

Piacenza Community Park (PiCo)

A SYSTEMATIC DESIGN APPROACH TOWARDS REGENERATION AND ACTIVATION OF ACNA AREA, an unused historic urban land in Piacenza city

Abstract;

The thesis investigates an abandoned urban area in the historic part of the city of Piacenza, Italy. A 44.000 sq meters triangular land with the risk of contamination because of its former function which was paint factory. Nowadays, it have been deactive and unused in spite of all positive functions and potential, specially its position and location. The needs of the neighborhood and lackage of the urban services in the vicinity convince us to propose and design a community park for neighborhood. According to analysis, the findings guide us to opt connectivity and environment as two actions which build our strategy and integrate small scale with medium scale, The third action for our strategy is urban service which neighborhood feels needed.

To give identity to the project, we inspired our design from a historical element of the city existing in the museum of the city and also to have maximum adaptation with context, we take advantage of the systematic urban network of Piacenza in designing the community park. In all phases of design and for all function and services, author tried to apply maximum sustainability and maximum respond to the context. At the end a pleasant space have been built which have maximum community engagement by its two nodes of gathering place and social interaction hub. Other needs of the neighborhood like sport and cultural one have been respond in the park properly.

Keywords;

Park, Greenery, Community Park, Regeneration, Activation, Urban, Design, Community Engagement, Neighborhood, Urban Services

INTRODUCTION

Developments in the biological sciences over the past-half century have demonstrated our interdependence with our environment. The discovery that two neurons that fire together strengthen the synaptic bond between them has led to our present understanding of learning and the neuroplasticity of the brain (Hebb, 1949). Neuroimaging technologies such as positron emission tomography (PET scans) and function magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) have allowed us to scan regions of the human brain as it responds to environmental cues, refining our understanding of how we perceive buildings and landscapes, and their spatial properties (Mallgrave, 2017). As professor of architecture Henry Francis Mallgrave notes, “We are developmental organisms raised within environmental fields, and the quality of these environmental fields has a powerful impact on our cognitive and organic development over a relatively short time” (2017, p. 18).

In an increasingly urbanized and digitized world, where once biodiverse ecosystems have been paved over with asphalt and turf, and we experience (or at least visualize) much of the world second-hand through images, it is critical that we sustain our close association with nature. Urban designers and architects can foster essential relationship of human and citizens with each other and also with nature by for example focus and design a perfect community park in neighborhood.

The transformation and regeneration of abandoned and wasted urban spaces is one of the essential urban design and planning stories of the late twenties century that government and municipalities willing to invest, even more than they can, to reactive these forgotten areas. The reason is mainly can be interact with the needs of people and community. Cities have reacted to this state of affairs with substantial regeneration programs and consider this problem as an opportunity to integrate to the other city fabric. However, since the success of most regeneration programs in Italy as an absolutely historic country which has lots of abandoned areas, reactivation and transformation an abandoned area in city of Piacenza, which has specific characters, will done in this project.

This thesis have been developed in different steps which starting by recognize the need of community and context that was being deactive. Then to response this need, a community garden proposed to the area by finding and knowing all the benefits and its role in the society and community, principles of design, steps to design and finally role of the community park in the neighborhood.

JUSTIFICATION

The study site is an abandoned industrial area at the north west side of Piacenza city and located in the historic part called ACNA. It was paint factory that have been demolished and now unused and wasted but due to high potentials and great opportunities, it is one of the most desired spaces to regenerate for both municipality and urban designers and planners. It is a 44.000 sq meters triangular area which municipality is owner of only 28.000 sq meters. It has essential location due to being located along with Piacenza historic wall and closing to the city center on south side. The area is sticked to the historic green belt and can integrate also to the northern green and natural network. The distance between Po river and north side of the site is less than one kilometer. ACNA included wild vegetation after many years and can be beneficial in terms of greenery and landscape itself. According to protection codes, ACNA included in indirectly cultural property protection(D.lgs. 42/2004 art.10)

AIM

The thesis aims to regenerate and activate an abandoned area in the central historic belt of Piacenza which has been forgotten. Adjusting and feeding back small scale issues based on medium scale logic throughout design process. The final project is smarter and more sustainable by embedment the small scale proposals into larger scales. According to initial analysis, the findings indicate; The lack of proper communication between the residents of the neighborhood and the lack of a suitable space for interaction and the low quality of social life in this neighborhood, lack of suitable shopping services in the surroundings and also according to municipality's desire, we wish to transform ACNA into community park which also fulfill the dream of up-level policy and legislation(PUA) by making new jobs. We also want to reclassify public green area in this spot and integrate it to the Po river and Trebbia. The riverfront clearly

has various positive potential for city and citizen, so the goal is to take maximum advantage of its benefits for our project. To be more integrated to city, another goal is to provide recreation, eating services, social interactions and sport activities to attract people and make it active, specially from Pubblico Passeggio and using historic ring and ax. Furthermore, according to attractors active time and type, our project will be active up to 22:00 o'clock as a sparkler of the city.

OBJECTIVE

- To regain the value of the area as a productive urban land in the historic center of the Piacenza city
- To regenerate and active the area in most hours which has the minimum distance with the city center
- To increase the urban life quality of the citizen in the neighborhood
- To engage people of the neighborhood in the community with all ages
- To give value to the rich greenery of the area and propose it to visitors
- To fulfill the needs of urban services in neighborhood
- To integrate people from all other public spaces in the vicinity and provide them a high quality space
- To lighting up the area as a sparkler and reaching its sparks to the other public spots of the vicinity