



Cloud Nest

A proposal for Shute Park

Copyright Becky Borlan, B+B Lab 2024

Site Visit and Impressions



By the time I arrived in Hillsboro and settled into my air bnb, it was already past 8pm. I realized with some dismay that most restaurants on Main Street were closed. My search for sustenance led me to Super Tacos Ochoa, an establishment that thankfully didn't close until 10pm. Welcomed by the cheerful colors, I slid into a booth after ordering. A soccer game flashed across the TV while I drank my coke (an indulgence I allow myself when eating tacos) I gratefully devoured this comforting meal after nearly 10 hours of traveling. As I walked back to where I was staying on NE Jackson and 6th St, I noticed how quiet and clean the streets were, as well as the abundance of spring flowers that burst from well tended yards in free-spirited clusters. The flora was more magnificent in daylight-it's technicolor glory on full display the next morning as I walked south to Shute Park. The park itself felt like an emerald oasis-small enough to feel intimate, large enough to accommodate many activities, with lots of cozy spots that felt sheltered from the nearby traffic. I was especially impressed by the towering Douglas firs, that despite their size felt like a place of refuge. I visited the park one last time at dusk. As darkness fell I could hear some kids playing soccer on the open field. Soon it was too dark to play anymore and I watched as the children crossed Maple Street and bounced into the apartments just on the other side. I realized that this park was their front yard.

Inspirations



Papel Picado



Soccer



Quilts

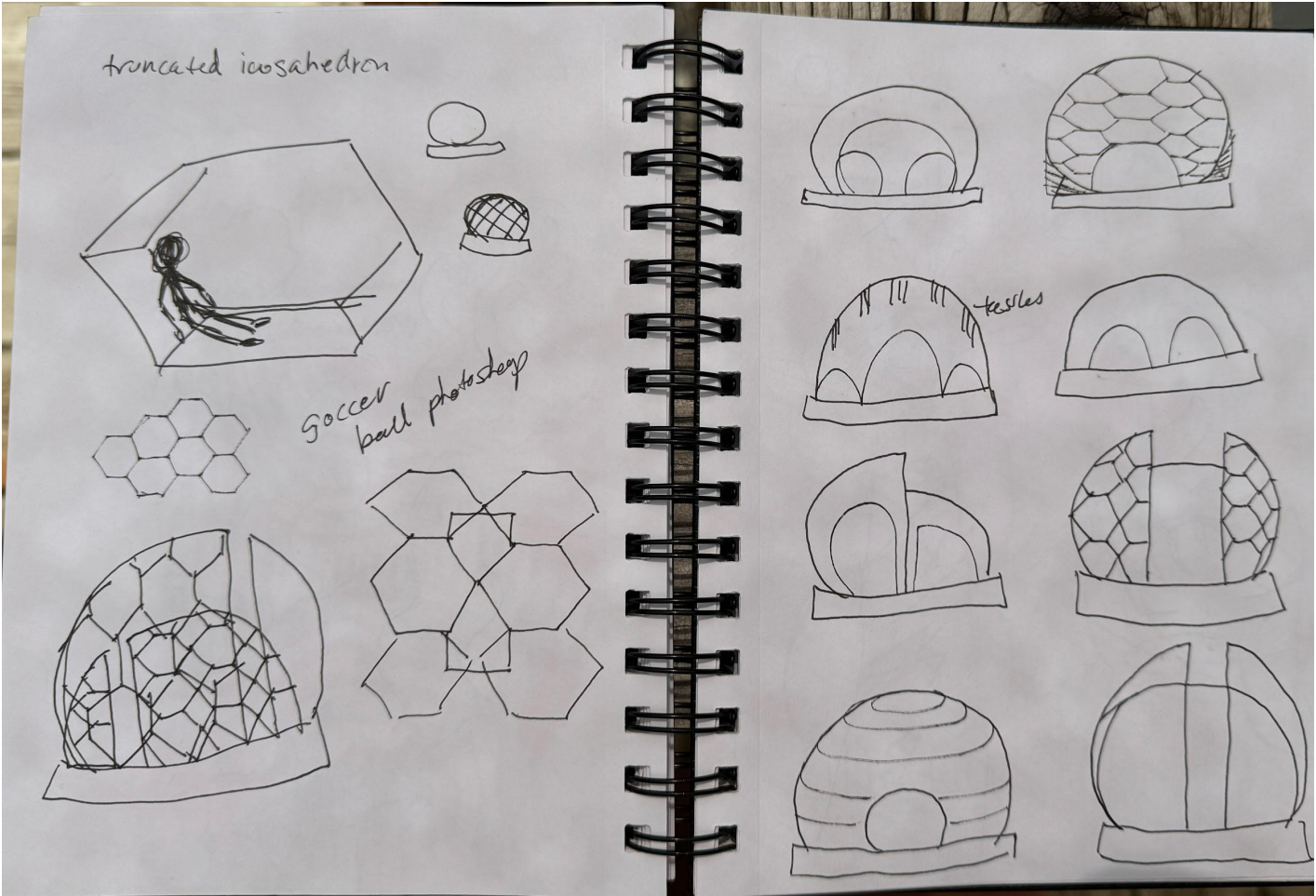


Buckminster Fuller and Geodesic domes



Traditional plazas and town squares

Sculpture Concept

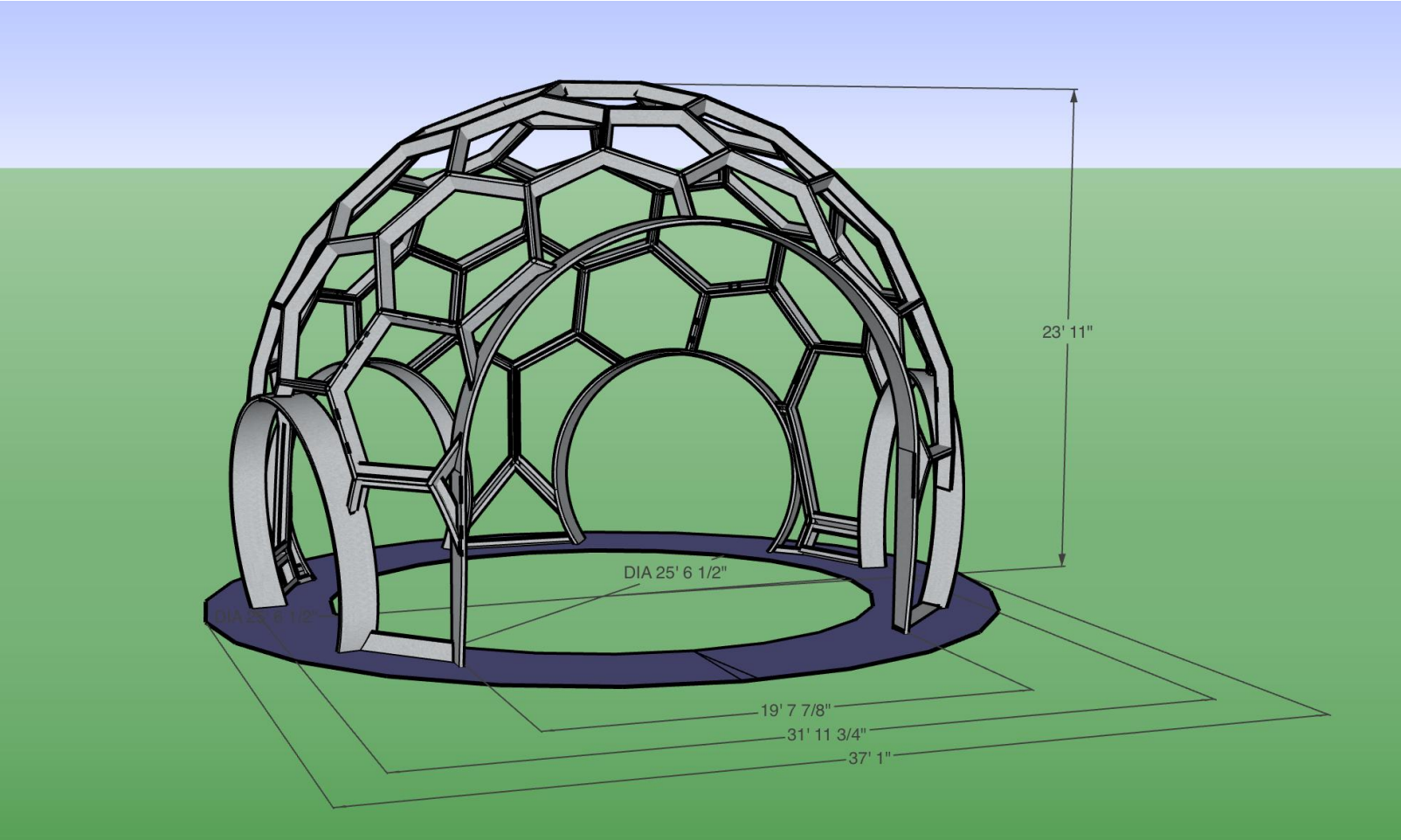




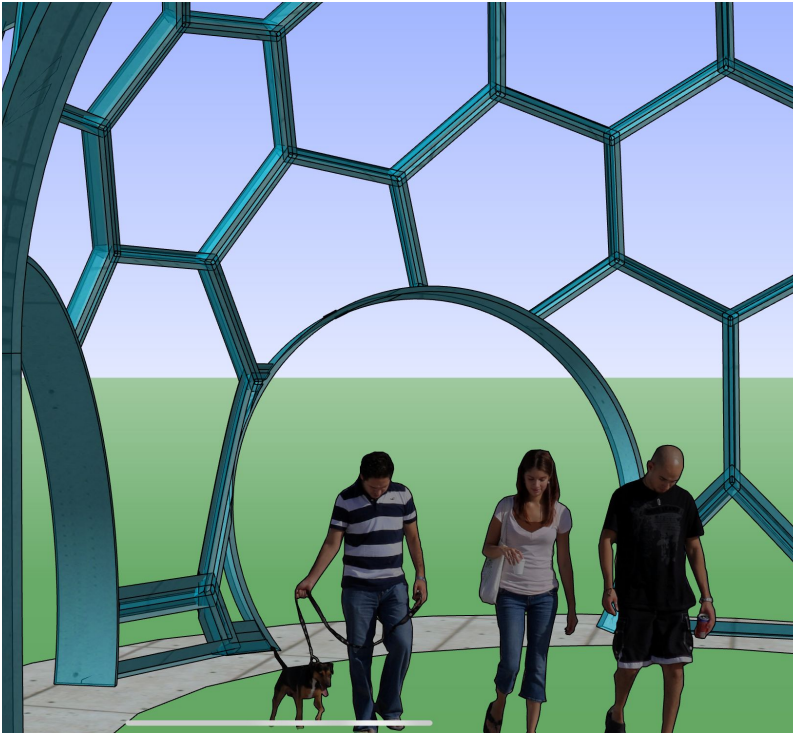
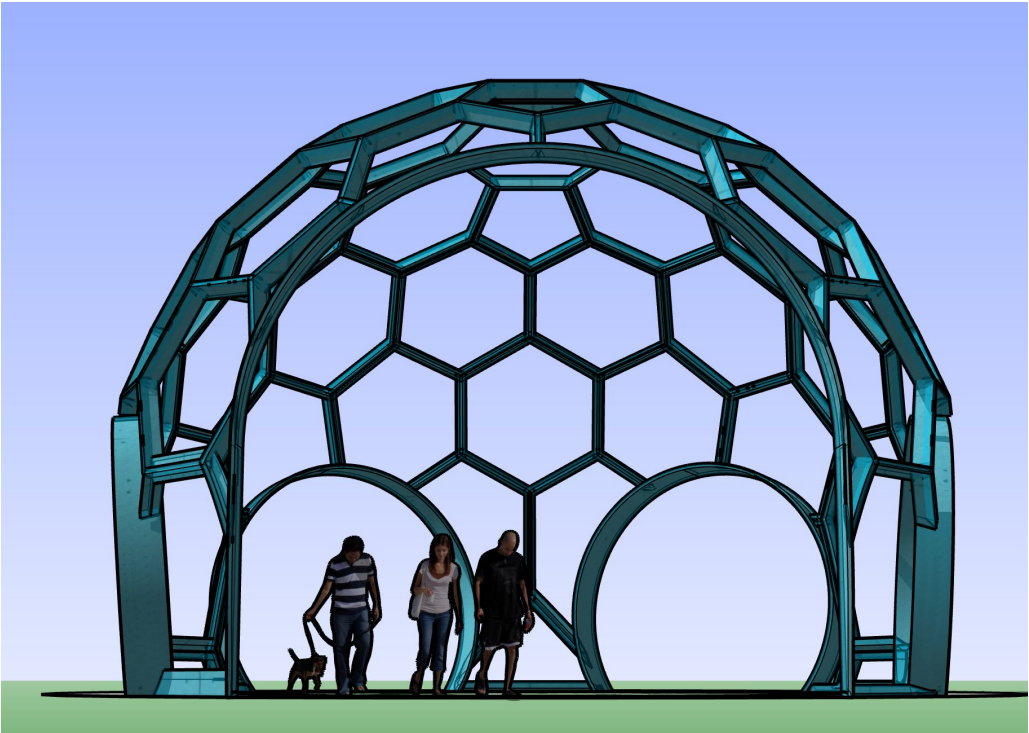


Sculpture Dimensions

1



Additional Views



Narrative

Cloud Nest is based on principles of geodesic dome building. A powder-coated steel structure supports translucent laser cut panels in the shape of hexagons, pentagons, and triangles. The panels are cut with various geometric and organic motifs, a reference to the Mexican art of papel picado. The structure invites park goers inside with a large main archway approximately 18 ft high. Four smaller archways encircle the structure, keeping sight lines open from the nearby playground. Underneath the piece is a level surface of grass at grade with the surrounding sidewalk. The existing planter will be demolished and removed to create easier access for pedestrians and those differently abled. The footers of the structure will connect just outside of the grass circle, bolted into concrete. Finally, the sculpture will incorporate a lighting plan using a combination of well lights embedded in the sidewalk, and post lights.

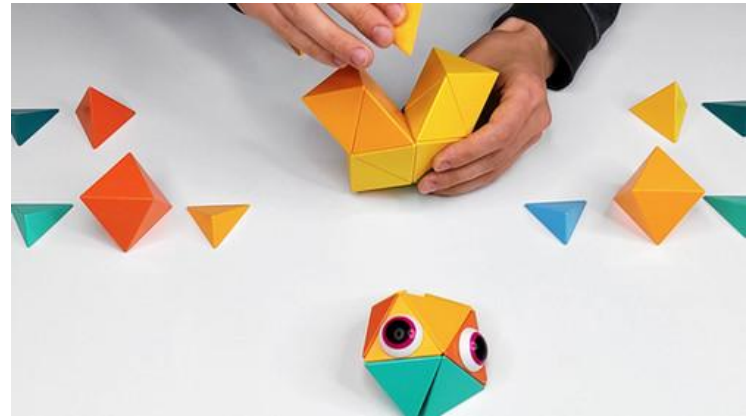
I was drawn to the idea of building a dome almost immediately after visiting Shute Park. There's something both ancient and futuristic about this type of structure, a reflection of Hillsboro's contrasts, hundred year old trees growing where cutting edge computer chips are made. I knew that I wanted the sculpture to be a gathering place, an anchor in the space, inspired by plazas and town squares. A place to have a birthday party, a landmark to meet friends, somewhere you can lie down in the grass without being directly in the sun. The piece walks the line between structure and shelter, providing a bit of cover but being open to the elements. I envision the cut out panels becoming more open at the top, so that it's less of a roof and more of a window to the sky.

Community Engagement

I'm excited to dive more deeply into the concept and specifics for Cloud Nest with the help of the Walter's Cultural Arts Center and other community partners. Many aspects of the sculpture can be collaboratively designed, like color, panel placement, and imagery for the cut out panels. Beyond soliciting feedback for various design choices, I like to engage the community in hands on activities inspired by or related to the project. For Cloud Nest, I am envisioning sets of custom made blocks based on the sculpture as well as other geometric patterns. These sets of blocks can be distributed to places like schools, community centers, the library next to the park. Visitors can build, play, and if they wish, submit a photo of their creation to a website specifically made to document people's interaction with the blocks.



Past community engagement activity-teaching how to fold an origami house



Example of geometric blocks