

Learning Places Fall 2018

SITE REPORT #1A

Zuccotti Park/The Oculus



East side of Zuccotti Park on a cloudy afternoon

STUDENT NAME: Francis Kwok

INTRODUCTION

What were your expectations of the place, before arriving? Did your experience of the place match your expectations? How did it, or did it not, live up to your expectations? What did you notice about the place that you didn't already know from reading or previous visits?

I have been around the area a few times but the park didn't really pop out for me to notice. The expectations I have before arriving was that the area would have been crowded with lots of people and have lots natural light shining on the site. Due to the fact that it was a gloomy day when I went to visit the site; there wasn't much light shining onto site but lots of shades due to the trees covering the site. There wasn't a lot of people for a park but there was tourist groups that walk past the place. There are a few people that were falling asleep and eating their lunch. I usually just noticed the buildings, people, and the greenery but I noticed that the park is surrounded by police surveillance systems and a building that doesn't have a windows on the first few floors. Before I went to The Oculus I didn't know it was that big and tall so going there the first time it was amazing and hot the exterior of it was made. The concept behind it is actually amazing as there is a reason why it is angled the way it is on the site.

SITE OBSERVATIONS

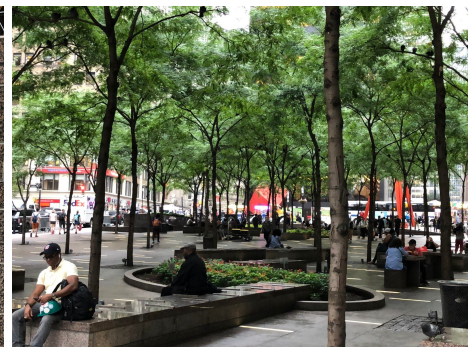
Insert 3 photographs and provide a title for each image. The title should be a a word or short phrase that sums up the subject matter of the photo or a visual theme present in the photo.



Tourist and Sculpture



Laws or rules



Quiet Park

Why did you choose these images? Do they summarize a feeling you have for the place? Do they focus on prominent objects or features of the place? Explain.

These three images shows about how Zuccotti Park came to be due to the historic events that happened in this area. As the group of tourist was walking past; I heard the head talking about the history of what happened in Zuccotti Park and the sculpture which echos the tall buildings around. The rules of the park after what had happened due to the courts and negotiations. Many parks are loud but this park was particularly calm and quiet for it being in the the area of well known tourist attraction.

Describe the sizes and shapes of buildings in this area. Is there general uniformity or heterogeneity among structures?

The new buildings are tall skyscrapers. The historic buildings are more medium skyscrapers and other buildings are low to medium height. Each building has their own shapes as it is unique to the architect and site but are mainly rectangular. There is a heterogeneity among structures as there is a advanced from historic buildings to modern buildings. Around The Oculus; pretty much all the buildings are taller and bigger but the The Oculus has its own unique form and you don't except it to be big but has multiply floors.

Describe the patterns, textures, colors, and ornamental features of the surfaces of the buildings and structures in and around the place.

The tall building on the northeast of the park is called, One Liberty Plaza which has a matte black facade and what seems to be the structure showing for aesthetic. The building on the east uses concrete as the facade on the commercial floor then have brown bricks for residential. Southeast building uses tinted glazing as the facade with a clean flushed look and reflection. South and southwest are historic buildings constructed by concrete with ornament on the lower and upper floors. On the lower floors; they also have green around the windows with decoratives. The building on the west is a two story building constructed with a cream material for commercial use only. Northeast building is mainly constructed of glazing as well but it isn't the tinted glazing but regular glass which millions showing for aesthetic. The Oculus cast a amazing shadows from the design of the building. The way it points out and is ribbed makes it look like human ribs. With the opening and closing skylight on the top middle of the building from front to back.

How is the natural world integrated into the built environment? Were trees, plants, lawns, and bodies of water established *around* existing architectures, or were the buildings and walkways built to observe preexisting “wild” areas? Describe patterns and methods of integration.

The natural world is integrated into the built environment by using similar materials used on the areas around the park. There are no trees around the existing buildings but there are many other green areas around the area. The trees in the park are used to shade most of the sunlight during the times when the sun is at its highest point. The buildings and walkways are built in a way due to the preexisting grids throughout Manhattan which was established so that people can find their ways even if they were lost as well as creating circulation whether by foot or by vehicle. By putting parks and gardens spaces in areas was to create spaces so that the city wouldn't get too dense and break up the skyscrapers. If there was no parks to space the skyscrapers apart then all the city's avenues and streets would have been dark and gloomy with no natural light coming through. There are multiple parks around the area of The Oculus. Many of the area around The Oculus was built due to the fact of 9/11 in which they came up with a redevelopment plan. The trees and walkways were created according to the new development.

Other than buildings, what are the functions of the designed / built structures (walkways, seating, etc)?

The design of having the trees in the park is to create shade for the people so even during hot sunny days; you may get some breeze and cool down. The benches are made for the people to sit and relax. The tables are for people who want to eat, sleep for a bit, as well as doing their work. There isn't just tourists in the area. As it is by wall street, there are many offices in the area where they can just go during break whether it is to catch up with people or just for the nature. The walkways and park creates a circulation for people to walk through and meet up. The Oculus was park of the redevelopment of World Trade Center. The hub is on a angle as well as having the center skylight due to the fact of the memorial of 9/11. The area in the hub was to create transportation easier. The shopping centers and food all around with the center being open space for events and many other occasions.

What public amenities are offered to users of the space (water fountains, wheelchair access and other supports for the disabled, public telephones, phone charging stations, WiFi, subway and bus stations, etc.)?

The whole space is basically wheelchair accessible. I noticed that there are some outlets in the area near the tables in which people can use to work on their project and also enjoy the nature. It is close to some of the bus stops. There isn't much public amenities that is offered in the park but there is a lot of stuff offered

around the area like The Oculus. The Oculus is wheelchair accessible and it is easy access to many trains like PATH. There is many bathrooms around the inside of the hub. There are a few seatings but are usually packed due to the shopping center; Zuccotti Park isn't as crowded but does during the winter holidays.

How have the planners and architects communicated the purpose of the place, via signage or design elements?

The planners and architecture created this space intended for people to come walk pass or just to sit and relax as you can see all the open space and seating in the park. With the trees being there for shading during the summer and having lights on the trees during the winter. The architect created lights as a design on the floor due to the fact that the park is open 24/7 to the public. Creating many entrances to and from the park as well as wheelchair accessible. The park being the place where many things happened like the first public Tea Act protest in America and for emergency storage directly after 9/11. The red 70 feet sculpture called Joie de Vivre was a abstract art which looks like a image of a person raising their arms to the sky. It creates a positive energy and emphasizes optimism. The park is used as a sacred place for many protests like the Occupy Wall Street protest where a person climbed up the 70 feet artwork and remained there for a couple of hours. There is 1 tree which was different from all the others. That tree was called the Tree of Life in which was planted post of 9/11 and used during Occupy Wall Street. The statue which withstand the 9/11 attack and how realistic it is that people mistaken it during the accident of 9/11 which then a symbol for the memorial after the attack and strength. It was also used during the Occupy Wall Street as protestors put garbage in the briefcase and put a bandana on its head to attack the capitalist society. The design of the hub is obvious as it is the center of pretty much all transportation for lower Manhattan. Due to the fact that it is right by 9/11 and in financial district that they created a shopping center within or commercial spaces I should say like Grand Central.

Are there any restrictions or rules (either explicit or implied) about how to use the space or interact with other people? Do you see anyone using the space in a manner that exceeds or violates the intentional design? Describe.

There are rules about how the space is used at the northwest side of the entrance. There was no one that exceeded or violates the intentional design as the park since it was meant for everyone. Even though you can eat in the park; you barely see any garbage as you do throughout the city. Of course there are many rules to the hub as you can see from all the armed cops or army inside and outside due to the 9/11 memorial. I didn't see any space being used in a manner in which it exceed or violates the intentional design.

How do people generally interact with the environment? Is this place crowded? Walkable? Easy to navigate? Comfortable?

People generally sit there relax and some may end up napping. Some people eat and talk with the beautiful view especially during the winter at night when that have the floor lights on and the lights they put on the trees. It isn't usually crowded but does get crowded during winter as all the tourist come and relax since it feels like the holidays. It is easy to walk around since it is a open space and is easy to navigate. It is like any other park; relaxing and comfortable. The area in the hub is crowded and it is actually hard to navigate as each staircase as well as elevator does not go from bottom floor to top floor. So top entrances only has circulation to the second floor and in the middle of the second floor are the circulation to the bottom floor. It is a comfortable place as it is made with marble and expensive but does tend to get very crowded as it is the center of many transportation like the PATH.

What is your personal experience of the place? Think about sound/smell/touch, your body's movement, contact with the ground and physical comfort. How does the place make you feel?

Zuccotti Park is nice and peaceful. It wasn't crowded so getting to places are easy and quick. It was a little dark due to the fact that the floor lights aren't on during the day and it was cloudy out with the trees as shade. The materials feel natural as many of the other sites around also use similar materials. There was some areas where it did smell it little weird and I think it was due to the fact that there was so much food carts. It is a nice place to relax and talk to someone. Even though there isn't much in this park; the view is nice to where you can go with a partner and eat lunch as well as talk there. It is a good area too since around the area; there are many shopping stores since it is the central area where all the transits meet. The hub is a amazing developed design as the exterior of the design continues to flow on the interior and the fact that it pops out more on the bottom floor due to the huge balcony. The place tends to get loud due to the fact that trains pass through and many people talking. The smell is normal as air circulation is key as well as it is due to the fact of having a really high center roof.

ANALYSIS/DISCOVERIES

Use this section to reflect on your observations. Remember to refer to your observations when drawing general conclusions.

Thinking about the neighborhood in which the place is embedded, who is this space designed for and for what general purpose?

Due to the fact that the neighborhood is in the financial district as well as it is close to many shopping centers. Zuccotti Park was designed for everyone but mainly tourist and workers in the area go there to relax and eat their food whether it is before work, break, or after work. It is also a good space to work on your own work. The hub is mostly tourist attraction as well as events that are held there occasionally. It is transportation for people to get to work; even from New Jersey and vice versa.

More specifically, what kinds of social interactions does the place encourage or support? How do noise and light affect social interaction? What about the proximity of design elements (walkways, benches, etc.)? Mention specific design elements in your answer.

Zuccotti Park doesn't have things to do like a ice skating ring or any other but it does make you talk to people and get to know them. The noise isn't much affecting the site as much as the trees due block some of it out and the lights are installed under the ground which brings a romantic lighting during the night. The trees are put in a way for shading and the benches made for people who wants to relax and enjoy nature and the city itself. The area is all open and not fenced so it creates a feeling of welcoming. The hub creates a social interactions by having many events there in which you can meet people that have the same interest. The lighting is just perfect with the mix of natural and artificial light. The walkways all bring you to many more destinations. The hub has many entrances/exits as it basically connects to many buildings in the area. Benches are put in areas that don't have many circulations due to the fact that it gets crowded. The big empty space which is used for many things. The stores and food just attracts you to it so it sorta makes you roam and explore the whole hub.

How might you use the space in a creative way that exceeds the intended use of the designers? Think about behavior, physical movement and organization, numbers of people, etc.

By creating something interesting like a movement of some sort can attract people and due to the crowd, it would bring attention to many people that are walking pass aw they would be curious to see what may be going on in the space. Since it has many tourists and financial district; they can create a occasional food event like Smorsburg. You can't necessarily do much that exceeds the intended use of the designer due to the fact that it is by 9/11 Memorial; there are many army and cops which are armed.

QUESTIONS for FURTHER RESEARCH. Write down questions that require further research to answer. These should follow directly from your analysis section and be complex and specific enough to serve as the basis of a research project; do not include questions you can answer with a quick google search.

1. Question? What was the intended use of Zuccotti Park in which it is designed for? Why isn't there a flow in which attracts people?
2. Question? What is the reason that Zuccotti Park is privately owned public space? What do they gain or lose from the park?
3. Question? Since The Oculus is a hub that has all the transportation right there; why do they continue to extend and create entrances/exits to areas that aren't even close to the hub? Under what zoning would this all go under?

SITE REPORT #1B

FURTHER RESEARCH

Choose and revise one of your questions for further research from part 1A of this report.

Revised Research Question:

Find a book, government document, or newspaper article that could help you answer your question.

MLA Citation for Book, Government Document, or new article:

Why did you select this source? How does it address all or part of your research question?

Describe the process you used to find this source including any keywords and the search engine or tool you used to search.

What other sources or further information would you need to answer your question? Where would you look for them?