HARVARD SQUARE PLACEMAKING

Kiosk restoration and concept workshop

June 17, 2015
AGENDA:
June 17, 2015

5:30PM  Welcome & Process to Date
5:35PM  Takeaways from the last workshop
5:40PM  Harvard Square Plaza Feasibility Study & Scope
5:45PM  The Kiosk – Historic Restoration
5:55PM  Concept of Use & Programming
6:20PM  Group Discussion
6:55PM  Next Steps
7:00PM  Adjourn
Harvard Square Placemaking Timeline

- **Sept 2013**: 1st Workshop
- **May 2014**: Harvard Square Vision Plan
- **Jan 2015**: 2nd Workshop
- **June 2015**: 3rd Workshop: Kiosk Restoration & Concept
Placemaking Evaluations by Site

1. Forbes Plaza/Holyoke Center
2. The Pit
3. Info Kiosk/Elevator/T
4. Out of Town News Kiosk
5. The Point
6. Harvard-Along Lehman Building
7. COOP – Brattle St.
8. Intersection JFK/Brattle St.
Takeaways from the last workshop

Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper Approach

General Reactions to Changes:
• Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper approach has had an \textit{instant positive effect}
• The tables and chairs welcome more people to sit & enjoy the public space
• The added seasonal greenery is beautiful & helps with safety
Takeaways from the last workshop

Still Room for Improvement:
• Integration of performance space
• More creative seating and lighting
• Improved information & signage (i.e. free wifi)
• Traffic calming in the Square
• Improved maintenance & upkeep
• Additional greenery
• Activation opportunities along storefronts
Takeaways from the last workshop: Out of Town News Kiosk

General Reactions to the Kiosk:

- Iconic building – historic appeal
- Low interest for engaging with the current use
- *The* meeting spot
Takeaways from the last workshop: Out of Town News Kiosk

Vision for Improvement:
- More transparent
- Flexible use of space
- Better integration with the rest of the Plaza
- More public engagement opportunities
- Incorporation of information for visitors
- Restoration of the historic structure
Harvard Square Plaza Feasibility Study

Impetus for the study:
• Scheduled upgrades to the plaza including MBTA elevator, eventual removal of information booth, and future kiosk renovation
• Infrastructure challenges
  • ADA accessibility
  • Utilities - water, sewer & electric

Scope of Study:
• The plaza including the pit, the point, and the OOTN Kiosk
• Engage community to develop detailed design of plaza

Timeline:
• Design – fall 2015 to fall 2016.
• Bid construction project winter 2016, with construction in 2017.
KIOSK: HISTORIC RESTORATION
OUT OF TOWN NEWS - Historic Restoration

MBTA Side Facade - 2014

Massachusetts Avenue Facade - 2014

MBTA Side Facade - 1960's

Massachusetts Avenue Facade - 1960's

Historic and Existing Conditions Images
Out of Town News - Historic Restoration

Outdoor Perspective
KIOSK: CONCEPT OF USE
Kiosk: Concept of Use

Objectives:

• Reclaim the public use of the building and promote better integration within the plaza

• Engage the community year-round through effective presentation, use, & experience

• Provide the best in local information

• Develop a use model that is financially self-sustaining

The kiosk and plaza should be able to support meet-ups, free time sitting, and immersion within the Square’s culture & offerings
Community Demographics

Harvard Square Audience:

- Residents
- Students
- Tourists & foreign visitors
- Youth/teens
- Homeless
- University faculty/staff
- Local businesses
- International businesses
- Street performers & artists

How can we serve and engage such a diverse population?
Information

Kiosk Concept: Incorporate local information services and support

- Harvard Square “ambassadors”
- Informed & technology-enriched staff
- Mobile work setting
- Use of “mocial” technology to orient visitors
- Daily staff presence
Signage

Concept: Physical and virtual information and signage

• Incorporation of screens to promote local public events, local business offerings, and information

• Balance public interests with privately sponsored content
Kiosk Programming

Planned events
Spontaneous happenings
A regular day

Other considerations:
• Seasonal variety of local community offerings
• Mix of public, nonprofit, and privately curated exhibits & event sponsorship
• Emphasis on public engagement and place
• Collaborations with community partners
Programming: Live Music & Performances
Programming: Community Service Outreach
KIOSK EXAMPLES: ART & CULTURE EXHIBITION
small scale curations
Suburb of LONDON, ENGLAND: History & Local Craftsmanship

Exhibition – to tell the story of a place – a historic, place-based narrative
KIOSK MUSEUM – SAN FRANCISCO, CA: Small, Temporary Curations

Partnership with a local nonprofit museum
SPRING EXHIBITION – BERLIN, GERMANY

Seasonal, historic place-based narrative
LOWER ROXBURY: BOSTON, MA – Local neighborhood events
KIOSK EXAMPLES: SEATING & MEETING
Integrating the kiosk within the plaza
The “Regular Day” Interior Vantage Point
KIOSK EXAMPLES: INFORMATION & TOURISM
BOSTON, MA: Boston Harbor Islands Information Center
GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Historic restoration
2. Information & Tourism
3. Programming (performances, exhibitions, community events)
4. Seating/lighting
5. Other questions/comments?
NEXT STEPS
THANKS!

Questions? Comments
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