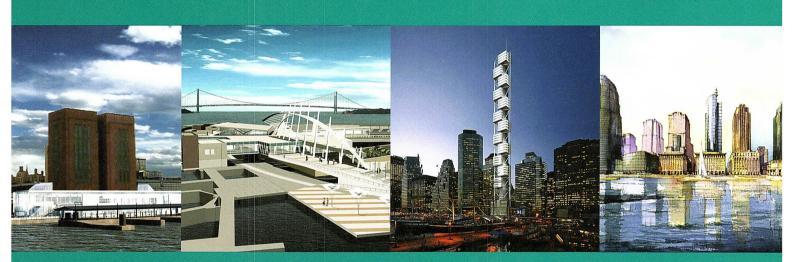
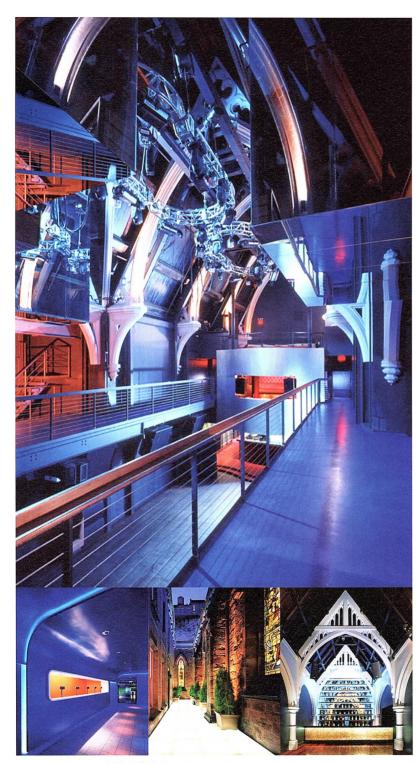


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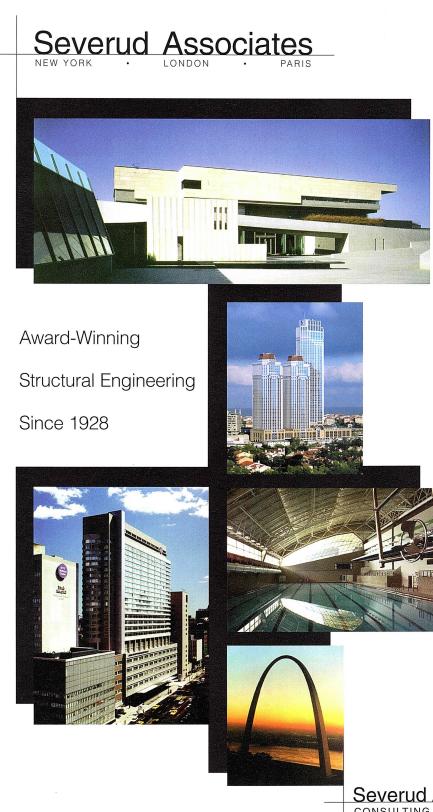
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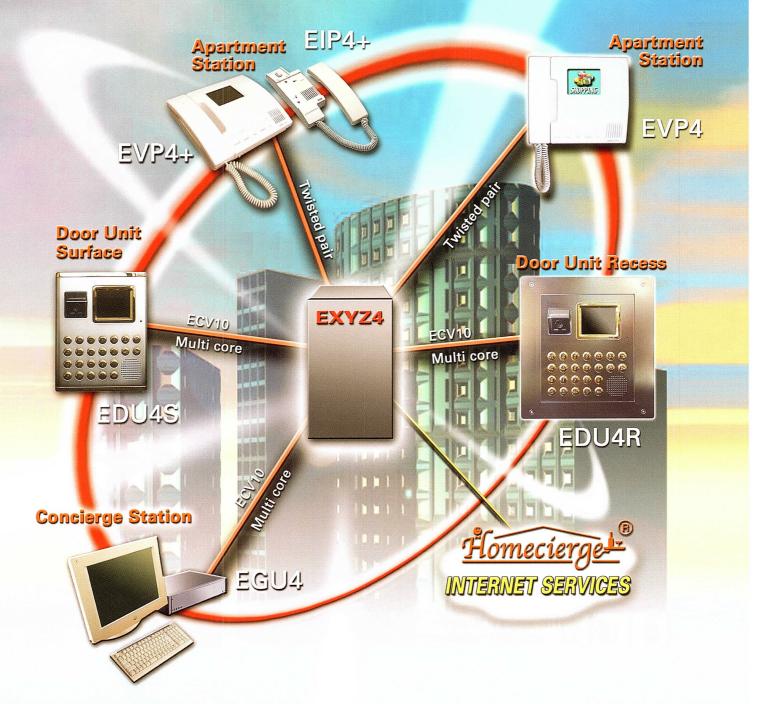


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#### First Words Letter from the President

## 25 Years on the Waterfront

wenty-five years ago my first job after college was working for the New York City Department of City Planning on waterfront planning. This issue of *Oculus* features recently realized, current, and future plans for the city's close to 600 miles of waterfront, and reflects on how much has happened in the last 25 years.

A quarter century ago, most of the waterfront was abandoned remnants of our industrial past. New York City grew from its waterfront, the best natural harbor on the East Coast, leading to the Erie Canal and the Midwest. After World War II, our industrial base and the transportation systems that served it moved out of the cities. The port facilities largely migrated to New Jersey and New York's waterfront was left rotting. The water was rancid. Marine life died. Raw sewage was dumped into the rivers. Not until the late 1980s with the completion of the North River sewage treatment plant was more than half of Manhattan's sewage treated. At least the marine borer worms did not eat the pier pilings; they could not live in the water.

The idea that one could ride a bike or walk on the water's edge around Manhattan was a dream 25 years ago. Now it is a reality. New riverfront open space has been created. This new access to the water has created tremendous development pressures. These pressures are not only due to the rediscovered land but also to the fact that our City has grown by almost a million people. Change has not only come to the Manhattan Gold Coast. A large park is planned along the Brooklyn waterfront. Queens West is creating a mixed-use planned community with open space along the shore of the East River. The west shore of the Hudson River has been transformed through New Jersey's foresight in developing new mass transit along the water. The New York City Department of City Planning has proposed re-zoning both the Greenpoint Williamsburg section of Brooklyn - to bring housing and open space, and Hudson Yards - to accommodate commercial and residential expansion of Midtown Manhattan. The rebirth of waterborne passenger transportation has created more and better transportation. Much of the rotting industrial piers and equipment has been removed or left as artifacts in the new landscape (for example Gantry Park and the relocated Pepsi sign at Queens West). The pressures of residential/commercial development compete with pressures for continued industrial use of power plants, marine transfer stations, and so forth.

When many of us started work on New York New Visions we recognized the amazing waterfront of Lower Manhattan was not fully appreciated. The western edge, redeveloped through Battery Park City, is still hard to get to. The eastern edge has had many plans, including some redevelopment around South Street Seaport, but is mainly an area of unrealized opportunities.

New York City has the highest density in the nation, the highest use of mass transit, and the low-



est per capita energy consumption. The city's continued growth is in itself creating a more sustainable country. The waterfront creates additional land for us to grow and, as importantly, provides the open space that is critical for us to lead a civil life. We need to be looking for every opportunity to create open space, up-zone and rezone to increase density to house our expanding population.

So much has been done in the last 25 years, yet we have more to do. As this issue of *Oculus* shows, there are plans and projects in design and construction that will continue this inevitable transformation.

September 17-19, our Chapter will host Learning from Lower Manhattan with five National AIA Knowledge Communities (committees). The conference will bring together architects and urban designers from around the nation to hear about how New York is rebuilding after 9/11. It will foster a better understanding of what is being done right, what is missing, and what could be done better in Lower Manhattan and the New York region. We hope you will join us! See page 45 for information and visit the conference web site at www.aia.org/learningfromlowermanhattan.

Mark Ginsberg, AIA

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## Wet Feat

Intil this issue of Oculus, the only time I recall being truly connected to and enamored of New York City's waterfront was on the Fourth of July, 1976, when I stood on line at 1:00 in the morning to be on the first of only two ferries going to Liberty Island to celebrate the Statue of Liberty Centennial. It was a perfect New York day: blue skies, magnificent tall-masted sailing ships (the first Op-Sail), the U.S. Navy in full regalia (the first Fleet Week), and boats of every stature from everywhere. It was magic.



There was not all that much waterfront to connect to then. But times have changed...and continue to change. So much so that by the time you read this, plans and

Editor's very ferry day

designs for the city's waterfront will have undergone added changes, with still more in the offing. This was clear from the number of projects we wanted to include but, because of the complexities of many public/private projects, we were not able to – in some cases permission to make them public was difficult to come by or flat-out refused. In the meantime, we've waded into the water deep enough to find an amazing number of new ventures under way or pending.

Among the most nimble of waterfront place-makers is the NYC Economic Development Corporation, as senior vice president Eve Michel, AIA, explains in "So Says…" A boathouse in Harlem takes us "Around the Corner," where Bette Midler is a potent but uncharacteristically silent star of another endeavor to bring people to the water.

Starting on another shore, "Outside View" comes from a New York-born Angelino who wonders why Los Angeles can't be more like New York – and vice versa. "40-Year Watch" revisits Chatham Towers, a 1960s complex with Corbusian overtones. "Good Practices" takes on what good leadership entails – besides just showing up. "In Print+" reviews a book that saunters around the city's shoreline, another that makes the thought of living on the water mouth-watering; and visits www.docomomo.com.

It's summertime. Share lunch with the seagulls on a ferry or at the end of a pier.

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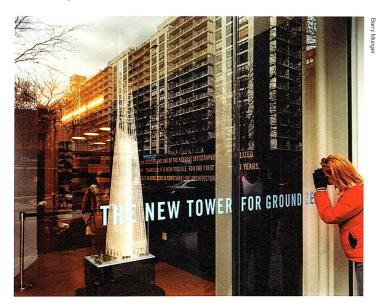
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## Freedom Tower Views

The nine-foot model of the New Tower at Ground Zero was exhibited at the Center for Architecture for almost two months, thanks to Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. Visitors from 21 states and 13 countries left comments in an electronic guest book. The following sampling was selected by AIA New York Chapter Executive Director Rick Bell.



Cette tour s'adresse comme un doigt géant qui montre le ciel. (This tower points skyward like a giant finger.) Phillippe Berthod (St-Brieuc, France)

It's beautiful!!!

Marco Besana (Mariano Comense, Italy)

We should put more brilliant architects together and let them throttle each other until they come up with great ideas.

Doug Blanchard (New York City)

A pretentious and contrived building.

Lew Bolan (Washington, DC)

It's going to be amazing, but it's a real shame that the original Libeskind design for the main tower has been compromised so much. Steve Bottoms (Glasgow, Scotland)

I feel this building, as wonderful as it is, should live in another city.

Jim Clayburgh (New York City)

Very innovative design!

Alison Crendell (Lake Charles, Louisiana)

Pienso que el sistema constructivo como el diseño guarda una memoria colectiva a las torres gemelas antes existentes. (I think the construction system as designed retains a collective memory of the previously existing twin towers.)

Diana Diaz (Queens, New York)

I wish that the "powers that be" would stop referring to it as "Freedom Tower," a rather banal designation.

Tom Furth (New York City)

The Freedom Tower seems to repeat the mistakes of the previous Yamasaki towers. I am thinking in particular of the vast building standing in a large open space.

Keith Garner (London, England)

A very beautiful tower.

Catherine Gullon (Grenoble, France)

A tower of light, hope, and honor.

Carol Keys (Fairfax, California)

It's a nice tower, maybe not nice enough for a magic city such as New York, but once off the ground, I'm sure it will become a magnificent landmark.

Pierre-Yves Lebon (Montreal)

Light and life enhancing. This too is a memorial.

Michele Meyers (Santa Fe, New Mexico)

*Eigentlich ganz schoen, passt schoen, aber die Spitze wuerde ich noch etwas umdesignen.* (Very nice, but I would redesign the tip.) Thomas Ott (Simbach am Inn, Germany)

More beautiful than I thought it would be.

Dan Sheehan (New York City)

An impressive building, pity there aren't two.

Carl Simmonds (London, England)

The uppermost section with the windmills seems gimmicky, incomplete, and awkward.

Philip Weber (New York City)

An elegant, magnificent, glorious building. Makes one proud to be a human being.

Ken Wilson (Ann Arbor, Michigan)

In celebration of the 10th anniversary of GSA's Design Excellence Program, the Center for Architecture is hosting "Civic Spirit: Changing the Course of Federal Design," September 13-November 6. The exhibition will acquaint the public and professionals with the program, how it operates, and the architectural projects the Federal government commissions and oversees.

On April 7, Tishman Realty and Construction helped celebrate the unveiling of the donor wall for the Center for Architecture. Tishman's \$100,000 contribution is a matching gift against all new pledges from architects. We are glad to report that architects doubled the initial challenge, pledging an additional \$200,000! These next few months will prove to be the most critical, as we need 100% participation from the design community to reach our \$6 million goal. To find out how to add your name to the donor wall, contact Brian Hartmann: 212-358-6118.

## So Says...





ve Michel, AIA, has been with the New York City Economic Development Corporation for almost 16 years, and is currently senior vice president in the Capital Program Department, which supports such projects as ferry terminals, ballparks, libraries, cultural facilities, and street enhancements. After receiving her architectural degree from Washington University in St. Louis, she became a licensed architect in California, and then worked with UNESCO in Jamaica. *Oculus* caught up with her on a waterlogged spring day to talk about – and take a hardhat walk-about in – some of the EDC's many waterfront initiatives.

Kristen Richards: The Economic Development Corporation has been more successful than just about any other public entity in New York. Is it because EDC is a public benefit corporation?

Eve Michel: EDC is a not-for-profit corporation whose only client is the City of New York. We are not a city agency, and as a result some of our procurement regulations are not as stringent as many of the city agencies. There is still an abundance of checks and balances in place, because we are dealing with public money and we are responsible for open and fair processes. However, there are certain regulations that make our procurement process a little less cumbersome, and that allows us to be a little bit more nimble, quicker on our feet.

How large is the staff?

There are only 14 of us. The Capital Program Division is a small portion of the EDC, which is about 300 people big. It's a good example of a private-public partnership. We have a very motivated staff of engineers, architects, and landscape architects, which goes hand-in-hand with the fewer constraints and the ability to get things done. Essentially, we're the owners' representative for the City of New York. We then hire private sector designers, architects, engineers, construction managers, and contractors. We do between \$200 and \$300 million worth of capital work a year.

One of our first projects, which pre-dated me, was for the South Street Seaport. The idea was to lay down infrastructures so a developer would be attracted to the site. The Rouse Company became that developer, and as we all know, that area has come up over the years.

We are able to get interesting projects done. For an architect it's an incredible variety. You usually don't get the kind of a mixture we do in the private sector where primarily you're obliged to make money as opposed to spending money. People ask me what I do. I say that I spend public monies.

EDC was originally created to be an economic development engine for the city, focused on job creation and retention. How did it end up tackling waterfront projects that on the face of it have little, if anything, to do with jobs?

The term economic development is more far reaching than simply job creation, although that is one aspect of it. A lot of the waterfront programs have to do with transportation of people and goods, which actually do generate jobs.

One of our projects is the East River Bikeway – an alternative commuter route that also revitalizes the waterfront. More ways to get around make the city more attractive. It's the soft side of economic development. But it's vital for quality of life.

What is the future of the ferry and water-taxi movement in the city?

Ferry ridership is very much up, especially since 9/11. The administration is doing what it can to encourage it, to relieve the buses and subways. Our charge is to design, construct, and upgrade ferry landings. It's a joint effort with EDC and the City Department of Transportation Private Ferry Group, headed by Alan Olmstead. Some new projects just going into construction are five East River Ferry landings: at Battery Park, East 34th Street, East 62nd Street, East 75th Street, and East 90th Street.

What about the St. George and the Whitehall terminals – the two ends of the Staten Island Ferry route. They're very different. Were their settings, one in Manhattan and one a commuter community, responsible for the different architectural expressions? Or was it the budget?



The main thing is that the Whitehall terminal (Frederic Schwartz Architects) is almost completely new construction,

## Vichel



while St. George (HOK) is a renovation with an expansion - a lot is dictated by the existing structure and aesthetics.



What are some of the environmental issues and sustainable design principles on these projects?

EDC has made a real effort on all the projects to have a strong alternate energy focus. At Whitehall, we have a million dollar integrated photovoltaic array. At St. George, we have a living roof, an oyster bed, and a facility to recharge electrical vehicles. In both Whitehall and St. George we have used energy efficient equipment, and have been able to obtain certain loans towards that. On the East River ferry landings we hope to have windmills to generate electricity for the power at the 34th Street facility. At Pier 11, the Wall Street Terminal is a passive solar building with its window orientation towards the south, and a huge glass garage door that opens up for natural ventilation.

> What about cruise ship piers and terminals in Manhattan and Brooklyn?

Our infrastructure division is charged with improving the tourist and cruise industry in the city, and part of that means redoing the passenger ship terminals on the Hudson River. The master planning effort is underway, and we're doing some internal work now to improve circulation in the passenger area; putting in escalators, putting a taxi stand across the street, and improving the whole drop off and parking situation. The industry has changed tremendously, from the size of the ships to the number of passengers - last year, they handled something like 900,000 travelers. The existing terminals can't handle the numbers. So there are major changes going on, and EDC is the primary mover. We've been working with a consultant, Bermello, Ajamil & Partners, who was competitively selected. They're Miami-based cruise industry experts who have been taking us through the planning exercise. The Brooklyn Pier is slated to be operational late summer 2005.

Do you think a Brooklyn-Manhattan freight tunnel is a good idea?

We've been involved with the early Environmental Impact Study, but there's no funding in place at this point.

Right now to get goods into Manhattan, Long Island, or Connecticut by rail, you have to go all the way to Albany and come back down. This would connect us to what they call the Gold Coast in New Jersey. It would take thousands of trucks off the road, and lower the cost of goods for consumers. It's a very good idea. Whether or not the cost is worth it - I'm not sure.

What's going on at the Battery Maritime Building, next to the Whitehall terminal?

It is both the gateway to Governor's Island as well as an important lower Manhattan monument. It's strictly an exterior restoration being done by Jan Hird Pokorny Associates, with Tishman overseeing the construction. EDC is seeking a tenant - either retail, possibly a hotel, or conference center.

EDC has other waterfront plans, including a waterfront park and pier in West Harlem between 123rd and 135th Streets. We are also working on some esplanades in the Green Point section of Brooklyn, and along the north shore of Staten Island.

Who are the architects and engineers?

We're working with W Architecture and DMJM Harris on the West Harlem piers. And the North Shore Esplanade - that's Abel Bainnson Butz. The Green Point Esplanade is with Donna Walcavage. We're also doing a private ferry facility for City DOT on the Westside at 38th Street, called Pier 79. We're working with William Nicholas Bodouva + Associates, and Skanska is our construction management team.

On a personal note, did growing up hearing tales of massive infrastructure and construction projects worldwide lead you to a design career in large-scale public projects?

Yes. My father was an engineer who worked on a number of international projects with Parsons Brinckerhoff. And we traveled extensively. I had an early understanding of monumental projects and what kind of impact they can have on a culture, on an area.

What about your future? Will you remain with this type of work, or become another Marilyn Jordan Taylor (chairman of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill)?

I think I'm a competent architect, but I'm a better manager. I don't see myself going into private practice. I see myself more as an owner's representative who has more of an oversight of the design and construction process. My primary concern is how to get good design constructed.

COULUS SUMMER 04



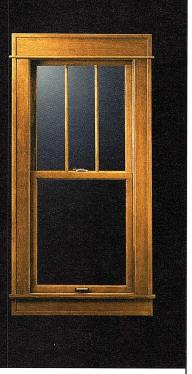
#### The window on the left was built in the 1930s. The one on the right, last week. Or was that vice versa?

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Around the Corner Peter Jay Sharp Boathouse by Robert A.M. Stern Architects and Armand LeGardeur Architect By David Sokol

or people who consider the waterfront of Lower Manhattan an Eden of parkland and recreational uses, perhaps their benchmark standard should be Manhattan's northernmost tip. Think about it: starting clockwise from the George Washington Bridge, "upstate Manhattan" is ringed by six tennis courts, one Little Red

Lighthouse, a commercial mooring (as well as Columbia University's boathouse), a handful of soccer fields, the island's only remaining salt marsh, and some decent biking. Sure, there's no ferry transportation like there is downtown, but to transplant the northern Manhattan waterfront to Wall Street climes would require the capital and landfill of at least another Battery Park City without the corresponding real estate development.

Of course, northern Manhattan got to be what it is today for lack of capital investment – office buildings would have quickly shouldered into the landscape otherwise. In the not-too distant past, that fact also spelled neglect. The efforts of groups like the New York Restoration Project (NYRP), founded by Bette Midler, are working to reverse the tide. In late spring another revitalizing piece of the puzzle, the Peter Jay Sharp Boathouse in Swindler Cove Park, was put into place.

Swindler Cove, a new five-acre city park, is located on the eastern terminus of Dyckman Street, just north of Highbridge Park. Here, the edge of the Harlem River is punctuated by a cavernous subway shed, Bronx-bound bridges, and grocery mega-stores and auto body shops that have not given way to a higher and better use. A large swath of neighborhood is a housing project. Despite northern Manhattan's bounty, this is exactly where a people-friendly shoreline could do some good.

The boathouse, another NYRP project, is part of an attempt to return this area to the Scullers Row it once was. But a boathouse does not a rowing renaissance make, and so NYRP has also established boat-building and rowing programs that introduce neighborhood kids to – and encourage them to excel in – a sport from which they were previously disenfranchised.

The architecture of the boathouse, which offers a visual connection to that storied past, was designed by Armand LeGardeur, AIA, an Associate Partner at Robert A.M. Stern Architects who has carried it forward in association with Stern's office after striking out on his own. LeGardeur is also doing other work at Swindler Cove. The first floor has storage for 16 shells, the second has administrative and exercise space and a spectators' deck. Based on collegiate examples, as well as on the boathouses of Philadelphia's Schuylkill River, the bracketed metal roof and board-and-batten siding references the real deal without turning it into Epcot Harlem River.

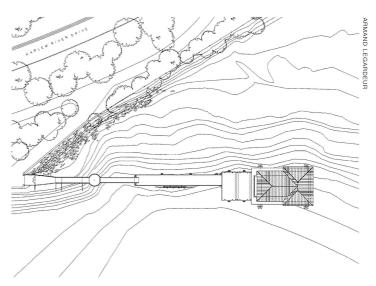
Even the engineers hit the history textbooks. Like the barges that used to launch racing shells at this spot, the Peter Jay Sharp is a floating structure, if now on Styrofoam and concrete blocks. Constructed in Norwalk, the boathouse was delivered by tugboat to its new home and hooked to an impermeable underwater conduit for utility service in June.

While this little-ornamented boathouse is nearer an expression of craft than nostalgic hyperbole, the modern luxury of underwater utilities raises a flag: Rowing is no longer the province of wealthy white men of the past (and thanks to Bette, our next champion could come from Dyckman Houses), and past rowers probably couldn't meet today's rigorous athletic standards. If the engineering of a boathouse has changed dramatically since olden days – and come to think of it, the entire sport of rowing has, too – then perhaps the architecture shouldn't look backward.

David Sokol is managing editor of I.D. magazine.

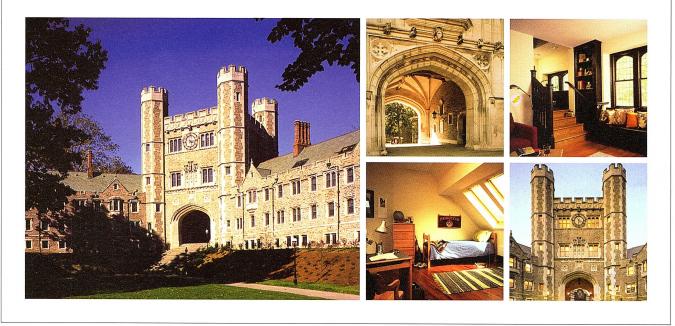


Above: Peter Jay Sharp Boathouse (while still under construction in Norwalk, Connecticut) Below: Site plan





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### Splash Zone: New York's New Waterfront

"Look towards Brooklyn and see all the ferries!" exclaimed Santiago Calatrava, AIA, during his presentation of his 80 South Street tower project at the Center for Architecture this past June. Indeed, look toward the waters that surround Manhattan Island, and you'll see ferries and water taxis scuttling to and from neighboring shores in every direction. You'll also see kayaks and sailboats and jet skis.

The city and the region are doing more than just dipping their toes in the water. According to the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance (MWA), "Despite the barriers posed by former industrial and military properties and landfill sites, remediation and reclamation efforts in the area are currently in the process of reshaping 6,000 acres of waterfront land totaling more than 69 million square feet in new development and more than \$42 billion." Big numbers!

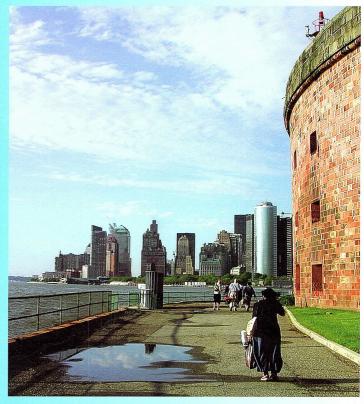
And if the strategies presented at "Blue Links," the MWA's 2004 NY+NJ Waterfront Conference in May are any indication of what's to come, those numbers will only grow. "In the postindustrial, solid-state world, you need less space for everything industrial on the waterfront," says Michael Plottel, AIA, Senior Architect, Empire State Development, and chair of the AIA New York Chapter's Public Architects Committee. "That means hundreds, thousands of acres of shoreline are returning to an unclaimed state; soiled from previous use, but pristine for new ideas."

New York is not unique. The same thing is happening in San Francisco, London, Hong Kong, Rotterdam, Sydney, Nashville – just about every city and town located on every type of waterfront. They are (re)discovering the economic and cultural value of waterfronts that have for too long been over-used, mis-used, or just out-and-out ignored.

Judging by the overwhelming response to Oculus's call for submissions for this issue, one could (figuratively) drown in the number of new waterfront projects that are underway, on the boards, or going through approval processes. That isn't counting the inspiring array of graduate thesis projects and artful proposals we received that, alas, we were not able to include due to space limitations. (Our thanks – and kudos – to all!)

While it would be impossible for a single issue to cover everything that's happening along our waterfronts, we hope that the sampling we have netted – from a floating public pool to New Jersey's Gold Coast – will encourage you to take a stroll to the "blue link" at the end of your street and explore the "emerald necklaces" adorning our shores.





Lower Manhattan from Governors Island

#### eatured:

- Once in a Blue Moon
- Take Me to the Rivers
- New Jersey's Waterfront: Doing it Right
- Civic Lessons at the Water's Edge
- Anatomy of a Townhouse
- Guiding Principles of Large Scale Architectural Design Taking Back the Shore
- Learning from Lower Manhattan:
- **AIA National Conference**

Dive in! Kristen Richards



Richard Rogers Partnership, Sharples, Holden and Pasquarelli Architects (SHoP), and Ken Smith Landscape Architect are working on a comprehensive master plan for the East River from Battery Park to East River Park.

Blue Moon," the latest artwork in Creative Time's Art on the Plaza series, is an installation by artists O+A (Bruce Odland and Sam Auinger) that is literally orchestrated by the moon. The artists encased microphones in "tuning tubes" and secured them to the sea wall of the North Cove at the World Financial Center in order to capture the ambient sounds of the Hudson River, and the tides that shape it, and convert them into music transmitted through five blue cube speakers on the plaza.

Perhaps "Blue Moon" is a metaphor for New York's waterfront during the 20th century: We've had our highs and lows – but for most of the second half of the century, we've been operating at low tide.

Except when "royalty" like the Queen Mary 2 and the Queen Elizabeth 2 comes to town, or leaves, we forget that New York once had a bustling harbor filled with tugboats, ocean liners, and cargo ships. Today, despite outstanding examples of waterfront reclamation and redevelopment including Hudson River Park, the Bronx River Park, Brooklyn Bridge Park, and the Gowanus Canal, the waterfront is still dotted with industrial debris, tow pounds, derelict buildings, and bus garages.

#### **Building a World-Class Waterfront**

That may be changing for the better. "Open space and access" has become the mantra of many civic planners and advocacy groups. According to City Council Member David Yassky, chair of the Council Waterfronts Committee, "The New York City waterfront is undergoing drastic changes from Riverdale to Red Hook. Aggressive redevelopment plans for new housing, ferries, and waterfront-based businesses dot the coastline. I am particularly encouraged by the City's recent investment in the cruise ship industry and a plan to rezone much of the North Brooklyn waterfront to create new housing where old industrial sites lay in ruin. But to make the waterfront truly successful, we have to guarantee open space and access for all New Yorkers."

"London, Copenhagen, Sydney are some of the world-class waterfront cities that are literally reinventing themselves around their waterfronts," says Robert Yaro, president of the Regional Planning Association (RPA). "Even though we are late bloomers, we have an opportunity to learn from their successes and failures." The RPA is working to ensure that the reinvention of the harbor enhances the character of existing waterfront communities, and safeguards the rights of the public to access the shoreline and waters. "People tend to forget we live in an archipelago," Yaro continues. "We need to think of the waterfront as our front door."

Carter Craft, director of the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance (MWA), calls the waterfront "New York's last frontier," and periodically reminds New Yorkers of the Public Trust Doctrine that says waterfront access is a fundamental right of all people. Decisions being made today in Washington, Albany, and City Hall will determine the future of our waterfront for decades to come. To help keep track of new waterfront development opportunities, the MWA created a database in 2000 of proposed, ongoing, and completed construction projects. But what's most pressing on the MWA's agenda is a campaign called "Blue Links." The group devoted its third biannual Waterfront Conference in May to the discussion of the deterioration of bulkheads, problems with ferry wakes, wetlands, brownfields, and waterfront recreation.

At the heart of the Blue Links campaign is a list of 90 bulkheads, ferry and water taxi stops, and promenades that have been identified as deserving of public investment. The MWA submitted this inventory to the federal government for consideration under the Transportation Equity Act. According to Craft, "The waterfront is all the buzz – which is great – but now it's a matter of getting on elected officials to put our money where their mouths are."

#### **Commuters Take to the Water**

Tom Fox was the first president of the Hudson River Park Conservancy. Now, as founder and CEO of New York Water Taxi, he and his partner, real estate developer Douglas Durst, have watched their venture grow from a niche to mass market. In April 2003, approximately 4,000 passengers rode the water taxis. In April 2004, that number exceeded 49,000. To what does Fox attribute this success? New York's version of Venice's *vaporettos* started out to enhance north/south access and egress to Hudson River Park, a five-mile, 550-acre park that starts at Battery Park and ends at 59th Street. Now, the water taxis have opened up neighborhoods such as Long Island City and DUMBO. Fox adds, "Kids love them."

Many New York and New Jersey residents get to work each day by ferry. "We need waterways that connect us, not divide us," says Marian Imperatore, AIA, whose family owns and operates NY Waterway, which has the largest ferry and excursion fleet in the harbor. "What the civic groups have accomplished over the last 20 years is the great push to reclaim the waterfronts for public access and recreation and transportation." A project that has been in the works since the days of the late Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan has focused on creating six ferry slips and a landside bus plaza at West 39th Street. The project, designed by William Nicholas Bodouva + Associates, is expected to be completed in early 2005 [see page 28]. The new midtown ferry terminal will be operated under contract by NY Waterway and open to any private ferry operator authorized by the City. While ferries will go to a number of locations from this terminal, the principal link will be to a new Gruzen Samton-designed ferry terminal owned by the State of New Jersey and operated by NY Waterway in Port Imperial in Weehawken [see page 29].

#### **Different Waterfronts**

New York City has different waterfronts - working waterfront, natural waterfront, and developed waterfront. "I love the twin piers at



O+A's "Blue Moon" cubes broadcast sounds of the tides on the World Financial Center plaza

Christopher Street [Piers 45 and 46 designed by Abel Bainnson Butz]. They're beautiful and fun," says Amanda Burden, chair of the City Planning Commission and director of the Department of City Planning. To say the least, she is in awe of the City's waterfront, and feels New Yorkers need to enjoy and make use of in their everyday lives. As part of Burden's philosophy of "planning from the waterside," the Brooklyn communities of Greenpoint and Williamsburg will take part in the creation of design standards for their own waterfronts. In its Greenpoint-Williamsburg Land Use and Waterfront Plan, the Department of City Planning is proposing zoning changes to allow for housing, open spaces, and a publicly accessible esplanade to coexist with light industry and commercial uses along two miles of Brooklyn's East River waterfront and upland neighborhoods.



Piers 45 and 46 at Christopher Street by Abel Bainnson Butz

Also in the works is a comprehensive master plan for the East River from Battery Park to East River Park, created by the design team of Richard Rogers Partnership, Sharples, Holden and Pasquarelli Architects (SHoP), and Ken Smith Landscape Architect. A project of the New York City Economic Development Corporation and the Department of City Planning, it is part of Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg's vision for lower Manhattan and the creation of a worldclass waterfront with enhanced access, new uses, and lots of public open space. Preliminary concepts for the plan were presented to community leaders, local elected officials, business owners, and residents and more are to follow before the plan is completed in early 2005.

#### **Bold Visions**

Many civic organizations continue to ask: Where is the bold vision for the waterfront? Where is the master plan for the entire waterfront? When will there be coordination between the veritable alphabet soup of federal, state, and city agencies involved in reshaping New York City's waterfront? Maybe we will see this one day. For now, projects seem to "stand alone under a blue moon."

Linda G. Miller is a freelance writer. She most recently served as director of communications at the Municipal Art Society.



William Nicholas Bodouva + Associates: West Midtown Ferry Terminal built around the brick ventilation shafts of the Lincoln Tunnel

Ou don't notice it nearly as much until you get out in the water. The sky. Sailing out and back on the Staten Island Ferry gives you some excellent views of the Manhattan skyline, as well as the promising renovations at the Whitehall and St. George ferry terminals. The trip will remind you of a significant fact: a good bit of the region is under water.

A ferry service from Brooklyn across the East River to Manhattan (then New Amsterdam) started in the early 1640s. Staten Islander Cornelius Vanderbilt made his first fortune running a ferry service. But ferry use peaked in the early 1900s, then faded as bridges and tunnels linked the boroughs together and connected Manhattan and Staten Island to New Jersey.

Today, work is underway on the existing Whitehall and St. George ferry terminals, and new terminals are being constructed along Manhattan's East River and Hudson shores. Currently, New York City's Economic Development Corporation (EDC) is supervising multiple projects, including:

- Rebuilding the Whitehall Ferry Terminal, Lower Manhattan
- Renovating and expanding St. George Ferry Terminal, Staten Island
- Constructing a new West Midtown public ferry terminal at Pier 79 on the Hudson River at West 39th Street
- Implementing new and improved ferry landing sites along the East

River, at the Battery Maritime Building, East 34th Street, East 62nd Street, East 75th Street, and East 90th Street

- Constructing a new pier for ferry and excursion boat service at West 125th Street
- Designing a new ferry landing in Greenpoint, Brooklyn

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey is also constructing a ferry terminal at the World Financial Center.

Frederic Schwartz Architects, architect-of-record TAMS (now Earth Tech), and design consultant Ronald Evitts, AIA, are responsible for the design of the Staten Island Ferry Whitehall Terminal and Peter Minuit Park. For Frederic Schwartz, AIA, it's obvious to ask: Why shouldn't Staten Islanders have as gracious a gateway to Manhattan as those who arrive at Grand Central? This project was "not just about the ferry," Schwartz says. The new terminal had to be properly linked to three subway lines (N/R, 1/9, and 4/5 trains), three bus lines, taxis, bicycles, cars, and pedestrians.

D. Kent Turner, AIA, of Hellmuth, Obata + Kassabaum's (HOK) New York office says his firm's charge was to "create a vision" for the St. George Intermodal Terminal and its Staten Island neighborhood. HOK created a comprehensive master plan for the surrounding area in 1999, and the firm's design for renovation, which aims at making the terminal an "icon," Turner says, will act as an anchor and catalyst for the area.

Schwartz and HOK renovated the Staten Island Ferry terminals



Gruzen Samton: Port Imperial Ferry Terminal in Weehawken, NJ

while keeping them in continuous operation and completely re-routing the bus and car traffic around the buildings.

The ferry terminals "are both architecturally compatible to their environment," says Iris Weinshall, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Transportation, adding "The Whitehall design is aesthetically pleasing and energy efficient, and the St. George Terminal will serve as the cornerstone of a new St. George terminus on Staten Island, which also includes a new [HOK-designed] ballpark and a new Lighthouse Museum."

#### Infrastructure on Top of Infrastructure

In Midtown Manhattan, the West Midtown Ferry Terminal at Pier 79 (39th Street) rises around the brick ventilation shafts of the Lincoln Tunnel, and, according to project manager Marla A. Gayle, AIA, "makes a statement." Bill Bodouva, FAIA, founder and principal of William Nicholas Bodouva + Associates, notes that the glass terminal is designed to stand in contrast to the brick towers, and to draw the eye through. The passageways into the terminal stand like bookends against the towers.

Like both terminals for the Staten Island Ferry, West Midtown has its structural supports designed around infrastructure below it – in this case, resting on a reinforced deck above the three traffic tubes of the Lincoln Tunnel. Like the Staten Island Ferry terminals, it's "intermodal," designed to make moving from bus to its six boat slips of varying heights (and back) quick and easy.

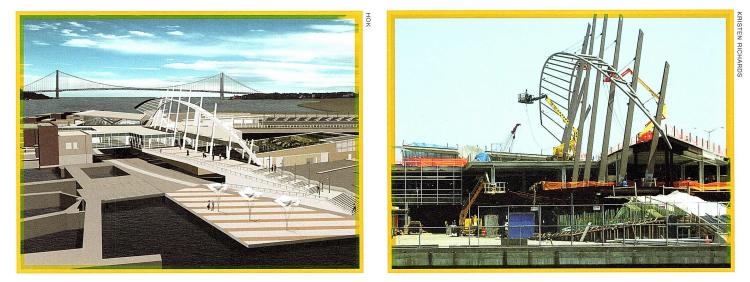
Building near the water brings its own difficulties, says Marty Hirko, assistant vice president of Skanska USA Building's New York Division, who is managing construction at the West Midtown and St. George sites. In addition to the lack of street access on one side of the site, workers must contend with the effects of currents on barges used for construction. At the St. George site, Hirko and the contractors he coordinates have to work while the station is in use, shifting passenger routes through the building. Other challenges include dealing with the dozens of public agencies, departments, commissions, and interest groups requiring permits and approvals.

New and renovated terminals will spur ferry use and transform the waterfront **By Thomas D. Sullivan** 

EDC commissioned Boston-based Kennedy & Violich Architecture (KVA) to design the 34th Street ferry terminal on the East River, in addition to four landings at the Battery Maritime Building, 62nd Street, 75th Street, and 90th Street. KVA principal-in-charge Frano Violich, AIA, explains that EDC charged his firm to create a "coherent family of elements" for the ferry terminals and landings on the East River. "Designing with digital fabrication methods creates a unified urban identity," he says.

#### Green Technology

KVA's East River Ferry Project will employ reflective and translucent materials to echo and amplify the effects of water. Sheila Kennedy, AIA, KVA principal consulting on design, speaks of the forms as "a



Above: HOK: The restoration of the St. George Ferry Terminal on Staten Island includes a 25,000-square-foot expansion for retail/restaurant use and a signature arch Right: St. George terminal's sculptural arch under construction

non-nostalgic approach to the city waterfront."

The facilities are designed to be largely off the power grid, using solar and wind energy to power efficient IT and LED lighting systems via DC current.

HOK and Schwartz Architects have also made significant efforts to reduce energy use in their structures. Joseph Seaman, HOK project manager for the St. George terminal, highlights the sustainable technology applied in the building: the slope of the roof is designed to cut cooling costs, and one section of the roof is planted, reducing reflected solar heat. Part of the content of the paving is recycled fly ash from steel manufacture, and the concrete is finished to reduce heat reflection. Because the terminal is on the migration path of the monarch butterfly, the grounds also include plantings congenial for monarchs.

Over at the Whitehall terminal, a photovoltaic canopy and south facing spandrel panels will provide two percent of the facility's energy. Earth Tech, led by project architect Michael Fonte, AIA, provided construction-phase services. the Authority's former Chief Architect who has moved on to develop transportation projects for STV Inc., designed the facility as a series of structural modules that can be arranged to adapt to multiple ferry sites and boat configurations. The modular structure was developed with Severud Associates.

On the New Jersey shore, the Port Imperial Ferry Terminal in Weehawken, designed by Gruzen Samton, will soon begin construction, expanding NY Waterway's ferry capacity from the west side of the Hudson. The 33,000-square-foot terminal will serve up to 25,000 passengers each day. A triple-height waiting area will offer panoramic views of the New York City skyline.

#### **Ferries and the Future**

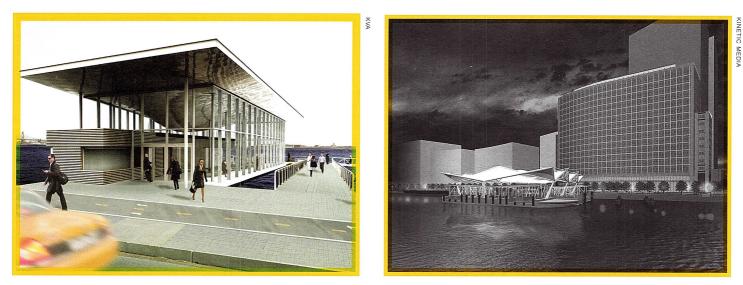
With these new ferry developments, is it reasonable to expect increased ferry use to make significant changes in development? "Attention to redeveloping the waterfront and opening it up to public access is now on everyone's radar screen," says Jeannette R. Rausch, Senior Vice President of EDC. "Waterfront projects tend to be costly and their implementation timely, given the environmental reviews, permitting process, and degree of public interaction required.

Bodouva has included a number of sustainable features at the West Midtown Ferry Terminal, such as a glass perimeter wall to mini-

mize use of artificial light during the daytime and an exterior perforated metal screen to reduce solar heat gain.

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey has developed the World Financial Center Ferry Terminal to be located along the Battery Park City esplanade. Its "open pavilion" design permits unobstructed waterside views and will accommodate multiple ferry operators. The five slip terminal is actually a floating "ship" constructed in drydock. Robert I. Davidson, FAIA,





Above: Kennedy & Violich Architecture: 34th Street ferry terminal on the East River Right: Port Authority of New York and New Jersey: World Financial Center Ferry Terminal

Nevertheless, the combination of projects in the works and those planned is significant. The ferry projects underway are a vital part of this new waterfront." Though she notes, "Ferry service is not typically, however, one of the main drivers for waterfront redevelopment, due to the usually small number of overall passengers it serves, cost, and frequency."

Those who run ferries (boats that hold 100 or more passengers) and water taxis are confident people will increasingly turn to the rivers for transport. "Ferries will be to the 21st-century growth of the New York metropolitan region what subways were to the 20th century," according to Arthur E. Imperatore, Jr., president of NY Waterway, the largest of the private ferry firms operating in New York harbor. "Because of the vision of elected officials in New York and New Jersey, we have developed important partnerships for future growth: The public sector invests in land-based infrastructure while the private sector invests in high-speed, low-wake, low-emission commuter ferries."

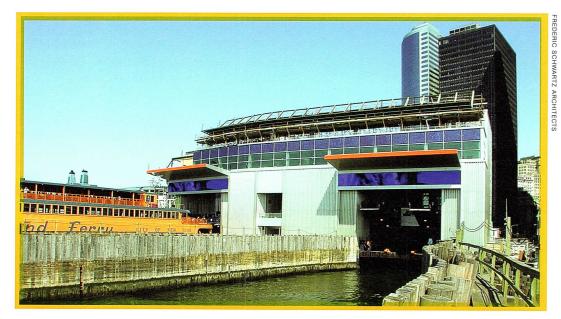
He adds: "With this model of public-private sector partnership, we expect up to 200,000 people to move across the region's waterways on a typical work day by 2020. Given the potential of the waterways that link New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, it is hard to imag-

ine a limit to this growth."

Tom Fox, president of the two-year-old New York Water Taxi, notes that he was born in 1947 – the first generation not to see New York over the bow of a boat. He says that in the April of his firm's first year of service, he had 4,221 passengers. "This April we had 49,952." His goal is "to make travel by boat convenient and fun again."

With the improvements in waterfront infrastructure, ferries will certainly play an increasing part in transit. Alan Olmsted, the executive director of private ferry operations for the New York City Department of Transportation, notes that, since the return of private ferries to New York harbor in 1986, ridership has increased every year (with the exception of 2002-2003, due to the re-opening of the PATH train).

Some continue to hold high hopes for the impact of ferries – and the importance of our waterways. Architect Evitts, who worked on the Whitehall Ferry Terminal with Schwartz, says, "In many ways, the harbor will be central to the city in this century the way Central Park was in the 19th and 20th centuries."



Thomas D. Sullivan, formerly the architecture critic of the *Washington Times*, is a freelance writer and a contributing editor to *Oculus*.

Opposite: Frederic Schwartz Architects: Whitehall Ferry Terminal at the tip of lower Manhattan

Left: LED signage and a photovoltaic canopy top the Whitehall terminal ferry slips

# New Jersey's Volterf

he decline of rail and break-bulk shipping in the second half of the last century left vast amounts of riverfront land on the west bank of the Hudson abandoned. Jersey City and Hoboken were connected to Manhattan by the Hudson and Manhattan Railroad (the Tubes), and the early stations set surrounding land use patterns. It was

because of the proximity to this system and its adjacency to vacant rail yards that the renaissance of the last 20 years was launched.



Jersey City waterfront towers (I-r): Cesar Pelli: 30 Hudson Street; Hartz Mountain: 70 & 90 Hudson Street, Hartz Tower; Fox & Fowle Architects: 99 Hudson Street/Merrill Lynch Development (center); Brennan Beer Gorman Architects: 101 Hudson Street; Beyer Blinder Belle Architects: 10 Exchange Place

In contrast to East River initiatives in Queens and Brooklyn, the focus in New Jersey has been on the public investment in infrastructure and transportation. The results have been the creation of a light rail system, the expansion of ferry service, and local initiatives coordinated to support redevelopment. The net effect has been the largest development boom that the area has experienced since rail service first reached the Hudson in the early 1800s.

The reintroduction of ferry service by NY Waterway in the late 1980s also helped to transform the area. Today, ferries carry close to seven percent of all trans-Hudson commuters. All major mixed-use developments on New Jersey's "Gold Coast" – from Port Imperial in the north, south to the Military Ocean Terminal in Bayonne – now have, or soon will have, ferry service. Some of these routes have been so successful that major expansions are planned, notably in Hoboken, where New Jersey Transit (NJT) and the Port Authority are redeveloping the old ferry slips for use as a permanent terminal, and in Weehawken, where a new terminal at Port Imperial designed by Gruzen Samton is due to break ground in August.

"This public and private investment in trans-Hudson ferry infrastructure has proven to be a crucial catalyst in redevelopment efforts," notes Arthur Imperatore, Jr., President and CEO of Arcorp Properties, a group of companies that includes NY Waterway. "A quick glance at the real estate section of any Sunday newspaper in New Jersey will often feature proximity to a ferry terminal as a major selling point for commercial and residential tenants."

New Jersey's waterfront has also benefited from the construction of the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Transit System (HBLRT), which was conceived over 20 years ago to capitalize on growing development interest in the western edge of the Hudson as a back-office environment for Manhattan.

#### **Connecting North to South**

The HBLRT includes 20 miles of track and 32 stations. The first phase of construction extended the system south from Hoboken, and opened in April 2000. The second phase will extend north from Hoboken, and is expected to open later this year.

NJT initially faced stiff local resistance to the project. As a consequence, it hired the architectural engineering firm of Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas to develop an Urban Design Guidelines Handbook for the project. The firm's multi-disciplinary team identified urban design issues, made specific design recommendations, and created materials to communicate the project concept to local officials and stakeholders.

As the project was planned and implemented, developers' attitudes began to change. Because waterfront projects require waterfront development permits from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, NJT was able to work with developers to guarantee permits for development along the system in exchange for free easements along and through adjacent properties that were necessary to build the system.

However, NJT was not always so development-friendly. Alex Twining, President of Metro-Nexus and the former Director of Real Estate for Colgate-Palmolive Company, directed the planning, development, and leasing of the Colgate Center project in the early 1990s. He notes that establishing light rail at the site was a major battle. "NJT feared delays that might be caused by running through the Center and then through the Paulus Hook and Van Vorst neighborhoods, so

# Ont Doing it Right

they decided to avoid the site," Twining recalls. "That meant not servicing a complex with six million square feet of office space, and thousands of commuters."

Members of the local neighborhood were also concerned. They recognized that if Colgate did not get HBLRT service, then thousands of cars would travel through local streets to reach the Colgate site. After a two-year battle with Colgate and the community, NJT redesigned the system to serve Colgate and the neighborhood. Since the system opened, over two million square feet of new office space has been built, including 30 Hudson Street by Cesar Pelli and Associates. Future plans also include a new facility for Merrill Lynch, designed by Fox & Fowle.

"Colgate was planned to be a community served by light rail, ferry, and PATH," observes Bruce Fowle, FAIA, designer of the Merrill Lynch project. "This was designed with a strong sense of place, unified street walls, retail activity, and a definitive public realm." Conversely, according to Fowle, some of the older projects to the north appear to never have been planned for pedestrians. "The buildings, both residential and commercial, are isolated, unrelated objects, which are almost totally dependent on vehicular access. The result is an urbanscaled suburban-like area without the amenities of cohesive landscape, intimacy of scale, and retail continuity."

## **Jersey City's Transformation**

Jersey City offers an example of a city where successful transportation and infrastructure initiatives have transformed the urban streetscapes. "Light rail, ferries, buses, and PATH have all made it easier to work here, live here, and not own a car," notes Jersey City Planning Director, Robert Cotter, AICP. "Walking has become enjoyable." In the future, the western extension of the light rail will allow Jersey City to expand from the downtown financial district to the west side. A recent redevelopment plan allows residential use on former industrial land that was once served by freight rail. Ground was broken for the first 72 condo-townhouses at the Residences at West Side Station in April of this year.

# **Reshaping Hoboken**

Describing another waterfront success story north of Jersey City, John Shapiro, AICP, a planning principal with Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates (PPSA), states, "Gritty Hoboken is now Manhattan's sixth borough – having incorporated important lessons about land use and transit. Hoboken, only one square mile in size, is now a subway suburb – a cross between Chelsea and Williamsburg."

Along the waterfront, new parks and LRT service have generated



Waterfront redevelopment in Hoboken includes a pier park designed by Cassandra Wilday, and restoration of the 70-acre ferry/rail complex master planned by STV and Beyer Blinder Belle Architects.

major housing and office development in what was once rail and shipyards. A team of consultants, led by PPSA and including Fox & Fowle, created a new master plan for Hoboken that was officially adopted in April of this year.

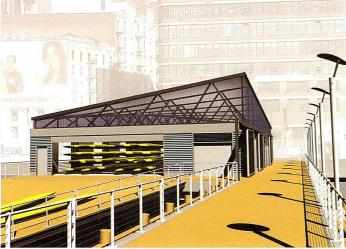
Recreation was considered paramount in a growing city where half of the residents are in their 20s and 30s. Strategies include a kayaking and boating cove, a green bicycle/rollerblade circuit for the entire city, and a doubling of active park space. Historic preservation is also important, but with guidelines that allow contemporary interpretations. Additionally, LEED standards will be adopted into zoning and codes. Green roofs will be the norm, not the exception. Parking will be shared or reduced, and parking lots will be prohibited. Formerly industrial streets will be "calmed" and "treed;" new plazas will be created.

There are many lessons learned from the planning in Hoboken. "Development creates density but not urbanity," Shapiro notes, adding, "Guidelines don't create great architecture, just better contexts. Affordable housing is important to maintaining social diversity, not just increasing the inventory. Planning can address quality of life not just land use regulations." In conclusion, he observes, "Maybe its time for Manhattan to learn from Hoboken?"

Mark Strauss, FAIA, AICP, is Principal-in-Charge of Planning for Fox & Fowle Architects. The firm he co-founded in 1993, Jambhekar Strauss Architects, was the architect and planner for the Secondary Operating System section of the Hudson Bergen Light Rail Transit System. Jambekar Strauss merged with Fox & Fowle in 2000.

# Civic Lessons

n a recent visit to his office, Richard Dattner, FAIA, showed a visitor a 60-foot-long plan for developing Manhattan's entire Hudson River shoreline, dating from1968. Approximately 50 volunteer architects, planners, and students designed it for Manhattan Borough then President Percy Sutton, with Dattner as one of the project's ringmasters. While it was the first time Richard Dattner & Partners Architects (RDP) had clients. But while mastering the process of working for the public sector, Dattner has articulated a design philosophy for civic architecture that has resulted in a consistently refreshing body of completed projects throughout the five boroughs. They range from libraries and schools to sports facilities and waterside parks. And they call to mind such precedents as the early 20th-century Carnegie libraries, handsome, quiet buildings that brought a sense of permanence



engaged the waterfront, it was certainly not the last. Significant examples of the firm's civic architecture on the water's edge include sanitation facilities, parks and recreation centers, a series of pavilions for Coney Island, and a return to the river with the next phase of the Hudson River waterside park development from 29th to 59th Streets.

Most of the firm's projects are for city and state agencies, which, with their cumbersome selection and review procedures, can be demanding and opportunity to many New York City neighborhoods.

Probably the most famous and largest of RDP's waterside projects is Riverbank State Park, where the firm transformed the roof of a 28-acre sewage treatment plant into the secondbusiest state park in the state. New York City offered the park to the West Harlem community to compensate for locating the plant at its western edge. What Harlem residents got is a halfmile-long, indoor-outdoor complex of sports, cultural, and recreation facilities. RDP nurtured the project over the last 14 of the 24 years it was being planned, working with community groups, government agencies, and engineers, until its opening in 1993. It was a demonstration of the firm's ability to turn sanitation facilities, usually at the top of any neighborhood's NIMBY list, into vital community additions.

Other sanitation projects include 11 waterfront sludge and sewage treatment plants built in Brooklyn and Staten around plant stacks; and earth berms. The resulting facilities' stylishness and their honest display of the buildings' functions helped sell them to their communities.

The firm often takes contextual cues from earlier public buildings; in this case it was solid, handsome Art Deco waste facilities of the 1920s with bas-reliefs of heroic workers.

In other projects, the firm often incorporates a wavy form that Dattner adapted from the



Left: Hudson River Park boathouse Above: A Hudson River Park "stepdown" at West 56th Street

Island between 1989 and 1996. Some architects would try to hide them; Dattner did just the opposite. Working with prime contractor Stone & Webster/ Hazen & Sawyer, Engineers, the office developed a prototype facility: a façade consisting of wide, contrasting light and dark tan bands of precast concrete panels; modular window walls to show the massive vats inside; blue aluminum cornice and sun shade units that break the façade wall; pyramid skylights

wall serpentine used at Jefferson's University of Virginia. The form appears as the roofline for a series of seven Coney Island precast concrete and masonry pavilions. Here, as in their waste facilities prototype, RDP wraps the buildings in alternating light and dark bands of precast concrete. Sturdy, playful, elegant, they dot a twomile stretch of the beach, functioning as shade pavilions, lifeguard stands, comfort stations, and concession areas.

# at the Water's Edge: Richard Dattner & Partners Architects

In designing a prototype for Marine Transfer Stations, the inspiration was the industrial vernacular of the New York waterfront – the large metal sheds and storage facilities that used to dot the shoreline. RDP has completed three Marine Transfer Stations based on that prototype, with eight more projects under consideration for locations in Manhattan and Brooklyn.

Now RDP is again creating parkland along the Hudson, designing two segments of Hudson River Park which, when completed, will extend all along the western edge of Manhattan. Together with landscape architects MKW + Associates, RDP is creating the 30-block-long portion between 29th and 59th Streets along the Hudson. The designers divided the esplanade into three sections. The southern end has the greatest density of natural plantings; the middle section has an international flavor suggested by the cruise ships that dock there; and the northern section has a garden, classroom, and children's playground to engage the Clinton neighborhood.

RDP is designing three boathouses to be constructed on rebuilt piers. They follow a simple industrial prototype, jazzed by the swoosh of a torqued roofline. The outer end of each pier will conclude with a "get down," a series of steps which will lower the height of the pier about 30 inches, and allow visitors to get closer to the river's ebb and flow. There will also be restaurant, café, and community facilities based on a common prototype, with landscaped roofs making a green connection with the park landscape. The facilities include a number of "green" design strategies such as sun shading, use of recyclable materials, and natural ventilation.

The centerpiece of the park will be a 685-foot-long rebuilt pier extending from West 44th Street. The plaza entrance will feature a display fountain; a curved facility housing a restaurant, concession stand, retail, and restrooms; and a neighborhood garden. The pier will have an interactive playground; boathouse, adjacent dock, and floating dock; a grass lawn shaded by trees; and a concluding "get down" with a "hook," a much thinner, 74-foot-long pier extending farther out into the water.

Making a civic building a public amenity isn't a new idea. But this is an age where infrastructure tax dollars are stretched thin. Less visible, outlying communities are frequently burdened with the facilities that those with more political clout won't take, and the chances for second-rate design are that much greater. Where some firms might take the often low fees and run, the Dattner office has produced buildings that have a sense of dignity, graciousness, and even gentle humor. They are reminders of the possibilities of civic vision.

Richard Staub is a marketing consultant and writer who focuses on issues important to the design and building community.



Above: Coney Island pavilions Below: Riverbank State Park: 28 acres atop a sewage treatment plant on the Hudson River



Anatomy of a

n the heart of the waterfront district on Manhattan's East River, where architecturally distinctive projects abound, 80 South Street is a true first, both in its construction and its unusual finance plan. At first, the plan for an 835-foot-tall tower seems fantastical: 12 glazed four-story cubes, 45 feet to a side, cantilevered from a transverse concrete elevator core, and stabilized by slender metal piers at either end.

For Santiago Calatrava, AIA, New York is a nodal point of post-war American art as well as a fabled island of skyscrapers and breathtaking suspension bridges that meld with his own aesthetic of employing torsion and cantilevering in construction. His delicate, transparent tower is essentially an expression of this poetic vision of New York.

"The best attribute of New York is that it is a city of today," Calatrava declares. "It is a city of all days. It is comparable to Paris at the turn of the last century, where there were so many artists. I came here to get involved in this spirit."

Calatrava's ambition is greater than just adding a sculptural object to the skyline; he desires nothing less than to create a new skyscraper typology, based in his own analytic minimalist expression of the human form.

He is a gentle iconoclast who combines the aesthetics of an abstract sculptor, the rigor of a Spanish architectural education at the Escuela Tecnica Superior de Arquitectura in his home of Valencia, and the precision of a Swiss engineer, from his training at Zurich's Federal Institute of Technology.

His first major commissions in the mid-1980s included Zurich's Stadelhofen Railway Station, with its free-flowing circulation and the Bach de Roda Bridge for the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona, which established his signature style of expressing movement and natural forms in radical new methods of structure and counterbalance. His expansion of the Milwaukee Art Museum in 2001 features a movable louvered roof that recalls the articulated feathers of a bird's wing.

Eighty South Street, like that of its neighbor, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill's former U.S. Steel Building (now One Liberty Plaza), or like the boldly braced John Hancock Center in Chicago, is nominally an enframed structure with a steel exoskeleton, but with a difference.

"In 80 South Street, the exoskeleton is deeply intimated in the nature of the object," says the architect.

Calatrava speaks about the high degree of control required to express the human form in the reductionist language of minimalism, but his eyes crinkle with delight as he talks about his passion for Brancusi and his countrymen Juan Gris and Picasso. His own Matisse-like watercolors adorn his New York apartment walls, their forms paralleling the dance-like expression in the figure-based postures of his buildings.

Calatrava's designs incorporate human anatomy, gestural and dance-like movement, and a sense of metamorphosis from stasis to motion. "The idea of transformation, of metamorphosis, is a mother of





Above: Calatrava next to a prototype of the building (illuminated white cubes), and an earlier sculptural variation, in his townhouse. Left: 80 South Street

evolution in architecture," he said in a 1997 lecture series at M.I.T. "We are maturing in our needs and in our understanding of culture so that now is the moment to introduce those components into architecture in a major way."

The design of 80 South Street originated in a tabletop sculpture Calatrava created 15 years ago as an experiment in how vertebrae support the human torso in flexible suspension. The light-filled parlor floor of his Park Avenue townhouse serves as a gallery for his sculptural variations on the theme, including "twisted torso," which inspired an apartment tower in Malmö, Sweden, that topped off in July. New Yorkers will now have the chance to see

Santiago Calatrava and Frank Sciame's castle in the air at 80 South Street By Eric P. Nash

# nouse

his mental process realized as a full-blown tower.

As Calatrava flips through floor plans, he points out that each cube is an individual four-story townhouse in the sky, with the top of one cube serving as a terrace to the next. A cultural institution like the Hispanic Museum may occupy the eight-story base, which conforms to the low-set character of the neighboring waterfront buildings.

"Each apartment has a view in all four directions," Calatrava says. "You have a wonderful view with the East River and the bridges there. Each cube has its own elevator. The building doesn't have any columns inside, so you can do the *plan libre*, as Corbusier said. There is complete flexibility." Even if you are nowhere near the estimated \$130 million price tag for a cubic townhouse, you suddenly crave one.

What looks like a Modernist gesture imposed on the cityscape turns out to be surprisingly contextual: Calatrava points out that the staggered cubes and sculptural mast reflect the setbacks and spires of classic downtown Deco skyscrapers, such as the cascading curtain wall of Ely Jacques Kahn's nearby 120 Wall Street, or the needle spire of 70 Pine Street, illuminated from within like a fantasy of German Expressionist Glass Architecture.

Developer Frank J. Sciame, Jr. is a contemporary version of the Renaissance merchant prince who wants to make the artist's vision come true. In his temporary quarters in an old commercial building on the site itself, he steeples his fingers and smoothly transitions into his pitch.

"Real estate and art have historically been good investments," Sciame says. "We want to find collectors of contemporary art who recognize that this would be a place to showcase their art and an opportunity to live in art."

He is not going the usual route of approaching real-estate brokers to set a market price. "What would one pay for a penthouse on top of the Guggenheim Museum?" he asks by way of an analogy. "Someone suggested we auction off the top cube at Sotheby's to set the market." The design pushes the price of the units into the stratosphere, not only because significant floor space had to be sacrificed to conform to zoning codes, but also because Sciame is committed to building Calatrava's design as it exists on paper.

"When I put on my construction manager's hat, there's a difference between V.E., or value engineering, and D.E., which is design elimination, and it seems to get blurred," Sciame says. "You go from V.E. to D.E. in short order. We are going to build the structure and systems as cost effectively as we can, but we are not going to touch the design." In a sense, the history of Manhattan has come full circle in the wake of the tragedy of 9/11, as the focus of urban and cultural life returns to its historic roots in Lower Manhattan and the harbor front that gave birth to the city.

"The bold vision the public sector has for Ground Zero has



Sciame with a model detail

enabled the private sector to do something like 80 South Street," Sciame says. "This is the time to do a building like this, on this site. Lower Manhattan in five to ten years will not only become the emotional soul of the city, it will also be the most vibrant neighborhood."

At the turn of the 19th century it was difficult to convince the city's plutocracy to move from their limestone townhouses into apartments. "The very rich did not wish to live in apartment houses, nor near apartment houses," architectural historian Elizabeth Hawes notes in *New York, New York: How the Apartment House Transformed the Life of the City (1869-1930).* Early grand apartment complexes like the Upper West Side's Apthorp and the Belnord were designed with long horizontal lines between each floor to give the sense of separate dwellings.

Now, Calatrava's cube completes the cycle by extending the townhouse vertically into the sky. Each townhouse can even have its own terrace garden, like "Skyscraper Theorem" featured in Rem Koolhaas's *Delirious New York*, a 1909 cartoon of an 84-story steel-frame supporting Shingle-Style cottages complete with outbuildings and cypress-tree landscaping.

No matter how much the city changes, some things remain constant: in a delirious gesture, the occupants of 80 South Street will have the option to add the quintessential Old Dutch design element of a stoop hundreds of feet above street level to complete their townhouses in the sky.

Eric P. Nash is the author of *Manhattan Skyscrapers* (Princeton Architectural Press, 1999), and co-author with Randall C. Robinson, Jr., of *MiMo: Miami Modernism Revealed*, to be published this fall by Chronicle Books.

# Guiding Principle

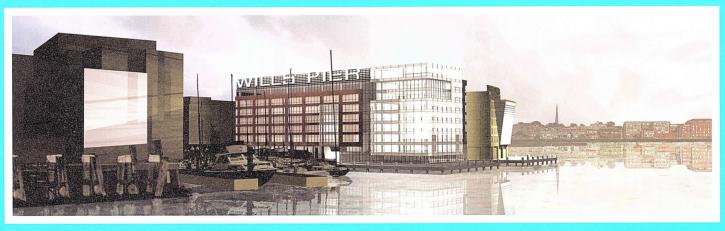
n architectural master plan offers a design that will guide the city for centuries to come. The architect takes what has been learned from past large-scale design successes and failures, and incorporates this knowledge into future designs for neighborhoods, commercial centers, civic centers – and waterfronts. The design should not be radically new for the sake of novelty, with no resemblance to what exists; it must be a reasonable imagining and interpretation of the city's evolution. We must always be mindful that most large-scale master plans never even get built. The genius is to ensure that they do.

should be the driving force behind the criteria for its development. This is what has happened and continues to happen around the country: in Long Beach, California; Baltimore's Inner Harbor; the Yonkers waterfront; and many other success stories.

## 2. Emphasize the public environment

In large-scale architectural projects, the emphasis has always been on the public environment: the public sector planning the infrastructure, and the private sector building the buildings.

The public environment creates real estate values. Park Avenue



Wills Pier, Harbor Point, Baltimore, MD

There are certain principles relevant to the success of all largescale development:

- 1. Integrate with and enhance what already exists
- 2. Emphasize the public environment
- 3. Learn from precedents
- 4. Realize a near-term vision
- 5. And for waterfronts: Start with a water plan (not a land plan)

Following these principles, it becomes clear that in the end the success of any large-scale design isn't based on an individual building or architect. People might not recognize the address, but rather they will recognize the ensemble and the PLACE.

## 1. Integrate with and enhance what already exists

The architect's master plan should be an integral part of what is already there. The plan should enhance an area, not be separate from it. The site itself is a part of a much larger area than just the immediate focus.

Until recently, the use of waterfronts – the foundation of growth of most of America's major cities – has not been as evolved as other parts of the city. Our first obligation is to tend to and improve surviving buildings, businesses, and places. We need to take what is "rooted" in these areas, whether it is the Far Rockaways, Newark, Washington, D.C., San Diego, or Los Angeles, and build upon it. The marketplace and its people – the history, the culture, the architecture, the experience – and Battery Park City in New York, Union Square in San Francisco, and Lake Shore Drive in Chicago are great examples of places created by these partnerships.

While the public environment is the inspiration for the Design, we cannot forget that private development is the means to achieve it. The buildings, therefore, have to be economically feasible – beginning with satisfying the current market criteria – and must be designed to execute a larger vision.

The public must first create functionality, or the infrastructure, to be able to erect the buildings and create places with comfort, safety, a pleasing appearance, convenience, and access to public transit. At the same time, we must ensure flexibility for the private sector to respond to the ever-changing marketplace.

# **3. Learn from precedents**

Most large-scale development projects never materialize. (And some that did shouldn't have.) We can learn from history what not to do, and what can be done.

What we do before a pencil even touches a drawing board is look, listen, and learn. We look at the site; we listen to what the stakeholders want; and we learn about the history and culture of the area. Only then do we understand what is needed to meet the client's and the community's needs.

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# of Large-Scale Architectural Design

The Fifth Principles Start with a water plan (not a land plan) By Stanton Eckstut, FAIA, and Peter David Cavaluzzi, AIA

After 15 years and numerous plans that tried to "re-invent" New York on the landfill from the World Trade Center site, the Battery Park City project was on the verge of bankruptcy. Then we spent only 12 weeks putting together a design that was about accepting and interpreting New York City. Today you see the ever-growing results that came from a city's understanding of itself.

South Beach in Miami was a revitalization of what used to be – and has become again – one of the great hospitality centers in America. This is nothing new; the dynamic and ostentatious nature that has so much to do with its success was already there, and simply needed to be brought back to life and modernized for today.

We are not creating new cities, but redesigning and evolving the city that is already here.

# 4. Realize a near-term vision

Large-scale projects fail because they can't get started. Yet it is nearly impossible for large-scale developments to be completed all at once. Portions must be realized in a short period of time (three to five years) to establish the vision of the design. If the first phase is not implemented expeditiously, the plan will lose credibility. It needs an initial impetus to drive the inertial market forces forward, and then the growth will become exponential. With Battery Park City, Rector Place was built as soon as possible so that the community, as well as the developers, had a sense of the future within the present. At Arverneby-the-Sea in The Rockaways, after 50 years of "selecting" a developer, it took just 30 months after the selection of Benjamin & Beechwood to complete Phase 1 this past spring.

Baltimore's Inner Harbor began with the vision of James Rouse in the 1960s. The first part was completed in the early 1970s, and there has been continuous growth through the 1990s with Inner Harbor East. Now, nearly 40 years later, the last piece of the design, Harbor Point, is being completed.

The beginning phase must be linked to the existing adjacent investments in the city. In other words, we leverage the existing city and make it an essential component of the new plan. What can get built sooner needs to be built sooner. Again, this has to be marketdriven. What already exists often meets these criteria.

# 5. Start with a water plan (not a land plan)

In any successful waterfront plan, the Water Plan informs the Land Plan. What happens in the water should be a major factor in what happens on land. The Water Plan should generate as much excitement and economically viable activities in the water as on the ground, whether for port, recreation, entertainment, or educational uses. This approach has proven successful on waterfronts in America and around the world.

# **Principles into Practice**

Since there are no set formulas for an architect's master plan, and all projects are different, these guiding principles help everyone involved and interested in the project answer the most important question: What are we trying to design?

Once there is an understanding of this, then and only then, can an architectural master plan be created that will become a reality.

Stanton Eckstut, FAIA, is a founding principal of New York City-based Ehrenkrantz Eckstut & Kuhn Architects. Peter David Cavaluzzi, AIA, is a Design Principal with the firm.



## Above: Queensway Bay, Long Beach, CA

Below: Arverne-by-the-Sea, a large mixed-use development in The Rockaways, took 50 years of planning and 30 months to complete Phase 1 housing.



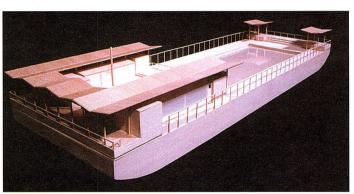
# Taking Back the Shore

A sampling of projects that are reclaiming for public use miles of New York Harbor and its rivers' shoreline

By Linda G. Miller

# Floating Swimming Pool, Brooklyn Jonathan Kirschenfeld Architects

Feel like taking a swim in the East River? By the summer of 2005, you'll be able to – in a 25-meter pool on a floating barge moored on the Brooklyn side of the East River. Early 20th-century New York City had as many as 15 floating bathhouses tied to piers along the East and Hudson Rivers. Inspired by these early bathhouses, the Neptune Foundation commissioned Jonathan Kirschenfeld, R.A., to design the competition-size pool on a 205-foot-long steel-deck barge, which the architect likens to a modern version of a 1950s style cabana club. The barge has locker rooms, showers, and a snack bar around a raised court overlooking the pool.



The pool will act as a kind of "migrating recreation pier" – since its site might vary from summer to summer. The NYC Parks Department and the NYC Economic Development Corporation are collaborating with the Neptune Foundation to determine how the moving barge might serve neighborhoods that lack direct access to public pool facilities.

# Schaefer Brewery Site, Williamsburg, Brooklyn Gene Kaufman Architect and Karl Fischer Architecte

The longest operating brewery in New York City, the F. & M. Schaefer Brewing Company closed its doors in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, in 1976, and the City subsequently demolished the brewery. By the time redevelopment began last year the only remnants of the area's use as a brewery were the foundation, brownfields that had to be cleaned, and M3 zoning for manufacturing. That zoning was changed to R73 – residential for waterfront projects – paving the way for the new project on the site designed by Gene Kaufman Architect and Karl Fischer Architecte.

The 600,000-square-foot complex includes three towers of 25, 15, and 14 stories, with 350 market rate condos and subsidized apartments, retail, and a parking garage. Residents whose units face the East River will have a view of the 38,200-square-foot public space being designed by Abel Bainnson Butz. This will include a 325-linear-foot wood deck waterfront esplanade, custom-designed bulkhead

railing, benches, a patio overlook with an arbor, and game tables and chairs. It is expected that the esplanade will eventually continue to the north and south when adjacent sites are developed in the future. The \$100 million project, one of the first to use the city's new waterfront zoning code designed to improve public access while providing a framework for redeveloping waterfront properties, should be ready for occupancy by 2006.

# Kedem Winery Site, Williamsburg, Brooklyn Pasanella + Klein Stolzman + Berg Architects

In 2001, kosher vintner Royal Wine Corp. relocated the Kedem Winery, directly north of the Schaefer Brewery site, to New Jersey. The owners are in the process of redeveloping the site to house members of Williamsburg's Hasidic community. Pasanella + Klein Stolzman + Berg Architects was hired to conduct a study to develop the site to provide residential, retail, and park space.



The Kedem plan calls for three large inter-connected towers with more than 400 residential units. Among the features designed specifically with Hasidic residents in mind are a synagogue, and terraces that have an unobstructed view of the sky in accordance with religious law for the observance of the holiday of *Sukkot*. A park and waterside promenade are part of a larger municipal program to improve waterfront access along the East River.

# Island Hopping with Beyer Blinder Belle

"The waterfront has always been our beat," says Beyer Blinder Belle partner John H. Beyer, FAIA, recalling one of the firm's earliest projects – working with the Greenwich Village Waterfront Community Association. Beyer has lived two blocks from the Hudson River for years. Perhaps that's why he has a special affinity for the waterfront and the architectural and planning waterfront projects the firm has been engaged in.

One of the firm's most noted waterfront projects began in 1980 when, as the architect-of-record for the Statue of Liberty/Ellis Island Foundation and the National Park Service, the firm produced the Concept Master Plan for the 27-acre Ellis Island. In 1990, the firm completed the restoration of the Boring & Tilton-designed Main Registry Building for use as the Ellis Island Immigration Museum. Beyer Blinder Belle is now developing a concept plan for the preservation and reuse of the 29 abandoned structures on the island's south side.



Above: A contemporary canopy of tempered glass, steel, and granite leads to the entrance of the Ellis Island Immigration Museum Right: South Street Seaport Museum complex

The firm also has a history with Governors Island, beginning in 1997 with a commission from the General Services Administration to begin a planning study for the future reuse of the island. The Governors Island Land Use Study incorporated common planning elements such as public access, transportation and infrastructure, public open space, and a landmark historic district. The study proposed six land-use scenarios, including academic, recreational, mixed-use, and maximum development.

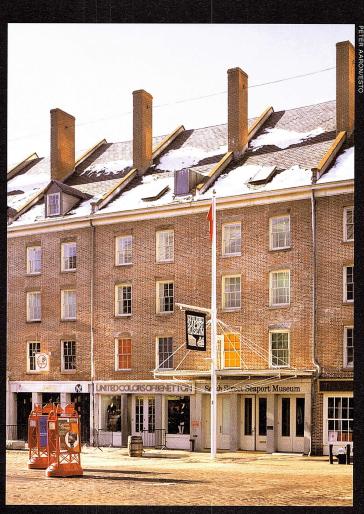
In 2003, the Federal Government transferred the 172-acre island to the City and State of New York and the National Park Service. Currently, Beyer Blinder Belle is a member of the team working with the National Park Service to create the General Management plan for the 22-acre park on the north side of the island that includes the two historic forts – Fort Jay and Castle William – and several other historic buildings. The Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation (GIPEC) is directing the overall plan for the remainder of the island with Ehrenkrantz Eckstut & Kuhn Architects.

Over on the East River, the new South Street Seaport Museum complex, completed last fall, awaits the installation of its permanent exhibition, "World Port New York," which will open in 2005. Beyer Blinder Belle developed a master plan for the internal renovation and joining of Schermerhorn Row, a block of circa 1812 Federal-style warehouse buildings that extends along Fulton Street from Front to South Streets. The first two floors are retail space; floors three through five have seven galleries per floor for a total of 30,000 square feet of new exhibition space.

Beyer Blinder Belle organized the various components of the museum around a new central court enclosed by skylights. Far from being a "white box" museum, the original masonry walls and beams are industrial artifacts that add to the authenticity of the galleries.

Across the Hudson, the firm served as general design consultant, along with prime consultant STV, to create a comprehensive master plan for the \$300 million restoration of the 70-acre Hoboken Terminal and Yard complex, including the restoration the 90-year-old terminal's Beaux-Arts waiting room.

When asked to name the best of his firm's waterfront project, John Beyer replies, "My favorite waterfront project is our next waterfront project."



OCULUS SUMMER 04

# Newtown Creek Water Treatment Plant, Greenpoint, Brooklyn

**Polshek Partnership** 

Newtown Creek flows west for three and a half miles between the boroughs of Queens and Brooklyn before emptying into the East River. On the Brooklyn bank of the creek, the Polshek Partnership, in association with environmental engineering firms Greeley and Hansen, Hazen and Sawyer, and Malcolm Pirnie, is building a wastewater treatment plant for the NYC Department of Environmental Protection. The \$2.3 billion project will replace an outmoded and environmentally unsound facility. The 54-acre site is being designed and constructed in phases over a 10-year period and will remain fully operational throughout the process. Completion is scheduled for 2010.



Large areas of glass provide natural light in machinery rooms. Perimeter green space buffers the plant from the street. There are two "1%-for-Art" projects on the perimeter of the plant: environmental artist George Trakas is building a promenade along Newtown Creek, and Vito Acconci is creating a series of fountains and fences along Greenpoint Avenue. The project has received two Awards for Excellence in Design from the NYC Art Commission for its sensitivity to the challenge of locating a large-scale industrial project within a residential neighborhood.

# Pier 94, West 54th Street

# **Handel Architects**

Wedged between the Westside Highway and the Hudson River at 54th Street is Pier 94, a venue for fashion, gift, and antique shows. Bounded by Pier 92 (where the Queen Mary 2 berths) and Clinton



Cove Park, the facility is undergoing a \$13.5 million interior and exterior facelift by Handel Architects for trade show producer ENK International and Washington Square Partners. Currently used on a show-by-show basis, Pier 94 will be expanded by 2005 to about 190,000 square feet to accommodate mid-size trade shows and exhibitions. The building and adjacent pier apron renovation will include a new weather-tight exterior wall, brand new HVAC, electrical, and fire protection upgrades, and new entry façade and signage visible from the highway. For zoning approval, the design includes public access to the riverfront with new paving, lighting, railing, and seating that link the project to the adjacent Clinton Cove Park.

# Icahn Stadium and Randall's and Wards Island Park Master Plan Hillier and Ricardo Zurita Architecture & Planning





**TILLIEF** 

Visible from the East Side of Manhattan is the new state-of-the-art Icahn Stadium for outdoor track and field on Randall's Island. Situated on a 25acre site on the East River, the venue, which will be completed this fall, will host local, national, and international competitions. The \$40 million

project, designed by project architect Hillier and associate architect Ricardo Zurita, will contain a 400-meter running track flanked by covered spectator seating for 10,000.

Zurita also completed the master plan for all 480 acres of Randall's Island and neighboring Ward's Island for the Randall's Island Sports Foundation. The \$103 million project calls for more than 70 playing fields for every manner of field sport, as well as a ferry marina, administration facilities, nature and visitors center, music amphitheater, water park, a road and a waterfront pathway system, and other amenities. The entire four-phase project is expected to be completed by 2008.



# Spotlight

## Westward: Queens West

Queens West, considered to be one of New York's largest and most exciting mixed-use developments in years, comprises 74 acres of prime waterfront property across the East River from the U.N. The multi-billion dollar project, which already boasts a new public school and waterfront parks, consists of distinct neighborhoods created during four development stages. The Queens West Development Corp., a subsidiary of New York State's Empire Development Corp., is overseeing several projects within the parcel that was formerly an underutilized industrial area.





Until Cesar Pelli's 42-story City Lights at Queens Landing opened in 1997, the Citicorp building was the only tower in the skyline on the Queens side of the East River. Pelli's 522-unit luxury residential building is a short walk from Gantry Plaza State Park, designed by Thomas Balsley Associates with Sowinski Sullivan Architects and Lee Weintraub, which opened in 1998.

Currently under construction is Avalon Riverview II, the second of three towers designed by Perkins Eastman Architects. The new 40story residential tower with 550 units, 30,000 square feet of commercial space, and five-story parking structure with a rooftop terrace, will become neighbor to the complex's existing 32-story tower.

The bright red neon Pepsi-Cola sign that has served as the unofficial "Welcome to Long Island City" greeting since it was erected in 1936 is perhaps one of New York's best-loved signs. The sign was recently moved – letter-by-letter – from the roof of the closed Pepsi plant to a temporary location 300 feet away. The sign will eventually become the center of attraction in a 22-acre Queens West development being designed by Arquitectonica for Rockrose. Here, seven glass apartment towers varying from seven to 35 stories and containing 3,000 apartments, retail, restaurants, and other amenities will soon rise; 13.5 acres of parks and public spaces are also in the works. Other members of the team include architect-of-record SLCE Architects, and landscape consultants Signe Nielsen and Abel Bainnson Butz. Occupancy is expected by late 2006.

If New York City wins its bid to host the 2012 Summer Olympics, Morphosis, with associate architect Gruzen Samton, will design a proposed \$1.5 billion Olympic Village complex on a 52-acre site at the southern edge of Queens West. A mixture of low-rise and high-rise buildings along the waterfront, the Village would contain 4,500 units to house 16,000 Olympians, coaches, and team officials. The complex also sports 43 acres of new parkland, a beach, and Olympicquality athletic training facilities – all with spectacular views of the Manhattan skyline. After the games, the apartments would be converted into condos. It is anticipated that the project, which will be privately funded, will come to fruition whether or not the Olympics come to New York.

Also in the works... Just south of the Queensboro/59th Street Bridge (on the Queens side of the East River), Richard Rogers Partnership and NBBJ are developing plans for Silvercup Studios West, a waterfront mix of film studios and retail, residential, and cultural space on a site owned by Silvercup Studios. To the south of Silvercup, real estate developer LCOR has proposed QueensPort, a mixed-use commercial and residential development to include 20 acres of parks and recreation along its 1.4-mile-long Queens shoreline.



Top left: Arquitectonica/SLCE Architects: 22-acre Queens West development includes the 1936 neon Pepsi-Cola sign Left: Perkins Eastman Architects: Avalon Riverview II (left) and Avalon Riverview flank Cesar Pelli's City Lights at Queens Landing; far right: abandoned Schwartz Chemical Co. plant Above: Morphosis/Gruzen Samton's Olympic Village

# The Hudson Riverfront Performing Arts Center, Weehawken, New Jersey

# **Ricardo Zurita Architecture & Planning**

Imagine the Manhattan skyline as a backdrop for showcasing music and theater. That is just what the \$21 million Hudson Riverfront Performing Arts Center in Weehawken will offer when completed in 2006. Designed by Ricardo Zurita, the 500-seat theater beneath an undulating roof will be located on a reconstructed pier. The open spaces of the pier will become a public park and serve as a venue for outdoor performances.



# **Riverside South Park, Manhattan** Thomas Balsley Associates Landscape Architects

Since 1991, Thomas Balsley Associates has led the master planning for Riverside South Park along the Hudson River between 59th and 72nd Streets – site of the old Penn Central rail yards and now Donald Trump's new residential community along Riverside Drive. Phase III of the 26acre waterfront park recently broke ground. This "missing link," from 65th Street south to the cove area between 62nd and 63rd Streets, will



complete and connect the continuous Hudson River Greenway along Manhattan's West Side from Battery Park to 125th Street.

The project is a public/private partnership between Trump/New World Holdings, the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, and the Riverside South Planning Corporation. Earlier phases included an extensive network of boardwalks, river overlooks, and public lawns and plazas from 65th to 70th Streets. Pier 1, the 750-foot long old rail pier at 70th Street, was restored and now has jogging and bike paths, community gardens, café terraces, ball fields, public art, a turf amphitheater, and open lawns.

## **Elevated Public Plaza at 55 Water Street**

# Rogers Marvel Architects and Ken Smith Landscape Architect

A \$150 million renovation in the 1990s may have turned the 1972 Emery Roth & Sons building at 55 Water Street into a Class A office tower, but the building's one-acre elevated plaza - with panoramic views of New York Harbor - remained practically invisible from street level. In 2002, the New Water Street Corporation selected Rogers Marvel Architects and Ken Smith Landscape Architect to transform the barren, windswept plaza into a vibrant, multi-programmed, and accessible respite for residents and workers in Lower Manhattan. With multiple means of ascent and lighted viewing balconies, new stairs will act as an urban stage pulling visitors from the street to the park above. At plaza level, the \$6.75 million project includes a glass and steel cantilevered "beacon," lit from within by an LED lighting system, that will be visible from the FDR Drive, the Brooklyn Promenade, and even arriving and departing flights from LaGuardia Airport. An expansive lawn cantilevered over the sidewalk below will accommodate everything from fashion shows and movies to weddings. When the plaza opens this fall, it will be another "jewel" in the "green necklace" along the Lower Manhattan waterfront.



# Learning from AIA Lower Manhattan: National Conference



Dear Reader,

The re-planning and design of Lower Manhattan post 9/11, as well as that of the city and region, is underway. In any large city, the urban form is always evolving, never finished. However, change of the magnitude caused by the terrorist attack could not be predicted. Responses to both the devastation and the aftermath have been unique.

On the cusp of the third anniversary of the attack on the World Trade Center, the transformation of lower Manhattan will be discussed in "Learning from Lower Manhattan," a two-day conference September 17-18, 2004, organized by the AIA New York Chapter and five national AIA Knowledge Communities (committees).

The conference will serve as a report on a work-in-progress, and offers an opportunity for those involved in urban design, planning, and architecture to reflect on and share what they have learned from post-9/11 redevelopment efforts – and to listen to what others from around the country have to say. Speakers include public officials, professionals, academics, and designers directly involved in the ongoing lower Manhattan renaissance. Panels will discuss the history of lower Manhattan and current initiatives in the fields of urban design and residential planning. The conference will offer tours of the area's diverse residential neighborhoods, and will explore initiatives in transportation, open space, the waterfront, and historic and cultural resources.

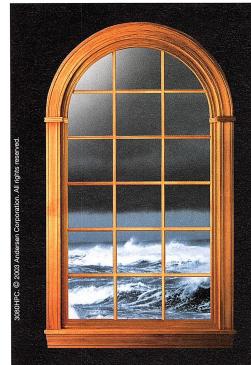
It is a pleasure to share this initiative with our readers. We invite, in advance of the conference, your thoughts, questions, and ideas about the issues this meeting will address. Please e-mail comments (no longer than one page in length) to LBrown147@aol.com or mark@cplusga.com. Registration information and a list of speakers, panels, and tours are available at www.aia.org/learningfromlower-manhattan.

Thank you,

Lance Jay Brown, FAIA Vice-Chair, AIA National Regional and Urban Design Advisory Group; Conference Co-Chair LBrown147@aol.com Mark Ginsberg, AIA President, American Institute of Architects New York Chapter; Conference Co-Chair mark@cplusga.com

Partial list of speakers: Michael Arad, AIA; Kent Barwick (Municipal Art Society); Eugenie Birch (University of Pennsylvania); Max Bond, FAIA (Davis Brody Bond); Amanda Burden, AICP (City Planning Commission); Santiago Calatrava, AIA; Kinshasha Holman Conwill (arts consultant); Ray Gastil (Van Alen Institute); Alan Gerson (NYC Council); Hugh Hardy, FAIA (H<sup>3</sup> Hardy Collabration); Daniel Libeskind, AIA; Kevin Rampe (LMDC); and Bob Yaro (RPA).

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# Lessons LA.

# Outside View By Sam Hall Kaplan

orn and ill-bred in New York City, writing for the *New York Times*, teaching architecture at City College, directing development at the NYC Educational Construction Fund, and serving on a local planning board, I found New York to be for me the center of the universe.

As for Los Angeles, it was a distant, strange planet, and whether called "LaLa land" or "El Lay," seldom entered my consciousness. Indeed, I thought being bi-coastal referred to people having to commute cross-town.

It was therefore natural when I moved there "temporarily" 25 years ago for me to want L.A. to be more like New York. I lived in an apartment, gravitated to the few crowded enclaves, sought out the delis and Chinese restaurants, and as critic for the *Los Angeles Times* welcomed density and extolled urbanism.

But as I settled into L.A. and experienced its eclectic architecture, engaging hidden spaces and places, and its marvelous mix of culture, I began to revel in its uniqueness. L.A. was not New York. I felt its benign climate and collage of contexts demanded a singular architecture that should neither mimic New York's, nor be a self-conscious



response to the clichéd prejudices of the eastern design establishment perpetually visiting L.A. We have more than our share of wannabe "starchitects" lining up wanting to be validated by counterfeit critics.

L.A. is a city where every style has had its moment in the sun, and a parade of architects their 15 minutes of fame. Unlike New York, there is a distinct tolerance in L.A. for follies and fantasies, and an embarrassment of self- and publicity-conscious conceits. Or maybe it is just the result of city's regrettably shallow design standards.

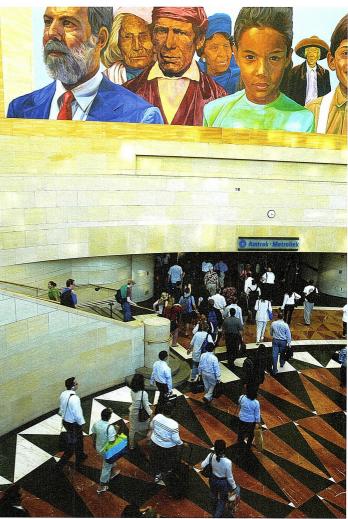
To be sure, there are serious, social minded, environmentally sensitive, user-friendly efforts out here by a cadre of concerned architects from which to draw hope for a livable city. But, unfortunately, an undiscerning starstruck media too often ignores them. That is a problem in L.A. where, unlike New York, a cult of amiability compromises open and informed debate over the shaping of an evolving cityscape.

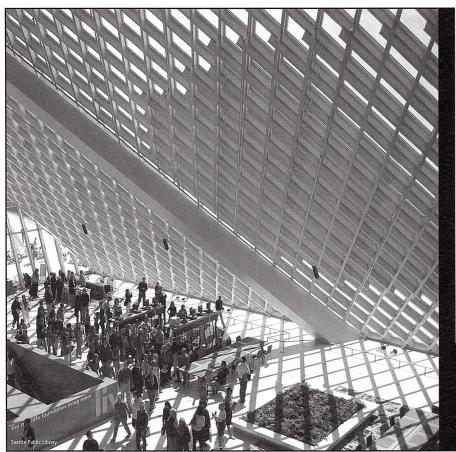
And it is evolving. Landmark office buildings downtown are being converted into lofts, a subway is running, one-story mini malls are being replaced by mid-rise mixed-use developments, parking is going underground while housing is going up and up, and streetscaping for pedestrians is happening. It may not yet be a sun-blessed, blissedout New York, nor will it ever be. But it ain't chopped liver either. And it is great grist for the architecture mill, if you look for it.

Of course, when I now visit my native New York, I wonder why it can't be more like L.A. Where is the sky, the sun, the serendipity?

Sam Hall Kaplan comments on architecture for broadcast and print in L.A. An Emmy award winning reporter for Fox News, he previously was critic for the *Los Angeles Times*, a metropolitan reporter for the *New York Times*, and an editor of the *NewYork Post*. His books include *L.A. Lost and Found*, and *The New York City Handbook*.

Below: Gateway Transit Center, East Portal, Union Station, Los Angeles Left: Grand Central Terminal, New York



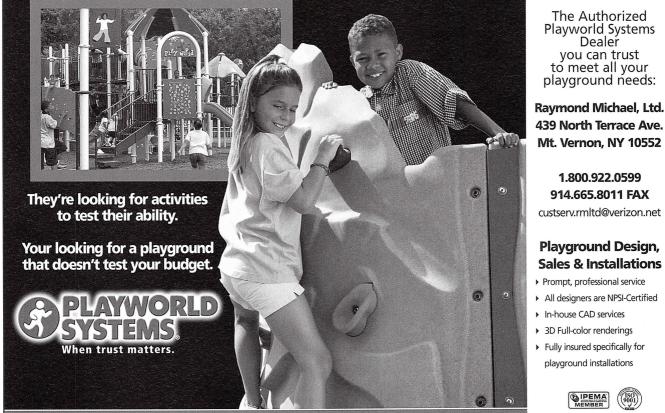


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# 40-Year Watch

# Chatham Towers by Kelly & Gruzen By Fred Bernstein

e Corbusier never completed a building in New York (the closest he came was helping to plan the United Nations headquarters), but his influence is clearly visible in Lower Manhattan, where two apartment buildings contain strong elements of both his *Unité d'Habitation* and his *"ville radieuse"* approach to urban planning. The 25-story Chatham Towers, critic John Tauranac noted in 1979, appear to have been "carved out of gritty cliffs of concrete" – not bad in a city where too many postwar apartment buildings look like Styrofoam and cardboard.

The buildings were conceived in 1960 as middle-income co-ops, and occupied in 1965. The architect was Kelly & Gruzen (now Gruzen Samton), which had also designed Chatham Green, a banal red brick apartment building immediately east of Chatham Towers. But this time, the commission went to several younger members of the firm, including scion Jordan Gruzen, FAIA. The Cuban-born architect Mario Romañach, designer of some of Havana's most extraordinary Modernist villas in the 1950s, and later a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, was also part of the team.



Above: Chatham Towers Below: Vintage interior



The buildings are made of concrete formed against plywood, with the wood's rough grain giving the façades a naturalistic mien in a city where slick curtain walls reign. The floorplates are staggered – two in, two out – so that the buildings, which have miserly eight-foot ceilings, actually read as assemblages of far roomier boxes, perhaps presaging the tower of boxes that Santiago Calatrava hopes to build just a few blocks to the south.

The buildings' urban planning is as Corbusian as their architecture. The two-acre site was previously home to dozens of commercial buildings, the remnants of the unruly Five Points neighborhood. Now, the two square towers rise from a rigorously landscaped (but recently altered) plaza. The plaza, built over a 125-car garage, has been criticized both for depriving non-residents of precious open space and for cutting off pedestrian routes between Chinatown to the north and government buildings to the south. The space's landscape designer, M. Paul Friedberg, points out that "what is wrong with the whole thing, and it's a major point, is that it is an insular development, focusing in on itself."

As heroic as the buildings themselves are from the outside, their interiors smack of 1960s institutional parsimony. Five to a floor, the apartments have low ceilings and cheap interiors (floors aren't wood but vinyl). The Swedish-made windows are pleasant surprises – with rounded corners and aluminum flanges, they look like they were made for trains or ferries. They contain Venetian blinds between layers of glass – an innovation that wasn't to become common until decades later.

By now, most of the apartments have been remodeled. But the lobbies, spare and colorless, are almost exactly as they were 40 years ago. One long-time resident says she has to fend off new arrivals who don't understand the 1960s aesthetic. When the elevators were recently redone, she says, "We almost got brass and mahogany."

But preserving the buildings won't preserve their context. Soon after they were built, a New York Telephone Company switching station (the windowless building that inexplicably towers over the Brooklyn Bridge) diminished the view from both of the Chatham Towers. In the late 1990s, a giant federal courthouse put the west tower in shadow. The buildings were meant to be tall trees; now they're merely shrubs, difficult to see until you're very close. If they're barely noticed, it isn't that the architecture isn't worthy; it's because the setting has overwhelmed them.

Fred Bernstein, an *Oculus* contributing editor, studied architecture at Princeton University, and has written about design for more than 15 years; he also contributes to the *New York Times, Metropolitan Home*, and *Blueprint*.

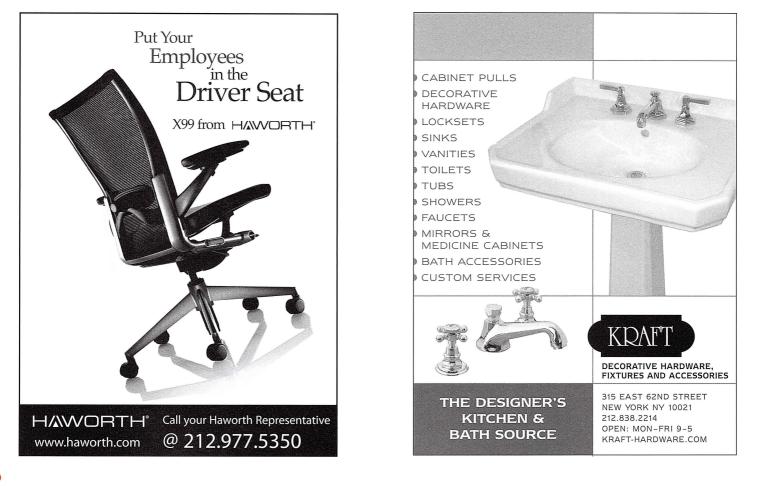
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# **Good Practices**

By Joan Capelin, Hon. AIA



Some architects are "born leaders," but for everyone else proficiency in leadership comes from education, training, and practice, practice, practice.

> eadership is today's big issue. With the nightmarish absence of exemplary conduct in our government, corporate America, the media, and, sadder yet, our institutions, "leadership" has leapt into our consciousness and onto our newspapers' front pages.

have to be

there, you can't

Still, recent attitudinal research confirms that – despite all the revolving doors leading to and from executive offices – we maintain great faith in our leaders. In the world of publicly traded stocks, for instance, a survey attributed nearly 50 percent of a company's reputation, and therefore the value of those shares, to the good reputation and accountability of its lead officer.

How does that statistic relate to design firms? It becomes even more powerful, because in this sector, leaders tend to stay in perpetuity. Further, leadership is often a partnership, with several people contributing to the company's reputation.

Moreover, design firms appoint principals in recognition of achievement, usually in design and project management – yet not every principal is suitable for leading the firm or a significant activity within it. For that matter, not every principal or associate is anxious or sufficiently ambitious to take on a leadership role.

How does leadership evidence itself in your office? Is leadership communicated by consistent, articulated principles as well as by example? Do all areas show strong leadership, including the technical and business sides of the firm? When the firm hires someone, is leadership potential on the list of qualities ascertained during the interview?

What do you admire and find invaluable in other leaders in the design professions – including their educators and association standard-bearers? More to the point, how do you personally expect the leaders of your office to act and believe?

# **Leadership qualities**

Here are some necessary leadership qualities that I've gleaned from asking these questions within the design community: Be a role model. Show vision and also foresight. Communicate clearly and frequently. Be able – and willing – to explain the firm's professional standards and skillfully train others to perform according to them. Praise – and also discipline – employees with integrity and tact. Negotiate beneficially in internal as well as external matters. Deal openly and honestly with consultants and clients. Show courage in times of stress.

One of the biggest excuses used to justify why a design professional is, for instance, an ineffective businessman, communicator, or people-person is that it's not what he or she was trained to do in design school. It's time to put that pretext aside and recognize – in the face of that 50 percent statistic – how much damage such an attitude can create for a firm.

Here's a question for current design firm leaders as well as their successors: When the time comes to pass the reins ... when the successfully negotiated contractual obligations and financial arrangements are all in order ... how well will the firm's successor or successor group have been prepared for its leadership role?

The group I call G2 – for second, or next, generation – has unquestionably shown how well it can handle technical issues pertaining to design and construction. But has G2 also been trained in overall client management, business development, money matters, public speaking, civic engagement, and, yes, professional ethics?

Do the G2 members listen well and communicate comfortably – internally as well as externally? Can they sell a design concept or new approach not just to the client, but to the design team, community, and agencies affected?

When the time comes to pass the reins ... ... how well will the firm's successor or successor group have been prepared for its leadership role?

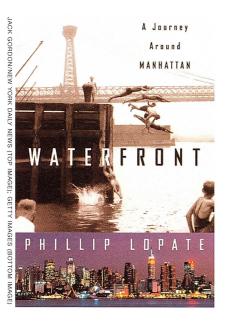
Does your G2 command the respect of the firm's supporters, past clients, design family, and press? Are they already well connected to their counterparts in the client sector, pertinent associations, and the rest of the design industry?

Doesn't it therefore make sense for the existing leadership to truthfully assess not just itself, but also G2, for the way each person conducts himself or herself, speaks, writes, appears, negotiates, and socializes?

Joan Capelin is President of Capelin Communications and an Honorary Member of both AIA national and AIA NY State. "You have to be there, you can't phone it in" is the title of Principle 24 in her new book, *Principles for Principals*, which offers "insights and anecdotes about what makes professional service firms thrive."



Waterfront: A Journey Around Manhattan, by Phillip Lopate. New York: Crown Publishers, 2004. 420 pages. \$25.95.



In 1860, New York City handled 52 percent of the nation's imports and exports. New York offered a deep port and two routes to the sea, enjoyed a mild climate, was sheltered from ocean gales, and had direct access to the West.

Author Lopate suggests that key elements of New York's maritime history may be lost due to what he sees as largely uninspired, derivative efforts to sanitize the

waterfront through creating pretty, park-like settings instead of allowing the gritty, maritime, industrial commercial genes to prevail.

That's no small task. The shift in maritime shipping technology has made use of the existing waterfront piers impractical. But what is to take their place? Lopate identifies three stages in the evolution of the waterfront: Manhattan as a working port; waterfront abandoned to become a seedy no-man's land; parks plus upscale retail/residential.

The third stage brings out all of Lopate's latent skepticism about what's happening at the water's edge. Part of the dilemma is that tourists and residents have diametrically opposite visions of New York. Tourists look for a sanitized Disneyland, which is what Times Square and South Street Seaport have become. Genuine New Yorkers want a more raffish approach, argues Lopate.

In the end, Lopate approaches even the most ambitious recent cases of waterfront development, such as Battery Park City, the Chelsea Piers, and Javits Center – plus assorted coastal parks, bike trails, and rollerblade runs – with a hefty grain of salt, an intuitive sense that this isn't really what the waterfront needs. He would rather see something less polished that weaves in a brawny commercial, even scruffy element in lieu of those slick new developments.

Lopate, a native New Yorker, voices a vigorous love for his city. He must, or he would not submit himself to the annual torture of The Great Saunter, a 32-mile trek around the coast of Manhattan sponsored by a group known as the Shorewalkers. The trek begins at Fulton and Water Streets and proceeds counterclockwise as far north as Inwood Park before making the turn south to end where it began.

It is the great saunter that must have given Lopate the idea of how

to organize his encyclopedic book. He divides his material into two parts: West Side and East Side. He moves (figuratively) north along both coasts, and he rests (again figuratively) at key stops to give us his judgment and the comments of the many locals he interviews.

Up the West Side his journey takes him to Battery Park City ("... [it] feels cut off from the rhythms of New York. Its very aloofness could be an asset: there aren't many places so detached from the hurlyburly.") He likes to meander about the place, especially at night and near the water, and is keen on its "moody self-containment."

Moving north to Chelsea Piers, the largest sports venue in the metropolitan area, he faults the complex for being "so grudging, unneighborly, and suburban in its relation to the streetscape."

Other stops along the way take Lopate past the Hudson River edge extensions of SoHo and the Village, the 1926 Starrett Building ("one of the structures I love most in New York..."), and the Javits Center ("I am struck by how little this bold lump of coal has been assimilated into Manhattan's bosom since it opened 15 years ago"), on to the train yards at West 72nd Street, Riverside Park, Washington Heights, and Inwood.

His East Side excursions take him first to South Street Seaport, which he calls an unmitigated urban disaster that tries to prettify what was once one of the genuine fulcrums of the city's maritime commerce. "The historic district was 'saved,'" he writes, "by extracting every ounce of its vitality, then injecting it with the formaldehyde of Ann Taylor, the Gap, and the other national franchise stores..."

Moving north, Lopate comes upon the Con Edison plant, the United Nations, and Tudor City. Tudor City, whose neo-gothic towers rise above First Avenue across from the U.N., was built between 1925 and 1932 by the Fred C. French Company – 3,000 apartments for all



Above: Dahlquist-Rayner houseboat, Sea Village, Vancouver, B.C. Opposite right: Burd-Sharps houseboat, Brooklyn, New York

# aunter

income groups. The towers face west. To the east in pre-U.N. days were the slaughterhouses – unsightly and smelly. Only the maids' rooms and stairwells enjoyed a view of the stockyards.

The chapter in which Lopate waxes most lyrical is about the Fulton Fish Market and the characters who people it, with all their attitudes and biases and humor. Fulton Fish Market is living proof of the kind of functioning waterfront he longs for.

At the end of the day, what is it about water that attracts people? Lopate is unsure. After jumping the assorted hurdles between you and water – highways, fences, rail yards, steep gradients – you finally get to the water and what do you find? "Nothing, an emptiness, the river flowing interminably by, now nearly devoid of ships or other human presence." He likes watching the water move, but after a rewarding half hour this "soon becomes a sterile delight for the urbanite raised on spectacle and shopping."

His key to this paradox: while we think we want access to water, what we really seek is inner peace, meaning, purity, an acceptance of our place on earth.

It's as good an answer as any.



### A House at Anchor:

The Houseboat Book, by Barbara Flanagan. Photographs by Andrew Garn. New York: Universe/Rizzoli, 2003. 192 pages. \$45 hardcover, \$29.95 paperback.

Houseboats conjure up life in constricted quarters with a view of the water. It must be rather like living in a trailer, capable (usually) of harnessing its horsepower and moving on, before dropping anchor at its next port of call. This book of beautiful color photographs shows houseboats of every size, construction, and architectural style – from sleek Modernist to Seattle bungalow to a floating confection that imitates the Taj Mahal. The only northeastern example is a massive old covered

wooden Lehigh Valley Railroad barge moored off Brooklyn's Red Hook.

The text provides the history of houseboats, how to build them so they float, and some useful sociological comments on the neighborhoods formed by groups of houseboats. Nearly all the case studies are concentrated in a handful of venues – the San Francisco area, the Pacific Northwest including Vancouver, and Florida. For more about life on a houseboat, see this issue's Last Words (page 55) by Rick Bell, a former longtime owner of a houseboat moored in the 79th Street Boat Basin on the Hudson River.

# Stephen A. Kliment, FAIA

# Click Here: www.docomomo.com

The organization dedicated to great Modernist architecture worldwide is well known to erudite readers of *The Modern Movement in Architecture: Selections from the Docomomo Registers*, a book published in 2000 at the sixth international conference of Docomomo (Documentation and Conservation of buildings, sites and neighborhoods of the Modern Movement). Others will need to click their way to www.docomomo.com for an overview of the international effort to recognize, document, and preserve architectural icons of the 20th century.

Docomomo International put its six-point agenda on the table in 1990 at its founding conference in the Dutch city of Eindhoven. The agenda avoids manifesto in favor of a mission statement. However, it is a very determined statement. The Kafkaesque name "international specialist committee on registers" (seemingly from *The Castle*), and a structure of "working parties" that produces scientific research and documentation give the organization decidedly Marxist airs.

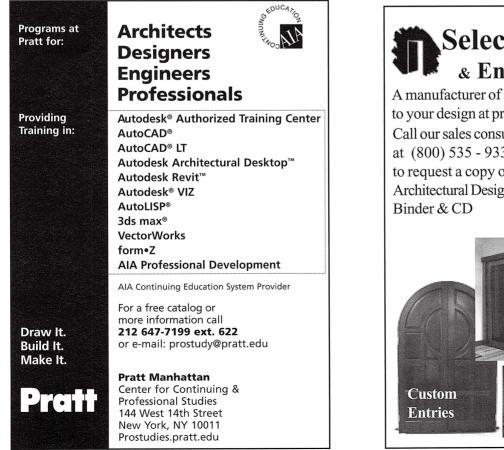
The international web site (funded by the French Ministry of Culture, *Direction de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine*) has a lot of information, but is a bit confusing – perhaps because of what seems to be cumbersome translation (there is a scary abundance of the word "fiches," a terrific example of French sabotage of the English language). The main menu includes "Addresses," which links to a list of the more than 40 member countries. Unfortunately, most of the links to the national web sites don't work without adding "www" or deleting a period here and there in the URLs, which is too bad – many of them are quite engaging. Take a few minutes to check out the fascinating Docomomo Journal.

The Docomomo-US (www.docomomo-us.org) link does work, and is quite lively and informative. And anyone interested in Modernism should consider becoming a member of this worthy organization. The U.S. working party will host the 8th International Conference in New York City September 26-29.

## Margaret Rietveld, AIA









# A Rising Tide

### "Come and take the pleasures of the harbor..." Phil Ochs

"Sittin' on the dock of the bay, watching the tide roll away..." Otis Redding

# "And our friends are all aboard, many more of them live next door..." Lennon & McCartney

Habiter La Mer" was the title of the September/October 1974 issue of L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui. In the lead article, Phillippe Saint-Marc called for humanist waterfront development: "The shorelines will not be able to accommodate in thirty years the crowds which will have a vital need to see the sea, to swim there, if we leave this essential space, made valuable by its ecological richness as well as its physical value encumbered by factories, cars, roadways, parking and apartment buildings."

What of 30 – or 50 – years from today? Global warming warns of a post-diluvian future for NYC2050, a day-after-tomorrow with water taxis idling on Fifth Avenue. Alexis Rockman's submerged Brooklyn paints Atlantic Avenue as the lost continent.

What better way than living on the waterfront to assure creation of an accessible, affordable, and round-theclock mixed-use community? There is poetry to living on the water, feeling the sway, sensing the soft splash.

One wonders when we will again swim in the Hudson. I did once, falling from my faded-teal houseboat at 79th Street. Touching the water, getting out on unpolluted rivers, even living aboard floating homes and sailboats did not always seem so odd. Think of Tom Hanks as a relocated Chicago architect in *Sleepless in Seattle*, or Cary Grant and Sophia Loren in the 1958 *Houseboat*.

Apart from the wait-list slips at the silted Riverside Park marina, why aren't there more live-aboards in Manhattan? Amsterdam celebrates with the houseboat museum Hendrika Maria on Prinsengracht. Despite the *cauchemar* in Kashmir, secreted Victorian houseboats on Lake Dal are discreetly advertised. Is the lack of habitable fringe a density thing? Must a wall of high-rise residential construction replace lost industrial, market, and maritime users on the river's edge? To find answers one could desperately seek Sausalito or Seattle, praise



Parisian peniches, or read Barbara Flanagan's superb *The Houseboat Book* (see In Print+, page 52).

In this age of *clivis multram* compost commodes, house-boaters can go anywhere. River dwellings provide promenade joggers a measure for distance and reduce the cliff from street wall to sea level. The 79th Street Boat Basin itself was and is a great leveler, an almost classless society of artists, traders, individualists, and the unemployed.

What better way than living on the waterfront to assure creation of an accessible, affordable, and round-the-clock mixed-use community? There is poetry to living on the water, feeling the sway, sensing the soft splash. Edith Wharton, in her 1929 novel *Hudson River Bracketed* has a character say: "Hudson River Bracketed? What's that?" Her protagonist replies: "Why, didn't you know it was our indigenous style of architecture in this part of the world?" Living on boats, the indigenous style of Hendrik Hudson, if not the Manahatta, speaks to diversity, mobility, and adventure.

# Last Words

Rick Bell, FAIA, Executive Director, AIA New York Chapter

KATHRYN VERNEZ



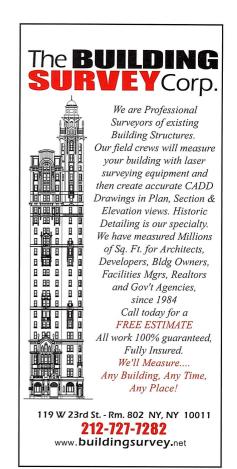
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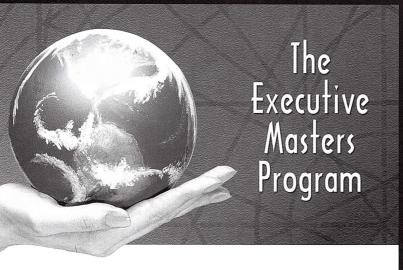
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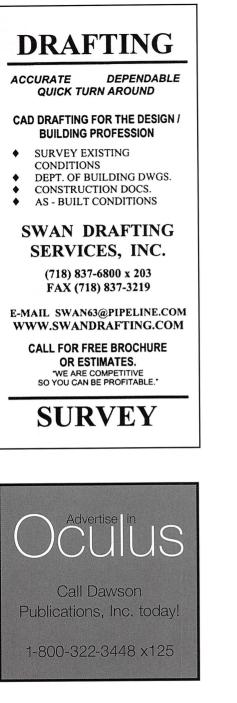
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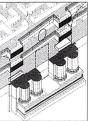
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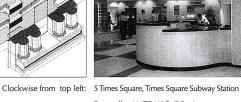


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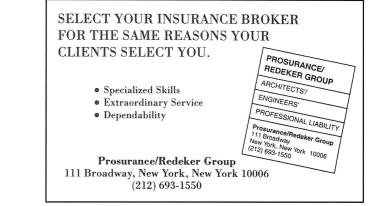
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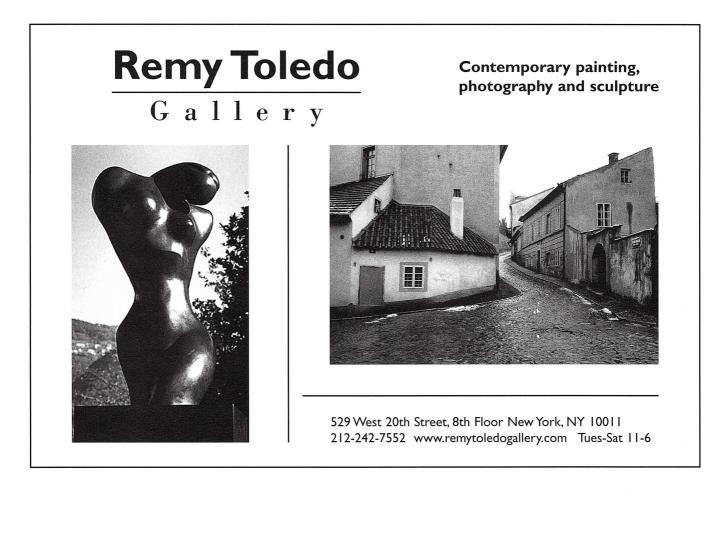
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