

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

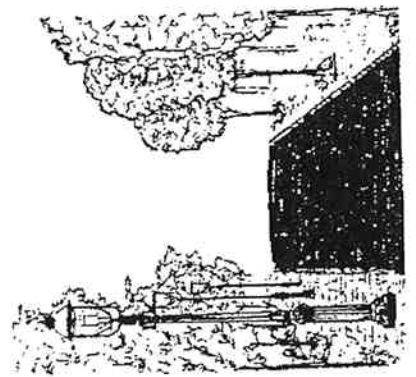
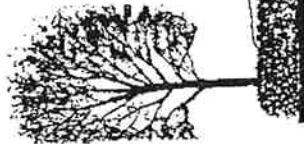
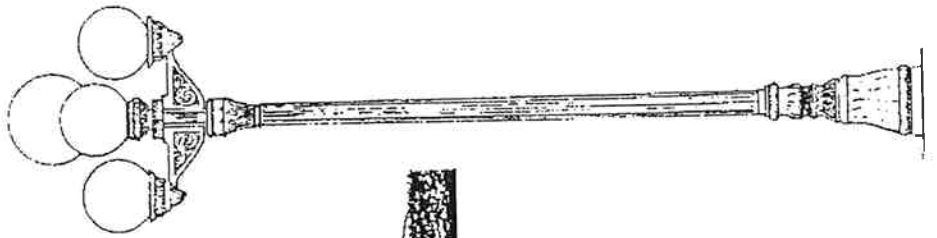
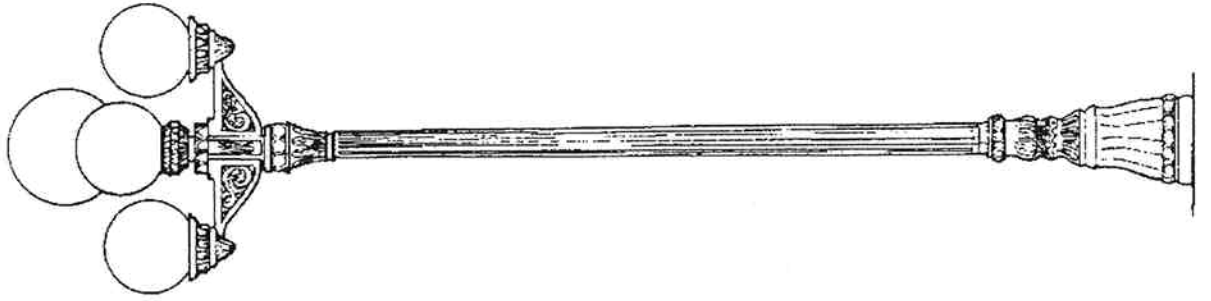
PARKS

A well-planned neighborhood park can well serve the leisure needs of area residents and be aesthetically pleasing. Green space is an important feature in any area, but to built urban neighborhoods, this space may provide the only outdoor recreation area for nearby residents.

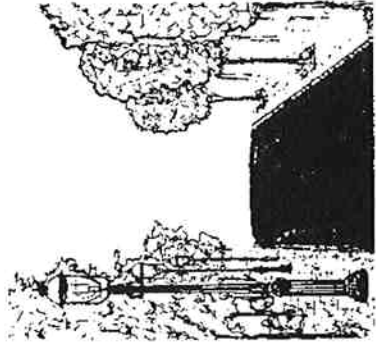
Historically, parks functioned similarly to the way they do today. Arcas were established for active and passive recreation. Play equipment was available as were benches and walkways. Many times, the park served as a meeting area and featured a bandshell or gazebo for picnics and concerts.

Brick, stone, wood, and iron are effective materials to enhance a park set in an historic area. Plants from an earlier era are appropriate, also. The *Landscape Lawns and Gardens* section describes historic plant material. Color should be provided by the plantings with other elements, such as benches or play equipment, taking a subdued, secondary role.

Lighting is important, also, and should be designed and scaled to pedestrians. It should be decorative and suit the other materials used in the park.



STREETS, ALLEYS, AND WALKS



was trees. The area between the sidewalk and street is the tree lawn where grass, flowers, and shrubs were frequently present. However, the most common feature was large, leaf bearing trees. They served as a soft physical barrier between buildings and roadways.

Also in the tree lawn were street lights, hitching posts, and carriage steps. These items are currently rare, but are important in retaining the character of a neighborhood.

Settling may occur on a walk or a street, particularly if the latter handles heavy traffic or serves as a truck route. The simplest means of repair for a street is to pry up the bricks which are damaged or settled, place some gravel in the space, turn over the bricks, and replace them. A damaged limestone or sandstone walk requires raising the sunken portion and reinforcing the ground below the walk section. Prying up the section or digging around it and pouring gravel or concrete into the space should prohibit further settling.

Brick is readily available from building material suppliers or salvage dealers. Limestone is much scarcer and, therefore, is difficult to obtain. Brick can be used in place of limestone for sidewalks. If a pattern, such as herringbone, has been established on a block, it should be continued.

PROHIBITIONS

Asphalt sidewalks and tree lawns are not permitted; neither are painted sidewalks, streets, or alleys.

Early in the twentieth century, brick replaced earlier road materials, such as dirt and gravel. Street bricks were solidly fired clay which were larger and heavier than building bricks. They were laid in a running bond pattern.

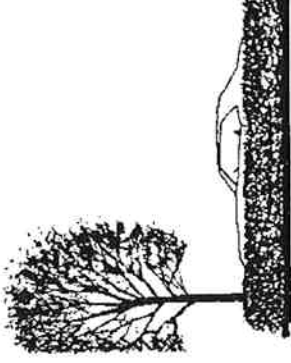
Curbs were usually of limestone, often cut in sections of several feet in length and, less frequently, rough but uniformly sized pieces of rough quarried stone.

Sidewalks were also of limestone or sandstone, laid in flat sheets approximately six feet square. These walks did very little settling once in place due to their weight. Also, because of the denseness of the stone, vegetation seldom found its way to the surface.

Retention of early thoroughfare materials is desirable since those materials add historical significance to an area. Furthermore, brick and stone were primary nineteenth century construction materials and therefore, harmonize with the extant historic building fabric.

Another prevalent thoroughfare feature

PARKING LOTS



Parking facilities are not original features of most historic areas. Many times, they are created following the demolition of buildings, all too often on the interior of a block. Scale as well as architectural fabric is destroyed in the process.

In order to reunify a blockface which has been affected by demolition, height must be re-established where the building was removed. A fence or wall at the setback line accomplishes this. Vegetation can be successful, also, but is a more temporary solution; if trees or shrubs are damaged or die, the tendency may be not to replace them. A fence or wall in conjunction with landscaping is a more satisfactory solution.

If a parking lot is located in front of or to the side of a building, landscaping within the lot is required in order to visually minimize the "sea of asphalt" appearance. Again, height is important and can be established with the use of caliper trees.

Lighting should be decorative and should be compatible with the primary era of the blockface or historic districts.