



RAPPAHANNOCK HERO'S HOME

A SOCIALLY SUSTAINABLE LIVING COMMUNITY FOR VETERANS

LOCATION: Fredericksburg, Virginia

Virginia has the seventh highest veteran population, with a large percentage of the adult population being made up of veterans. It also has the second youngest veteran populations (59% of the VA veteran population are from the Gulf War and post 9/11). With a younger population, there are greater chances of the Veterans creating a long-lasting connection with the location, ultimately building a stronger community and supporting Social Sustainability.

Fredericksburg was the chosen city to place this community. This city has a long history, from the Colonial Era and the Civil War. Choosing a location with history can add to a unique design, that looks at the story of the people, giving new community members a substantial story to connect with. Another consideration for this location, was the access to VA services. Fredericksburg has two VA Clinics, and a Department of Veteran Services. This, along with the National Cemetery located there, show that Fredericksburg already has involvement with the VA, and connections to the community.

SITE:

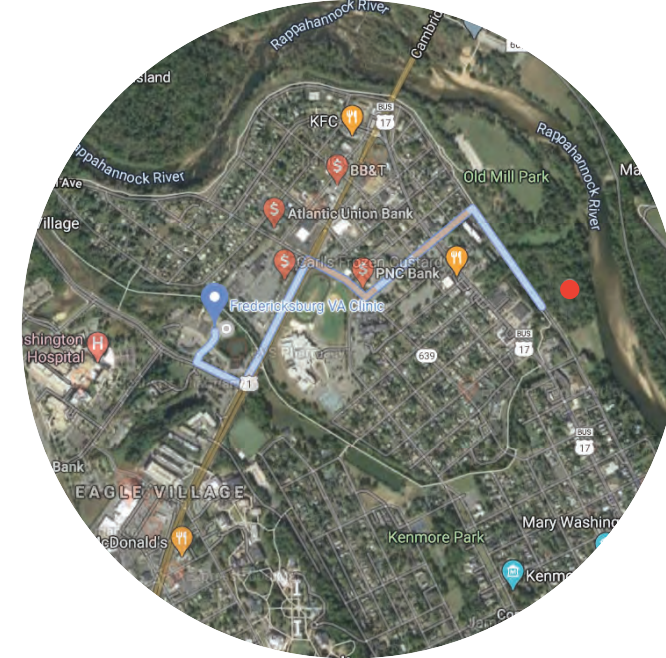
The site was chosen for its access to the VA Clinic, location on the Rappahannock River, and proximity to the center of town. Although research showed that Veterans typically gravitate toward rural areas, a location closer to the center of town was chosen to encourage interaction with the community. Also, younger generations are showing a trend towards cities, so this site could help attract younger Veterans to stay.

The city has a public transportation system, which would allow residents without a vehicle to travel around town. There is also a station for a railway station, which would provide residents with a way to travel long distance. This site is located on the river and is also near trails, providing residents with outdoor activity options.

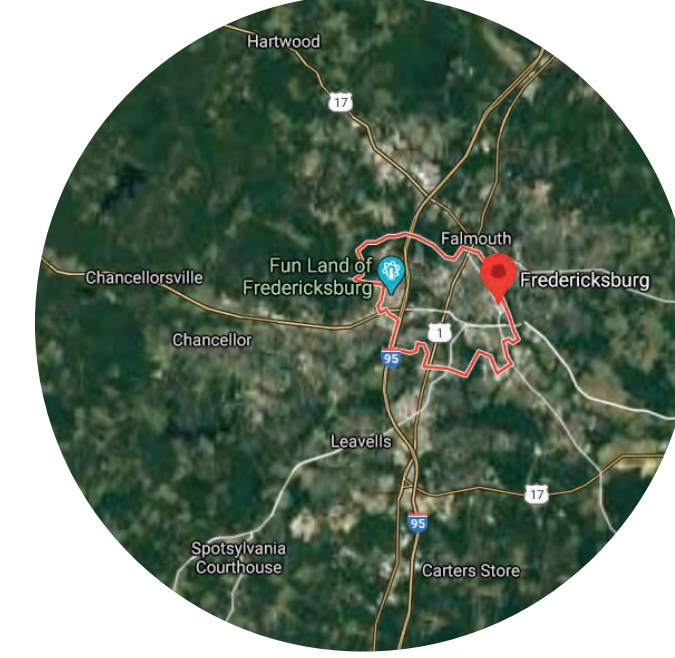
CONCEPT: Connecting Roots

Roots provide support for trees, and this home acts as the root for Veterans' recovery, social life, growth, and health, by supporting their needs. The driving concept of roots, emphasizes the community this space serves, by designing spaces that promote engagement, inclusive activities, and social interaction between residents.

This design concept grounds the Veterans Home to the location, giving users an experience unique to the location, encouraging them to root themselves within this community. The design supports their physical, mental, and social needs, providing them with necessary resources to recover from service and integrate back into everyday life.



This map shows where the site is located, and its relation to the VA Clinic and other amenities.
● = Site Location



The red outline shows the city limits of Fredericksburg, VA.



This map shows where Fredericksburg is located within Virginia.



ROOM LABELS:

- A. Lobby/Waiting Room
- B. Mail-room
- C. Building Manager's Office
- D. Manager of Vet. Services Office
- E. Work Room
- F. Admin. Assistant Office
- G. Head of Counseling Service
- H. Social Area
- I. Work Zone
- J. Multipurpose Room #1
- K. Community Kitchen

- L. Dining Area
- M. Family Restroom
- N. Flexible Reading Room
- O. Gender Neutral RR
- P. Multipurpose Room #2
- P-1. Storage Closet
- Q. Equipment Room
- R. Outdoor Dining
- S. Community Garden
- T. Lactation Room
- U. Janitor's Closet
- V. Flex-Space
- W. Creative Flex Space
- X. Living Space (not in scope)

DESIGN FEATURES:

1. Glass windows are along this office wall to allow natural light in an invite residents to interact with staff.
 2. The Head of Counseling Service Office is not along a window wall, because researched showed windows can cause stress for people with PTSD (common among veterans).
 3. This indoor track encourages physical exercise, even during the cooler months.
 4. The Flexible Reading Room acts as a flex space, and a small library. It includes a computer for residents to use.
 5. Between Multipurpose Room #2 and the Equipment Room, there is a movable partition wall. This allows this space to become a small gym when it is not being used for other event or activities.
 6. Two basketball hoops are located in the courtyard.
 7. This flexible space opens onto the common corridor for greater flexibility and physical distancing.
 8. The Creative Flex Space is meant to be used for various hands-on activities, not just group meetings.
- * White dashed lines show where skylines are included.

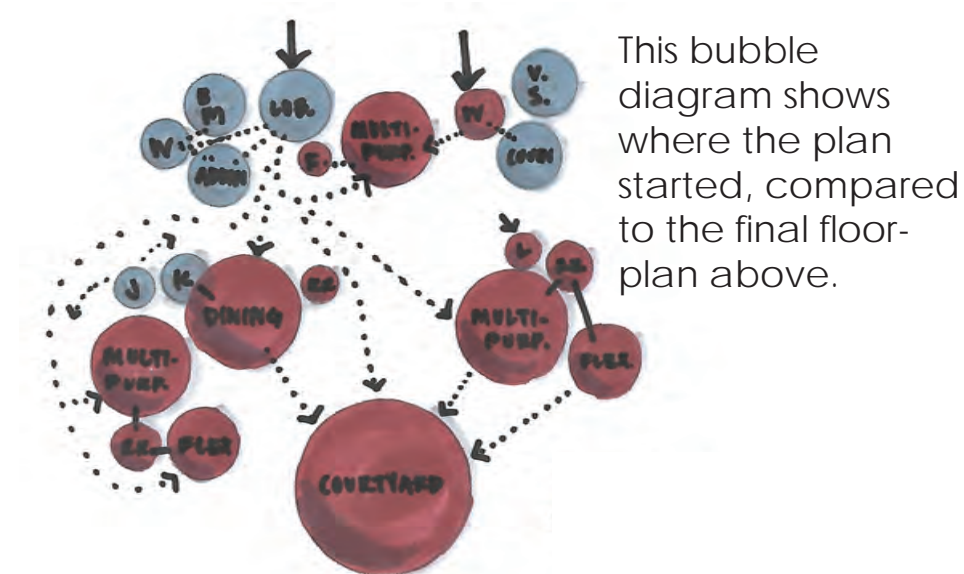
FLOOR PLAN

CONCRETE FLOORS W/ RUST-OLEUM:
Gloss Epoxy - Used in the main walkways, for easy cleaning.

TARKETT SPORTS: DROPZONE COMFORT
A shock absorbent, moisture resistant, rubber flooring, made out of recycled content, for the indoor sports areas.

TARKETT: ACCESS - WHITE OAK LIMED
This solid vinyl floor is scratch, stain, wear and moisture resistant, and has a urethane coat, make it sanitary and durable.

TARKETT: LIFETIME - MUSE ECLIPSE
This vinyl flooring is used in areas that experience moisture and high traffic, because it is moisture resistant, easy to clean, and durable.



This bubble diagram shows where the plan started, compared to the final floor-plan above.

LOBBY VIEW



When one walks into *Rappahannock Hero's Home* they are greeted with a reception desk and the view of the courtyard with a backdrop of the Rappahannock River. For a contactless check in system, facial recognition stations are placed on the reception desk (seen in image). This device will take the visitors temperature and image to generate a visitors sticker. Behind the reception desk is a business work center. This space is separated from the main walkway by a planter. Plants are incorporated throughout the home to bring natural elements in, help reduce stress, and act as a barrier between seating spaces as an added layer of privacy.

This view also shows one of the Social Areas within the space. This zone encourages open communication between residents to build community connections. This social zone has a lowered ceiling feature to visually attract users. The lowered ceiling also increase a sense of intimacy. This feature includes slats to allow natural light from the windows above to continue to shine through.

FACADE ELEVATION

The facade of the residential units is designed to welcome interaction, with the use of seating along the corridor, and magnetic boards where residents can pin up notices, pictures and leave notes for each other. While it promotes interaction, it also has room for individuality, so residents know they have a place of their own. This includes varied colors units are associated with, as well as their military branch flag being displayed above their unit. Canopies and live-walls are used to signify where each unit is, and mimic exterior house features, like the roof and landscape.



This process sketch shows the initial features considered for the facade design.

RELEVANT THEORIES:

PLACE ATTACHMENT - Relates to building a Socially Sustainable Community. The design uses this theory to create spaces of engagement between residence, build a bond between the users and the space by creating a sense of identity in both the individual and community levels, and appeal to residents by creating a calming, inviting home.

HALL'S PROXIMITY THEORY - This theory is relevant to this project due to the pandemic design considerations, as well as considerations of different social comfort levels as these specific users have gone through trauma. This will be incorporated into the design by providing seating arrangement options for users.

ATTENTION REDUCTION - Relates to designing for people that have experienced stressful situations, by designing spaces that ease the mind through negative distractions, having places to relax, and fitting their needs.

THERAPEUTIC LANDSCAPE - This theory will be incorporated into the design of this Veterans Home by using natural elements, biophilia and access to the outside world, to increase healing.

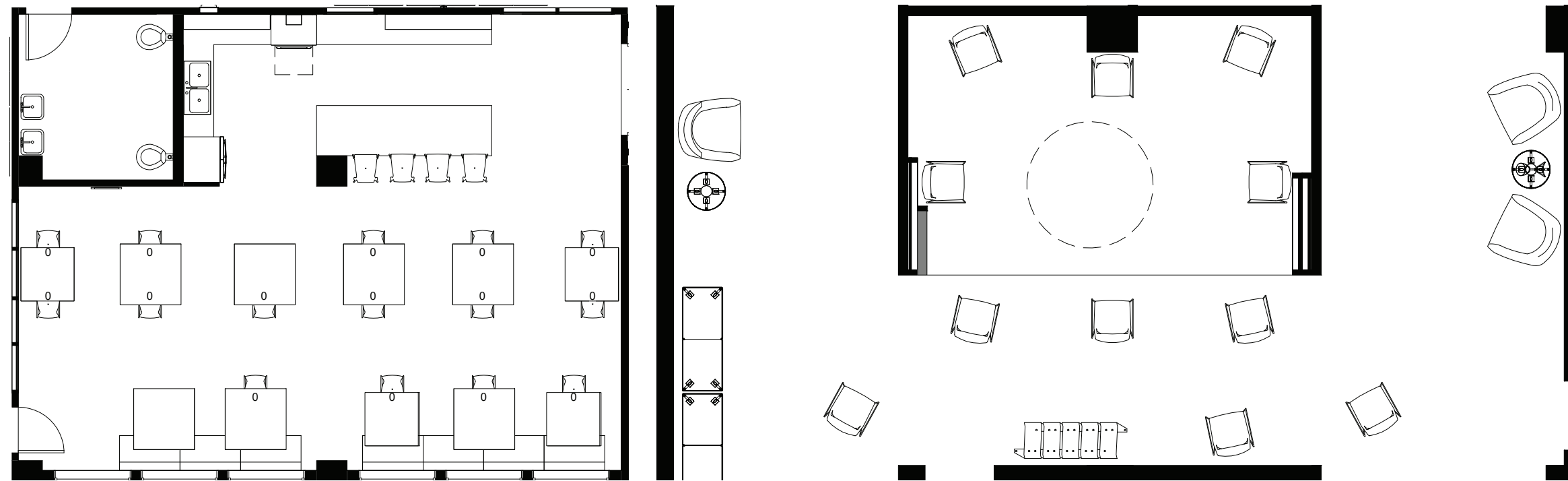
COMMUNITY DINING AREA VIEW



This room is a place where people come together. The Community Dining Area provides users with multiple seating options. It is designed with the kitchen opening onto it, so community members can engage in conversation with each other while they prepare their food and eat. Large windows are used through this space to invite residents inside to participate in social activities. This view shows the interaction between the kitchen and dining area, as well as the indoor track along the corridor.

Acoustical panels are used on the wall to absorb sound. Other materials in this space include a vinyl upholstery on the booths, for easy cleaning.

Open upper shelves were chosen because research showed that closed storage spaces can trigger stress, this stems from not knowing what is behind the enclosed casing. For the same reason, the base cabinet doors are glass.



ENLARGED ALTERNATIVE DINING AREA FLOOR PLAN (NOT TO SCALE)

The enlarged floor-plan shows an alternative space layout for the dining area. This layout fits current guidelines of seating six feet apart, during the pandemic. While this distancing may not always be needed, this space was designed to be prepared.

PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND SOCIAL SUPPORT

The design supports the physical, mental and social needs of the users. Physical needs are met through design that is inclusive to all users, as well as spaces for physical strength building. Mental needs are met through consideration of stimulation levels, and in spaces like the reading room and counseling spaces. Social needs are met throughout the whole home, by encouraging interaction and providing places of rest and individual reflection.

ENLARGED ALTERNATIVE FLEX SPACE FLOOR PLAN (NOT TO SCALE)

The full floorplan shows the flex space at full capacity, while this enlarged plan (above) provides an alternative layout that spaces seatings, and opens the room into the hallway.

ENLARGED ALTERNATIVE MULTIPURPOSE ROOM #1 (NOT TO SCALE)

Both multipurpose spaces can be arranged in a variety of ways to allow more flexibility within the space. This enlarged plan (right) shows one of the multipurpose spaces in an alternative form.

FLEX SPACE VIEW FROM CORRIDOR



This flex space is designed to open onto the common corridor, to allow for greater physical distancing when needed. This is done through stacking window walls, that then fold along the inside wall of the space, to maximize sight-lines, auditory projections and connection between users within this space. This design feature can also be used when physical distancing is not needed, to encourage those passing by to join the group activity or discussion. This view shows the process of transitioning the space into part of the corridor.

COURTYARD VIEW



This Veterans Home provides residents with options of activities to partake in. In the courtyard, multiple of these activities are available. The courtyard includes a covered outdoor dining space, providing residents with an additional seating options to choose from, and more seating to accommodate for physically distancing when needed. This area also acts a place for residents to gather and engage in conversation while enjoying the outdoors.

A fireplace is located near the garden. This feature also encourages interaction, by providing a central place for users to gather around. In the center of the courtyard are two basketball hoops. While this is not a full basketball court, this activity allows community members to bond, as well as build physical strength. This activity can double as community strength building and physical therapy and rehab for those recovering from injuries.

The final part to the courtyard is the Community Garden. Here residents can care for plants, vegetables and fruits together. This acts as a positive distraction, by providing a way for community engagement and motor skills buildings, but in a discrete way. The garden can also be used to grow food for the home, making it sustainable in environmental, economical, and social aspects.

Beyond the garden is the river. The back section of the courtyard is designed to provide views to the river, as well as privacy with a mixed use of higher walls and a low fence.