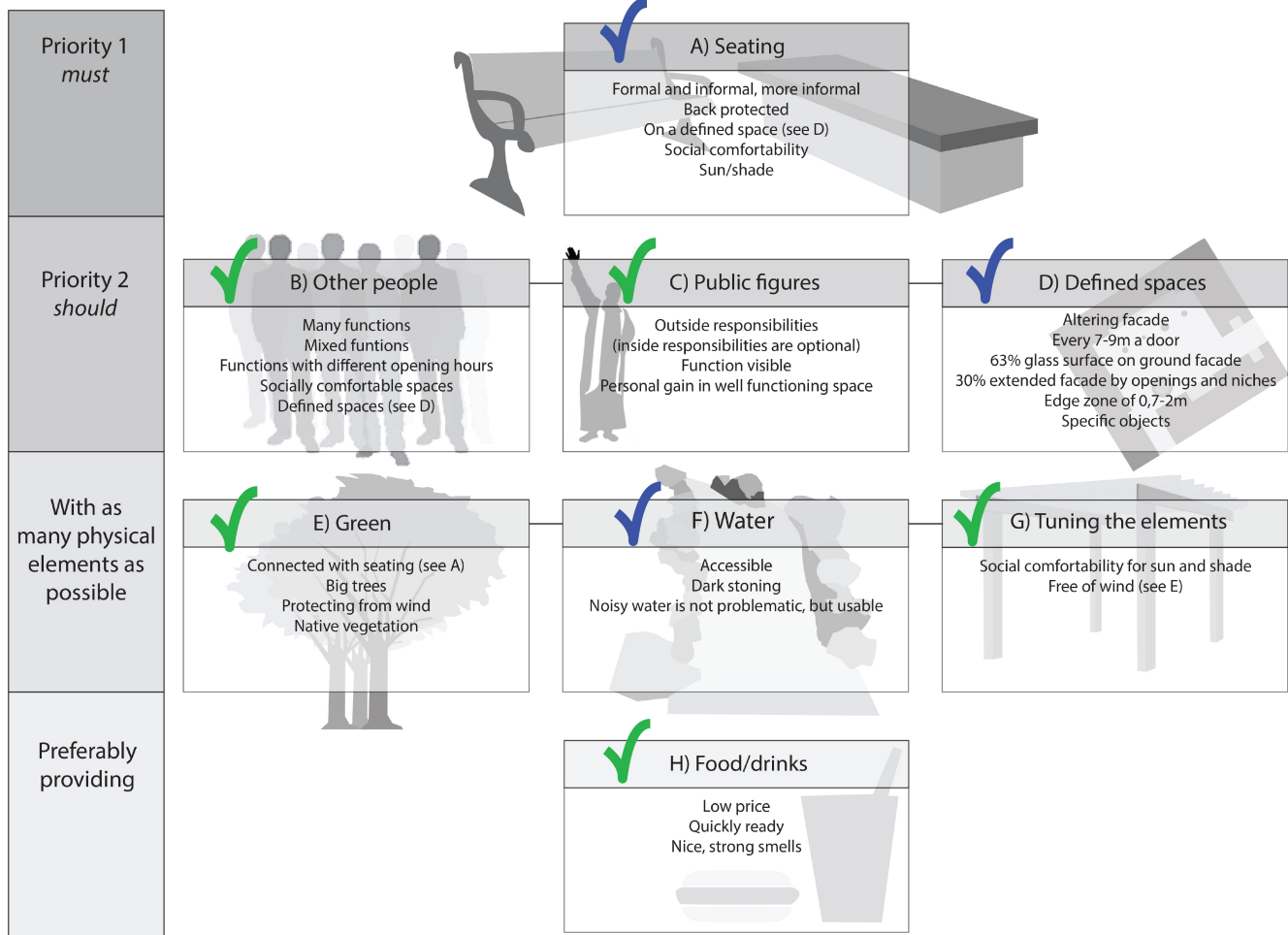


Reflection

P4-Presentation | Martinus van Uden | 10th of May 2016

During the research period a toolbox was developed to use during the design. The toolbox contains three parts. The first is a list of elements to be used during the design to gather people in public. The second is a set of conditions where the whole of the design must live up to. The last part is a set of elements to create conversation in public.



1. Elements for gathering

The number one priority of this design is seating. Seating has become the dominant element of the design. The stairs with their blocks for sitting are scattered across the plan. These are all informal seating elements. The next step is to add formal seating. When this properly done, some benches will contain a back, where some won't, creating social comfortability.

The element of other people is not really checkable without building the building. Nevertheless, there are

several aspects covered to assume that the building will be used throughout the day by a diversity of people. This can be found in the variety of functions, as well as the fact that traffic is been taken care of underground, thus creating a pedestrian paradise.

Public figures is in regard of reflection similar. There are several places where it would be logical to get public figures (food sale, library organisation), but someone becomes a public figure by the sense of trust. This is not really an architectural matter.

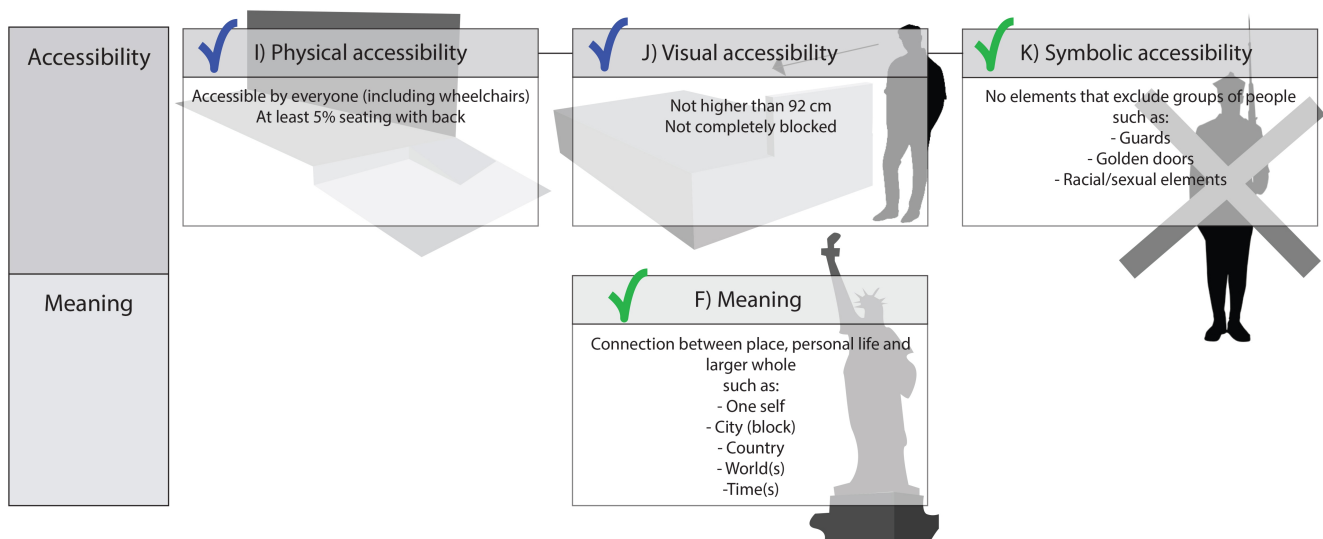
The whole square consists of several individual parts that are flexible to create their own atmosphere. The actual atmosphere should start differing at certain places. This could be done by adding wall paintings, sculptures, bas reliefs on the wall, adding trees, benches, variation with the stairs and columns... It is simply the next step to really define spaces.

The green is an essential part of the building, one of the main elements. The green could be taken further outside, making it an essential part of the ground floor of the square. Then truly a green route could be formed.

A prominent water element is available it the main library building. More could be added to differentiate the squares.

Tuning the elements is done by offering seating spaces both in the sun and the shade, depending on the moment of the day. The square consists of various tiny squares, that will be probably be relatively free of wind.

Lastly, the gathering element of food and drinks is covered by adding several types of food selling points throughout the building, creating an option for everyone.



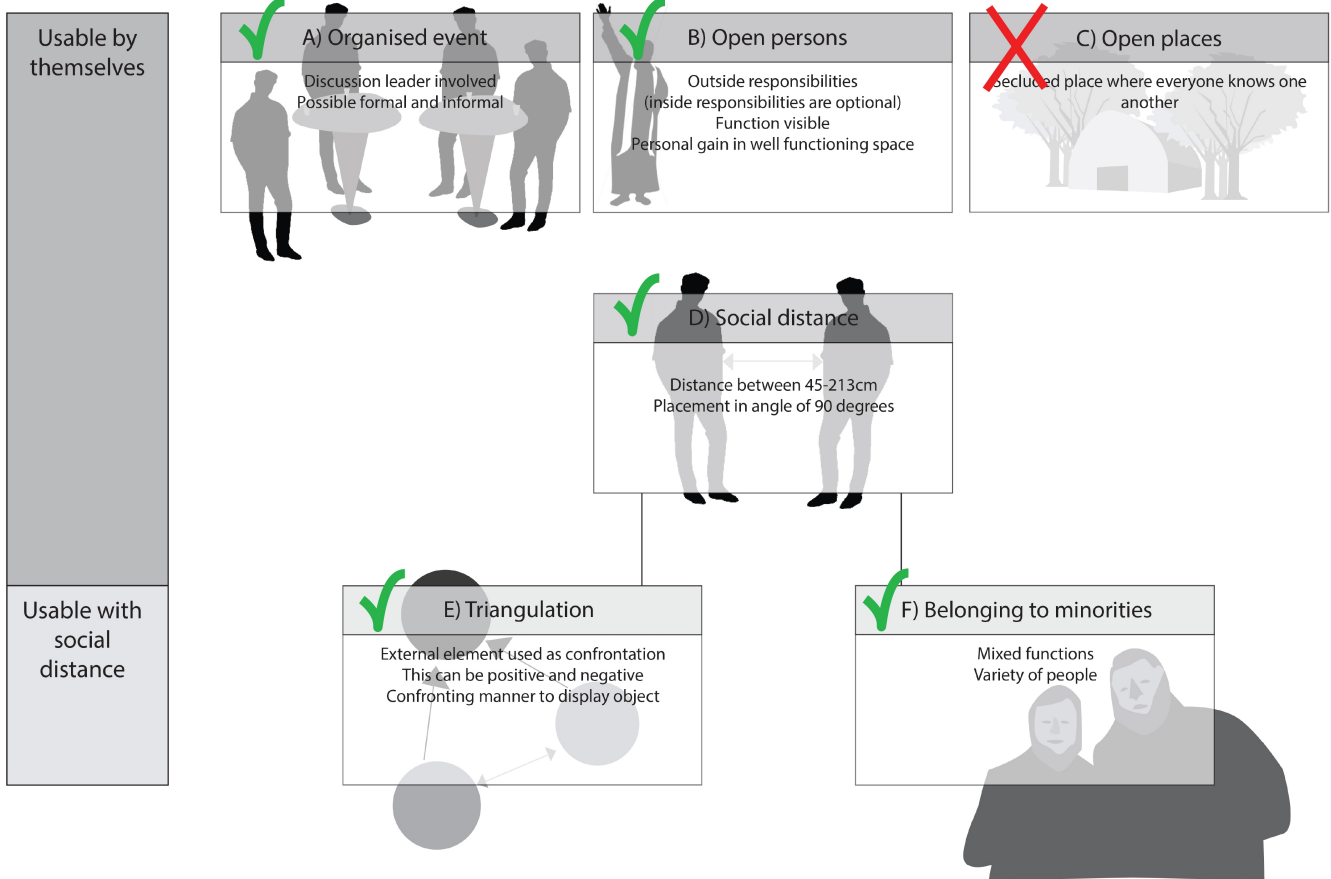
2. Design conditions

The element of physical accessibility is a bit compromised with the excessive use of staircases. Since stairs are one of the main attraction points, wheelchairs will have a hard job going through the outer building. Prominent elevator shafts are available on the inside though to actually make all the floors available.

The visual accessibility is mostly available from the higher parts to the lower. At the moment it is hard to actually see what is going on on higher levels. This is adaptable without much ado though. Plants can be hanging from the balustrades.

The symbolic accessibility is covered with the continuous flows of material from outside to inside. This is strengthened by the double concrete beams, of which one is on the outside and the other on the inside. The fact that the rooftops of the building are an essential part of outside space, creates a huge symbolic accessibility.

Meaning can be found in the fact that the building is responsive to several needs of the public. It can also be sought in the rare element of green in the city, the meaning of public debate in the city, or the worth of the exhibition. One might say that, apart from meaning derived from function that responds to the needs of people, the building offers a framework in which an identity can be placed by citizens instead of offering an artificial one.



3. Conversation stimuli

The element of organised events is covered with the function of the theatre and the big (and smaller) screens that will can be used for public debate. If the events will actually be organised is not an architectural question; the setting is created that it can easily be done, even stimulated, if one wants to.

Open persons, or public figures, have good reason to be part of this library, as is explained before. The fact of people becoming open persons, is due to a sense of trust and not an architectural question.

The building is not an 'open space', nor should it be. Open spaces cause conversation in a place that is not truly public in the Habermasian sense of the word. Since the goal here is to create a truly public space, this element can be neglected in this specific context.

The square is divided into several smaller parts. Every smaller part is still bigger than the ultimate social distance to start conversation. Tactically adding furniture, green and water elements, and benches could solves this. Even though the inside space is wide open, the use of columns, height differences and furniture causes the space to force people together

Triangulation is caused by exhibition space. If this will actually trigger conversation is mostly due to the way

the exhibition is displayed, which is hard to determine without building it. The method used is to create a scene that limits space between the different spectators and between the spectators and the exhibited, causing the exhibition to have a confronting effect. What also works probably is the staging of the scene. One can easily look down on other people and start conversation about them.

The element of belonging to minorities is covered by the fact that the building is located at a truly public location, where people of all different subcultures gather. Apart from that, the mixing of functions stresses that concept.

As a whole one could state that almost all design tools are used in the design or will be easily implemented when designing more in detail. The true question now is if the building is valuable *in se*; regardless of the research.

An important element in determining this is whether the balance between the grid and the breaking it is in order. At the moment one could state that the grid is still too dominant. This would change if the staircases were to be altered in such a way that they would come out of the grid and create a unique atmosphere in every individual square. Altering the columns for this purpose might also help doing the trick.

This alteration of the columns is also a relevant aspect on the square. The huge amount of columns blocks activities that need more space. A study is needed to determine whether columns can be removed and for instance potentially be replaced with tiles, that could be tiny artworks in themselves.

The alteration of the staircases could also cause a more natural flow through the different levels of the building, connecting all elements of which the complex exists. The same might be done with the floors below ground level. Using elements that connect the two, might liven up the whole space.

In general I would say that all elements are present for a convincing design. Some elements need to be tweaked just a little in order to really fascinate or inspire.