Revolutionary War Center

Cook Horticulture Farm
North Brunswick, NJ

Regional Analysis

Undergraduate, Team Effort

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Intermediate Landscape Architecture I
Project Statement

Our regional design study was to create a vision plan for a Center relating to the Revolutionary War in Middlesex County, New Jersey. A full regional inventory and analysis of New Jersey as well as its place within the 13 original colonies was needed to show how we chose our site. It was important that our research supported the decisions we made and show how it shaped our design.
Project Narrative

As a class we conducted a statewide inventory and analysis. We then worked in smaller teams of two to further develop that information and locate a site where we were to design a Revolutionary War Center. Throughout the process team work was vital.

In exploring New Jersey’s, as well as Middlesex County’s role in the Revolutionary War, the criteria for analysis and planning was to provide information that supported the site location of the Revolutionary War Center. The research led to the collection and analysis of data through GIS. Data sources varied from the NJ DEP, NJ DOT to work completed by former university students in the Advanced Geomatics Class from the spring of ’07. The class had conducted a semester long project collecting and geocoding important events and sites related to the Revolutionary War within New Jersey. This information proved invaluable. We built upon it and explored the region’s infrastructure, such as public transportation and road networks, in order help locate the area that could best support a center of the magnitude planned. Researching the state and local history through university archives, currently published books as well as visiting the region’s existing Revolutionary War parks, sites and monuments provided an abundance of information. It was also important to speak to people of the county and local level regarding their own plans for the future of the region.

Once the inventory was completed the analysis began. In GIS thematic maps were created taking the Adv. Geo. information and Middlesex County proved rich in history. Putting together this information with the state’s infrastructure Middlesex County again showed very promising. From there looking for a site within the county led us to the Cook Horticulture Farm of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. More inventory and analysis was done regarding site conditions, history, as well as confirming property boundaries. From there we were able to relate the site to the region via the Revolutionary War and provided specifically designed tours that would carry visitors throughout New Jersey.

As part of the analysis a gathering of Revolutionary War history was conducted. We studied the historically significant events and ideas of the time that led up to a war of America’s fight for independence. From here we began an exploration of how to create and implement a visionary plan for our Revolutionary War Center in New Jersey.
The goal of the Revolutionary War Center in New Jersey is to inspire and stimulate intellectual growth and awareness, which would lead to further exploration throughout the state via the Revolution.
A Green Approach

Building on Rutgers University’s commitment to environmentally responsible health and safety, we will incorporate innovative, high-performance environmental technologies to promote the health and productivity of visitors, reduce waste and assure environmental sustainability.

We have a goal to build Rutgers most environmentally responsible building, focusing on sustainable sites, water efficiency, indoor environment quality and atmosphere. This would be strongly backed by the University Committee for sustainability and Rutgers University Green Purchasing, as well as, the NJ Economic Development Authority which would provide a green building tax credit.
Vision

Liberty for all mankind. The pursuit of happiness. Equal representation.

These thoughts became America’s classic statement of purpose and ignited a revolution that was physically manifested in a war throughout New Jersey more so than in any other colony.
The 13 Original Colonies

This map represents the number of conflicts that occurred throughout the Colonies during the Revolutionary War. New Jersey contains the highest concentration.
Middlesex County’s involvement during the war is heavily represented in these maps.
The Cook Horticulture Farm is centrally located between two metropolitan areas. New Jersey has the infrastructure to provide easy access throughout the state.

The map shows the heavy concentration of battles, skirmishes, and historic landmarks in New Jersey. Middlesex County contains the highest number within the state.
The Cook Horticulture Farm is located in the Lawrence Brook Watershed, near the Raritan River and directly off of Weston’s Mill Pond. It is in close proximity to the railway and major intersections which is vital to the Center’s success.
The New Jersey Office of Travel and Tourism requested a study be done which was completed in 2006.

The study shows that 70% of New Jersey tourists originate from within the tri-state area and over 80% travel by auto. The peak of NJ’s tourist season is in the months of June, July, and August. These are all positive aspects for designing a center at the site we chose.
The site is located directly off of Route 1 and Ryders Lane offering easy access to the New Jersey Turnpike and Garden State Parkway. Wetlands on the site have been integrated into our design.
Located in the Rutger’s Historic District the site is anchored by Rutgers Gardens and Cook College. Within the site is the Equine Facility which dates back at least to the late 19th Century. The facilities would be left intact.
The field leading to the Weston’s Mill Pond will be left untouched.
Southeast View
Easy access and high visibility of the entire site to and from Route 1.
Northwest View
Approaching the site from Ryders Lane traveling North offers high visibility of Weston’s Mill Pond.
Perspective of Back View and Gardens
Southwest View
Perspective View of Center from Route 1
Perspective of Walk Towards the Pond
Bus Tours of these sites would be offered from the Center.
The Revolutionary War Center sign would be posted throughout New Jersey at all relevant sites offering easy recognition for tourists traveling by car.