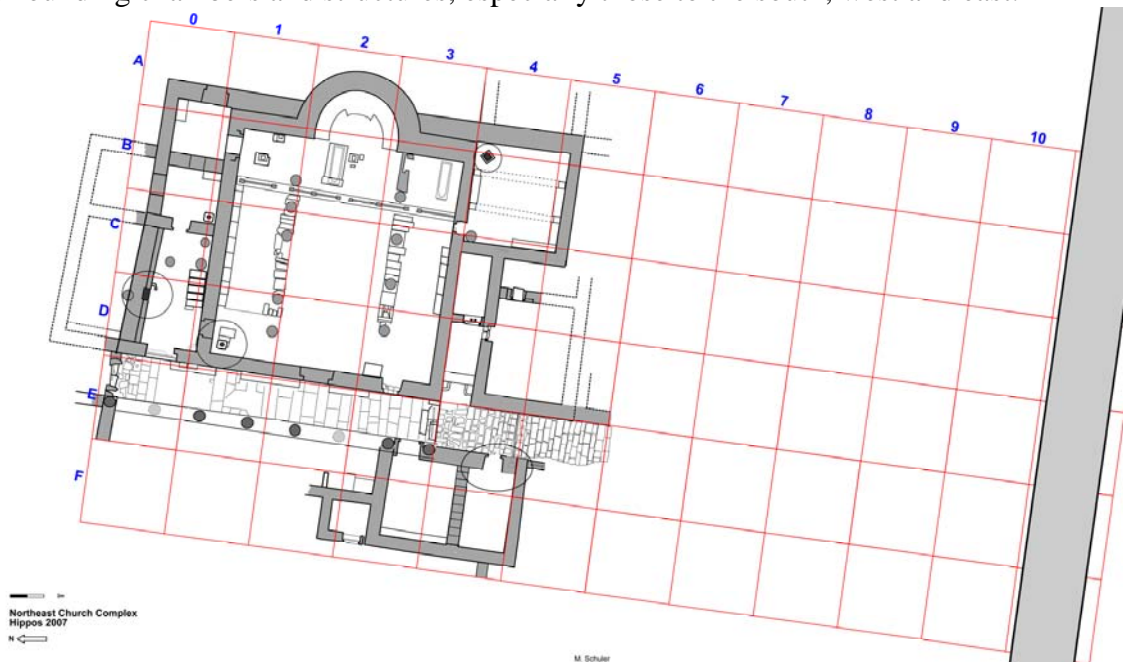


Northeast Church Project 2007 Excavation Plan

When the NEC project began six years ago, we thought we might be uncovering a small Byzantine church some 50 KM west of the NWC. Five seasons of work have revealed a rather unremarkable church that is part of a larger complex. The discovery of three small cells in the complex in 2006 raised again the possibility that the church may have been part of an urban monastic complex.

Research Question

The 2007 season will attempt to identify more fully the relationship of the NEC to surrounding chambers and structures, especially those to the south, west and east.

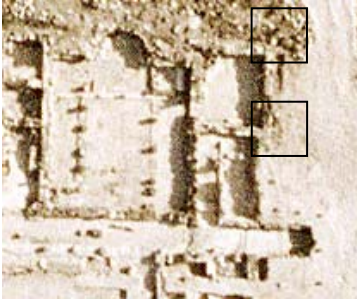


Work to the west



We propose to continue opening squares in a south to north direction parallel to the stylobate of the portico, finishing F2 and moving on to F1 and F0. Through this procedure we hope to reveal the extent of small chambers to the west and clarify if there is a corner to the complex in F0.

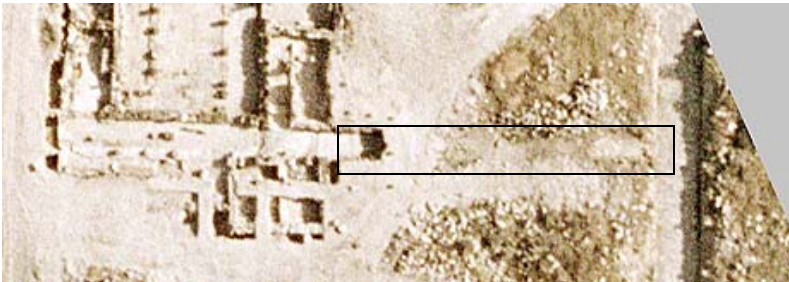
Work to the south



To the south of the complex, we propose opening A5 and C5. Work in A5 will reveal any connected structures to the east and south of the complex. Work in the A row of squares will also be necessary to expose the exterior of the eastern wall of the NEC.

Work in C5 will reach the south wall of the large hall of the block building on the east of the street and reveal its relationship to the *diakonikon*. Both squares A5 and C5 should show if the NEC complex continues to the south. Squares D5 and B5 will be excavated as called for by work on the previously named squares.

Work on the street



Approximately 25 m of the street remains to be exposed between the NEC complex and the *decumanus maximus*. Exposure of this street will help to clarify the extent of structures related to the NEC. Unfortunately the street is covered with 1.5 to 2m of heavy rubble. Work will begin in E8.

By starting in that location, the tractor can continue to pass between previously excavated areas and so access the Roman podium area. However this access will eventually be lost over the season. Early in the season, we should discuss how to phase excavation while allowing for mechanized access. Alternatively, we might use the tractor to remove more of the heavy surface rubble.

Ideally, the team will complete the street this season. Squares E8, E7, and E6 will be the priority.

Conservation



Conservation and documentation of the nave mosaic will continue. As time allows, more conservation will be done on the fragmentary mosaics of the north aisle and the chamber north of the chancel.