



9.10 The Faces Fence

the southern island. The dominance of the traffic use over the pedestrian environment hampers any civic function here, while the poor condition of the contents of the planters' did little to dissipate the impression.

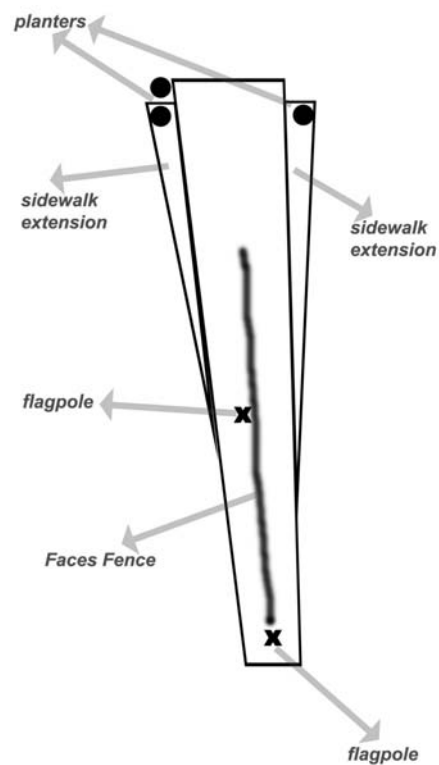
Element 10 contains the Faces Fence by Monica Banks (Figure 9.10). This is a curving decorative fence, similar to the one in element 9, but using a continuous red motif to create characterful Broadway 'faces'. Both sides of the space have been widened by the BID, with planters added (Figure 9.11). There were also two flagpoles both displaying Stars and Stripes.

ELEMENTS 11 AND 12

Element 11 is perhaps the most complex in design, containing numerous structures and fences (Figure 9.12). At the southern end is a statue of George M. Cohan, a famous Broadway impresario and patriotic songwriter, and names of Cohan's songs such as 'You're a Grand Old Flag' are inscribed on the plinth. A small fenced planting bed existed behind Cohan, protected by one small and one tall fence. The perimeter wall of the bed was angled to make sitting on it very uncomfortable. Whether or not this was the intention, the design and management of the space seem to aim at repelling users and thus reduce any potential civic qualities it might have.

In a formally organised fenced-off space at the northern end of element 11 is Father Duffy acting as a 'permanent reminder of the local hero who ministered in the decidedly secular world of Times Square' (caption on the fence below the statue). The Duffy statue has the only reference to religion in Times Square, backed as it is by a large Celtic cross. The area around Father Duffy contains formal planting and a bench, all of which are inaccessible. The steps around the base of the area provided the only place within the bow-tie where several people can sit down. However, the area inside the fence was, at the time of survey, poorly managed, whilst the fence itself is intimidating with its pointed metal spikes. Here again, design and management seemed to repel users rather than invite them in.

At the northern end of element 11 is the TKTS ticket booth, selling cut-price theatre tickets at set times of day. The booth is a semi-permanent structure in the regulation red of Times Square. The queue for tickets transforms the space into a crowd, particularly on Wednesdays and the



9.11 Diagrammatic plan of element 10

weekend when there are matinées. In doing so the booth fosters the use of the public space, but like much of Times Square this is mainly for tourists. At the time of survey the booth was about to be rebuilt, with stadium style seats on the roof.

Cameras overlooked the north and south of the space, and, like the other bow-tie spaces, were always trained on the road or pavements opposite. Two central flagpoles displayed the Stars and Stripes. Several lampposts had been fitted with additional lighting for safety and both sides of the space had been widened. There were also phone boxes on the northern side of the space which double as billboards.

Element 12 was more typical of the areas surrounding the bow-tie rather than of the bow-tie proper, with most of the site taken up by the Renaissance Hotel building (Figure 9.13). The hotel acts as the northern framing façade, with an advertising tower on its southern side facing Times Square. The element contained a subway entrance, and a range of vending machines/distribution boxes.