

REVITALIZATION OF CHARLES SQUARE – FINAL EVALUATION

Evaluation criteria:

- A. Solution of urbanistic relations*
- B. Landscaping modifications and park design*
- C. Architectonic solution and solution of public spaces*
- D. Quality of adaptation / regeneration of listed objects*
- E. Suitable concept of infrastructure - transport and rainwater management system*
- F. Efficiency and economy of the solution*
- G. Expediency in the choice of professional approach – proposed performance*

The overall average score is 1-7 points.

Buro Sant en Co + M1 + Promika

In terms of overall expression, the proposal is cohesive from its concept to the details – in formal, operating and aesthetic terms. Due to the formal language of choice, the authors were able to organically respond to various spatial situations within the area to be solved (e.g. preserving important trees), while still handling operating requirements. The proposal also successfully solves one of the key dilemmas: finding a way to be both a park and square in parallel, which makes it possible for the area to function as a park square. The core motif of the proposal is an effort to disrupt the park boundaries and open it towards adjoining spaces. At the same time, the authors maintain the fundamental geometric layout of the space, its axes, as well as the extensive lawns, which remain the focal point of the park. (A, D)

Formalism was one of the prominent features of the proposal, which some of the Committee members perceived as too constraining. This concept introduces a new layer to the area, which becomes dominant and, thus, indirectly pushes the historical landscape of Thomayer's design into the background. At the same time, this team is one of those that opted for a bolder intervention in Thomayer's present concept.. The proposal takes the system of pathways and sidewalks as its basic structure, which it abstracts into a system of ovals that it transforms into the basic spatial principle of the new solution. However, part of the Committee was of the opinion that this decision is inappropriate in terms of park values because it pushes Thomayer's natural topography into the background, which is the basic feature and spatial structure of the park. (A, D)

The authors placed the greatest emphasis on connecting the park to the street, which also ensures the better sustained functioning of the square in the future. The perimeter embankment is no longer a boundary but rather an interface with the qualities of a park (wild vegetation) and a city (a place for rest and relaxation). At the same time, it still meets the function of a clear park border. Thanks to the paved surface of pathways along the perimeter embankment of the park, which is of the same Prague mosaic as that of the sidewalks, and incorporated benches, the embankment has gained an added rest and relaxation function and, at the same time, attracts people to the park. However, the Committee members also voiced opinions that the park centre would become too exposed in this way. Some of the members stated that the park perimeter was too fragmented and failed to fulfil a protective function. Nevertheless, other Committee members considered the same aspect of the park design proposal as the most successful solution to one of the key issues of the park – its connection to neighbouring areas. Frequent changes in perimeter vegetation cover will necessarily also affect the root system of trees, yet it is evident that the authors have thought about the planned

paths and sidewalks thoroughly, with a view to protecting the most important trees and minimising landscape modifications connected with the implementation of new through passages. (A, B, C, D, F)

The Committee also expressed doubts as to how appropriate it is to place both fast-food kiosks in the western part of the park, particularly in view of the need to revitalise the south-eastern part of the park and the better views and all-day sunshine on the eastern side of the square. Nevertheless, the Committee appreciated the high quality of the architecture of cafés, reminiscent of horticultural tradition and historical bus stops. The proposal fittingly reflects the difference in traffic and perception of the representative northern end and southern end of the square, which is meant for rest and relaxation. The organisation of events on the lawn puts increased pressure on consistent maintenance. The placement of a children's playground and fitness centre at the southern tip of the perimeter embankment has been evaluated positively. (A, C, F)

The proposal presented the most sophisticated system of rainwater management. It does not primarily collect rainwater in retention tanks, but makes use of the terrain and routes the water under the eastern path in the park, from where it permeates and spreads evenly to the entire park. This is an innovative solution that has been well thought through. There is also progressive emphasis on greater bicycle parking capacities close to subway entrance points. The exploration of the possibility of building underground garages is convincing, with ramps utilising the slope of U Nemocnice Street, which makes it possible to make the ramps shorter. (E)

In terms of the efficiency of the chosen professional approach, it can be concluded that the proposal presents its approach to Horizon 2025 in a very illustrative and convincing manner, i.e. it defines phases of solution implementation in the context of future changes and measures to be adopted under Horizon 2050.. The authors have fully utilised the potential of competitive dialogue; there were major changes from the draft proposal to its final version, yet the original concept was preserved. The team structure and follow-up tasks were described transparently. (F, G)

The overall score is 5.59 points.