



Client: The Schoolyard Committee
Warren Prescott School
Charlestown, MA

Designers: Radcliffe Seminars
Design III Studio: Applications
Todd Richardson, Instructor

Completion: December 1999

The Warren Prescott Elementary School is located in a dense urban neighborhood in Charlestown. It is important as a community resource, and it is the academic home to 450 children in grades K-5. The Schoolyard Committee turned to COG for help in developing a vision for their landscape. This became an opportunity for an advanced design studio to develop master planning skills.

With the exception of a new, award-winning playground area, the school's open space is asphalt. Large parking areas double as play space. There are no quiet, passive areas. The school entrance needs to welcome students to a warm and safe place where exciting and wonderful things happen.

The design students developed base maps and site analyses. They

observed children at play to better understand the value of play and its physical needs. Primary consideration was given to space for large-scale physical activity, to intimate, quiet spaces, and to safe places to be alone. The complicated pedestrian circulation was balanced with vehicular requirements. Outdoor classrooms were created. The role of the school in the community was considered.

Each student integrated their observations into a master plan for the entire school landscape which included phasing opportunities. These plans gave a voice to the dreams of the school community as well as to the student's own visions. Several students have volunteered to continue working with the school to refine these concepts, creating tools for fundraising and plans for the future.

