

OCULUS

on current new york architecture

The New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects

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New York Harbor with South Beach, Staten Island, and the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge. Photo: Stan Ries/ESTO.

OCULUS

Waterfronts and Waterborne Transportation: A Conference Reviewed

Volume 46, Number 4, December 1984

Oculus

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by John Belle

In a city where four of five boroughs are islands, New Yorkers live as if landlocked. They picnic and jog around a man-made reservoir at Manhattan's center; they take their views from the tops of skyscrapers and their fresh air from balconies overlooking other balconies.

Why do New Yorkers shun their abundant waterfront acreage? Decades of neglect have left it a blighted area, shadowed by highways, and home to abandoned industrial buildings, broken-down wharves, and other signs of urban decay. And New Yorkers are not alone in possessing a waterfront that is largely unappealing and inaccessible. The problem is found across the Hudson River in New Jersey, and in many other American cities, from coast to coast.

To discuss this and related issues, the AIA's Urban Design and Planning Committee sponsored a major national meeting on waterfronts from October 11-14. Approximately 100 architects, planners, and artists from across the country joined developers and local New York and New Jersey officials for the Manhattan-based conference.

To most of us, the word "conference" is a stuffy word, evoking visions of a droning speaker in an overheated room. We tried hard to depart from this stereotype, since we were interested in stimulating fresh ideas, not putting people to sleep. Substantial parts of the meeting were spent walking along the waterfronts and viewing them from the beautiful yacht "Entrepreneur," owned by Ed Carlton and lent to us for the occasion by Captain Richard Gurley.

History—More Than Water Under the Bridge

America's great cities resemble the rest of the world's in their reliance on water. The nation's earliest history witnessed the rise of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Charleston, and

later Chicago, St. Louis, New Orleans, and San Francisco, based largely on the quality of their ports and waterways.

But even as American ports matured in this century, the national highway, rail, and air transport systems evolved into fiercely competitive, flexible, and generally faster shipping alternatives.

After World War II, city waterfronts were dealt another blow when the industries that once lined urban rivers fell victim to foreign competition, the rise of light industry, and the costly impact of pollution-control laws. Hence, much of New York's and New Jersey's waterfronts now are bordered with abandoned piers and factories.

Then, in the 1970's, interest in the waterfronts stirred. The Rouse Company began its succession of highly successful waterfront "marketplaces." Certain adventurous cities began waterfront-revitalization programs. The back-to-the-waterfront movement arrived in Manhattan relatively late. But with the recent opening of South Street Seaport, the much-publicized urban design of Battery Park City, the Westway controversy, and other recent events, interest in these sites is now running at an all-time high. The air is buzzing with ideas and proposals from private developers and public agencies. To us, this seems like the crucial time to grapple with the form that redevelopment should take.

The meeting participants did not produce waterfront-development guidelines or design rules; such was not our intention. Rather, we met to learn about the past and present of the waterfronts, in order to seed our minds with ideas for the future.

A Conference Overview

The 43rd floor of the World Trade Center was a strategic choice for the beginning of the conference, since it overlooks the vast sweep of New York's and New Jersey's harbors, giving the participants a broad perspective of the subject at hand.

John Belle is a partner of Beyer Blinder Belle and Chairman of the AIA Urban Design and Planning Committee.

WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT

"Waterfront development is the next frontier for architects and offers opportunities to raise public consciousness about the design of our city spaces and buildings."—John Belle



Photo: Stan Ries/ESTO

During the day of meetings at the WTC, an AIA presidential citation for achievements in waterfront development in the public sector was awarded to Peter Goldmark, executive director of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. He has recently announced his retirement from public service. An AIA presidential citation for private sector accomplishments was presented to developer Arthur E. Imperatore.

The central role of money in waterfront development was the subject of the morning's first speech, by Charles Shorter, economist with Laventhol & Horwath, who are financial analysts for many developers. Mr. Shorter stated that waterfronts are becoming magnets for development for six reasons:

- The romantic appeal of the waterfront draws people to shops and other uses there.
- Waterfront land is fairly easy to assemble.
- A great deal of waterfront property is available in some cities.
- Public-private partnerships, a

necessity for waterfront development, are now a well-tested force in the marketplace.

- Money is available for development.
- Individual entrepreneurs with considerable vision are emerging as potential developers.

The public sector's bargaining position as the supplier of infrastructure for waterfront development was the theme of Eugenia Flatow's presentation. Ms. Flatow, consultant with the firm of Jean Weeks, argued that developers cannot effectively work alone. The water mains, sewage systems, and roads that make the waterfront usable, accessible, and hence, marketable, can only be supplied by the public sector. She noted that public-private partnerships are an excellent way to provide the public with a say in the design and use of these areas.

Board Delays

Arthur Imperatore, president of Arcorp and owner of two miles of the New Jersey waterfront paralleling 35th to 73rd Streets in Manhattan, decried approval boards for the time they consume and lack of expertise they apply to development proposals.

"One person on a board of fourteen can veto a project that the developer has sweated over," he commented.

Mr. Imperatore had both compliments and caveats for the architecture and planning community, whose work, he said, can make sites more attractive, more accessible, and thus more salable. But he added that architects must conform their designs to the taste of the public and must creatively reflect the needs of developers. "No more monuments to yourselves!" he warned in closing.

Ferries

The interesting possibility of reviving ferry service to improve waterfront access was explored by Kevin Tremble, a transportation planner with the Port Authority. Mr. Tremble's many useful observations concerning waterborne transport included the following:

- Ferries do double duty by providing both business and recreational service — hence, they should be designed not just for efficiency but with a strong sense of drama and aesthetics.
- The capitalization costs of ferries compare favorably with those of roads and bridges. But the labor-intensive

Waterfront Development

1. NYC/AIA President, Terrance Williams, presents the national AIA's Presidential Citation, awarded to Peter Goldmark, to his representative, Ray Monti, Chief Engineer of the Port Authority.

2. The morning panel at the Port Authority listening to Leonard Piekarsky, Deputy Commissioner in Charge of Ferries for the New York City Department of Ports and Terminals. At the table from left to right, Eugenia Flatow, Charles Shorter, Arthur Imperatore and Kevin Tremble.

3. Waterfront at Hunters Point.



Photos except as noted: Roberta Lichtman

1.

nature of ferries makes them more expensive in the long run.

- Five to ten-mile routes are the longest that ferries can efficiently cover.
- No ferry should dock more than a 15-minute walk from a key pedestrian destination.
- A quarter-hour is also the optimum departure frequency for rush-hour ferries.

Unlike roads and bridges, ferries also have the unique advantage of mobility. The ferry that feeds a new and growing development site in 1986 can be rerouted in 1989 to the next nascent property. Wherever private or public development depends on access, this is a critical issue.

Leonard Piekarsky, assistant commissioner with the New York Bureau of Ferries and general aviation, noted that the Staten Island ferries, one of which was purchased for \$16 million in 1982 (and is now valued at \$35 million), have functioned admirably, transporting 6,000 people per hour at a cost of \$600 per hour, or ten cents per person.

But, he said, ferries can discourage potential Manhattan commuters because of the change of transit mode and the slow speed. For example, a trip by standard ferry across the Hudson from a dock near the Garden State Parkway to one in Manhattan might consume a full hour-and-one-half. High-speed ferries offer a distinct improvement, cutting travel time by as much as two-thirds.

The Hunters Point Project

Following the ferry discussion were presentations on two major local waterfront projects planned by public agencies. Ban Ami Friedman, manager of waterfront development for the Port Authority's Hunters Point project, and Peter Magnani, director of the Queens office of the Department of City Planning, described a large mixed-use waterfront project intended for the Hunters Point area.

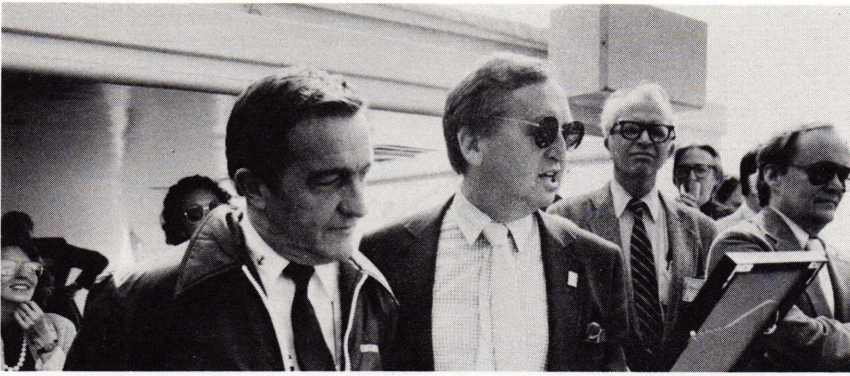


2.



3.

Photo: Courtesy The Gruzen Partnership



1. On board the motor yacht *Entrepreneur*, John Belle reads a citation and presents it to Captain Gurley. In the background are Peter Stanford and Craig Whitaker.

2. A view of the downtown skyscrapers from beneath the Brooklyn Bridge.

Photo: Stan Ries/ESTO



The Port Authority is working with Beyer Blinder Belle and The Gruzen Partnership (in joint venture), with ten city agencies, and with five major landholders at the site. The intention is to reinforce the industrial strength of the area while increasing both the mix of uses and the tax base. (Jordan Gruzen will discuss the Hunters Point project in the next issue.)

The Hoboken Project

Next, attention turned to Hoboken, NJ, as Mike Krieger, manager of waterfront development for the Port Authority's Hoboken project, Tom Ahern, director of the Hoboken Community Development Agency, and Brian Shea of Cooper, Eckstut Associates displayed partial findings and preliminary concepts for a major new development venture there. (A discussion of the Hoboken project will appear in the next issue.)

This Hoboken team faces the considerable challenge of creating a major regional center on the waterfront while working on a low-rise, human scale. It must also remain sensitive to the economic make-up of Hoboken, where 17 percent of the population is unemployed and 23 percent live in poverty.

The next topic was introduced a little differently, to say the least. Peter Stanford began his lunchtime slide show, entitled "The Great East River Monkey Show," with a parable of a monkey, representing waterfront residents, chased from its woods by an admiring photographer, meant to embody developers and architects.

Mr. Stanford, president of the National Maritime Historical Society and founder of the South Street Seaport, expressed his belief that developers and architects must adapt their plans to the real spirit of waterfront residents, rather than to stereotyped images of New England whaling villages and the like. An image of blue-collar fathers fishing with their sons on Sundays is a far more accurate image of riverfront culture, Mr. Stanford maintained.

Waterfront Development

"There is a tendency to take the image of the river culture and use it for show," said Mr. Stanford. "Architects are the hope for those of us who work to preserve the river and its culture, but they must adapt their designs to the real culture and spirit of waterfront residents." Mr. Stanford pointed with pride to the preservation of Pier A at Battery Park City. Innovative citizens arranged the sale of air rights over the adjoining slip to save it and the pier for public use.

Evening Activities

As evening approached, the meeting participants descended from their lofty 43rd-story perch to view the waterfront first hand. Following dinner at South Street Seaport, a number of conferees took the PATH train to Hoboken for an evening screening of "On the Waterfront," filmed in Hoboken in 1953, and "Ghosts of Cape Horn" (1979). The screenings took place in Hoboken's Church of Sts. Peter and Paul, where an important scene from "On the Waterfront" had been shot. Reverend George Ligos, pastor of the church, spoke about the city's relationship to the river in the first half of this century.

Yacht Tour

On the next morning, the conference took to the water. Thanks to the generosity of Captain Gurley and Mr. Carlton, the motor yacht "Entrepreneur" was awaiting us at the West 23rd Street pier, ready to embark on an extensive waterfront tour. When the conferees had finished admiring the vessel, with its piano lounge and pastel interiors, they turned their attention to the spectacular vistas moving past. Before disembarking at 3 p.m., we had inspected virtually all of the waterfront acreage surrounding Manhattan, sailing North up the Hudson to the George Washington Bridge, and then back down to N.Y. Harbor and up the East River, viewing Queens and circling Roosevelt Island.

The single stop on the tour was Ellis Island
cont'd. p. 14, col. 1

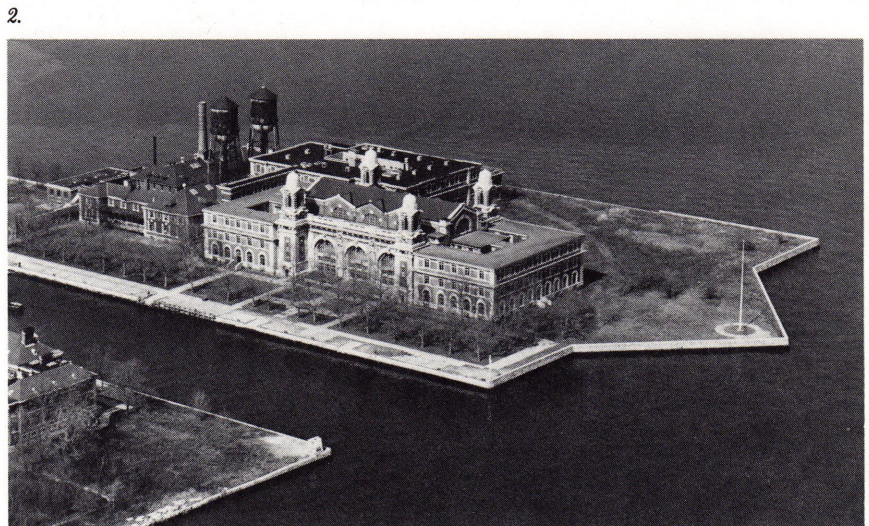


1. National President, George Notter, with John Belle, Chairman, on board the Motor Yacht Entrepreneur with the hospital wing of Ellis Island in the background.

2. James W. Rhodes, Project Director for the Ellis Island Project and John Belle walk ashore leading the group for a tour of the Main Building.

3. Aerial view of Ellis Island.

4. In the Registry Room the group listens as Mr. Adlerstein describes some of the historic events that have taken place in that room.



Photos except as noted: Roberta Lichtman

Photo: Stan Ries/ESTO

Chapter Reports

by Cathanne Piesla

Chapter member Frances Halsband's nomination to the Landmarks Preservation Commission has been approved by the City Council and also that of Adolph Placzek, former librarian of Avery Architecture Library. David Todd has also been nominated, but the City Council hearing in his case has not, as of this writing, been held.

The Practice Committee will continue its panel discussions in the coming months. Barry LePatner, Esq., is arranging to have each session video taped and made available through the Chapter's resource library to anyone who was unable to attend a session or who wants to review the ideas brought out. Sessions include: Negotiating Higher Fees; Securing Repeat Commissions; Contract Negotiations; Select the Right Agreement; and Liability Prevention: Avoiding Pitfalls of Architectural Practice.

The Educational/Cultural/Recreational Facilities Committee has completed a Survey on Chapter member firms' Activity in the Design of Educational, Cultural, Recreational Facilities, based on a questionnaire distributed last May.

The questionnaire asks for such information as: level of activity, location of projects, client, new construction vs. renovation, status of project, and the relationship between firm size and the type/number of projects a firm gets.

Twenty-nine firms — ranging in size from a one-person to a 200-person firm, and representing 763 persons — responded to the questionnaire, reporting on a total of 189 projects.

Chapter members may obtain a copy of the survey results by calling Chapter Headquarters, 838-9670.

Five members of the Corporate Architects Committee, Eric DeVaries, Peter ElGindi, Corwin Frost, Victoria Kahn, and Lenore Lucey participated in a roundtable discussion on the Role of the Corporate Architect/Engineer/

Facilities Manager, sponsored by *Architectural Record* on October 31. The one-day session was held at McGraw-Hill and covered many questions related to the Facilities market. There were 18 participants representing both corporate building departments and consulting design firms. The moderator was Walter F. Wagner, FAIA, Editor of *Architectural Record*. The proceedings will be published in the January 1985 issue.

Coming Chapter Events

Wednesday, December 5, 5-7:00 p.m.
Tour of the ATT Building conducted by the ATT Facilities Management Group. Sponsored by the Corporate Architects Committee. The tour size will be limited; call the Chapter office by December 3.

Thursday, December 6, 5:30 p.m.
Presentation by NY City Department of General Services Commissioner, Robert M. Litke speaking on future and current projects, consultant selection, and compensation. Sponsored by the Educational/Cultural/Recreational Facilities Committee. The Urban Center.

Thursday, December 13, 6:00 p.m.
Professional Liability for the In-house Architect. Lecture by Joan Schirb, Attorney at law. Sponsored by the Corporate Architects Committee. The Urban Center.

The Corporate Architects Committee is sponsoring a Tour of the new Irving Trust Operations Center, at 101 Barclay Street, designed by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, on January 16. The one-hour tour at 5 pm will include the 1000 seat cafeteria, the 45,000 s.f. education facility, at the atrium. Tour size is limited, call the Chapter by January 14. The Committee is also sponsoring a lecture by Mary Lanier, Art Advisor on "Corporate Art and the Architect," on the 24th of January at 6 pm.

Names and News

Davis Brody & Associates and Abramovitz Harris & Kingsland have been selected to jointly design a major new building for Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts to house rehearsal space for Lincoln Center, a small film theater, dormitories, teaching rooms, and additional office space with residential units above Seymour Fish will examine how to coordinate and control CADD in an A/E office as the feature lecturer at the Annual Computer Seminar in Utica on March 12 The J.M. Kaplan Fund has just published its first book, *New York City's Gracie Mansion: A History of the Mayor's House* by Mary Black (see p.12) The Municipal Art Society awarded the President's Medal, its highest honor, to Paul Goldberger in October Dierdre O'Farrelly, graduate student in architecture at Columbia, came in 20th among women in the New York City Marathon in October Stuart Pertz gave a lecture on "The Times Tower Over Time" — outlining the history of the tower built by Eidlitz and McKenzie and redesigned by HLW — at the Municipal Art Society in October "Rough Drafts" is the theme of the "Architectural League's 1985 Young Architects competition, which is open to architects, designers, artists, and urban planners who have been out of graduate or undergraduate school ten years; the deadline is January 22. For entry forms: 753-1722 "Affordable CAD," an article in the Fall 1984 issue of the AIA's *Architectural Technology* magazine, features evaluations by 14 architects of six CAD systems Edward Larrabee Barnes and Arthur Drexler are among the judges of the design competition for a comprehensive masterplan for the Berkshire Hills site of Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival and School. It has a deadline of December 7 A 146-foot-long and five-foot-high ornamental wrought-iron fence designed by architect and community activist Don Clay for the Jefferson Market Branch of the New York Public Library was dedicated in October Der Scutt was the architectural judge on a jury to select
cont'd. p. 10, col. 1

OCULUS NYC/AIA DEC 84

*Send Oculus Calendar information to:
New York Chapter/AIA, 457 Madison
Avenue, N.Y. 10022.*

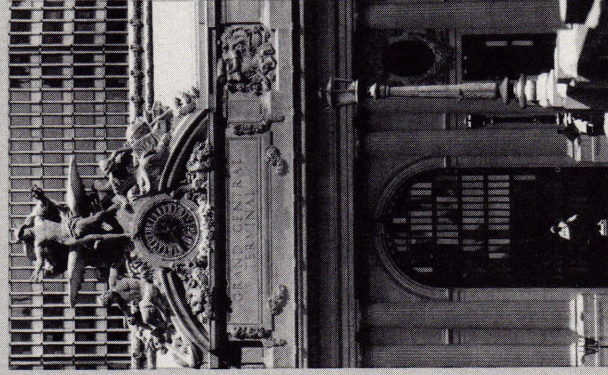
*Oculus welcomes information for the
calendar pertaining to public events about
architecture and the other design
professions. It is due by the 7th of the
month for the following month's issue.*

*Because of the time lag between
information received and printed, final
details of events are likely to change. It is
recommended, therefore, that events be
checked with the sponsoring institutions
before attending.*

MONDAY 3

CHRISTMAS TREE AND BAROQUE CRECHE

Metropolitan Museum of Art.
879-5500. Closes Jan. 6.



CONTINUING EVENTS

EXHIBITION

"Three New York Firms: Peter Gluck
and Assoc., Rivkin-Weisman, Tod
Williams and Assoc." Columbia
Graduate School of Architecture, 100
Level, Avery Hall, 280-3414. Closes
Dec. 12.

VAN GOGH IN ARLES

Exhibition. Metropolitan Museum of
Art. 879-5500. Closes Dec. 30.

TUESDAY 4

LECTURE

Designing Dreams: Modern
Architecture in the Movies III"
conceived by Donald Albrecht and co-
sponsored by the Architectural
League & the Department of
Environmental Design, Parsons. 6:30
pm. Parsons auditorium, 66 Fifth
Ave. 753-1722.

TUESDAY 11

LECTURE

"Designing Dreams: Modern
Architecture in the Movies IV"
conceived by Donald Albrecht and co-
sponsored by the Architectural
League and the Department of
Environmental Design, Parsons. 6:30
pm. Parsons auditorium, 66 Fifth
Ave. 753-1722.

EXHIBITION

"Chicago and New York: A Century
of Architectural Interaction." The
Octagon, Washington, D.C.
202-638-3105. Closes Jan. 6.

EXHIBITION

"Building Suburbia: Scarsdale,
1890-1940." 1828 Quaker Meeting
House Museum, 937 White Plains
Rd., Scarsdale, 014-723-1744. Closes
Jan. 6.

WEDNESDAY 5

NYC/AIA TOUR

Corporate Architects Committee
sponsors a tour of the ATT Building
conducted by the ATT Facilities
Management Group. 5-7:00 p.m.
Reservations through Chapter office
by Dec. 3. 838-9670.

CONSERVING NEW YORK

Brendan Gill on "Reweaving the
Fabric of the City" in 6-Wednesday
lecture series co-sponsored by the
Met and the N.Y. Landmarks
Conservancy. 8 pm. Metropolitan
Museum of Art. 879-5500.

WEDNESDAY 12

CONSERVING NEW YORK

Arthur Rosenblatt and Theo Prudon
on "Books and Art: The New York
Public Library and the Metropolitan
Museum of Art," final lecture in
6-Wednesday series co-sponsored by
the Met and N.Y. Landmarks
Conservancy. 8 pm. Metropolitan
Museum. 879-5500.

VISIONS OF LIBERTY

Exhibition of photographs relating to
the Statue of Liberty. The New-York
Historical Society, 170 Central Park
West. 873-3400. Closes Jan. 13.

EXHIBITION

"The Old Dutch Homesteads of
Brooklyn" as documented in photos,
drawings, paintings. Long Island
Historical Society, 128 Pierrepont
St., Brooklyn Heights. 718-624-0890.
Closes Jan. 31.

THURSDAY 6

NYC/AIA PRESENTATION

The Education/Cultural/Recreational
Facilities Committee hosts Robert M.
Litke, Commissioner of NY City Dept.
of General Services. See Chapter
Events this issue. The Urban Center.
5:30 p.m.

LECTURE

Charles Gwathmey on "The work of
Gwathmey/Siegel," 6 pm. Higgins
Hall, Pratt Institute, 200 Willoughby
Ave., Brooklyn. 636-3600.

THURSDAY 13

NYC/AIA LECTURE

"Professional Liability for the In-
House Architect" will be addressed by
Joan Schirb, Attorney. Sponsored by
the Corporate Architects Committee.
The Urban Center. 6:00 pm.

LECTURE

"Cliveden: 3 Centuries of an English
Estate" by Rodney Shewan who lived
and taught at Cliveden for 10 years. 6
pm. The Royal Oak Foundation, 41 E.
72 St. 861-0529.

EXHIBITION

"White City: International Style
Architecture in Israel," The Jewish
Museum, 1109 Fifth Ave. 860-1889.
Closes Feb. 17.

EXHIBITION

"On City Hall, In City Hall,"
historical survey of City Hall's art,
architecture, and landscape. City
Hall, Broadway & Murray St.
566-5525. Closes March 29.

FRIDAY 7

NYC/AIA COMGRAF '84 (DEC. 9-12)

"Computer Graphics for Graphic
Arts," a seminar/tutorial/exhibit
sponsored by Pratt Center for
Computer Graphics in Design and
Collier Graphic Services. Essex
House, New York. Information:
Michael Lissauer, 840-0440.

FRIDAY 14

DEADLINE

For mailing data binder for the "R.S.
Reynolds Memorial Awards for
Distinguished Architecture Using
Aluminum" to: R.S. Reynolds
Memorial Award, American Institute
of Architects, 1735 New York Ave.,
N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

MONDAY 17

1967: American architect Barry Byrne died.

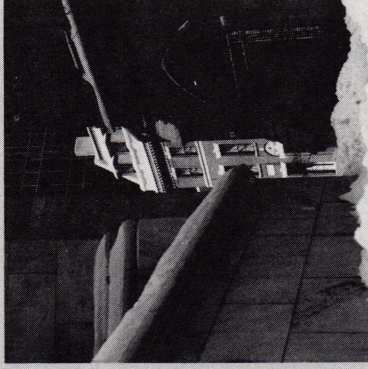
TUESDAY 18

1888: Public works-official Robert Moses born.

WEDNESDAY 19

Hanukkah

THURSDAY 20



FRIDAY 21

Feast day of St. Thomas, Patron Saint of architects.

MONDAY 24

1865: Architecture critic Sir Charles Eastlake died.

TUESDAY 25

TWO FILMS
"Le Corbusier," a 35 min. film by Carlos Vilardebo, one of Le Corbusier's collaborators; and "The Bauhaus: Its Impact on the World of Design," a 19 min. film. 7 pm. The Jewish Museum. 1109 Fifth Ave. 860-1888.

Merry Christmas

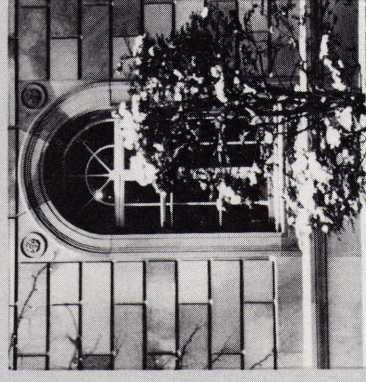
WEDNESDAY 26

1940: American architect Chester Holmes Aldrich died.

THURSDAY 27

1932: Radio City Music Hall opened in New York City.

FRIDAY 28

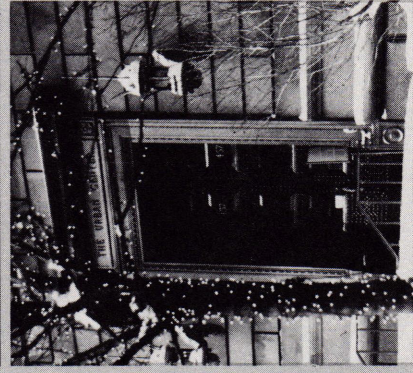


MONDAY 31

DEADLINE

For postmarking submissions in "Light in the 21st Century," an international competition recognizing lighting design proposals not yet in use sponsored by Ziggurat to: Inside/Lighting Competition, 715 8th Ave., San Diego, CA 92101.

TUESDAY 1 JAN



WEDNESDAY 2 JAN

1893: Louis Sullivan's Schiller Building opened in Chicago.

THURSDAY 4 JAN

1870: Groundbreaking for first tower of the Brooklyn Bridge.

FRIDAY 5 JAN

DEADLINE

For receipt of requests for application forms for the 1985 Rotch Travelling Scholarship competition to: Norman C. Fletcher, Secretary, Rotch Travelling Scholarship, 46 Brattle St., Cambridge, Mass. 02138. 617-868-4200.

Names and News

1. Townhouses designed by Robert A.M. Stern.

2. Demolition of the German Meeting House, Lexington Avenue and 85th Street.

cont'd. from p. 7

the most significant developer of the year in the Greater Atlanta area In an article on "Affordable Housing" in *Hawaii Architect*, the journal of the Hawaii Society/AIA, Lew Ingleson asks and answers: "Is it frustrating? Always! Is it fun? Sometimes. Is it satisfying? Definitely, with the realization that families that might not have been able to afford a house are living in homes that are the results of your efforts." . . . First prize in the 1984 Hispanic Talent Search Architectural Competition sponsored by Castro-Blanco, Piscioneri and Feder, Architects, in association with NYC/AIA, for a new high-rise residential development on the Upper East Side, was awarded to Manuel G. Mergal who holds a Master of Architecture degree from Columbia, with honorable mentions to Rafael A. Marxuach who attends the Rhode Island School of Design; Maria Aviado, a student at Syracuse University; Jose Antonio Izquierdo who holds a Master of Architecture from the University of Texas; and Hector Munoz, who attends the New Jersey Institute of Technology M. Paul Friedberg was the keynote speaker last month at the AIA Denver Chapter's Annual Meeting with a theme of "Urban Design" "Health Care Marketing for Architects" is to be the theme of a discussion sponsored by NYC/AIA Health Facilities Committee on January 10 The Eggers Group are architects of a 570,000 square foot headquarters building for Pepsicola in Somers, New York Classical America is sponsoring two classes beginning in January at the National Academy School of Fine Arts: "Instruction in freehand drawing of composition and perspective, ornament and buildings" beginning January 21; and Alvin Holm will offer "drafting of the Orders and classical ornament" beginning January 23 The townhouses designed by Robert A.M. Stern to harmonize with the Stanford White-designed clubhouse which is a focal point of the St. Andrews golf community under construction at Hastings-on-Hudson were instrumental in the selection of St. Andrews for an NAHB Grand



1. Award Groundbreaking ceremonies in October launched a \$5.5 million redevelopment program to a plan drafted in 1983 by Beyer Blinder Belle to rehabilitate the downtown business district of Lakewood, New Jersey Ezra Stoller showed slides and discussed his lifelong involvement with architectural photography last month at the New York headquarters of the American Society of Magazine Photographers The Temple Hoyne Buell Center for the Study of American Architecture at Columbia will inaugurate a series of annual scholarly meetings next April to be called the Buell Talks in American Architecture in an effort "to encourage and enhance scholarship" said Center Director Robert A.M. Stern in announcing the project Swanke Hayden Connell Architects have added the following new Associates to the firm: Marjorie S. Allen, Douglas Coombs, Alyn Cosgrove, Deborah Hill, Donald Kiel, William F. Koelling, Robert H. Landsman, Jon Nathanson, Susan Nazath, Bruce Schafer, Elizabeth Cooke Schechter, Joseph Spina, and Jay B. Walter January 31 is the deadline for entries in a competition, "Designing for Video," sponsored by RCA Consumer Electronics and *The Designer* magazine. For information: Designing for Video Competition, Gilbert/Green



2. Communications, Inc., 141 E. 33 Street, NYC Sites XII, which describes itself as "a quarterly literary magazine on buildings, places & monuments" includes an article on Lewis Mumford by Barbara Probst Solomon.

Update on 42nd Street/ Times Square

by George Lewis

At the Board of Estimate hearing on October 25, Terrance Williams presented a chapter statement, and at the continuation of its hearing on November 8 the following statement, including points previously made by Williams was submitted:

"Since the Final Environmental Impact Statement, which we found seriously deficient in several respects, was issued in August, the Project remained before the public in essentially unchanged form, until two weeks ago, when there began to appear a last minute flurry of assurances and promises regarding urban design in response to criticisms of this Chapter and others. These statements of intent, which have been generated largely by Chairman Sturz of the City Planning Commission, are quite welcome, and certain of them appear in more or less positive form in the amended Resolution before you.

It is our message today, delivered in the strongest terms of which we are capable, that *all* these expressions of intent, including the paper issued October 22 by Messrs. Sturz, Stern, and Spinola, as well as a paper "Comprehensive Urban Design Plan for Times Square," which was distributed Monday along with certain verbal assurances by Chairman Sturz, *be included in the Resolution upon which you will vote.* This Resolution, if approved, will stand for years as the document describing the City of New York's commitment.

We submit that the following commitments which have been delivered to us by Messrs. Stern, Sturz, and Spinola, and by Chairman Sturz individually, be more explicitly stated in the Resolution, or added to it:

1. Comprehensive Urban Design for Times Square.

On page 4 of the Resolution it is stated that "a Times Square Advisory Committee, to include representatives of civic and community groups, property owners and other interested parties, shall be established by the Department of City Planning . . ." This

is welcome so far as it goes, but the Committee could wind up being no more than window dressing unless it also states in the Resolution that the City, through the Planning Department, shall "develop a scope of work for a comprehensive urban design plan for Times Square," (a quote from a paper distributed this week by Chairman Sturz) and, further, to commit adequate staff to the accomplishment of the necessary planning, including, to quote from the Stern/Sturz/Spinola paper, "a focus on special Times Square lighting treatments to insure that this unique element of Times Square's visual character will be enhanced as the area evolves."

2. Site 2, The Former Times Tower.

This Chapter, from the time the four proposed office towers were unveiled last December, has maintained that there be on the Times Tower site, Site 2, a construction at the very least comparable in impact and sign-bearing potential to the present tower. On pages 18 and 19 of the Resolution it is stated that Site 2, may be included in the project and leased to Park Tower provided that Park Tower agrees, among other things, that use of the site "be approved by a committee consisting of representatives of UDC, the City, Park Tower, and civic and/or community groups." It is imperative that this paragraph of the Resolution be expanded to state, as Chairman Sturz has stressed, that "the committee's decision is to be final and must be unanimous."

3. Control of Mid-Block Density.

The Chapter in previous testimony has stated that, in view of the unprecedented density of the office towers in terms of their total floor area in relation to lot size, the mid-block density must be kept correspondingly low. We have said, "The Urban Development Corporation must be effectively prohibited from permitting at any time in the future, mid-block density in excess of what is there now." As we, who are not lawyers, examine the Resolution, we are not sure that this has been set down as a firm commitment. It is a

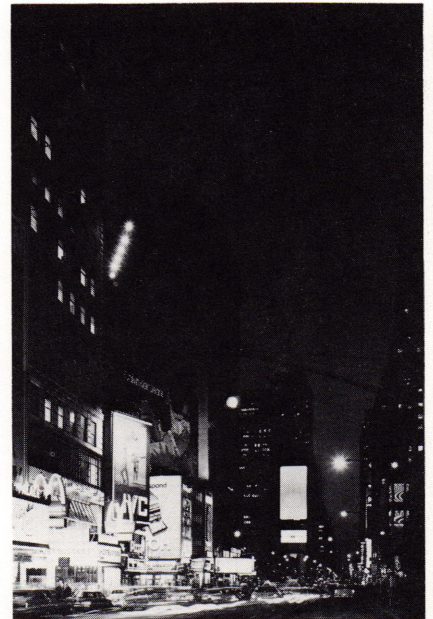


Photo: Stan Ries/ESTO

land use matter of the utmost importance, and it should be stated in the Resolution in layman's language devoid of ambiguity.

In sum, we cannot recommend that you approve the Project the way it is inadequately described in the Resolution dated November 7. The Project will deserve full support if the Resolution is revised and expanded to include the points we have made here. Chairman Sturz has assured us that the City is committed to all of them, but they must be in the Resolution to ensure beyond all question that the City and the Urban Development Corporation will carry them out in the years ahead.

Gracie Mansion Restoration

Excerpts of remarks by Joan K. Davidson, Chairman The Gracie Mansion Conservancy, at the opening of Gracie Mansion Wednesday, November 7, 1984, 2:00 pm

This mayor, like the mayors before him, could simply have "redecorated" Gracie Mansion in any way that suited his fancy. He had the right. But he chose instead to do something bigger — to turn the necessary repairs, rearrangements, and enlargements into a public service; to demonstrate in a dramatic way for all to see that Gracie Mansion, which is the people's house, could become a center of their cultural, intellectual, and civic life — a source of unity and pride for all New Yorkers.

Although Gracie Mansion is, first of all, home for mayors (that is, the 1799 historic house; the 1966 wing is for official functions), the Conservancy chose not merely to fix it up as a pleasant, comfy family home.

And although Gracie Mansion is The Official Residence, where foreign heads of state come to call, the Conservancy chose not to make it into a kind of museum, a waxworks "period" setting, arbitrarily recreating some narrow slice of past time.

A third thing the Conservancy chose not to do was to turn the whole matter over to some outside expert who would make the decisions for us. There is no *single* designer for the new Gracie Mansion, but several designers. The rejuvenated house like the city itself, and indeed like life, represents varying visions and points of view.

What the Conservancy *did* do was to consider that we were creating something for the permanent benefit of the city and that at every step of the way a sense of public responsibility was sitting on our shoulders. This meant, first of all, that we would involve in the enterprise the experience and resources of New York's incomparable institutions: the Landmarks and Parks Commissions, museums, libraries, historical societies, botanic gardens.

Nothing was taken for granted; every design question was studied, discussed by the Working Group, and, let's face



Gracie Mansion, the north front.

it, even passionately argued over — from the shape of stair treads to the color of window shutters to the philosophical nature of a fence that would surround the Chief Executive Officer's residence. And indeed, it often turned out that on specific architectural and decorative details, larger questions of public policy hung.

1. Our underlying design idea has been, as I said, not to preserve in aspic some particular moment in time, but to acknowledge the long sweep of New York's history and creative achievement. We celebrate New York — its scholars, architects, builders, designers, painters, sculptors, and craftspeople — from before the Revolution to the present day. And though we respect history, our decisions have also been governed by the requirements of daily life, common sense, and the contemporary eye.

2. Many of the fine works — those of art and furniture — are here on borrowed time. We very much want to build a permanent Gracie Mansion collection, and there are, as Clement Conger, Curator of the White House and State Department, says, "ample

opportunities for donation" on all sides.

3. In regard to the future, anyone who remembers how recently, in a neighboring state, the newly elected Chief Executive Officer promptly gave the heave-ho to carefully assembled collections in the Governor's Mansion, and who has seen how even the White House has subtly changed in recent years, may well ask, how do we know that our large effort here will survive Mayor Koch's loving care of it? Our answer can only be: there is no way to legislate permanence, but traditions can take root. We have, we believe, created a background design that should endure through succeeding mayoral administrations since it is both classic enough and free enough to allow for modifications to accommodate changed circumstances. Furthermore, the Conservancy will stay in business, and we will have a permanent curator to oversee the design and the collections. In the end, it will be encouragement, example, and public pressure that may be able to assure that we can avoid expensive and disruptive upheaval after every election, and instead continually enhance the rich heritage of New York's Gracie Mansion.

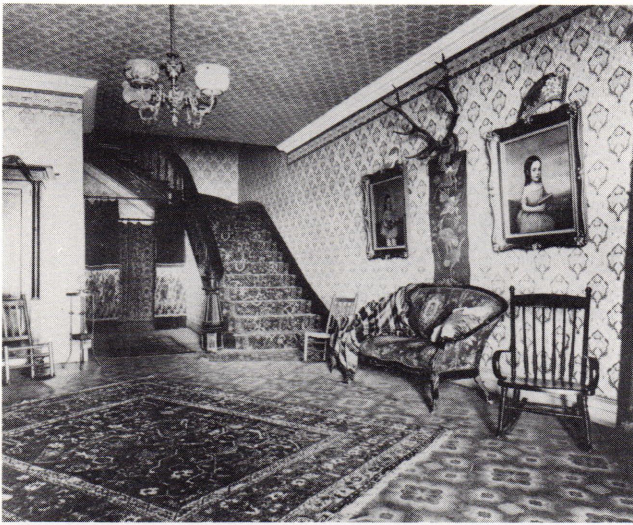
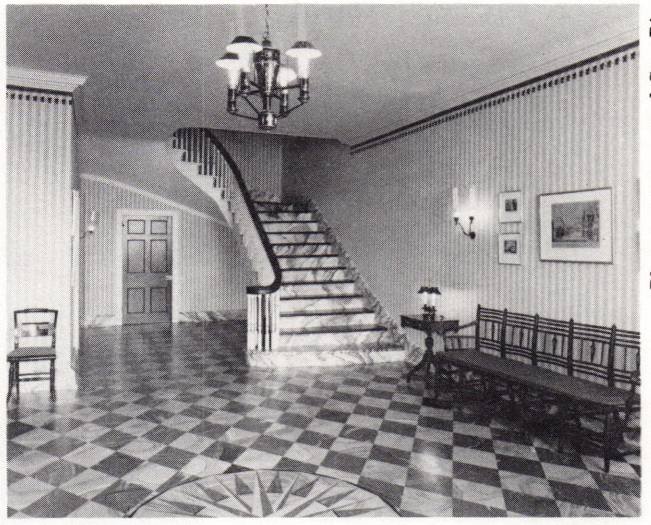


Photo: Pach Bros., The New York Historical Society

The Center Hall around 1890.

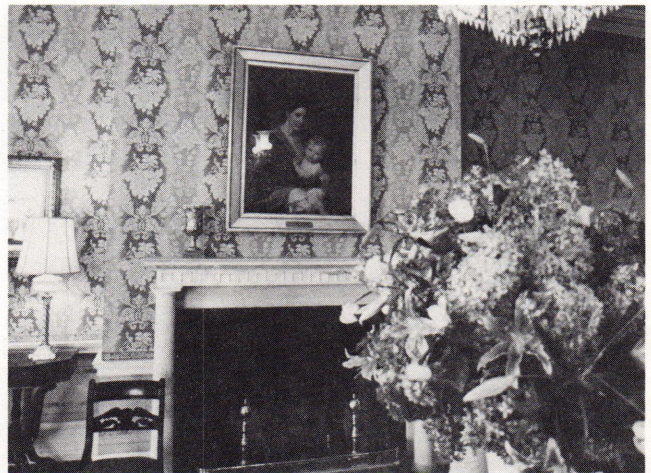


Photos except as noted: Stan Ries

The Center Hall, 1984, by Marilyn Johnson and Lisa Krieger.



The Dining Room.



The north Parlor.



The southwest Sitting Room in the Susan Wagner wing.



The northwest Library in the Susan Wagner wing.

Waterfront Development

cont'd. from p. 6

Island. There, in the echoing Great Hall, National Park Service planner Michael Adlerstein reviewed the history and plans for the Main Building. His description of restoring the Great Hall and installing a museum of immigration and a computer genealogy center was all the more affecting because of the desolate character of the room in which he spoke.

Waterfront Neglect

The neglect of local waterfronts received thorough review by Martin Gottlieb, a native New Yorker and reporter for *The New York Times*, who often writes on real estate and development issues. He deplored the tendency of politicians and their constituents to urge that unpleasant activities be located in fringe areas — the waterfront, in their view, being prime among these. He also noted that city bureaucracy has delayed many promising projects beyond their time. Fixing his audience with an appraising stare, Mr. Gottlieb observed that many so-called public plazas and parks are unhospitable and unappealing. He closed with a plea that the architecture profession learn from past mistakes in designing public spaces on the waterfront, and urged his listeners to formulate guidelines for waterfront development in the city.

Art on the Waterfront

The formal events of the day ended with a panel discussion on the role of artists and art in urban waterfront design, held at Parsons School of Design. Moderated by Nancy Princenthal, an art consultant and freelance writer, the panel consisted of artists Scott Burton, George Trakas, and Athena Tacka. All three artists, who are known for their large-scale environmental works, concurred that involving artists in the design process at an early stage ensures that the art is more responsive to its site.

"Those responsible for large scale developments tend to see waterfront art as a successor to plaza art, something that's brought in at the



1.



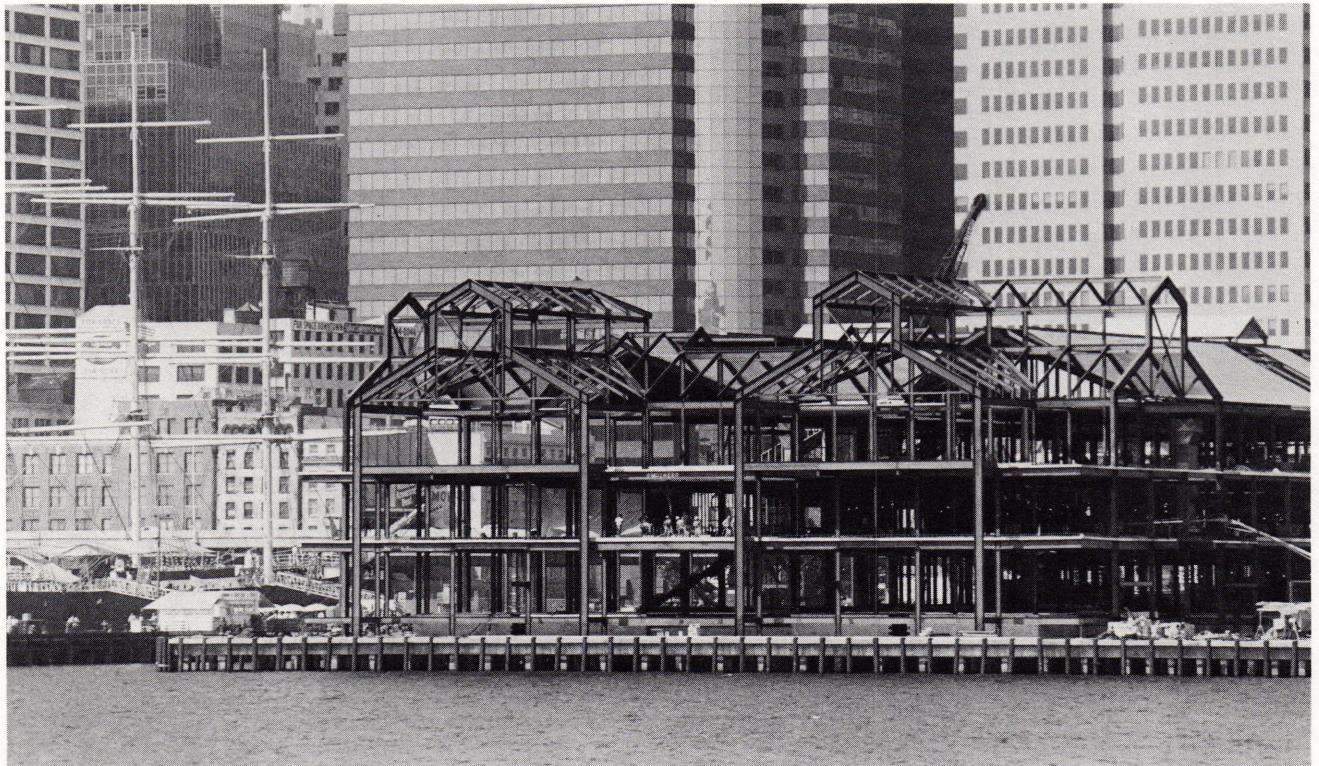
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Photos: Stan Ries/ESTO

1. An electrical station near the Williamsburg Bridge.

2. An industrial yard on the Queens waterfront.

3. The Pier 17 Pavilion is the central part of the Phase II development planned by the Rouse Company for the South Street Seaport. Scheduled to open in 1985, the 125,000 square foot glass-and-steel building will accommodate 120 retail shops, cafes, and restaurants on three floors, many having the best possible views of the East River and the Brooklyn Bridge. It will be the third new building in the Seaport complex, a National Register Historic District.



3. eleventh hour," Ms. Princenthal commented.

The artists illustrated their discussion with slides of completed installations, including one at a utility plant in Washington State. The slideshow also featured a planned work for the World Financial Center created by Mr. Burton and Siah Armajani.

The next day was highlighted by a business meeting of the Urban Planning and Design Committee, (minutes are available from Bruce Kriviskey at the national headquarters of the AIA), followed by an afternoon tour of Roosevelt Island.

Roosevelt Island

The trek to Roosevelt Island by tramway was led by Theodore Liebman, of Liebman Ellis Melting and former chief of architecture for UDC, and Jerry Maltz, former project architect with the Roosevelt Island Development Corporation.

With only 2,100 of the 5,000 planned

residences in place and with more stores and a subway entrance on the way, Roosevelt Island is due for considerable growth, according to Mr. Liebman. To some extent this will deprive the island of its pleasantly isolated atmosphere. It is accessible only by tramway and, to a limited extent, by car. But growth will probably not defeat the successful integration of social and economic groups that has taken place there, he believes.

The conference concluded Sunday morning with a tour of South Street Seaport, led by John Stubbs of Beyer Blinder Belle and by Robin Burns, the Seaport's vice-president for design and construction.

Conclusion—A Time to Begin
No manifesto arose from the conference, and none was anticipated. But there was agreement that New York's waterfronts are at a critical evolutionary stage.

The heyday of waterfronts as

industrial and freight transport centers has surely passed, and it seems evident that a transition in office, recreational, and retail uses is underway. If ferry service is revived between the five New York boroughs—and the "sixth borough" that is on the rise in New Jersey—the commercial value of those sites will rise quickly toward its peak.

The conferees agreed that waterfronts constitute an urban resource that should be accessible to all. Most important, they concurred that these areas should be viewed by policy-makers, developers, and designers as public amenities first and as commercial real estate second. This calls for standards of waterfront design—standards which we hope the attendees of this conference and our colleagues throughout the region will develop and support. We look forward to a future conference in which we tackle the challenge of formulating such guidelines and exploring more deeply the potential of these romantic and complex urban territories.

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