

**Client:** Roxbury Tenants of Harvard (RTH); Boston, MA

**Designers:** Jennie Smith & Andrea Taaffe

**Design Completion:** Spring 2008

**Installation:** Spring/ Fall 2009

## Description:

COG's designers worked with the Roxbury Tenants of Harvard (RTH) and local residents to design a memorial garden to build bridges within this community and help heal the wounds of violence. The site was a small vacant lot on Francis St. in the Mission Hill/Longwood Medical Area. For years, the community has been discussing the best use for this rare open space. The community's vision is of a meditation garden, a quiet but welcoming retreat.

Upon contacting COGdesign, RTH had a clear idea of what was needed to achieve its goal for the space. They realized the need for redirection of rain runoff as flooding in resident's basement was a problem. They suggested some terracing to a retaining wall to remedy the water problem. They also envisioned a path allowing for easy access by the diverse residents and a shaded seating area. Along with various plants to soften the site, they also requested a grass area for multiple uses. RTH expressed the need for a wrought iron fence and gate and requested garden sculpture.

With the help of COG's designers and volunteers this space has been transformed into a quiet oasis. An undulating pathway, dotted with turquoise, light blue, and green glass stones, can be seen from above. A weeping cherry tree, grassy area and flowering vines, create an inviting setting. Nancy Schon, the Newton sculptor who created the ducklings for Boston's Public Garden, has created a bronze butterfly in flight.

Roxbury Tenants of Harvard is a non-profit affordable housing organization. The resident population is very diverse with a significant number of disabled and elderly, as well as young families. The community is racially and ethnically diverse, including African American, Russian, Chinese, Hispanic, Irish, and others.

