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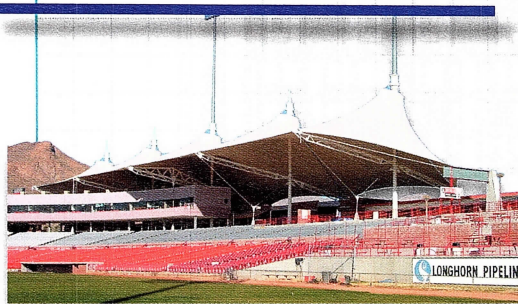
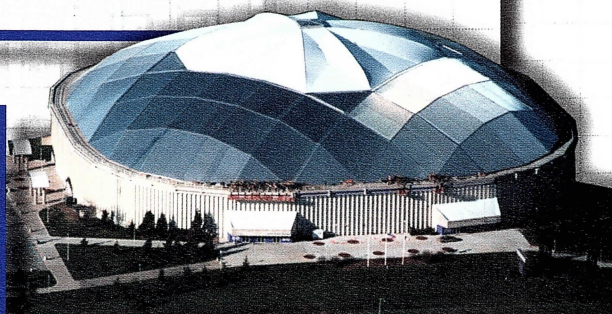
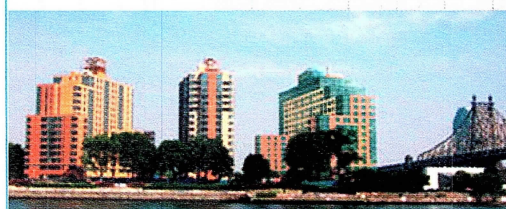
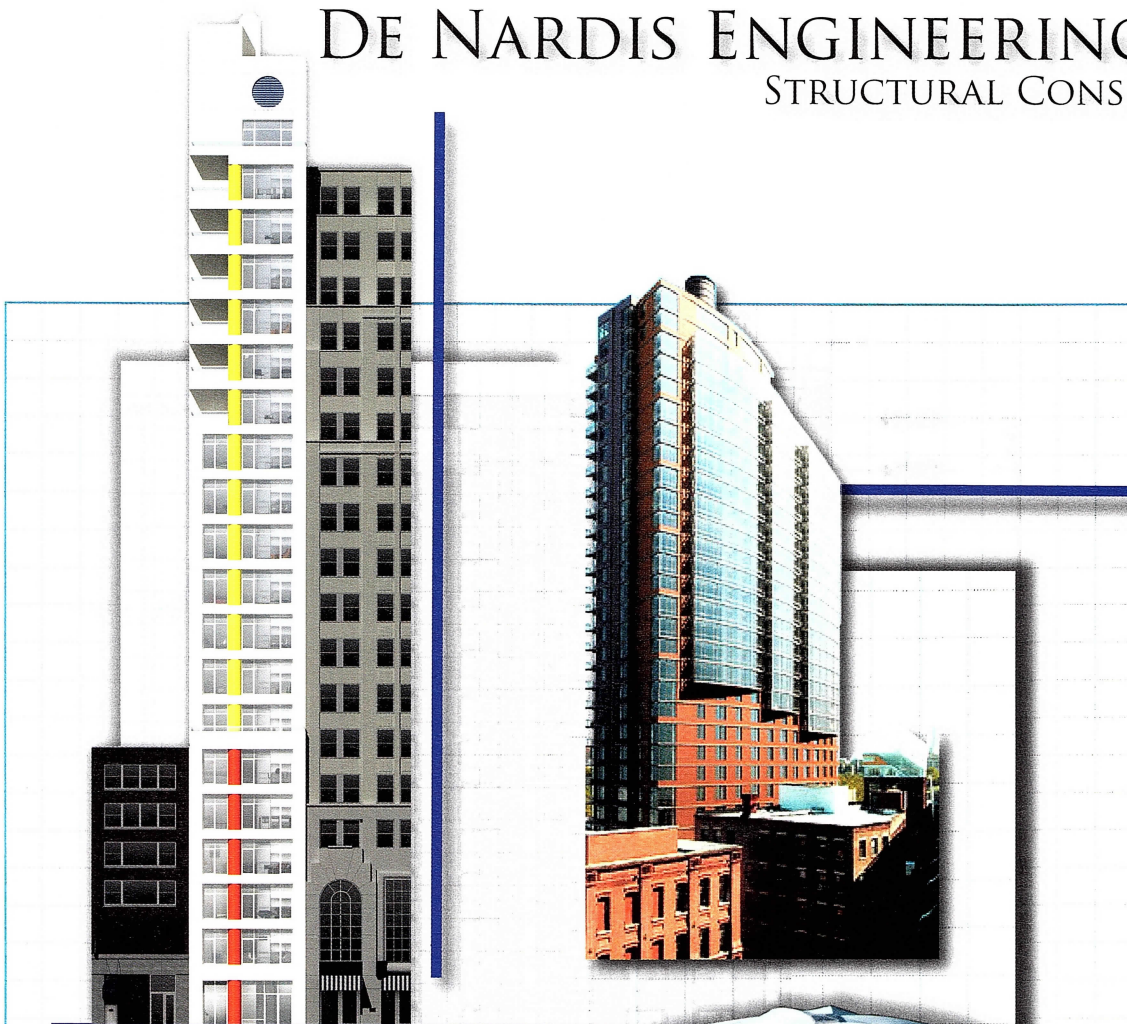
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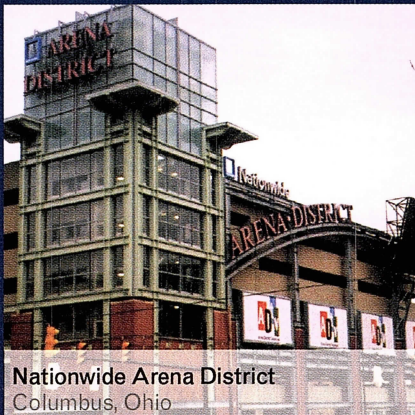
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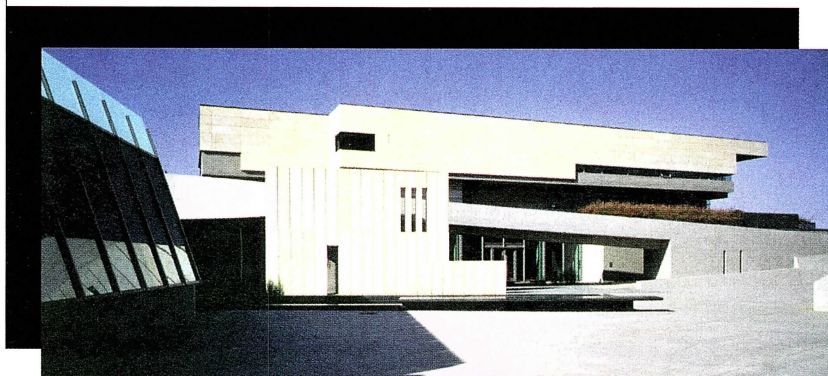
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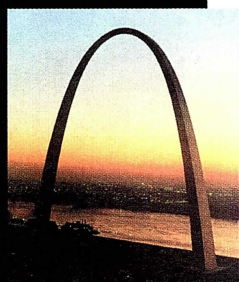
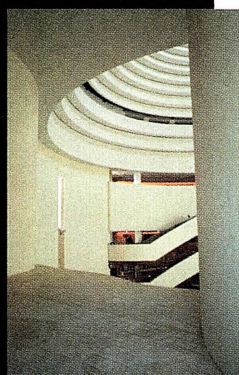
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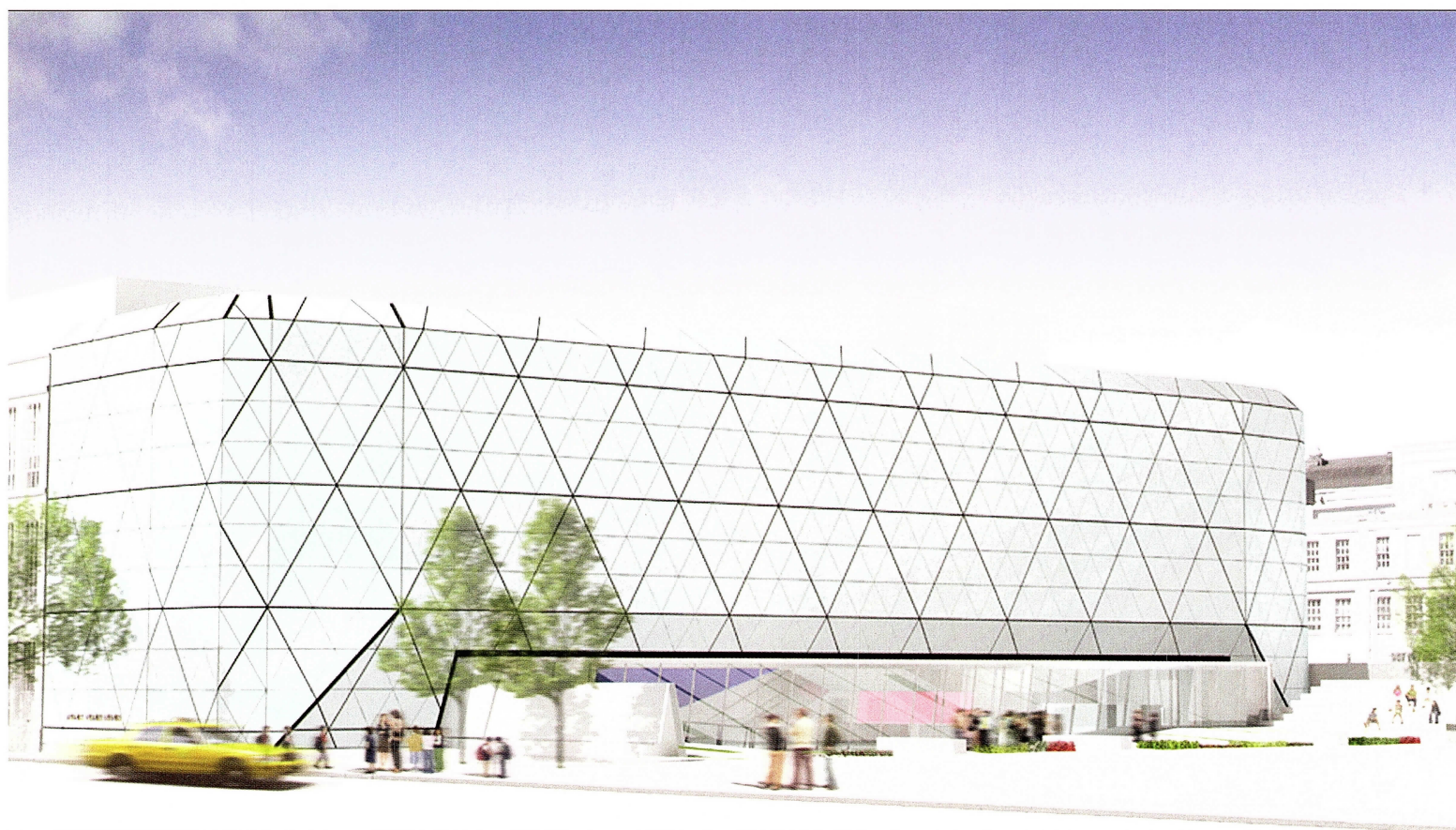
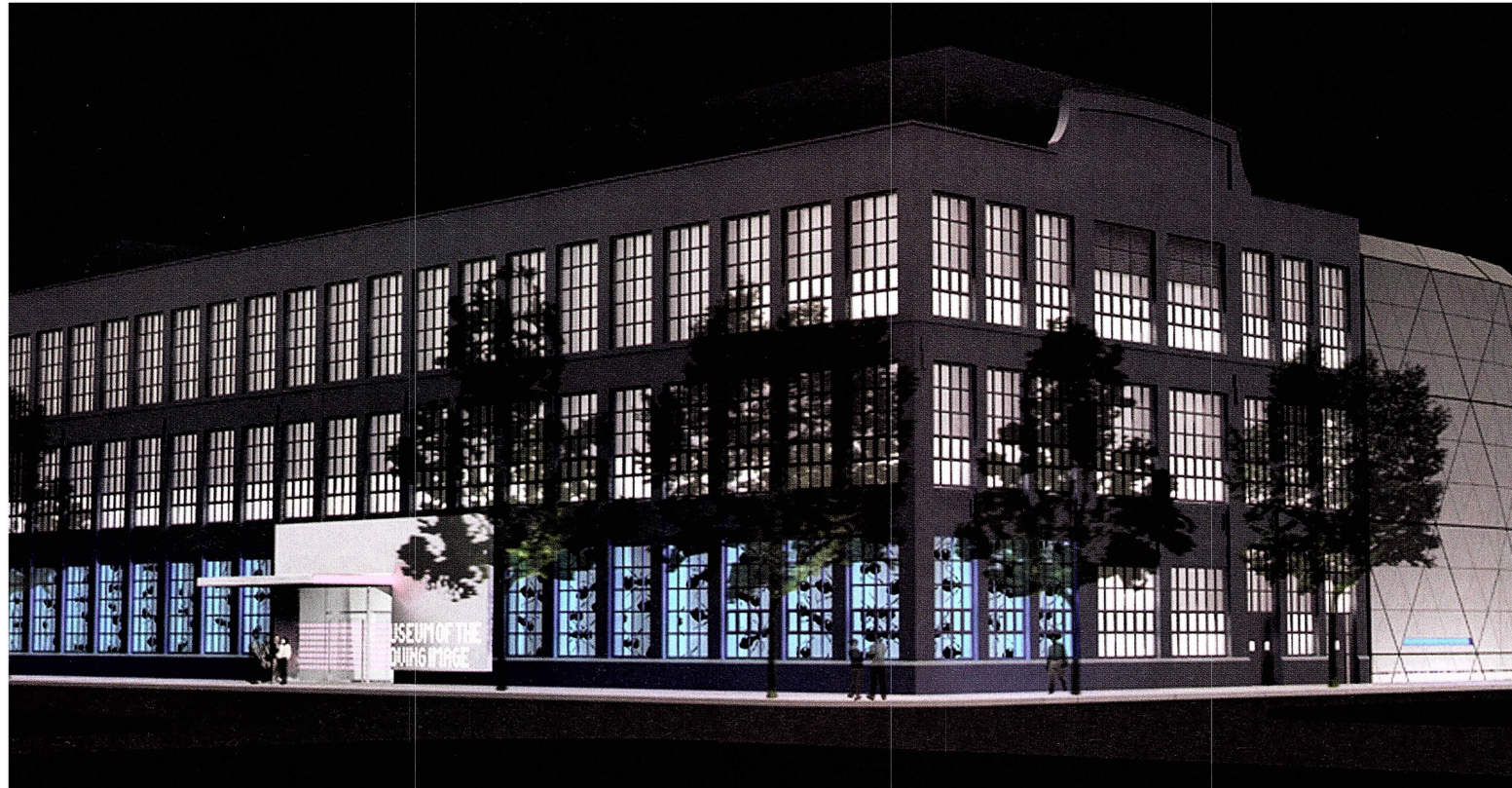
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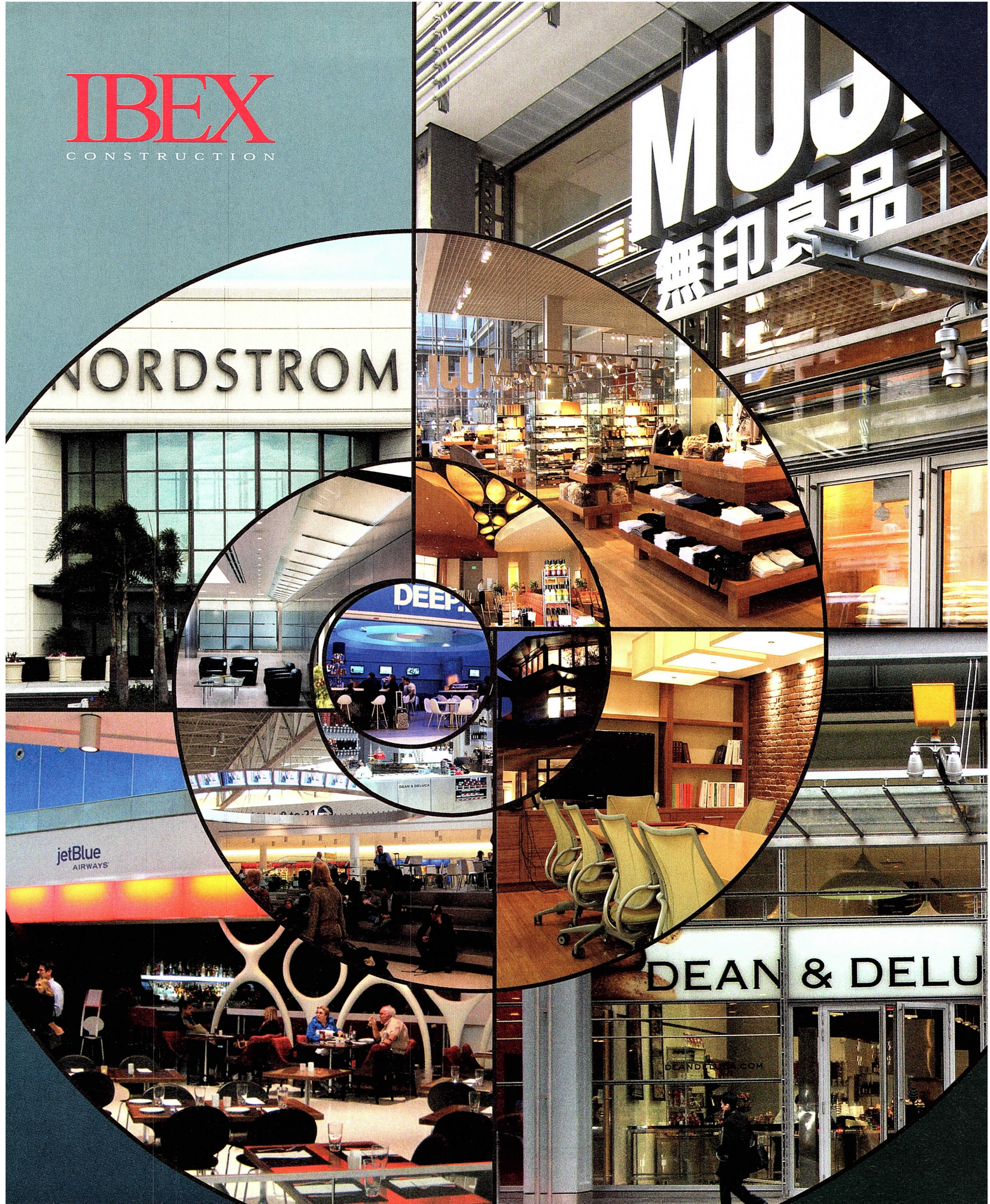
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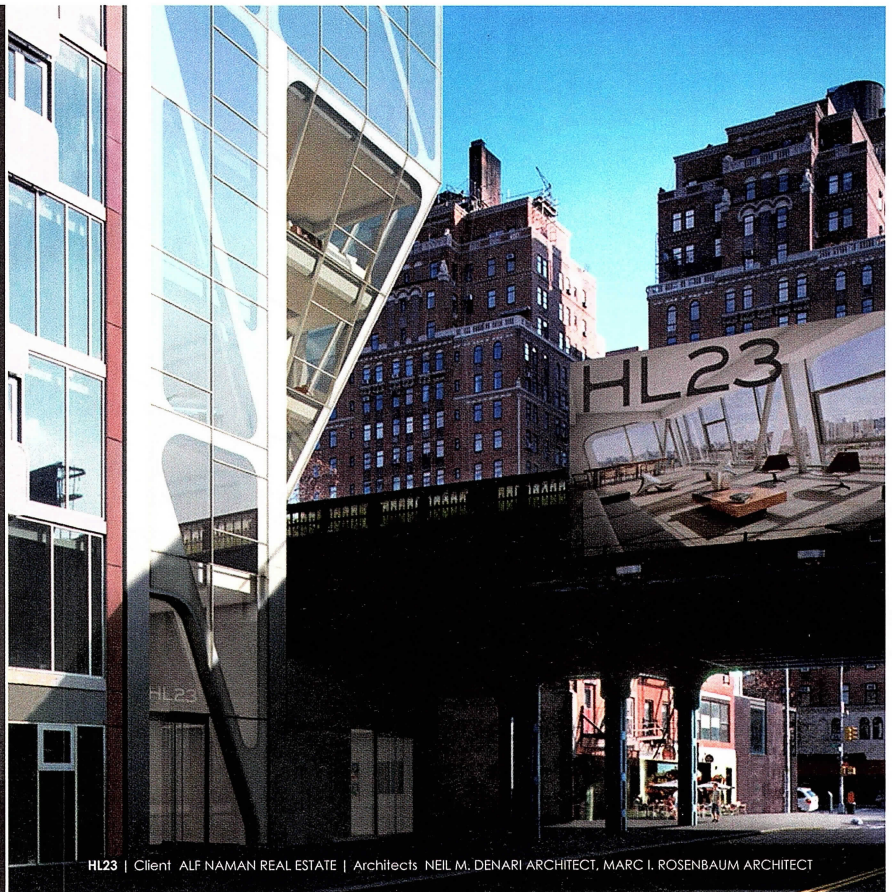
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Eyes on the Horizon

First Words
Letter from Two Presidents

Since its opening five years ago, the Center for Architecture has become a leading local and international forum for the discussion of architecture and urban design issues. Throughout this period, the AIA New York Chapter has supported Mayor Michael Bloomberg's planning and housing initiatives, which have transformed much of the city through rezoning for residential and mixed-use development. Through the participation of our members, the International Building Code was adopted. On Earth Day 2007 the mayor announced PlaNYC, an ambitious plan to create a 21st-century "green" city that anticipates the need to accommodate a million new residents with supporting infrastructure by 2030. The stage was set for the new century.

In an already built-up city, where and how can so much new development be accommodated? The 2008 AIANY theme exhibition "+Housing," at the Center for Architecture, showed how housing can be combined with school, cultural, and commercial spaces to maximize the use or reuse of limited sites. When institutions need to modernize through expansion on a larger scale, however, they often confront resistance from established neighborhoods. A number of examples, such as the Columbia University expansion into Harlem, are discussed in this issue. Institutional growth is imperative if a city is to remain competitive in the global marketplace, yet those needs must be balanced against sustaining livable communities.

The Wall Street collapse and crisis in global financial markets has unexpectedly brought prospects for unlimited growth to a halt. The New York Building Congress has forecast the worst is yet to come in 2010, after projects in the pipeline dry up. However, as Governor David Paterson reminded us recently, some of the most significant infrastructure in the city was built over periods of economic ups and downs, so we must keep our eyes on the horizon. The silver lining in this cloud will be the opportunity to work with government, the development community, and community organizations to plan more thoughtfully for the next cycle of growth and to rethink projects hastily conceived in the rush of the recent real-estate boom.

Finding the right balance presents an enormous challenge and demands a creative collaboration often missing in recent new developments where government overrides local concerns. We must be careful not to replicate the errors of our Modernist past. Above all, we must look back on this period as a time when we created something good that will be remembered by future generations.

We wish to dedicate this issue of *Oculus* to Stephen Kliment, FAIA (1930–2008), who was a strong editorial voice, friend, and mentor to so many of us. We will miss him.

James McCullar, FAIA
Sherida E. Paulsen, FAIA



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James McCullar, FAIA, and Sherida E. Paulsen, FAIA

In looking back over the past year, I am pleased that we accomplished so much under the 2008 theme "Architecture: Designs for Living." It could not have been done without the support of the Board of Directors, our committees, partners such as the United Nations, our Executive Director Rick Bell, FAIA, the AIANY staff, and Sherida Paulsen, FAIA, who has laid the groundwork for 2009. Sherida will build on past programs, as all presidents have, and take our accomplishments to an even higher level. We look forward to her leadership in the coming year.

James McCullar, FAIA
2008 President, AIA New York Chapter

Jim McCullar has set a new standard for leadership at the AIA New York Chapter and the Center for Architecture, and will be a very tough act to follow! His steady focus on our Chapter members through his Public Lecture Series and open embrace of the international design community at our United Nations conference made "Designs for Living" a celebration of design excellence in our changing nation and world. We will shift our gaze next year to "Elevating Architecture/Design Literacy for All" to examine our urban connections that foster design excellence, and the need for arts education at all levels to support the public demand for a sustainable and beautiful environment. I look forward to working with the 2009 Board of Directors, the unflappable Center for Architecture staff, and Center for Architecture Foundation President Roberta Washington, FAIA.

Sherida E. Paulsen, FAIA
2009 President, AIA New York Chapter



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New Yorkers are all too familiar with competing for space, from finding a seat on a subway or bus to deciding who should build what on acres – or even slivers – of land.

As I write this, I just received news that will impact two projects discussed in this issue of *Oculus*. The NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated I.M. Pei's Silver Towers and its Picasso sculpture as landmarks; NYU and its planning team SMWM, in association with Grimshaw Architects, Toshiko Mori Architect, and Olin Partnership, anticipated and supported this step in their plans to add a 40-story tower to the site (see page 34). In contrast, the scale of General Growth Properties' current plan to rebuild the South Street Seaport, designed by SHoP Architects, could lead to rejection by the LPC (see page 42). Another development not covered here, but of equal import, is the LPC's decision to approve the demolition of Albert C. Ledner's 1964 Curran/O'Toole Building in Greenwich Village to allow St. Vincent's Hospital to build a 300-foot tower. Needless to say, there are cheers – and jeers – from all sides.

The economic landscape is also changing rapidly and not looking all that rosy: the AIA's Architecture Billing Index is hitting all-time lows, and both the *McGraw-Hill Construction Outlook 2009* and the New York Building Congress' *New York City Construction Outlook 2008-2010* say uncertainty lies ahead. But this city is nothing if not resilient, and no matter what, build it will – and must – though perhaps not as grandly as hoped for.

So, while a number of projects presented here may change in scope or scale, the overall discussion of who wants (or doesn't want) what where, and how differing factions do (or don't) find consensus, remains the same. In light of the intense competition for space, we examine the cause of – and possible cure for – NIMBY, and the gauntlet that must be run to gain approval from city agencies and communities. We explore the planning and communication strategies that some of New York's expanding cultural and educational institutions are using to assuage sometimes adversarial communities. Also offered is a sampling of projects taking a vertical approach to expansion. In an odd twist amidst the current fiscal turmoil, we look at why businesses planning to expand into the glut of specialized office space once occupied by financial services firms gives new meaning to the term "adaptive reuse," and creates an emerging niche market for designers. Finally, with competition for use of the city's waterfronts in full swing, we report on a number of projects and proposals in the works.

In regular departments, "One Block Over" visits the South Street Seaport to find out what the locals (yes, there are locals) think of its past transformations and future plans. In "So Says," Friends of the High Line Co-Founders Joshua David and Robert Hammond discuss how they took on the daunting task of saving the elevated rail line from demolition. "40-Year Watch" explains what happened to Columbia University's big plans to expand into Morningside Park – and why they failed. "Good Practices" offers an amusing chronicle of The Big Presentation! "In Print+" reviews current books of interest, including a tome of Ada Louise Huxtable's reflections on architecture. "Click Here" is a roundup of websites dripping with information about NYC's waterfronts.

Lastly, it is with heavy hearts that we add an extra page to this issue for a purpose I never imagined: an eloquent and heartfelt remembrance by Rick Bell, FAIA, of *Oculus* Editorial Director Stephen Kliment, FAIA, who unexpectedly passed away in September. Steve's sharp, red-pencil editing – no archi-babble allowed – made me a better writer, editor, and thinker. I treasure his friendship and miss him so very much.

Kristen Richards

kristen@ArchNewsNow.com

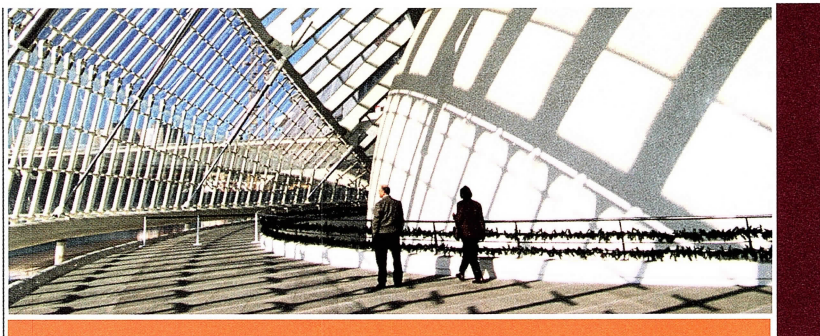
In our Summer 2008 Design Awards issue, Faranz Mansuri was inadvertently omitted as a De-Spec Inc. design team member for the Interiors Honor project Banchet Flowers (pg. 22); Gary Haney should have been included as design partner for Skidmore, Owings & Merrill's Al Rajhi Bank Headquarters, a Project Merit winner (pg. 36).



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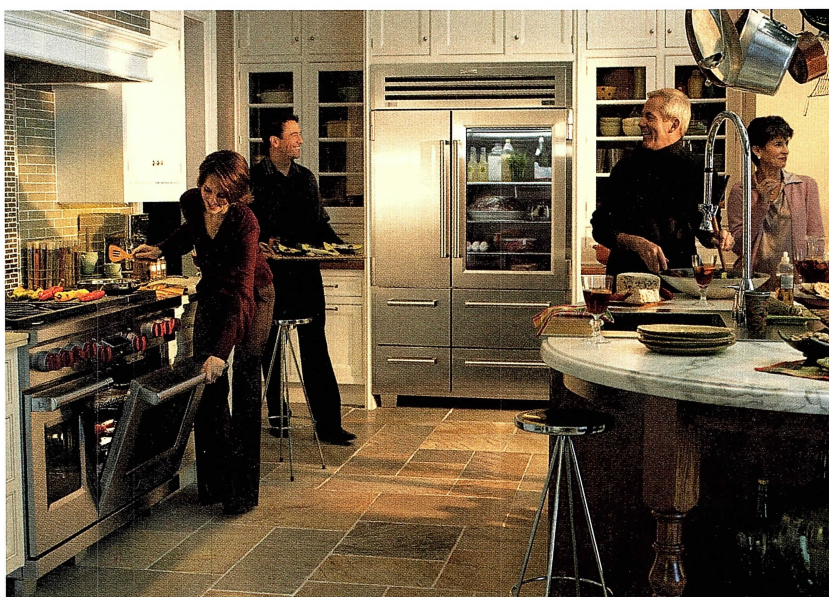


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What We Strive To Say

**Stephen A. Kliment, FAIA,
Remembered**

By Rick Bell, FAIA

We are saddened to report the death of Stephen A. Kliment, FAIA, a distinguished architect, author, teacher, and editor, whose work influenced what was built and how buildings were received. Steve died of cancer at age 78 on September 10, 2008, while traveling in Ebersberg, Bavaria. He leaves his wife, Felicia Drury Kliment; daughters Pamela Drury Kliment and Jennifer Kliment Wellander; two grandchildren; and a brother, architect Robert Kliment, FAIA.

Steve touched the lives of many as a colleague and mentor. Born in Prague, Czech Republic, on May 24, 1930, he was raised in England and immigrated to the United States in 1950 to study architecture. He received architectural degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (a B.A. in 1953) and Princeton University (an M.Arch in 1957). He also studied at l'Ecole Speciale d'Architecture in Paris and the University of Havana, Cuba.

His long career straddled architectural practice and criticism, with notable projects undertaken as a partner with Caudill Rowlett Scott (1968-1980) and at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. He was editor-in-chief of *Architectural & Engineering News* (1960-1968) and acquisitions editor of architecture books at John Wiley & Sons (1987-1990). He became editor-in-chief of *Architectural Record* (1990-1996), developing it into the premier architectural magazine in the U.S. Most recently he served as editor of *Principal's Report*, published by the Institute of Management and Administration in Newark, New Jersey.

Steve taught classes in writing for the design professions, including architecture, engineering, interior design, landscape architecture, and graphic design. These courses were legendary at Harvard's Graduate School of Design and City College of the City University of New York, where he was an adjunct professor.

I was privileged to work with Steve in crafting a publications program for the revitalized New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. He helped relaunch *Oculus* in 2003 and oversaw the development of the electronic journal e-OCULUS, serving as editorial director and member of the AIANY Board of Directors. In each issue of *Oculus* he wrote with eloquence and wit about current architectural literature. In his review of a biography of Bertram Goodhue, Steve might have been describing his own writing style when he noted that author Romy Wyllie's book was a "singular synthesis of [Goodhue's] life and work" with "broad scholarship distilled into lucid, jargon-free prose."

At the time of his death Steve was working on a book about

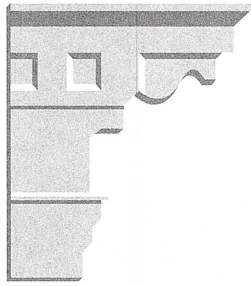


KRISTEN RICHARDS

African-American architects, representing his longtime commitment to making the profession more diverse and inclusive. He was an honorary member of the National Organization of Minority Architects, whose President-Elect R. Steven Lewis, AIA, said of him, "He will certainly be missed by all who came to know him and to appreciate the support he gave as a champion of black architects."

His grace, wit, and wisdom were ever visible through his words and actions. In "Why Writing Matters," the introduction of his notable book *Writing for Design Professionals* (W.W. Norton & Company), Steve quoted from Ephesians, chapter four: "Let no corrupt communications proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." He knew about writing, and he knew about people.

Steve's memory and generosity of spirit will live on at the AIA because of the impact he had on our lives as editor, educator, mentor, and friend. Writing this now, I am saddened to think he is no longer here to praise the *bon mot* or to redress hyperbole. He edited us all, and his memory continues to guide what we strive to say, how our values inform what we write, and how we conduct our lives.



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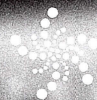
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Center Highlights

Center for Architecture

2008 Heritage Ball

The annual Heritage Ball honorees included: 2008 President's Award recipient Studio Daniel Libeskind; Center for Architecture Award winner Commissioner Shaun Donovan, Hon. AIA, NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development; 2008 AIA New York Chapter Award recipient MaryAnne Gilmartin, Forest City Ratner; and 2008 Center for Architecture Foundation Award winner The Robin Hood Foundation.

Right: (l-r): Daniel Libeskind, AIA; 2008 AIANY President James McCullar, FAIA; Nina Libeskind; Dinner Chair Aby Rosen, RFR Holding; MaryAnne Gilmartin; AIANY Executive Director Rick Bell, FAIA; Shaun Donovan, Hon. AIA.



SAM LAHOZ



SAM LAHOZ

Robin Hood Foundation Executive Director David Saltzman (left) with Center for Architecture Foundation President Alexander Lamis, AIA.



SAM LAHOZ

Left: Jim McCullar, FAIA (left), and Rick Bell, FAIA (right), present Randolph Croxton, FAIA (center), former AIANY President, with a surprise Proclamation for initiating the first Heritage Ball in 1986.



SAM LAHOZ

Left: After the Ball, the celebration continued with the Party@theCenter themed "Take Five: 5 years of the Center for Architecture + 5 hours of dancing," where DJ small change (left) kept partygoers hopping under theatrical videos and lighting designed by Illya Azaroff, AIA.

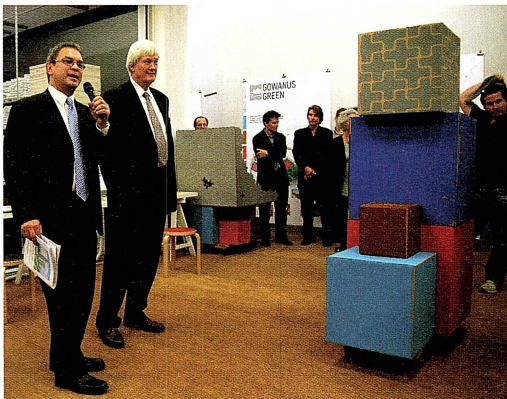
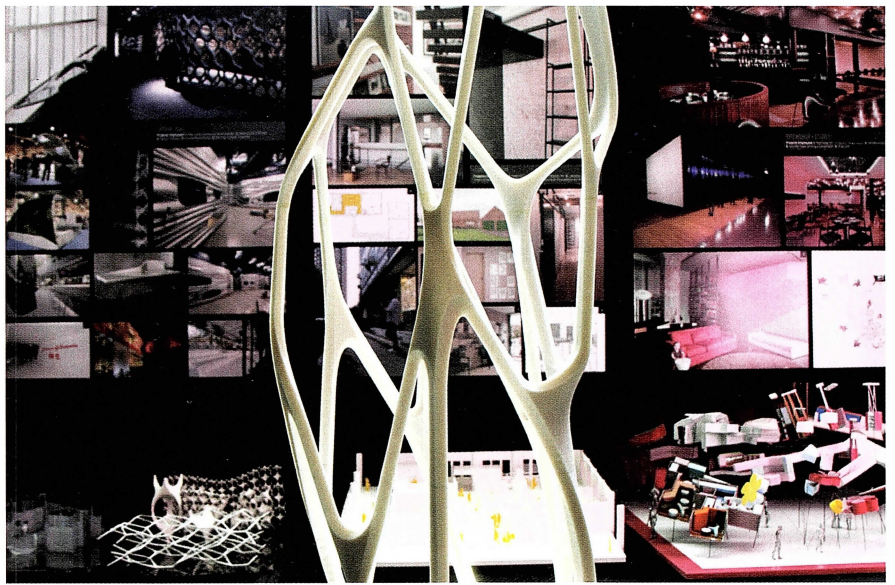


SAM LAHOZ

Above: The Take 5 dancers Kendra Ross, Patrick Shaw, Francisco Silvino, and Alyssa Marquez take a break to enjoy the party with the rest of the crowd.



Above and right: "New Practices New York 2008" was the second juried portfolio competition and exhibition, designed by We Should Do It All, to recognize and promote innovative and emerging architecture firms. The six winners were Baumann Architecture, Common Room, David Wallace Architect, Matter Practice, Openshop | Studio, and Urban A&O.



Rick Bell, FAIA (left), and James McCullar, FAIA, at the opening of "+Housing: 2008 AIA New York Designs for Living" exhibition, curated by Alexandra Lange and designed by Team ProAm, which highlighted the Chapter's 2008 theme.



In October, more than 140 students and 11 deans from universities in and around NYC gathered for the annual Deans Roundtable to debate the important role of architectural education in the new global marketplace.

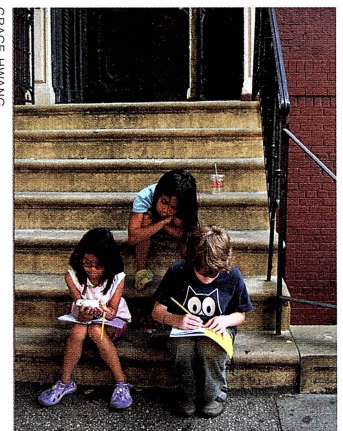


The "ARCH SCHOOLS 2008" exhibition, designed by Martina Sencakova, featured exemplary student work from 14 Tri-State area schools.



In September, New Practices New York 2008 competition winner Common Room led the Center's participation in Park(ing) Day, a nationwide initiative to reclaim parking spots for recreational public use.

Center for Architecture Foundation



For the Summer@theCenter program, "Stories from the 'Hood," students researched historical maps of Bleecker Street and the South Village, built models, and took to the streets to photograph, sketch, and conduct interviews to capture the neighborhood's intricate history for their Guide-By-Cell audio tour.



The sidewalk in front of the Center now sports "The Villager," one of nine bike racks designed by artist, musician, and biking enthusiast David Byrne, and installed throughout the city by the Department of Transportation.

2009
Design Awards

2009
Building Type Awards



AIA New York

Call for Entries

Schedule

Registration and Fees Due
06 February 2009, 6:00pm

Submissions Due
20 February 2009, 6:00pm

Design Awards Winners Announced
Design Awards Symposium
23 February 2009, 6:00pm

Building Type Award Winners Announced
02 March 2009, 6:00pm

Design Awards and Building Type Awards Luncheon
Cipriani Wall Street
22 April 2009, 11:30am–2:30pm

Design Awards and Building Type Awards
Exhibition Opening
23 April 2009, 6:00pm

Design Awards Architecture Winners' Symposium
06 May 2009, 6:00pm

Design Awards Interiors Winners' Symposium
18 May 2009, 6:00pm

Design Awards Projects Winners' Symposium
03 June 2009, 6:00pm

All events take place at the Center for Architecture unless otherwise noted.

To register and for more information:
www.aiany.org/awards/

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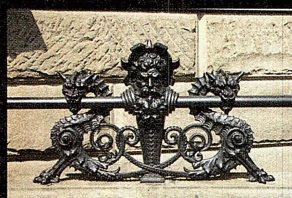
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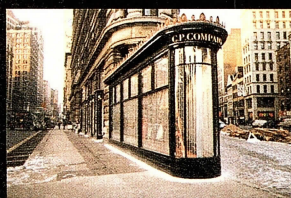
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Seaport Redux: Locals Welcome

One Block Over
By Claire Wilson

The breezes around Manhattan's Front and South Streets stunk of fish until the Fulton Fish Market closed in 2005, but now they have the clean, briny bite of river and sea. The 18th- and 19th-century brick buildings around Peck Slip and along Water Street that once housed fishmongers, flophouses, and chandlers have been turned into shops and rental housing. The cobblestone streets and old-fashioned street-lamps make some blocks look like Beacon Hill in Boston – charming but not sanitized.

On a recent afternoon, however, no one in Jeremy's Ale House, a bar on Front Street with a long history, had any nostalgia for the fish market, which had operated nearby since 1822. "The neighborhood has changed for the better," said Tim White, the bartender. "This whole block was a ghost town, and it's beautiful now."

A redevelopment plan by SHoP Architects will bring more improvements to South Street Seaport. Integrating the waterfront with the surrounding office, residential, and entertainment components, it effectively takes the Seaport back from the hordes of invading tourists and turns it over to New Yorkers. Pending approval, the project will reposition retail and leisure attractions to appeal to national and international visitors, but will also cater to locals and the exploding residential population in the Financial District. The median household income there is roughly \$165,000 per year, according to the Alliance for Downtown New York, but supermarkets and seven-day-a-week bars and restaurants have been slow to move in.

Commissioned by Seaport owners General Growth Properties, the plan calls for wide-open spaces along the water, a park running up Peck Slip, affordable housing and a school, the restoration and relocation of the historic former fish market structure called the Tin Building, new tenants for the 1982 Fulton Market Building, and the demolition of the three-story enclosed shopping mall on Pier 17. According to SHoP partner Gregg Pasquarelli, the party's over for the so-called "festival marketplace" of which the 1980s mall was a centerpiece. "They built it when the city was a different place and the festival market was about making it safe," he says. "Now the entire city is a festival marketplace. Who wants to go to the waterfront and go inside an enclosed shopping mall?"



CLAIRE WILSON

Indeed, inside the dreary mall you could be in any mall, anywhere. There are no views to speak of, except from some restaurants. The assortment of T-shirts and tourist paraphernalia is the same as it is in Times Square, where it belongs. Razing the mall will help create five acres of open space on the pier.

Those behind the project say views of the water will be an important component of the structures, which will be contemporary and include glass-walled retail stores under the FDR Drive. There will certainly be great views from the hotel and condominium tower being proposed, and this is one of the biggest sticking points. Some critics say that at 495 feet tall, it is taller than the 350-foot height zoning allows. They claim it would intrude on the small enclave of old red-brick buildings in the historic district, whose charm is in their scale and the way they tumble scattershot from the base of the Brooklyn Bridge. Further, at only 273 feet tall, the bridge's rightful, majestic dominance of that part of the East River could be seriously compromised.

The hotel/apartment complex already has the locals digging in their heels. "It would detract from the ambiance people come here to see," said Tom Trubiano, a retired transportation consultant visiting Jeremy's. "It would be an eyesore."

Tim the bartender agrees. "A 40-story tower next to the Brooklyn Bridge would stick out like a sore thumb," he said. "It would be totally out of place. We just don't need another 40-story building."

Claire Wilson writes the "Blueprints" column for the *New York Times*. She lives in Manhattan.

So Says... Joshua David Founders, Friends of the

JOEL STERNFELD



Joshua David (left) and Robert Hammond atop the High Line

Robert and Josh first met at a community board meeting in 1999. Longtime residents of the West Side, both had come to the meeting after reading a newspaper article about the High Line possibly being torn down. When they learned nobody was trying to save the railway, they took on the project themselves as a side project. Neither had a background in planning, architecture, government, or community organizing. (Josh was a magazine writer and editor, Robert a consultant for start-up businesses). Now full-timers at their non-profit Friends of the High Line managing a staff of 15, they're looking forward to opening the first section of the park in spring 2009.

Kristen Richards: What made you decide to save this piece of infrastructure and found the Friends of the High Line?

Joshua David: It was such a remarkable structure – stretching 22 blocks through three neighborhoods, offering a unique way of experiencing New York City – and it was threatened with demolition, no one working to save it. You can do nothing and walk away, but the opportunity to create something amazing for the city seemed too great to allow us to do that.

KR Did you have alternative uses in mind other than a park?

JD We considered other options but none seemed feasible. And when we saw the incredible self-seeded landscape that had taken root on top of the structure, we couldn't imagine anything but a park.

KR Did you talk to other partners to help and codevelop?

JD We reached out to everyone we could, hoping some existing organization would take it on or formally partner with us. We received lots of offers to help and made the most of every one, but no one wanted to take this massive project off our hands entirely. I can't say I blamed them; it was a pretty daunting endeavor.

KR How important is mixed-use development to achieving your objectives for the High Line district?

JD The variety of existing uses is essential to the neighborhood's vibrancy. It's the mix of housing with residents of all different income levels, art galleries, commercial spaces housing design firms and new media businesses, restaurants, nightlife, schools, and cultural institutions that makes the High Line district one of New York's most vibrant neighborhoods. This vibrancy will be essential to the High Line's success because it will provide different types of park users at different times of day.

KR How can we ensure that new arts development in the High Line District is economically sustainable over time?

JD I wish I had the answer to that, but I don't. Rents were rising precipitously prior to the recent severe downturn. It's possible the downturn will make a number of gallery lease renewals possible, but at the same time, it's a lot harder to sell art right now.

and Robert Hammond, High Line

Robert Hammond: People were forecasting the demise of the galleries in Chelsea when we started this project in 1999. Since then there's been a net increase each year, although I think the new economic climate will change that.

KR Do current zoning regulations provide sufficient incentive for new building along the High Line?

JD I think the Department of City Planning under Amanda Burden, working with the local community and Community Board 4, came up with a good plan that balances incentives for new housing with measures to maintain the best of the existing built environment and the uses those buildings house.

KR If the High Line is fundamentally a "connector," why won't any adjacent buildings be able to connect directly onto it?

JD Buildings can connect, but only in a manner that creates a substantial public benefit. For instance, a public entrance can run through a private building onto the High Line. But a private building can't open a door onto the High Line that serves only the tenants of that building. And that's as it should be. In its new life as a park, the High Line must serve the public first and foremost.

KR What is the relationship between the High Line and the current planning for Hudson Yards? Why is it important that the High Line continue into the Hudson Yards site, and why doesn't Related Companies, the designated developer of the site, agree with you?

RH A third of the High Line is at the rail yards and, unlike the other neighborhoods the High Line runs through, everything at the rail yards (more than 12 million square feet of development) will be new. There will no reminders of the past and the rail use that will still go on hidden under the platform – except the High Line. There are dozens of other reasons why the High Line should be preserved in its entirety at this site. To the Related Companies' credit, it has committed to keeping the majority of the High Line and recognizes its value, but it still wants to keep open the option of demolishing the spur over 10th Avenue. Most people don't even believe me when I tell them this is still a possibility. Developers have made bad bets on the High Line before – when they wanted to tear down the whole line – and I think history will repeat itself. If we are successful in keeping it, in the not too distant future Related may view the spur over 10th Avenue as the crown jewel of the whole site.

KR How do the intent, design, use, and location in relation to office and residential districts of the High Line differ from the Promenade Plantée in Paris? How are they similar?

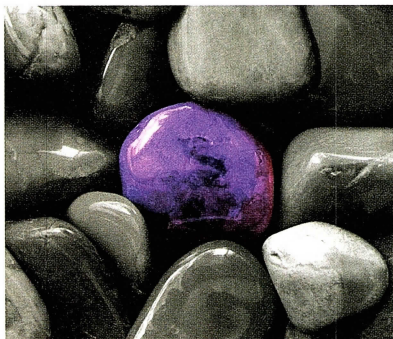
JD I see two key differences. One is how the project came about. The Promenade Plantée was a government-led initiative, so a nonprofit like ours didn't have to create a citywide movement to make it happen. Residents near the Promenade like and use the park, but they didn't have to fight to get it, so they treat it more casually. It doesn't inspire the same passionate devotion that the High Line does. The other main way it differs is design. The design of the Promenade is more formal and traditional park. It's very beautiful, but the design that Field Operations and Diller Scofidio + Renfro have created for the High Line is truly something new, innovative, and as surprising and unusual as the High Line itself.

KR Given the strictures of the Rails-to-Trails program, could a rail line, even light rail, ever find its way back onto the High Line?

JD It could, but it's highly unlikely. In our early work with the Design Trust for Public Space, we studied all the rail options. We found that substantial demolition of surrounding buildings would have to take place to accommodate passenger platforms if the High Line were given over to passenger rail use (the structure was designed to carry freight). In addition, the economics of it don't work, and the community wouldn't support it. A lot of my neighbors remember trains running on the High Line. Robert and I love those old black-and-white photos of the trains – it's nostalgic to us. But to my neighbors who live next to the High Line, the trains were just noisy and smelly and dirty.

KR And the bonus question for Robert: What about the Rome Prize you were awarded this year? What happens to a dream deferred?

RH Sadly I had to decline the Rome Prize. In many ways the real work begins after we open and start operating the High Line, so I didn't feel I could leave with good conscience and spend six months in Rome this spring. I am reapplying and hope to be able to take a six-month sabbatical from the High Line in spring of 2010. And in two to three years I want to look at doing something completely different.



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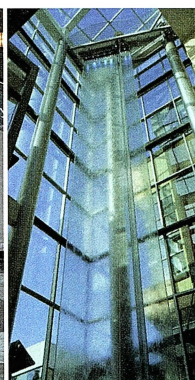
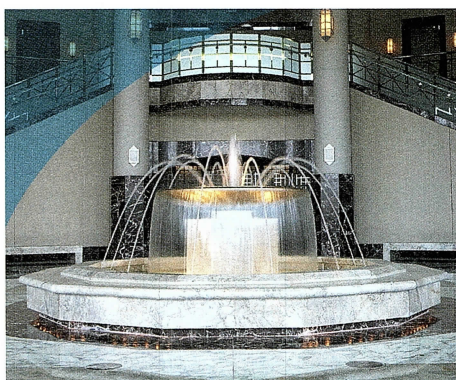
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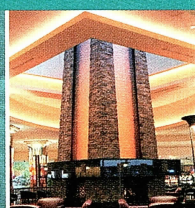
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Competing for Space

By Stanley Stark FAIA

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New York City, the most populous and densely populated city in the United States, is on a major growth curve. Its 8.27 million population is forecast to grow by one million new residents over the next 20 years. Its 305-square-mile land area, which we already think of as congested, will become considerably more densely packed.

Since it is highly unlikely that we will build more land or annex more territory, planners, architects, government officials, and developers will have to become more creative in how we can use space: how we capture it, employ it, and manage competing interests and land uses.

The competition for space and how these contests are being played out in the city are the heart and soul of this issue. They represent what's happening now and what may need to happen in the future. The current tense relations between educational, healthcare, and cultural institutions as they expand to fulfill new missions are confronting wary and suspicious residential neighborhoods that feel pressured and push back politically. Facility types and land uses that used to be strange bedfellows are now, on occasion, combining their resources – and footprints – into joint developments. Competition has led to symbiotic cooperation. Schools are being integrated into residential and commercial buildings. Research labs are being incorporated with staff housing. Expansions are growing upwards as well as sideways.

Obstacles are being challenged, embraced, and accommodated. Ralph Waldo Emerson said that “every wall is a door.” So the desires that spur the competition for the limited resource of space may yield to new ways of understanding how that space can be used and shared. NIMBY politics, often viewed as exclusionary, self-centered, and implacable, represent just another force or constituency whose interests must be blended into the mix.

As parties traditionally in competition are compelled by necessity and shortage to explore new areas of cooperation, we should expect to see other changes to support this growth. Zoning might become more accommodating to multiuse districts and multiuse building types. Density will be allowed to spread more evenly rather than be over-concentrated in fewer locations. Previously undeveloped and abandoned space, such as the vast and unusable areas beneath viaducts and overhead traffic structures, may come under new and creative scrutiny (an early concern of the Lindsay Administration's Urban Design Group). The city's waterfronts will emerge again as a new battleground between the forces of private development and public access.

This issue of *Oculus* will not cover all of these topics – we have our own competition for space within the magazine – but we are launching the debate and expect to return to it periodically. Competition and cooperation are intertwined. After all, this is our future.

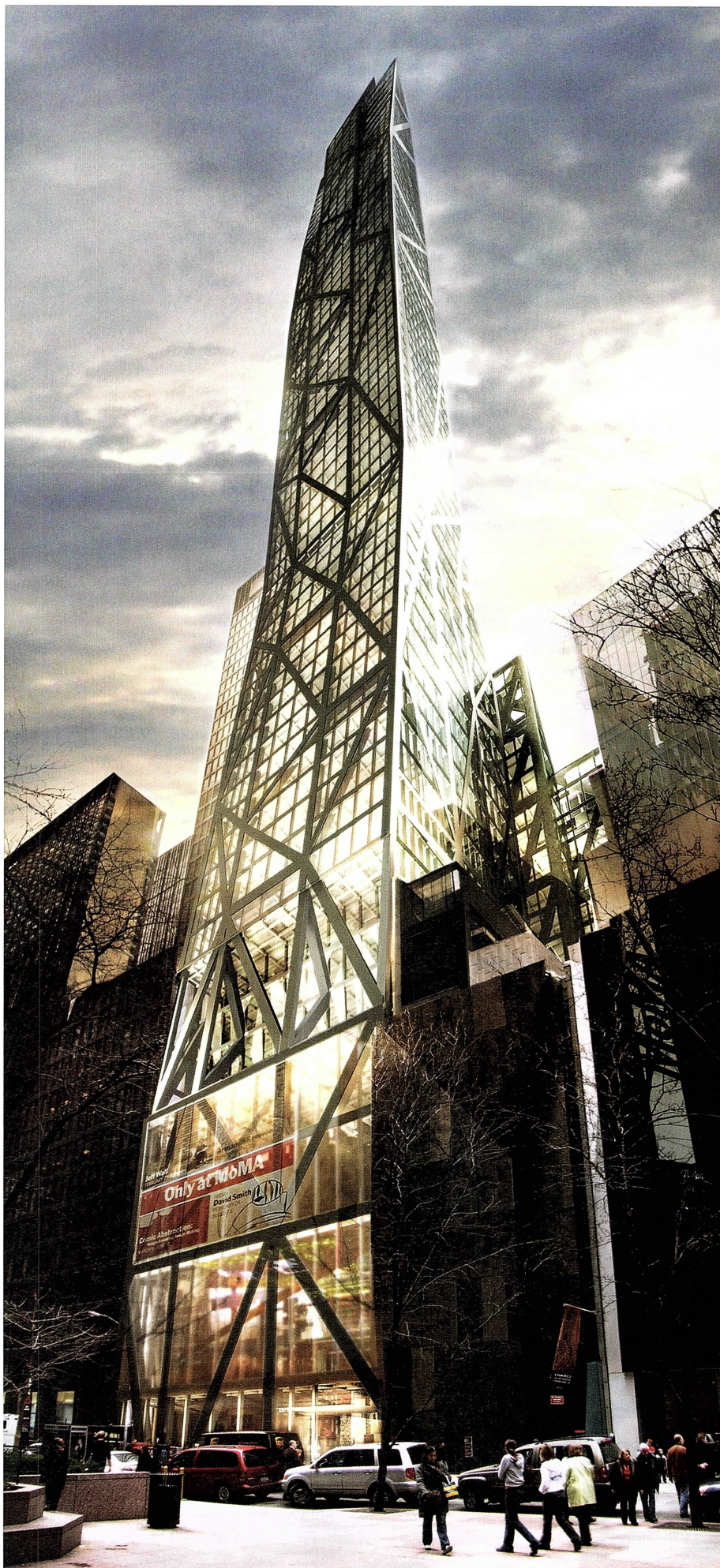
Stanley Stark, FAIA, is vice president and national director for life sciences within HDR/CUH2A's Science and Technology practice. He is a long-term member of the *Oculus* Committee.

NIMBY and Me

Community opposition to
real-estate development
doesn't have to be
inevitable

By Roger Yee

ATELIERS JEAN NOUVEL



53W53, designed by Ateliers Jean Nouvel for Hines, will include new gallery space for MoMA

Congratulations! Your neighborhood is scheduled to receive: a) a garbage transfer station, b) a library, or c) a big-box retailer. Please try to be happy while one or more options are chosen for you. Are you smiling? If your neighborhood happens to be Brooklyn's Atlantic Yards, site of a proposed mixed-use development designed by Frank Gehry; Willets Point in Queens, where New York City hopes to transform an underutilized 61-acre site known as the "Iron Triangle"; or 125th Street in Harlem, the object of a major rezoning to bring in taller buildings and more commercial appeal to draw tourists and locals, you know who is smiling – and who isn't.

New Yorkers know that every new real-estate development project – residential, commercial, or institutional, public or private, big or small, as-of-right or zoning variance, vernacular or atypical – brings change to the neighborhood in question. Some projects are welcomed with open arms. Others trigger intense, often well-organized community opposition known as "Not in My Backyard" (NIMBY).

In an inquiry into the cause of – and possible cure for – NIMBY, *Oculus* has put aside the particulars of specific NIMBY controversies to examine the problem in general. While the participation of real-estate developers in the discussion would have been welcome (those contacted declined to speak), the individuals who generously considered the NIMBY phenomenon have given cause for optimism. NIMBY may seem inevitable, but it is not intractable. In fact, there are situations in which NIMBY could conceivably be dissuaded from showing up at all.

Tinkering with the status quo

Since most architects believe their projects bring good things to clients' communities, they can be caught off guard when their designs are attacked by neighborhoods. "People don't like change," declares Mark Ginsberg, FAIA, a principal of Curtis + Ginsberg Architects, who has been extensively involved in community housing development and city planning initiatives such as the New York New Visions effort. "Of course, there are exceptions. If you propose almost anything new for struggling neighborhoods, people are wildly enthusiastic. Similarly, if you announce projects like a library, firehouse, or Whole Foods, you get a hero's welcome anywhere."

People like to preserve the character of neighborhoods they have come to understand and use for their own needs, Ginsberg explains. Tinkering with the status quo introduces uncertainty, which then turns into a risk or an opportunity. Given the public's current distrust of business and government, neighborhoods frequently expect changes to cause living conditions to worsen rather than improve. Change all too often implies the arrival of "people different from you" and "less appealing uses dumped on you."

NIMBY opposition is most likely to arise when projects bring potential for harm to neighborhoods, Ginsberg says. Unpleasant activities that society must perform, such as garbage and sewage processing, social rehabilitation, and providing temporary or low-income housing, are obvious sources of concern or outright fear. (Conversely, residents of low-income neighborhoods tend to fear gentrification as displacement by Yuppies.) So are projects that rezone neighborhoods for higher density and more intensive use, especially



The 76-story Beekman Tower, designed by Gehry Partners for Forest City Ratner Companies, will include a public school, an ambulatory care center, and retail

if they are not accompanied by the upgrading of local schools, transportation, hospitals, and other services and amenities. NIMBY also thrives in active, well-organized communities, where civic leaders can quickly mobilize opposition and generate publicity.

For all the sound and fury, Jerilyn Perine, executive director of the Citizens Housing and Planning Council and a former New York City planning commissioner, believes that NIMBY is rarely as straightforward as its cast of characters would claim. She urges all parties to hear opposing points of view so a compromise can be achieved. "Architects can overestimate the positive impact of architecture on communities," she points out. "Local residents who suddenly learn they are to receive a beautiful new building may think good design looks more like a secret plot than a work of art."

It's partly true, Perine notes, that certain neighborhoods are a dumping ground for undesirable projects. Yet the choice of project sites is not as politically motivated as it may seem. "Neighborhoods can be singled out for specific municipal projects because they occupy an area with historic associations, strategic value, or affordable land," she explains. "For example, if you're located along a highway, your neighborhood may be the logical place to store salt for icy roads." Nevertheless, the public or private developer has an obligation

to consider how a project will affect its surroundings and to share that knowledge with the community.

Still, Perine warns against giving neighborhoods a free pass in every NIMBY dispute. “In the post-Robert Moses era, we have activist city planners and community organizers who can portray whatever communities want as inherently good,” she reports. “That’s a faulty premise. What we want as individuals cannot be automatically equated with the public good. In the end, we must build the homeless shelter, bus depot, or car pound somewhere.” Furthermore, she criticizes neighborhoods for viewing themselves as museums. “Urban environments are all about change,” she asserts. “People come to New York to succeed and move up in life. Even historic neighborhoods can accept change without being destroyed.”

Explain first, design later

Is there a cure for NIMBY? Experienced planners and designers admit that NIMBY disputes are harder to avoid when communities are unaware of new projects until they are already designed, which is usually the case. “Neighborhood people rarely have any information about a new project,” notes Ernest Hutton, FAICP, Assoc. AIA, a principal of Hutton Associates Inc., and co-chair of both the AIANY’s New York New Visions and the Planning & Urban Design Committee. “Since the developer fears he won’t have the right answers for them, he avoids reaching out. So people don’t get to talk to peripheral parties until late in the development process. It’s so counterproductive.”

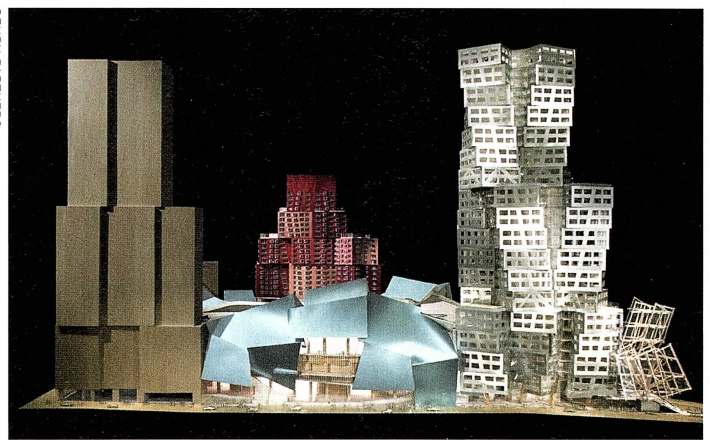
Hutton has weathered enough NIMBY encounters as an urban planner to appreciate that no news is not good news in real-estate development. “Communication and outreach are among the first things a developer should do,” he maintains. “This extends even to as-of-right projects. A developer can save lots of time by explaining his objectives to a community from the beginning.”

One common source of poor communications is the heavy role zoning plays in lieu of plans. “New York has evolved largely through zoning, and hasn’t prepared a master plan in decades,” Hutton says. “Zoning, which is highly detailed and technical, is of interest to lawyers, developers, and architects. Planning, which translates FARs [floor area ratio], height restrictions, and setbacks into tangible forms, is of interest to neighborhoods. A developer who wants to educate the public needs to clarify his intentions in terms ordinary people can understand.”

Local community planning boards are a good way to do this, Hutton believes, bringing major planning issues down to a manageable scale. David Helpern, FAIA, a principal of David Helpern Architects, can readily concur because he is both an architect with commercial and institutional clients and a member of Community Board 8 on Manhattan’s Upper East Side. Having joined the board in April 2008, Helpern was immediately impressed by the sheer volume of business handled by the various committees – and the seriousness of board members in serving their community. “There’s a greater sense of civic responsibility on both sides today,” he says. “The developers often share the same commitment as the community to protecting the city’s character. You see a heightened sensitivity to urban planning and design values in their projects.”

“The more transparency, the better,” asserts Helpern, who urges

GEHRY PARTNERS



Atlantic Yards, designed by Gehry Partners for Forest City Ratner; view of the Arena Block from Atlantic Avenue

architects and clients to conduct information presentations at the earliest stage possible. “The intelligent developer will test his ideas at the community level before proceeding to ULURP [Uniform Land Use Review Process] and spending a lot of money,” he says. “It’s particularly effective for the not-as-of-right applicant.”

Helpern assures fellow architects that they and their clients will get a fair hearing. “Getting feedback will expose potential areas of conflict and identify promising areas for compromises,” he explains. “If a smart developer brings a project that has been well thought out, meets a clear need, and benefits the neighborhood as well as the investors – even if it creates bulk or replaces a beloved but obsolete local structure – he has a decent chance of getting approved.”

Words of encouragement: NYC Department of City Planning

Speaking for the New York City Department of City Planning and its commissioner, Amanda Burden, Hon. AIANY, Press Secretary Rachael Raynoff offers the following food for thought: “Since 2002, City Planning has gotten 87 rezonings covering more than 6,800 blocks adopted. We did that by engaging communities, elected officials, property owners, and stakeholders. NIMBY concerns are diminished when decision-makers listen and engage those who otherwise might oppose new plans.”

Raynoff openly acknowledges that drawing up new plans is hard work. “The participation of the community and local elected officials in the planning process is part of building consensus and makes proposals better,” she says. “Planning is noisy, combative, iterative, and reliant on community involvement. Any initiative that does not build consensus and is not shaped by the give-and-take of the public review process will be an inferior plan. Our 87-0 record attests to the strength and success of our approach.”

Architects, take note. The Golden Rule still applies in the 21st century for coping with NIMBY. Plan, design, discuss, and build for others as you would have them do for you. Sooner or later you will – and they will.

Roger Yee is senior editor of architecture and design for Visual Reference Publications and a consultant to organizations in the design community.

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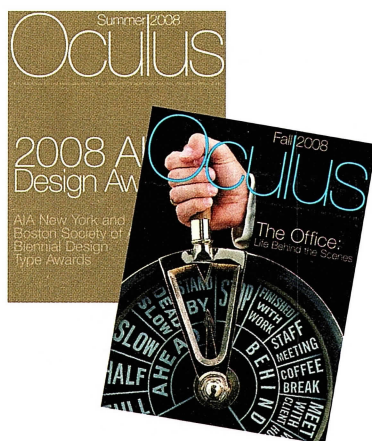
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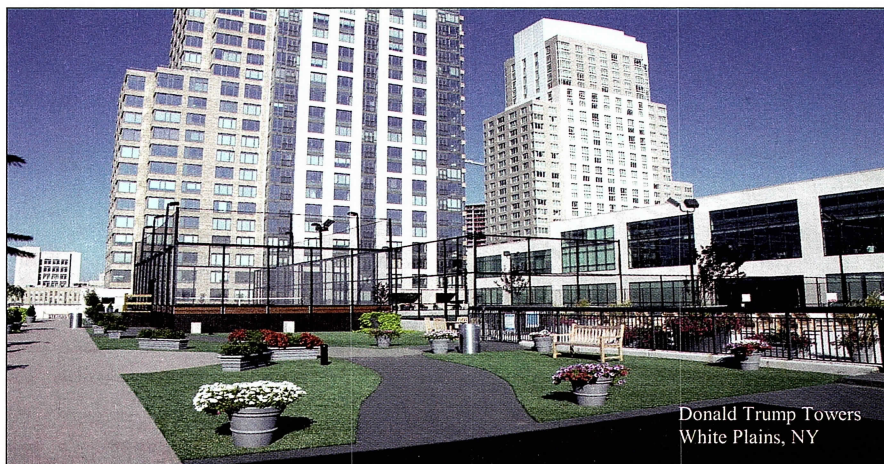
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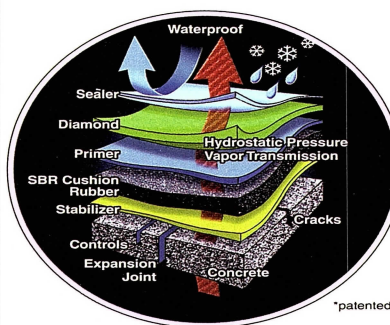
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Running the Gauntlet

Approvals and community relations for the wary professional
By Ernest Hutton, FAICP, Assoc. AIA

Beyond creative programming, responsive design, and patient financing, the most important factor in implementing a proposed project is getting it approved. New York's roadsides are littered with best-laid schemes gone astray.

In the contentious world of community relations, any change to the status quo is viewed by local residents with skepticism. To those seeking approvals, it must seem as though community activists are lurking behind every bush. Perhaps they are, but this is part of the process, and the more all sides share information with each other, the better the process will work.

In New York City, approvals need to be considered both for projects that require discretionary approval – such as variances, special permits, and other judgment calls by the planning commission or some other body – and for as-of-right situations in which the project plays by the zoning rules to the extent possible.



"Running the Gauntlet" (Briggs Co., 1868-1930)

Discretionary Approvals

Discretionary approvals sometimes seem to be more common than as-of-right approvals, as there are decreasing numbers of prototypical building sites that lend themselves to generic codification. Even though the NYC Zoning Resolution tries to deal with every contingent situation, there are always anomalies. The Resolution itself, as with any document built up over time, is fraught with contradictions that lead an architect to consider tradeoffs to improve a building's function or design. These tradeoffs often require changing the rules to fit the situation.

The City Planning Commission is the official arbiter of planning issues such as approvals, special permits, and other judgments, based on criteria laid out in the Resolution. These decisions fall under review as pertinent by the Board of Standards and Appeals (which also has the power to grant variances), or as diehard cases by the courts. Other bodies also weigh in on project approvals. For projects within the city's myriad historic districts, for example, the Landmarks Preservation Commission must issue a Certificate of Appropriateness – a judgment based more on the commission's informed opinion than on defined guidelines for often varying district characteristics or conditions.

To the extent that a project requires a change of zoning or other major deviation from the rules, a structured and broad-based process of public review kicks in, called Uniform Land Use Review Process (ULURP). This exercise is dreaded by applicants for its requirements of time, money, and energy, but welcomed by community residents as one of the few opportunities to examine and weigh in on a qualifying project. The process involves an environmental assessment or, if necessary, a full environmental impact statement (often more a convenience for lawyers on both sides than for the applicant or the public); advisory opinions by local community boards (which often carry weight with official bodies); official planning determinations by the City Planning Commission (impacted by staff, commission, and director agendas); and approval by City Council (at which point policy and legal judgments are inevitably colored by local politics).

Each step entails a measure of risk, for which the reward is an approved project. The cost of achieving approval is a major element in the total cost of a project eventually passed on to the end user.

As-of-Right Projects

The other side of the approvals coin is the as-of-right project, within zoning rules that are (as they should be) geared more to prevent harm than to encourage innovation. Yet even here there are concerns that a wise architect or planner should anticipate to protect his client as well as his own self-interest.

Such conforming projects are evaluated by the Department of Buildings (DOB), which provides project zoning examination, rather than by the Department of City Planning, which initiates and drafts the zoning. The zoning code has been built up over time, elaborated and refined with reference to varying conditions, and interpreted via often conflicting precedents, which themselves become part of the often unseen record that defines zoning.

How the DOB examiner will interpret particular zoning regulations on complex issues is therefore hard to predict. The alternative, the sometimes controversial "self-certification" of zoning interpretation by qualified

architects or engineers, helps to streamline the process, but should be even more rigorously justified than opinions by a DOB examiner.

Negotiating the Process

Sometimes coping with the process is the only option, and a cottage industry has developed around seasoned planners, architects, and lawyers who specialize – for a well-earned fee – in facilitating the approvals process. However, even they recognize that the system, if not broken, is certainly in need of corrective maintenance.

Suggestions to improve the process abound, and some have been tried with less than stellar results. An inter-professional American Institute of Architects/American Planning Association/American Bar Association concept to rewrite the present zoning code into a simplified, rational document foundered as infeasible. As a fallback, a recent, similarly sponsored attempt to propose some simple "housekeeping" changes ran into a buzzsaw of suspicion and politics when forced to make its way through ULURP as an independent proposal, and was eventually withdrawn.

Those involved in both efforts now agree that the best way to cope with and improve the process is to focus on transparency: make the system (warts and all) as open as possible, and educate residents and professionals alike in the effectiveness of meeting and talking before a project is designed, rather than after the fact.

Michael Kwartler, FAIA, principal of Michael Kwartler and Associates and a zoning consultant, is a strong advocate for opening up the design process. "You have to involve the community upfront," he says, "using proven techniques for participation and consultation, and taking advantage of new information technology to communicate planning and design alternatives." Mark Ginsberg, FAIA, principal of Curtis + Ginsberg Architects and a former AIA NY Chapter president, stresses streamlining and simplifying approvals procedures. "A standardized zoning form, understandable to the layman and organized for the professional and the zoning examiner, can take a lot of the mystery out of what is being requested," he notes.

Both agree on the need to computerize the zoning document – making footnotes, precedents, and rulings available to everyone – and provide enhanced educational materials that graphically interpret zoning for both community members and designers. "The current Zoning Handbook [produced by the NYC Department of City Planning] is an excellent and well-illustrated document," explains Kwartler. "But it illustrates only the prototypical generic situation. What's needed is a supplement illustrating what happens when you have a site or program that doesn't fit the mold. How do you deal with the exceptions as well as the rules?"

The approvals system is difficult and complicated. But increasing communication among the players and providing clear and concise information to all will go a long way toward achieving transparency in this necessary process.

Ernie Hutton, FAICP, Assoc. AIA, an urban designer/planner whose projects specialize in community and stakeholder involvement, is president of Hutton Associates Inc., a collaborative practice based in New York.



Grimshaw Architects/Ammann & Whitney: Queens Museum of Art

Shape Shifting

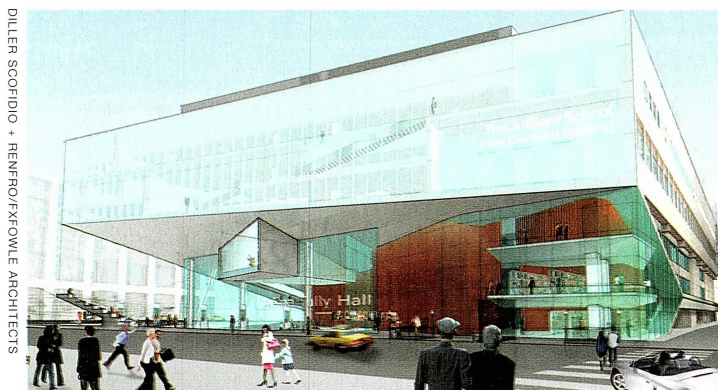
New York's cultural institutions are finding ingenious ways to expand and reenergize their facilities.

By Richard Staub

New York City's cultural institutions have been restless when it comes to building. Well-endowed concerns such as Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts and The Metropolitan Museum of Art are reconfiguring the buildings and land they've already got. Meanwhile, the Whitney Museum of American Art, after three tries at expanding its uptown landmark, is bound for the Meatpacking District adjacent to the High Line, with a satellite facility designed by the ubiquitous Renzo Piano with Cooper, Robertson & Partners. And, if approved, The Museum of Modern Art will expand yet again, extending galleries into an adjacent, Jean Nouvel-designed condo/hotel tower. That's just for starters. The list goes on to include institutions in most of the five boroughs.

Why now? For one thing, once scrappy start-ups like the New Museum of Contemporary Art, the Museum of the Moving Image, and the Museum for African Art – all of which have completed new buildings or have expansions under way – have matured. They've developed loyal followings and assembled boards that believe in and support their missions and programs. And then there is the inevitable shift in goals, not to mention physical wear and tear.

The New Museum, whose new building designed by SANAA dramatically increased its size and visibility, recently announced the purchase of an adjoining five-story building. The Museum of the Moving Image in Queens is doubling its size with a renovation and expansion by Leeser Architecture. Extending Fifth Avenue's Museum Mile to 110th Street, the Museum for African Art will have new quarters in 1285 Fifth Avenue, a residential complex that suggests how the real estate/culture combo can work. Robert A.M. Stern Architects is the design architect for both the museum and the exterior of the residential building, collaborating with SLCE Architects for the residential portion and with G TECTS for the museum.



Diller Scofidio + Renfro with FXFOWLE Architects: The Juilliard School and Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center

Expanding or building an arts facility usually calls for a complex mix of culture, architecture, finance, real estate, and politics. Sometimes institutions have to go through several schemes – and locations – before finding the solution that actually takes off. After plans to move to the restored Tweed Courthouse were nixed by Mayor Bloomberg, the Museum of the City of New York decided to stay put and began a more modest, two-phase expansion and renovation program designed by Polshek Partnership.

The New York Historical Society, which was unable to get a variance to build a high-rise tower above its facility, has begun an extensive interior renovation designed by Platt Byard Dovell White Architects. Putting aside a baroque scheme designed by Eric Owen Moss, FAIA, the Queens Museum of Art will double its size, working with Grimshaw Architects and Ammann & Whitney. By moving its office, library, and related functions into adjoining buildings, the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum is freeing up space in its landmark building for galleries designed by Gluckman Mayner Architects.

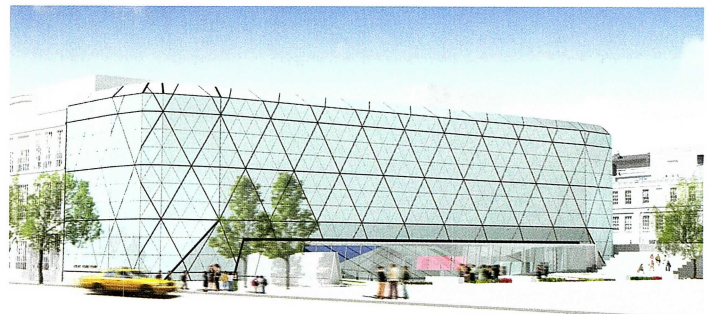
The Drawing Center and The Joyce Theater have announced relocation plans but have yet to find sites that work. Their hopes were dashed most noticeably in 2002, when they were being considered for the World Trade Center site. The Drawing Center withdrew because it wouldn't limit future exhibits to non-controversial work, and The Joyce's Frank Gehry-designed building has disappeared into funding limbo. Indeed, other than the museum portion of the National September 11 Memorial and Museum, designed by Snøhetta and Davis Brody Bond Aedas, the once-lauded cultural component of the WTC master plan has virtually evaporated.

The most ambitious renovation program under way is Lincoln Center's transformation, driven by a desire to reenergize the aging complex. The plan includes the redesign of The Juilliard School, an acoustically warmer interior for Alice Tully Hall, development of the West 65th Street corridor as a "Street of the Arts," refurbishment of the plaza, and the introduction of a new entryway. The project will give portions of the formerly all-travertine bastion a contemporary edge and provide an establishment imprimatur for Diller Scofidio + Renfro, which is collaborating with FXFOWLE Architects on the Juilliard, Tully



RENZO PIANO BUILDING WORKSHOP/COOPER, ROBERTSON & PARTNERS

Renzo Piano Building Workshop in collaboration with Cooper, Robertson & Partners: Whitney Museum of American Art satellite in the Meatpacking District



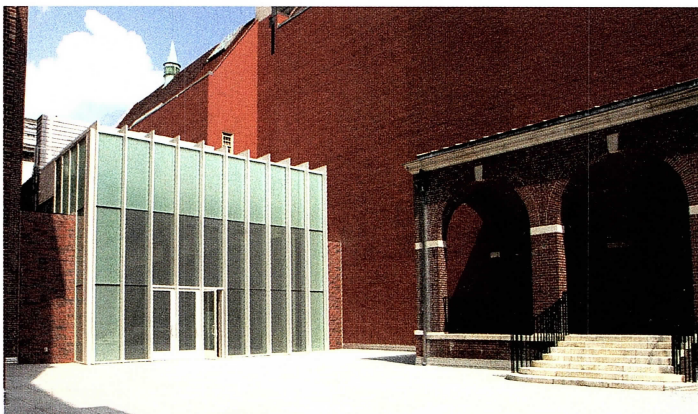
LEESER ARCHITECTURE

Leeser Architecture: Museum of the Moving Image



ANIPHASE

Gluckman Mayner Architects: Cooper-Hewitt's new ground-floor gallery



Polshek Partnership: Museum of the City of New York

Hall, and West 65th Street projects, and with Beyer Blinder Belle on the entryway portion. Just a block away, the former Harmony Atrium is being transformed into a new visitors center designed by Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects. (The refurbishment of the New York State Theater by JCY Architecture is also under way, but is not part of Lincoln Center's master plan.)

Across the East River, the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) has plans for a 200-seat theater in a nearby former Salvation Army building, with the goal of attracting a younger audience – a building goal shared by many organizations. The project is the latest in BAM's more



Platt Byard Dovell White Architects: New York Historical Society

than 25-year association with Hugh Hardy, FAIA, his original firm Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates, and currently H3 Hardy Collaboration Architecture. Planned nearby is another H3-designed building, Theatre for a New Audience.

Of course, it isn't just about buildings. BAM inaugurated an enterprising plan for an arts neighborhood in the 1990s that would make

the surrounding Fort Greene area a creative hub. Now managed by the Downtown Brooklyn Partnership, a revised plan has a series of projects either under way or targeted to happen over the next several years. And last fall, Creative Time's Anne Pasternak announced an effort to attract and develop space for up-and-coming arts organizations in Lower Manhattan.

"The need for cultural facilities is greater than ever," says Hardy, interviewed at the beginning of the financial crisis. "Unstable times are when the arts become more special, because they assert our fundamental values. They also spark questions about who we are and what we're about – which is terrific material for artists." If that's so, may 100 new facilities bloom!

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



Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects: Lincoln Center's new visitors center in the former Harmony Atrium



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The University as Laboratory for Urban Design

NYC's educational institutions share tight space with their neighbors and growth isn't always easy, but universities are striving to modernize through planning, design – and good communications with sometimes adversarial community members

By Bill Millard

School of Visual Arts Theater is the old Clearview Cinema on West 23rd Street redesigned by Milton Glaser and Laurence G. Jones Architects

Depending on who's talking, New York's institutions of higher learning are either the laboratories of a knowledge-based economy or arrogant, entitled bullies who colonize territory and catalyze gentrification. Where university officials see progress, job creation, and cultural stimulation, opponents see power imbalances, abuses of civic processes, and excessive scale. In urban settings, congestion, high real-estate values, and stakeholder concerns amplify the inherent tensions of university projects.

Some institutions, however, manage to forge symbiotic relations with neighbors. While pleasing everyone is impossible, academic officials and architects find that an open ear to residents' concerns and a transparent master plan can help make an institution a pillar, not an ogre.

Pratt and Cooper Union: Balancing academic and community needs

Some media outlets recycle the same headline whenever university projects arise: "Big Institution Crushes Little Guy." Conversely, objections to a new project can look like obstructionism or opportunism. But rapacity is not a common motive for academic administrators, and not all opponents belong to the NIMBY/CAVE/BANANA* faction.

Jack Esterson, AIA, partner at Wank Adams Slavin Associates' WASA/Studio A, has designed a multiuse building for the Pratt Institute's first foray beyond its superbloc campus in Brooklyn. With landscaping by Mathews Nielsen, the 120,000-square-foot building will replace vacant lots with Pratt's fine arts studios, digital arts program, student services, and development office; a housing advocacy group; swing space for temporary tenancies during renovations elsewhere; and ground-floor retail. The building represents a \$42-million investment, a prominent branding effort, and a visible commitment to sustainable design, including a green roof and plinth and solar louvers on the south façade (LEED Gold is expected).

* Along with the familiar NIMBY faction, many architects and planners have encountered Citizens Against Virtually Everything and their motto, Build Absolutely Nothing Anywhere Near Anybody.

Esterson has lived in the neighborhood for 38 years, attended Pratt, taught there, and served on community groups. After 1950s megablock housing complexes replaced low-rise townhouses, he explains, “one-story strip buildings decimated the neighborhood and broke Clinton Hill into east and west, creating a no-man’s land that lasted about 40 years.” Local knowledge helps him balance Pratt’s green priorities and community needs, “mending that tear” resulting from planning errors. “The community has been incredibly supportive,” he observes.

Balanced educational and public programming is also a feature of Cooper Union’s new “vertical piazza” by Morphosis and Gruzen Samton. The project began amid considerable dissension, however. “There’s an element of fear,” says Cooper Union President George Campbell, Jr., Ph.D. Some community groups “looked at other universities’ expansion projects, and they don’t make the distinction between a university that’s expanding and a university that’s doing a revitaliza-

he says. “I had to calm these guys down. They wanted transparency at the lower level and connective tissue with some commercial space.” The original idea was abandoned, and the new design delivered a dramatic hexagonal window on the Shevchenko Place east façade that frames and reflects St. George’s neo-Byzantine dome.

Gruzen Samton Principal and Project Manager Susan Drew, AIA, LEED AP, says that Cooper Union “wanted a building that championed innovation and engineering expertise.” A cogeneration plant, radiant ceiling panels, green roof, and other features have accrued LEED points, and the building may ultimately be accredited LEED Platinum. The high-tech approach that initially alarmed some neighbors is integrated with performance features, expressing what Mayne hails as New York’s “radical heterogeneity,” while aiding circulation, sunlight, ventilation, and energy use.



As proposed by Renzo Piano Building Workshop and Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, Columbia University’s West 125th Street development would enhance public spaces to include more pedestrian-friendly connections to the new Hudson River Park

tion.” Asked what modernizations might pass their muster, some “hard-core” objectors told Campbell, “We don’t believe you need to do anything. We don’t want any building taller than what you have.”

Morphosis Principal Thom Mayne, FAIA, recalls that “the real vocal group” was the East Village Ukrainian community, which opposed any structure that might obscure St. George’s Church. Cooper Union’s proposal to replace Taras Shevchenko Place with a public plaza outraged those who had worked to have the street renamed for the Ukrainian national poet in 1978. When Mayne first presented the idea in hearings, “they were livid against the building,”

Columbia and NYU: Omelets, shoehorns, and gorillas

An urban university has only so many ways to gain space: reorganization within existing properties, infill construction or adaptive reuse, external expansion, and creation of satellite campuses. Columbia University and New York University (NYU), both short on classrooms, infrastructure, and housing, have argued that their intellectual, economic, and environmental benefits justify the Robert Moses-style egg breaking that inevitably accompanies expansion. Both have aroused high-volume opposition. Columbia took on its community-relations challenge in one fell swoop, announcing in 2002 an ambitious master



Above: Bird's-eye view of NYU Plans 2031 development possibilities, produced by SMWM, in association with Grimshaw Architects, Toshiko Mori Architect, and Olin Partnership, including the "Zipper Loft" Building (lower right) proposed for the Jerome S. Coles Sports Center site adjacent to I.M. Pei's Silver Towers

plan and a new approach to its spatial squeeze: a 17-acre, 6.8-million-square-foot campus in West Harlem's Manhattanville. While many expressed support, commercial property owners, Community Board 9 members, State Sen. Bill Perkins, and others swiftly objected.

"We are putting all our cards on the table for 30 years," says Philip Pitruzzello, Columbia's vice president for Manhattanville capital construction. At this writing, most businesses have accepted relocation offers near mass transit. Occupants of the area's 132 apartments are receiving equal or upgraded affordable housing with university assistance. To date, Columbia has refrained from petitioning the state for eminent domain for commercial properties and renounced that option entirely for residences.

This segment of West Harlem could clearly use a renaissance. Most neighborhood markets have given way to car-repair shops and low-wage warehouses in borderline-brownfield condition. To replace these with the business, international affairs, and art schools, a science center, and 1,000 units of university housing under the master plan by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill and Renzo Piano Building Workshop. In exchange, Columbia is offering the area 1,200 construction jobs annually for 25 years, 6,000 new permanent jobs, expanded adult and childhood educational, health, and cultural programs, and employment and

housing assistance. Columbia officials believe these renovations will not only relieve spatial pressures but potentially heal rifts with surrounding communities. "Very few people are saying, 'We want to keep this or that that's still here,'" Petruzzello reports.

Maxine Griffith, AICP, Columbia's executive vice president for government and community affairs, refers to the project's LEED-Silver-level features as "the greening of Harlem." These include moving parking underground, maximizing public transit use, and creating pedestrian corridors to the new West Harlem Piers Park. "How do you evolve a community so that it stays at perfect pitch?" Griffith asks. Universities' permanence, she believes, means their expansion helps a neighborhood more than commercial developers, who can flip holdings and move on. Recruiting incentives help align academic interests with neighborhood priorities, since scholars seek livable, affordable neighborhoods.

Similar processes have characterized the growth of NYU since the 1980s, when it decided to morph from a regional institution to a national research university. But the university did not entirely foresee its needs for construction; building-by-building improvisations have fed opponents' arguments that its expansions would require a skyscraper-sized shoehorn.

The choice to upgrade NYU's profile, say Alicia D. Hurley, Ph.D., NYU's vice president for government affairs and community engagement, and John Beckman, vice president for public affairs, not only entailed a billion-dollar fundraising campaign, competitive efforts to attract faculty, and a rise in the student population. It also meant reconfiguring NYU's student profile from local commuters to nationally recruited matriculants.

The consequent growth from housing about 3,000 students in the early 1990s to about 12,500 now, Hurley says, meant NYU had to build more residence halls or cease guaranteeing on-campus housing to undergraduates. Hurley describes one unpopular building widely considered overscaled, the 26-story dorm on East 12th Street, as a rush decision. "We were forced to add as many beds as possible because we were being kicked out of leased facilities at Water Street and Cliff Street," she says. "We look at that project and say, 'That's where we want to never go again.'" In 2007 the school adopted a unified strategy, after years facing accusations of keeping a plan secret.



Above: Pratt Institute's new multiuse building, by WASA/Studio A with landscaping by Mathews Nielsen, will house the school's fine arts studios and digital arts program, along with a housing advocacy group and ground-floor retail

"I've been through many rounds with NYU," says Andrew Berman of the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, "where they say they have made mistakes, they've learned from them, and they're setting off on a new foot. So far, every time it's been more of the same, if not worse." Berman calls attention to planning principles developed by Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer's NYU Task Force, including "prioritize reuse before new developments" and "seek locations outside the neighborhood." However, Berman charges, "Their first project after they signed the planning principles was to demolish Provincetown Playhouse," a historic neighborhood theater.

NYU's contributions to the Village, Hurley points out, include stability, security, community education, activism, and steady unionized employment. Its renovations will be LEED-certified and substantially energy-independent. Still, media commentary on NYU's Village presence invariably includes the phrase "800-pound gorilla." NYU Plans 2031, developed with SMWM, Grimshaw, Toshiko Mori, and Olin Partnership, calls for 6 million square feet of new space. The "core and neighborhood" component in one scenario is 3.6 million square feet, with the remainder allocated to Brooklyn, Governors Island, and the First Avenue medical corridor. As Berman points out, "That's

about one to one-and-a-half Empire State Buildings' worth of space that they want to stick in a relatively small area" – or, 20 more dorms the size of the 175,000-square-foot 12th Street tower.

Berman allows that NYU "is an essential element of what makes this neighborhood what it is," but the expansion puts the Village "in danger of becoming a company town, where everything falls under NYU's purple banner." Rather than annex adjacent property, he hopes the university will consider developing a satellite campus nearby. The school is now building a branch near Abu Dhabi. ("It's interesting that they're willing to set up a campus halfway around the world," Berman comments, "but resistant to setting up a satellite campus that might be a 15- or 20-minute subway ride away.") Like its uptown rival Columbia, NYU catches flak for gentrification it cannot control, and in crafting the 2031 strategic plan, it is working for a level of transparency that may be close to what its critics have demanded.

School of Visual Arts: The city is the campus

Troubled as its community relations may be, NYU conceivably represents the future of the urban university – not removed from but integrated with city life. If Columbia's quad is New York's purest expression of the Jeffersonian enclave model, NYU exemplifies the mesh model, overlaid on the street grid. The ultimate meshed campus would be a specialty institution like the School for Visual Arts (SVA), dispersed across 15 unlinked buildings between Second and Eighth Avenues, with no central headquarters or icons. Its closest approximation to a flagship is the old Clearview Cinema on West 23rd Street, recently leased to refurbish as a student gallery and public theater, redesigned by Acting Chairman Milton Glaser and Laurence G. Jones Architects. "We like to say that the isle of Manhattan is the entire campus for SVA," says spokesman Michael Grant. Community reactions to its expansions – even its 24-story dorm on Ludlow Street and another on East 10th Street – have been "positive, not adversarial," says Executive Director of Facilities James Pirot. "We received a lot of praise on 10th Street because we played by the rules." Perhaps SVA can play less aggressively because it is a fraction of NYU's size.

"You're never going to get complete agreement with communities in a democratic process," Mayne says "You have to enlarge the conversation into something macro and start looking at the macro/micro connection. The U.S. has made transitions from an agricultural to an industrial to a service economy, and one main sector of a service economy is education. We export intellectual capital, creative capital." The places that refine those vital resources increasingly require the highest application of intelligence and creativity in their own right.

[Bill Millard](#) is a freelance writer and editor whose work has appeared in *Oculus*, *Icon*, *Content*, *The Architect's Newspaper*, and other publications.

No Place to Go but Up or Down

NYC architects get creative with vertical solutions for building expansions

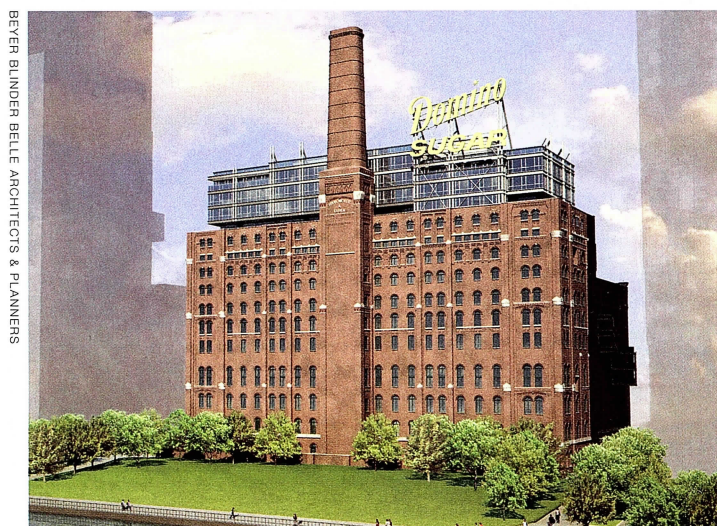
By Lisa Delgado

The layers of New York City architecture speak volumes about how the city has been expanding vertically in recent years. Modern glass additions sparkle atop aged masonry buildings, and below the city's surface, bedrock bears the imprints of new excavations.

The reason is clear: in such a dense city, expanding up or down is often the only way to go. Plus, "adding space on a building is very cost-effective," says Mary Burnham, AIA, partner at Murphy Burnham & Buttrick (MBB). "As the cost of real estate has skyrocketed, the incentive to build vertically as opposed to move or expand into another building has grown, because economically it makes a lot of sense."

As architects seek to maximize vertical space, some recent projects give testament to their ingenuity – and sometimes diplomacy, as neighbors or city agencies put in their two cents' worth. Case in point: Beyer Blinder Belle Architects & Planners' (BBB) controversial design for expanding the landmarked Domino Sugar refinery and converting it into a mixed-income residential and retail space, part of a larger development designed by Rafael Viñoly Architects on the Williamsburg waterfront in Brooklyn. "The first question was: How or even could you turn this into a residential building?" says Michael Wetstone, AIA, LEED AP, project architect for BBB. Once filled with catwalks connecting machinery, the former refinery lacked traditional

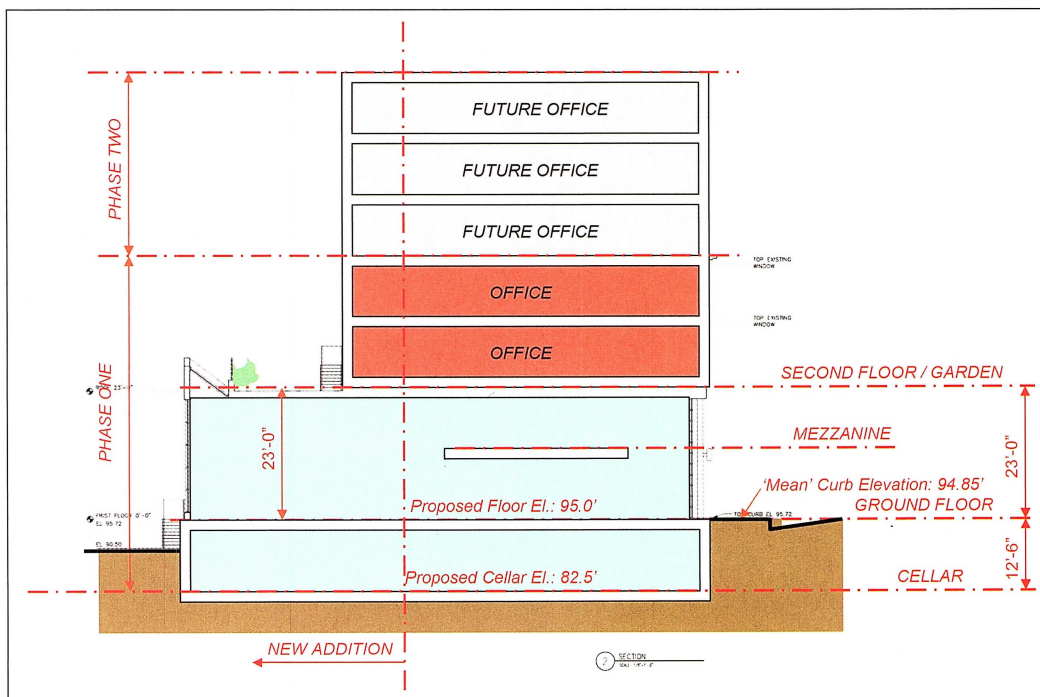
floor levels; furthermore, since the structure was 140 feet wide, the interior spaces wouldn't get enough natural light. The BBB team designed an entirely new steel-frame building nestled inside the brick shell. To bring natural light to the interior, they included an interior courtyard. To recoup the residential space lost to the courtyard, they



BEYER BLINDER BELLE ARCHITECTS & PLANNERS

Beyer Blinder Belle Architects & Planners: Domino Sugar refinery conversion into a mixed-income residential and retail space

BEATTY, HARVEY & ASSOCIATES



BEATTY, HARVEY & ASSOCIATES



Beatty, Harvey & Associates: Korean Methodist Church and Institute; section illustrates first phase to expand the sanctuary and basement, and second phase upper levels

designed a sleek, glassy, five-story upward expansion. (Going down would have been impractical so close to the waterline.)

Amid a flurry of media coverage, the Landmarks Preservation Commission rejected BBB's initial design as too tall and too contemporary for the old brick building, a beloved neighborhood icon. The architects had to lower it and add a vigorously industrial exterior steel skeleton before the design was approved last June. (At press time, no construction date had been set.) In the end, the input was beneficial, according to Wetstone. "Landmarks gives a lot of scrutiny and feedback," he says, "and, 99 times out of 100, projects improve."

A Beatty, Harvey & Associates (BH&A) design for an expansion of the Korean Methodist Church and Institute stirred up opposition from neighbor Columbia University for structural reasons. The university complained that a plan to remove the existing floors and shift them downward might endanger a party wall shared with a university-owned row house next door, recalls Salvatore Coco, AIA, LEED AP, BH&A's partner-in-charge. The church backed down, though adjusting the floor levels would have improved handicapped access. A new, more conservative design is "losing something in the translation," Coco says, "but the church is still doing a significant addition," which will greatly expand the sanctuary and basement (thanks to community-use zoning) and add three upper levels in the future. The first phase of construction will likely begin this spring.



ROGERS MARVEL ARCHITECTS

Rogers Marvel Architects: Mulberry Street Branch Library; windows in a below-grade children's reading room let in a little natural light and views of the rough-hewn rocky vault

Projects that delve into subterranean space face challenges such as lack of natural light and tricky excavations. When Rogers Marvel Architects designed a gut renovation to transform a former candy factory into the Mulberry Street Branch Library in SoHo, the firm included a dramatic new winding stair and a ceiling ribbon with HVAC to bring light and air downward. Windows in a subterranean children's reading room let in a little natural light augmented by fluorescent lights, giving clear views of the rough-hewn texture of a rocky vault. "We thought it would especially capture the imagination of children, to look out and to see this underside of New York that you rarely do," says project architect Marta Sanders.

During a long-term renovation and expansion project at St. Hilda's & St. Hugh's, a school in Morningside Heights, MBB's Burnham scru-



ADRIAN WILSON PHOTOGRAPHY

Murphy Burnham & Buttrick: St. Hilda's & St. Hugh's new greenhouse on the school's rooftop is used as a classroom, dining room, and lecture hall

tinized every bit of space from basement to roof to maximize programmatic use for the school's nursery-to-eighth-grade students. In a new rooftop greenhouse, created with greenhouse manufacturer Rough Brothers, "flexibility is the name of the game," she says. A range of sensor-based or timed climate controls and adjustable grow lights make the greenhouse a valuable resource for science classes, and, thanks to movable furniture and equipment, "it's not just a place where we're growing plants; it's also a classroom, dining room, and lecture hall," says Head of School Virginia Connor. Earlier renovations equipped each classroom with its own storage space, freeing up the basement for an exercise room and a music rehearsal space.

After years of working in NYC, Burnham's inclination to build vertically and save space stays with her even in areas prone to sprawl. "We had one client in Westchester who needed a new library," she recalls. "Another architect had said, 'Let's put this library out on this field.' We said, 'No, let's put it on top of the building.' So the sensitivity to maximizing your footprint is something that even applies to suburban settings. Make a building that makes sense – and keeps the green spaces."

[Lisa Delgado](#) is a freelance journalist who has written for e-OCULUS, *The Architect's Newspaper*, *Blueprint*, and *Wired*, among other publications.

Space Glut

With an oversupply of available office space, how do you assess what's right for your client?

By Steven B. Bleiweiss



The financial crisis has already had a significant effect on New York City's commercial real-estate market. Only tenants whose imminent lease expirations leave them no choice are considering real-estate transactions of any kind. Landlords are becoming more generous with free rent and allowances for tenant improvements as they vie for a diminishing population of credit-worthy tenants. These unprecedented market conditions are creating a major challenge for design professionals and call for different approaches to advising clients and assessing what makes for "suitable" space.

Consider the economics of supply and demand. On the demand side, it is the legal, media, advertising, entertainment, and publishing sectors that are pursuing renewals or relocations. Who has the supply? It's the financial services industry, which is putting large blocks of space on the market. This is not a new dynamic. NYC's commercial real-estate market has always been – and will always be – largely dependent upon the health of the financial services sector. The dif-

ference this time lies in the kinds of space being added to the market and the resulting opportunities for those looking for space.

The companies looking to shed space are in a hurry. With staffs shrinking, space needs vanishing, and bank accounts lightening, they are highly motivated to set terms that favor sub-lessees. Those seeking space are also motivated to conserve cash for capital expenditures. They are likely to be attracted to the sublease terms being offered, even if such terms include little or no allowance for tenant improvements when compared to demolished or "raw" space being offered directly by landlords at higher rents, but with cash to help subsidize the tenant's initial construction.

Supply and demand are not quite as neatly balanced as this suggests, however. As in any market, the supply consists of space offered by landlords and what is available for sublease from the current tenant. When demand outpaces supply, landlords hold the winning hand and rents spike up. But the converse is not true: when supply exceeds demand, as it does today, rents don't nose-dive – they

ease down. As a result, the gap between the direct lease terms offered by landlords and the sublease offers is considerably wider, making the latter look far more advantageous.

On the other hand, much of the supply of space, coming from the financial services sector, is highly engineered and specialized. It features raised floors, robust electrical capacity, 24/7 supplemental air conditioning, the latest in communications infrastructure, and, in many cases, recently acquired and flexible furniture. Moreover, conventional wisdom holds that an investment bank's layout does not lend itself to the needs and expectations of a law firm, a media company, or an advertising agency.

This is where "adaptive reuse" takes on new meaning and significance. The challenge for businesses planning to relocate is finding ways to use as little capital as possible in adapting and reusing high-quality space available at attractive rents. They must solve the equation of cost-effectiveness: on one side, the financial benefits over the life of the lease, a lower rent for a less-than-ideal layout, and no landlord contribution for tenant improvements; on the other side, higher rent for raw space, designed and built to suit from scratch, with an allowance for improvements.

This is not to suggest that a law firm or media company can move into a space built for an investment bank without making any alterations. The businesses will have to invest in adaptation. The question is, how much less would that capital investment be? And, conversely, how high a premium is a more ideal space worth? Can this premium be both justified and financed in this credit environment?

The good news is that relocating tenants have more choices now. The bad news is that these tenants must make more complex deci-

sions than ever. There will be no shortage of attractively priced choices for relocating tenants, and many of these choices will be long-term subleases in high-quality, well-located buildings with technically robust installations, perhaps even furniture and phones. These spaces have been planned, designed, built, and furnished for previous tenants, not those relocating. They will be offered with little or no cash for tenant improvements, but can probably be occupied sooner than a space taken raw and built to suit.

So how can design professionals best advise relocating tenants?

First and foremost, shift away from the traditional "needs analysis" and towards a "supply-centric" approach. Go beyond spatial needs and adjacencies and probe deeply into the client's business drivers. Examine the client's business from both the outside-in as well as the inside-out. Assess how work gets done, how staff members communicate, how information flows, and how clients, vendors, colleagues, and advisors interact with the space. Understand each client's priorities, including image, functionality, budget, schedule, acceptable trade-offs, and compromises, and what is sacred, at any price.

Think of this process as a higher-stakes equivalent of putting the proverbial square peg into the round hole. The keys to success are an impeccable understanding of each client's business drivers, the almost unconditional trust of the client, rock-solid due diligence on all physical aspects of each space under consideration, and creativity to maximize the value of the client's prospective investment.


Steven B. Bleiweiss is principal and chief marketing officer at Mancini Duffy.



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What to do with 578 miles of shoreline?
The possibilities are limitless – and limited

By Linda G. Miller

DBOX FOR SOLOW MANAGEMENT

Water Fight

An earlier design by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill and Richard Meier & Partners for the East River Realty Company's development of the former Midtown East Con Ed steam plant site, prior to negotiations with the City Council to lower the building heights

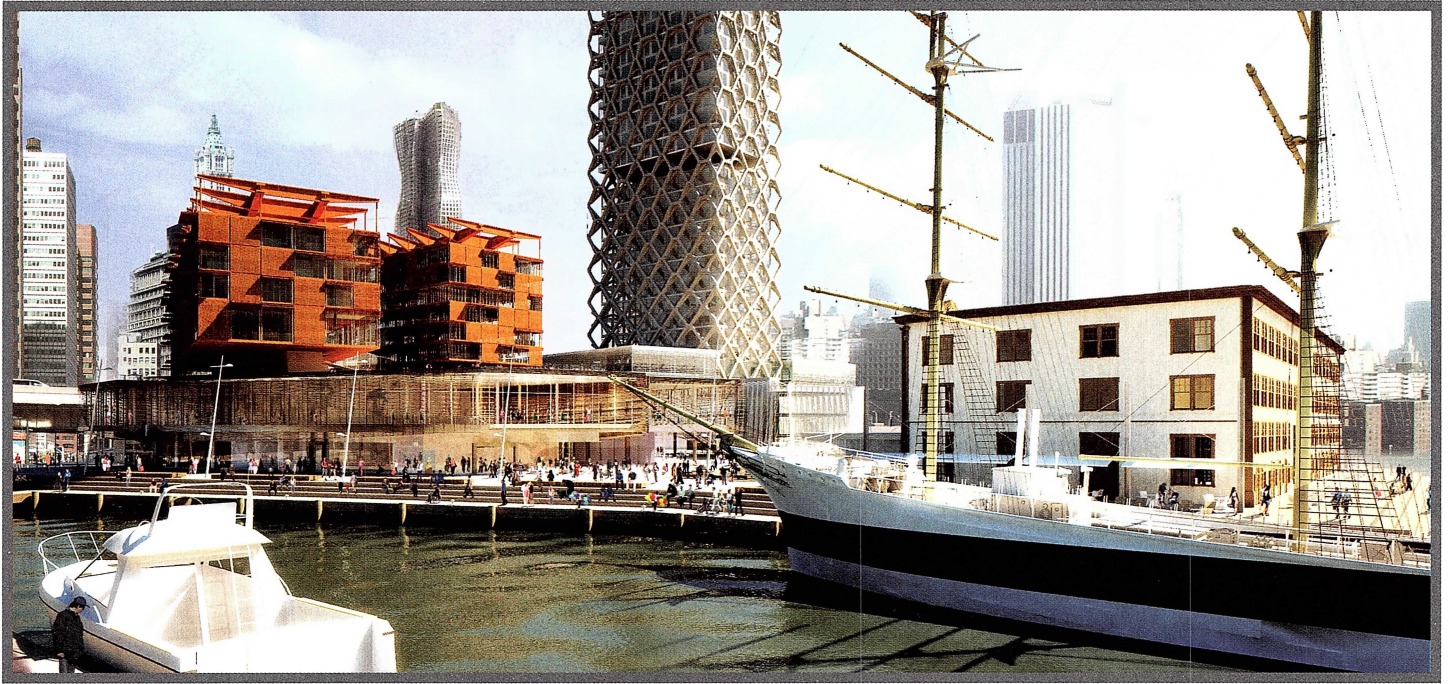
Last October, Mayor Bloomberg signed a law requiring the Department of City Planning to submit a comprehensive waterfront plan by December 31, 2010, and once every 10 years thereafter. The plan will examine all aspects of the city's waterfront, including public use and access, environmental protection, and pursuit of new development while strengthening existing businesses. It will also take into consideration the city's 10-year capital strategy and other relevant proposals for implementing that strategy. "This plan will ensure that New York City never turns its back on the waterfront," says Council Speaker Christine Quinn. "It allows us to best assess the different ways our waterfronts can be used for leisure, employment, and industry."

A wakeup call came in 2004, when the *Queen Mary 2* made its inaugural voyage to New York. The ship had to get a temporary exemption from the Coast Guard to extend 132 feet beyond the West Side pier into the Hudson. The situation underscored the need for the city to update the West Side piers, which had not been renovated in 35 years. Two years later, as part of the city's \$150-million redevelopment and port modernization plan, the Brooklyn Cruise Terminal opened and became the new berth of the *QM2*. Formerly a cargo dock, the terminal is large enough to accommodate ships three football fields in length and has created jobs and travel-related businesses in Red Hook.

"Our waterfront can be a source of good jobs and a diverse economy," says Roland Lewis, president and CEO of the nonprofit Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance. "Ironically, just as the NYC Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) released the Maritime Support Services Location Study that identified the need for at least seven more ship repair facilities, we were literally burying a vital graving dock in Red Hook for a big-box store. Perhaps this will raise awareness about the need to protect the working waterfront." The big box he refers to is the 346,000-square-foot IKEA store that opened in June 2008, replacing a 19th-century dry dock that was still in use.

The 578 miles of waterfront in New York City are the focus of numerous plans and proposals for redevelopment and protection. Here are just a few of the projects in the works:

- The 300-acre Brooklyn Navy Yard features three fully functioning dry-docks, four active piers, and 40 buildings housing furniture manufacturers, electronics distributors, architectural firms, and the city's first Hollywood-scale film and television production facility. The not-for-profit Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation, under a contract with the City of New York (the yard's owner), is responsible for leasing space, developing underutilized areas, and overseeing the modernization of the yard's infrastructure. Its domain includes Admiral's Row, a collection of 19th-century residences that are in a severe state of decay. Plans call for demolishing the buildings and erecting a 65,000-square-foot grocery store, a large parking lot, and additional retail and industrial space, but preservationists and some community groups counter that the buildings should be rehabilitated and used for community amenities.
- The rezoning of Greenpoint-Williamsburg in 2005 opened two miles of waterfront to create 54 acres of open space, including 10,800 units of housing. After a proposal to construct a power plant on the site was denied, the city got the green light to create the 28-acre Bushwick Inlet Park, which will feature boat launches, picnic grounds, a multi-purpose athletic field, wetland preservers, and a two-mile bicycle and pedestrian path.
- What happened to the idea of turning the 100-foot-wide, 1.4-mile-long Gowanus Canal, bordered by industrial buildings, into Brooklyn's own version of the Grand Canal of Venice? An idea currently being floated by the Gowanus Canal Conservancy, and supported by the New York State Council on the Arts, is to create Sponge Park, designed by dlandstudios (featured in "Ecotones: Mitigating New York City's Contentious Sites" at the Center for Architecture last summer). The plan includes an esplanade on both banks of the canal and 16 acres of public urban spaces, which will absorb and filter toxins from



SHoP Architects: South Street Seaport viewed from Fulton Cove

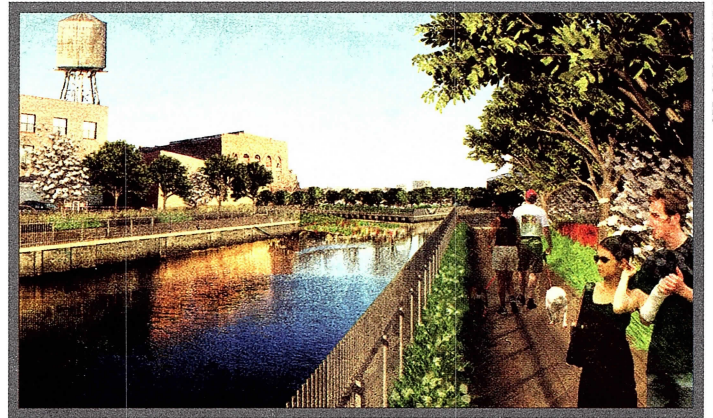
surface runoff water that flows into the canal.

- Several initiatives are under way at Newtown Creek, home to the Exxon/Mobil underground oil spill, hundreds of brownfields, waste transfer stations, and the city's largest water treatment plant. Improvements include the Newtown Creek Nature Walk, designed by environmental sculptor George Trakas, and 1155 Manhattan Avenue, one of four waterfront industrial buildings reclaimed by the Greenpoint Manufacturing and Design Center as home to 72 small businesses and artists.

- The question of what is appropriate, both historically and in scale, is at issue as South Street Seaport undergoes renovations by owners General Growth Properties in partnership with the NYCEDC. The plan, designed by SHoP Architects, involves demolishing the three-level shopping mall that covers most of Pier 17 and replacing it with an esplanade and central plaza, two-story shops and restaurants, and hotels. On the pier's north end the project's signature building would be a 42-story hotel and residential complex featuring a three-story specialty retailer at its base. Opponents have complained that the building obscures views of the Brooklyn Bridge and is out of character with the historic neighborhood (see "One Block Over," pg. 19).

- SHoP Architects is also part of a design team, including Ken Smith Landscape Architect, ARUP, HDR, NYCEDC, NYC Department of City Planning, and the Mayor's Office, that is developing the East River Esplanade and Piers Project. It would span two miles from the Battery Maritime Building (also poised for redevelopment by Rogers Marvel Architects) to East River Park, and feature an esplanade and pavilions under the FDR Drive; a rebuilt, two-tier Pier 15; and a rebuilt Pier 35.

- The Municipal Art Society of New York has set its sights on the creation of green space and public access to the waterfront along what is now a largely vacant, 9.2-acre riverfront area from East 34th to 41st Streets (site of the Midtown East Con Ed steam plant). The original \$6-billion redevelopment plan by the East River Realty Company (ERRC) called for a 1.5-million-square-foot office tower and six residential



dlanstudio llc: Gowanus Canal Sponge Park from Carroll Street

towers that would include 4,166 housing units. The buildings, designed by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill and Richard Meier, would range between 50 and 60 stories, towering over the nearby UN Secretariat Building. As the project winds its way through the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) process, ERRC has agreed to set aside approximately 600 units for affordable and workforce housing and to build a school. The developer also agreed to contribute \$10 million towards an easement enabling the realignment of the FDR Drive and the construction of a waterfront park deck to the river.

"When I first started working on Battery Park City, banks thought it was a high-risk project, and the first developers had to fight for their financing," says Bonnie Harken, AIA, APA, co-chair of the American Planning Association's Waterfront Committee. "Less than 30 years since that first mile of esplanade opened at Rector Place, you can walk or bike all the way to West Harlem past new parks and buildings, renovated piers, and water taxi stops. Wouldn't it be great if we could see similar progress – like what's being planned for Governors Island, Fresh Kills, Bronx River Park, and Coney Island – on other waterfront sites over the next few years?"

Linda G. Miller is a New York City-based freelance writer.

40-Year Watch

**The pragmatic rise and
tumultuous fall of
Columbia's Morningside
Park gym project**
By John Morris Dixon, FAIA

Columbia University's current expansion plans may be controversial (see pg. 33), but back in 1968, its plan to build a hybrid university/public project in Morningside Park generated a uniquely bitter confrontation. That project – disputed in an atmosphere of explosive racial and political tensions – contributed to violent on-campus reactions that resounded across America.

Town-gown antagonism had existed ever since the 1890s, when Columbia and other institutions relocated to Morningside Heights, an acropolis separated from Harlem by a sharp cliff, which was incorporated by the city into Morningside Park. Yet the incendiary 1960s project was preceded by a widely praised instance of university-community cooperation. With no room for playing fields on its main campus, Columbia entered into a deal to build some fields for joint university-community use on the flatter part of the adjoining park.

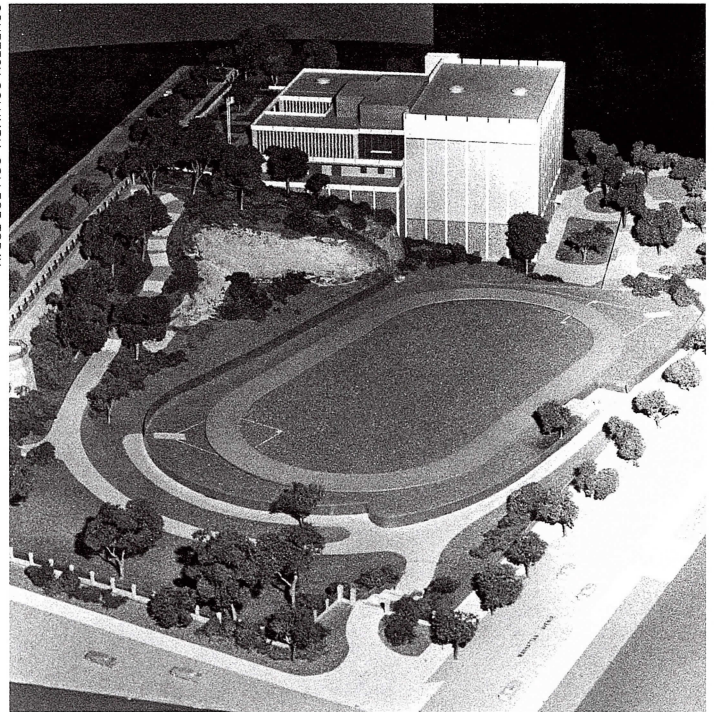
The following year, the city and university reached another agreement that was initially greeted as constructive: If Columbia built a community gym in the park, to Parks Department specifications, it could superimpose a gym for its own use on top of it. Straddling the cliff, the gym-on-gym structure could be entered by Harlem teenagers at the lower end and Columbia students at the upper. In the final (1961) design, the whole cubic form rose 150 feet above the lower portion of the park. Columbia facilities would occupy about 85% of its volume, but the structure would displace no residents and cover rocky terrain described in one university publication as “an untended no-man's-land.”

In 1965, however, before construction commenced, community objections prompted John V. Lindsay, campaigning for mayor, to join other public officials in opposing this use of park land for private purposes. By 1967, Columbia had met with community leaders and agreed to augment the lower facility, but it rebuffed suggestions that the entire structure be shared.

Then on February 19, 1968, with no prior announcement, the university began excavation for the gym. The next day 20 people staged a sit-in at the site and 12 were arrested, including six Columbia students. On February 29, 150 demonstrators assembled. Students and faculty of Columbia's architecture school soon expressed their opposition, and on April 24 the faculty of Columbia College asked that construction be stopped. That very day, students occupied the university president's office and other buildings, chanting, “Gym Crow Must Go.” On April 26 Lindsay, now mayor, demanded that construction be halted.

As the gym protests evolved, they mingled with objections to the Vietnam War and Columbia's participation in weapons research. The atmosphere of crisis was heightened by the April 4 assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., and the urban conflicts that followed. The student sit-ins extended to more buildings, including the Architecture School's Avery Hall. Among architecture students and faculty, protest

COURTESY COLUMBIA COLLEGE TODAY



Model of proposed gym by architects Eggers & Higgins and Sherwood, Mills & Smith

was focused more specifically on the gym project and related deficiencies in campus planning and design. On April 30, sudden raids by about 1,000 New York police cleared the occupied buildings of protesters. Some students simply left on police orders, but 692 people were arrested (18 of them architecture students) and about 100 injured. The Columbia protests and their violent suppression contributed to a mounting national wave of campus revolts.

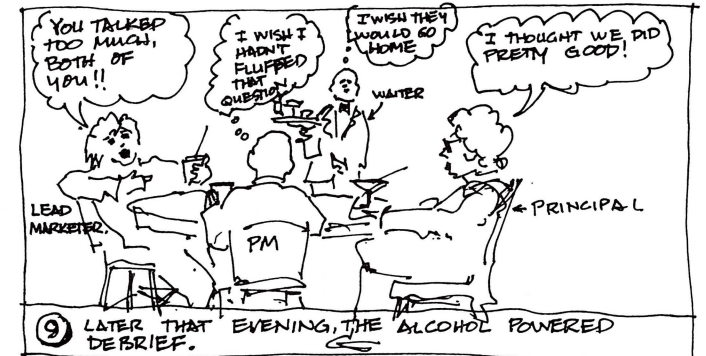
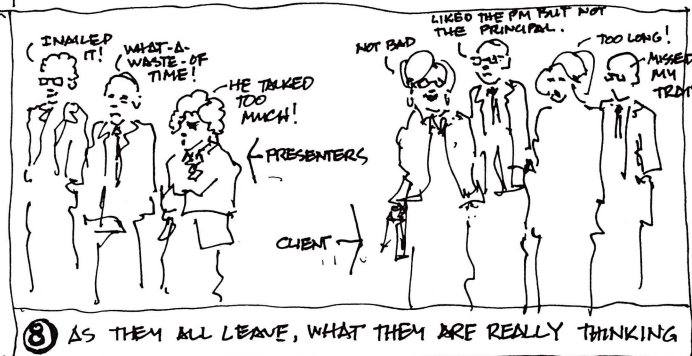
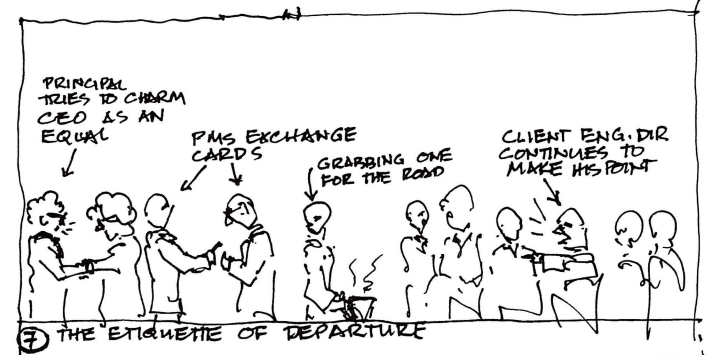
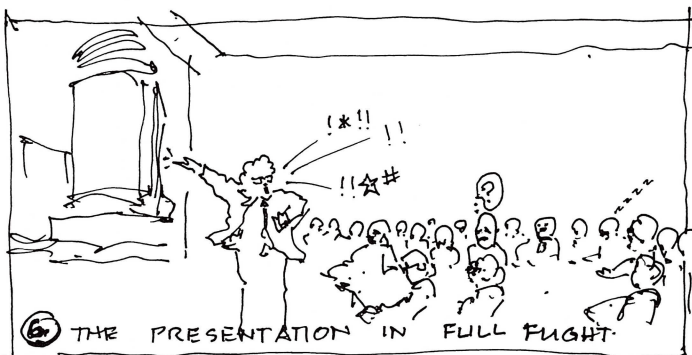
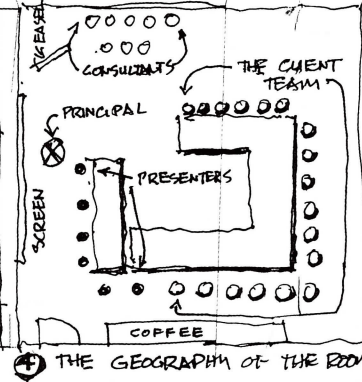
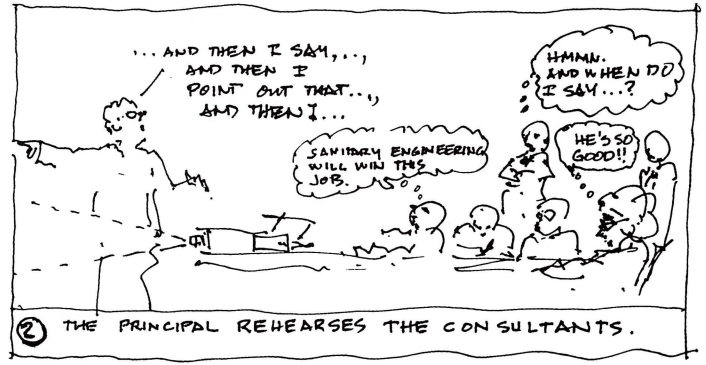
In May 1969, university trustees finally voted to abandon the Morningside Park project. Eventually, a largely subterranean gym was constructed on Columbia's main campus.

For further details on the gym controversy, see *New York 1960* by Robert A.M. Stern, Thomas Mellins, and David Fishman. For exhaustive coverage of the campus protests, see a special 1968 issue of *Columbia College Today* at www.college.columbia.edu/cct

John Morris Dixon, FAIA, left the drafting board for journalism in 1960 and was editor of *Progressive Architecture* magazine from 1972 to 1996. In recent years he has written for *Architectural Record*, *Architecture*, and other publications.

Chronicles of Life in the Profession

Episode 17: The Big Deal Presentation!



Stark 10:21:08

Raves & Reviews

In Print +

On Architecture: Collected Reflections on a Century of Change, by Ada Louise Huxtable. New York, NY: Walker & Company, 2008. 464 pp. \$35.

An architectural journalist for more than 40 years, Ada Louise Huxtable has elevated architectural journalism and criticism to a level of national importance from her positions as architectural critic for the *New York Times*, *The New York Review of Books*, and currently the *Wall Street Journal*.

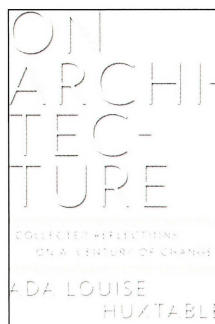
This selection of more than 100 reviews and essays from 1960 through early 2008 illustrates how modern architecture evolved from its broad social acceptance in post-war America through a period of tremendous turmoil and change. As classic Bauhaus Modernism came to be seen as rigid and confining, architects restlessly sought new directions. Huxtable's reporting reveals the ferment, multiple directions, hits and misses, and occasional heroes and goats. In revisiting past debates, we realize that very little has been settled.

Huxtable captures the perpetual state of crisis that modern design and the architectural profession are in. She is dubious about theory; what matters is how theory and reality come together in the built project. Unmoved by size and magnitude, she commented on the Pan Am Building: "A \$100-million-dollar building cannot really be called cheap. But the Pan Am is a colossal collection of minimums..." In fact, she was ambivalent about tall buildings. Finally, she ruefully chronicled the follies and disappointments of large-scale urban developments from the 1960s to 2007.

There are those she admires (Aalto, Gehry, Venturi, Kahn), but she never allows her judgment to be abandoned by her critical detachment. While she finds value and admirable qualities in Johnson and Stone, in her estimation they are flawed as architects.

This collection is wide-ranging and deep, and Huxtable's appraisals are sound. We can only benefit from reacquainting ourselves with her work, and her reflections on ours.

Stanley Stark, FAIA



include architects, urban planners, politicians, academics, and artists, with the emphasis on empirical observation and action.

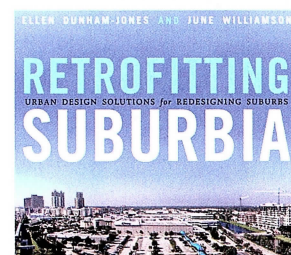
With nearly three-quarters of the planet living in urban conditions, the book notes the difficulty of defining "urbanity." The essays attempt to enlarge the frame of reference, including projects in Third World and Asian megacities, European "new towns," and multicultural border cities in the U.S. They also offer less familiar examples: virtual communal networks defined by the Internet, economic free zones, "all-inclusive" resorts, and other autonomous social and economic enclaves. What characterize many of these places are their previously unimagined scale, population densities, volatile demographic changes, lack of permanence, and absence of spatial focus.

The authors highlight varied, ingenious, and highly localized responses to urban challenges. Although some projects are done in cooperation with local governments, the solutions tend to praise the potential of self-organization and informal development. Many criticize the inadequacy of formal planning ideas and design professionals – architects as well as planners.

Yet, despite the hopefulness, doubts persist. Are these grassroots ideas an adequate response to the challenges of the future urban environment? Several authors note challenges created by sheer size, privatization of public space, need for sustainability, and weakening of municipal authority in many localities. This polemical collection illuminates the variety and energy of the debate.

Daniel Heuberger, AIA, LEED AP

Retrofitting Suburbia: Urban Design Solutions for Redesigning Suburbs, by Ellen Dunham-Jones and June Williamson. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, December 2008. 248 pp. \$75.

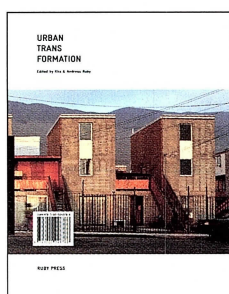


Although architects and urban designers are enamored with the blank slate, projects in the past 50 years have usually been sited in sprawling, aimless suburbia. Dunham-Jones and Williamson assert that redeveloping sprawl into more urban, sustainable places is the big project for the 21st century.

Keeping with principles of new urbanism and smart growth, this guide is aimed at architects, planners, urban designers, developers, and elected officials. While improved public transportation and revised zoning ordinances that promote mixed-use developments and denser housing types create a more walkable, sustainable environment, the authors suggest it is up to designers to creatively adapt existing buildings to address communities' evolving demographics, economics,

Urban Transformation, edited by Ilka & Andreas Ruby. Berlin: Ruby Press, 2008. 400 pp. 336 illustrations. \$63.

This collection of essays, based on the international Holcim Forum 2007 held in Shanghai, casts a global-sized net to capture a range of ideas on current urban issues. The more than 50 contributors

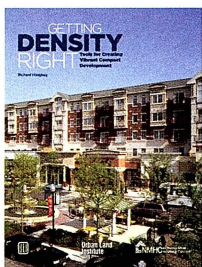


and regional conditions. They discuss the benefits of urbanization and then present several strategies illustrated through retrofitting case studies – some successful, some flawed.

The authors believe that a large-scale, fast-paced approach is necessary to combat the effects of global warming and rising gas prices – symptoms of our overdependence on automobiles. Possible solutions include retrofitting regional malls, shopping centers, and office parks; adaptive reuse of big-box stores; urbanizing residential subdivisions; converting apartment complexes for new demographics; transforming commercial strip corridors and edge city infill. For example, in the post-World War II residential development Levittown, the original houses have been expanded and multiunit housing has been constructed for aging residents. Similarly, more than a dozen abandoned Wal-Mart stores have been converted to churches since 2002.

This book acknowledges our state of sprawl and examines solutions that have resulted in unexpected opportunities. So the cliché holds true: what's old is new again. However, adapting structures with a limited lifespan due to cheap construction could prove merely a temporary solution. Will these quick fixes of today become the burdens of tomorrow?

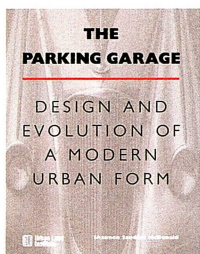
Murrye Bernard, Assoc. AIA, LEED AP



Getting Density Right: Tools for Creating Vibrant Compact Development, by Richard M. Haughey. Washington, DC: Urban Land Institute, 2008. 145 pp. Includes DVD. \$53.95.

The book's thesis is that despite lingering public opposition, the battle over high density is largely over. The debate now is where to

increase density and how best to implement the new styles of compact development. The volume comprises a handful of case studies, mostly from the South and West, and introduces a range of model codes and zoning types, plus an array of density and design tools.

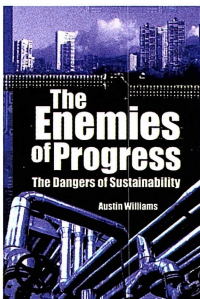


The Parking Garage: Design and Evolution of a Modern Urban Form, by Shannon Sanders McDonald. Washington, DC: ULI, 2007. 311 pp. \$87.95.

Next to prison design, the parking garage has long ranked as the most unpopular typology of modern architecture. This volume seeks to place the parking garage in some sort of plan-

ning, structural, and visual context as it explores such issues as land-use connections, form and function, mechanization, structure, materials, and, last but not least, a courageous chapter titled "The Aesthetics of the Parking Garage." Handling the exterior has typically consisted of making the parking garage look like an office building or a department store, or else to honestly express its function, as Paul Rudolph did with his famous curvy cast-in-place concrete structure in downtown New Haven. Perhaps the real issue is that if more of us used public transportation or biked to work, the need for parking garages would vanish, benefiting air quality and land use. But given what our

society wants, this volume packs a mass of helpful information for the architect, engineer, urban designer, and city planner.



The Enemies of Progress: The Dangers of Sustainability, by Austin Williams. Charlottesville, VA: Societas Imprint Academic, 2008. 156 pp. \$17.90.

It was only a matter of time before the pro-sustainability mantra enticed a contrary view. This has now emerged in the person of Austin Williams, a tutor at London's Bartlett School of Architecture, who confronts climate change

and what he calls the "paralyzing obsession with carbon emissions and the belief that human agency has inevitably harmful consequences." The book looks at the fetishization of global warming, which keeps societies from providing solutions, Williams claims, through fear-mongering in the media and public discourse. The author wants to reinstate the nobility of such notions as development, progress, experimentation, and innovation. Al Gore, watch out!

Reviews by Stephen A. Kliment, FAIA

Click Here: Waterfront Websites

There's no better example of competition for public space than the waterfront of a major city, and New York is no exception. For example, The Waterfront Alliance (www.waterfrontalliance.com), begun in 2000 as a project of the Municipal Art Society, has created a "Waterfront Committee" on the City Council to make the New York and New Jersey harbors a public playground. Through its "Waterfront 411," local organizations can access a library of resources to promote the public use of prime real-estate land by, for example, creating parks and the ferry transit system.

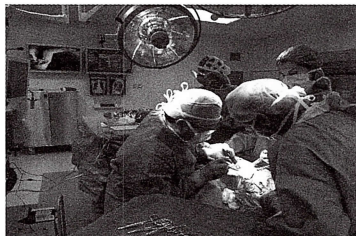
Search "waterfront" on the Lower Manhattan Development Corp.'s Renew NYC site (www.renewnyc.com) for other examples, such as The East River Waterfront Esplanade and Piers Project. The design involves two miles of improved esplanade joining the Peter Minuit Plaza to the East River Park in an effort to knit together neighborhoods through city-owned public open space.

It's not only happening in Manhattan. The NYC Department of Parks & Recreation (www.nycgovparks.org) has information on its waterfront projects in all five boroughs, including a new 1.6-mile esplanade incorporating the proposed 28-acre park at Bushwick Inlet in Brooklyn. The Port Authority of New York & New Jersey (www.panynj.gov) offers detailed and well-illustrated reports on its waterfront developments, such as Queens West and the South Waterfront at Hoboken. Finally, at Project for Public Spaces (www.pps.org), you can learn "How to Turn a Waterfront Around." All the websites include calls for qualifications and proposals for future projects.

Margaret Rietveld, FAIA

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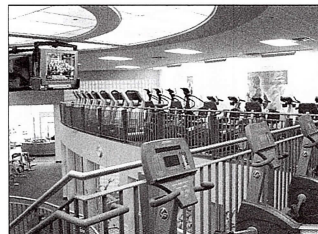
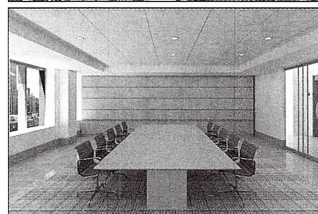
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the air by the tree is by the tree;
now things flow in their own color
and in their own rhythm. Yet we are out
far from home with the wind at night;
lights and longing are out
where there is no peace.**

(from "A Walk" by Chong Hyon-jong, 1972)

The 100,000-seat Olympic Stadium in Seoul was covered by 1,763,360 empty plastic bottles in vertical strings. The mammoth "Plastic Stadium" recycling installation, by public artist Jeong Hwa Choi, colorfully sheathed the rough concrete structure and highlighted the Seoul Metropolitan Government's environmental policies. It also symbolized the "Design is Air" theme of the Seoul Design Olympiad last October, which convened world-class contenders in the globally competitive fields of industrial design, architecture, interior design, landscape architecture, and urban design. Donghoon Chang, a designer of consumer electronic products, declared the principles of what he called "good user experience design" to be clarity of purpose, functionality, aesthetic value, and delight. Other speakers, including Daniel Libeskind, AIA, and superstar product designer Young Se Kim, echoed similar concepts.

Talks took place in the cathedral-like inflatable Airdome structure by Bill Price. Straddling the running track and measuring 97 by 27 meters, it allowed 5,000 people to hear keynote speakers including designers Libeskind, Yves Béhar, Minsuk Cho, Ross Lovegrove, and Patricia Moore. The Olympiad was organized by its director general, Ms. EunSook Kwon, industrial design chair at the University of Houston, and included many other design luminaries, among them Michelle Berryman from Atlanta, New York's Wendy Brawer of Greenmaps, Shrikant Nivasarkar from Mumbai, Amadeo Schiattarella from Rome, Mara Servetto from Milan, and professor Eui-Young Chun of Seoul's Kyonggi University.

Taking the AIA New York Chapter's Global Dialogues program to Korea, I was invited to speak about attributes and buildings that characterize design excellence. The Chapter's 2008 Design Award winning projects represented New York City in the "World Design Cities of the Future" exhibition. The other cities featured were Beijing, Hong Kong, Milan, Ningbo, Paris, Prague, Rotterdam, Seoul, and Turin – the 2008 World Design Capital. We have much to learn from all these places, but particularly from the commerce, creativity, and urban poetry of Seoul.

Seoul's Mayor Se-hoon Oh opened the conference by talking about the significance of design in Seoul, and how it has made pleasant what was unpleasant, safe what was unsafe, and convenient

what was inconvenient. Korea's President Myung Bak Lee spoke of the importance of raising design consciousness on the national scale. The Olympiad's design competition had four categories: Earth, Fire, Water, and Wind. It elicited more than 200 entries that used innovative techniques

to clean rivers, re-map emotional landscapes, and help firefighters retrace their steps through phosphorescent "pebbles" dropped at the scene of a fire. Proposals detailed flotsam-catcher boats and rooftop rain collectors for high-rise window washing.

The drawings and models on view for the juried competition were extraordinary, but the physical reality of Seoul was even more so. Two years ago, the Cheonggyecheon Stream was uncovered and a district reborn with the removal of the deck that had hidden it. Restaurants and nightlife abound in this 24-hour city well served by public transit. Accommodating 8 million annual riders with 10 color-coded and comprehensibly linked lines, the subway system is clean, inexpensive, sprawling, and easy to use. My host, architect Yeon-soo Kim, in charge of the Hillstate/Hyundai design-team efforts, guided me to a better understanding of Seoul's geography and topography and led me through such remarkable places as the Gana Art Gallery structures on the Mt. Bukhansan hillside, designed by Jean-Michel Wilmotte, and the Hillstate Gallery by H-Sang Seung. (The trip was sponsored by Hyundai, to whom I am most grateful.)

Seoul seems fascinated by New York City, and not just because of the strong Korean presence on West 32nd Street, our Korea Way. A recent book by architect Min Ho Lee is loosely translated as *New York is Always Under Construction: The Life Diary of a Curious Couple*. It captures the spirit of New York's diverse neighborhoods, highlighting opportunities for culture, entertainment, and culinary adventure. A corollary book should be written about Seoul, whose size and complexity engender admiration and respect, and which beckons architects from all corners of the earth to see new museums, high-tech innovation, and the fruits of longstanding design traditions.

"Design innovation" also describes the Olympiad's "Design as Air" product display. One product designer, Yao Ying Jia, vice president of design at Lenovo, was the generator of the Clouds of Promise torch for the 2008 Beijing Summer Games. Yao defined design in terms of social responsibility, emotional expression, and life-work balance, describing it as the study of culture and wisdom, and the distillation of art and technology. Architect Young Gull Kwon, Seoul's deputy mayor, stated simply: "Design has always been a part of our lives, just like air."



Bell with Seoul's Mayor Se-hoon Oh

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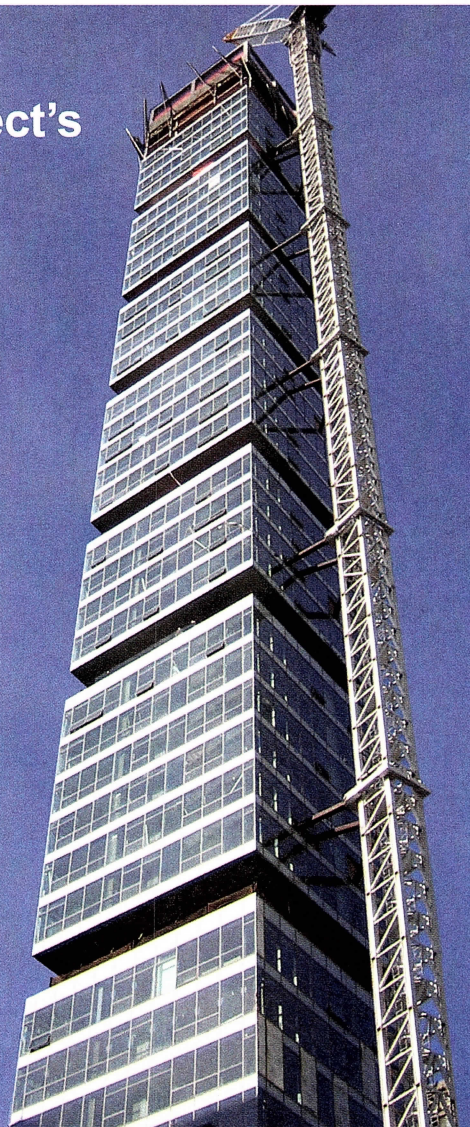
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