OUR PARK
A PARTICIPATORY DESIGN APPROACH FOR SOUTHWARK SCHOOLYARD

Shari Hersh /// Gamar Markarian /// Sulay Sosa /// Olga

Forward Equitable Development
Philadelphia
June 26, 2019
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1. MURAL ARTS RESTORED SPACES INITIATIVE

2. DESIGNING TOGETHER

3. COMMUNITY APPROACH

4. BUILDING TOGETHER

5. LESSONS LEARNED
BACKGROUND and FRAMEWORK
1. **MURAL ARTS RESTORED SPACES INITIATIVE**

   > Socially-engaged public art as a platform for neighborhood change

   > Turning project sites into community spaces and strategic hubs for cooperative thinking, spatial inventiveness, and environmental restoration

**GOALS:**

a. **Sustainability and Environmental justice**

b. **Social Inclusion and Reinforcement of Social Fabric**

c. **Equity and Community Capacity Building**
Playgrounds for Useful Knowledge
Reflections on
PLAYGROUNDS FOR USEFUL KNOWLEDGE
AN ACTION-RESEARCH PROJECT ON SOUTH PHILADELPHIA
THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA MURAL ARTS PROGRAM'S RESTORED SPACES INITIATIVE
a. Sustainability and Environmental Justice
b. Social Inclusion and Social Fabric

“The right to the city is far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city. It is, moreover, a common rather than an individual right since this transformation inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power to reshape the processes of urbanization. The freedom to make and remake our cities and ourselves is, I want to argue, one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights.”

David Harvey
c. Equity and Community Capacity Building

- Create a context for “self-organizing” and capacity building through community-identified projects, collaborative visioning, design, and co-production of art and green space.

- Ensure the “social capital” of the project benefits the participants (youth and community) as well as the artists.

- Distribute the financial resources for the production of art projects to youth and community participants, as well as to artists, professionals, and local businesses.
THE PROCESS
2. DESIGNING TOGETHER

PHASES:

a. Icebreaker
b. Board game + Survey
c. Past / Present / Future
d. Community Mapping
e. Designing Together
Icebreaker

When my mom go to sleep

Mother's birthday

Mother likes the West

Mother likes trees

Where we live, there is a mountain that the sun passes and it's pretty because every morning you see it and it's really bright.

I would dream of having swings in the schoolyard and a slide in the school yard and a pool in the school yard.
b. Board game + Survey
b. Board game + Survey
b. Board game + Survey

Imagine the Schoolyard of the future.

Please place a sticker in the box that completes the following statements:

1. I would like to have a _______ in the schoolyard.
2. Friend, come join us this weekend at the school.
3. It's so sunny today! Let's go to the schoolyard to _______ because it's good exercise.
4. Remember when we couldn't be in the schoolyard because of _______.
5. We created a _______ out of recycled materials this morning.
6. If it was up to me, I would draw _______ on the walls and _______ on the ground.
7. The _______ helps absorb rainwater. Now we can play after the rain.
8. Growing plants in the _______ makes me healthier and happier.

*Extra Credit* Please fill out a post-it note with your response to this question.

How can the schoolyard better connect my community to the school?

*Write it down!*

Encuesta sobre el patio de la escuela Southark

Por favor, seleccione una pegatina para completar las siguientes afirmaciones.

1. Me encantaría tener _______ en el patio de la escuela para una actividad después de la escuela.
2. Amigo, ven a unirse a nosotros este fin de semana en la escuela para _______.
3. Hoy hace mucho sol! Vamos al patio de la escuela para _______.
4. Recuerdo cuando no podíamos estar en la escuela porque _______.
5. Nosotros creamos un _______ de materiales reciclados esta mañana.
6. Si dependiera de mí, dibujaría _______ en las paredes y _______ en el suelo.
7. El/Lo _______ ayuda a absorber el agua de lluvia. Ahora podemos jugar después de la lluvia.

*Crédito extra* Por favor llene una nota post-it con su respuesta a esta pregunta.

 créditos
b. Board game + Survey

OUTCOME:

Design spaces to allow for:

(1) programming for families to interact and share with each other.

(2) opportunities to contribute to school and community.

(3) keeping and practicing culture.

(4) promoting inclusivity and collectivity instead of bullying or competition.

(5) teachers and community to explore their own interests and introduce students to new concepts and skills.

(6) youth to explore and discover independently or in groups.
c. Past / Present / Future
c. Past / Present / Future

OUTCOME:

(1) A place to share rich culture / A place where culture is kept, and which can reflect the multicultural community.

(2) A safe space / A peaceful space.

(3) Unity / A space where we can come together, participate and become more respectful and equal with each other.
d. Community Mapping
Community Mapping

OUTCOME:

(1) Neighbors meet each other
(2) Discover each other’s skills
(3) Learn future aspirations
(4) Share skills and exchange knowledges
Designing Together
### Designing Together

#### OUTCOME:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
<th>Group 3</th>
<th>Group 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer, Edwin, Ashley, Samantha, Jared, Sandy, Damin</td>
<td>Liam, Graciela, Jose, Jamie, Gary, Ana, Efren</td>
<td>Martin, Tito, Bryant, Kalianna, Hector L, Mia, Blanca</td>
<td>Mason, Caiying, James, Sophia, Kamora, Mercy, Audrey, Hector M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gate</td>
<td>Nice seating &amp; tree for shade combo</td>
<td>Buffer along property/fence</td>
<td>Learning classroom in garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active rec edge/seating &amp; shade</td>
<td>Toddler playground &amp; other play places near each other but separated</td>
<td>Soccer field w nets/play space along fence</td>
<td>Using back steps for creative structure/stage/amphitheater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest on asphalt</td>
<td>Garden beds create a mini room - classroom/learning lab</td>
<td>Playground visible</td>
<td>Buffer room - quiet space near transformer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage</td>
<td>Track, runs and sprints with measurable distance. (Grandparent use)</td>
<td>Dog poop at fence (honeysuckle and/or wisteria)</td>
<td>Playground welcomes community into space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gradation from hard to soft</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Age play separated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creative play form</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Spinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triangles at entry/exits - wayfinding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Veggie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space composition/garden/play/social/rec</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE PEOPLE
2. COMMUNITY APPROACH

Community Design Leaders

Russia
Indonesia
Spain
Lebanon
China
USA
Puerto Rico
Mexico
Guatemala
Myanmar
2. COMMUNITY APPROACH

- Talk, Listen, Share, Dream ..... 
- Participatory process: no pre-designs, no impositions
- Creative thinking: having fun, playing, thinking outside the box
- Share, trust, bond
- Learn, self time, self confidence,
2. **COMMUNITY APPROACH**

> The most important points for me are:

- Respect
- Patience
- Love
- A project with no barriers
- Equity and inclusion
"Getting to know people from other countries." Gabriela

"I feel proud of being part of the project." Yaneth

"Doing something for the school and the community." Elena

"A true labour of love." Olga

"Doing something for my daughters school" Elizabeth
When I was in elementary school (K-3rd grade), we did a project where we had to create a map of our school. After a few months, the 4th-grade teacher told us to present our projects in class. I don't remember the name of the teacher, but I remember it was exciting to present our work.

[Map with notes]
Elena

estoy entusiasmada de que todo esto
proyecto es el reforzar MAA los murales y
casas más
1. Green
2. Colorful
3. Represent Culture
4. Safety & Guards
5. Literacy

Draw a team by color and each team rotate to take care/clean up watering for the garden. Fruits or vegetables from the garden give to family(ies) who need help. Green have hard time or donate for seniors. Students learn gardening as regular class during the day.

Doggie water is really fun for the kids and small kids like the water.

Doggie water for the school garden.

pumpkin

flowers

1. Community
2. Playful
3. Welcoming
4. Safety
5. Curious
BUILDING TOGETHER
4. BUILDING TOGETHER
4. BUILDING TOGETHER
4. BUILDING TOGETHER
LESSONS LEARNED
5. **LESSONS LEARNED**

Community Design Leaders and Community Organizers.

Game play created fun and equity.

Work with a team that is committed to horizontal forms of collaboration.

In planning, the social aspect is usually neglected in favor of the material.

Local and everyday knowledge is as valuable as expert technical knowledge.
OUR PARK
A Restored Spaces Initiative Project in Partnership with Trust for Public Land

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LOVE COURTYARD ARTISTS: BASURAMA and muralist James Dunn

OUR PARK ARTISTIC TEAM: Gamar Markarian, Mateo Fernández-Muro, Danielle Denk, Shari Hersh

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COLLABORATORS: Community Design Leaders and Organizers; Khin Aye, Eryani Chandra, Elizabeth Cristobal, Bilkis Esar, David Gana, Noelia Garcia, Nichole Girgenti, Esther Lian, Gabriela Ramos Gueman, Gibran Medina, Sequoia Medley, Lizeth Morales, Yaneth Melendez, Olga, Dalila Romera, Elena Rosas, Sulay Sosa, Rosa Salgado, Si Si Than, Josefina Atonal Tecuapacho, Farida Yusuf, Kwok Xi Yao; Southwark Elementary: Beth Dougherty, Andrew Lukov, Natalie McHugh, Rodrigo Fernandez Jarque, Esther Lian, Megawati Sumana-Eischen, Connie Wang; carpenter Janice Smith; Karissa Barlow from Bethana; EPX Education and Beautification Committees, Friends of Southwark; Restored Spaces Team; Julius Ferraro, Kyla Van Buren and Ciara Williams; Trust for Public Land Team


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