



Client: Department of  
Human Services  
Town of Arlington, MA  
and  
The Tenants of  
Menotomy Manor

Designers: Radcliffe Seminars  
Design III Studio:  
Applications

Completion: February 1999

Menotomy Manor is a low income family housing development in Arlington, built in the 1940s and now home to 76 families. Several years ago, residents requested landscape improvements from the town. Last year, Arlington's Human Services Director contacted COG for design help. An advanced design studio took on the job.

The students met with the tenants to hear their concerns. Social issues were crucial to the program development, and "humanizing the space" was one description of the challenge involved in developing a landscape plan for Menotomy Manor. Students found that working on a project with real clients helped to develop essential design skills: listening to and focusing on the client. In all the

designs, attention was given to private, semi-private and public areas. Circulation and parking were serious concerns, and students found elegant ways of personalizing the complex by naming clusters, changing paint colors, and suggesting plantings. The Human Services Director said, "the students' work gives a vision to the tenants."

Students presented several master plan proposals to tenants and the Arlington Housing Authority. The response was enthusiastic. Because the response was so positive, the Housing Authority and Department of Human Services are applying for federal and state funds to move the project forward. The students' work is credited with providing the essential vision to town and tenants.

