The University of Akron

The Cuyahoga Valley Resource and Development Center

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The Cuyahoga Valley Resource and Development Center

Senior Honors Project

Spring Semester 2022

Suzanne Kroll, Donald Alexander, Emily Booth

Lindsay Shook

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April 30, 2022
When first posed with the opportunity to design anything for my honors research project, I had a plethora of ideas going through my mind. Though I knew for sure that I wanted to design something commercial for my project. I thought through different ideas for restaurants, hotels, retail stores, and eventually decided I wanted to design something that would better the community around it, no matter where I eventually located my project. The previous year in my Design Studio III course, we were learning about sustainable design. I was immediately drawn to it. I did not realize how harmful to the environment the manufacturing of paint, flooring, and furniture could be. Everything about the manufacturing process for interior finishes was full of pollutants. In Design Studio III, I was able to learn about more sustainable finishes, and that there are companies out there that have a focus on sustainability and trying to minimize their carbon footprint. I knew I wanted to learn more about sustainable design, and I thought my honors research project was the perfect place for this.

Based off my interest in sustainable design practices, I got the idea for The Cuyahoga Valley Resource and Development Center. I am originally from Pennsylvania, so at the start of this project, I was very unfamiliar with the Cuyahoga Valley. I wanted to change that. I knew that the Cuyahoga Valley had a rich history. The Cuyahoga Valley National Park was what really captured my attention and interest. As I started researching the national park, I realized how important this piece of land was for the people that have inhabited it over the past few millennia. This was the perfect location to design a project focused on sustainable practices. Immersing my sustainability project in nature felt right, so that those who would visit it are put right in the nature that sustainable design practices are fighting to preserve. This is when I decided that an educational facility seemed quite fitting. A facility aimed to educate families in the area of the importance of the natural elements and life in the Cuyahoga Valley, while also employing
sustainable design practices to further implement the significance of protecting the nature around us.

From this project, I hoped to learn more about sustainable design practices, as well as more about the Cuyahoga Valley since I am new to the area. I wanted to delve deeper into the manufacturing of interior finishes. I wanted to learn more about the numerous qualifications and certifications that a product can have to deem it “sustainable.” In choosing the location of the Cuyahoga Valley, it gave me a chance to learn more about where I’m going to living for the next few years. Nature is something that has always been important to me, and I enjoyed getting to know about this national park.

To prepare for this project, I began doing some research on the Cuyahoga Valley to understand the history of the national park. I learned that people have inhabited the valley for over 12,000 years. By the mid-1700s, the Europeans started establishing trading posts throughout the area and making way for more permanent settlers within the following few decades. The Cuyahoga Valley was changed and adapted to all the different groups have people that have lived on this land. It continued to develop as more settlers started moving into this area. Throughout my research into the development of the valley, one notable point stuck out to me: how the land was changed and constructed to fit the people that were inhabiting it at the time. This land was cherished by the people that used it, and it was clear that the Cuyahoga Valley was crucial to the start of settlers in the state of Ohio. Everything became a resource, especially the Ohio and Erie Canal that traveled through the Cuyahoga Valley to connect the two rivers and create an easier route of transportation.

From here, my research became more focused on elements I wanted to bring into my design from the area. During my first round of research, I found the F.A. Seiberling Nature
The F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm in particular has plenty of areas for the kids to interact with and enjoy. It has areas where you feel shrunk down to the size of a bug with large displays above your head, and you feel as if you are walking on the forest floor. These details from the F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm became important to my own design, and you can see how I used some of those elements. I created the kid’s reading nook, and the tables in the lobby for coloring, so the children have specific areas just for them. I also included a step up at the one display in the museum so the kids could get a closer look. It was important to me that the whole family could come to this building and enjoy it. My design is meant for all age groups.

The area I chose to locate my project in did inspire my design. The Cuyahoga Valley is bursting with history about its natural elements, the people that have inhabited it, and the overall development and changes that people over multiple generations have made to it. I wanted to be able to highlight the constantly changing Cuyahoga Valley in my design choices, so I gave plenty of room for the space to be changed and adapt like the Cuyahoga Valley. I wanted to locate it closer to Cuyahoga Falls because it is my favorite area of the Cuyahoga Valley. My first focus when designing this space was making sure that it felt very open, light, and bright inside. I wanted the nature of Cuyahoga Falls outside the windows to be able to seek for itself. So, the windows that are in the space I purposely made very large. I also used plenty of glass in the interior so as not to break up the natural light that would be flooding into the space. No matter which section of The Cuyahoga Valley Resource and Development Center you are standing in, I wanted you to be able to have great views of Cuyahoga Falls. The doors at the rear of the
classroom and the museum spaces are placed strategically for customers to be able to view the nature around them out the back doors as soon as they pass through the front entry of the respective sides of the building.

My next focus was making sure that the exhibits were the focal point. I left most of the walls white with little accents of green, again, just to draw on all the natural light that the windows and glass doors will be allowing into the space. Keeping the walls a neutral color also helps to highlight the nature that will be displayed on the museum half of the space. The multiple colors in the images on the walls and the nature items on display benefit from the simple white background. This makes the museum and the classroom spaces adaptable to whatever needs to be displayed at that time. Every item in both spaces is completely mobile. Since my design of this building is smaller and more intimate, it was important to me that the layout was able to be changed.

I designed this space with families of the surrounding community in mind. I wanted to make The Cuyahoga Valley Resource and Development Center a family friendly educational facility. The intention would be to have a variety of weekly classes offered to specific age groups. My favorite part of the classroom space is the kid’s reading corner. This is a great space to utilize for children’s courses to have story-telling sessions there. This corner could also be a spot for children to be in the room during an adult course. That way the whole family can be included, and it can be easier for adults to attend classes knowing that their kids can be in the room with them. There will be plenty of story books about different plants and animals native to the Cuyahoga Valley for the kids to read and learn from while picking a comfortable spot in the tent or on the faux grass rug.
I grew up in a very rural area, and the state park close to my home frequently offered classes like the ones I’m describing in a few of their nature centers. I have fond memories of taking classes there as a child. Making The Cuyahoga Valley Resource and Development Center a family-oriented space is important, so family members continue to return to this space. Due to my positive experiences in the nature centers growing up, that makes me want to eventually take my own children there. I want to create that kind of environment in this space. One that people want to frequently return to as they start to create their own families. The kids and adults are equally the target audience. Being able to create a space that works for a variety of age groups and learning abilities is crucial to the success and impact this nature center will have on the community.

The purpose of my building is primarily to educate. There is still so much that people, including myself, do not know and appreciate about not just the Cuyahoga Valley, but the environment around us in general. This design is meant to educate its consumers on nature and what steps we can do to help preserve and protect the land around us. I focused on having a rather simplistic design in a Scandinavian Modern style. This style best encapsulated the natural and neutral elements that I wanted to use. Using the Scandinavian Modern design style meant the use of light wood floors, mostly white walls, and the natural-like light wood furniture pieces. As I was mentioning earlier, I want the focus of this design to be the outdoors, and the large patio in the back of the building. All the green outside would draw the attention rather than brightly colored walls or interior finishes. The purpose for the interior was to not distract from the nature surrounding the building. The white walls, clean lines, and minimal green accents accomplished that goal.
The Cuyahoga Valley Resource and Development Center would greatly improve the environment and community where it is placed. It is very important that the community members have a respect for where they live and the environment around them. My goal in designing this was to create a space where people can learn about small tasks they can do to live more sustainable lives. My vision was the classes offered here would be a mix of history courses as well as sustainability courses. The classes would teach local residents about recycling options in the area, how to reuse items in their home instead of throwing them away and reduce their overall carbon footprint on the community. I have been slowly learning this for myself since moving to a new area but having a facility with classes to teach community members would be a drastic improvement to the area.

As I move into my future career, I would love to incorporate more sustainable practices and finishes into my designs. My current job does not have me completing my own projects, but as I grow in my profession, I will certainly keep what I have learned from this project in mind. I am now much more aware of what sustainable design certifications are available and how to find finishes that meet those specific criteria. At my job currently, we do have finishes that are LEED, Green Guard, and Cradle to Cradle certified. Being able to complete this extra research for this project gave me more time outside my work setting to learn about what these individual certifications are. I do see more and more architecture firms and clients requiring these certifications for finishes and installation practices for commercial projects. I like that the design industry is starting to adapt and change to be more environmentally conscious and aware of the pollutants that certain manufacturers create. We do have better and more sustainable options now, so we should take advantage of those opportunities to make a difference in our communities.
Throughout my design process for The Cuyahoga Valley Resource and Development Center, I did accomplish my main learning objective of being more aware and knowledgeable of sustainable design practices, finishes, and furniture. The honors research project allowed me to explore my own objectives separate from my other courses. The self-driven nature allowed me to focus on what I felt I needed to learn more about, and it improved my self-discipline in finishing a project. I will take both of these skills with me into my future and continue to improve on them. There is always more to learn about sustainable design, and I look forward to exploring more of this in my future career.
CUYAHOGA VALLEY RESOURCE & DEVELOPMENT CENTER
COLUMBUS, OH

ARCHITECT
ABC ARCHITECTS
123 SMITH ST
AKRON, OH 44325

DESIGNER
LINDSAY SHOOK
185 E MILL ST
AKRON, OH 44325
NOTES:
P1: Sherwin Williams, Lucky Green
   SW 6962
P3: Sherwin Williams, Extra White
   SW 7650
B1: Tarkett, Type TV, 4" H, Mist
D1: Rustica, Double Pocket Doors,
    Aluminum Metal with White Finish
D2: Home Depot, Solid Core 10 Lite Clear Glass White Primed Wood
    Interior Door

DIVIDER WALL WEST ELEVATION

ENTRY NORTH WALL ELEVATION
A classroom space to be used for educational classes revolving around the Cuyahoga Valley. Each class would be tailored to a specific age group and the space is large enough to be adjusted to accommodate the variety of uses.
The other half of the building serves as a museum space that will have frequently rotating exhibits with natural items from the Cuyahoga Valley. This space will supplement the classes being offered at that time.
ENTRANCE
I created this corner of the classroom space specifically for children's classes. This is a cozy corner for the instructor to use for story-telling, or for the kids to wait in while their parents are in a class.

The outdoor space was very important to this, as I wanted the consumer to be able to stand outside and truly and experience see the Cuyahoga Valley that they just learned about inside.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>IMAGES</th>
<th>MATERIAL</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>VENDOR</th>
<th>LOCATION(S)</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
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<tr>
<td>LVT1</td>
<td><img src="image1" alt="LVT" /></td>
<td>LVT</td>
<td>Draft, Abstract, Pax Crystal (D209) 12&quot; x 24&quot;</td>
<td>Mannington</td>
<td>Use as flooring throughout space</td>
<td>RECEIVED</td>
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<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Paint" /></td>
<td>paint</td>
<td>Lucky Green SW 6926, 146-C6</td>
<td>Sherwin Williams</td>
<td>Used on columns in lobby</td>
<td>RECEIVED</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Used on Museum display case bases</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Paint" /></td>
<td>paint</td>
<td>Ellie Gray SW 7650, 239-C6</td>
<td>Sherwin Williams</td>
<td>Used in Classroom on accent walls East and West Walls</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Paint" /></td>
<td>Paint</td>
<td>Extra White SW 7006, 257-C1</td>
<td>Sherwin Williams</td>
<td>Restroom Partitions All Restroom Door Frames</td>
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<td>T1</td>
<td><img src="image5" alt="Tile" /></td>
<td>tile</td>
<td>Light Grey Natural Pebble Floor and Wall Tile, 12 x 12</td>
<td>Home Depot</td>
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<td><img src="image6" alt="Sticker" /></td>
<td>sticker</td>
<td>Custom Water Sticker</td>
<td>Custom</td>
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<td>G1</td>
<td><img src="image7" alt="Glass" /></td>
<td>glass</td>
<td>Custom Size Glass</td>
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<td>Used in Museum display cases</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rug</td>
<td>Premium Turf Rug Green Artificial Grass Rug 7’ x 10’</td>
<td>Home Depot</td>
<td>Used in Classroom Space</td>
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<tr>
<td>D1</td>
<td>double pocket door</td>
<td>Suite Double Converging Pocket Doors, Aluminum Metal with White Finish</td>
<td>Rustica</td>
<td>Used as door from entry into classroom and museum space</td>
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<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>vinyl base</td>
<td>Type TV, 4&quot;, Mist</td>
<td>Tarkett</td>
<td>Used throughout space</td>
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<tr>
<td>D2</td>
<td>glass panel door</td>
<td>Solid Core 10 Lite Clear Glass White Primed Wood Interior Door Slab 3’ x 7’</td>
<td>Home Depot</td>
<td>Used between classroom and museum space</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>H1</td>
<td>door lever</td>
<td>Halifax Square Satin Nickel Passage Door Handle</td>
<td>Home Depot</td>
<td>Used on D2</td>
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<tr>
<td>L1</td>
<td>wall washer</td>
<td>WAC Lighting, Wall Wash Single Light 7” LED Monopoint Accent Light with 40-degree beam angle Integrated LED</td>
<td>Build</td>
<td>Throughout space</td>
<td></td>
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See lighting plan for exact locations.
<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L2</td>
<td>wall sconce</td>
<td>Nuvo Lighting, Hawk Single Light 5” LED Wall Sconce with Frosted Glass Shade Integrated LED</td>
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<tr>
<td>L3</td>
<td>mini pendant</td>
<td>WAC Lighting, Tube Single Light 4-15/16” W LED Outdoor Mini Pendant with 33-degree beam spread Integrated LED</td>
<td>Build</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Reception L-Desk with Reversible Return

Warm Ash/Brushed Nickel

National Business Furniture

74.25” W x 65.75” D x 41.85” H
B

Sayl Chair

Fog/ Studio White Frame with Shale Upholstery

Herman Miller

24.5” W x 26” D x 40.75” H
C
Graham Buffet
Auburn Finish
Pottery Barn
72” x 18” x 31”
D

L Shaped Desk with Storage and Hutch

Aspen Finish

Madison Liquidators

71” x 95”
E

Barnes Upholstered Bench

Light Gray Upholstery

All Modern

18.8” x 48” x 18.8”
F
Oeuf Bear Play Chair
Birch/White
West Elm
13” Sq. x 22”
G
Oeuf Play Table
Birch/White
West Elm
33.25" x 27.25" x 18.25"
Surround Desk
Steel Frame/Ash Veneer Top
Steelcase
48” x 24” x 30”
Aubrey 4-Piece Bookcase
Dutch White Finish
Pottery Barn
74.5” x 17” x 72”
Collapsible Play Tent
Gray Cotton Canvas
West Elm Kids
42.5” x 41.5” x 43.5”
Natural Tree Stump Side Table
Natural Wood
West Elm
12”-15” Dia. X 19”
Chelmsford Dining Table
Natural Wood Grain Color Variation
Wayfair
55” x 24” x 29”
M
Framework Upholstered Dining Chair
Frost Gray Twill Upholstery, Burnt Wax Legs
West Elm
18.7” x 21” x 33”
N

Metal Magazine Rack

Transparent Acrylic Shelves and Aluminum Legs

Wayfair

21.5” x 17.7” x 57”