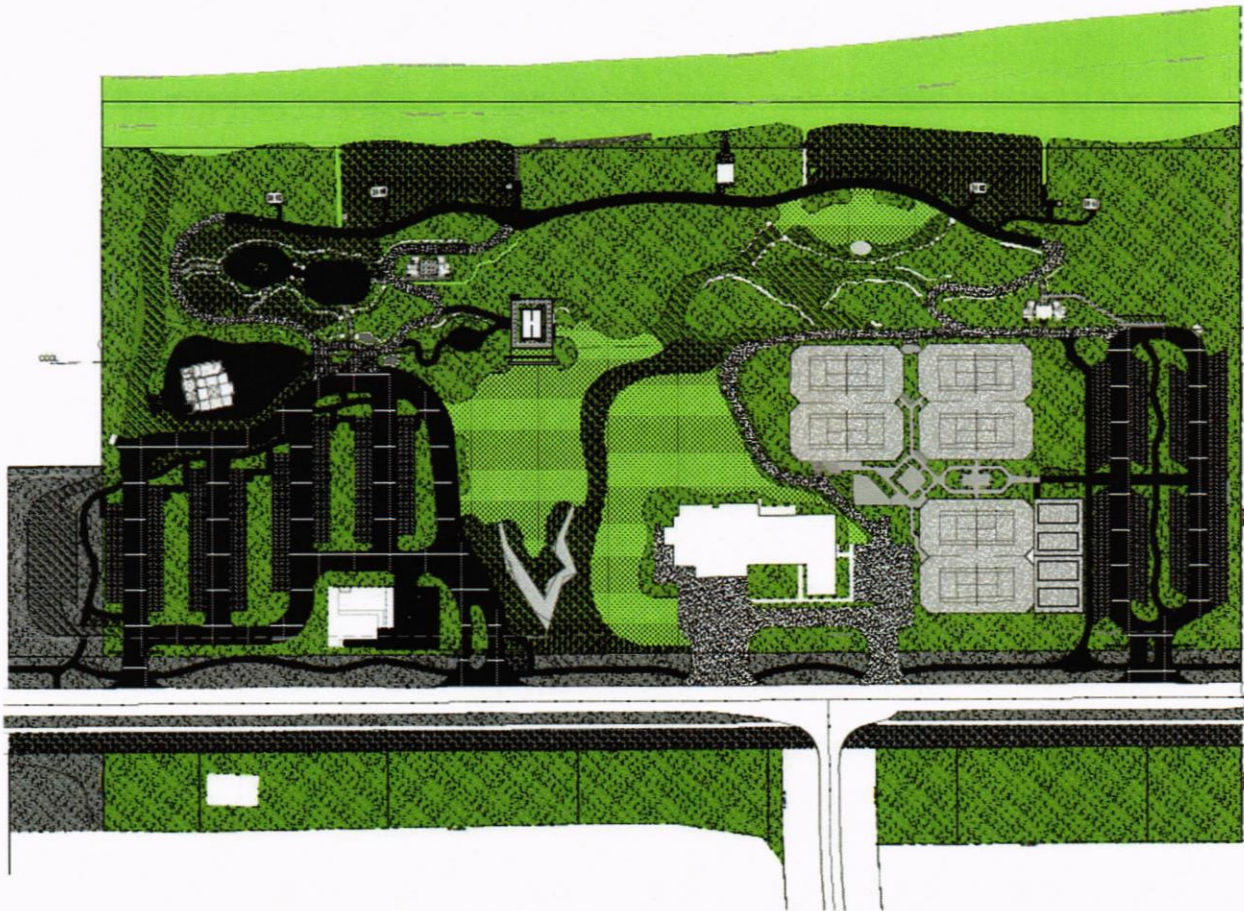
#### Landscape Plan

The landscape plan proposed for Phipps Ocean Park complies with the Town Code landscape requirements, which are displayed in the table below. Please note, the plant species, officus benamina and ficus nitida, are not present nor proposed on the proposed landscape plan. At least 35 percent of all new required landscaping, in the categories of trees, palms, shrubs, and a combined category of vines and ground cover plants, are required to consist of native vegetation.

#### **Landscape Legend**

<b>Landscape Open Space (LOS)</b>	Required: 594,984 SF (66%) Existing: 594,984 SF (66%) Proposed: 595,900 SF (66%)
<b>Front Yard LOS</b>	Required: 10,401 SF (40%) Existing: 18,104 SF (70 %) Proposed: 23,18,892 (73%)
<b>Native Trees</b>	Required: 35% Proposed: 100%
<b>Native Palms</b>	Required: 35% Proposed: 100%
<b>Native Shrubs</b>	Required: 35% Proposed: 100%
<b>Native Vines/Ground Cover</b>	Required: 35% Proposed: 100%

Shown below is the open space diagram that demonstrates approximately 59% of the site or 13.67 acres (595,900 square feet) will remain as open space.



Proposed Open Space Diagram

#### Parking

The Town of Palm Beach does not have minimum parking requirements for park and recreational uses. Phipps Ocean Park proposed parking will consist of two (2) surface parking lots on the north and south ends of the park. The parking areas have been designed with an abundance of shaded tree canopy in strategically located landscape islands. A total of 201 parking spaces are proposed, consisted of 88 angled, 96 perpendicular, and 17 handicapped accessible.



### Summary

According to the applicant's Letter of Intent (LOI), the design team established five (5) general objectives that were validated through a series of public meetings. Ultimately, these objectives drove the design of the Phipps Ocean Park and consist of the following:

#### ***I. Maximize Usability***

The site analysis indicates the site is primarily used as a parking lot for visitors to access the beach and tennis center. The rest of the site is mostly composed by lawn areas largely unused mostly due to the lack of program. The project aims to provide more opportunities for passive and recreational activities by diversifying the program and increasing the quantity and quality of spaces.

#### ***II. Improve Park Accessibility***

The park currently offers basic ADA accessibility in the form of accessible parking spots, bathrooms and a wooden boardwalk/ramp that leads to the Beach and the Dune Crest Path. The remainder of the paths and amenities found on-site are not accessible.

This project aims to provide full accessibility to all park features by making all paths accessible. The playground is conceived with accessibility and inclusiveness in mind, where special structures are integrated into the design. Restoration and preservation are core values of this project. The design aims to remove all exotic and invasive species inside the park. This is part of a larger mission of restoring the park's ecosystems and ecotones to a new historic reality, that returns species (flora and fauna) that are part of the historical landscape of the area. The project also aims to improve circulation and visibility by designing intuitive paths and implementing signage.

#### ***III. Restore and Preserve Natural Environment***

Restoration and preservation are core values of this project. The design aims to remove all exotic and invasive species inside the park. This is part of a larger mission of restoring the park's ecosystems and ecotones to a new historic reality, that returns species (flora and fauna) that are part of the historical landscape of the area.

#### ***IV. Increase Educational Opportunities***

Preservation through education is a very effective way of protecting valuable environmental assets. The Little Red Schoolhouse is expanding its educational reach to a larger demographic in the community. Also, the creation of an Outdoor Classroom as an additional space to experience education from an experiential standpoint is vital to the overall mission. Additionally, the Coastal Restoration Center, a focused environmental educational space, will produce and promote the use of native landscape species for Phipps Ocean Park and the community. Visitors are able to learn firsthand how plants are propagated and utilized within a larger context. Lastly, educational/themed paths will take visitors along the different areas of the park. With different lengths and themes, the paths will accommodate visitors of all ages, and provide recreation, exercise, and education. A series of educational stations will reinforce and highlight special topics and moments across the park. These spaces will also serve as small plazas to take a rest and enjoy the view.

***V. Beautify and Establish Resiliency***

The project will assess and improve existing stormwater infrastructure by restoring historic ecosystems and habitats. Part of this will include the removal of all existing invasive and exotic plant species found in the park. Stormwater management techniques like rain gardens will also be implemented throughout the park and emphasized at the north and south parking lots. Finally, the Little Red Schoolhouse is relocated and raised from its current elevation, ensuring its safety from future potential floods.

The criteria employed aimed to align with the objectives of the residents, the Town elected and appointed officials' directives, and the Preservation Foundation's overall mission.

WRB/JGM/JHD