

The Craig Center

Former Craig Pumping Station

In 1886, the city of Montreal commissioned architects Maurice Perrault and Albert Mesnard to design pumping stations in order to combat the annual spring floods. The following year, the Riverside and Craig Pumping Stations were built. However, the use of icebreakers in the mid 20th century stemmed the need for these stations altogether. In the late 1980s, the Craig Pumping Station was formally decommissioned and has since been abandoned. Flanked by high speed lanes, and overshadowed by the Jacques Cartier bridge, the station proves difficult to access. The station faces multiple structural complications. All four facades are secured with steel beams, preventing them from billowing outwards. Much of the masonry requires replacing or complete removal. A new roof is required along with full window replacement.

For this proposal, Viger Street and Notre-Dame Street have been consolidated into one on the south side of the pumping station, as was proposed in the March 2020 Programme particulier d’urbanisme (PPU) des Faubourgs.

Our three driving concepts for the project are the following:

- Network
- Levels
- Progress

Network

Behaving like arteries, the sewer system allows for water to flow seamlessly throughout the tunnels while the pumps regulate the quantity. The pumping station proved essential to the wellbeing of the communities it served, a factor that we wish to address in the repurposing of the building. Echoing this idea of network connections, we propose to transform the former pumping station into a community center and clubhouse with a permanent bakery and café. A new park will be built on the station’s north side, since Viger Street will have merged with Notre-Dame, complete with skatepark and a continuation of the nearby bike path.

We would like to acknowledge Danielle Plamondon and Pierre-Luc RivestIn’s proposal to implement guided tours below the station. The latter would act as a meeting point for those interested, while tickets would be purchase in advance on the station’s new website. In keeping with the city’s PPU des Faubourgs, the former pumping station would attract the growing neighbourhood, creating a meeting space and invite Montrealers to discover a hidden piece of history, rooted in the underground. Skylights would be placed in the park, allowing park-goers a glimpse into the network below.

Levels

The former Craig pumping station is mostly visible from the outside, but much like an iceberg, its main body remains below the surface. Descending to the basement, the four pumps become visible. Their connection continues even lower, down to Montreal’s sewer network. Continuing with the concept of levels, we would introduce a mezzanine above the ground floor. The profile of the mezzanine floor willl reference although differ from the undulated ground floor’s, supported by steel cast columns that reference the originals. The bakery-café would be installed on the ground floor while seating and rest areas would be found on this elevated level. The base of the current chimney will remain, while a new steel stack will be inserted for the bakery’s use.

Progress

As a reference to the technological advancement that the new pumps represented in 1887, we propose the addition of a new technology: photovoltaic glass on the south facade. A self sufficient material that will work to power the new clubhouse, PV glass offers a return of investment that no other material can provide. Whereas the current windows feature square muntins, the new PV glass walls would following the same square grid, but reverse what is opaque and what is translucent. The solar cells will be spaced apart in a grid formation on blue glass, allowing light to pass through and create displays of interesting light and shadow inside the clubhouse.

We propose to gently reconfigure the rhythm of the glazed parts on both the south and north side, achieving a more symmetrical layout and also allow more natural light. We propose to integrate two cast in-situ concrete structures along the interior east and west walls in order to prevent the structure from billowing outwards.

In reference to the existing opening on the ground floor, we plan to place a circular opening covered in glass that will be replicated on the mezzanine level, but without glass and cordoned off with a mesh and steel railing. This allows for guests to have a clear view of the pumps below, from both levels, so that the connection between the multiple levels is upheld no matter where visitors are located.

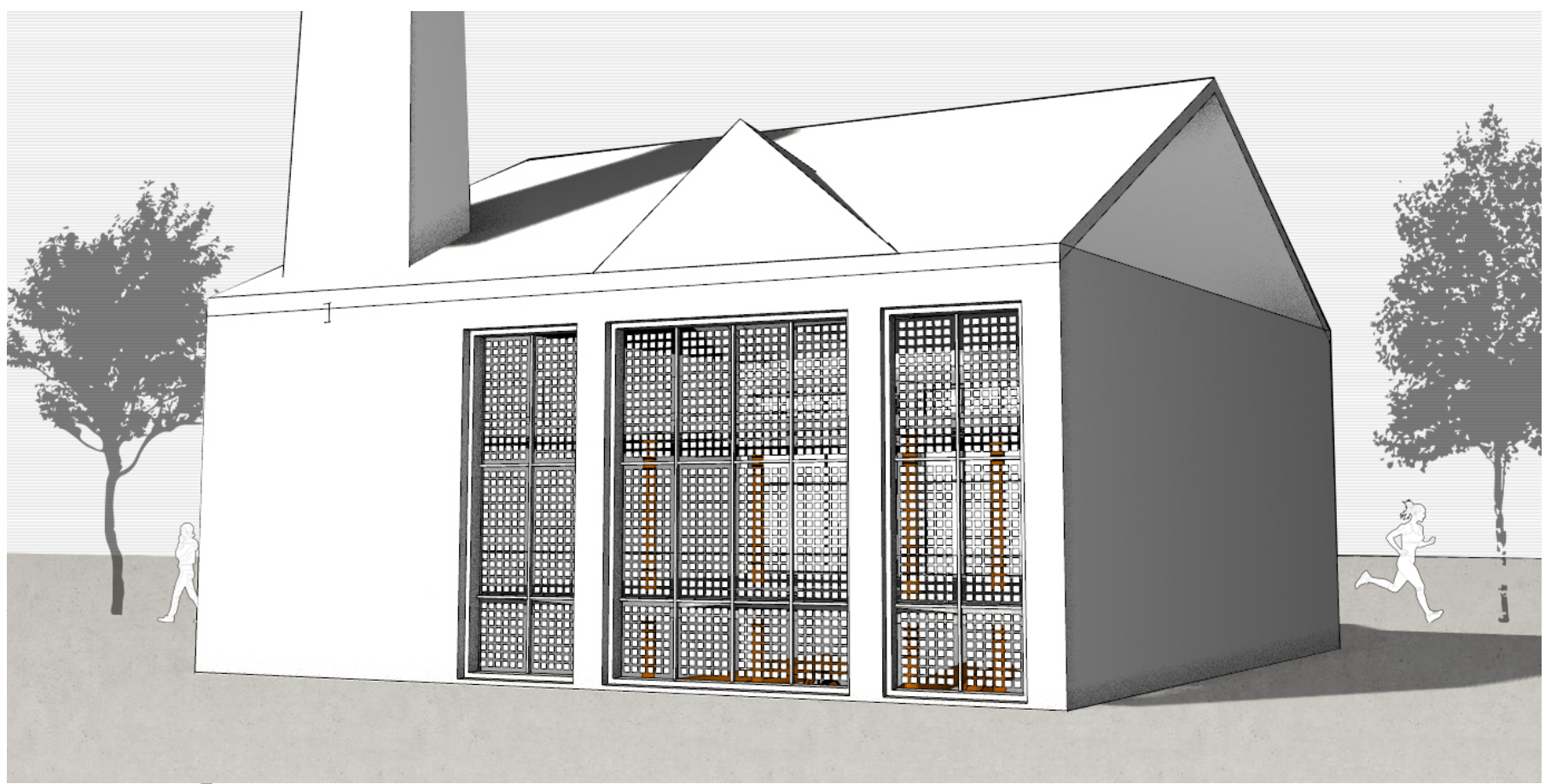
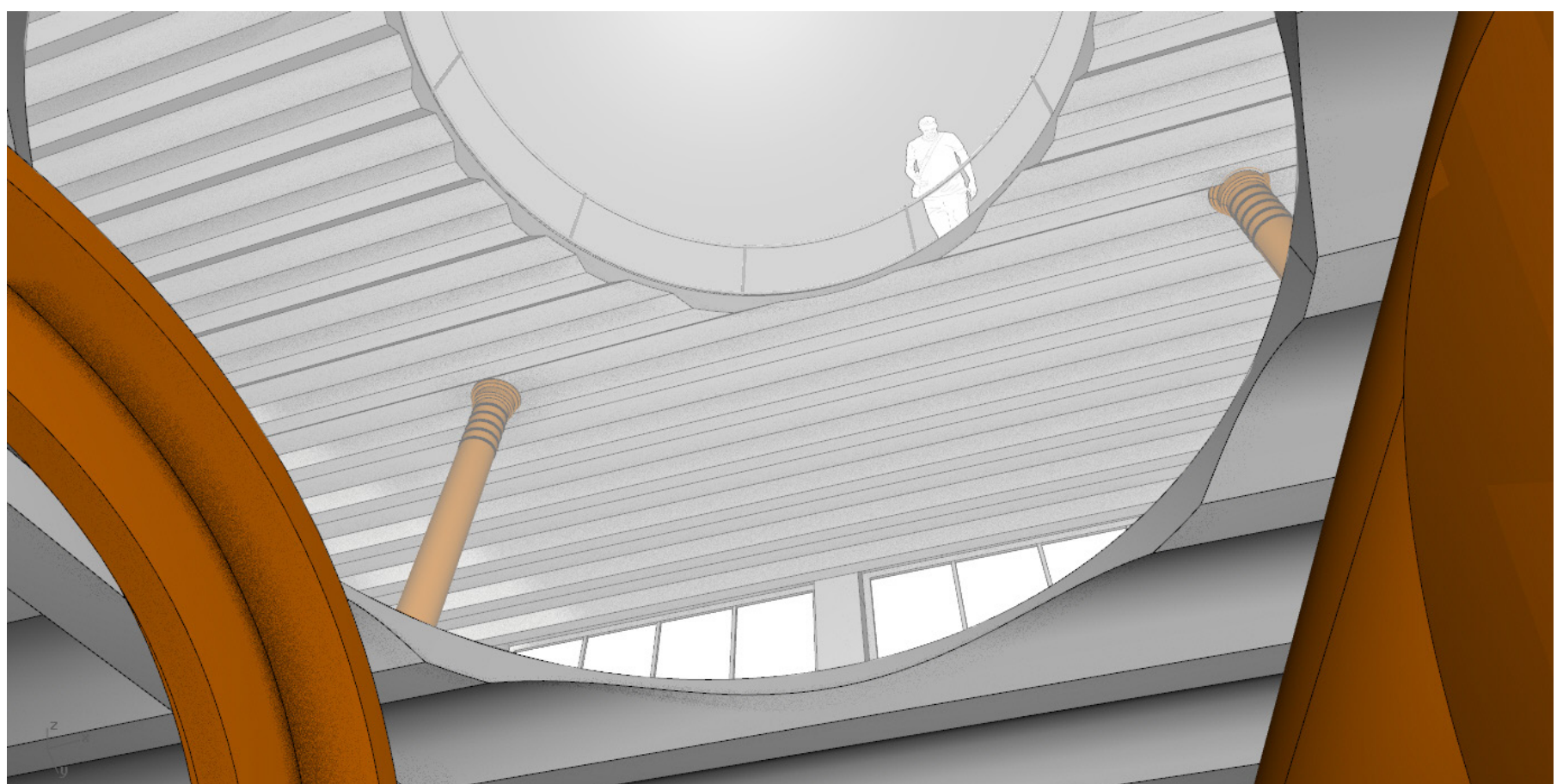
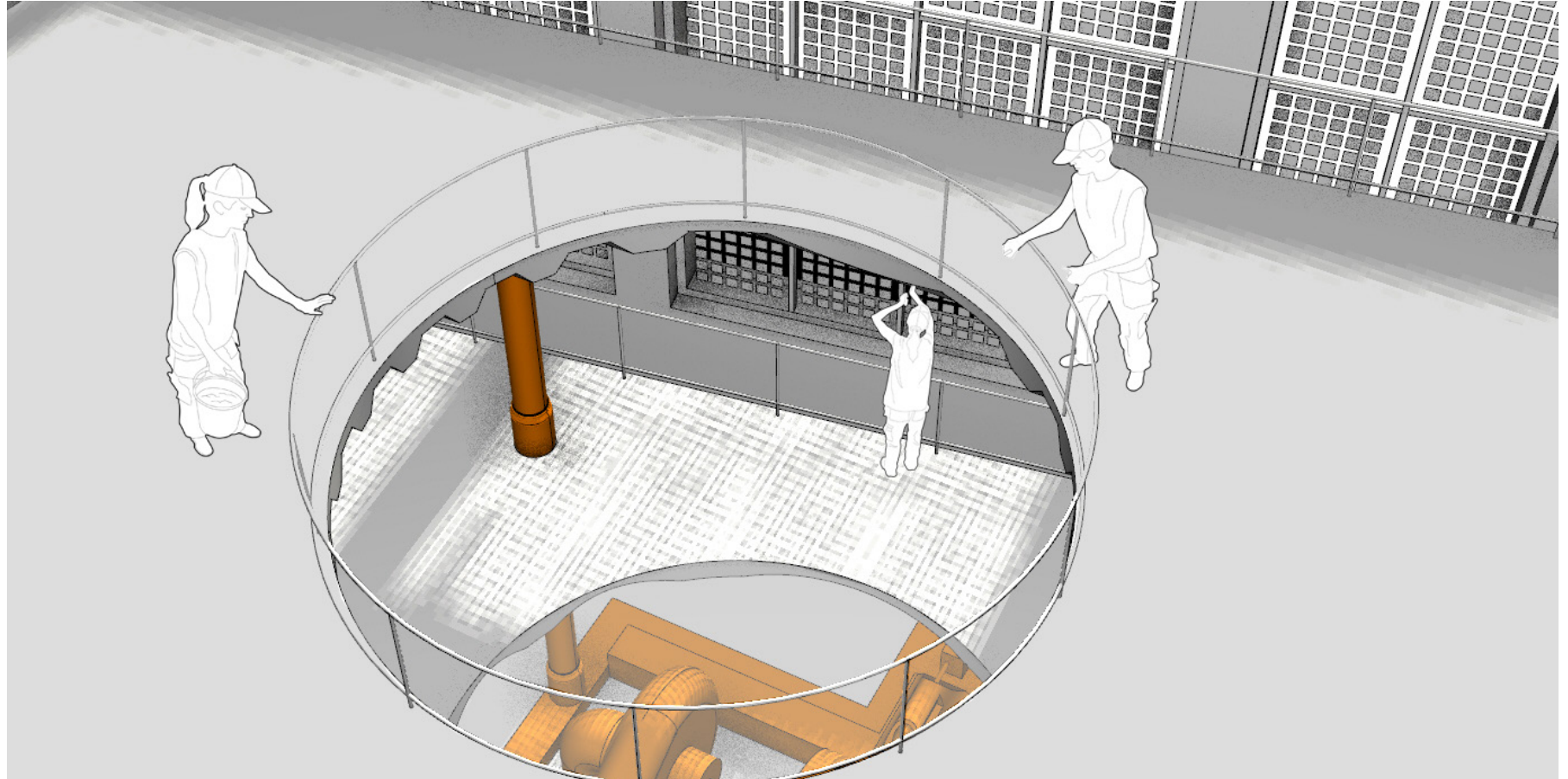
Sectional Perspective



Legend

- 1 Skatepark and park
- 2 Skylights, allowing passers-by the opportunity to catch a glimpse of guided tours within the tunnels below, creating a visual link
- 3 Underground tunnel, where guided tours would take place
- 4 Clubhouse ground floor and bakery-café
- 5 Mezzanine
- 6 Chimney rebuilt for use by bakery-café

Stills



Legend

- 1 View from mezzanine, with ground floor and pump floor visible
- 2 View from pump floor through ground floor opening and mezzanine visible
- 3 Exterior view of PV glass on south facade

Concours d’idéation pour la relève en aménagement
Requalifions l’ancienne station de pompage Craig

Organisé par le comité de la relève d’Héritage Montréal
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