

Lion s Court Report

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Final Proposal: Outdoor Caf /Grass Lawn

The Lion s Court location should be converted to an outdoor space, which will resemble a combined cafe and park setting. The space should be divided into two areas one caf -like and one park-like. The transition between the two spaces should not be abrupt but the two should flow into one another over the course of several feet. This will allow the space to serve both roles and yet still maintain a cohesive appearance. The key to good design for the space will be a very detail oriented one. In making anything nice there is often a temptation to make it stand out. The beauty of the new Lion s Court will come from it blending in with its surroundings. The grassy area directly to the North of Lion s Court is often used for University receptions and the park area directly to the South will provide pleasant scenery for visitors. Although cafe service need not be open 24 hours, the space should remain usable. Thus tables and chairs should be secured at night in a manner which does not prevent use (i.e., chairs should not be stacked).

Cafe:

The cafe area will have a hard surface and should be contextual with the space s surroundings. Parqueted bricks would serve nicely. On the hard surface should be several tables and chairs where students can sit and eat or congregate. If the cafe is located towards the southern side of the space, the existing retaining wall can be incorporated into the plan and the area does not need to be graded again. On the side of the cafe area should be a booth from which coffee or other refreshments can be served during the daytime. Vice President for Student Services, Gene Awakuni, had expressed interest in utilizing the space to extend JJ's Place outside. A small structure would be able to facilitate that. The cafe should be surrounded by some form of barrier to encourage patrons to enter through the park. However, there must be an opening at the Southwest corner to allow ADA access to the terrace. Furniture in the cafe should be contextual. The style should be conventional, not modern. The area should accent the rest of the Van Am Quad and not clash with it.

Park:

On the side opposite the cafe there should be more outdoor space landscaped in the form of a small park. Trees and shrubs can be used to set the park off from the remainder of the quad and prevent foot traffic from cutting across the grass. Inside there should be walkways and other items of interest to break up the area and make it less like another open grass lawn. For example, a low stone table with a chessboard inlaid accompanied by two low stone stools would function wonderfully. Although it would still be predominantly grass, the idea is to produce a park rather than a field. The area should be conducive to relaxing, reading, studying, or picnicking rather than Frisbee or soccer. This distinction is important both out of courtesy to Hartley, Wallach, and John Jay residents and also because of the relative prevalence of areas

that can be used for sports and the scarcity of spaces for quiet activities. While a few such spaces exist (e.g., Lehman Lawn), there are none located south of College Walk. Putting in place a rule against certain activities would likely be seen as invasive while designing the space accordingly could not only discourage athletic activity but could also facilitate use of the area for its intended purpose.

Additional Features:

Towards one end of the space should be a small elevated stage area for student groups to perform outside. It should not be something that is used for rehearsal -- thus blocking out other students from utilizing the cafe. Rather, it should make the cafe and park an area where a capella or other performance groups can give outdoor shows. This effectively adds university performance space, creates an outdoor venue, and can bring additional business to the cafe. Keeping in mind that the open area should be broken up, there should be several objects distributed throughout the park section. They can intermingle somewhat with tables in the cafe to help disguise the separation into two areas. Park benches either like those found in New York City parks or outside Butler Library. Additionally, pieces of sculpture, other furniture, and strategically positioned trees can round out the space.

We believe that this proposal meets the most student needs while remaining courteous to residents of the surrounding Buildings. The vision is to produce a focal point while remaining contextual. It will be an outdoor location which attracts the Columbia Community and helps to make the quad more usable. The location creates a counterpoint to Alfred Lerner Hall. While still a space for activity, it is outdoors and conservative in appearances, as opposed to indoors and contemporary.

Student Feedback and Sources

A. Responses to the Referenda of April 4, 2001

(see appendix #1)

Lion's Court

The tin shed known as Lion's Court is being torn down at the end of the 2001-2002 school year. What would you like to see in its place? Choose up to two.

Grass Lawn 42%
Tennis Courts 15%
Basketball Courts 24%
Brick Plaza w/ picnic tables 32%
*Other*_____ 8%

***Conclusion:** Seek to combine two most popular answers on the referenda with such a large, available space.

B. CCSC Student Focus Groups — Week of October 7th & CCSC E-mail Responses for Lion s Court Comments 10/9-10/14

General breakdown of responses

1. Support for

- a) Outdoor Caf /Grass Lawn idea: 32
- b) Grass Lawn: 12
- c) Tennis Court: 5
- d) Basketball Court: 6
- e) Other/Additions:
 - Swimming Pool: 2
 - Playground (Swing Set): 5
 - Health Services: 1
 - Fun House (video games, TV, etc): 1
 - Outdoor stone theatre area: 2
 - Musical instrument practice space: 4
 - Sculpture garden/reflecting pond/fountain: 2
 - Chess Tables: 2
 - Benches: 3
 - Buddhist Meditation Center: 1

2. Against

- a) Outdoor Caf /Grass Lawn idea: 6
- b) Grass Lawn: 2
- c) Tennis Court: 0
- d) Basketball Court: 2
- e) Other: 0

3. Extra Details

--caf accept dining dollars

- twenty-four hour space
- concerns about winter/cold weather usage
- trees planted on grass areas
- kosher options for food
- enough food eateries on campus

Conclusion

The most prudent course of action is the one which satisfies the most needs for the most students. While there were a number of students who indicated that they would like an athletic facility, any such facility must be tailored to a specific use. For example, a basketball court would not satisfy those who wanted tennis courts. Additionally we must consider the factor of noise for Hartley, Wallach, and John Jay residents. There are a number of tennis courts available at Baker Field and Pupin and basketball courts are available in Dodge Fitness Center and Barnard Hall.

Music Facilities are not a feasible option due to the amount of construction that would be necessary to produce a usable, soundproof practice space.

We therefore seek to combine the grass and caf options into a single space, which can fulfill multiple roles. While not truly a multi-function space, the new Lion s Court will be capable of housing a wide variety of performances and activities. The new area will differ from other multi-function spaces such as Roone-Arledge Auditorium because it will have a default role, whereas the auditorium is mostly unused during the day.

The combination of food service, park, and outdoor performance venue introduces a number capabilities that are mostly unavailable on the university campus currently.

Respectfully Submitted,

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X _____
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X _____
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