

## **HVRA – Brunswick-College Parkette Design Competition**

### ***Judge's Comments***

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First of all I wish to thank HVRA for asking me to be one of the judges. I have enjoyed reviewing the submissions and hope that my comments are helpful. Best of luck with turning Brunswick-College parkette into a far more dynamic and interesting place to experience at this important space and corner.

As well as my top six choices – which were difficult to select, since all of them have some challenging or problematic elements as well as many good features - I have made the comments “A TOP CHOICE” for submissions that I think are overall winners or have a number of winning elements in the submissions, and “SOME INTERESTING ELEMENTS” for those that I think have included some good features which deserve to be recognised. My first choices are:

**1<sup>st</sup>: All the World is a Stage, 2<sup>nd</sup>: Canopy Park, equal 3<sup>rd</sup>: Kensington Common, 3 Steps to One New Parkette and Urban Constellation, 6<sup>th</sup> Ingrained**

My brief comments on each submission as per your number system are as follows:

#### **#1 All the World is a Stage - FIRST CHOICE**

- Form is good.
- Indoor/Outdoor relationship with adjacent building is excellent.
- Strong elements include site furniture, stage.
- Well articulated and detailed.
- Sophisticated.
- Good potential.

#### **#2 The Bricks**

- Opens up lower area, which is good.
- The mid park raised elements are somewhat interesting but clumsy, a little heavy, and could create further visibility and safety elements for the park.

#### **#3 Bring Back the Boulevards!**

- This is visually acceptable but does not create potential uses.
- Interesting, but except for the trees, it does not create excitement or additional elements.

#### **#4 The Brunswick Bend**

- Creates a strong pedestrian entry to Brunswick Avenue.
- Elegant themed lighting.
- Does not fully address the low area adjacent to the building.
- Good detailing and images.
- Significant introduction of seating could be good.

#### #5 **Campo du Ricordi – Park of Living Memory - “SOME INTERESTING ELEMENTS”**

- Simple and bold.
- Introduction of canopy trees are successful.
- Provides ample seating, though not many other activity options.
- May interrupt pedestrian desire lines in north/south directions.
- Architectural layout is a bit of an art piece due to its particular layout.

#### #6 **Canopy Park - SECOND CHOICE**

- Nicely handled.
- The canopy structure could be a very positive element; should be flatter to help ensure a successful “Green Roof”.
- Well detailed with an excellent and strong concept, with good pedestrian flow, interesting canopy structure and successful patio seating area.
- Stormwater concept is progressive.

#### #7 **The Circle of Leaf**

- Creates a social space.
- Interesting from above, not sure it would be as interesting from a pedestrian’s/user’s perspective.
- Not sure it would improve the existing condition substantially.
- Tree planting provides a positive addition to the parkette.

#### #8 **Flow People Light and Air**

- Simplified design.
- Furniture/seating elements are good.
- Cover or grate is interesting.
- Opens up lower area.
- Besides the seating area, not a lot of parkette activities proposed.

#### #9 **Flowing Garden**

- Fun forms almost playful.
- The structures on the east side could create a barrier and isolate the areas adjacent to the building.

#### #10 **For Your Life - “SOME INTERESTING ELEMENTS”**

- Lovely images
- Elegant and contemporary.
- Wood adds warmth to the space.
- Tree planting good, though there could be more.

### #11 **Four Leaf Clovers**

#### “SOME INTERESTING ELEMENTS”

- Shelter/Structure an interesting idea, form is fun, though it could be stronger.
- Vertical elements read well.
- Benches and other elements are fun and sculptural.
- The wood adds warmth.
- Some of the turf areas are too small to survive anticipated use. Perhaps these areas would be better in a compacted stone screenings material.
- Has made an attempt to integrate the lower area adjacent to the building.

### #12 **Games Room** – a “TOP CHOICE”

- A distinctive approach.
- Intense and fun.
- Café seating is a good choice.
- Looks potentially durable, though small hedges could take a beating.
- Happy to see lots of trees.
- Pedestrian flow may work well.

### #13 **Green Weaver**

- Flowing wood benches could be a strong element.
- Still a bit of a problem with the lower area.
- Tree planting is good.
- Lower planting may not survive the use of the parkette.
- Sculpture introduction does become a focal point, though it could become a target for vandalism.

### #14 **I Couri di Brunswick**

- Heart theme is cute.
- Introduction of a number of trees, as carried out, is somewhat successful.
- Visibility to lower space is not resolved.
- The heart furniture could be fun.
- Spaces do not appear to be dynamic.

### #15 **Ingrained** – SIXTH CHOICE

- Architectural and finessed.
- Small spaces of grass will not survive.
- Lower areas in wood decking looks interesting and has potential for furniture.
- Textures including those of grasses and wood are interesting.
- Trees in tubs, though interesting forms, may be high maintenance and require frequent watering by Parks maintenance staff.
- If implementable, the treatment of the café area by the building could be a big improvement to the visibility and use of the space.
- Good presentation.
- Though I am concerned that Ingrained would be difficult to maintain, I did appreciate the textures that it would introduce to the parkette.

### #16 **Intersections** - “SOME INTERESTING ELEMENTS”

- Appreciate the interesting suggestion of a Green Wall. Not sure that it would be implementable.

- Raising the north-east area beside the building is also an interesting proposal assuming it could be implemented.
- Not enough interactive social spaces.
- The proposal could provide a strong entrance to Brunswick Avenue.
- The plantings, though high maintenance, could be a positive colourful element.

#### **#17 Kensington Common – THIRD CHOICE**

(with #25, 3 Steps To One New Parkette and # 27, Urban Constellation)

- An interesting scheme with a range of elements and one which could provide a range of experiences for the users.
- Lower café/seating area, tree bosque planting, grasses plantings, and art panels, are all carefully thought out.
- The overall changes of grade are handled in an interesting and successful manner.
- Small low plantings areas are probably not sustainable.
- Sculptural elements are fun.
- Art panels though interesting could be a challenge to program/organize/maintain

#### **#18 Kensington Square**

- Fun, sculptural seating areas.
- The flow of the park is somewhat counter to the direction in which people may wish to walk (north-south), into or out of Brunswick Avenue.
- One tree may not be adequate to have a lot of impact.
- Small turf areas will not be easily maintainable or sustainable.

#### **#19 Laetitia Urbis – The Happy City - “INTERESTING ELEMENTS”**

- An interesting, almost Mediterranean or sophisticated, ruins concept.
- Though a distinctive sculptural approach, not sure that it fits in with the context or location.
- May provide some personal safety concerns with numbers of high walls and elements.

#### **#20 Magic Carpet**

- Change of grade / undulations are playful.
- Grade changes could create a safety concern if not handled carefully.
- Opening up of the lower east area is a step towards addressing this problematic area.

#### **#21 Portugal Influences - “SOME INTERESTING ELEMENTS”**

- Paving walking pattern is flowing and somewhat fun, though it could be even stronger.
- Proposed tables and chairs would add some use to the park.
- The addition of even more trees would be positive.

**#22 Red Tree Parkette - "SOME INTERESTING ELEMENTS"**

- Simple but elegant concept.
- Appreciate the introduction of tables and seating, green walls and sculptural element.
- Could have more than one tree, particularly along Brunswick Avenue.

**#23 Slow Motion - "SOME INTERESTING ELEMENTS"**

- The sculptural corten steel walls/sculptural elements are interesting.
- Good entrance/gateway to the street.
- Has opened up the lower east area successfully. The addition of seating/tables/café uses to this lower area would be desirable.

**#24 Sunken Garden**

**"SOME INTERESTING ELEMENTS"**

- Interesting concept, but does not show a lot of detail.
- Could have more trees.
- Lowering the entire area could be interesting, assuming that there are not a lot of existing underground services that would preclude this approach.

**#25 3 Steps to One New Parkette – THIRD CHOICE**

(with #17, Kensington Common and # 27, Urban Constellation)

- Zoning and layout of rooms of the parkette is simple and bold, and has opened up the lower spaces by the building nicely.
- Furniture elements will provide use for the parkette.
- Forms are simple and bold.
- Smaller turf areas may not be sustainable. These smaller areas may be more successful if they were filled with low tough ground cover plants. Keep only the larger turf areas which would hopefully survive and be more easily maintained.
- Vertical lighting elements are strong.

**#26 Trillium Corner**

- The blocks could become a climbing/safety concern and restrict views to Brunswick Avenue.
- Some grass areas may not be sustainable.
- Does not appear to deal totally successfully with the problem spaces close to the building; does not totally integrate the lower space adjacent to the building with the balance of the parkette.

**#27 Urban Constellation – a "TOP CHOICE"**

(with #17, Kensington Common and # 25, 3 Steps to One New New Parkette)

- Lighting has a strong concept and expression.
- The overall layout of the parkette does create an interesting entry feature to Brunswick Avenue, and its forms are strong.
- Lower café area addressed, though could still be somewhat isolated from the rest of the park.