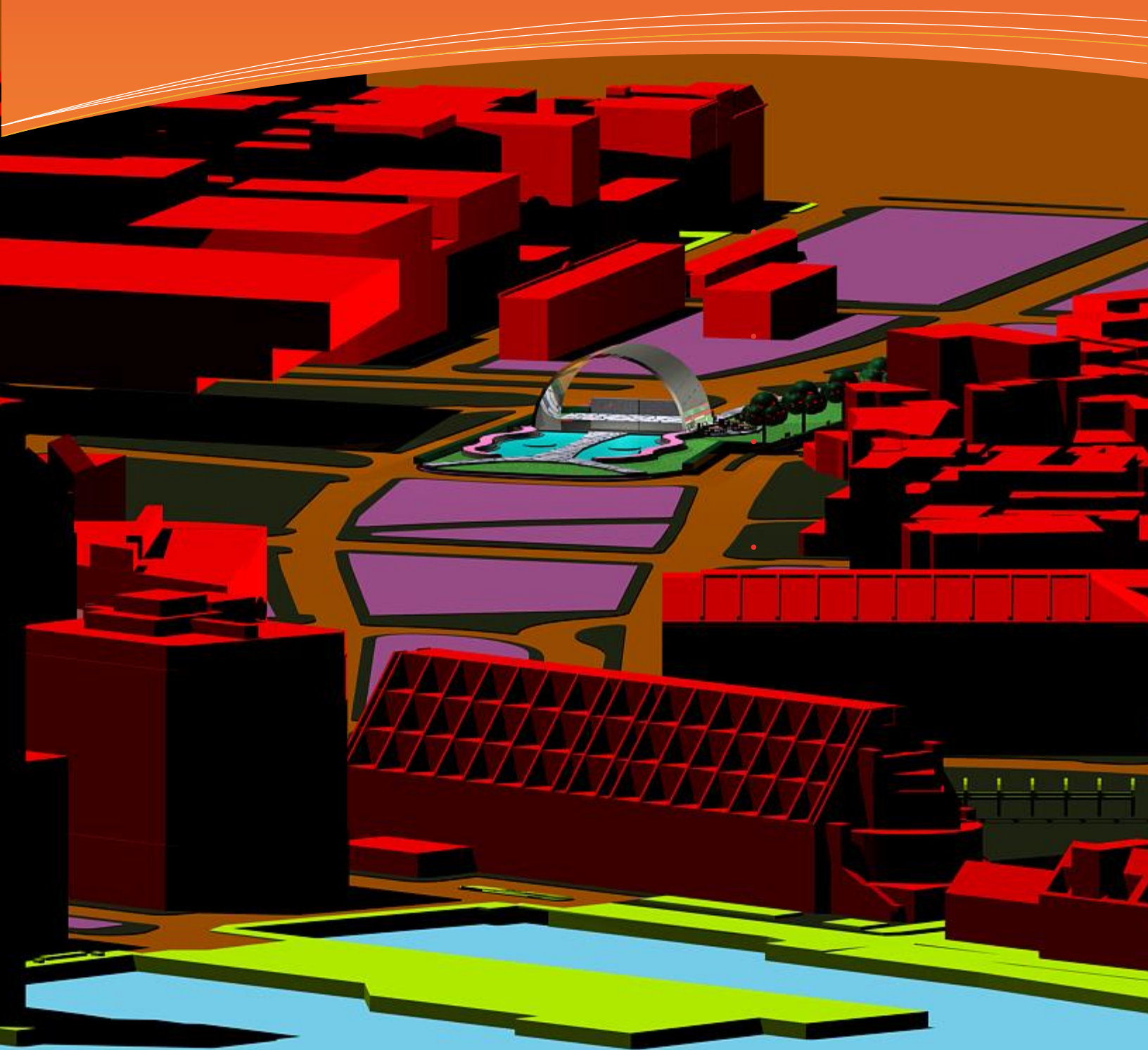


The Great Molasses Flood Memorial:

A CONCEPTUAL LOOK INTO DESIGN OPTIONS
FOR RAMP PARCEL 6



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Boston Molasses Flood

On January 15, 1919, a molasses tank at 529 Commercial Street exploded under pressure, killing 21 people. A 40-foot wave of molasses buckled the elevated railroad tracks, crushed buildings and inundated the neighborhood. Structural defects in the tank combined with unseasonably warm temperatures contributed to the disaster.

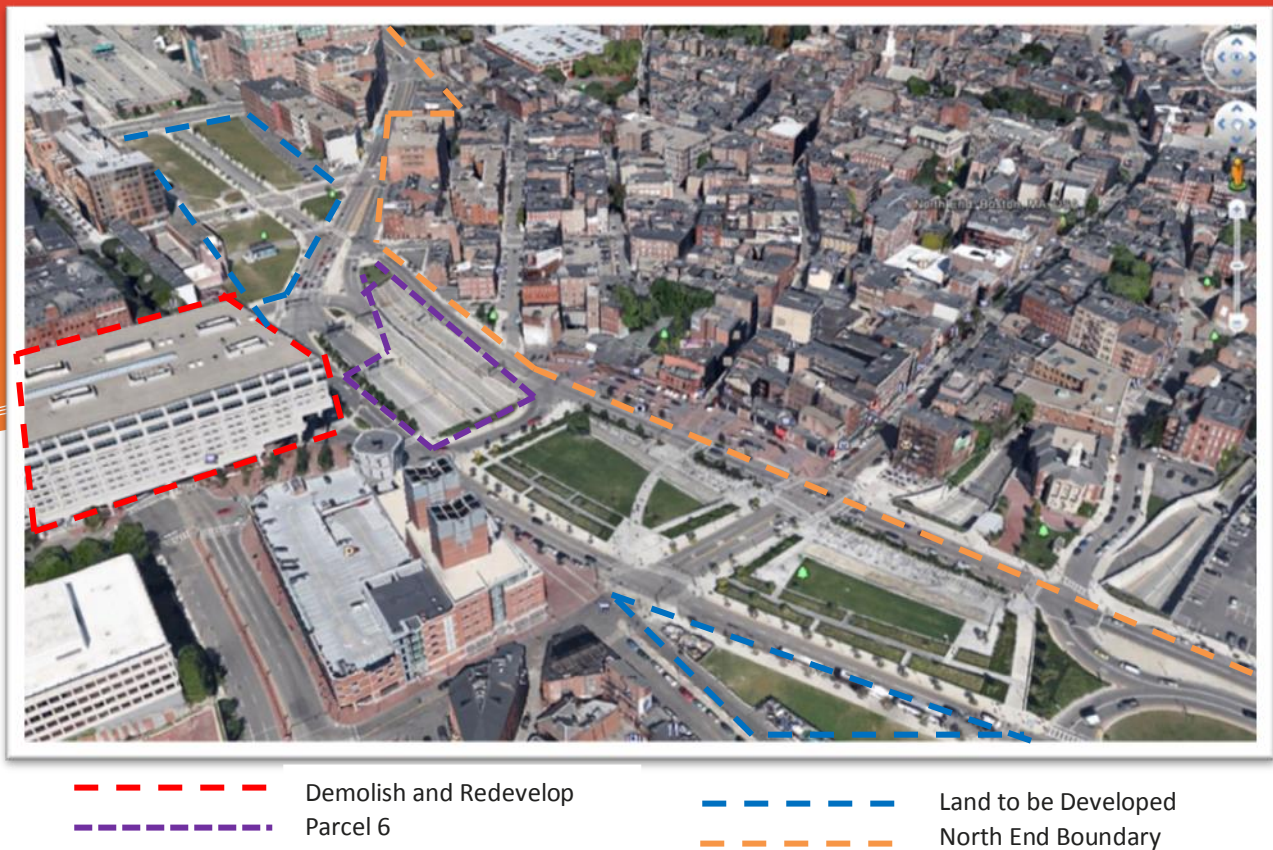


Introduction:

As discussed at in the community meeting on June 26, 2014 Parcel 6 must be covered to mitigate the impact on the surface environment. The original desired use for this parcel as described in the Joint Development Parcel-By-Parcel Analysis of 1991 is a social / community center or recreation / open space area. The public opinion voiced during the community meeting in June reiterated the need for more open park space for both residents and visitors to enjoy. The idea for the Great Molasses Flood Memorial (also referred to as the Molasses Memorial in this document) is a potential solution creating both open park space, and a community space that naturally ties into the existing Rose Kennedy Greenway.

Historical Context:

The Great Molasses Flood, occurred on 95 years ago on January 15, 1919. The United States Industrial Alcohol Company housed a massive holding tank containing 2.3 million gallons of molasses. The 90' wide and 50' cylindrical tank had been constructed using steel and rivets that did not adhere to the original engineer's specifications. Due to a sudden rise in temperature on afternoon of January 15, the tank gave way creating a ferocious 40' wave of molasses to come barreling down Commercial Street. This disaster took the lives of 21 people, and left over 100 injured. The molasses wave buckled the nearby elevated railroad and crushed buildings that stood in its way. Though this was a horrible tragedy, the citizens of the North End, bonded together, and filed one of the first Massachusetts, class-action lawsuits. They took the United States Industrial Alcohol Company too court, and won. Pictured above to the right is the only remembrance of the Molasses Disaster, located along Commercial Street in front of the Lagone Park.



Current Context:

Parcel 6 forms the northern end of the Greenway open space corridor and, although today it is inaccessible, is an important focus as a transition parcel from the Greenway to the surrounding neighborhoods. To the north, the Bulfinch Triangle continues to be reestablished as new development fills out the air-rights parcel south of Causeway Street. To the west, the Bulfinch Congress Holdings Joint Venture will redevelop the Government Center Parking Garage site into a collection of residential and office buildings. The MEPA documentation for this project was filed in December of last year. Southward, Parcel 9 is being developed by Normandy Real Estate Partners as a hotel with a market on the ground floor. This development, along with the Boston Public Market on Parcel 7, and streetscape improvements around Union Street from the Connect Historic Boston TIGER Grant continues to build vitality surrounding Parcel 6. Parcel 6 is a natural crossroads for all of this activity but remains a blight in the center of it all.

During the Central Artery Project, several designs for both buildings and decks were developed for Parcel 6. A deck over Parcel 6 will provide important connections along a natural desire line from the southwest corner to the northeast corner. Because any deck covering the ramps must rise to provide clearance for the vehicles below, a deck over Parcel 6 will provide an elevated viewing platform to the surrounding neighborhoods and create a dynamic terminus to the Greenway open space. Given this context, a historic memorial that can be used for community activities and recreation on the deck at this location will add a focus along a natural path of travel.

Conceptual design, facing
Parcel 6 from southwest



Conceptual Design:

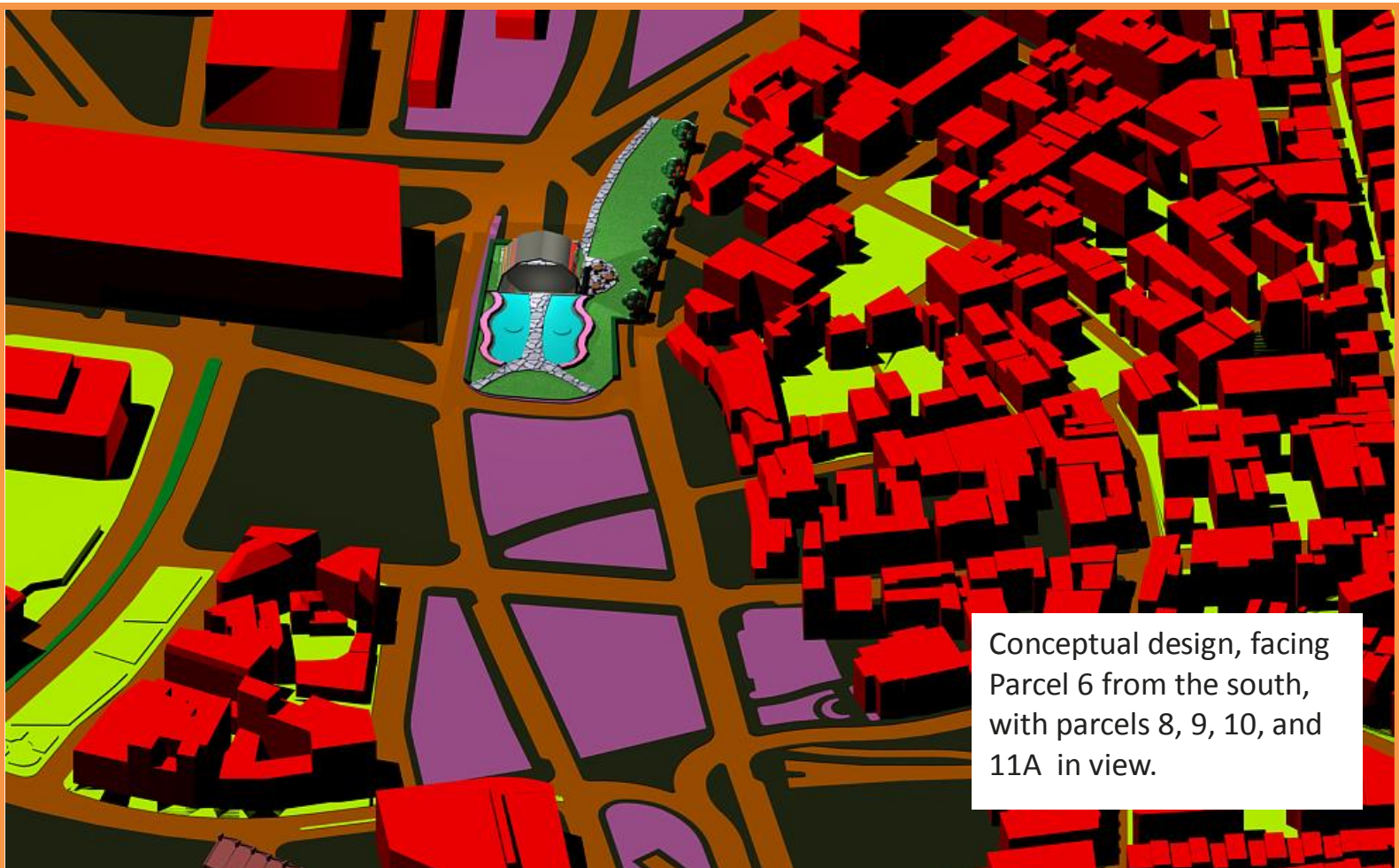
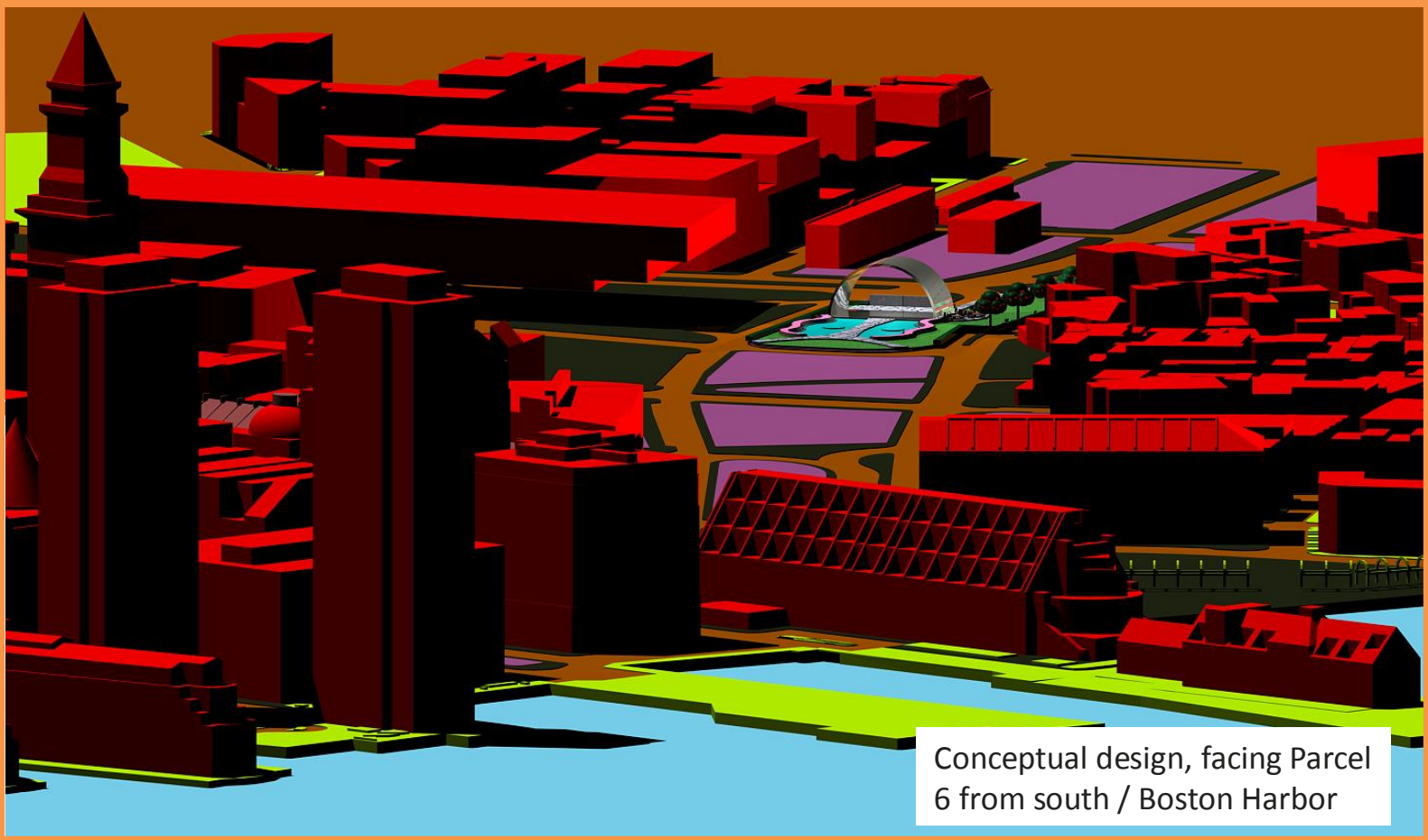
The idea is to create a multiuse park space for residents and visitors of Boston. The centerpiece of the space will be an open arch memorial to commemorate the Great Molasses Flood. By turning the historic molasses tank on its side, we have opened up the space creating a natural center for recreation, music, and community interaction. Dimensions of arch will be congruent to the actual molasses tank from 1919, 90' long 50' wide. Two small pools with fountains will lead up to the entrance of the arch, split by a center walkway. From an aerial view, these pools seem to spill from south side of the tank. The north side of the arch will house a stone wall with the historical accounts, images, and names of those who lost their lives in the Great Molasses flood. A walkway will continue out of the back of the arch, leading to an elongated green space, aligned with benches and trees. This creates a natural channel of flow through the park, while creating additional community green space. The two pool areas have the ability to drain, creating a patio space to be used for performances, summer concerts, or community events under the archway. The pool area could potentially be turned into a small ice skating area during winter months. Removable Plexiglas walls could convert the archway into a small skate rental / concession shop allowing all to enjoy the memorial year round.

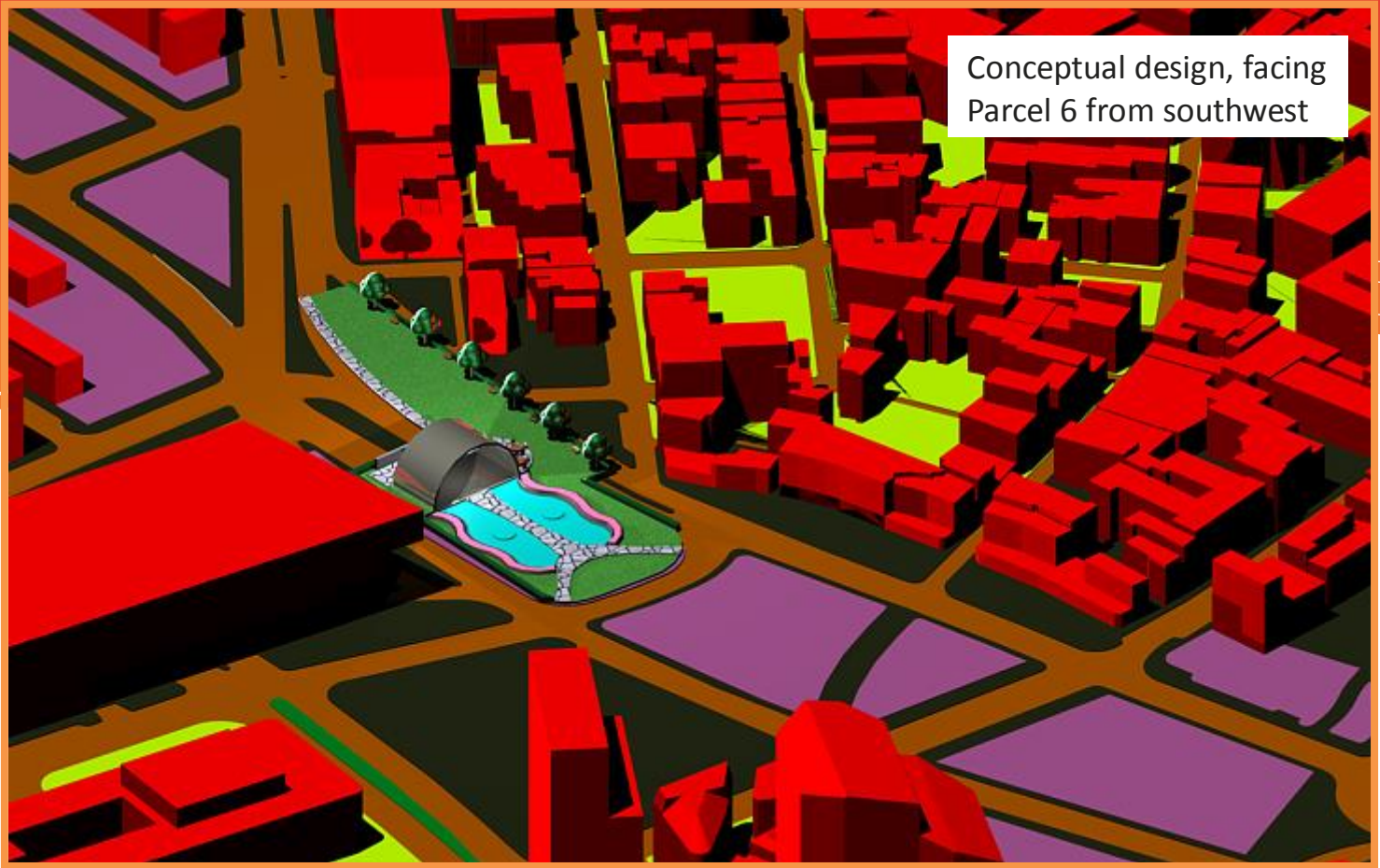


Conceptual design, with orthographic images facing Parcel 6 from southwest

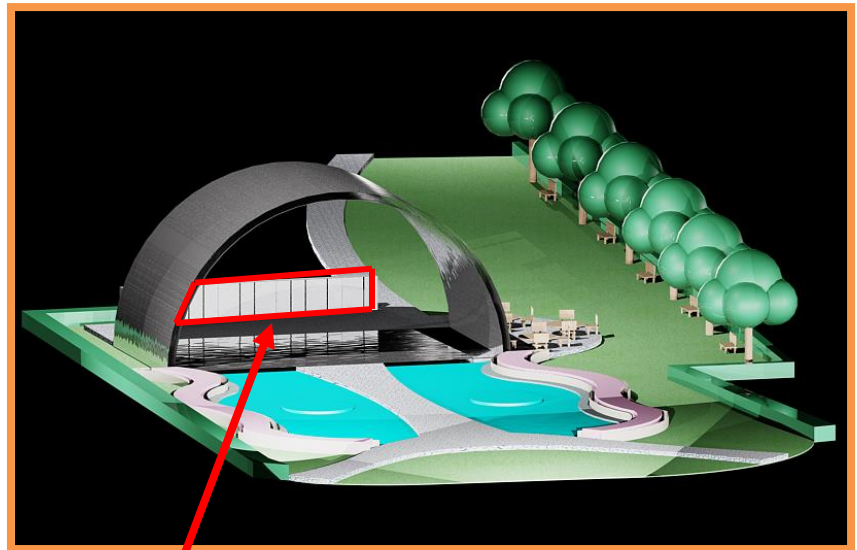


Conceptual design, facing Parcel 6 from the north





Conceptual design for a Granite Memorial, recounting the historic events, honoring those who lost their lives and images and maps from the time period



Community Involvement:

Optimization of Ramp Parcel 6 will take a community effort. If we share our ideas, and build upon our collective creativity, we can create a space that residents can enjoy for years to come. Please let me know your thoughts, criticisms, and concerns regarding my proposed use of the land. Any feedback will only help us create the best use of space for Parcel 6. If others in the community have other ideas and would like to enlist my drafting skills I would love to lend a hand. As a civil engineer working for a design and engineering firm, Kleinfelder, I have access to programs that can help give form and function to our ideas. The conceptual drawings shown are to scale, however, without detailed survey site information, the grade, slope, and overall shape of the site may change. Though I did make an effort to leave proper clearance for vehicles entering the on ramps, it was only a simple estimation. More information is needed to ensure that this design will both structurally and aesthetically work.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns please e-mail me at **BryanWebb33@gmail.com** I am also a resident of the North End and am available to meet after work to discuss further. I am looking forward to hearing your feedback, and turning this parcel into a space we can all enjoy.