

➤ **Users of public spaces, current and future**

- Publics that want to view art work.
- Gift shop shoppers
- Students from University of the Arts, Curtis Institute
- Groups from the suburbs come into KC.
- Donor involvement through their support of student projects
- Young adults and school children

➤ **Uses of public space, current and future**

- Mounting or displaying artwork on moveable scaffolding or framing structures made of wood, to show cast art. Artwork could be easily moved to various locations inexpensively.
- Students could perform, inside and outside KC, at no cost. Performing is important to students.
- More performing is needed.
- Have students create colorful 30' x15' banners hanging from the Commonwealth Plaza ceiling. The banners would be school projects for children. Donors would love to support this project by purchasing materials.
- Students of all ages should be able to use free music rooms when no orchestral performances are scheduled.
- Trees and plants can be used to create walkways to various activities, use natural lighting to enhance the environment
- Rooftop Garden needs table seating and greenery throughout.
- Rooftop Garden should have astronomy shows, star watching.
- Student performances at no cost
- Have art shows.
- Have more festivals during the year.
- Have recording studios, presentation areas, classrooms, and internet access areas.
- The Merck Art Education Program does outreach at KC. More outreach and follow-up programs, to educate the public and school children, are needed.
- Close Broad Street for outside performances at KC.

➤ **What's liked about KC?**

- Great potential for future activities and attracting more users and newer users
- The “building works”, it simply needs to become busier.
- “KC is beautiful...open (spacious)...exciting...its comfortable.”
- “It’s big (Commonwealth Plaza) and gives a sense of privacy.”

➤ **Barriers at KC**

- “I don’t see any public space...there’s empty space but not public space.” Here, the speaker doesn’t feel that KC public space is truly public space. The space is large but not dedicated to the public’s use.
- “There’s nothing to do.”
- Users and potential users don’t know what’s happening in KC.
- Budgetary consideration determines how public space is used and its activities
- KC ushers/guards aren’t friendly, look intimidating and can stop users from entering the building.
- Barrier tape used to stop users from going into restricted areas also stops users from entering the building.
- The open spaces aren’t open all the time to the public; some public spaces are closed during performances.
- Public spaces appear to be closed at times or look uninviting, unfriendly environment.
- “People don’t know they can just walk in.”
- People don’t know when KC is open to the public.

➤ **Principles/criteria that can guide planners and architects**

- Public space should be needs defined as a public space, one that is dedicated for the public’s use.
- Artwork and greenery (plants, trees, and flowers) should be displayed throughout KC.
- Use green design in public spaces.
- Purpose to the public spaces
- Big donors’ wishes shouldn’t out way the wishes of the general public.
- Public spaces open to the public at all times.
- The Gift shop needs its own entrance
- Have plenty of seating and tables.
- Create a friendly welcoming environment.
- Public needs to be informed of KC activities.
- Use of technology in Commonwealth Plaza and other public spaces to inform users and potential users, i.e. video screens, animations, interactive displays, kiosks and “Y-5” internet linkage to music and videos.

- Use music on the outside to draw the public into KC to generate more users.
- Use of an icon like the Wanamaker's Eagle
- Use of natural light
- Be flexible in the design, set-up and uses of the public space environment; the public spaces should serve both concert goers and non-concert goers, dual purposes.
- Color should be used throughout KC.
- Exploit the unique public space and environment of KC. Be creative and use one's imagination fully.
- Public should know KC's regular hours.
- Public space should convey "ordinary use...day to day use of the space." One should feel that this is a place to go and have a cup of coffee or enjoy flowers.
- Training of staff, ushers/guards, in being mannerly, how to be friendly and welcoming to the public.

➤ **Summary**

- The group was eager to share their thoughts; it was as if their long pent views finally had an opportunity to be aired.

Kimmel Center Public Space Project
Moderator Notes
January 28, 2008
Submitted by Fatima Hafiz

Group Members

Transportation Advocacy Worker
Performing Artist
Organization Development Consultant
Former Board Member of Philadelphia Orchestra
Business volunteer for the Arts
Founding member of Chamber Orchestra-Resident Company
Architects and neighborhood residents
Retired Verizon Writer
College Students
Concert goers and members of Kimmel

Small Group Discussion

USERS

- church groups
- community residents
- senior citizens
- art school students
- tourist
- convention center participants
- museum patrons
- flower show patrons
- retirees
- vendors
- universities
- other cultural institutions
- cirque du soliel
- Philadelphia school district
- ticket subscribers
- performers
- customers of gift shop
- children
- renters of the facilities
- craft vendors
- local artist

OUTREACH/MARKETING

- make gift shop accessible to street as a bridge to the inside of the center
- restaurant open at other times
- grand piano in the plaza
- multi-media screens inside and outside-digital displays
- marquee
- more three sheet enclosures
- summer time and weekend activities outside and inside
- sidewalk activities
- greenery
- affordable food
- kiosks
- exhibits to attract more diverse audiences
- partnering with groups outside of center city- community arts centers
- resident companies to partner with schools
- make more inviting (fabrics, paintings, banners, plants , benches)
- seating areas appealing to different audiences
- contrast of choices and variety

USES

- wireless access
- piazza type structure
- student exhibitions
- arcade
- broadcast television and radio shows
- rotating art – frequently
- internet cafe
- seating for lunch -12-2
- free talent showcase for young talent
- diverse cultural events
- afternoon and Saturday puppet shows, magic shows, slide shows
- eatery
- classrooms
- free meeting space for student group

SUPPORTS

- schools – public, private, colleges, universities, special schools
- walk in traffic
- building being open more
- director of activities and logistics – funded from outside
- good space
- natural lighting
- roof garden

- architecture
- inside the theaters
- elegant detailing
- underground parking
- public transport access
- big restrooms
- verizon hall interior

BARRIERS

- affordability
- perception of upscale place
- architectural components not connected
- unions
- building closed during holidays
- transportation for some groups (PA Council of Arts provide busing grants)
- no street level view (paradox)
- human flow awkward
- invisible signage
- physical assessability
- lighting (outside and inside)
- common wealth plaza- colors, cold, gray, black granite uninviting
- seating is insufficient and not to scale
- no seating in the garden
- restrooms inaccessible- none on the roof
- access to theaters limited
- location and critical mass visibility

PRINCIPLES

- Music as primary
- Variety of Arts (visual, literary, performing)
- Cultural Inclusion
- Architectural transparency
- Open hours
- Balance between intimacy and large scale

Kimmel Center Public Space Project
Moderator Notes
January 28, 2008
Submitted by Chris Satullo
Group "Green"

Users:

Current: Concert audiences, upper class, children, Comcast, businesses, students, performers, other cultural organizations

Potential: Grass-roots organizations, student performers, more field trips, public broadcasters, drop-in visitors, assisted living residents

Uses:

Current: Concerts, plays, master classes, rehearsals, private functions (price a problem), free events, lectures, exhibits

Potential: Art exhibits, weddings, dances/balls, flea markets, musical salons, job fairs, political debates, alumni meetings and graduations, "Philadelphia's wintertime Rittenhouse Square"; use lobby for promotion of programs; put laptops in so people can browse program and see performance clips; kiosks for info; teas; Mummers performances; WiFi; coffee; more programs like Winter solstice; winter spot for parents and kids; recreation program performers; movies; cheaper lunches; focal point for social gathering and networking in CC; open mike days; piano bar; resource center for artists; book stalls; "Performances for pop-ins"

Values

These are all "should be's": Broad-based welcome, freedom to linger, user-friendly, showcase for art, linchpin of tourism, point of Philly pride, arts education, free destination, firm focus on art, truly public space, support of up and coming groups, diversity in people, art and music; hub for community outreach; "village of art"; good citizen and neighbor.

What works

Impressive; handles traffic on busy day; performance spaces; idea of a small stage in plaza; info desk volunteers

What doesn't work

Front door is hard to open, literally and figuratively; Spruce St. entrance for disabled is poor; Spruce St. side is barren and uninviting; Broad St. entrance gives feel of unused space but no feel of wonderful art inside; chairs are too few and too low, elderly patrons find them impossible to get and out of; lighting in plaza doesn't work for performers or pedestrians; long, dead hallways. Slow, small elevators. No escalators. Worn and dangerous staircase. Long rows in Verizon creates fire code worries; if there's ever a fire, a lot of old people will never make it out.

Possible fixes

This group came totally alive when asked this question:

More lighting from below, not above
Movable, comfortable seating clusters
Greenery – create a partnership with the Philadelphia Horticultural Society – make it a showcase for them.
Escalators!
Make staircases safer
Screens inside and outside to show performances
Recorded music piped into plaza at all times
New uses, retail, food etc, to activate dead tier hallways.
Link to PAFA – student art shows.
More color in plaza
Better pr/marketing in building, on web, in community
Open the box office to outside, while keeping it inside – get rid of the black thing
Move the info station closer to Broad St. entrance
Break up the gift shop, creating stalls throughout the plaza; make the shop space an inviting coffee bar with art/music periodicals and books

Principles

- 1) Support up-and-coming art and artists of all media**
- 2) Open Commonwealth Plaza to the WHOLE commonwealth**
- 3) Make it a “lively” arts center**
- 4) Use the building to promote the program**
- 5) Design for comfortable conversation**
- 6) Caffeine! WiFi! Food!**
- 7) More color**

What do you find exciting about the Kimmel:

- lighting at night – grandeur
- city within a city
- combination of shapes and materials
- natural light
- interior volume
- Commonwealth Plaza – great image
- Size – roomy
- Scale – breathtaking
- The garden – green, light, alive
- Commonwealth Plaza – free events and garden
- “A place”
- soaring impression and excitement at performance

Uses

- shopping
- exhibitions – art, photography
- performance in and out of the “boxes”
- lunch restaurant –affordable and reasonable prices
- movie/screening/film festival
- lectures/artist talks
 - by performers before and after show
 - academic
- venue for other events:
 - fringe festival
 - links to museum shows
 - “M Butterfly” bring in lectures, music performance, culture events
- Conventions
- Community events
- Children events
 - Education
 - Puppet show
 - Day care
 - Play space
- Ethnic festivals
 - Performers
 - Art

- Vendors
- On the waterfront in the summer, at the KC in the winter
- Indoors and outdoors
- Music teachers hold recitals
- After school workshops
- Amateur musicians “get your chops back”
 - Open mike as well as audition
- Place to hang out with children and talk with others (chairs, benches)
 - Dogs?
- Community orchestras/organizations “open space” for “rehearsals”
- Coffee bar
- Broadcast of events
 - Airwaves
 - On “street”
- Wireless/WIFI – strong, free
- People watching
- Meetings – small, in public spaces
- Info booth –for whole city; tourist info
- City-wide ticket booth
- Community meeting/conferencing, videoconferencing

User

- Everybody and anybody
- Grandchildren run around
- Weekday people in the city
- People who live in the neighborhood
- Urban strollers
- Architectural tourists
- Tourists
- Ticker buyers – music lovers
- Concert goers
- Foreign tourists
- People look for something to do – “always something at KC”
- Eaters and drinkers – buy there or bring own
 - Students
 - Business people
- Shoppers
- School children (groups – introduction to the arts)
- Arts followers – “culture vultures”
 - Classical
 - Opera
 - Visual arts
 - Dance

- Sculpture
- Jazz
- World music
- Interactive
- Rock
- Folk
- Etc.
- Lecture attenders
- Vendors come in with wares/display
- Resters/relaxers
- Employees
- Special event goers (graduations, conventions)

Values:

- Mixed use – other reasons to come it
 - Multiplicity of uses – sometimes correspond to show, sometimes not
- Welcoming and access and inviting to public spaces
 - Includes energizing exterior to draw people in
 - Need marquee, signs, etc. outside
- Exposure to arts
 - Educate children
 - Link to Avenue of the Arts, art schools, variety of arts.
- Location – Broad and Spruce, population center
- Availability
 - Hours of operation
 - Openness of space
 - Not just box-office
- Community
 - Build sense of community
 - Reach out to all, not just a few
- Wide range of arts
 - Reach out to wide demographics, interests, SES, ethnicity
- Partnership

Barriers/Inhibitors

- Feels unsafe to walk to suburban station at night
- Not a place to pass through without a particular purpose
- Unclear hours of operation/inconsistent?
- Intimidating
 - Outside:
 - Not clear opening
 - 15th Street wall
 - Spruce street

- Lack of signage
- Gift shop with no outside entry
- Lack of color
- Lack of light
- Inside:
 - Big/huge
 - Shapes edges
 - Greeted by plainclothes security
 - Barriers to prohibit access to areas that should be public
 - Security precautions limit what can see when here
 - Institutional feel to parts of building
- Stairs that go nowhere
- Elevator – unclear names to floors (Tier 1 = floor 2)
- High prices for refreshments/food
- Buildings inside building loom and can be intimidating
- Limited seating in public spaces
 - Current circle chairs/not for interaction
- Feels empty most times
- Need low cost/informal coffee bar

Supports

- Good people watching space
- Halls and plaza support public space
- Landmark building – can't miss it
- Public performance space
- Has bars, restaurants, cafés
- Good public restrooms in basement (when open)
- Location
- Volunteers are helpful, will help answer questions, particularly at info booth

Principles

- Seating conducive to conversation and lingering
- Welcoming atmosphere
 - Security and emptiness need to be overcome
 - Need color and decorations
- Link outside and inside:
 - Signage
 - Lighting
 - Plantings
 - More transparent glazing at street
 - Sound playing outside what's inside
 - Sidewalk – break it up to connect to inside and connect to paces/wayfinding
- Clear and consistent hours of operation

- Stuff to do:
 - Restaurants
 - Coffee shops
 - Free Events
 - Shopping
- A gathering focal point
 - E.g., a fountain