Play space
Where design comes into play

A Grid report commissioned by the
COMMUNITY DESIGN COLLABORATIVE
Re-design your wardrobe using weave, knit, and dye techniques at Greensgrow. Learn how people-centered design can be mobilized for health and wellness at The Beacon. Engage with the newest research on growing plants indoors at Drexel’s Design Research Symposium. Hear from experts on how GIS and 3D modeling are creating, more active, healthier communities at Philadelphia University’s Geodesign Forum.

9 days, 100 public events. #DesignPhilly

For a complete listing of events view the calendar at designphiladelphia.org/events. Follow us on social media @DesignPhilly
Dear Grid reader,

Philadelphia’s parks, recreation centers and libraries are spaces where people of all ages go to dream, play and learn. They are also the heart and soul of our neighborhoods. Mayor Kenney made a bold, forward-thinking move in his first year in office. He called for a $256 million investment to expand access to quality pre-K and a $300 million bond initiative to rebuild parks, recreation centers and libraries in neighborhoods across Philadelphia.

Further, he made history with the passage of a groundbreaking soda tax to help fund these efforts.

These investments are sorely needed. Nearly 80 percent of Philadelphia schools are in Pennsylvania’s lowest academic performance tiers. Forty-six percent of children enter kindergarten unprepared. Nearly half of Philadelphians live in distressed communities with high poverty rates and low business investment.

Investing in quality pre-K and neighborhood public spaces can help reverse these trends and strengthen our city. A vital part of this effort is making sure that all communities—regardless of zip code—have access to outdoor play space.

During the past two years, Play Space—an initiative of the Community Design Collaborative and Delaware Valley Association for the Education of Young Children—has asked us to consider where design comes into play. The designs generated through this initiative demonstrate that Philadelphia’s play spaces can be active, quiet, green, gritty, nurturing and adventurous.

Innovative play spaces create opportunities for children to strengthen social skills and build confidence, for families to interact, and for communities to narrow the achievement gap.

As Philadelphia rebuilds our parks, recreation centers and libraries, let’s use these concepts to guide our investments and jump-start a more playful Philadelphia for our children, families and communities.

Sincerely,

Michael DiBerardinis
Managing Director
You CAN Run Away From Your Problems

Play Space initiative shows everyone wins when we invest in public play areas for kids

High-quality, early childhood education has been identified as a key factor in improving outcomes for kids in Philadelphia, and it’s a major priority for Philadelphia’s Mayor Jim Kenney, who has acknowledged that the city’s children face significant challenges due to persistent high poverty levels.

“We cannot expect our children to succeed academically if they come to school too hungry, sick or traumatized to learn,” he says.

Peg Szczurek, associate director of the Delaware Valley Association for the Education of Young Children (DVAEYC), says that while Philadelphia isn’t alone in having large numbers of kids and adults who are traumatized by the conditions of poverty, “We’re finally naming the elephant in the room, and saying, ‘What is it that we need to be providing?’ and then advocating for it.”

Increasingly, Szczurek says, educators are realizing that to give kids the greatest chance at success, a major part of their early education must be hands-on, play-based learning, preferably in spaces that also give them access to nature.

“One of the messages that we’ve had as an organization is protecting a child’s right to play,” Szczurek says, because academic-based programs are infringing on playtime. “Play is a child’s work.”

At the same time that educators are fully realizing the power of play, the city is embarking on major infrastructure investments through programs like the Play Space initiative, which aims to create safe, accessible spaces for children to play and learn. The initiative shows everyone wins when we invest in public play areas for kids.

“The playground is an undervalued resource. We have to readjust our thinking and see it as a vital community space.”

— Susan G. Solomon

THE FACTS

1 IN 5 CHILDREN IS STILL OBESE

and rates have actually increased in the last three years among younger girls (grades K-5)
investments to its libraries, recreational centers and school playgrounds, creating a perfect opportunity to embed learning opportunities in well-designed public spaces that also increase access to nature and improve neighborhood cohesiveness. Leveraging use of our current public spaces is key.

To capitalize on the opportunity, the Community Design Collaborative partnered with DVAEYC as part of an 18-month series of programs called Play Space. With funding from the William Penn Foundation, the Collaborative investigated the role of design in revitalizing and creating play spaces accessible to child care centers and early elementary school students.

“For years, our Infill program has looked at underutilized spaces around the city and brought the power of good design to those spaces for the communities’ benefit,” says Beth Miller, executive director of the Collaborative. “In this next phase of Infill, Play Space, we were able to use educational programs, small-scale design projects and a major design competition to fully explore the educational opportunities of these spaces.”

Shawn McCaney, director of Creative Communities and National Initiatives at the William Penn Foundation, says the opportunities abound. The foundation wants to use lessons learned from the Play Space design process to bring great public spaces to all of Philadelphia’s communities.

“There are all kinds of ways to embed learning in public space, and you can do that without sacrificing the community-serving benefits,” he says. “By combining the learning and the community-serving benefits, you create multigenerational public spaces, which are ideal. These are really the kind of spaces that we look to see built citywide.”

McCaney says good design is crucial. “The design community has a huge role to play in really advancing this notion of combining play and learning, as well as promoting design excellence and innovation. You know, we don’t want to just fix boilers, and fix the roofs at rec centers and reseed turf fields. We want to create 21st century public amenities that really meet the needs of people today... and we really rely on the design community to figure that out.”

---

46% of children enter kindergarten unprepared

39% of children live in poverty in Philadelphia

1 HOUR Amount of time that a child should engage in physical activity each day

“Children who live in poverty often face socio-economic obstacles that impede their right to have playtime.”

— Milteer & Ginsberg

80% of our children’s time is spent outside the classroom
The Power of Nature and Imagination

It’s critical to give kids access to nature and unstructured playtime

Second grade teacher Debbie Rickards of Friends Select School contemplated the power of play as she kept one eye on her flock of energetic second-graders who were running, jumping and yelling in Sister Cities Park in Center City Philadelphia. “It’s through play that children learn,” Rickards says. She illustrates her point with an example from over a decade ago that clearly had a lasting impression on her. “After 9/11, [the kids] built their own towers. And then they broke them,” she says. But then, something remarkable happened. “They fixed them. And it was so powerful to see children working through that in play. They work through entire lives in play. They learn things, they test ideas, and they get to move their bodies and get fresh air and exercise. It’s really important to them.”

When the kids are asked directly why they like playing outside in the park, most of them first talk with tiny furrowed brows about how it feels to sit inside for so long: that they get tired, hot and frustrated. But once their vision takes them outside, they brighten. Many of them talk about having fresh air and about being able to “get my energy out.” Ollie, age 8, says, “It feels great. After a long day, you can just sit under a tree and relax and observe nature.”

They’re there to celebrate being part of a winning team from the Community Design Collaborative’s international Play Space Design Competition. Alongside seasoned design professionals, the kids collaborated on a project to re-envision outdoor space at the Cobbs Creek library branch in Philadelphia, and their teammate Julie Bush, a landscape architect from Ground Reconsidered, is also there. “Our office has designed a lot of playgrounds and parks around the city. We’ve never worked with an entire class of second-graders before. It was a little bit different!” she laughs.

Sister Cities’ trees, wading pool, grass and open water fountains are clearly a delight to the students—and to the adults. They’re amenities you might not expect to find in plain view of hundreds of office workers and tourists walking along a busy Center City parkway just blocks from the Philadelphia Museum of Art. But it’s this kind of access to public play spaces that gives kids better opportunities to develop cognitively and socially, especially when combined with access to nature. Gail Farmer, director of education at the Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education, writes in an essay for the Collaborative that “a growing body of research in early childhood development is revealing the critical connection between this type of exposure to nature and the developing brain. Children who spend

“It feels great. After a long day, you can just sit under a tree and relax and observe nature.” — Ollie, age 8
immersive time playing in nature tend to be less anxious and better able to focus.”

We’re biologically predisposed to pay attention to nature, and to learn from it, she says. “Nature, on any scale, fires up a child’s developing brain in a way nothing else can.”

Part of the pull of nature is what developmental educators call “loose parts,” which in a classroom might mean blocks that can be configured in hundreds of ways. In nature, that might mean sticks, rocks, branches or just about anything else a child chooses to use or make up a story about.

As Philadelphia moves toward a major investment in its public spaces beyond Center City, there is an opportunity to approach the design of these spaces in a way that provides better outcomes for kids and communities.

In Susan G. Solomon’s book “The Science of Play: How to Build Playgrounds that Enhance Children’s Development,” she writes, “Now is the time for inventive attitudes and achievements. We need new visions of possibilities, especially at the national level, so that people who commission playgrounds—a group that includes parents, school districts and parks departments—will have support to insist on better outcomes.”

Meg Wise, executive director of Smith Memorial Playground in Philadelphia, agrees that the time is now. And she says that we have to think beyond traditional playground equipment and better understand how and why kids engage with their environment. “It means recognizing that kids have a design aesthetic,” she says. “A cookie-cutter monkey bar or slide—that does a disservice to kids, to give them something that doesn’t spark their imagination, that doesn’t reflect a great design object, that doesn’t reflect the site. The best [equipment] acts with the natural attributes that are in their site, and gives kids opportunities to really direct their play.”

Studio Ludo founder Meghan Talarowski, one of the designers on one of the winning teams of the Play Space competition, says that her experience designing play spaces in England influenced her approach. “The riskier, more interesting play environments that I was studying there, they had a lot more people in them, and the kids were a lot more active in them,” she says. “The most important part for a playground is that it’s not prescriptive—that it’s a stage that kids get to make their own.”

Wise, who was also an advisory committee member for Play Space, says that with some of Smith’s less traditional equipment, the adults sometimes tell their kids that they’re doing it wrong, “But for us,” Wise says, “there is no wrong way. It’s important that the adults learn that lesson, and recognize that play is about infinite possibilities.”
Small Play Spaces, Big Impact
Designers unlock the potential of family child care centers

Philadelphia is a city of neighborhoods, and every one of them is full of kids. But only about a third of those children have access to high-quality pre-K programs, which are critical to helping them get the best possible chance of succeeding socially and academically.

According to the Delaware Valley Association for the Education of Young Children (DVAEYC), family child care homes are a major part—approximately one-third—of the kinds of facilities that offer pre-K child care programs. They are licensed, private homes that care for up to six children at a time, and are independently rated by the statewide Keystone STARS program.

Ensuring that these spaces have not only adequate care but high-quality play spaces is one way to put the city’s children on equal footing, and to promote nature-based play for kids as young as infants and up to 12 years old.

“As we developed programming for our Play Space initiative, and listened to our partners at DVAEYC, it became clear that family child care homes could be a critical place where bringing designers in could help in a big way,” says Community Design Collaborative Executive Director Beth Miller.

“Our Child’s Play charrette was also a way to introduce designers to concepts and diverse forms of nature-based play, which is something they might not yet have familiarity with.”

More than 30 design professionals participated in the charrette, which was facilitated by SALT Design Studio. These design days offer an intense period of collaboration that mobilizes the participation of the people who will use the space, in order to ensure that community needs are met while designers generate cost-effective, innovative designs. SALT Design founder Sara Pevaroff Schuh says she could identify immediately with the design challenge. “I’ve had a tiny little backyard,” she says, “and I had little kids at the time. It’s a continual challenge to make something out of a very small space.”

She also says the teams recognized that sometimes a small space was all kids had. “Often kids may not live in an area that is safe for the day care to take them to a nearby park. We wanted to be able to offer a sense of nature in their own backyards.”

DVAEYC’s Peg Szczurek says the Child’s Play design charrette more than accomplished its goals. “We were working with engineers, designers and architects and landscaping people, and sharing what the needs of the children were,” she says. “We have here at DVAEYC a deep interest and effort around nature-based play, of returning children to green areas. Being able to share
with folks why you might want a sensory garden for toddlers or how putting in elements for a bird habitat might be of interest to school-age children—or a weather station, right in their play space—but also making sure there were a lot of loose parts, where children could be creative, could problem solve. The designers loved it. It was so much fun to work together. We learned from each other.”

In addition to producing cost-effective, innovative designs, the program sought to provide guidance for family child care providers so that they might apply for grants to help fund the outdoor improvements. Possibilities included grants from the city of Philadelphia to help improve Keystone STARS ratings and stormwater management grants from Philadelphia Water.

“It’s important in the work that the Collaborative does that we acknowledge the reality of design challenges,” says Collaborative Executive Director Beth Miller. “But these design charrettes really show how much is possible when we innovate together.”
Bringing Community Together
Sometimes, we need to talk it out

A critical piece to Play Space was starting a conversation about the power of well-designed play spaces by convening stakeholders across the community—play experts, designers, play space administrators, children, parents and neighborhood leaders.

During 18 months in 2015 and 2016, the Community Design Collaborative offered a series called Play Talks that enabled the entire play community to come together and share their vision, look at innovative approaches to design and coalesce around the notion that play spaces have real benefits for communities and the children who live there.

“It's crucial that Philadelphians take an active role in improving early learning, education quality and health outcomes for their children,” wrote former DVAEYC Executive Director Sharon Easterling in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. “And giving all communities—regardless of zip code—access to outdoor play space is a vital piece of that effort.”
Building Healthy Communities
Our medicines and vaccines help millions of people live longer and healthier lives.

But in order to fully achieve our mission of helping people do more, feel better and live longer, we need to go beyond discovering, developing and delivering new medicines, vaccines and healthcare products. That’s why we support innovative health and education programs designed to bring sustainable, positive change in local communities across America.

© 2001–2016 GLAXOSMITHKLINE ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

US.GSK.COM
Bus Stops and Sidewalks and Sidelots, Oh My!

Any place is a space to discover, grow and get healthy

The Community Design Collaborative’s Play Space initiative included the Art of Active Play program, which took place over the summer of 2015. It aimed to spark public dialogue about physical activity and its impact on child health, and to transform underutilized and unexpected places into opportunities for play. Its series of community-designed-and-built projects was specifically targeted at encouraging physical activity for children ages 6 to 12.

Mica Root, a program partner from Get Fit Philly, says the “collaborative effort engaged children and teenagers, design and health professionals, child care experts, artists and other community members in designing and building three imaginative play structures.” They included a fort, bench and balance boards.

One in five children in Philadelphia is obese, and rates are increasing among girls in kindergarten through fifth grade. Bringing play spaces to the places that kids already are—even city streets—is one way to give more equitable access to health and learning opportunities for children in neighborhoods across Philadelphia.

Shawn McCaney, director of Creative Communities and National Initiatives at the William Penn Foundation in Philadelphia, says now is the time to think through how to best utilize each and every space.

“The overarching aim is how to marshal all the city’s assets in supporting the educational mission of schools and early childhood care facilities,” he says. “How everyday spaces like sidewalks and streets and bus shelters could be learning opportunities... A bus stop could include a game that might engage a parent and a child in a learning interaction.”

The prototypes traveled from 41st and Lancaster —where they were built— to Smith Memorial Playground for a Family Play Day in October 2015. Today, they are permanent fixtures in three Philadelphia neighborhoods.

Program Partners:
Community Design Collaborative, Delaware Valley Association for the Education of Young Children, Public Workshop, Philadelphia Department of Public Health/Get Fit Philly, People’s Emergency Center and Smith Memorial Playground

Funders:
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (Art of Active Play) and William Penn Foundation (Play Space)
LEAN ON THE
Free Library of Philadelphia
During the School Year!

Our FREE afterschool program, known as LEAP, offers:

• HOMEWORK HELP
• COMPUTER AND WI-FI ACCESS
• LIVELY ACTIVITIES FOR
  STUDENTS GRADES K THROUGH 12

Learn more at freelibrary.org!

THANK YOU TO OUR
PLAY SPACE DESIGN
AWARDS SPONSORS

PRIZE
AIA Philadelphia
Crew Philadelphia
GlaxoSmithKline

CREATOR
Brandywine Realty Trust
Free Library of Philadelphia

DISCOVERER
Allied Construction Services
Land Collective
Liberty Property Trust
Recreation Resource/BCI Burke

EXPLORER
Bittenbender Construction, LP
Designed for Fun
Ground Reconsidered
Landscape Architecture

HOK
Ian Smith Design Group
Keast & Hood Co.
Kitchen & Associates
Kompan
KSK Architects Planners
Historians, Inc.
Langan Engineering & Environmental Services
Lomax Family Foundation
McGillin Architecture, Inc.
MEDstudio@JEFF
O’Donnell & Naccarato, Inc.
Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency
Philadelphia Assoc of Community Development Corps
Philadelphia LISC
Playworld Systems
Site design group, ltd.
Volpe Koenig, P.C.

DESIGNERS
Volunteer for the Community Design Collaborative and help communities bring their ideas to life!

www.cdesignnc.org

COMMUNITY DESIGN COLLABORATIVE
The 2016 Infill Philadelphia: Play Space international design competition sought to promote innovative outdoor play spaces for Philadelphia and other cities. Interdisciplinary teams were invited to create plans for an outdoor play space at one of three public spaces—a library, a recreation center and a school. Each of the competition sites presented unique challenges and great opportunities. The sites are in areas with multiple child care providers as well as high populations of young children living nearby—all of whom could take advantage of improved play space.

While the focus of this design competition and initiative, as a whole, was to explore the potential for innovative play space to enhance early childhood development (primarily pre-K through third grade), it was acknowledged that truly successful play spaces for this age group must serve various age groups of children and be multigenerational.

In addition, while the designs aspired to be prototypical and replicable, they also strove to respond to the context of the specific sites and the desires of the communities in which they are located. A key component of this competition was the inclusion of community input, which was gathered through a community task force meeting at each site, as well as community surveys. This information was the basis for the development of the program information for each site and was used to inform and inspire the designs.
COMPETITION PARTICIPANTS

- A K Architecture, LLC
- Abiola Sagbohan
- ALO
- Anahita Shadkam
- Andrew Chiang
- Arrowstreet
- Atkin Olshin Schade Architects
- Atrium Design Group
- Berwyn Center
- Bittenbender Construction, LP
- Brown Sprague LLC
- Caitlin O’Donnell
- Carol A. Krawczyk, Landscape Architect, Inc.
- Catherine Yoon
- CBA Landscape Architects LLC
- CH2M HILL
- Children’s Crisis Treatment Center
- City University of New York
- City Play
- Copley Wolff
- Cornell University
- CVM
- Derck & Edson Associates
- Derek Kalp
- DERU Landscape Architecture
- Design for Generations, LLC
- Designed For Fun
- Doug Shannon
- DPI
- earthplay
- Einwiller Kuehl Inc.
- Elwyn
- Engineering & Land Planning (E&LP)
- Esperanza Academy Charter High School
- Fahringer, McCarty, Grey, Inc.
- Foldout Metropolis
- Footprint Architecture & Design
- Friends Select School
- Gail Fenton
- Genki Takahashi
- Graham & Parks School
- Ground Reconsidered
- Landscape Architecture
- Harvard Graduate School of Education
- Hill International, Inc.
- Hiram College
- HOK
- Hydraterra Professionals
- Ian Smith Design Group
- International Consultants, Inc.
- Ithaca Children’s Garden
- IT'S ALL MADE UP
- J R Keller LLC Creative Partnerships
- James Wick
- Joe Boruchow
- J R Keller LLC Creative Partnerships
- John Shandra
- KAMIZ
- Katherine Weckler
- KDA Architects
- Kelsey Gallion
- Kirk Fromm, design + illustration
- KS Engineers, PC
- Kyrie Yaccarino
- Lamba Associates
- LandHealth Institute
- Live Green Landscapes
- Made Studio
- Marissa Post
- Maser Consulting P.A.
- Meliora Environmental Design LLC
- Michael Williams
- Michelle Crowley
- Landscape Architecture
- Mission Hill School
- Modesto Bigas-Valedon
- Nicole Wagy
- Om Creation Studio, LLC
- ONOFF
- OSD LLC
- Over the Rainbow Nursery, Inc
- Paula Forny
- Penn State Cooperative Extension
- Penn State Dept. of Architecture and Landscape Architecture
- Philly Art Center
- PLACE
- Planned Parenthood
- PlayHarvest
- Prudential Insurance Company of America
- Ramla Benaissa Architects, LLC
- Red Sun Kindergarten
- Richard Conte Jr.
- Rogers Partners
- Roofmeadow
- Roots First
- Rose Levine
- Ryosuke Takahashi
- S.M.P. Group Design Associates, LLC
- SALT Design Studio
- Samiotes Consultants, Inc.
- Shift Landscape Architecture
- Site design group, ltd.
- Space for Childhood
- Springboard Schools
- SS J Design Details
- Streetsense
- Studio Ludo
- Studio of Instinct Fabrication
- Studio PM
- T & M Associates
- Tawab Hlimi
- Temple University
- Teresa Foster Confair
- Terry Guen Design Associates
- The OMNIA Group Architects
- The Parent-Infant Center
- TSW
- University of Waterloo
- Urban Engineers, Inc.
- Valerie Manica
- Viridian Landscape Studio
- Xin Xu
**Design Team Statement:** The library is an “instrument of change,” with knowledge extending beyond the building. Our book sculpture soars out of the windows and into the landscape, becoming a quiet reading garden on the south side of the site. On the north side of the site, the book opens up to reveal its narrative structure in a creative, physically challenging, but safe play environment. Inspired by children’s descriptions of their own playground designs, the play loop moves through a narrative structure with equipment representing the introduction, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution. This, along with the stormwater garden, can be used as educational opportunities within the landscape. The entry is designed for every user of the site, providing both an accessible ramp and an outdoor venue to host library programs. Our design provides a beautiful and useful landscape that will become an iconic destination within the neighborhood.

**Neighborhood:** Cobbs Creek, West Philadelphia  
**Address:** 5800 Cobbs Creek Parkway, Philadelphia, Pa. 19143  
**Established:** 1925

**Cobbs Creek Library**

**Neighborhood:** Cobbs Creek, West Philadelphia  
**Site Owner:** Free Library of Philadelphia  
**Address:** 5800 Cobbs Creek Parkway, Philadelphia, Pa. 19143  
**Community Partner:** Friends of Cobbs Creek Library

**The Opportunity:** The Blanche A. Nixon/Cobbs Creek Branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia is one of 25 Carnegie buildings built in Philadelphia in the early 20th century to open up libraries to communities. Located on a green half-acre site on Baltimore Avenue, the library’s name honors a mother, community activist and library volunteer who helped teens resist the pressure to join gangs in the ’80s. The library continues its legacy of community engagement, serving over 49,000 residents annually. The addition of an innovative outdoor play space has the potential to expand the library’s capacity to serve as a safe place for education, recreation, entertainment, technology and community gathering —both inside and out.

**Community Goals**

- Reflect the library’s mission to advance literacy  
- Expand the facility’s ability to accommodate the community by creating useable outdoor space  
- Serve nearby early education and child care programs  
- Meet the diverse needs of the multigenerational surrounding community  
- Redefine the site as an iconic, identifiable destination for the community and the city  
- Connect to the history and characteristics of Cobbs Creek and the watershed  
- Engage existing resources from the community in the implementation and maintenance of the site  
- Maintain/respect the existing mural
“This is an opportunity to take all that the library has to offer outside.”

- Darren Cottman, Cobbs Creek Branch, Free Library of Philadelphia

**Neighborhood Playbook**

**Competition Team:**
SALT Design Studio (lead); CH2M HILL; City University of New York; Ian Smith Design Group; ITS ALL MADE UP; Kirk Fromm, design + illustration; PlayHarvest; SS | Design Details

**From:**

**Nixon Park**

**Competition Team:**
TSW (lead)

**From:**
Atlanta, GA
Design Team Statement: Waterloo is bustling with activity, brimming with life, overflowing with joy. We believe that the energy of the Norris Square community is the reason that the Waterloo Recreation Center exists today. Given its history, nothing is more important than the care, devotion and life that neighbors have already infused into this place. As we reimagine the future design of Waterloo, we seek both to honor and support the people who are its heart and soul and to create lasting connections with nature and play. During our design process, five elements inspired us: community, play, water, nature and re-use. By weaving together the diverse rhythms and energy of each, we created a place that celebrates the community of which it is an integral part.
“A nice balance between pushing the envelope and being practical.”
- Shawn McCaney, William Penn Foundation

Community Gifts

Competition Team: Shift Landscape Architecture (lead); James Wick
From: Guelph, Ontario, Canada

Reclaiming Recreation

Competition Team: Ramla Benaissa Architects, LLC (lead); Elwyn; Maser Consulting P.A.
From: Philadelphia, PA
DESIGN COMPETITION: SCHOOL

SITE WINNER

Bright Futures Chutes and Ladders

**Competition Team:**
Atkin Olshin Schade Architects (co-lead); Meliora Environmental Design LLC (co-lead); Viridian Landscape Studio (co-lead); International Consultants, Inc.; The Parent-Infant Center

**Design Team Statement:** Our scheme is inspired by the classic children’s board game Chutes & Ladders. The board game is brought to life in three dimensions with the construction of two large-scale “ladders” that act as shading devices, and with a lushly planted “chute” that represents the long buried Mill Creek. It connects the front and rear of the site while dividing the play space into public and private zones. A trike track parallels the chute and includes a closed circuit for younger children. The board game is realized on a smaller scale with landing spaces represented by eight outdoor playrooms—each with a different ground surface and unique play theme. Smaller chutes and ladders throughout the site reinforce the theme. Rainwater is managed in multiple ways and is incorporated into active play in The Laboratory and The Studio. Shade trees define outdoor classrooms, and rich plantings support rain gardens.

Haverford Bright Futures School

**Neighborhood:** Mill Creek, West Philadelphia
**Address:** 4601 Haverford Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. 19139
**Established:** 1970

**Site Owner:** Philadelphia School District
**Community Partner:** Mill Creek Advisory Council

**The Opportunity:** Haverford Bright Futures is located in an urban renewal area that lacks the traditional grid and density of the city. Its ample, nearly two-acre site, originally a YMCA in the ’70s, feels disconnected from the surrounding community. Green, but unstimulating, the site does not reflect the vitality of a Bright Futures preschool program with an international enrollment inside. Each of the four classrooms leads directly outdoors, but the children are greeted by a modest concrete pad and a vast lawn. Enhancing this site with innovative play opportunities will create a more engaging place for both the children and the community.

COMMUNITY GOALS

- Bring classroom activities outside
- Promote the multicultural aspects of the neighborhood and school community
- Create more visibility/identity for, and access to, the site
- Encourage community use of the site
- Focus on 3- to 5-year-olds primarily, but create an intergenerational amenity
- Maintain the existing asset of grass
- Incorporate the history of Mill Creek
“Very clever... fabulous... most natural.”

- Ken Finch, Green Hearts Institute for Nature in Childhood

**Embrace Past, Present and Future**

**Competition Team:**
Studio of Instinct Fabrication (lead); Red Sun Kindergarten

**From:**
Beijing, China

**SITE FINALIST**

**Co-Play at Haverford Bright Futures**

**Competition Team:**
Terry Guen Design Associates (lead); CITYPLAY; Philly Art Center; Roots First

**From:**
Chicago, Ill.
Brandywine Realty Trust
Proudly supports the Community Design Collaborative 2016 Play Space Design

555 East Lancaster Ave | Radnor, PA 19087
(610) 325-5600 | www.brandywinerealty.com

Reading Terminal Market applauds the efforts of Community Design Collaborative and their positive impact on the community.

MONDAY-SATURDAY 8-6 & SUNDAY 9-5 • 54 PARKING
12TH & ARCH STREETS • 215.922.2317 • ReadingTerminalMarket.org

Reading Terminal Market
applauds the efforts of Community Design Collaborative and their positive impact on the community.

Reading Terminal Market
applauds the efforts of Community Design Collaborative and their positive impact on the community.

Reading Terminal Market
applauds the efforts of Community Design Collaborative and their positive impact on the community.
What does play have to do with learning, health, nature, adventure, and community? Everything!

Play Space challenged designers, public leaders, educators, childcare providers, families, and communities to imagine new outdoor play spaces for Philadelphia’s libraries, recreation centers, schools, sidewalks, and yards. See their visions for the city’s playful future and learn more about the surprising, far-reaching benefits of play.

Free and open to the public on weekdays from 9 am to 6 pm. Use the Visitors’ Entrance at the northeast corner of City Hall.

www.cdesignc.org
You’re invited—come out and play!

A single cube will be on display from October 6-16, 2016 for DesignPhiladelphia Festival at The Center for Architecture & Design.

Join us to experience PlayCubes™ – the innovative new collaboration between Playworld, and renowned architect and designer Richard Dattner.

Come see, explore and discover the new shape of play!

Details at Playworld.com/DesignPhiladelphia