

In 2007, with the SEFC Public Realm Plan complete, the City commissioned the SEFC Art Master Plan. A public process helped define how art should reflect the history, sustainability ethic and forward-looking nature of the new community, and set the stage for a public art selection process.

This process led to the choice of Vancouver artist Myfanwy MacLeod to develop a signature piece of public art for the central plaza in Olympic Village.

“She proposed two giant sparrows, 15 feet high – nicely scaled for a public open space that bridges between the monumental building scale and the human scale,” says Senior Urban Designer Scot Hein.

“By highlighting a non-indigenous species that’s now considered invasive, Myfanwy really picked up on the future challenges that face us.”

In addition to the sparrows, financed by Vancouver’s public art plan, Hein says the Olympic Village

development will include three other significant pieces of art, either paid for by the developer or as part of the approval of the Neighbourhood Energy Utility (NEU).

“Millennium wanted a private courtyard in its signature building. So the negotiation was, ‘In exchange, give us something special.’ So in the middle of the water courtyard there’s this fibre optic serpentine reed-like piece of art that is going to be so beautiful at night – kind of like the northern lights.”

The five ventilation stacks at the NEU will be hung with three-storey LED panels that can be programmed to light in any colour – or to indicate the total energy usage of the neighbourhood. A “stainless steel gazebo” is another artistic installation planned for the waterfront. Most art pieces will be installed in the new development after the Olympic Games have ended.



Artwork interwoven into the public realm often serves as a social catalyst or as a way to reveal complex ideas and issues.... At SEFC it is critically important ... to stimulate understanding that will lead to a greater sense of shared responsibility and caring. SEFC Art Master Plan, 2007

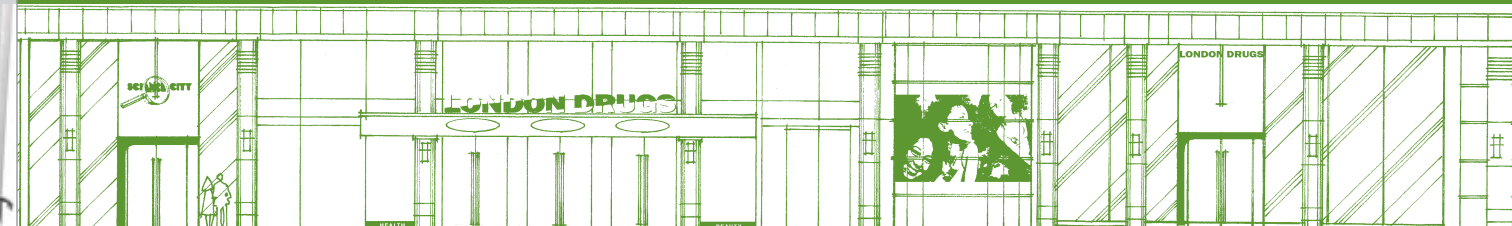
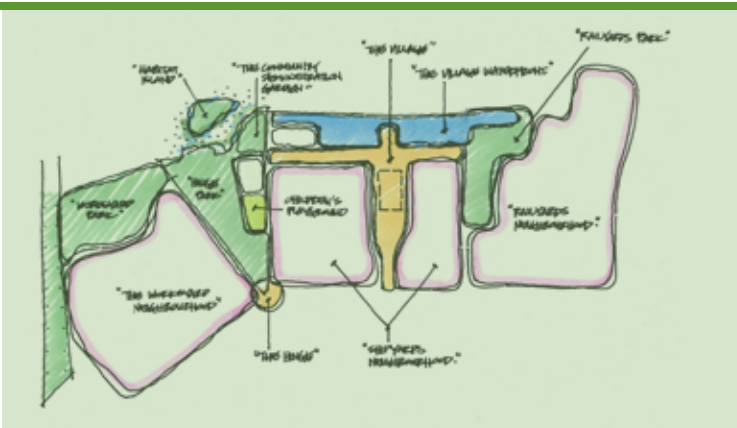


“Old World Sparrows,” by artist Myfanwy MacLeod, has been commissioned by the City for the plaza. Light standards on the plaza are shaped like the ribs of a ship (visible far left and inset, above).

Planned as a model of sustainable development, SEFC is a “complete neighbourhood” where goods and services are within walking distance and jobs and housing are linked by transit. People live, work, play and learn here.

SEFC amenities include:

- Approximately 26 acres of park land, including habitat, playgrounds and opportunities for urban agriculture;
- One community centre and recreational (non-motorized) boating facility;
- One elementary school, three child care facilities, two out-of-school care centres and eight family day care centres;
- Mid-size grocery store and community-serving retail/services;
- Five heritage buildings and an opportunity for an inter-faith spiritual centre;
- Mixed housing component to provide diversity in housing type and tenure; and
- A central location in terms of pedestrian, cyclist and transit connections (see page 24).



Concept sketches (bottom and top left) show the mid-size grocery store and community-serving retail and services that will open onto Shipyard Plaza. Buildings feature arcades (recessed storefronts), creating a variety of public walking and gathering spaces. Illustrative plan (top right) shows approximately 26 acres of parkland, including wildlife habitat, play areas and opportunities for urban agriculture.

Margot Long
BCSLA, FCSLA, ASLA
PWL Partnership Landscape Architects Inc.

As an architecture student at the University of Oregon, Margot Long took an introductory course in landscape architecture and... changed disciplines.

“It was the late 70s, heavy into the environmental movement,” she says, laughing. “And I thought (this is how naive I was), ‘Oh my gosh, they’re not going to build more buildings. They’re going to be tearing them down and leaving landscapes to deal with – so I should become a landscape architect!’”

Joking aside, Long says landscape architecture also encompassed the challenge that interests her – how to use open space to effectively serve multiple purposes.

“Especially now that our cities are becoming more dense, the spaces between buildings are just so critical, from environmental, social and recreational points of view. Every inch really has to function for a purpose.”

Long’s firm designed the parks, waterfront and most public areas for Olympic Village, combining elements such as native plantings, children’s play areas, restored habitat, an active and accessible waterfront, a stormwater wetland and many references to industrial and ecological heritage.

“This has been so much fun for us,” she says. “It’s been really, really fun.”