



# Old Town History Park Practicum



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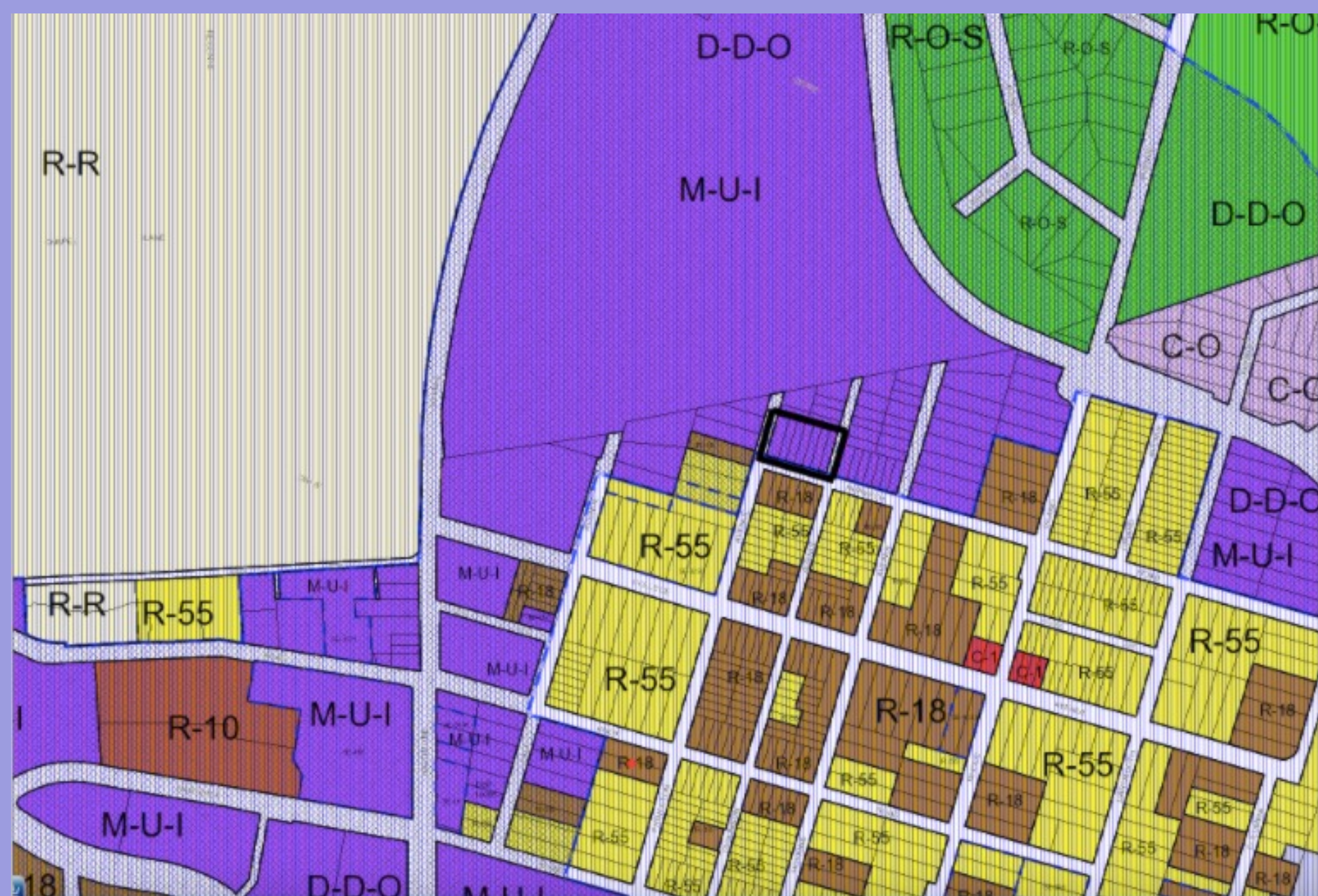
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## Introduction

This past semester I took the course ARCH271/RDEV250: People, Planet and Profit, Building Sustainable Places with Dr. Wayne Curtis. Initially, this was a course I signed up for to fulfil a gen ed and the practicum requirement, but quickly found that it was a very interesting course with very applicable information to our modern society. For my practicum, I wanted to focus on College Park and specifically focus on adding additional greenspace.

## Project Inspiration:

For the practicum, I chose to develop and plan the “Old Town History Park” in the Old Town neighborhood of College Park. In class we learned about architect and theorist Jane Jacobs, who inspired me for this project. Jacobs was a strong critic of the modernization of New York City and other major cities. She was strongly opposed to the rapid construction of highways, bridges, and skyscrapers, as she believed it was detrimental to the climate and that it was a catalyst for increasing slums in the city. Instead, Jacobs was an advocate for walking and biking, lower population density, parks, and more greenspace, as she believed this was more sustainable and better for building a sense of community.



## Development Strategy

### Zoning:

Mixed-Use Infill (M-U-I)

Development District Overlay

### Layout:

Open green space with trees, a gazebo, benches, picnic tables, and a paved path throughout the park with historical information plaques



## Project Benefits:

- Low Construction Costs: Historic Site, could even apply for grants given the historic preservation
- Reduced Crime: Better sense of community and engagement
- Produce Habitat for Wildlife: Improve the quality of the air we breathe
- Teach Community about Old Town/UMD History: Improve the appearance of the UMD campus

## Site Plan:

The idea of the park is to create an open, spacious area for residents to come relax and enjoy the nature. The picture below lays out a diagram of how the park would be laid out. there will be a circular paved path with plaques like this one on the right that will have important information on them that will inform residents and visitors of the park of the historical significance of Old Town. The gazebo in the center will have picnic tables which will attract University of Maryland students who like to do homework outside, and the open green space will also provide an area for college students to lay out, children in the area to play, and an overall space for everyone to be immersed in nature while being in the city of College Park.

## Fitting in with UMD’s Master Plan

University of Maryland’s Action Principles:

- Build an inclusive community
- Create a vibrant surrounding community
- Enhance contributions to society



Old Town History Park will do just that, and more!

## Site Plan & Design Concept



## Impact:

While a park may not be considered an immediate need by most residents, I believe this park could add a lot of value to the town. In a suburban neighborhood with an already extremely dense 12,114 people per square mile, the last thing needed is additional housing and construction. Given that the plot of land is already empty and has trees around the edge, the construction of this park will not be expensive nor time consuming for the University. A community building open green space park is a much more sustainable alternative and something much of the neighborhood lacks.

## Acknowledgments:

Most importantly, I wanted to thank Dr. Holtz and Dr. Merck for a great two years in Science and Global Change. I learned a lot more than I could imagine about our changing climate and what we need to adapt and mitigate to the problem. I also wanted to thank Dr. Curtis for teaching the Arch271 course and teaching me a lot about sustainability in Architecture

