

“Glass-House”: The Botanical Research Center

Program Outline

Embedded in every program outline are a set of issues that will define how the program elements / spaces are ordered and related.

This center is conceived as being for both the academic world and the public at large. It is intended to be open 365 days of the year and be place of tranquility, memory and identity within the Wellesley Campus. And yet, in achieving this, all parts of the program may not be accessible to everyone all of the time – there are issues of security and privacy, of movement and visibility, and issues of inside and outside space and the manner in which a relationship is established to the landscape.

Unlike a singular greenhouse, this program is about a center with a collective identity, a place that carries out scientific research and which has a unity that goes beyond the iconographic and structural nature of the “green house” as a single piece. The “glass house” in this program is a major and significant part but has to be supported by other spaces and functions.

And yet it is also a place for lingering, to stop and study, to observe and simple to be in a world apart – a microclimate and a microcosm. It should be place appropriate for botanical species, large and small, to grow and to be observed. Like the tradition of the greenhouse or glasshouse, it must be a work of architecture and not just an act of building shelter and structure.

The following are the major spaces:

Entrance / Garden:

Courtyard/ landscape space/ microclimate/ water / garden

Botanical “glasshouse”:

Approx 9,000-12,000 square feet. While being of a whole, it should be capable of being subdivided into different zones or modules through the environmental control. There should be at least a height of 40 feet in some part for larger species.

Research Labs and shop space to service glasshouse:

3 labs or shop spaces of approx. 2000 square feet in total including an external access

Office space:

Research offices of approx. 1000 square feet in total – cellular or open plan

Education Center:

Flexible meeting or event space- for up to 60 people to gather or assemble. Might be part of circulation space or a specific auditorium or amphitheatre.

Movement, circulation space - and external space(s) as appropriate and in line with concept.

Other elements which are appropriate for the architectural concept