

Art Commission Review – Submittal Form

(Applicant complete below section)

Project Name: West Mill Creek Percent for Art

Project Address: 5100 Parrish St, Philadelphia, PA 19139 **On Public Property?** Yes No

Total Budget: \$45,000 **Utilizing City Funds?** Yes (specify amount): 100% No

Project Type (check all that apply):

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Building – New Construction or Addition | <input type="checkbox"/> Encroachment in/over ROW |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Building – Renovation or Repair | <input type="checkbox"/> Signage (Reconsideration) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plaza/Park/Playground | <input type="checkbox"/> Streetery (Reconsideration) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Project Team:

Agency/Org.: Creative Philadelphia Design Lead (firm): Miguel Horn

Other: _____

Primary Contact for Project Communications:

Name: Marguerite Anglin

Affiliation: Creative Philadelphia

Email: [REDACTED]

(Art Commission staff complete below section)

Art Commission Meeting Date of Project Review: 5/13/26

Level of Review:

Concept Review Final Review If Final, specify date of preceding Concept Review: _____

Administrative Review (for projects with minimal visual impact on public realm)

Staff Notes (Optional):

The overall West Mill Creek Playground project, of which this proposal is the Percent for Art piece, was previously approved by Art Commission in November 2024. Previously approved project included improvements to plaza where proposal is located, as well as the plan to restore the existing sculpture. Existing sculpture restoration approved by Art Commission in March 2026. New artwork is sculptural interpretive signage for the existing restored sculpture.



April 29, 2026

Katherine Liss
The Philadelphia Art Commission
One Parkway, 1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

SUBJECT: Request for concept review - Percent for Art at West Mill Creek Playground (5100 Parrish St)

Dear Alex and Katherine,

Creative Philadelphia is submitting this request to be included on the agenda for the May 13, 2026 Art Commission meeting for conceptual review of a Percent for Artwork at West Mill Creek Playground. This artwork is part of a Capital Programs-Rebuild project involving prior approved playground improvements which are currently under construction. The proposed new artwork consists of a sculptural metal panel with interpretive signage by artist Miguel Horn, designed to engage in dialogue with an existing Percent for Art sculpture already on site.

The existing sculpture, "Decline and Rise" by artist Harold Kimmelman was commissioned through the City's Percent for Art program and is located along the 5000 block of Brown Street. The sculpture was created in 1969 in response to a tragedy. In early July of 1961, the Mill Creek sewer collapsed, causing the destruction of four row homes and deaths of three residents along the 5000 block of Funston Street. Eight years later, the sculpture was erected in memory of the tragedy and victims who succumbed to the underground structural collapse.

Due to the abstract nature of the work (long blocks tilted at various angles), and because memory fades over time, the meaning of the sculpture has been forgotten by the community, and the artwork has affectionally become known as the "french-fry" statue. Creative Philadelphia saw this opportunity for new Percent for Artwork to bring additional context to the existing sculpture, highlighting its original intent and history.

In February 2026, Creative Philadelphia received Art Commission administrative approval for conservation of "Decline and Rise", consisting of cleaning and treating the metal to restore the surface finish, replacing concrete paving directly under the sculpture, and bracing and protecting the sculpture during the Rebuild construction. Heritage Conservation Collective, LLC is currently in process of completing this approved work.

In concert with the conservation, Creative Philadelphia has also commissioned artist Miguel Horn to create a sculptural artistic panel and educational signage. This effort will reanimate and bring renewed meaning to the existing sculpture, while adding a meaningful and

complimentary new artwork on the site. Horn completed community engagement during the summer of 2025, which informed his designs. The final work includes a new 4'x8' metal sculptural panel that is in dialogue with the original sculpture, along with an educational panel that includes information about the 1961 tragedy and Kimmelman's "Decline and Rise" sculpture.

We look forward to presenting this project at the May 13, 2026 Philadelphia Art Commission meeting. Should you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to call me at 215.686.4596.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marguerite Anglin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "M" and a long, sweeping underline.

Marguerite Anglin, RA, NOMA
Public Art Director
Creative Philadelphia
City of Philadelphia

West Mill Creek Playground
Area 'G' Brown St Plaza
Interpretive Signage

PHILADELPHIA ART COMMISSION REVIEW
May 13, 2026

CONTEXT: WEST MILL CREEK PLAYGROUND NEIGHBORHOOD



AREA 'G' BROWN ST PLAZA: EXISTING REBUILD CAPITAL PROJECT



Base Scope

- Replace portions of plaza concrete paving
- Replace a ramp and stairs to be a code compliant
- New PPR standard light fixtures
- Security camera improvements
- Remove a dying tree, and replace it with new trees
- New PPR site signage
- Install benches

HISTORY: MILL CREEK CULVERT CONSTRUCTION LATE 1880s



HISTORY: MILL CREEK CULVERT COLLAPSE, 5000 FUNSTON ST, JULY 17, 1961



48897-29 7-18-61

HISTORY: MILL CREEK CULVERT COLLAPSE, 5000 FUNSTON ST, JULY 17, 1961



AREA 'G' BROWN ST PLAZA: Decline and Rise Sculpture



AREA 'G' BROWN ST PLAZA

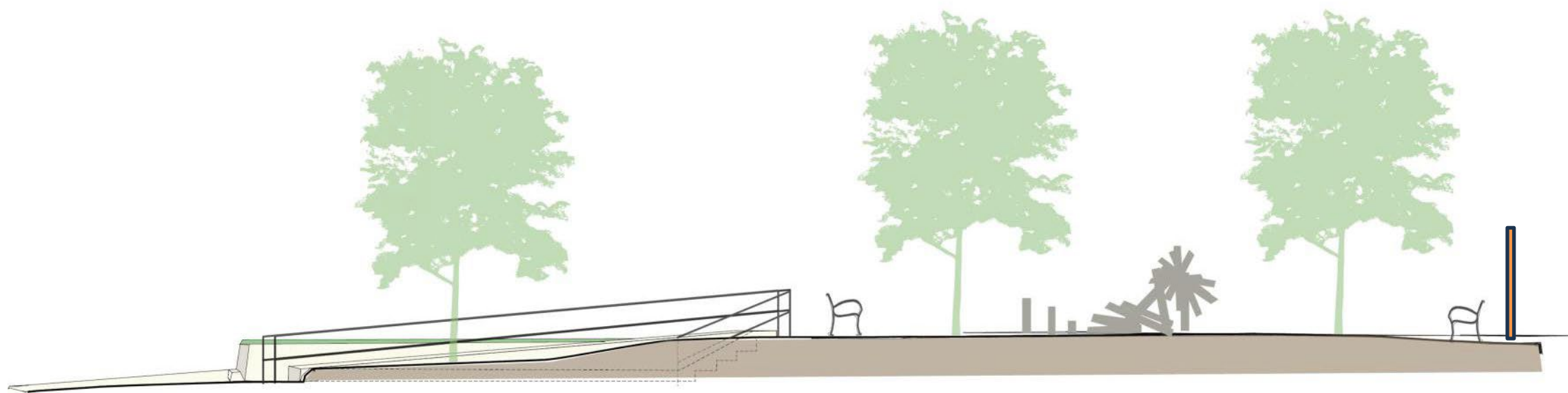


BROWN ST

AREA 'G' BROWN ST PLAZA



Section A



Section B



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: MILL CREEK COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP/FATOE ARTBUS ACTIVATIONS June/August 2025



FINE.ART.THROUGH.OUR.EYES ARTBUS

COLLAORATORS:

- Cassandra Green
- Denise Green
- Miguel Horn

EVENTS:

Mural Arts Unveiling, Priscilla Bell-Lamberty's West Mill Creek: Past Present, Future



"The Pit" Basketball court ribbon cutting

Dates:

- June 2025
- August 2025

Medium:

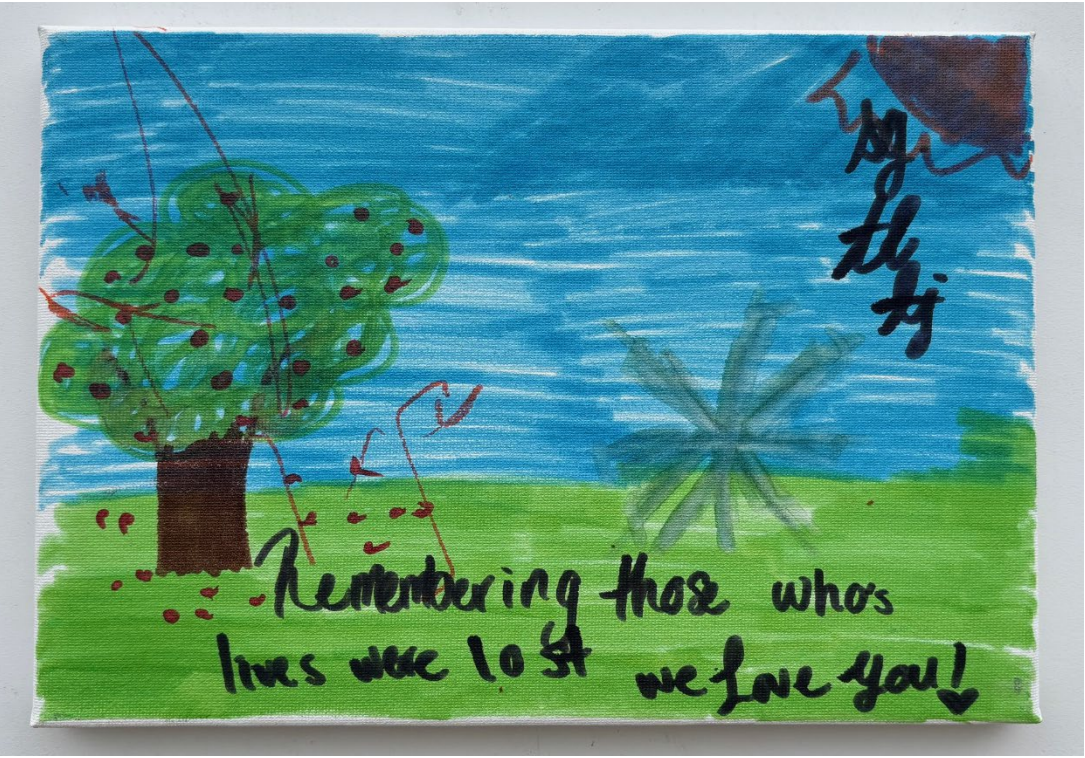
- Jenga Block Building,
- canvas painting
- Written prompts

Families and community members gathered to celebrate several project milestones during the ongoing construction projects at the site. Mill Creek Community Partnership and the F.A.T.O.E. Artbus organized art activities for youth centered around the sculpture's connection to site's history.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: MILL CREEK COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP/FATOE ARTBUS ACTIVATIONS June/August 2025



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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: MILL CREEK COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP/FATOE ARTBUS ACTIVATIONS June/August 2025



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: SUMMER 2025 MCCP, FATOE ART BUS

Community response inspiration Board

DECLINE & RISE

1961 FUNSTON STREET COLLAPSE MEMORIAL SCULPTURE

In early July of 1961 the Mill Creek sewer collapsed causing the destruction of four row homes and deaths of three residents near the 5000 block of Funston Street.

The 'Decline & Rise' sculpture was erected in 1968 in memory of the tragedy and victims who succumbed to the underground structure collapse. Artist Miguel Antonio Horn will be creating signage to accompany a marker that will be added to the sculpture in late 2025.

Data Source

Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, George D. McDowell Collection, Special Collections Research Center, Temple University Libraries



SCAN QR CODE TO WATCH THE DOCUMENTARY
"MILL CREEK: PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE"
PRODUCED BY MILL CREEK COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

MCCPCOMMUNITY.COM
CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFO ON THIS
PROJECT, LOCAL RESOURCES & UPCOMING EVENTS

FOLLOW @MIGUELANTONIOHORN & @MCCPCOMMUNITY ON INSTAGRAM



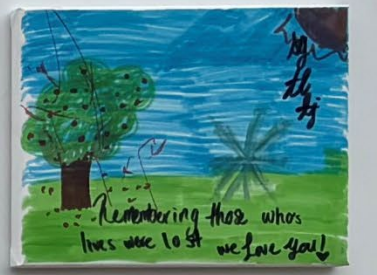
Who/What helps keep constant
in times of change?

What helps you/your community Rise?

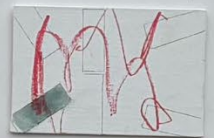
"Community Action Groups
to 'Coordinate' the
neighborhood's
response to the
disaster"

"People that get involved
and participate in
community events"

Friends
Music
Reading
Meditation
FAITH OPTIMISM



zarnob



Haleema



@creativePHL
@MCCPCOMMUNITY
@rebuild.phl
@philaParkandRec
@HeritageConservationCo
@MiguelAntonioHorn

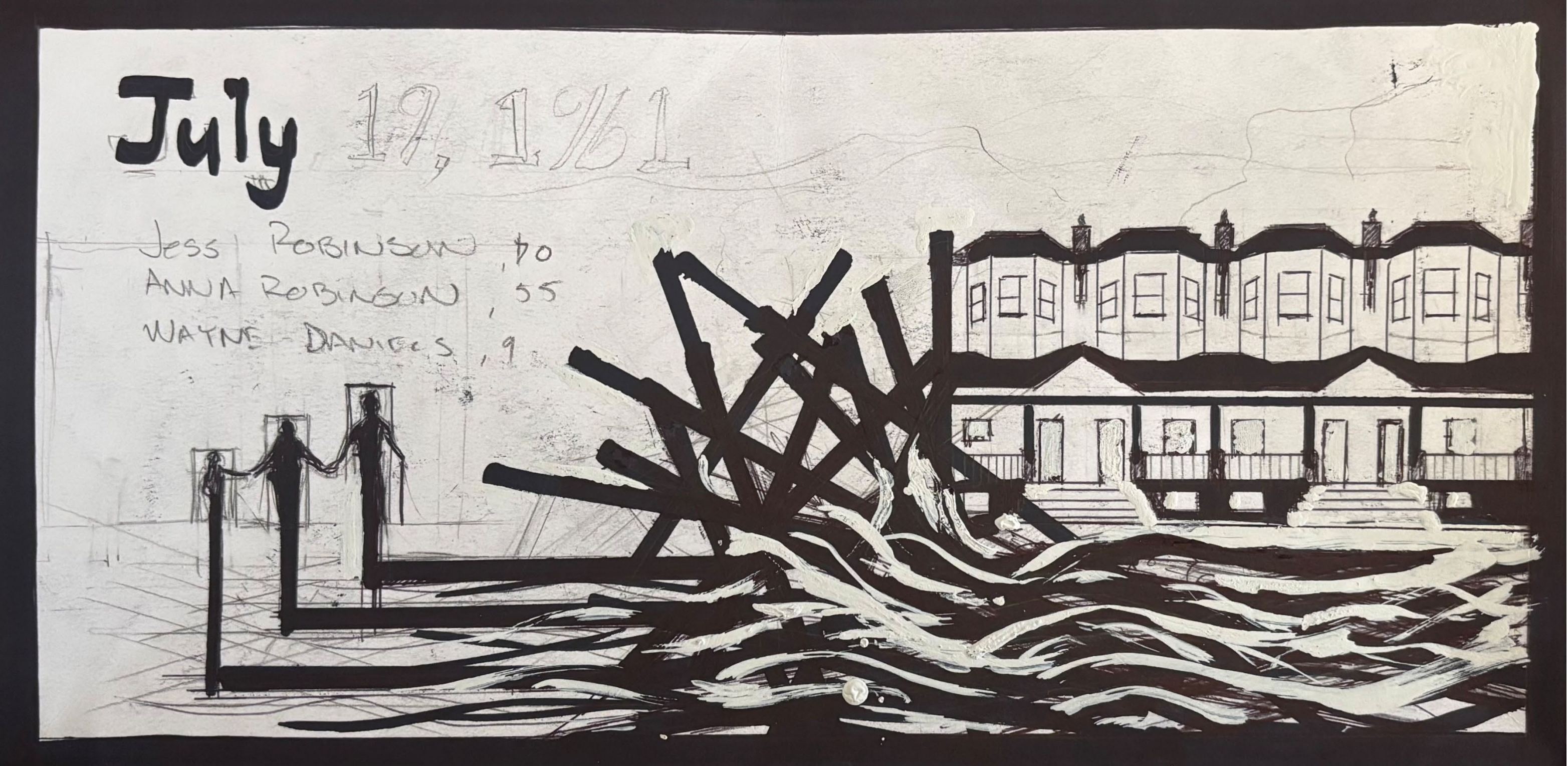


COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: SUMMER 2025 MCCP, FATOE ART BUS

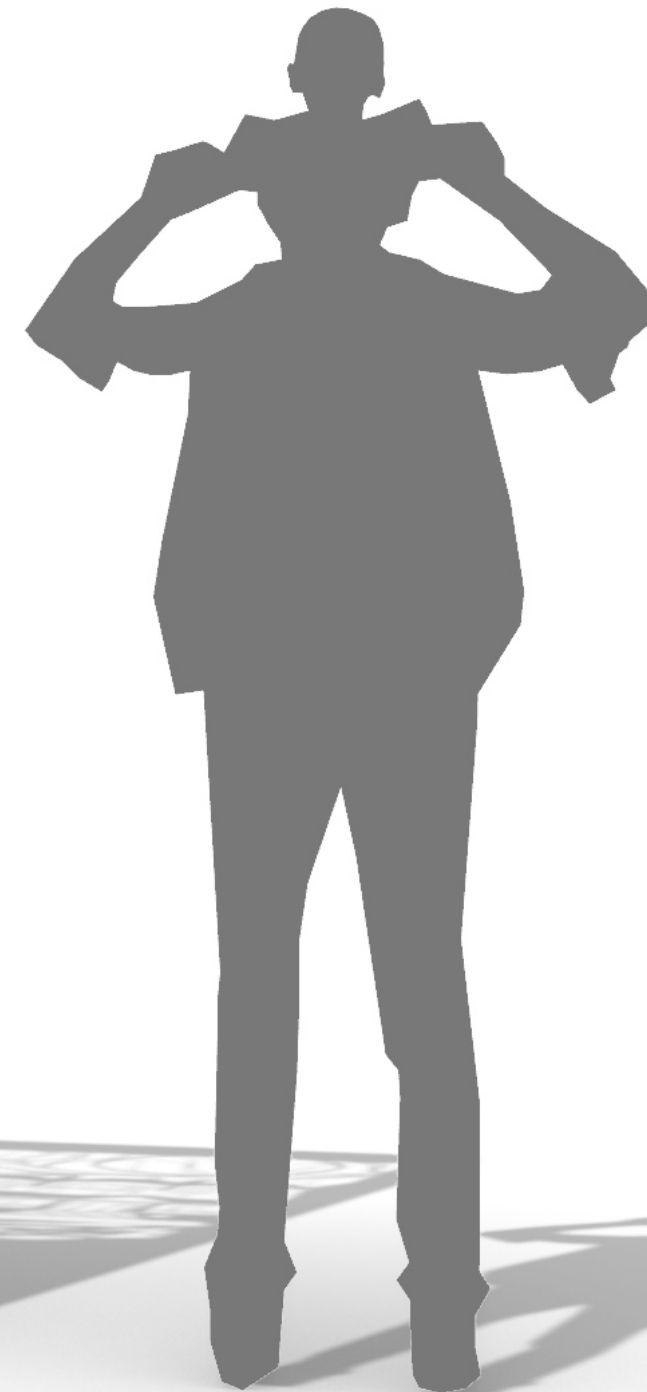
Community response inspiration Board



INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE: DESIGN DEVELOPMENT SKETCH



INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE: DESIGN DEVELOPMENT RENDER



INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE: SITE RENDER

VIEW FROM NORTH EXTENT OF PLAZA



INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE: SITE RENDER

VIEW FROM SOUTH, CENTER OF PLAZA



INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE: SITE RENDER

VIEW FROM NORTH



NARRATIVE SIGNAGE:

HISTORICAL/ CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

Decline and Rise: A Sculptural Memorial of the Mill Creek Culvert Collapse



Mill Creek Culvert Construction and Funston St Collapse, courtesy Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, George D McDowell Collection, Special Collections Research Center, Temple University Libraries

Mill Creek, a tributary of the Schuylkill River, originates in Montgomery County and once flowed openly through West Philadelphia. In the late 1800s, industrial mill contamination made the waterway a public health hazard, and it was buried within culverts and sewer lines as the area rapidly developed from farmland into dense urban housing. Homes were constructed above it using unstable fill, including coal ash, which compromised the ground beneath them. Over time, this led to sinkholes and collapses along the buried waterway.

On July 17, 1961, the culvert collapsed beneath the 5000 block of Funston Street, causing four rowhomes to fall and killing three residents: Jesse Robinson, 70; his wife Anna Robinson, 55; and nine-year-old Wayne Daniels, the sole member of his family who did not escape the tragic event. Following the collapse, the city used eminent domain to seize properties built above the Mill Creek culvert, and the cleared land became open space, including West Mill Creek Playground and Brown Street Plaza.

The sculpture located here, Decline and Rise, was created by Harold Zimmerman in 1968 as a memorial to this tragedy. Fabricated from stainless steel tubing and known locally as the “French Fries,” the abstract form evokes the tumultuous movement of water and the violence of the collapse. At one end of the sculpture, three pillars stand in memory of the lives lost. Over time, although community elders have preserved the story of the collapse, the meaning of the sculpture itself has faded from broader public awareness.

During renovations to the plaza in 2026, artist Miguel Horn was commissioned by Creative Philadelphia to create interpretive signage reconnecting the sculpture to the site’s history. In collaboration with the Mill Creek Community Partnership, F.A.T.O.E. ArtBus, and local residents, Horn developed a series of community-based art activities exploring themes of loss, memory, and resilience. Drawing from this process, Horn created an illustrated panel that reconnects the sculpture to the site’s history. The composition marks the four collapsed homes and three lives lost, while a band of flowing water across the base represents Mill Creek. At its center, a chaotic entanglement of lines anchors the composition. The panel echoes the original sculpture’s form, evoking the spiraling timbers and rushing water of the collapse, and incorporates imagery created by participants during community programming.

City of Philadelphia
Cherelle Parker, Mayor
Creative Philadelphia
Valarie Gay, Director
Margueritte Anglin, Public Art Director

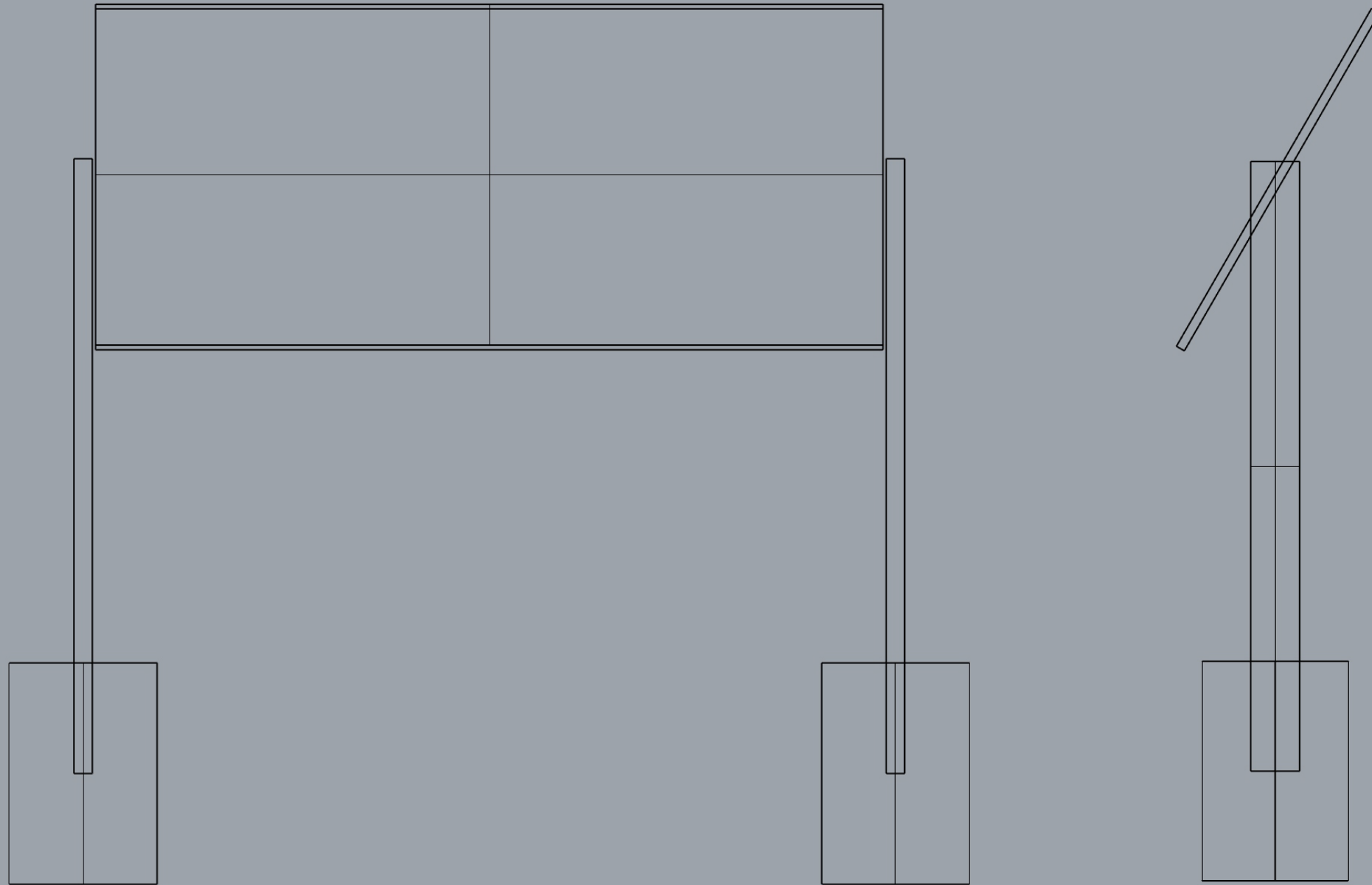
Project made possible with support from
Rebuild PHL
Heritage Conservation Co
Olin Landscape Partners
Mill Creek Community Partnership
Fine.Art.Through.Our.Eyes
ContraFuerte, LLC

Scan the QR Code to see the Documentary “Mill Creek:
Past, Present & Future” Produced by Mill Creek
Community Partnership



NARRATIVE SIGNAGE:

MOUNTING



WEST MILL CREEK PLAYGROUND AREAS E & G

5100 Parrish St.
Philadelphia, PA 19139

OLIN

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE / URBAN DESIGN / PLANNING
ONE PENN CENTER
1617 JOHN F. KENNEDY BOULEVARD, SUITE 1900
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103
TEL 215 445 0030 / FAX 215 445 0041
WWW.THEOLINSTUDIO.COM
OLIN PARTNERSHIP, LTD.

Playground Design:
Studio Ludo
4800 Springfield Ave
Philadelphia, PA 19143
(215) 454-6780

Civil Engineering:
Sci Tek
1880 John F Kennedy Blvd #600,
Philadelphia, PA 19103
(267) 314-5385

Structural:
Arora and Associates, P.C.
190 Brodhead Road, Suite 120,
Bethlehem, PA 18017
(484) 895-3131

MEP:
Mark Ulrick
30 N. 41ST SUITE 500
Philadelphia, PA 19104
(856) 320-8100

No.	Date	Description
1	07/31/2024	SCHEMATIC DESIGN 100%
12	10/25/2024	DESIGN DEVELOPMENT 100%

DETAILS - SITE SIGNAGE

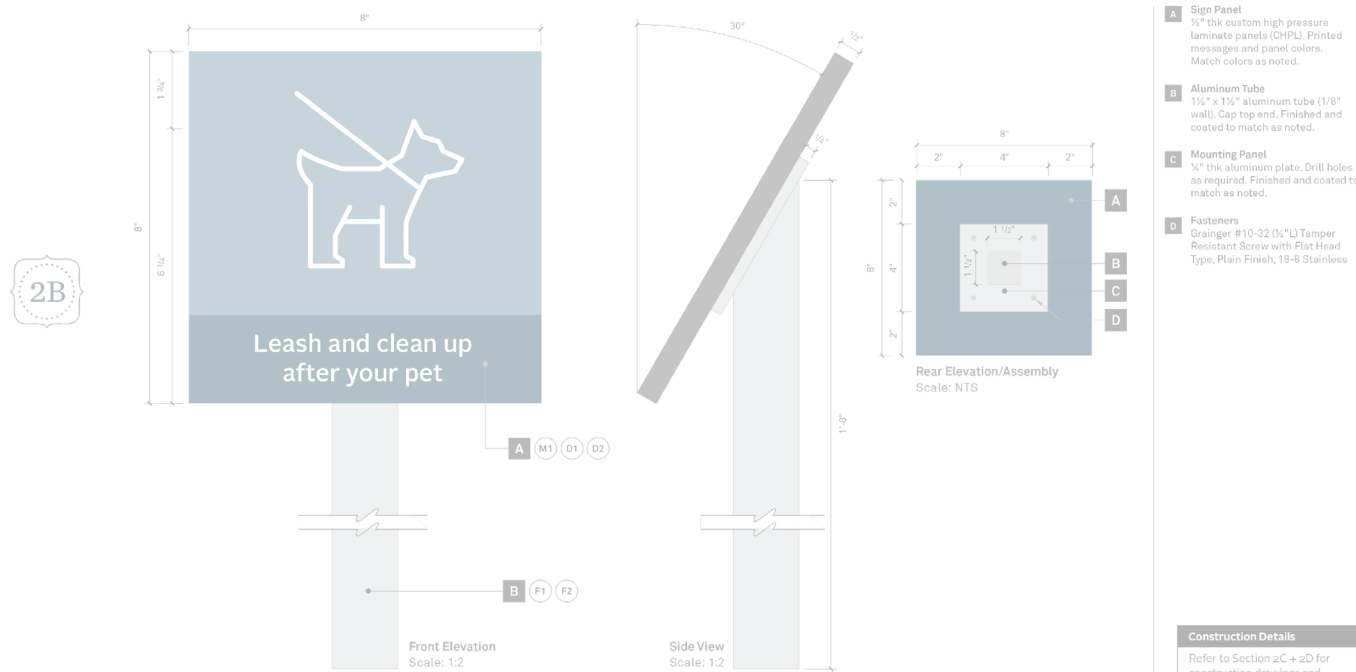
Scale: NA
Date: 10/25/2024
Drawn: TS
Checked: TS
Project No.:

L843

RUL.7

Sign Type Description

This sign type is used to post a singular regulatory message throughout a Philadelphia Parks & Recreation site/facility.

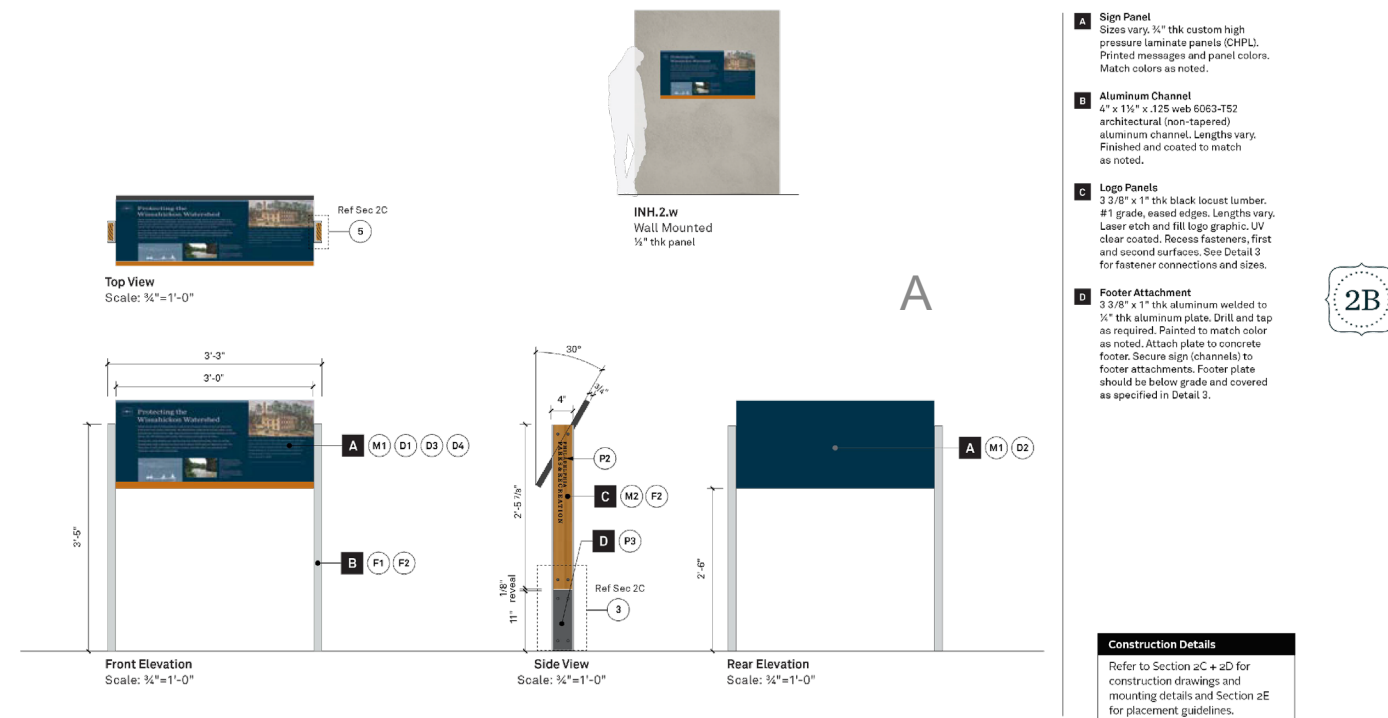


1 | PPR SIGN: RUL.7
SCALE: 1:2

INH.2

Sign Type Description

This sign type is used to interpret a property element or history of the site or structure. This sign type accommodates one 150-word story and 2 - 4 images.



2 | PPR SIGN: INH.2
SCALE: VARIES

DECLINE & RISE

1961 FUNSTON STREET COLLAPSE MEMORIAL SCULPTURE

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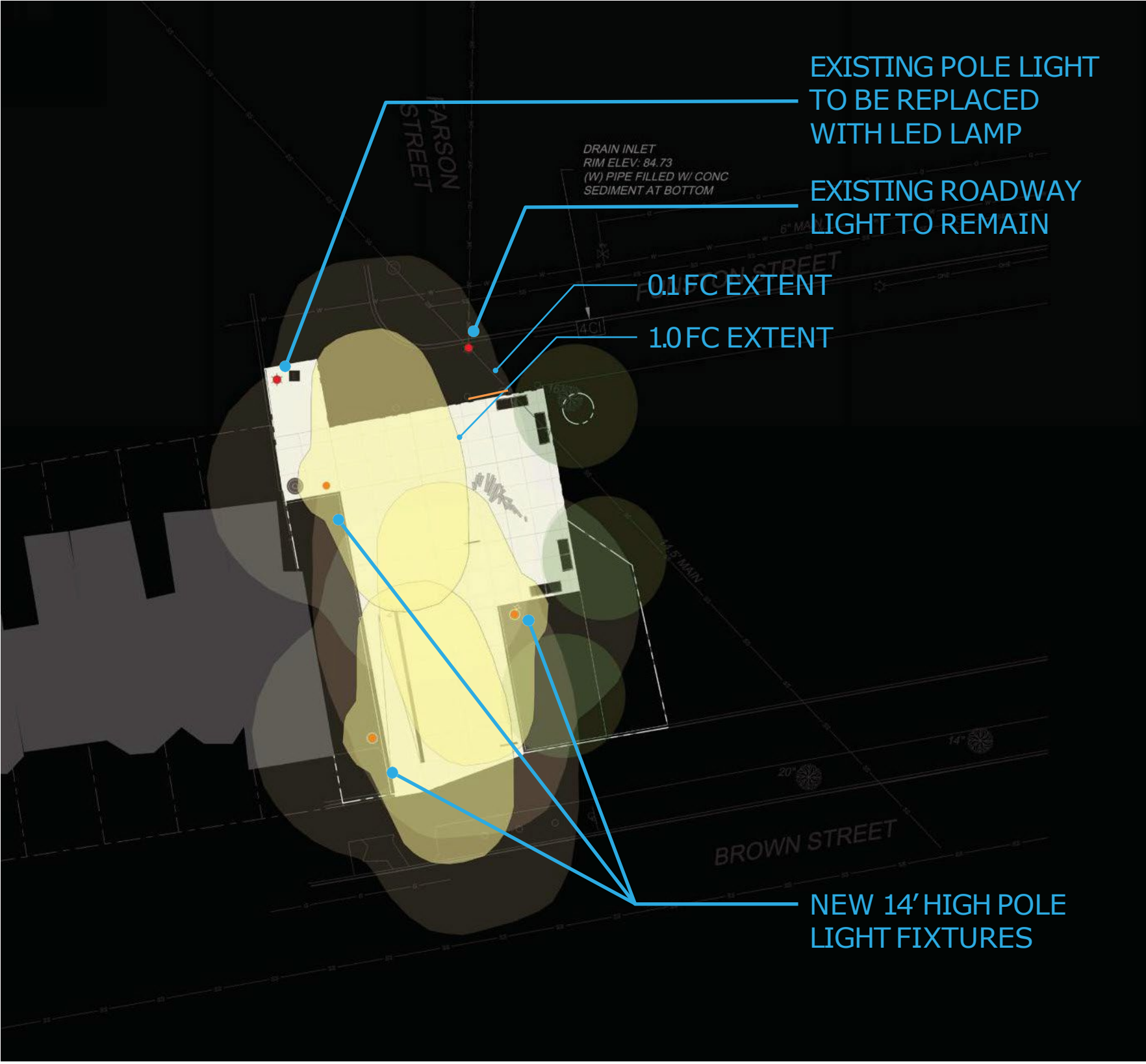


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AREA 'G' BROWN ST PLAZA



AREA 'G' BROWN ST PLAZA - SITE LIGHTING



EXISTING POLE LIGHT FIXTURE TO BE REPLACED



UTILIZES EXISTING JUNCTION BOX FOR SITE LIGHTING EXTENSION

AREA 'G' BROWN ST PLAZA

