Today's News - Tuesday, February 15, 2011

- Janz returns to Flint and finds some surprising answers to his question: "What is the place of an architect in a setting where few building permits are issued, where many more buildings are being demolished than designed?" By Wes Janz [images]- Places Journal

- Minneapolis has high hopes for its riverfront, naming winner in waterfront design competition.

- Q&A with Diebenkorn: the "town builder" (and "guerrilla developer") discusses urban highway removal, sustainability, and TOD.

- An ode to NYC's traffic commish Sadik-Khan, who "has turned conventional wisdom on its head...with her potent combination of smarts, chutzpah and political savvy" in transforming urban transportation (despite the naysayers).

- Hurren x 2: Calgary's new mayor makes the city "the new leader of urban Canada; he is one of those rare city politicians who actually loves the city" (as opposed to Toronto's mayor who "was elected on a promise to wage war on the city") + He bemoans a heritage report that "paints bleak picture" of Toronto's treasures: "You can make money out of heritage but it's still seen as an obstacle."

- It turns out to be a heritage sort of day: Glancy cheers National Trust's call to arms to save Lutyens' Castle Drogo, "the stuff of architectural sorcery" - but "the whole quixotic caboodle might tumble and fall. Should we care?" (hint: yes!).

- On brighter heritage notes: Moore marvels at "the rebirth of the gothic masterpiece," the St Pancras Renaissance Hotel, now "sumptuously" restored: "It is both magnificent and a little demented" (not necessarily a bad thing).

- King finds himself in Petaluma, where the post office is a health club and the old opera house is a martial arts center - and "this is as it should be": aged buildings are really "vessels shaped in one culture...often inhabited by later cultures in ways the creators could not have conceived."

- Kamin re: green credentials of Gehry's 8 Spruce Street and Gang's Aqua: Why does it matter? Because these "acclaimed skyscrapers" were "designed by two of the most highly-publicized architects of our time" and "can have enormous influence, not simply on architects but on developers."

- Rochon on Bali's Green School and the Canadian who "has given the world a remarkable new temple of learning" (but "you'll find no mention of any architect of record").

- OMA's A&D teams with WWF and Ecodys on "The Energy Report" which forecasts the "world could be entirely dependent on renewable energy" by 2050.

- What high speed rail can mean for community design.

- A fascinating look at London's brush with its own Robert Moses and plans for highways to nowhere.

- Pickrel fondly remembers Edgar Tafel, FLW's last apprentice and "history incarnate" (Edgar Tafel, FAIA: A Remembrance will be held at NYC's Center for Architecture Thursday afternoon).
In Bali, a new school that’s already a legend: Canadian jewellery magnate John Hardy has given the world a remarkable new temple of learning, its centrepiece made entirely from bamboo...you’ll find no mention of any architect of record...The Green School model could be designed in Canada to magnificently align with all four seasons. By Lisa Rochon - Globe and Mail (Canada)

OMA forecasts green energy supply by 2050: ...world could be entirely dependent on renewable energy...Working with the WWF/World Wide Fund for Nature and Ecofys environment consultancy...hopes "The Energy Report" will inspire and encourage governments to find ways of ending reliance on fossil fuels. -- Reinier de Graaf/Office for Metropolitan Architecture/AMO [link to report]- BD/Building Design (UK)

What High Speed Rail Means for Community Design: Smart design can help ensure the public sees high speed rail as a viable transportation option. Well-designed stations and public spaces may also mean denser, mixed-use neighborhoods as well...can offer an important platform for community revitalization. -- TND Planning Group; Arup; Grimshaw Architects [links]- The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

London: Roads to nowhere: Imagine a London where the best-known districts no longer exist, crushed by vast, elevated motorways. It’s a chilling vision – and one that almost came to pass...If the planners had had their way [in the late 1960s], they would have wrought more destruction than the Luftwaffe could manage... -- Charles Bressey; Edwin Lutyens; Patrick Abercrombie; Robert Moses; Herbert Manzoni- Independent (UK)

Remembering “Edgar T”: Farewell to Frank Lloyd Wright’s last apprentice: To me, and many others, Edgar Tafel was history incarnate - propelling the past forward, granting us a tantalizing glimpse into the machinations of "the world's greatest architect"...at a zenith of his career. By Debra Pickrel- Metropolis Magazine

-- BIG-Bjarke Ingels Group: New National Gallery, Nuuk, Greenland -- TNT Nuuk; Ramboll Nuuk Arkitekti
-- Grimshaw Architects: Newport Station, Newport, Wales

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