

**Minutes of Stated Session Meeting  
First Presbyterian Church  
Charlottesville, Virginia  
November 28, 2022**

**Attendees:**

**Pastor and Moderator:** David Forney

**Associate Pastor and Vice Moderator:** Aram Feinberg

**Covenant Pastor:** Rachel Sutphin

<b>Ruling Elders:</b>	<b>Class of 2022</b>	<b>Class of 2023</b>	<b>Class of 2024</b>
	Christine Dean	Judy Blair	Charlie Chadwick
	Amy Gillespie	Robert Brewbaker	John Dillery
	Rich Lutz	Victoria Kean	Linda Hitt
	Cathy Meaney	David Maloney	Jocelyn Kelley(E)
	Monika Mentzer	Carolyn Pettit	Jolene Kidd
	Wayne Mullins	Reid Thompson	Vasant Kumar
	David Schmidt		Trip Walker
	Ada Trowbridge (E)		

**Clerk of Session:** Judy Blair

**Guests:** Incoming officers Anita Brockette, Barbara Carswell, Jan Garnett, Jim Gillespie, Jean Hudson, Maggie Kleinot, Elaine Knight, Bonita Metz, Jamie Miller, Julie Patterson, Jayne Rathburn, Teller Stalfort, and Rick Welborn

[ E denotes excused absence; A is for unexcused absence]

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**Joint meeting of Session and the Diaconate held in Agape Classroom**

- Moderator David Forney called the meeting to order at 7 pm, and Cathy Meaney led the devotional and prayer.
- The moderator then led the recitation of the Vision and Mission Statement.
- The following announcements were made:
  - No joint meeting in December
  - Hosting of PACEM guests Dec 17 -31
  - Journey to Bethlehem cancelled
  - Christmas Eve services at 4 pm and 8 pm
  - Combined worship service on Dec 25 at 10 am
  - Church office closed on Dec 26
  - Combined worship service on Jan 1 at 10 am
  - Combined worship service with installation and ordination of new officers on Jan 8 at 10 am, followed by a brunch.
  - Joint meeting on Jan 23 with devotion by Linda Hitt
  - Officer retreat on Jan 29, 12:30 - 5 pm
- With no additional business for the joint meeting, deacons went to a separate room for their Diaconate meeting.

**Session Meeting**

**Opening items:**

- With a quorum present, the Session meeting started at 7:15 pm
- The moderator explained the examination process.

**New Officer Examination & Approval**

- Incoming officers were assigned to small groups with session members and shared their faith statements.
- Each group discussed the most meaningful aspects of the faith statements.

- After the small group activity, the incoming officers were introduced to everyone and reports on the examinations were given.
- A motion to sustain and approve the examinations and to receive the following as new officers was made, seconded, and approved:
  - Ruling Elders: Anita Brockette, Jan Garnett, Jim Gillespie, Jean Hudson, Elaine Knight, and Rick Welborn
  - Deacons: Barbara Carswell, Maggie Kleinot, Bonita Metz, Jamie Miller, Julie Patterson, Jayne Rathburn, and Teller Stalfort

**Consent Agenda:** following the departure of the incoming officers, the items below were approved unanimously:

- Approve the minutes of the Special Called Session Meeting on Oct 2, 2022
- Approve the minutes of the Stated Session Meeting on October 24, 2022
- Receive October 2022 financial reports (attached to F&A meeting minutes)
- Approve the following teachers for Children and Youth Sunday School classes: Michelle Ball, Stacey Benefield, Matt Benefield, Sandi Bosselman, Jane Brennan, Nancy Brewbaker, Anita Brockette, Diane Brownlee, Sally Clarry, Chris Dean, Ellie Forney, Linda Hitt, Laura Holbrook, Ellen McCrory, Debbie McPhillips, Pat McPhillips, Jayne Rathburn, Nancy Spindel, Rachel Sutphin, Debbie Vermillion, and Ashley Walker (Children and Family Ministry)
- Approve the following teachers for Adult Sunday School classes for January through May: Charlie Chadwick, Aram Feinberg, David Forney, Liz Forney, Amy Gillespie, Gordon Lindsey, Wayne Mullins, Tad Oelstrom, and Gweneth West (Adult Ministries)
- Approve Judy Blair as Clerk of Session for 2023
- Approve Robert Ramsey as Church Treasurer for 2023 and David Schmidt as Church Assistant Treasurer for 2023
- Approve Bill vonReichbauer as an additional signer on the church's accounts at Atlantic Union Bank and UVA Community Credit Union when two signatures are required on a check and approve completion of the associated paperwork required by the financial institutions (Finance & Administration)
- Approve 2023 housing allowances: \$54,000 for Rev. David Forney, \$45,510 for Rev. Aram Feinberg, and \$20,800 for Rev. Rachel Sutphin
- Approve the Celebration of the Lord's Supper every Sunday and on Maundy Thursday in 2023 (Welcome and Worship)
- Approve Alice Brown and Diane Watkins as at-large members of the Christian Outreach Committee
- Approve, subject to F&A's concurrence, the use of \$6,600.71 from the Building Reserve for the purchase of a commercial freezer to replace the kitchen's inoperable fridge/freezer unit (Property Management)

**Old Business:**

- Memorial Garden hardscape design
  - An illustration of the recommended hardscape design was distributed in advance of the meeting (attached).
  - Property Management made a motion that the illustrated Memorial Garden hardscape be approved.
  - The rough estimate for implementing the hardscape is \$115,000, but final drawings are needed to have a firmer cost estimate. Planting is estimated at \$50k, and there will be additional costs for architectural work, bidding process, and allowance for contingencies.
  - After discussion, a clarifying amendment to the motion was made, seconded, and approved, and the following amended motion was approved unanimously:  
That Session approve the illustrated Memorial Garden hardscape in order to finalize drawings and begin the bidding process.
  - A planting and maintenance plan is being developed and should be ready for Session review in January.

- Memorial Garden project gifts
  - Property Management made a motion that Session approve receiving donations for this design, construction, and to-be approved plantings, including a \$100,000 gift (\$25,000 which has already been received).
  - After discussion, a clarifying amendment to the motion was made, seconded, and approved, and the following amended motion was approved unanimously:  
That Session approve receiving donations for the Memorial Garden project.

### **Reports from Committees and Work Groups:**

- Draft minutes and reports from the following were submitted in advance of the meeting along with the meeting agenda: Adult Ministries, Children & Family Ministries, Christian Outreach, Finance & Administration, Personnel, Preschool, Property Management, Stewardship, Welcome & Worship, and Youth Ministry committees, Board of Deacons, and Clerk.
- On behalf of the Finance & Administration Committee, David Maloney addressed a question about current and anticipated parking lot usage during the week and revenue implications.
- Reid Thompson on behalf of the Stewardship Committee reported that the number of pledge commitments and the amount pledged for 2023 already exceeds the results at the end of the 2022 campaign.

### **New Business:**

- Exception to facilities use policy (Moderator Forney asked Pastor Aram Feinberg to moderate discussion of this item and excused himself from the meeting room)
  - Adult Ministries made a motion that Session grant an exception to the facilities use policy to allow FPC facilities to be used for fee-based spiritual direction activities.
  - The exception would allow Adult Ministries to approve Liz Forney's proposal for a group spiritual direction program that dovetails with the mission of Adult Ministries.
  - After discussion, an amendment to the motion was made, seconded, and approved, and the following amended motion was approved unanimously:  
That Session grant an exception to the facilities use policy to allow FPC facilities to be used for fee-based spiritual direction activities as proposed and led by Liz Forney with the exception in place for 2023.
  - Any fees for use of the facility would be determined in accordance with the facility use policy
- Outdoor classroom proposal (attached)
  - The proposal from the Preschool Committee was distributed in advance of the meeting.
  - Preschool Committee chair Judy Blair explained that this was not a request to approve implementation or fundraising, just a request to move forward to the next step of developing a detailed plan.
  - The motion from the Preschool Committee that Session approve the development of detailed plans for an Outdoor Classroom was approved.
  - The proposal noted that the Preschool Committee would form a workgroup to develop plans for fencing and connection to the current playground, cost estimates, plans for construction of features, phases of implementation, and a fundraising plan.
- Committee members for 2023
  - At the January meeting, the membership of committees and teams for 2023 will be approved.
  - Membership rosters should be submitted to the Clerk of Session prior to the January Session meeting
- Offering at Christmas Eve services
  - Session agreed that contributions received at Christmas Eve services will be Christmas Joy gift contributions unless designated for another purpose.
  - Joy gift envelopes will be available at the services.

### **Announcement**

- Next stated meeting on January 23, 2023
- POJ meeting on Sat, February 18, 2023 - Jolene Kidd approved as a commissioner; 3 additional commissioners are needed

**Thanksgivings and Commendations:**

- Incoming officers for their Faith Statements
- Pastor David Forney for leading us with patience, kindness, courage, and empathy during challenging years
- Completion of the renovation and construction work
- Michael Joyce for his nimbleness and versatility as our facilities manager
- All involved in the recent Thanksgiving meals for the Blue Ridge House in Lovington and our Soup Kitchen
- Participants in Hanging of the Greens activities and the Congregational Life team for providing the meal
- Rachel for the Advent workshop

**Prayer of Thanksgiving for Class of 2022 Session Members**

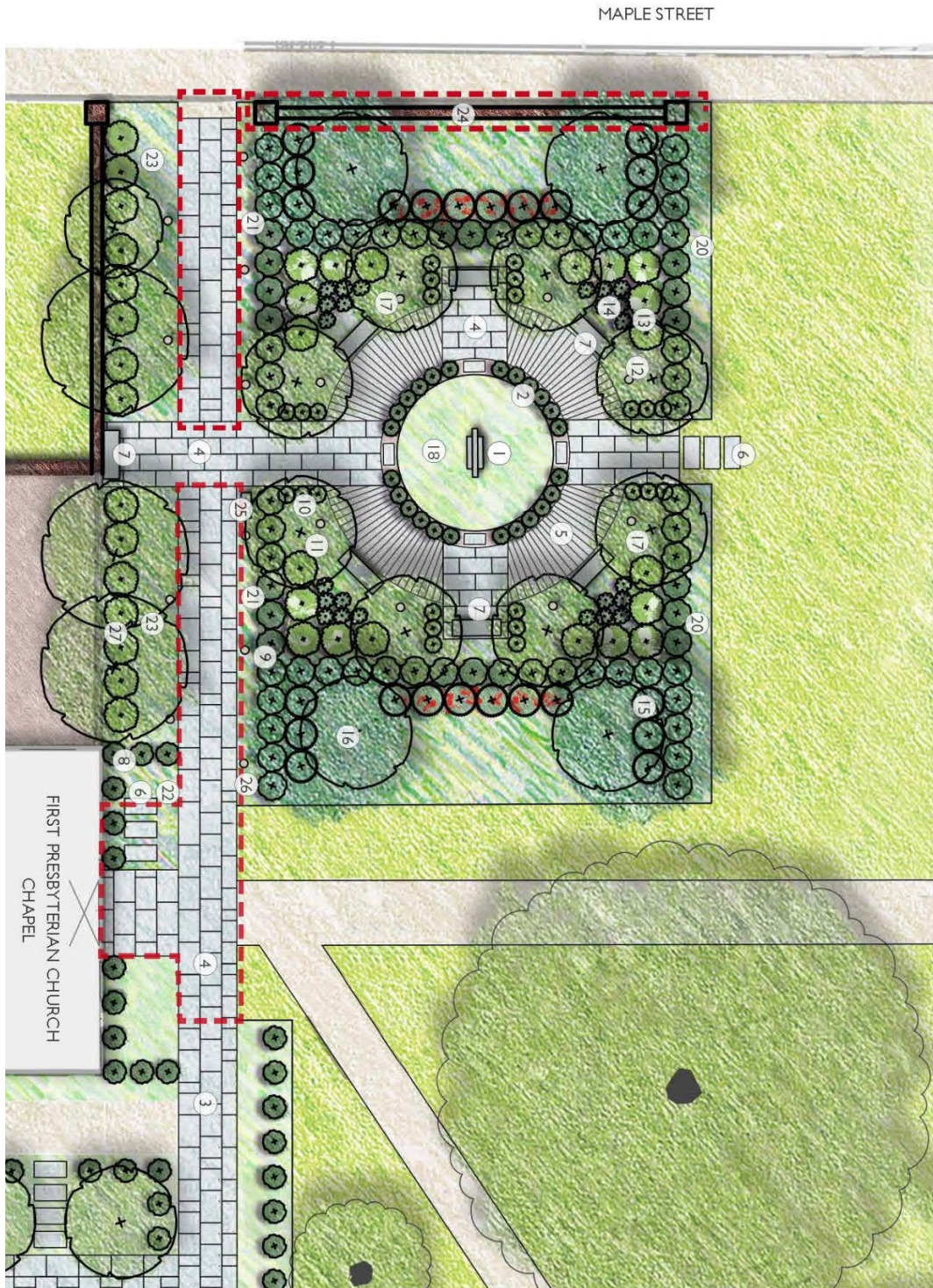
- The meeting ended with a prayer of thanksgiving and a laying on of hands for Chris Dean, Amy Gillespie, Cathy Meaney, Monika Mentzer, Wayne Mullins, and David Schmidt, whose terms as Session members are ending.
- Each was recognized for contributions made while serving on Session.

The moderator adjourned the meeting with a benediction at 9:10 pm

Minutes recorded by Clerk of Session Judy Blair

Approve 1.23.23

- Motion 1: The Session approves the illustrated Memorial Garden hardscape.
- Motion 2: The Session approves receiving donations for this design, construction, and to-be approved plantings, including a \$100,000 gift (\$25,000 which has already been received.)



# Outdoor Classroom

November 2022

The Preschool Committee proposes an Outdoor Classroom for the benefit of the children of the FPC Preschool and the church's other programs for children. An outdoor classroom promotes learning that goes beyond the traditional classroom; it engages children in a wide variety of play that expands their understanding of the world around them in an organic and nature-based environment.

Each space is unique and can be customized to the outdoor space available, needs, and desires of FPC. Examples of the variety of elements that may be incorporated in an outdoor classroom are shown on the attached pictures of features (pp. 2-4).

The importance of this type of space is being promoted by early childhood programs around the country, and the demand for having more outdoor space for exploration and learning has increased since the pandemic. It is becoming a very desirable curriculum addition when families are selecting a preschool program. Creating an Outdoor Classroom at FPC will not only enhance the learning experiences in our programs for children, but it will also help the Preschool remain competitive.

The church discussed the possibility for additional outdoor play space when the renovations to the church were being considered, so this proposal would solidify the potential for adding this much-needed space. Zoning for the renovation of the Memorial Gardens is already being discussed, and the plans for fencing the outdoor classroom area, which is adjacent to the Memorial Garden, could be included in the zoning proposal.

The space being considered is the area adjacent to the current playground space, on the hill behind the brick wall that connects to the Memorial Garden. (See photograph, p. 5) The boundaries of the space would be a fenced-in area that runs parallel to the sidewalk along Maple Street and ends at the edge of the existing building. Stairs could connect the current playground with the proposed outdoor classroom space. A water spigot and drain already exist, making the space ideal for incorporation of a water feature. (See sketch on p. 6.)

Funding for this project could be spread out over time. The first phase of the project would be the building the fence enclosing the space and the connecting stairs. Subsequent phases could be the addition of selected features as funds are raised.

We are asking Session to approve development of detailed plans for an Outdoor Classroom. A workgroup will be established by the Preschool Committee to develop plans for fencing and connecting stairs, cost estimates, plans for construction of features, phases of implementation, and a fundraising plan, which would be presented to Session for review and approval.

Submitted by the Preschool Committee with thanks to the Outdoor Classroom Development Team members Maria Brown (Preschool Director), Leigh Ann Bush (Preschool teacher), Mary Boyce Diehl (Preschool parent), Heidi Figler (Preschool teacher), Megan Hettinger (Preschool parent), Marty Mason (Property Management), and Monika Mentzer (Preschool Committee) for their work on this concept proposal

# Outdoor Classroom Elements

It's not critical to have all elements, go with what you can afford, what your children are interested in and what meets your needs.

entrance sign



seating & benches



border or fence



a place for documentation



storage



water area



music & movement



balance beams



tree stumps



digging area



vegetable garden



flower or pollinator garden



planters



free parts area



research tables





gathering spaces



bird feeders



tunnels or hidden areas

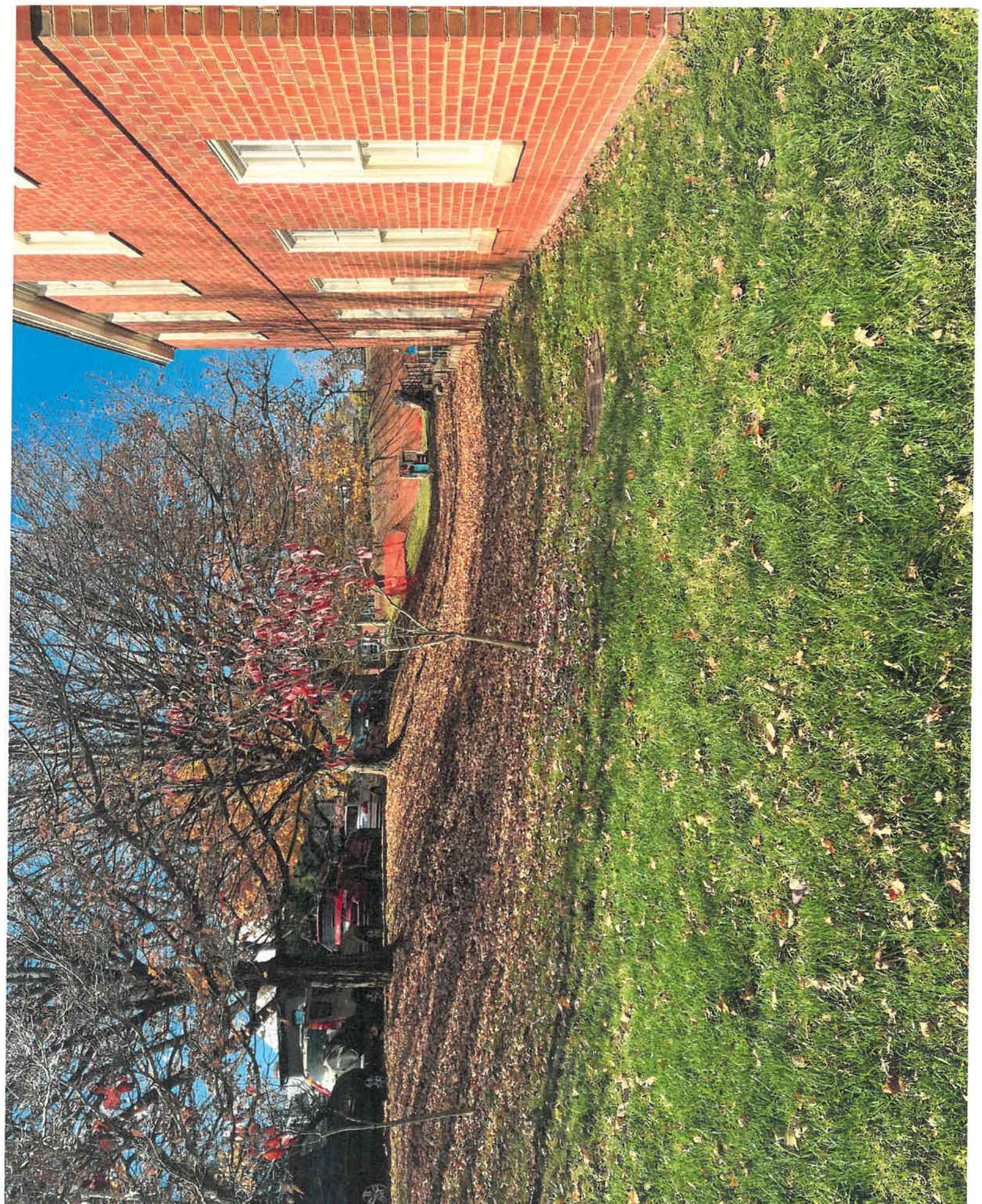


shade structure or trees



play house or simple structure





Memorial Garden

- Not to Scale -

Existin Brick Wall

Sidewalk - Maple Street

Fence for Outdoor Classroom



Proposed Outdoor Classroom Space



Proposed steps to Outdoor Classroom

EXISTING FENCE

Existing Preschool Bldg.

Existing Playground

Existing Preschool Building

Preschool Entrance