



## UNION SQUARE BENCHES

Somerville, Massachusetts

2007

In response to a competition sponsored by the Somerville Arts Council ArtsUnion program, we produced an urban design scheme proposing enhancements to the three major ways that run through, and which largely define Union Square in Somerville, Massachusetts. The judges chose to begin the development of our ideas by sponsoring two of our mahogany benches at a critical crosswalk in The Square. Two more benches are currently being funded nearby.

The benches are intended to provide shelter from a busy avenue for sitting, eating, drinking coffee or waiting for a bus. They are modular, and were fitted around existing granite bollards. Aluminum masts provide a gateway for the crosswalk while also buttressing a wayfinding map provided by the City of Somerville.

client

City of Somerville

primary materials

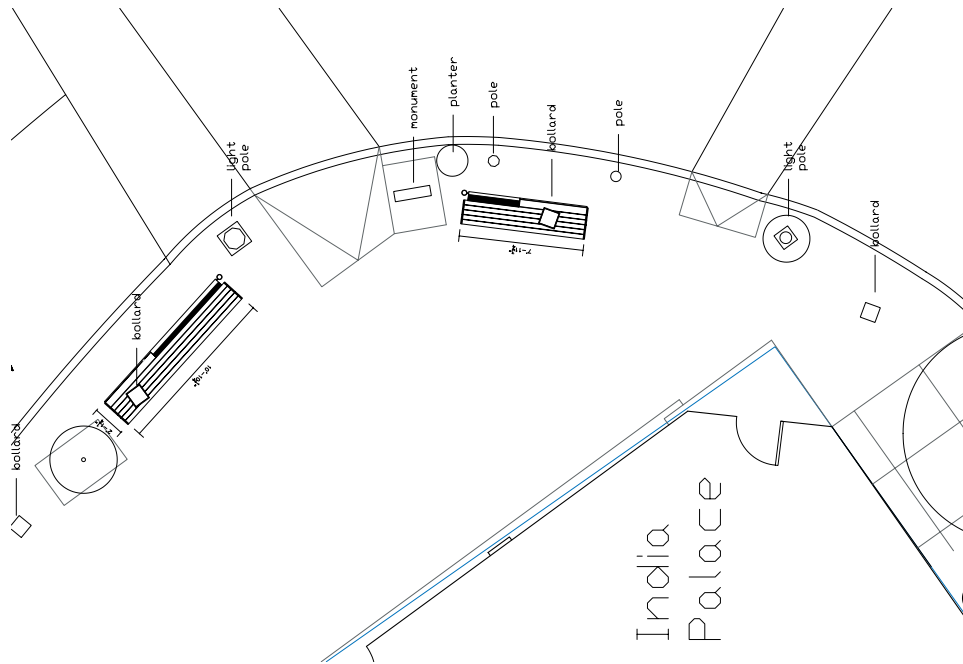
mahogany decking

completion date

2007



Scribing around stone bollard



Site Plan

# SOMERVILLE SQUARES

DECEMBER 28, 2006

PAGE 9

## The best seat in the city is in Union Square



BY MEGHANN ACKERMAN  
Journal Staff

There's no reason weary walkers shouldn't have a stylish spot to rest, which is why the Arts Council has commissioned a series of benches and other public fixtures by local artists in Union Square. Decorative trash barrels, performance areas, benches and kiosks will soon be dotting the area.

"This is part of the effort to improve Union Square and specifically make it more arts-friendly," said Mimi Graney of Union Square Main Streets.

One of the artists tapped for the project was Kimo Griggs, who has had an architecture firm and fabrication shop in Union Square since the 1980s.

"Most people think they're great and stop and want to talk," he said of his mahogany and copper fixtures. "It's very positive and people have been complimentary. People have been using them."

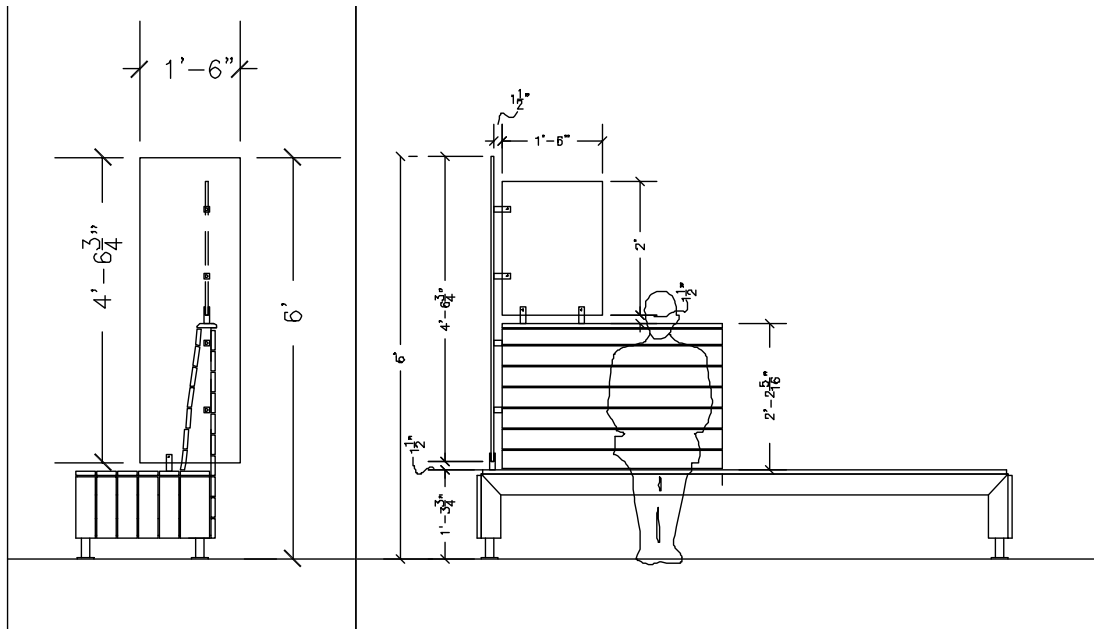
There has been one problem with the bench, however.

"The same day that we put them up, we noticed that the inline skaters and skateboarders were destroying them," said Griggs. "We had to retrofit them with ornamental pieces that keep the front edges from being slid on."

Kimo Griggs posing on the bench he designed and made for Union Square. The bench was so popular with skateboarders that decorative metal fixtures had to be added.

PHOTOS BY ZARATZANEV





Elevation, above, Installed Bench, below

