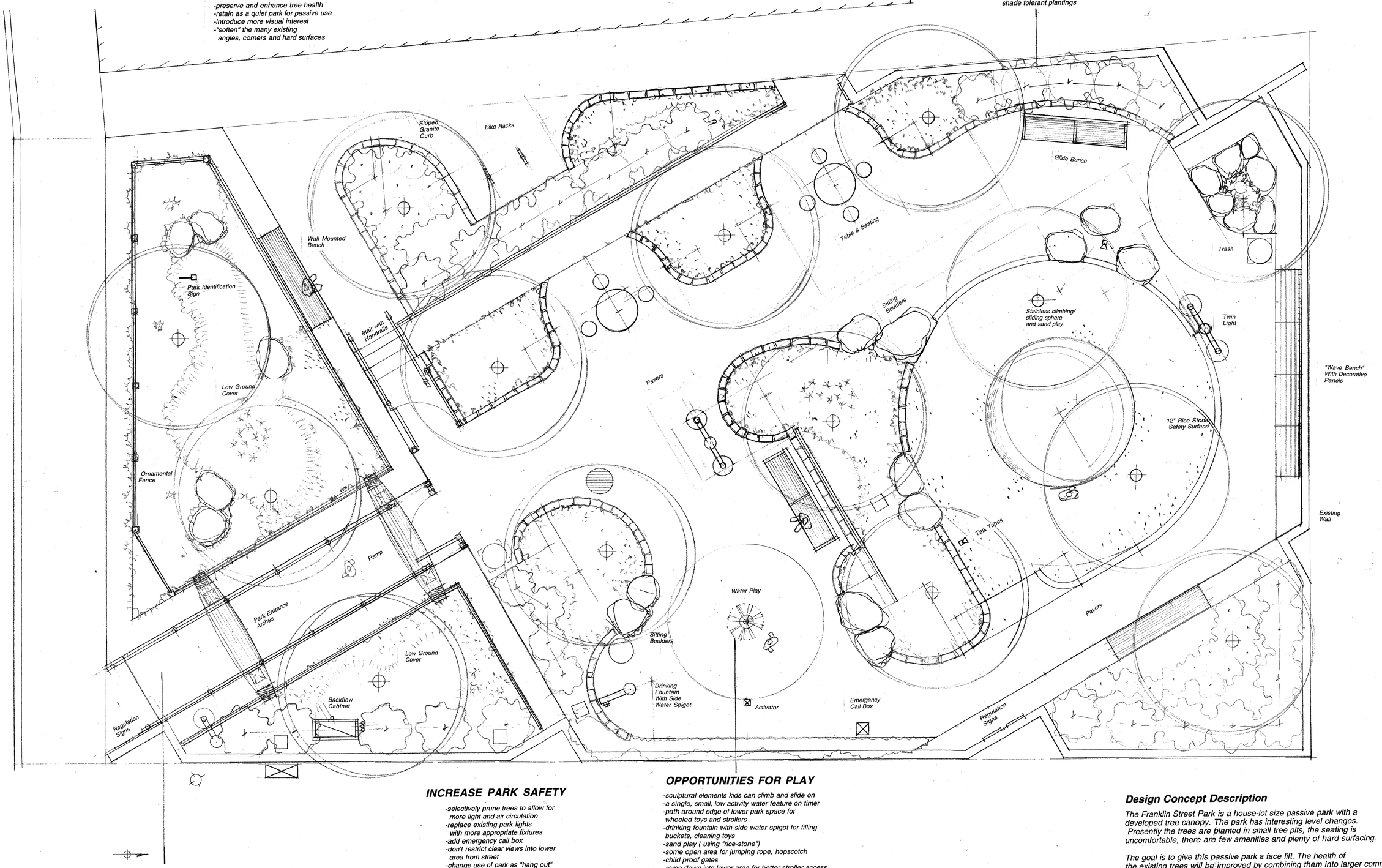
RETAIN PASSIVE PARK CHARACTER an "Oasis"

-preserve and enhance tree health
-retain as a quiet park for passive use
-introduce more visual interest
-"soften" the many existing angles, corners and hard surfaces

ADD NATURAL FEATURES

-introduce "naturalizing" materials such as sitting boulders and shade tolerant plantings



IMPROVE PARK ACCESS (ADA)-Americans with Disabilities Act

-provide ramp into lower level for wheelchairs and strollers
-provide wheelchair accessible table, benches, drinking fountain, play opportunities
-provide full access to all areas of park

INCREASE PARK SAFETY

-selectively prune trees to allow for more light and air circulation
-replace existing park lights with more appropriate fixtures
-add emergency call box
-don't restrict clear views into lower area from street
-change use of park as "hang out"
-discourage undesirable behavior in park
-encourage constructive activities

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PLAY

-sculptural elements kids can climb and slide on
-a single, small, low activity water feature on timer
-path around edge of lower park space for wheeled toys and strollers
-drinking fountain with side water spigot for filling buckets, cleaning toys
-sand play (using "rice-stone")
-some open area for jumping rope, hopscotch
-child proof gates
-ramp down into lower area for better stroller access
-talk tube play

GENERAL IMPROVEMENTS

-trash receptacles with dome tops
-more comfortable benches and table
-drinking fountain with side water spigot
-improved park regulatory signs
-develop commemorative sign for front of park
-ornamental steel fence and gate
-landscaping improvements
-automatic irrigation system
-remove existing asphalt walks and replace with pavers to provide textural interest
-sandblast/powerwash existing concrete walls to remain
-refinish existing concrete block walls to remain including installing steel panels at back wall of park
-new hedge material along walls to "soften" appearance
-new sculptural park entrance arches
-swinging bench "glide bench"

Design Concept Description

The Franklin Street Park is a house-lot size passive park with a developed tree canopy. The park has interesting level changes. Presently the trees are planted in small tree pits, the seating is uncomfortable, there are few amenities and plenty of hard surfacing.

The goal is to give this passive park a face lift. The health of the existing trees will be improved by combining them into larger common beds.The front planting bed presents an opportunity to make a more inviting park entrance.To address concerns over use of the park as a hangout, some limited opportunities for play is being considered as well as other visually interesting sculptural elements to encourage more active use. Lighting improvements and some long overdue tree pruning will bring more light into the site and improve safety. Clear park regulatory signs will be posted and all areas of the park and all park furniture will be made wheelchair accessible.

The concept is to create an exciting and unique enclosed public open space that residents will discover and enjoy. A space for quiet reflection, reading a book, playing a game or watching a child play...A space with beautiful plantings, shade and visual interest...an urban oasis...

Franklin Street Park

City of Cambridge
Community Development Department

Spring 2002

Concept Plan