



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

MEMO

DATE: May 11, 2016

TO: **Architectural Review Committee (ARC) of the Historic Preservation Commission**

FROM: Nicholas Perry, Urban Designer, (415) 575-9066

REVIEWED BY: Tim Frye, Historic Preservation Officer, (415) 575-6822

RE: Review and Comment for Art/Lit Living Innovation Zone Case No. 2016-006157COA

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The Planning Department (Department) and the Project Sponsor (Sponsor) are requesting review and comment before the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) regarding the proposal to develop and install a Living Innovation Zone (LIZ) titled 'Art/Lit' within the Civic Center Landmark District. The LIZ is a temporary installation that activates public space and enhances the public realm.

BACKGROUND

The subject site is a portion of the public-right-of-way along Fulton Street, which runs adjacent to the Asian Art Museum in Assessor's Block 0353, Lot 001. It is located within the Civic Center Landmark District and a P (Public) Zoning District.

Block 0353, bounded by McAllister, Hyde, Fulton and Larkin Streets, is home to the Asian Art Museum. The building previously functioned as the San Francisco Public Library between 1917-1995. The museum opened in 2003. Aside from the building itself, the block today has few landscape elements that date to the period of significance. These features include London Plane trees planted in turf beds at the building's south side, fire utilities and granite curb remnants.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project involves the installation of a temporary LIZ, which will be designed as a self-supporting structure that will be sited within the turf beds between three rows of the London Plane trees. According to the Project Sponsor, the concept for the 'Art/Lit' is informed by the collaboration between the Asian Art Museum and Main Public Library and their mutual efforts to: (1) increase engagement in the arts among local residents, pedestrians, and Museum and Library visitors, strengthening a sense of community and demonstrating the potential of the arts to enhance public space; and (2) provide a safe, fun, and engaging space for interacting with the arts in the public space outside the Museum and the Library's physical facilities.

The planned LIZ will consist of two main elements: an 18-foot tall dragon structure featuring a gallery wall and gathering space made of wood decking and a telescope art gallery. Like the Exploratorium's LIZ in UN Plaza, the architecture - including intimate, social and performative spaces - will encourage social interactions while simultaneously presenting passersby with a two unique art viewing experiences.

The body of the dragon bends and folds - inspired by the Japanese art of origami - and stands on steel 'poles,' evoking the dancing puppet dragons often included in Chinese New Year celebrations. Mounted on these poles will be prayer wheels. When the one near the head of the dragon is spun, it will operate a flag in the dragon's mouth which is intended as a 'flame.'

Floating below the dragon is the gallery space is a 4' high and 30' long curved wall that will feature a rotating exhibit of youth and local artists every four months. A programmatic curator will be hired for the duration of the LIZ, who will oversee and coordinate bimonthly programs designed specific to the site that will align with the exhibition and programmatic schedules of the Library and the Museum.

These two elements will be mounted on a steel frame. The afore mentioned poles will connect directly to the base. In order to provide substantial support for the structure, six inches of soil will be excavated for the installation's base. The base will be covered by wood decking that will surround the structure and meet the sidewalk at grade.

Adjacent to the dragon structure will be five telescopes that will point at three of the Asian Art Museum's office windows and two of the Library's office windows. Made of stainless steel, the telescopes will be vary in height as to be ADA compliant and fixed in place in order to keep them directed at specific windows. The intent is to transform these windows into gallery spaces, coordinating the featured artwork – sited behind the windows and not affixed to the building - with the dragon gallery wall.

Also, the Sponsor hasn't settled on a single color or pattern for the dragon. In concept, the Sponsor features patterns on the dragon that will ultimately be patterns of cultural significance, representing the Museum's diverse collections and the neighborhood's diverse population. Also, The Sponsor intends to use quality wood to provide visual warmth and humanize the space.

OTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED

The proposed project is being brought to the ARC for comment prior to HPC review of a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for work located within the Civic Center Landmark District designated pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code.

STAFF ANALYSIS

At this early phase of the project, the Department has no specific recommendations for the proposed design, and along with the Project Sponsor, seeks the advice of the ARC regarding compatibility of the proposed design with the District, Appendix J of Article 10 of the Planning Code, as well as its compatibility with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* (Secretary's Standards).

REQUESTED ACTION

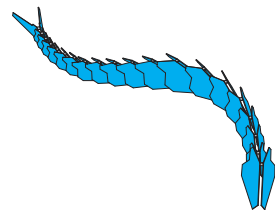
Specifically, the Department seeks comments on:

- The compatibility of the project with Appendix J of Article 10 of the Planning Code and the Secretary's Standards, specifically,

- The location of the proposed LIZ installation
- The overall design, materials, and colors
- Any maintenance and security considerations, including lighting, that should be addressed prior to the Certificate of Appropriateness hearing.

ATTACHMENTS

Plans, elevations, and photographs

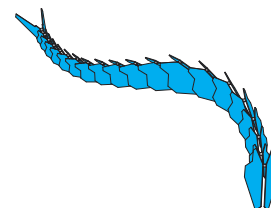




origins

A Wishing Tree

When the Youth Art Exchange Architecture Firm was asked to design a Living Innovation Zone for the Asian Art Museum, the students also began a series of outreach events with the community. The first, conducted in September 2015 was the "Wishing Tree" installation. Here, students asked for feedback at the Civic Center Night Market - questions to the public included what do you love about the neighborhood; what do you want to see changed; and what matters most about Civic Center, the Asian Art Museum, and the Public Library. Answers posted as "wishes" on the Cherry Tree showcased the things community would like to see happen. This was the first of a series of outreach events with the community, peers, planners, and local stakeholders.





inspiration

Here there be dragons!

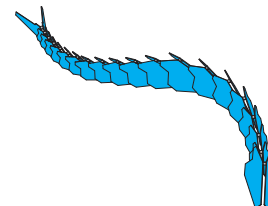
As the students in the firm developed their concept for the Asian Art Museum and the Public Library, they settled on four sources of inspiration that would drive their design and influence their ideas for incorporating play.

Dragon: From their research into common themes in the art of Asian cultures, the students found dragons to be a nearly universal feature in myths and art. Building upon the connection of dragons to mysterious landscapes, and the history of exploration, inspired the students to create a unique territory of discovery and play, watched over by a dragon.

Origami: The students chose origami as a means to connect exterior architectural form to the art celebrated inside the museum, as well as to the pages of books in the library. The students experimented with the art of paper folding to generate their design.

Interactive element: A mobile prayer wheel will spin at both ends of the dragon, with one at the mouth also operating a flame flag. This idea intrigued the students as a way to create an inclusive form of interaction for people of all ages and abilities, while referencing traditions relevant to the Asian Art Museum.

Telescope art gallery: Seeking ways to activate the opaque historic facades of both the Asian Art Museum and the Public Library on Fulton Street, the Telescope gallery is inspired by the existing windows on both buildings. With the careful placement of telescopes, selected windows now become the gallery walls, and the public is invited to look through to the interior display.

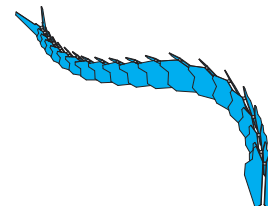




prototypes

Dragon Tail

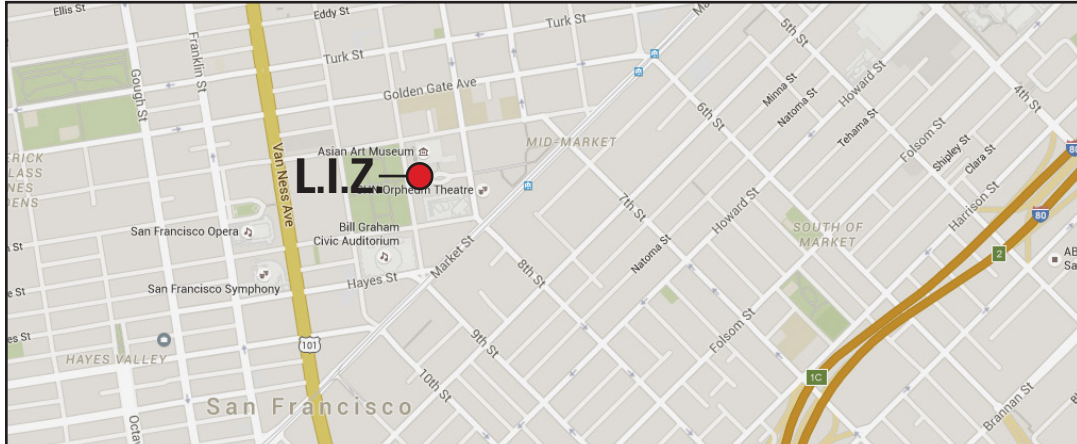
In their effort to test their designs and solicit additional feedback from the public, the students constructed scale models and multiple full-scale prototypes of their design. One prototype, a section of the dragon's 'tail', was installed at the Youth Art Summit, in front of city hall, and inside the Asian Art Museum atrium. The other, a 50% scale model of the final design, will be displayed at Root Division as part of the students' final exhibition on May 14th.



project location



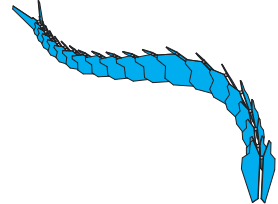
SITE LOCATION



VICINITY PLAN



CONTEXT PLAN

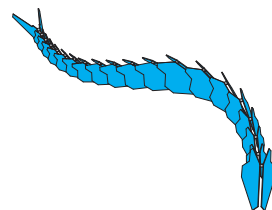


site context

Views of Existing Site



VIEW OF SITE LOOKING SOUTHEAST



site context



VIEW OF SITE LOOKING EAST



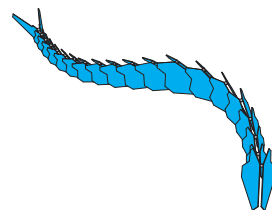
VIEW OF SITE LOOKING NORTHEAST



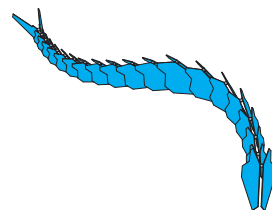
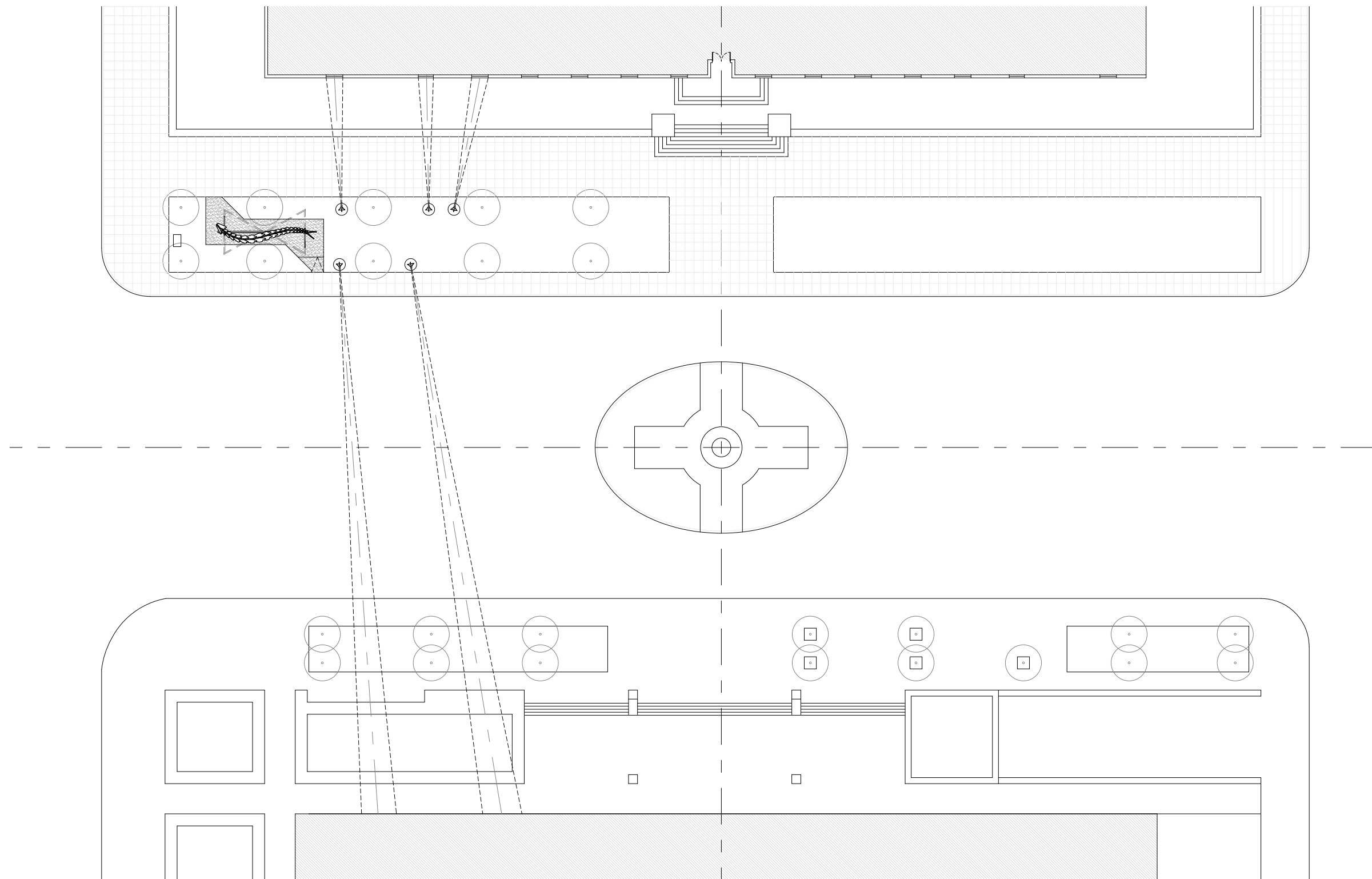
VIEW OF SITE LOOKING WEST



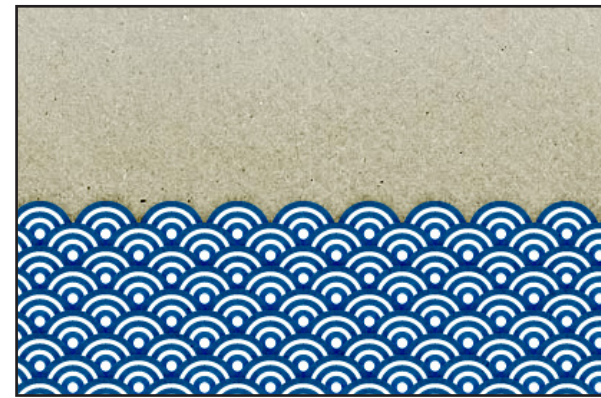
VIEW OF SITE LOOKING SOUTHWEST



site plan



project diagram



Traditional Japanese Seigaiha Pattern

PAINTED MDO PANELS CNC'D WITH FABRIC & PRINT MOTIFS FROM ASIAN TRADITIONS FORM THE DRAGON'S BODY & HEAD



19th cent. Ming Dynasty Flag

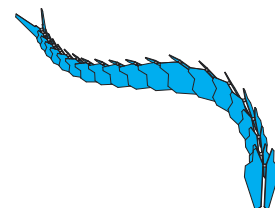
FINELY GALVANIZED STEEL STRUCTURE ALLOWS FOR SCULPTURE TO BE REASSEMBLED AFTER L.I.Z.

TWO-SIDED GALLERY WALL BRINGS MUSEUM & LIBRARY ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE

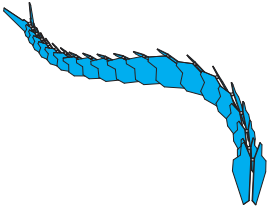
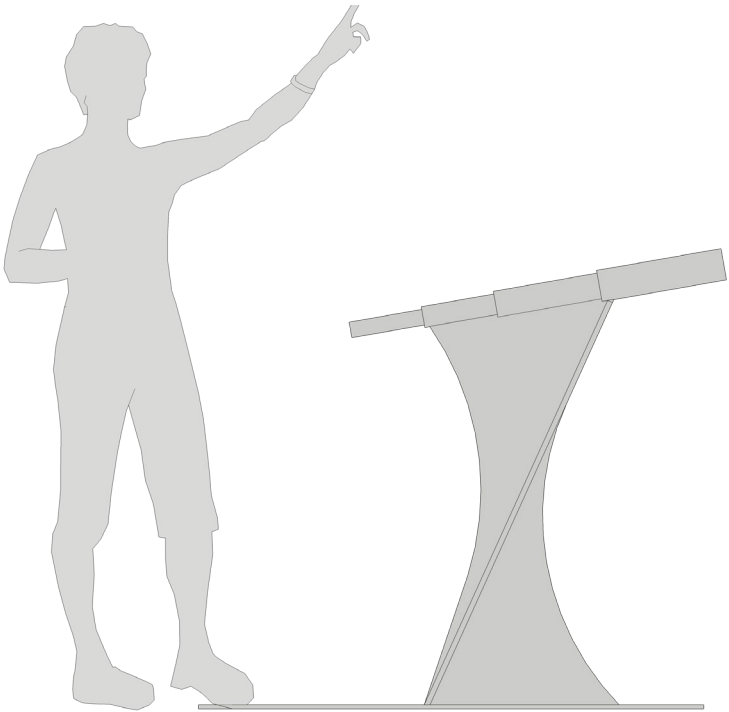
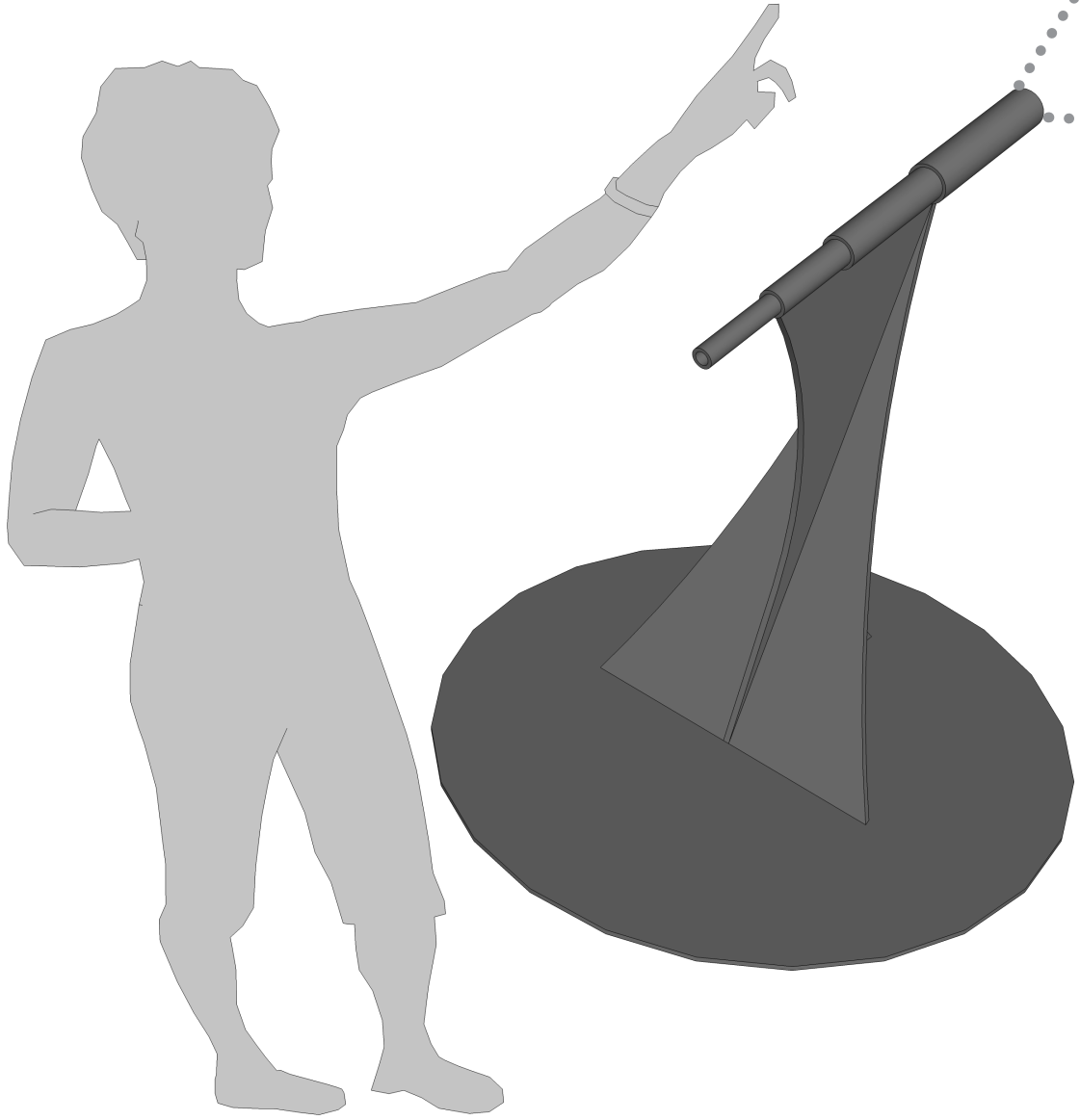
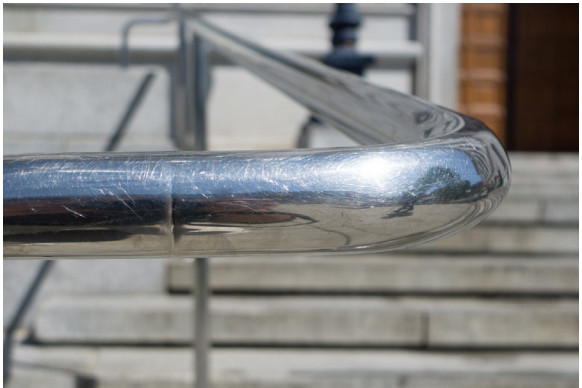
'DRAGON FLAME' FLAG MOVES IN & OUT OF DRAGON'S MOUTH

PRAYER WHEEL SPINNER OPERATES 'DRAGON FLAME' FLAG

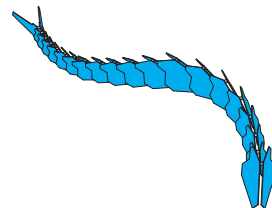
SOLID WOODEN DECK WITH WATERPROOF, NON-SLIP SURFACE CREATES ACCESSIBLE PATH



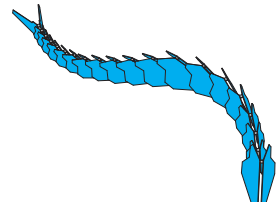
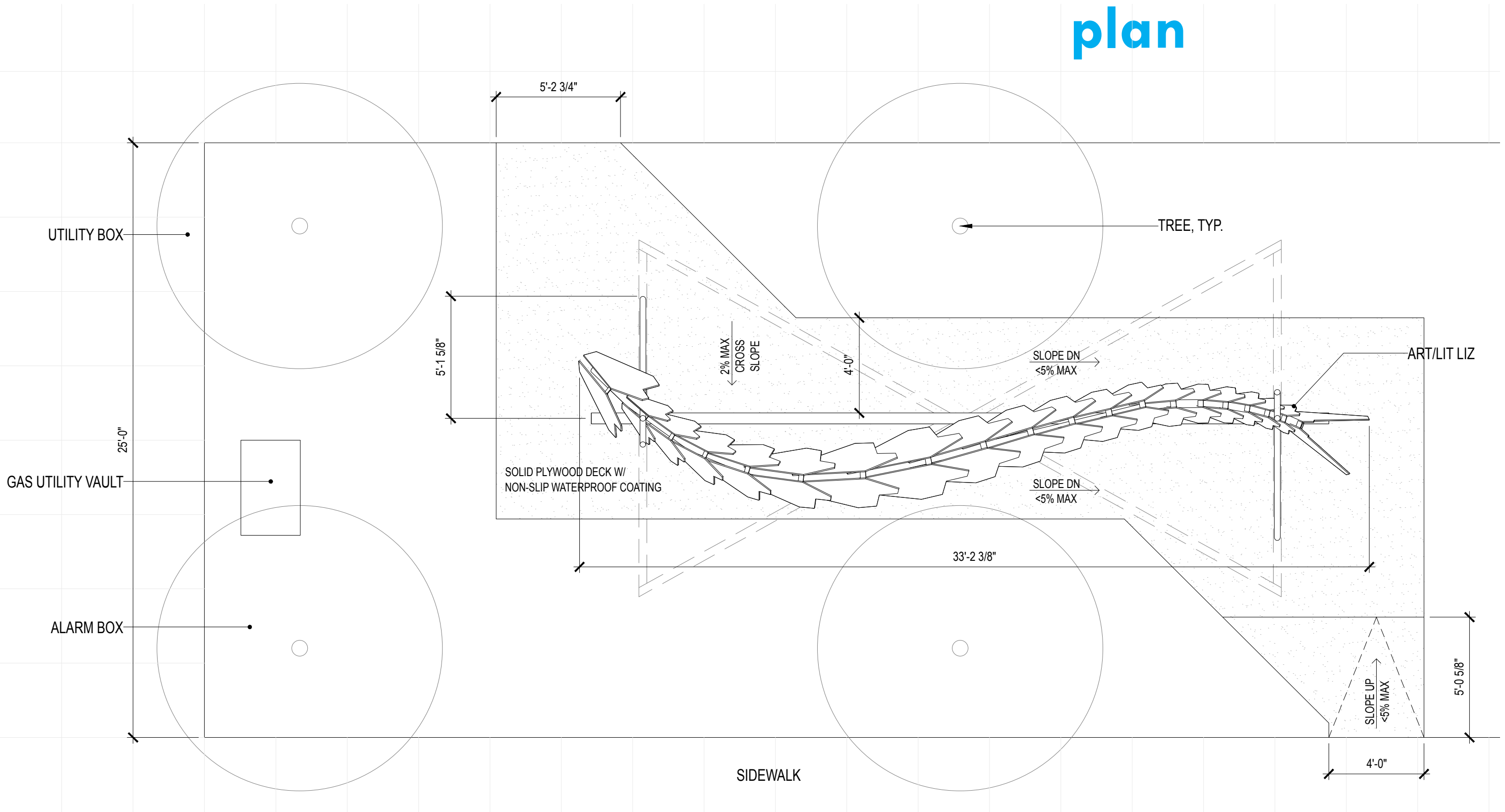
project diagram



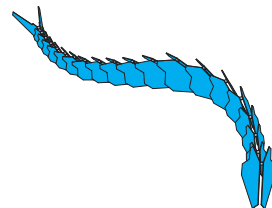
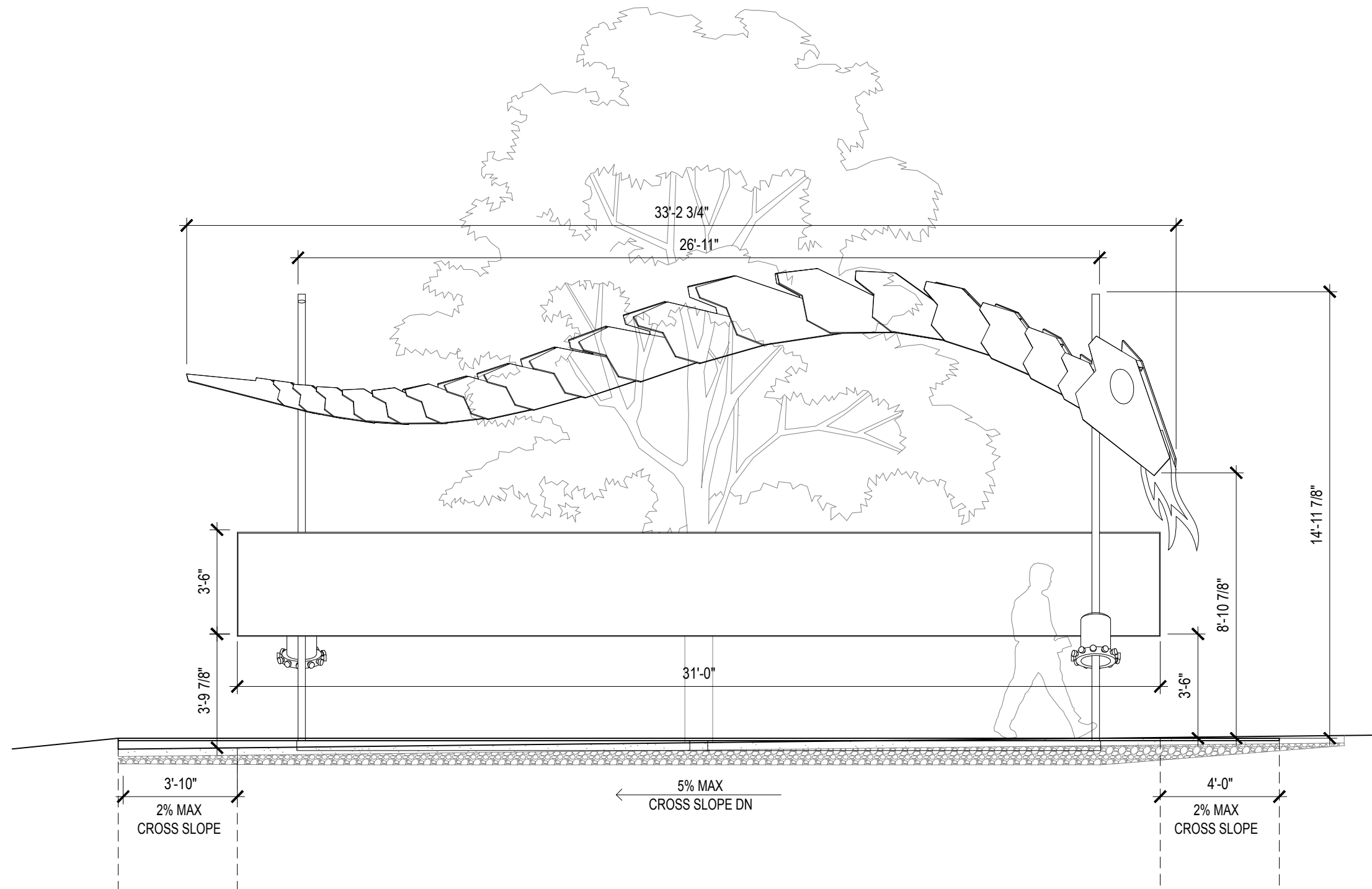
bird's eye view



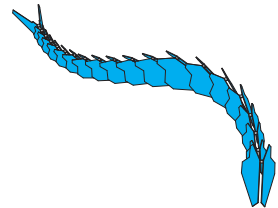
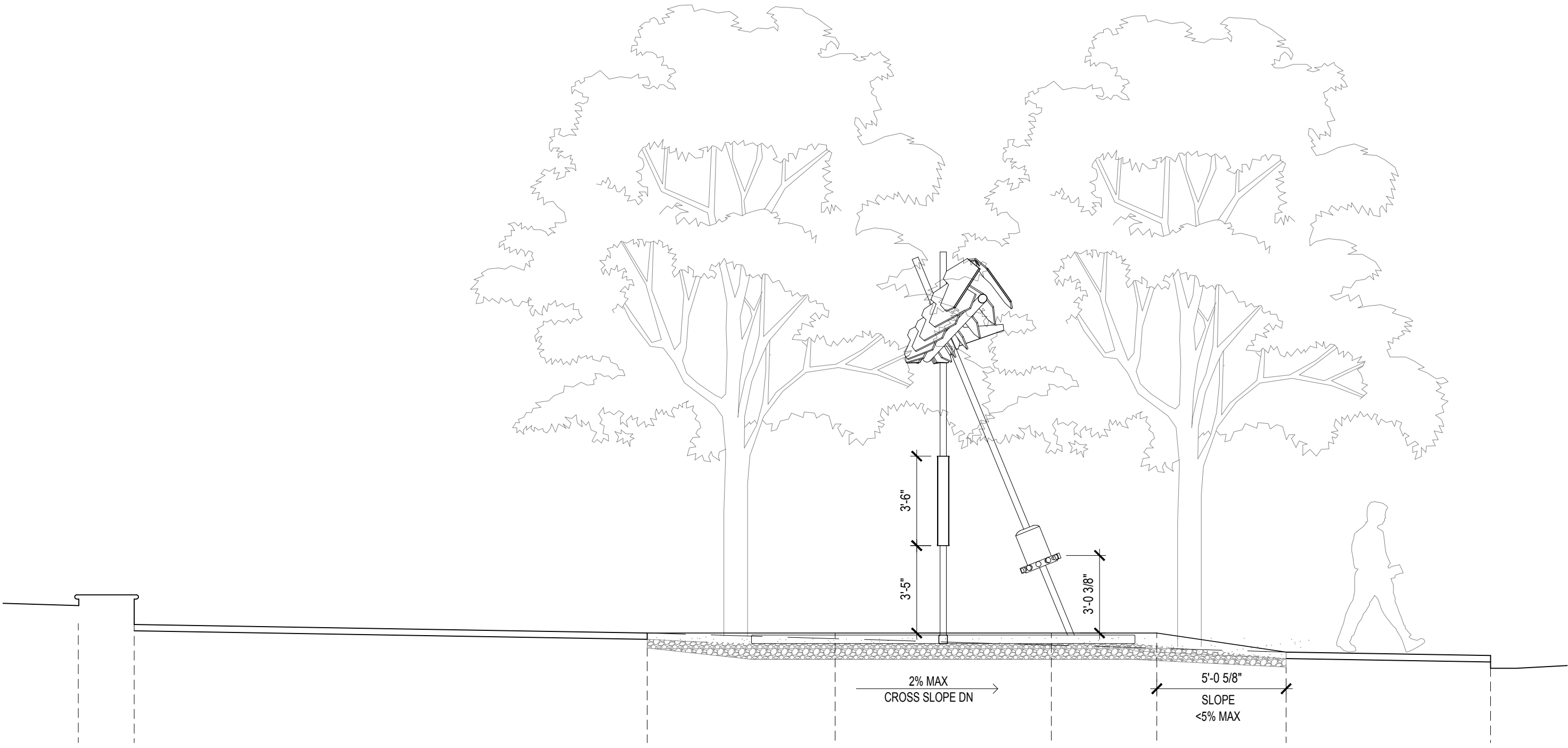
plan



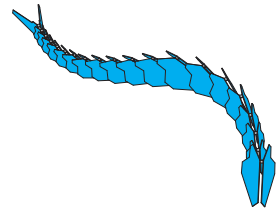
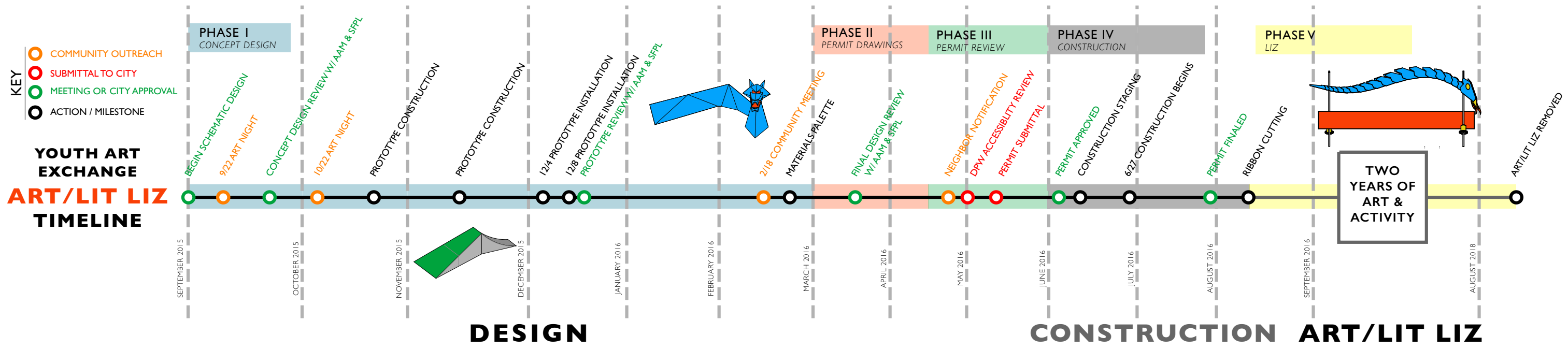
front elevation



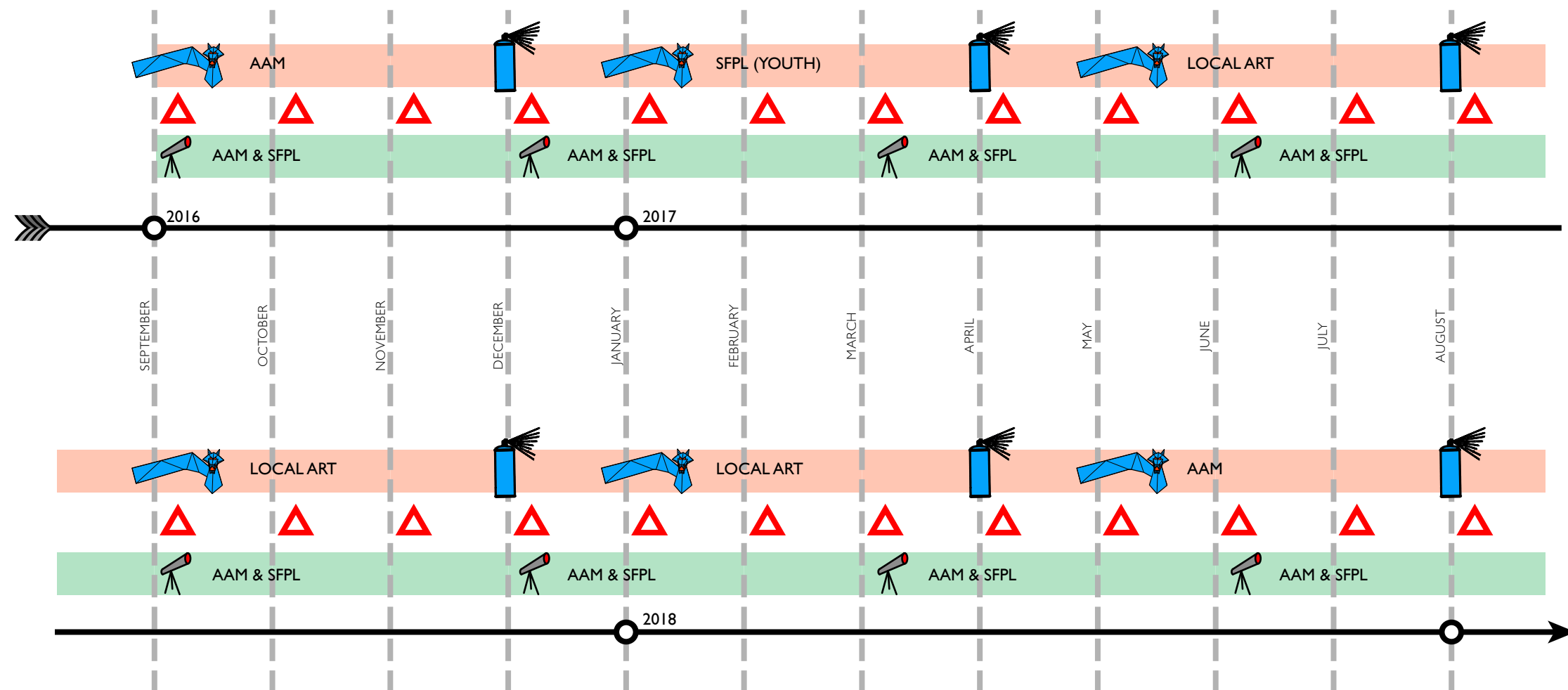
section



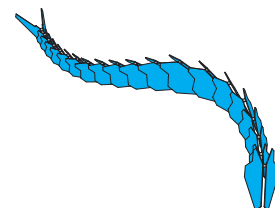
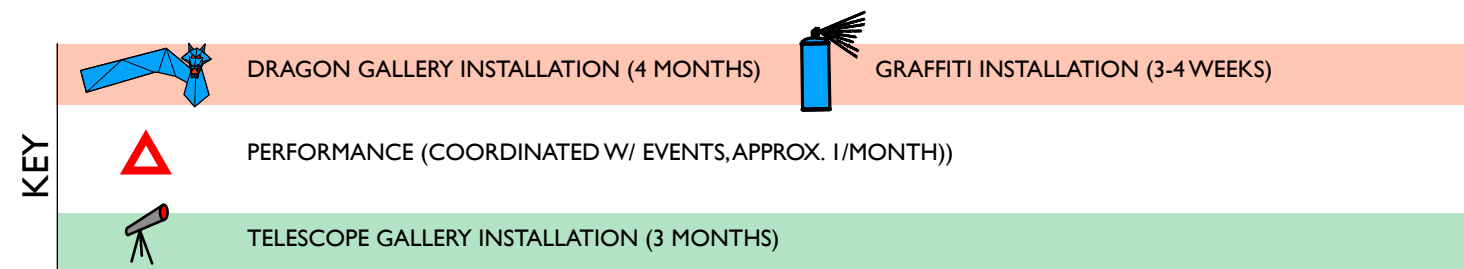
project timeline



gallery timeline

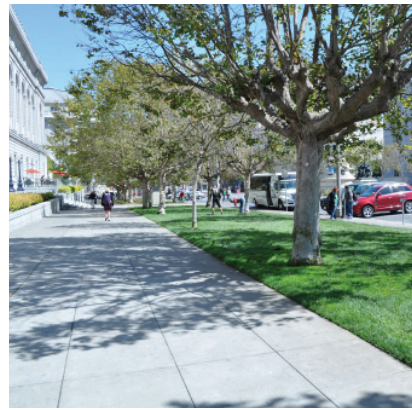


YOUTH ART EXCHANGE
ART/LIT LIZ
PROGRAMMING
TIMELINE





Double allée of Platanus x acerifolia/London Plane trees in turf area at Fulton Mall



Concrete sidewalk along south entrance to Asian Art Museum at Fulton Mall



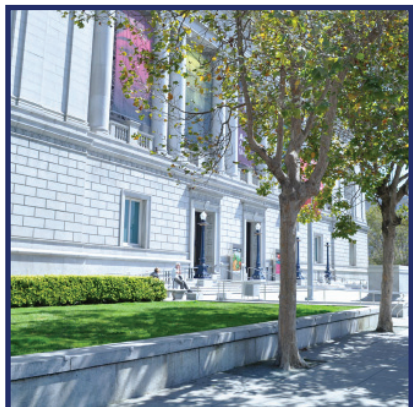
Light pole at Hyde St driveway and gate



Granite curb along McAllister St



Fire box along Larkin St



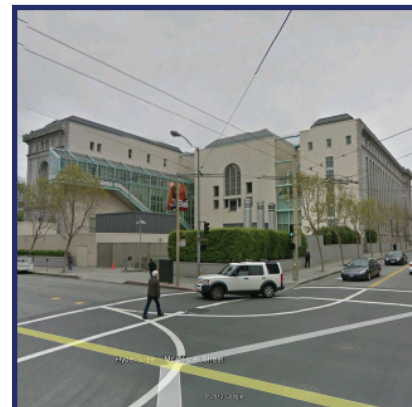
Platanus x acerifolia/London Plane trees and turf planting area at Larkin St entrance



Square metal tree grate along McAllister St



MUNI bus shelter with wavy red roof along Larkin St

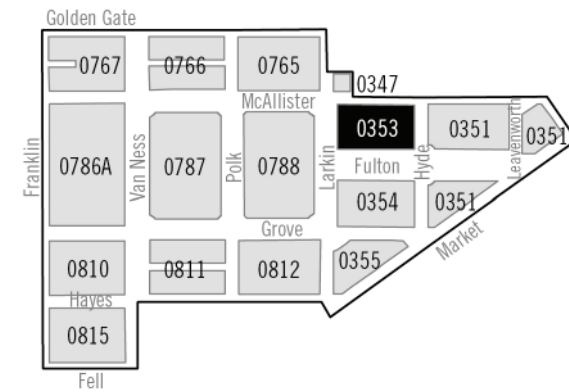


Rear view of Asian Art Museum at Hyde and McAllister Streets*

San Francisco Civic Center Historic District
Planning Department, San Francisco, California

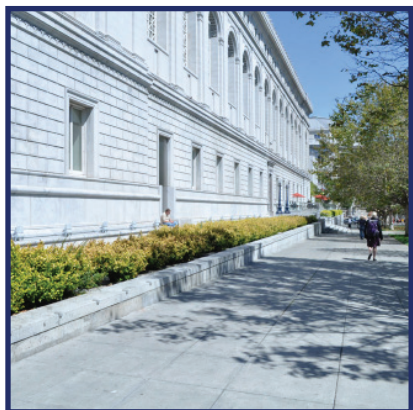
Cultural Landscape Report

BLOCK #0353



Block #0353, bounded by McAllister, Hyde, Fulton and Larkin Streets, is home to the Asian Art Museum. The building previously functioned as the San Francisco Public Library between 1917-1995. The museum opened in 2003.

Aside from the building itself, the block today has few landscape elements that date to the period of significance. These features include London Plane trees planted in turf beds at the building's south side, fire utilities and granite curb remnants.



Planting area along Fulton Mall entrance



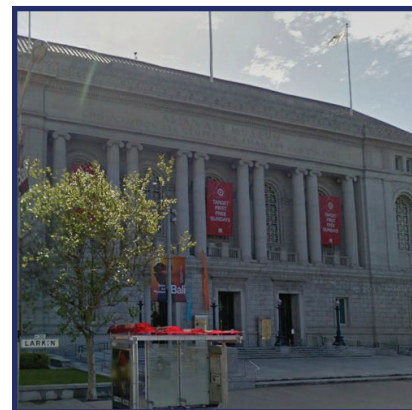
Elevated planter box with Buxus sempervirens/Boxwood at Hyde St



Single cobra street light at McAllister and Larkin Streets



Bronze statue of Ashurbanipal at Fulton St museum entrance



Asian Art Museum entrance at Larkin St*



Curb ramp at McAllister and Hyde Streets



High pressure auxiliary water supply hydrant along Grove St

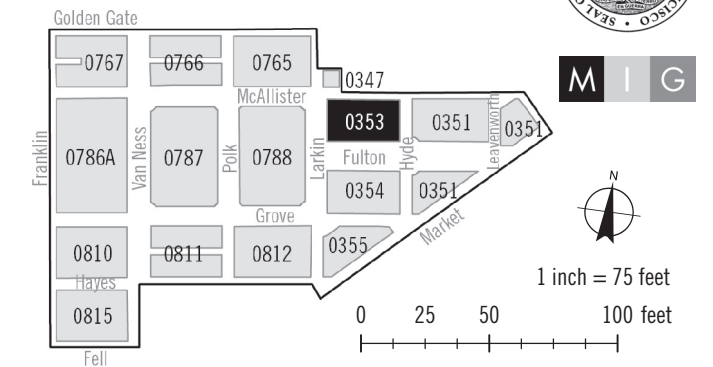


Traffic control box at Fulton and Larkin Streets

San Francisco Civic Center Historic District
 Planning Department, San Francisco, California

Cultural Landscape Report

BLOCK #0353



- LEGEND:**
- sign - street name
 - sign - SFPD inlaid into the sidewalk
 - bike rack
 - utility
 - fire hydrant - painted white with blue top
 - bus stop
 - driveway
 - fire box
 - traffic control box
 - sculpture - Ashurbanipal statue
 - light pole
 - street light - aggregate concrete post
 - street light - single cobra
 - street tree - Platanus x acerifolia
 - tree - Platanus x acerifolia
 - planting area
 - planter box - granite with shrub
 - planter box
 - tree well - square metal grate
 - curb - granite
 - curb - cement
 - contributing building or structure
 - non-contributing building or structure

SOURCES:

1. MIG field work, September 10-14, 2012
2. Hand drawn inventory field maps, September 2012
3. Bing aerial imagery online for ArcGIS, 2012
4. San Francisco Utility Commission light pole data, 2012
5. San Francisco publicly available GIS city lot, block and curb data, 2012

DRAWN BY:

MIG: Rachel Edmonds, Steve Leathers and Heather Buczek using Arc GIS 10.

DRAWN DATE:

March 2013, updated September 2013

LEGEND FOR SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

- vegetation
- small scale feature
- circulation
- circulation - curb
- building or structure

BLOCK #0353 - ASIAN ART MUSEUM									
CHARACTERISTIC	QTY.	FEATURE	DESCRIPTION	ADDRESS/LOCATION	DATE BUILT	PRIMARY SOURCE	JURISDICTION	CHARACTER DEFINING	
buildings & structures	1	Asian Art Museum	Asian Art Museum; ten murals (former San Francisco Public Library)	200 Larkin	1916	1978 NR, 1987 NHL, 1994 SFLD	-	C	
circulation	6	curb	6" cement curb	Block #0353 on Fulton, Hyde, Larkin, McAllister	-	site visit	DPW	-	
circulation	2	curb	6" granite curb	Block #0353 on Hyde, McAllister	1910c	site visit	DPW	C	
circulation	1	driveway	driveway with light pole	Block #0353 on Hyde	2003	site visit	-	NC	
small scale feature	1	bike rack	bike rack	Block #0353 on McAllister	2003	site visit	DPW	NC	
small scale feature	1	bus stop	bus stop - covered with bench	Block #0353 on Larkin	2010	site visit	MUNI	NC	
small scale feature	1	fire box	firebox - red metal post	Block #0353 on Larkin	pre 1936	site visit	SFDT	C*	
small scale feature	1	fire hydrant	fire hydrant - painted white with blue top	Block #0353 on Larkin	1909c	site visit	BEWS	C*	
vegetation	1	planter box	planter box - adjacent to building	Block #0353 on Hyde	2003	site visit	-	NC	
vegetation	1	planter box	planter box - granite with tall shrub	Block #0353 on Hyde	2003	site visit	-	NC	
vegetation	2	planting area	planting area adjacent to building with box hedge	Block #0353 on Fulton	pre 1938	site visit	-	C	
vegetation	2	planting area	planting area adjacent to building with turf and box hedge	Block #0353 on Larkin	pre 1938	site visit	-	C	
small scale feature	1	sculpture	sculpture - at entry steps; bronze statue on a concrete base of Ashurbanipal - by Fred Parhad and Frank Tomsick	Block #0353 on Fulton	1985	site visit	DPW	NC	
small scale feature	1	sign	sign - logo for SFPD inlaid into the sidewalk	Block #0353 on Fulton	-	site visit	-	-	
small scale feature	1	sign	sign - street name 'FULTON' engraved into curbscut ramp apron	Block #0353 on Fulton	-	site visit	DPW	-	
small scale feature	1	traffic control box	traffic control box - green metal post	Block #0353 on Fulton	1916c	site visit	-	C	
small scale feature	6	tree well	tree well - square metal grate	Block #0353 on Hyde	2003	site visit	DPW	NC	
small scale feature	1	utility	utility protected by a green mesh cage	Block #0353 on Larkin	1916c	site visit	-	C	
small scale feature	1	light pole	light pole - double lamp on metal post on median into driveway	Block #0353 on Hyde	2003	site visit	-	NC	
small scale feature	3	street light	street light - aggregate concrete post with single pendant arm style with cobra luminaire	Block #0353 on Fulton, Larkin	-	SF PUC	SF PUC	-	
small scale feature	6	street light	street light - single cobra	Block #0353 on Fulton, Hyde, McAllister	-	SF PUC	SF PUC	-	
small scale feature	1	sculpture	Pioneer Monument - see Block #0354 for more information	Fulton between Larkin and Hyde	1894, 1993	1987NHL, 1994 SFLD	DPW	C	
spatial organization	1	Fulton Street Mall	Fulton Street Mall - associated with Blocks #0351, #0353, #0354, #0788	Block #0353	c. 1916	c. 1918 SF Planning image	DPW	C	
vegetation	20	tree	street tree - Platanus x acerifolia, London Plane	Block #0353 on Hyde, McAllister	2003	site visit	DPW	NC	
vegetation	5	tree	street tree - adjacent to planting area - Platanus x acerifolia, London Plane	Block #0353 on Larkin	1980-1993	site visit	-	NC	
vegetation	20	tree	tree in an allee with turf - (historically) pollarded Platanus x acerifolia, London Plane	Block #0353 on Fulton	c. 1936	J. Tilman image courtesy of Moulin Archive	-	C	

*This feature has been determined to be a contributing feature of the Civic Center Historic District. Features similar to this one located outside the district boundaries were not evaluated as part of this project.