

Today's News - Friday, December 4, 2009

- Woes for a green future? Leading climate change expert says Copenhagen summit talks are already so flawed that any deal would be a disaster - it would be better to start again from scratch.
- Why do LEED-certified buildings waste so much energy?
- Seattle could lead the world as a carbon-neutral city - "so what's standing in the way? Political will."
- On a brighter note, there's a new toolkit to guide cities and counties through the process of greening their communities (modeled after the PlaNYC guide).
- Forget airports - mega-train stations are "the symbol of a new age of urban renewal and planet-friendly travel" (glamour and speed included).
- Columbia University loses attempt to claim eminent domain for campus expansion plans: arguing neighborhood blight is "mere sophistry" and "idiocy" claims the court (read the ruling - it's practically scathing; an appeal is surely in the offing).
- Cities continue to toss up bland glass boxes "in all their stark, anonymous severity. Will architects ever give us something new" or will they "stick to the one unwritten law of modern architecture: Thou Shalt Not Ornament"?
- EPA's 2009 National Award for Smart Growth Achievement honors four projects that "bring together sustainability and environmental benefits on the ground."
- Peter Bohlin, Pugh + Scarpa, and Michael Graves take home AIA national awards.
- AR 2009 Awards for Emerging Architecture celebrate young architects from around the world.
- Weekend diversions:
 - MoMA offers "the unruly history - not the svelte myth - of the Bauhaus."
 - An architect and an artist offer "CO2 Cubes" that will visualize carbon emissions for all attending Copenhagen summit.
 - Norway's high-design tourist routes take a "Detour" to Parsons in NYC.
 - In London, Haygarth turns the things we throw away into some amazing (and actually functional) objects.
 - Kamin ponders whether Burnham's "Plan of Chicago" is a work of literature, and cheers a new film about "Mr. Big Plans" debuting this month.
 - 'Tis the season of critics' picks: King says "URBANbuild: local/global" may be "this year's most ambitious polemic on urban design" with lessons that are applicable far beyond New Orleans.
 - Ouroussoff and Planetizen offer their list of best books.
 - Eggert's "Securing the Past" is "serious, provocative and original" in defending and securing the past "against the skepticism of postmodernism" (though it's not without its "irritants").
- A sneak-peek of the 2010 "AIA Guide to New York City" - a new edition a decade in the making.

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Copenhagen climate change talks must fail: World's leading climate change expert says summit talks so flawed that deal would be a disaster...any agreement likely to emerge from the negotiations would be so deeply flawed that it would be better to start again from scratch. "I would rather it not happen if people accept that as being the right track because it's a disaster track" -- James Hansen/NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies - Guardian (UK)

The Green Façade: LEED-certified buildings are clean, innovative, and environmentally friendly. But why are they wasting so much energy? Eventually, LEED for Existing Buildings (LEED-EB) will likely supplant LEED for New Construction as an emblem of credibility and prestige..."Green buildings are only as efficient as their operations"... -- Fedrezzi/USGBC; Rob Watson/GreenerBuildings.com - The Atlantic

Op-Ed: Seattle can lead the world as a carbon-neutral city: The challenge is enormous: make Seattle the first carbon neutral city in North America by 2030...Is it possible? And should we even try? Our answer to both questions is "yes"...So what's standing in the way? Political will. By Craig Curtis/Miller Hull Partnership and Lisa Richmond/AIA Seattle - Seattle Times

ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability USA Unveils Comprehensive Toolkit for Greening Cities and Counties: ...a comprehensive resource to guide cities and counties, step by step, through the process of greening their communities...modeled after the city of New York's highly successful PlaNYC guide... - GreenerBuildings.com

Waiting for the Train: If the airport represented glamour and speed for the postwar traveler, the megastation is the symbol of a new age of urban renewal and planet-friendly travel...Architects have been eagerly re-inventing the station as a green "multimodal" hub...at the heart of city life. -- Terry Farrell; Foster + Partners; HOK; Santiago Calatrava; AREP - Newsweek

Eminent Defiance: Columbia University expansion opponents score surprising win in court...In a stern 3-2 ruling...appellate court determined that the project lacked any true public purpose, with the state exercising eminent domain wholly to the benefit of a private entity...decision admonishes the state on two counts related to its finding of blight in Manhattanville, which became the pretext for condemning the area. -- Renzo Piano; SOM [images, links] - The Architect's Newspaper

Banish the Bland: The Glass Box Is So Last Century: ...didn't need a comeback. They've never left: Cities continue to toss them up in all their stark, anonymous severity. Will architects ever give us something new?...even when today's architects escape the old box-on-stilts of the International Style, they stick to the one unwritten law of modern architecture: Thou Shalt Not Ornament. -- Frank Gehry; Rem Koolhaas; Louis Sullivan; Philip Johnson; Adolf Loos; Kent Bloomer; Steven Semes; Brent Brolin - Wall Street Journal

EPA's 2009 National Award for Smart Growth Achievement: four projects "bring together sustainability and environmental benefits on the ground." -- Envision Lancaster County (Pennsylvania); City of Charlotte; Parkside of Old Town (Chicago Housing Authority, FitzGerald Associates Architects); Tempe Transportation Center (City of Tempe and Architekton + Otak, Arizona) [link to info, images] - The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

AIA announces winners of national awards: 2010 AIA Gold Medal to Peter Bohlin, FAIA/Bohlin Cywinski Jackson; Architecture Firm Award to Pugh + Scarpa; AIA/ACSA Topaz Medallion for Excellence in Architectural Education to Michael Graves, FAIA [links to details] - Chicago Tribune

AR 2009 Awards for Emerging Architecture celebrates the best pieces of design by young architects from across the world. -- Li Xiaodong Atelier; ODOS Architects/O'Shea Design Partnership; Matharoo Associates; Jose Maria Sanchez Garcia [videos, links] - Architectural Review (UK)

Art and Design in the Lab: "Bauhaus 1919-1933: Workshops for Modernity": The unruly history—not the svelte myth—of the Bauhaus is what we see as walk through this show...historical show rich in cultural implication can draw people to its concerns. Indeed, the caliber of conversation overheard through eavesdropping on engaged visitors of all kinds has never been higher! - New York Observer

"CO2 Cubes" depicts CO2 emissions: Do you know what your carbon footprint looks like?...artist Alfio Bonanno...and the architect Christophe Cornubert, a recipient of the Reitveld Architecture Prize, have tackled the question with a digital media installation to be unveiled on Dec. 7 at the United Nations climate change talks in Copenhagen. [image, video, links] - Mother Nature Network

"Detour: Architecture and Design Along 18 National Tourist Routes in Norway" at the Sheila C. Johnson Design Center at Parsons through January 19: What can rest stops, information centers, and observation decks tell visitors about a culture? - Peter Zumthor; Louise Bourgeois; Snøhetta; Jensen & Skodvin Architects; etc. - Parsons The New School for Design

Stuart Haygarth Turns Our Disposable Lifestyles Into Art: The eco-artist turns the things we throw away into stunning decorative objects - from chandeliers made of washed up trash, to coffee tables made of broken rear-view mirrors...at Haunch of Venison gallery in London. [images, links]- Fast Company

A double dose of Burnham: Is his 'Plan of Chicago' a work of literature?; film "Make No Little Plans: Daniel Burnham and the American City" about 'Mr. Big Plans' showing this month
By Blair Kamin - Chicago Tribune

Book lays out plan for rebuilding New Orleans: "URBANbuild: local/global" by Ila Berman and Mona El Khaffi...what may be this year's most ambitious polemic on urban design: a 464-page case for bringing new urban forms to New Orleans...the lessons learned are applicable far beyond Louisiana. By John King - San Francisco Chronicle

Architecture books: John King's picks: "Architecture: Elements, Materials, Form" by Francesca Prina; "The Atlas of American Architecture" by Tom Martinson; "Carville-by-the-Sea: San Francisco's Streetcar Suburb" by Woody LaBounty; "Living Modern: A Biography of Greenwood Common" by Waverly B. Lowell; "Lost Buildings: Demolished Destroyed Imagined Reborn" by Jonathan Glancey; Mapping New York; "Twenty Minutes in Manhattan" by Michael Sorkin; "Why Architecture Matters" by Paul Goldberger - San Francisco Chronicle

Architecture Books: Nicolai Ouroussoff's picks: "Learning from Hangzhou" by Mathieu Borysevicz; "Bauhaus Women" by Ulrike Muller; "Lost Buildings" by Jonathan Glancey; "Legacy: the Preservation of Wilderness in New York City Parks" by Joel Meyerowitz - New York Times

Top 10 Books - 2010: Planetizen picks: "Bicycle Diaries" by David Byrne; "The Smart Growth Manual" by Andrés Duany, Jeff Speck, Mike Lydon; "Wrestling With Moses: How Jane Jacobs Took On New York's Master Builder and Transformed the American City" by Anthony Flint; "On Private Property" by Eric Freyfogle; "Building Up and Tearing Down" by Paul Goldberger; "The Architecture of Community" by Léon Krier; "The BLDGBLOG Book" by Geoff Manaugh; "Paris Underground" by Mark Ovenden; "Green Metropolis" by David Owen; "Mannahatta" by Eric W. Sanderson - PLANetizen

Book review: "Securing the Past: Conservation in Art, Architecture and Literature" by Paul Eggert...a serious, provocative and original book...he enlists post-structuralist theory, in which he is adept, to defend and secure the past against the scepticism of postmodernism. - The Australian

The AIA Guide to New York City: In Search of Green Places: Norval White, FAIA, and Fran Leadon, AIA, provide a preview of the new edition a decade in the making. -- Croxton Collaborative Architects; Cook+Fox; Foster + Partner; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM); Polshek Partnership; Ismael Leyva; Pelli Clarke Pelli; BKSK; Antonio Di Oronzo/bluarch architecture; Dattner Architects, MKW + Associates, Michael Van Valkenburgh; Sasaki Associates; Mathews Nielsen Landscape Architects; Abel Bainson Butz; Lee Weintraub Landscape Architecture; Thomas Balsley - AIArchitect

WORDS THAT BUILD Tip #21: Communicating Architectural Edges: Write about meaningful circulatory patterns of light by personifying the interplay of architecture and light. By Norman Weinstein - ArchNewsNow

INSIGHT: Alignment: Sustainability and Historic Preservation: Retrofitting existing buildings is a vital strategy for significantly reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions globally. To many, it is THE strategy. By Elaine Gallagher Adams, AIA, LEED AP - ArchNewsNow



-- Exhibition: "Donald Judd: Furniture," Sebastian + Barquet, New York, NY
-- Books: "Building Up and Tearing Down: Reflections on the Age of Architecture" and "Why Architecture Matters" by Paul Goldberger

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