

WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL: FDR D-DAY PRAYER DESIGN DEVELOPMENT



Prepared for:

FRIENDS OF THE NATIONAL
WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL, INC

JUNE 3, 2021

PRESENTATION TO THE NATIONAL
CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION

TABLE OF CONTENTS



WWII MEMORIAL CONTEXT	3
APRIL 2021 CFA LETTER	4
REVISED PLANTING DESIGN	5 - 7
BENCH STUDIES AND DESIGN REFINEMENTS	8 - 11
ALTERNATE PLAQUE AND INSCRIPTION	12 - 13
MEDALLION DESIGN OPTIONS	14 - 20
MATERIALS PLAN	21
LIGHTING DESIGN	22 - 28
DISCUSSION	29
APPENDIX	30 - 36

WWII Memorial Context

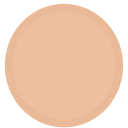
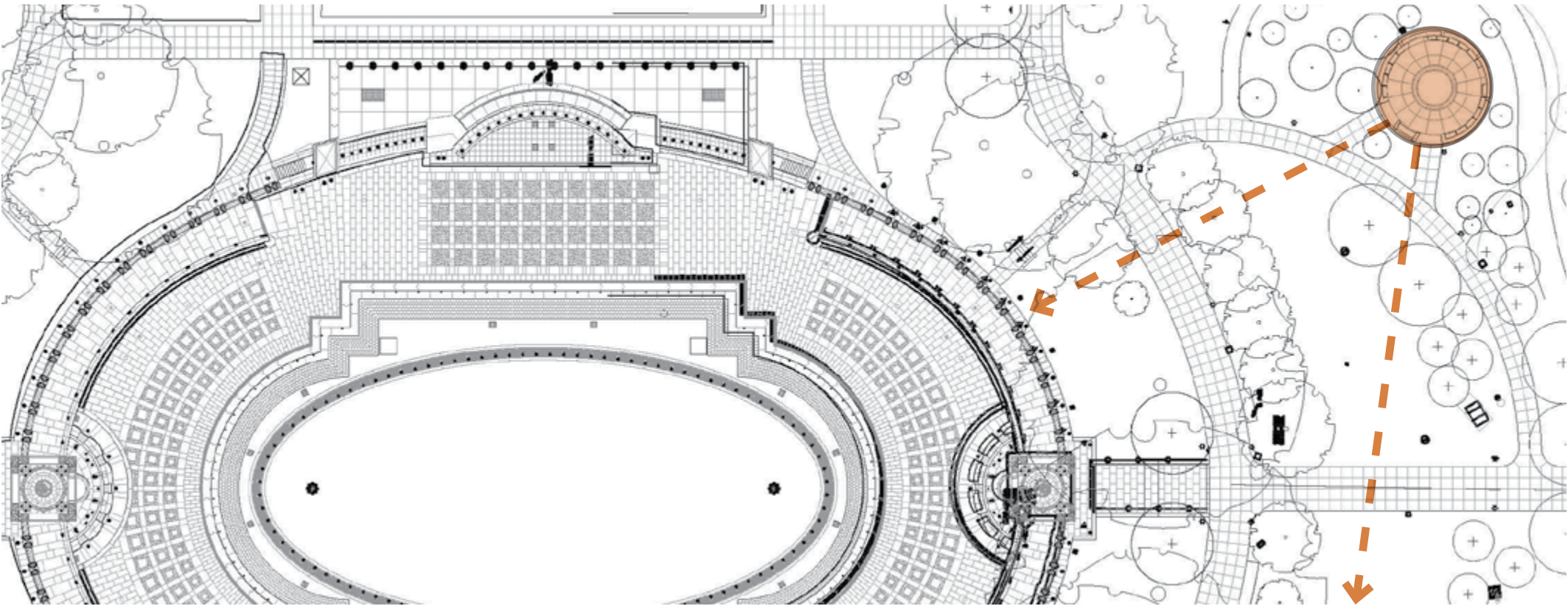
- The FDR Prayer plaque will be placed within the Circle of Remembrance, a contemplative space within the memorial grounds



“Set among the trees on small knoll in the northwest corner of the site, away from the memorial plaza, is the contemplative area. Designed by landscape architect James van Sweden, **the garden is a tranquil setting for reflection and meditation removed from the activity and emotional power of the memorial.** The setting takes advantage of a 5-foot rise in an otherwise flat site to provide a clear view of the lake in Constitution Gardens on the north and back to the memorial...on the south.”

Description of the Circle of Remembrance from “World War II Memorial Washington, DC” by Thomas B. Grooms, U.S.General Administration Services Design Excellence Program

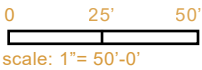
WWII CONTEXT AND VIEWSHED DIAGRAM



WWII Memorial
Circle of Remembrance



D-Day Prayer Plaque viewshed



Commission of Fine Arts

Letter Re: FDR Prayer Concept

CFA 21/APR/21-1

LOCATION: West Potomac Park, 17th Street and Independence Avenue, SW Washington, DC

OWNER: National Park Service (NPS)

PROPERTY: World War II Memorial

DESCRIPTION: Install plaque with President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s D-Day Prayer

REVIEW TYPE: Revised Concept

PREVIOUS REVIEW: CFA 21/JAN/21-1

22 April 2021

Dear Ms. Mendelson-Ielmini:

In its public meeting of 15 April conducted by videoconference, the Commission of Fine Arts reviewed a second revised concept submission for alterations to the existing Circle of Remembrance at the World War II Memorial, to include a new plaque inscribed with the prayer delivered by President Franklin D. Roosevelt by radio on D-Day. Expressing appreciation for the responsiveness to its previous advice, the Commission approved the submission with the following comments to guide the development of the final design.

In their consideration of the design options presented, the Commission members endorsed the applicant’s preferred location for the new plaque at the southeastern side of the Circle of Remembrance, with a clear view to the central area of the World War II Memorial. They noted the strength of the site’s circular form— with its unity of space, continuity of built elements, and panoramic views to the surrounding landscape—and they recommended that the design reinforce this essential character. For the design of the landscape, they suggested simplifying the plantings to be large trees and lawn only, eliminating the more decorative groundcover, shrubs, and understory flowering trees, in order to unify the site with the larger landscape of the war memorial; the natural context of large trees would further heighten a contrast with the pure geometry and crisp detailing of the circle, recalling the spatial effect of a chapel.

Regarding the built elements of the Circle of Remembrance, the Commission members recommended that the design of the perimeter benches be less blocky in character, perhaps more carefully related to the benches within the central area of the memorial. For the plaque, they recommended emphasizing the continuity of the outer circle of stone by reducing the height of the flanking piers to align with the backs of the benches; this would allow the bronze plaque to visually float above a consistent stone base. For the graphic design of the inscriptions, they endorsed the preferred typeface, Perpetua, for the body of the text, to be laid out in raised lettering at the larger size of one-half inch; they also suggested combining the title and date of the prayer as a single line across the top of the plaque to simplify the layout. They questioned the proposed inscription at the outer wall facing the site path—“Circle of Remembrance / World War II Memorial”— as superfluous labeling for a space that visitors can readily discover on their own; they suggested instead using a simpler inscription, such as “June 6, 1944” or graphic symbols such as stars, to indicate the theme of the circle and the display of the prayer within it.

In their discussion, the Commission members agreed in their support for the addition of a large, circular motif within the pavement at the center of the circle. However, they raised concerns about the proposed reinterpretation of the World War II Victory Medal bas-relief bronze medallions located within the Atlantic and Pacific arches of the memorial, particularly at an enlarged scale and as bronze linework inlaid into a background of stone. They suggested considering a cast bronze bas-relief medallion no larger than those in the memorial, or developing a different design that employs abstracted nautical imagery evocative of the D-Day setting, or using a non-directional motif such as a laurel wreath consistent with the non-axial configuration of the Circle of Remembrance. They cautioned that any feature proposed for the center of the pavement should not compete with the prayer plaque itself, which should convey the primary honorific meaning of the circle.

The Commission looks forward to the resolution of these design details in a final design submission for this important addition to the World War II Memorial. As always, the staff is available to assist you.

Sincerely,
/s/ Thomas E. Luebke, FAIA
Secretary

During the April 15th review, CFA suggested the following:

- **“simplifying the plantings...to unify the site with the larger landscape of the war memorial”**
- **“perimeter benches be less blocky in character, perhaps more carefully related to the benches...of the memorial”**
- **“reducing the height of the flanking piers to align with the backs of the benches; this would allow the bronze plaque to visually float above a consistent stone base”**
- **“using a simpler inscription, such as “June 6, 1944” or graphic symbols such as stars, to indicate the theme of the circle”**
- **consider “a cast bronze bas-relief medallion no larger than those in the memorial, or developing a different design that employs abstracted nautical imagery evocative of the D-Day setting, or using a non-directional motif such as a laurel wreath”**

Revised Planting Design

Commission Comment:

“simplifying the plantings...to unify the site with the larger landscape of the war memorial”

- Retain existing trees
- Place (1) additional Chionanthus retusus to balance design
- Low evergreen shrubs at entry: Sarcococca hookeriana var. humilis

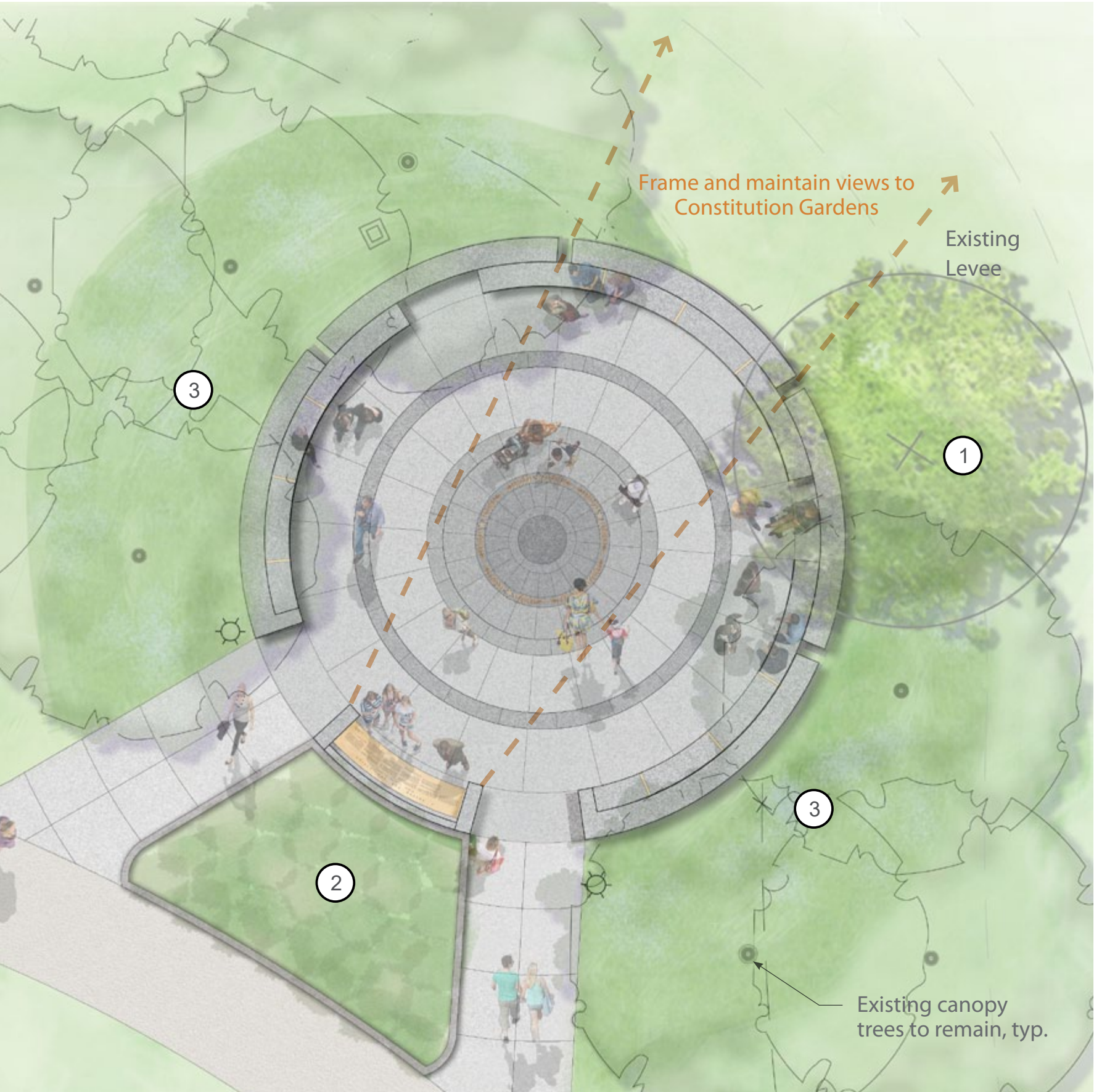


① Additional Chionanthus retusus to match existing multi-stem trees

② Front Entry Shrub: Sarcococca hookeriana var. humilis



③ Groundcover under trees: Carex species



Revised Planting Design

- Placing (1) additional multi-stem Chionanthus retusus will balance composition while maintaining views to Constitution Gardens



Revised Planting Design | View to Constitution Gardens

- Placement of (1) additional *Chionanthus retusus* balances enframement
- *Sarcococca* is compact low-growing shrub at entry

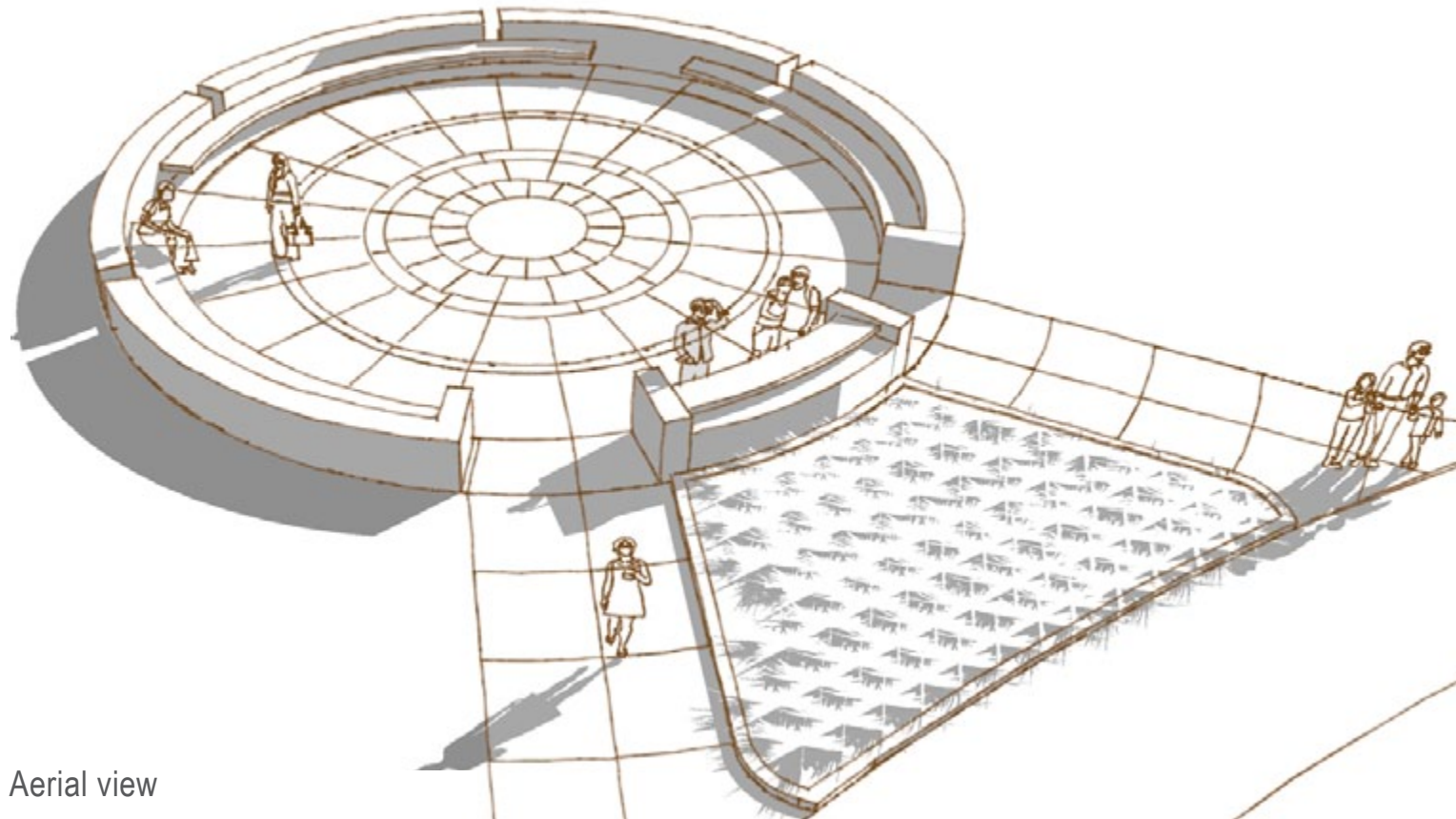


Bench Studies

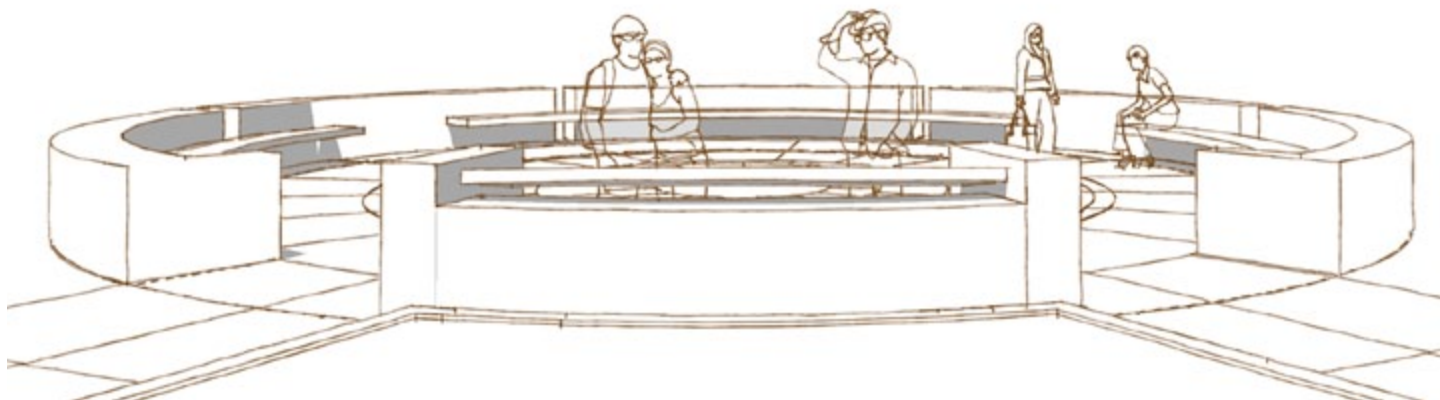
In previous review, Commission recommended “the design of the perimeter benches be less blocky in character, perhaps more carefully related to the benches within the central area of the memorial.”

- Pillars eliminated and bench sculpted in revised design
- Pillars removed from Plaque enframement, allowing the Prayer to ‘float’

PREVIOUS DESIGN | VERTICAL STONE PILLARS

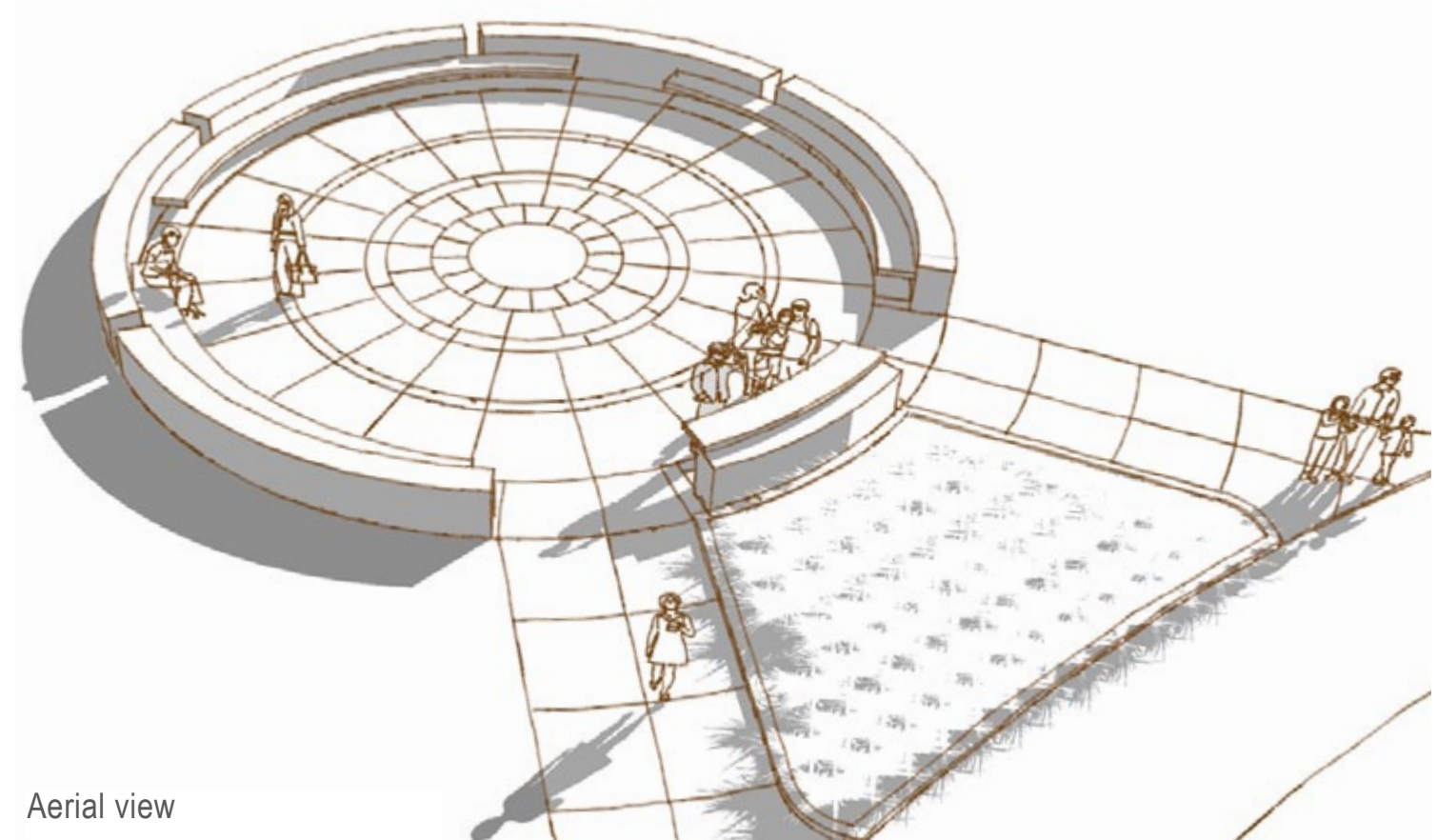


Aerial view

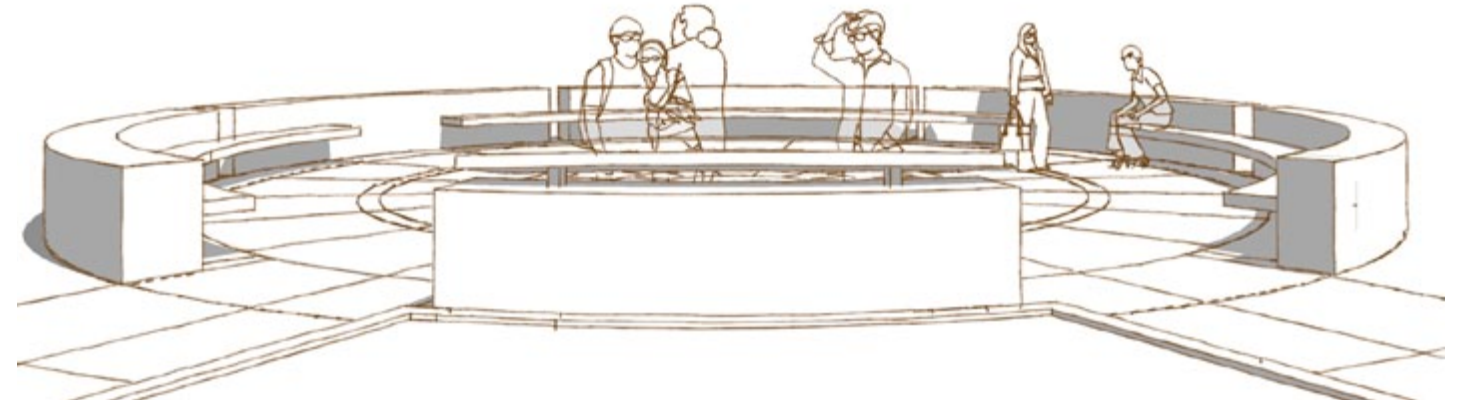


View to Constitution Gardens

REVISED DESIGN | ‘FLOATING’ PLAQUE AND REFINED BENCH



Aerial view



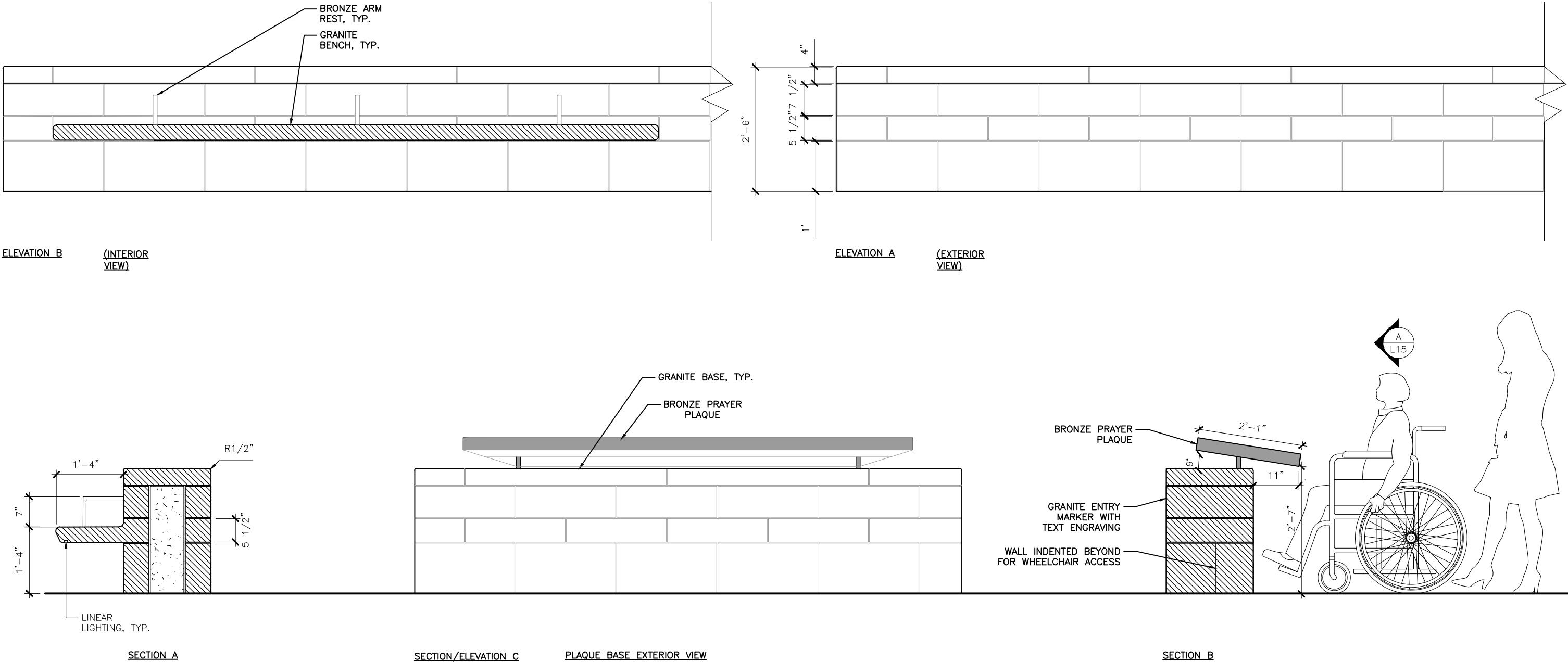
View to WWII Memorial

Bench and Wall Details - WWII Memorial Precedent



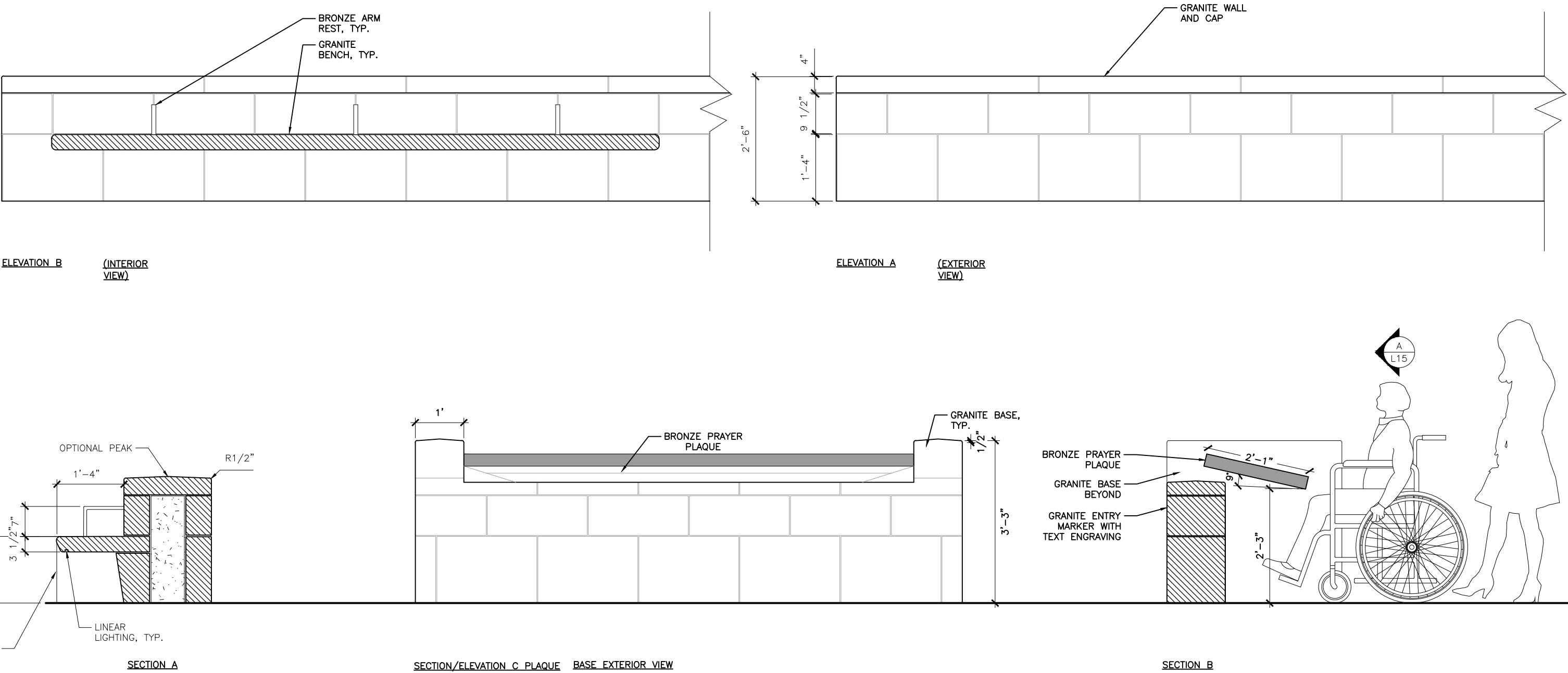
Bench and Wall Details - Option 1

- Wall incorporates (3) stone bands, with center band corresponding to bench
- Bench profile draws from simplified WWII bench profile
- Plaque supported by dark metal frame from below



Bench and Wall Details - Option 2

- Wall incorporates (2) stone bands, with bench anchoring lower band
- Bench angled to relate to angle of wall below
- Plaque spans between granite pillars



Alternate 'Floating' Plaque Concept and Revised Inscription

In previous review, Commission recommended “reducing the height of the flanking piers to align with the backs of the benches; this would allow the bronze plaque to visually float above a consistent stone base” and recommended a “...simpler inscription, such as “June 6, 1944” or graphic symbols such as stars, to indicate the theme of the circle”

- Pillars are eliminated and plaque is supported by dark metal frame from below
- Granite enframement has been lowered to 30” to match site walls
- In consultation with the National Park Service, D-Day with the date is preferred



Alternate 'Floating' Plaque Concept

- Granite enframement has been lowered to match 30" height of site walls
- Prayer plaque is supported by dark metal frame below
- Medallion revised to incorporate non-directional design
- Bench profile sculpted and refined to recall WWII Memorial detail



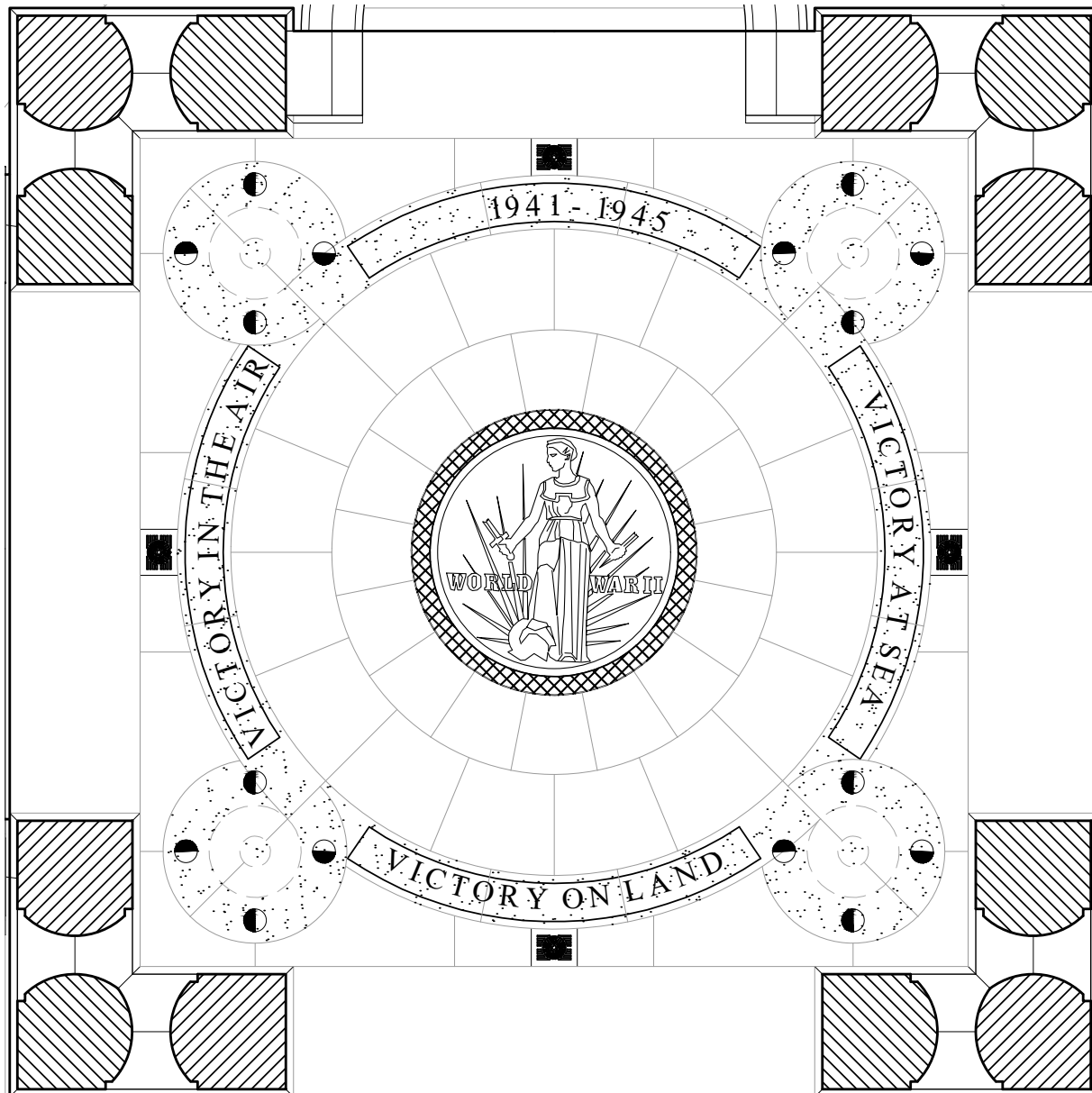
Center Medallion Material Precedents

- Bronze elements in-laid into granite paving
- Granite elements in-laid or etched into granite paving
- A combination of bronze and granite inlay
- All proposals are to be flush with the finish surface



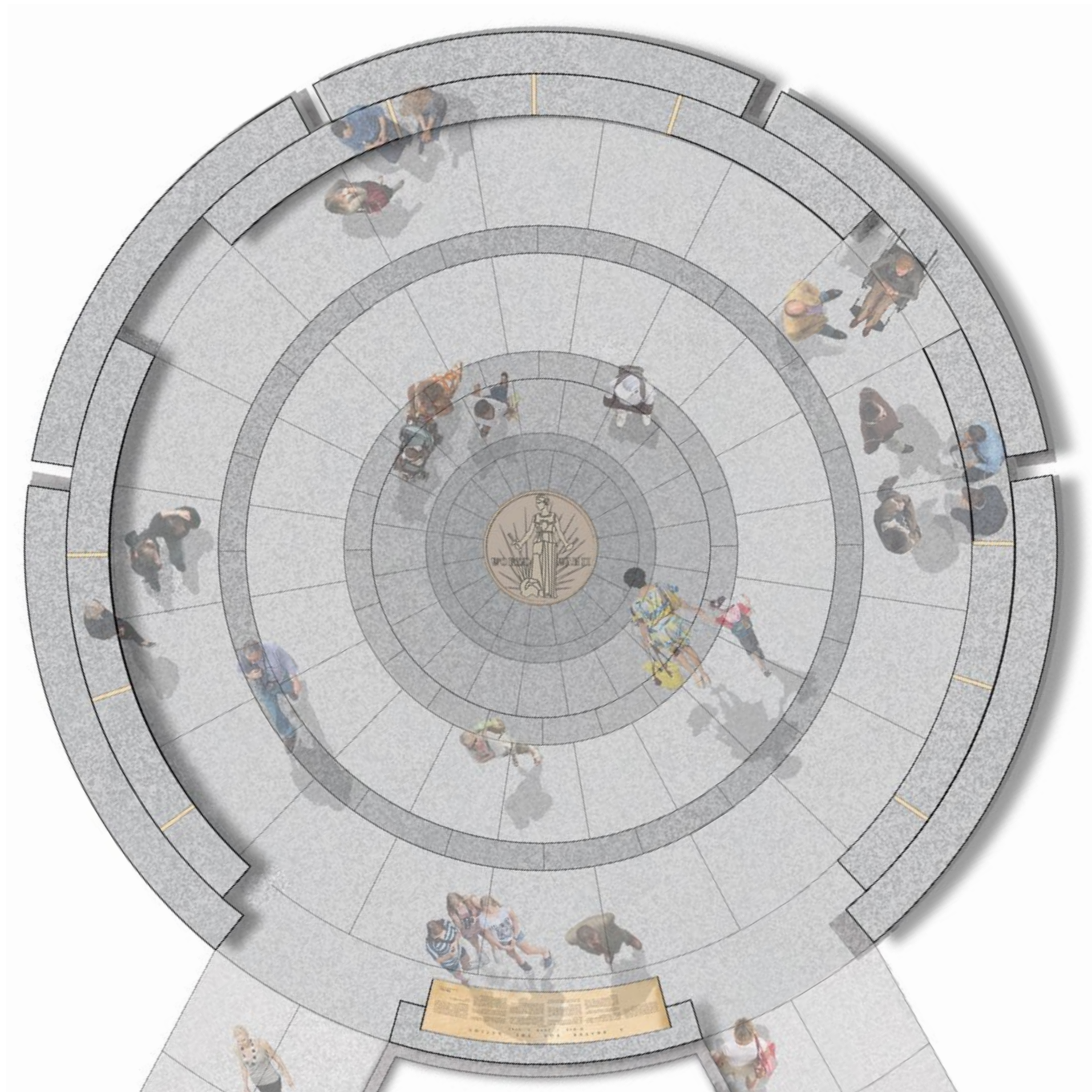
Center Medallion Option 1 | Medal of Freedom

- Incorporates the bronze WWII Medal of Freedom at the same scale included in Atlantic and Pacific Arches



Center Medallion Option 1 Medal of Freedom

- Bronze Medal of Freedom medallion
- Size to match the Atlantic and Pacific Arches of WWII Memorial (*Diameter 6'-0"*)



Center Medallion | Non-directional

- Symbol A: WWII Memorial bronze rope - signifies unity and binding of nation together
- Symbol B: Olive wreath - signifies peace achieved following D-Day invasion and recalls several mentions of 'peace' in D-Day Prayer
- Symbol C: Optional inclusion of stars in reference to Freedom Wall and gold stars given to family members of WWII casualties



Center Medallion | Non-directional Options

Option 2: Granite medallion with bronze olive branches and stars interwoven

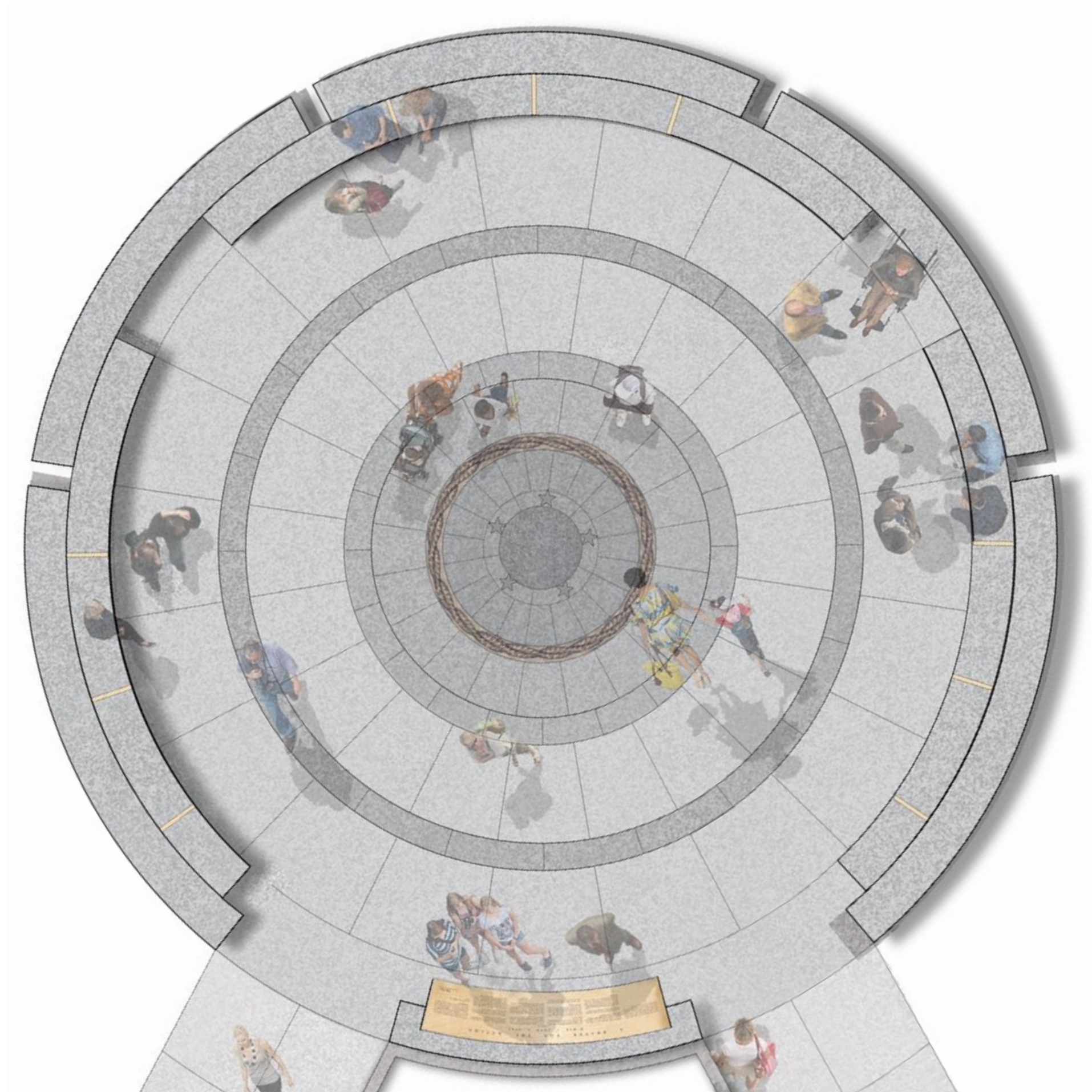
- Center medallion is textured granite
- Bronze motif composed of olive branches and alternating stars inlaid into granite or bronze
- Incorporation of (5) granite stars representing the beaches of Normandy



Center Medallion | Non-directional Options

Option 3A: Bronze rope

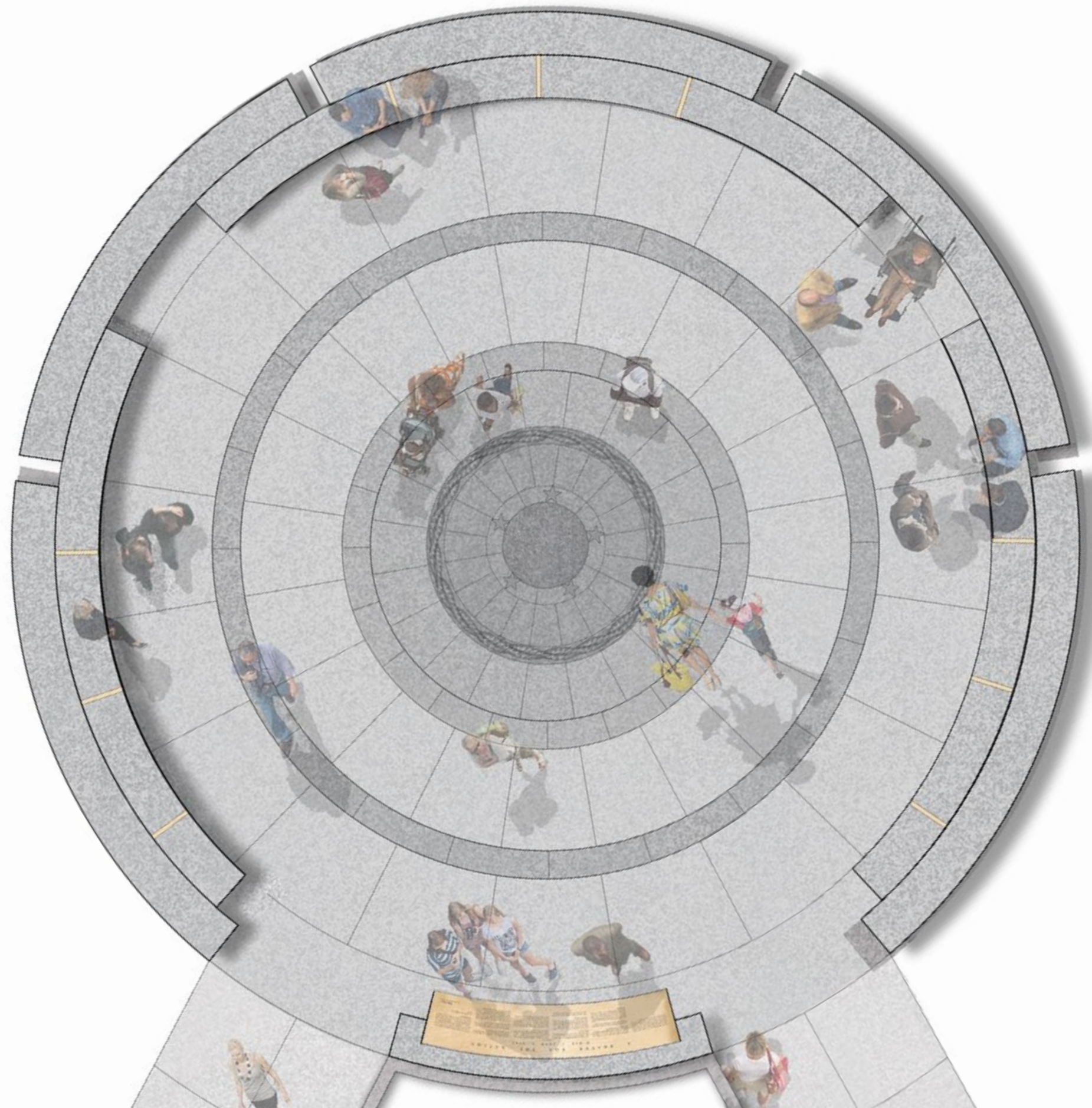
- Center medallion is textured granite
- Bronze band of braided rope
- Incorporation of (5) granite stars representing the beaches of Normandy



Center Medallion | Non-directional Options

Option 3B: Granite medallion and stars with granite rope

- Center medallion is textured granite
- Granite band of braided rope
- Incorporation of (5) granite stars representing the beaches of Normandy



D-Day Prayer Plan
Materials Plan

- Site walls, benches and paving will be granite to match WWII Memorial
- Bronze plaque with granite base to match site walls
- Final medallion to incorporate granite and bronze, depending on final design

Materials Key

1

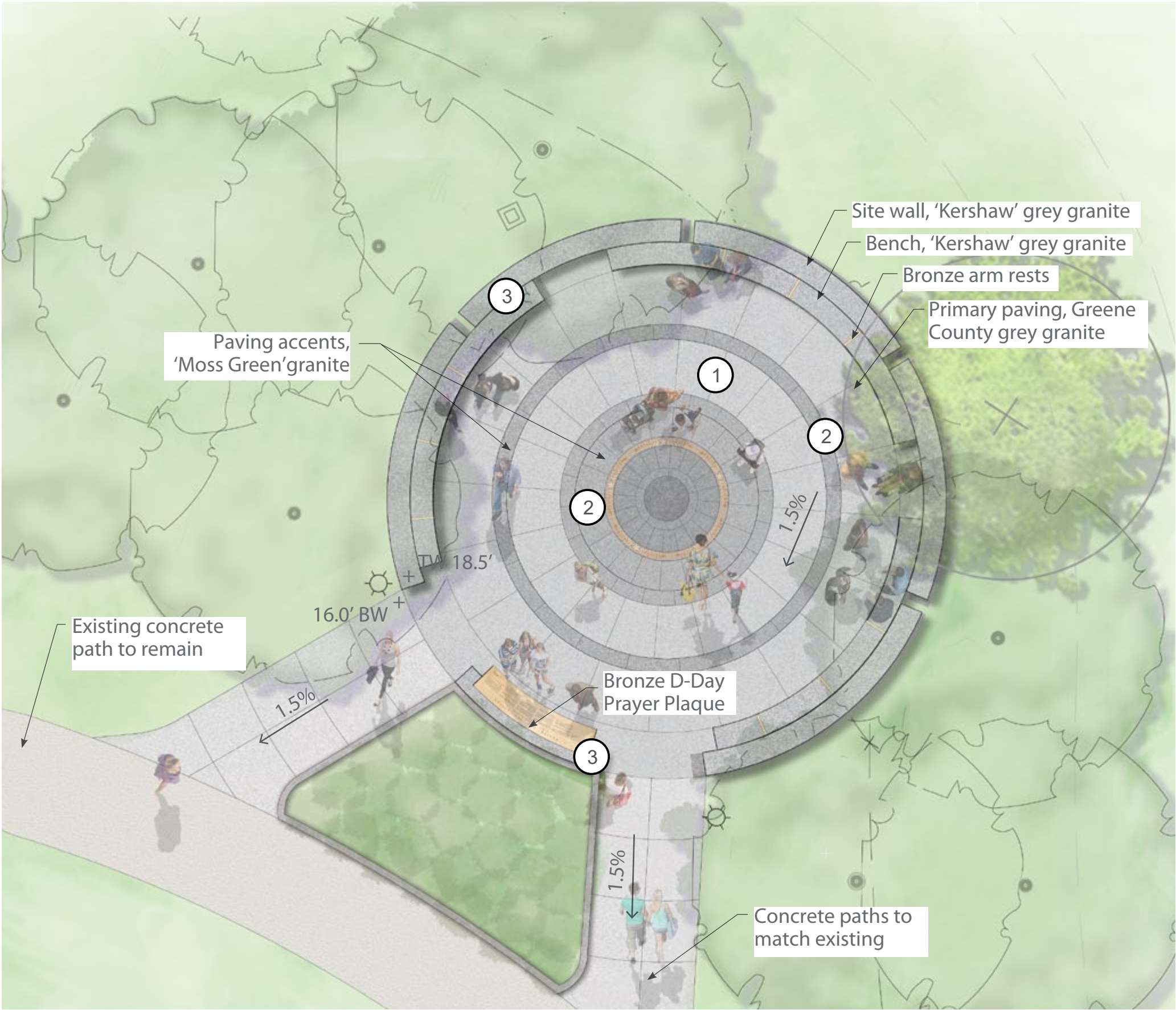
'Greene County' granite (primary paving material)

2

'Moss Green' granite (paving accent)

3

'Kershaw' granite (vertical elements)

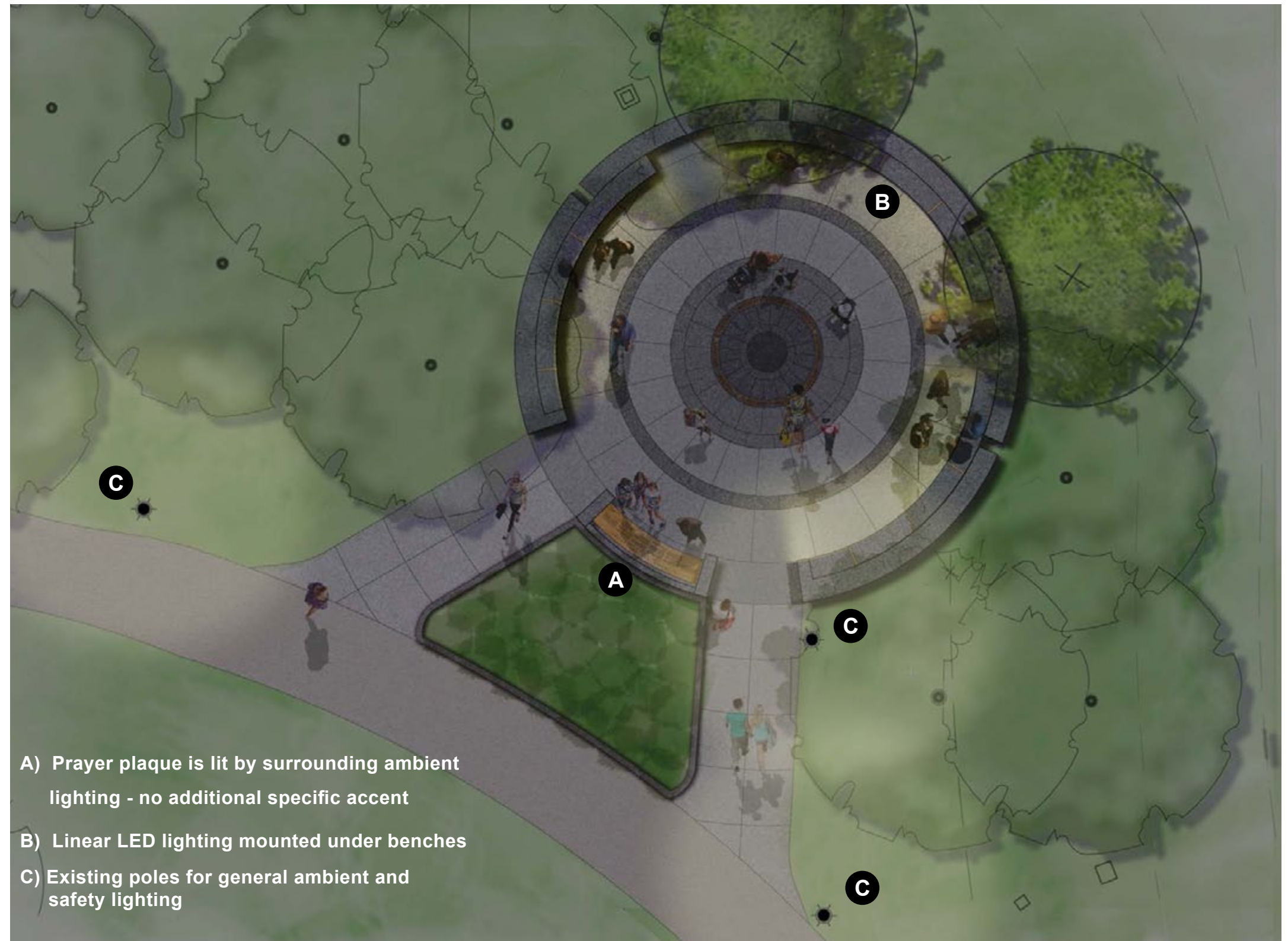


D-Day Prayer Lighting Scheme Concept Description

Option 1

GENERAL NOTES:

- Linear lighting will incorporate a dedicated LED which are available for a lifetime rating of up to 100,000 hours.
- Fixture will be detailed under benches so that any direct view of fixture will be obscured under typical conditions and will allow for more importance to be on lighting effect only
- Lighting to be soft, low level lighting so as to not compete with the adjacent World War II Memorial with the focus on emphasizing the circle.
- Lighting will support and complement the architectural and landscape design.
- Particular attention will be paid to fixture selections and strategies to minimize maintenance.



D-Day Prayer Lighting Scheme View to WWII Memorial - Option 1



D-Day Prayer Lighting Scheme

View to Constitution Gardens - Option 1



D-Day Prayer Lighting Scheme Concept Description

Option 2

GENERAL NOTES:

- Linear lighting will incorporate a dedicated LED which are available for a lifetime rating of up to 100,000 hours.
- Fixture will be detailed under benches so that any direct view of fixture will be obscured under typical conditions and will allow for more importance to be on lighting effect only
- Lighting to be soft, low level lighting so as to not compete with the adjacent World War II Memorial with the focus on emphasizing the circle and accenting the plaque.
- Lighting will support and complement the architectural and landscape design.
- Particular attention will be paid to fixture selections and strategies to minimize maintenance.
- Proposed lighting to match light temperature of existing condition.



D-Day Prayer Lighting Scheme
View to WWII Memorial - Option 2



D-Day Prayer Lighting Scheme
View to Constitution Gardens - Option 2



D-Day Prayer Lighting Scheme

A-POLE LIGHT OPTIONS

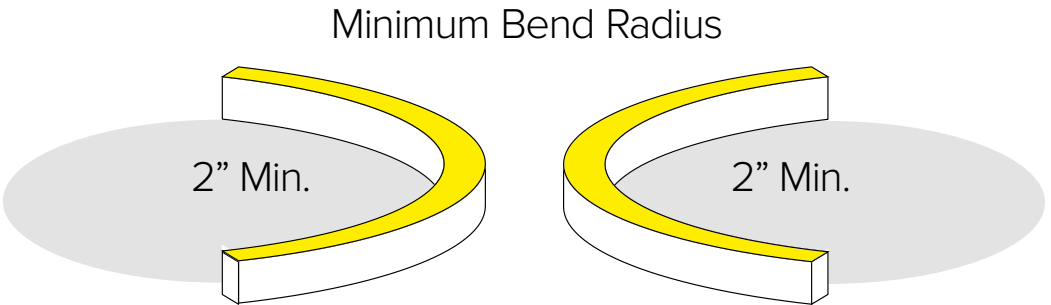
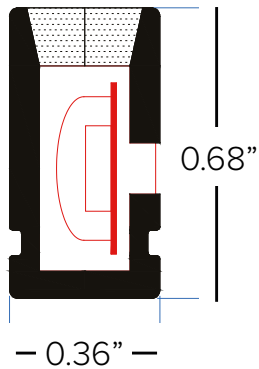


OPTION A - PALCO INOUT



OPTION B - BEGA

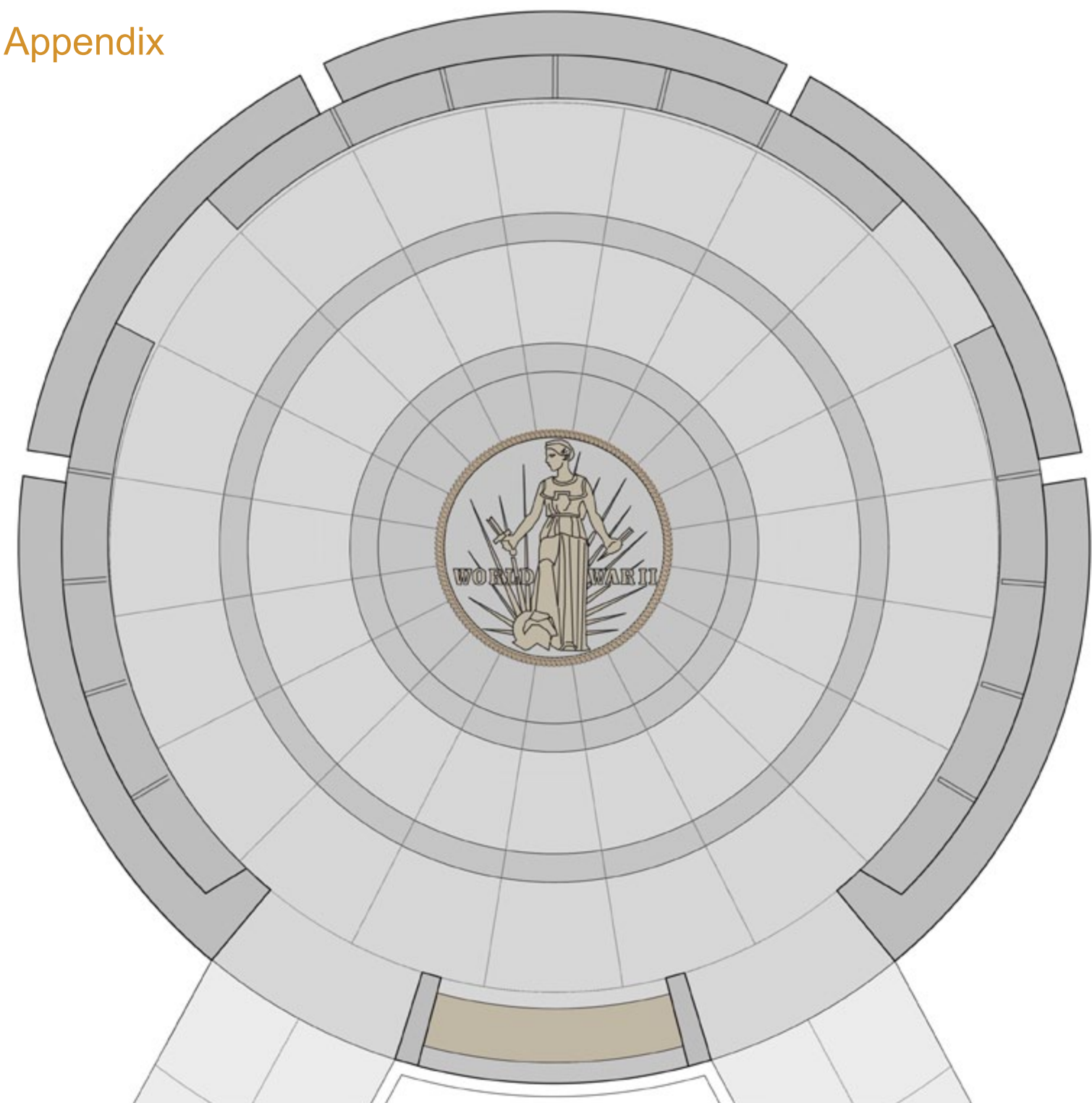
B-LINEAR LIGHT UNDER BENCH



Discussion



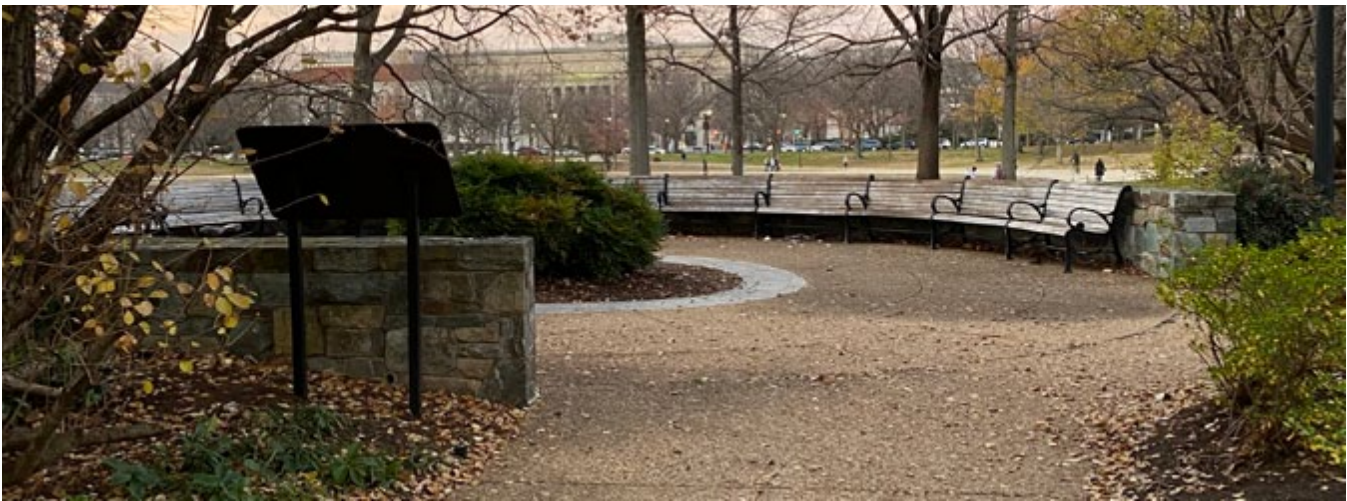
Appendix



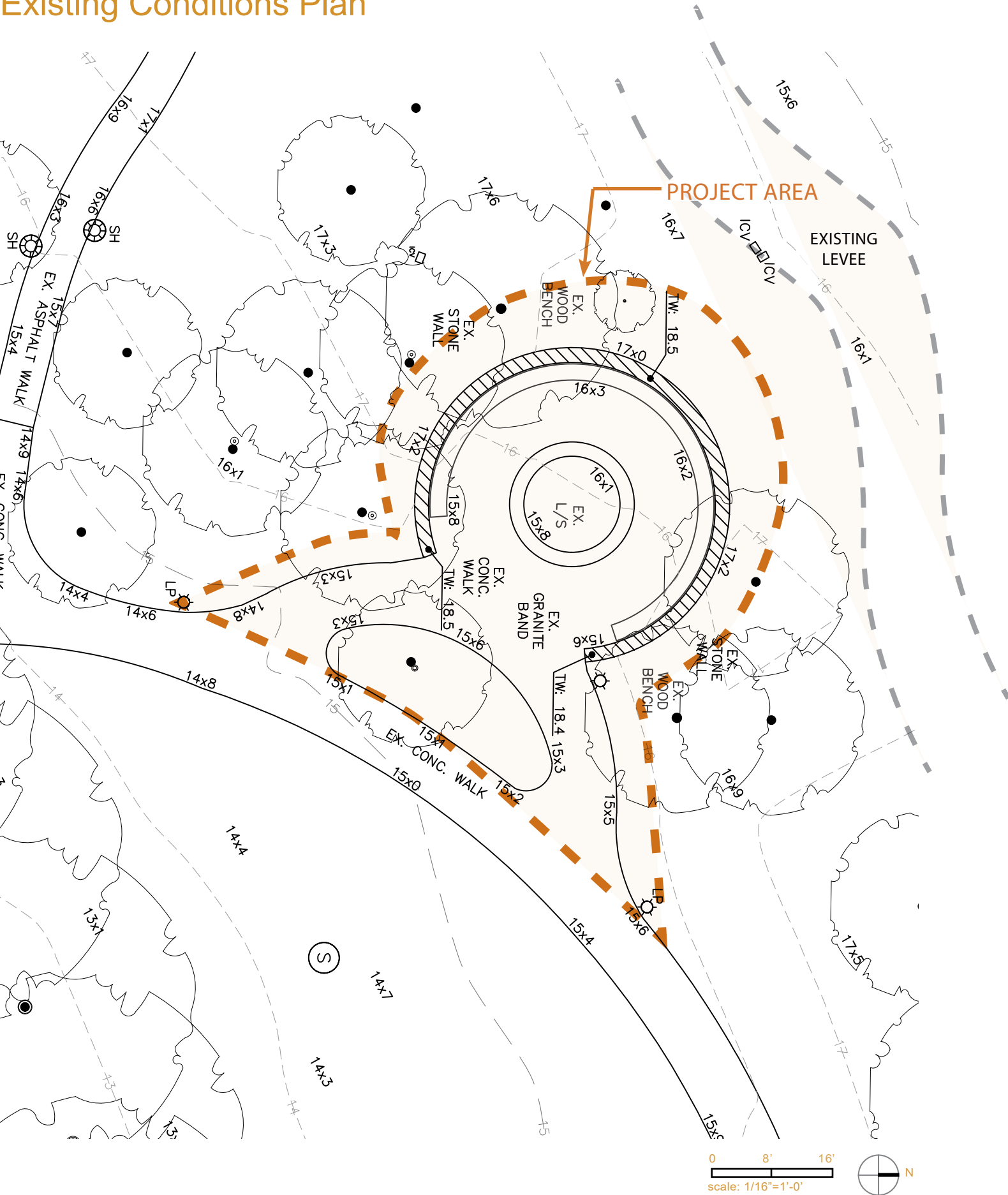
- EXISTING CONDITIONS
- JANUARY 2021 MEDALLION STUDIES
- JANUARY 2021 PRAYER PLAQUE CONCEPT
- JANUARY 2021 PLANTING PLAN AND PALETTE

Existing Conditions and project scope

- Original design was for a quiet, reflective space
- Current materials are not cohesive with the WWII Memorial
- The project is limited to the existing Circle, as shown
- Link to video of existing conditions: <https://vimeo.com/491439353>



Existing Conditions Plan



Revised Circle and Prayer Plaque Design | View to Constitution Gardens

- Plaque has been enlarged from +/- 7' to +/- 10'
- Granite base provides more substantial foundation for plaque
- Granite base incorporates text identifying the Circle of Remembrance
- Enlarged plaque is elevated to highlight its unique materiality and create a sensation of 'floating' above stone base
- Height of site walls and pillars reduced to enhance views in and out of Circle



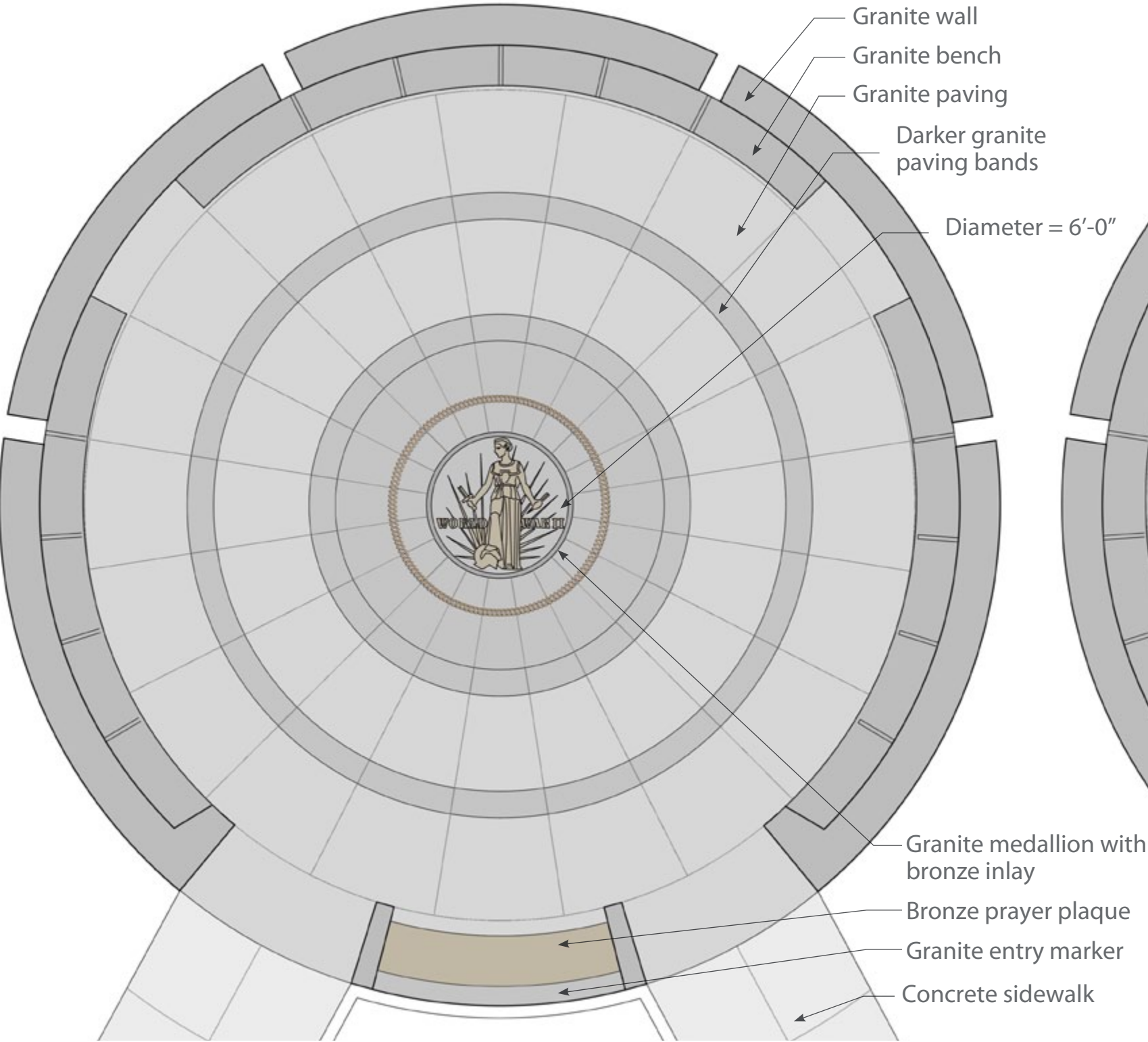
Revised Circle and Prayer Plaque Design | View to WWII Memorial

- Clear view of WWII Memorial while reading Prayer
- Lower site walls and plaque enframement create stronger visual connection to the WWII Memorial
- Granite base provides strong foundation for Prayer Plaque while allowing wheelchair access
- Angle of Prayer Plaque reduced to minimize Plaque enframement height
- Medal of Freedom incorporated into center of the Circle

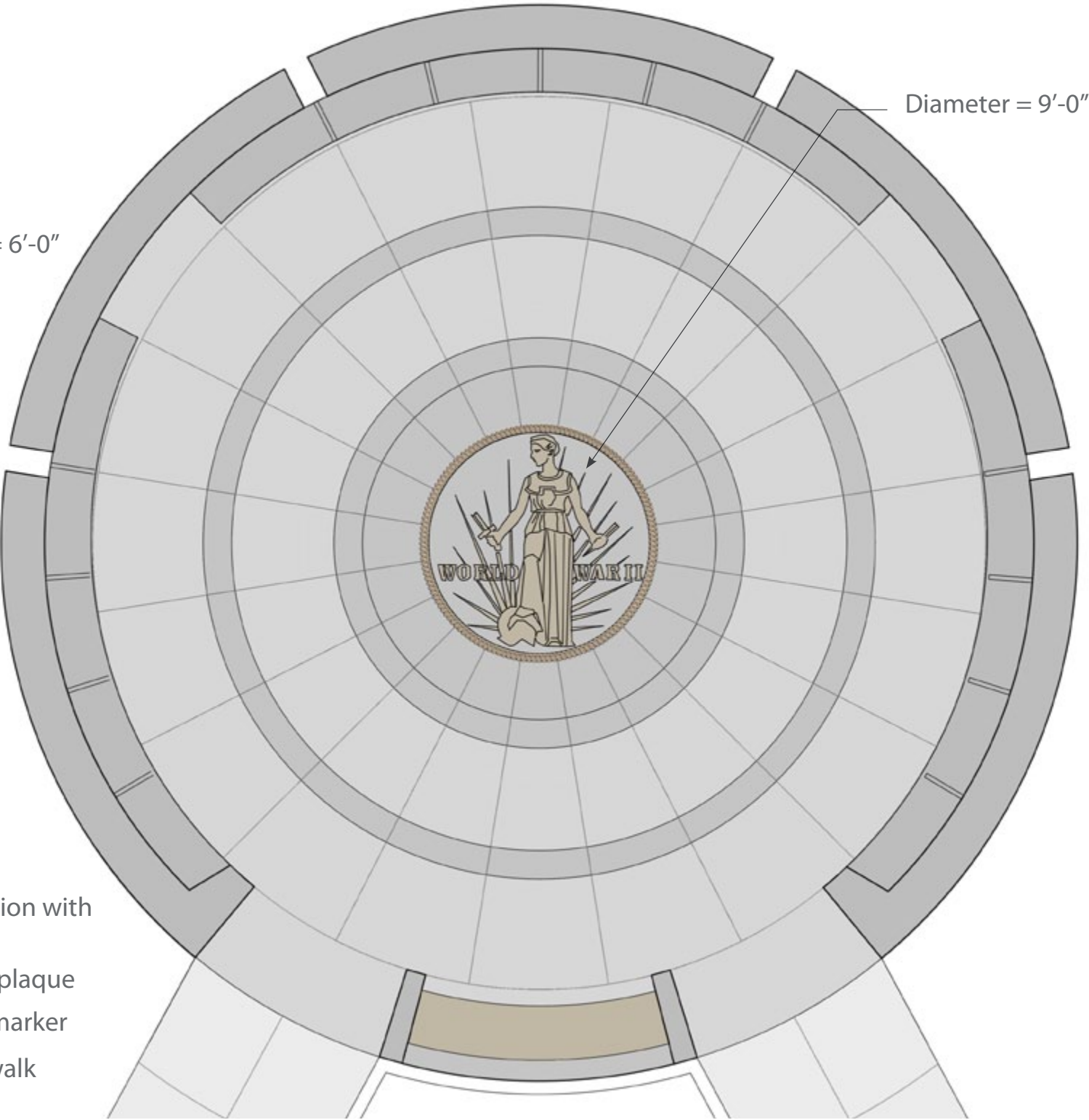


Previous Medallion Studies

Option 1: Granite Medal of Freedom with bronze inlay
(matching the size of WWII medallion)

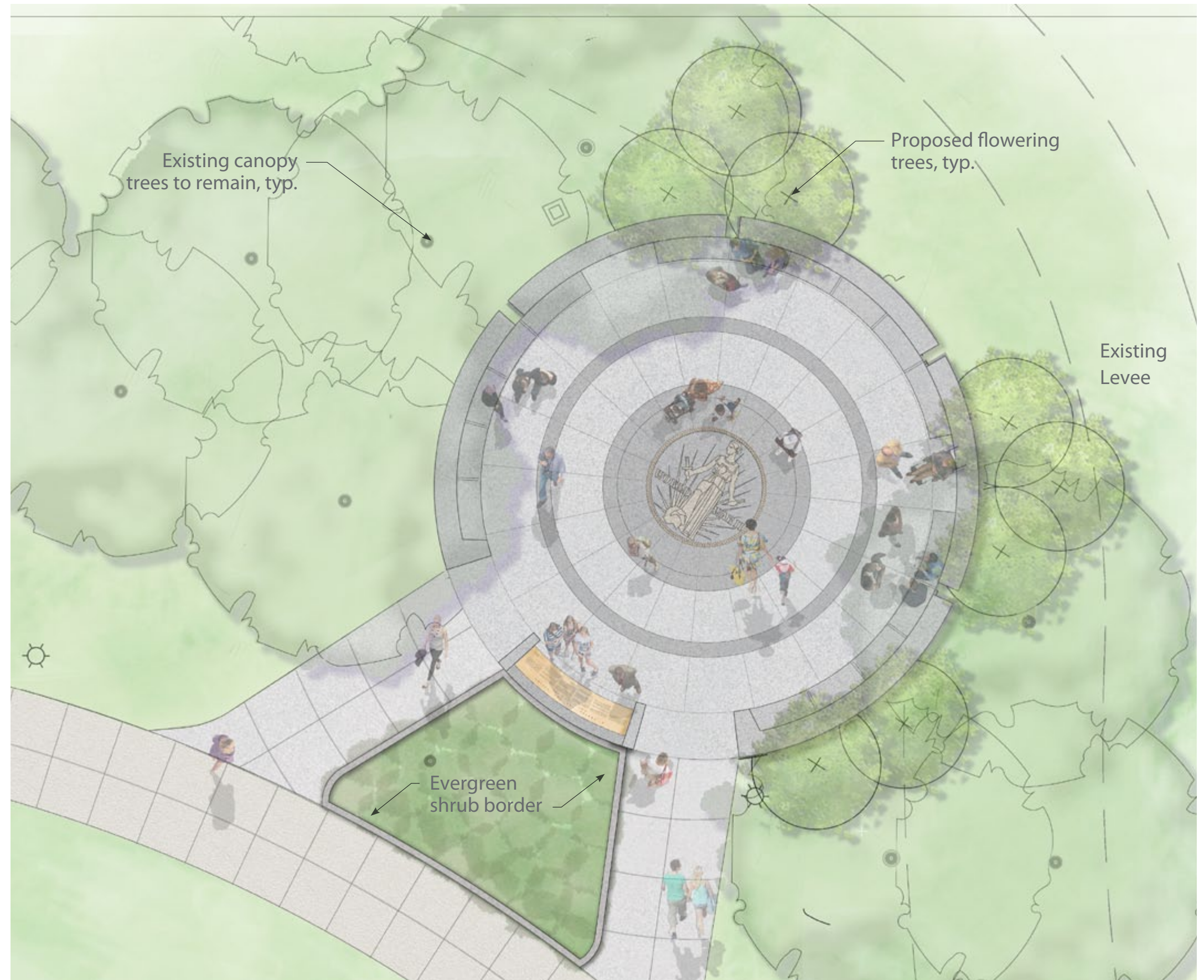


Option 2: Granite Medal of Freedom with bronze inlay
(scaled to correspond to size of Circle and Prayer Plaque)



D-Day Prayer Planting Design Concept Description

- Retains existing mature trees
- New flowering trees are arranged in small groups to strategically frame views of Constitution Gardens
- Hardy shrubs create a threshold into the Circle and a backdrop for the plaque



D-Day Prayer Planting Design

Representative Plant Palette

- Trees are underplanted with hardy groundcovers that will provide yearlong interest with minimal maintenance
- A mix of spring and summer bulbs are interspersed to provide seasonal interest
- White flowers for remembrance and symbolizing peace
- Hardy evergreen shrubs for seasonal interest, high traffic and minimal maintenance
- Flowering or fall color in the canopy, shrub, perennial, and bulb layer



Existing multi-stem canopy trees: Chionanthus retusus



Proposed trees: Amelanchier grandifora 'Autumn Brilliance'



Proposed trees: Amelanchier grandifora 'Autumn Brilliance'



Sarcococca spp.



Carex spp.



Heuchera villosa 'Autumn Bride'



Helleborus orientalis white cultivars



White narcissus



Snow drop species