

# NESTOR KRUGER

Main Street Unionville Public Art Program  
Main Street Pathway

*Little Creatures*

- 02 The Statement
- 04 The Alphabet
- 05 The Fence
- 10 The Grates & Guards

Bruce Creek



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## INTRODUCTION

In 1839 an American millwright named Ira White, purchased 100 acres of land in an area that would later become known as Unionville. That same year White built a sawmill on a property nearby to prepare the lumber he needed to build a grist mill. The grist mill was built a year later beside Bruce Creek, a branch of the Rouge River running through his property.

To provide a consistent flow of water to the grist mill White created a mill pond by damming the creek. The new pond referred to first simply as “the Pond,” then later as Willow Pond is known today as Toogood pond, the name of the Albertan family who purchased the property in 1939. A meandering path connecting the two mills would later become the main street of Unionville, as small cottages and houses began to appear along the lane.

I think about this story briefly describing the growth of Unionville and in particular how the river supplied the energy to run the saw to create the mill to mill the grain in order to produce the flour needed to supply the people with the energy to build the town.

This cycle was driven by the meandering path of the Rouge River and its many tributaries, like Bruce Creek. The story represents for me the movement of energy from one system to another, from a river system to a mechanical system to a biological system and one of many stories or branches connected to the site.

Grist Mill, 1840



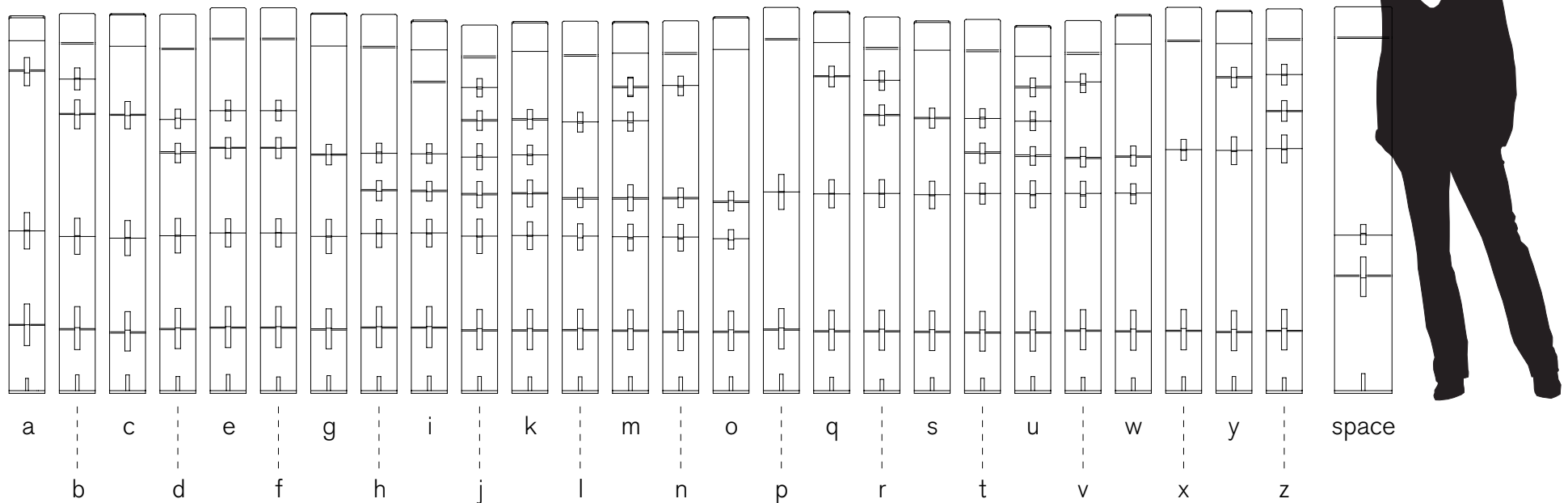
Sawmill, 1839



### The Proposal

The work that I am proposing for the Main Street Pathway public art opportunity consists of a set of 26 unique zig-zag forms that have been designed to represent each letter in the roman alphabet. These letterforms are then used in a specific sequence to create a list of objects (nouns) related to the history and geography of Unionville and a set of agent nouns (a noun denoting someone or something that performs the action of a verb) expressing experiences of transformation and movement. The goal was to create a public artwork with a rhythmic and organic appearance that simultaneously encoded a list of words within the forms that when decoded functioned as a type of poem of the village.

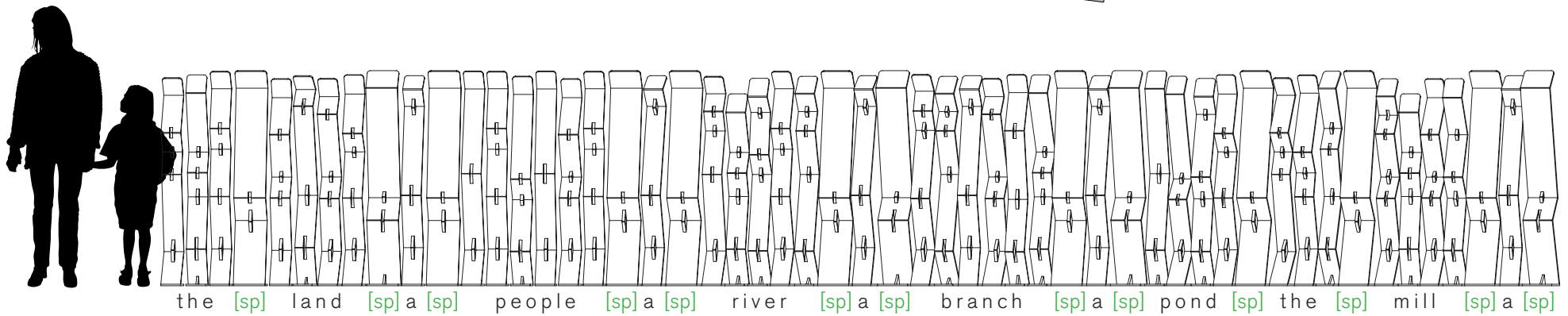
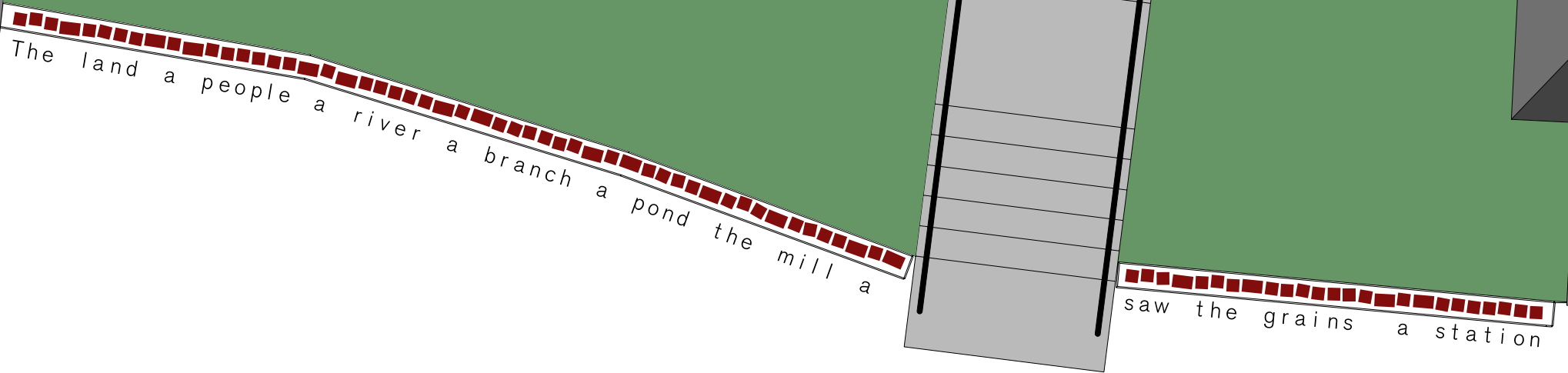
Note: Figure and fence are to scale



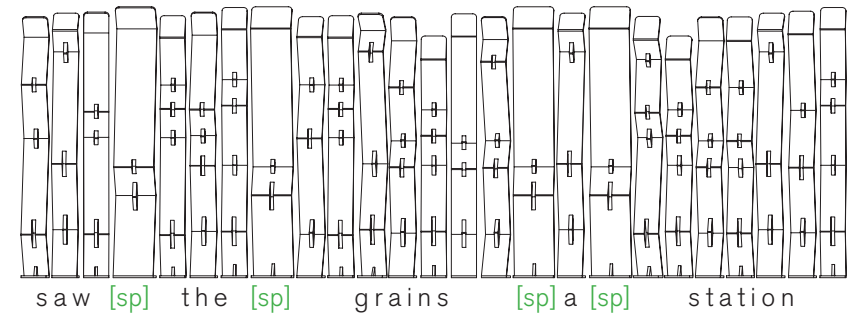
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These views of the fence show the placement of the text and the different rotations of the base, which were employed to create a more organic relationship with the different sculptural elements and the site. The text is read left to right when facing the fence from the street.



Note: Figures and fence are to scale



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Each fence and guard element adapts an 8-bit binary system of zeros and ones found in digital computing to create forms that represent each lower-case letter in the Roman alphabet.

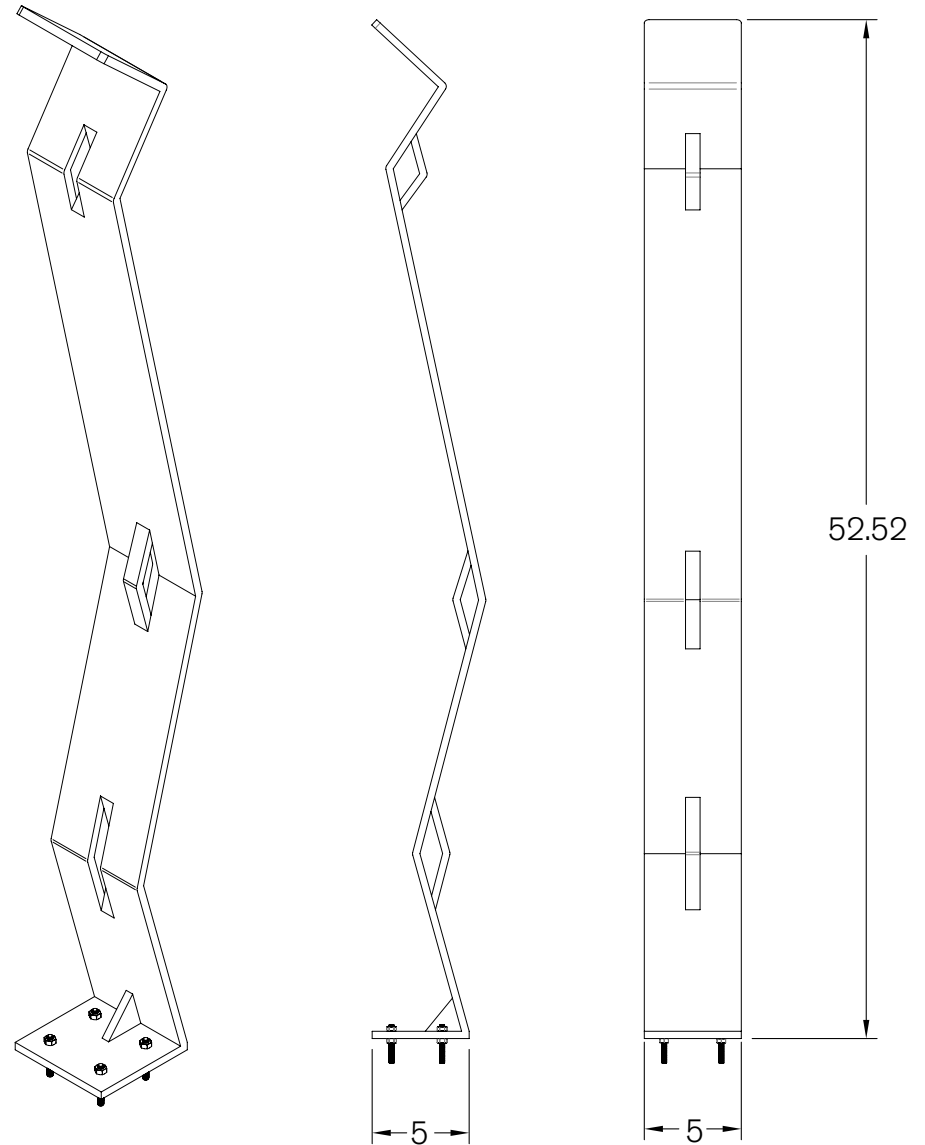
This system is the base unit of the digital world and a system capable of representing many forms and processes in our physical world. A fold in the fence and guard element to the left represents a zero and a fold to the right represents a one.

The zig-zag forms evoke a type of meandering path, an accordion fold, a spring, and a type of hinged joint. The reference to a hinged joint suggests a form capable of independent movement and therefore alluding to a type of animated being.

### Technical Details:

#### Fence elements:

- 3/8" corten steel
- Heights: between 51" and 54"
- Widths: 5" And 8"
- Fence elements fastened to stone base





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The following (13) proposed tree guards and grates have been designed to enumerate a list of subjects and objects related to movement and processes of transformation in an arrangement that evokes the form of the water wheel found in every watermill.

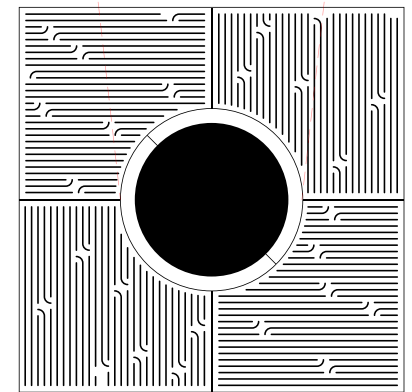
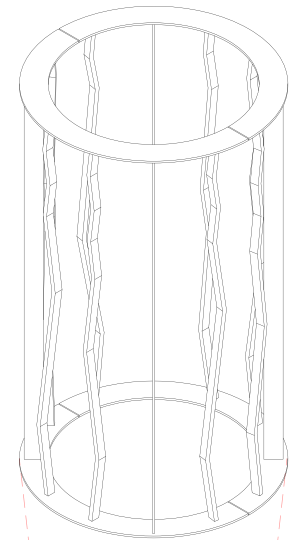
Each tree guard contains an 8-letter agent noun interrupted by four flat boards alluding to the paddles of a water wheel.

The grates and guards are designed to create a sense of rotational movement, a movement performed by the water wheel. The four sections that compose each grate rotates approximately 27 degrees within the fixed frame of the grate to produce the appearance of a full rotational sequence across all 13 guards and grates.



Ten coloured Adirondack Chairs surrounding a Freeman Maple tree in Tony Murphy Park in Unionville, performing what I see as a similar action to the tree guards.

# GRATES & GUARDS



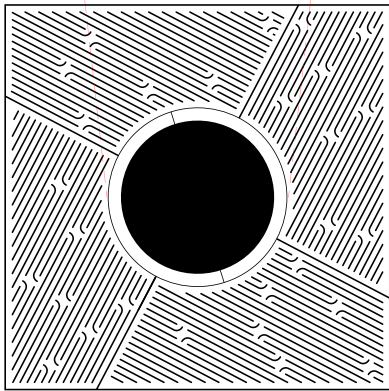
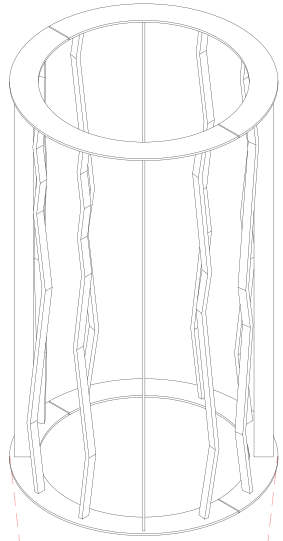
01. Wanderer



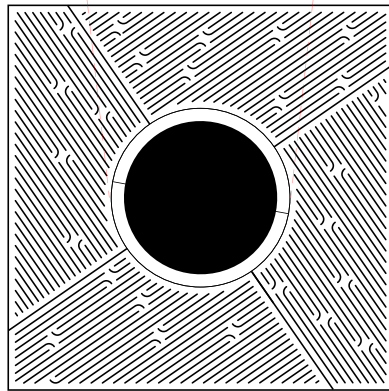
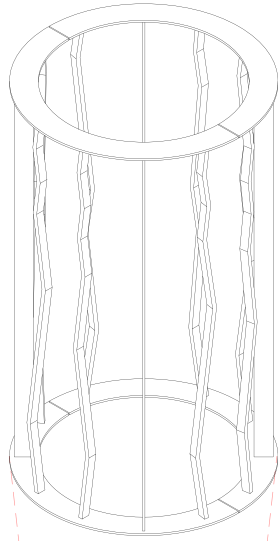
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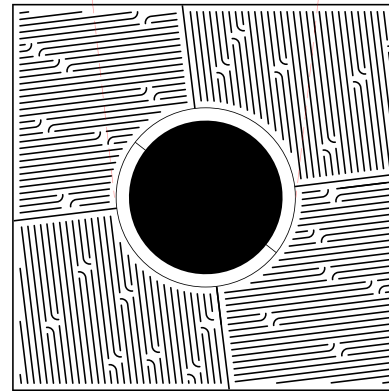
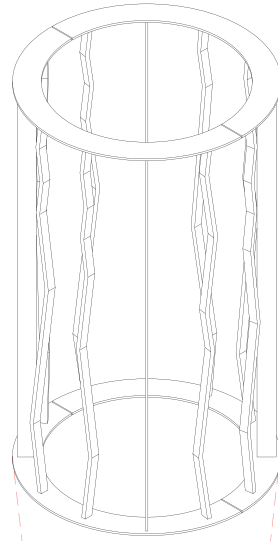
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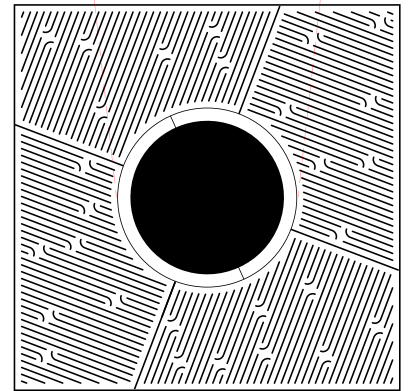
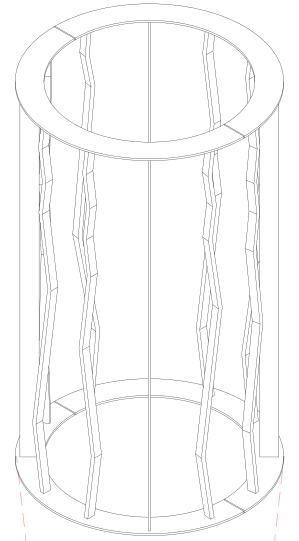
02. Follower



02. Wonderer



04. Traveler

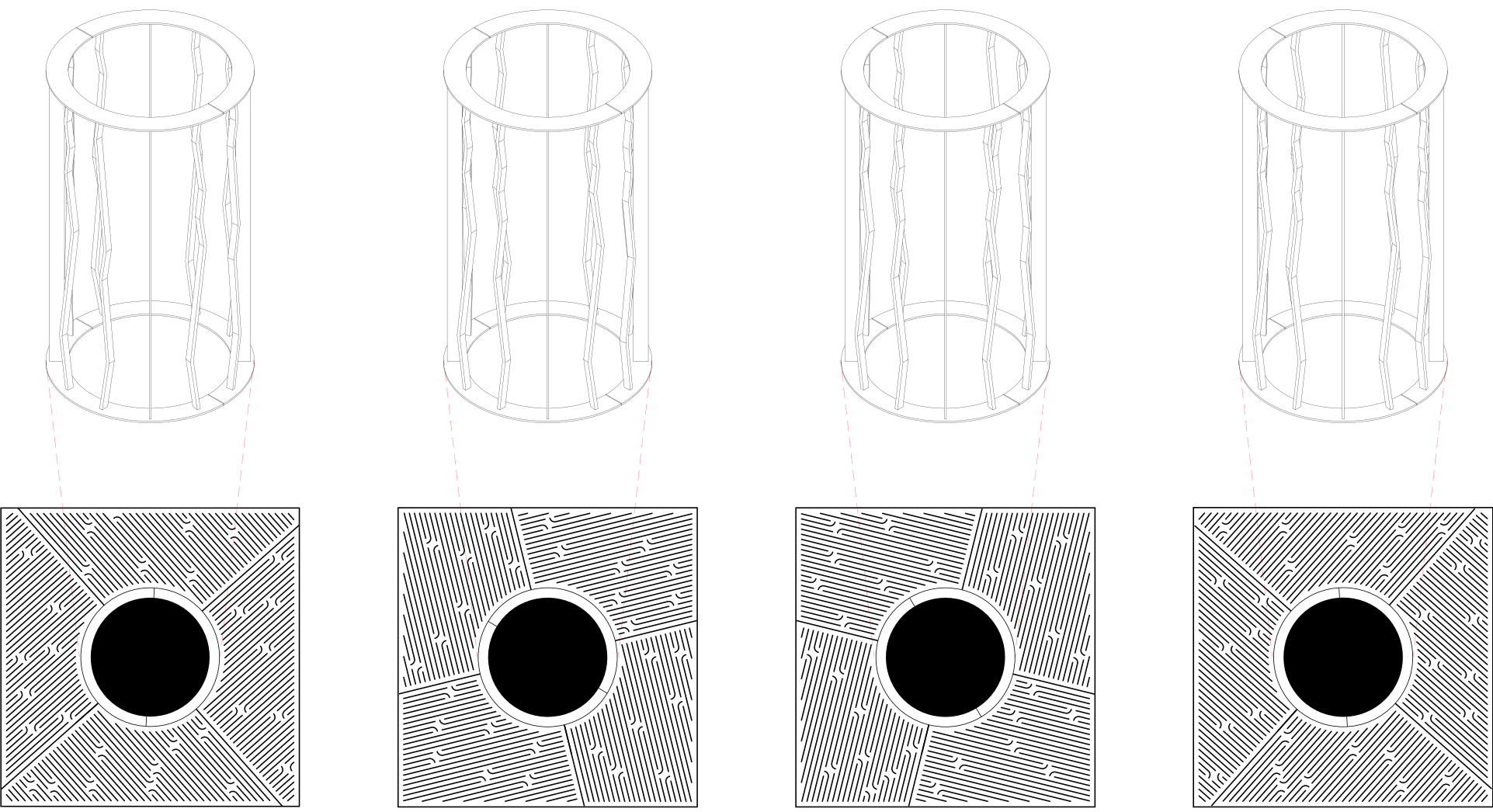


05. Gatherer



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06. Inventor

07. Lingerer

08. Beholder

09. Flowerer

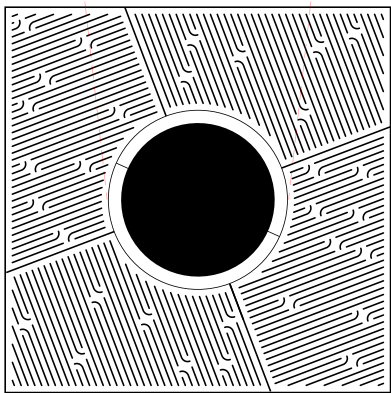
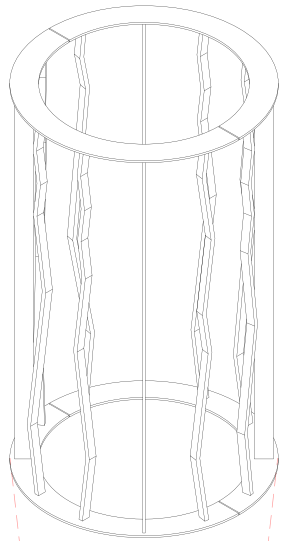


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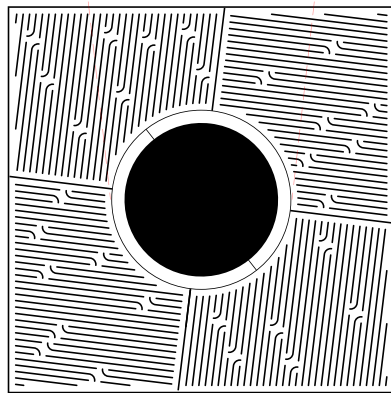
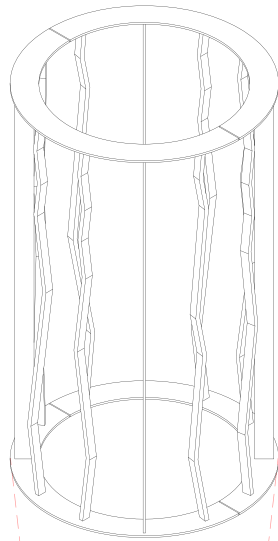
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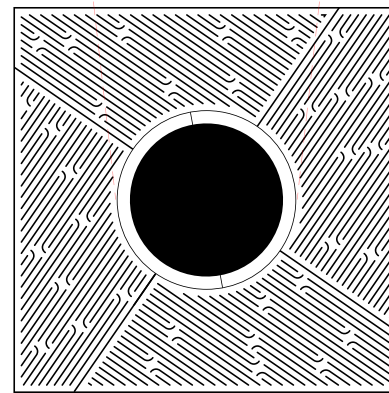
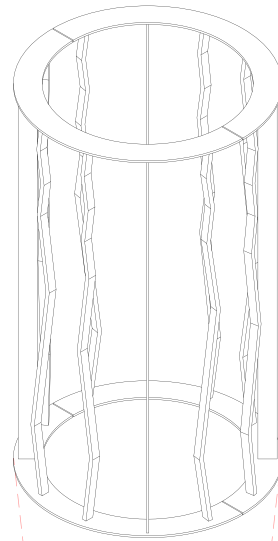
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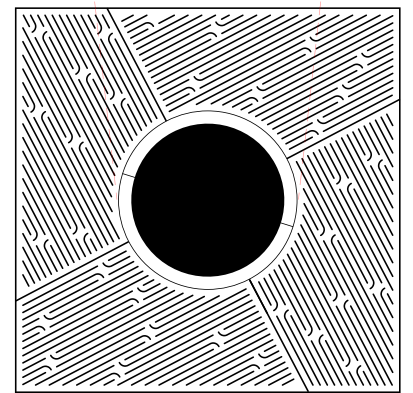
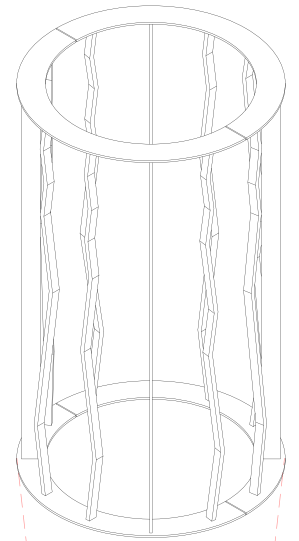
10. Marveler



11. Gardener



12. Lumberer



13. Reformer



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Each tree grate is composed of four independent sections that contain alternating patterns of slot lines with a 1/4" opening for each slot. The alternating pattern provides some additional contrast when viewed from different angles and helps to reinforce the sense of rotational movement in the design. A series of small breaks within the linear pattern introduce a contrasting motif within the form and to evoke the small disruptions essential to generating the meandering path of a river or creek; events that change the course of the river and analogous to the changes an individual, community or town may experience.

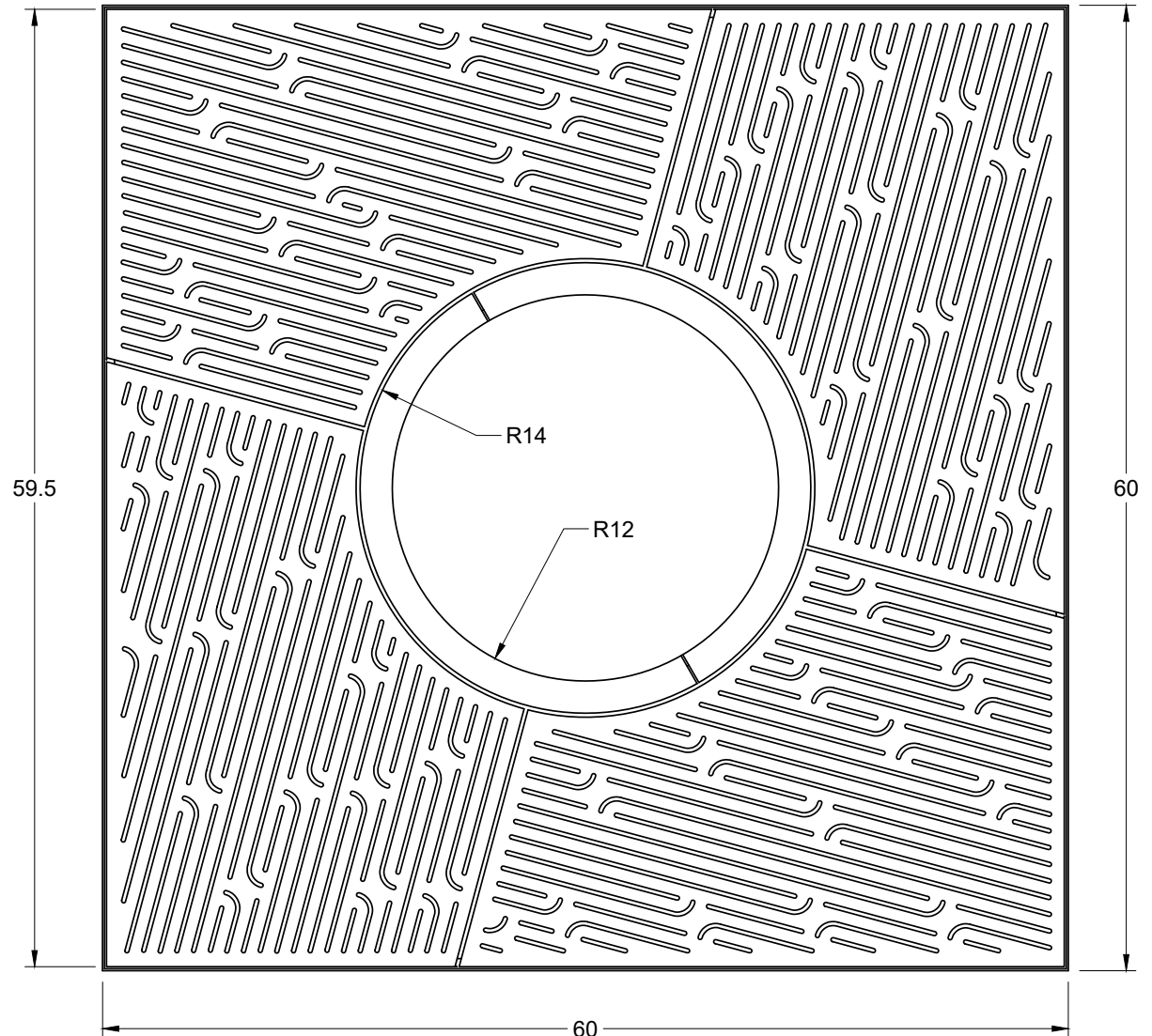
### Technical Details:

#### Tree Grates:

- 3/8" laser cut corten steel
- slot openings: 0.25"
- Fastened to frame with metal screws.

#### Note:

Screw locations not added to current design





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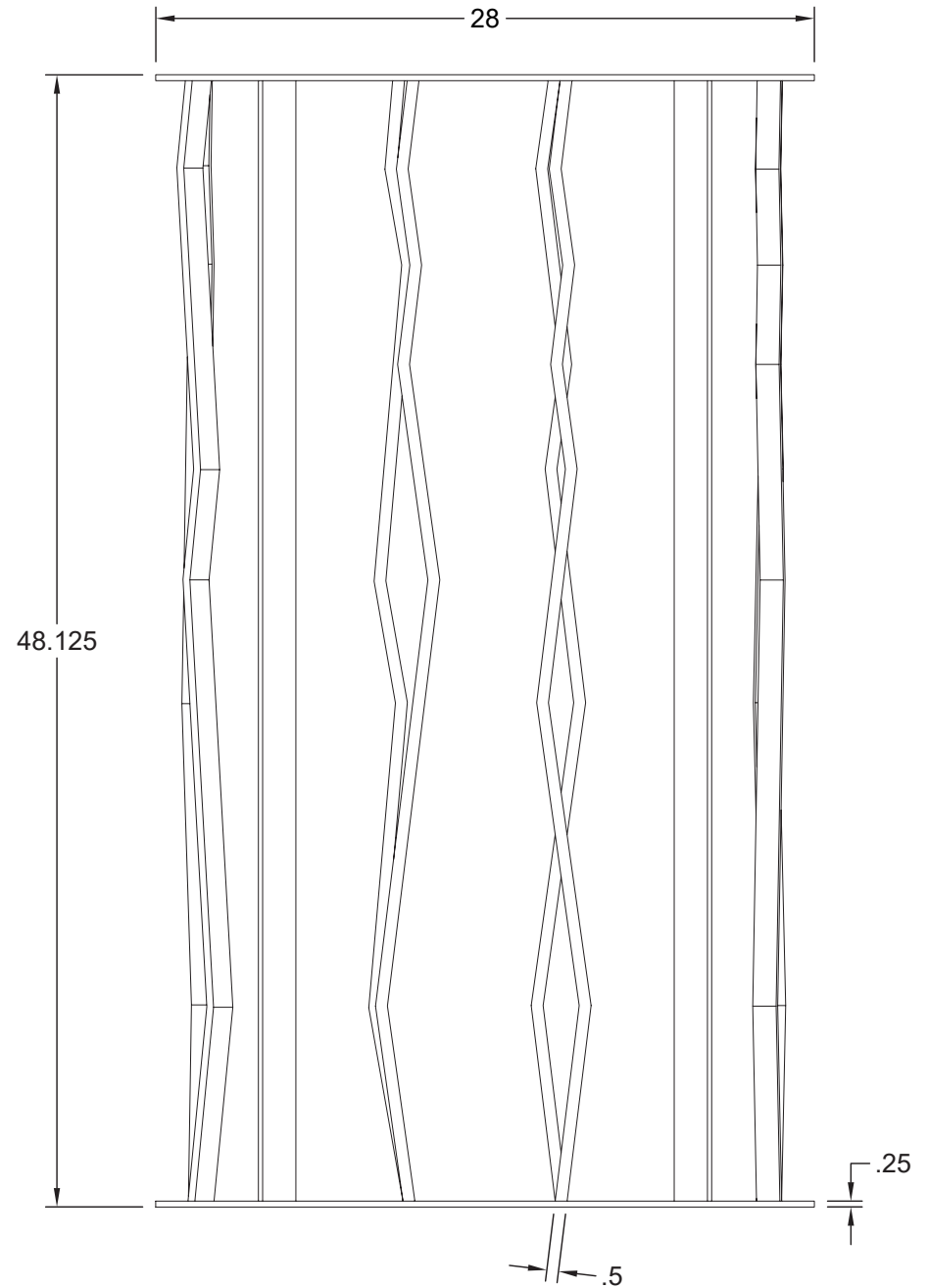
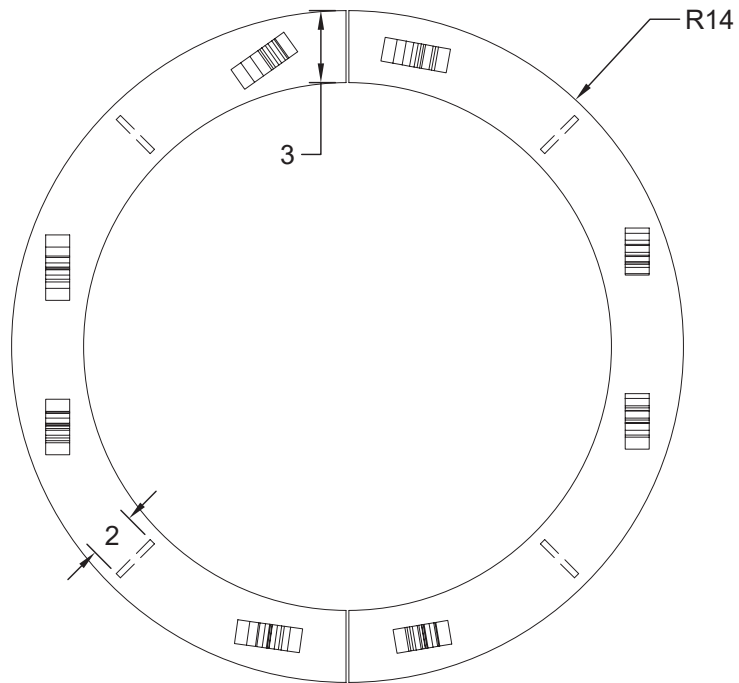
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## Technical Details:

### Tree Guards:

- Two separate sections composed of:
- Four flat 2" slats: 0.25" thick
- (8) Zig-zag letter forms: 0.5" thick
- Each vertical element welded to the top and bottom plates.
- Each half fastened to frame
- Interior opening: 24" dia.



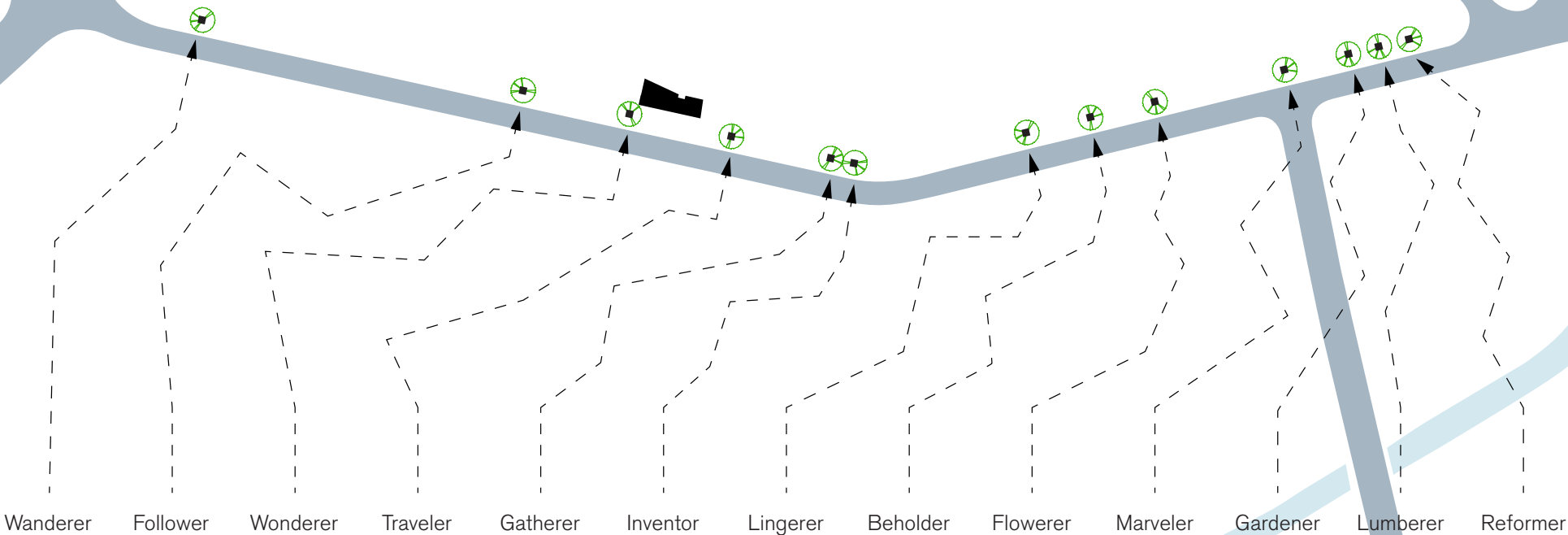


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**GRATES & GUARDS: LOCATIONS**

The diagram below shows the placement of the grates and guards along Main street.



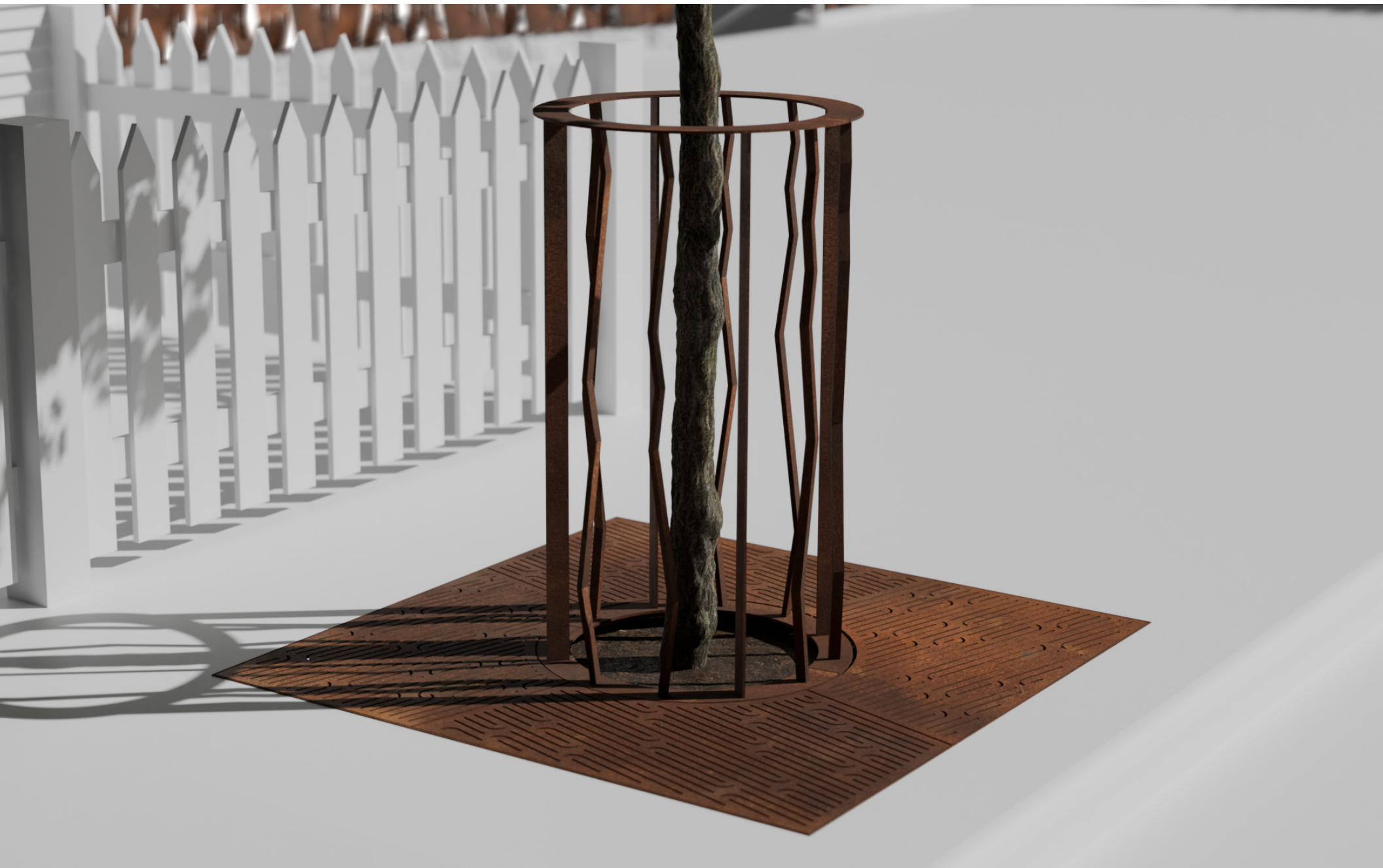


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A photo of the trailhead sign to the Rouge Valley Trail off of East lane. The corten steel of this sign creates a material connection to the corten steel fence proposed in this document.



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This photo shows Lillian Parkinson, a telephone operator, at the Unionville Telephone Office, seated in front of her switchboard, which was located at the back of Perkin's Hardware Store at 159 Main Street.

Pearl Rainey ran the first telephone exchange in the rear section of the hardware store, which was built around 1873 by John Eckardt, who later sold it to John Dunn, who then leased it to Ruben Stiver who then sold it to John Ramsey. In 1891 William Padget and Alexander Hay bought the property opening Hardware and Horse, and in 1918 the property fell into the hands of J.W. Perkins who opened the Perkin's Hardware Store. Today it is the home for the Crock A Doodle.

I consider art as an opportunity to create connections. The artist in one sense adopts the role of the switchboard operator connecting people to people, people to things and people to the past, present and future. Artists, however, can also create disconnections and misconnections and it is often these

unexpected, chance encounters that can more profoundly alter the path of an individual like the way a disturbance alters the path of the river. I think the role of public art is to perform these various acts, whether intentional or unintentional. I have attempted to draw connections in this proposed work to the path of Ira White, the energy and properties of the river, the growth of the village of Unionville, and a simple accordion fold in order to convey the qualities and virtues of a meandering path in relation to the contingent properties of the site.