

EVALUATION: DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE

Student: Petr Štolba
Project: Revitalizace Lokálního Centra Strašnická
Ústav Prostorového plánování, 15121
Advisor: Henry W. A. Hanson IV
Opponent: Regina Loukotová
January 30, 2014

The following review is based on the timely submission of a portfolio, poster and model in accordance with the submission requirements and the assignment. Additionally, progress of the work throughout the semester is considered.

The selection of the diploma topic by the author was self-determined and a worthy topic of appropriate complexity and scale as a diploma work. The project sets out to create an urban center befitting the local neighborhood. Throughout the process Mr. Štolba stated his interest in solving the public space as the existing circumstances are not successful other than serving the public transportation function. Additionally, he stated two other primary goals; having a development proposal that was financially viable and highlighting the school building, formally and functionally. All three of these goals are considered valuable and appropriate to the project.

Mr. Štolba was able to obtain relevant data of the existing conditions and historical background that was necessary in developing the proposal. Mr. Štolba is also familiar with some of the social and cultural attributes of the area as he is a nearby resident. However, explicit observations of patterns and style of the urban life were not explored in his study of the area. Additionally, analysis of the physical and functional conditions was largely superficial; therefore, the understanding he has of the area is largely intuitive. Although this experience is valuable, it is not sufficient to make a compelling argument.

During the development of the proposal it was recommended that Mr. Štolba explore each of his goals with an alternative. This was not part of the development of his proposal. Rather, he prepared formal variations of indistinguishable intent. Finally, the formalistic structure of the proposal appeared.

Mr. Štolba consulted on the transportation infrastructure so that it could be reorganized and create the opportunity for public space that supports the community. This reconfiguration of transportation infrastructure is largely successful in that it connects the community with transportation, retail, and public space with a simple and legible arrangement; thus providing a body of public space.

However, the public space is not yet designed as a place to support the diversity of community activities that could bring it to life. Additionally, there are several other unresolved issues critical to the relationship between public space and the buildings;

- The relationship between the buildings and the public space is very unclear from the portfolio and poster. For example, there is an apparent arcade on the West side of the public space as seen in the visualization; however it is lacking in the ground level plans.
- The site has a significant slope, North to South. This slope is not resolved relative to the floor plans. For example, how does the courtyard of the new building meet the floor level and the elevations of the courtyard access points?
- It is presumed that the ground floor spaces are intended for retail space. What are the intentions of this relationship? Will there be outdoor seating? How are these outdoor areas defined? How do the buildings enhance this function?
- The East side of the public space has some geometric pattern in the pavement, somewhat reminiscent of the existing edge. What is the intention of this decoration? Are the trees shown existing?
- What is the relationship between the West façade of the existing school and the public space? This is currently an enclosed lawn area with canopy trees. What is the intention of the presumed pavement of this space?
- There is a total absence of basic topographic information; building floor elevations and percentage of slope in the public space. The absence of this basic information about the design proposal asks the viewer to “have faith” that it will somehow all work out.

The scale of the proposed buildings is relatively consistent throughout their length. This scale is apparently a reference to the existing buildings on the North side of Mrštiková Street. However, there are significant conflicts in scale where the proposed buildings abut the West side and KD Baádniků. The proposal also has windowless faces to primary facades; for example facing Starostrašnická. This is reminiscent of the attitude to urbanism the author wishes to depart from.

The proposal includes several appreciated visualizations from ground level. However, these views illustrate numerous points above in that they imagine this place to be absent of cars (on the main street) and people only walking through public space without reason other than going from one place to another relegating public space a place of passage, not a public Place.

In conclusion, the author has some skill in preparing a proposal. However, the proposal is largely missing a compelling argument or persuasive narrative as to why this is an appropriate solution. The reader is then left to accept the proposal with a significant ‘Leap of faith’ that the author is correct in the proposal.

Therefore, my evaluation of the Diploma Project of Petr Štolba is D; Satisfactory.