

Today's News - Monday, November 21, 2011

- ArcSpace brings us eyefuls of New York by Gehry (a.k.a. 8 Spruce St.).
- Hawthorne sees "a major shift" in Los Angeles with a "new attitude toward the city's recent heritage...seen in increasingly visible battles over the fate of postwar landmarks."
- In Detroit, a developer hopes to revive his almost 30-year-old plan to redevelop 3,000 acres where a long-buried creek would flow again as a "linchpin" to the project.
- King gives (mostly) thumbs-up to a project that "would open up what now is a fenced-off remnant of a 50-year-old redevelopment plan" along San Francisco's Embarcadero, "and that's preferable to leaving things as they are."
- Chaban digs deep into why America has lost its infrastructure chops: it's "not a question of the capabilities or capacity of the people...It is a question of vision, of operating principals, the bean counters versus the visionaries" (a great read!).
- In a rather New York-centric kind of day, Florida thinks "the timing may be right" for NYC to take on the "Silicon Valley nerdistan [our favorite new word] model of suburban industrial park development - a more urban tilt may be emerging" (and "where entrepreneurial talent wants to be").
- It seems the peaceable kingdom surrounding the opening of the 9/11 Memorial is slipping back to the same old same old, with parties sparring over funding disputes (and the museum could be delayed - again).
- Bradbury tours The Shard with Piano: "Being an architect is a very dangerous job, because if you are wrong then of course everybody knows."
- Heathcote has high praise for Singapore's "green tentacles creeping into every corner," but especially the Gardens by the Bay, where "even the plants have been given mega-structures and skyscrapers to allow them to compete with the city on equal terms" (and where the "greenhouses are the finest thing Wilkinson Eyre has done").
- High hopes that Gehry's Opus Hong Kong signals that "more and more visionary architects will continue to design for a collective vision" - with the caveat to "keep in mind that architecture can't simply be iconic for its own sake."
- Knight cheers Denver's Clyfford Still Museum as "nothing less than a marvelous model for what a single-artist museum can be" that "uncannily seems to have grown from Still's paintings" and where "a brute material" like concrete "feels exquisite" and "surprisingly buoyant."
- L.A. picks 6 impressive teams for its Union Station Master Plan shortlist.
- Philip Johnson in the spotlight on both coasts.
- Bentley Mays has a curious conversation with a French architect whose projects "have been too provocative to get built" much of the time (perhaps "pugnacious" is being too polite?); UT architecture students attending his lecture tomorrow night "may not learn much about winning big commissions, but they will likely get a moral lift from seeing the work of so politically forthright an architect."
- While not many of 88-year-old Yona Friedman's designs have come to fruition, "his ideas have inspired planners around the world" (and nary a sign of pugnaciousness).
- A good reason to split your time between Philly and D.C. next week: the 9th Annual CitiesAlive Green Roof and Wall Conference: Green Cities: Restoring Urban Waters; and the BECC 2011: 5th Annual Behavior, Energy and Climate Change Conference.
- Call for entries: Urban Intervention: an international call to conceive a fresh vision of environmental, social, and economic opportunities at the heart of Seattle Center.

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In Los Angeles, it's back to the future: The city, known for looking forward, has gained a sense of history. Places where artists, architects and engineers influenced the future are being made into monuments and shrines...This new attitude toward the city's recent heritage can be seen in increasingly visible battles over the fate of postwar landmarks...it is a major shift. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Eames Demetrios; Charles and Ray Eames; Richard Neutra; Zimmer Gunsul Frasca (ZGF) - Los Angeles Times

Developer revives long-held dream: \$1B plan would have waterway as linchpin: ...Richard Baron...a national developer of blighted urban property longed to come back to his hometown of Detroit...an almost 30-year-old plan to redevelop 3,000 acres...would re-create a creek that once flowed through that area and be the backbone for development...Bloody Run project "is something that can take advantage of vacant land and become a transformative effort in an American city"... -- Steven Vogel - Crain's Detroit Business

8 Washington project would benefit S.F. waterfront: ...there's something unseemly about the idea of developing 3 acres of San Francisco's Embarcadero as ultra-luxe condominiums. In terms of improving the public experience along downtown's waterfront, though, what's proposed...makes good sense...includes a generous landscape that would open up what now is a fenced-off remnant of a 50-year-old redevelopment plan. And that's preferable to leaving things as they are. By John King -- Skidmore Owings & Merrill (SOM); Peter Walker/PWP Landscape Architecture [images] - San Francisco Chronicle

Raiders of the Lost ARC: Christie, Cuomo and the Collapse of American Infrastructure: At a time when we need to be building, not only to repair our aging infrastructure, but to dig ourselves out of a recession, we are doing anything but... This is not a question of the capabilities or capacity of the people...It is a question of vision, of operating principals, the bean counters versus the visionaries. By Matt Chaban -- Robert Yaro/Regional Plan Association Robert Moses; Robert Caro; Vishaan Chakrabarti - New York Observer

Start-Up New York? For decades, high-technology start-ups followed the Silicon Valley nerdistan model of suburban industrial park development. But growing evidence suggests a more urban tilt may be emerging...the timing may be right for New York City's tech move. The question is not simply where great universities are located, but where entrepreneurial talent wants to be. By Richard Florida [links] - The Atlantic Cities

9/11 Museum Is Delayed: Port Authority, Foundation Spar Over Escalating World Trade Center Expenses...planned September 2012 opening will likely be pushed back...\$800-million-plus project is the latest pressure point in a series of funding disputes at the WTC site, where the redevelopment tab has reached more than \$11 billion. - Wall Street Journal

The Shard: its architect's view: As it nears completion...already one of London's most recognisable landmarks. For Renzo Piano, the only way is up...the project carries with it a deep sense of responsibility. "Being an architect is a very dangerous job, because if you are wrong then of course everybody knows"...it is the sheer drama, scale and sculpted form that fascinates most...Piano always has the power to surprise and delight. By Dominic Bradbury [slide show] - Telegraph (UK)

Garden state: Seductively curvaceous greenhouses and eccentric 'Supertrees' are transforming Singapore...Tiny, dense, hyper-urban...the city-state has seen green tentacles creeping into every corner...every sliver of leftover sidewalk...Gardens by the Bay...the perfect metaphor for this meticulously and intelligently-planned city...even the plants have been given megastructures and skyscrapers to allow them to compete with the city on equal terms. By Edwin Heathcote -- Wilkinson Eyre; Grant Associates; Atelier One; Atelier Ten [images] - Financial Times (UK)

Elite drawn by magnum opus: ...Frank Gehry finally realizes his dream of building his first residential project in Asia. Opus Hong Kong...Hopefully...more and more visionary architects will continue to design for a collective vision...We must be cautious, however, and keep in mind that architecture can't simply be iconic for its own sake. - The Standard (Hong Kong)

Denver's Clyfford Still Museum: ...is nothing less than a marvelous model for what a single-artist museum can be...Brad Cloepfil of Allied Works Architecture has given the city its best museum building. While nodding to Louis Kahn and Tadao Ando, the...two-story structure uncannily seems to have grown from Still's paintings...[concrete] a brute material also feels exquisite...surprisingly buoyant. By Christopher Knight [images]- Los Angeles Times

Metro Chooses Six Teams to Submit Master Plan Visions for Union Station -- EE&K Architects (Ehrenkrantz, Eckstut & Kuhn)/UNStudio; Gruen Associates/Grimshaw Architects; IBI Group/Foster+Partners; Moore Ruble Yudell; NBBJ/Ingenhoven Architects; Renzo Piano Building Workshop/Parsons - Southern California Public Radio

With a Famous Church Sold and the Premiere of a New Play, Philip Johnson Hits Both Coasts: ...Crystal Cathedral, which he co-designed with John Burgee, has been sold to the Catholic Church...AIANY will be hosting a reading of a new architecture-and-Johnson-related play by Bob Morris...entitled "Glass House." - UnBeige

French architect a fresh breeze amid convention: ...not many architects slice larger hunks out of the conventional wisdom about what architects are supposed to be and do than Didier Faustino...most of his proposals...have been too provocative to get built..."My projects are my weapons." By John Bentley Mays -- Bureau des Mésarchitectures - Globe and Mail (Canada)

A model architect: While only a few of Yona Friedman's designs have come to fruition, he is responsible for the tiered Spatial City movement, which had a big impact on his field, and his ideas have inspired planners around the world..."to keep working while the world is changing causes you to be open to the idea that things change." - Ha'aretz (Israel)

CitiesAlive 2011: 9th Annual CitiesAlive Green Roof and Wall Conference: Green Cities: Restoring Urban Waters explore leading edge green infrastructure projects, scientific research and policies, November 29 - December 3, Philadelphia - Green Roofs for Healthy Cities

BECC 2011: 5th Annual Behavior, Energy and Climate Change Conference focused on understanding the nature of individual and organizational behavior and decision making...to accelerate our transition to an energy-efficient and low carbon economy; November 29 - December 2, Washington, DC - Precourt Energy Efficiency Center, Stanford University

Call for entries: Urban Intervention: Howard S. Wright Design Ideas Competition for Public Space (international): conceive a fresh vision of environmental, social, and economic opportunities on and beyond a 9-acre site at the heart of Seattle Center; early registration deadline: January 6, 2012 - Grousemont Foundation / Seattle Center/Seattle Center Foundation / AIA Seattle

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