Laurel Branch Library
Laurel, Maryland

Project Name / Location
Laurel Branch Library / Laurel, MD

Project Category
Institutional Architecture

Project Synopsis
Envisioned as a modern space for discovery and community rather than a repository for print media, Laurel Branch Library embraces its place in the community through transparency — dissolving the barriers between interior and exterior while providing an array of modern educational amenities. At 31,000 sf, its open, intuitive floorplan and comprehensive technology integration along with its pedestrian friendly location make Laurel Branch Library an accessible space for socializing and exploring educational resources. Private study and conference rooms serve as meeting spaces for groups of students and local organizations, and all user groups are valued with their own modern spaces including adult, teen, and children's reading areas with specially selected, age appropriate features and furnishings.

The liveliest of these spaces is the children's wing, or "Discovery Island"— an exploration zone intended to encourage early literacy. Children enter via a cave-like opening in a stone wall, emerging onto a lush tropical island where they are greeted by reading nooks tucked into the greenery. Young readers navigate the stacks, following illuminated dinosaur tracks to discover a complete model Nanotyrannus skeleton, encased in the glass floor, and illuminated from within as though recently excavated. The remainder of the tracks lead young readers to another hidden reading nook — this time disguised as a discarded dinosaur ribcage. Utilizing Laurel Branch Library's transparency to full effect, this nook overlooks an adjoining pathway, linking the library to the newly renovated historic Emancipation Community Park.

Public Access Area (covered by emergency generator)
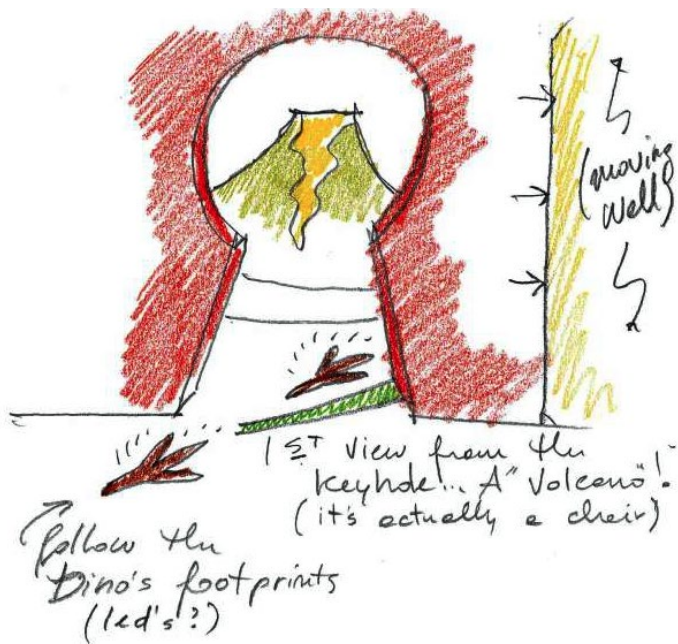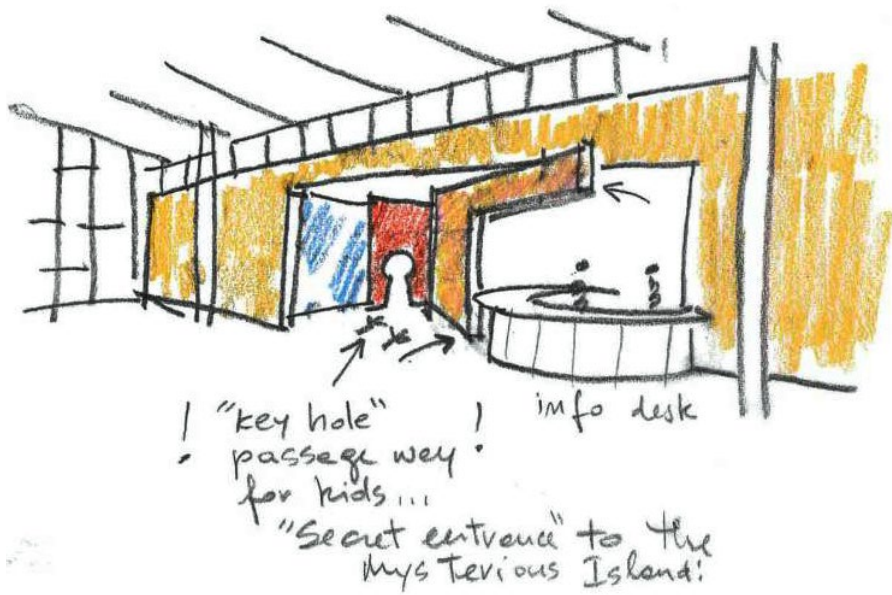
Staff and Service Area

Adult and Teen areas

Children's Area

OUTDOOR STORY SPACE

ABLE CURB

WATER FEATURE

VEHICULAR BOOK DROP-OFF

WINDOW LEDGE SEATS

DINOSAUR PIT

ELEC. ROOM

MECH. ROOM

STORY ROOM

LOADING

STAFF WORKROOM

STAFF KITCHEN

BOOK DROP

MAIN STOAGE

FAMILY TOILET

TOILET

TOILET

VOLCANO SEAT

I.T. ROOM

STAFF WORKROOM

COFF.

COFF.

LOUNGE

COPY CENTER

LOBBY

TEEN ZONE

FIREPLACE LOUNGE

IMFORMATION DESK

CUSTOMER SERVICE DESK

LIBRARY ENTRANCE

ENTRANCE VESTIBULE

VENDING CAFE

SELF CHECKS

STUDY ROOM

PUBLIC MEETING. RM.

STUDY ROOM

COMPUTER. LAB

PUBLIC MEETING. RM.

KIT.

STUDY ROOM

TABLE AND CHAIR STOR.

STUDY ROOM

"WHISPER" ROOM

ECO LAWN

N

0'   10'   20'   40'

Floorplan + site plan

Section

Main entrance

Lobby entrance / cafe

Circulation desk / stacks

!"key hole" passage way for kids...
"Secret entrance" to the Mysterious Island!

info desk

Children's area "Discovery Island"

(moving well)

1st view from the keyhole... A "Volcano"! (it's actually a chair)

Follow the Dino's footprints (led's?)
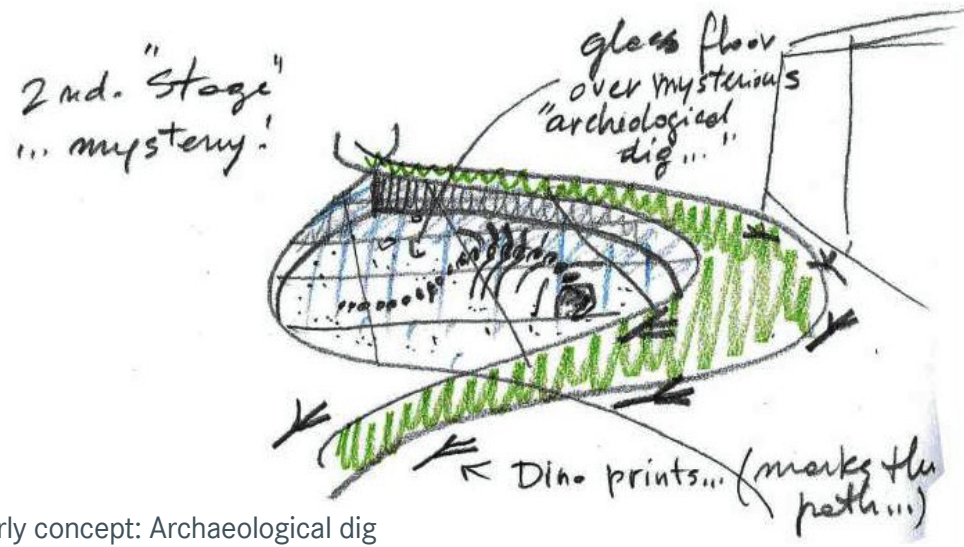
Early concept: Archaeological dig

Reading nooks

Teen zone

South exterior