

LA 490

Preparation for Comprehensive Project
Jerry Diethelm

Letters to Students

@Mid-Term
Fall 2002

LA490 Comp Prep
Mid-term Project Report - Fall 2002
Jerome Diethelm

Project Title: **Pastoral Escape...Oasis...in Borrego Springs**

By:

C:

I like the "lemonade of heat," and I'll take two glasses. Wherever you are cooking this project, keep putting it there, for it grows and enriches each time I see, hear and read about it. Just yesterday it was just an empty map in the hall, and now it is vividly full of places and layers of experience. I appreciate the ways you have tried to visually represent what you are saying and the way you capture some of the qualities you want through inspiring examples. I like the way the many layers include both the landscape and us. Well done!

So I know you'll have some gathering places for social events of different sizes, a children's garden, a memorial garden, a shaded and connecting path which is a special kind of place (a place of passage) itself and also a connecting paseo, and also that there will be connections to the town and church areas.

I also know that water will play an important role in all these places that add up to oasis and paradise, providing shade, coolth, reflecting light, water play, contemplation... One of your products should probably be a conceptual water systems plan for the site. City water? Well water?

So since this is already poetically rich, I think I'd suggest you think about what else you'll need to do a schematic layout of the proposed place for the end of term and try to do a simple one right now.

The reason I suggest this is that it will help you think more about programmatic aspects like number, size and the location and relationship of all the parts. How many gathering areas and for how many people? And where? How big will they need to be? What will these areas need to support the kind of gatherings you envision? How big will the children's garden be – for how many children. You already suggest some locational criteria and what you'd like in it. Same with the memorial garden. How long a wall is needed for how many people? Will it be closer to the church side of things?

So now that you know what's going to be here and have a good beginning vivid sense of the quality you want, try to increase your knowledge and program about each part (deeper parts) and start working with them to create a beginning diagrammatic whole.

I'm impressed.

Thanks,

Jerry

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Jerome Diethelm

Project Title: **Waterfront Development Plan**
By:

K:

This is a visually beautiful project report, and it is also well written and organized. Your images are especially helpful in making the place understandable. I especially like the one in 2. that shows the park, bridges and all the city areas and places it connects, or needs to connect, to. I like knowing where the bowl is and Salmon Spring. I can't quite tell where the main existing entrances to the park are, but I can see that you are looking for good places throughout the park to make closer connections through the seawall to the river.

The key issues section is very clear and you have made good use of the city material that forms the basis of your work. No 4. is a good example of the goal assignment I described in class today. The first two goal levels already exist. See if you can now add some design objectives to these. Speculate about possibilities and add "such as(s).

I think part 5. Has already been covered for the whole park in 4. and you should probably zoom into your focus area with a new graphic and get more specific about what needs doing here. It's the only area that doesn't really appear or exist clearly. I know some general things about it, problems under the bridge, connections needed etc., but I don't really know what more specifically this place needs.

You've found lots of useful and inspirational precedent studies to draw from and are well under way.

Try to build a better program for your focal area now so are ready to include a schematic proposal for the area by end of term. You might work backward and try to design the area and then ask yourself what the program was that would generate the kind of design you thought was needed. Try to name the sub-areas of your focal place in the same way you did the park and its city connections. Try to outline the things that will go into a design here: Planting; seawall remodeling, special paving, new fountain, crosswalk or bridge, riverside furniture, lighting????? You already mentioned signage for the whole park. When you say, "I am...going to develop a detailed design of a part of the waterfront," I want to know more about what will go in it.

Very fine start. Just move on now and this will be a terrific comp project

Thanks,

Jerry

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Jerome Diethelm

Project Title: **Reclaiming our Alleys: A Park on Every Block**

By:

A:

I share your vision, which you state very well: Eugene's alleys have a certain charm, at least some do, and all hold great potential for park-like community open space and pedestrian, storm water and wildlife corridors through our urban neighborhoods. Yes, they could run, as in your example, from Hendrick's Park to the riverfront. And here I wonder if it might not be a good idea to map a few more corridors to go along with the one you're interested in as an example of the alley network you'd like to create. There are four more on the Fairmont map. All of them? Some of them?

It would also be helpful if you could diagram and discuss the parts of the Villard Alley Corridor a bit more as a setting for your work. This corridor has several distinct areas and conditions: it runs behind houses north of the park, crosses Fairmont, goes through three residential blocks, crosses Franklin and its commercial area, and then makes its way to the river. It also intersects the Millrace on the other side of Garden Ave. I know your interest and emphasis is on the potential for transforming the residential blocks, but you mention system wide ecological goals as a part of your community building vision.

I enjoyed looking at the colored image of the block, and I understand the potential for widening the public zone you describe. This seems like a good start at some general evaluation, but I think you need to do more.

Your project will probably need a more detailed existing representation and evaluation to set it up for the sequence of changes over time you will want to demonstrate. This is an optimistic and hopeful project that will need to show a desirable transformation, a dress rehearsal of the potential, of the changes from what's there to the alley park world it could become. And that will require a more detailed block drawing and more detailed evaluation of what's there now and how it's used. Block spatial structure? Existing vegetation? Important trees? Gates? Garages, buildings that are in the way and/or could be moved, used for something else? Location of existing utilities? Possible property donations/sales/easements?

And if I look into the future a bit, I imagine you telling the story of the changes in the block, the ways that people got together about it, and year by year and step by step, moving a fence here, having the city underground utilities there, planting new interior trees in just the right places, creating the swales and habitat changes that improve its biological potential.... And I imagine a sequence of images, axons of the block or photos of an evolving block model that show these changes and illuminate your narrative.

Some years ago, Richard Britz published a book about block changes in the Whiteaker Neighborhood called, *The Edible City Resource Manual*. Ann Bettman might still have a copy you could look at. It has some good drawings and diagrams of a similar idea.

Terrific project and a very good start. How about focusing in a bit on the block now and expanding that world.

Jerry

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Jerome Diethelm

Project Title: **Awbrey Park**

By:

A:

I of course read a lot into such simple statements as, "Color will also be very important to my design," after hearing your vivid presence about Awbrey Park in class the other day. It's also a not too hidden pleasure for me to hear you mention Sarah and Emily, who along with Andrea Riner, were all students doing their comps not too many years ago. You've chosen a good project, useful precedent (you could have more than one) and some very nice people to talk to and consult.

I appreciated the simple axon diagram of the park as a way to focus your narrative. You might also enhance it with some color to give the areas and things you're describing more emphasis. Each of the elements, the parts of the project could use some more detailed programmatic development. List each one and itemize the work you're writing about. Add in yet more detail. New restroom facility: how big? Located? Materials? Children's playground: I know a little about it philosophically from your report, but I'm not sure what you'll be including, how big it is or what its relationship is to the rest of the place. Colorful, low maintenance plantings: how about a beginning palette? And some examples of plantings that do what you were writing about. You get the idea I'm sure.

You weren't explicit about products, but I would expect you'll do an overall site plan at 20 scale showing site entrances, connections and the location of all the special areas and elements of the proposed park. Maybe an existing plan and a proposed plan to convey the amount and location of the changes you are recommending. Tipping this up into a colorful axon (a bigger version of your diagram) with people using the park, the flowers blooming and spring Creek flowing, would be a nice centerpiece to the work.

You'll need a park planting plan, probably at 20 scale, showing all the changes and additions. And perhaps a new lighting plan, which could also include park furniture, such as benches, and other systems such as irrigation. More detailed areas will probably be at 1/8 scale and sections through these areas look real when they are 1/4" = 1'0". You could do some before and after sections through some of the planting and/or creek and play areas. And what else? Make your list. Guess.

Related to paths. Soft yes, and it's nice to have a modest mix, if only for handicapped access and ease of use. Paths sometimes keep sensitive places from being overrun, although this is certainly not Prospect Park in Brooklyn or Hampstead Heath in London where foot traffic is really a problem. A circular path that takes you around the park can be a pleasant local walk, like Charles Darwin's famous "sand walk" at his home in England.

This is developing nicely, A. I'm confident that it will be a terrific comp project.

Thanks,

Jerry

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Project Title: **The Wilde Estate Permaculture Project**

By:

B:

This is an inspiring and joyful project, full of the optimism and down to earthly commitment that permaculture represents. It looks as though you've also found a good place to practice your perma art&craft with the Wilde estate and some good models to guide you. After reading your description and evaluation of the place, which was thorough and thoughtful, I thought again of our conversation about how important it will be to have a good air photo and be able to draw the project in the kind of detail the ideas call for. Your list of products looks like a very good start. And I do think you'll want to be able to show seasonal and yearly changes in the building of this world.

I think you've made some important strategic choices. The first is to choose a demonstration place to make vivid the ideas of permaculture so you can learn more about its actual application and development and rehearse the transformation of this place, both for yourself and others. A second I'd suggest, which you're already doing quite naturally (but I want to underline it) is to continue to use - for both design and presentation - and show the principles of permaculture and other examples along with your local application. In other words, following the principles and applying the experience of others at the Wilde property and letting people know it.

A third has to do with who is the client and how real and practical to be with the project. The position you've taken makes a lot of sense, and I like your sensitivity to Mr. Wilde's love of his rhododendrons and azaleas and his son's tree. You also can't change everything at once, so it makes sense to keep some established things in the beginning and then phase them out later as the permaculture idea takes hold. Another aspect of this is that permaculture can be flexible and adaptive; it doesn't have to be fanatical. But I think you need to be clear that you're the client for this experiment.

There is another level to this beyond some of the modest remodeling you mention that you might want to consider. I'm talking about a more ideal arrangement and set of relationships on the site, assuming you could have put everything in the best places. It might be useful to have a diagrammatic model of an idealized Wilde site, again as a way of describing the application of permaculture principles, and use it to compare to the more adaptive additions and changes you are proposing. Looking forward, I imagine your presentation of this work covering a broad mental territory: ideas, systems, the changes in a place over time (5-10 years), and the experience of a year in the life of a Brookley (is that an adjective?) place.

Excellent project; good strategies; better base material; wonderful start.

Thanks,

Jerry

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Project Title: **The Wayne Morse Federal Building's Parks and Plazas**

By:

B:

You're right. There has been a lot done and said about this area, and you enter into the process with a lot to build on. You seem to be catching up quickly, have found some interesting precedents to guide and inspire you, and have some rich ideas for the parks and plazas for the area.

But you badly need an up-to-date layout of the site so that you can be more specific about the actual spaces and opportunity places you'll be working with in an around the building. I'd advise you not to try to redesign the whole courthouse neighborhood again. You should plan to build on where the city is right now with all of that after several consultants (e.g. 6th along the tracks and all) and see if you can help make it great, especially in the immediate vicinity of the courthouse and as it relates to the spaces you'll be working on. So for your project you can review and explain the present official context and setting for your work and then move on in to your specific designs.

Without the above courthouse site plan you can't really do a more specific site evaluation or blow up and make base materials of areas you'll be making proposals for. So for now, that's the next key step. That's why I ask for maps at these scales. I know you need them to do the prep work.

You'll need to specifically designate each area you'll be working on (this term, not sometime in the future) and elaborate the program you've begun in your narrative, being as specific as possible about what you are trying to accomplish there, key relationships, elements, activities the place is supposed to support, materials, the mood and tone you're trying to achieve etc. Your general intentions are fine at the goal level, but now you need the next level down.

Ask Anita, Nan Lawrence at the city or David Dougherty to help you get the drawing you need. I like the Agripac preservation plan you found. Yes, the new courthouse building should provide a special setting for some exciting contemporary landscape art. I'm anxious to see it. Move over Martha and Peter!

Think ahead now about the schematic plan you'll be asked to do by the end of the term and get the materials together that will allow you to produce a good first version.

Thanks,

Jerry

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Project Title: **Recreation Wasteland: Addressing the Past and Securing the Future**
By:

C:
You've been really clear and well focused about your project from the beginning and continue to be so in this report. Its very well written and would be even better with some more maps and diagrams to illustrate and orient the narrative.

I know that you'll be developing the Rouse Boulevard Trailhead area and its connections to and through the old adjoining landfill, and that you'll be creating a master plan for the trail and landfill and some of the detailed proposals needed to bring the project to life. It's good that the trailhead area and facilities will probably get built because that puts the right kind of pressure on you to design some things you'd be proud to be associated with when they appear and you are able to actually walk through your vivid presence. That means gathering some good examples of canoe launches and fishing platforms etc. (along with landfill precedents) to guide you in your work.

In the image on page one, is the green area the project area, or is the landfill just the part of it south of the East Gallatin River? I've forgotten since your excellent presentation in class. I do remember you're showing us more about the interior structure of the site than you include here and also a closer, more detailed image map of the trailhead area itself. Since these latter two will both play an important role in the products you list, they need to play a stronger role in the report too. It's better to have them present as you discuss such things as important bird habitat areas, eroded banks, or possible parking, launch and platform areas at the trailhead.

It would be good to know whether the landfill at present is causing any water quality problems so you can answer your questions about such things as fishing in cherry Creek. If this is an old landfill, and if it didn't include toxic materials the way the one in Alton Baker Park did, it may be that ground water in the area is OK???? The ABP landfill had a clay cap put over the top to keep rainwater from adding to the problem of seepage into the Willamette. Anyway, some history of "your" landfill would help you know what assumptions are reasonable to make and how to better deal with the place. Can Gary help you with this? Or perhaps Bart Johnson who gave a class on the ABP landfill a while back.

The list of products seems about right. I think I'd plan to do an overall planting and vegetation management plan as a part of the master plan and include your invasives program as a part of it. The master plan should probably also include an overview of the recreational opportunities you are proposing here and the places the trail ties together. I think I'd plan to take people on a walk as a part of your final presentation, maybe using some before and after images, since the before is fairly bleak and will make your proposals look really good.

Excellent work this term. Great project.

Thanks,

Jerry

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Project Title: **Spencer Creek Natural Park**

By:

H:

This is terrific work H. I like the way you've described the present site and habitat situation. Adam Novick is a great client to have for the project. You say you have two clients, Adam and the site itself (which is a wonderful way to look at it), but later you add your own educational interests into the mix, so you really end up with three.

Adam has two main goals, native habitat protection and land conservation, and yours involve public access, education and overall aesthetics. (What are the site's?) You inherit some good information about this place from the many studies that have been done. Salix and others have mapped the habitats, flora and fauna. Management plans for the site already exist for you to model yours on and extend.

I know that you'll be producing a trail system on the site and some outdoor classrooms and perhaps some interpretative materials. But this is a very general goal level statement and needs more specific intentional development. Will the trails connect up to the other trail systems in the area? Will there be special trailheads for the entrance or entrances into the property? Do you envision a system that visits all the habitat types like beads on a string? Will you want to vary the trail experience by taking people under the forest canopy and along or across the clearings, up slopes, along slopes and down slopes? Will there be special stopping points for great views or unique specimens or plant communities? Will there be benches? You need to write the program for this trail system so that you can examine the site with some of your ideas in mind. Site evaluation requires that you have some idea of what you're looking for so you'll know it when you see it.

Along with habitat type, you'll probably want to map out the spatial structure (patches) of the site, which will be helpful in laying out the trail experience. One thing worried me a little as I read your report. It sounded as though you were planning to do all this analysis in your studio term. Since I am asking you for an end of term schematic, you can see that you will have to begin this process now. You need to do enough programmatic development for your trail (write your trail spec) and do enough site evaluation so that you can make a preliminary proposal this term. You probably know that and I needn't have concerned myself. If you can envision the kind of educational places you think will be needed, you will be able to look for those that might make good possibilities.

Since you intend to make a management plan, look over the management plans that have been done to date (for this site and others if you have them) and try to outline what you think yours will need to include. You can probably piggyback yours onto theirs. Instead of doing "the" management plan, you can think of your work as a contribution to the overall development of the Novick property management plan and give others credit for their share of the work.

The goal exercise should help you now. You have a clear set of higher-level intentions. Now build the arrays and bring it all down to the ground (goals -> objectives-> design objectives). This is thoughtful work and will make a great comp project. Nose down now and stay on the trail!

Thanks,

Jerry

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Project Title: **Kaohsiung Riverfront**
By:

H:
This is a very well-organized and presented report. The map and photo images you have included make it easy to understand. You write very clearly and to the point, using the issue-oriented process I have been discussing. And I like your understanding that there are all kinds of issues, such as existing vegetation being “messy,” and an amphitheater area that is “leaking” space.

I know from your report that your riverfront park extends from the old residential area to the harbor view area along the Kaohsiung riverfront and that you are focusing your work on the development of the outdoor areas of the art and culture area and its connections to the river and to Ren-Ai Park to the south across the parkway. You say the park needs to improve its connections and functional use, and then later in your report you also describe how it needs to better define its spaces and improve the quality of its plantings, stairs, walkways and gathering areas. You could expand your abstract to include these things.

I especially wonder about the paving in your project area because there is so much of it. I know you intend to modify that somewhat and soften the area with plantings, but I wonder about the quality of what look like large scored concrete areas and whether they might be made of more attractive materials, colors and patterns, especially in the art and cultural area. Would this seem out of place in Kaohsiung? You have a good sense of your project area’s spatial and planting needs, but I also wonder about lighting and other public furnishings for the area. You also don’t say anything about public art and sculpture. No, I’m not suggesting Japanese generals on horseback, just imagining such things as children playing on dragon boats and bollards that remind us of the lantern festival, colorful banners, and other important examples of contemporary art in Chinese culture that help bring the place to life visually and deepen the public experience.

Your analysis of problems and opportunities is very good. You understand that to identify a problem or opportunity is to be able to state an intention to do something about it, suggest possibilities, and/or state a goal. And you are evaluating each of the key areas of the project and their connections. It would be good if you could develop this exploration some more in the time left in the term. Are there any precedent places you know and admire that provide inspiring examples for your work? Any important references?

The list of products seems about right. I’d plan to show the area in use at one or both of the festivals you describe and also how it might fit into everyday life in Kaohsiung.

I’m very impressed. Keep up the excellent work.

Jerry

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Project Title: **Kagu Mila Guru Stupa**
By:

J:
I loved reading this and joining in the spiritual and personal landscape journey you describe. Yes, I know: all organic things decay, and we are all centers; each atom is a cosmic center. Mandalas unite us to the whole. Compassion, which means to suffer along with, requires us to expand our capacities for empathy and moral imagination.

You are very clear about your desires for the project, and so my comments are more toward how to advise you to go about it and develop it further this term.

In the most practical sense, which is also a center of Buddhist thought, you say that you'll be siting a Lama house, a Gompa, a driveway, some parking, camping and a connecting road – and perhaps a bridge, since it looks as though the road crosses the arroyo. And it appears from your resources that you'll be using Feng Shui for siting things and garden development.

So I'd suggest you do a first pass Feng Shui site evaluation as a way of evaluating the existing site plan. You need to do it now in order to be able to make a schematic proposal at the end of this term. Are things located in the right places? With the proper orientations and the most propitious relationships?

Next, all of the things you mention are just that, things, buildings, but they are really centers of special places – the place of the Gompa for example. Will there be a garden or gardens here? Outdoor meeting or meditation places? Could you elaborate on the program for this place as a way to help ground your designing? Can you try to be specific about what each place will need to have and be like? The Lama house place? Parking for how many? And what about the connecting places, the places of passage, their location and their qualities?

You know how important it is to “listen to the ecology and spirit of the place.” So how about revealing more about it, its qualities that are special, its seasons and processes, water and vegetation on the site and the role they now play and will need to play. Making proposals that involve the ecology of the place will need to spring from both a knowledge and intuitive/emotional base. In order to make more intimate and detailed proposals for the new inhabited areas, you'll need base map materials (topography, plants,...) that are at a larger scale so you can reveal the special qualities of each place in your designs.

This is a wonderful project that needs some more specific programmatic development and a zooming in to enable your preliminary work. Try working backward from trying to make a schematic plan, asking yourself what else you need to know or decide or study (preliminarily right now) in order to get to this point in your preparation for further development in studio.

Thanks,

Jerry

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Project Title: **North Macadam Development & OHSU Tram Plaza**
By:

J:
This is a very good mid-term report J and the VP brings it to life, naming many of the things and qualities that need to be in your overall program. I like your diagrams and photos of the North Macadam District and the conceptual green structure you are showing. I'd probably add "green streets" and perhaps some inter-block alley paths running north south to the diagram to link to the larger fingers that run to the 150' strip along the Willamette. We had a comp project four or five years ago in this area that came to all the same conclusions and did a pretty good job of setting up the open space matrix for the areas development. It'll probably be in a tube in the rack on the mezzanine of the AAA library. The name will return to me if I think about something else.

My advice to you is to use the above as the context and not the focus of your work. I'd turn the title around to indicate the tram focus: **The OHSU Tram Plaza in the North Macadam District**. If you establish the conceptual open space structure that has emerged from earlier studies (with whatever additions you think important to make) as the given, you can then move into the tram plaza part of the work.

Notice that you don't have any plaza-scaled base maps or drawings at this point, so it is impossible to do any site evaluation until you do. Your VP is helping you here though, revealing some good programmatic information at this scale. You need to develop the plaza-scale aspect of this work so that you can actually do a schematic proposal, of the tram plaza area, not the Macadam District Development, by term end.

So pin down your plaza site, draw and diagram it and evaluate it. Knowing that you have to make a tram plaza proposal for it, ask yourself what information you need or preliminary program decisions you need to make in order to do this. Organize and itemize this information. Diagram the ideal relationships between the elements and parts. Use the things from your VP and evolve a plaza program. You can't project a schematic out of nothing.

I imagine the tram riding over the trees on the street below and probably not over too many private homes, and I wonder if you ought not to be designing the plaza on both ends. For your presentation you can take us all for a ride and look out over the new district and the Willamette River and Portland in the distance.

Great project J. It could be spectacular.

Thanks,

Jerry

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Project Title: **River District Park Blocks**
By:

K:
This is a good review of the situation in the River District, thoughtful and well written. It gave me some needed background to the place and the framework plan for the district as it presently exists. So if I understand it, an earth forest and water orientation gives us the Spring, The Wetlands, The Fields and The Riverfront, and each one has some form of expression of the boardwalk, stone aquifer and pedestrian gallery. And if I understand you, you don't so much object to the last three, but think the expressions of these ideas might be better-oriented to the local places and our contemporary culture. And why not, since it's a framework plan and it is fair game for interpretation. Your stronger critique is of the park designations, such as the Fields etc. that don't reflect strongly enough the "civic, social, ecological, and pragmatic function" or character of their surrounds. Sounds like a clear and strong point of view to me.

So, what I expected to find next (good critique, what's the proposal?) was the framework you are proposing that grows out of your evaluation. I think you need to create one now, cobble something up, using whichever of their ideas and yours in order to get to the next level of programmatic development. Time to make Katie's Proposed Conceptual Framework for the River District Park Blocks.

The point is that you can't begin to program or design one of the parts without the whole, and you need to give yourself enough programmatic direction to get to the level of a schematic proposal for one of the blocks by the end of term. Work backward if it helps. Do a scheme for one of the blocks that interests you and try to write down the program that it would be an answer to. Be more specific than feels comfortable to you right now and just give yourself permission to change your mind as much as you want.

The Halprin quotes are inspiring to run into again. Yes, "we need great sculpture to comment on our civilization and speak of the condition of our culture, even possibly throw stones at it." Maybe big stones.

Wade deeper into this as quickly as you can now.

Thanks,

Jerry

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Project Title: **case in point**

By:

K:

Yes, I see what you mean, it all started when you met a man named Daryl and that's how you met Tom and encountered Apple Tree Lane... Sounds like an intriguing group and a good setting for pursuing your interest in deepening the design process of places to include the choreography of time and movement and ecological appreciation.

You probably know that Lawrence Halprin's wife Ann is a dancer and much of Halprin's work was about the choreography of people in places. In his book, the RSVP Cycles (AAA Library) you'll find his movement notation system he used and called "motation." Lawrence and Ann were very interested in the scoring of designs and experience. I don't remember seeing you at Liska's presentation last week, but she presented 5 projects, some done with David Goodyke, involving ways of representing invisible processes and qualities of landscape. Sophie Robitaille's master's project of two years ago was about ways of representing landscape qualities whose presence is needed to enrich design and designing. Sound similar?

So I guess this is a long way of saying you are not alone and wanting you to get hooked up to some helpful resources. Comp prep is meant to do that and to help you make your interests into a studio project, not tell you that your interests don't fit. So can this be a good comp project? Yes, if I can convince you that developing your recording and notation systems/methods is not trivial (Sophie worked on hers for a year; you'll have ten weeks. Liska has been at it for several years now) and get you engaged in the work this term, sufficient enough for you to do a first schematic proposal that grows out of **your** axes of interest, not some dumb trivia you think the school (and I) want. So that means your having a round of useful experience to build on that you can carry on into further studio work, where the emphasis is meant to be more synthetic than analytic.

Tom the client's wish for "world's beyond" and perhaps a special path and "water feature" seem ready made to be woven into an Apple Lane Score. Even the entry driveway can be a special line of movement and experience. Your job is to make the invisible visible and useful and demonstrate its application through proposals for the site. The danger in this work is that you get caught up in the process, can't make it convincing to others and can't show how you apply it, leaving you with a bad case of dancer's despair. That's why a jr. application at the end of this term is a good personal check on your preparation.

The cognitive maps I assigned earlier could have, and still can, record some aspects of your axis. I think your strategy of finding places on the site where special qualities converge is a good one. Perhaps these become some of the key points on the path of site experience. But there are probably unique things too – the shadow wheel of a great tree, the way the wind flashes the leaves of the white poplar and bends the tall grasses – that create important centers of experience.

Since I've been seeing double, I'm handing back both of your reports. More movement now would be my advice.

Thanks,

Jerry

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Jerome Diethelm

Project Title: **Have you been to Alviso?**

By:

K:

I was going to say, "No I haven't," but after reading your report I think I have. I have seen the "yellow wilted weeds of winter." I have felt the wet feet of a sinking town. What a fascinating place!

You've done an excellent job of setting the town scene and suggesting a possible integrated strategy for its revitalization. Figure 1 is a good visual synthesis of your ideas. Yes, I agree you have to carve a nine-week center out of this for your studio work.

My advice would be to divide the project into two pieces. The first would be the conceptual work you've already outlined that describes this fascinating place with its multiple problems and proposes an interconnected conceptual solution. This would show the new golf course location and describe its role in flood control etc, the reclaimed marina, the abandoning of the lowest part of the town and its dredging for fill to fill the salt ponds... At this scale you don't have to become a golf course designer (unless this is your real passion) and can just show it diagrammatically. And you can show the proposed freshwater marsh treatment area, a la Arcata, and relate how this, asbestos and all the rest can work together. The really interesting part 2, I think, is the marsh and marina area and all the recreational/ecological opportunities this presents. You can use some of the weenie money to help revitalize the town and protect and enhance the Bay. Besides I think the Taboo and marsh walks, gatehouses, wildlife watch places and picnic houses, boat dock and ramps would make this a unique water park that would at least raise Alviso's spirit if not put it back up on the map.

Ann Christiansen, who still practices in town I think, did her comp about ten years ago (or so) on the Arcata marsh development, and lo, here you are referring to it. It's probably in a tube on the mezzanine floor of the AAA library. The Upshot: watch what you propose.

Great project K. Time to move on now though and try to set out a program for the more focused part of the work.

Thanks,

Jerry

LA490 Comp Prep
Mid-term Project Report - Fall 2002
Jerome Diethelm

Project Title: **A Plan for Flat Creek Jackson Hole, Wyoming**
By:

L:
This is a fine piece of work L. You've re-conceptualized and refocused your project beautifully. I love it when you say, "Flat Creek is a pristine river system that becomes momentarily pinched into an urban setting, then flushed out into an agricultural landscape before meeting the more substantial flow of the Snake River." The description and your photos bring this water system, threaded through town and landscape, to life vividly.

I also like the way you propose to use the park section of the corridor to define the southern entrance to the town. And your description of the bio/social role and purpose of the corridor is right on the mark.

Since the park is going to get more up close design attention, it needs its own more specific program, and you're already doing that. There will be grazing areas in season, garden areas, the ped/bikeway connecting the town and areas to the south, parking, bike storage, restrooms etc. You should itemize each of these elements now and try to size them and relate them so that you are prepared to do a schematic design of your park area to scale by end of term. Ask yourself what more about it," for each element and try to create a relational diagram of the parts that you can turn into your first schematic proposal. Zoom into your fig. 6 another level with your designer's eye.

I like your curly arrows floating like ribbons in your photos. I like the way your love and concern for the areas exceptional corridors has turned into a well-focused project.

OK, that was level two. I think you're capable of level three or four this term. Very impressive.

Thanks,

Jerry

LA490 Comp Prep
Mid-term Project Report - Fall 2002
Jerome Diethelm

Project Title: **Urban Oasis**

By:

M:

Very well done M. I can understand the site from your drawings and photos and know what the general program for the project is and what drawings you intend to produce. I think you might want to include some before and after sketches of the areas you write about in your vivid presence to demonstrate the changes your proposals will bring about. The vp does a good job of naming things. I can see the wrought iron gate and the ivy on the wall, the trellis with grapes, waterfall and pool.

Now imagine yourself making an end of term schematic proposal and what more you'll need to do it. Also think ahead about the kind of background material and references you'll need to build a sports court, pool, garage, trellis etc. and start to gather them together. Collect some images of the kind of hardscape you are thinking about and some literature showing how to install it. Also start to put together your plant palette and some images that portray the combinations that please you and/or your client. Check to see who might sell some of the trees you mention such as the Tulip trees and the Katsuras.

To make a schematic, I know I'd need to know how big and what kind of a pool and where there might be good places to site it. The same with the garage and sports court. Probably also time to make a simple relational drawing (to scale) of all the elements you describe that could evolve into your schematic plan.

Since the site plan is going to be a central drawing in your project, I'd suggest you refine it and add more detail. You can reproduce it and then use it (shrink it) to show different aspects of your site evaluation, such as where you need more enclosure, where you need to add understory planting, where the pool might go etc. Perhaps in the end you could turn your illustrated site plan 30° and make it into an axon that would allow you to draw what (the trees and other plants, the spaces of the site, people doing things, and all the materials and colors of) this Urban Oasis really looks and feels like.

You mention lighting. How about irrigation? If you have a waterfall and pool, you probably will have some kind of irrigation system for the planted areas you are proposing. You'll also have pumps and filters and probably a drainage plan for the site.

Residential work looks simple, but there is a lot that needs to be considered. You're doing a good job. Time to take it to the next level of preparation and refinement. Good project, M.

Thanks,

Jerry

LA490 Comp Prep
Mid-term Project Report - Fall 2002
Jerome Diethelm

Project Title: **Green Trails in the Urban Landscape**

By:

N:

Your title, diagrams and your abstract tell me that this is a project focusing on the development of green (and blue) open space corridors in the south Springfield sector of our metropolitan region. You hope to aid in the establishment of a recreational corridor system that would link the existing bikeway through East Alton Baker Park to Mt. Pisgah, using both the Springfield Millrace corridor and the Willamette riverfront as connecting passages to Clearwater Park, where a new pedestrian bridge would create a new entrance to The Howard Buford Recreation Area and the Arboretum. In addition to providing these social connections and a green urban structure, the proposed corridors are intended to preserve and enhance wildlife movement and wildlife habitat in the urbanizing area. The role of Clearwater Park, then, is that of a new "gateway" park and entrance to Pisgah.

Notice how I've tried to honor your Green Trails idea and put Clearwater Park into it, emphasizing its new role as the gateway river park with the bridge to Pisgah. That's not its only role of course, but it is its central role in your proposed conceptual system.

So I think you need to talk system up front and bring your system map, which is the last illustration in your report now, also up front to explain the new network you'd like to create as identified in your title. At the larger scale, it's a matter of describing the connections that you desire and some of the opportunities for establishing them, such as the development of the Millrace corridor and riverfront links to Dorris Ranch and on to Clearwater Park. These two proposed corridors then meet at Clearwater Park, where the new bridge completes the system.

Having set the stage you can then zoom into Clearwater Park, using your very nice diagrams (put them into the description and evaluation rather than at the end as after images), describe its present status (you say deviant a lot. How about it having some social problems because of its present isolation and under-use, or something less harsh sounding) and the things that will be needed to play its new role.

The new program: Access to the new park will certainly change. More people will drive there to park and then walk over the bridge to Pisgah. People will converge at Clearwater from the pedestrian and bike trails, and there will need to be upgraded services in the park for destination activities. You need to specify them now in order to lay out the new park. You will need a new habitat protection and vegetation management plan and program. Anyway, try to compose an explicit program for the new park you want this to be, not just fix the one you see now. Envision and guess about the future you want here, and if necessary make something up.

So this is coming along nicely. It just needs a bit of reordering and some more program development for the new park.

Good work. And thanks,

Jerry

LA490 Comp Prep
Mid-term Project Report - Fall 2002
Jerome Diethelm

Project Title: **San Clemente: Trail Railway and Beach Corridor**

By:

N:

I'm sitting here at home, reading your abstract (warm rain outside) and think it needs to say something like:
"This project is about the development of a public beachfront corridor in the City of San Clemente that provides for safe and pleasant passage along the narrow ocean-side strip of land that lies between an existing railroad ROW and San Clemente beach. The goal is to create a designated public pathway that will support pedestrian needs, have minimal ecological impact, and fit gracefully into the coastal landscape. Safety issues are especially important because of the presence of the railroad, and the proposal will need to resolve potential railroad pedestrian conflicts in this unique setting. I will be proposing a plan for the location and development of this corridor, which will include improvements to its special areas and public crossings, and proposals for materials and furnishings that enhance beach front character. Or something like this. You get the idea I'm sure.

And I do think you badly need an outline as I suggested in my handout. Did you get it? I'd guess you didn't. Otherwise I'd have expected you to describe the present situation with respect to the corridor, talk about the ongoing process of developing this passage, discuss the earlier plan, show it if possible, and describe its shortcomings as a way of setting up your work.

You do badly need some corridor map diagrams to refer to in order to develop this work, so I hope you are successful in getting something you can use without spending a fortune on it. Doesn't the earlier study have some base maps you can use and build on? I'm getting anxious to be able to more clearly visualize the sections of the corridor and the key crossing areas and see sections of the corridor in critical areas and hear you create more of a program for your work. You have a lot of general criteria related to safety, but not much that much that I can project into a physical corridor proposal.

Your poetic soul burns brightly through your Journey of Memory and adds a wonderful layer of the qualities that will make the place special. But I don't think it belongs up front as an intro means of explaining what this project is about. Vivid presence was an exercise to get you thinking about such things, a natural mode for you, and would probably be better blended into your report narrative. Try to use the material from the exercises as fuel for the report rather than including them as such.

This is a little disorganized and undercooked for this stage of the term. Time to get with it N. I know you're stretched, a bit peripatetic, caught between classes, and trying to do a lot this term, but I have a lot of confidence in you and know you'll pull it off brilliantly.

Thanks,

Jerry

LA490 Comp Prep
Mid-term Project Report - Fall 2002
Jerome Diethelm

Project Title: **Marin Town and Country Club**

By:

R:

This is well written, Ryan, a very interesting place, good critique, and the vision that you describe for the MCTC will make a fine comp project. As I understand it, MCTC would be a senior community, home to 150 elderly, an important new park and open space asset for Fairfax, linked to area trails and commercial services, and in general, a demonstration of sustainability, accessibility and tranquility. You also want the proposal to be somewhat realistic economically so that the owners and community will take it seriously as a real possibility. Knowing now that you will be presenting the proposal to the owners and community (as well as our department) will help you focus on the kind of products you will need and how to aim them at your target audience.

I wonder whether 150, for example, makes any sense economically, and also whether it's the right number from a social perspective. Is there a social module that would work best: e.g. 10 groups of 15 people or something else? I think it's terrific you've worked with Sym Van Der Ryn and will be pursuing rammed earth construction here, and I suggest you try to pin down now the size and number of structures (1 story? 2 story? 3?) that you'll be trying to site by term end. Will you want or need to leave room for expansion over time to xxx people? I understand from your narrative that everyone will have access to a garden. Local? Allotment? What other spaces and facilities will be required? Community Building? Pool? Commons? It's time to create the more explicit program that you'll project into physical space, pattern and relationship on the site this term that you can develop later.

You have some useful site imagery. I'd suggest you take the last site diagram and use it upfront in the narrative where you're describing the place and its contents and relationships. It's more effective to include the imagery in the description rather than pile it up at the end of the words.

You could probably also use an existing diagram of the trails you intend to hook up to. And it might be helpful to include some prototype buildings or groups of building that you could use as models for the one's you'll need here. Since building design is another whole problem in itself, I'd suggest you borrow something close to your needs and perhaps modify the buildings a bit in order to concentrate more on the site planning aspects of the problem. Building design is usually influenced from two directions. The outside forces of the site plan and site relationships press from the outside in, and the interior programmatic needs of the building shape things from the inside out. Landscape architects should at least take the lead on the site planning related aspects of building design and make good suggestions from that point of view. If you can do more, terrific!

I'd asked for an abstract of the project at mid-term (see my handout) and I'd like you to try that now that the project is getting clearer in your mind. You know, the upfront 5¢ version of your work that even says what you're going to give your client. Most everyone is doing a good job of providing an overview of their work right now. The object is to put a clear model in your mind as well as rescue people who ask you what you're doing from the longer story.

Go on now to develop an explicit park program and an explicit housing program and see if you have enough programmatic direction to do a schematic proposal. If not, work backwards and fill in the blanks.

Thanks,

Jerry

LA490 Comp Prep
Mid-term Project Report - Fall 2002
Jerome Diethelm

Project Title: **Mountain View: A smart Growth Neighborhood in Fort Collins, Colorado**
By:

S:
Good. This is getting better and clearer each time. I like the way you now diagram and talk about the whole site (and show it) and the way you are able to list what smart growth consists of and explain it in more detail. The image of the "mountain view" really does convey how attractive this place is. Your mixed use, single family home and block residential examples of how to make your proposals reflect your criteria. It's a very good idea to collect more of these examples and evaluate them for your project. Projects like Stapleton Airport are useful precedents. And there is helpful literature you need to consult, ranging from Stein and Wright's *Toward New Towns for America* to Peter Calthorp's *The New American Metropolis* and all the other more recent "new urbanist" literature. There's quite a lot of help out there for this project.

So what's missing right now that you will need to do a schematic plan for the Mountain View by the end of term?

I think you need some numbers to know how many and how big and how much of what goes where. Perhaps you can "measure" your project and guess at this by comparing it to another smart development's program and layout. How about overlaying, at the same scale, a comparable project on your site to see how much space things really take up, how many "blocks" or modules or whatever you'll have, and how many open spaces etc. You can then probably guess at a target population for Mountain View and begin to develop your own end of term schematic layout. Don't worry, you'll have plenty of time to explore it further in studio. The point here is that you won't be coming up with this preliminary layout at the end of studio if I can convince you to start now.

The other thing that critical to this kind of development is the transportation and circulation system (and all the utilities), which will provide the structure to the site. You'll probably have several kinds of streets, a hierarchy from main ways to local lanes, and a path system that connects places together, to open spaces, and to the village center. The size and character of these passages really does make a difference. A local example of all this is Charbonneau, which is located off I-5 near Wilsonville. You might want to check it out. It was built in the late 70's and is now looking quite mature. It also has a number of housing types and some pleasant narrow tree-lined residential streets. Fairview Village in Portland is another example.

I really like the block example you show and would only say more please. You are talking good smart growth and now its time to get more into the parts and systems and relationships on the site that will make it shine.

Good progress S. Great project. Definitely winter term. Keep moving...

Thanks,

Jerry

LA490 Comp Prep
Mid-term Project Report - Fall 2002
Jerome Diethelm

Project Title: **A Garden for the Homeless**

By:

S:

You will be creating a plan showing a proposed system of homeless parks and services in downtown Seattle along the waterfront, and a site plan and other drawings that develop a proposal for an experimental "Garden for the Homeless". I imagine a series of drawings that convey a day in the life of some of the people who live in and visit the place, and maybe some of the seasons of the experimental garden. You are designing a social structure here too. Are there such things as social seasons in the garden?

You list the elements of the experimental garden in some detail, which is a very good start. If you will say more about each of these things and try to size them, you can move on to some (to scale) idealized relational diagrams that can be fit into the site and made into a schematic plan proposal by term end. Those are two important targets for the term, to elaborate a **reasonably specific program** so that you can create a **schematic design proposal**.

Now that you have a site to work with and a more explicit program, it will be helpful to blow up the scale of the site and evaluate it with your program in mind. Where are the entrances? Where should the shelter or shelters go? Where is a good area for the gardens? The seating and gathering areas? The fountain? I'm sure you get the idea, but this is hard to do unless you are willing to guess at sizes and numbers and not just stop at names. How many people will the site serve? How many will be sleeping there? It's your experiment. You get to say.

I'd suggest you shorten your discussion of the homeless condition in this report to a briefer statement of the situation as you see it that leads up to the need for this experiment. You don't have to justify it here in great detail. I know you've been looking into the subject and have many ideas on the subject. You can elaborate further on the insights and ideas you have in your work and when you make your final presentation.

I think it would help to show a lot of examples of the kind of homeless places that other cities have and then compare theirs to what you're proposing. Have you had a chance to visit Dignity Village in Portland? I also wonder if there will be enough light for gardens under the freeway? Maybe on the southwest side???

Anyway, time for more detailed program development, more detailed site evaluation and more precedent image gathering. You're on track with a very interesting idea.

Thanks,

Jerry

LA490 Comp Prep
Mid-term Project Report - Fall 2002
Jerome Diethelm

Project Title: **Envisioning a New Life for Sorrel Way Pond**

By:

T:

Sorrel Way Pond looks a bit rundown in the photos, but at the same time also looks as though it could be a wonderful place, not quite Walden Pond perhaps, but any pond has a special magic. Thoreau said a lake was "earth's eye."

So I understand that you'll be improving the visibility of the pond from the highway and improving the entrance area. The major thrust will be to create a park that demonstrates and educates about a functioning wetland ecosystem and also provides some opportunities for passive recreation. You're very clear about your point of view and overall goals. Good! And I like the way you're using air photos to tell the history of the pond, how it was a gravel pit that was cut off from the slough by the highway.

So my questions have to do with how you are going to do each of these things, how to get beneath the goal level here to more specific project work and the various tools (drawings, images, knowledge) you'll need to do this.

Let's take visibility. I think you'll need some before and after images from the highway to make your point and probably a blow up of the ponds southern end so that you can at least show what's there, what you need to remove and replant, and perhaps a section that shows the highway pond relationship. Get the base materials started that you know you'll need and speculate about the products you'll need to make. I'd asked you to begin this list. That's how you do it.

Let's take recreation. What more specifically would you like here. An improved walk through the woods around the pond a la Walden? A small pier and wetland board walk? Four canoes for rent? A restroom facility? Better benches? How about a park keeper's cabin that could also include some interpretative materials about the wetland restoration process the pond was in process, supervised by the retired keeper and former hydrologist/teacher/poet/philosopher, who gets free rent for his service? How about improved parking and some new park lighting? OK, you make it up.

Take wetland restoration. From what to what? Perhaps you can show what an ideal would be like with some system drawings and good examples from your collection, and then represent more specifically the present state of Sorrel Pond, your evaluation and prescription, and the stages of change needed. Take vegetation in the park. I think you'll need a more specific existing conditions plan and photos in order to show what gets done where.

So the overall message is, well conceived, clearly put, terrific project. You are on course and your booster rocket has just dropped away, leaving you in stage two. Remember you're going to do a first schematic proposal of the park for your report at the end of term, which is getting close now. Give yourself the programmatic material you need to be able to make this drawing look more than very general. Good work. This is going to be a great project, but you'll need to get closer asap.

Thanks,

Jerry

LA490 Comp Prep
Mid-term Project Report - Fall 2002
Jerome Diethelm

Project Title: **Greenwood Avenue: The Connection with Character**
By:

W:

I don't know Bend very well, but I can see from your maps and diagrams that Greenwood Avenue is a major entry way into the downtown from the east. There's already wide agreement in town that it is not providing the kind of first impression of the town that people desire and that the time is ripe for some new ideas and proposals. Enter WP, landscape architect!

Since I haven't been to Bend for a while, I wonder how Greenwood compares to other entrances to the downtown. Would it help to compare these as a way to help establish the relative problems of Greenwood Avenue? Are there any good examples in town of streets that Greenwood Ave. ought to aspire to and that capture what "Bendians" think good or great street environments ought to be like? Having some good local examples or importing images of successful comparable examples often is a good way of vividly capturing and help you and your client define what needs to be done?

In the image map diagrams, I see three corridor sections, looking east to west, the one east of the underpass, the two and a half block section to Bond, and the Bond to Wall area. I think I'd think of this last one as an important whole with two key downtown intersections at each end, as a downtown entrance block, rather than place the emphasis only on the intersections.

You'll need measured cross sections of the street in all these sections of greenwood so that you can show before and after versions of the building, pedestrian and car environments. I also think the elements causing the overall feelings of blight need to be better defined so that you can show proposals for how to overcome them. You begin to do that with your list of issues, but these are mostly topics and don't say what the issues are. Maybe it seems too obvious, but I think you'll get farther if you spell it out.

You're making a good collection of photographs, and I hope your most recent image safari, and meeting enriched the process. I especially liked the upside down overpass. An editorial?

You've also got some useful base maps to work from. They need more of the buildings and other existing conditions on them (or better on a copy of them). Each of the sectors needs a more up close evaluation at sector/nodal scale. And you need to build your program of what more specifically needs to be done in each area. If you stick your neck out a bit, your client can respond better and give you some of the feedback you need.

A good start. Keep on this now and it will be a terrific comp project.

Thanks,

Jerry

LA490 Comp Prep
Mid-term Project Report - Fall 2002
Jerome Diethelm

Project Title: **Pronghorn Destination Golf Resort**

By:

R:

You said Tuesday you were pointing toward a PowerPoint presentation of your studio work, so it's a good idea to begin putting your images of the place together digitally. I like your idea of submitting in PageMaker, and that also makes it possible to turn it into a pdf document, using PageMaker's export function.

Having said that, I'm missing looking at the site you're working with and evaluating. Why not scan in the images and comment on them in the narrative? You don't have to pay for color prints this way. Very smart.

I know from reading your report that there are problems related to building in a Juniper forrest, that there will be 36 holes of golf (if the designers can get together) and housing sites for 300. And I know your general thoughts for trying to fit the project to the site in ways that are more responsive to the landscape. But I don't know, from what you've written, what you intend to do or what products to expect from your work.

Will you do an overall site plan,, showing all the proposed building sites and existing specimen trees, that now includes building locations? Will you show an overall drainage plan that locates all the swales, retention ponds etc? Will you do an overall circulation plan or has one already been done that you'll be using? You should show an existing plan and evaluate it, so that you can define your areas of work, the things you hope to contribute to what looks like an ongoing, involved attempt to build a destination resort.

And you need to spell out the program you will use to generate a schematic site plan for your project, and/or key area of your project that will be the focus of your work, by term's end. We'll be looking at preliminary versions of these in class next week.

So I think this comes down to: what's been done to date and what you think of it, and what you see as your work.

If you can be clear about this, you'll be able to write the abstract I asked for, which is just of summary of the above and says what you're going to produce. This is an interesting project and a beautiful place. Define your work now so you can move on to a preliminary schematic.

Thanks,

Jerry

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G 

This reads very well, and is clear about the people, place and project. The graphic material complements the narrative and looks great in color. I know what you'll be doing generally for your client, but I don't know what you'll be producing for your comp project. You might just add what you intend to make at the end of the abstract. What drawings (reports etc.) will be required to do the pond and wetland work you outline?

Yes, it is by definition a multi-valued project grounded in the ecological and the aesthetic. Of course I am always flattered when someone makes such good use of the Fan. My advice, however as I said in class, is to hide the model and try to write a little less academically. No one, except perhaps you and me knows or cares about a Fan of Values or Intentions and I'm happy to have you skip the reference and credit in favor of a slightly more conversational tone, something that you might write to your clients to share your thinking about the project.

Ditto the Goal Array format of goals/objectives/design objectives. Here again I'd try to write a bit more conversationally and then gather the design objectives together into a more specific program for each area, trying to give quantities and materials when you can. You say, for example, "parking" but not for how many. It's hard for me to do a schematic site plan if I don't know things like this. Guess, if necessary to give yourself a place to start.

In terms of the overall content, I've very much enjoyed listening to you talk about your project this term. You have a good sense of what needs doing overall and detailed knowledge about the pond and wetland work you'll be doing. Knitting both together with a gallery and environmental educational trail network will make a terrific project. You might say a bit more about these things in your final, not so much from the point of view of making the report longer, but as a first round narrative attempt to get ready to explain this to everyone when you present. It takes you a while, so why not begin the script now?

Will you be suggesting and/or creating great locations to display artwork? Have particular places to convey ecological processes - a wetland transect?

Well, fill this out a bit, add in your schedule and most recent schematic that reflects your program and you're on your way. High quality work as usual,

Thanks, Jerry