To those who have braved at least one winter in the upper Midwest the prospect of "year-round vibrancy" on Milwaukee's blustery lakefront might raise an eyebrow. But that's exactly what developer Rick Barrett hopes his

A few years ago then-Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley and some aldermen toured Saint Anthony Hospital in Lawndale. The hospital provided community programs and charity care for an area that sorely needed it, but the operation had fallen on hard times financially. Not long afterward, Alderman Ricardo Muñoz called up Saint Anthony Ministries CEO Guy A. Medaglia with a question: If the 22nd Ward gave 11 acres of property to Saint Anthony Ministries, what would they do with it? They could have just built a bigger hospital. Instead Saint Anthony and Muñoz worked up plans for a 1-million-square-foot campus designed to provide 2,100 construction jobs and, Medaglia believes, a unique model for community development. Focal Point, as the project at 31st Street and South Kedzie Avenue is called, includes big-box and local retail, a charter school, childcare, green space, and hospitality suites for large functions like weddings and graduations. "At this point," Medaglia said, "the hospital is just a tenant." The timing was perfect, Muñoz said. Formerly home to Washburne Trade School, the vacant lot at the east end of Little Village was already a target for the ward's efforts to expand public green space. "It was kind of like a marriage made in heaven of healthy uses for that site," Muñoz said. Plans call for four acres of green space, including a soccer field and an open

WHERE IS ARCHITECTURE IN CHICAGO'S LONG-AWAITED CULTURAL PLAN?

Grounds for Culture

In mid-July, after months of public meetings, the city of Chicago released a draft of the Chicago Cultural Plan. One of its biggest priorities: Space. According to plan project manager Julie Burros, a survey of public meeting participants listed space—along with arts education—as a top need. "This is a plan—and it is very much about urban planning," Burros said. "We talk about space a lot, and I think we talk very specifically

NEW DEVELOPMENT TO ACTIVATE UNUSED DOWNTOWN PARCEL

INDY GOING URBAN

Downtown development can happen at a painstakingly slow crawl or, worse, through aimless expansion and piecemeal projects. But sometimes it moves ahead in sudden bounds. In Indianapolis, developer Buckingham Companies has embarked on a project that would essentially create

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TERRITORY BUT BOUNCING BACK

INDEX STILL IN NEGATIVE TERRITORY BUT BOUNCING BACK

BILLINGS BEGINNING REBOUND?

The AIA’s monthly Architecture Billings Index (ABI) for July came in with a disappointing 48.7 index score below 50 indicates a decline in billings for design activity. The news was not all bad though. The ABI was up significantly from last month’s score of 45.9. “Even though architecture firm billings nationally were down again in July, the downturn moderated substantially,” said AIA economist Kemifi Baker in a statement. “As long as overall economic conditions continue to show improvement, modest declines should shift over to growth in design activity over the coming months.”

At the regional level, the South, a region battered by the Great Recession, was the only area in positive territory, skyrocketing up to a score of 52.7 from the previous month’s 47.6. The Midwest clocked in at 46.7, the West lagged with 45.3, and the Northeast continued its steady decline to 44.3, the lowest score for that region since February 2010. By sector, multi-family residential (51.4) outpaced mixed-practice (49.1), commercial/industrial (48.4), and institutional (46.6). Inquiries rebounded to 56.3, up from last month’s 54.4.

The Sears Tower ceded its title of tallest building in the world to Kuala Lumpur’s Petronas Towers in 1998. That same year Mayor Richard M. Daley authorized the Lakefront Millennium Project, converting a downtown train yard into a massive expansion of Chicago’s front lawn. It was heralded as a model for a new generation of urban parks.

Having long since relinquished the title of skyscraper capital of the world to Asia, the U.S., and Chicago in particular, have embraced a new measure of urban vibrancy: ambitious parks and public works projects that are redefining our cities from the ground up.

There is sound logic for our cash-strapped cities to double-down on their investments in public space. It’s return on investment manifests as tourism dollars and boosted property values, but also as long-term infrastructure. Parks and greenways sustain cities, from promoting public health and sense of place to regulating the local climate and enabling commercial hubs.

Work is slated to start soon on the world’s longest elevated park, the Bloomingdale Trail, which will connect park-poor neighborhoods along the city’s Northwest Side with a multiuse trail nearly three miles in length. Mayor Rahm Emanuel promised full support for the project, naming the trail a first-term priority. Northerly Island’s idyllic transformation from former airfield to ecological oasis is on track to begin soon, as well, and the Chicago Park District last year acquired nearly 600 acres of marshland on the city’s southeast side.

Projected to cost between $450 and $700 million, the Bloomingdale Trail will pair private money with federal transportation funds. Chicagoans are right to be cautious of underestimating the true tab of such an ambitious project. Millennium Park ended up costing $475 million, more than twice its projected budget, with $175 million coming from private sources. It also wrapped up several years overdue, something Bloomingdale Trail enthusiasts may recall during that project’s long slog to secure funding. But viewed over the lifetime of the projects, even bloated price tags can be easily justified.

And the added benefits of ambitious parks projects go beyond economic impact studies. The Neighborhood Capital Budget Group, a now-defunct independent monitor of city spending, analyzed 13 years of planned investment between 1990 and 2002 and found parks were “left out” of the city’s tax increment finance-driven development strategy. This shift in urban planning priorities may help correct the historic discrepancies between downtown and the neighborhoods, as high-profile projects encourage a more comprehensive vision that could bring far-flung communities into the fold.

Emanuel’s $1.7 billion infrastructure trust, though it still poses issues of transparency, proves there is no lack of political will to think big and pursue innovative funding schemes. Mayor Daley’s infamous $1.15 billion leasing of the city’s parking meters left many Chicagoans with a healthy skepticism of the projects, even bloated price tags can be easily justified. And the added benefits of ambitious parks projects go beyond economic impact studies. The Neighborhood Capital Budget Group, a now-defunct independent monitor of city spending, analyzed 13 years of planned investment between 1990 and 2002 and found parks were “left out” of the city’s tax increment finance-driven development strategy. This shift in urban planning priorities may help correct the historic discrepancies between downtown and the neighborhoods, as high-profile projects encourage a more comprehensive vision that could bring far-flung communities into the fold.

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WASTE NOT

Always eager to back up its claim to the nickname “the city that works,” Chicago has stepped up efforts to renovate its historic building stock. In addition to the public plan to retrofit 6.5 million square feet of office space, individuals are taking steps to reduce waste as well. Those efforts include pursuit of an innovation credit for composting in one of the largest LEED-EB certified buildings in the world. Merchandise Mart was awarded Silver LEED certification in 2007. That put it among the ranks of other high-profile greening projects like the Empire State Building and Willis Tower. With more than 4 million square feet of floor space, the mammoth art deco landmark was the largest commercial building in the world upon its completion in 1930. It even carried its own zip code until 2008.

Now to push its environmental evolution further, the Mart has embarked on a composting initiative to bolster its LEED profile during the scheduled recertification process.

“Waste Not” / Singer McCrackers
**SAINTLY AMBITIONS** continued from front page

As a destination for neighborhood’s needs. The campus will serve more than 400,000 residents from the nearby neighborhoods of Little Village, Pilsen, North Lawndale, Brighton Park, Back of the Yards, and Archer Heights. Three firms presented plans to Saint Anthony, which put them to the community for a vote. They chose HDR’s plan.

“It’s meaningful for us on a personal level,” said Abigail Clary, HDR’s director of health-care for the central region. “With healthcare architecture you’re always helping someone, but we’re connected to the people we’re actually going to help. That’s very unusual.”

The firm led an extensive study in partnership with the University of Nebraska that attempts to bring evidence-based design to the campus community, according to principal investigator Sheila Elijah-Barnwell. “We’ll be back after it’s occupied, measuring the outcomes,” she said. “It doesn’t just end with opening a beautiful building.”

Collaboration is not without its hang-ups. Managing the variety of programs onsite was challenging, Elijah-Barnwell said, as the team tried to avoid chaotic circulation. And ambition breeds new problems. “When I told the architects we need all movable walls in the hospital,” Medaglia said, “they looked at me like I had 16 heads.”

The solution to that problem is still on the way, Clary said, but the team already fielded a design curvilinear that arose during community outreach. Among the key requests from Focal Point’s future neighbors was a soccer field. HDR happily obliged, but worked to avoid a stiff divide between the field and the project’s other programs. “One of the goals was to pull all the outdoor space into the center of that campus for a community feeling,” Clary said, “instead of a field on one side and buildings on the other.”

The field is connected to a 22,000-square-foot courtyard in the center of campus by green space underneath one of the two-story buildings that link the three main buildings. Trusting grids that connect retail structures with a pattern that recalls downtown’s architecture venus as bridges elsewhere along the industrial corridor in which the site sits. An abundance of glass on the larger structures alludes to transparency—a theme which could be key if Medaglia’s vision is to hold true. He wants Focal Point to be a nationwide model for community hospitals from Los Angeles to the Bronx.

“This is a big project. But the more people began supporting the concept, the more viable it became,” said Medaglia, who left his career in financial consulting to chair Saint Anthony. “Gradually we’ve made believers out of the people who said it couldn’t work.”

**SHORING UP** continued from front page

funding these kinds of initiatives,” Medaglia said. “The Couture was a bid to redevelop the downtown transit center, whose proximity to the Milwaukee Art Museum and lakefront festival grounds have led some to call it one of the most valuable properties in Wisconsin.

Once viewed as potential competition for the Couture, plans for another nearby development have instead coalesced with that project into a cause for optimism along an underused corridor of Milwaukee’s lakefront area. As 18 stories the comparatively squat 833 East complements the Couture in massing, as well as in the economic impact projected by its developers. If the $100 million 833 East hits its 2016 opening target, it will be the first new office tower downtown since 2004.

Fourth-floor skywalk connections could link the Couture to 833 East and to the existing U.S. Bank Galleria, including the restaurants therein. U.S. Bank is the largest office high-rise in the state. It will connect one million square feet of office space to 833 East and, in turn, to the pedestrian environment that its developer, Mark Irgens, hopes the project will help foster. “I think the Couture is beautiful in its vision and could be devilishly difficult in its implementation,” said CBRE Executive Vice President Bill Bonfias, who is handling leasing for 833 East. The projects won’t be realized for a few years, and both need to secure more pre-leasing.

Together the two projects constitute a bet that growth along Milwaukee’s downtown corridor will continue its progression eastward, but demand for new office buildings elsewhere has slowed somewhat. “The trend line,” Bonfias said, “in terms of recent development, was bound to grab the lakefront.”

Nearby 875 East Wisconsin and redevelopment in Northwestern Mutual’s downtown campus are among the recent downtown projects that make the lakefront positioning of the Couture and 833 East seem like part of a logical progression. Santita’s celebrated Milwaukee Art Museum is inseparable from the city’s architectural profile. With the museum undergoing an expansion itself, it may be high time for the city to build out its lakefront area.

“Our goal is to provide the city with an elegant, state-of-the-art high-rise that attracts forward-thinking business to the area that will help ultimately help grow our economy,” said Eric Nelson, spokesman for Irgens. Law firm Godfrey & Kahn has signed on as 833 East’s anchor tenant. The proximity of the Couture and its luxury restaurant, Nelson said, will only benefit 833 East and downtown in general.

But the two projects did not gel at first. With each looking to boast panoramic lakefront views, the designers of the Couture and 833 East had to resolve sightline issues without compromising the integrity of each individual project.

That process was apparently successful. George Meyer, CEO of Kahler Slater, the firm that designed 833 East, said full-height glass and cantilevered, column-free cornices open up the office space both to views of Lake Michigan and to collaborative floor plans currently popular in modern office designs.

Barrett previously worked with the Couture’s architecture firm Rinka Chung on The Moderne condo and rental apartment tower nearby. "The Moderne is a shining example of their ability to design statement buildings that are both aesthetically elegant and modern, while being simple and functional," Barrett said. Both Milwaukee natives, principal Matt Rinka and Barrett share a sense of ownership over the future of their hometown’s lakefront.

Though initially thought to run afoul of Wisconsin’s public trust doctrine governing the use of former lakebed property, the Couture has won support from city and county officials in part due to Barrett’s upfront promise to meet local and minority hiring goals for jobs onsite. But final approval from the County Board and the Common Council is still pending. Both projects would represent a substantial evolution for the Milwaukee skyline and, if its developers’ projections hold true, help sustain a lakefront culture already nourished by Henry W. Maier Festival Park, Discovery World, and the city’s iconic art museum. Barrett said the project is part of his mission to “put Milwaukee on the map as a vibrant, global city.”

**NEWS**

**THE ARCHITECT’S NEWSPAPER SEPTEMBER 12, 2012**

**COURTESY HDR**

**COURTESY RINKA CHUNG**

**COURTESY KAHLER SLATER**

**COURTESY W. MAIER FESTIVAL PARK**

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- Henry Cobb – Pol Lubeck Fried & Partners
- Doha Tower; Doha, Qatar
- Ateliers Jean Nouvel
- Al Bahar Towers; Abu Dhabi, UAE
- Peter Olburn – Aedas Architects
- Lynn S. Beedle Lifetime Achievement Winner
- Holmest John – Murphy/Jahn Architects
- Fazlur R. Kahn Lifetime Achievement Winner
- Charles Thornton & Richard Tomasetti – Thornton Tomasetti, Inc.

More info at: http://2012awards.ctbuoh.org

INDY GOING URBAN continued

from front page: a new neighborhood from 14 acres of vacant land near Lucas Oil Stadium, host to the Super Bowl earlier this year. CityWay includes 250 luxury apartments, 60,000 square feet of retail and office space, a luxury hotel, a YMCA, and public green space.

The four blocks north of South Street between Delaware Street and Virginia Avenue were once a train yard and a drainage swale before they were a parking lot. “For the last 130 years, it has been the most underutilized parcel of land in Indianapolis,” said Scott Travis, Buckingham senior development executive. The city and state helped support the $155 million project. Leveraging its AAA credit rating, Indianapolis aggressively supported the development through the sale of municipal bonds. The project services the debt, while Indianapolis acts as a credit backstop. On top of that, the city contributed $8 million for infrastructure improvements, while Indiana kicked in $5 million.

One of the first mixed-use projects in Indianapolis to consider mixing more than just two uses, CityWay is designed to connect the city’s core to its somewhat overlooked Southeast Quadrant. The site is within walking distance of major employers like Eli Lilly, Rolls-Royce, and WellPoint, as well as the emerging cultural districts of Fountain Square and Fletcher Place. Public transit is still lacking in Indianapolis, which may limit the resurgence of downtown urbanism. Still downtown occupancy rates were around 95 percent last year, with developers on track to improve that figure this year in the wake of the building boom that preceded the Super Bowl. Maury Plambeck, director of metropolitan development for the city, said an Eli Lilly executive and early tenant of recently built downtown condo space noticed the lot on his walk to work each morning. “He saw all the other pedestrian-oriented development going on in other parts of downtown,” Plambeck said, “and he approached Buckingham.”

The proximity to major employers should be a draw for potential employees seeking an urban lifestyle. Traditionally people from Indianapolis don’t consider the area part of downtown. But this project will change that, Plambeck said, by tying into urban institutions like the cultural trail, a bike and pedestrian path that connects neighborhoods. “This connects four of our most important corporations in the urban core to the balance of the city,” Travis said. Early signs suggest the formula is selling: All 100 apartments available for the project’s first phase have been leased. But the area was not a natural choice for pedestrian-oriented development.

Delaware Avenue, which borders the site to the west, was a one-way, five-lane thoroughfare that Travis called “almost not navigable” for pedestrians. In addition to taming Delaware, infrastructure improvements for the project include expanding better street lighting and adding parking along South Street. Two intersections will be raised to slow down motorists.

Gensler designed the hotel, which is set to open early next year, while OZ Architecture’s Colorado studio tackled the residential component. Subtle touches in the material components, from balcony detailing to exposed brick, reference the industrial heritage of the nearby warehouse district. A public green in front of the hotel will host public events for up to 400 people.

In forging a new path for its downtown redevelop-ment Indianapolis has not forgotten their past. The team reclaimed hunks of limestone found buried at the site, repurposing the former foundation for landscaping accents. “It’s got some history, some authenticity,” said Brad Chambers, president of Buckingham. “We’re thrilled to be working on a project at this site and at this point in the city’s history.”
Given that many of us may spend more than a quarter of our lives at work, our offices had better feel somewhat like a home. It’s fitting then that Gensler design director Jason Hall, who led the firm’s design of an office expansion for branding agency SapientNitro in Chicago’s Inland Steel Building, called the process a kind of homecoming. Gensler’s own offices were in the same 1950s Skidmore, Owings & Merrill-designed building for more than 10 years until 2008. “There were things we wanted to celebrate,” Hall said. The terrazzo flooring on the 12th floor, for example, was adapted from the iconic building’s lobby. “Having worked there, it was really just a respect and love for the building.” SapientNitro had their own vision for the space, of course, which the Gensler team incorporated into its salute to the original design details of Inland Steel. Self-described “idea engineers,” SapientNitro listed “a sense of style that is uniquely Chicago” among its wishful descriptors for the new space. They also wanted to promote cultural and personal growth while maximizing flexibility. The 11th and 12th floors comprise “an amazing column-free space,” Hall said. It was a prime condition for imagination. Gensler identified themes of overlap and balance in the client’s schematic design document, which—in keeping with the company’s character—is crisply designed and replete with whimsical Venn diagrams. SapientNitro’s previous space took up just half of the 11th floor, with open spaces along the edges. “It felt a bit like a tale of two offices,” said John Carstens, SapientNitro’s executive creative director. Gensler pushed all the collaborative program elements to the center for an orientation Carstens said promotes just the right amount of “forced cross-pollination” across departments. The absence of columns allows for natural light throughout. “The way you access space is always through the collective,” Hall said. “You have to go through the ‘we’ space to get to the ‘me’ space.” There’s a slight separation of function between the office’s two floors. The sleek 12th floor houses the main reception area for clients, while Carstens describes the 11th as “the creative monkey house.” The 11th floor café is screened off from the work area and decorated with a distinctive SapientNitro twist: tables made from local bowling alley flooring; a chalkboard mural of the Chicago skyline rising out of flames; a wall grid of small boxes for each individual employee to display tokens of his or her personality. That so-called “pixel wall” has housed several contributions from Carstens, including a rhinoceros stuffed animal and a toy John Deere combine. The wall was a way to make the space feel like home while SapientNitro slightly tightened its standards for employee decoration in individual office spaces. “Our last space did kind of feel like Grandma’s basement,” said Carstens, whose goal was to contain, but not discourage, personal expression. “This space belongs to us. We do want people to feel like they own it,” he said. “It’s a wonderful thing when we see people take ownership of the space,” Hall said.
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delaspada.com

2 URCHIN POUF & FLAX OTTOMAN THOMAS EYCK
Sourcing raw and local materials is a major part of Christian Meindertsma’s practice—as well as the subject of her recent TED Talk. For these two casual seating options she went out of her way to use flax grown locally in the Netherlands.
thomaseyck.com

3 NESTREST DEDON
Sit it on the ground or hang it from a tree branch, Daniel Pouzet and Frad Frety’s Nestrest makes for an elegant perch. Woven with supersized strands of an especially strong fiber that’s four centimeters wide, Nestrest can support a full brood.
dedon.de

4 DINING TABLE 00219 USONA
Shown here in tinted black oak, this open weave table base also comes in natural and birch. Like all of Usona’s products, it’s made to order and can be customized in a variety of sizes, finishes, and materials.
usonahome.com

5 CORACLE MATTER
Inspired by the small, woven half-shell coracle boats used in Wales since the Bronze Age, Benjamin Hubert updated the traditional vessel with a lounge chair made with a basket seat made from automotive suede and a steel frame wrapped in a suede tri-weave recalling bicycle handlebars.
mattermatters.com

6 SPOOL RODA
Rodolfo Dordoni’s Spool collection is, as the name suggests, inspired by weaving spools. The varnished stainless steel frame stands up to all weather conditions and the backrest is wrapped with double-polyester twisted thread to provide flexibility and durability.
rodaonline.com
When a bucolic cemetery in Minneapolis began to near capacity its owners worried a large expansion might dampen the landscape’s pastoral charm. The 141-year-old non-sectarian Lakewood Cemetery occupies 250 acres in the city’s Uptown neighborhood. At 24,500 square feet, the cemetery’s new Garden Mausoleum is large compared to the existing structures nearby. Yet the building is in harmony with the older mausoleum and the chapel that it sits in between, as if in meditation. Elegant and quietly powerful, the mausoleum is an authentic union of materials and design in service of higher ideals, both human and divine.

Designed by Joan Soranno and John Cook of HGA, the Garden Mausoleum peeks out of a south-facing hill along the northern edge of the site’s 1960s-era “sunken garden.” Clerestory windows punctuate the mausoleum’s granite face, revealing a warm interior stately enough for ceremonial rites but antithetical to negative associations that might be evoked by the word crypt. Inside, mahogany and charcoal granite walls complement white marble and onyx floors that alternate between honey yellow, jade green, and coral pink.

The mausoleum is a burial place for 10,000 people, but it is also home to a chapel and gathering spaces. As such its handsomely understated spaces are prime for spiritual exploration and self-reflection. Adjacent to Lakewood’s 1910 Memorial Chapel, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the mausoleum is a continuous mosaic of textures—rift-sawn oak and bronze doors recall the old chapel’s majesty, but gently, as one would a loved one’s memory.

MORE THAN JUST GREAT SKIN ...

Hear Edward Peck (left), Jonatan Schumacher and other leaders in building skin design at the Façade & Innovation Conference

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Sculpture: Gyre, Thomas H. Sayre, N.C. Museum of Art

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The Science of Comfort

Louisville, Kentucky is home to seven historic landmark districts, including the nation’s largest Victorian neighborhood, but recent changes to the city’s 40-year-old historic preservation laws by the Metro Council have preservationists seeing an uncertain future. Citing concerns over oversight, accountability, public participation, and property rights, the council passed new rules giving the legislative body final say over all landmarks decisions and added restrictions to the petitioning process that initiates the landmarks review process. Now some fear that politics and potential corruption could erode the intent of the law and preservation groups are muling legal action to reverse the changes.

The contentious six-month fight was spurred by the four-year-old landmark designation of Colonial Gardens, a former beer garden built in 1902 alongside one of the city’s Olmsted parks. The designation stopped a proposed strip mall planned for the site, but the building remains vacant and deteriorating, splitting the neighborhood over its historic merits. “If Colonial Gardens didn’t happen, this ordinance wouldn’t have happened,” said Stephen Porter, an attorney representing preservation groups.

Preservationists maintain that giving a political body the final say over the landmarks process unduly politicizes the process and could lead to illicit campaign contributions from developers. It also removes the lucrative negotiating power the ordinance previously possessed, where compromises could be worked out about saving historic buildings without officially invoking the landmarks process. Fundamentally, Porter is disturbed that the authority of the Historic Landmarks and Preservation Districts Commission, an appointed panel of volunteer experts, can be overturned by a political body untainted in historic preservation practices. He noted the ordinance included some compromises, including extending a 30-day stay of demolition of historic properties to allow more time for the Landmarks Commission to prepare reports and hold public meetings.

The final bill was passed on July 26 and subsequently vetoed by Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer. In a letter explaining his decision, the mayor said, “Landmarking is a standards-based process and is rarely used—averaging twice a year for the last 40 years. Our landmarking process has served us well for more than a generation— and preserved our sense of place for generations to come.” Despite the mayor’s veto and outcry from concerned preservationists at two public hearings, the council voted 18 to seven to override the veto on August 9.

Porter said preservation groups are considering the best time to bring a challenge. “There’s no reason for a big rush,” Porter said. “It’s possible that Metro Council will never even review a case, but if some case were to arise where they did overturn the Landmarks Commission’s decision, we’d likely challenge the ordinance with a lawsuit.”

BRANDEN KLAYKO

www.insulbloc.com

Sculpture: Gyre, Thomas H. Sayre, N.C. Museum of Art
NEW GENERATION

Chicago shuts down two coal plants this month, but reuse speculation is at peak capacity, reports Chris Bentley.

In late August a barge floated up the Chicago canal and unloaded 1,500 tons of coal from Romeoville, Illinois. It's a trip barges like it have made up to three times daily for decades, delivering coal to burn in one of two power plants on Chicago's southwest side. But this one was the last.

The Fisk and Crawford coal plants will close in September. Their owner, Midwest Generation, agreed to decommission the facilities ahead of schedule under mounting pressure from environmental groups and to take advantage of $151 million in tax breaks. Falling natural gas prices and pending Environmental Protection Agency regulations also played a decisive role in the closures.

Now the communities of Pilsen and Little Village, home to Fisk and Crawford respectively, eye the 60- and 72-acre sites with mixed feelings. A 2002 Harvard School of Public Health study linked the plants to 41 premature deaths and 2,800 asthma attacks annually. As soon as neighborhood environmental organizations celebrated the facilities' early closure they encountered a new challenge: How to build a future for the industrial sites that have helped define their communities for roughly a century.

Mayor Rahm Emanuel convened a task force in March to investigate potential reuse options for the site, but the privately owned land is ultimately Midwest Generation's to sell. Plans for reuse have to grapple with historic preservation, environmental cleanup, and unemployment in a rapidly gentrifying area.

As coal plants around the country power down, what happens to these 132 acres in Chicago could have nationwide implications. After several months under consideration by the city and an ambitious team of community groups, the exhaust stacks of Fisk and Crawford still cast long shadows over the city's southwest side.

GREEN GROWTH

“It’s changing the way the city does development in a community like ours,” said Kim Wasserman, coordinator for the Little Village Environmental Justice Organization (LVEJO). “Conversations that have historically never happened are now happening.”

Instead of the city’s usual dropping in to build a new school only to vanish after the press conference, Wasserman said, officials have taken time to appreciate the complexity of the neighborhoods and the struggles they face. And previously adversarial parties have buried the hatchet in the name of productive discussions.
Activists scaled the stack at Fisk last year and unfurled a banner reading “QUIT COAL,” in what was perhaps the most visible incarnation of the area’s growing anxiety towards their industrial neighbors. LVEJO encouraged community members not to grow vegetables in soil because they suspected contamination, even offering “toxic tours” of the neighborhood’s environmental hazards—Crawford was a fixture on the tour route. Now Toxic Tour leaders and representatives from Midwest Generation sit across from one another in negotiations both have called collaborative and respectful. “This is the first brownfield coal site that has engaged in this kind of process with the community,” said Jean Pogge, CEO of the Delta Institute, the Chicago–based non-profit leading the mayor’s task force. In Pilsen, public forums on the topic predate the task force’s formation by at least several months.

“A lot of people want to see more green space,” said Nelson Soza, executive director of Pilsen Alliance. “But they also want to see jobs. We don’t think that’s mutually exclusive.” Soza’s organization conducted door-to-door interviews with hundreds of neighborhood residents earlier this year to find out their ideas for reuse. His results lined up with those from another survey conducted by PERRO, the Pilsen Environmental Rights and Reform Organization. PERRO’s survey respondents favored multi-use over single-use by a margin greater than six to one. Green space topped the list of preferred land uses with 37 percent
of responses, while "jobsindustrial" received the next most votes at 27 percent.

Calls for housing were unanimous—discounted early on, task force members said, due in part to zoning issues and the industrial environment of the sites. Neighborhood groups also worried housing proposals would exacerbate gentrification. Pilsen and Little Village are predominantly Latino communities and both have seen thousands of residents leave in recent years. Pilsen alone lost about one-quarter of its Latino population between 2000 and 2010. The intervening years saw unemployment rise among a diluted Latino population, as the area’s thriving art scene attracted young white tenants. Both neighborhoods are in a park-poor industrial corridor. While the future owners will ultimately determine the extent of green space onsite, the Delta Institute identified two water-edge locations at Crawford and one at Fisk that they deemed potentially suitable for public access to the canal. And early talks have targeted an underused parking lot off Cermak Road for a potential land transfer to the park district. But PERRO organizer Jerry Mead-Lucero said he hopes for even more public space.

POWER EXCHANGE

Nearly all parties agreed the sites must provide jobs, from survey respondents to Mayor Emanuel. And community groups are adamant that those jobs come from a non-polluting employer. The plant closings represent 200 lost positions, which environmental groups hope can be replaced by light manufacturing and green jobs.

While no dangerous material will be stored onsite after the plants are closed, remediation is always an issue with former industrial sites. A legacy of contaminants typically follows decades of coal-fired electrical generation. The condition of the sites has not yet been determined, but will ultimately factor heavily into the cost of converting the land for public use. The Fisk site’s history will persist long after the power shuts off. The original 1903 generation station once housed the world’s largest steam turbine. Designed for Samuel Insull, an aide to Thomas Edison, Fisk was a driving force in Chicago’s groundbreaking electrification. Edison’s signature still graces a guestbook inside the plant, but Insull’s heritage is waning. His State Line Generating Plant in Hammond, Indiana shut down earlier this year; along with Fisk and Crawford, it rounded out the Delta Institute identified two water-edge locations at Crawford and one at Fisk that they deemed potentially suitable for public access to the canal. And early talks have targeted an underused parking lot off Cermak Road for a potential land transfer to the park district. But PERRO organizer Jerry Mead-Lucero said he hopes for even more public space.

COMMUNITY UTILITIES

More than 100 coal plants have closed nationwide in the last three years, roughly one-sixth the total number of plants in the United States. An abundance of natural gas, tightening environmental regulations and campaigns from an increasingly unified clean energy movement have challenged the nation’s dominant source of electricity.

Industrial reinvention has emerged as a guiding principal for Midwestern development in the 21st century. The region’s stock of aging coal plants is large. Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin together are home to more than one-fourth of all coal plants in the country. Coal plant sites have been given new life as parks, museums, and mixed-use developments from Texas to Germany. In Austin, a 9-year remediation effort by the city and its public utility company reclaimed the Seaholm Power Plant for retail, office, condo, and hotel space, as well as a 3-acre park. Though it burned natural gas and fuel oil instead of coal, Seaholm bears some similarities to Fisk. Its historic art deco architecture and remaining electrical operations were successfully integrated into the new development.

The site handled remediation well, too. It earned the first-ever EPA Reuse certification for unrestricted use of a PCB remediation site, as well as a Gold Medal in the environmental category of the 2005 Texas Council of Engineering Companies Engineering Excellence Awards.

"Whoever takes over these sites will have to work through public processes," said Doug McFarlan, a Midwest Generation representative. "So I think it’s just good business for everyone to be transparent and open book." Work is far from over for the task force. As Midwest Generation courts potential buyers for the sites, the guidelines crafted by community groups will face a crucible. But consensus is strong between parties once known for their adversarial positions. Those involved hope the task force will be a model for community engagement, as well as a positive influence on the community in this time of transition. Southwest side residents like Soza see an unprecedented opportunity to remake their neighborhood’s industrial core in the image of the community that has grown for generations around it.

“We hope we can build something as historic as the Fisk plant when it first came in 1903,” he said.

CHRIS BENTLEY IS AN’S MIDWEST EDITOR.
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THURSDAY 13
LECTURE
Massimiliano Fuksas: Et in arcadia ego
5:30 p.m.
Cleveland Museum of Art
11150 East Blvd.
Cleveland, OH
http://www.clevelandart.org

FRIDAY 14
WITH THE KIDS
Sculpture Garden Favorites
3:30 p.m.
Toledo Museum of Art
2445 Monroe St.
Toledo, OH
toledomuseum.org

SATURDAY 15
EVENT
Art with Character
1:00 p.m.
Milwaukee Art Museum
700 North Art Museum Dr.
Milwaukee, WI
mam.org

TUESDAY 18
LECTURE
Grete Marks: When Modern Was Degenerate
1:00 p.m.
Milwaukee Art Museum
700 North Art Museum Dr.
Milwaukee, WI
mam.org

OCTOBER

WEDNESDAY 19
LECTURE
Vincent James and Jennifer Yoss:
Current Work
6:00 p.m.
Illinois Institute of Technology
College of Architecture
3201 South State St.
it.edu/arch

EXHIBITION OPENING
Vernissage
4:00 p.m.
Museum of Contemporary Art
220 East Chicago Ave.
mca-chicago.org

THURSDAY 20
LECTURE
Black Art in America: A Conversation for the 21st Century
7:00 p.m.
DuSable Museum
740 East 56th Pl.
chicagohistory.org

THURSDAY 20
LECTURE
Sally Mann:
If Memory Serves
6:00 p.m.
The University of Chicago
5751 South State St.
annarbor.org

THURSDAY 20
LECTURE
In the Know
7:00 p.m.
Chicago History Museum
1601 North Clark St.
chicagohistory.org

FRIDAY 21
EXHIBITION OPENING
The Singing Bird Room of Robert Lostutter
7:00 p.m.
Madison Museum of Contemporary Art
227 State St.
Madison, WI
mmoca.org

SUNDAY 7
EXHIBITION OPENING
Building—Inside Studio Gang Architects
6:00 p.m.
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.
artic.edu

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Despite what the mainstream media would have you believe, Mad Men is not responsible for today’s fervid embrace of mid-20th-century design. It’s more emblematic of a pattern in public taste since World War II: underappreciated trends rediscov-ered four to six decades hence. Consider the love for Victoriana in the 1950s, art nouveau in the 1960s, arts and crafts in the 1970s, and deco and moderne in the 1980s. Can a new rage for Memphis and PoMo be far behind?

As such, we shouldn’t be surprised that Alexander Girard is having sort of a moment. Late in 2011, Ammo Books released a 672-page tome about him, compiled by the fashion/interior/product designer Todd Oldham with design writer Kiera Coffee. At NeoCon this year, concurrent with reintroducing an archival collection of his textile designs, Herman Miller mounted An Uncommon Vision, an excellent exhibition of his work that will remain at Merchandise Mart until spring.

As director of Herman Miller’s Textile Division from 1952 to 1973, Girard worked with George Nelson and the Eameses to create what became the company’s well-defined aesthetic. But Oldham and Coffee’s Alexander Girard is less a scholarly analysis of Girard’s career than a visual compendium of all things Sandro (his American parents raised him primarily in Italy), including designs for interiors, exhibits, textiles, table top items, furniture, and graphics, as well as his extensive personal collections of art and objects.

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The book doesn’t offer an enormous amount of interpretative mate-rial, which is acceptable, because it does offer such a dense array of color-splashed images illustrating the vast range of Girard’s talents that it compels readers to draw their own conclusions about his influence on design, both then and now.

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Camp Out: Finding Home in an Unstable World is a steely-eyed examination of the sometimes noxious state of home ownership and the outbreak of contemporary placelessness. It’s also an exuberant-ly scribbled wish list of architectural next-steps, urban do-overs and domestic re-inventions.

The exhibition, which is on view at Laumeier Sculpture Park in St. Louis, features work by 10 inter-national artists who look broadly at what “home” represents in a world that has watched the abrupt collapse of property ownership and enduring construction cycles. Roughly half the work included is located, either appropriately or ironically, inside the stately house that once belonged to the Laumeier family. Each of the half-dozen small galleries feature pieces that explore what it means to identify with a specific place or to be shel-tered by something that is ultimately ephemeral.

Photos by Edgar Martins, whose work often captures neglected buildings and ghostly construction sites, sets an ominous mood at the outset of the show. Exhibited here are images of a seemingly empty, possibly abandoned, house in mid-disintegration. Ragged holes in a drywall ceiling hover over mounds of pink insulation that have spilled onto the beige carpet of an otherwise unblemished and wholly unremarkable corridor. It seems as though an internal organ violently ruptured only moments prior to the shot and fluffy pink flakes are still floating languidly through the hazy air.

Smartly installed across the room, Emily Speed’s Inhabitant serves as a whimsical counterpoint. Resembling a ramshackle model of San Gimignano, and created while Speed temporarily lived in St. Louis, the freestanding piece is more than five feet tall and looks as if it were assembled during a frenzied fever dream. Formed from cardboard, duct tape, and...
VERNACULAR CLOTHING TYPOLOGIES

Familiar fabric patterns and vernacular clothing typologies from cultures around the world. By melding kimonos, saris, trench coats, military uniforms, and more, Mattingly has stitched together a suit that is simultaneously generic and singular. There is an eight minute video of the suit in action, bobbing up and down on the surface of a vast body of water, dutifully protecting its wearer from the elements. Wearable Home is additionally represented by three collages graphically reminiscent of Stanley Tigerman or Superstudio. Six pieces are installed on the 105-acre grounds outside the house, staked in a landscape that precariously leans into the small opening 12 feet above ground. Inside, appointed with a wood floor and a table, it is spacious enough to comfortably stretch out and enjoy the uninterrupted views of the surrounding art and grounds.

WHERE ART IS continued from page 18

FABRIC OF LIFE continued from page 18

His space-agrulated plastic furniture designs for Braniff and their eye-popping upholsteries may have been too edgy to make their way into your average American home, they certainly seem to have captured the fancy of Hollywood art directors in the 1960s. Consider the sets for such TV shows as Love-American Style, Laugh-In and Get Smart, or just about any Doris Day rom-com.

While the debate over the relevance of actual, physical books rages on, publications that are primarily visual in content persist in print form, as increasingly more precious and rarefied objects. A publication like Alexander Girard attests to its publisher’s optimism that a market for an oversized volume with a $200-plus price tag still exists. Whether or not that’s true, the fact that the publication doesn’t exist in an electronic reader alternative seems aggressively non-modern, or at the very least antithetical to spreading Girard’s gospel to another generation.

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Jonathan Louie about his interest on display this past summer—his latest gallery installation, Citizens of No Place, was recently published by Princeton Architectural Press. Earlier this year Lai was named a winner of the Architectural League Prize for Young Architects.

**AN**: Earlier in your career you developed a following for your graphic representation of the architectural process; but your interest seems to have moved toward other architectural endeavors—such as your oversize “Superfurniture.” How does the architectural narrative still play itself out in your design and process? 

**JL**: The similarity between cartoon making and architecture is that both practices imagine other worlds, and both disciplines demand astute graphic articulation to resonate with their audience. With cartoons, authors literally need to indulge in their own fictional worlds in order to tell stories that are unlike existing reality. In some ways this is a very liberating thought for architects—the stories we write should resist the acceptance of the normal, typical, generic or absolute, because we are the physical writers of the city fabric that represents the culture of our times.

My interest in Superfurniture is scale-related. Many of the predecessors who I admire built installations before they were able to gain enough steam to build buildings. This is a path I’ve been interested in, the relationship between drawing and building as a young person. Some of the architectural effects that installations produce are simply unscaleable, and probably should not be scaled at all—human perception doesn’t always work in every size. Worse yet, some installations forfeit architecture altogether and merely produce physicalized illustrator diagrams about some sort of global economy or community activism without any desire to nurture a sense of architectural effect. My relationship with the installation scale and human engagement had to be one-to-one in order for the part-to-whole relationship to develop. This is why I think installations should be projects not quite big enough to be buildings, but far too big to be furniture—it is what it looks like, not to be scaled.

In Three Little Worlds, there seem to be two narratives unfolding. The first—through Kickstarter—communicating design intent to an audience, and the second the narrative of living in your Superfurniture. Can you talk more about performance, and how it has influenced your work? The internet has helped me voice my intent in advance. I feel deeply fortunate to have been at my age during this era of the internet. So, yes—the first life of this project lived its course through a different representation—on the internet. I have been extensively documenting my time in this installation through videos. In some ways, the delivery of the performative aspect will also require the internet.

The past week living here has been a journey inward. While I feel extremely fortunate—I am now living in London by the Thames in an installation I designed drawing murals all day—it displaced me from my comfort zone and I am gaining a perspective on what the next chapters of my life could be. Perhaps this isn’t entirely a performance. I wanted to take myself out of context to learn more about domesticity. Do you consider installations to be architecture? It depends if the intention of the installation was meant to be one-to-one scale, or a one-to-one architectural effect. In almost all cases, the installations that I enjoy are studies of parts, with the whole being architecture. Which is to say, these installations do not attempt to be at any other scale but the scale we live in, and therefore I think of them as being partially architecture.

More so than your previous projects, Three Little Worlds seems to encapsulate a total lifestyle. If Superfurnitures’ organize themselves around the home, how do you determine what are, and are not necessary additions? In retrospect, Three Little Worlds could have done more to facilitate total lifestyle. In terms of necessity, the color, texture, and proportion of the frames really produces a distinct atmosphere from the normal world. So in that sense, the project does create a satisfying lifestyle. The frame-to-boundary relationship, on the other hand, was functionally miscalculated. Because I am currently immersed in a thought regarding graphic vs. painterly, and because I choose the graphic argument, Three Little Worlds deliberately withheld traces of how things were built. As a result, it even overlooked the white, poche spaces for other possible uses. In another version of a project like this, this will definitely be something I would pay closer attention to. What is the graphic in architecture? I am interested in two particular aspects of graphics—sensibility and convention. I believe both to be communicative techniques, but sensibility evokes effects, whereas convention articulates thoughts. Through articulation, I think about the exact meanings that line weights and line types can convey. We are able to communicate cut, directionality, orientation, projection, plane, above/below, surface condition, transparency, layers, and texture—all simply within the conventions of architectural notation that readers mutually agree upon. I think the same about drawings—careful control of lines can produce suggestive messages for the audience. In the way we read. With sensibility, on the other hand, the message may not be as exact. Perhaps the most simplistic dichotomy would be sharp versus soft, as the two sensibilities can evoke different reactions. Furthermore, within soft, there are many, many types of soft curves. I think of the specificity of curve-types to be similar to timbres in music, as it establishes the mood

As a young architect, you’ve built a career around being client-less or having a larger audience as your client. What are some of the benefits and detriments in the development of your work and design agenda? The benefit of having this career so far is that I have managed to build a portfolio with very little extra time, and was able to really meditate on the architectural effects and issues that I am interested in. This route has allowed me to nurture my thoughts. The detriment is that I have almost zero money whatsoever. I spend every last cent of my university salary building this practice. The odd grant money or sales of art just does not cover the cost of the office. Can you give an example of your project process? As “client-less” as these projects have been, there still were a lot of constraints. With Three Little Worlds, the unattainability of funds vastly dialed back the ambition of the original thought. I began by proposing a comic book that a person can walk into, exploring the relationship between framing, windows, and voyeurism. We went through Kickstarter to fund the project, but it just still was not enough in the end. This process required us to take on the tasks of being designers, fundraisers, and publishers. And for White Elephant (a 2011 installation at Louisville, Kentucky’s LoT exhibition space) we were even partially the fabricators in-house. This life of multi-tasking is extremely exhausting, and I am very much looking forward to having a client. But, perhaps this process has also molded me to be more creative and versatile problem-solver. This may influence the way I design when actual constraints emerge.
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