Baseball and Books

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Abstract

Excitement is rumbling through the city just waiting for the grand opening. A fresh new face has been added to the streetscape of downtown Roanoke. A new branch library and baseball stadium is set to open soon. The site is near the edge of downtown Roanoke, Virginia at the intersection of Jefferson St. and Elm Ave. All the construction is complete and cleared away.

Residents and employees all around Roanoke are eager for a new baseball season to start up. Those especially eager are downtown employees, who have just a short walk from work to the stadium. The new stadium has created a buzz from all the downtown businesses looking forward to the influx of people this summer, not to mention the amount of jobs the stadium will provide residents of Roanoke.

Fans will be treated to a great event and will be fully entertained. The mountains far away create a beautiful backdrop for all. With baseball games becoming more and more of a social event and atmosphere, this stadium’s seating exhibits a new socially driven design while still mixing in the simplicity of the traditional seating style.

The new branch library sits atop the stadium having its own autonomous nature while also blending in with the stadium form. It has its own specific entrance designed only for library use. Its grand entrance reaches out from the brick stadium wall signifying its special use. The library is one long floor filled with book stacks, personal reading spaces, large group meeting rooms, and computers. Views outward toward the baseball field and overlooking the Roanoke area provide a peaceful spot for all to sit back and enjoy a good read. At night, the large rooms are rentable for parties on game nights allowing for a private feel while still getting the great atmosphere of the game.
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LIST OF FIGURES

Base Image Figure 1: “Roanoke, Va” Map. Google Maps. Google, 28 April 2016. Web


All photos and drawings are by the author unless otherwise noted
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THE STADIUM

The stadium seating unveils a new style responding to the social need in baseball games. The stadium incorporates spaces for the fans interested more in the atmosphere of the event rather than the actual game. Fans who are more interested in attending a game for the social aspect can now enjoy the game while also enjoying time with friends without having to sit in a line.

Closest to the field is a bar top that wraps around from the third base line to the first base line only interrupted twice by the dugouts. This gives fans the opportunity to sit, eat and drink more comfortably, and enjoy the game close up. Behind them is plenty of standing room for others to come and congregate enhancing the social atmosphere. This area is only accessible from the lover level.

Accessed from the main level are two sections of traditional row seating divided by a section of high top tables. The tables provide just another way of incorporating a social gathering. Groups of two or three can sit together watching the game and having some good food without anyone feeling left out of the conversation. The design brings a new approach to the enjoyment of baseball as a sporting event and also a destination for social gathering.
THE LIBRARY

The library copies the form of the stadium below. The library’s primary programs are stationed on the double height wings of the building with administration facilities on the first level and a mezzanine above located in the center connecting the two wings. The entrance is located on the Jefferson St. side in the tall glass tower. Users can take the grand stair circling its way up to the library enjoying the street view below. Accessible elevators also provide a quicker and easier option up. The stair lets out into the large wing. A central axis carries through from the Jefferson St. wing to the Elm Ave wing. Book stacks follow the axis creating a walkway between the stacks. On the field side, users can choose personal reading nooks facing inward or a glass enclosed nook facing outward toward the field and the beautiful surrounding environment. On the street side, a module is provided for those wanting more seclusion and privacy for reading and work. The module houses two people, one per side, and gives each side its own personal window to bring in light and look out over Jefferson St. The mezzanine is filled with tables for extra reading and work space. Glass walls enclose the stadium side bringing in plenty light and opening up an even more amazing view of the field and city.
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Plan Key
1. Entrance
2. Restroom
3. Reception
4. Stairway
5. Book Stacks
6. Computer Wall
7. Admin. Offices
8. Meeting/Group Rooms

Library Level
Floor Plan
SECTIONS
SECTION DETAILS
The stadium entrance plaza radiates toward the intersection point of Jefferson St. and Elm Ave. The plaza is a combination of concrete, brick pavers, wood, and stone pavers. Five sections comprise the plaza. Two for ticket lines, two for entry, and one for accessible entry. Stone pavers line the edges and dividing sections of the plaza with a small brick column at each intersection point subtly delineating the program of each section.
On Jefferson St. two large towers of brick rise high just inches from the sidewalk. Between them is the library entrance, a simple and elegant cylindrical glass tower. On the inside, stairs wrap along the curved walls. Slightly hidden from a distance down the street, an alluring entrance is accessed, once it is made known. The juxtaposition of dense brick and the light glass make for a powerful façade. Small trees fill the natural area between the library and the stadium’s stair towers. Two covered walkways lead from the sidewalk to the library entrance.
View of Planting Area
View of Field from Main Level
The library roof is designed to capture the northern light, so the Elm Ave. wing of the library faces North and South. That roof became an overlapping shed roof with a continuous line of glass between the two forms.
That same style was shifted over to the Jefferson St. wing which faces East and West, except in this case, it couldn’t be one long continuous form. The roof was broken up into a saw tooth roof allowing for multiple locations of northern light to enter down into the library.
The central part of the library breaks the system and exhibits a traditional monitor style roof locally found around the Roanoke area.
Conclusion

The goal of this project was to contribute to the life of downtown Roanoke, Virginia with a new baseball stadium and branch library. The intent was to create a building comprised of two completely different programs but for it to look as one cohesive unit. The stadium and library needed to find a way to mesh together as one but also keep their individual identities clear.

It was important to take into account how people would access both parts of the building from the street. The location creates an easy entrance to the library on Jefferson St where most pedestrians are and a grand entrance plaza for the stadium at the corner allowing for more masses of people to gather.

In all, the building will bring new life to edge of downtown Roanoke and reach into the residential areas. The tall standing stadium wall will become a focal point along Jefferson St and will be a new landmark for drivers along I-581. It will stand strong through time bringing fun and knowledge to all of Roanoke.
PRELIMINARY WORK