Participatory Design in Re-Greening after Natural Disasters for Individual and Community Resilience

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Abstract

Session Title: Landscapes of Resilience-understanding how the creation and care of green spaces can affect resilience in times of crises
This presentation describes the design intent, symbolism and potential benefits of creating a healing garden space in response to the devastating tornado in Joplin, Missouri in 2011 that destroyed over 8500 buildings and killed 161 people. Designed by a diverse trans-disciplinary team with community input, The Butterfly Garden and Overlook, is intended to create a public space where people can be nestled within nature to promote resilience and healing in response to this disturbance. The site is located in Cunningham Park, ground zero of the tornado, and has become a community sacred space.

The design of the Butterfly Garden and Overlook weaves together the four main conceptual design ideas derived from Worden’s four tasks of mourning and four key elements of TKF Open Spaces Sacred Places - portal, path, destination and sense of surround. Worden’s tasks describe the means by which an individual works through the pain of grieving for a loved one or a loss and moves into the next phase of life. The architectural and natural elements symbolically represent and allow the user to enact and experience the tasks of mourning as a person moves through the garden, aiming to strengthen individual and community resilience.

Keywords: individual resilience, community resilience, disturbance, healing, participatory design