Exploring Environmental Justice through Listening: An Environmental Design Case Study in Camden, NJ

Assignment Sheet

Good design must take into account community values and user experience, as well as technical affordances and constraints. However, students are often not invited to see themselves as part of a larger community or as professionals who are ethically responsible for identifying, researching, and deeply understanding the needs of stakeholders affected by design and planning. This group assignment will give you the chance to build designs that are responsive to community stakeholders, municipal authorities, and ecological sustainability.

For the purposes of this assignment, we will be proposing some design improvements to Phoenix Park, in Camden's Waterfront South district.

Requirements

- o **Group Research:** You will be working in teams. As a group, you must devise a plan for dividing up the work but also communicating the results to each other in a comprehensive way.
- o **Group Report Web Page:** As a group, you must become specialists in one aspect of the project and collaboratively prepare a **webpage** that briefs your audience on the ins and outs of the specific aspect you've researched. You will also present your webpage to the class during an informal presentation.
- o **Group Project Proposal**: Each group will write a **Project Proposal** in an effort to convince your "customer," the CCMUA, that they should hire you to complete the job. More details below. You have a lot of freedom when it comes to choosing how you would like to improve the park, but you have two constraints:
  - a. Your proposal must balance the needs of three stakeholders:
    - i.   the Waterfront South community
    - ii. the CCMUA
    - iii. the Delaware River ecosystem
  - b. Your proposal must include an element designed to educate park visitors about the in-progress Living Shoreline

Group Research

Each group will be assigned to become an expert in one of the follow aspects of Phoenix Park and the Waterfront South community:

1. Community Stakeholders: Historical Perspective
2. Community Stakeholders: Future Plans Perspective
3. Camden County MUA
   o Political, Social, & Cultural Factors
   o Engineering & Planning
4. Delaware River Ecosystem

Through research, your group will become intimately familiar with one part of the project. To begin, visit our **Resource Bank,** which contains essential information you'll need, including invaluable interviews with community members.

Group Report Webpage

Using Google Sites, your group will prepare a public-facing webpage about the individual aspect of the topic you've been assigned to become an expert in. Your webpage should succinctly and compellingly **summarize** and **educate** its readers. You've done a lot of research–now take the opportunity to share it with others.

You will also give a brief (10 minute), informal presentation that introduces the rest of us to your research and guides us through what you've found.

Group Project Proposal

As a culmination of your work on this project, you'll produce a document that combines research proficiency, document design, and the ability to communicate technical information clearly. Writing a good **Project Proposal** requires you to use all of these skills.

A **Project Proposal** is a persuasive document with an attractive, professional, inviting **appearance** (the information you present should be easy to access) as well as **substance**: a well-organized plan of attack, technical details and depth, and a specific format. Its goal is to convince your reader they should hire you to do the work. Its objectives are to:

1. Identify what work is to be done
2. Explain why this work needs to be done
3. Persuade the reader that the proposer (i.e. you) are qualified for the work, have a plausible management plan and

technical approach, and have the resources needed to complete the task within the stated time and cost constraints.

Project Proposal: Format & Organization

Your Project Proposal should follow this organizational scheme:

1. Title Page
2. Executive Summary (one page)
3. Statement of Problem (the "Why?")
   ○ In short, explain why Phoenix Park needs to be improved, providing relevant background information and context
4. Objectives (the "What?")
   ○ Here you translate the needs of the stakeholders into specific designs that meet these needs. Define the scope of work and clearly state the project objectives, including design specifications in specific, quantitative terms. Also address any critical design issues, constraints, and/or limitations
5. Technical Approach (the "How?")
   ○ Even though you may not have a comprehensive solution to all of the design problems, in this section you should present an initial design focused on how you will attack the problem, with some design concepts
6. Schedule & Plan of Action: (the "How and When?")
   ○ Describes how the project could be managed, including a timetable with milestones. Specific items to possibly include in this section are as follows:
      i. Description of task phases
      ii. Timeline with milestones
7. Budget (the "How Much")
   ○ Provide your best estimate of how project funds will be spent. For this project, you have a budget of $30,000 of funding from the CCMUA, and you are encouraged to brainstorm additional sources of funding, as well.