



THE NEW NEXUS

DESIGNING A SQUARE FOR NØRREBRO STATION

Basargrunden • Assignment
Urban Design Studio • Summer 2019
Faculty • Joshua Morrison • Laura Parsons



Basargrunden



Nørrebro Station, historic photo



Black Square, SuperKilen Nørrebro

Introduction

Brief

As urban designers, we set the frame in which public life happens. We create the commons, the space between buildings, where people of different groups mix, and where the ballet of city life takes place. Urban design involves both the physical design of urban places as well as the organizational design of the diverse set of functions which are contained within these places.

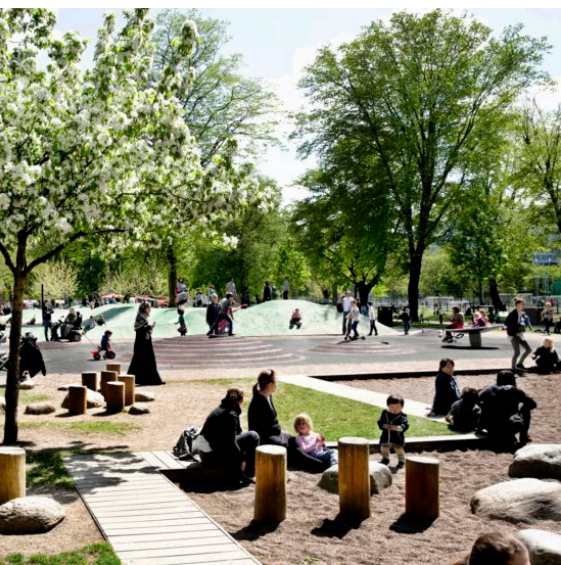
Train stations are the crossing points of many different networks. They are the spaces we emerge from trains and busses and enter into the fabric of the city. It is thus critical that the spaces that surround them perform well as public spaces. Places where people want to linger and spend time in the public realm.

This urban design studio explores the role of a new civic space in a changing city. Our site is a new public space adjacent to Nørrebro Metro Station, opening in the fall of 2019. Design proposals developed during this studio will suggest how this space might act as a social glue for the communities that surround it - a place where people of different ages, ethnicities, and cultural groups feel is theirs and will use on a regular basis.

The design of the space should carefully consider microclimate, programming, surfaces, water, landscaping, streetscape, temporary use and the architectural design of space for public life. Most importantly, the design should be in 'human scale' placing an emphasis on how people interact and use the space.



Basargrunden. Medborgerne's Christmas event.



Fælleparken, Copenhagen

Context

In the fall of 2019, a public space previously used as a staging ground for the metro will open adjacent to Nørrebro Station (see cover image on page 1). This site, called Basargrunden, lies at the intersection of one of the most culturally, racially, and socioeconomically diverse neighborhoods in Denmark - Nørrebro, and Nordvest.

Due to budgetary constraints, the City of Copenhagen has decided not to build-out the space when the metro opens. This has created a 2-3 year lag in which the space will be an empty asphalt triangle - a clean slate. In these years, Fundament Design and CoUrban will be working with a local organization called Medborgerne (The Citizens) to design a temporary intervention in the space. This temporary intervention will test out ideas for a longer term design and act as a testbed for what may come in the permanent design. It will also be used to garner participation from marginalized communities in the neighborhood, and to build local ownership of the space.

The programming of public spaces (which activities we design for), and who we seek to attract often reflects who is a part of the design process. Public spaces can unintentionally exclude certain groups and activities and prioritize others. The design of the public realm thus has the potential to reinforce divides between social groups as well as inequalities. On the other hand, public spaces also have the potential to nourish ties between social groups and increase social cohesion and trust.

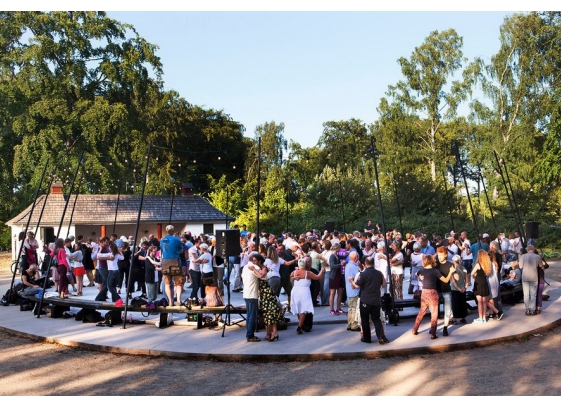
The DIS Architecture and Urban Design Studio will produce concepts for the long-term design of this space, which will be shared with the stakeholder committee at BasarGrunden and with Medborgerne. These conceptual designs will also influence the temporary intervention that is built in the fall of 2019 and may be considered in the eventual permanent design of the space.



New Road, Brighton



Library Plaza, Nordvest, COBE



Summer Dance, Fælleparken, Copenhagen

Objectives

The assignment deals with the challenge of designing a public space for both passive and active recreation that satisfies all the needs and desires of the many different user groups that may interact with this space. These groups can range from children to the elderly and from European to Asian, Arab and African populations living in close vicinity. Through an extensive group analysis, you are expected to carefully consider your programmatic design and the physical design features that can support this. You are also expected to respond to microclimatic issues with the site and region in designing a space that can be used throughout the dark, cold scandinavian winters as well as the long warm summer days. Your final presentation boards will capture the essence of your design proposals and communicate clearly the ways you are responding to the design brief.

Program

The programming of activities and functions and their placement within the site is an integral part of your proposal and must be based on your findings during the site analysis. The analysis and the concept are therefore considered as vital parts of the process as the final design project. A project can either succeed or fail depending upon the designer's ability to successfully respond to the unique context of people and their culture. Design proposals should thus be based on concrete findings from your analysis. Elements to consider include

- A strong relationship between the space and its local context
- A series of "urban furnitures" functioning as structuring elements to divide the site into intentionally scaled and defined spaces
- A user-oriented strategy for circulation
- A functional mobility plan (including pedestrians, bicycles, strollers, etc.)
- A spatial quality representative of your concept, achieved through clear design moves and communicated visually
- An intentional use of materials and surfaces, consistent with the aims of your design concept

Phase I - Analysis

It is important to start with a thorough site analysis, to ensure that the final design is responding to the physical and sociological features of the site. The aim is to gather as much understanding about the site and its surrounding context before the initial design work starts.

An architectural site analysis can be done in many different ways. We will break you up into groups of 2-3 so that each group is able to focus on their specific area of analysis, but together we will share all our findings and have a much larger base of knowledge to start designing from. Each group will present their analysis results in the studio, and in this way an "analysis library" will be established for the studio. Each group will focus on one of the following areas:

A. Activity, Edges & Functions

Mapping of activity:

Who is using the site, what are they doing, and where is it taking place? This should be done during the day and evening on a weekday and a weekend.

Edges and Functions:

Record what the edges to the site look like, and what is happening. Are they engaging with the site, relating to the human scale or are they



Desire lines mapping movement, Nørreport



Rendering using physical model

locked away and imposing? Capture this with images and/or a diagram. Record the surrounding building functions / ground floor use and indicate them on a diagram by color-code.

B. Movement, Connectivity, and Culture:

Map, track and trace the way pedestrians, bikes and cars are moving across and around the site. Try group the main flows and connections. This should be done for both volume and frequency of movement through the day and evening.

Design and conduct interviews with people at the site (shop owners, people on benches, passer-bys). Seek to develop for the studio a better understanding of needs and desires of these different users regarding the future of the space. Record key findings from these interviews. Research demographics for the local area, who are the current and potential users? Which communities are present in this space? Study and document the history of the site.

C. Scale, Spatial Features & Context.

Make scale comparisons with other stations in the city. Show these on comparisons in a diagram. Make scale and program comparisons with nearby squares and public spaces in Nørrebro and Nordvest within a 5 minute walking radius and highlight their connections on a map. Are there public space or civic programs that are missing in the area (e.g. play space for teens, urban forest/park space, performance spaces...)

On the site, record key spatial dimensions and proportions, as space between buildings (street width) and building heights. Cut key sections across and along the site, and remember to add a human scale indication.

D. Physical Site Model

Build a model of the existing site and abutting facades at 1:100. This will be used to understand the scale and proportions of the site and its surroundings. It should include the site boundaries, permanent features, typology of buildings bordering the site and show any existing trees or vegetation. The studio will provide a budget of 400DKK for materials.

E. Climate

Record the sun path over the site and account for seasonal changes in light penetration and shadows. Record also the wind exposure and noise conditions, relative to the immediate context.

Conduct a quality criteria assessment of the space using Gehl's 12 Quality Criteria (Readings: Jan Gehl "How to Study Public Life")

G. Engagement methods:

You will need to curate a tool for engaging with people currently using the site. Either a temporary installation or activity can give an understanding of how people respond to each other and the site. An example could be setting up a ping pong table, adding in movable seating, and introducing lighting to the space. Use photography to document your findings and how your intervention has changed the space.

All groups:

Use photos or film to capture details, situations and views from and to the site. Keep note of observations and your first impressions through sketches and written descriptions.

Phase II - Design

Presentation Requirements

Visual representation is one of the most important means of communication for your final presentation. Below is a comprehensive list of the type of material that can be included. It is up to you, as the designer, to select which material best communicates your design which should be approved by the instructor prior to your final submission.

- All material from phase 1
- All sketch models (diverse scales) and process sketches
- Final section model with people, cars, trees, etc. (1:200)
- Axon diagram showing the overall design.
- Site plan (1:500)
- 1 long section/elevation made in a spatial collage (1:100)
- 1:10 or 1:20 sections to illustrate certain features
- Perspective renderings or sketches to illustrate the atmosphere of the space.
- Headings, text on plan, sections and diagrams to explain context and a text that shortly describes the project, so it will be able to stand alone and be understood without a oral presentation.
- A title for your project that captures your concept.

In addition to your design for the space, you will also be expected to suggest a way to test your design through a low-cost pilot, which will be considered for the intervention taking place in the fall of 2019. This pilot should explore one or more aspects of your program for the site. This pilot can be communicated in a basic diagram that you include on your presentation board.

Evaluation and Grading

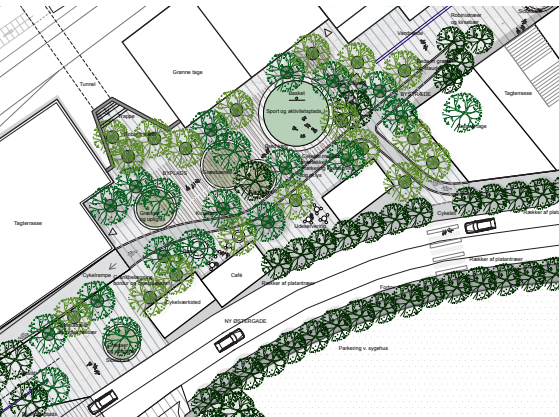
Evaluation is based on daily work in studio (process) 40%, and final presentation 60%. Evaluation criteria are outlined in detail in the grading rubrics for process and presentation which are included in the course syllabus.

Submission Information

Please refer to the studio syllabus and AD Information for project submission guidelines and plotting instructions.



Section elevation. Elemental.



Plan drawing. Marianne Levinsen.



Rendering of public space design,
SLA