

Etown Southern-Campus Mixed-Use Development for College and Community

EGR 496 - Architectural Studio II

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Cafe/Residence Hall

This development had both students and community of Elizabethtown College in mind when creating this cafe/residence hall. The rationale behind this combination of two opposite properties is when their peak hours are, the cafe would run throughout the morning into the late evening around 4pm the latest while residence halls would have their sleeping hours around 10pm. Etown additionally had a cafe prior to this idea, and the school doesn't have a building meant for outside guests or community members to enjoy. Being a student at Elizabethtown, I've had the experience of all the housing being taken and there not being limited options. With more incoming students and more students needing single rooms, this building will be built with that in mind while additionally having rooms for triples.

The location of this mixed-use development matters a lot due to access to roadways and having useable land. After surveying the allotted land, I decided to go with the area next to the pathway leading into Etown and below Bower's Writing Center. This piece of land is already mostly clear with only a small number of trees that would be interfering, which helps environmental impacts on the surrounding area. The only challenge with this plot would be the slop where there's a +10ft increase in elevation. This does make the area difficult to work with and makes most of the building underground, but I used this disadvantage to benefit from a separation between the cafe and residence area while being in the same building. Considering the new road traffic, there would be an increase to cars going into this neighborhood, however the amount of traffic would only be about 30 more cars per hour and delivery of food and materials for the cafe could all be taken in a van or small truck.



Figure 1: Footprint of Mixed-use Building plus Parking on the left

Then designing the cafe and residence hall is straight forward, stay in the vernacular of the college while creating a new sense of being updated shown in Figure 2. One of the main features is the tower on the corner of the building. This isn't out of the established vernacular and master plan of Etown because BSC already has a similar feature in the back. While the BSC hides this tower, I designed this building to stand out of the blocky nature of Etown's buildings. The tower additionally gives the cafe a marketable feature and an amazing sitting area in the hexagon tower. Additionally, learning about the benefits and sustainability of green roofs, I added a green roof to the residence hall section. This green roof uses insulation and layers of polyester system commonly found and specified by BMI [1]. Besides the tower and green roof, the building follows a similar pattern to Hackman South and North with concrete lining with brick exterior walls. The separation of the two entities is the two separate doors with the right most door leading to the cafe while the left most door leads to stairs to the second floor where the dorms would be. With the current layout and space, I was able to fit 6, 2 person dorms, and 3, 3 person dorms. To be fair, that's not a lot of dorms, but I figured that it would be wise to build small first and then leaving room for expansion on the left. In Figure 1 you can see there is still unused space on the right side of it (which would be to the left on Figure 2) where it can expand while you can create an additional floor for a second floor for the residence hall.



Figure 2: Designed Cafe/Residence Hall with parking lot on the right

This space doesn't only create a new dining option on campus and housing options but also creates another space for students to study. About 27% of college students prefer to study in a cafe [2], even though this isn't most college students there is a good population of students on Etown that probably would want a cafe to study at and Jay's nest doesn't fill that need and Blue Bean has gotten pretty packed over the couple of years. Additionally, I designed it with smart windows like the ones from Bowers Center to avoid glaring. This would bring a new space on campus for that need while being available to the community. One of the main features of Etown is the carrot cake and the only space on campus to get one is at Jay's nest and that is difficult for community members able to enjoy this unique thing of Etown. The new cafe would be able to give a space to get a carrot cake or pastry while not having to go into the center of campus. While it is a bit of a distance for some students, it would be a 10-minute walk from Schlosser Hall, which would be the farthest distance a student would walk from.

Playground

Designing an area that can be used by everyone including ADA accessible and elderly needs is interesting but accomplishable with the right thought process. In Figure 3 and Figure 4 I made a small playground that would be able to fit the needs of children that need wheelchairs, elderly, and your typical child. I wanted to give the sense of community and gathering when creating this area, that's why there are three houses in a circle that give children the ability to play together. The boulders in the center of the "town" allow children that want to climb the ability to while be central to play area and not separate. Throughout the whole area I used a rubber surface that is flushed with all access areas to allow wheelchair access and ease of use. I also added the classic things you would see as a park of slides, swings, and seesaws which all are modified to be able to be used by a wheelchair kid.

For the elderly, there is a lot to do with mobility and different elevations. I wanted to include a section that will test their ability to walk on different surfaces like rocks and gravel. Also having two different styles of staircases, one being more rigorous than the other allows different skills of each elderly person. I opted for more track style of section to make it repeatable while also being able to track their progress and time. Having water fountains in pivotal sections also gives people the ability to hydrate and is necessary for people to enjoy the facility.



Figure 3: Multi-age Playground area View 1



Figure 4: Multi-age Playground area View 2

References

- [1] “Green roofs | Your Project | Building Owners | BMI Group.”
<https://www.bmigroup.com/our-solutions/roof-systems/green-roof-system/>
- [2] “College Students and coffee: 13 Statistics to know in 2026 — Corner Coffee Store.”
<https://cornercoffeestore.com/college-students-and-coffee-statistics>