

**CULTURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY – LANDSCAPES \* OLMSTED PROJECT COVER SHEET**

Please submit completed form to: Architectural Survey Coordinator  
State Historic Preservation Office, Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development  
450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 5, Hartford, CT 06103

<b>I D E N T I F I C A T I O N</b>	<b>PROPERTY NAME</b> (Current/Historic)		
	Trinity College		
	<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>TOWN/CITY</b>	<b>VILLAGE</b>
	Hartford	Hartford	
	<b>JOB NUMBER</b>		
	Primary: 00601 Related Job Numbers:		
	<b>Landscape Type</b>		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Park, Parkway, Recreation Area. Scenic Reservation <input type="checkbox"/> City/Regional Plan, Improvement Project <input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision, Suburban Community <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> College/School Campus <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds of Residential Institution <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds of Public Building <input type="checkbox"/> Private Estate / Homestead <input type="checkbox"/> Cemetery / Burial Lot / Memorial / Monument <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds of Commercial / Industrial Building <input type="checkbox"/> Country Club / Resort, Hotel, Club <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds of Church <input type="checkbox"/> Arboretum, Garden <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibition, Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Miscellaneous		
	<b>DATE OF ORIGINAL PROJECT:</b> 1872		
	<b>SUBSEQUENT PROJECTS:</b> 1898		

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**DESIGNER(S) (primary)**

- Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr.
- John Charles Olmsted
- Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.
- Other firm member(s):
- Other notes:

Other Designers (prior to or following Olmsted project):

**Repositories consulted with source materials**

- Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Olmsted Archives (online albums)
- Library of Congress: Frederick Law Olmsted Papers (Trinity College)
- Olmsted Online (OlmstedOnline.org)
- National Archives and Record Administration
- Connecticut State Library
- Hartford History Center
- Other: Trinity College website, Olmsted Legacy Trail (olmstedlegacytrail.com)

**Observations regarding features characteristic of Olmsted firm design**

Trinity College was initially developed atop the hill where the Connecticut State Capitol building stands today beginning in 1823 and expanded in 1845. Bushnell Park was developed nearby in 1854. After Hartford was recognized as the sole state capital in 1872, the site determined most suitable for the construction of a state capitol building was the hill occupied by Trinity College. Following negotiations with state lawmakers, Trinity College trustees agreed to relocate the college. In 1872, Trinity College worked with Frederick Law Olmsted to identify new locations but did not select any of those recommended by the designer. Later, in 1875 and again in the 1890s, they engaged Frederick Law Olmsted to address site planning issues related to the hillside chosen for the campus. Olmsted consulted on grading, circulation, and planting decisions, guiding the establishment of the Long Walk and the entrance sequence at Summit Street. The Olmsted firm also prepared planting plans for several rows of English elm trees on the main quad. The plantings were laid out to form a T for Trinity when viewed from

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above. Many of the trees died following the introduction of Dutch elm disease in the 1950s and were replaced with Marshall seedless ashes.

The streetscape and entry node at Summit Street survive today along with the alignment of the Long Walk. Surviving trees parallel Seabury and Jarvis and project outward from Northam Towers into the open green of the central quad. Overall, the campus possesses a modicum of integrity for the Olmsted design.

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I D E N T I F I C A T I O N	<b>PROPERTY NAME</b> (Current/Historic) Trinity College (Job #00601)													
	<b>COUNTY</b> Hartford	<b>TOWN/CITY</b> Hartford	<b>VILLAGE</b>											
	<b>STREET AND NUMBER (and/or location)</b> 300 Summit Street													
	<b>OWNER(S)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE <input type="checkbox"/> MUNICIPAL <input type="checkbox"/> STATE <input type="checkbox"/> FEDERAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRIBAL <input type="checkbox"/> EASEMENT Trustees of Trinity College													
	<b>LAT/LONG COORDINATES</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Center Point <input type="checkbox"/> Polygon 41.747953, -72.690979													
	<b>PARCEL INFORMATION</b> <b>Acres:</b> 77.3 <b>PID(s):</b> <b>MBLU(s):</b> 132001001													
	<b>USE (Present)</b> College campus		<b>(Historic)</b> College campus											
	<b>SURVEY TYPE</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Reconnaissance-Level <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Intensive-Level													
	D E S C R I P T I O N	<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE</b> (Check all that apply) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Designed <input type="checkbox"/> Vernacular <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural/Ethnographic <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Linear <input type="checkbox"/> System/Multi-Site <input type="checkbox"/> Residential <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Institutional <input type="checkbox"/> Maritime <input type="checkbox"/> Green <input type="checkbox"/> Park- Active Recreation <input type="checkbox"/> Park-Passive Recreation or Commemorative <input type="checkbox"/> Other – specify:												
		<b>DATE OR PERIOD</b> (Include source of date) 1872; 1898												
<b>DESIGNERS</b> (Entities that created, designed, constructed, or shaped the landscape) Olmsted firm														
<b>DESIGN SCOPE</b> (For designed landscapes, explain what work was commissioned.) Grading, circulation, and planting plans														
<b>LOCATION OF DRAWINGS/IMAGES/SOURCE MATERIAL</b> Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site; Library of Congress														
<b>VISUAL ASSESSMENT SUMMARY</b> (Check boxes for the qualities that are key features of this landscape. If attaching descriptive narrative, consider these categories.)  <table border="0"> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Layout &amp; Spatial Relationships</b></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Water Features</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Circulation</b></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Drainage</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Topography</b></td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Buildings/Structures/Objects</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Plantings/Vegetation</b></td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Recreational Space</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Views &amp; Vistas</b></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other:</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Boundaries</b></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Design Style:</b> Picturesque</td> </tr> </table>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Layout &amp; Spatial Relationships</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Water Features</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Circulation</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Drainage</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Topography</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Buildings/Structures/Objects</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Plantings/Vegetation</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Recreational Space</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Views &amp; Vistas</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Boundaries</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Design Style:</b> Picturesque
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<b>C O N D I T I O N</b>	<b>EXISTING CONDITION</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recognizable <input type="checkbox"/> Not Extant/Not Recognizable Changes: Addition of sports fields; quad never completed as designed		
	<b>POTENTIAL THREATS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> None Known <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure Improvements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Onsite Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adjacent Development <input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism <input type="checkbox"/> Overuse <input type="checkbox"/> Deferred Maintenance <input type="checkbox"/> Invasive Vegetation <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental – specify: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other – specify: _____		
<b>E N V I R O N M E N T</b>	<b>SETTING</b> (One sentence description) Trinity College is located in south Hartford and edged by residences and commercial/institutional buildings		
	<b>VEGETATION</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maintained Open Land <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Open Land <input type="checkbox"/> Woodland/Forest <input type="checkbox"/> Wetland <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specimen Plants <input type="checkbox"/> Other – specify: _____		
	<b>SLOPE</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Level/Nearly Level <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moderate Slope <input type="checkbox"/> Steep Slope                      Elevation (ASML): 97-122'		
	<b>CONNECTICUT PHYSIOGRAPHIC PROVINCE (Eco-Region)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Northwest Highlands <input type="checkbox"/> Western Uplands <input type="checkbox"/> Western Coastal Slope <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Central Valley <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Coastal Slope <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Uplands		
	Soil Description: Dominated by Udorthents and urban soils, generally well drained		
<b>H I S T O R Y</b>	<b>SUMMARY</b> (Provide a brief overview in this space. More detailed narrative can be attached.) Trinity College relocated to its current site after state legislators sought to site the new State Capitol on the hill overlooking Bushnell Park in 1872. Later that year, the college engaged Frederick Law Olmsted to help identify potential new locations for the campus. In 1875 and circa 1890, they again engaged Olmsted to address site planning for the campus. Olmsted consulted on grading, circulation, and plantings, guiding the establishment of the Long Walk, the entrance sequence at Summit Street, and elm tree plantings.		
	<b>NATIONAL REGISTER RECOMMENDATION</b> Entered by: Liz Sargent HLA <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended Eligible (Criterion <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Eligible <input type="checkbox"/> Not Evaluated Explanation: The campus does not possess sufficient landscape integrity for the Olmsted design NR Listed: <input type="checkbox"/> District-Contributing <input type="checkbox"/> District-Non-Contributing <input type="checkbox"/> Individual <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient Documentation		
<b>R E P O R T E D B Y</b>	<b>NAME</b> Liz Sargent and Maeve Corcoran	<b>ORGANIZATION</b> Red Bridge Group	<b>DATE</b> December 2021
	<b>ADDRESS</b> 2100 Green Street, San Francisco, California 94123		
	<b>PHOTOGRAPHER</b> Liz Sargent	<b>DATE</b> September 13, 2021	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Permission to use photographs (public domain)
	<b>SURVEY METHOD</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site Visit/In-Person Walkover <input type="checkbox"/> Drive-through/Windshield <input type="checkbox"/> Digital Review Only		

**ATTACHMENTS (Include the following items in the PDF)**

- Location Map     Site Map     Photographs with captions     Historic Images (if applicable)  
 Narrative Description of Property     Historical Narrative of Property     References

**DESCRIPTION (Visual Assessment Summary)**

**Layout & Spatial Relationships:** Trinity College is located within the urban landscape of Hartford, edged to the north by Vernon Street, to the east by Broad Street, to the south by New Britain Avenue, and to the west by Summit Street. The main quad sits atop an elevated terrace that overlooks a cluster of sports fields to the east. A curving access road—College Terrace—leads up the hill from Zion Street to the west. The main quad is a rectangular open space edged on three sides (north, south, and west) by a series of connected buildings. The Chapel, an important symbolic element of the college, which maintains strong ties to a religious heritage, is at the northeast corner of the main quad and towers over and is visible from the remainder of the quad. Trees line a walk system that parallels the building facades. There is a grove of trees within the center of the quad and one historic English elm tree. A statue of Bishop Thomas Brownell commemorates the college's founder.

**Circulation:** An arched entrance leads into the main quad from the north and provides access to an orthogonal walk system that connects the visitor with the Chapel and each of the other buildings within the quad as it parallels the interior perimeter of the space. A walk also extends from the southeast corner of the quad, down the sloped hillside at the eastern edge of the quad, and along the base of the hill, passing the sports facilities. A principal entrance into the quad occurs through Northham Towers, approximately midway along the western edge of the path.

**Topography:** The main quad is relatively level, while the land slopes away steeply at the eastern edge of the terraced landform to a lower-level area.

**Plantings/Vegetation:** Trees edge the buildings and walk along the western edge of the quad and form a grove in the center. One large tree is a remnant of the English elms said to have been planted on the advice of Frederick Law Olmsted.

**Views & Vistas:** Views of the Chapel are afforded from much of the main quad, and from the elevated terrain toward the city to the east.

**Buildings/Structures/Objects:** The Chapel forms the northeastern end of the main quad. It is edged to the west by Downes Memorial and Williams Memorial building. The western edge of the quad is formed by Jarvis Hall, Northham Towers, and Seabury Hall. To the south of the main quad are Cook Hall, Goodwin Woodward Hall, and Clement Chemistry Building. Raether Library and Information Technology Center form the southeastern end of the main quad. A statue of college founder Bishop Thomas Brownell is in the central eastern part of the main quad.

**Recreational Space:** The main quad allows for passive recreation, while the lower area to the east contains ball fields, tennis courts, and a track and field area.

**HISTORICAL NARRATIVE**

Founded as Washington College in 1823, Trinity College initially occupied a rural 14-acre parcel in the "College Hill" district on the outskirts of Hartford. As originally established, the campus consisted of two modest brownstone buildings. The campus was expanded to include a third building in 1845. The grounds of the campus included tree plantings and other features intended to emphasize the location along the Park River. In 1854, lands around the campus were developed as part of Bushnell Park, considered to be the nation's first municipal parkland, reflecting an increase in the importance of the area as Hartford's center of commerce.

**CONTINUATION SHEET Trinity College (#00601) / 300 Summit Street, Hartford**

In 1872, after years of sharing the role with New Haven, Hartford became recognized as the sole capitol of Connecticut. As lawmakers sought a suitable site for construction of a capitol building, the hillside location occupied by Trinity College was increasingly identified as desirable. Following negotiations with state legislators, trustees of Trinity College agreed to part with the land in exchange for \$600,000. Faced with the need to relocate to another site within the city, the Trustees engaged Frederick Law Olmsted, and later Jacob Weidenmann, to identify locations that could accommodate the collegiate institution. For a brief period between 1872 and 1878, both the college and the State Capitol occupied the site as the latter was under construction.<sup>1</sup>

Olmsted provided a report identifying ten potential sites, evaluating each based on views, soil health, and distance to city amenities. Olmsted wrote to the college president that: "A well-designed campus," would foster "acquisition of the general quality of culture which is the chief end of a liberal education."<sup>2</sup> Some were indicated as less desirable due to their limited size and security, or because surrounding neighborhoods had acquired a reputation for "hard drinking, brawling, and licentiousness." Olmsted also indicated that it would be difficult to avoid these neighborhoods entirely, noting that, "a choice between them must be made chiefly upon a judgment of the convenience of relations which would be had with the city and of the degree in which the character of the neighborhood of each is likely, under the influence which the location of the college will exert, to be indirectly auxiliary to its purposes."<sup>3</sup> The three sites recommended by Olmsted were the Blue Hills site, Rocky Hill site, and Thrall property.

The Trustees, however, did not concur with Olmsted's evaluation and declined to select any of the sites he had recommended. Instead, they initially offered to purchase the Penfield Farm site on the north side of Park Street for \$2,000, but their offer was rejected. They subsequently made an offer on the 80-acre Summit Street site for \$225,000, which was accepted. The site, described as, "a wooded trap rock ridge far from the city center and surrounded by cheap boarding houses," did not meet any of Olmsted's guidelines for a site suitable for the campus.<sup>4</sup>

In 1875, Olmsted was consulted again to aid in the design development of the grounds, which was proposed to include a grand four-quadrangle layout based on the recommendation of the British architects hired to design the buildings. Olmsted's design plans included topographical studies, preliminary sketches for the campus layout, a plan for the layout and planting of Summit Street, and a detailed sketch of the Long Walk. The topographical studies show exposed ledges and shallow rock requiring immense grading to create spaces adequate for traditional campus needs. Olmsted's sketches show roadways and paths navigating the uneven terrain. Plans prepared by English architect William Burges were implemented by local architect Francis Hatch Kimball, who executed the design in the High Victorian Style and created the iconic "Long Walk" along Northam, Jarvis, and Seabury Halls. Other portions of the proposed quadrangle designed by Burges were never built due to lack of funds.

In 1883, Olmsted recommended to the Trustees that they plant a line of trees perpendicular to a line of elms along the Long Walk to form a T for Trinity visible from above. Many of the trees died following the introduction of Dutch elm disease in the 1950s and were replaced with Marshall seedless ashes.<sup>5</sup> Surviving trees parallel Seabury and Jarvis and project outward from Northam Towers. In 1893, the firm prepared a plan for "A Parkway West of College Building" that established the present-day streetscape and entrance along Summit Street.

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<sup>1</sup> "Trinity College." Available at <https://www.olmstedlegacytrail.com/trinity-college>. Accessed December 2, 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Olmsted 200. "Spotlight on... Trinity College." Available at <https://olmsted200.org/spotlight-on-trinity-college/>. Accessed December 10, 2021.

<sup>3</sup> "Trinity College." Available at <https://www.olmstedlegacytrail.com/trinity-college>. Accessed December 2, 2021.

<sup>4</sup> "Trinity College." Available at <https://www.olmstedlegacytrail.com/trinity-college>. Accessed December 2, 2021.

<sup>5</sup> Brendon W. Clarke, "The History of Elms at Trinity," Trinity History Department, available online at <https://commons.trincoll.edu/historyblog/2017/11/07/the-history-of-elm-trees-at-trinity/>.

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Portions of these designs remain in evidence today, with the current graded hillside of the main quadrangle also likely surviving from the firm’s involvement in the campus design.<sup>6</sup>

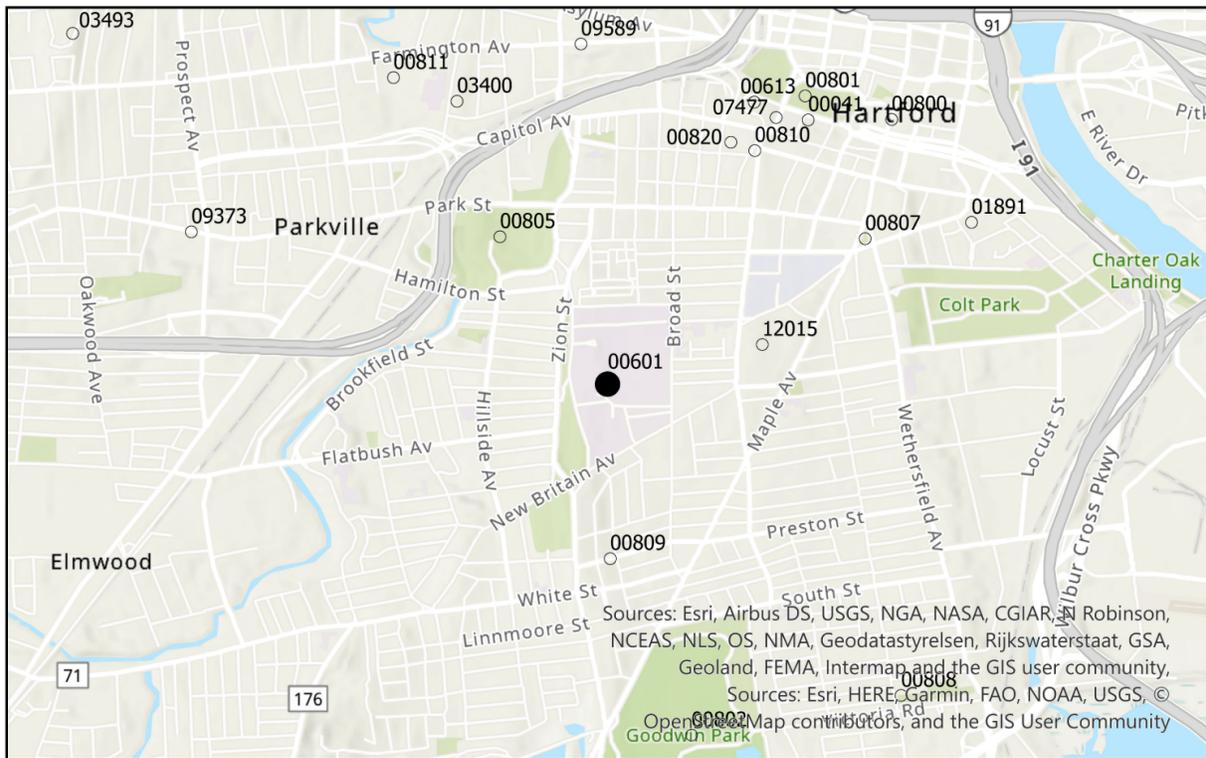
The bones of Olmsted’s recommendations appear to survive today. The campus has been expanded since the nineteenth century. In the 1960s and 1970s, two new buildings, Mather Quadrangle and LSC Quadrangle were developed in the south. Architect Nicholas Quennell introduced tree and understory plantings, light standards, and new paved walking routes throughout the campus in 1998. Lastly, Mather Quadrangle was renamed to Gates Quadrangle in 2012, and completely redesigned by the Chicago-based landscape architecture firm, Hoerr Schaudt.<sup>7</sup>

**REFERENCES**

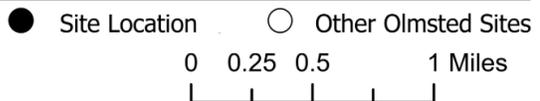
Trinity College. “Trinity College History.” Available at <https://www.trincoll.edu/abouttrinity/history-traditions/history/>. Accessed December 10, 2021.

“Trinity College.” Available at <https://www.olmstedlegacytrail.com/trinity-college>. Accessed December 2, 2021.

**GRAPHICS**



**JOB: 00601 LOCATION: Hartford**



<sup>6</sup> “Trinity College.” Available at <https://www.olmstedlegacytrail.com/trinity-college>. Accessed December 2, 2021.

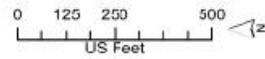
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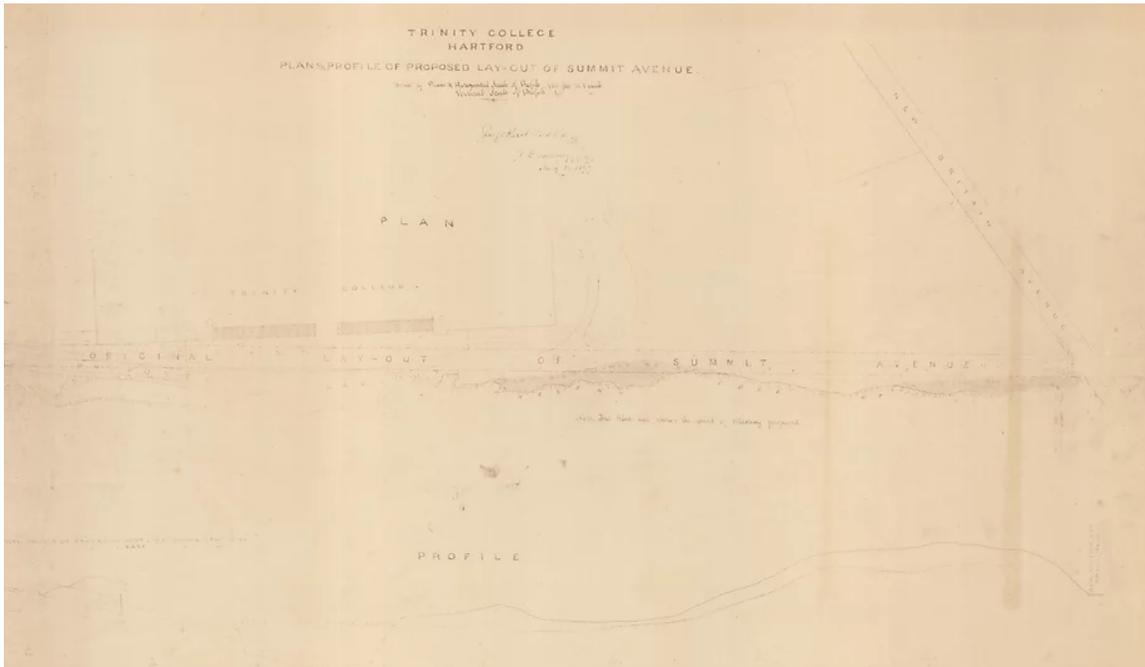


JOB: 00601 LOCATION: Hartford PROJECT: Trinity College

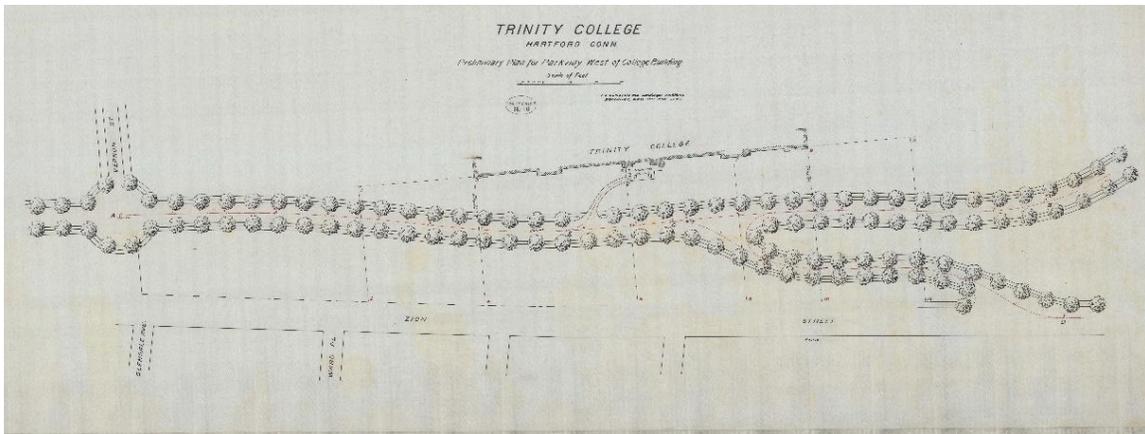


**CULTURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY – LANDSCAPES \* OLMSTED PROJECT**

**CONTINUATION SHEET Trinity College (#00601) / 300 Summit Street, Hartford**



Plan & Profile of Proposed Lay-out of Summit Avenue. (Source: courtesy of Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site)



Trinity College, Preliminary Plan for Parkway west of College Building. (Source: courtesy of Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site)



View toward the Long Walk (1885). (Source: to be added)



View northwest toward the Chapel with the buildings that face the main quad beyond. (All photographs taken by authors in 2021 unless otherwise noted)



View south across the green from the Chapel toward the buildings that frame the quad and the Long Walk (right).



View southwest past the Brownell statue toward the buildings framing the quad.



View north toward the historic English elm that survives from the Olmsted planting plan.