

Inwood & Isham Parks

**Restore forest health,
streams, marshes and
scenic views**

Evoke past eras:

Native American life,
Revolutionary War



Protect, reveal and interpret geological treasures:

Geological phenomena and formations, springs and natural shorelines

Explore Mannahatta:

An isolated valley, and a forest ridge overlooking the sublime expanse of
the Hudson Valley and Palisades

Improve family attractions:

Nature center, accessible restrooms, community space, performance
area, picnic lawns

Inwood Park

Community Concerns as reported on All Our Ideas

Each “word cloud” shows the top ten concerns people mentioned. If the type is larger, it means the item has a high probability of being requested by other community members.



Inwood and Isham Park Community

Concerns as reported on *All Our Ideas*

Adjacent community

Enforce noise ordinance
Improve bike/pedestrian safety
Calm traffic add speedbumps
Enforce one-way streets north of Isham Park
Enforce traffic laws at 215th and Broadway
Improve forest ecology
Install side street speed bumps
Plant more flowering plants
Dampen subway noise
Enforce litter laws

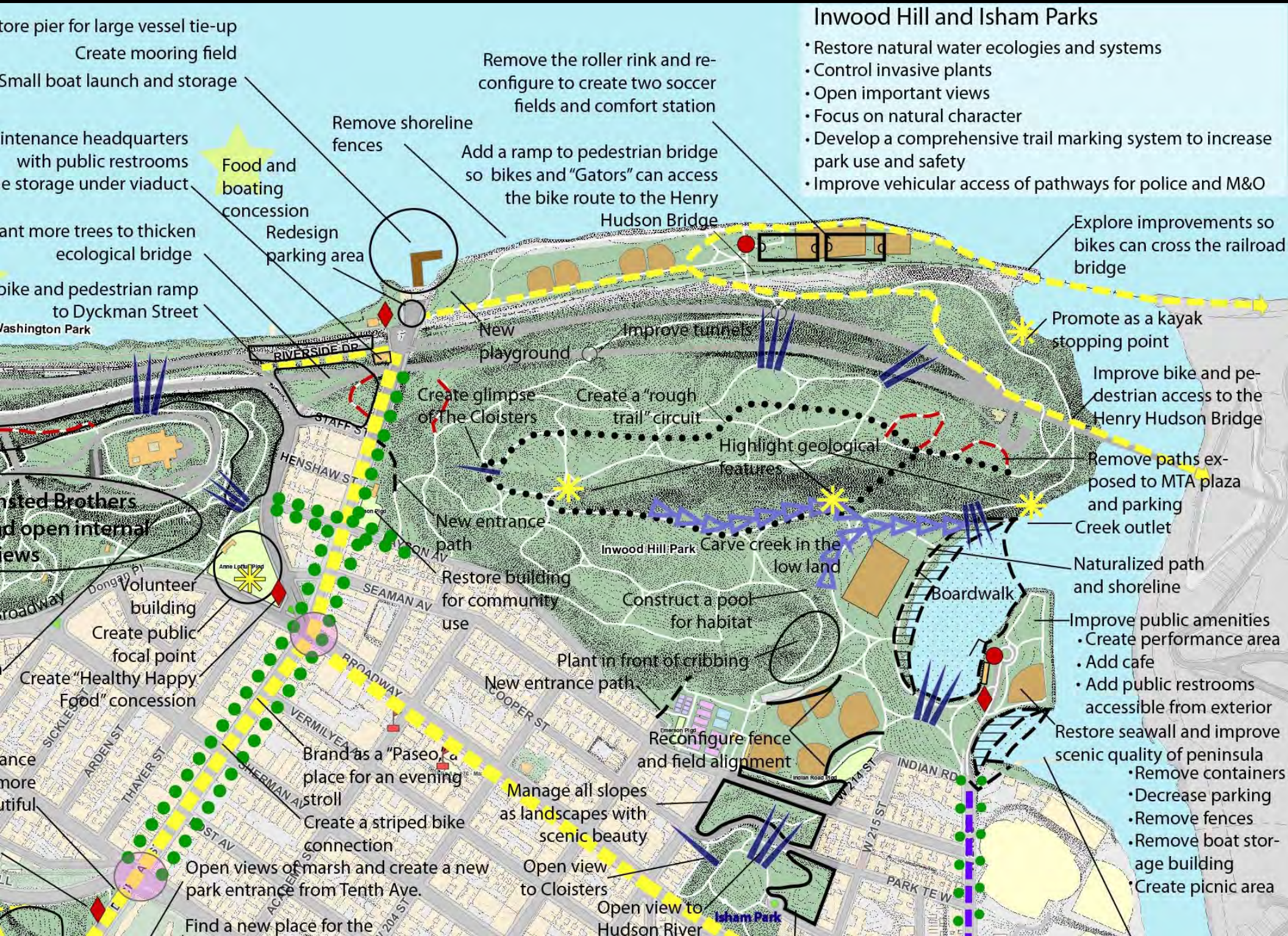


Physical Issues



Inwood Park

Concept Plan



Inwood Park

Revise the path system to highlight natural features, avoid the TBTA toll plaza and correct circulation problems

Remove redundant paths and restore creeks and marsh areas.
Create a rustic path through the Clove.



Present day map overlaid with historic features, creeks, paths, and roads



FILLED-IN SPACE FOR ADDITION TO THE PARK.

During the Ice Age a series of bore holes were created in the rocks of Inwood Hill. These borings were created by rapidly flowing water from melting glaciers. The aggregate in the water wore down the rock into a depression which widened with the passing of time. The borings were discovered by geologists in 1931.¹

The abundant natural resources of Inwood Hill attracted human settlement as far back as 1000 A.D. The site offered a fresh supply of water from the cold spring, cave shelters, an abundant supply of fish and shellfish in the Spuyten Duyvil Creek, rich soil for growing crops and a forest to supply timber for construction.²



Ice Age Bore Holes



Cave Shelters



Spuyten Duyvil Creek

Shorakapkok Native American Village

Cold Spring

Archeological findings imply that a permanent village named Shorakapkok was established by a group known as the Week-quas-keeks along the eastern border of the park. Additionally, artifacts have been found over the entire site, many in the vicinity of the cold spring and on the hillside near the caves.³

DRAWN FOR
DYCKMAN INSTITUTE
REGINALD PELHAM BOLTON



1. Reginald Pelham Bolton, *Inwood Hill Park on the Island of Manhattan* (New York: The Dyckman Institute, 193?), 23.

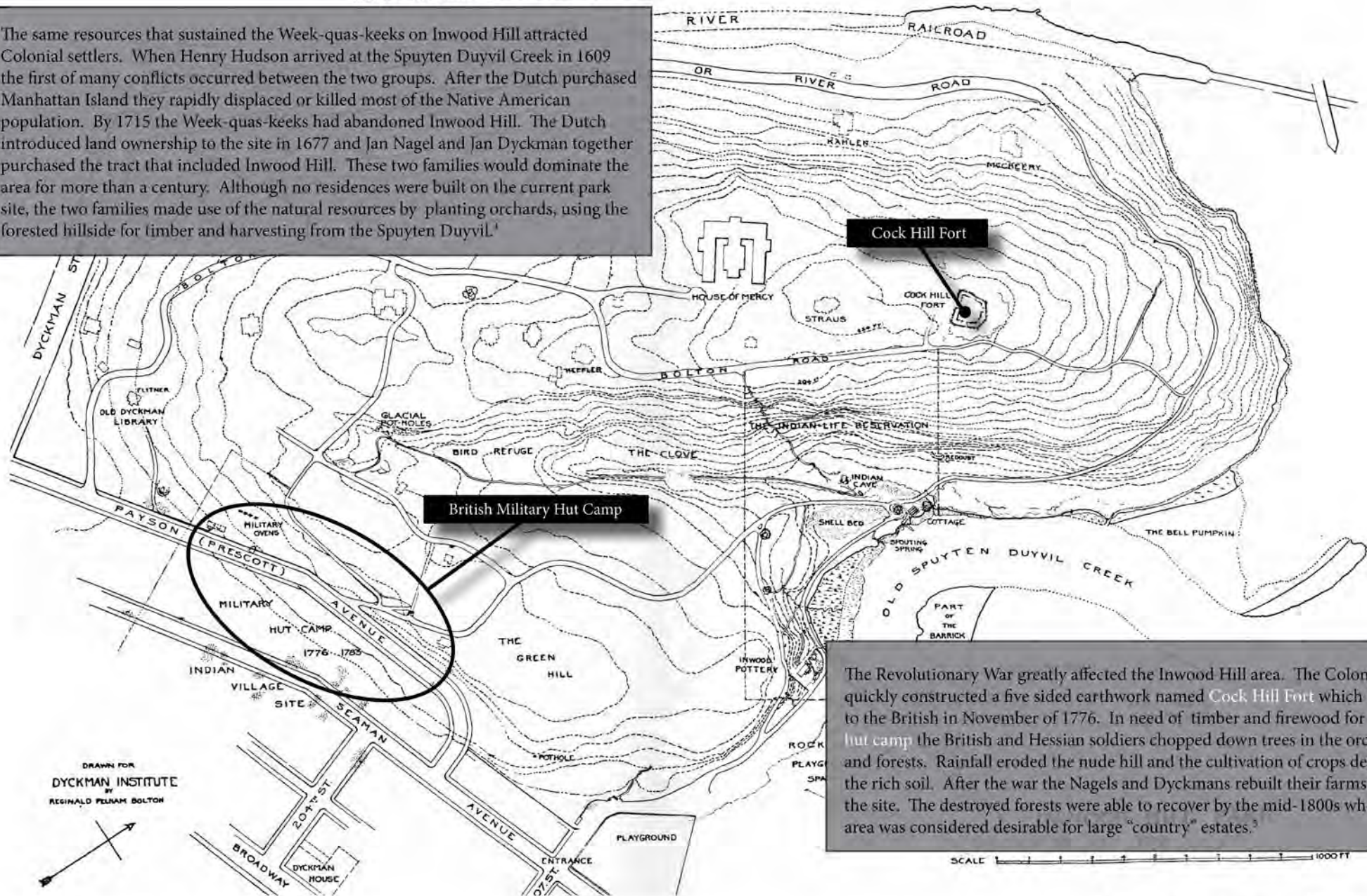
2. "Human Impact on the Inwood Hill Park Site," in *Inwood Hill Park: Ecological Planning Study*, prepared by City College of New York Urban Landscape 365, Spring 1987, 1.

3. *Ibid.*, 1.

Inwood Park Historic Features: Colonial and Revolutionary Periods

FILLED-IN SPACE FOR ADDITION TO THE PARK.

The same resources that sustained the Week-quas-keeks on Inwood Hill attracted Colonial settlers. When Henry Hudson arrived at the Spuyten Duyvil Creek in 1609 the first of many conflicts occurred between the two groups. After the Dutch purchased Manhattan Island they rapidly displaced or killed most of the Native American population. By 1715 the Week-quas-keeks had abandoned Inwood Hill. The Dutch introduced land ownership to the site in 1677 and Jan Nagel and Jan Dyckman together purchased the tract that included Inwood Hill. These two families would dominate the area for more than a century. Although no residences were built on the current park site, the two families made use of the natural resources by planting orchards, using the forested hillside for timber and harvesting from the Spuyten Duyvil.⁴

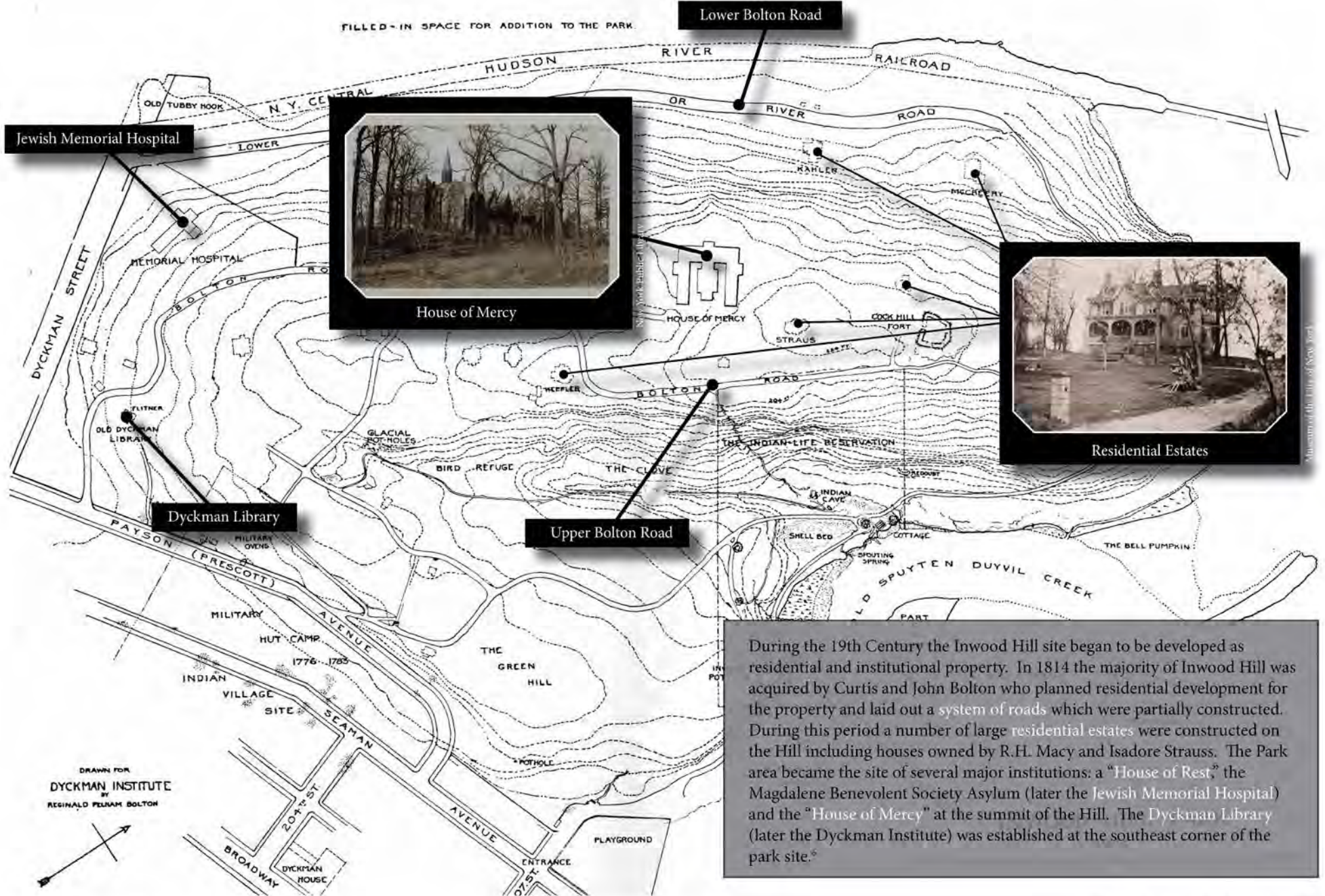


The Revolutionary War greatly affected the Inwood Hill area. The Colonials quickly constructed a five sided earthwork named Cock Hill Fort which fell to the British in November of 1776. In need of timber and firewood for their hut camp the British and Hessian soldiers chopped down trees in the orchards and forests. Rainfall eroded the nude hill and the cultivation of crops depleted the rich soil. After the war the Nagels and Dyckmans rebuilt their farms on the site. The destroyed forests were able to recover by the mid-1800s when the area was considered desirable for large "country" estates.⁵

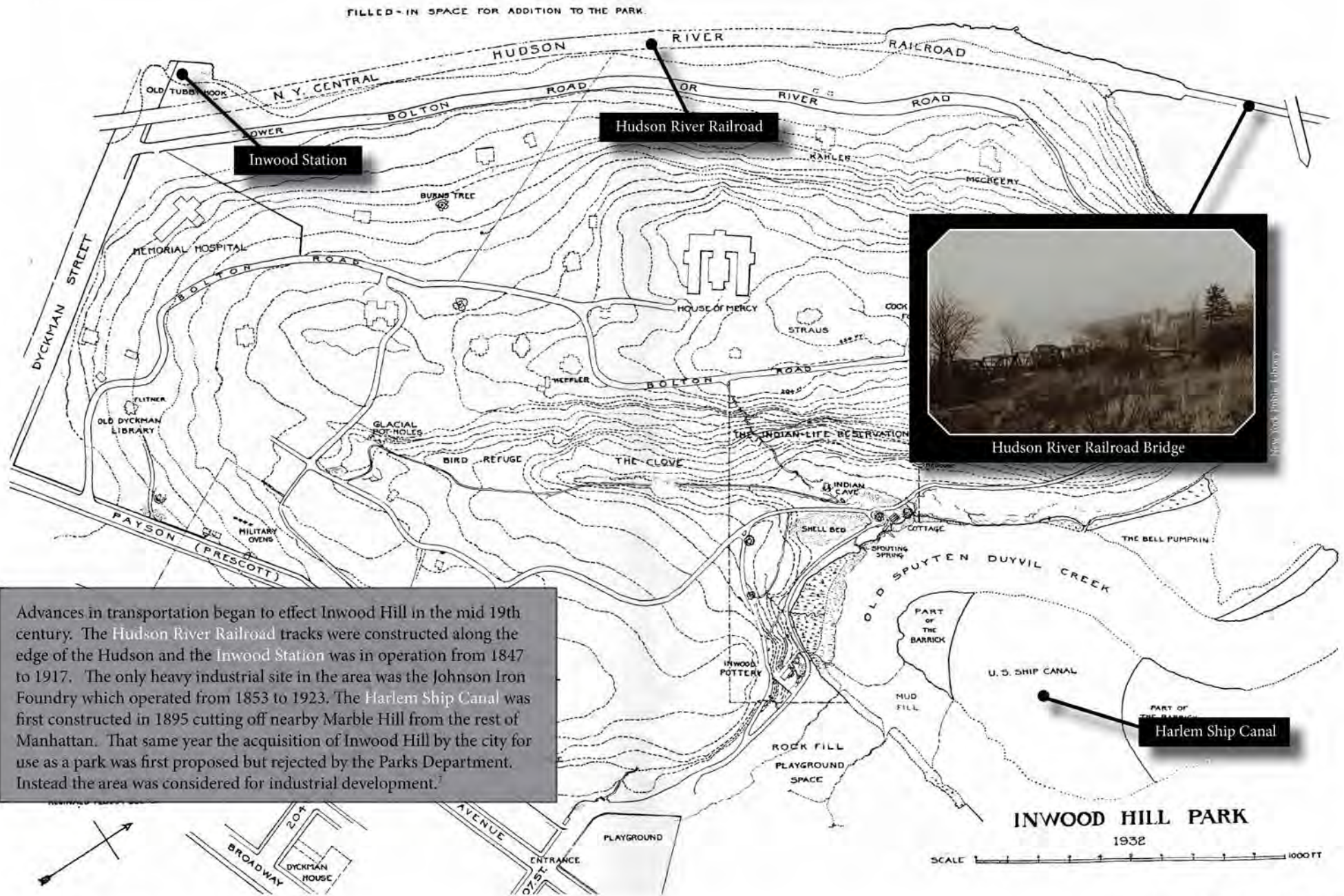
Map by Reginald Pelham Bolton

4. "Human Impact on the Inwood Hill Park Site," 2-3.
5. *Ibid*, 3.

Inwood Park Historic Features: 19th Century Estates and Institutions



Museum of the City of New York



Inwood Park

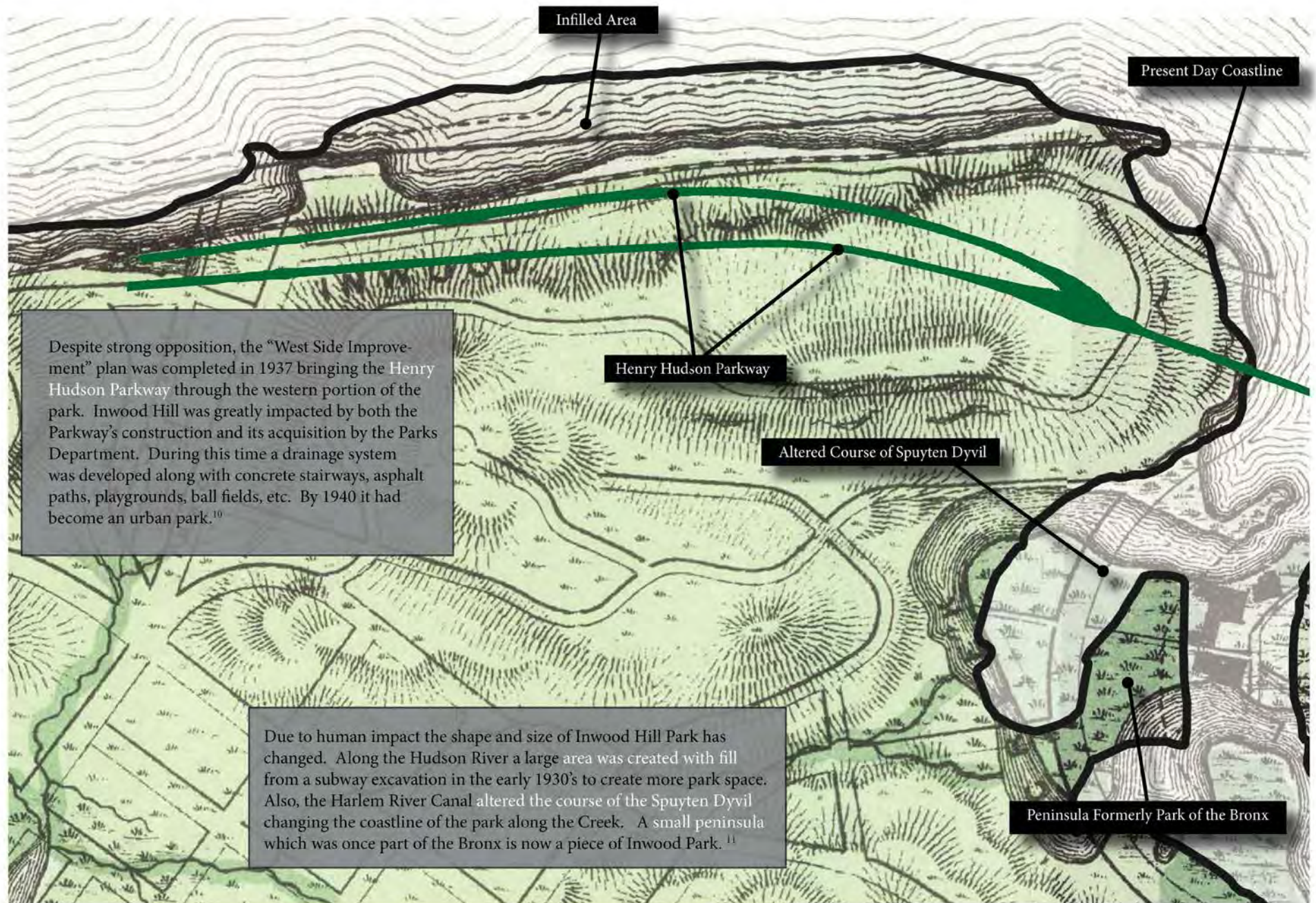
Historic Features: Early 20th Century

During the early 1900's, Inwood Hill remained in its "natural" form including the last bit of natural waterfront in Manhattan. The City was persuaded to create a park at Inwood Hill and between 1916 and 1923 the Parks Department acquired most of the present day site. At this point the trustees of the Dyckman Institute were appointed honorary curators of about 20 acres which were designated as the "Indian Life Reservation." This area included the cave and rock shelters, the Great Tulip Tree (the oldest living thing in Manhattan), the nearby cottage and a working pottery which reproduced Native American pots.⁸ Native American remains were first discovered on the site in 1890 and a professional archeological dig was sponsored by the Museum of the American Indian in 1919.⁹



Map by Reginald Pelham Bolton

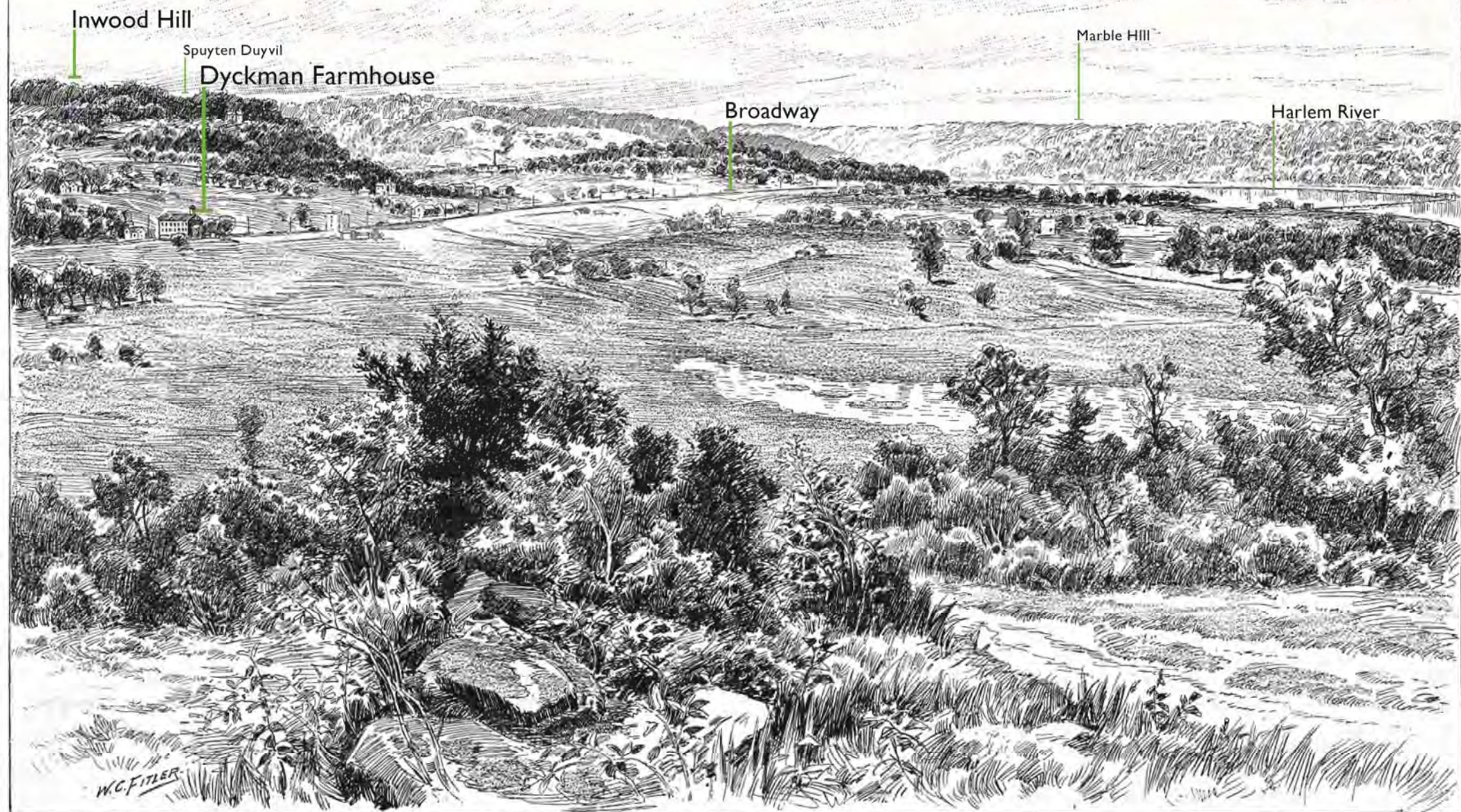
8. Bolton, 2.
9. "Human Impact on the Inwood Hill Park Site," 5.



10. "Human Impact on the Inwood Hill Park Site," 5-6.

11. *Ibid*, passim.

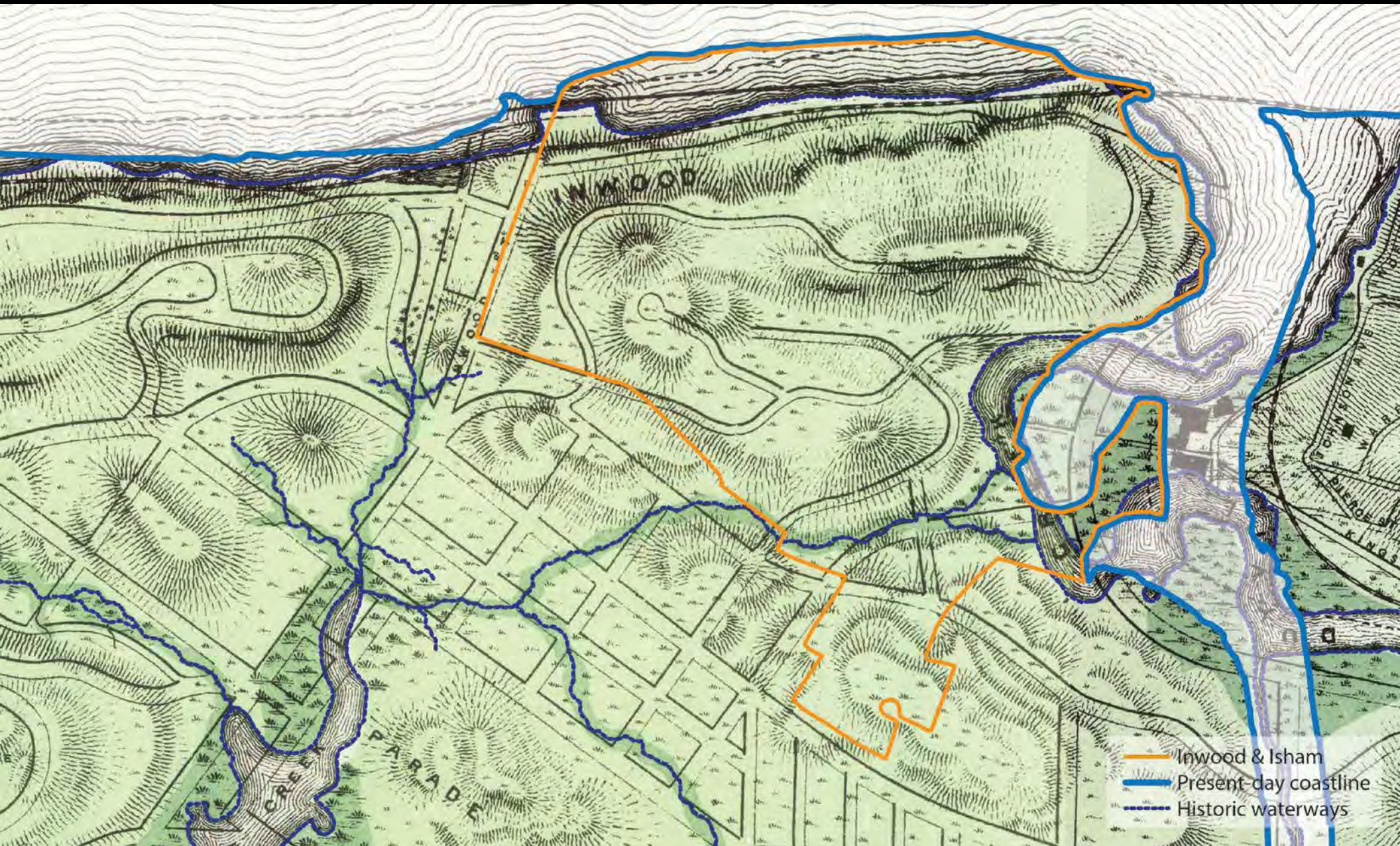
1892 rendering of the view of the Inwood Hill area from the Fort George area which is at the north end of the current day Highbridge Park



Inwood Park

Restore the original hydrological systems

1874 - Viele Map showing original watercourses, overlaid with current park outlines and coastline



Inwood Park

Restore watercourses and wetlands



Existing emerging
wetland



Inwood Park

Restore watercourses and wetlands

Create a naturalized shoreline at a proper elevation to establish a high marsh

Reconstruct shoreline pathway as a boardwalk

Establish a low marsh in the body of the inlet



Proposed naturalized shoreline and creek outlet

New small boat launch location

Inwood Park

Create a naturalized creek outlet

Create a
naturalized
shoreline

Reconfigure
shoreline and inland
elevations to create
a creek

Remove the steel
fences, reconfigure
the paths adjacent
to the creek



Inwood Park

Create naturalized wet areas and rivulet in the Clove



Existing conditions: Showing flooded and washed out path in the Clove



Proposed: Showing rivulet formed by lowering soil levels and re-grading topography

Inwood Park

Establish a wilderness trail

Restore and reuse steps and paths carved into the rock, as well as the small trails constructed on the slopes in the Indian cave area of the western ridge

Use very discrete trail markings

Route the path past scenic, geological and hydrological features



Inwood Park

Improve interpretation of Native American caves and the geological features

Give insight to the Native American point-of-view

Provide access to the geological features in a way that blends into the natural environment and does not cause erosion.



Inwood Park

Create a real fire ring and performance area at the Indian Caves

Use rocks and natural materials to form a ring of seating that will accommodate groups of 30 people



Inwood Park

Re-establish the natural character of the entrance to the Clove



- Remove curbs, lamp posts, and utility structures; use discreet signage
- Reduce pavement and construct a boardwalk over the restored rivulet
- Plant a new tulip tree to replace the lost historic tree

Proposed conditions



Current conditions

Inwood Park

Improve the use and appearance of the peninsula



Remove the storage yard and containers, relocate the kayak storage building

Enhance the picnic area

Enhance the performance area

Paint the nature center a darker color

Reconfigure the restrooms to permit outside access when the center is closed

Provide a boardwalk for marsh access

Improve the roof and HVAC system

Inwood Park

Reconfigure the ball field layout and foul ball fences to protect park users and improve appearance of the adjacent areas

Reconfigure the fields to decrease fly ball hazards to park users

Construct new fences closer to field foul lines to provide a more effective barrier and to make paths feel less constricted

Reconstruct similar fences near the dog run



Inwood Park

Continue to remove invasive trees and vines

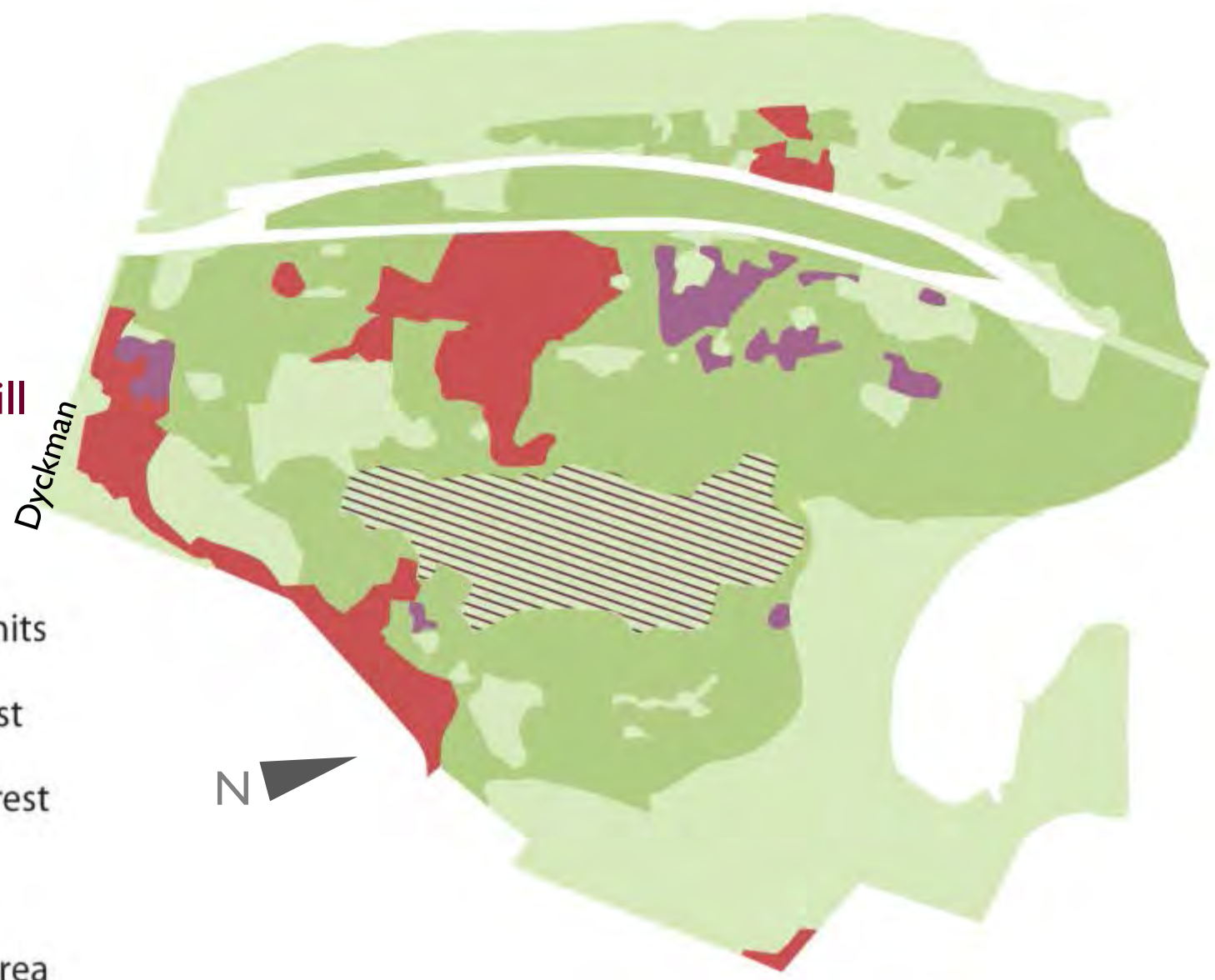
This is a map of the plant communities prepared by the Natural Resources Group to guide restoration decisions. It considers cover type, canopy species, understory types and species and soil conditions.

Inwood Hill Park

The red and purple areas require attention or they will spread aggressively

Plant Communities

- Other Entitation Units
- Native Closed Forest
- Invasive Closed Forest
- Invasive Vineland
- Sensitive Habitat Area



Inwood Park

Restore scenic views



Historic view of the Hudson

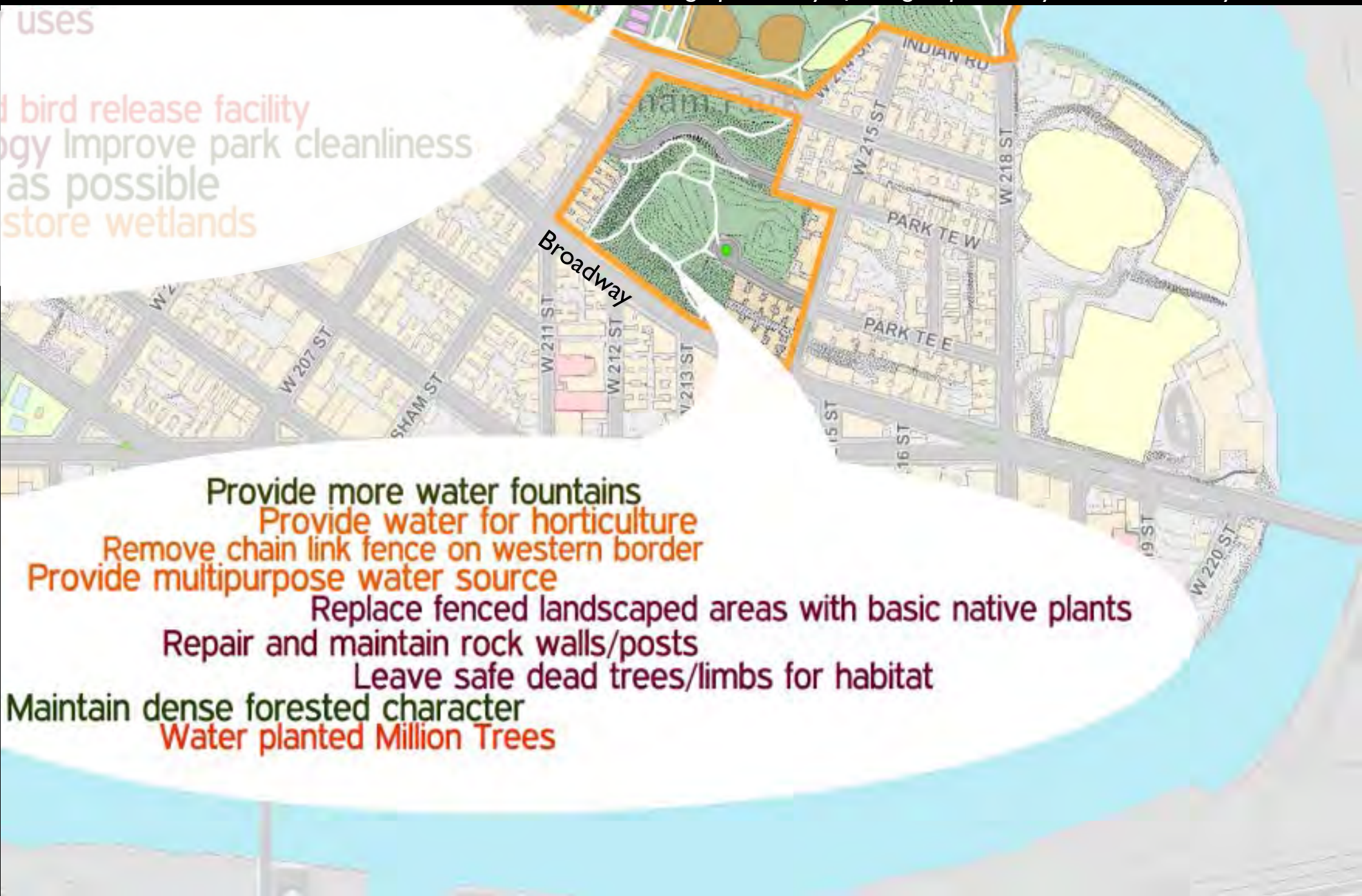


Example of overgrown condition with obscured view

Isham Park

Community Concerns as reported on *All Our Ideas*

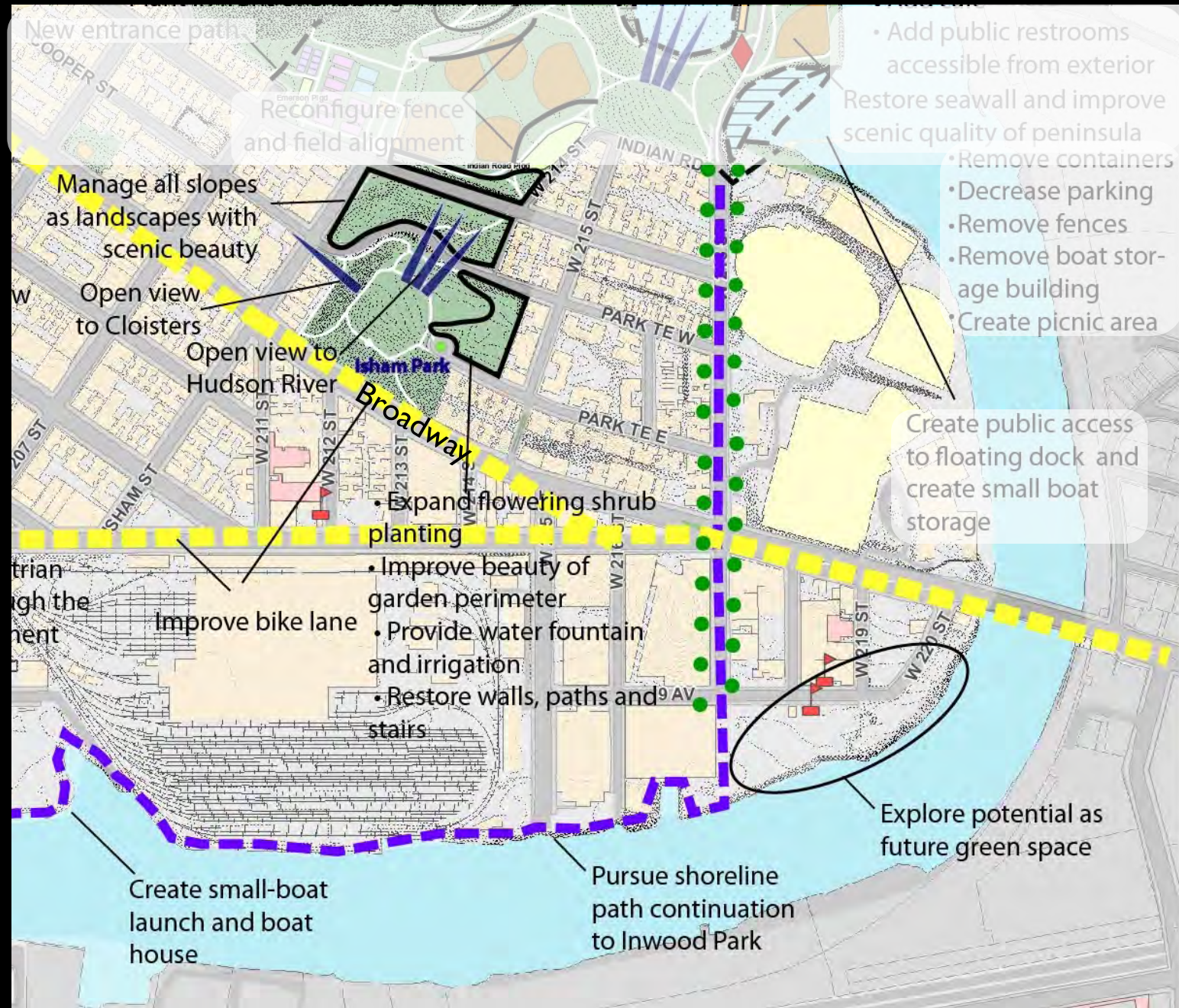
Each “word cloud” shows the top ten concerns people mentioned. If the type is larger, it means the item has a high probability of being requested by other community members.



Adjacent community



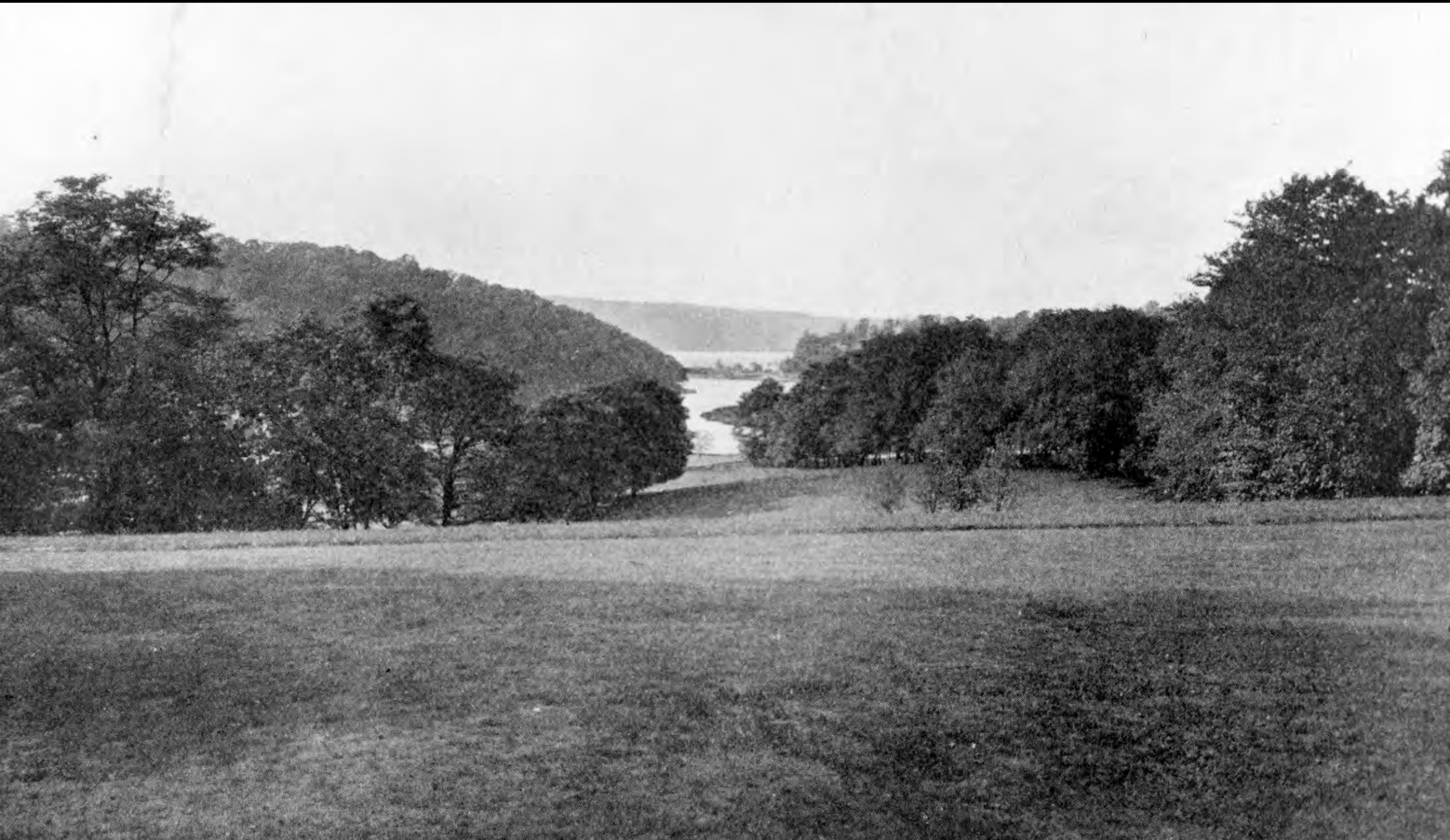




Isham Park

Restore critical historic views and scenic beauty

Historic view from the Isham hill toward Inwood park and the Hudson River



Isham Park

Restore critical historic views and scenic beauty

Prune and thin healthy trees to improve sculptural beauty and sightlines

Relocate newly planted street trees that will grow too tall for the location

Only plant shorter trees in the view corridor

Relocate lampposts and signs that interfere with the view



Existing conditions

Isham Park

Improve safety and beauty of “Isham Family Path” and park slopes



Remove dead trees, prune and thin healthy trees to improve sculptural beauty and sightlines; plant understory trees and shrubs to enhance habitat

Remove tall shrubs that enclose the pathway

Plant groundcover near paths, plant lower flowering shrubs and airy multistem understory trees down the slope to add scenic beauty

Design short range views from the memorial benches

Establish a zone of 2 foot-candle warm colored lighting to make the path more attractive to pedestrians in the evening

Isham Park

Improve the appearance of the Park Terrace East circle

Replace the cobra head street lights with historic street lights, use discreet ground or fence mounted signage

Improve the circle plantings

Employ chemical graffiti removal rather than painting the stone



Isham Park

Integrate Bruce's Garden into the park landscape

Plant low growing
flowering shrubs and
airy multistem trees
on the park side of
the fence

Evaluate removing
the fence and
connecting the
garden to the park
like “Strawberry
Fields” in Central
Park

Provide water for
irrigation



Isham Park

Remove Mulberry trees damaging the stairs, and restore the stairs

Remove mulberry trees damaging stairs

Restore the stairs

Plant low growing flowering shrubs and trees

Provide water for irrigation

Demap the street that was never constructed



Isham Park

Use standard dark color for all painted concrete surfaces



Existing white painted wall



Proposed granite gray painted wall

Decrease the dominance of painted surfaces in the landscape by making them darker

Plant ivy on the wall to naturalize it and discourage graffiti