

Mission and goals

Client Participants:

Christ Bartlett, Executive Director
Bob Skiba, Director of the Archives and Project Director
John Cunningham, Project Team Manager
Rich Wilson, Project Team Member
Ada Bello, original 1965 demonstrator

Consultant: Ellen Snyder Grenier, Interpretive Planner

The Project:

Through objects, images, and media associated with this theme, the turmoil of the 1960s will be conveyed--as war raged in Vietnam and the country experienced civil unrest, protest, civil rights activism, and a rise in counterculture.

Mission:

This exhibition will show that Reminder Day served as a catalyst for the Gay and Lesbian community to unify and gain visibility.

Big Idea:

Visibility is essential to create change and be heard.

Goals:

- To show how these events laid the groundwork for later activism (show how this movement changed the world).
- Represent individual struggles: those who chose to “stay in closet” what were their hesitations/motivations for doing so
- Show strength in visibility: Philly peaceful protests in context of Stonewall and protesting style in NYC
- Show Gay rights protests in context of greater civil rights movement and protests against the Vietnam war
- To emphasize speaking out against the Status Quo
- Encourage visitors to reflect on how they are visible/invisible



Design Concept/Strategy

The central hub is an impermanent structure, possibly moveable. This structure houses the physical collection from John J. Wilcox Jr. Archives of Philadelphia. These will be displayed in the temporary structure that features micro-climate control. Audio recordings of personal stories detailing what life was like in Philadelphia as a gay or lesbian person during the 1960s will be integrated into the design.

This structure will highlight the theme of visibility vs invisibility by its partially transparent exterior walls. The client will decide the location of the structure; we suggest Independence Mall area, ideally outside or near the Liberty Bell.

Interpretation differs from what is visible outside the structure vs. inside the structure to portray the different viewpoints of insiders vs outside observers. The insiders as protestors symbolize the vulnerability of protestors and how they become on display--hyper visible.

Portray images from photograph archives of protestors on lucite exterior wall. These black and white figures will be solid, leading their silhouettes as signifying imagery against the Independence Mall (see sketch).

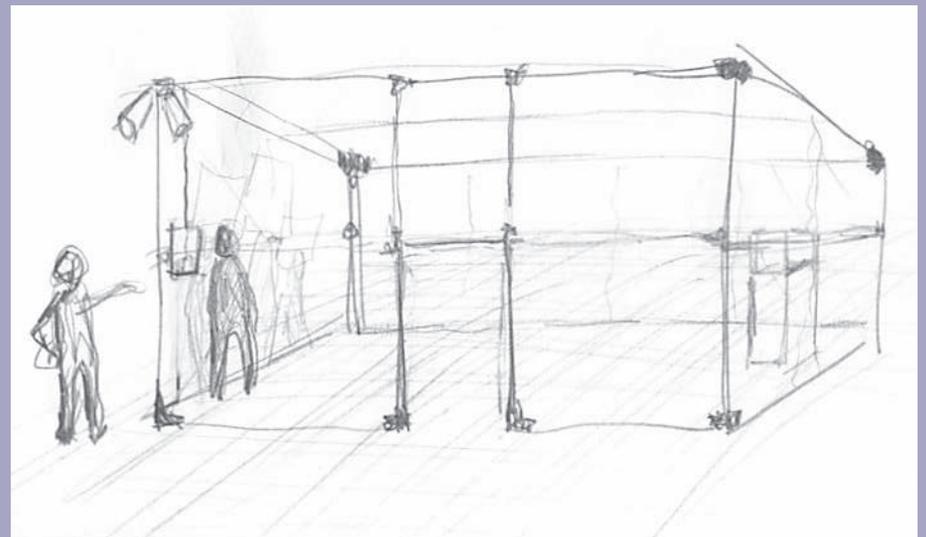
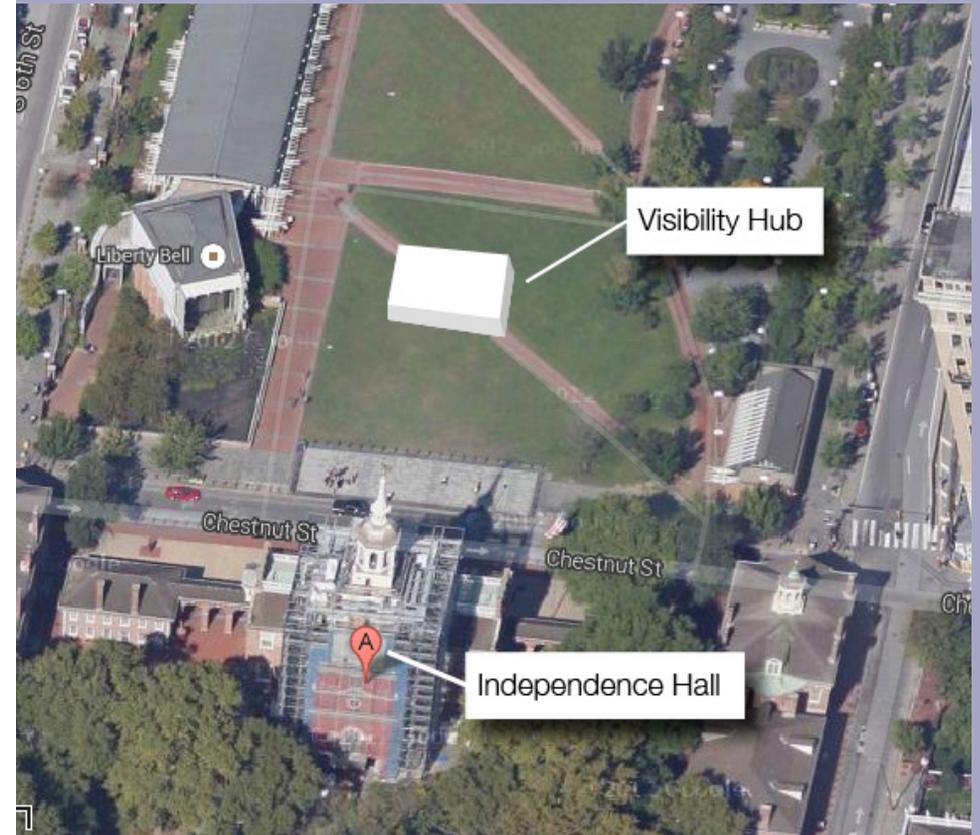


Visitor Walk-through: Hub

Visitors may be led to the hub by their experiences at the satellites, or they may encounter it first - it stands alone as an interpretive device, and it is where we will house the WWCC artifacts as well as information about Reminder marches glass box - from across the mall, visitors will be able to see the life-size photographs of Reminder protesters printed (half-tone) on the wall, with Independence Hall in the background. Audio will be used to present conflicting viewpoints directed at the protesters at the time: for example, visitors will hear "they look just like us," "too visible, they're drawing too much attention to us," "not visible enough, not radical enough."

Sound bites will familiarize visitors with conflict within the LGBT community as well as outside. The act of entering the glass box puts visitor in the position of "becoming" visible in the eye of the public - we want people to understand the personal risk involved in claiming visibility. Artifacts are paired with personal testimonials from the protesters: visitors will hear stories about what led individuals to come out, the forces that precipitated desire for visibility and protest, and what visibility meant to the gay and lesbian community at the time.

As the visitor approaches Independence Hall, coming from the direction of the National Constitution Center, they see a glass box with other people walking around it, looking at images on the walls, and walking through it. The visitor walks closer and sees that there are life-size photographs of people printed on the glass walls. They are protesters, and their signs read everything from "Gay is Good" to "Homosexuals should be judged as individuals." The vintage image is superimposed on Independence Hall in the background, and the visitor hears voices coming from the walls the closer they get.



Additional Sketches

