Appendix D - Design Guidelines

A. *Introduction*

The Design Guidelines are intended to provide aesthetic and technical guidance and direction for the development of the Preserve. These guidelines are similar in content to those contained in the previous master plan (OPRHP, 1993). They have been revised and updated to reflect the changes in this Master Plan. These guidelines do not recommend a specific visual theme for the structures, but rather suggest that all designed structures and site features exhibit unifying design characteristics (beyond chosen building materials) so that an overall sense of compositional unity may be maintained throughout the Preserve. The unifying elements will emerge through an integration of these design guidelines, which have been listed below. Since the Preserve has been determined to be eligible for listing on both the New York State and the National Registers of Historic Places, all design and site development will include consultation with OPRHP's Division for Historic Preservation.

Goals within these design guidelines are adapted from the 1993 Master Plan, and are as follows:

- To insure that design and construction throughout the Preserve remains consistent with and emphasizes the overall goals of the Master Plan, with special regard given to: the protection of the desired theme exhibited throughout the Preserve; the environmental impacts that may occur due to development, and the sensitive interaction of people with the Preserve's resources.
- To provide a consistent, overall unifying design that will be evident in the construction of all buildings, structures, site furnishings, signage and in site development.
- To provide facilities that can be maintained and operated in an efficient and sustainable manner.

While divergence from these guidelines may be inevitable in certain circumstances, exceptions should not be arbitrary. If exceptions are necessary, the guidelines should be followed to the greatest degree possible in order that the new design element is as consistent as possible with the overall design theme for the park. To be effective, the design guidelines must be applied equitably to small, minor buildings and site works as well as to major buildings and site features.

B. *Constructed Features*

1. Structures

General objectives for building and other structure designs suggest that proposals should:

- Defer to the natural setting, i.e., not dominate or compete with views and vistas, respecting the site's natural forms and colors.
- Be ecologically sensitive in such things as the choice of materials and levels of energy and water consumption.
- Result in buildings which are healthy for their users (i.e., provision of maximum fresh air, avoidance of materials that emit gas).
- Visibly demonstrate "green" technology and sustainable design concepts and their interaction with the environment in ways which emphasize climate, natural cycles, and natural features of the Preserve.

- Follow an established unifying design concept developed from the Preserve, environment and the desire for buildings that are cost effective, sustainable, and simple to construct and maintain.

Incorporate fire resistant materials when feasible including the landscape design around structures.

To specifically interpret the general objectives, the following should be applied to all new and renovated structures.

- Rely on natural light for interiors.
- Rely on passive solar heating.
- Use radiant heat source.
- Rely on natural ventilating and cooling mechanisms, while providing maximum fresh air for users.
- Use energy efficient and user friendly supplemental heating and lighting systems.
- Avoid materials and finishes that pose health hazards for building users and builders, or to the environment in their production or use.
- Use least processed materials and materials that have been recycled.
- Use materials and finishes that allow the use of least toxic cleaners, repairs, maintenance techniques, etc.
- Use native stone where appropriate in some part of each major structure.
- Use indigenous wood species where visible.
- Use materials in scale and character with the site material, textures should blend with and accent the surrounding environment.
- Employ simple and inexpensive construction technology.
- Use materials that are easily repaired, replaced, and refinished.
- Use lighter, less permanent appearing materials than all-season buildings for structures used in the summer months; be simple of form with primarily horizontal massing;
- be consistent in roof form and pitch;
- not be visible above the surrounding tree line or land forms;
- be primarily one story with a continuous floor surface to allow complete and easy accessibility to all;
- have private staff functions in lower ceilinged, lower volumes, and public functions in higher ceilinged, higher volumes.

Design should reflect the following guidelines:

- Fenestration should reflect the interior function of the building.
- Entrance ways should be indicated and protected by over-hanging roofs and vestibules.
- Paint and stain colors should reflect and accent the environment surrounding the buildings.
- Interior and exterior colors should be in a range of light "natural" tones.
- Interior and exterior walls should be light to medium tones with darker, stronger toned trim.

- Roofing should be in the darker range of tones of colors used elsewhere in the building.
- Colors should fit the site in all seasons.
- Seating should be built into or near the exteriors of major buildings where the public may congregate.
- Open fireplaces or wood stoves should be provided within the warming area as acceptable by applicable building codes.
- Chimneys should be broad masonry masses.
- Interior surfaces, trims, and materials should reflect those on the buildings exteriors.
- Interior colors should reflect the colors used on a building's exterior. White interiors are to be avoided.
- Interiors should have shelves, seating, counters, etc. built-in wherever possible.
- When used on the interior, wood and other natural materials should be left in as simple a finish and form as possible.

Gazebos/Summer houses

An inventory of historic paths, carriage roads and historically referenced gazebo locations will be undertaken prior to restoration or replacement of these features. This inventory will be used in assessing how the general design guidelines described below will be implemented. The assessment will also be completed in consultation with OPRHP's Division for Historic Preservation.

General Guidelines

Overall gazebo design should reflect and remain consistent with the design of the historic gazebos that were found throughout the Preserve. Utilization of both existing information and combined researched documentation will assist in the establishment of an overall gazebo restoration and replacement program.

The Preserve’s gazebos had traditionally been built of round, half-round or quarter round sections of raw wood, leading to two problems: structural stability and durability. In order to insure the gazebos are both safe and relatively maintenance free, while still maintaining the character of the historic gazebos, the following guidelines are suggested:

1. Structure size, scale, and intimacy of the new gazebos should be based on those of the traditional ones.
2. Gazebos should provide some shelter from sun, wind, rain and snow.
3. The basic framework of the gazebo should be constructed of a durable, standard-sized material such as pressure treated lumber.
4. Trim, roofing, siding, etc. should be constructed of traditional round-section members reminiscent of previously built gazebos.
5. Gazebos should be firmly anchored to their sites with unobtrusive methods.
6. Gazebo sites within high-use areas may be extended into the adjacent landscape utilizing railings, to provide safe viewing areas as necessary (see "Railings").

Gazebo Siting

The location(s) of gazebos/summer houses will be incorporated into the plan at historically known vantage points surrounding Lake Minnewaska. Safety concern and viewshed opportunities shall remain an important theme in the re-establishment of these structures.

2. Site Furnishings/Fixtures and Equipment

Site furnishings such as benches, fences, etc. have a strong visual and functional influence and can contribute to building the character and unified image desired for the Preserve.

The following guidelines are intended for the design and placement of furnishings and equipment. Furnishings and equipment should:

1. match the character and materials of the environment and structures;
2. be inexpensive to either build or install, while remaining simple to maintain;
3. have a functional purpose and not used only to "pretty-up" the Preserve;
4. generally be focused within high use public areas of the Preserve;
5. be placed on peripheral areas and not be a visual focus within the landscape.
6. Transformers, pumps and pump houses, power lines, etc. should all be carefully sited and screened from visitors, designed to blend in with other structures and the natural setting. Power lines should be installed underground whenever physically and fiscally possible.

3. Railings and Stone Barriers

Railings and stone barriers most typically will be installed only in instances where public safety may be in question, such as along the cliff faces in high concentration use areas of the Preserve, and also quite possibly be installed adjacent to potentially hazardous natural features that have been identified during design development. As a general rule, railings and stone barriers shall remain restricted in their use to the Preserve's most heavily used areas to provide public safety. In some of these locations, particularly in areas in immediately surrounding the future Visitor Center, a low profile railing may be installed atop a low profile grouted stone wall along cliff edges, thereby creating an impenetrable lower level physical barrier immediately adjacent to a cliff edge, along with providing a deterrent from users either climbing or sitting on this wall. There may exist a few locations beyond the Lake Minnewaska area (ie. possibly at a designed accessible vantage point immediately adjacent to an existing waterfall feature) where OPRHP/PIPC shall reserve the right to install similar barriers at their discretion and as deemed necessary, toward assuring the overall safety of their Preserve patrons.

Railings and/or stone barriers may also be installed as extensions of gazebos, where overall public safety is a concern. These devices (when introduced) should not be placed continuously throughout the Preserve, but rather they should be used sparingly in areas where carriage roads lead patrons to a cliff edge, run adjacent to cliff edges, or in places where large groups gather in a small area and create a dangerous condition. The use of railings and stone barriers will become less frequent as distance away from the Lake Minnewaska core area increases, and where the integrity of scenic vistas takes precedence.

Railings should be compatible with the natural setting and match the aesthetics, materials and construction methods of the nearby gazebos. Railings should meet appropriate safety standards and provide the degree of physical protection appropriate to their location. To the fullest extent possible wood railings should consist of material native to the Catskill/Shawangunk region. Mortared stone low profile walls may also be appropriate in high use settings, and may (as previously mentioned), be combined with a low profile railing detail.

In rare and unique situations, particularly involving environmentally sensitive areas, railings may be utilized in directing access around and away from the object of concern, such as rare plants, communities and/or areas prone to erosional forces.

4. Signage

A standardized signage system is a major means of creating an image and identity for the entire site, as well as for individual use areas. A comprehensive system of sensitively integrated signage will improve circulation, reduce confusion in locating points of destination, and when designed and installed properly, shall not negatively impact the park patrons overall experience of the natural surroundings within the Preserve.

The signage system should be based on the following objectives:

1. Uniformity and clarity: A consistent approach to signage is necessary to communicate information. The signs should be clearly visible and graphically understandable.
2. Flexibility: The system should allow some flexibility for special circumstances but in essence should be a rigid standard for all signage.
3. Economy: The use of standardized components will reduce production costs and minimize administration and maintenance costs.
4. Appropriateness: A comprehensive, consistent system of signs should be in keeping with the design theme and in particular with the unique requirements of an environmental education facility, and with standard symbols and nomenclature within the Park system.
5. The signage system should not attempt to compete for attention in a setting such as Minnewaska, but rather it should serve as a forewarning announcement towards what lies ahead.

Sign System

The signage system proposed for Minnewaska is composed of several sign types:

1. **Entry:** This sign identifies the main entrance and is the first opportunity to create an image and identity for the Preserve.
2. **Directory/Information:** The directory provides the visitor with orientation at the entrance area and at other high pedestrian traffic areas. Circulation routes, parking, and specific building location areas are labeled, offering a simple method of identifying points of destination. Trails and carriage roads will be shown also. This sign may also function as an information or message board for Preserve rules and regulations, campground and trail maps, or posting a schedule of specific programs.
3. **Directional:** This sign provides orientation at major decision points, giving the visitor directions to structures, parking, trails, and other areas within the Preserve.
4. **Vehicular Regulatory:** Vehicular regulatory signs include standards for common traffic signs (stop, speed limit, handicapped parking, etc.) as published in the federal government's "Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices" (MUTCD). These are related to the proposed signage system through placement, structure, and hardware. Other regulatory signs are site specific (restricted parking, service vehicles only, etc.) and should conform to graphic standards established for the Preserve.
5. **Pedestrian Regulatory:** These can be smaller than vehicle regulatory in that they are not meant to be read from an automobile. More information can be put on these signs as well.

They carry messages about conduct and permissible areas for pedestrian traffic. These signs will also warn visitors of hazards.

6. **Interpretive:** These are signs which are related to the educational/interpretive issues at Minnewaska and should be located at the appropriate points along trails and carriage roads, vantage points, historic sites, etc. These signs are the same size as pedestrian regulatory signs.

Signage Materials and Design

The overall design of the signage should be simple and understated. Natural materials should be used, with native stone bases for the larger signs, and wood for the edges and posts. Lettering on the entry sign and other "target" signs should be routed into the wood panels and follow lettering styles in keeping with Preserve architecture. Lettering on other signs should be simple and be painted or adhesive letters. Sign messages should be brief; interpretive signs should, wherever possible, be keyed to printed handouts. Signs should all be easily readable. A consistent treatment should be developed for sign materials, base and mount types and message grouping. Sign colors should be drawn from the natural setting except where safety concerns demand more visibility.

C. *Site Development*

General objectives are that site construction should:

Utilize existing disturbed areas in as much as these spaces fit within the overall Preserve design program;

1. Utilize existing structurally sound structures, in keeping with sustainable design principles;
2. Minimize environmental disturbances during development of the Preserve, particularly as they relate to visual impacts;
3. Sensitively integrate design proposals into the natural topography and vegetation of the Preserve; displaying a high degree of sensitivity to the existing carriage road system aesthetic;
4. Use simple, indigenous materials wherever possible;
5. Minimize maintenance requirements.

1. Grading and Drainage

Grading and drainage for site development should:

1. Utilize simple, small, separated terraces in providing level areas for parking areas within the Preserve.
2. Utilize existing landforms or create new landforms and berms to screen and separate development as appropriate.
3. Use naturalistic drainage ways for runoff, controlling and decreasing velocity of runoff prior to its exiting into the undisturbed natural landscape.
4. Integrate natural buffer systems, filtering devices, settling beds and infiltration opportunities in protecting water quality and water runoff concerns. Utilize informal, naturalistic grading contouring in both developed and restoration areas.
5. Enhance buildings and other structure settings.

6. Use simple, laid-up native stone retaining walls in place of long fill slopes.
7. Emphasize the use of bio-engineering and soft solutions to erosion problems (over the use of heavy stone fill, etc.).

2. Circulation

The circulation system at Minnewaska State Park Preserve is intended to provide for safe and efficient transportation, while enhancing appreciation of the Preserve. The circulation system is composed of the following elements: entrances, vehicular circulation, parking areas, pedestrian trails, and carriage road which are a combination of pedestrian and vehicular ways. The recommendations that follow provide guidance for the implementation of a circulation system that will support the goals of the Master Plan.

Entrances

As the first opportunity to create image and identity, the entry should be well organized and express a clear image and visual theme:

1. Provide stacking at the entrance to aid gatehouse functions and to minimize the negative impacts of congestion and lack of organization.
2. Provide for safe and efficient vehicular entry and exit, as well as turn-around, bus loading, and truck and trailer movement.
3. Provide adequate security measures and the perception of security when the Preserve is closed.
4. Minimize signage.

These same principles shall apply to ancillary park entrances, such as the entrance to the Peter's Kill Area.

Vehicular Circulation

Vehicular circulation can be divided into primary roads and service roads. The consistent treatment of pavement materials and roadway widths will also help to organize and unify the image of the Preserve.

1. No curbs should be used on roadways. Provide for drainage through swales along the edge of all roadways. Painted edge lines are not recommended.
2. Primary roads (main entrance, road to top of hill, etc.) and parking lots that shall sustain moderate daily use throughout the year should be paved in asphalt. "Green" paving technologies shall be considered before all paving projects. All other roadways shall be paved with gravel.
3. General use carriage roads should be paved with crushed shale.
4. Overhanging trees should be limbed up to at least 14 feet above roadways and service roads to allow for safe passage of vehicles. Yearly inspection of drainage swales should be programmed for the removal of unwanted volunteer plants.
5. Vegetation should be pruned back from roads to allow safe sight distance.
6. Roadways should provide room for cyclists.

Parking

Parking that is appropriately located, maintained in a neat orderly appearance, and functions smoothly will provide clear orientation and a positive image to Preserve users. As a result of the program developed in the Master Plan, the parking lots proposed within the plan shall be sited upon previously disturbed areas in almost all instances, and/or within close proximity to high use public areas in the Lake Minnewaska area. There will continue to be two primary parking areas within the Preserve for visitors. The first remaining at the lower Awosting Parking lot nearby the entrance to the park (which will provide 270 parking spaces), with the second primary parking region being located on top of the hill near Lake Minnewaska, whereby 340 parking spaces will be distributed amongst four smaller parking areas situated upon previously disturbed areas. Peterskill parking area shall also have 100 parking spaces incorporated within its layout, with the allowance of accepting 20 additional parking spaces when necessary during busy times.

Subsequent site design of these parking lots shall incorporate sustainable design initiatives and techniques as listed below, toward not only reducing the perceived size of the paved areas, but also of addressing runoff and heat island concern commonplace to parking lot design. Some of these techniques shall include:

1. Lateral planted strips should be employed between adjacent parking roads. These strips should be wide enough to accommodate plowed snow, while providing enough vegetation to visually soften the appearance of the parking areas.
2. Provide at least two ADA accessible parking spaces near all major trailheads and building entrances. Accessible parking will also be provided at primary access points at Lake Minnewaska, and at a quantity consistent to ADAAG standards.
3. Parking lots in the Lake Minnewaska area and the Awosting lot shall be paved in asphalt, with parking stalls delineated by single white painted lines. Parking stalls should not have wheel stops which would hinder snow removal operations.
4. Parking areas should have a maximum slope in any direction of 5%.
5. Upon the relocation of the main Lake Minnewaska parking lot, a complete rehabilitation and planting with native trees and shrubs shall be coordinated with the removal of the current parking lot.
6. Parking lot drainage systems should be designed to capture and localize the dispersion of automobile oils and toxics, while also direct drainage back into its original course. Provision should be made for periodic cleanout and removal of runoff pollutants.

Pedestrian Circulation

Whenever possible, pedestrian circulation should be separated from vehicular circulation. There may be instances where this ideal may not always be possible, particularly in situations along some carriage roads and service roads in the vicinity of Lake Minnewaska. The siting of new roads, walks, buildings and parking in the Master Plan has taken this into account. It will be necessary during implementation of the Plan to assess on a site specific basis the way in which pedestrians circulate on the intended routes once construction is completed. As with the design of any circulation systems, some adjustments may be necessary in the relocation of walkways or trails near the Visitor/Interpretive Center and other pedestrian traffic generators.

1. All routes for the physically disabled should meet ANSI and ADAAG standards. “Universal Design” principals shall be incorporated in any new facilities to provide equal access for all abilities.

2. Primary pedestrian walks within the core area at Lake Minnewaska should be a minimum of 8 feet wide and paved in asphalt. All other unpaved pedestrian ways should be a minimum of 6 feet in width of crushed shale.
3. Primary pedestrian walkways in and around the immediate vicinity of the Park Headquarters, Visitor Center and Education Center should be paved.
4. The pedestrian walk connecting the Awosting parking lot to the Awosting Falls area should be paved.
5. Provide grade dips, "knicks" and deberming along steeper areas where stormwater flow erodes trails and carriage roads.
6. Trail construction and maintenance should follow trail construction standards indentified in the Minnewaska State Park Preserve Trails Plan.

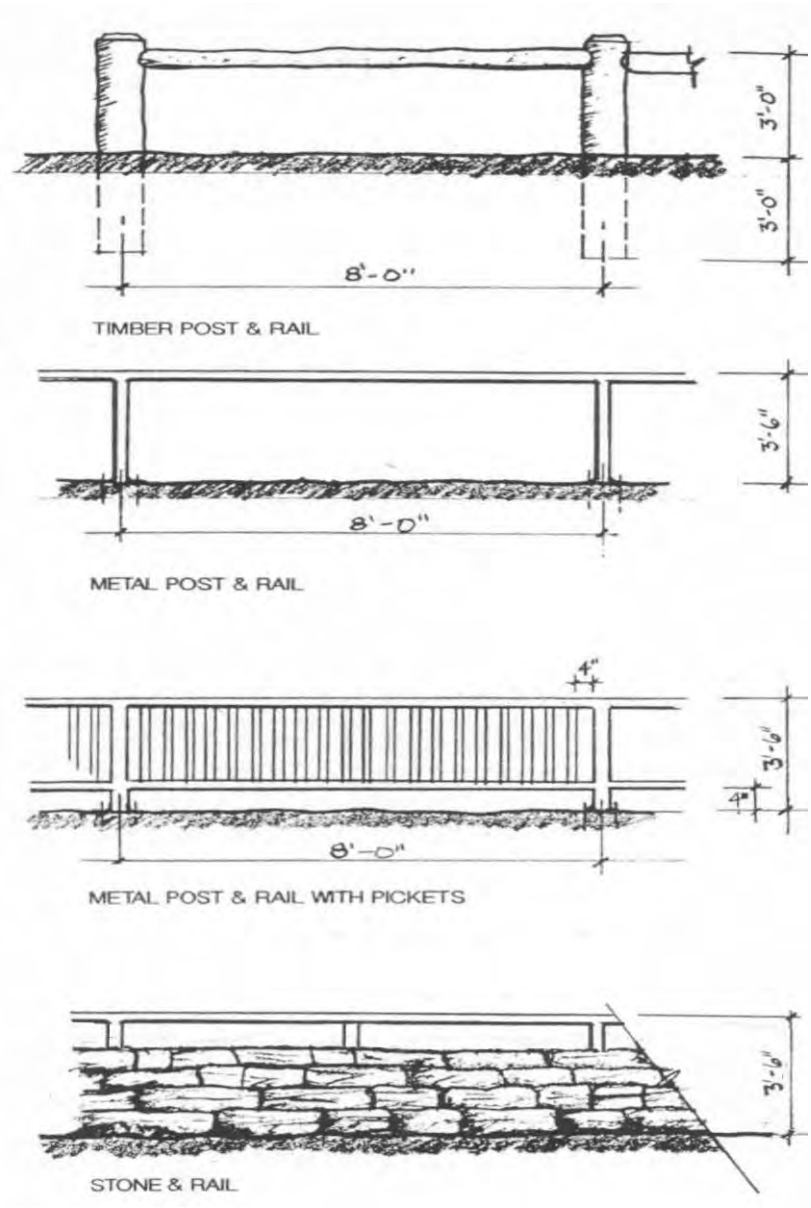
Carriage roads

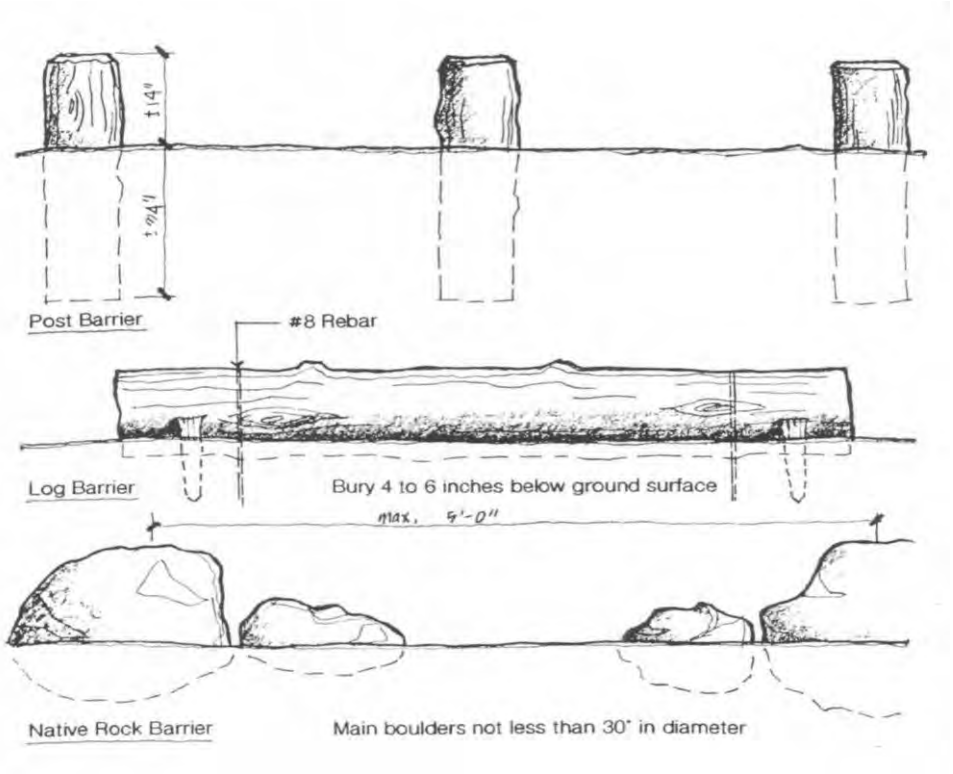
Carriage roads are considered as one of the most important manmade features in the Preserve. They provide significant enjoyment for hikers, cyclists, cross country skiers, bird watchers, naturalists, and many others in addition to directing visitors to some of the most spectacular views on the eastern seaboard.

1. Carriage roads should be maintained in as high a state of repair as is possible, given the popularity of their use, the safety and enjoyment of visitors and the need for service vehicles.
2. Carriage roads should be either slightly crowned in the center or slightly cross pitched to one side depending upon localized conditions. They should be level, without ruts or holes. When repairs are required, they should be accomplished with the same crushed shale used traditionally on all the carriage roads.
3. There are several areas where carriage roads have been subject to erosion. These are due to trapped rainwater in areas adjacent to rock ledges on the uphill. Where rainwater is being trapped, these areas should be regraded and filled to allow the water to sheet off or appropriate drainage shall be installed.
4. In general, carriage roads should have drainage swales on one or both sides. The transition from crushed shale surface should be smooth at its edges, without an abrupt change in elevation, blending gradually into the swale, and the swale blending back into existing terrain.
5. Carriage roads should be no less than 12 feet wide, with overhanging tree branches limbed up to 12 feet from the ground.
6. In densely wooded areas, mature trees should be permitted to grow within the swale zone, although shrubs should be pruned back in this zone.
7. In lightly shaded areas with more daily sunlight, a more vigorous growth of young trees and shrubs compete for light in the swale zones. These areas should be monitored periodically to determine if pruning or removal of these plants is necessary as they may begin to crowd the carriage roads.

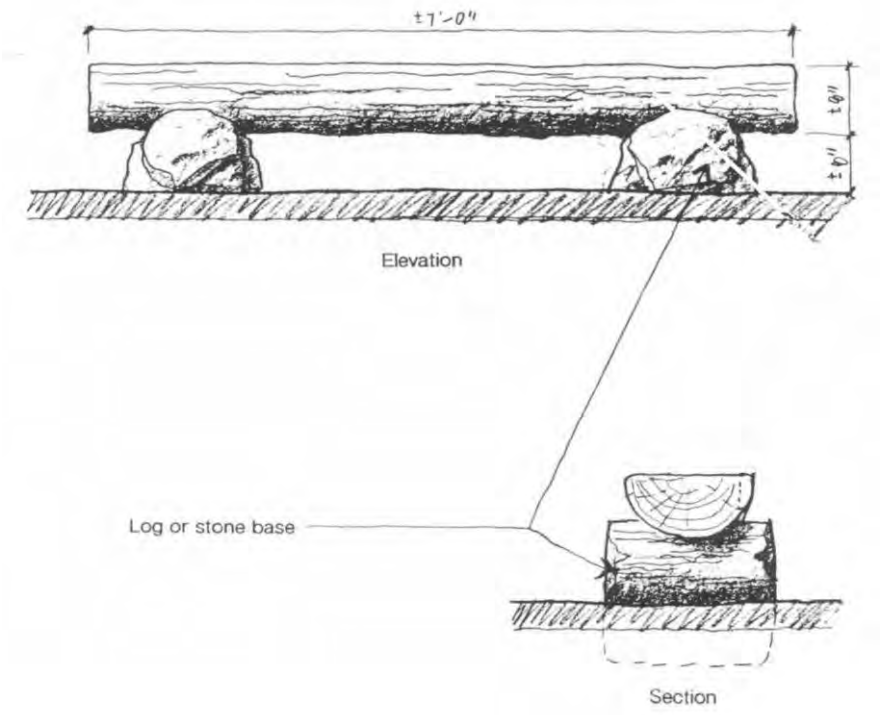
D. *Sample Design Guideline Details*

1. Railings and Barriers:

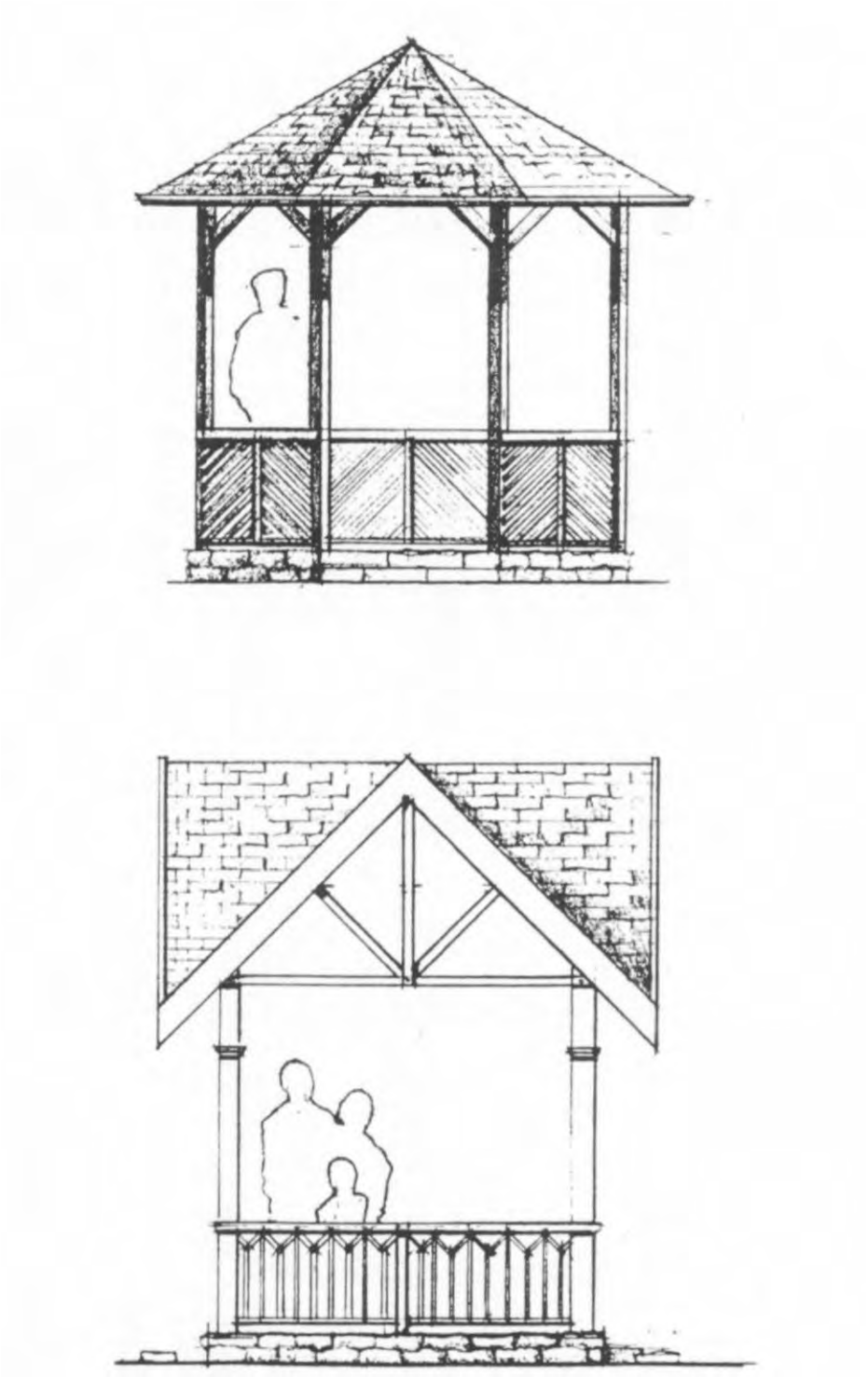




2. Rustic Wood Bench



3. Gazebo /Summerhouse



4. Contact Station