

**Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board**  
**Northeast Athletic Field Park – Recreation Building CAC #4**  
April 8, 2015 - Meeting Minutes

*Present:*

Doron Clark, CAC Chair	September Luitjens, CAC
Kristin Peterson, CAC	Todd Bennington, CAC
Chris Bubser, CAC	Chris Lawler, CAC
Dana Murdoch, MPRB	Liz Wielinski, MPRB Commissioners
Kate Lamers, MPRB	Dave Sheppard, P+W
Mark Anderson, NE News	Sarah Larson
Jenny Arneson	Tammy Rusnacko
Amy Hernandez	Kate Lawson
Sydney Jordan	

*Next meeting:* None planned

*Attachments:* CAC-Recommended Schematic Architectural Floor Plan, Site Plan, and View from East Parking Area  
Budget Summary  
Options 1 & 2 – Reduced Scope

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## **I. Introduction**

**CAC 4.1** - Dana Murdoch opened the meeting at 5:35 with a brief summary of the committee's work to date, and led introductions.

**CAC 4.2** - Dana reviewed the project scope, history, the CAC's previous recommendation, the public hearing, and the discussions at MPRB since the hearing. She verified that the scope approved by the CAC cannot be constructed with the project budget available.

**CAC 4.3** - Dana confirmed that the MPRB Board of Commissioners had approved the scope and concept recommended by the CAC (one gymnasium with walking track, three community rooms (one with a demonstration kitchen another with a dedicated restroom for preschool uses), a central/social area, bathrooms, front desk, and support spaces including storage, office, and mechanical spaces.) MPRB staff and MPRB President and District 1 Commissioner Wielinski had been searching for funding from internal and external sources since the public hearing, but were unable to find additional funds that could be allocated to the project.

**CAC 4.4** - Dana noted that without additional funding the project scope must be reduced by either (1) removing the indoor track, or (2) removing the community room with demonstration kitchen.

**CAC 4.5** – Dana reviewed the recreation building vision and program identified in the Northeast Athletic Field Park Master Plan from January 8, 2014 so that the group could compare the current scope to the one originally recommended. Although the program identified in the Master Plan (2 full size gymnasiums, a walking/running track, community rooms, fitness room, daycare, gymnastics/wrestling room, and support spaces) was not intended to be final, it established baseline criteria that were tested and modified through the community engagement for the current

project. The Master Plan required a new CAC to be formed to guide the final programming for the recreation building.

**CAC 4.6** – Dana summarized the various scope options and estimated construction costs based on 2014 construction season:

- **Master Plan Full Scope - \$8,500,000**
  - 2 full size gymnasiums
  - running track
  - community rooms
  - fitness room
  - daycare
  - gymnastics/wrestling room
  - support spaces
- **Current CAC Approved Scope - \$3,800,000**
  - one full size gymnasium with walking track
  - three community rooms (one with a demonstration kitchen another with a dedicated restroom for preschool uses)
  - a central/social area
  - bathrooms, front desk, office, storage, support spaces
- **Reduced Scope Option (1) - \$3,300,000 (current construction budget)**
  - Same as current CAC-approved scope , but without walking track
- **Reduced Scope Option (2) - \$3,300,000 (current construction budget)**
  - Same as current CAC-approved scope , but without one community room and demonstration kitchen

**CAC 4.7** – Liz Wielinski stated that at the time of the public hearing, she anticipated that MPRB would be able to find \$500,000 to fill the funding gap so that the currently approved concept and scope could be constructed. However, other projects had recently been approved by the MPRB which would absorb any funding that might have otherwise been available to the Northeast Recreation Building.

**CAC 4.8** – Dana explained that MPRB needed the CAC to reconvene and provide direction with an understanding of the current budget situation. She suggested that the public share their thoughts and questions before moving to a CAC discussion.

## **II. Discussion**

**CAC 4.9** – The following questions and comments came from members of the public.

- Why was the Northeast Recreation Building chosen to take money away from?
- How can this project be moved ahead in the queue?
- There is risk in waiting. Construction costs are only going up. What if the community waits 2 – 4 years and still has no building and the funding is even less adequate?
- Why can the Park Board not find money?
- From the school board perspective – we can all spend referendum money but the community should ask for funding now.

Comments by MPRB Staff:

- Money has not been taken away from the Northeast Park Recreation Building project. The project has always had a dedicated project budget of \$4,000,000 with construction costs budgeted at \$3,300,000.

Comments by and MPRB President and District 1 Commissioner Wielinski:

- Recommendation to share community concerns during Open Time at 5:30 p.m. at the May 6, 2015, or any other regular MPRB board meeting (held the first and third Wednesdays of the month, see the website for a full calendar).

**CAC 4.10** – Doron Clark asked if there would be a referendum to provide additional funding for neighborhood parks. Liz stated that MPRB Commissioners would be out in 2015 seeking a tax levy for 2016. She thought that if they were successful, there might be additional funds in three or four years.

**CAC 4.11** – Continued public discussion:

1. Nervous about waiting. A levy is great, but building now and doing an addition is preferable to waiting.
2. How often as the Park Board done additions to existing buildings?
3. Having no building is a huge inconvenience. Having no bathrooms and no programming makes the park much less usable.
4. It is very disappointing that the master plan has not been realized. Far too much effort and funding has gone into the ball fields which do not serve the community.
5. Saying that MPRB does not have the money is not believable. MPRB always finds money – why is riverfront property being purchased?

Comments by MPRB Staff:

- Additions to existing MPRB building are infrequent.
- All current MPRB land acquisition along the river is being financed by State Legacy dollars (up to 75% of the cost), through the Metropolitan Council's Parks & Trails Opportunity Fund grant program (applied to regional parks only), with the required 25% local match usually coming from the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization (MWMO), whose mission is to improve water quality and riverbank habitat along the Mississippi River.

**CAC 4.12** – Kristin Peterson began the CAC discussion by asking what the potential to shift money from the ball fields to the building was. She also noted that the rendering provided did not show the existing pool building, which was very unattractive. She thought that perhaps the glass in the proposed building should be removed or reduced so that the pool building wasn't such a prominent view. Kristin felt that she could get behind the currently approved scope at \$3.8M, but not the reduced scope. She thought that waiting and trying for the program approved in the master plan was too risky.

**CAC 4.13** – Chris Lawler stated that he was originally thinking he might prefer to wait and try for more funding, but after hearing the conversation that night he felt that thought it best to recommend the \$3.8M scope and move ahead.

**CAC 4.14** – September Luitjens stated that she did not like any of the reduced scope options. She did not think that the hope of additional funding was worth waiting another four years for.

She greatly prefers the program outlined in the Master Plan. She felt that the neighborhood needs a building now. She noted that many neighbors immediately around the park did not know one another, and that this was the type of impact the community suffered because of no building and programming.

**CAC 4.15** – Todd Bennington felt that if there was any guarantee that future funding would be available, he might be willing to wait for a larger building. However, he felt that since there was no assurance of a tax levy or additional funding allocated for this project, he preferred to move ahead with the approved scope at the \$3.8M budget. He added that the approved scope was the minimum he would support; the reduced scope options were not acceptable.

**CAC 4.16** – Dana gave an update on the Phase 1 construction. She stated that because of inadequate budget for the Phase 1 construction, the ball fields and relocated maintenance yard were planned to be bid in May 2015 for August 2015 construction start. Included is an alternate would be to update the existing restrooms between the baseball fields, but there may not be enough funds. One member of the public thought that restrooms were more important than the upcoming softball fields, and that adding fields without bathrooms made an already bad situation worse. A CAC member thought that it made sense to move funding from the softball fields to the building in order to get to the total \$3.8M needed.

**CAC 4.17** – Once the discussion returned to the current recommendation, Chris Bubser stated that he couldn't support the scope being reduced from the one previously approved. He said he understands that needs are great in other parts of town and that he didn't want projects elsewhere not to proceed. He said while he loves the bigger building, it was not worth the risk of waiting, and that he could get behind the current scope and \$3.8M budget.

**CAC 4.18** – Doron said that he wanted the larger building and would be willing to wait and advocate for more funding, but that he felt the scope at \$3.8M was okay. He noted that the \$3.8M scope was the minimum he would be willing to recommend.

**CAC 4.19** – A member of the public and former member of the Master Plan CAC suggested that if money were to be reallocated from the ball fields to the recreation building, it was a change to the Master Plan. She thought that the stakeholders and CAC members from the Master Plan process should be contacted about the change in phasing. She added that she approved of the change, but thought it was important protocol to have this change publically discussed. MPRB staff will verify if any process is required to contact the Master Plan CAC.

**CAC 4.20** – Liz Wielinski suggested that if members of the CAC and community wanted to advocate for additional funding to be dedicated to the recreation building, they needed to convince the Board of Commissioners that this project was a high enough priority. She stated that she and several other key MPRB Board and staff persons would be at a conference, and unavailable during the upcoming April 15, 2015, meeting. Liz suggested that if community members wanted to speak to the Board that they come to the May 6, 2015, meeting at MPRB headquarters.

**CAC 4.21** – The following recommendation was prepared by the CAC and edited by MPRB staff with final approval from the CAC Dana reminded the CAC members that all meetings must be public, and that a serial discussion online was essentially a private meeting. Therefore, any

changes must be minor and editorial in nature, rather than changes to the content of the recommendation.

### **III. CAC Recommendation**

*The Northeast Athletic Field Park Recreation Building Community Advisory Committee (CAC) recommends:*

*The most appropriate recreation building program to best meet the needs of the Northeast Park neighborhood, residents, and families, is similar to the program described in the Northeast Athletic Field Master Plan and characterized by the CAC as “full scope” to include the following:*

- *2 full-size gymnasiums*
- *Elevated running track*
- *Program spaces to support preschool, exercise, and community activities (minimum 4 rooms, 1 with a demonstration kitchen)*
- *Restrooms*
- *Office, storage, support spaces*

*However, the need for a recreation facility is so desperate in the Northeast Park neighborhood that the CAC is willing to accept a recreation building program previously approved by the CAC on January 12, 2015 and now defined by the CAC as “minimum scope” to include the following:*

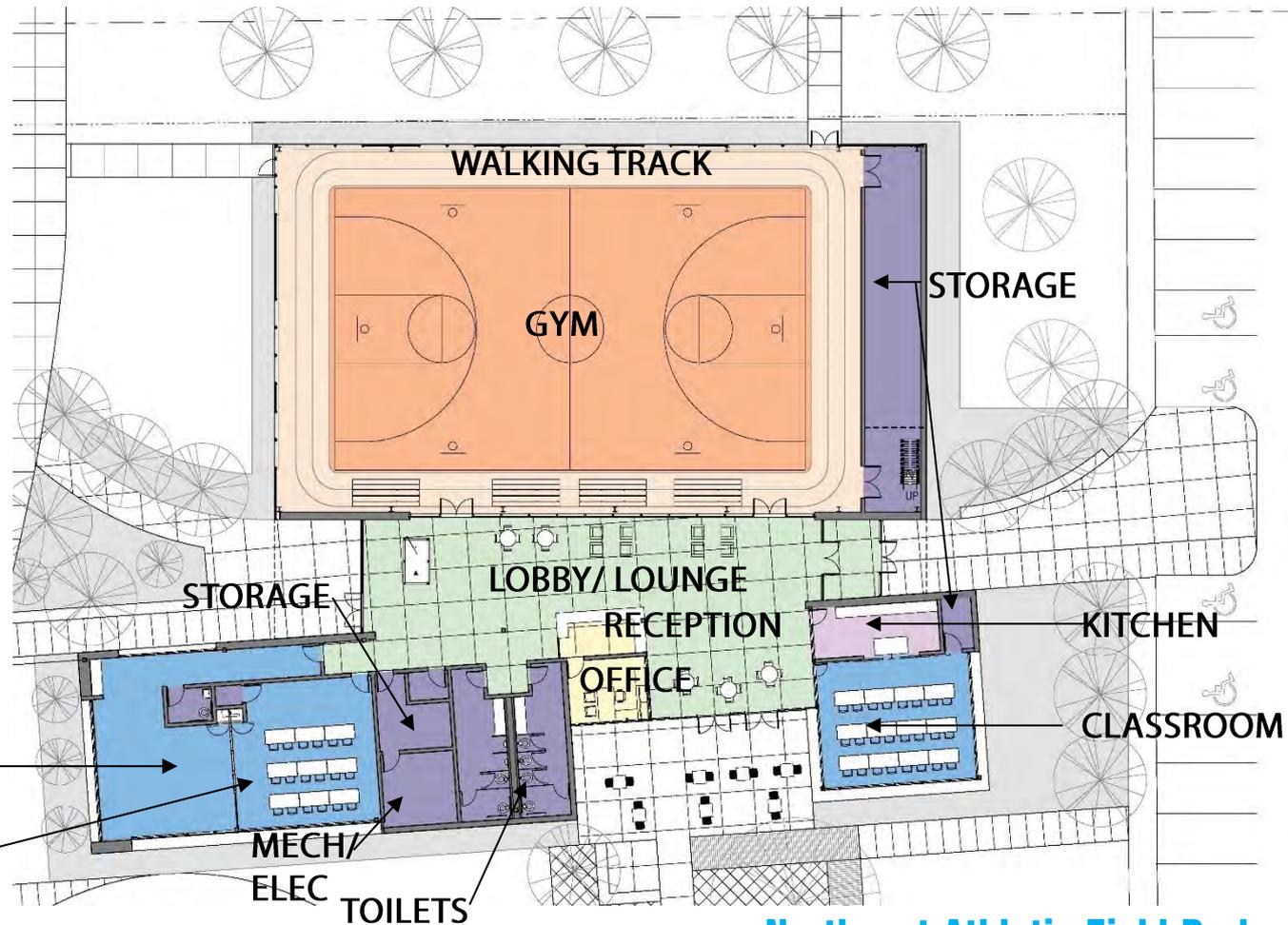
- *1 full-size gymnasium*
- *At-grade walking track*
- *3 Program spaces including preschool, multipurpose community room, and demonstration kitchen and classroom*
- *Central gathering space*
- *Restrooms*
- *Office, storage, support spaces*

*The Northeast Athletic Field Park Recreation Building CAC rejects any proposed building program less than this “minimum scope.”*

*In order to achieve the “minimum scope” program and to bridge the \$500,000 funding gap, the Northeast Athletic Field Park Recreation Building CAC is willing to reassign funding from the ‘Initial Phase – Fields’ as defined in the Northeast Athletic Field Master Plan to improve the west softball fields, the central lawn area, the existing restrooms, and overall walking trails, and relocate the maintenance yard. If this option is available, the Northeast Athletic Field Recreation Building CAC recommends including the central lawn, restrooms, and walking trails improvements as parts of the recreation building project.*

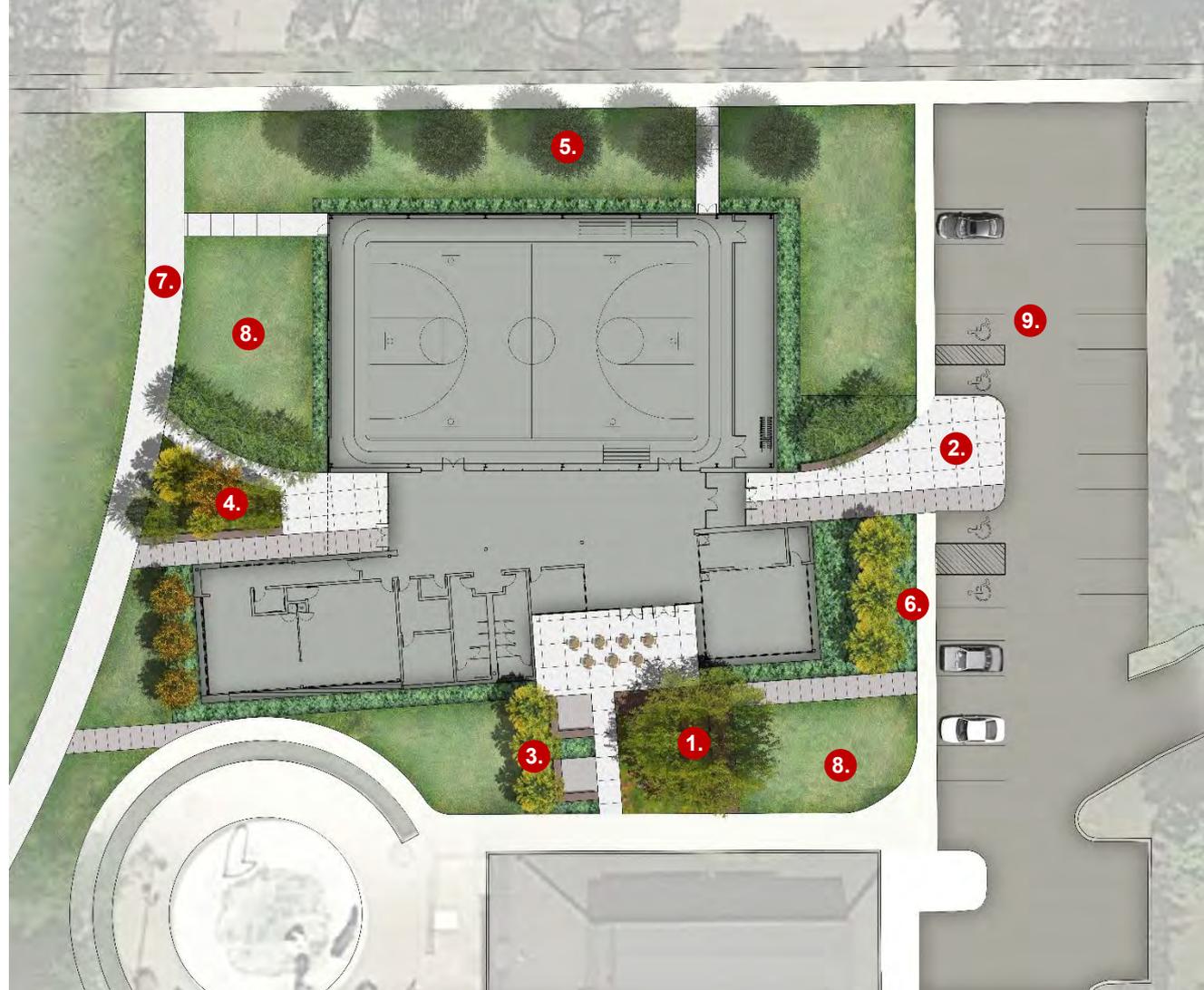
**The meeting minutes above represent the recollection of MPRB staff at the meeting. Please contact the project manager if you feel there are significant errors or omissions.**

# ARCHITECTURAL FLOOR PLAN



## SITE PLAN

1. PRESERVED ELM
2. POTENTIAL ENTRY COURTYARD
3. FUTURE OUTDOOR ROOMS
4. POTENTIAL COMMUNITY GARDEN
5. STREET TREES AND PLANTING BEDS
6. POTENTIAL RAINWATER GARDEN
7. FUTURE TRAIL CONNECTION
8. INFORMAL LAWN
9. REALIGNED PARKING AND DROP OFF



## VIEW FROM EAST PARKING AREA



# SCHEDULE & BUDGET

Master Plan identified project budget: \$4,000,000

Project budget: \$4,000,000

Project costs (site costs, fees): approx. \$700,000

Available for construction: approx. \$3,300,000

Schematic Design cost estimate (2/3/2015): \$3,954,000

**Reduced Schematic Design cost (updated 2/18/2015): \$3,759,042**

# OPTION 1 – REDUCED SCOPE

## MODIFICATIONS:

- REMOVE WALKING TRACK
- REMOVE INDOOR/OUTDOOR COURTYARD
- DECREASE LOUNGE/ACTIVITY SPACE

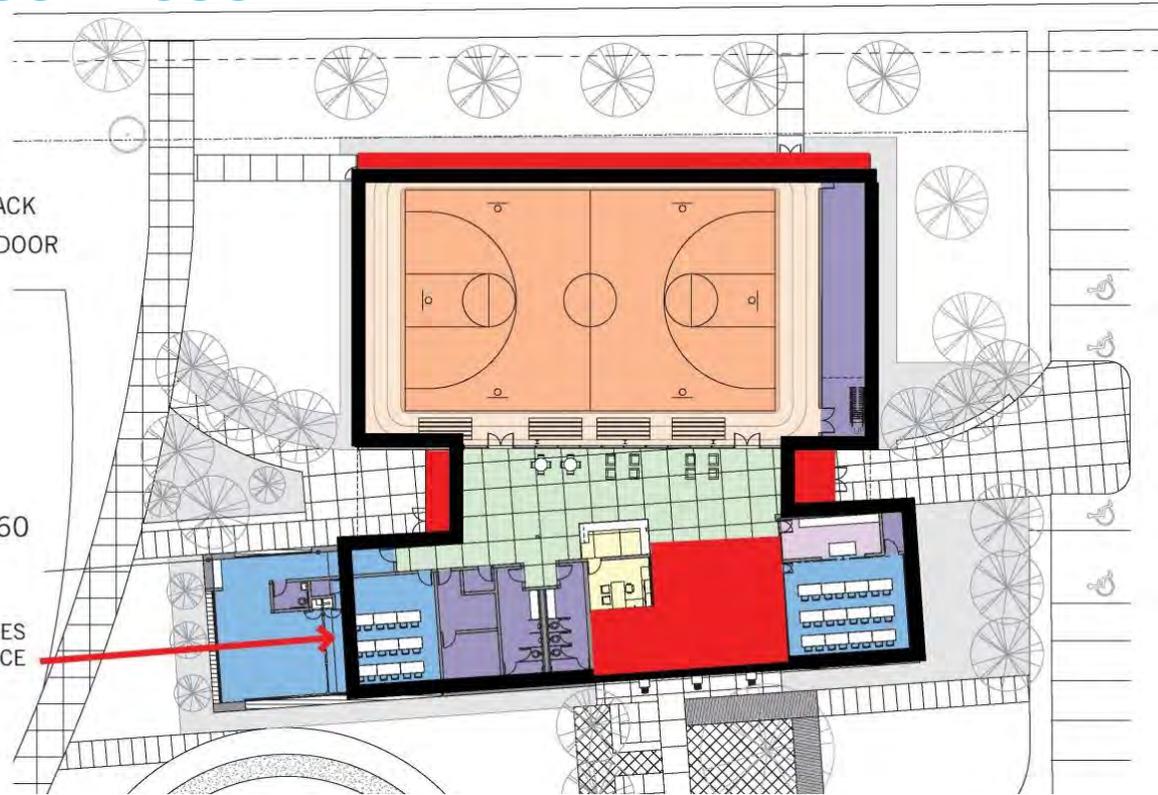
## TOTAL AREA:

13,030 SF

## TOTAL COST:

\$252/ GSF= \$3,283,560

CLASSROOM SLIDES  
INTO COURTYARD SPACE



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# OPTION 2 – REDUCED SCOPE

## MODIFICATIONS:

- REMOVE CLASSROOM
- DECREASE LOBBY/  
ACTIVITY SPACE
- REMOVE DEFINED  
COURTYARD

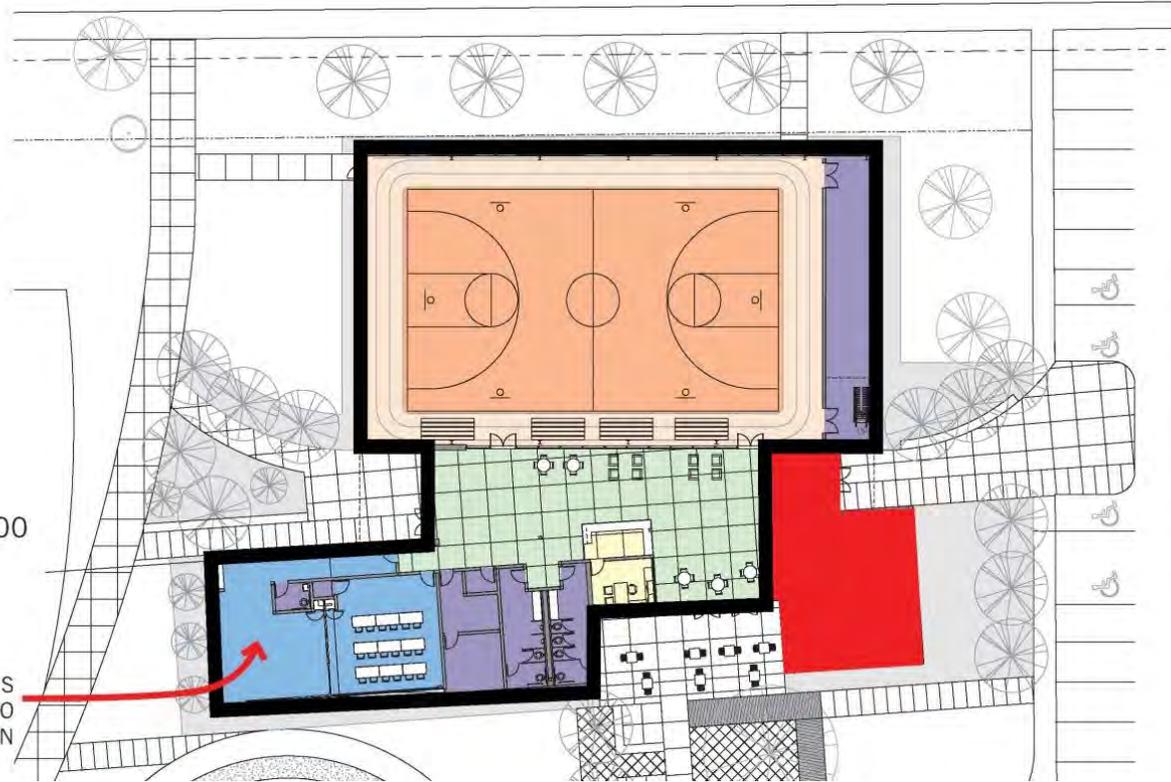
## TOTAL AREA:

13,100 SF

## TOTAL COST:

\$252/ GSF= \$3,301,200

CLASSROOM IS  
SMALLER TO  
ACCOMMODATE KITCHEN



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