

Today's News - Tuesday, April 6, 2010

- Heathcote on the transformation of mega-cities to meta-cities, "a new breed of city" with lots of problems, but none are insoluble - "the city remains, on the whole, a civilizing place."
- Hume x 2: when it comes to transit, politics has a blind spot that puts Toronto and the region 25 or more years behind where they should be.
- He cheers Ryerson University urban planning students' proposals organized around a public transit network: "they are light years ahead of today's thinking."
- A Stanford study finds land preservation efforts in Silicon Valley have had only a minor effect on housing construction, and demand for urban housing close to jobs and transit has helped bring developers and conservation groups together.
- Greenberg resigns from Toronto waterfront sports complex project because it "fails to integrate with the Plan for the Lower Don Lands" (but he'll remain on the master plan team).
- King on the preservation debate swirling around two lowly Presidio barracks, "an example of the inherent subjectivity as to what preservation in the 21st century should be."
- BSA's Rotch Traveling Scholarship winner and runners-ups show "the potential for remaking the much-reviled Boston City Hall and its sprawling empty plaza at a time when its fate is in limbo" (now, if only the powers-that-be would pay attention - great slide show).
- Chihuly glass museum debate revives question: Is Seattle Center a park or arts hub?
- SANAA tapped to transform 141-year-old Art Nouveau La Samaritaine department store in Paris into a hotel.
- OMA wins competition for Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec expansion (lots of pix).
- ZGF wins \$61 million Homeland Security HQ contract.
- Merrick cheers the Junction, a new arts and civic center in Yorkshire: it is "a joy...viscerally anti-bling and a small triumph of lo-fi design."
- Kennicott cheers a new Washington, DC, library: it "isn't radical or innovative, but it is the product of thoughtful design, and it looks handsome...a good reminder of why people pay taxes and what they get in exchange."
- Arad's Holon Design Museum in Israel aims for the Bilbao effect; it "might lack its Spanish role model's interesting location and size," but it "makes up for any shortcomings with sheerchutzpah."
- SHIFTBoston competition winners are part of "a growing movement that aims to preserve - and reuse - urban infrastructure."
- The Ford Foundation has a \$100 million initiative to develop arts spaces and housing.
- 2010 IIDA-NC Honor Award and Pioneers in Design winners announced.
- Call for entries: Build a Better Burb open ideas competition to retrofit 3 Long Island downtowns (cash prizes; no fee).

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From megacity to metacity: This is a new breed of city...Where they collapse is in equality...In spite of the nightmare scenarios, it is important to remember...None of these problems is insoluble and the city remains, on the whole, a civilising place. By Edwin Heathcote -- Rem Koolhaas; Teddy Cruz - Financial Times (UK)

When it comes to transit, province has a blind spot: If it were simply a question of Toronto keeping up with the Joneses, no one would worry. But we are 25 or more years behind where we should be...Great cities vary widely but one shared characteristic is great transit...a precondition to civic greatness. One doesn't happen without the other. By Christopher Hume- Toronto Star

Student planners remake the world — and Toronto: These are our children speaking. Unless they're spouting this stuff because they think it's what their elders want to hear — unlikely — they are light years ahead of today's thinking. By Christopher Hume -- Paul Bedford- Toronto Star

Open space little effect on housing, study says: Land preservation efforts in Silicon Valley and surrounding areas have had only a minor effect on housing construction...much of the land preserved over the past 50 years would have been only marginally useful...demand for urban housing close to jobs and transit has helped bring developers and conservation groups together. - San Francisco Chronicle

Ken Greenberg quits in dispute over Toronto waterfront sports complex: Urban designer has resigned from...working on plans to fit a sports complex and hockey arena into the Lower Don Lands redevelopment. He argues the facility is far too large for the space being considered...he will remain a part of the team responsible for the overall master plan. - Toronto Star

2 Presidio barracks fuel preservation debate: ...will never be mistaken for high design...These survivors also are the focus of a debate as to whether they should remain or be removed - and an example of the inherent subjectivity as to what preservation in the 21st century should be..."You need to save the Plain Janes as well as the grand dames." By John King- San Francisco Chronicle

A softer City Hall: Young architects offer visions for turning plaza into something a bit more welcoming: Though ultimately a hypothetical exercise, the Boston Society of Architects (BSA) Rotch contest showed the potential for remaking the much-reviled City Hall and its sprawling empty plaza at a time when its fate is in limbo. -- Kallman, McKinnell and Knowles (1968); Christopher Shusta [slide show]- Boston Globe

Chihuly glass museum debate revives question: Is Seattle Center a park or arts hub? Supporters said it would boost tourism and add to the arts opportunities...council members have reported that they're hearing from more opponents than supporters. - Seattle Post-Intelligencer

LVMH Picks Pritzker-Prize Winners for Samaritaine Hotel Project: ...to convert the 141-year-old Art Nouveau structure into a hotel. -- SANAA- Bloomberg News

OMA wins competition for the Beaux Arts Museum [Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec] expansion: A series of stacked boxes remind the programmatic relations of Seattle's Library... -- Koolhaas/Office for Metropolitan Architecture [images]- ArchDaily

ZGF Architects [formerly Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Architects] Wins \$61M Homeland Security Headquarters Contract: ...more than 2.1 million square feet of new office

space for DHS at the St. Elizabeths Hospital site in Washington, D.C. -- Einhorn Yaffee Prescott (EYP); Olin- Engineering News-Record (ENR)

Up the Junction: 21st century architecture has come to Yorkshire: A new arts and civic centre in Yorkshire is a joy, at one with its gritty surroundings and sure of its purpose...This building is viscerally anti-bling...a small triumph of lo-fi design. By Jay Merrick -- Buschow Henley Architects [images]- Independent (UK)

Benning Library brings commerce, community in sync: ...isn't radical or innovative, but it is the product of thoughtful design, and it looks handsome...likely to be a major player in the daily life of its neighborhood, and a good reminder of why people pay taxes and what they get in exchange. By Philip Kennicott -- Davis Brody Bond Aedas [image]- Washington Post

Israel by Design: Holon Design Museum...part of an ambitious plan to put the wealthy but otherwise bland municipality on the global culture map...make no bones about wanting to create the famous Bilbao effect. While the project might lack its Spanish role model's interesting location and size, it makes up for any shortcomings with sheerchutzpah... -- Ron Arad; Preston Scott Cohen; Alexander Levy (1925); Austen St. Barbe Harrison (1928); Moshe Safdie; Piero Lissoni [images, links]- New York Times

Designers dream up underground arts space: Old tunnel fodder for winning plan...Tremont Underground Theater Space [TUTS]...stems from a growing movement in the architectural world, one that aims to preserve — and reuse — urban infrastructure. -- SHIFTboston; Sapir Ng/Tsoi/Kobus & Associates; Andrzej Zarzycki- Boston Globe

Grants Nurture Arts Spaces and Housing: The Ford Foundation is to announce a \$100 million plan to develop art spaces nationwide over the next decade. - New York Times

2010 IIDA-NC Honor Award Winners and Pioneers in Design Announced -- Cameron Sinclair/Kate Stohr/Architecture for Humanity; Phillpotts & Associates; Gensler; BAMO; Aidlin Darling Design; Mark Horton/Architecture; Cary Bernstein Architect; Studio O + A; Pollack Architecture; Mark Cavagnaro Associates; Anshen + Allen; Vanderbyl Design; Bohlin, Cywinski Jackson; Leddy Maytum Stacy Architects - IIDA Northern California

Call for entries: Build a Better Burb open ideas competition to retrofit Long Island downtowns as the next generation of suburban centers; cash prizes; deadline: June 21 (no fee)- Long Island Index/Rauch Foundation

Power to the Past: Cannon Design Regional Offices at The Power House: A design firm transforms a 1928 city landmark to support its highly collaborative, team-oriented work approach that includes space that can be used by the community as well. - ArchNewsNow



Ron Arad Architects: Design Museum Holon, Holon, Israel

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