

# Rock Creek Golf Course

## Rock Creek Park

Cultural Landscapes Inventory

National Park Service



Urban Heritage Project | PennPraxis

University of Pennsylvania

July 2017

# Table of Contents

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<b>Cultural Landscape Overview + Management Information</b>	<b>1</b>
Inventory Unit Summary & Site Plan	<b>1</b>
Concurrence Status	<b>8</b>
Geographic Information and Location Map	<b>10</b>
Management Information	<b>14</b>
National Register Information	<b>16</b>
<b>Chronology &amp; Physical History</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Analysis &amp; Evaluation of Integrity</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>Condition</b>	<b>117</b>
<b>Bibliography &amp; Supplemental Information</b>	<b>119</b>



Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

## Inventory Unit Summary & Site Plan

### Inventory Summary

#### The Cultural Landscapes Inventory Overview:

##### CLI General Information:

###### Purpose and Goals of the CLI

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI) is an evaluated inventory of all significant landscapes in units of the national park system in which the National Park Service has, or plans to acquire any enforceable legal interest. Landscapes documented through the CLI are those that individually meet criteria set forth in the National Register of Historic Places such as historic sites, historic designed landscapes, and historic vernacular landscapes or those that are contributing elements of properties that meet the criteria. In addition, landscapes that are managed as cultural resources because of law, policy, or decisions reached through the park planning process even though they do not meet the National Register criteria, are also included in the CLI.

The CLI serves three major purposes. First, it provides the means to describe cultural landscapes on an individual or collective basis at the park, regional, or service-wide level. Secondly, it provides a platform to share information about cultural landscapes across programmatic areas and concerns and to integrate related data about these resources into park management. Thirdly, it provides an analytical tool to judge accomplishment and accountability.

The legislative, regulatory, and policy direction for conducting the CLI include:

*ational Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 USC 470h-2(a)(1)).* Each Federal agency shall establish...a preservation program for the identification, evaluation, and nomination to the National Register of Historic Places...of historic properties...

*utive Order 13287: Preserve America, 2003.* Sec. 3(a)...Each agency with real property management responsibilities shall prepare an assessment of the current status of its inventory of historic properties required by section 110(a)(2) of the NHPA...No later than September 30, 2004, each covered agency shall complete a report of the assessment and make it available to the Chairman of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Secretary of the Interior... (c) Each agency with real property management responsibilities shall, by September 30, 2005, and every third year thereafter, prepare a report on its progress in identifying... historic properties in its ownership and make the report available to the Council and the Secretary...

*Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Federal Agency Historic Preservation Programs Pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act, 1998.* Standard 2: An agency provides for the timely identification and evaluation of historic properties under agency jurisdiction or control and/or subject to effect by agency actions (Sec. 110 (a)(2)(A))



## Rock Creek Golf Course

## Rock Creek Park

*Management Policies 2006.* 5.1.3.1 Inventories: The Park Service will (1) maintain and expand the following inventories...about cultural resources in units of the national park system...Cultural Landscape Inventory of historic designed landscapes, historic vernacular landscapes,... and historic sites...

*Cultural Resource Management Guideline, 1997, Release No. 5, page 22 issued pursuant to Director's Order #28.* As cultural resources are identified and evaluated, they should also be listed in the appropriate Service-wide inventories of cultural resources.

### Responding to the Call to Action:

The year 2016 marks the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service. A five-year action plan entitled, “*A Call to Action: Preparing for a Second Century of Stewardship and Engagement*” charts a path toward that second century vision by asking Service employees and partners to commit to concrete actions that advance the agency’s mission. The heart of the plan includes four broad themes supported by specific goals and measurable actions. These themes are: Connecting People to Parks, Advancing the NPS Education Mission, Preserving America’s Special Places, and Enhancing Professional and Organizational Excellence. The Cultural Landscape Inventory relates to three of these themes:

**Connect People to Parks.** Help communities protect what is special to them, highlight their history, and retain or rebuild their economic and environmental sustainability.

**Advance the Education Mission.** Strengthen the National Park Service’s role as an educational force based on core American values, historical and scientific scholarship, and unbiased translation of the complexities of the American experience.

**Preserve America’s Special Places.** Be a leader in extending the benefits of conservation across physical, social, political, and international boundaries in partnership with others.

The national CLI effort directly relates to #3, Preserve America’s Special Places, and specifically to Action #28, “Park Pulse.” Each CLI documents the existing condition of park resources and identifies impacts, threats, and measures to improve condition. This information can be used to improve park priority setting and communicate complex park condition information to the public.

### Responding to the Cultural Resources Challenge:

The Cultural Resources Challenge (CRC) is a NPS strategic plan that identifies our most critical priorities. The primary objective is to “*Achieve a standard of excellence for the stewardship of the resources that form the historical and cultural foundations of the nation, commit at all levels to a common set of goals, and articulate a common vision for the next century.*” The CLI contributes to the fulfillment of all five goals of the CRC:

- 1) *Provide leadership support, and advocacy for the stewardship, protection, interpretation, and management of the nation’s heritage through scholarly research, science and effective management;*
- 2) *Recommit to the spirit and letter of the landmark legislation underpinning the NPS*

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

- 3) *Connect all Americans to their heritage resources in a manner that resonates with their lives, legacies, and dreams, and tells the stories that make up America's diverse national identity;*
- 4) *Integrate the values of heritage stewardship into major initiatives and issues such as renewable energy, climate change, community assistance and revitalization, and sustainability, while cultivating excellence in science and technical preservation as a foundation for resource protection, management, and rehabilitation; and*
- 5) *Attract, support, and retain a highly skilled and diverse workforce, and support the development of leadership and expertise within the National Park Service.*

### Scope of the CLI

CLI data is gathered from existing secondary sources found in park libraries, archives and at NPS regional offices and centers, as well as through on-site reconnaissance. The baseline information describes the historical development and significance of the landscape, placing it in the context of the landscape's overall significance. Documentation and analysis of the existing landscape identifies character-defining characteristics and features, and allows for an evaluation of the landscape's overall integrity and an assessment of the landscape's overall condition. The CLI also provides an illustrative site plan that indicates major features within the inventory unit and generates spatial data for Geographic Information Systems (GIS). The CLI also identifies stabilization needs to prevent further deterioration of the landscape and provides data for the Facility Management Software System

### **Inventory Unit Description:**

Rock Creek Golf Course is a cultural landscape in northern Washington, DC. Located on the east side of Rock Creek Park, along 16th Street NW, north of Military Road NW, it consists of an 18-hole, parkland-style golf course, originally designed by William S. Flynn, and built between 1921 and 1926. The 103-acre course is located approximately six miles northeast of the United States Capitol and three miles south of Silver Spring, Maryland. Rock Creek Golf Course is a component landscape of Rock Creek Park. The boundaries of Rock Creek Golf Course, as considered for this cultural landscape inventory, are roughly defined by Military Road to the south, the Valley Trail to the west, an area of heavily wooded hillside to the north and 16th Street NW to the east. For exact boundary markers see the site plan information graphic below.

### **HISTORICAL OVERVIEW**

Washington DC's first public golf course opened at East Potomac Park in 1920. Its incredible popularity prompted the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds (OPBG) to begin plans for construction of a second public course, located in Rock Creek Park. Construction of the Rock Creek Golf Course began in October of 1921, under the direction of the OPBG. In 1922, the OPBG hired noted golf course architect, William Flynn, to lay out a nine-hole course. Working in the parkland style, Flynn designed a course that highlighted the site's dramatic topography and incorporated stands of mature trees. A nineteenth century farmhouse was renovated for use as a clubhouse, and in 1923 President Warren G. Harding dedicated and opened the course.

Like East Potomac, the course was immediately popular and often over-crowded. Within a year, plans were underway to expand Rock Creek Golf Course to a full 18-holes. In July 1924 Flynn returned to

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

Rock Creek to determine the location for the additional nine-holes. Ultimately, Flynn's new design required radical changes to the existing holes in order to create a cohesive layout, and in the spring of 1926, golfers at Rock Creek had "an entirely new course" (Washington Post March 24, 1926:15). The final course occupied approximately 108 acres of land and played at a distance of 5,191 yards, with a par 70. The Office of Public Buildings and Grounds contracted out operation and management of the course to a concessionaire, S.G. Loeffler, who paid for part of the new course's construction.

Rock Creek Golf Course remained popular and its original design was left relatively unchanged throughout the 1940s and 1950s. Between 1957 and 1958, the expansion of Military Road resulted in the loss of several holes on the front nine. William F. Gordon, a protégé of William Flynn was hired to redesign Holes 3 through 8. In 1964, the National Park Service (NPS) secured funding for construction of a new clubhouse, as part of NPS's Mission 66 updates throughout Rock Creek Park. Conditions at the course began to deteriorate in the late 1960s and 1970s. Concessionaire, S.G.Loeffler shortened the back nine to appeal to players who complained it was too difficult. In 1982, a new concessionaire, Golf Course Specialists, took over the contract at Rock Creek and restored the back nine to its original length. Despite nearly 100-years of continuous use, in 2017, William Flynn's 1926 design for Rock Creek Golf Course remains largely intact.

#### SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

This CLI finds that the Rock Creek Golf Course Cultural Landscape, which is part of Rock Creek Park, US Reservation 339, is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A, in the area of Recreation and under Criterion C, under the area of Landscape Architecture. The Rock Creek Golf Course represents a significant period in history of golf in the United States, and the development of municipal recreation in Washington, DC. Additionally, it is an important local work of golf course architect, William S. Flynn, and a largely intact example of a course designed during the period referred to as the "Golden Age" of golf course architecture. The Golden Age of Golf encompasses a period from the early 1900s to the beginning of the Great Depression. During this period, golf course architects, like William S. Flynn, experimented with creative new course designs that combined artistic sensibilities with strategic concerns

A 2014 amendment to the nomination identified the course's 1960s comfort stations and 1964 clubhouse as contributing resources, as part of the larger Mission 66-era updates made throughout the park. The comfort stations were dismantled, according to NPS's recommendation, in the fall of 2016. This CLI recommends that the period of significance for the course be refined to 1921-1927 and 1963-1964, correlating with the original design of the course by William S. Flynn, its construction, under the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds and the construction of a new clubhouse as part of the Mission 66 initiative.

#### ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION SUMMARY AND CONDITION

This CLI finds that the Rock Creek Golf Course Cultural Landscape retains integrity from both periods of significance: the period of initial design and construction of the golf course and its associated features (1921-1927) and the replacement of the original clubhouse with a modern structure (1963-1964). Original landscape characteristics and features from both periods are present at Rock Creek Golf Course and the landscape displays all of the aspects that determine integrity, as defined by the National Register of Historic Places.

Rock Creek Golf Course

Rock Creek Park

**Site Plan**

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*Project Boundary for Rock Creek Golf Course Cultural Landscape Inventory. 2017 Google map image.*



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**Property Level and CLI Numbers**

**Inventory Unit Name:** Rock Creek Golf Course  
**CLI Identification Number:** 975992  
**Parent Landscape:** 600031

**Park Information**

**Park Name and Alpha Code:** Rock Creek Park -ROCR  
**Park Organization Code:** 3450  
**Park Administrative Unit:** Rock Creek Park

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

## Concurrence Status

**Inventory Status:** Complete

### Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

This Cultural Landscape Inventory was completed by Shannon Garrison, Research Associate, University of Pennsylvania. This CLI was researched and written as part of a project to document National Park Service-owned golf courses in Washington, DC. The work of Patricia Babin, NPS Cultural Resource Specialist, National Capital Region, was integral to the completion of the Rock Creek Golf Course CLI. Her Historic Resource Study (HRS), *Links to the Past: A Historic Resource Study of National Park Service Golf Courses in Washington, DC*, provided the basis for much of the historic information included in this CLI. In addition to the HRS, primary and secondary source material from within the National Park Service and local repositories were consulted and are listed in the bibliography. Additional assistance was provided by: Daniel Weldon, Cultural Resource Specialist, National Capital Region, National Park Service; Maureen Joseph, Regional Historical Landscape Architect, National Capital Region; Josh Torres, Cultural Resources Program Manager, Rock Creek Park, National Capital Region; Nick Bartoloemo, Chief of Resources, Rock Creek Park, National Capital Region; Randall Mason, Associate Professor and Chair, Historic Preservation, University of Pennsylvania; Molly Lester, Research Associate, University of Pennsylvania; Michael Fichman, GIS Research Associate, University of Pennsylvania; Mikayla Raymond, Cultural Landscape Intern, University of Pennsylvania; and Ty Richardson, Cultural Landscape Intern, University of Pennsylvania.

### Concurrence Status:

**Park Superintendent Concurrence:** Yes

**Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence:** 07/20/2017

**National Register Concurrence:** Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination

### National Register Concurrence Narrative:

The Historic Preservation Officer for the District of Columbia concurred with the findings of the Rock Creek Golf Course Cultural Landscape Inventory on INSERT DATE, in accordance with Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act. It should be noted that the Date of Eligibility Determination refers to this Section 110 Concurrence and not the date of National Register Eligibility, since that is not the purview of the Cultural Landscape Inventory.

### Concurrence Graphic Information:

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

**Statement of Concurrence**  
**Rock Creek Golf Course Cultural Landscape Inventory**

The preparation of this CLI for the Rock Creek Golf Course is part of the National Park Service's efforts to update cultural resource inventories as required by Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

- The D.C. State Historic Preservation Officer (DC SHPO) concurs with the findings of the Rock Creek Golf Course Cultural Landscape Inventory. The office concurs that the cultural landscape resources retain integrity to the site's periods of significance, 1921-1927 and 1963-1964, and contribute to its historic character.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
David Maloney  
State Historic Preservation Officer

7/26/2017  
Date

*DC SHPO Concurrence for the original findings of the document. Concurrence was signed on July 27, 2017*

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

Memorandum

To: Regional Landscape Architect, National Capital Region

From: Superintendent, Rock Creek Park

Subject: Statement of Concurrence, Rock Creek Golf Course Cultural Landscape Inventory

I, Julia Washburn, Superintendent of Rock Creek Park, concur with the findings of the Rock Creek Golf Course Cultural Landscape Inventory, including the following specific components:

MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: Must be Preserved and Maintained


CONDITION ASSESSMENT: Good


Good: indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Fair: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the character defining elements will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory for the Rock Creek Golf Course is hereby approved and accepted.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent, Rock Creek Park

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Superintendent Concurrence on the original findings for the CLI. Concurrence was signed on July 20th, 2017.*

## Geographic Information & Location Map

### Inventory Unit Boundary Description:

The Rock Creek Golf Course Cultural Landscape is located in northern Washington, DC. It is a component landscape of Rock Creek Park, US Reservation 339 and is administered by the National Park Service's Rock Creek Park unit. The Rock Creek Golf Course is approximately 103 acres. It is surrounded by parkland on all sides, with the exception of part of the eastern boundary, which borders a residential neighborhood along 16th Street NW, and part of the southern boundary, which borders Military Road NW.

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

**State and County:**

**State:** DC

**County:** District of Columbia

**Size (Acres):** 103.00

**Latitude:** -77.0405240000

**Longitude:** 38.9715400000

**Source:** GPS-Differentially Corrected

**Type of Point:** Point

**Latitude:** -77.0365830000

**Longitude:** 38.9657730000

**Source:** GPS-Differentially Corrected

**Type of Point:** Point

**Latitude:** -77.0365070000

**Longitude:** 38.9629180000

**Source:** GPS-Differentially Corrected

**Type of Point:** Point

**Latitude:** -77.0433220000

**Longitude:** 38.9615850000

**Source:** GPS-Differentially Corrected

**Type of Point:** Point

**Latitude:** -77.0472240000

**Longitude:** 38.9651640000

**Source:** GPS-Differentially Corrected

**Type of Point:** Point

**Latitude:** -77.0438360000

**Longitude:** 38.9710840000



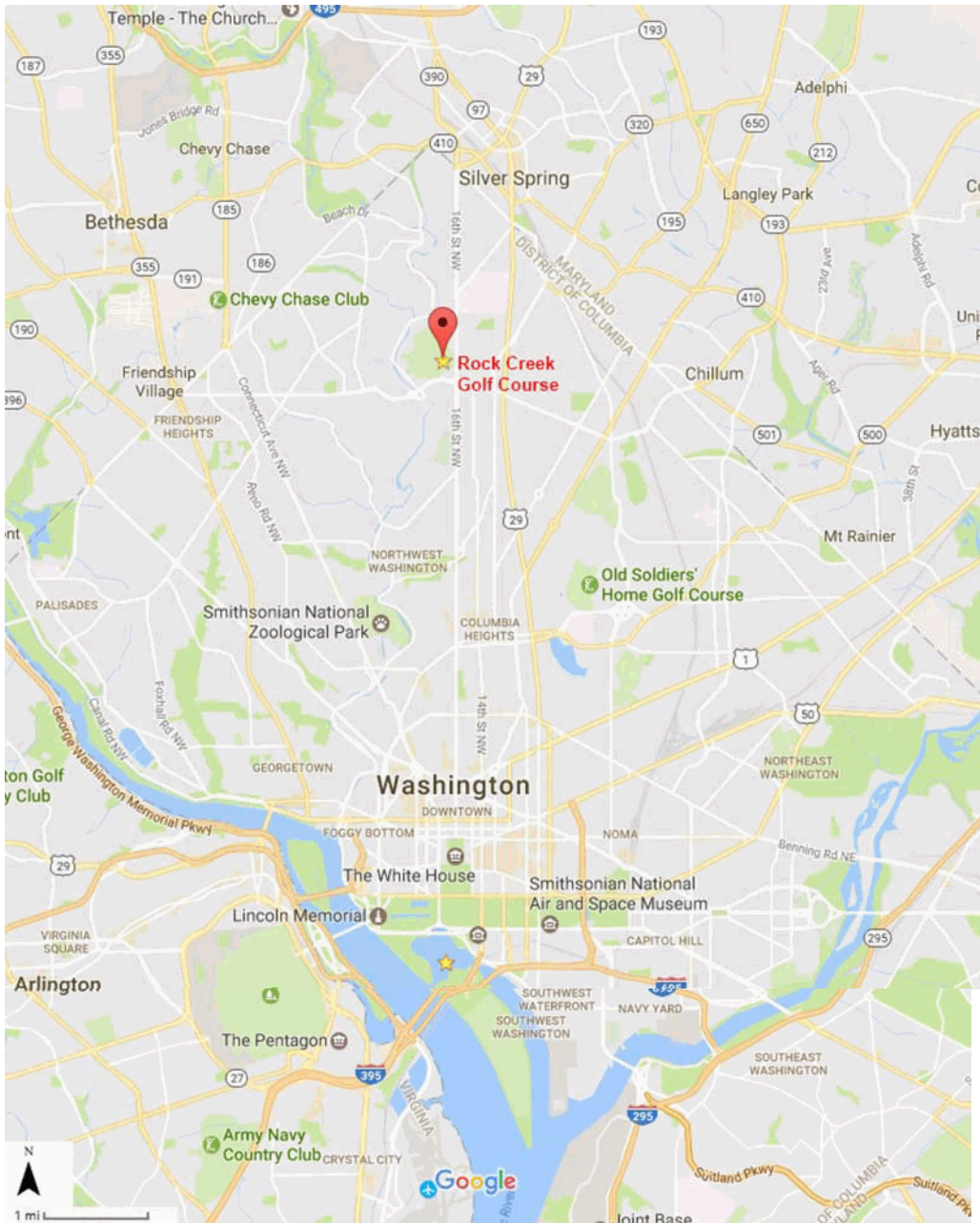
Rock Creek Golf Course

Rock Creek Park

**Location Map:**

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Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park



*2017 Google Map showing Rock Creek Golf Course in relation to the National Mall. Rock Creek Golf Course is located approximately six miles north of the U.S. Capitol Building.*

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

## Management Information

**Management Unit:** Rock Creek Park

### General Management Information

**Management Category:** Must be Preserved and Maintained

**Management Category Date:** 07/20/2017

#### Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

The Rock Creek Golf Course is currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing resource in the Rock Creek Park Historic District, which was entered into the register on October 23rd, 1991. The Rock Creek Park Historic District lists the period of significance as 1791-1941. A 2014 amendment to the nomination identified many of the historic district's mid-century features as contributing resources, including the Rock Creek Golf Course clubhouse. The amendment expanded the period of significance to 1791-1972

**Maintenance Location Code:** 112700

## Agreements, Legal Interest, and Access

### Management Agreement:

**Type of Agreement:** Concession Contract/Permit

**Expiration Date:** 12/28/2018

#### Management Agreement Explanatory Narrative:

As of spring 2017 Rock Creek Golf Course is managed by Golf Course Specialists, under a concession contract. The contract is set to expire in the near future. Subsequent updates to the CLI will capture the terms of the future concession agreement.

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

**NPS Legal Interest:**

**Type of Interest:** Fee Simple

**Public Access:**

**Type of Access:** Unrestricted

**Explanatory Narrative:**

At the time of the completion of the CLI in 2017 the course was open to the public during the following hours:

Seasonal Course Hours

May – August: 5:30am – 8:00pm

September: 6:00am – 7:00pm

October 1 – November 5: 7:00am – 6:30pm

November 6 – November 30: 7:00am – 4:00pm

January 1 – March 12: 8:00am – 2:00pm (W-F)

8:00am – 3:00pm (S-S)

March 13 – March 31: 6:30am – 5:30pm

April 1 – April 30: 6:30am – 7:00pm

**Adjacent Lands Information**

**Do Adjacent Lands Contribute?** Yes

**Adjacent Lands Description:**

Contributing lands outside of the boundaries of the Rock Creek Golf Course Cultural Landscape include the entirety of Rock Creek Park, composed of the Rock Creek Park Historic District, and bounded by the Maryland-District of Columbia line to the north and the National Zoo to the south.

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

## National Register Information

### Existing National Register Status

#### National Register Landscape Documentation:

Entered Documented

#### National Register Explanatory Narrative:

Rock Creek Golf Course is listed on the National Register as part of the Rock Creek Park Historic District (1991). The Rock Creek Park Historic District nomination form identifies statewide significance under criteria A, B and C, in the areas of Architecture, Community Planning and Development, Conservation, Entrainment/Recreation, Industry, Landscape Architecture, Military and Other: Horticulture. The period of significance is listed as 1791-1941, which encompasses Andrew Ellicott's 1791 survey of areas within the park, the park's founding in 1890, and improvements made to the park through the depression era. In 2014, an amendment to the nomination renamed the historic district as The Rock Creek Valley Historic District, and expanded the period of significance to 1972. The 2014 amendment also acknowledged the significance of the Rock Creek Valley Historic District under Criterion D, for archeology.

#### Existing NRIS Information:

<b>Name in National Register:</b>	Rock Creek Park Historic District
<b>NRIS Number:</b>	91001524

### National Register Eligibility

<b>National Register Concurrence:</b>	Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination
<b>Contributing/Individual:</b>	Contributing
<b>National Register Classification:</b>	District
<b>Significance Level:</b>	Local
<b>Significance Criteria:</b>	A - Associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history
<b>Significance Criteria:</b>	C - Embodies distinctive construction, work of master, or high artistic values



Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

**Period of Significance:**

<b>Time Period:</b>	CE 1921 - 1927
<b>Historic Context Theme:</b>	Creating Social Institutions and Movements
<b>Subtheme:</b>	Recreation
<b>Facet:</b>	Sports (Active)
<b>Other Facet:</b>	Golf Course Development
<b>Time Period:</b>	CE 1963 - 1964
<b>Historic Context Theme:</b>	Expressing Cultural Values
<b>Subtheme:</b>	Architecture
<b>Facet:</b>	NPS Mission 66

**Area of Significance:**

<b>Area of Significance Category:</b>	Entertainment - Recreation
<b>Area of Significance Category:</b>	Landscape Architecture

**Statement of Significance:**

The Rock Creek Golf Course is located on the east side of Rock Creek Park, along 16th Street NW, directly north of Military Road. It consists of an eighteen-hole parkland-style course, originally designed by William S. Flynn, and built between 1921 and 1927. Several holes on the front nine were redesigned by Flynn’s protégé, William F. Gordon, in 1958, following the expansion of Military Road.

This CLI finds that the Rock Creek Golf Course Cultural Landscape, which is part of Rock Creek Park, U.S. Reservation 339, is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A, in the area of Recreation, and under Criterion C, under the area of Landscape Architecture. The Rock Creek Golf Course represents a significant period in history of golf in the United States, and the development of municipal recreation in Washington, DC. Additionally, it is an important local work of golf course architect, William S. Flynn, and a largely intact example of a course designed during the period referred to as the “Golden Age” of golf course architecture. The Golden Age of Golf encompasses a period from the early 1900s to the beginning of the Great Depression. During this period, golf course architects, like William S. Flynn, experimented with creative new course designs that combined artistic sensibilities with strategic concerns.

The Rock Creek Golf Course is currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing resource in the Rock Creek Park Historic District, which was entered onto the register on October 23rd, 1991. The Rock Creek Park Historic District lists the period of significance as 1791-1941. A 2014 amendment to the nomination identified the course’s 1964 clubhouse as contributing

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

resources, as part of the larger Mission 66-era updates made throughout the park. This CLI recommends that the period of significance for the course be refined to 1921-1927 and 1963-1964, correlating with the original design of the course by William S. Flynn, its construction, under the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds and the construction of a new clubhouse, as part of the National Park Service's Mission 66 initiative.

#### CRITERION A

##### Local – Recreation

The Rock Creek Golf Course Cultural Landscape derives local significance under Criterion A, for its importance as one of the first public golf courses constructed in Washington, DC. Designed by renowned golf course architect, William S. Flynn, the course was the second operational public course in the city. Its construction is testament to the growing popularity of golf in the early twentieth century. It is also a reflection of shifting priorities in park design and an increased emphasis on providing space for active recreation.

The early 1900s saw a huge boom in golf course construction, driven by the rise of suburban country clubs built for upper and middle classes. During this period, often referred to as the Golden Age of Golf, enthusiasts promoted the benefits of the sport for all levels of society. They advocated for the construction of public courses to serve urban residents who lacked the means to join private clubs. The municipal golf movement inspired hundreds of new golf courses in cities and small towns across the country. Designed for players of modest means, these courses were centrally located, or easily accessible by public transportation, and maintained low greens fees. In Washington, DC, the first public golf course opened at East Potomac Park in 1920. Its immediate popularity led Lt. Colonel Clarence Sherrill, the Officer in Charge of Public Buildings and Grounds, to request funds to build a second public course, at Rock Creek Park. Construction of the Rock Creek Park course began in 1921, under the direction of Public Buildings and Grounds architect, Irving Payne. In 1922, Sherrill hired well-known golf course architect, William S. Flynn, to consult on the course design. A nine-hole course was completed in 1923 and dedicated by President Warren G. Harding, who participated in the course's opening tournament. One year later, to accommodate public demand, Flynn redesigned Rock Creek into an eighteen-hole course, which opened in 1926.

The construction of a golf course in Rock Creek Park reflected a shifting approach to the design of recreational facilities in the early twentieth century. Rock Creek Park was originally established in 1895, during the 19th century urban parks movement. The urban park philosophy promoted the development of large urban parks to provide refuge from the dirt, heat and crowds of America's rapidly growing cities. Naturalistic landscape design offered space for passive recreation such as carriage rides or picnics. But soon after the turn of the century, Washington residents began to demand space for more active, organized pursuits. A 1907 Washington Post article asked, "is a public park a beautiful space to be merely looked at or is it a place to be used?" (Washington Post, March 10 1907:R7) Popular sports like tennis and golf required ample space and specifically designated and designed courts and courses. The construction of Rock Creek Golf Course is testament to the shift away from passive, pastoral landscapes designed during the 19th century, and towards a more facilities-based park that

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

would remain popular throughout the 20th century.

Subsequent changes to the course—specifically the construction of a new clubhouse between 1960 and 1964—reflect another important 20th century development in park design. During the Mission 66 era (1945-1972), the National Park Service engaged in a nationwide building program intended to modernize the park system, to accommodate and attract new visitors. As part of the overall improvements made to Rock Creek Park during this time, the Rock Creek Golf Course clubhouse is considered a significant examples of this trend.

#### CRITERION C

##### Local – Landscape Architecture

Rock Creek Park Golf Course is also significant under Criterion C, for its importance as a local example of the work of noted golf course architect, William S. Flynn. Despite catering to a markedly less wealthy clientele, many municipal golf courses built during the Golden Age of Golf were the work of prominent golf course designers like Flynn. Flynn’s work at courses like Shinnecock Hills, in Long Island, is still regarded as among the finest golf course design in the U.S. During his relatively short career, William Flynn designed more than thirty courses throughout the country and remodeled or expanded approximately thirty more, often collaborating with civil engineer and business partner, Howard Toomey.

Flynn is most recognized for his parkland-style designs, which are laid out across rolling terrain and incorporate mature trees. The steep topography and wooded environs of Rock Creek lent itself to the dramatic parkland-style Flynn was known for. Flynn’s sensitivity to future advances in golf technology is another hallmark present at Rock Creek. The course’s nearly intact nature and continued use over the past 95 years is testament to Flynn’s concern for building courses that would stand the test of time. The final course at Rock Creek was praised for its scenic beauty and challenging design.

## State Register Information

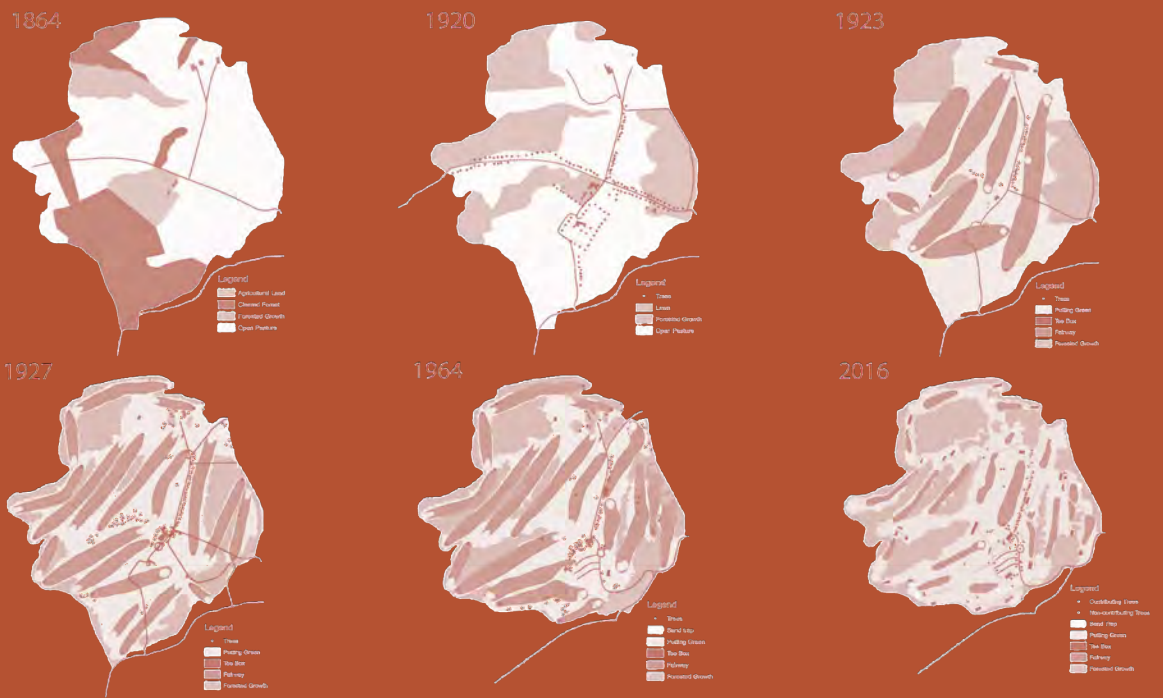
**Date Listed:** 10/23/1991

**Name:** Rock Creek Park Historic District

### Explanatory Narrative:

The Rock Creek Valley Historic District, first listed in 1991 and amended in 2014, meets District of Columbia Designation Criteria A (Events), B (History), D (Architecture and Urbanism), F (Creative Master), and G (Archeology). The Historic District’s period of significance is continuous, spanning from 1791-1972, with two additional periods of significance for archeological resources, from 3000 to 600 BCE and 1740 to 1800 CE. The 1972 end date corresponds with the creation and evolution of bridle and foot trails, and the construction of the Park Road Tennis Courts, developed as part of the Mission 66 program to improve the park’s recreational resources. The Rock Creek Valley Historic district retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association and sufficient time has elapsed to allow for an appropriate historic perspective.

# Chronology + Physical History



Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

## Chronology & Physical History

### Cultural Landscape Type and Use

**Cultural Landscape Type:** Designed

**Current and Historic Use/Function:**

**Primary Historic Function:** Golf Course

**Primary Current Use:** Golf Course

**Current and Historic Names:**

**Name**

Rock Creek Golf Course

**Type of Name**

Both Current And Historic

**Ethnographic Study Conducted:**

No Survey Conducted

**Chronology:**

Year	Event	Annotation
12000 - 7500 BCE		Paleo-Indian peoples hunted in the Coastal Plain along the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers.
7500 - 1000 BCE		Archaic-Indian peoples hunted, fished, and seasonally camped along the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers.
CE 1000 - 1608		Woodland peoples fished, farmed domesticated plants, and settled villages along the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers. Evidence suggests a trail crossing at Milkhouse Ford dates to this period.
CE 1608	Explored	Captain John Smith is first English settler to explore and map the Potomac River and its Eastern Branch.
CE 1612	Platted	Captain John Smith publishes General Historie of Virginia, which maps his explorations along the Potomac River, its Eastern Branch and the area around Rock Creek.
CE 1688	Land Transfer	Charles Calvert, 5th Lord Baltimore, grants Henry Darnall 6,000 acres of land in present day Washington and Montgomery County, Maryland. Darnall's extensive holdings include "Gyrle's (Girl's) Portion" which consists of 1776 acres north of Washington, DC's original boundary, including the area around Rock Creek Golf Course.



Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

CE 1711 - 1860	Developed	Over the course of several generations, the area north of Washington, DC is developed for agricultural use by tobacco and wheat farmers.
CE 1739 - 1740	Land Transfer	Darnall's Rock Creek land passes to Charles Carroll who leases portions of it.
CE 1790	Established	The Residence Act of 1790 establishes the District of Columbia. Pierre L'Enfant lays out the new federal city of the District of Columbia, sited between the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers.
CE 1801	Established	The 1801 Organic Act places the District of Columbia under the control of the US Congress and organized the unincorporated area north of the district into Washington County.
CE 1830	Engineered	Sometime prior to 1830 Jacob Hoyle purchases land along the eastern bank of Rock Creek, just below Milk House Ford Road. The land is part of the southern section of the future Rock Creek Golf Course. Between 1830 and 1860 Hoyle constructed two buildings on his property and cleared part of it for farmland.
CE 1861	Built	1861 Boschke Map of Washington shows the future site of Rock Creek Golf Course owned by three men, all farmers: J. Pilling, James Moreland and Jacob Hoyle. A series of structures are located throughout the site -- the Morelands lived in a house near the present day golf course club house. Sometime prior to 1861 the land was partially cleared for agricultural uses.
CE 1861 - 1864	Removed	During the Civil War, trees between present-day Oregon Avenue and Georgia Avenue, north of Military Road, are cleared to provide sightlines between Fort DeRussy and Fort Stevens.
CE 1862	Built	Military Road constructed.
CE 1865 - 1894	Purchased/Sold	The antebellum farms of Hoyle, Moreland and Pilling are sold to new owners: Samuel Freas and William J. Cowden. The land continues to be cultivated as farmland.

Rock Creek Golf Course  
 Rock Creek Park

CE 1867	Planned	Major, Nathaniel Michler, Corps of Engineers, submits a report to the Senate's Public Buildings and Grounds Committee, suggesting Congress acquire land in the valley of Rock Creek in northern Washington, DC, for a public park.
CE 1889	Land Transfer	Congress passes the Rock Creek Park Act and approves the acquisition of 2,000 acres north of the Klinge Ford Bridge.
CE 1891 - 1890	Planned	The boundaries of Rock Creek Park are determined.
CE 1894	Land Transfer	Lands owned by Samuel Freas and William J. Cowden are transferred to the US Government.
CE 1895	Maintained	On January 1, 1985 the Rock Creek Board of Control assumes management responsibility for the new park, which encompassed approximately 1,606 acres.
CE 1904	Planned	The Commissioners of the District of Columbia begin to discuss plans for constructing a municipal golf course in Washington, DC.
CE 1905	Built	Camp Goodwill and the Baby Hospital Camp, both summer camps for deprived white children and their mothers, are founded on the former Cowden and Freas farms. Old farmhouse structures are repurposed for camp use.
CE 1906	Planned	DC Commissioners announce plans to establish the city's first public golf course at Rock Creek Park. The recommended site of the 18-hole course was along the south side of the Brightwood Reservoir, extending north along the east bank of Rock Creek, and crossing Military Road just above Milk House Ford.
CE 1907 - 1908	Built	The golf course's first nine-holes are partially constructed. Official opening is delayed because of lack of funds to complete the course.
CE 1909 - 1916	Abandoned	The course languishes, incomplete and unused.

Rock Creek Golf Course  
 Rock Creek Park

CE 1910 - 1916	Engineered	Milkhouse Ford Road is partially paved east of Camp Goodwill. Additional road construction is also completed at the future golf course site.
CE 1911	Established	An arboretum is established to the north, east and south of Camp Goodwill.
CE 1913	Planned	A new eighteen-hole golf course is recommended for Rock Creek Park, to be built after the completion of the newly announced East Potomac Park Course.
CE 1916	Built	Playing fields, a large picnic area, shelters and tennis courts were built adjacent to the reservoir, at the site of the unfinished course.
CE 1918	Planned	Landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmstead Jr., develops a comprehensive plan for the improvement and management of Rock Creek Park. The future site of Rock Creek Golf Course is designated as part of a 150-acre unit providing space for leisurely walks and picnics.
	Maintained	The administration of Rock Creek Park is reorganized under the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds.
CE 1919 - 1925	Built	Joyce Road constructed by the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds
CE 1920	Built	Washington, DC's first public golf course opens at East Potomac Park.
CE 1921	Built	Lt. Colonel Clarence Sherrill, Officer in Charge of the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds, requests \$50,000 to build a new golf course in Rock Creek Park. Work on a nine-hole course begins in October, under the direction of Public Buildings and Grounds architect Irving W. Payne.
CE 1922	Designed	Colonel Sherrill hires golf course architect, William S. Flynn, to serve as consultant for the design of the golf course. Flynn spends two days on site going over the grounds to locate places for greens and trees.
CE 1923	Moved	Camp Goodwill is relocated to a site west of Rock Creek, to make way for the new golf course.

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

	Established	On May 23, 1923, President Warren G. Harding officially opens and dedicates the new nine-hole course. The course is initially operated by private concessionaires Norman B. Frost and Harold D. Miller.
	Rehabilitated	Existing farmhouse, previously used by Camp Goodwill, is renovated for use as the Rock Creek Golf Course clubhouse.
CE 1924 - 1926	Built	The popularity of the new course leads to the construction of an additional nine holes, also designed by Flynn.
CE 1924	Maintained	In December 1924, Frost and Miller's concessionaire contract is canceled due to unsatisfactory conditions and management. The Welfare and Recreation Association takes over the contract.
	Excavated	During planning of additional nine holes, an original hole from the unfinished 1907-1908 course is discovered. Flynn incorporates the hole into his new design, as Hole 5.
CE 1925	Established	The Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital is established and appointed as managers of Washington's park system, taking over administration of Rock Creek Park from the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds.
CE 1926	Altered	The Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital is established, and appointed as managers of Washington's park system, taking over administration of Rock Creek Park from the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds.
	Altered	S.G. Loeffler takes over management of Rock Creek golf course. Loeffler contributes \$30,000 to improvements and construction of the full eighteen-holes. Changes to the course include the near total redesign of original nine-holes, construction of back-nine and the renovation and enlargement of clubhouse.
	Built	Full eighteen-hole course opens on April 3, 1926.
CE 1927	Built	Golf Course Access Road is constructed.

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

CE 1929 - 1939	Eroded	Condition of courses under Leoffler deteriorates. Wooded terrain proves difficult to manage and lack of water in summer months causes deterioration of tees and greens.
CE 1931	Altered	Rock Creek course manager constructs a practice putting green along the course`s eighth fairway and a pitching and putting course where golfers could practice while waiting for their turn to tee off.
CE 1933	Land Transfer	Under Executive Orders 6166 and 6228 administration of Rock Creek Park is turned over to the National Park Service.
CE 1939	Reconstructed	Responding to complaints from golfers, Loeffler rebuilds several of the greens.
CE 1941 - 1951	Maintained	The DC Recreation Board repeatedly attempts to take over the NPS golf courses, including Rock Creek, citing mismanagement under Leoffler. Department of Interior refuses to transfer management responsibilities to Recreation Board while DC-managed parks remain segregated.
CE 1957 - 1958	Rehabilitated	Military Road is reconstructed and widened into a four-lane freeway. The expansion destroys part of the southeast section of the Rock Creek Course. William F. Gordon, a former architect at Flynn`s firm, is hired to help with the required redesign of the course. The new road required shortening the third hole, moving the fourth hole to the existing fifth hole, constructing a completely new fifth hole and reworking part of the sixth hole.
CE 1958	Planned	NPS proposes plans for new clubhouse to be built next to the existing structure.
CE 1960 - 1963	Built	Several shade structures are built near tee boxes throughout the course.
CE 1963	Built	NPS receives necessary funds and new clubhouse constructed in Mission 66 style.

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

CE 1964 - 1979	Planned	An independent consultant for NPS concludes that deferred maintenance and deterioration at Rock Creek Park, Langston and East Potomac courses required at least \$2.1 million dollar investment in improvements to the courses.
CE 1970 - 1975	Altered	Deterioration of back nine requires managers at Rock Creek shorten holes.
CE 1982	Maintained	Golf Course Specialists, Inc. takes over concessionaire contract at Rock Creek Park.
CE 1985	Restored	Golf Course Specialists restores Rock Creek`s back nine to their original layout, clears overgrown fairways and rehabilitates greens.
CE 2016	Rehabilitated	Golf Course Specialists conducts tree clearance throughout the course and dismantles several deteriorating shade structures, originally built in the 1960s.

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

**Physical History:**

CLI author's note:

The below physical narrative relies heavily on Patricia Kuhn Babin's work, *Links to the Past: A Historic Resources Study of National Park Service Golf Courses in Washington, DC*. The Historic Resource Study (HRS) was researched and written during the same period as the completion of the Rock Creek Golf Course CLI (2016-2017). Babin's work is quoted extensively throughout this document. For more detailed information on the history of Rock Creek Golf Course and how it relates to the history of golf in Washington, DC, readers are advised to refer to the HRS.

**PRE COLUMBIAN HISTORY AND NATIVE AMERICAN SETTLEMENT, 15,000 BC TO 1608 CE**

Archeological and historical evidence suggest humans have inhabited the area around Washington, DC since 15,000 BCE. From 12,000 to 7,500 BCE—the Paleo-Indian Period—they survived in small, mobile bands of hunter-gatherers. Seasonal migrations followed large game, including elk, caribou and deer and native peoples fashioned tools out of stone, bone and wood. Hunting parties may have used the area around Rock Creek Park as a temporary stopping point but no evidence of long-term settlements from this period has been found (Bedell, et al. 2011:9-12; Bedell 2008:3).

During the Archaic Period, which lasted from 7,500 to 1,000 BCE, warming climates and rising sea levels forced native populations to adapt. Circa 2,200 BCE, the Late Archaic Period, they developed new technologies for hunting, fishing and food preparation and established larger, more permanent settlements along the Potomac. As the size and permanency of tribal populations grew, local resource exploitation increased, and new social hierarchies emerged. New tools included large, heavy stone points, or “broadspears,” mortars and pestles and large bowls carved out of steatite and soapstone. Late Archaic people quarried quartzite cobbles and soapstone from the hillside beds around Rock Creek, south of Military Road. The quartzite was chipped and shaped into tools at nearby campsites and soapstone carved into bowls and cooking vessels (Bedell, et al. 2011: 9-12; Bedell 2008:3).

These developments continued through the Woodland Period, 1,000 to 1,600 BCE, as Native Americans began to experiment with farming, cultivating crops like maize as early as 1,000 BCE. In the years immediately preceding European settlement, Eastern Algonquin tribes, known as the Conoy or Kanawha, inhabited the area around present day Washington. The Conoy are believed to have arrived on the inner coastal plain in the early fifteenth century. Their territory extended from St. Mary's County, Maryland, at the mouth of the Potomac River, to Washington, DC, and possibly included lands on the Virginia side of the Potomac River (Commisso 2013:54; Potter 1993:19).

Thus far, archeological studies have produced no evidence of permanent villages in Rock Creek Park (Berger 2008:3-6). However, during studies of quarry sites conducted between 1889 and 1894, William Henry Holmes, head of the American Bureau of Ethnography, noted some evidences of primitive dwelling on terraces overlooking Rock Creek, west of Mount Pleasant

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

(Holmes 1893:4.53). Among researchers, there is speculation that Milkhouse Ford Road, which crossed the future site of Rock Creek Golf Course, originated as an American Indian trail. Historic maps and early settlers' comments indicate it existed prior to European settlement of the area. (Poss 2013:4,11-12).

#### Summary

There is no evidence of agricultural activity or any permanent settlements at the future site of Rock Creek Golf Course during this period. Dense, old growth forest covered the area. Researchers believe that the future Milkhouse Ford Road was originally a Native American trail that ran through the center of the site. While there is no conclusive evidence to date the trail, Milkhouse Ford Road is believed to be one of the oldest roads in Washington and anecdotal accounts suggest it was extent as a trail and creek crossing prior to 1608 (Poss 2013:4,11-13).

Historic maps and recent research suggests that at the time of first European contact, approximately 0.5 miles of foot trails were extant at Rock Creek Golf Course. For a map of historic conditions at Rock Creek Golf Course prior to European settlement, see Appendix A, Image 1.

#### EARLY SETTLEMENT, 1609-1790 CE

In 1608, Captain John Smith led the first documented exploration of the area around the Potomac River and initiated contact with local tribes. His maps and writings document encounters with the Nacotchtanks, an Algonquin-speaking tribe with a large settlement located at the confluence of the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers, on the southeastern shore below modern day Washington (Potter 1993:10-11,19,161; Berger 2008:1.14). From their base in the central Nacotchtank village, inhabitants were ideally situated to take advantage of trade routes and various resources found along the rivers. Smith's Map of Virginia, published in 1612, extensively documents these waterways, including an inlet that appears to be Rock Creek (Bedell 2008:1.14-17; Poss 2013:15).

European settlement in the area around Rock Creek Park began in the late 17th century and was predominantly Scotch-Irish (Bushong 1990:12). White settlers displaced the Native American population within a generation, though the tribes of the Potomac Valley profoundly influenced newly arrived Europeans. Early settlements survived on Indian cultivated crops, and trade with the surrounding tribes. In the fertile soil around Rock Creek, settlers planted corn and tobacco, as the Native Americans had before them (Bushong 1990:12,16).

The formal acquisition of the land around Rock Creek began in 1688, when Henry Darnall obtained patents for approximately 6,000 acres in present day Washington and Montgomery County, Maryland. Darnall's extensive holdings included "Gyrle's (Girl's) Portion" which consisted of 1,776 acres extending north from Washington, DC's original boundary, to modern day Silver Spring, including the area around Rock Creek Golf Course (Bushong 1990:13; Gahn 1969:33). The Rock Creek land passed to Charles Carroll in 1739. Carroll leased some of the land in 1739 and 1740. Rock Creek Valley residents, interviewed in 1762 to determine the boundaries of Gyrle's Portion, reported several families residing in the Rock Creek Valley in the



## Rock Creek Golf Course Rock Creek Park

preceding decades (Poss 2013:15; Bedell 2008:33-34).

### Summary

More research is needed to determine what, if any, landscape features date to this period. There is no evidence that the site was cleared, cultivated or otherwise improved. The creek crossing at Milkhouse Ford and the associated trail running east, through the future golf course, continued to serve as the primary road in area, but there is no documentation of improvements or changes made during this time.

### A NEW CAPITAL CITY, 1790-1865 CE

In 1790, the Residence Act authorized President Washington to select the location for the permanent capital of the United States of America. On January 24, Washington announced the capital would be built on a ten-mile tract at the confluence of the Potomac and Eastern Branch (Anacostia) rivers. Washington appointed three commissioners of the District of Columbia to survey the area and oversee the construction of government buildings. While Pierre L'Enfant drew up plans for the city of Washington, Andrew Ellicott and Benjamin Banneker surveyed a diamond-shaped area to the north. The area eventually made up Washington County. Forty boundary stones, laid at one-mile intervals, established the boundaries of Washington, DC. These were based on celestial calculations made by Banneker, a self-taught astronomer of African descent, and one of the few free blacks living in the vicinity. (Leach 1997:VIII.7). As part of the Organic Act of 1801, Maryland and Virginia ceded the area within the 100-square-mile diamond to the federal government. The future site of Rock Creek Golf Course was part of the land ceded by Maryland, and eventually became part of Washington County (Bushong 1990:24).

During the early 19th century, wealthy, landed gentry owned the majority of Washington County. In addition to larger country estates, a few farmers made their home along the banks of Rock Creek. Most of these farms were clustered near Milkhouse Ford Road. Milkhouse Ford, one of the earliest roads in the region, continued to serve as the main crossing in the northern Rock Creek Valley. Land to the east was owned by a number of farmers, including Jacob Hoyle, James Pilling, J. Moreland and Frederick Titnum. These families settled the area during the first half of the nineteenth century (Bushong 1990:33). By the time Albert Boshke surveyed Washington, DC, between 1856 and 1859, owners had cleared the future site of Rock Creek Golf Course and partially cultivated the land for agricultural use. Boshcke's map, published in 1861, illustrates early, pre-Civil War expansion north and west from the historic city center. Still, Washington County remained rural. On the eve of war, the future site of Rock Creek Golf Course was a patchwork of farms surrounded by uncultivated, densely forested land (Boshcke 1861).

Once war was declared, in April 1861, a series of measures to protect Washington from Confederate forces were quickly enacted. In October of that year, the Army Corps of Engineers oversaw the construction of Fort DeRussy. Located immediately west of the future Rock Creek Golf Course, across Rock Creek, the fort was part of a ring of fortifications surrounding the city. According to engineer specifications, troops cleared land of trees and other large vegetation for two miles in front of all forts, to increase visibility. Around Fort

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

DeRussy, “at least 56 acres of trees were cut down to clear sight lines for the guns and provide lumber for the construction of the fort’s quarters, outbuildings and abates.” Any trees not previously cleared by farmers on the east of Milkhouse Ford, were cut down during this period (Bushong 1990:42; Cooling and Owen 2010:166).

The construction of Military Road, in September 1962, further altered the landscape around the future golf course site. The road originally connected Fort DeRussy, Fort Stevens and Fort Sumner. It was eventually extended to forts in northeast Washington and soon replaced Milkhouse Ford Road as the major route through the northern part of Rock Creek valley (Berger 2008:50; Cooling 2010:34-35; Poss 2013:24).

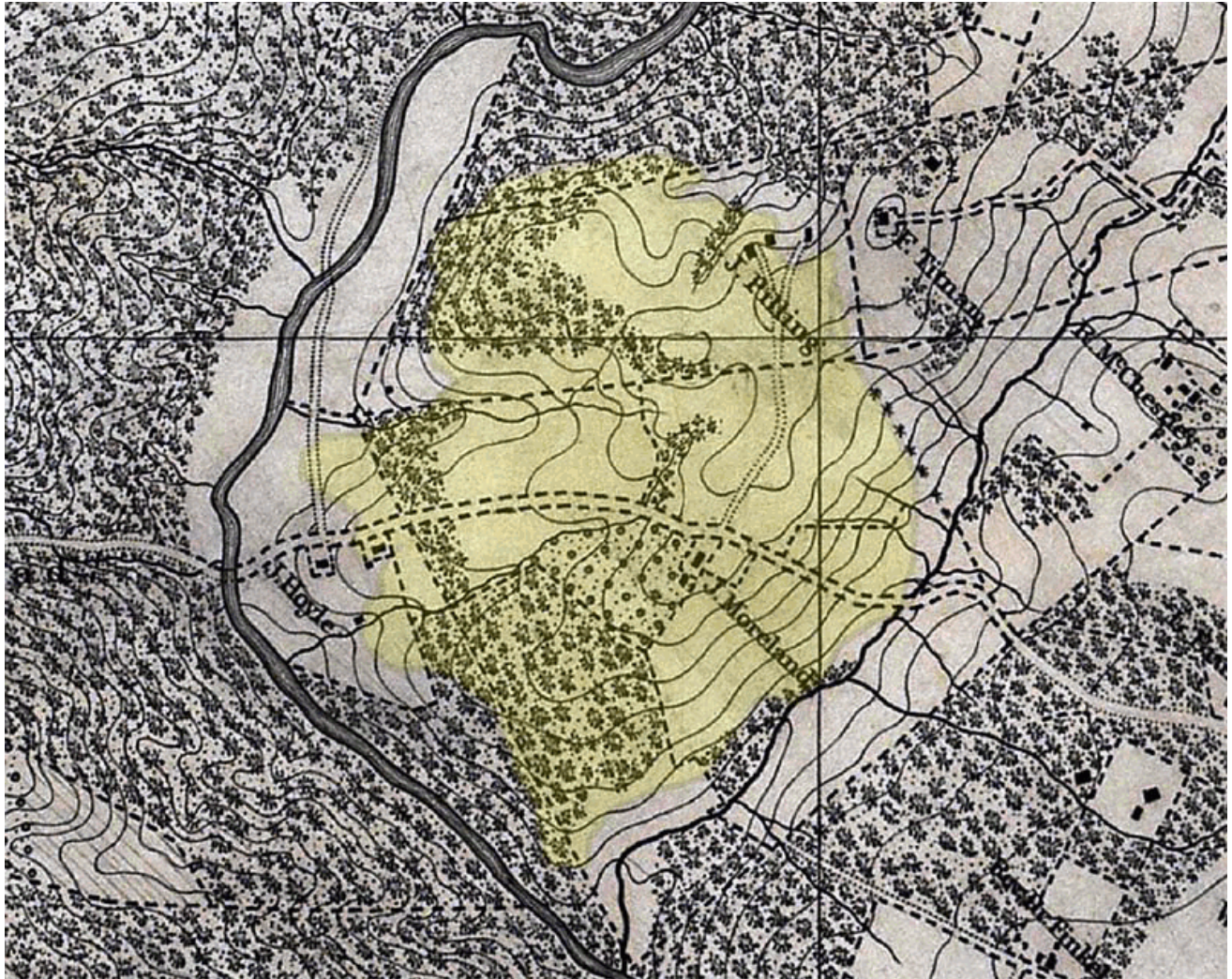
#### Summary

Though and exact date for the settlement of the Rock Creek Golf Course site has yet to be determined, evidence cited in Bushong’s History of Rock Creek Park suggests the area was first settled and improved during the early 19th century. The first documentation of structures and other landscape features dates to Albert Boschke’s Topographic Map of the District of Columbia, published in 1861. This map depicts five buildings, owned by J. Moreland and J. Pilling, present on site. These owners cleared much of the land for agricultural purposes. J. Moreland planted an orchard on part of his property. Areas surrounding the farms, especially along the site’s southern slope, remained heavily forested. Milkhouse Ford Road is clearly documented, as well one smaller, unnamed carriage road leading north from the Moreland to the Pilling farm. In total, the Boshcke Map depicts approximately 0.8 miles of roads present on site in 1861.

Later maps of the site, including Nathaniel Michner’s 1867 survey of Rock Creek, depict the hilltop site as completely denuded. Civil War documentation suggests that troops stationed at nearby Fort DeRussy conducted tree clearance in the area as part of the fort’s 1861 construction. Military Road, which defines the Rock Creek Golf Course site to the south, was constructed during this period. The road itself is outside the boundaries of this CLI.

An 1864 map of historic conditions at Rock Creek Golf Course, is located in Appendix A, Image 2.

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park



*Topographical Map of the District of Columbia showing property ownership in 1857. The future golf course site is shaded. Boschke, A, et al. Topographical map of the District of Columbia. Washington: D. McClelland, Blanchard & Mohun, 1861. Retrieved from t*



Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park



*Civil War era map of District of Columbia showing clear-cut trees around site. The future golf course site is shaded. Barnard, J. G., Boschke, A. & United States Coast Survey (1865), Map of the environs of Washington: compiled from Boschkes' map of the Di*

THE PUBLIC PARK MOVEMENT AND FOUNDING OF ROCK CREEK PARK, 1866-1890 CE

In the years immediately following the Civil War, an urban parks movement spread throughout

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

the United States. The movement emphasized the need for spaces where city dwellers could find refuge from the dirt, heat and crowds of America's rapidly growing metropolitan centers. New York's Central Park (1859), designed by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux, influenced the establishment and design of parks in numerous American cities, including Fairmount Park in Philadelphia (1865), San Francisco's Golden Gate Park (1870), and Forest Park in St. Louis (1876) (Bushong 1990:61; Poss 2013:29).

Olmsted believed parks were imperative to good health and provided both physical and spiritual benefits to people. His park designs were influenced by aesthetic philosophies and landscape theories emphasizing the sublime, beautiful and picturesque. In Olmsted designed parks winding walks and drives offered a variety of scenes, meant to elicit a range of intellectual and emotional responses (Ranney 1990; Hawkins 1991:277,258; Poss 2013:29).

Olmsted came to Washington several times during the Civil War, while he was a member of the U.S. Sanitary Commission. During his time in the capital, he made trips to Rock Creek Valley, and believed the area was an ideal setting for a park. In 1866, Congress authorized Major Nathaniel Michler of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, to search for nearby lands that could be used for a new public park. Michler quickly concurred with Olmsted and others. In his report to Congress, submitted in 1867, Michler enthusiastically endorsed Rock Creek, calling attention to the valley's natural features and scenery (Mackintosh 1985:3; Bushong 1990:63). He noted it already possessed much that was beautiful and picturesque, including "charming drives and walks," ravines, primeval forest and cultivated fields. It could only be improved through "the taste of the artist and the skill of the engineer" (Poss 2013:155) Michler envisioned ponds and lakes for "useful and ornamental purposes," zoological and botanical gardens, and grounds for playing and promenading. (Poss 2013:30)

Aware of the threat posed by development, Michler recommended Congress act swiftly, and purchase the land before the area was overrun with "costly suburban villas" (Mackintosh 1985:3). Despite Michler's warning, for the next two decades, major public works projects were almost entirely focused on central Washington. In 1886, Frederick Law Olmsted chided Washington for its failure to protect Rock Creek:

At our national capital, while we are every year adding to its outfit new decorations in marble and bronze, formal plantations, specimen trees, and floral and busy millinery, we leave the charmingly wooded glen of Rock Creek in private hands, subject any day to be laid waste. Once gone, the wealth of the nation could not buy for Washington half the value of landscape beauty that would have been lost. (Olmsted 1886:964)

In 1884, Senator Thomas Bayard of Delaware introduced legislation to further review the Michler report. Civic leaders in Washington lent their support to the proposal. After further studies on the feasibility and benefits, Representative John Hemphill of South Carolina brought a bill to Congress for the establishment of a 2,500-acre park along Rock Creek. In March 1889 Congress approved the bill creating Rock Creek Park and the National Zoological Park (Mackintosh 1985:12)

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

After years of advocacy, the nation's capital now had a public park to rival those in other American cities. Rock Creek Park's enabling legislation stated the park was "dedicated and set apart as a public park or pleasure ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people." (Davis 1998:35; Mackintosh 1985:13-14,123-126). It called for regulations that "shall provide for the preservation from injury or spoliation of all timber, animals, or curiosities within said park, and their retention in their natural condition, as nearly as possible." (Davis 1998:35; Mackintosh 1985:126).

Within a month of President Benjamin Harrison's signing the park legislation, the Rock Creek Park Commission, created for the sole purpose of purchasing land for the park, set out to determine the park's boundaries. After exploring the valley by carriage, horse and on foot, the Commission determined the tentative boundaries of the park to be 16th Street, from Blagden's Mill to the Maryland border on the east side of the park and Daniel Road (Oregon Avenue), and Broad Branch as the western boundary. By January 1891 the boundaries were solidified. In April of that year, a map and the valuation of the land were forwarded to the president and the DC Recorder of Deeds (Bushong 1990:76; Poss 2013:37).

At the time of the park's founding, Rock Creek had more than seventy owners. Twenty-one of the land parcels acquired for the park included buildings. Commissioners met with property owners in the proposed park in April and May of 1891, and interviewed individuals concerning compensation. Most owners stated that they wanted reimbursement for what they had paid for the land, plus the valuation of improvements. The Commission negotiated the purchase of land with each individual landowner. The National Archives holds records of all the sales, along with maps of each property purchased for the purpose of creating Rock Creek Park. Samuel Freas and William J. Cowden owned the farmsteads where the Rock Creek Golf Course was eventually built. Freas' 40 acre property included seven buildings and structures. Cowden's nearly 80 acres included four buildings and structures. Their parcels, numbered 33 (Freas) and 34 (Cowden) were transferred to the Rock Creek Board of Control on December 13, 1894. On January 1, 1895, this body assumed responsibility for the new park, which consisted of 1,605.97 acres purchased for a total of \$1,740,511.45.

#### Summary

Nearly all of the original land owners moved out of the park between 1891 and 1895. The majority of structures were dismantled, though those on the future site of Rock Creek Golf Course were not. All of the farm buildings belonging to Samuel Freas and William J. Cowden, eleven in total were retained. When the land was transferred to the Rock Creek Board of Control in 1890, eleven buildings existed on site; four on the Cowden property and seven on the Freas property. More research is needed to determine the exact dates of these buildings construction. Based on their location, at least five of them were probably present pre-Civil War, originally built by the farms' previous owners, J. Moreland and J. Pilling. GIS mapping suggests that at least part of the Cowden farmhouse was probably built prior to 1857. After the founding of Rock Creek Park, it was reused, first as part of a camp for underprivileged children, and later as the golf course clubhouse. One structure, the Cowden's barn, was used through the 1980s (Bushong 1990:77-85; Bedell 2008:84-85; Boshke Map 1865; National Archives Record Group 79 821\_88001).

## Rock Creek Golf Course

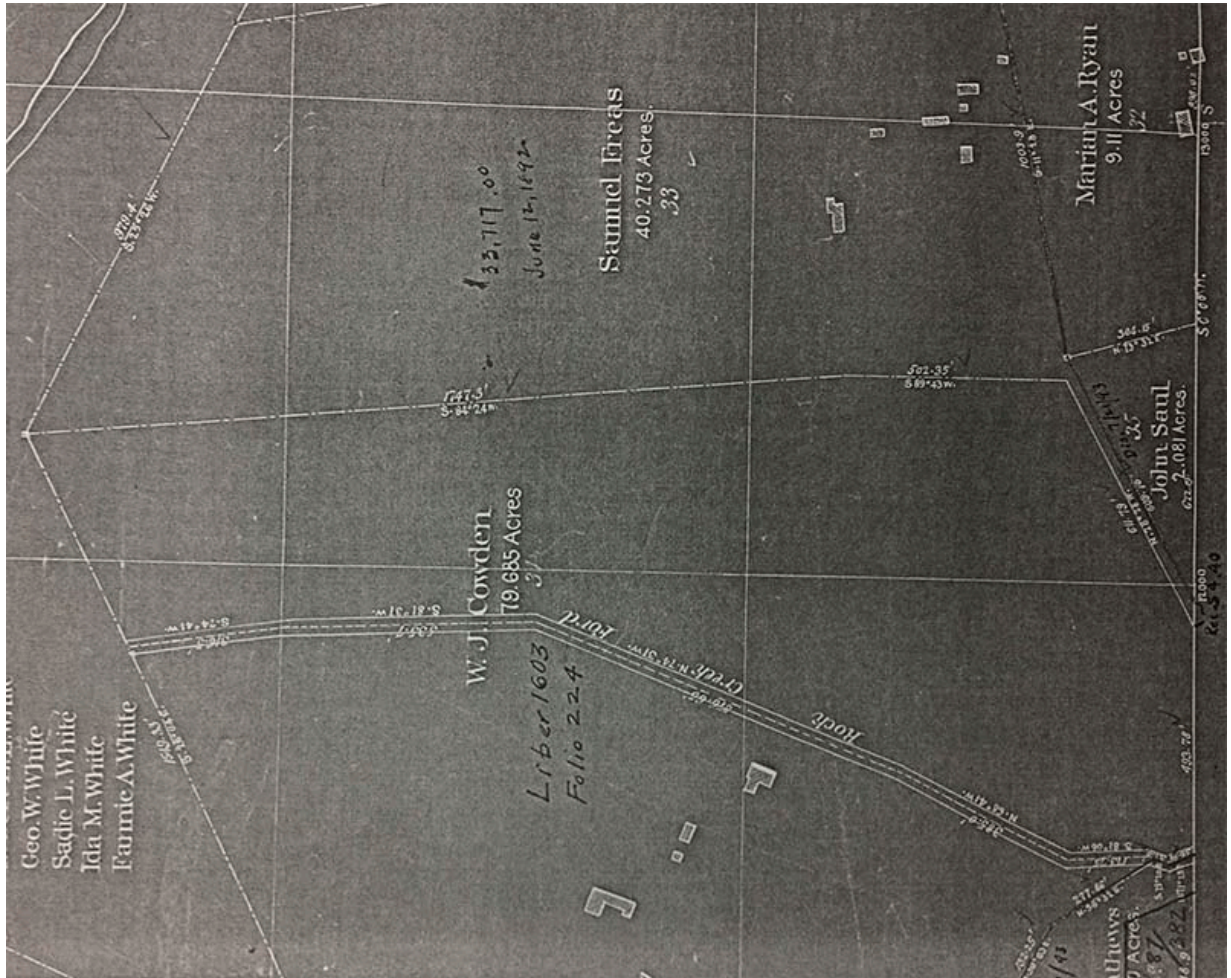
### Rock Creek Park

The trail or carriage road between farmhouses, first shown in Boschke's 1860 map, is missing in an 1892 U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey of the area, but this was probably an oversight, as the road reappears again in later maps, along with new roads between buildings on both properties. The 1892 map shows natural vegetation beginning to return to the hillsides bordering Rock Creek. However, the Cowden and Freas farmsteads remained mostly free of trees, with the exception of orchards planted adjacent to each farmhouse.

An 1890 map of historic conditions at Rock Creek Golf Course is located in Appendix A, Image 3.



Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

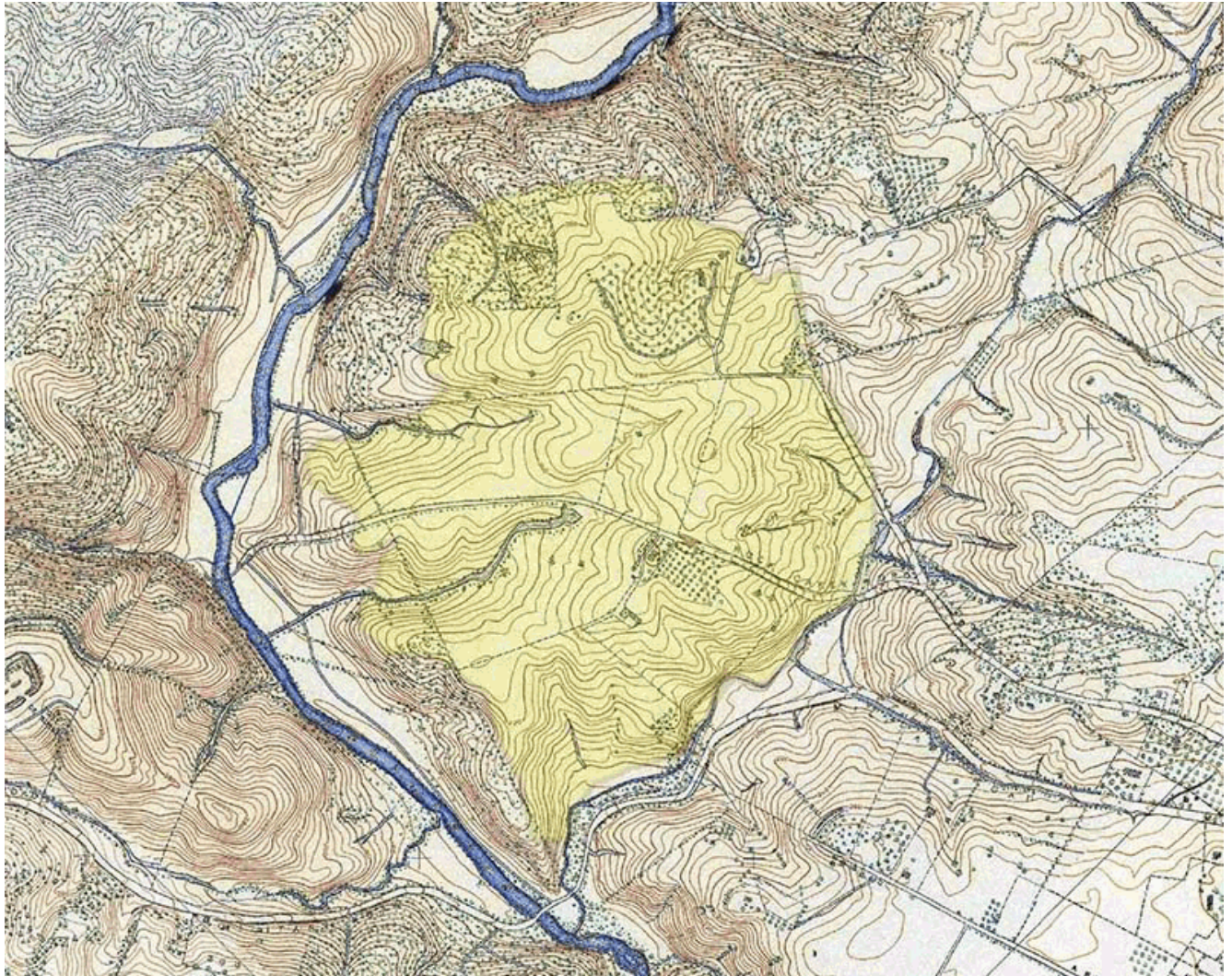


*Property map showing ownership of lots making up future site of Rock Creek Park, 1890. National Archives, Cartographic and Architectural Records, RG79, Rock Creek Park.*



Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

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*United States Coast and Geodesic Survey map from 1892, showing property transferred to Rock Creek Board of Control in 1890. U.S. Coast and Geodesic Survey & Evans & Bartle 1892, District of Columbia. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, fall 2016: <http://www.loc.gov/rr/historic/>*

#### EARLY YEARS AND THE FIRST ROCK CREEK GOLF COURSE, 1890-1920 CE

Lack of funding hampered any major development during the Park's first years of operation. Congress made no appropriations available until 1899, despite calls from the public for

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

construction of roads, trails and other recreational features (Davis 1998:36-37).

The Brightwood Citizens' Association was particularly vocal, lobbying Congress to increase access to the park and design designated space for concerts and sporting activities. A site near 16th Street and Kennedy was promoted as the preferred location for more active pursuits like softball, tennis and golf. The demand for sports facilities reflected evolving ideas related to recreation at the turn of the century. As opportunities for white-collar work increased, a growing number of men found themselves with more free time, and disposable income to spend on leisure activities. Their new jobs required little (if any) manual labor and they soon began to seek out opportunities for more vigorous physical activity during their non-working hours. Organized sports, like baseball, golf and tennis, rose in popularity alongside more casual pursuits like croquet, skating and cycling. Unable to afford fees for private clubs, middle class urban dwellers began to look to city parks to provide them with dedicated sports facilities. By the early 1900s, an increasing number of urban reformers believed that organized recreation was necessary in public parks.

Rock Creek was founded during an earlier era in park planning; one that emphasized passive recreation. As a result, plans for facilities like campgrounds, ball fields and tennis courts met with some resistance. The desire to avoid "artificiality" was among the park's founding design principles. Park managers and the public cited these principals as reason to protect Rock Creek's naturally rugged landscape from the introduction of unnatural elements, and maintain the park as a preserved bit of country within the rapidly developing city (Poss 2013:43).

In the end, the demand for recreation resulted in the construction of sports facilities within the park. As a compromise to those concerned, active recreational spaces were sited in areas where early intrusions had already affected Rock Creek's natural landscapes. In 1900 the DC Water Department obtained Congressional authorization for the construction of the Brightwood Reservoir (located on a site occupied today by the Rock Creek Tennis Stadium, tennis courts and ball fields). Because of the installation of the reservoir, this area of the park was considered an acceptable location for recreational facilities.

Plans for the city's first public golf course, to be built directly south of the reservoir, were announced in 1906. Private golf and country clubs proliferated throughout country in the 1890s, but the majority of Americans could not afford to pay fees to access these courses. Promoters of the game, eager to see it catch on among America's middle class, began to advocate for construction of municipal courses in major U.S. cities. The country's first municipal course opened in 1895, at Van Cortland Park, in the Bronx, and was an immediate success. Public courses were soon opened in Boston and Chicago. Locally, newspaper columnists pressured Washington to follow suit. A 1907 Washington Post article expressed frustration with the lack of opportunities for recreation available in the city's parks:

Is a public park a beautiful place to be merely looked at or is it a place to be used? This question has been answered by several American cities in whose parks public golf courses have been laid out. . . In nearly all city parks playing of lawn tennis, baseball, football, cricket, and croquet is permitted; but it is especially fitting that the public park provide a course for golf,

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

for that is a game none can enjoy otherwise without belonging to a club. The public park can be put to no better use than to provide facilities for the people's pastimes (Washington Post, March 10, 1907:R7).

The appeal of the Brightwood Reservoir site was twofold—it was partially cleared, a result of the reservoir's construction, and had several "natural hazards," which could be incorporated into the course. Both factors would lower the cost of construction, a major concern, for Park Commissioners. Rock Creek's budget, dependent on Congressional approval, fluctuated wildly during the park's first few decades. The idea of a golf course, paid for by the federal government and located on public land, was not without controversy. Commissioners delayed presenting the project to Congress, instead preferring to use funds from the already approved operational budget. Much of this budget for the years 1907 and 1908 was devoted to building the course's first nine holes (Poss 2013:48; Bushong 1990:116).

By September 1, 1907, the first nine holes were nearly complete. The course needed only a small amount of grading, clearing, plowing, and planting. In 1908 Commissioners reported construction on the front-nine was finished, and "good grass growth secured" (Annual Report of the Commissioners of the District of Columbia 1908:189). At this point, The Board of Commissioners appealed to Congress for additional funding, seeking \$2,000 to \$3,000 for the golf course, a request that appears to have been denied (Appropriations Bill Hearings 1908:61-63). Work continued through 1909, yet, despite the commission's adoption of cost saving measures—achieved partly through use of chain gangs for construction work—funds were still required to finish the course.

Stymied by Congress, city commissioners were unable to secure enough money to open the Rock Creek golf course. It remained incomplete and fell into disrepair. In 1911, the Washington Herald reported that it would "require very little retouching to get the putting greens and bunkers in shape" (Washington Herald April 16, 1911). But by that time focus had shifted toward plans for a course at East Potomac Park. Playing fields, a picnic area, shelters and tennis courts were built over the original golf course in 1916 (Bushong 1990:117).

The final site of the Rock Creek Golf Course was, during these years, the location of another early park facility, Camp Goodwill. This summer camp for deprived white children and their mothers began operation in 1905, under the sponsorship of the Committee on Prevention of Consumption (Bushong 1990:115). Camp Goodwill and its affiliate, the Baby Hospital Camp, were constructed on the former Cowden and Freas properties. An old farmhouse and its outbuildings were repurposed for camp use. The "unfortunates" and their "tired mothers" slept in canvas tents pitched in the surrounding fields. A 1914 newspaper article described the "beauty of the spot" where croquet grounds, see-saws, swings, tether poles, sandboxes and baseball fields were "all occupied by happy children" (Bushong 1990:115).

In 1911, the U.S. Forest Service established an experimental arboretum in the area surrounding Camp Goodwill. A cooperative agreement between the Board of Commissioners and the Forest Service allowed the federal agency to use the site primarily for experiments in the hybridization of willow trees. But by 1914, seventy species, representing every region in the United States,

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

had been introduced into this section of the park. By 1920, 2,000 trees of 170 species were being cultivated in the arboretum (Bushong 1990:117). The U.S. Commission of Fine Arts strongly opposed proposals to establish a permanent arboretum and botanical garden within the park (Bushong 1990:117). Their 1916 annual report criticized the planting as “distinctly out of harmony” with the surrounding scenery (Report of the Commission of Fine Art 1916:35).

The controversial arboretum and unfinished golf course are just two examples of the disorganized and piecemeal nature of Rock Creek Park’s early development. By 1917, there was a clear and “urgent need of having a carefully considered plan for the entire park prepared by a competent landscape architect” (Bushong 1990:97; Poss 2013:56-57). The Board of Control commissioned the Olmsted Brothers to prepare a planning study. The resulting report, completed in December 1918, would become a seminal planning document for the improvement and expansion of the park.

The final Olmsted report included a survey of the park’s topography and natural growth areas, and divided the park into landscape types, according to characteristic natural features. Olmsted’s firm proposed a plan for the systematic preservation and enhancement of the landscape, and provided guidance on the construction of roads, trails and other amenities, which could accommodate increased park visitation, without marring the site’s natural scenery. The report’s opening paragraph reiterated Rock Creek Park’s founding legislation, declaring “the dominant consideration, never to be subordinated to any other purpose in dealing with Rock Creek Park, is the permanent preservation of its wonderful natural beauty, and the making of that beauty accessible to people without spoiling the scenery in the process” (Olmsted Report 1918:1).

The four fundamental units defined by the report were “natural forest” (Type I), “open woodland” (Type II), “an area of growth primarily of cedars” (Type III) and “open grassland” (Type IV). The future site of Rock Creek Golf Course was classified as Type IV, Division D, the “open hillside section.” The cleared land was praised for its “interesting topography of rolling hills” from which it “afford[ed] a sense of freedom, breadth, and outlet found nowhere else in the Park” (Olmsted Report 1918:14). The report described the vegetation as “in parts overgrown with scrub pine and more or less cut up by hedgerows” (Olmsted Report 1918:14). There is no mention of Camp Goodwill, but the arboretum is classified as “undesirable” (Olmsted Report 1918:14). The Olmsted report recommended little recreational development in Division D, in order to maintain its “openness” (Olmsted Report 1918:14). It encouraged pedestrian use, as long as walkers did not damage the surroundings. “Walks on easy grades, occasional unobtrusive seats, groves or simple overlook terraces at points commanding outlook, and such roads and bridle paths as are required to reveal the beauty of the landscape – these are needed. Further than that, simple rolling pasture or mowed grassland should prevail. Few defined walks will be needed, as pedestrians should be encouraged to spread over turf at will” (Olmsted Report 1918:14; Poss 2013:61;). There is little discussion of recreational facilities in the report. In general, they were considered secondary to the preservation and restoration of the park’s natural beauty. The Olmsteds recommended that any intense recreation be limited to the area around the Brightwood Reservoir, which had already been developed for that purpose. A preliminary plan for a playground included tennis and croquet courts and a wading pool. There is no mention of golf or a golf course in the report (Olmsted Report 1918:11).



## Rock Creek Golf Course Rock Creek Park

The Fine Arts Commission approved the Olmsted Report in February of 1919. Colonel Clarence Ridley, of the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds, (which had taken over administration of Rock Creek Park from the OPBPP in 1918), announced “Nothing will be done hereafter in this park which is contrary to the letter or spirit of this report” (Mackintosh 1985:<http://www.nps.gov/rocr/historyculture/adhi3.htm>). Within a year, the experimental arboretum had been abandoned and Colonel Clarence Sherrill, Officer in Charge of the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds, began planning for new use of the area.

The period between 1900 and 1920 marked several important changes at Rock Creek Park. The era can be characterized by physical development—new roads, bridges and trails were constructed, along with sports fields and other recreational facilities—but also by the park’s growing popularity. Issues of access and transportation led to debates over how to manage the landscape. Many of the issues and arguments regarding management and public use that erupted during the first decades of the park’s operation reappear throughout its history (Poss 2013:63). By 1920, the modern character of the park began to emerge. Over the next decade, what was once a remote patchwork of rural tracts, was slowly transformed into a significant public landscape.

### Summary

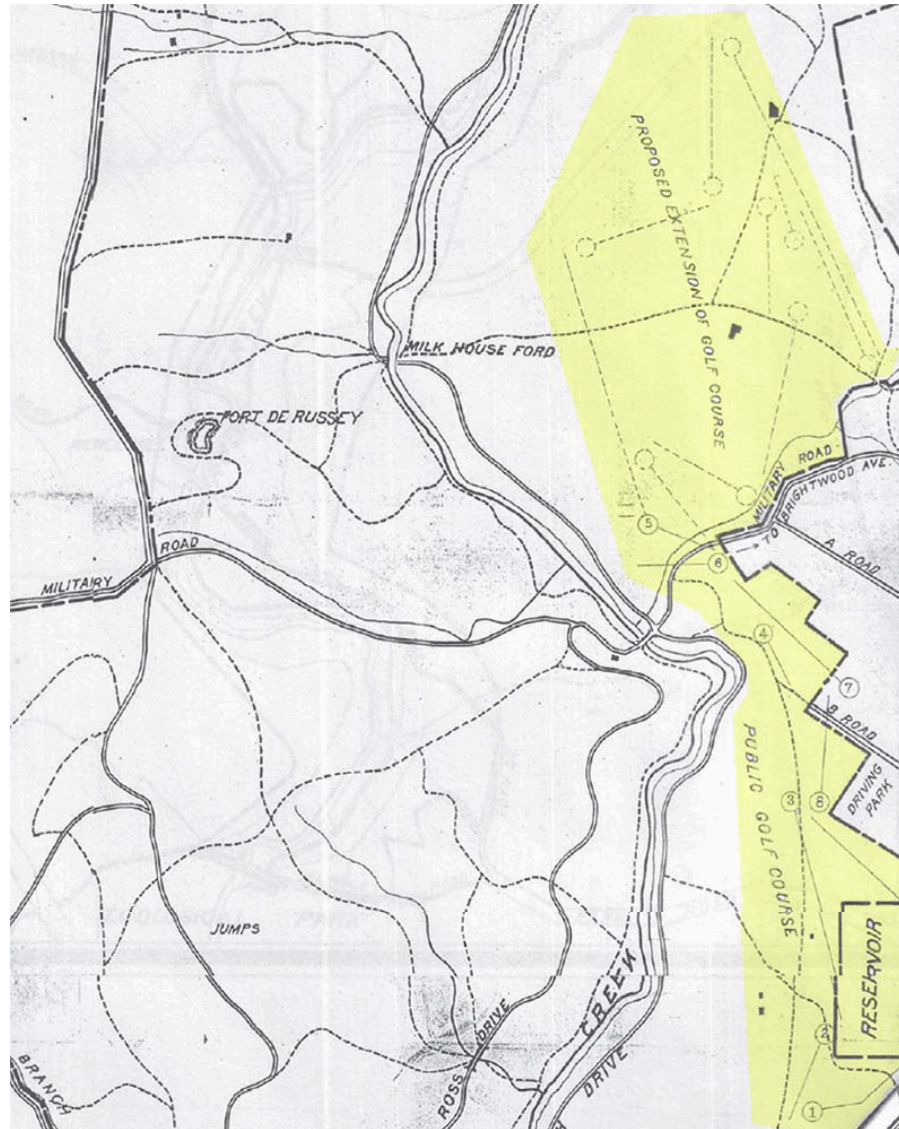
Camp Goodwill opened on the site of the future golf course in 1905. The pre-existing Cowden farmhouse and its outbuildings, were repurposed for camp use. It is unclear if the camp constructed any new permanent structures during this period. Maps shows seven buildings extant in 1920.

A 1910 map of Rock Creek Park shows a section of the historic Milkhouse Ford Road, running east from camp to 16th Street was improved and paved. The western segment the historic road, while still present, was not improved, and survived as a walking trail or road trace during this period. Park management also appears to have improved the road connecting the main camp building with the original Freas farm, building a loop that connected with the Milkhouse Ford Road where it intersected with 16th Street NW. A 0.3 mile access road connecting the clubhouse with Military Road was completed sometime between 1910 and 1916.

Vegetation continued to repopulate the hillsides around the future golf course site, especially along the streams extending east from Rock Creek. A 1910 map of the park shows plantings along the road between the historic Cowden and Freas properties (Poss 2013:343). An experimental arboretum was established around the perimeter of the camp in 1911. More research is needed to determine the exact location of the arboretum, but park maps and secondary sources suggest that plantings were limited to the perimeter of the property, along the north, east and south sides (Bushong 1990:117; War College Division Map of Rock Creek Park and Vicinity 1916).

A map depicting historic conditions at Rock Creek Golf Course circa 1920 is located in Appendix A, Image 4.

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park



*1907 Map of Rock Creek Park showing location of original golf course near Brightwood Reservoir and proposed expansion of course, north of Military Road. Poss, Deana R., Frances McMilen and Nancy Vazquez Cultural Landscape Report: The Historic Trails of Ro*

#### CONSTRUCTING ROCK CREEK GOLF COURSE: ORIGINAL NINE HOLES 1921-1923 CE

Washington, DC's first public golf course opened at East Potomac Park in 1920. Its immediate popularity prompted the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds to explore building another course. As the site of the city's first constructed, though unopened, public golf course, Rock Creek Park was again viewed as an ideal location.

In 1921, Colonel Clarence O. Sherrill, the Officer in Charge of Public Buildings and Grounds, requested an appropriation of \$50,000 to build a new golf course in the park. The site identified was directly north of the original course, bordered by Military Road to the south and 16th Street to the east. Like to original course located near Brightwood Reservoir, part of the area's attraction was that it required minimal clearing. The open landscape dated to the early 19th century, when farmers cultivated the hilltop for agricultural purposes (Bushong 1990:182). The closure of the arboretum in 1920 spurred plans to redevelop the site, which was still home to Camp Goodwill and the Baby Hospital ("Bucks Rock Creek Golf Course Plan," Washington Evening Star July 5, 1921). To make room for the Rock Creek Golf Course, the campsite was eventually moved west of Rock Creek, to a 6-acre area north of Fort DeRussey ("Will Move Camp Goodwill," Washington Post, October 20, 1922).

Not all were in favor of a golf course in Rock Creek Park. Former President Wilson wrote to Colonel Sherrill in June 1921 with strongly objections:

Is it possible that it is true that a golf course is to be laid out in Rock Creek Park? I am loath to believe that such an unforgivable piece of vandalism is even in contemplation, and therefore beg leave to enter my earnest and emphatic protest. That park is the most beautiful in the United States, and to mar its natural beauty for the sake of sport would be to do an irretrievable thing which subsequent criticism and regret could never repair (Quoted in Bushong 1990:118).

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

Concerned about Wilson's position but confident that a new golf course was an appropriate addition to the park, Sherrill immediately wrote to Chief of Engineers, Major General Lansing H. Beach, who had been instrumental in Rock Creek Park's early development. Sherrill asked Beach to request a small appropriation from Congress for the construction of the golf course out of fear that any effort to establish the course without Congressional support might create "so much hostility...as to jeopardize any future hope of securing funds to make a really first-class golf course" (Quoted in Bushong 1990:118).

Meanwhile, Sherrill responded to President Wilson, explaining that the land considered for the golf course had been cleared of trees before its purchase by the government, and was currently inaccessible to the public. He described the tract as "overgrown with brambles and poison ivy as to be entirely worthless," a mischaracterization, as the site had served needy mothers and children perfectly well as campground since 1904. The Colonel assured Wilson that a "golf course could be so constructed as not to affect the natural beauty of the tract," arguing its use as a golf course would "not apt to mar the appearance as much as constantly occurs at every picnic ground" (Quoted in Bushong 1990:118). Wilson, apparently satisfied, responded through his secretary and conveyed his relief regarding the choice of the site for the proposed golf course (Quoted in Bushong 1990:118).

Construction of the nine-hole course began in October of 1921, under the direction of Office of Public Buildings and Grounds landscape architect, Irving W. Payne, who developed a rough outline for the course (Annual report of the Chief of Engineers, United States Army to the Secretary of War, 1923; Annual reports, War Department 1923;2035). In January 1922, Colonel Sherrill requested the services of golf course architect William S. Flynn of Ardmore, Pennsylvania. Flynn served as a consultant for the design of the golf course and spent two days on site going over the grounds to locate greens and tees (Bushong 1990:119). A February 1922 drawing of the course by the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds indicates that the location of the greens and tees were designated by Flynn (Flynn 1922 Plan).

Born in Wilton Massachusetts, William S. Flynn (1890-1945) played golf in high school with his friend, future U.S. Open champion, Francis Ouimet. Flynn entered into the field of golf course architecture in 1909 when he laid out his first course in Hartwellville, Vermont. Like many golf course architects during this time, Flynn had no formal training. Yet, he designed more than 35 courses and remodeled or expanded approximately 30 more, before his death, in 1945, at the age of fifty-four. His masterwork, at Shinnecock Hills, Long Island, is still considered one of the greatest golf courses in the U.S.

Flynn's golf course designs took care to incorporate a site's natural features. He usually worked in the parkland style. This style is commonly adopted for inland courses and can be identified by the inclusion of lush, "park-like" elements, such as tree stands and water features. A typical Flynn course traversed rolling terrain and incorporated mature trees (Cornish 1993:262; Philadelphia Inquirer, May 14, 2000). At Rock Creek, these signature elements were already present and Flynn took advantage of existing conditions, emphasizing the site's steep topography and wooded environs (Bushong 1990:119). The first nine holes were constructed between 1921 and 1923, under the supervision of the Office of Public Building's and Grounds.



## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

Prior to the course's 1923 opening, William E. Brigham, president of the Washington Newspaper Golf Club, described the course as being "laid out under expert advice" (Washington Sunday Star, September 10, 1922).

Brigham also gave a sense of the varied and natural character of Flynn's course and, described its picturesque qualities:

Directly in front are the fairway and approach of No. 2 hole, with the green at the edge of the woods. Only a short distance south is the tee of No. 3. Looking toward the west, the green of No. 8 is below, near the bank of a small brook crossed by a rustic bridge, with the tee on the side of the hill about twenty feet above the level of the green. To the right of the tee, on a slightly higher elevation, are the green and a good stretch of the fairway of No. 7, which emerges from a forest of pine.

A slight turn of the head and we face northward, with the tee of No. 8 nearby, shaded in the afternoon by a group of tulip poplars and the fairway rising gradually until it is finally lost to view over the hill. To the east the eye easily follows the fairway of No. 3 to the green (Washington Sunday Star, September 10, 1922).

Indeed, the new Rock Creek course received enough praise that in the February 1923 Bulletin of the USGA's Green Section, Col. Sherrill boasted it "compares favorably with the best in this section of the country. It has been constructed with the same care and attention to detail as that which characterized the building of the courses in East Potomac Park, but surpasses those both in appearance and playing advantages because of the natural undulating surfaces of the ground and the beautiful views which are unfolded along the entire course" (U.S. Golf Association 1923:38-39).

While Flynn's parkland-style Rock Creek course was much different than Walter Travis's links-style design for East Potomac, both courses were considered significant works, by respected golf course architects. The Office of Public Building and Ground's choice in hiring well-known designers like Flynn and Travis is notable, and reflects OPBG's commitment to providing the public with access to first class golf (OPBG's definition of "public" however, was limited to white men and women. Rock Creek Park and Rock Creek Golf Course remained segregated through the 1930's). Many golf course architects practicing during this period, known as "The Golden Age of Golf," were also committed to the idea of quality public courses. William Flynn designed several throughout his career. While superintendent at Merion Cricket Club, Flynn worked closely with a group of architects, including Hugh Wilson, on construction of Cobb's Creek Golf Club, the first public course in Philadelphia. The course "set a new standard for public golf" when it opened in 1915 (Cirba 2013:2). In 1924 Flynn opened his own public course, Marble Hall, where he experimented with planting a variety of grass strains and employed new growing and planting techniques. Marble Hall was Philadelphia's first daily fee course (Morrison 2011:937-939).

Promoting the game, especially among the country's growing middle class, was in the interest of professional golfers, golf course architects, sports journalists and sporting manufacturers, alike. For golf course architects like Flynn, designing public courses presented a specific set of

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

challenges. Courses like Rock Creek needed to appeal to golfers of different skill levels. Creating holes that did not intimidate novices, but would hold the interest of more experienced golfers could be difficult. 1922 plans for Rock Creek do not show any bunkers on the course. Flynn was known for his restrained use of man-made hazards, and he may have omitted them completely in order to accommodate beginning golfers. Meanwhile, his bold routing, especially over the steep hills north of the clubhouse, kept things interesting for more accomplished players (Morrison 2011: 937-94).

President Warren G. Harding officially opened and dedicated the nine-hole Rock Creek Golf Course on May 23, 1923 as part of the Washington Newspaper Golf Club's spring tournament. The President drove the first ball and played in a foursome with Supreme Court Justice Edward Terry Sanford, Speaker of the House Frederick Huntington Gillett, and Edgar Markham, President of the Washington Newspaper Golf Club (New York Times, May 23, 1923:15).

The course was immediately popular. Over a single month, between May 23 and June 30, 1923, it served 8,776 players (Annual report of the Chief of Engineers, United States Army to the Secretary of War, 1923; Annual Report, War Department 1923:2035). An article published not long after its opening described, "Looking off the tee down [the Hole] 5 fairway reminds one of Pennsylvania Avenue during a Shriner parade" (Unknown newspaper clipping, Record Group 42, Entry 102, Box 30, Folder 618.21, NARA, Washington, DC).

#### Summary

The Office of Public Buildings and Grounds (OPBG) oversaw construction of the Rock Creek Golf Course's original nine holes between 1921 and 1923. William Flynn designed the course to play in a counterclockwise pattern around the clubhouse. OPBG renovated the 19th century Cowden farmhouse, former home of Camp Goodwill, for reuse as the golf course clubhouse.

One small outbuilding between the farmhouse and barn does not appear on 19th century maps of the property and may depict a small pavilion, mentioned in the 1923 Annual Report of the War Department. The building was constructed with material from an old army barracks at East Potomac. It is not clear if it was intended as a permanent structure, or constructed for temporary use during the golf course's opening (U.S. Army, Annual Report of the Chief of Engineers, United States Army to the Secretary of War, 1923; Annual Report, War Department 1923:2035).

Flynn's design incorporated many of the site's natural features. Its construction required the cutting of some second growth forest and other vegetation. Research did not locate specific documentation of tree clearance related to the course's construction but analysis of historic maps confirms that much of this occurred to the west of the clubhouse.

A map depicting historic conditions at Rock Creek Golf Course in 1923 is in Appendix A, image 5.

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park



*1922 War Department Plan of William Flynn's design for the first nine-holes at Rock Creek. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Creek Park Golf Course: Location of Tees and Greens Designated by W.J. Flynn, 1922, on file with National Park Service, National Capital Regional Office Archives*

Rock Creek Golf Course  
 Rock Creek Park



*1922 Photo from Washington Post Pictorial Section showing clockwise from top left: Hole 8, Hole 9, green on Hole 2 and green on Hole 1. Patrick J. Joyce, superintendent of Rock Creek Park, is pictured in the center. Washington Post, October 22, 1922, Picture.*

CONSTRUCTUING ROCK CREEK GOLF COURSE: COMPLETION OF EIGHTEEN-HOLE COURSE 1924-1927 CE

In early July of 1924, Col. Sherrill wrote to William Flynn, requesting his services to design nine

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

additional holes at Rock Creek Golf Course (Letter from Col Sherrill to William S. Flynn, July 5, 1924). At the end of the month, Flynn traveled to Washington and met with Col. Sherrill to discuss the new layout (Washington Post July 27, 1924:14). Flynn quickly accepted the job and charged \$600 for his work, a fee that also included five visits “to see that the work is being carried out in accordance with the plans and specifications” (Flynn to Col Sherrill, July 28, 1924). Since Col. Sherrill wanted the new course to be open by the following summer, work began immediately. Wooded areas northwest of the first 9 holes were cleared and by the time of Flynn’s visit in August 1924, he had “an excellent idea of the course” (Col Sherrill to Flynn, July 31, 1924; Col. Sherrill to Flynn, August 6, 1925; Washington Evening Star August 13, 1924:27).

In his column “Tee to Green,” Henry Litchfield West, former District Commissioner who aided in the construction of the first course at Rock Creek, noted that during the planning of the expanded course one of the holes from the failed Brightwood Reservoir course, built almost 20 years earlier, was found. The hole, situated in the woods north of Military Road “met with the approval of William Flynn, the architect of the proposed addition to the course” (West, Washington Post, August 24, 1924:54). Flynn incorporated the 1907-1908 hole into his design. Its description: “a tee shot across a hollow to a green on the side of a hill opposite the tee,” closely matches the original layout of Hole 5 (West, Washington Post, August 24, 1924:54).

The expansion of the course to a full eighteen holes required Flynn to make radical changes to the existing course in order to create a cohesive layout. Some original greens were abandoned, while several new holes reused the fairways and greens of the existing holes (Washington Post March 24, 1926:15). The fairways were widened, which required blasting to remove rock, and a large number of stones that were still mixed in with the turf were removed (Washington Post January 17, 1926:M21; Washington Post, March 26, 1926:15).

In the spring of 1926 golfers at Rock Creek had “an entirely new course;” a full eighteen holes, which could be played as two nine-hole courses. Henry Litchfield West described the changes to the course in the Washington Post:

In the first place, the tee for the first hole has been removed so that the new tee is close to the clubhouse, but the first and second holes remain unchanged. The old third hole was abandoned and the new third hole will be played to the southward, while the fairway of the fourth hole comes back to a new green near the old [Hole] 2.

The fifth hole is one of the prettiest short holes on any course in the District. It is situated in the woods and is a short mashie pitch across a ravine, at the bottom of which is a small creek, the green being located near the Military Road. The sixth and seventh holes are both new, while the eighth green is new old [Hole] 4. The ninth hole is to be played across the road that comes into the golf course from Sixteenth Street down to the old ninth green. The tenth hole follows the line of the old [Hole] 8, but the tee has been advanced so that a ball does not have to be driven across the ditch. The eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth are all new holes while the sixteenth is the present [Hole] 6. The old seventh hole, which was a favorite short pitch across a ditch, has been eliminated, and a new hole, the seventeenth, about 154

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

yards in length, has been constructed. The eighteenth hole plays back to the clubhouse (Washington Post March 24, 1926: 15).

The final golf course occupied approximately 108 acres of land bounded by Military Road to the south, Sherill Drive to the north, Beach Drive to the west and Sixteenth Street to the east. The combined distance of the two courses was 5,545 yards and the par was 70 strokes. While Flynn's final design required reworking nearly all of his original nine holes, the spirit of the 1923 course survived the expansion. Flynn took pains to accommodate beginners and experienced golfers alike. The front nine's wide open fairways and gentle slopes provided novices with a less challenging course of play, while the narrow, wooded holes and difficult terrain of the back nine appealed to the more accomplished, ambitious golfer. As with the 1923 design, no manmade hazards appear on 1926 plans.

The first golfers to play when the course reopened on April 3, 1926 were Sen. Wesley A. Jones of Washington and Representative Oliver from Alabama, paired against Edwin A. Halsey of the sergeant at arms' office of the Senate and James D. Preston, superintendent of the Senate Press Gallery. The course was crowded throughout opening day and "the golfers universally commended the reconstruction of the course" (Washington Post April 3, 1926:13). Shortly after the course reopened, the Washington Rapid Transit Co. began operating a bus line to the Rock Creek Golf Course, running on a 20-minute schedule from 6:30am to 6:30pm (Washington Post, May 2, 1926:M32). Improvements to the course only increased the number of players; in 1923, 47,031 played the course. In 1927, the number had grown to 94,416 (Washington Post July 1, 1928:SM3).

S.G. Loeffler, the new concessionaire, covered part of the cost for construction of the eighteen-hole course. Loeffler took over the contract to manage Rock Creek Park in 1925, after two years of "unsuccessful experience" by the Welfare and Recreation Association (Washington Post, January 17, 1926:M21; Washington Post March 26, 1926:15). Loeffler, who also held a contract to manage East Potomac Park, spent \$30,000 of his own money improving Rock Creek (A Brief History of Golf Courses in the National Capital Parks 1950; Washington Post August 17, 1952:C4).

Included in these improvements was the enlargement of the Rock Creek clubhouse. When Rock Creek's first nine holes opened in 1923, an existing building, dating from the site's 19th century history as farmland, was repurposed for use as a clubhouse. Camp Goodwill had previously used the structure, a two-story wood-frame building with rear addition and one-story wrap-around porch. In 1926, the building was stripped to its original frame and reconstructed with the addition of more modern amenities. Loeffler installed showers for men and women and built private dressing rooms in the women's locker room. He added steam heat to insure comfort for golfers during cold temperatures. Illustrating the disparity between the number of men and women who used the course, the renovation included 502 new lockers for men and only 125 for women (Washington Post March 24, 1926:15).

Additional park structures constructed during this time included "two rustic footbridges, approximately 38 feet long and 4 feet wide," completed in 1926. The bridges crossed over a

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

stream adjacent to Military Road and “were used in connection with the Rock Creek golf course,” probably to cross to the green on Hole 5 (Annual Report of the Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital 1926:25-30; Poss2013:72). A driveway off Joyce Road, completed in 1927, replaced access roads from Military Road and 16th Street (Annual Report of the Chief of Engineers 1922:2188; Bushong 1990:107; Poss 2013:71).

#### Summary

Between 1923 and 1926 Rock Creek Golf Course was rebuilt as an eighteen-hole course. While William Flynn retained the counterclockwise organizational pattern of the original nine-hole course, he redesigned most of the holes themselves. The addition of nine new holes required expanding the course north, through hilly and heavily forested natural landscape, and necessitated trees removal to clear areas for fairways, tee boxes and greens. Two footbridges crossing a stream near Hole 5 were completed in 1926.

The clubhouse was expanded during this period and some of the 19th century outbuildings between the clubhouse and barn may have been removed. They do not appear on 1926 plans of the site. These plans suggests a number of trees, shrubs and flower beds were installed around the clubhouse following its expansion. Landscaping extended to the parking lot and the area behind the tee box for Hole 1. Researchers did not locate any additional landscaping plans for the course and it is assumed that all other vegetation appearing on plans from this period was natural or planting prior to 1926.

Joyce Road opened in 1925 and provided new eastern access to the park from 16th Street. A new, 0.3-mile driveway connecting the clubhouse with Joyce Road was completed in 1927. The only additional road construction consisted of a short connection between the 19th century road extending north from the clubhouse and Underwood Street.

A map depicting historic conditions at Rock Creek Golf Course in 1927 is in Appendix A, image 6.





Rock Creek Golf Course

Rock Creek Park

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park



*U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, Aerial image of Rock Creek Golf Course from 1927, 1927, National Archives, College Park.*

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

MID-CENTURY CHANGES, 1933-1964 CE

In August 1933, the management of Rock Creek Park was transferred to the National Park Service along with the other city parks, sites, and reservations under the jurisdiction of the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks. The transfer took place following President Franklin D. Roosevelt's June 1933 executive order reorganizing the executive branch (Bushong 1990:132; Poss 2013:75).

Though no major changes were made to the course in the 1930s and 40s, some important circulation changes and the shortening of many holes did occur during this period. A comparison of the 1944 plan of existing conditions at Rock Creek Golf Course shows a major shift in progression of play on the back nine was implemented sometime between 1927 and 1944. The original design directed play around the northern perimeter of the site on Holes 12, 13 and 14. By 1944 play had been rerouted with holes changed around so that play was directed toward the interior on Holes 12-14.

On the front nine, the construction of an additional green, halfway up the fairway of 462-yard Hole 8 allowed for alternate play on Holes 5 through 8. The shortening of several holes also occurred sometime during this period. Many of the changes on the front nine were minor reductions in yardage by 10 or 20 -yards. Overall, the length of the back nine dropped from 2,952-yards to 2,686-yards. Many of the changes in the length of individual holes during this period were the result of movement of tee boxes, a change that is inherent to golf course.

The post-war period was significant for major building projects throughout the National Park Service, and substantial changes at Rock Creek Park affected the golf course during these years. In 1946, DC Commissioners announced plans to expand Military Road. They proposed widening the road into a four-lane parkway to be built over the southern part of the golf course (Washington Post, January 26, 1958:A17). Accordingly, Pennsylvania golf course architect, William F. Gordon was hired to redesign the front nine. The road project required the removal of the original Holes 3, 4, and 5, the construction of three new holes, and the reworking of several others (National Park Service 1946; Washington Post, April 21, 1957:A13).

In May 1946, Gordon wrote to Leoffler after receiving updated plans for the proposed highway that projected further into the golf course than previously expected. Gordon explained that, "as it stands now, the only way we can still retain eighteen-holes at Rock Creek will be to play the present Hole 4 from a tee location about where the Hole 3 tee is now, construct a new Hole 4, 5 and a new tee on Hole 6 all in the area where your present 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th holes are located." Gordon estimated that the work would cost \$11,000 (William F. Gordon to S.G. Leoffler, May 6, 1946). Later that month, Gordon submitted his revised plans to Leoffler and wrote, "these proposed changes on the Golf Course will not alter the general routine of play and will prove just as interesting as the present layout. Work can be carried out on Holes 2, 3, 5 and 6 without interfering with play. However, when the green on number 4 is built, that hole will be

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

out of play for at least one week” (William F. Gordon to S.G. Leoffler, May 27, 1946). Reconstruction of the course took place between 1957 and 1958 (Washington Post April 21, 1957:A13; Davis 1998:147-148; Poss 2013:86-87).

In 1955, the NPS announced plans for a \$1 billion ten-year program to upgrade deteriorated facilities in the National Park System. Projects would be completed by 1966, in time to celebrate the Service’s 50th year. Called Mission 66, the program funded several improvements and modifications within Rock Creek Park (Davis 1998:145-146; Poss 2013:87). Among these improvements was the construction of a new clubhouse, something golfers at Rock Creek had been clamoring for since the course first opened. After fires in 1933 and 1937, the NPS developed plans for a new clubhouse, but nothing was ever built. New plans were drawn up in 1958. Following the trends of Mission 66, the clubhouse had modern features such as a prominent, angled roof and walls of windows that looked out onto the course. Although NPS Director Conrad Wirth approved the plans, funding delayed its construction. The Washington Post reported in April 1961 that for six years in a row the House Appropriation Committee ruled out the \$176,500 needed for a new clubhouse. The existing “ramshackle” clubhouse remained in use, but was in great need of repair. The building simply could not accommodate the number of golfers that used the course, more than 88,000 in 1960 (Washington Post April 23, 1961).

The National Park Service finally received the necessary funds in June 1963, and awarded an \$87,744 contract for the construction of the clubhouse to Neal Construction Company of Silver Spring, Maryland (Washington Post, June 25, 1963). The final clubhouse was initially designed in 1962, by Washington, DC architect John Hans Graham & Associates and was modified in 1963 by the National Capital Parks’ Design and Construction Division. The brick-faced building featured a lounge, kitchen, and pro-shop on the upper level and men’s and women’s locker rooms on the lower level. Large windows and a deck located off the lounge looked over the course (John Hans Graham & Associates 1962). The site of the new building was northeast of the former clubhouse. As part of the project, the NPS reworked the existing Golf Course Access Road, adding a circle drive at its terminus right in front of the new clubhouse entrance. The adjacent parking lots were also expanded and rebuilt. The clubhouse opened to the public until October 1964 (John Hans Graham & Associates 1962). The 19th century barn that had served as the course’s maintenance building remained until a new maintenance shed was constructed in 1982. The old clubhouse was demolished in January 1965.

#### Summary

The course’s first man-made hazards, several sand traps located around the greens, first appear in existing conditions drawings of the course, dating to 1944. The drawing mentions that the course’s layout was taken from a 1937 aerial, which was not located during research for this CLI. This dates the installation of hazards to sometime between 1927 and 1937. They do not appear on original drawings or 1927 aerials of the course (Golf Course Rock Creek Park, Map Showing Existing Conditions 1944).

In 1957, the expansion of Military Road required the removal of several holes at Rock Creek Golf Course. Golf course architect William F. Gordon designed three entirely new holes to replace Holes 3, 4 and 5, and reworked several other holes on the front nine. During this period,

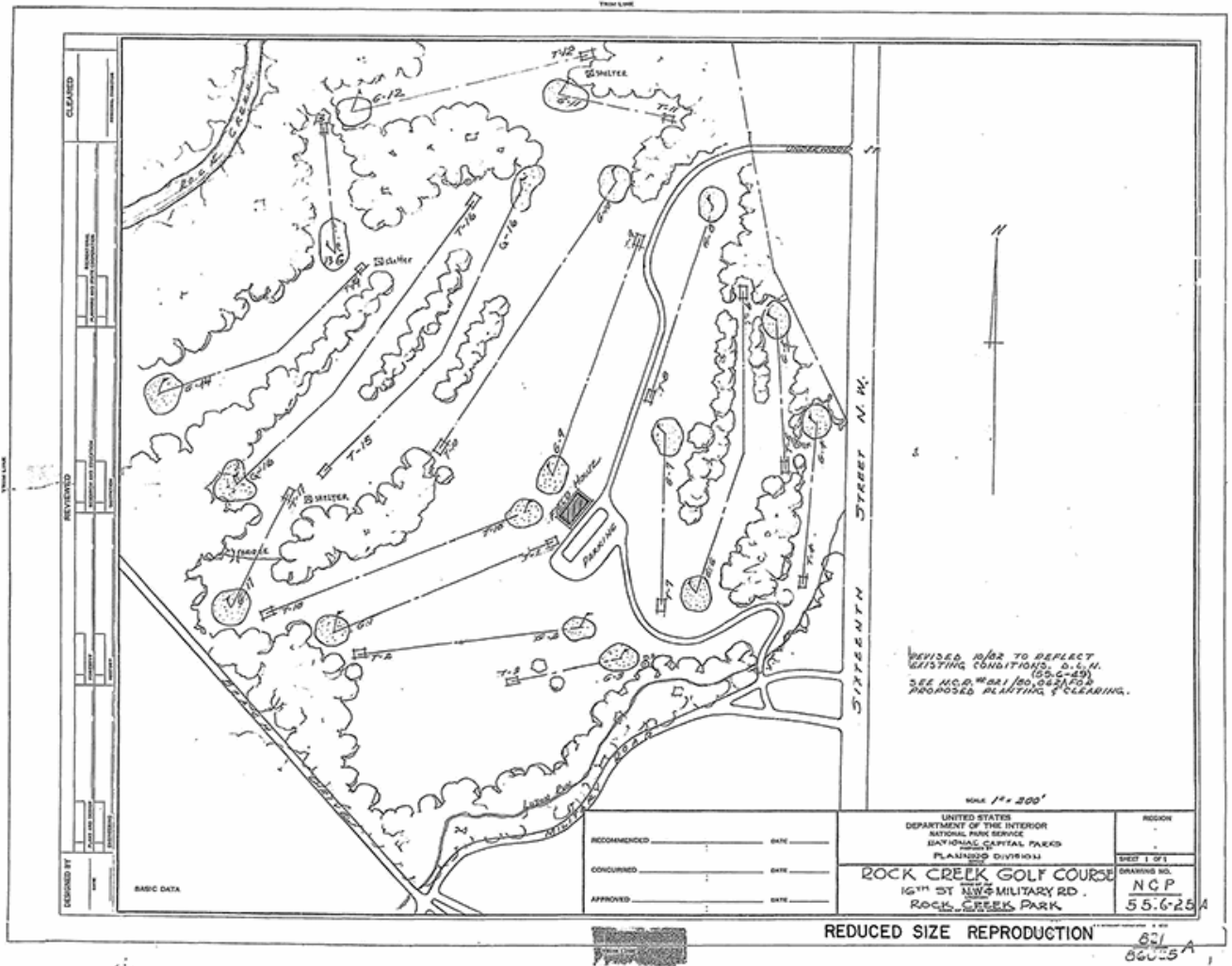
## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

the National Park Service constructed several rain shelters throughout the course and secured funds for a new clubhouse. The modern brick building and an expansive new parking lot, opened to the public in 1964. The original clubhouse was demolished, though a 19th century barn remained onsite, and continued to be used for storage. Two additional 19th century structures, north of the clubhouse, appear to have been demolished sometime between 1928 and 1944. Several roads dating to the early 20th century likewise disappear from 1944 plans. The completion of the new Golf Course Access Road in 1927 resulted in the abandonment of the eastern segment of Milkhouse Ford Road, the 1920s-era access road between the clubhouse and Military Road and a road that originally cut through the fairway of Flynn's Hole 8.

A map depicting historic conditions at Rock Creek Golf Course in 1965 is in Appendix A, image 7.

Rock Creek Golf Course  
 Rock Creek Park



*Undated Plan of Rock Creek Golf Course showing new William Gordon holes on front nine. Rock Creek Golf Course 16th Street NW and Military Road Rock Creek Park, on file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region*

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park



*U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, Aerial image of Rock Creek Golf Course from 1964, 1964, National Archives, College Park.*

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

NEGLECT AND RESTORATION, 1965-2017 CE

By the early 1960s, golfers had begun to complain about conditions at Rock Creek. The topography on the back half of the course was so steep and overgrown that “it has forced many to ignore the [back] nine altogether” (Washington Sunday Star, February 18, 1962:C4). The Rock Creek Golf Course had always challenging because of its hilly topography, particularly Holes 10-18. The 13th hole (originally Hole 6B and today’s Hole 16), known as “Cardiac Hill,” was considered “back-breaking” and “probably the most testing hole on the course” (Washington Sunday Star, February 18, 1962:C4). A 1973 Washington Post article described as:  
narrow, dead uphill, 436-yard par-four [that] taught humility to generations. Golfers reached its tiny green cursing, sweating, and gasping for breath, their scores in shreds and their lungs and hearts pounding” (Washington Post July 11, 1975:D1).

Despite the affection some golfers retained for the difficult back nine, Severine G. Loeffler, Jr., who helped run the golf courses along with his father, found that the front nine was played 80 percent more than the back nine. Though Gordon’s 1957 changes to that part of the course were not without detractors. The expansion of Military Road resulted in the shortening of many holes, “to the point where it [had] become little more than a pitch-and-putt layout the last two years” (Washington Sunday Star, February 18, 1962: C4).

By the 1970s, so many golfers had given up on the back nine that Loeffler suspended regular maintenance on that part of the course. “Whole fairways [were] left to the ravages of time. . . Eventually the greens began to erode. Often, to putt on the back nine was to calculate the ball’s roll through crab grass, leached dirt and ruts from the runoff of the last thunderstorm” (Washington Post May 19, 1985:SM18). According to the Washington Post, the S.G. Loeffler Co. decided in the summer of 1975, “Cardiac Hill and its equally demanding brother, the treacherous Hole 16 (originally and currently Hole 14) scared away too much potential business. . . The average golfer [did] not want to crawl back to the clubhouse” (Washington Post, July 11, 1975:D1). Consequently, Loeffler drastically altered the scenic and challenging back nine. The sixteenth hole “a beautiful 370-yard downhill dogleg with a breathtaking tee elevated 80 feet above the wooded fairway” was eliminated. The old thirteenth green became the green for a new 128-yard, par-three Hole 15. In addition, the difficult uphill Hole 10 was chopped into two holes – an easy 265-yard par four and a 128-yard par three (Washington Post July 11, 1975:D1).

Many of Rock Creek’s loyal players were not happy with the changes. One player claimed, “This was one of the best nines in the Middle Atlantic Section. Now it’s gone.” Loeffler responded that he expected that the better players would be against the shortening of the course, “But we’re in the business to serve the multitudes.” The changes to the back nine made it shorter than the 2,216-yard front, with five par three holes a total of 2,079 yards and a par of 31 (The Washington Star, August 21, 1977:D5).

The 70s-era changes at Rock Creek can be characterized as a last ditch attempt by Loeffler to



## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

make the course financially viable. The concessionaire had been losing money since 1970. Even after the National Park Service waived the \$48,000 rent in 1972 – a particularly bad year for the course – Loeffler still lost \$51,000. Lacking a long term contract since 1963, Loeffler was loathe to invest the kind of money needed to restore much of Rock Creek, and in 1977, The Washington Evening Star reported that the company was losing its “patience with the growing number of critics (Washington Star August 21, 1977:D5).

Throughout the 1970s, the National Park Service conducted a series of inspections and studies of the golf course, to assess its condition and economic viability. A memo from the Superintendent of National Capital Parks-West to the Director of National Capital Parks wrote that the “overall impression one receives upon visiting the Golf Course is that of neglect. The concessionaire is not devoting sufficient manpower and attention to the proper routine maintenance of the grounds and structures” (National Park Service Marketing and Economic Overview Rock Creek Park 1977:55). Potholes were scattered throughout the fairways, the fairways and greens were full of weeds, and the majority of tees were worn to bare ground. The clubhouse needed painting on the exterior and the interior had dirty floors, filthy walls and ceilings, chipped paint, missing lightbulbs, trash on the floors, and the rest rooms were “repellent.” The superintendent recommended that the National Park Service complete a rehabilitation plan and that in order to restore the golf course to standard condition, it would take \$65,000 over a two-and-a-half-year period (National Park Service Marketing and Economic Overview Rock Creek Park 1977:55-56).

A 1977 marketing and economic overview of the Rock Creek Golf Course recommended extensive renovation to a number of the tees, particularly reestablishing the turf. It also recommended major renovations to four of the greens and creating a paved cart path around the back nine. The market summary stated despite the fact that around 50,000 rounds of golf were played annually, the golf course was only marginally profitable to concessionaire, likely due to the poor conditions. It also reported that “although no substantiation could be found, rumors as to the personal safety of golfers additionally create an atmosphere that discourages ingress of players” (National Park Service Marketing and Economic Overview Rock Creek Park 1977:37-41).

After the release of the report, the National Park Service held a public meeting to discuss the future of the golf course. Over 60 people attended the meeting and “everyone at the meeting wanted to keep the course. . .” A large percentage also were in favor of realigning the back nine holes (The Washington Star, August 21, 1977:D5). One long-time patron described the condition of the course, stating:

The greens are the worst they’ve even been. They are full of crabgrass. The fairways are pretty good now but the benches are shot to hell. It be management. The management stinks. A review and analysis of the Loeffler contracts with the [National Park Service] will reveal that as far as the Rock Creek Golf Course is concerned the Park Service management has not protected the public interest of golfers in the Nation’s Capital (The Washington Star, August 21, 1977:D5).

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

In 1977-1978 the National Park Service hired golf course architects Leon and Charles Howard of Austin, Texas, to propose design changes to the golf course. The firm's report stated:

The greens are small and generally without character, and physical maintenance problems with the greens (several indications of poor drainage was evident) have almost eliminated the turn in many areas of the greens. The tees are small and in many instances are rough and slightly inclined providing a very poor teeing area. The sprinkler system is totally inadequate to give proper irrigation coverage and is in a bad state of repair.

Foot and cart traffic without paved paths has created additional maintenance problems, including erosion and related problems to such an extent that many areas do not have sufficient soil to maintain turf. Trees have matured, without being pruned until they have now, in certain instances, almost closed off routes of play which surely were intended on the original golf course design (Howard 1978:7).

The firm recommended several improvements to the course, including a realignment of the back holes to return length to the golf course, rebuilding and enlarging all the tees and greens, rebuilding the bunkers, widening some of the fairways either by removing trees or pruning, and selective tree planting in open areas between fairways (Howard 1978:14).

The study was particularly damning regarding the history of maintenance at the course, citing "improper use of herbicides, seeds, and fertilizers as well as poor turf maintenance programs [which] allowed major infestation of foreign grasses and weeds on the fairways and greens. Most of the needed improvements required little or no capital investment, but just proper maintenance from a "competent operator." Loeffler's contract, which had been consistently renewed since 1925, was called into question (National Park Service Marketing and Economic Overview Rock Creek Park 1977).

By 1981, Severine G. Loeffler, Jr. no longer wanted to continue the contract at Rock Creek Park and stated that his family's company had lost money operating the course over the last six years. In the past, the profits from the East Potomac Park course covered the losses from the Rock Creek and other courses. Loeffler stated that the problem was that the market was saturated, and with over 70 courses in the area there were "too many to survive. Even in 1968 I told the [National Park Service] there was no future for Langston . . . and that Rock Creek ought to be phased out too." If the NPS did not find a new operator, it would be forced to close the Rock Creek Golf Course (Washington Post, December 20, 1981:C1).

In 1982 partners Robert Brock, Franklin Coates, and William Torpey of Golf Course Specialists Inc. (GCS), who had recently modernized and rebuilt courses in Williamsburg, Charlottesville, and Reston, Virginia, took over the contract at Rock Creek Park (Washington Post, May 5, 1982:DC10; Washington Post, January 5, 1983:DC7). The firm restored the back nine, clearing away brush and overgrown areas throughout the course. Greens, tee boxes and fairways were restored according to Flynn's design and the original 1927 circulation re-established, with the exception of holes 15 and 16 where the direction of play remained reversed (Washington Post, May 19, 1985:SM18). Despite improvements under GCS, decades of deferred maintenance and

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

rumors of crime in Rock Creek took their toll on the Rock Creek Golf Course. Annual use dropped throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

During the summer and fall of 1996, NPS planners examined options for redesigning parts of the park. They proposed several potential scenarios, including one called “Urban Wilderness Emphasis” which called for the closure of Joyce Road and the elimination of several major recreation and administration facilities, including the Rock Creek Golf Course. A more “natural” vegetation management policy curtailed mowing and allowed woodlands to overtake existing fields and recreation areas. The NPS unveiled this proposal, along with several others, in June 1997, seeking public comments. Over the summer, many respondents spoke out forcibly against plans to eliminate other “unnatural” but highly popular features such as the golf course, horse stables, and community gardens. Echoing objections from an earlier era, some respondents expressed concern that elimination of these features, and curtailment of automobile access, would dramatically reduce visitation, transforming it from a popular urban park to a secluded retreat for the athletic elite (NPS 1997:65-66).

A drastic demographic shift, beginning in the late nineties, saw the return of middle and upper class residents to central Washington. This influx of wealthy urbanites has increased development pressure throughout the city, threatening many public resources. At the same time, interest in, and advocacy on behalf of, the city’s public and national parks is growing. Since 2007, District of Columbia Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton has been working to improve the conditions at the three National Park Service Golf Courses and preserve “these unique, valuable and historical DC attractions for the enjoyment of future generations. Norton has introduced the “Golf Course Reservation and Modernization Act” to Congress that would allow the National Park Service to use public-private partnerships to modernize and rehabilitate its golf courses. Norton’s bill mandated that all three courses – East Potomac, Rock Creek and Langston – be combined into a single competitive request for proposals that would generate ideas and alternatives to lead to renovations while preserving historic features.

#### Summary

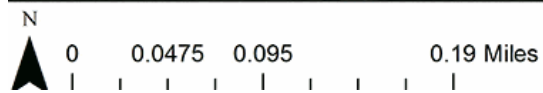
No major construction projects occurred at Rock Creek Golf Course between 1965 and 2016. The only new landscape feature introduced during this time were sections of the golf cart path, first built sometime between 1969 and 1978.

Deferred maintenance resulted in the neglect of the golf course, especially the back nine. Crabgrass, potholes, erosion and fairway encroachment from unchecked vegetation growth affected play, especially on the back nine. In 1975, the course concessionaire shortened the back nine, reversing the direction of play on several holes. During the 1980s, a new concessionaire restored the back nine according to Flynn’s original design, cleared away a lot of brush, replanted greens, tees and fairways and implemented regular maintenance procedures. In the 1990s GCS secured healthy grass growth throughout many bare or eroded areas and fairways and greens previously affected by weeds. In 2016 the concessionaire engaged in tree clearance throughout the site, removing dead, diseased and other trees throughout the site. Two dilapidated rain shelters, dating to the early 1960s, were torn down at the request of the Park Service that same year.

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

A map depicting historic conditions at Rock Creek Golf Course in 1965 is in Appendix A, image 7.

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park



*2016 aerial of Rock Creek Golf Course. ArcGIS Satellite imagery.*

Rock Creek Golf Course

Rock Creek Park



# Analysis + Evaluation of Integrity



## Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

### Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

This section provides an evaluation of the physical integrity, landscape characteristics and features of Rock Creek Golf Course cultural landscape, as researched and surveyed between the summer of 2016 and spring of 2017. To document all visible aboveground features, on-the-ground field observations and site research was used to supplement topographical surveys and GIS data. All field data was collected and converted into a database for the golf course. Existing conditions were then compared with those of landscape characteristics and features present during the periods of significance (1921-1927 and 1963-1964).

Landscape characteristics are the tangible and intangible aspects of a landscape that allow visitors to understand its cultural value. Collectively, they express the historic character and integrity of a landscape. Landscape characteristics give a property cultural importance and comprise the property's uniqueness.

Each characteristic or feature is classified as either contributing or non-contributing to the site's overall historic significance. Landscape characteristics and features are classified as contributing if they were present during the property's periods of significance and non-contributing if they were not present during those periods. Non-contributing features may be considered "compatible" if they are determined to fit within the physical context of the historic period and match the character of contributing elements in a way that is sensitive to the construction techniques, organizational methods or design strategies of the historic period. Features designated as "incompatible" are those that are not harmonious with the quality of the cultural landscape and non-historic. For those features that are listed as undetermined, further primary research, which is outside the scope of this CLI, is necessary to determine the feature's origination date. Landscape characteristics and features, individually and as a whole, express the integrity and historic character of the landscape and contribute to the property's historic significance.

This section also includes an evaluation of the property's integrity in accordance with National Register criteria. As defined by the National Register, historic integrity is the authenticity of a property's identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the site's historic period. The National Register recognizes seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Several or all of these aspects must be present for a site to retain historic integrity. To be listed on the National Register, a property must be shown to have significance under one or more criteria and retain integrity to the period of significance.

Contributing landscape characteristics identified for the Rock Creek Golf Course cultural landscape are: land use, topography, spatial organization, circulation, buildings and structures, small scale features, vegetation, views and vistas and natural systems and features.

Land use: The use and purpose of the Rock Creek Golf Course cultural landscape has not changed since the first period of significance, when the site opened to the public. It has served as a municipal golf course ever since and retains integrity of land use.



## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

**Topography:** The topography of Rock Creek Golf Course has changed very little since construction was completed in 1926. The course's highest point – roughly 290-feet above sea level – and its lowest point, about 200-feet, remain the same as during the first period of significance. As such, it retains integrity of topography to the 1921-1927 period of initial construction.

**Spatial Organization:** The spatial organization at Rock Creek Golf Course remains much as it was during the first period of significance. The direction of play through the landscape is still centered around the clubhouse. The course itself retains the counterclockwise directional routing that Flynn first designed in 1921. The division between the front and back nine is intact, and the current organization of these two distinct halves, which both play in and out from the clubhouse, and were designed so they might be played as separate, nine-hole courses, remains close to Flynn's original plan. Densely forested areas continue to define fairways and views towards greens on the back nine, and the front nine is retains a more open feeling. Overall, the site retains integrity of spatial organization to the first period of significance.

**Circulation:** Contributing landscape features related to Rock Creek Golf Course's circulation include part of Joyce Road and the Golf Course Access Road. Both were constructed during the first period of significance, and are relatively unchanged since their original period of construction. A circular cul-de-sac was added to the Golf Course Access Road when the clubhouse was rebuilt in 1964. At that time the parking lot was expanded. A pre-Civil War road segment extending north from the clubhouse was incorporated into the circulation plan for the course. This road was converted to a cart path in the 1970s and is considered a contributing feature to the first period of significance.

**Buildings and Structures:** For the purpose of this CLI, Rock Creek Golf Course is treated as a single structure; the description of the golf course structure includes the overall approach to the course's design and layout, as well as the design of individual holes (including tees, fairways, greens and hazards). The course as a whole, along with the clubhouse, collectively contributes to the overall integrity of the Rock Creek Golf Course as a public recreational landscape.

Though Rock Creek Golf Course has experienced a series of changes since construction was completed in 1926, the overall landscape retains nearly all of the essential features present during that period that make it identifiable as a public golf course, designed during the early 20th century by an important golf course architect. Among these features are: an eighteen-hole course, divided into two distinct nine-hole courses, both of which play in and out from the clubhouse; a layout centered around a central clubhouse, a parkland-style course that incorporates the site's natural conditions which include stands of mature trees and varied topography on the back-nine and a flatter, more open landscape, with fewer trees on the front nine. As such the course retains integrity as relates to National Register Criterion A, for importance in the area of Recreation, as one of the earliest public golf courses in the District of Columbia.

As relates to Criterion C and the landscapes importance as a work of golf course architect William Flynn, The majority of Rock Creek's fairways and greens, particularly on the back nine holes, are

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

largely unchanged since 1926. Though the expansion of Military Road in the 1950s resulted in the loss of original Holes 3, 4 and 5, William Gordon's 1957 alterations to the course's front nine were sympathetic to Flynn's original design. Gordon was able to reuse parts of Flynn's 1926 tee box locations, fairways and greens when re-working the affected sections of the course. The front nine's open and rolling landscape, originally farmland, was a feature that Flynn emphasized in his design for the course's front nine. This feeling remains intact. So does the tight, hilly design for the back nine—considered by many to be the highlight of the course—and built on what had historically been uncultivated woodland. The distinctive, natural quality of Flynn's original design remains evident today and as such the course has integrity of buildings and structures as relates to Criterion C.

The only other contributing building within the landscape is the clubhouse, which continues to reflect the Mission 66 style adopted by the park and constructed throughout Rock Creek during the second period of significance.

**Small Scale Features:** None of the small scale features at Rock Creek Golf Course date to the period of significance, and there is little documentation of original features from either period of significance. A number of sunshades dating to the second period of significance were present at the beginning of field work, but were dismantled by the concessionaire, at the request of NPS, in the fall of 2016, Rock Creek Golf Course does not retain integrity of small scale features.

**Vegetation:** Character-defining vegetation at Rock Creek Park includes: the open, relatively treeless nature of vegetation on the front nine of the course, a result of the land's historic use as farmland; the densely forested vegetation on the back nine, which is used to frame fairways and greens and is the result of the area's history as uncultivated woodland; a row of red cedars (*Juniperus virginiana*) along the cart path north of the clubhouse, and a number of red oaks (*Quercus rubra*) and magnolias (*Magnolia*) around the clubhouse. The incorporation of mature trees was a hallmark of William Flynn's design, and the original 1926 tree stands along fairways, especially on the back-nine, and around the course's perimeter, are intact and retain integrity. Conversely, the more open front nine, which is comparatively free of trees between fairways, is another hallmark of Flynn's original landscape design and is still intact. More research is needed to determine when exactly the row of red cedars was planted along the northern access road/golf cart path. The road itself dates to the 1850s, but the trees do not appear on maps until the early 20th century. Like the native vegetation surrounding the site, Flynn incorporated these cedars into his course design and they are considered a contributing feature. Oak and Magnolia trees surrounding the clubhouse date to the second period of significance and are also contributing.

**Views and Vistas:** Contributing views at Rock Creek include views along Flynn's original fairways, toward greens on Holes 1 through 18 and picturesque views located at various points throughout the course. Where Flynn's original fairways and green locations remain intact, views between them retain integrity. Some original views have been lost due to 90-years of vegetation growth throughout the site, but many picturesque, scenic views are still present, especially on the back nine. These include views of mature tree stands, dramatic topography, deep ravines and open rolling hillsides, which all retain integrity to Flynn's original design of views along the course.

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

Natural Systems and Features: Historically, two streams, both small tributaries of Rock Creek, were located within the boundaries of Rock Creek Golf Course. These streams first appear on Boschke's 1857 map. Both were present on site through the initial construction of the course, and appear on 1922 plans of the original nine-hole course. The southern stream remains extant and retains integrity to the first period of significance, when it was incorporated into the design of Hole 17.

#### INTEGRITY

Location: Location is the place where the cultural landscape was constructed and/or where historic events occurred. The boundaries of the Rock Creek Golf Course have changed slightly since the first period of significance. Originally, the course was bordered by a heavily forested area to the north, 16th street to the east, Military Road to the south and the hilltop above Rock Creek to the west. The 1958 expansion of Military Road affected the original southern boundary. The road was re-routed north and widened, resulting in the loss of William Flynn designed Holes 3, 4, and 5. While Military Road still serves as Rock Creek Golf Course's southern boundary, the road itself is not in the same location as it was during the first period of significance, and the course lost a few original acres along the southern border. Original boundaries to the north, east and west were unaffected. The majority of individual holes are in the same general location as when they were first laid out. The current clubhouse, which was built during the second period of significance, near the location of the original clubhouse building, has not been moved or altered since 1964. The location of Rock Creek Golf Course retains a high degree of integrity to the first and second periods of significance.

Design: Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure and style of a cultural landscape or historic property. During the first period of significance, William Flynn designed a nine-hole parkland style course, which appealed to golfers of various skill-levels, and highlighted the site's natural features. Flynn's bold routing played golfers across open, rolling hillside to the south of the clubhouse and through more dramatic, heavily forested topography along the northern edge of the course.. In 1924, Flynn was hired to design an additional nine holes at Rock Creek. The expansion of the course to a full eighteen holes required radical changes to the earlier course, in order to create a cohesive layout. Many original holes were abandoned or completely redesigned. While Flynn's final design required reworking nearly all of his original nine holes, he retained the spirit of the 1923 course. Pains were taken to accommodate beginners and experienced golfers alike. The front nine's wide-open fairways and gentle slopes provided novices with a less challenging course of play, while the narrow, wooded holes and difficult terrain of the back nine appealed to the more accomplished golfer.

The course remained largely unaltered until 1957, when plans to expand Military Road required the removal of Holes 3, 4 and 5, construction of three new holes, and the reworking of several others. Further changes to the course occurred in the 1970s, when fairways on the back nine were shortened. In the 1980s and 1990s, the back nine was restored to its original layout. Despite the loss of three original holes, and some re-organization of play over the past 90 years, the course retains much of Flynn's original design. The layout of Hole 11 is identical to that of Hole 5 in Flynn's 1921 plan.

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

Fourteen holes retain the same, or close to the same layout as Flynn's design (Holes 1 and 2 and Holes 7 through 18): tee boxes have been moved, in keeping with typical golf course management practices, but greens and fairways are all in the same location as they were laid out in 1926. The rest of the course follows the routing layout and progression envisioned by Flynn, with the exception of Holes 15 and 16, which were switched and reorganized to reverse play in the 1970s. Characteristic design elements that make Rock Creek legible as a William Flynn course—including the incorporation of mature trees and a layout that emphasizes the site's dramatic natural terrain—are intact. Overall, the course retains integrity to the first period of significance. The course's clubhouse, which was designed and built during the Mission 66-era, retains integrity of design to the second period of significance.

**Setting:** Setting is the physical environment of a cultural landscape. During the first period of significance, Rock Creek Golf Course was planned as part of a recreational space within the larger Rock Creek Park. Heavily wooded parkland bordered much of the site. Despite the rapid northward expansion of DC during the 20th Century, the setting of Rock Creek Golf Course remains much the same as it was during its first period of significance. Some residential development along the course's northeast corner was constructed concurrent with the course itself. The rest of the course has remained relatively unaffected by the city's growth. The mid-century expansion of Military Road, and construction of a new clubhouse during the second period of significance, did not substantively affect the original course's setting. The landscape retains integrity of setting to the first period of significance.

**Materials:** Materials are the physical elements of a particular period, including construction materials, paving, plants and other landscape features. Much of the original landscaping materials at Rock Creek Golf Course have been replaced since the first period of significance. Turf grass for greens, fairways and tee boxes requires regular, seasonal replanting. Flynn's landscape design for Rock Creek Golf Course incorporated stands of existing trees along fairways and between holes. Most of these tree stands are still present. During the second period of significance, landscaping was installed around the new clubhouse. Some trees from this period remain extant. The original 19th-century clubhouse was replaced with a new structure in 1964. The clubhouse is considered significant as part of the Mission 66-era construction throughout Rock Creek Park and retains integrity of original materials. As such, Rock Creek Park Golf Course has partial integrity of materials to the first period of significance, and integrity of materials to the second period of significance.

**Workmanship:** Workmanship includes the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or period. Though some of the original workmanship from the first period of significance was lost with the replacement of original landscape materials, the original layout of holes from the first period of significance remains largely intact, and reflects integrity of workmanship to 1921-1927. In addition some archeological evidence of workmanship to this period may exist. The Rock Creek Golf Course clubhouse, which is unchanged since its period of construction, retains integrity of workmanship to the second period of significance.

**Feeling:** Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period. Rock Creek's continued use as a public golf course, and the preservation and restoration of various elements of Flynn's original design, contribute to the integrity of feeling at Rock Creek Golf Course.

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

Despite the introduction of a few modern amenities, like golf carts, and the construction of a new clubhouse, player experience at Rock Creek Course remains much the same as it was during the first period of significance. The course was built to accommodate golfers of all skill levels and serve local DC residents. It continues to attract novices and experienced golfers alike, and most players are Washington DC residents who live in the surrounding neighborhoods. The course retains integrity of feeling to the first period of significance.

Association: Association is the direct link between an historic event or persons and a cultural landscape. Rock Creek Golf course has been associated with public golf in Washington, DC since its opening, in 1923. As such, it retains integrity of association as a municipal golf course.

CONCLUSION: This CLI finds that Rock Creek Golf Course retains integrity to both periods of significance. Subsequent changes have altered the landscape, especially with regard to materials, but the landscape continues to evoke historic significance.

### Landscape Characteristics and Features

This section presents an analysis of landscape characteristics and their associated features and corresponding List of Classified Structures names and numbers, if applicable. It also includes an evaluation of whether the feature contributes to the property's National Register eligibility for the historic period (1921-1927; 1963-1964), contributes to the property's historic character or if it is noncontributing, undetermined or managed as a cultural resource

#### Aspects of Integrity:

Location  
Design  
Setting  
Materials  
Workmanship  
Feeling  
Association

#### Landscape Characteristic:

##### Land Use

###### Historic Condition

Land use refers to the principle activities conducted upon the landscape and how these uses organized, shaped and formed the land. Before the establishment of Rock Creek Park, the Rock Creek Valley, north of Military Road, consisted of forested river valley and a few rural farmsteads. After the establishment of the park, in 1890, the area became a protected natural landscape. The land at Rock Creek Golf Course has been used for public recreation since it was incorporated as part of the founding of Rock Creek Park. Between 1905 and 1921, the future golf course site was part of Camp Goodwill, a summer camp for underprivileged white

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

children and their mothers. In 1911, the U.S. Forest Service established an experimental arboretum along the perimeter of the camp. Both of these uses were abandoned in 1921, when construction of the Rock Creek Golf Course began. This new land use required some tree clearance, especially along the edges of the course. The design exploited the site's natural topography. Large-scale earth moving was not widely practiced as part of golf course construction during this time, and would not have been practical given the project's limited budget. The main effect of the land's use as a golf course was tree clearance, planting of turf grass to create fairways and greens and the building of access roads to the clubhouse.

#### Existing Condition

The first nine holes of Rock Creek Golf Course were completed in 1923. Since that time the land has consistently functioned as a public golf course. The site has been in near continuous operation since 1926, when its full eighteen holes were opened to the public. Changes in golf technology and advances in course maintenance practices since the first period of significance have not altered the way in which the landscape is organized or used. Much as it did when it first opened, Rock Creek Golf Course serves golfers of all skill levels, most of who live in the surrounding neighborhood.

#### Analysis

The use and purpose of the Rock Creek Golf Course cultural landscape has not changed since the first period of significance, when the site was established as a public golf course. The site retains full integrity of land use.

#### **Character-defining Features:**

Feature: Continual use as a golf course

Feature Identification Number: 181078

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

#### **Topography**

##### Historic Condition

Topography refers to the three dimensional configuration of the landscape surface characterized by features such as slope and articulation, and orientation such as elevation. Rock Creek is located at the fall line of two geographic provinces: the hard, rocky Piedmont and soft, sandy Coastal Plain. (Poss 2013:113). Throughout history, the resulting terrain has been noted for its varied, dramatic topography. The hill directly opposite Rock Creek Golf Course was chosen as the site of Fort DeRussy, one of the Civil War Defenses of Washington. From its position 340-feet above sea level, Fort DeRussy, commanded views of the Rock Creek Valley, and protected the northern approach to the capitol. On the slightly smaller, 290-foot hill across the creek, three north-south ridges intersect with two east-west ridges, creating a dynamic landscape of hills and valleys. Farmers cleared part of this area for agricultural use in the early 19th century. The open space, with its "interesting topography of rolling hills," was praised in the Olmsted Report of 1918. The location "afford[ed] a sense of freedom, breadth and outlet found nowhere else in the Park" (Olmsted 1918:14). The report categorized the area as "Open

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

Hillside” and recommended that the site “should be kept open to provide a pastoral contrast to the sylvan scenery at the heart of the park” (HAER No. DC-55:63).

When DC Commissioners began searching for a new location on which to build a public golf course, the naturally varied terrain north of Military Road was a logical choice. Plans for a course in the area date to 1907, when nine holes were constructed around Brightwood reservoir, with the intention of building additional holes north of Military Road. The Brightwood course never opened, and the Commissioners ultimately demolished the half-built holes and replaced them with ballfields and tennis courts. Officials still considered the hillside above Military Road as a location for a golf course. Recreational activities were already located in the area and the site’s topography isolated it from other parts of the park. Crucially, it was not visible from the valley below, so construction of a course would not adversely affect the more naturalistic designs that the Olmsted Report recommended throughout the park (HAER No. DC-55:63).

Construction of the Rock Creek Golf Course began in 1921, and golf course architect William Flynn laid out the first nine holes to emphasize the site’s diverse topography. Flynn was known for incorporating natural features in his course designs. His original nine holes progressed in a circular loop around the property. Beginning west from the clubhouse—an existing farm building sited near the property’s highest point—Holes 1 through 4 wound around the southern edge of the property, playing across the site’s more gradual slope. A short Hole 5 (current Hole 11) played up, to a green located across a valley, while a long Hole 6, played from the property’s highest point (290-feet) down near the course’s lowest (220-feet). Hole 7 traversed a steep ravine and was followed by another long hole, Hole 8, a dogleg back up the big hill to the course’s high point. Hole 9 dropped the player gently back down toward clubhouse. Upon completion, the course was praised for its “diversified” topography, which resulted in a wide “variety of holes” throughout the course (Washington Post July 9, 1922).

Flynn’s redesign of the course, completed in 1926, further emphasized the site’s dramatic topographic changes. Only one original hole was left untouched (Hole 5, now Hole 11), the rest were reworked, or completely abandoned. The result was an eighteen-hole course, laid out to divide the front nine, which plays across the site’s more gentle, southern slope, from the back nine, where dramatic holes led golfers across treacherously steep drops to the north and east. Fairways on the front nine were fairly flat, and played predictably, while fairways on the back nine presented a unique set of challenges. Flynn laid out holes across ravines, and up and down steep hills. The design resulted in rolls and bounces that were unexpected. Holes 11 and 12 played across deceptively deep valleys. Hole 14’s fairway dropped straight from the tee box, located 250-feet above sea level, down to the course’s lowest point, 200-feet. Hole 15 reversed course, playing back up the same steep slope. The trek up the hill was so extreme that the hole eventually earned the nickname “heart-attack” or “cardiac” hill (Arnebeck, Washington Post, May 19, 1985). Flynn draped the fairway of Hole 17 across a narrow ravine. Teeing off from one hill, golfers risked smacking the ball into the side of the hill opposite, resulting in a roll to the bottom that forced golfers to play back up.

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

Earth moving was not widely practiced as part of golf course construction during this time, and Flynn's final design for Rock Creek featured no large-scale manufactured landforms. Grading and shaping greens created a variety of surfaces favorable for putting, but the design for Rock Creek Golf Course called for no major topographic changes.

During the initial period of significance, the only major topographic changes to the Rock Creek Course were the result of road construction. Between 1921 and 1925 Joyce Road was completed, which required a considerable amount of sidehill excavation. The new roadway cut back sharply toward the east boundary of the park and then descended to Military Road via a small ravine. Cuts of up to 15- and 20-feet were made into the hill (HAER No. DC-55: 77). A new Golf Course Access Road, built between 1926 and 1927, also required some excavation and grading.

#### Existing Condition

Rock Creek Golf Course's natural topography remains much the same, as it was when the golf course was initially designed in 1921. Though golf course design and maintenance has changed dramatically in the ensuing 95 years, and construction is now often associated with large-scale earth moving and landform building, these developments have had no effect on Rock Creek. No major renovations or course redesigns were implemented between 1926 and 2016, and as such, the naturally diverse topography that inspired Flynn's original design for the course has been preserved. Regular redesign of greens and reshaping of bunkers and sand traps creates slight changes in the topography of individual holes, but these changes are to be considered an inherent part of the golf course landscape and have generally been in keeping with Flynn's restrained approach to such features.

#### Analysis

The topography of Rock Creek Golf Course has changed very little since construction was completed in 1926. The course's highest point – roughly 290-feet above sea level – and its lowest point, about 200-feet remain the same as during the first period of significance, and are the natural result of geological processes. Besides slight grading of areas for greens and tee boxes and some land-moving for bunkers, the only major man-made changes to the topographic landscape occurred as the result of road construction, which required excavation of some of the hills to the south and east between 1921-1927 and again in 1958. Cuts made into hillsides during road construction in the 1920s and 1950s did not dramatically alter the natural topography of the landscape. As such, Rock Creek Golf Course retains integrity of topography to the first period of significance.

#### **Character-defining Features:**

Feature: Varied natural topography throughout the

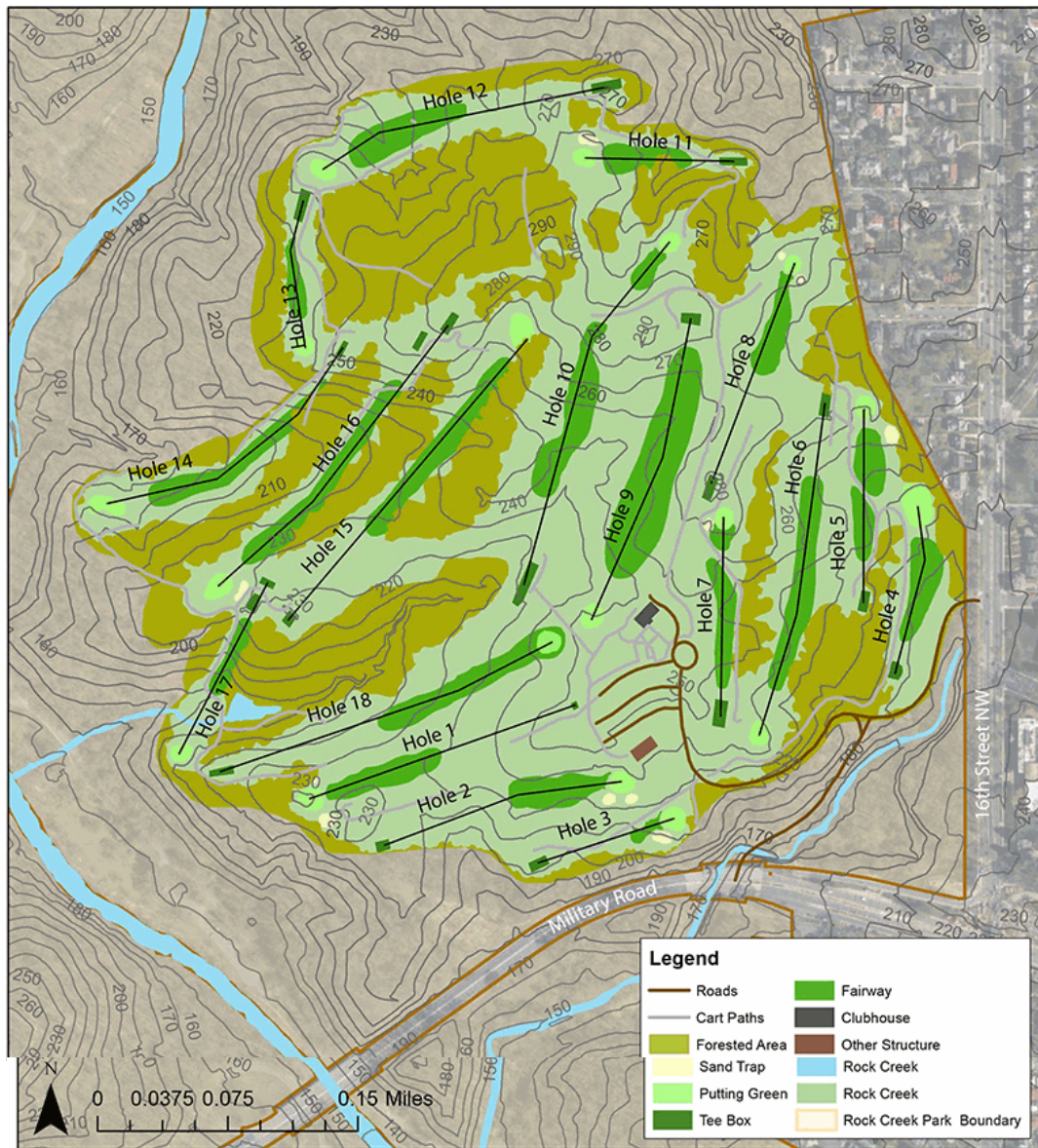
Feature Identification Number: 181080

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

#### **Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**



Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park



Topographic map of Rock Creek Golf Course, 2017. Drawn by M. Fichman and Shannon Garrison, 2017.

## **Spatial Organization**

### **Historic Condition**

A site's spatial organization refers to the three-dimensional organization of physical forms and visual associations in the landscape, including the articulation of ground, vertical and overhead planes that define and create spaces. The spatial organization of Rock Creek Park, like that of most golf courses, was originally centered around playing in and out from the clubhouse.

Flynn's original 1921 routing of the course began at a tee box located just northwest of clubhouse. "Routing" is a term used by golf course architects to describe "the path of the golf holes from the first tee of the first hole to the last green of the last hole" (Richardson 2013) From the tee box at Hole 1, golfers first played southwest and then moved in a counter-clockwise direction, doubling back and heading southeast, on Hole 2, before making a sharp turn toward the north at Holes 3 and 4. Hole 5 routed the course back west and a long Hole 6 initially ran south, before doglegging sharply to the west. Hole 7 played southeast, ending just north of the first hole's fairway, and closing the course's loop. Holes 8 and 9 were tucked inside the surrounding holes. Hole 8 played northeast and Hole 9 played parallel, to the southwest, ending directly behind the clubhouse.

The addition of nine new holes, constructed between 1924 and 1926, required the near total redesign of the course, and a completely new routing. The clubhouse remained the central organizing principal. Like the original nine holes, Flynn laid out the course counterclockwise, beginning west of the clubhouse, with Hole 1. Unlike the original layout, holes, were not routed in a wide loop. Instead they zig-zagged back and forth across the site's southern and eastern slopes, playing east on Hole 2 and then southwest on Hole 3, doubling back northeast with Hole 4. Hole 5 dipped southeast, towards the intersection of Military and Joyce Roads. Holes 6, 7 and 8, located across the newly constructed Joyce Road, switch-backed north (Hole 6) then south (Hole 7) and then back north (Hole 8), before Hole 9 returned players southwest, to the clubhouse. Starting with Hole 10, the back nine snaked north, then west with Holes 11 and 12, before swinging back south with Hole 13. Hole 14 doglegged south, then west. A long Hole 15 played back northeast, parallel to Hole 16, which played in the opposite direction. A short Hole 17 hopped south from one hilltop to another and Hole 18 headed east, ending just behind the clubhouse. This organization, which played out from the clubhouse and back in on both the front and back nine, prioritized nine-hole play, offering golfers of different skill levels options to play either Course A (front nine), Course B (back nine) or both, for a full round.

Access to the clubhouse was also the organizing principal in the construction of roads to and from the golf course. Preexisting roads, including the historic Milkhouse Ford Road, originally connected the farmhouse, and its auxiliary buildings, with Rock Creek to the west and Military

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

Road to the south. Until the 1862 completion of Military Road, Milkhouse Ford, which lies directly west of the golf course, offered the only easy crossing of Rock Creek in the northern Rock Creek Valley. During construction of the golf course, new roads replaced the historic Milkhouse Ford Road and the southern access to Military Road. These new roads reoriented the property to the east and the north, connecting the clubhouse with 16th street, via the newly built Joyce Road, and Underwood Street, NW, via an expansion a pre-existing north/south road. This shift reflected the increased development immediately east of the park, and the assumption that the course would draw golfers from these newly built neighborhoods. Players from southern DC could use public transportation lines that ran down 16th Street to access the course. For more on the roads at Rock Creek Golf Course see the Circulation section, below.

Natural features that contributed to the site's historic spatial organization included the densely forested area that surrounded much of the course's back nine. Unlike the front nine, which had been cleared in the 19th century for agricultural use, Flynn's 1924 design for the back nine carved holes through hillsides thick with trees. He incorporated many of these natural tree stands in his design, using mature forest to define fairways and views towards greens. The result was an open feeling front nine, with wide sun-drenched fairways and an enclosed, shady feeling on the back nine, where mature forest were used to create corridors or channels of movement and views. For more on vegetation at Rock Creek golf course, see section below.

The front nine was reorganized in 1957, when the expansion of Military Road resulted in the loss of Flynn's original Holes 3, 4 and 5. Golf course architect William F. Gordon, a protégé of Flynn's, redesigned these holes. Gordon routed a new Hole 3 to play east and moved Holes 4 and 5 across Joyce Road. The new holes both played north and were wedged below a shortened Hole 6. No changes were made to the back nine at this time

The construction of a new clubhouse, completed in 1964, did not dramatically alter the site's spatial organization, as the new structure was sited immediately northeast of the existing farmhouse. A new parking lot and cul-de-sac driveway were built at this time. Gravel cart paths, added between 1969 and 1978, merely formalized existing circulation paths and are discussed in greater depth in the circulation section.

#### Existing Condition

The spatial organization at Rock Creek Golf Course remains much as it was during the first period of significance. The direction of play through the landscape is still centered around the clubhouse. The course itself retains the counterclockwise directional routing that Flynn first designed in 1921. The division between the front and back nine is intact, and the current organization of these two distinct halves, which both play in and out from the clubhouse, and were designed so they might be played as separate, 9-hole courses, remains close to Flynn's original plan. Holes 3, 4, 5 and 6, which were redesigned by William Gordon in 1958, are unchanged since that period. Though the rerouting of this part of the course altered Flynn's layout, the open, open spacious feeling Flynn intended on the front nine, remains intact. Dense vegetation and tree canopy continue to define the spatial organization of the back nine. On this

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

half of the course, Flynn's original route to and from the clubhouse is virtually the same as it was in 1926. Holes 15 and 16 have been swapped and both play in opposite directions than they were originally intended. This change has affected the original circulation pattern around the back nine, but not the overall spatial organization.

Like the organization of the course itself, circulation at Rock Creek Golf Course is generally centered around access to the clubhouse. The northern road to the course, via Underwood Street, was eliminated between 1969 and 1978. The original road still exists, and has been converted for cart and maintenance vehicle use. The Golf Course Access Road, which connects to Joyce Drive, east of the clubhouse, is the only remaining road to the course. Cart paths, first introduced in the late 1960s/1970s, have been extended throughout the course.

#### Analysis

Contributing landscape features related to the Rock Creek Golf Course's spatial organization, and developed during the first period of significance, include: the counterclockwise routing of the course around the clubhouse; the division and distinct treatment of the front nine and back nine; and the circulation patterns designed to connect the clubhouse to neighborhoods to the east. Of these items, the counterclockwise organization of the landscape is the most important and remains almost completely intact. The same is true of the division and distinctions between the front and back nine. While the expansion of Military Road required the redesign and rerouting of part of the front nine, the general organization of this part of the course was not significantly affected or altered. Likewise, the re-organization and reversal of play on Holes 15 and 16 has not altered Flynn's original spatial organization. Tree encroachment on fairways and greens on the back nine has resulted in the narrowing of many of Flynn's fairways and crowding of greens. This has affected original vertical and overhead planes that help to define space on this part of the course and has also negatively affected play on certain holes. Still, the overall feeling of an open airy front nine and a densely forested back nine remains intact.

Construction of a new clubhouse in 1964, did not significantly affect the course's spatial organization, as the new structure was located immediately east of the original building. The orientation of circulation patterns that connect the clubhouse with entrances to the park from the north and east, has changed somewhat since the first period of significance. These changes are discussed in the circulation section below. Overall, the site retains integrity of spatial organization to the first period of significance.

#### **Character-defining Features:**

Feature: Counterclockwise org. of golf course

Feature Identification Number: 181082

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Open, relatively treeless front nine and

Feature Identification Number: 181084

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>
-77.0405590000	38.9654160000

Feature: Densley forested back nine  
Feature Identification Number: 181086  
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

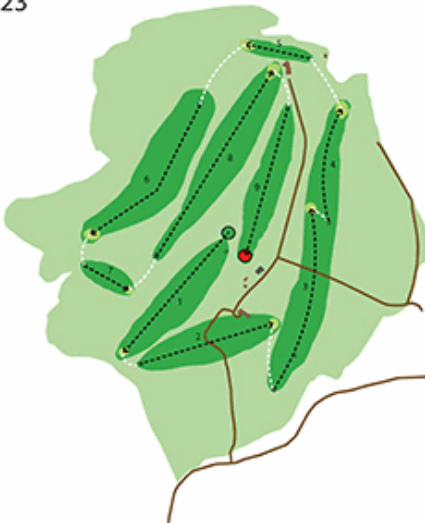
<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>
-77.0435330000	38.9671770000

Feature: Circulation connecting the clubhouse an  
Feature Identification Number: 181088  
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**

SPATIAL ORGANIZATION: HISTORIC AND EXISTING

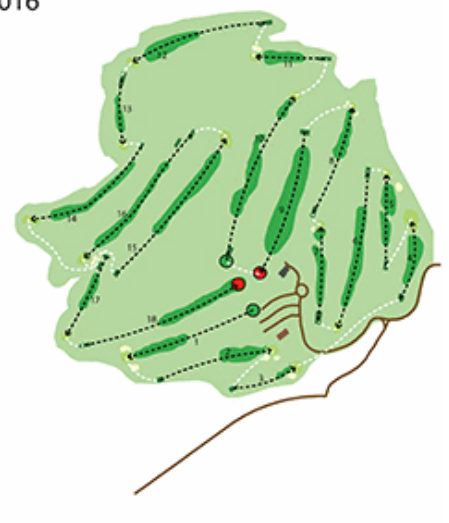
1923



1927



2016



*Changes in routing at Rock Creek have not affected the overall spatial orientation from the first period of significance, which laid out the course in a counterclockwise pattern around the clubhouse. Drawn by S. Garrison, 2017. A larger version of this graphic is in Appendix A.*

## **Circulation**

### **Historic Condition**

Circulation is defined by the spaces, features and applied material finishes which constitute systems of movement in a landscape. Historic circulation at Rock Creek Golf Course consists of formal circulation in and around the site, in the form of roads, golf cart paths, sidewalks, social trails throughout the landscape, and traces of a historic, 17th century road that run through the center of the property. For discussion of direction of play and routing of the course itself, see the Spatial Organization section, above, and Buildings and Structures section, below.

Some trails and carriage roads around Rock Creek Golf Course predate the construction of the course, and the park, themselves. Prior to the establishment of the golf course, a historic road ran through the center of the property, connecting Milkhouse Ford – the main northern crossing of Rock Creek – with farms and property to the east. This road dates back to the late 17th century, and is associated with pre-Civil War milling and farming industries in the Rock Creek Valley. In drawings of William Flynn’s original nine holes, Milkhouse Ford Road is still extant. Dashed lines west of the clubhouse depict a portion of the road was unpaved, probably dirt. East of the clubhouse, the road was paved. The paving likely dates to the early 20th century, when the road would have provided access to Camp Goodwill from a park entrance on 16th Street. This section of the road was demolished and planted over between 1926 and 1927, concurrent with construction of a new Golf Course Access Road. The unpaved, western half of Milkhouse Ford Road remained extant and crossed fairways on Holes 10, 15 and 16. Traces of this road are visible in aerial photography through 1995.

A road connecting the golf course clubhouse and the 19th century Freas farmhouse, also predates construction of the course itself. This road first appears on the 1857 Bocshke Map. It was incorporated as part of the course’s original 1923 circulation and rebuilt in 1926, to connect with Underwood Street, to the east. The connection to Underwood Street was eventually abandoned and the road was incorporated as part of the golf cart path in the 1970s.

In 1862, Military Road replaced Milkhouse Ford as the main avenue for crossing Rock Creek in the northern Rock Creek Valley. This road, which was straightened and widened from two to four lanes between 1958 and 1960, continues to serve as a major east/west artery through the park. Its expansion caused the loss of three William Flynn designed golf holes and it currently serves as the southern boundary of the Rock Creek Golf Course. Military Road itself is outside the scope of this CLI.

Other pre-existing circulation at Rock Creek Golf Course included a north/south road which turned off from Military Road, east of Rock Creek, connecting with a 19th century barn that was used as a maintenance shed. Aerials show the southern portion of the road, which ran through fairways on Holes 2 and 4, existed through the 1930s.

Between 1921 and 1927, the Office of Public Building & Public Parks made a number of improvements to the road system of Rock Creek Park. Among them was Joyce Road, constructed between 1921 and 1925, to provide a connection from Beach Drive to Sixteenth

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

Street and the neighborhoods on the east side of the park. The one-half mile long road ran down the ravine formed by the Luzon Branch, a tributary of Rock Creek, from the intersection of Sixteenth Street and Rittenhouse Street to Beach Drive. Only the section between Sixteenth Street and the Golf Course Access Road are within the boundaries of this CLI.

Construction of a new road to provide access to the golf course began in 1926. Completed in 1927, the new Golf Course Access Road connected the clubhouse to Joyce Road via a winding southern drive. It replaced the paved eastern section of Milkhouse Ford Road. Though the older road offered more level and direct access to 16th Street, it crossed several of the course's fairways and was planted over during construction of the new Access Road (HAER No. DC-55: 14-17:77).

In 1964, as part of construction of a new clubhouse, a circular cul-de-sac was added to the end of the Golf Course Access Road, and a larger, 90-car parking lot was built to the southeast of the new building. Sidewalks around the clubhouse and parking lot perimeter were also built during this time. Gravel golf cart paths were built sometime between 1969 and 1978. They first appear on aerial images of for Rock Creek Golf Course in 1978. Originally, these paths were not extensive and seem merely to have formalized existing circulation patterns between holes.

#### Existing Condition

With the exception of the circular cul-de-sac added in 1964, the Golf Course Access Road appears unchanged since construction was completed in 1927. It is a .185 mile-long, two-way road, 18-foot wide, made of bituminous concrete with 3-foot shoulders. It continues to connect Joyce Road and the clubhouse. No major changes appear to have been made to the section of Joyce Road between the Golf Course Access Road and Sixteenth Street. The section of road is two lanes, 0.1-mile, 22-foot wide, and constructed of bituminous concrete with mountable concrete curbs. The large, 90-car parking lot to the southwest of the clubhouse appears unchanged since its original construction in 1964. The circular drive and sidewalks around the clubhouse, which also date to this period, also appear unchanged (HAER No. DC-55:14-17).

More research is needed to determine when the road connecting the clubhouse with Underwood Street, originally intended for vehicular use, was converted for use only by golf carts and maintenance vehicles. This probably occurred around the time of the original cart path construction. Aerial images from 1978 show access to Underwood Street has been left to deteriorate. The connection with Underwood seems fully blocked by 1988. It remains blocked in 2017. Dense brush and vegetation cover the original connection between the two roads.

Golf cart paths, first built sometime between 1969 and 1978, have been expanded throughout the course since the period of their initial construction. In 1978, less than 0.1-mile of cart paths appeared on aerial imagery. In 2017 there are approximately 2-miles of paths throughout the course. On average, existing paths are 4-feet wide. Some are partially paved while others are original gravel or pebble and some are dirt paths (NPS Feasibility Study 1977). Vegetation encroachment on the fairways of the back nine has affected some of these cart paths, making



## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

them inaccessible or difficult to drive.

#### Analysis

Contributing landscape features related to Rock Creek Golf Course's circulation include part of Joyce Road and the Golf Course Access Road, both constructed during the first period of significance. Additional, non-contributing landscape features include the course parking lot, circular driveway and sidewalks around the clubhouse, constructed during the second period of significance, and cart paths constructed after the periods of significance. Joyce Road and the Golf Course Access Road are both relatively unchanged since their original period of construction. Regular maintenance and replacement of original materials due to normal wear seem the only major changes since the roads were completed in 1925 and 1927. Both Joyce Road and the Golf Course Access Road retain integrity to the first period of significance.

The circular driveway at the end of the Golf Course Access Road was added during the construction of the new clubhouse, which was completed in 1964. The parking lot south of the clubhouse was also expanded during this time and sidewalks were built in front of the clubhouse. These features replaced existing driveways and parking lots that were built during the first period of significance. Though the new 90-car parking lot was considerably bigger than its 1926 counterpart, neither the parking lot or circular drive substantively altered existing circulation patterns at Rock Creek Golf Course. As such, these features, which date to the second period of significance, are not considered contributing

Rock Creek Golf Course's cart paths were first built sometime between 1969 and 1978. A paved segment of the current path between the clubhouse and the green on Hole 8 is constructed on top of a road which dates to the first period of significance and once connected the clubhouse with Underwood Street. This segment is the only part of the current cart path system considered a contributing landscape feature. It retains integrity to the first period of significance. The rest of the paths and any current social trails are all considered non-contributing.

Traces of the historic Milkhouse Ford Road partially cross the western half of Rock Creek Golf course, between Holes 14 and 15. This 17th century road has its own individual significance earlier than 1921 and should be studied further for identification and listing.

#### **Character-defining Features:**

Feature: Joyce Road between 16th Street and GC A

Feature Identification Number: 181090

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Golf cart path segment between clubhouse and Underwood Street.

Feature Identification Number: 181094

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing



Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>
0.0000000000	
Feature: Golf Course Access Road	
Feature Identification Number: 181096	
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing	
<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>
-77.0389640000	38.9634890000
Feature: Circular driveway in front of clubhouse.	
Feature Identification Number: 181098	
Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing	
<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>
-77.0395670000	38.9650370000
Feature: Parking Lot	
Feature Identification Number: 181100	
Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing	
<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>
-77.0404300000	38.9646980000
Feature: Sidewalks	
Feature Identification Number: 181102	
Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing	
<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>
0.0000000000	
Feature: All other cart paths throughout the course.	
Feature Identification Number: 181104	
Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing	
<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>
0.0000000000	

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

Feature: Social trails throughout the course.

Feature Identification Number: 181106

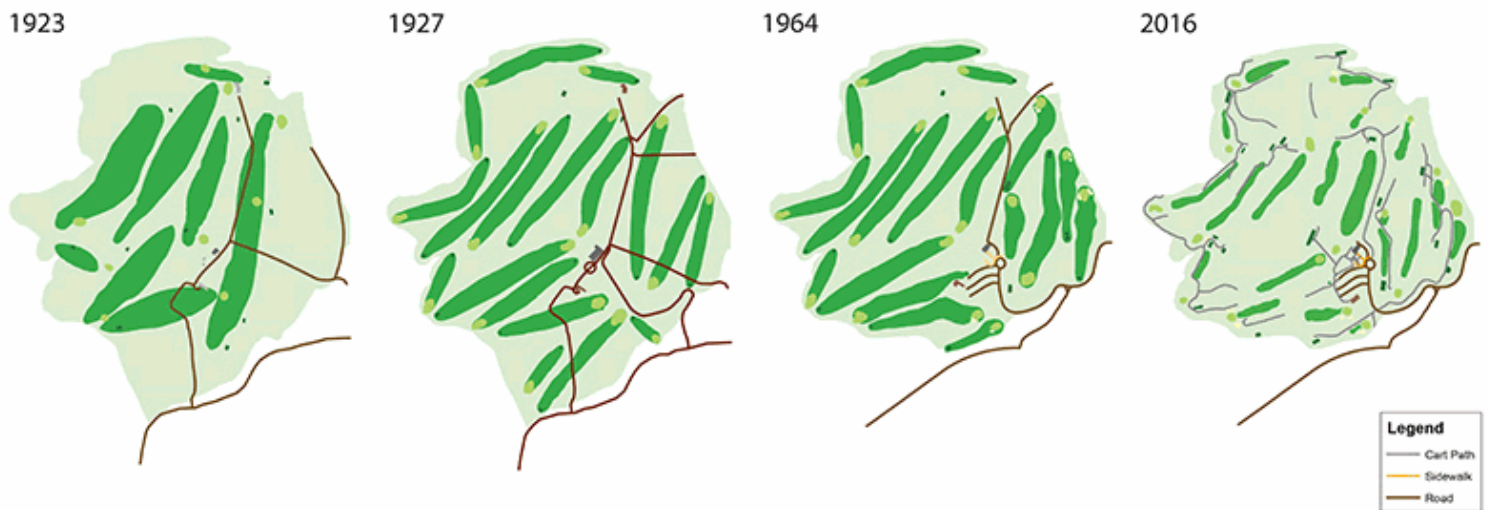
Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing

Latitude Longitude

0.0000000000

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**

CIRCULATION: HISTORIC AND EXISTING



Map showing existing circulation at Rock Creek Golf Course in 2016. Drawn by S. Garrison, 2017. A larger version of this graphic is located in Appendix A.

**Buildings and Structures**

Historic Condition

Golf Course

Irving W. Payne, a landscape architect with the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds (OPBG), working with Major Douglas L. Weart, Assistant to the Officer in Charge of the OPBG and Smith Riley, a forester, laid out the first rough outline for a nine-hole golf course at Rock Creek Park in October of 1921 (Memorandum from Col. Sherrill to Superintendent Gillen, 22 October 1921). In January of 1922, Colonel Sherrill, Officer in Charge of the OPBG, hired golf course architect William S. Flynn of Ardmore, Pennsylvania to design the course. Flynn spent two days going over the grounds at Rock Creek, planning the location of tees and greens. Payne prepared the final drawings, incorporating Flynn's suggestions. The first nine holes of the

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

Rock Creek golf course opened in 1923 with a remodeled farmhouse as the clubhouse. The course was designed in a parkland style and organized in a counterclockwise loop around the landscape, starting west of the clubhouse.

In 1924, Col. Sherrill wrote to William Flynn requesting his services to design nine additional holes at Rock Creek. In July of 1924 Flynn traveled to Washington and met with Col. Sherrill to discuss a new layout for the course. (Letter from Col Sherrill to William S. Flynn July 5, 1924; Washington Post July 27, 1924) Col. Sherrill wanted the new course to be open by the following summer, so work began immediately. Wooded areas north of the original nine holes were cleared in the summer of 1924. William Flynn visited the site again in August of 1924 and wrote to Col. Sherrill that he had “an excellent idea of the course” (Col Sherrill to Flynn, July 31, 1924; Col. Sherrill to Flynn, August 6, 1925).

Flynn’s “excellent idea” required a near total redesign of the original nine-hole course. For the new Rock Creek Golf Course Flynn planned two distinct nine-hole courses, Course A and Course, B. The courses could be played individually, in a nine-hole round, or together, for a full eighteen-hole game. Working in the parkland-style, Flynn’s courses emphasized different aspects of the site’s natural topography and vegetation. The front nine, or “Course A” was open and airy with holes laid-out across gentle slopes to the south and east of the clubhouse. The back nine, or “Course B” was carved out of mature forest and played across dramatic changes in topography. The final eighteen-hole design was spread out over 108 acres and had a combined distance of 5,545 yards. The par for an entire eighteen holes was 70. Original yardage and pars (as determined by 1917 USGA Guidelines; Rock Creek Park Historic District National Register Amended Nomination 2014:7.26; Rock Creek Golf Course: A Brief History; USGA 1917 Guidelines, found at <https://www.thoughtco.com/par-3-to-5-yardage-guidelines-1564466>).

Original 1926 Yardage (Source: 1926 Topo Map)

Course A (front nine)

Hole 1: 334 yards, par 4

Hole 2: 278 yards, par 4

Hole 3: 175 yards, par 3

Hole 4: 340 yards, par 4

Hole 5: 92 yards, par 3

Hole 6: 225 yards, par 4

Hole 7: 334 yards par 4

Hole 8: 481 yards, par 5

Hole 9: 334 yards, par 4

Total: 2,593 yards

Course B (back nine)

Hole 10: 508 yards, par 5

Hole 11: 164 yards, par 3

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

Hole 12: 325 yards, par 4  
Hole 13: 174 yards, par 3  
Hole 14: 330 yards, par 4  
Hole 15: 478 yards, par 5  
Hole 16: 437 yards, par 4  
Hole 17: 162 yards, par 3  
Hole 18: 374 yards, par 4  
Total: 2,952 yards

Henry Litchfield West described the changes to the Rock Creek Golf Course in his Washington Post Column:

In the first place, the tee for the first hole has been removed so that the new tee is close to the clubhouse, but the first and second holes remain unchanged. The old third hole was abandoned and the new third hole will be played to the southward, while the fairway of the fourth hole comes back to a new green near the old Hole 2.

The fifth hole is one of the prettiest short holes on any course in the District. It is situated in the woods and is a short mashie pitch across a ravine, at the bottom of which is a small creek, the green being located near the Military Road. The sixth and seventh holes are both new, while the eighth green is old Hole 4. The ninth hole is to be played across the road that comes into the golf course from Sixteenth Street down to the old ninth green. The tenth hole follows the line of the old Hole 8, but the tee has been advanced so that a ball does not have to be driven across the ditch. The eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth are all new holes while the sixteenth is the present Hole 6. The old seventh hole, which was a favorite short pitch across a ditch, has been eliminated, and a new hole, the seventeenth, about 154 yards in length, has been constructed. The eighteenth hole plays back to the clubhouse (Washington Post March, 24, 1926).

Comparing plans of the original nine-hole course with the final eighteen-hole course shows West's report to be mostly accurate. Inaccuracies include his description of Hole 9, which never appears to have played across the Golf Course Access Road, or any other road on the property. Hole 11 is the original Hole 5, not a new hole as West claimed. Further in his column West mentioned the discovery, during construction, of an original hole from the failed 1909-era course. The hole was situated in the woods north of Military Road and "met with the approval of William Flynn" who incorporated it into his final design. The hole was "a short one, a tee shot across a hollow to a green on the side of a hill" (West Washington Post March 24, 1926). This, and the description of the hole's location, closely matches that of Flynn's Hole 5. Two rustic footbridges, approximately 38-foot long and 4-foot wide, were built across the stream at the bottom of the hill allowing golfers access to the green (Poss 2013:72).

A hole by hole description of the 1926-era course is included in Appendix B.

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

Though no major changes were made to the course in the 1930s and 40s, some important circulation changes and the shortening of many holes did occur during this period. A comparison of the 1944 plan of existing conditions at Rock Creek Golf Course shows a major shift in progression of play on the back nine was implemented sometime between 1927 and 1944. The original design directed play around the northern perimeter of the site on Holes 12, 13 and 14 and then doubled back first north and then south on Holes 15 and 16, which were tucked between Holes 14 and 10. By 1944 play had been rerouted so that the original Hole 16 was changed to Hole 12. Play then progressed to the original Hole 15, which became the new Hole 13. The original Hole 12 became Hole 14, Hole 13 became Hole 15 and Hole 14 became Hole 16. The result was a circulation pattern that played in, toward the course's center on Holes 12 and 13, and then out around the course's northern and eastern perimeter before heading back to the clubhouse on Hole 18. This new direction of play was in effect through the 1980s. While the circulation changes did not affect the physical design of the course itself, they should be kept in mind when comparing original yardages, by hole, with those listed between 1944 and 1990.

The course's first man-made hazards, several sand traps located around the greens, first appear in existing conditions drawings of the course, dating to 1944. The drawing mentions that the course's layout was taken from a 1937 aerial, which was not located during research for this CLI. This dates the installation of hazards to sometime between 1927 and 1937. They do not appear on original drawings or 1927 aerials of the course (Golf Course Rock Creek Park, Map Showing Existing Conditions 1944).

On the front nine, the construction of an additional green, halfway up the fairway of 462-yard Hole 8 allowed for alternate play on Holes 5 through 8. The 1944 existing conditions map shows options for skipping the 97-yard hole 5 and instead proceeding across Joyce Road, playing Hole 6 as Hole 5, Hole 7 as Hole 6 and then, instead of playing the length of Hole 8 as Flynn had designed it, playing an alternate Hole 7 from the original Hole 8 tee box, to the new green and then proceeding from a new tee box, just east of the green, and playing the remaining half of the fairway, ending on Flynn's original green for Hole 8.

The shortening of several holes also occurred sometime during this period. Many of the changes on the front nine were minor reductions in yardage by 10 or 20 -yards. Hole 6, originally 225-yards and listed as a par 4, was shortened by nine yards and re-categorized as a 216-yard par 3. Holes on the back nine were shortened by more significant measurements. Hole 10, designed by Flynn as a 508-yard par 5, lost 100 yards, becoming a 406 par 4. As mentioned above, play on Holes 12 through 16 was redirected, and when these holes were switched, many were also shortened. Hole 13 (original Hole 15) was reduced from 478-yards to 451-yards. Hole 14 (original Hole 12) was reduced from 325-yards to 248-yards. Overall, the length of the back nine dropped from 2,952-yards to 2,686-yards. Many of the changes in the length of individual holes during this period were the result of movement of tee boxes, a change that is inherent to golf course.

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

1944 Yardage (Source: 1944 Existing conditions map)

#### Course A (front nine)

Hole 1: 304 yards, par 4

Hole 2: 281 yards, par 4

Hole 3: 167 yards, par 3

Hole 4: 336 yards, par 4

Hole 5: 97 yards, par 3

Hole 6: 216 yards, par 3

Hole 7: 327 yards, par 4

Hole 8: 462 yards, par 5

Hole 9: 318 yards, par 4

Total: 2,508 yards

#### Course B (back nine)

Hole 10: 406 yards, par 4

Hole 11: 148 yards, par 3

Hole 12: 435 yards, par 4

Hole 13: 451 yards, par 5

Hole 14: 248 yards, par 4

Hole 15: 168 yards, par 3

Hole 16: 315 yards, par 4

Hole 17: 159 yards, par 3

Hole 18: 356 yards, par 4

Total: 2,952 yards

In 1946, DC Commissioners announced plans to expand Military Road south of the golf course. The new, wider road would be built over parts of Holes 3, 4 and 5 (Washington Post, January 26, 1958). The NPS hired golf course architect William F. Gordon, a protégé of William Flynn, to redesign the front nine accordingly (NPS 1946; Washington Post, April 21, 1957:A13). After plans for the proposed expansion projected further into the golf course than expected, Gordon wrote to S.G. Loeffler “ “As it stands now, the only way we can still retain eighteen holes at Rock Creek will be to play the present [green] four from a tee location about where the third tee is now, construct a new Hole 4, Hole 5 and a new tee on Hole 6 all in the area where your present fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth holes are located.” Later that month, Gordon submitted his revised plans to Loeffler and wrote, “These proposed changes on the Golf Course will not alter the general routine of play and will prove just as interesting as the present layout. Work can be carried out on Hole 2,3,5 and 6 without interfering with play. However, when the green on Hole 4 is built that hole will be out of play for at least one week.” Reconstruction of the course was underway by 1957 and was complete by the time expansion of Military Road began, in 1958 (Davis 1998:147-148; Poss 2013:86-87; William F. Gordon to S.G. Loeffler, May 27, 1946).

The new holes, included a completely new Hole 3, which played short, 142-yards from a teebox

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

near the location of the original third tee, and towards the original fourth green, just as Gordon described. A new Hole 4 was located in roughly the same location as Flynn's original Hole 6. Rather than playing straight north, as that hole did, the newly designed 218-yard hole was boomerang-shaped, playing northeast and then northwest. The new 210-yard Hole 5 also played north and required golfers to backtrack slightly to access the tee box. Hole 6 retained the original green designed for Flynn's Hole 7, but the fairway was reoriented slightly from a 327-yard dogleg that played southwest and then south to a 375-yard dogleg playing south and then southeast. The new Hole 7 was just the existing alternate option for playing that hole, made permanent, and a new Hole 8 played from a new tee box located directly north of the new Hole 7, toward the northeast, before bending sharply northwest, toward a newly designed green 260-yards from the tee.

The course saw a steady stream of golfers through the mid 1960s, but the late 1960s through the end of the 1970s was a period of decline at Rock Creek Golf Course. Golfers began to complain about conditions on the back nine especially. Failure to properly maintain the turf led to dangerous erosion on the course's steep slopes and a lack of regular vegetation clearance resulted in narrowing fairways, as thick brush began to encroach on what should have been playable space. A 1974 NPS feasibility study found:

“the fairways, tees and greens show a high degree of neglect – weeds abound on the fairways and greens, and the majority of the tees are worn to bare ground. From the deteriorated condition of the turf, long-term lack of proper fertilization is obvious. Potholes are numerous throughout the fairways – a hazard to all. Although the open areas have been mowed, no trimming has been done, and 2-foot high weeds surround tees that lie adjacent to naturally wooded areas. At the edge of the tenth fairway, two junked dump trucks lie rusting next to a fertilizer spreader that appears to be still usable. The traps are almost entirely bare of sand. The grounds maintenance equipment appears rundown and obsolete... All greens were infested with goosegrass. Turf was thin, green grass showed signs of disease. Greens 1 and 7 rated very poor, no greens rated higher than fair. 2, 9 and 18 were rated fair on turf cover, but because of the rough surface on these they would rate poor on playability. Recommended all tees be renovated. Recommended greens renovated, esp. Hole 1 and Hole 17. Overall rating for Rock Creek Golf Course would be poor. (Cook 1974:Appendix A).

By this point, so many golfers had given up on the back nine that regular maintenance had been suspended for that part of the course. According to the Washington Post, the course concessionaire decided that Hole 13 (today's Hole 16) – referred to as “Cardiac Hill,”– and the equally demanding sixteenth (today's Hole 14) “scared away too much potential business...The average golfer [did] not want to crawl back to the clubhouse” (Washington Post July 11, 1975). Consequently, the S.G. Leoffler Co. drastically altered the scenic and challenging back nine. The sixteenth hole (today's Hole 14) “a beautiful 370-yard downhill dogleg with a breathtaking tee elevated 80 feet above the wooded fairway” was eliminated. The old thirteenth green became the green for a new 128-yard, par-three Hole 15. In addition, the difficult uphill Hole 10 was chopped into two holes – an easy 265-yard par four and a 128-yard par three (Washington

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

Post July 11, 1975).

Two years later, a 1977 study of the course found that it was still in “less than acceptable condition for player use and in overall appearance because of poor maintenance” (NPS 1977:27) Criticism of Rock Creek included: an inadequate number of sand traps, poor condition of existing traps, inadequate drainage, bare or non-existent tee boxes, poor turf maintenance, infestation of foreign grasses and weeds, poorly rolled greens and rain shelters in need of repair (NPS 1977: 28).

The course’s length, which had been consistently shortened since its original construction, was cited as a major issue when considering future use. Golf course technology had changed significantly since 1926, when golfers routinely played with wooden clubs and the average length of a drive was much shorter. Compared with modern courses, Rock Creek Park had too many Par 3s – nine total, and its Par 4s were too short. The 1977 report only considered two out of nine to be “standard length.”

A number of specific recommendations were included in this report, including extensive renovation of nearly all tee boxes, major renovations of greens on Holes 1, 15, 17, and 18 and grooving, topdressing and reseeding of all greens. The report mentions that many of these greens had been allowed to shrink since their original design and should be restored to their original size. Vegetation growth on the back nine had become a major problem. Trees had matured, without being pruned, until they were beginning to “close off routes of play with (sic) surely were intended on the original golf course design.”

By the end of the 1970s the concessionaire, S.G. Loeffler, which had managed the golf course of over 50-years, asked the NPS for relief from its current contract. In 1982 Golf Course Specialists (GCS) took over management of the course and proceeded with some of the proposed improvements suggested in the 1977 study. These included the construction of three new greens on Holes 14, 15 and 16, the construction of a new maintenance shed in 1984, and a rehabilitation of the back nine, which restored Flynn’s original progression of play and length to some of the shortened holes. Despite the restoration of the back nine and concern about yardage of holes, the length of the course continued to shrink. In 1989 it played at 4,803 yards, par 65, considerably shorter than Flynn’s original 5,545 yard-, par 70 course.

1990 Yardage (Source Bushong Report)

Front Nine

Hole 1: 296 yards, par 4

Hole 2: 268 yards, par 4

Hole 3: 140 yards, par 3

Hole 4: 185 yards, par 3

Hole 5: 200 yards, par 3

Hole 6: 364 yards, par 4

Hole 7: 184 yards, par 3



## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

Hole 8: 269 yards, par 4

Hole 9: 315 yards, par 4

Total: 2,221 yards

#### Back nine

Hole 10: 384 yards, par 4

Hole 11: 155 yards, par 3

Hole 12: 276 yards, par 4

Hole 13: 165 yards, par 3

Hole 14: 320 yards, par 4

Hole 15: 390 yards, par 4

Hole 16: 400 yards, par 4

Hole 17: 162 yards, par 3

Hole 18: 330 yards, par 4

Total: 2,582 yards

#### Clubhouse and Shelters

In 1923, Flynn's original design for nine golf holes at Rock Creek incorporated seven structures, already extant on site. Most of these buildings dated to the late 19th century, when several families farmed the land. In the early 20th century, an old farmhouse and its outbuildings were converted into a summer camp for poor white children and their mothers. Camp Goodwill was relocated across Rock Creek in 1921, once planning for a new golf course began. Initially all existing camp buildings seem to have been left standing on the course. A farmhouse, described as a two-story wood-frame structure, with a rear addition and one-story wrap-around porch was refurbished and reused as a clubhouse. A large barn, located to the south of the farmhouse was used as a maintenance shed. Three small outbuildings between the barn and clubhouse appear on the 1922 plan of the site. More research is needed to determine what these structures were. Further north, near Underwood Street, another large structure may have been a second farmhouse or barn. A smaller outbuilding was located directly east. Analysis of historic maps suggests that these buildings were constructed sometime between 1857 and 1890. They were transferred to Rock Creek Park as part of parcels 33 and 34, which were owned by the Samuel Freas and William J. Cowden, respectively. The future clubhouse, was transferred as part of the Cowden property.

The 1923 Annual Report of the Chief of Engineers mentions materials from an old barracks building in East Potomac Park were used to build a pavilion across the road from the Rock Creek Golf Course clubhouse (War Department 1923:2035). More research is needed to determine the exact location of this pavilion and if it was a temporary or permanent structure. It does not appear in 1926 plans of the site.

In 1926, four of the six buildings and structures depicted on the 1922 plan of the site were extant. No new buildings or structures were constructed as part of the course's 1926 expansion, but the clubhouse was renovated and enlarged. The 19th century farmhouse was

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

stripped to its original frame and reconstructed with the addition of more modern amenities. The concessionaire S.G. Loeffler, who shared part of the cost of course improvements, installed showers for men and women and built private dressing rooms in the women's locker rooms. Steam heat was introduced and men's and women's lockers installed (502 for men, 125 for women) (Washington Post March 24, 1926). There is no evidence that any other structures were renovated during this time. The newly designed course re-opened in 1926. 75,000 golfers passed through it that year (Rock Creek Park Historic District National Register Amended Nomination 2014:8.66).

Funding for construction of a completely new clubhouse, something golfers had been clamoring for since the 1930s, finally came through in the early 1960s. Part of Mission 66, a ten-year program to upgrade deteriorated facilities in the National Park System, updates were planned throughout Rock Creek Park. Plans for a new clubhouse were first drawn up in 1958. The clubhouse had modern features such as a prominent, angled roof and walls of windows that looked out onto the course. Although NPS Director Conrad Wirth approved the plans, delayed funding deterred its construction until 1963. Local architecture firm, John Hans Graham & Associates, working with the National Capital Office of Design and Construction, designed the final structure. Built into a hillside, immediately northwest of the original farmhouse, the new clubhouse had a one-story front elevation facing the entrance drive and a two-story rear elevation facing the golf course. The design featured vertical siding and brick on all four elevations. A low gable roof covered both ends of the building. A shed roof and tall windows facing the golf course marked the lounge area, located at the approximate center of the building. Large windows overlooking parts of Holes 9, 10 and 18 visually connected interior and exterior spaces. In its use of gable and shed roofs, brick and vertical siding, and traditional and nontraditional windows, the clubhouse straddled the line between more traditional and modern Park Service design. The entrance level of the clubhouse originally included the lounge, kitchen, pro shop, and office, while the lower level had men and women's locker rooms and showers. The clubhouse – substantially completed by the end of February 1964 – opened the following October. The old farmhouse was demolished that same year (Robinson 2012 E.25; Rock Creek Park Historic District National Register Amended Nomination 2014:8.55-56).

Concurrent with the construction of the clubhouse was the building of several new shelters throughout the course. The associated shelters complemented the clubhouse in their form, design and use of materials and also reflected the influence of Mission 66. (Rock Creek Park Historic District National Register Amended Nomination 2014 7.13).

#### Existing Conditions

##### Golf Course

Many changes have been made to individual holes at Rock Creek, since the initial period of construction. These changes include the movement of tee boxes and hazards and redesign of greens, which are all considered a normal part of golf course maintenance and management. Such changes have not affected the overall design of the course itself, or its integrity as a public golf course, built in the early 20th century. As a whole, Rock Creek Golf Course still looks,

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

feels and plays much the same as William Flynn intended when he designed it in 1924. The course as a whole and the majority of fairways and greens are still in the same location as when they were completed in 1926. The course remains an eighteen-hole course, comprised of two nine-hole loops that play in and out from a centrally located clubhouse. The front nine and back nine are still distinct from one another, with the front nine defined by its open feeling, gentle slopes and wide fairways and the back nine defined by its narrow fairways surrounded by dense forest and traversing steep slopes. More hazards have been introduced since the period of significance and some holes have been shortened. In 2016, the course's total yardage was 4951, par 65.

A hole-by-hole description of the current conditions of Rock Creek Golf Course can be found in Appendix B.

#### Clubhouse and Shelters

The current golf course clubhouse has not been significantly altered since construction of the building was completed in 1964. The internal layout of the clubhouse has not changed since the initial period of construction, though the pro-shop and lounge area are now located in the central space, and smaller rooms to the south and north are devoted to office space. There are no remnants of the original farmhouse, or any of its outbuildings, all of which were located southwest of the current clubhouse.

Three remaining shelters at Rock Creek Golf Course, dating from the 1960s, were dismantled in fall of 2016. All three shelters were partially collapsed and covered in dense vegetation. None of them were actively used.

#### Other structures

The only other structure at Rock Creek Golf Course is the maintenance shed, built in 1982 and located at the southern end of the parking lot, north of green No.2. The rectangular shed is wood and metal siding. It replaced the 19th century barn, which had previously been used for storage of maintenance vehicles and materials. The barn was demolished in 1982. There are no remnants of the original barn on site.

#### Analysis

Contributing buildings and structures at Rock Creek Golf Course include the golf course and the clubhouse. The maintenance shed, dating to 1982, is non-contributing.

#### Golf Course

The course itself retains many historic elements that contribute to its overall significance as a public golf course, designed during the early 20th century by an important golf course architect, to serve Washington, DC. Among these features are: an eighteen-hole course, divided into two distinct nine-hole courses, both of which play in and out from the clubhouse; a layout centered around a central clubhouse, a parkland-style course that incorporates the site's natural

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

conditions which include stands of mature trees and varied topography on the back-nine and a flatter, more open landscape, with fewer trees on the front nine. As such the course retains integrity as relates to National Register Criterion A, for importance in the area of Recreation, as one of the earliest public golf courses in the District of Columbia.

As relates to Criterion C and the landscapes importance as a work of golf course architect William Flynn, The majority of Rock Creek's fairways and greens, particularly on the back nine holes, are largely unchanged since 1926. Though the expansion of Military Road in the 1950s resulted in the loss of original Holes 3, 4 and 5, William Gordon's 1957 alterations to the course's front nine were sympathetic Flynn's original design. Gordon was able to reuse parts of Flynn's 1926 tee box locations, fairways and greens when re-working the affected sections of the course. The front nine's open and rolling landscape, originally farmland, was a feature that Flynn emphasized in his design for the course's front nine. This feeling remains intact. So does the tight, hilly design for the back nine—considered by many to be the highlight of the course—and built on what had historically been uncultivated woodland. The distinctive, natural quality of Flynn's original design remains evident today and as such the course has integrity of buildings and structures as relates to Criterion C.

#### Clubhouse

The clubhouse continues to reflect the Mission 66 style adopted by the park and constructed throughout Rock Creek during the second period of significance. Minimal alterations have occurred to the design or materials.

#### Character-defining Features:

Feature: William Flynn's 1924-1926 era design for Rock Creek Golf Course.

Feature Identification Number: 181108

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Latitude Longitude

-77.0405570000 38.9665270000

Feature: Clubhouse

Feature Identification Number: 181110

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Latitude Longitude

-77.0399430000 38.9652920000

Feature: Maintenance shed

Feature Identification Number: 181112

Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

Latitude

Longitude

-77.0400890000

38.9642530000

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**

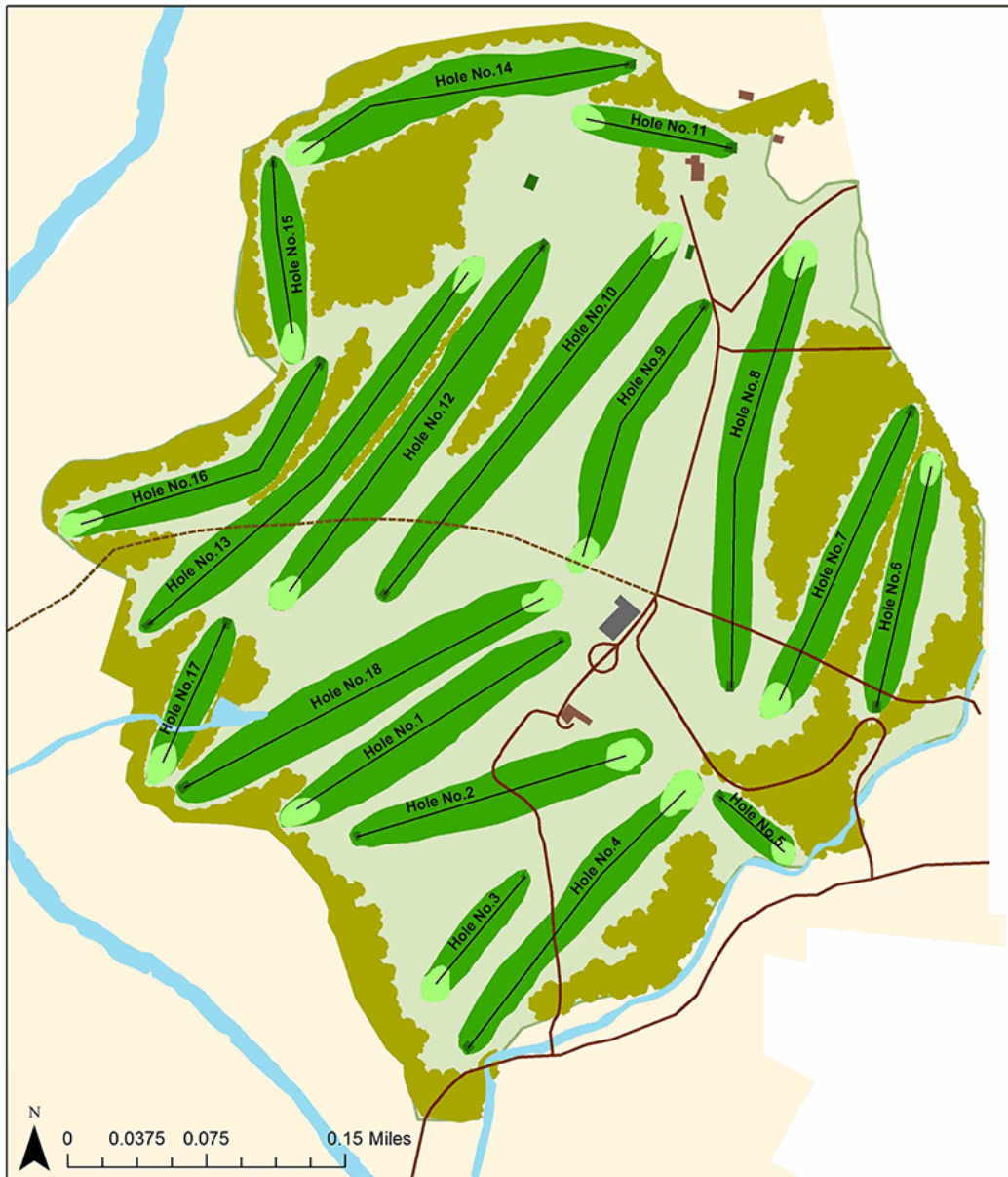


*View from tee box of Hole No.11, the only surviving hole from Flynn's 1923 course.*

Rock Creek Golf Course

Rock Creek Park

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park



*1940s re-organization of play on back nine holes. Drawn by M. Fichman and S. Garrison, 2017*



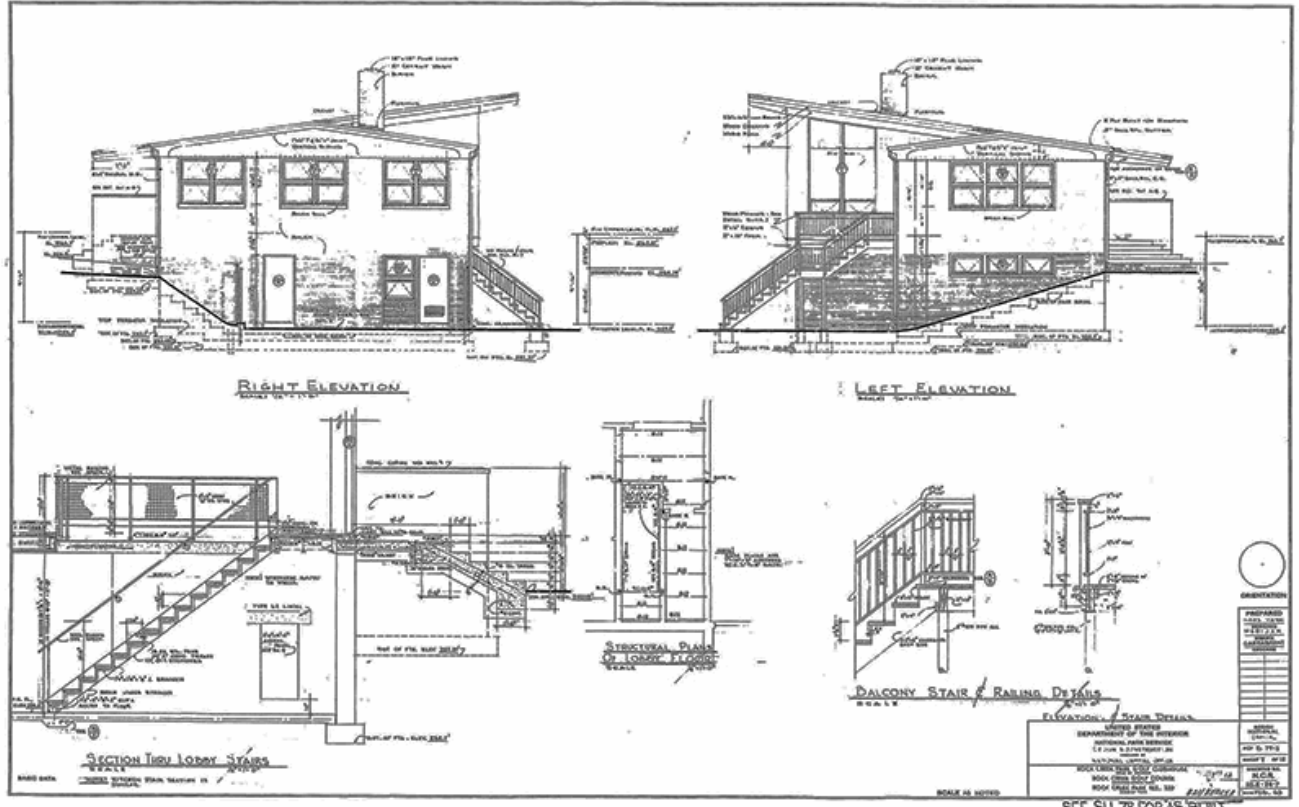
Rock Creek Golf Course

Rock Creek Park



*Hole 14, looking up one side of “heart-attack hill.”*

Rock Creek Golf Course  
 Rock Creek Park



1963 plans for new clubhouse. National Park Service, on file with National Park Service, National Capital Region.





*Shelter dating to second period of significance, dismantled in fall 2016.*

### **Small Scale Features**

#### Historic Conditions

Small scale features are the elements that provide detail and diversity, combined with function and aesthetics to a landscape. The only documentation of small scale features built during the first period of significance is the construction of two rustic footbridges, originally located on Hole 5. These footbridges, were approximately 38-feet long and 4-feet wide, and crossed a small stream near Military Road. They were demolished, along with Hole 5, when the road was widened in 1958. Additionally, a large circular bag rack was used to mark golfers place in the

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

line at the first tee (NARA, Record Group 306, PS Box 515, Image 54-11874). While there is no other evidence of small scale features dating to this period, signage, benches, yardage markers, and fencing were all typical items found on golf courses during this time. Because Rock Creek Park was operated by a concessionaire, many of these small scale features were likely purchased or constructed by the S.G. Loeffler Co.

#### Existing Conditions

Existing small scale features at Rock Creek Park include a water fountain located behind the green of Hole 3, railroad ties used to define tee boxes throughout the course, a small wooden cart path bridge crossing a stream north of Hole 12 and mechanical gear near the tee box on Hole 15, once part of a tow rope used by golfers who had trouble climbing the hill. Of these, only the water fountain was constructed by the NPS. The concrete pedestal water fountain is located near the original 5 tee and is typical of a type installed by the NPS throughout Washington DC in the 1930s and 1940s. Railroad ties, used to define tee boxes on several of the holes, is typical of the park's approach to constructing waterbars and check dams in Rock Creek Park during the 1970s, but may also have been built by one of the course's concessionaires. It is likely the concessionaire also installed the bridge for the cart path sometime after 1970. Wood and metal benches and plastic ball cleaners/hole markers are located at each tee box. They are of fairly standard design and all are owned by Golf Course Specialists. White, red and yellow wooden posts mark men's, women' and family tees. Some painted stone yardage markers can be found along fairways. Directional and regulatory signage are located at several places throughout the course, especially on the back nine where steep hillside conditions often require caution. A large birdhouse is located behind the clubhouse, between greens 9 and 18. A second birdhouse is on top of the hill between the tee for Hole No.9 and the green for Hole 10.

#### Analysis

None of the existing small scale features at Rock Creek Golf Course date to either the first or second periods of significance. Most of the current features, including all benches, ball washer, tee marker and signage are owned by GCS, the concessionaire. These are all considered non-contributing.

#### Character-defining Features:

Feature: Concrete water fountain near green on Hole 3.

Feature Identification Number: 181114

Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing

Latitude Longitude

0.0000000000

Feature: Railroad ties at tee boxes throughout course.

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

Feature Identification Number: 181116  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing  
Latitude Longitude  
0.0000000000

Feature: Mechanical gears, originally used as a tow rope system.

Feature Identification Number: 181118  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing  
Latitude Longitude  
0.0000000000

Feature: Wooden golf cart bridge north of Hole 12.

Feature Identification Number: 181120  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing  
Latitude Longitude  
0.0000000000

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park



*1930s concrete water fountain near original green No.5 on 1926 course.*



## Vegetation

### Historic Condition

The forest surrounding Rock Creek Golf Course is second growth forest that is more than a century old. Farmers cleared much of the hilltop east of Milkhouse Ford in the decades prior to the Civil War. The 1957 Boschke Map shows old growth forest remained only along the western hillsides. The Union army cleared these hills in 1961, during construction of Fort DeRussy, located across Rock Creek. Trees returned to the hillsides over the next three decades. In 1891, when the land was transferred to the U.S. Government for use as a public park, the majority of the hilltop was cultivated land and open pasture. Agricultural activity was abandoned with the foundation of the park.

The 1918 Olmsted Plan called for the hillside, a rare open space within the densely forested Rock Creek Park, to be preserved “to provide a pastoral contrast to the sylvan scenery at the heart of the park” (HAER No.DC-55:63). The location “afford[ed] as sense of freedom, breadth and outlet found nowhere else” in Rock Creek (Olmsted Report 1918:14).

The Olmsted Report recommended abandoning a controversial arboretum located along the site’s north, east and southern hillsides. The arboretum dated to 1911, when a cooperative agreement between the Board of Commissioners and the U.S. Forest Service allowed the federal agency to use the site primarily for experiments in the hybridization of willow trees. By 1914, seventy species had been introduced into this section of the park representing every region in the United States. By 1920, 2,000 trees of 170 species were being cultivated (Bushong 1990:117). The U.S. Commission of Fine Arts strongly opposed the arboretum. Their 1916 annual report criticized the planting as “distinctly out of harmony” with the surrounding scenery (Report of the Commission of Fine Art 1918:35).

By 1921, the open hillside east of Fort DeRussy, so appealing to the Olmsteds, had also drawn the attention of officials searching for a location on which to build a new golf course. The hilltop site required minimal clearing, which translated to a cheaper construction costs. According to a Washington Post article, only a “small amount of worthless scrub pine [needed] to be removed” in order to build the course. The same article described the soil as very fertile and the grass...in fine condition.” (Washington Post, July 9, 1922). In 1921 the location was approved. In hiring



## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

William Flynn to design a nine-hole course, the OPBG ensured a minimum of tree removal. Flynn was known for designing in the parkland style and incorporating mature stands of trees throughout his courses. Ultimately, forested areas only required thinning along fairways on Hole 1 and Hole 6. Scrub was cleared and turf laid for tee boxes, fairways and greens. There is no documentation of any other landscaping during construction of the course's first nine holes.

Rock Creek's 1926 expansion to eighteen holes required considerable clearance along the site's borders. Wooded areas east and north of the original course were cleared in the summer of 1924. Turf was planted in 1926 and new landscaping installed around the clubhouse. Pre-existing trees, including red maple (*Acer rubrum*), black walnut (*Juglans nigra*), locust (*Gledista*) and magnolia (*Magonolia*) were incorporated in the landscape design. New trees and shrubs planted around the clubhouse included white flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*), Cornelian cherry (*Cornus mas*), Arrowwood (*Viburnum*), Japanese cranberry (*Berberis thunbergii*), red oak (*Quercus rubra*), American ash (*Fraxinus Americana*), sweetgum (*Liquidambar*) and tulip trees (*Liriodendron*). A pre-existing row of red cedars (*Juniperus virginiana*), lining the road north of the clubhouse, was also incorporated into the landscape design.

In 1957, the construction of new holes, north of Joyce Road, required additional tree clearance on the front nine, between Hole 7 and Hole 8. A new planting plan replaced the 1927 design after completion of the new clubhouse in 1964. This plan incorporated a few of the trees and tree types from the original 1927 plan. Flowering dogwoods, magnolia and northern red oak were planted around the entrance and sides of the new building.

Deferred maintenance throughout the 1960s and 1970 resulted in the neglect of the golf course, especially the back nine. Crabgrass, potholes, erosion and fairway encroachment from unchecked vegetation growth affected play. Failure to properly maintain the turf led to dangerous erosion on the course's steep slopes and a lack of regular vegetation clearance resulted narrowing fairways, as thick brush began to encroach on what should have been playable space. A 1974 NPS feasibility study found:

“the fairways, tees and greens show a high degree of neglect – weeds abound on the fairways and greens, and the majority of the tees are worn to bare ground. From the deteriorated condition of the turf, long-term lack of proper fertilization is obvious. Potholes are numerous throughout the fairways – a hazard to all. Although the open areas have been mowed, no trimming has been done, and two-foot high weeds surround tees that lie adjacent to naturally wooded areas....The grounds maintenance equipment appears rundown and obsolete... All greens were infested with goosegrass. Turf was thin, green grass showed signs of disease. Greens 1 and 7 rated very poor, no greens rated higher than fair. Greens 2, 9 and 18 were rated fair on turf cover, but because of the rough surface on these they would rate poor on playability. Recommended all tees be renovated. Recommended greens renovated, esp. 1 and 17. Overall rating for Rock Creek Golf Course would be poor. (Cook 1974:Appendix A).

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

#### Existing Condition

In 1982, a new concessionaire took over management at Rock Creek Park and began restoring conditions throughout the course. The result was a significant amount of clearance on the back-nine, a regular practice that continues today. Though fairways on this part of the course are not fully restored to their original width, they are significantly wider than they were in the 1960s and 1970s. In addition to maintaining natural vegetation through regular clearance, Golf Course Specialists replanted fairways and teeboxes that had been left patchy and bare. Bermuda and Rye grasses are currently used for fairways and tees. Greens are spot seeded with bentgrass every spring and fall. The surrounding rough is planted with fescue.

Many naturally forested areas, delineated as part of William Flynn's 1926 design, remain intact throughout the course. These include trees south of Hole 4, between Holes 5 and 6, trees south of Hole 12, between Holes 14, 15 and 16 and trees and other naturally occurring vegetation located around the perimeter of the entire course. Since 1926 additional growth, especially along the southern hillside, has filled in areas between Holes 17 and 18 and along Military Road, covering the original third fairway. The row of red cedars, which predates the course's construction, remains along the golf cart path, north of the clubhouse. Three red oaks and one magnolia survive from the second period of significance. Additional planting around the course include willows along the fairway of Hole 14, a number of pines near the tee box on Hole 16 and five holly trees south of the eighteenth green (NPS NCR Access Database, 1963; Planting Plan).

#### Analysis

Character-defining vegetation at Rock Creek Park includes: the open, relatively treeless nature of vegetation on the front nine of the course, a result of the site's history as farmland and the densely forested vegetation on the back nine, which is used to frame fairways and greens and is the result of the area's history as uncultivated woodland. The difference between the vegetation on the front and back nine profoundly influenced Flynn's original design of the course. The contrast between the two halves of the landscape is one of the site's defining characteristics and remains extant today. The incorporation of mature trees was a hallmark of William Flynn's work, and the original 1926-era tree stands along fairways, especially on the back-nine, and around the course's perimeter, are intact and retain integrity. Conversely, the more open front nine, which is comparatively free of trees between fairways, is another example of Flynn's incorporation of existing conditions into his course design and is still intact and contributing.

Additional contributing vegetation at Rock Creek Golf Course includes a row of red cedars (*Juniperus virginiana*) along the cart path north of the clubhouse, and a number of red oaks (*Quercus rubra*) and magnolias (*Magnolia*) around the clubhouse. More research is needed to determine when exactly the row of red cedars was planted along the northern access road/golf cart path. The road itself dates to the 1850s, but the trees do not appear on maps until the early 20th century. Like the native vegetation surrounding the site, Flynn incorporated these cedars into his course design and they are considered a contributing feature. Oak and Magnolia trees

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

surrounding the clubhouse date to the second period of significance and are also contributing.

Additional trees identified during fieldwork are considered non-contributing. The pine and holly trees near Holes 16 and 18 date to the 1980s or early 1990s. More research is needed to determine date for the willow and birch trees.

**Character-defining Features:**

Feature: Contrast between vegetation on the front and back nine with the front nine characterized by its open, relatively treeless landscape and the back nine defined by the dense areas of mature forest that surround the fairways.

Feature Identification Number: 181124

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Latitude Longitude

0.0000000000

Feature: Native deciduous vegetation along perimeter of course.

Feature Identification Number: 181126

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Latitude Longitude

0.0000000000

Feature: Native deciduous vegetation between fairways throughout the course.

Feature Identification Number: 181128

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Latitude Longitude

0.0000000000

Feature: Row of red cedars (*Juniperus virginiana*) along road north of clubhouse.

Feature Identification Number: 181130

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Latitude Longitude

-77.0395480000 38.9663500000

Feature: Red oak trees (*Quercus rubra*) surrounding clubhouse.

Feature Identification Number: 181132

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing  
Latitude Longitude  
-7,703,734.0000000000 38.9654070000

Feature: Magnolia (Magnolia) tree west of clubhouse.  
Feature Identification Number: 181134

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing  
Latitude Longitude  
-77.0402810000 38.9651500000

Feature: Pine (Pinus) trees near Hole 16 tee box.  
Feature Identification Number: 181136

Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing  
Latitude Longitude  
0.0000000000

Feature: Holly (Ilex) trees near Green 18.  
Feature Identification Number: 181138

Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing  
Latitude Longitude  
0.0000000000

Feature: Willows (Salix) along fairway 14.  
Feature Identification Number: 181156

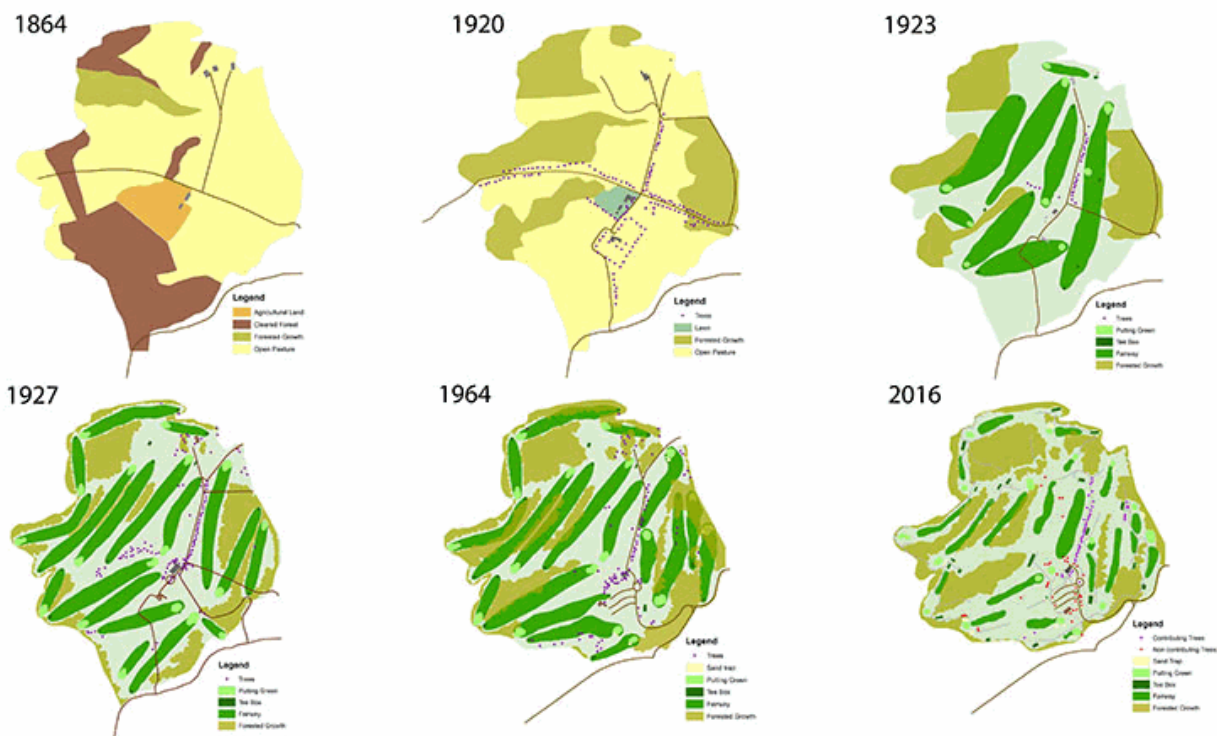
Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined  
Latitude Longitude  
0.0000000000

Feature: Birch (Betula) trees on Hole 15.  
Feature Identification Number: 181158

Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined  
Latitude Longitude  
0.0000000000

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**

VEGETATION: HISTORIC AND EXISTING



*Contributing and non-contributing vegetation at Rock Creek Golf Course. Contributing trees are trees that were planted during the period of significance. Non-contributing trees were planted outside the period of significance. Areas of contributing natural*

**Views and Vistas**

**Historic Conditions**

Historically, the views at Rock Creek Golf Course have been considered among the course’s most notable features. The variation of topography on the back nine and the open feeling of the front nine afforded excellent and interesting views from various places on the course. Historically, the most important view may have been the site’s lack of visibility from the creek below. Because the site was encircled with dense forest, the golf course was hidden from view from the creek and other locations within Rock Creek Park. The relative invisibility of the course from within the park meant that its construction would not threaten the naturalistic feeling promoted by the 1918 Olmsted Report and many park managers (Sherill 1923; Davis 1998).

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

Flynn's ultimate design for Rock Creek emphasized the site's scenic nature by highlighting picturesque views throughout the course. Trees were cleared to reveal dramatic topography, especially on the back nine. In other areas, mature trees were used to frame views of the holes themselves, especially the greens. On the front nine, a lack of trees and views between holes and across much of the landscape preserved the open feeling first praised by the Olmsted Brothers.

#### Existing Conditions

Viewshed maintenance is not currently in practice at Rock Creek Golf Course, nor does it seem to have been a historic concern. However, Flynn's treatment of views at Rock Creek was focused on revealing the natural beauty of the landscape and the course itself, and this quality remains intact throughout the course. The unchecked growth of vegetation over the past 90 years has closed off some views, particularly around the green on Hole 10, near the site's highest point. This area is cleared of all vegetation in Flynn's original plan, but is now thickly wooded.

#### Analysis

Contributing views at Rock Creek include views along Flynn's original fairways, toward greens on Holes 1 through 18 and picturesque views located at various points throughout the course. Where Flynn's original fairways and green locations remain intact (Holes 1, 4, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18) views between them retain integrity. Some original views have been lost due to 90-years of vegetation growth throughout the site, but many picturesque, scenic views are still present, especially on the back nine. These include views of mature tree stands, dramatic topography, deep ravines and open rolling hillsides which retain integrity to Flynn's original treatment of views along the course

#### Character-defining Features:

Feature: View between fairways and greens on holes throughout course.

Feature Identification Number: 181160

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Latitude Longitude

0.0000000000

Feature: Picturesque views of natural landscape throughout the course.

Feature Identification Number: 181162

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Latitude Longitude

0.0000000000

#### Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



*View from tee box of Hole 9, showing open landscape on front nine.*

### **Natural Systems and Features**

#### **Historic Condition**

Historically, two streams, both tributaries of Rock Creek, were located within the boundaries of Rock Creek Golf Course. These streams first appear on Boschke's 1857 map. Both were present on site through the initial construction of the course, and appear on 1922 plans of the original nine-hole course. The streams are missing from 1927 plans, but appear in

## Rock Creek Golf Course

### Rock Creek Park

aerial photography. The northern stream partially crossed the fairway of Flynn's 1922 Hole 6. The southern stream ended in a pond in the woods.

#### Existing

The southern stream remains extant, currently crossing Hole 17 at the bottom of a valley. A small pond where the stream ends appears only seasonally, depending on rain. The stream itself has been shored up with wood on either side and is mostly dry. More research is needed to determine when the stream to the north dried up, or if it was purposely damned to prevent it from crossing fairways when the golf course was expanded in 1926. It is missing from aerials and plans after 1922.

#### Analysis

The southern stream crossing fairway 17 is a contributing natural landscape feature. It predates the course and was incorporated into its final design.

#### **Character-defining Features:**

Feature:	Stream crossing fairway 17
Feature Identification Number:	181164
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>
0.0000000000	

#### **Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**





*Pond south of fairway on Hole 17*

# Condition

1864



1920



1923



1927



1964



2016



## Condition

### Condition Assessment and Impacts

**Condition Assessment:** Good

**Assessment Date:** 09/30/2017

#### Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

A Condition Assessment of Good indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

The Rock Creek Golf Course Cultural Landscape retains integrity to its periods of significance, 1921-1927 and 1963-1964. Overall, it is in good condition. Despite the loss of three William Flynn designed holes, continued vegetation encroachment along fairways, and erosion and deterioration in some areas, the landscape's cultural and natural values are well preserved. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition. Although no action is needed at this time, the following impacts should be addressed in order to ensure that the cultural landscape remains in good condition.

The following actions should be taken in order to maintain a ranking of "good":

- Routine maintenance of the fairways by removing encroaching non-historic, non significant trees
- Routine maintenance of contributing resources
- Routine planting
- Routine monitoring of the condition of the cultural landscape
- Address concerns of erosion through appropriate actions

### Impacts

**Type of Impact:** Vegetation/Invasive Plants

**External or Internal:** External

**Impact Description:** Decades of unchecked vegetation growth along the course's perimeters has resulted in loss of fairway width on some holes on the back nine. Hole 12 and 14 are particularly impacted

**Type of Impact:** Exposure To Elements

**External or Internal:** External

**Impact Description:** The landscape exhibits wear and tear that can be partially attributed to weather damage and exposure. Erosion on back nine, especially Hole 14, is an issue

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

**Type of Impact:** Consumptive Use  
**External or Internal:** Internal  
**Impact Description:** Continual year round play results in damage to fairways, tees and green. Regular replanting, upkeep and maintenance usually address this issue.

## Treatment

### Treatment

**Approved Treatment:** Undetermined  
**Approved Treatment Document:** Cultural Landscape Report  
**Approved Treatment Completed:** No

### Approved Treatment Costs

**Cost Estimator:** Regional Office



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**Citation Title:** Reconstruction of Tees, Greens and Fairways Vicinity of Proposed Fort Drive Rock Creek Park Golf Course  
**Year of Publication:** 1947  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

**Citation Author:** National Park Service  
**Citation Title:** Reconstruction of Tees, Greens and Fairways Vicinity of Proposed Fort Drive Rock Creek Park Golf Course  
**Year of Publication:** 1947  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

**Citation Author:** National Park Service  
**Citation Title:** Rock Creek Golf Course 16th Street NW and Military Road Rock Creek Park Work in Progress  
**Year of Publication:** 1949  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

**Citation Author:** National Park Service  
**Citation Title:** Rock Creek Golf Course 16th Street NW and Military Road Rock Creek Park Work in Progress  
**Year of Publication:** 1949  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

**Citation Author:** National Park Service  
**Citation Title:** Preliminary Development Plan Proposed Golf Club House Rock Creek Park, Res. 339  
**Year of Publication:** 1958  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

**Citation Author:** National Park Service  
**Citation Title:** Preliminary Development Plan Proposed Golf Club House Rock Creek Park, Res. 339  
**Year of Publication:** 1958  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

**Citation Author:** National Park Service  
**Citation Title:** Proposed Club House Golf Course Rock Creek Park, Res. 339  
**Year of Publication:** 1958  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

**Citation Author:** National Park Service  
**Citation Title:** Rock Creek Park Golf Clubhouse Rock Creek Golf Course Rock Creek Park Res. 339  
**Year of Publication:** 1961  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

**Citation Author:** National Park Service  
**Citation Title:** Topography Rock Creek Club House Rock Creek Park Res. 339  
**Year of Publication:** 1961  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

**Citation Author:** National Park Service  
**Citation Title:** Rock Creek Park Golf Clubhouse Rock Creek Golf Course Rock Creek Park Res. 339  
**Year of Publication:** 1962  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

**Citation Author:** National Park Service  
**Citation Title:** Sidewalks and Marking Pattern Rock Creek Golf Club House  
**Year of Publication:** 1962  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

**Citation Author:** National Park Service  
**Citation Title:** Rock Creek Park Golf Club House  
**Year of Publication:** 1963  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

**Citation Author:** National Park Service  
**Citation Title:** Planting Plan Rock Creek Golf Club House Rock Creek Park Res. 339  
**Year of Publication:** 1963  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

**Citation Author:** National Park Service  
**Citation Title:** Rock Creek Golf Course 16th Street NW and Military Road Rock Creek Park  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

**Citation Author:** National Park Service  
**Citation Title:** Study Rock Creek Golf Course Rock Creek Park Res. 339  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

**Citation Author:** National Park Service  
**Citation Title:** History of Golf in the Nation`s Capitol  
**Citation Type:** Narrative  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

**Citation Author:** Office of Public Buildings & Public Parks of the National Capital  
**Citation Title:** Golf Course Rock Creek Park July 1924  
**Year of Publication:** 1924  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

**Citation Author:** Office of Public Buildings & Public Parks of the National Capital  
**Citation Title:** Golf Club House Grounds Plan for Improvements Rock Creek Park

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**Year of Publication:** 1925  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

**Citation Author:** Office of Public Buildings & Public Parks of the National Capital  
**Citation Title:** Rock Creek Golf Club House Porch Plan, Elevation and Section  
**Year of Publication:** 1925  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

**Citation Author:** Office of Public Buildings & Public Parks of the National Capital  
**Citation Title:** Rock Creek Park Detail Planting Plan Golf Course Club House Plan for Improvements  
**Year of Publication:** 1926  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

**Citation Author:** Office of Public Buildings & Public Parks of the National Capital  
**Citation Title:** Rock Creek Park Proposed Road From Golf Course to Military Road  
**Year of Publication:** 1927  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

**Citation Author:** Office of Public Buildings & Public Parks of the National Capital  
**Citation Title:** Rock Creek Golf Course Club House Alterations in Existing Structure As Required By Proposed Improvements  
**Year of Publication:** 1933  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

**Citation Author:** Olmsted Brothers  
**Citation Title:** Rock Creek Park, A Report by the Olmsted Brothers, December 1918  
**Year of Publication:** 1918  
**Citation Publisher:** Olmsted Brothers, Brookline, Massachusetts  
**Citation Number:** Records of the Commission of Fine Arts, RG 66, Ent  
**Citation Type:**  
**Citation Location:** National Archives, Washington, DC

**Citation Author:** Olmsted, Frederick Law  
**Citation Title:** Open Letters: Suggestions to Cities, The Century, Volume 32:6  
**Year of Publication:** 1886  
**Citation Publisher:** The Century Magazine  
**Citation Type:** Narrative  
**Citation Location:** <https://books.google.com/books?id=zGIJAAAAQAAJ&dq=the%20century%20illustrated%20monthly%20volume%2032&pg=PP1#v=onepage&q=the%20century%20illustrated%20monthly%20volume%2032&f=false>



Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

- Citation Author:** Poss, Deana R., Frances McMilen and Nancy Vazquez  
**Citation Title:** The Historic Trails of Rock Creek: Cultural Landscape Report  
**Year of Publication:** 2013  
**Citation Publisher:** National Park Service, Washington, DC  
**Citation Type:**  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region
- Citation Author:** Potter, Stephen  
**Citation Title:** Commoners, Tribute, and Chief: The Development of Algonquian Culture in the Potomac Valley  
**Year of Publication:** 1993  
**Citation Publisher:** University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA
- Citation Author:** Ranney, Victoria Post  
**Citation Title:** The Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted, Volume Five, the California Frontier, 1863-1865  
**Year of Publication:** 1990  
**Citation Publisher:** Johns Hopkins, Baltimore, MD
- Citation Author:** Robinson, Judith H., Tim Kerr, Janel Crist Kausner  
**Citation Title:** Mission 66-Era Visitor Centres, Administration Buildings, and Public Use Areas in the National Capital Region of the National Park Service  
**Year of Publication:** 2012  
**Citation Publisher:** National Park Service, Washington, DC

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

**Citation Author:** Sherrill, Col. C.O.  
**Citation Title:** Public Golf at the Capital of the Nation in United States Golf Association, Bulletin of the Green Section for the U.S. Golf Association, February 23, 1923  
**Year of Publication:** 1923  
**Citation Publisher:** United States Golf Association, Far Hills, NJ  
**Citation Type:** Narrative  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

**Citation Author:** Spilsbury, Gail  
**Citation Title:** Rock Creek Park  
**Year of Publication:** 2003  
**Citation Publisher:** The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD

**Citation Author:** U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey  
**Citation Title:** United States Geodetic Survey, Aerial Photography of Washington, DC, 1927  
**Year of Publication:** 1927  
**Citation Publisher:** U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

**Citation Author:** U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, Evans & Bartle  
**Citation Title:** District of Columbia, U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey Map  
**Year of Publication:** 1892  
**Citation Publisher:** U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, Evans & Bartle  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** <https://www.loc.gov/item/87693313>

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

**Citation Author:** West, Henry Litchfield  
**Citation Title:** Rock Creek Links are Rebuilt  
**Year of Publication:** 1926  
**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC March 24, 1926, 15  
**Citation Type:** Narrative  
**Citation Location:** <https://proxy.library.upenn.edu/login?url=http://proxy.library.upenn.edu:2251/docview/149666004?accountid=14707>

**Citation Author:** West, Henry Litchfield  
**Citation Title:** From Tee to Green  
**Year of Publication:** 1924  
**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, August 1924, 54  
**Citation Type:** Narrative  
**Citation Location:** <https://proxy.library.upenn.edu/login?url=http://proxy.library.upenn.edu:2251/docview/149388625?accountid=14707>

**Citation Author:** West, Henry Litchfield  
**Citation Title:** Rock Creek Links Concessions Let  
**Year of Publication:** 1923  
**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, March 8, 1923  
**Citation Type:** Narrative  
**Citation Location:** <https://proxy.library.upenn.edu/login?url=http://proxy.library.upenn.edu:2251/docview/149398033?accountid=14707>

**Citation Author:** West, Henry Litchfield  
**Citation Title:** From Tee to Green  
**Year of Publication:** 1924  
**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, August 24, 1924:S4

**Citation Author:** West, Henry Litchfield  
**Citation Title:** From Tee to Green  
**Year of Publication:** 1922  
**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, July 9, 1922:46

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

- Citation Title:** Rock Creek Park Golf Course: Location of Tees and Greens Designated by W.J. Flynn
- Year of Publication:** 1922
- Citation Publisher:** Army Corps of Engineers
- Citation Type:** Graphic
- Citation Location:** On file with National Park Service, National Capital Region
- Citation Title:** Report of the Commissioners of the District of Columbia, 1907-1908
- Year of Publication:** 1908
- Citation Publisher:** District of Columbia, Board of Commissioners
- Citation Type:** Narrative
- Citation Location:** [https://archive.org/details/Annual\\_Report\\_of\\_the\\_Commissioners\\_of\\_DC\\_1908\\_2](https://archive.org/details/Annual_Report_of_the_Commissioners_of_DC_1908_2)
- Citation Title:** District of Columbia Appropriation Bill: Hearings Before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, United States Senate
- Year of Publication:** 1908
- Citation Publisher:** Government Printing Office, Washington, DC
- Citation Type:** Narrative
- Citation Location:** <https://books.google.com/books?id=INotAAAAMAAJ&dq=washington%20dc%20appropriations%20bill%201908&pg=PA1#v=snippet&q=golf%20course&f=false>
- Citation Title:** The Commission of Fine Arts Annual Report June 30, 1916-January 1, 1918
- Year of Publication:** 1918
- Citation Publisher:** Government Printing Office, Washington, DC
- Citation Type:** Narrative
- Citation Location:** <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/osu.32435063253280>

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

- Citation Title:** Annual Report of the Chief of Engineers, U.S. Army 1922  
**Year of Publication:** 1922  
**Citation Publisher:** Government Printing Office, Washington, DC  
**Citation Type:** Narrative  
**Citation Location:** <http://cdm16021.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p16021coll6/id/1152>
- Citation Title:** Annual Reports, War Department, Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1923: Annual Report of the Chief of the Militia Bureau  
**Year of Publication:** 1923  
**Citation Publisher:** Government Printing Office, Washington, DC  
**Citation Type:** Narrative  
**Citation Location:** <https://books.google.com/books?id=vUM3AQAIAAJ&lpg=RA1-PA87&ots=fB6m0gh34H&dq=Annual%20reports%2C%20War%20Department%2C%20fiscal%20year%20ended%20June%2030%2C%201923&pg=RA1-PA89#v=onepage&q&f=false>
- Citation Title:** Annual Report of the Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital, 1926  
**Year of Publication:** 1926  
**Citation Publisher:** Government Printing Office, Washington, DC  
**Citation Type:** Narrative  
**Citation Location:** <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/005626167>
- Citation Title:** Report of the Commission of Fine Arts: Annual Report June 30 1916-January 1, 1918  
**Year of Publication:** 1918  
**Citation Publisher:** Government Printing Office, Washington, DC  
**Citation Type:** Narrative  
**Citation Location:** <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435063253280;view=1up;seq=5>

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

- Citation Title:** Annual report of the Chief of Engineers, United States Army to the Secretary of War, 1923
- Year of Publication:** 1923
- 
- Citation Publisher:** Government Printing Press, Washington, DC
- Citation Type:** Narrative
- Citation Location:** <http://cdm266001.cdmhost.com/cdm/ref/collection/p16021coll6/id/1154>
- Citation Title:** National Park Service Marketing and Economic Overview Rock Creek Park 1977
- Year of Publication:** 1977
- Citation Publisher:** National Park Service
- Citation Title:** Reconstruction of Tees, Greens and Fairways, Vicinity of Proposed Fort Drive, Rock Creek Park Golf Course
- Year of Publication:** 1946
- Citation Publisher:** National Park Service, Washington, DC
- Citation Type:** Narrative
- Citation Location:** On file with National Park Service, National Capital Region
- Citation Title:** Reconstruction of Tees, Greens and Fairways, Vicinity of Proposed Fort Drive, Rock Creek Park Golf Course
- Year of Publication:** 1946
- Citation Publisher:** National Park Service, Washington, DC
- Citation Type:** Narrative
- Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region
- Citation Title:** Rock Creek Park Historic District National Register Nomination
- Year of Publication:** 1991
- Citation Publisher:** National Park Service, Washington, DC
- Citation Title:** Rock Creek Park and the Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway: Final General Management Plan
- Year of Publication:** 1997
- Citation Publisher:** National Park Service, Washington, DC
- Citation Type:**
- Citation Location:** <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?parkID=198&projectID=11262&documentID=13218>

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

- Citation Title:** Shinnecock Hills Golf Club National Register Nomination  
**Year of Publication:** 2000  
**Citation Publisher:** ~~National Park Service, Washington, DC~~  
**Citation Type:** Narrative  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region
- Citation Title:** Harding Helps Open Public Golf Course  
**Year of Publication:** 1923  
**Citation Publisher:** The New York Times, New York, NY, May 1923:15
- Citation Title:** Harding Helps Open Public Golf Course  
**Year of Publication:** 1923  
**Citation Publisher:** The New York Times, New York, NY, May 23, 1923
- Citation Title:** DC Muny Golfers to Receive Trophy  
**Year of Publication:** 1924  
**Citation Publisher:** The Washington Evening Star, Washington, DC, August 13, 1924:27
- Citation Title:** Reconstruction by CCC to Provide DC with Modern Public Golf Courses  
**Year of Publication:** 1939  
**Citation Publisher:** The Washington Evening Star, Washington, DC, February 4, 1939, A15
- Citation Title:** "Backs Rock Creek Golf Course Plan"  
**Year of Publication:** 1921  
**Citation Publisher:** The Washington Evening Star, Washington, DC, July 5, 1921, 1  
**Citation Type:** Narrative  
**Citation Location:** <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1921-07-05/ed-1/seq-1/#date1=1789& index=0& rows=20& words=BACKS+COURSE+CREEK+GOLF+PLAN+ROCK& searchType=basic& sequence=0& state=& date2=1924& proxtext=Backs+Rock+Creek+Golf+Course+Plan& y=17& x=17& dateF>
- Citation Title:** Straight Off the Tee  
**Year of Publication:** 1929  
**Citation Publisher:** The Washington Evening Star, Washington, DC, March 24, 1929

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

- Citation Title:** Talcott is Stymied  
**Year of Publication:** 1909  
**Citation Publisher:** The Washington Evening Star, Washington, DC, May 7, 1909
- Citation Title:** Golf Course Tied Up  
**Year of Publication:** 1909  
**Citation Publisher:** The Washington Evening Star, Washington, DC, September 1, 1909, 11  
**Citation Type:** Narrative  
**Citation Location:** <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1909-09-01/ed-1/seq-11/>
- Citation Title:** Among the Golfers  
**Year of Publication:** 1911  
**Citation Publisher:** The Washington Herald, Washington, DC, April 16, 1911, 3
- Citation Title:** Movement to Open Rock Creek Park  
**Year of Publication:** 1909  
**Citation Publisher:** The Washington Herald, Washington, DC, July 16, 1909:2
- Citation Title:** United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, Aerial Photography of Washington, DC, 1964  
**Year of Publication:** 1964  
**Citation Publisher:** United States Coast and Geodetic Survey  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region
- Citation Title:** United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, Aerial Photography of Washington, DC, 1968  
**Year of Publication:** 1968  
**Citation Publisher:** United States Coast and Geodetic Survey  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region
- Citation Title:** Hitchcock Enlists in Park Crusade  
**Year of Publication:** 1909  
**Citation Publisher:** The Washington Herald, Washington, DC, July 23, 1909:2



Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

- Citation Title:** Rock Creek Park Place for Public  
**Year of Publication:** 1909  
**Citation Publisher:** The Washington Herald, Washington, DC, July 24, 1909:2
- Citation Title:** United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, Aerial Photography of Washington, DC, 1978  
**Year of Publication:** 1978  
**Citation Publisher:** United States Coast and Geodetic Survey  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region
- Citation Title:** United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, Aerial Photography of Washington, DC, 1984  
**Year of Publication:** 1984  
**Citation Publisher:** United States Coast and Geodetic Survey  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region
- Citation Title:** Rock Creek Critics Might Get Their Wish  
**Year of Publication:** 1977  
**Citation Publisher:** The Washington Star, Washington, DC, August 21, 1977:D5
- Citation Title:** From Tee to Green  
**Year of Publication:** 1962  
**Citation Publisher:** The Washington Sunday Star, Washington, DC, February 18, 1962:C4
- Citation Title:** Rock Creek Park May Be Nearer  
**Year of Publication:** 1906  
**Citation Publisher:** The Washington Times, Washington, DC, March 18, 1906:11
- Citation Title:** United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, Aerial Photography of Washington, DC, 1988  
**Year of Publication:** 1988  
**Citation Publisher:** United States Coast and Geodetic Survey  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

- Citation Title:** United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, Aerial Photography of Washington, DC, 1995
- Year of Publication:** 1995
- Citation Publisher:** United States Coast and Geodetic Survey
- Citation Type:** Graphic
- Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region
- Citation Title:** United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, Aerial Photography of Washington, DC, 1927
- Year of Publication:** 1927
- Citation Publisher:** United States Coast and Geodetic Survey
- Citation Type:** Graphic
- Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region
- Citation Title:** United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, Aerial Photography of Washington, DC, 1948
- Year of Publication:** 1948
- Citation Publisher:** United States Coast and Geodetic Survey
- Citation Type:** Graphic
- Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region
- Citation Title:** Rock Creek Golf Course
- Year of Publication:** 1957
- Citation Publisher:** United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, DC
- Citation Type:** Graphic
- Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region
- Citation Title:** Rock Creek Park Golf Club House
- Year of Publication:** 1963
- Citation Publisher:** United States Department of the Interior, Washington, DC
- Citation Type:**
- Citation Location:** On file with National Park Service, National Capital Region

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

**Citation Title:** United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, Aerial Photography of Washington, DC, 1958

**Year of Publication:** 1958

**Citation Publisher:** United States Coast and Geodetic Survey

**Citation Type:** Graphic

**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region

**Citation Title:** No Place For Golfers, Course is Cluttered Up With Discourteous Dubs

**Citation Publisher:** Unknown

**Citation Type:** Narrative

**Citation Location:** Record Group 42, Entry 102, Box 30, Folder 618.21 (Rock Creek Golf)

**Citation Title:** 1 of 3 Public Links in DC Closed, Other Measures Eyed

**Year of Publication:** 1981

**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, December 20, 1981:C4

**Citation Title:** E. Potomac Park Public Golf Course Gets New Manager

**Year of Publication:** 1983

**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, January 5, 1983:DC7

**Citation Title:** Rock Creek Golf Course Bids Open

**Year of Publication:** 1923

**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC February 16, 1923:16

**Citation Title:** Rock Creek Links Are Rebuilt

**Year of Publication:** 1926

**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, March 24, 1926:15

**Citation Title:** Buses Start Today to Rock Creek Links

**Year of Publication:** 1926

**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, May 2, 1926:M23

**Citation Title:** Military Road Project Wins Approval

**Year of Publication:** 1957

**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, April 21, 1957:A13

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

**Citation Title:** Rock Creek's Sad Tale  
**Year of Publication:** 1961  
**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, April 23, 1961

**Citation Title:** Rock Creek's Links Are Opened  
**Year of Publication:** 1926  
**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, April 3, 1926:13

**Citation Title:** Loeffler, a Man of Many Firsts, Up Front in Celebs  
**Year of Publication:** 1952  
**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, August 17, 1952:C4

**Citation Title:** 1 of 3 Public Links in DC Closed, Other Measures Eyed  
**Year of Publication:** 1981  
**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, December 20, 1981  
**Citation Type:** Narrative  
**Citation Location:** <https://proxy.library.upenn.edu/login?url=http://proxy.library.upenn.edu:2251/docview/147237320?accountid=14707>

**Citation Title:** S.G. Loeffler May Get Rock Creek Municipal Golf Links Concession  
**Year of Publication:** 1926  
**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, January 17, 1926:M21

**Citation Title:** Historic Military Road Is Going Modern  
**Year of Publication:** 1958  
**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, January 26, 1958:A17

**Citation Title:** Selling the Game of Golf to the Public  
**Year of Publication:** 1928  
**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, July 1, 1928:M3

**Citation Title:** Cardiac Hill Goes the Way of the Niblick  
**Year of Publication:** 1975  
**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, July 11, 1975:13

**Citation Title:** Plan 18-Hole Golf Course at Rock Creek  
**Year of Publication:** 1924  
**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, July 22, 1924:S3

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

- Citation Title:** 9 More Holes Planned on Rock Creek Links  
**Year of Publication:** 1924  
**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, July 27, 1924, 14  
**Citation Type:** Narrative  
**Citation Location:** <https://proxy.library.upenn.edu/login?url=http://proxy.library.upenn.edu:2251/docview/149418007?accountid=14707>
- Citation Title:** Cheap Prescriptions  
**Year of Publication:** 1921  
**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, July 6, 1921  
**Citation Type:** Narrative  
**Citation Location:** <https://proxy.library.upenn.edu/login?url=http://proxy.library.upenn.edu:2251/docview/145897004?accountid=14707>
- Citation Title:** Clubhouse Contract  
**Year of Publication:** 1963  
**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, June 25, 1963  
**Citation Type:** Narrative  
**Citation Location:** <https://proxy.library.upenn.edu/login?url=http://proxy.library.upenn.edu:2251/docview/141816822?accountid=14707>
- Citation Title:** Clubhouse Contract  
**Year of Publication:** 1963  
**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, June 25, 1963
- Citation Title:** Studies Public Links  
**Year of Publication:** 1913  
**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, March 22, 1913, 5  
**Citation Type:** Narrative  
**Citation Location:** <https://proxy.library.upenn.edu/login?url=http://proxy.library.upenn.edu:2251/docview/145245648?accountid=14707>
- Citation Title:** Rock Creek Opening is Delayed  
**Year of Publication:** 1926  
**Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, March 26, 1926:15

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

- Citation Title:** Park Service Seeking Operator for Langston Golf Course in SE
- Year of Publication:** 1982
- Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, May 5, 1982:DC10
- Citation Title:** Public Golf Links Soon
- Year of Publication:** 1906
- Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, November 3, 1906, 9
- Citation Type:** Narrative
- Citation Location:** <https://proxy.library.upenn.edu/login?url=http://proxy.library.upenn.edu:2251/docview/144634652?accountid=14707>
- Citation Title:** “Will Move Camp Goodwill”
- Year of Publication:** 1922
- Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, October 20, 1922
- Citation Title:** Artistic Settings of New Public Golf Course in Rock Creek Park
- Year of Publication:** 1922
- Citation Publisher:** Washington Post, Washington, DC, October 29, 1922:Pictoral Section
- Citation Title:** Superb Rock Creek Golf Course Needs Clubhouse
- Year of Publication:** 1922
- Citation Publisher:** Washington Sunday Star, Washington, DC, September 10, 1922
- Citation Title:** Letter from Walter Flynn to Col Sherrill, July 28, 1924
- Year of Publication:** 1924
- Citation Type:** Narrative
- Citation Location:** Record Group 42, Entry 102, Box 30, Folder 618.21 (Rock Creek)
- Citation Title:** William F. Gordon to S.G. Leoffler, May 6, 1946
- Year of Publication:** 1946
- Citation Type:** Narrative
- Citation Location:** Record Group 79, Accession No. 64A-42, Folder 11-40-50 (Rock Creek Golf Course),

Rock Creek Golf Course  
Rock Creek Park

- Citation Title:** William F. Gordon to S.G. Leoffler, May 27, 1946  
**Year of Publication:** 1946  
**Citation Type:** Narrative  
**Citation Location:** Record Group 79, Accession No. 64A-42, Folder 11-40-50 (Rock Creek Golf Course),
- Citation Title:** A Brief History of Golf Courses in the National Capital Parks 1950  
**Year of Publication:** 1950  
**Citation Type:** Narrative  
**Citation Location:** Henry S. Wender Papers, Container 5,
- Citation Title:** National Park Service Records in National Archives, Record Group 79, Cartographic Reading Room, Rock Creek Park Files
- Citation Title:** Golf Course Specialist Files
- Citation Title:** Rock Creek Park Historic District (Amended Nomination and Boundary Increase)
- Citation Title:** Improvement Plan Alternative A Showing Alternative Routing of Back Nine Holes and Existing Water System  
**Citation Type:** Graphic  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region
- Citation Title:** Rock Creek Golf Course: A Brief History  
**Citation Type:** Narrative  
**Citation Location:** On file with the National Park Service, National Capital Region
- Citation Title:** National Archives, Record Group 42, Entry 102, Box 30

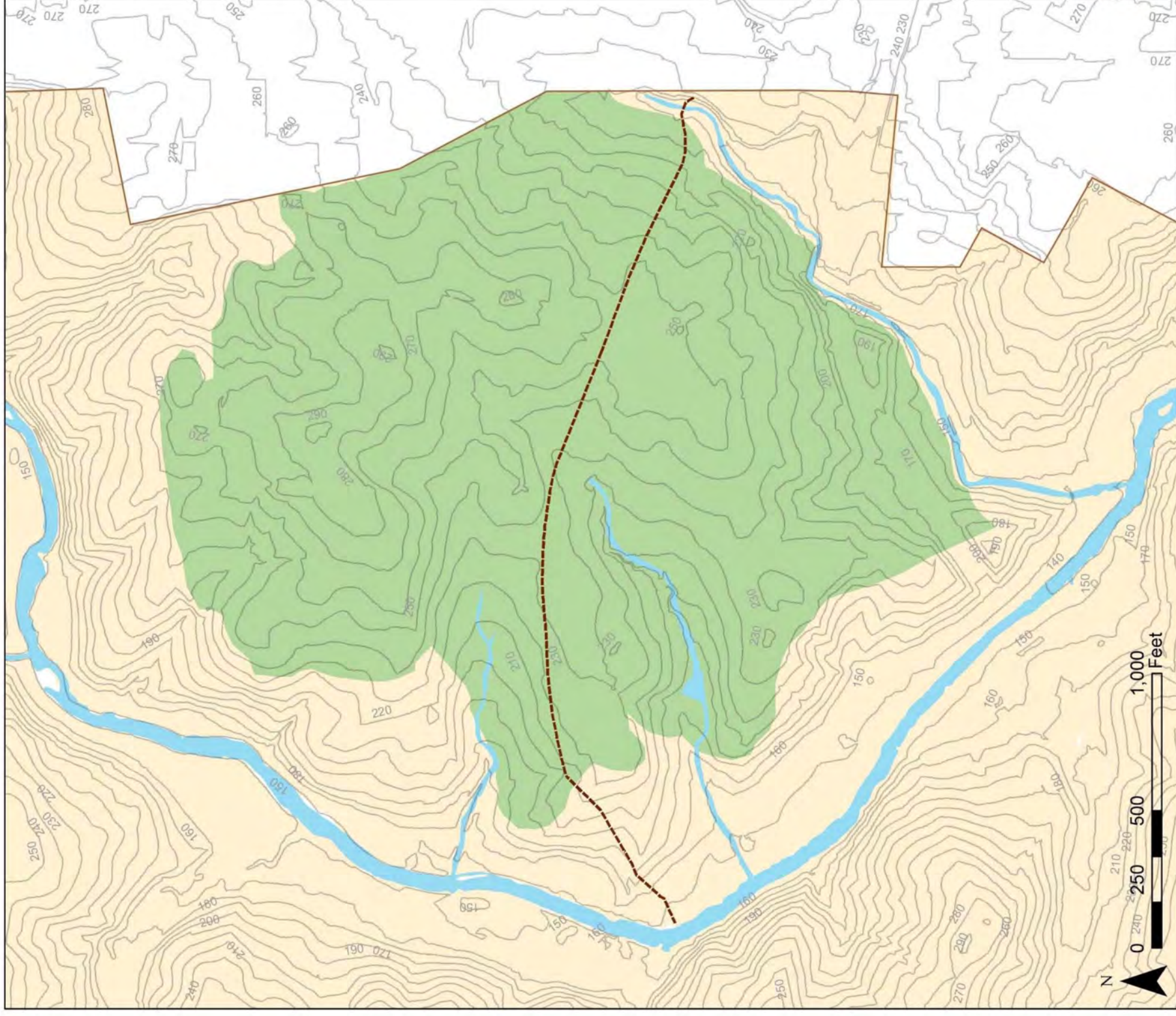
## **Appendix A: Mapping Analysis**

This appendix includes maps of Rock Creek Golf Course at various periods between 1608-2016. All source material for drawings is listed within the map. In some cases, not all features known to be present during the period were depicted or visible in existing plans or historic aerials. In such cases, the location of the feature was determined through textural references and might not be exact.



# IMAGE 1 ROCK CREEK GOLF COURSE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE 1608 CONDITIONS

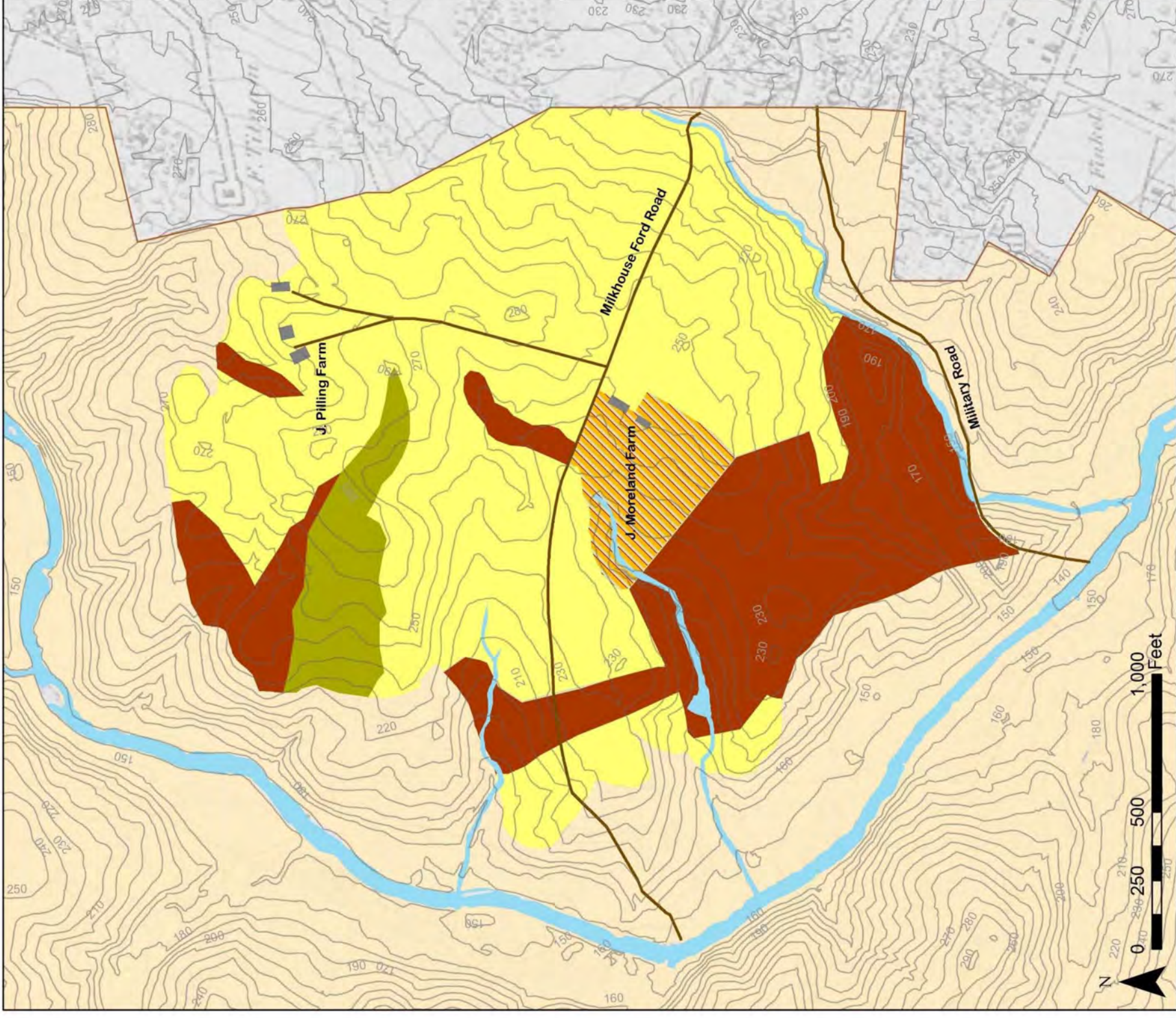
Drawn by S. Garrison and M. Fichman, 2017





# IMAGE 2 ROCK CREEK GOLF COURSE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE 1864 CONDITIONS

Drawn by S. Garrison and M. Fichman, 2017  
Background Map: Map of the environs of Washington: compiled from Boschkes' map of the District of Columbia and from surveys of the U.S. Coast Survey showing the line of the defences of Washington as constructed during the war, 1865

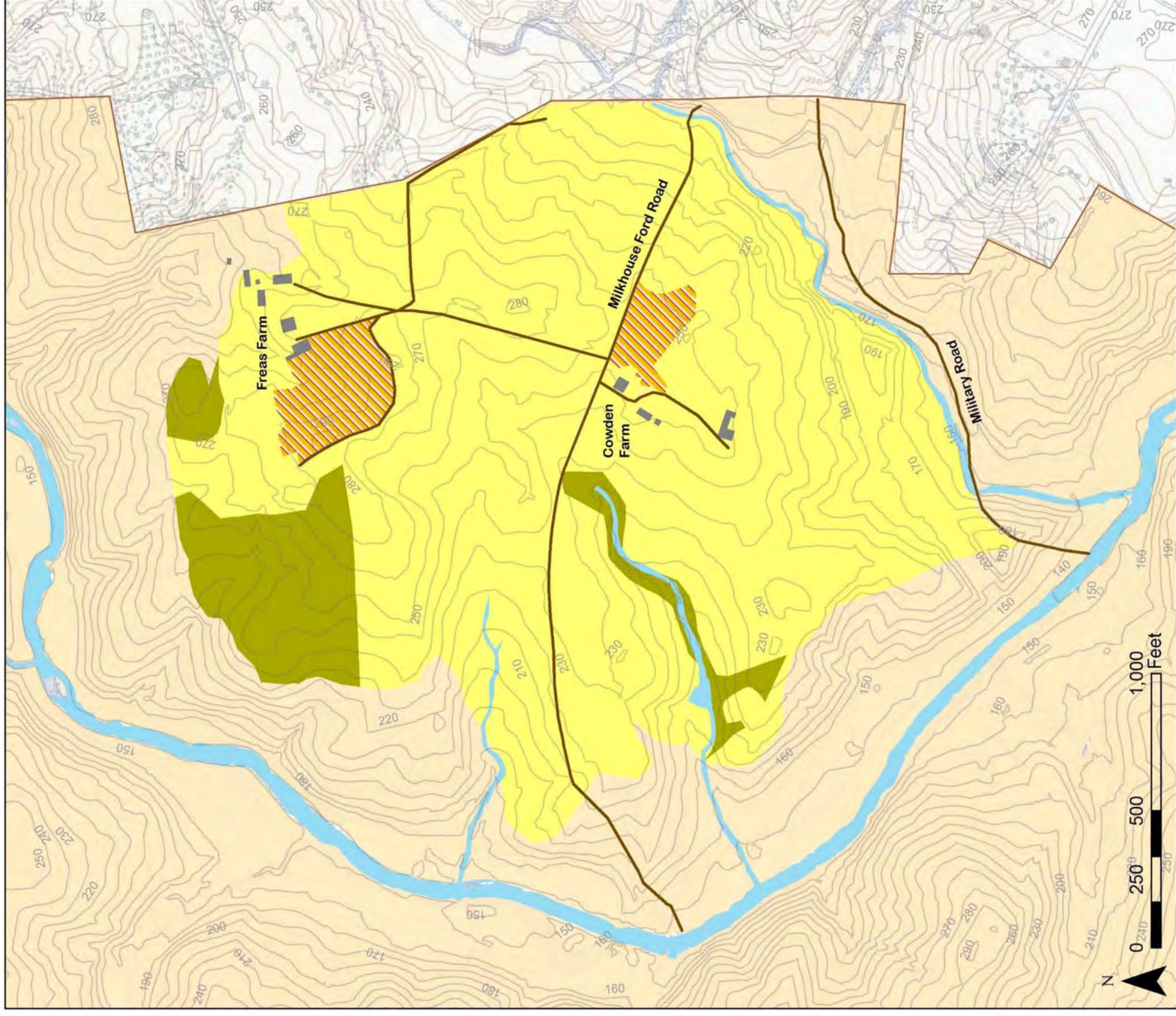


- Legend**
- Historic Roads
  - Historic Structures
  - Agricultural Land
  - Cleared Forest
  - Forested Growth
  - Open Pasture
  - Rock Creek
  - Future Rock Creek Park Boundary



# IMAGE 3 ROCK CREEK GOLF COURSE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE 1890 CONDITIONS

Drawn by S. Garrison and M. Fichman, 2017  
Background Map: U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, 1892

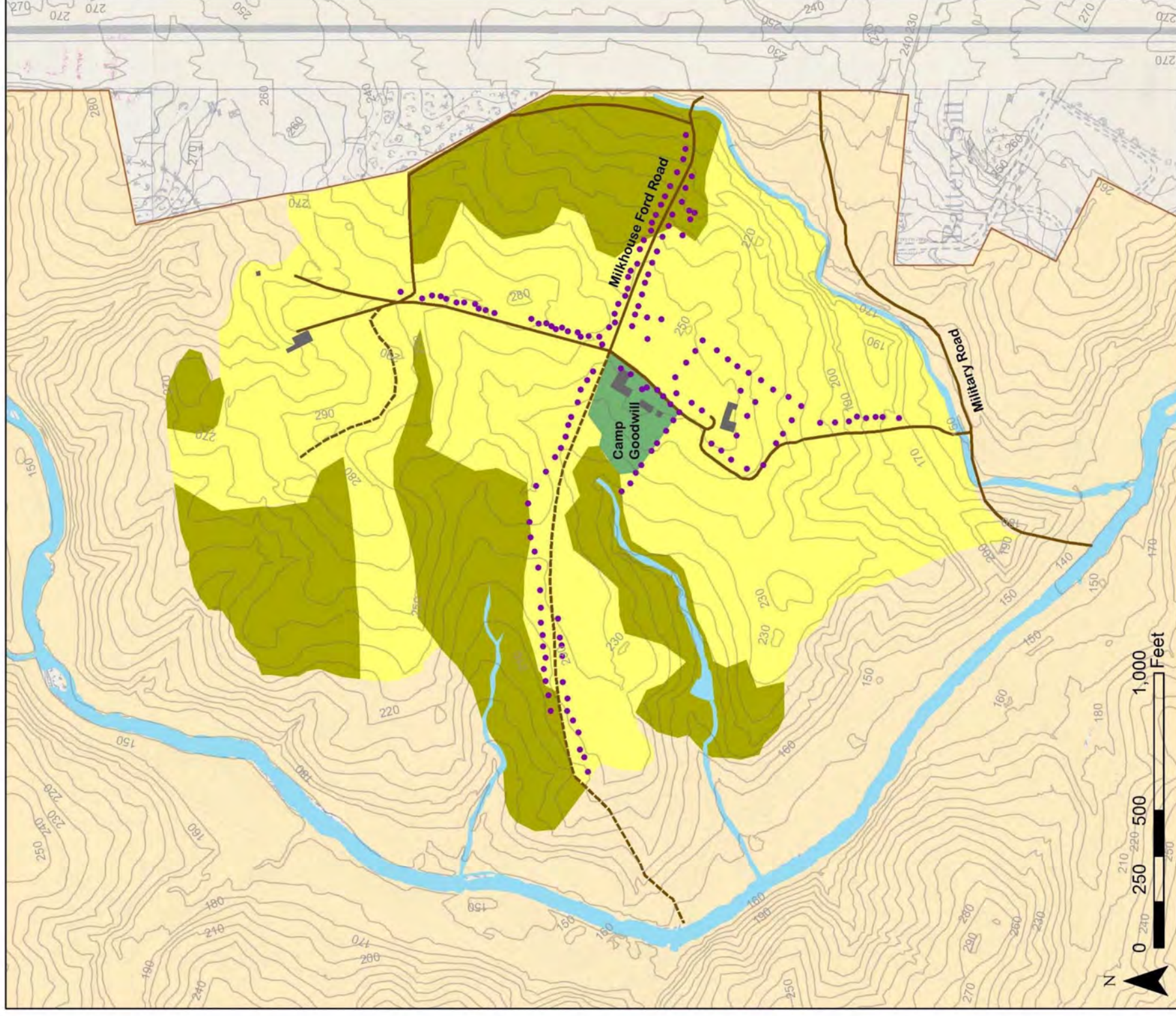


- Legend**
- Historic Roads
  - Historic Structures
  - Agricultural Land
  - Forested Growth
  - Open Pasture
  - Rock Creek
  - Rock Creek Park Boundary



# IMAGE 4 ROCK CREEK GOLF COURSE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE 1920 CONDITIONS

Drawn by S. Garrison and M. Fichman, 2017  
Background Map: 1916 Map of Rock Creek Park

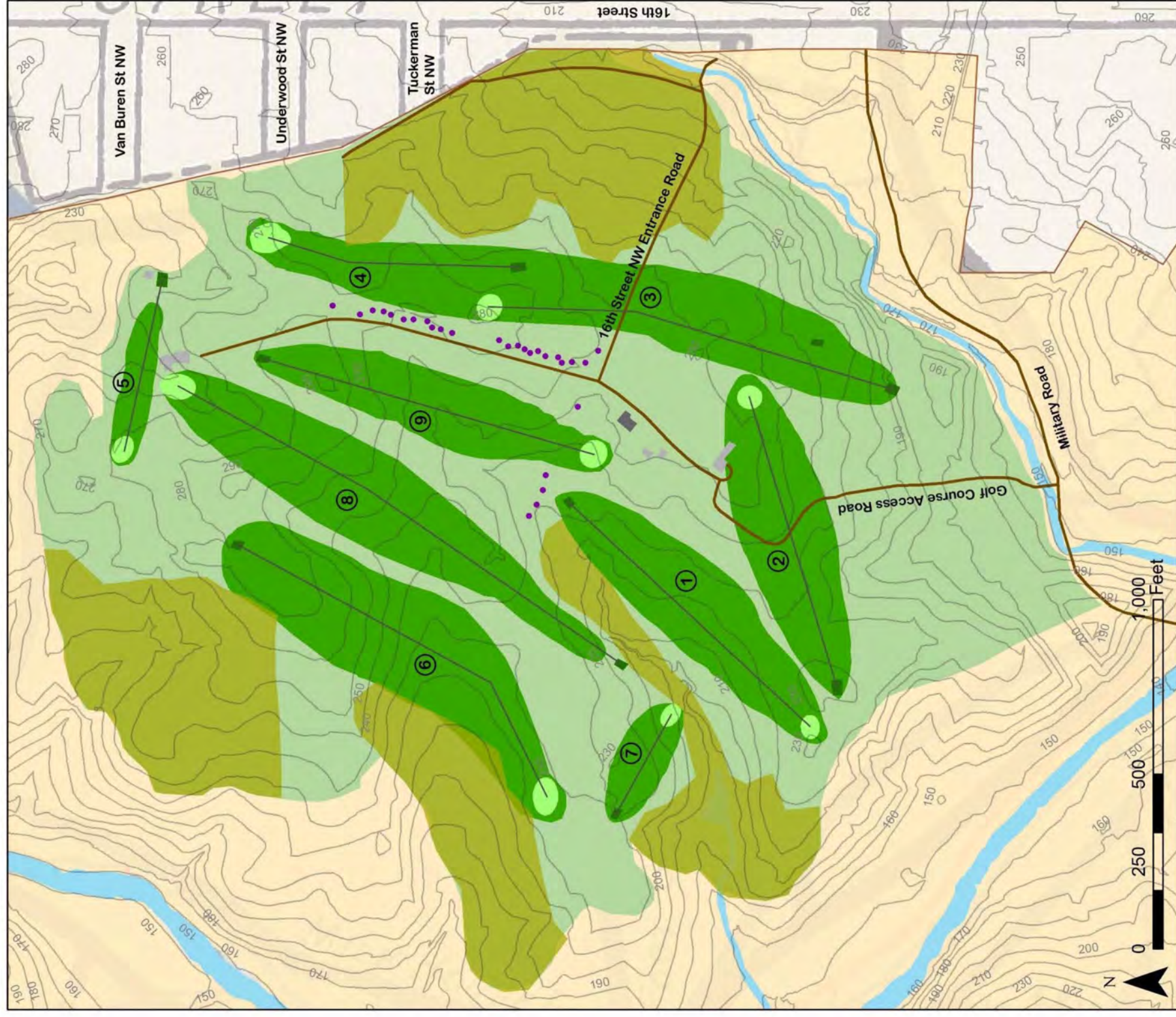


- Legend**
- Trees
  - Historic Trail
  - Historic Roads
  - Historic Structures
  - Forested Growth
  - Lawn
  - Open Pasture
  - Rock Creek
  - Rock Creek Park Boundary



# IMAGE 5 ROCK CREEK GOLF COURSE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE 1923 CONDITIONS

Drawn by S. Garrison and M. Fichman, 2017  
Background Map: Rock Creek Park, 1921

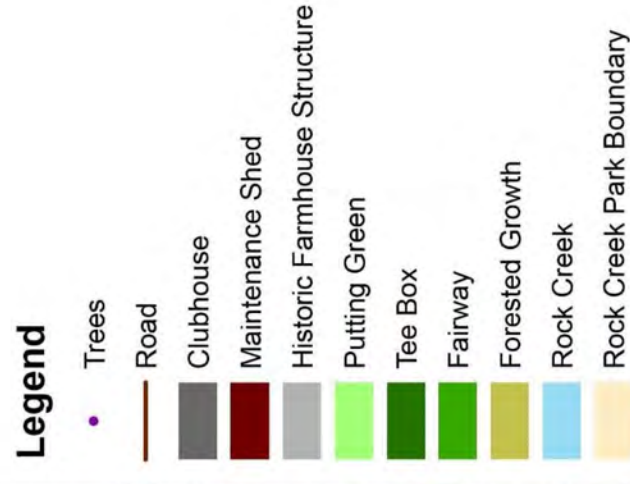
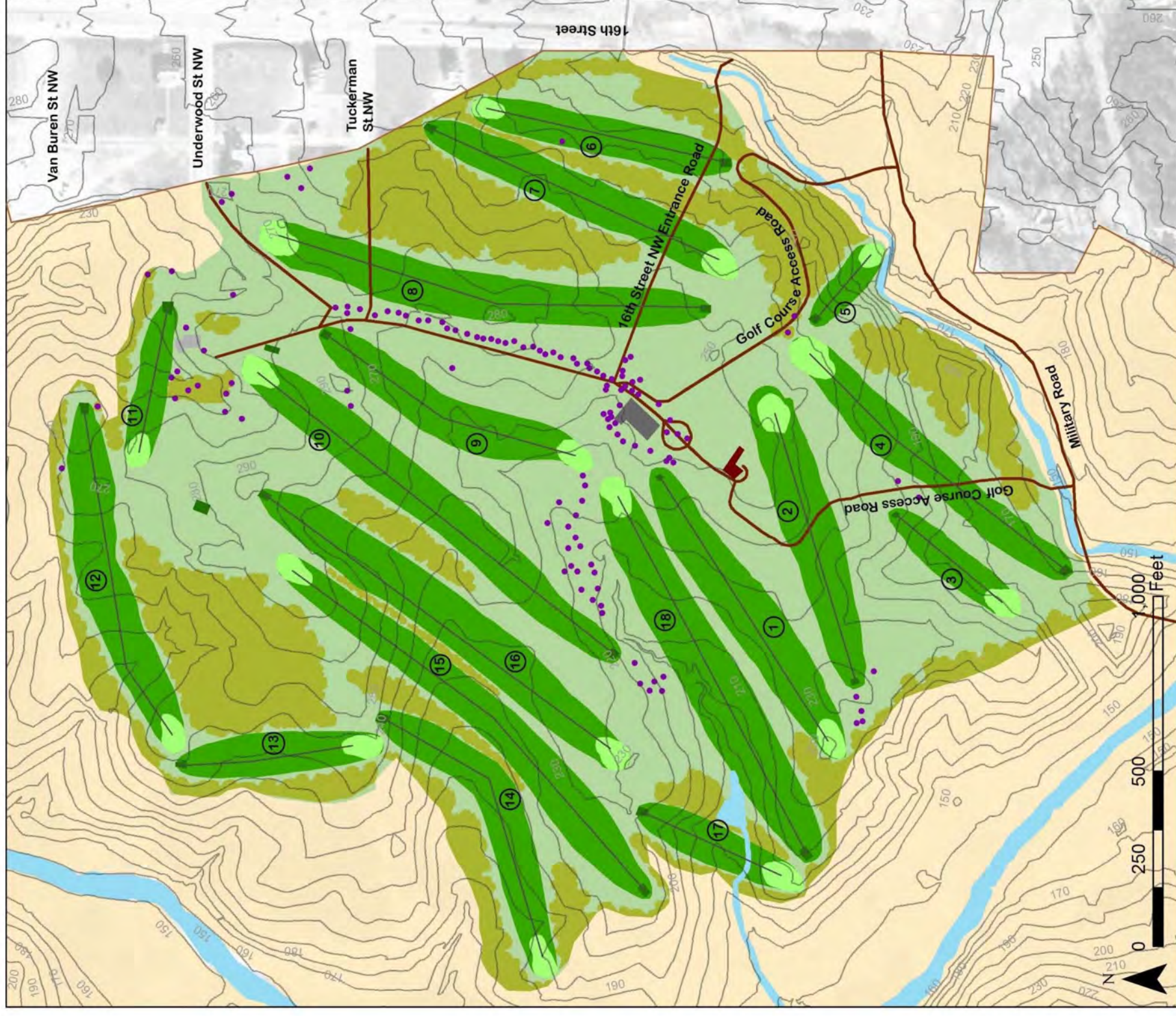


- Legend**
- Trees
  - Historic Road
  - Clubhouse
  - Historic Farmhouse Structure
  - Putting Green
  - Tee Box
  - Fairway
  - Golf Course
  - Forested Growth
  - Rock Creek
  - Rock Creek Park Boundary



# IMAGE 6 ROCK CREEK GOLF COURSE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE 1927 CONDITIONS

Drawn by S. Garrison and M. Fichman, 2017  
Background Photo: U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, 1927







# IMAGE 7 ROCK CREEK GOLF COURSE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE 1964 CONDITIONS

Drawn by S. Garrison and M. Fichman, 2017  
Background Photo: U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, 1968





Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

# IMAGE 8 ROCK CREEK GOLF COURSE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE 2016 CONDITIONS

Drawn by S. Garrison and M. Fichman, 2017  
Background Photo: GIS World Imagery, 2016

## Legend

- Trees
- Cart Path
- Sidewalk
- Road
- Clubhouse
- Maintenance Shed
- Sand Trap
- Putting Green
- Tee Box
- Fairway
- Forested Growth
- Rock Creek
- Rock Creek Park Boundary

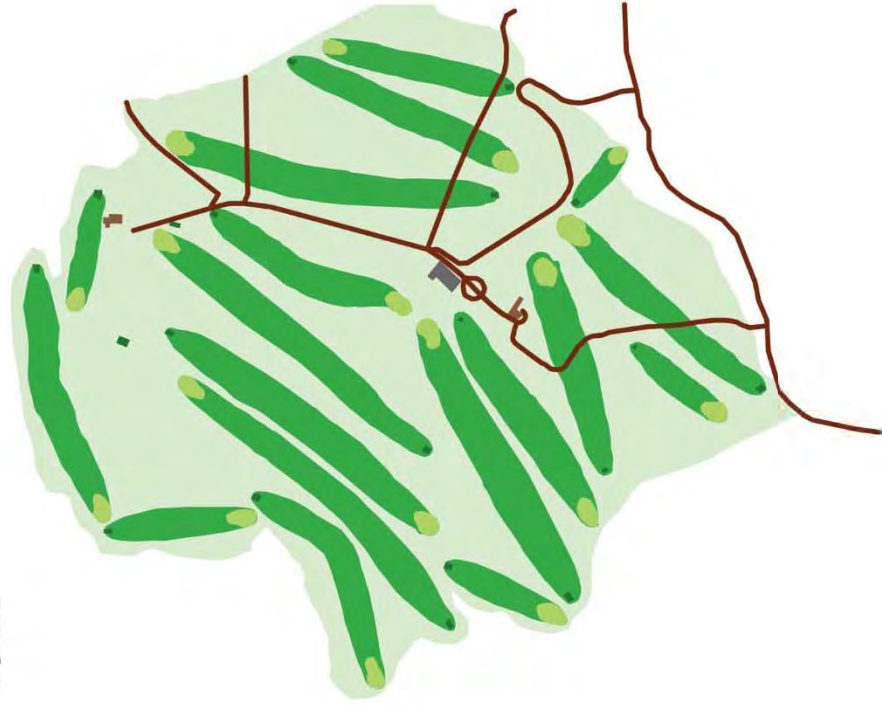


## CIRCULATION: HISTORIC AND EXISTING

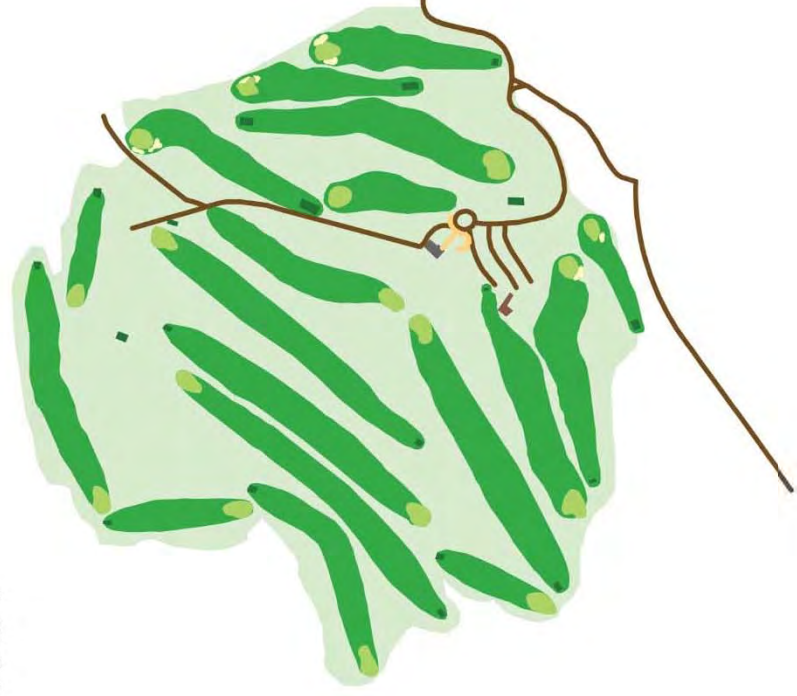
1923



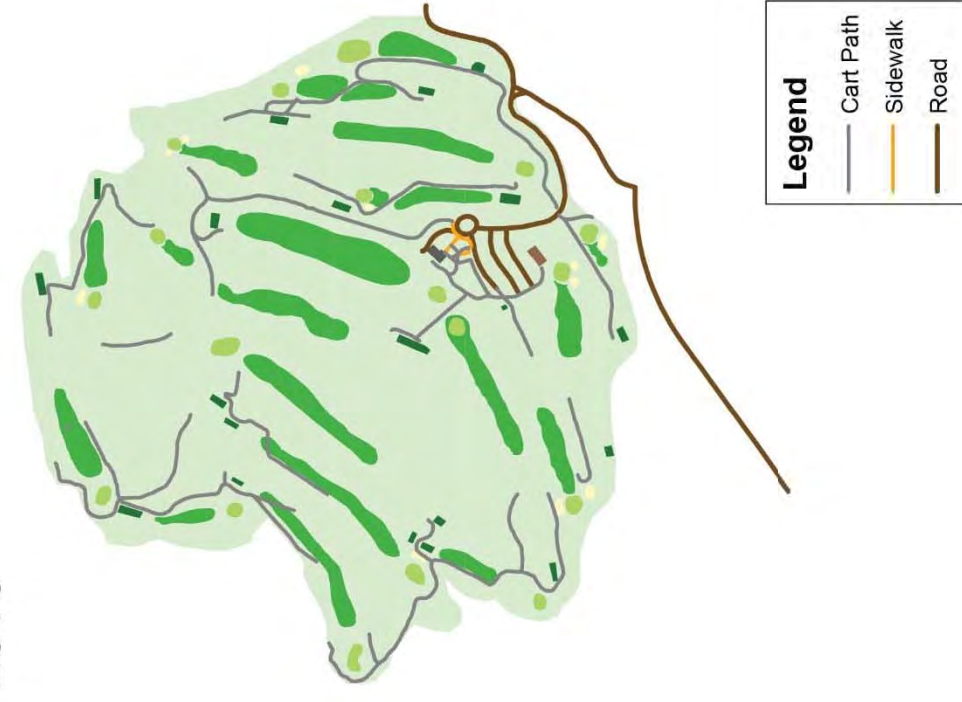
1927



1964



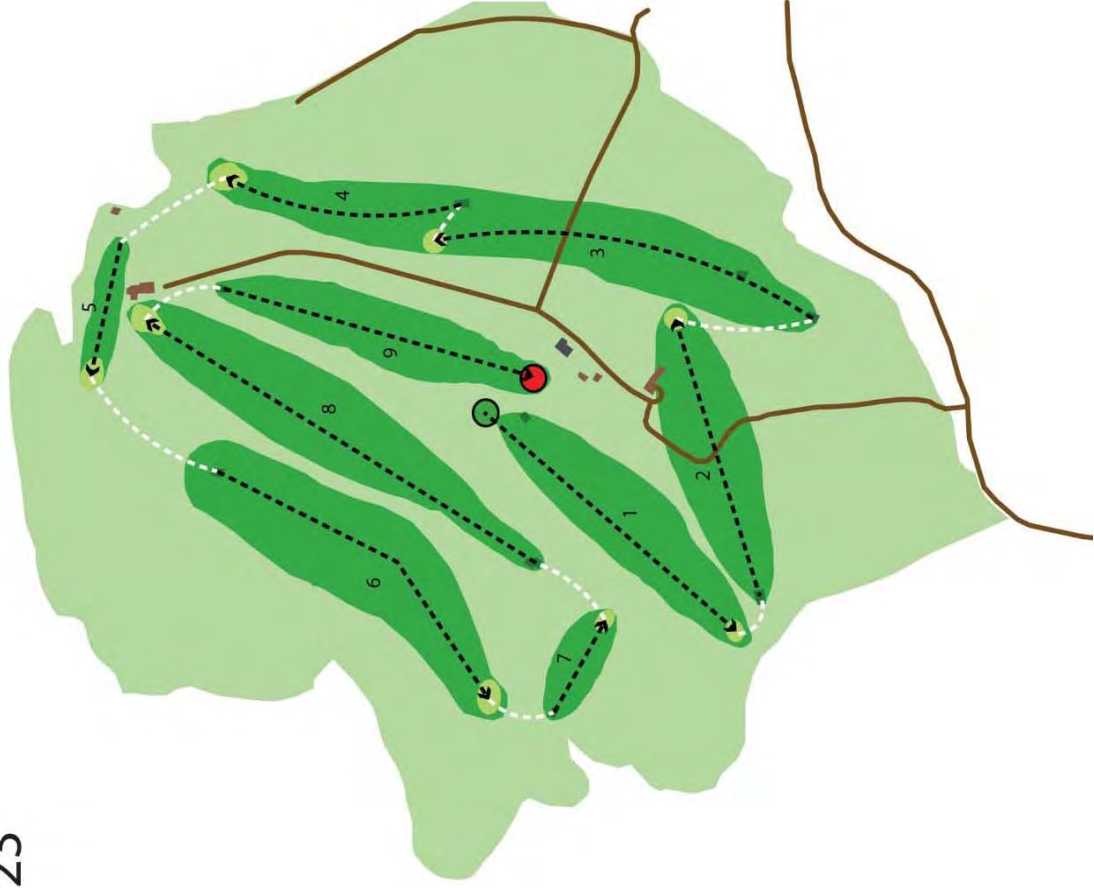
2016



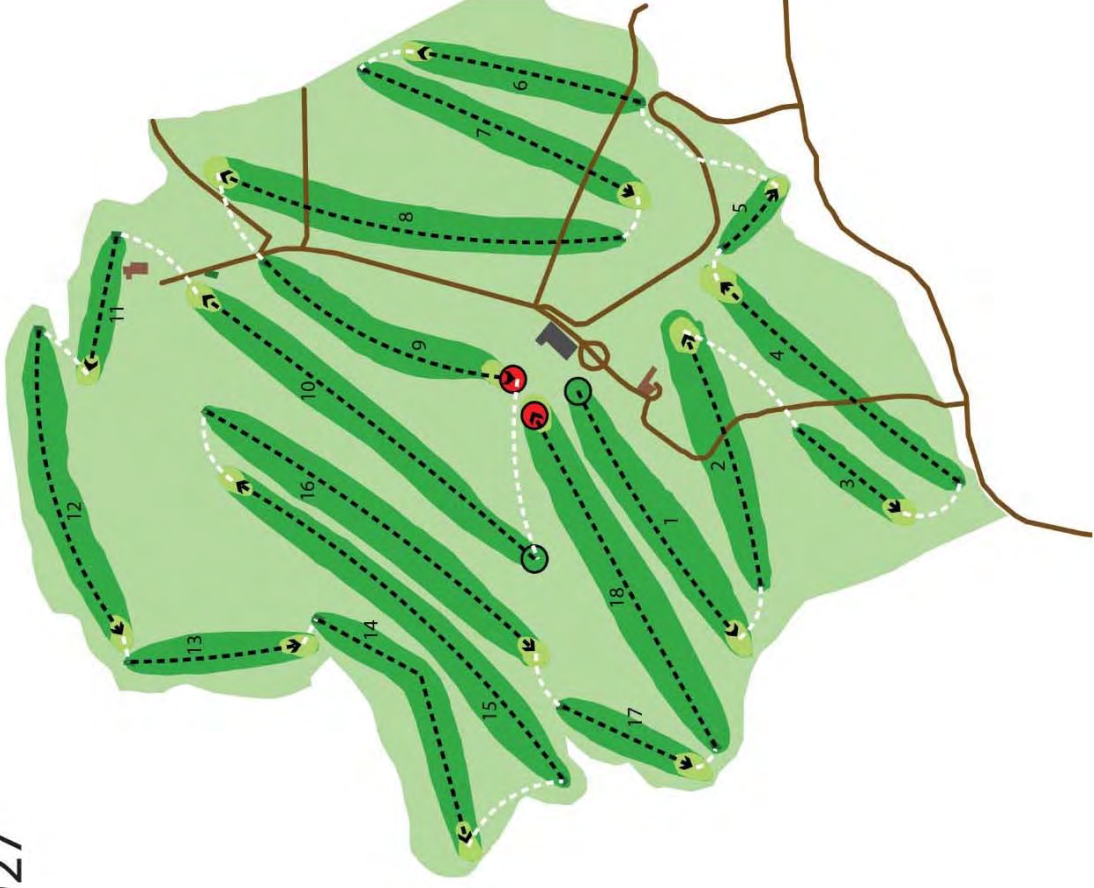


## SPATIAL ORGANIZATION: HISTORIC AND EXISTING

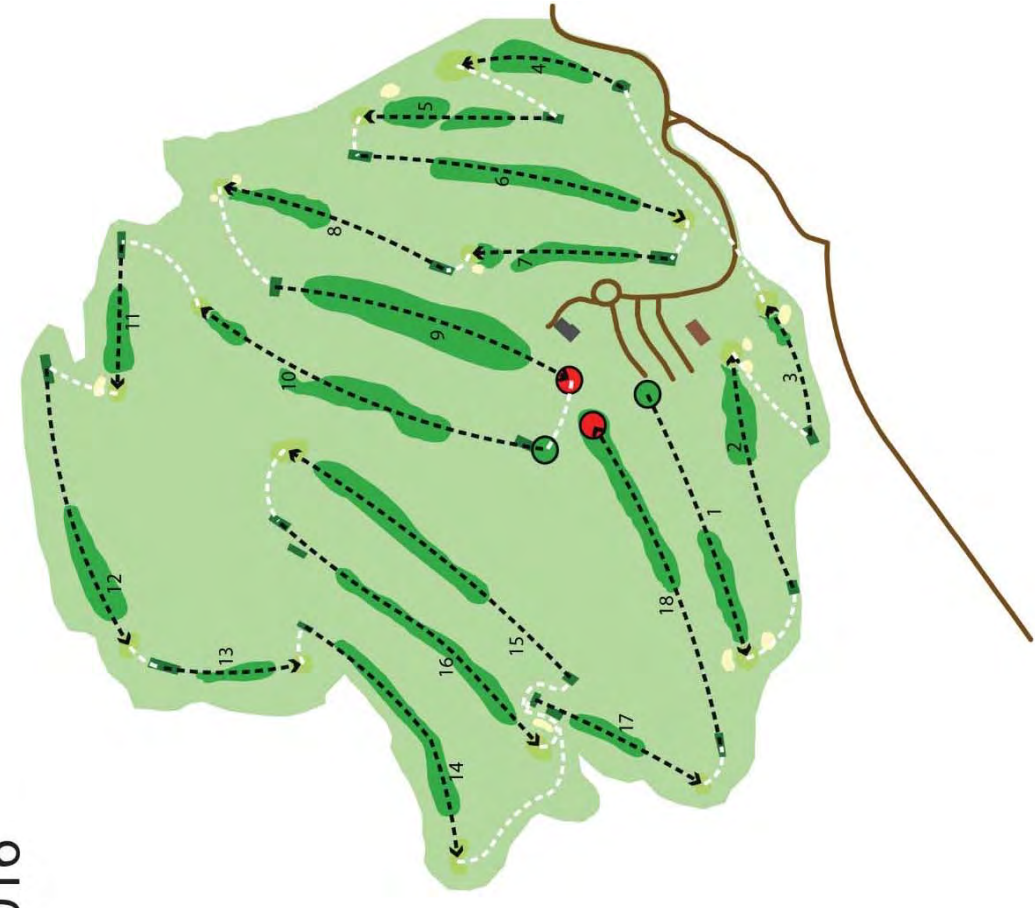
1923



1927

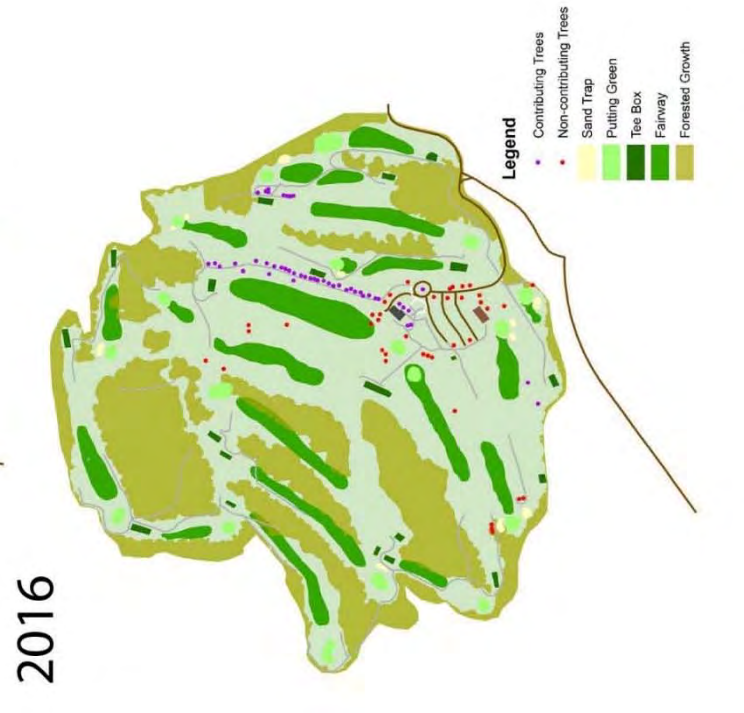
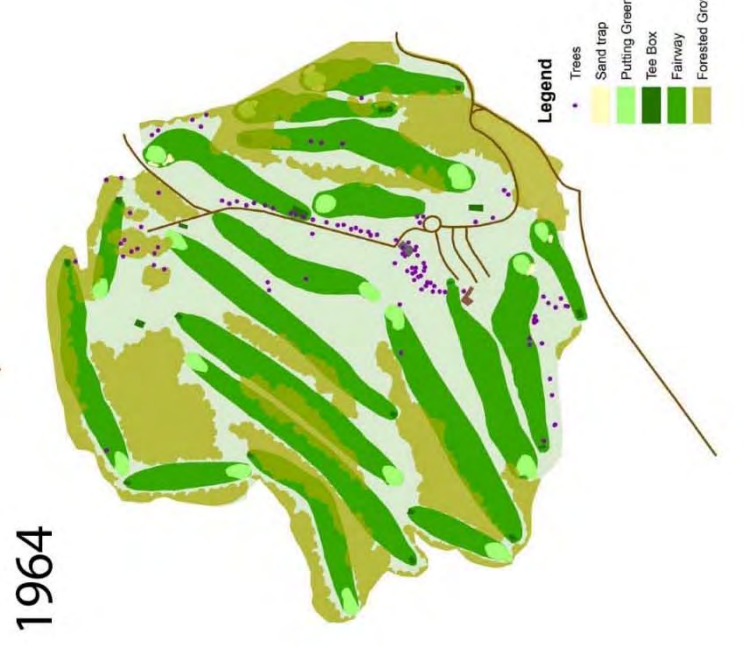
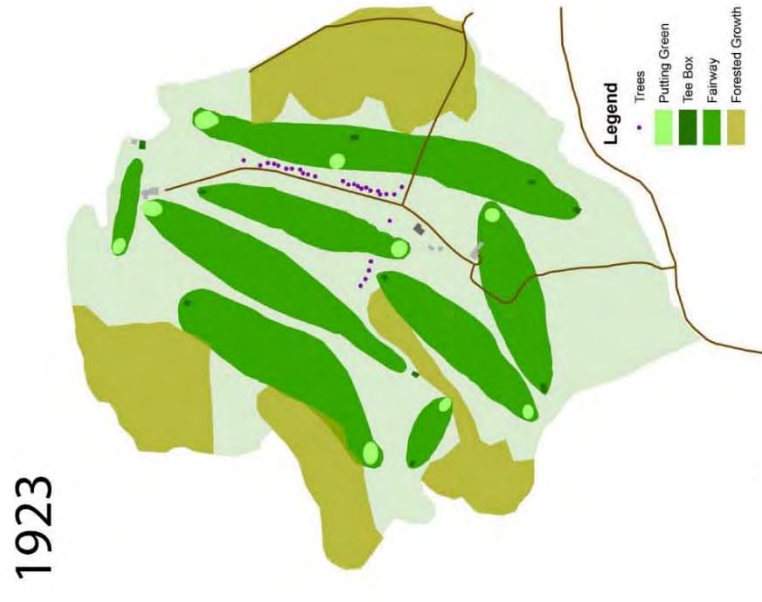
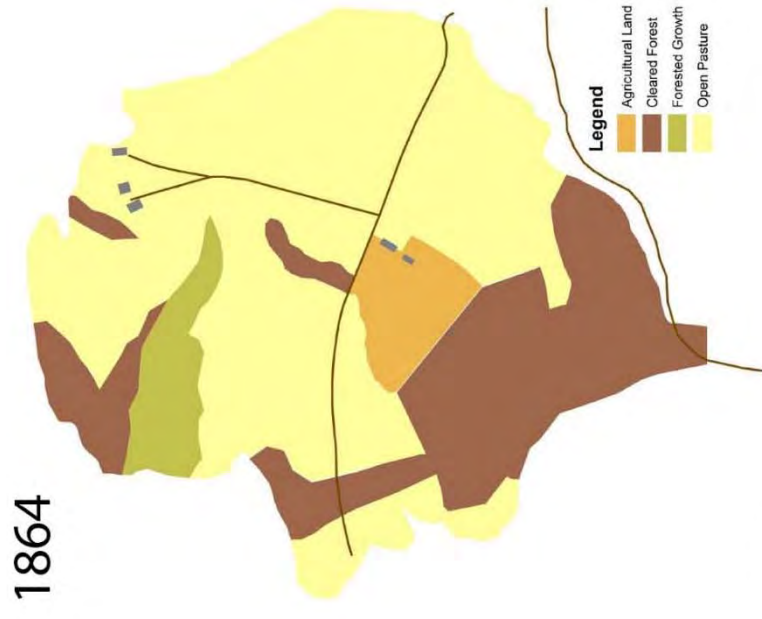


2016





## VEGETATION: HISTORIC AND EXISTING



## Appendix B

This appendix includes hole by hole descriptions of Rock Creek Golf Course, dating from their period of initial construction and the completion of fieldwork conducted as part of this CLI, in 2016-2017. Supplemental images and large scale maps and plans of each course are also included in the relevant sections.

### Historic Condition

Irving W. Payne, a landscape architect with the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds (OPBG), working with Major Douglas L. Weart, Assistant to the Officer in Charge of the OPBG and Smith Riley, a forester, laid out the first rough outline for a nine-hole golf course at Rock Creek Park in October of 1921 (Memorandum from Col. Sherrill to Superintendent Gillen, 22 October 1921). In January of 1922, Colonel Sherrill, Officer in Charge of the OPBG, hired golf course architect William S. Flynn of Ardmore, Pennsylvania to design the course. Flynn spent two days going over the grounds at Rock Creek, planning the location of tees and greens. Payne prepared the final drawings, incorporating Flynn's suggestions. The first nine holes of the Rock Creek golf course opened in 1923 with a remodeled farmhouse as the clubhouse. The course was designed in a parkland style and organized in a counterclockwise loop around the landscape, starting west of the clubhouse.

In 1924, Col. Sherrill wrote to William Flynn requesting his services to design nine additional holes at Rock Creek. In July of 1924 Flynn traveled to Washington and met with Col. Sherrill to discuss a new layout for the course. (Letter from Col Sherrill to William S. Flynn July 5, 1924; *Washington Post* July 27, 1924) Col. Sherrill wanted the new course to be open by the following summer, so work began immediately. Wooded areas north of the original nine holes were cleared in the summer of 1924. William Flynn visited the site again in August of 1924 and wrote to Col. Sherrill that he had "an excellent idea of the course" (Col Sherrill to Flynn, July 31, 1924; Col. Sherrill to Flynn, August 6, 1925).

Flynn's "excellent idea" required a near total redesign of the original nine-hole course. For the new Rock Creek Golf Course Flynn planned two distinct nine-hole courses, Course A and Course, B. The courses could be played individually, in a nine-hole round, or together, for a full eighteen-hole game. Working in the parkland-style, Flynn's courses emphasized different aspects of the site's natural topography and vegetation. The front nine, or "Course A" was open and airy with holes laid-out across gentle slopes to the south and east of the clubhouse. The back nine, or "Course B" was carved out of mature forest and played across dramatic changes in topography. The final eighteen-hole design was spread out over 108 acres and had a combined distance of 5,545 yards. The par for an entire eighteen holes was 70. Original yardage and pars (as determined by 1917 USGA Guidelines; Rock Creek Park Historic District National Register Amended Nomination 2014:7.26; Rock Creek Golf Course: A Brief History; USGA 1917 Guidelines, found at <https://www.thoughtco.com/par-3-to-5-yardage-guidelines-1564466>).

### **A Course – Front Nine, 1926**

**Hole 1:** 334 yards, par 4. Played southwest from a tee box located west of the clubhouse. A straight, open hole with a wide, treeless fairway. No hazards are included in historic drawings, although 1927 aerials suggest a sand trap may have been located east of the green. Henry Litchfield's West's 1926 description of the hole declares that except for the movement of the original tee box closer to the club house, the hole was unchanged from Flynn's original 1923 design.

**Hole 2:** 278 yards, par 4. Played straight east. A few trees were located near the tee box but otherwise no trees bordered the fairway, which was wide and open feeling. No hazards are included in historic drawings, although 1927 aerials suggest a sand trap may have been located west of the green. Henry Litchfield's West's 1926 description of the hole describes it as unchanged from Flynn's original 1923 design.

**Hole 3:** 175 yards, par 3. A short, open hole that played southwest. No hazards appear on historic plans or aerials. No trees bordered the fairway.

**Hole 4 :** 340 yards, par 4. Played northeast. No hazards are included in historic drawings, although 1927 aerials suggest a sand trap may have been located west of the green. The eastside of the fairway was bordered by trees.

**Hole 5 :** 92 yards, par 3. Hole 5 dipped southeast, towards the intersection of Military and Joyce Roads. The shortest hole on the course, it played down to a green located at the bottom of a steep slope. It is the only hole on the front nine that was bordered on all sides by dense forest. Newspaper articles suggest that Hole 5 was at least partially designed as part of the 1907-era golf course which was partially constructed but never completed. Flynn discovered the hole while building the new course and incorporated it into his plan. In 1926 Henry Litchfield West described it as such: "The fifth hole is one of the prettiest short holes on any course in the District. It is situated in the woods and is a short mashie pitch across a ravine, at the bottom of which is a small creek, the green being located near the Military Road." No hazards appear on plans or historic aerials.

**Hole 6:** 225 yards, par 4. Hole 6 played straight north from a tee box located immediately south of the 16th Street Access Road to a green located north of the golf course access road. The north side of the fairway was bordered by a mature stand of trees. No hazards appear on plans or historic aerials.

**Hole 7 :** 334 yards par 4. Hole 7 played straight, southwest, from a green located north of the 16th Street Access Road to a green located south of the 16th Street Access Road. The fairway was bordered by stands of mature trees on both sides. No hazards appear on plans or historic aerials.

**Hole 8 :** 481 yards, par 5. Hole 8 played north and was the longest hole on the front nine. The fairway was a slight dogleg that led golfers toward the highest point on the course. The eastern part of the fairway was bordered by a mature stand of trees. Henry Litchfield West's 1926 article claims this hole was the original Hole 4 on the 1923 course. No hazards appear on plans of the course, but historic aerials suggest a small sand trap may have been located immediately southeast of the green.

**Hole 9:** 334 yards, par 4. Played in a slight dogleg to the southwest, ending at a green near the clubhouse. The fairway was wide open and treeless and played down a gentle slope. No hazards appear on plans for the course, but historic aerials suggest that two sand traps may have been located immediately north and northeast of the green. The green was located in the same spot as the original 1923 ninth green.

### **Course B – Back Nine, 1926**

**Hole 10:** 508 yards, par 5. Hole 10 played north, up a hill toward a green located near the site's highest point. The longest hole on the entire course, it was bordered by a small stand of mature trees to the northwest of the fairway. The fairway is very similar to the 1923 Hole 8. No hazards appear on plans or historic aerials.

**Hole 11:** 164 yards, par 3. A short, straight hole that played west, Hole 11 was the only hole original to Flynn's 1923 course that was kept entirely intact. It was surrounded by mature forest to the north and played across a shallow valley. No hazards appear on plans or historic aerials.

**Hole 12:** 325 yards, par 4. A slight dogleg Hole 12 played west, then southwest and was bordered by mature forest on nearly all sides. The fairway played down then back up a hill. No hazards appear on plans or historic aerials.

**Hole 13:** 174 yards, par 3. A short straight hole located on the slope of a hill, Hole 13 played south and was surrounded by mature forest on all sides. No hazards appear on plans or historic aerials.

**Hole 14:** 330 yards, par 4. An extreme dogleg, that played southeast down a steep 50-foot drop off the teebox then east across a slightly sloping fairway to a raised green. The fairway and green were bordered by mature forest to the north and west, and large stand of mature trees to the south and east. No hazards appear on plans or historic aerials.

**Hole 15:** 478 yards, par 5: The original « heart-attack hill Hole 15 climbed back up the 50 drop played down on the previous hole. The long straight fairway was bordered by stands of mature trees. No hazards appear on plans or historic aerials.

**Hole 16:** 437 yards, par 4 : Hole 16 played straight back down Hole 15's steep hill, southwest toward a green located 40 feet below the tee. The fairway was partially bordered by stands of mature trees. No hazards appear on plans or historic aerials.

**Hole 17:** 162 yards, par 3. A short hole that hops southwest across a deep ravine to a green from a tee box located on a hilltop to a green located on a slightly smaller hilltop. A tiny stream crosses the fairway at the bottom of the ravine. The fairway and green are bordered on all sides by dense forest. No hazards appear on plans or historic aerials.

**Hole 18:** 374 yards, par 4. Hole played northeast, up a gentle slope, returning golfers to the clubhouse. A few trees bordered the north side of the fairway. No hazards appear on plans or historic aerials.



## **Existing Condition**

Many changes have been made to individual holes at Rock Creek, since the initial period of construction. These changes include the movement of tee boxes and hazards and redesign of greens, which are all considered a normal part of golf course maintenance and management. Such changes have not affected the overall design of the course itself, or its integrity as a public golf course, built in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. As a whole, Rock Creek Golf Course still looks, feels and plays much the same as William Flynn intended when he designed it in 1924. The course as a whole and the majority of fairways and greens are still in the same location as when they were completed in 1926. The course remains an eighteen-hole course, comprised of two nine-hole loops that play in and out from a centrally located clubhouse. The front nine and back nine are still distinct from one another, with the front nine defined by its open feeling, gentle slopes and wide fairways and the back nine defined by its narrow fairways surrounded by dense forest and traversing steep slopes. More hazards have been introduced since the period of significance and some holes have been shortened. In 2016, the course's total yardage was 4951, par 65.

A hole by hole description of current layout of the course is below:

### **Front Nine**

**Hole 1:** 302 yards, par 4: The tee box is located at the end of the parking lot. A wide, straight fairway, plays west down gentle slope to the green, slightly lower than the tee box. Both fairway and green closely match with Flynn’s 1926 design.



Photo taken in June 2016.

**Hole 2:** 285 yards, par 4: A slight dogleg, with a wide open fairway that plays east, back up the a northwest slope to the green, located on a knoll behind the maintenance shed. The last third of the fairway and green were moved slightly south of Flynn’s 1926 design as a result of the expansion of parking lot in 1964.



Photo taken in June 2016.



**Hole 3:** 160 yards, par 3: A short straight hole playing east, uphill, and across a steeper northwest slope than the previous two holes. The hole is located along the site's southern edge and its fairway is hemmed in by dense tree growth on this side. Designed by William Gordon in 1947 and constructed between 1957-1958, the hole is relatively unchanged since that period. The current green is located on the site of Flynn's original fourth green. A remnant of the tee box for the original Hole 5 and a 1930s concrete water fountain are located directly south of green.



Photo taken in June 2016.

**Hole 4:** 173 yards, par 3: A relatively flat, slightly boomerang-shaped hole, playing north on the course's eastern edge. The fairway and green were originally designed for Flynn's Hole 5.



Photo taken in June 2016.

**Hole 5:** 202 yards, par 3: The hole is wedged between Holes 4 and 6, Hole No.5 is similar in design to Hole 4. It is also a short hole that plays straight north. The fairway is on a slight east-west slope. The location of the tee box requires golfers to backtrack slightly from the fourth green. Hole 5 was designed by Gordon and is relatively unchanged since its period of construction in 1957.



Photo taken in June 2016.



**Hole 6:** 360 yards, par 4: A south playing hole with a wide fairway that slopes down slightly, in an eastern direction. Part of the fairway matches the location designed by Flynn in 1926, the rest dates to Gordon's redesign of course. The green is located in relatively same location as Flynn's original seventh green.



Photo taken in June 2016.

**Hole 7:** 202 yards, par 3: Hole 7 plays north from a tee box located north of the Golf Course Access Road, toward an uphill green near the course’s highest point. The fairway was originally part of Flynn’s fairway for Hole 8. During the 1940s it was played as an alternate hole on the front nine and was made permanent during Gordon’s redesign of the course in 1957. It is not significantly changed since that time.



Photo taken in June 2016.



**Hole 8:** 270 yards, par 4: Hole plays north, uphill, toward across a gentle eastern slope, toward a green located near the site's highest point. The fairway is wide and open, bordered by the cart path and a mature row of cedars to the west and dense vegetation behind the green. The green is located in same general location as Flynn's original eighth green. The original 1926 fairway was shortened during Gordon's 1957 interventions. Gordon's 1947 design for Hole 8 called for a dogleg fairway, though currently the fairway is straight.



Photo taken in June 2016.

**Hole 9:** 330 yards, par 4: Hole 9 plays south, downhill from a tee box located near the course’s highest point, toward a green behind the clubhouse. The fairway is wide and straight and bordered to the east by one of the original access roads to the course, now a cart path, lined with a row of mature cedar. The current fairway and green location match Flynn’s design for Hole 9.



Photo taken in June 2016.



**Hole 10:** 400 yards, par 4: Hole 10 is the course's longest hole, and plays north from a valley behind the clubhouse uphill toward a green near the site's highest point. The fairway is wide and bordered by a stand of mature trees to the west. The hole is not significantly changed since it was first designed by Flynn in 1926.



Photo taken in June 2016.

**Hole 11:** 160 yards, par 3: The hole is tucked amongst mature trees, and plays west across a hollow from a tee box located on a hilltop, toward a green located on a hill opposite. This hole is the only completely intact hole designed as part of Flynn’s 1921 nine-hole course. On that course it was Hole 5.

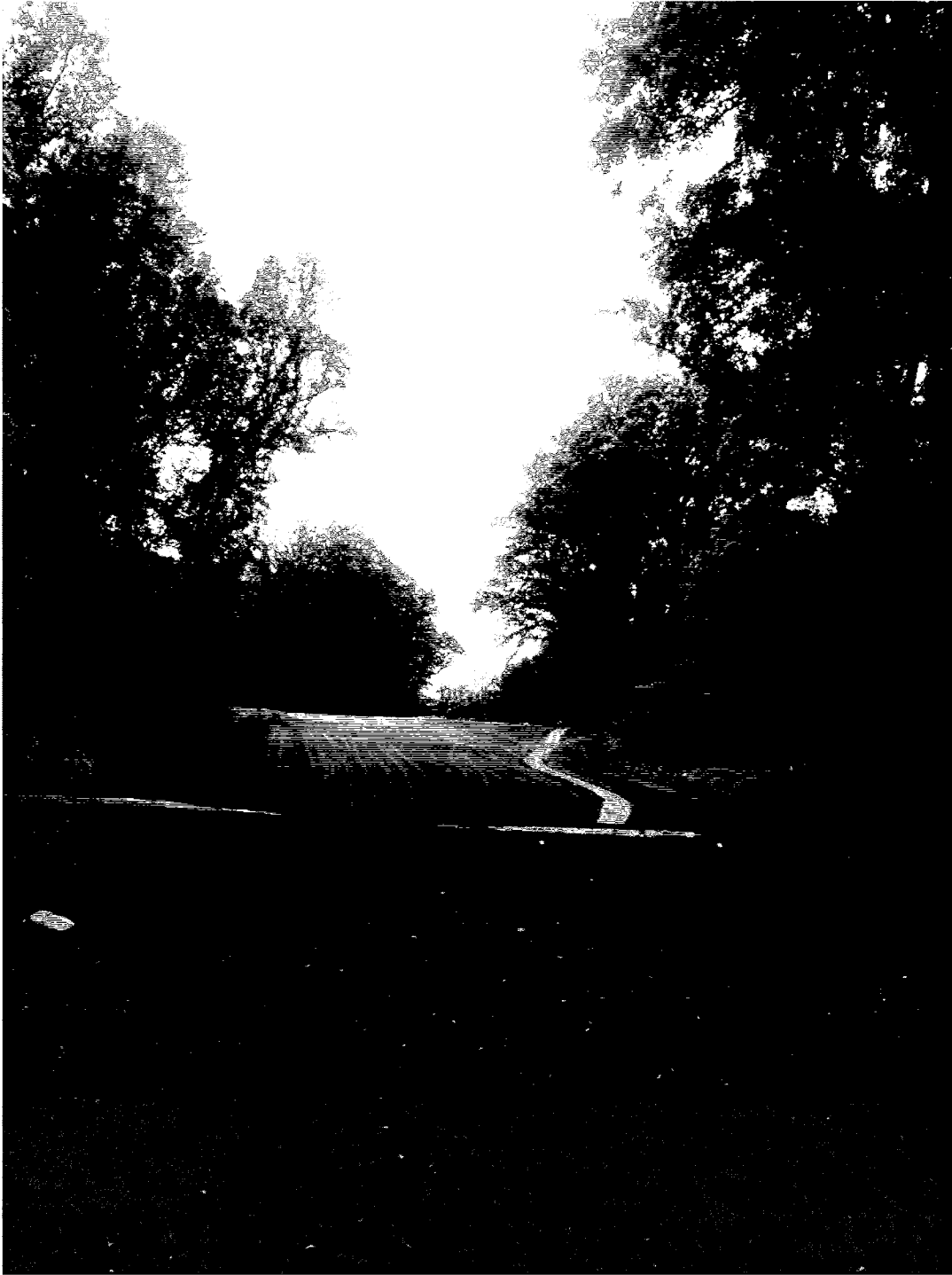


Photo taken in June 2016.



**Hole 12:** 315 yards, par 4:Hole 12 plays west along the site’s northern edge. The fairway has been narrowed significantly due to vegetation growth on both sides. Hole 12 plays down a valley, curving slightly south toward a green located approximately 20-feet below the tee box. Other than a narrowed fairway, the hole matches Flynn’s original 1926 design.



Photo taken in June 2016.

**Hole 13:** 170 yards, par 3: A short, straight hole playing south, with a narrow fairway that slopes slightly to the west. Dense forest borders both sides of fairway and the green. The hole layout still matches Flynn’s 1926 design.



Photo taken in June 2016.



**Hole 14:** 339 yards, par 4: A dogleg south and then west, with a steep, 50-foot drop off the tee box. The hillside is so treacherous that the hole must be closed during and after heavy rains. The fairway is bordered by mature forest, and vegetation growth has narrowed the hole significantly, especially along the northern edge where a cart path, now inaccessible and covered in brush, marks the original fairway width. Despite a narrowed fairway, the hole still matches Flynn’s original 1926 design.



Photo taken in June 2016.

**Hole 15:** 371 yards, par 4: A wide, northeast-playing fairway, bordered by stands of mature trees to the east and west. The hole currently plays uphill, but was originally designed to play downhill. The location of the tee and green have been swapped and the hole is currently out of order. In Flynn’s design it is Hole 16.



Photo taken in June 2016.



**Hole 16:** 370 yards, par 4: A southeast playing hole. The tee box is located at the site’s highest point and plays down the same steep 50-foot slope as Hole 14. As with Hole 15, Hole 16 currently plays in the opposite direction than intended. Hole 15 on Flynn’s original design, the intention was to play back up the hill that was played down on Hole 14. By the 1970s, this hole was known as “heart-attack hill” because of its difficulty. The current reversal of play and swapping of original Holes 15 and 16 has negated Flynn’s original design on this part of the course.



Photo taken in June 2016.

**Hole 17:** 200 yards, par 3: A short hole that hops southwest across a deep ravine to a green from a tee box located on a hilltop to a green located on a slightly smaller hilltop. A tiny stream crosses the fairway at the bottom of the ravine. The fairway and green are bordered on all sides by dense forest. The layout matches Flynn’s 1926 design.



Photo taken in June 2016.



**Hole 18**, 342 yards, par 4: A wide, open-feeling hole that plays east, slightly uphill and out of the forested back nine, toward a green just behind the clubhouse. The fairway is bordered on one side by a stand of mature trees. Its design is not significantly altered since Flynn’s 1926 plan.



Photo taken in June 2016.

## Appendix C: Glossary of Terms

*Note: The following terms were primarily taken from PGA, "Golf Glossary and Golf Terms," accessed February 22, 2017, at <http://www.pga.com/golf-instruction/instruction-feature/fundamentals/golf-glossary-and-golf-terms>; "Murdo Frazer Golf Course, Golf Glossary," accessed February 22, 2017, at <http://murdofrazer.com/golf-glossary>; Forrest Richardson & Assoc., Golf Course Architects, "Golf Course Terminology," accessed February 22, 2017, at [http://www.golfgroupltd.com/golf\\_course\\_terms.html#l](http://www.golfgroupltd.com/golf_course_terms.html#l)*

### A

**Amateur:** Amateurs or amateur golfers in golf play for pleasure, so they don't earn their keep as golfer. They are not even allowed to accept money for any activity, so nor for tournament winnings, neither for teaching golf sports. As a result it is the direct opposite to professional players who do so.

**Approach:** A shot hit towards the green or towards the hole.

**Artificial feature:** A feature created by construction means.

**Artificial hazard:** Any hazard created by construction means.

**Artificial hole:** A golf hole constructed entirely, or nearly so, by shaping or earthmoving efforts as opposed to being configured into a naturally occurring landscape with minimal or almost no grading effort.

### B

**Back Nine:** In an 18-hole course the last nine holes a golfer plays are called back nine, back side or last nine. Most of the time the round starts at hole one, so the back nine are the holes 10-18.

**Bent:** Used in British Isles to refer to clumps and areas of sea lyme grass growing with or without other varieties of links grasses intermixed.

**Biarritz green:** A biarritz, or biarritz green, is a putting green that features a deep gully, or swale, bisecting its middle. The name "biarritz" come from the golf course in France where the first-known biarritz was constructed, Biarritz Golf Club.

**Bump and run:** A pitch shot around the green in which the player hits the ball into a slope to deaden its speed before settling on the green and rolling towards the hole.

**Bunker:** A hollow comprised of sand or grass or both that exists as an obstacle and, in some cases, a hazard.

### C

**Caddie:** A person hired to carry clubs and provide other assistance.

**Carry:** The distance a ball will fly in the air, usually to carry a hazard or safely reach a target.

**Cart path:** Improved surface on which motorized carts are intended to travel; typically gravel, asphalt or concrete.

**Chip and run:** A low-running shot played around the greens where the ball spends more time on the ground than in the air.

**Chocolate drop:** A mound with a pointed index resembling a drop of chocolate but much larger.

**Country club:** Private club that only allows members and their guests to use facilities.

**Course furnishings:** The equipment used on a golf course for the purpose of playing the game of golf; examples are tee markers, flagsticks, flags, ball washers, hazard markers, etc.

**Course par:** The score standard for a golf course comprised of the total of all of the pars assigned to each hole; the number of strokes that a scratch player may be expected to take in order to complete a round.

**Cross-bunker:** Sand bunker that lies at a ninety-degree angle to the line of play, usually requiring a shot to carry it.

## D

**Divot:** The turf displaced when the club strikes the ball on a descending path. (Her divot flew into the pond.) It also refers to the hole left after play.

**Dog-leg:** Descriptive of the shape of a dog's leg used to communicate the angled alignment of a golf hole.

**Drive:** A shot played from the tee to start a golf hole to any fairway other than that of par-3 hole.

**Driving range:** Another term for a practice area. Also known as a golf range, practice range or learning center.

**Duffer:** A person inexperienced at something, especially at playing golf.

## E

**Earthwork:** All operations that include the act of moving or shaping earth.

**Executive-length course:** Courses with an 18-hole par between 55 and 68; derived from the expectation that "executives" would be able to enjoy a round of golf within the business day and still meet their commitments.

## F

**Fairway:** Expanse of grass which serves as the connection between a tee and a green; the primary target for any shot that is not an approach shot to a green.

**Fairway bunker:** Sand bunker that has a direct impact on the play of a golf shot other than an approach to the green

**Feature:** Any hazard, mound, depression, natural condition, area or portion of a golf hole or course which may be individually referenced.

**Fore:** Occurring before another, or coming before; warning yelled by golfers when a struck ball may endanger another golfer or spectator on a golf course.

**Forward tee:** The tee of a golf hole which is closest to the green (used now to replace "ladies tee", a mostly archaic term).

**Front nine:** The first nine holes of an 18-hole golf course; derived from the holes position on the "front" of a scorecard.

## G

**Geometric:** Term used to describe the look of many American golf course designs with their angular and hard-edged slopes and feature shaping; typically prior to 1915.

**Golden Age of Golf Course Architecture:** Began with the opening of The National Golf Links in 1911 by C.B. Macdonald and lasted until stock market crash of 1929.

**Grading:** The process of relocating dirt from one place to another with mechanized or hand tools; the result of such activity.

**Green:** Smooth grassy area at the end of a fairway especially prepared for putting and positioning the hole; all ground of a hole which is specifically prepared for putting.

**Green-side bunker:** Sand bunker that has a direct strategic or penal impact on the play of a shot to a green

**Greenkeeper:** An older, outdated term for the course superintendent.

## H

**Hazard:** Area of a golf course containing water, sand or other terrain which is subject to The Rules of Golf pertaining to play from such areas; also a term used loosely to describe features which are in the path of a shot (i.e., trees, hillsides, etc.).

**Heathland:** An expansive area of interior land, usually wasteland that is relatively flat and poorly drained.

**Hole length:** The distance as measured along the centerline of a given hole from any tee center point to the green center point.

**Hollow:** Depressed or low point of a surface; small valley or basin; usually subtle and fitting harmoniously into surrounding slopes or mounds; hollows are not always fully depressed and may drain to other areas.

**Hump:** An abrupt rise in elevation concentrated on an isolated area.

## I

**Inland golf course:** Golf course not located within the vicinity of a sea or ocean.

## L

**Links:** A seaside golf course constructed on a natural sandy landscape that has been shaped by the wind and receding tides (from the Old English “lincas”, meaning the plural of a ridge, a Scottish term to mean the undulating sandy ground near a shore); also used more generally as a synonym for a “seaside golf course” or a golf course that is configured with nine holes extending outward and nine holes returning to the clubhouse; often incorrectly used to describe any golf course. The Old Course at St. Andrews is the most famous links in the world.

**Linksland:** Land located proximal to an open sea, or bay connected directly to an open sea, and possessing the characteristics of dunes or seaside vegetation that is composed of naturally rolling sand dunes formed by the wind and the ocean.

## M

**Maintenance facility:** The entirety of the facilities required to care for a golf course; usually a building and grounds for storage of equipment and supplies, and space for offices and maintenance of equipment

**Maintenance road:** Improved road or path alignment developed only for use by maintenance personnel for their access to and around the golf course and maintenance facility.

**Mashie:** Classic golf term for a middle iron with the loft of a 5, 6 or 7-iron.

**Mound:** A single raised area of earth created by shaping; seldom used in reference to a natural rise in the ground, unless specifically a “natural mound.”

**Municipal golf course:** Golf facility owned by local or city government and open to the public.

## N

**Natural feature:** Any individual feature or collective features of a course or hole which was not manufactured

**Natural hazard:** Feature that existed on the site before the construction of the golf course and was incorporated into the design as a hazard; usually a body of water or natural sandy area.

## O

**Obstacle:** Any feature, tree or condition in the way of a golfer’s pursuit of a target or lower score.

**Old course:** Shorter and common reference to Royal St. Andrews Golf Links Old Course.

## P

**Par:** The score an accomplished player is expected to make on a hole, either a three, four or five.

**Parkland:** Land located inland and partially wooded, but open enough to resemble a park area.

**Parkland course:** Course located on parkland or in such a setting.

**Partial paths:** Cart trails which are limited to only certain parts of a course and require use of fairways and roughs for cart traffic, such as from greens to tees.

**Penal design:** Golf course design focusing on penalizing a golfer for a poor or miss-hit shot in the form of either forced carries or fairways lined with hazards; a penal design is characterized by a lack of strategic concept other than to not miss-hit.

**Philadelphia School of Design:** Born out of a supply of talented golfers in the Philadelphia area with little or no skilled golf course architects; considered one of the more daring and creative schools; architects: Billy Bell, George Crump, William S. Flynn, A.W. Tillinghast, George Thomas, Hugh and Merion Wilson.

**Pitch-and-putt course:** A course on which all of the holes are significantly shorter than most par-3 holes and require “pitch” shots to reach a green or area defined for putting; such courses generally have holes ranging from 10 to 100 yards.

**Pitch-and-run:** A shot from around the green, usually with a middle or short iron, where the ball carries in the air for a short distance before running towards the hole.

**Pitch shot:** A "pitch shot" (or just "pitch") is a shot played with a highly lofted club that is designed to go a relatively short distance with a steep ascent and steep descent. Pitch shots are played into the green, typically from 40-50 yards and closer.

**Pot bunker:** Small and round, especially deep sand bunker.

**Putt:** Stroking a golf ball in such a manner that it rolls the entire distance it travels, usually in an attempt to achieve the final goal of hitting the ball into the hole either from the surface of a putting green or near proximity to one.



**Putting green:** An improved surface for putting (see “green”); often used to refer to a practice green for putting, but the term can mean any green where putting takes place.

## **R**

**Railroad tie embankment:** A wall or slope stabilized with railroad ties which creates a formal appearance along a bunker or other slope.

**Rain shelter:** A small structure provided in regions prone to rain outbursts in order to provide refuge to golfers during a round; typically located in areas accessible from multiple holes and often provided every few holes.

**Redesign:** A hole or course that undergoes a new design.

**Renovation:** Change(s) made to a golf course or hole to improve conditions.

**Restoration:** Careful rebuilding of a golf course, hole or area to return it to the form and character as designed and constructed originally.

**Roughs:** All parts of a golf course excluding greens, tees, fairways, hazards, and areas out of-bonus which, with the tees and tee banks, greens and green banks, fairways, sand traps and lakes make up the total area of the golf course.

**Routing:** The path of golf holes from the first tee of the first hole to the last green of the last hole of a given golf course; also used to describe the alignment of cart paths.

**Run-up:** A shot played purposefully to run along the ground and “up” to the green.

## **S**

**Sand green:** Putting surface constructed of compacted sand and no turf, the surface is often oiled to keep the sand in place; sand greens are constructed where no water is available or where no means exist to finance standard turfgrass greens.

**Sand trap:** Sand-filled depression strategically placed as a hazard and a deterrent to making an unimpeded recovery shot; term used regionally in place of bunker (see “bunker”).

**Short course:** Usually a par-3 or executive-length course, but occasionally a regulation course that is shorter than average.

**Strategic design:** Golf course design concept focusing on alternate routes from which a golfer may choose to proceed based on risk versus the reward; this approach also allows for players with different skills to negotiate a hole commensurate with their particular skill level.

**Stolonizing:** The process of taking the stolon of the turfgrass plant which is a reproductive structure and spreading them over the surface of the dirt much like seeding. This type of propagation only works with grasses that are stoloniferous. The most common stoloniferous grass is the Bermuda grass and bent grass.

## **T**

**Target:** An area at which the golfer is expected to aim, land or end up; sometimes used interchangeably with “pin” or “flag.”

**Target golf:** Coined in mid-1960s to define courses on which play is from area to area and the emphasis on the roll of the ball is diminished as a result of such lush conditions; also interchanged now with “target course.”

**Tee box:** The area where players tee to start a hole.

**Temporary green:** A green or moderately improved area delineated for use as a green under the rules of golf that is temporary in play while the regular green is repaired or altered.

**Tile drainage:** Drainage by means of a series of tile lines laid at a specific depth and grade.

**Tree line:** The edge of a group of trees that defines a wooded area, especially so after clearing for a fairway or following growth of planted trees to maturity.

**Tree lined:** A fairway lined with dense trees.

**Turfgrass:** Grass specifically developed to serve as a playing surface for a recreational activity or for a residential or commercial law.

## V

**Variety:** The quality or state of having different forms or types of views, strategies and experiences on a course.

## W

**Well-Trapped:** Hole, green or fairway that has many bunkers or bunkers which are especially well place.

**Woodlands:** Land covered with trees and shrubs (woody vegetation); usually a forest, but also plantations, farmland and other lands on which woody vegetation is established and maintained for any purpose.

## Y

**Yardage:** Length of a golf hole or point to point measurement on a golf course or golf facility.

