

# **St John in the Wilderness Church** Copake Falls, New York

## Landscape Design Goals and Proposals

Prepared by Jamie Purinton for April 7, 2018 preliminary design meeting

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### **BE FITTING TO ARCHITECTURAL PERIOD AND STYLE**

All design and changes to be fitting with Richard Upjohn's mid 19<sup>th</sup> century 1851's board and batten rustic gothic revival architecture and 1853 picturesque Parish House. Celebrate the mid19<sup>th</sup> century landscape picturesque movement and the imaginative romantic approach by embracing the woodland wild setting and architectural details. Be inspired by a tradition of such notables landscape designers of the time such as Downing and Calvert Vaux.

### **Specific Design Proposals**

- Create an outdoor pavilion in same style of Church and include craftsman timber framing details
- Create winding woodland trails and a "wilderness" gathering location at far eastern corner of site
- Create quiet overlook sitting areas where you can appreciate the natural surrounds
- Bring the surroundings up to the buildings or apron the buildings with an easy to maintain ferny woodland groundcover
- Preserve old trees that provide picturesque character to the landscape

### **REVEAL AND REFERENCE FORMATION OF COPAKE FALLS AND COPAKE IRON WORKS**

St John in the Wilderness is an integral part of the early 1846 formation of Copake Falls and the establishment of the Copake Iron Works. The Pomeroy Family Cemetery is a significant meaningful centerpiece of this landscape. The Pomeroy Family founded the Copake Iron

Works, formed the prosperous Copake Falls village, and was major benefactor for the establishment and construction of the St John in the Wilderness Church. The key players in this industrial story are water power, timber, ore deposits and the local railroad; and this landscape overlooks and includes all of those elements

### **Specific Design Proposals**

- Finesse the pathway through the cemetery and add benches where people can sit and take in the history of the founding members of Copake Falls and the Iron Works
- Incorporate iron works craft in the new benches
- Should we clear and reveal the old railroad track or will it become a way to bypass the State Park entry gate?
- Develop a trail system that overlooks the streams, woodland and Bash Bish Park iron ore pit
- Add interpretive historic signs or textual elements incorporated into the benches or fences.

### **IMPLEMENT SUSTAINABLE DESIGN PRACTICES**

Sustainable design follows the tradition of the picturesque movement by celebrating rustic local details and materials, featuring old trees and respecting wild features. This landscape can be more progressive in terms of sustainability by updating the storm water management design. Storm water management is particularly important in these erosion prone steep slopes adjacent to a pristine surrounding stream.

Specific Design Proposals:

- Adopt a native woodland palette of plants using in particular masses of easy care deer resistant spreading ferns
- Improve storm water management by sending roof and parking lot water to new rain gardens that absorb and filter water
- Incorporate porous pavement in new parking areas

- Allow steep banks to be managed as meadows versus lawns in order to reduce mowing in places that are too steep to use
- Centralize impact of developed area and preserve open space beyond the building areas
- The gardening program could be oriented around a woodland plant walkway that incorporates native spring ephemerals like trillium, lady slippers and bloodroot.

### **ADDRESS FUNCTIONAL NEEDS OF CHURCH AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITY**

St John the Wilderness serves the community by hosting regular outdoor events, concerts and activities. The grounds can better serve those functions with an outdoor pavilion and new outdoor gathering spaces. The landscape improvements need to also address the needs of the elderly population with more accessible parking areas, paths and entryways.

#### Specific Design Proposals

- Add parking area at same grade as Church
- Add railing and ramped entry to Church, wheel chair accessible pathways around front of church and railings on sloped paths
- Provide barbeque area and pavilion on upper lawn for functions providing water and electric service
- Continue using upper lawn for overflow event parking
- Provide garden gathering place at basement entry to Parish for small gatherings and concerts