PARKS WITHOUT BORDERS
Ideas for the Next Generation of Urban Parks and Public Space
Enhancing Park Experience through Creative Play
Washington Square Park
1970’s Mounds

- Adventure Play

Case Study – Washington Square Park

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Pre-Conditions

• Public Safety
  • Three 5’ High Asphalt Mounds
  • Visual Barrier – Impaired Sight Lines
  • Known as “Drug Dealing” Corner
  • Unsafe Play Conditions
Play Mounds – Creative Play

- **Location**
  - Creative Play – Open Meadow
  - No Borders
Play Mounds – Creative Play

- Initial Project Goals – Interrelate
  - Public Safety
  - Challenging
  - Appropriateness
  - Shade
Play Mounds
- Public Safety
  - Slightly Submerge – Open View Corridors – Creativity
  - Allows for Multi-Purpose Use
  - Safe Adventure

Case Study – Washington Square Park
Play Mounds
• **Challenging** – Innovative Play – Not Programmed
  • Mounds – Subtle Grading – Safe For Rolling
  • Cable Structures – Climbing – Hanging – Energetic
Play Mounds
• **Appropriateness** – Significant park in an Historic District
  • Synthetic Turf – Graceful Greener Park
  • Cable Play – Play Value – Transparent – Color
  • Renewed Sense of Place
Play Mounds
• Shade – Nature
  • Tree Canopy – Provide Relief From Heat
  • Contact to Nature

Case Study – Washington Square Park
Play Mounds – Universal Success

• Interactive
  • Engaging Parents – Alternative activities for very young children and active older adults
  • Public Enjoyment

Case Study – Washington Square Park
Play Mounds – Construction – Subgrade

- Storm Water Capture
  - Perforated Pipe
  - Broken Stone
  - Permeable Geotextile Fabric
Play Mounds – Construction – Subgrade

- Excavation – Land Forms – Clean Fill and Compaction
- Concrete Curb (Nailer) and Recycled Plastic Lumber
Play Mounds – Construction

- 3” Thick Asphalt Binder Course
- Concrete Footings
- Post and Cables
Play Mounds – Construction

- Poured-in-Place 2” Thick E-Layer
- 10 MM Rubber Shock Pad
Play Mounds – Construction

- Adhesive – Sprayed Glue
- Minimize Seams - Glued
- Lying Synthetic Turf

Case Study – Washington Square Park
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Play Mounds – Surface

- Synthetic Turf – Durability / low maintenance
- Continual Lawn – Prohibit / avoid Skateboarding
- Health and Safety For All Ages
- Recycling Capabilities – LEED Certification
  - Bio Based Soy Backing
Imagination Playgrounds
Case Study – Imagination Playground at Burling Slip
Existing conditions

Case Study – Imagination Playground at Burling Slip
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In the spirit of Adventure Play
- Sand play
- Water play
- Block play
- Running Ramp

*LOOSE PARTS* PLAY
- telescopes
- bent making
- sandbags
- ropes
- balls
- magnets
- bunkbeds/platforms
- sails
- Foot connector toys

COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL
- burlap bags
- building blocks
- boxes
- crates
- wheelbarrows
- wagons
- baskets

COMMUNICATION
- market calls
- mirrors
- balls
- ship horns
- signal flags
- radios
- megaphones

SENSORS
- sand
- water
- cloth

GAMES
- art supplies
- chalk
- New York Street Games

ARCHAEOLOGY
- sand boxes
- spades
- buckets
- brushes

FIXED PLAY VALUE

OBJECTS
- Scribbled Landscape
- Touchstone
- Ramp

ACTION
- Suke
- Chalkboard/ Drawing Sidewalk
- Sandbox/ Water
- Toddler Sandbox
- Rope Net
- Climbing Platforms

SENSORS
- View from Crow's Nest
- Listening Fences
- Whispering Fence
- Telescopes
- Reading
- Acting

image credit: Rockwell Group
Case Study – Imagination Playground at Burling Slip

image credit: Rockwell Group
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Sand Play Area

image credit: Rockwell Group
Case Study – Imagination Playground at Burling Slip
Case Study – Imagination Playground at Burling Slip
Case Study – Imagination Playground at Betsy Head Park

Site Location

Inspiration

image credit: Rockwell Group
Case Study – Imagination Playground at Betsy Head Park

Existing conditions

image credit: Rockwell Group
Case Study – Imagination Playground at Betsy Head Park

GOALS

- Water, sand and creative block play
- Year round, secure play space for all ages
- Playground as centerpiece of the park, a 360 viewing
- Temporary and permanent play features climbing, sliding, and block building
- Ramp as major play feature and connecting element
Case Study – Imagination Playground at Betsy Head Park

Playground and Adult Fitness Area

image credit: Rockwell Group
Sand and Block Play Areas

Case Study – Imagination Playground at Betsy Head Park
Case Study – Imagination Playground at Betsy Head Park

Water Play

Image credit: Rockwell Group
Case Study – Imagination Playground at Betsy Head Park

Standard Play Components along Ramp
Case Study – Imagination Playground at Betsy Head Park

Block Play
Case Study – Imagination Playground in a Box

Sunset Park Pool
River Avenue Playground
Case Study – River Avenue Playground

Site Context / Inspiration
Case Study – River Avenue Playground

Spray Area Sequenced with Elevated Rail Line
Spray Area Sequenced with Elevated Rail Line
Stepped Play and Spray Sequence

Case Study – River Avenue Playground
Sunset Park Playground
Case Study – Sunset Park Playground

Site Location

History
Case Study – Sunset Park Playground

Inspiration
Case Study – Sunset Park Playground

Use Diagram

Existing Conditions
Inspiration

Case Study – Sunset Park Playground
Case Study – Sunset Park Playground

Play Ramp with Varied Elevations

SAFETY SURFACE

MAIN PATH

PLAY PATH

+ 1.5'

+ 0.5'

42" STEEL PICKET FENCE W/ ACTIVITY PANELS

LANDSCAPE

0' 2' 4'
Case Study – Sunset Park Playground

Sand Play

Tactile and narrative play

Free play
Overall Park Perspective

Case Study – Sunset Park Playground
Thank You
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