# The Embrace & 1965 Freedom Rally Memorial Plaza

April 28, 2020

**Boston Landmarks Commission** 

#### Outline

# O Previous Site

King Boston Competition

# 1 Site Update

New Site Approach

1965 Freedom Rally & the Boston Civil Rights Community

New Design Concept: The "Garment of Destiny"

# 2 The Embrace

Concept

Materiality

# 3 What We Heard

**Previous Site** 

# King Boston Competition (2018)

# **Public Engagement**

**Community 14** Community Meetings to develop Request for Proposal

1015 public responses to 5 finalist renderings displayed

Public Engagement is ongoing

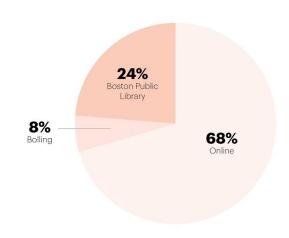
"A Stunning New Boston Memorial Will Celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. and Coretta Scott King"

- Architectural Digest

"The Embrace," the winning entry by Hank Willis Thomas and MASS Design Group, performs an admirable balancing act. It's mysterious, a gentle knot of arms and hands entwined in shimmering bronze. It's subtle, oh so subtle, an intimate physical gesture evoking tenderness and care without being prescriptive or lionizing its subjects. And more than anything else, it's human - instantly relatable, a gesture of connection and intimact that every one of us craves.

- Murray White, Globe

# **King Boston Memorial Feedback Method**



# Previous Site and Program

# The Embrace

"Civic Engagement through Radical Love"

# Plaza

"A place to pause"

# Amphitheater "A place to gather"



Parkman Memorial Bandstand

33 ft diameter Bandstand green, 42,800 sq ft

KING BOSTON MEMORIAL | PROJECT INTRODUCTION



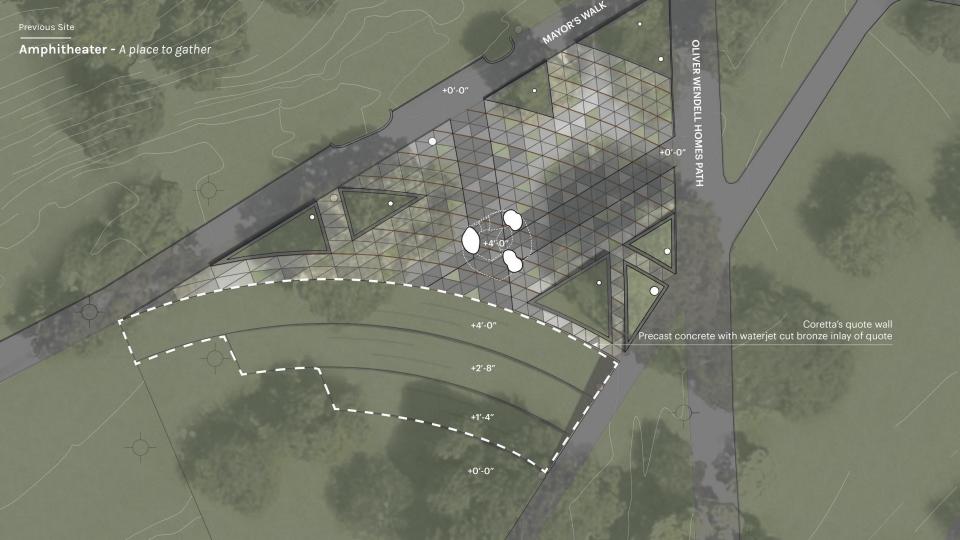
#### Plaza - A place to pause



The plaza original concept came from the understanding of quilts.

Within the African American context, they have been rumored to be used for codes and communication in the Underground Railroad. The patchwork of a quilt symbolize unity and of coming together as it identifies smaller pieces of fabric joining in order to create something bigger than itself.



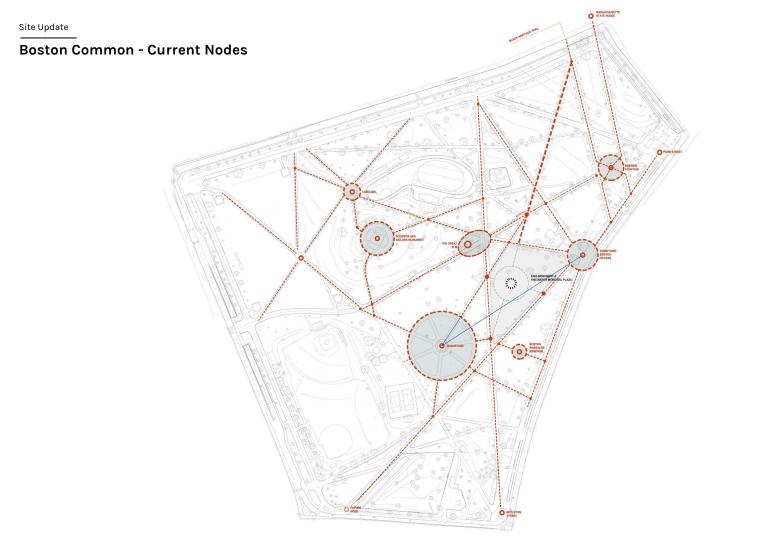


Site Update

# **New Site Approach**

The **Boston Common** can be read as a series of historic nodes interconnected in a network of paths.

Our goal is being contextual and responsive to both the **King Legacy**, and the **history and future of the Boston Common**.



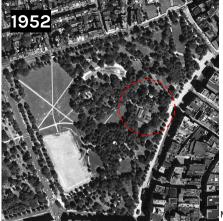
#### **Boston Common - The Visitor Center over Time**

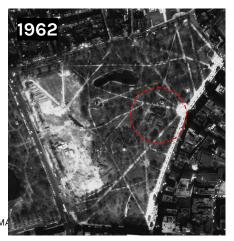
1950s - Freedom Trail established and a temporary Visitor Information Center was located within the planned memorial site. Before then, the Park Rangers service station provided an informal visitor center on a seasonal basis.

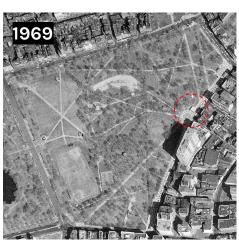
1967 - Boston Visitor Center added at north edge of Parkman Plaza along the Lafayette Mall.

c. 1994 - The current Visitor Information Center expanded and refurbished the Ranger Station at this site, adding an 84-year-old "women's comfort station" with the aid of \$1.4 million in city capital funds and a year's work. Provided public restrooms for the first time since 1966.









#### **Boston Common - The Visitor Center over Time**

View of the Ranger Station that was expanded to create the current Visitor Center, left. Boston Visitor Information Center (1967), as seen in 1988, right.





The Ranger Station from the Parkman Plaza.

The existing Visitor Center acts as a wall across Lafayette Mall.

Site Update

# 1965 Freedom Rally & the Boston Civil Rights Community

**Collective action** is usually forgotten. This project is an exceptional opportunity to tell the story of the Boston people that in their fight for social rights marched with King during the **1965 Freedom Rally.** 

#### FREEDOM RALLY

On **April 23, 1965**, Martin Luther King, Jr., led one of Boston's first freedom marches from Roxbury to Boston Common. Galvanized by his presence, 22,000 people gathered together to hear him speak in one of the city's most enormous demonstrations for civil rights.



KING BOSTON MEMORIAL | MASS + SONGHA & COMPANY

"Little did I imagine that such a day was possible when I walked through this same Boston Common as a student 10 years ago. This will go down as one of the greatest days that Boston has ever seen."

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



#### April 23th 1965





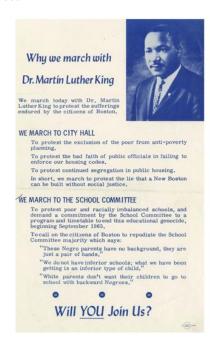
#### April 23th 1965

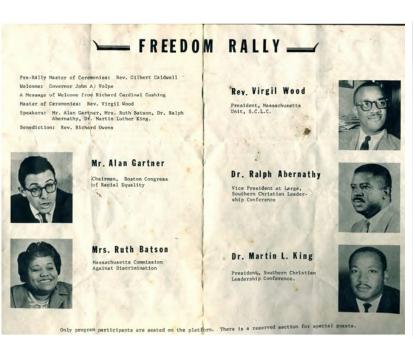




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#### April 23th 1965





# FROM BOSTON CONGRESS OF RACIAL EQUALITY 373 Blue Hill Avenue, Roxbury, Massachusetts 02121

#### CORE Pickets Taxi President's Home

Protesting the discriminatory Ave. and Camden St., Rox-hiring policies of the Cleary bury, at 9:30 a.m., April 23. Cab Co., eighteen CORE mem- It will end at Boston Combers picketed on April 3 in mon. front of the home of its presidest and owner, Mr. Sidney Many Leaders Sponsor Freedman, 316 Blue Hill Ave.,

Of 50 regular drivers and about 100 substitutes at Cleary, none are Negroes, Yet Mr. 23rd for Martin Luther King Day' Roxbury tenants are invite Freedman has repeatedly refused to negotiate his company's hiring practices, despite a year chusetts Unit of the Southern cated in the following neight of dealings with CORE's Em- Christian Leadership Confer- hoods; Howard Ave., Ley ployment Committee, He has ence, said that it is 'the neighborhood said that it is 'the neighborhood and not he' that is opposed to on March 2 issued a proclamation CORE office), Homestead the hiring of Negroes.

CORE's demands are that Mr. Luther King Day', heads the list
Freedman publicly announce his of sponsors, which includes alof one spokesman, is to non-discrimination in hiring and | Massachusetts politics, as well service, and that he hire as driv- as leaders of the religious, eduers five Negroes who meet the cational, civic and business comsame standards as those applied munity. Among the sponsors City's "Enforce to white applicants, 'Mr. Freed- are: His Eminence Richard Car-

Martin Luther King will lead a march starting from Car-

# King Visit, April 23

A list of 100 sponsors of April Blue Hill Christian Center. has been released by Rev. Virgil attend. A. Wood, President of the Massa- Block organizations are

declaring April 23 as 'Martin and Mt. Pleasant Ave. intention to follow a policy of most every major figure in to help determine the futur man must meet his responsibili- dinal Cushing, Lt. Gov. Elliot

ties and not put them off on the Richardson, Atty. Gen. Edward but its way of dealing with 'white neighborhood', stated Em- W. Brooke, Sen, Edward M. Ken- far from satisfactory to CC CORE urges everyone to write er of the House John W. McCor- tion nor concern in dealing or call Cleary Cab, stating sup- mack, Bishop James K. Mathews, the overall problem of hou port of CORE's position; to refuse Rt. Rev. Frederic C. Lawrence, for those now condemned to to patronize any company that Rabbi H. Bruce Ehrmann, For- in dwellings that are dilapide fails to practice equal treatment; and to write to Boston's Mayor Francis X. Bellotti, and Eli Gold-Consequently, CORE and and City Council protesting the ston, Of the 23 political leaders ants are planning direct as licensing of companies which dis-criminate. invited to be sponsors, only one refused, Sen, Leverett Saltonstall. to be announced later.

# **TENANT GRO**

Roxbury tenants have j better living conditions on izations have formed, and th Tenants Association, Chair of the Association is Mr. Ic Braxton, Secretary is Mrs. Alexander.

On Thursday, April 22, at p.m., a kickoff meeting for Association will be held as

st., Warren St., Blue Hill

nedy, Dr. Harold C. Case, Speak- codes has not been forceful



**Michael E. Haynes**, left, with Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. at the time of King's speech before the Massachusetts legislature on April 28, 1965.

- Pastor at Twelfth Baptist Church in Roxbury from 1964 to 2004.
- Served in the Massachusetts House of Representatives from 1965 to 1968, representing Roxbury.
- During the 1960s and 1970s Haynes played an active role in the civil rights movement.
- In 1965, he helped plan Martin Luther King Jr.'s entrance into Boston when he came to speak on Boston Common that spring.



#### **Reverend James Reeb**

- Reeb was a white, Unitarian Universalist minister, pastor, and activist in the Civil rights movement in Washington, D.C. and Boston, Massachusetts.
- In 1965, Reeb traveled to Selma to answer Martin Luther King's call for clergy to support the nonviolent protest movement for voting rights.
- Reeb died on March 11, 1965 while marching in Selma, Alabama, after being attacked by a group of white supremacists.
- Delivering Reeb's eulogy, King called him "a shining example of manhood at its best" (King, 15 March 1965).



# **Reverend Virgil Wood**

- During his Pastorate in Lynchburg, Virginia, he became actively involved with the Civil Rights movement, setting up Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s work there as the Lynchburg Improvement Association, a local unit of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).
- From 1963 to 1970, Dr. Wood led the Blue Hill Christian Center in Boston's Roxbury community, and was the head of the Massachusetts Unit of the SCLC.
- He served with Dr. King, Jr. as a member of his National Executive Board of the SCLC for the last ten years of Dr. King, Jr.'s life and work, and coordinated the State of Virginia in the historic march on Washington, D.C., on April 28, 1963.

# Reverend James P. Breeden and Noel Day

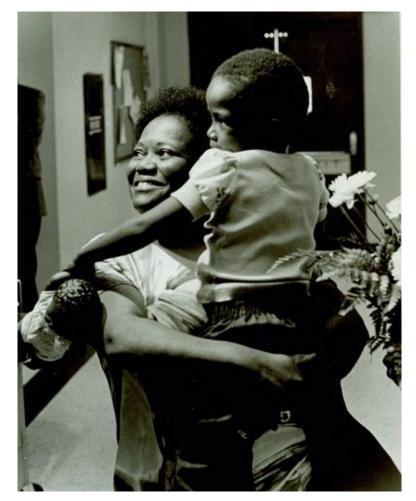
- Organized Boston's 1963 Stay Out for Freedom campaign through their Citizens for Human Rights (CFHR) organization organized thousands of Black Bostonians to engage in collective non-violent direct action to protest de facto segregation through the creation of the nation's first Freedom School in 1963.
- In 1961, Reverend Breeden was among 15 Freedom Riders arrested in Jackson, Mississippi and charged with "actions likely to cause a riot."



1964 REV JAMES BREEDEN (left) AND REV VERNON CARTER

#### **Ruth Batson**

- Chairwoman of the Public Education Committee of the NAACP Boston Branch.
- June 11, 1963: Challenged the all-white Boston School Committee and the segregation of the Boston Public Schools by pointing out that schools with high black enrollments had poor funding and horrible school conditions.
- After serving as chairwoman of the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination from 1963 to 1966, Ruth helped launched the Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO) voluntary desegregation program.
- She was the first black woman on the Democratic National Committee, and the first woman elected president of NAACP's New England Regional Conference.





Otto P. and Muriel S. Snowden, pictured c. 1950 in their first office at 151 Humboldt Ave.

- Social workers & founders of Freedom House, Inc. in 1949.
- Freedom House, Inc. grew out of their community organizing with the Council on Community Affairs of Upper Roxbury (1947-1949).
- The initial goal of Freedom House was to centralize community activism in the fight for neighborhood improvement, good schools, and harmony among racial, ethnic, and religious groups in Roxbury, Massachusetts.
- They were committed to working to ensure the stability of Roxbury as a middle-class, racially mixed neighborhood by linking the community to existing services and creating services where they were lacking.



Margaret Moseley presents Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. with a \$200 check from Boston friends and well-wishers at a reception held for him in March of 1958.

- Margaret Moseley was a community, peace, and civil rights activist.
- She was a founding member of Cooperative Way, a consumers' cooperative in Boston in the 1940s, and served on the board of the Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts.
- She was a founding member of Freedom House in Roxbury, president of the Community Church in Boston, and Massachusetts legislative chair for the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), which established the Margaret Moseley Memorial Peace Education fund in her honor in 1989.
- In 1965, Moseley traveled to Selma, Ala., with six other women from WILPF to work on the voting rights campaign.



Reverend Walter C. Davis of the Charles Street African Methodist Episcopal Church, left at the Freedom House reception for Reverend Martin Luther King Jr., March 20, 1958.

 President of Charlame Park Homes, moderate-income housing constructed by Charlame Park Homes, Inc., sponsored by the Charles Street A.M.F. Church.

# Reverend Vernon Carter, Pastor of All Saints Lutheran Church

- In 1965 Rev. Vernon Carter, minister of the All Saints Lutheran Church in Boston's South End throughout the 1950s and 1960s, conducted a personal 114-day vigil/march in front of the Boston School Committee Headquarters to protest racial imbalance in the Boston schools.

# FREEDOM'S JOURNAL

MASSACHUSETTS FREEDOM MOVEMENT BOSTON FIVE CENTS

# LOCAL MINISTER SAYS I WILL FIGHT FOR FREEDOM AT THE DOOR OF MY CHURCH!

The Rev. Vernon E. Carter, Pastor of All Soints Lutheran Church made the following statement this week:



Rev. Vernon E. Carter

If the power structure finds it necessary to enter my church in order to break up our Freedom School, I will defy these officors at the door. I will have to be physically removed in order for them to break up our school. In our church is a statue of Christ with arms open as if to say, "Come unto me, all ye that are weak and heavy laden and I will give you rost."

The Church has historically given sanctuary to people who have suffered from unjust laws and practices. The integrity, of the Church is at stake. Civil disobedience is an American privilege at crucial periods in our history. If the power structure has any

moral integrity, it should concentrate on enforcing a good law -- the 1954 Supreme Court decision against segregation of schools -- rather than seeking to obstruct sincere efforts to fulfill a good law which they refuse to enforce. If the office of the Attorney General would like to be truly democratic, it should state both sides of the issue and declare the public school system of Boston as unconstitutional in using children to foster segregation. If anyone should be arrested for violation of the law, it should be the School Committee of Boston, Mass., for adamantly declaring that there is no segregation of schools in Boston in order to evade the issue.

# STAY OUT STILL ON

SEND YOUR CHILD TO FREEDOM SCHOOL FEBRUARY 26TH

#### Sarah-Ann Shaw

- As leader of the the Northern Student Movement (NSM), she
  initiated its program that combined "educational opportunities"
  for children and advocacy for "civic responsibilities" among
  parents, including canvassing and voter registration and
  engaged many women as "parent advocates and coordinators."
- She was the first female African-American reporter in Boston.
- Known for her presence in civil rights movements and as a volunteer in education programs.

science of the 'BZ newsroom.

ascence of the BZ newarcom.

The tugghest stories, she says, were child abuse cases. The most contentious? School Committee hearings during the height of court-ordered busing. But the ones she remembers most vividly, says Shaw, were the stories of people like Ed White, a furloughed prisoner in his 60s whom Shaw followed around for a day, "seeing the world through his eyes as a free person," as Shaw puts it.

"Her one goal," says "BZ news director Peter Brown, the 10th newsroom boss under whom Shaw came to serve, "was to make sure everyone's voice got heard. And I mean, everyone's."

Boston University professor Jim Thistie, a Channel 4 news director in the early 70s, says Shaw was a key resource whether she was assigned a story or not.

"On both sides of the racial divide there were noble and not-sonoble people," says Thistle. "Sarah-Ann was our listening post whenever we had a tough call to make."

TV (Channel 5), Thistle says, he

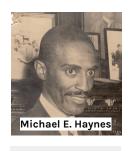


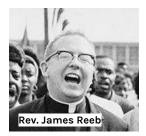
Even after moving to WCVB- Neighborhood coordinator Sarah-Ann Shaw in 1968.

reached earlier this fall, Shaw orplains as she crosses a busy intersection. "I ddn't have to retire they probably would have kept me as long as I liked," she muses. "But I ddn't want to spend another winter slogging through the anove to 'BZ. And my grandchildren" ages 15 and 11—"live right around the corner from me.

around the corrier from the. This is good, Shaw laughs, because to this day she cannot drive as ar. Her children — Klars Shaw-Moss, a former Boston Globe Foundation director who will soon be a senior associate at the Barr Foundation in Boston, and Erfoundation in Boston, and Edward, Shaw's adopted son, an LA-based director — gave her driving lessons for her birthday some years ago. The lessons did not take. "The most terrifying experience of my life, "Shaw calls: "Shaw calls:

She promises to stay busy. First postretirement stops signing up to be a third-grade reading tutor with the Boston Partners in Education program. A "pack rat" braiture, Shaw has kept carons of papers from the movement days, material that she intends to dominate to the Museum of Afro-American and the stage of the stay of the stage of the stag





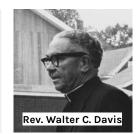


















Site Update

# The "Garment of Destiny"

New Design Concept

"In a real sense all life is interrelated. All men are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single **garment of destiny**.

Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be, and you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be...

This is the inter-related structure of reality."

Martin Luther King Jr., Letter from the Birmingham Jail

# The "Garment of Destiny"

Fabrication
"THE GARMENT OF DESTINY"



Function
THE PEACE WALK



# The "Garment of Destiny" Fabrication

Fabrication
"THE GARMENT OF DESTINY"



**QUILTS** - These garments are made collectively, contain historic narratives and symbolic meaning, and are intended to comfort the community.

### The "Garment of Destiny" Fabrication













African American quilting traditions are embedded with narratives of **hope**, **healing**, **and history**.

Many techniques are linked to African heritage, such as the use of strip construction, large-scale designs, contrasting colors and asymmetrical patterns.

"Story" quilts employ applique elaborate narratives. The diamond shape is symbolic of the cycles of life. Pattern breaks are intended to keep away evil spirits.

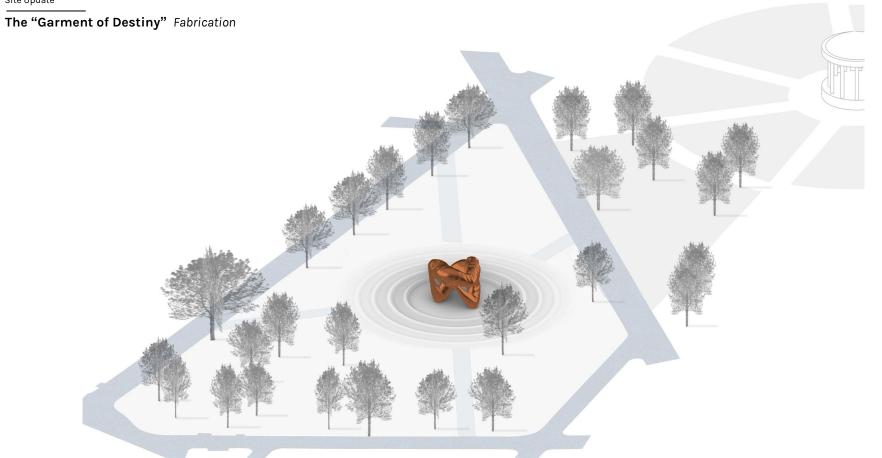
Quilts were often constructed collectively, and are meant to be shared - representing caring for the community.



Examples of **STAR QUILTS**: concentric geometry patterns

## The "Garment of Destiny" Fabrication





Function
THE PEACE WALK



The LABYRINTH - an ancient form containing a single circuitous path that winds its way into the center. The labyrinth is a meditative journey: the path to the center is the same as the path out, and the path is always in full view.



"By walking, we generate peace within our body, our consciousness. We embrace and heal the pain, the sorrow, the fear in us, and that is the ground for helping peace to be a reality in the world."

### Thich Nhat Hanh

3rd Annual Candlelit Candlelit Labyrinth Peace Walk at the Armenian Heritage Park on the Rose Kennedy Greenway in Boston in 2016. The Peace Walk occurs in tribute to those killed in the Armenian genocide of 1915 to 1923.

"Events like this help us remember that we aren't alone." —Susan Deranian, event organizer.

"If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward."

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The labyrinth evokes the power of marching with others.

Marching is a collective act, meant to bring people together, and to demand observation.

Marching cultivates a sensory awareness of our connection to others. Performed and embodied togetherness. Centering oneself and preparing for action.



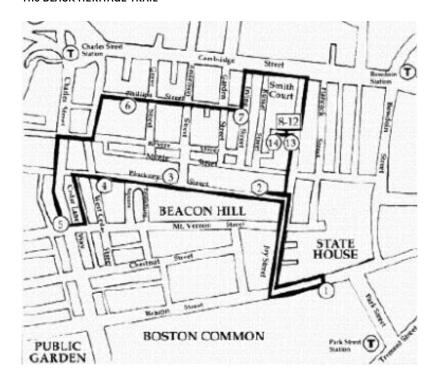
In Argentina, the Madres de Plaza de Mayo used their bodies as "walking billboards" for the pictures and names of their children who had been "disappeared" during the military dictatorship. It was forbidden to stand together in a group, so the mothers walked slowly in a circle in the Plaza de Mayo.

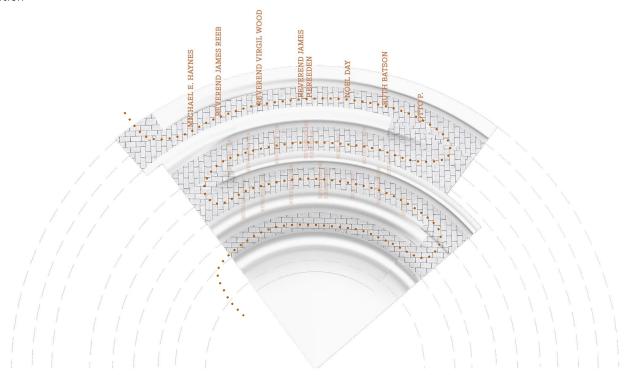
### The FREEDOM TRAIL





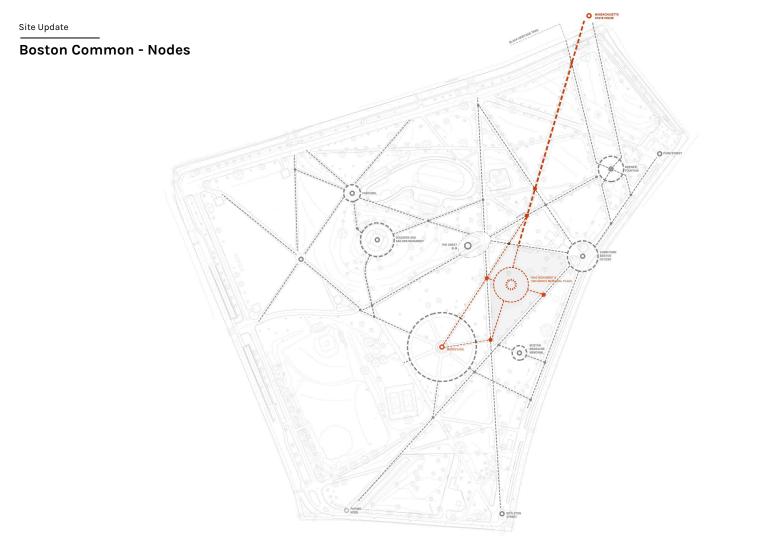
### The BLACK HERITAGE TRAIL

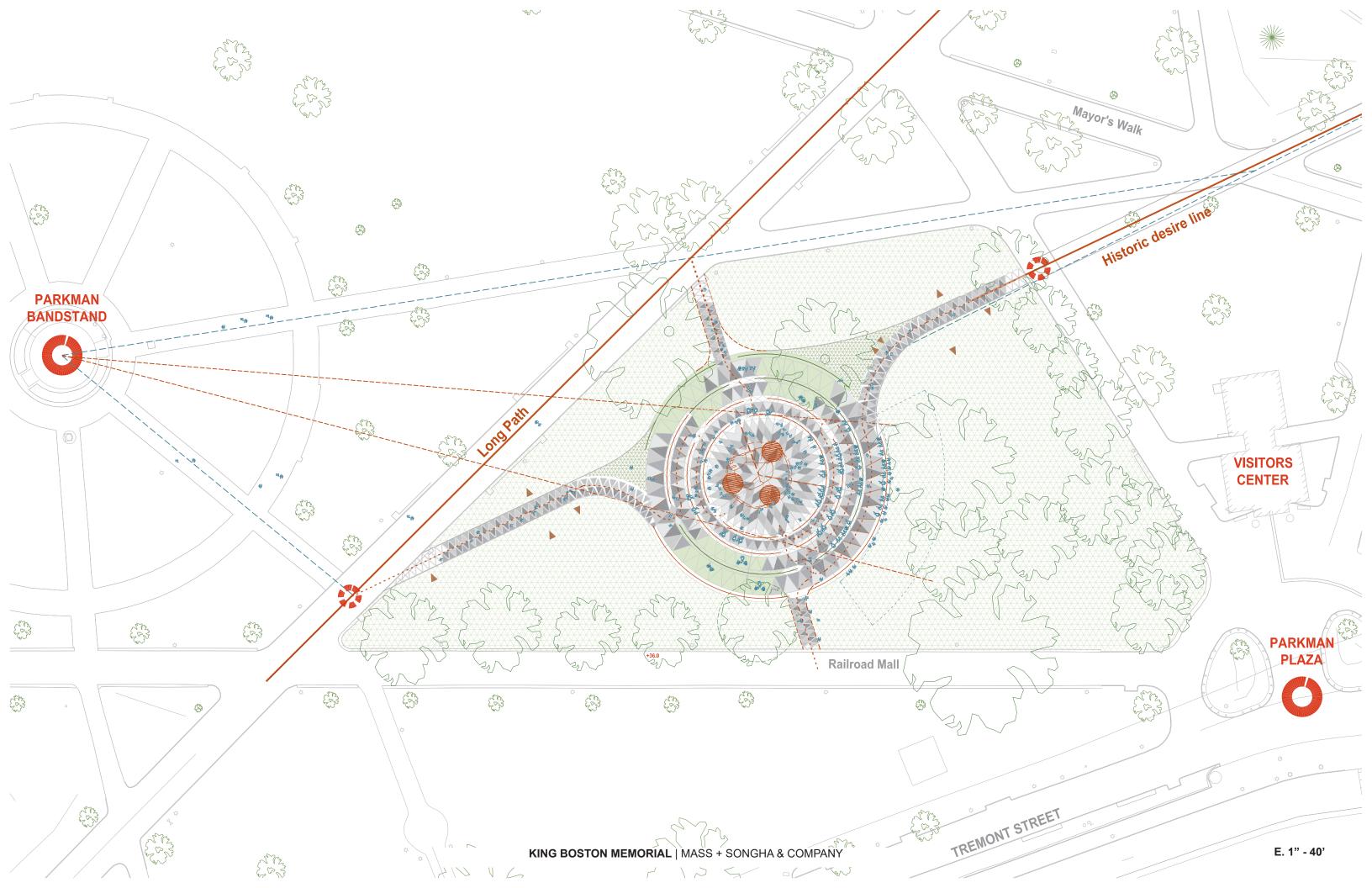


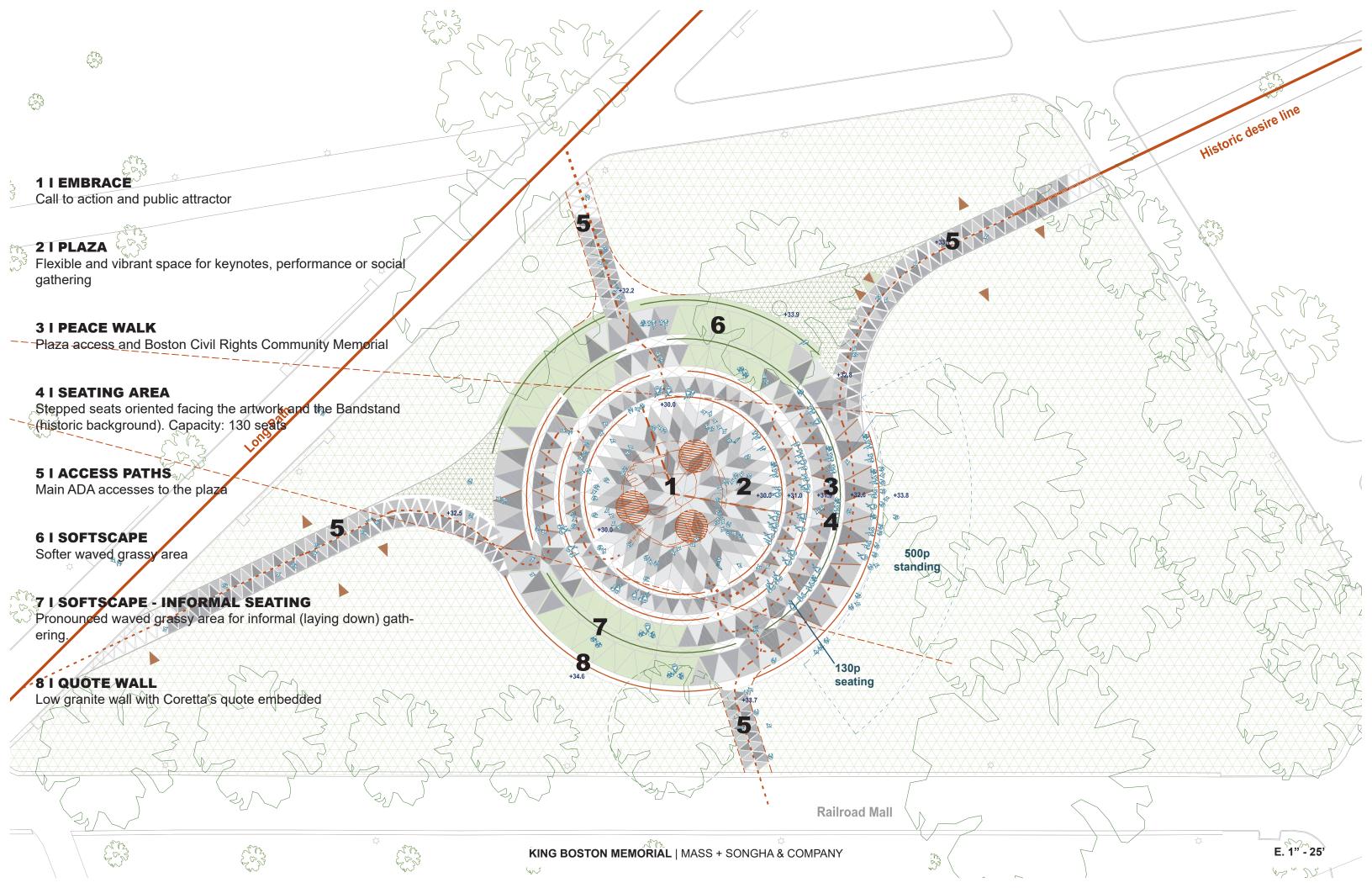


1965 Freedom Rally became one of the city's most enormous demonstrations for Civil Rights.

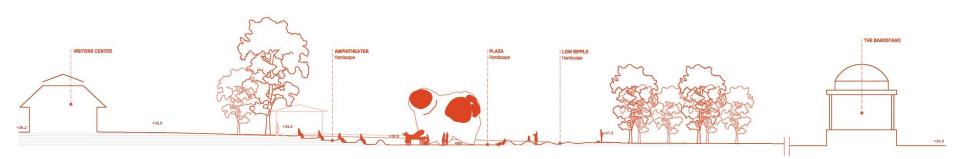
We see this new location allowing **The King Boston Memorial** to bring this ideas closer to the public scene of Boston and to have an identity on its own.



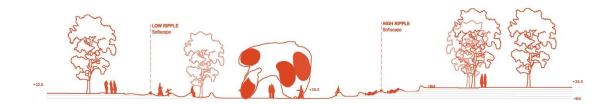




## The "Garment of Destiny" Sections



SW-NE SECTION



NW-SE SECTION



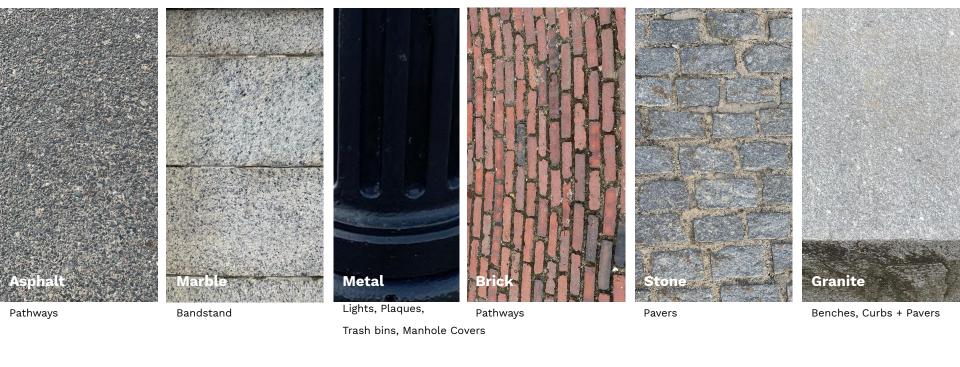






Which material palette are we thinking on?

## Existing Materials with the Boston Common



## Suggested Materials Stone







## **Suggested Materials** Polished Granite











KING BOSTON MEMORIAL | MASS + SONGHA & COMPANY



The Embrace

# Concept

"Love is such a powerful force. It's there for everyone to embrace – that kind of unconditional love for all humankind. That is the kind of love that impels people to go into the community and try to change conditions for others, to take risks for what they believe in."

**Coretta Scott King** 



## The Embrace

"Civic Engagement through Radical Love"



### **PATINA**

- a thin film of color created by the application of heat and chemicals to the surface of a bronze
- Color comes from the reaction of chemicals with the copper in bronze

### **DURABILITY AND MAINTENANCE**

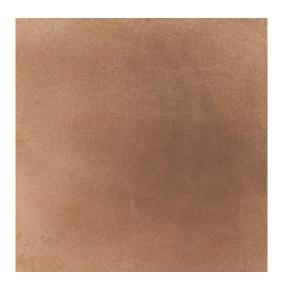
- Familiar application
- Wash as needed with non-ionic soap and water
- Waxing 2x per year; in spring and fall



## **Material Finish Samples**







"HONEYCOMB" on BRONZE



"RUSTIC BROWN" on BRONZE

How other patina finished sculptures look like?



"George Washington" Boston Public Garden



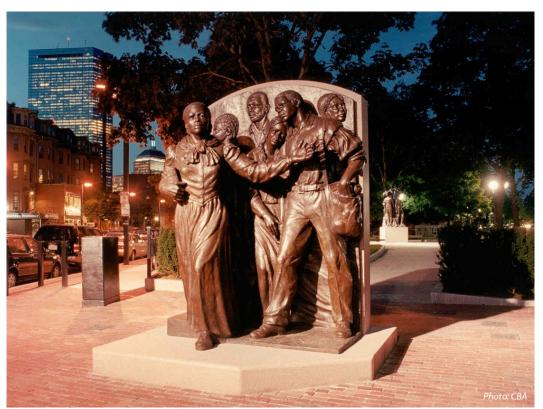
"Unity" Hank Willis Thomas



"The Shaw Memorial" Boston Commons



"Sojourner Truth" Florence, Massachusetts

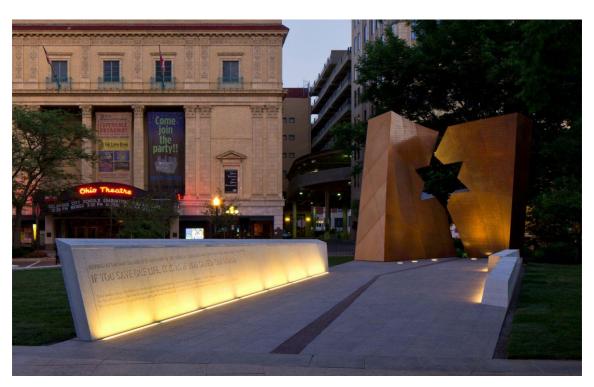


Harriet Tubman Park, Boston

### **National Precedents**



"The Spirit of Freedom" Washington DC, 1997 Bronze



"Ohio Holocaust and Liberators Memorial" Columbus, OH 2014 Bronze

## WHAT WE HEARD

#### THE EMBRACE

MATERIALITY
 Patina more appropriated for the Common, more human, invites touching, tells visitors' story.

• SCALE Illustrate scale of proposal

### LANDSCAPE - 1965 FREEDOM RALLY MEMORIAL PLAZA

• LOCATION & GRADING Node approach (floating island) and smaller seating area (amphitheater) makes for good movement.

Consider intensity of the labyrinths.

MAINTENANCE
 Develop detail for landscape features to ensure their viability and durability.

Consider drainage details.

ACCESSIBILITY Clarify entry points and universal accessibility.

MATERIALITY
 Reduction in overall amount of paving from original proposal is a positive development

• FUNCTION Ensure that large crowds can adequately be accommodated.

Consider sightlines and lighting for security

PLANTING
 Study relationship to the existing tree canopy.

