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Air India Memorial concept revealed

This morning I spoke with Leila Zeppelin, the lead designer of the Air India Memorial and the Ceperley Meadow Playground redevelopment. She is with [Lees & Associates](#), a landscape firm with a focus on cemetery and memorial design.

The conceptual drawings were presented at a public meeting last Thursday held by the Vancouver Parks Board. It was met with no objections and now Parks board staff will draft a resolution to be voted on in the future. And now, the Air India design concept is no longer under wraps, however, there are no images online as of yet. Check the Vancouver Parks Board for more [info](#).

The proposal calls for a terraced picnic area that cascades to a redeveloped playground. The playground will use natural elements like rocks, boulders and driftwood to create the play area instead of standard playground equipment.

With collective spaces and apparatus that encourage group play like disc-shaped swings and giant hammock under a driftwood arc, Zeppelin hopes the design will encourage among children conflict resolution skills and cooperative play.

The actual memorial sits higher on the slope among three dove trees beautifully described by Zeppelin. She says they have large white "handkerchief" blossoms and symbolize peace.

It is a promising concept but I think the memorial component is too small. And that's because there's local resistance to putting memorials inside Stanley Park.

However, the memorial stone wall does command a great view of the ocean. The victims were lost in the ocean and so the ocean because the great connective substance between here and the waters of Ireland.

Plus there is the simple act of looking for a name of a child who was killed in the Air

India bombing and then turning 180 degrees and see children playing in the playground. This should be a powerful experience of hope rather than just a symbolic or representation of hope. It is hope itself.

So if Lee & Associates are permitted to scale-up and give the memorial wall an adequate physical presence, the project could be well on its way to doing justice to the victims' memories. The completion date in June 23, 2007, the anniversary of the bombing.

In 1985, 329 people were killed when a bomb exploded on Air India Flight 182 as it flew off the coast of Ireland. There were no survivors. Two others were killed in the bomb plot at Narita Airport in Japan.

Look for updates [here](#).

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