NEA Director of Design Jeff Speck to Resign in May: City planner heading back to planning cities.- ArchNewsNow

Op-Ed: Barriers To Planning: Lessons From Katrina: The barriers that hindered [evacuation] efforts in New Orleans apply not only to evacuation planning, but to planning in general. By Thomas W. Sanchez and Marc Brenman - PLANetizen

Planners go ‘round and around over cul-de-sacs: Once a homeowner’s dream, the dead-end street is falling out of favor everywhere – except Southern California. City planners shun them. New urbanists hate them. Boulder, Colo., all but banned them. - Los Angeles Times

Calatrava unveils tower's latest twist: ...still tweaking—and he may never stop until construction starts... has improved immeasurably...it still isn't cooked yet. By Blair Kamin [images, video]- Chicago Tribune

Skyline could have a brave new look: Latest design of Chicago Spire similar to birthday candle...once again as skinny as a birthday taper, topped off after dark with a shaft of light...will mark nothing less than the birth of an entirely new Chicago skyline. By Kevin Nance -- Santiago Calatrava- Chicago Sun-Times

Plans revealed for a ‘World Trade Center’ in Oslo: ...to be built behind the Nobel Peace Center, on prime property at Oslo’s inner harbour. -- Koolhaas/OMA; Space Group [image]- Aftenposten (Norway)

Foster + Partners motors ahead in Spain: ...has beaten off a star-studded shortlist to win a commission for a new Motor City in Aragon... [images]- Building (UK)

Serpentine Gallery Delays Pavilion Design by Frei Otto in Favor of Snøhetta’s Thorsen and Olafur Eliasson- Architectural Record

Olympic park win for 5th Studio: Lea Valley park (in Thames Gateway) to rival London’s great parks in size -- Latz + Partner. Latz + Partner; Colliers CRE; Leaside Regeneration; The Ecology Partnership; Whitby Bird; Davis Langdon- Building (UK)

Brooklyn Architecture To the Rescue: ...new Office of Emergency Management...seems an unusually welcoming and pleasant pile, when you consider its dire functions;... Brooklyn Museum’s new Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art...Whatever one thinks of Judy Chicago’s “The Dinner Party” the structure that now envelops it is stylish as well as functional. By James Gardner -- Swanke Hayden Connell; Susan T. Rodriguez/Polshek Partnership- New York Sun

How it really stacks up: Three years after the Seattle Central Library opened to starbursts of praise...Its time for a reconsideration. feels, in varying places, raw, confusing, impersonal, uncomfortable, oppressive, theatrical and exhilarating. By Lawrence W. Cheek -- Koolhaas/Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA)- Seattle Post-Intelligencer

Visionary's Vision Doubted: Architect of Sydney Opera House Under Fire Yet Again -- Joern Utzon; Jan Utzon; Philip Drew; Richard Johnson/Johnson Pilton Walker (AP)- Washington Post

Renzo Piano Leaves Boston Project: ...has withdrawn from a project to build an 80-story tower that would have involved the demolition of a 1960 building by Paul Rudolph...CBT Architects intended to “implement Piano’s design, making appropriate refinements as needed during the design review process.” - New York Times

In Cuba, they still remember ‘Papa’ Hemingway: Castro’s government has spent $1 million to restore Hemingway’s shabby baronial estate [Finca Vigia] to its old glory [images, links]- Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

-- Polshek Partnership Architects: Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art