

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.

New Visit

The authors have based their concept on an integrated space spanning from façade to façade, which differentiates them from all other proposals. Their effort to attain the atmosphere of one integrated square space has led to a major deviation from the identity of historical Thomayer's Park, which is formed by, among other things, large rest & relaxation lawns protected by a perimeter embankment and fine work with park topography. The authors have created a completely new concept of the park square, which enables them to re-integrate buildings into the square space – which was evaluated positively. However, unlike other proposals, the team of authors has not been able to preserve the park qualities that are subject to heritage protection. The authors criticise the closed nature of Thomayer's Park and deliberately disrupt this concept. Only the park trees represent heritage to them. The authors also mention their idea of maintaining the longitudinal axis of the park, relying on the assumption that this will remain intelligible and discernible due to the mass of trees; nevertheless, due to the absence of any visual or symbolic boundaries, it is the diagonal pedestrian pathways that will become the key axes. The authors have avoided looking for a balance between the closed, yet open nature of the park square and have given preference to creating a single space open in all directions, which presents a problem in terms of overall impression. (A, D)

The authors have attempted to adapt the existing system of pathways and sidewalks and managed to preserve some of its segments. Thus, their proposal maintains a certain touch of Thomayer's Park, yet this is no longer clearly discernible under the obvious predominance of the newly created basic structure. Only fragments of Thomayer's fine convex-concave landscape model remain. The authors have analogously removed the central pools, which eliminates the original central points of the park space. Similarly, the authors have not accepted the challenge to handle the issue of taller shrubs in the city centre, which was typical for Thomayer and which may also be a benefit in terms of biodiversity. (A, B, D)

The team of authors presents a broader concept of pedestrian through passage through the centre with the prospective establishment of backbone pedestrian zones in the New Town (Town Wall Perimeter, Spálená, Vodičkova – Jindřišská, Na Moráni). This consideration makes sense in terms of life in the city centre, yet it has not been explored in terms of traffic. Similarly, to the other teams, the authors have created a promenade linked to Vodičkova Street in the eastern part of the park, which is appropriate in terms of the broader context and relations. Moreover, they were the only team to renew the tree-lined avenue along the eastern side of the square, which is evaluated positively. Overall, their proposal has solved the issues connected with through pedestrian traffic. (A)

In terms of the architectonic solution, their proposal lacks the integration of surfaces into one type of fine detail and eliminates the various layers created over the course of historical development. The details of street furniture were well thought out and they were the only team to commemorate the events of World War II, which was evaluated positively. (C, D)

In their proposal, the authors envisage the largest quantity of paved areas by far, which has negative effects on rainwater management and the minimisation of damage to and sustainability of existing trees. Proposed paving with a retention gap allows rainwater permeation, yet to a much lesser degree than non-paved surfaces. Of all the proposals, the proposed rainwater management system uses the fewest options close to nature. The Committee feels that it is possible to ensure the square remains a living urban space by using a significantly smaller extent of paved areas, which is evident from the comparison with other proposals. The high ratio of paved areas also increases the total costs of implementation. The proposed elimination of a tram stop in the centre of the square fails to meet the operating and traffic needs of the city. (E, F)

In terms of the appropriate choice of professional approach, the Committee has concluded that the authors found it difficult to accept the given limitations stemming from the current situation. The Committee is of the opinion that, compared to other participants, this team did not sufficiently use the feedback on their proposal provided by the Contracting Authority during the proceedings. (G)

The overall score is 3.05 points.