

## Today's News - Tuesday, May 15, 2012

EDITOR'S NOTE: We're heading to the AIA convention in Washington, DC, very early Wednesday morning (road trip!), and will not be posting again until Monday, May 21 (we'll have a lot of catching up to do!).

- Westworld redux: a \$1 billion green ghost city to rise in the New Mexico desert to test and evaluate new technologies (operations and maintenance system will be underground) - "while no one will live there, the city will be designed as if they do" (great links).
- RMI's Gallagher Adams on the high price of "energy apathy; we can choose not to pay that price."
- Architects are invited to imagine Washington, DC, without height restrictions - they didn't have to force "their brightest ideas into efficient but boring 130-foot high grey boxes," so they "let their creativity run wild, even if the products might be scary."
- Kamin calls for careful scrutiny of Pelli's plan for Chicago's Wolf Point: "the issue is whether the design...will rise to the level of greatness demanded by the site - or whether the Chicagoans of today, like the Indians of long ago, are going to get hustled."
- Davidson on Cornell's "high-stakes commission" on Roosevelt Island: "the home of futuristic innovation can't look dumb and dull" and "Mayne will have to summon more urban sensitivity for this assignment than he has ever shown before."
- Predock protests plans for a water park opposite his Human Rights museum in Winnipeg: "It seems to me that this site is destined for a higher civic purpose."
- Schumacher cheers HGA's plans for a new atrium at the Milwaukee Art Museum: "a modest structure" that wouldn't compete with the masterpieces around it.
- Q&A with H&deM re: their "unusual, mischievous, archaeological scheme" for the Serpentine Pavilion: "It's really quite bold, this public airing of past starchitects' laundry."
- Beverly Hills (finally) gets serious about preservation - alas, not before FLW, Jr.'s wing-shaped home bites the dust ("It was a beautiful piece of art and a terrible home.")
- Viet Nam faces its own "thorny issues" regarding historic preservation: "many pieces of architectural heritage" have been "distorted" by "unskilled and unresearched restoration."
- The president of the Malaysian Institute of Architects laments: "we're not getting enough architects...if we don't support our local talent, who will?"
- The "traditional - and often unsuccessful - saviors of decayed neighborhoods" should take heed of lessons to be learned from efforts by SCAD design students.
- Rochon raves about some of Canada's Governor-General's Medals in Architecture winners - "architectural masterworks" that "take your breath away."
- Change in plans for WTC spire raises its architect's "ire": the tower could end up being rated only third tallest in the U.S. ("They should have done a better job designing it," sayeth the developer about the spire).
- Weekend diversions (a bit early):
- Jacobs finds that MoMA's "obsession with image manages to obscure some of its most important content" in "Foreclosed": if you pay attention, you'll find "not an architecture show at all," but "a mini-seminar on public policy."
- Kennicott finds much to like in the NBMs "House & Home" show that tells "a complicated story clearly and engagingly" (and oh - those "pleasure buttons of nostalgia" - great slide show).
- "Delhi Modern" in New Delhi documents "a time when architects, urban planners and state departments came together" instead of leaving everything to private developers.
- Hume is entranced by a Toronto photo show that "reveals beauty in greasy, hidden train yards...a timely reminder that transit can be taken any way but not for granted."
- King gives two thumbs-up to Ehrenhalt's "The Great Inversion": he may be on the side of "movements like new urbanism and smart growth, but these sympathies don't blur his sharp eye for details or the wry clarity of his prose."
- Design Corps set to launch SEEDdocs online with the first of six mini-docs highlighting winners of the 2012 SEED Award for Excellence in Public Interest Design.

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**CITE: The \$1 Billion "Green Ghost City" Built to Test the Technology of Tomorrow: Center for Testing, Evaluation & Innovation...built over 20 square miles of virgin desert in New Mexico...unique opportunity to test and evaluate technologies in conditions that most closely simulate real-world applications [in] urban, suburban and rural zones...While no one will live there, the city will be designed as if they do... [images, links] - Inhabitat**

**Energy Apathy: The Price and the Cure: RMI's research for Reinventing Fire reveals \$5 trillion in U.S. energy efficiency savings sitting on the table waiting to be claimed...That's \$3,205 per person in today's dollars unrealized—a high fiscal price to pay for energy apathy and just the tip of the iceberg. We can choose not to pay that price. By Elaine Gallagher Adams, AIA- Rocky Mountain Institute**

**New designs for the nation's capital: With talk of lifting the height limit in the District, we asked architects for their most radical ideas...the Height of Buildings Act stifles creativity, forcing their brightest ideas into efficient but boring 130-foot high grey boxes...the exercise did allow Washington architects to do something they typically aren't accustomed to: let it all hang out. Have fun. Let their creativity run wild, even if the products might be scary. -- Rippeteau Architects; Hickok Cole Architects; Eric Colbert & Associates; PageSoutherlandPage; WDG [images] - Washington Post**

**Wolf Point plan deserves scrutiny; Kennedy family and Cesar Pelli plan complex that includes 900-foot skyscraper: ...the issue is whether the design...will rise to the level of greatness demanded by the site — or whether the Chicagoans of today, like the Indians of long ago, are going to get hustled...proposal deserves the highest level of scrutiny. By Blair Kamin -- Pelli Clarke Pelli - Chicago Tribune**

**Building in a Hole: Cornell's high-stakes commission: ...the home of futuristic innovation can't look dumb and dull...The new building also shouldn't be distant or aloof...On Roosevelt Island, Mayne will have to summon more urban sensitivity for this assignment than he has ever shown before. By Justin Davidson -- Thom Mayne/Morphosis; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) - New York Magazine**

**Canadian Museum for Human Rights architect slams water park pitch: ..."risks trivializing" the area's rich historic past and cultural district that is being built up. "It seems to me that this site is destined for a higher civic purpose"...proposed hotel would also create a high barrier right in the line of sight between the \$351-million museum and the downtown... -- Antoine Predock - CBC (Canada)**

**The Milwaukee Art Museum is proposing a new, \$5 million addition: ...a glassy atrium that would give the museum a new entrance on a prime spot of lakefront that isn't used much now...a modest structure that wouldn't enter into the "pitched battle of the two masters on the lakefront"...8,000-square-foot building will extend the 1972 David Kahler addition... By Mary Louise Schumacher -- Santiago Calatrava; Eero Saarinen; Jim Shields/HGA Architects [image] - Milwaukee Journal Sentinel**

**Interview: Herzog & de Meuron on why they chose to uncover the foundations of former Serpentine pavilions for their own collaboration with Ai Weiwei this year...unusual, mischievous, archaeological scheme..."we were determined not to do an object"...It's really quite bold, this public airing of past starchitects' laundry... By Rory Olcayto [images] - The Architects' Journal (UK)**

**In Beverly Hills, Preservation Gains a Toehold: The impending demolition of a Richard Neutra home spurred the city to enact its first preservation rules...victory for preservationists was offset by a defeat...After a three-year struggle, the owner of a wing-shaped home designed by Frank Lloyd Wright Jr..."It was a beautiful piece of art and a terrible home"... -- Marmol Radziner; John Lautner [images] - New York Times**

Heritage conservation a thorny issue say scientists: Unskilled and unresearched restoration of buildings and the setting of performance records at cultural events is placing tangible and intangible heritage at risk. Preservation requires a scientific approach...many pieces of architectural heritage have been distorted by these efforts. [images]- Viet Nam News

Designing a sustainable tomorrow: Saifuddin Ahmad is a strong advocate of sustainability, not only for Mother Nature but also for the future of local architects: In the late 1970s, Malaysia had only three schools for architecture. Now, there are 25. "Yet, we're not getting enough architects," laments the president of the Malaysian Institute of Architects (PAM)...says the country should do more to promote local architects. "If we don't support our local talent, who will?" -- SNO Architects; Datuk Ken Yeang; Hijjas Kasturi- New Straits Times Press (Malaysia)

What Art-School Kids Teach Us About Urban Renewal: Some of the most interesting revitalization work...is coming not from the traditional - and often unsuccessful - saviors of decayed neighborhoods. It's coming from design students, who are earnestly trying to find ways to work with local residents without igniting suspicion of outsiders wielding big ideas. By Emily Badger -- Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) [slide shows, links]- Fast Company

Five medal-winning houses to write home about: This year's winners of the Governor-General's Medals in Architecture include three residences that stand as architectural masterworks...that take your breath away... By Lisa Rochon -- Patkau Architects; Shim-Sutcliffe Architects; Mackay-Lyons Sweetapple Architects; 5468796 Architecture; Guillaume Levesque/Architectes de l'Urgence du Canada [images, links]- Globe and Mail (Canada)

Pointed Spat Over World Trade Spire: Developer's Plan to Alter Top of New Tower Arouses Architects' Ire: ...sparring over what goes on top of the 104-story tower—a dispute that could stop the structure being recognized as America's tallest..."They should have done a better job designing it"... -- David Childs/Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) [images]- Wall Street Journal

Pretty Little Pictures: Even when MoMA is tackling real issues, its obsession with image manages to obscure some of its most important content: At its best, "Foreclosed: Rehousing the American Dream" was not an architecture show at all. It was a mini-seminar on public policy—and an assault on conventional notions of private property. By Karrie Jacobs -- Studio Gang Architects; Andrew Zago; Amale Andraos/Dan Wood/WORKac; Michael Meredith/MOS; Michael Bell/Eunjeong Seong/Visible Weather- Metropolis Magazine

"House & Home" at the National Building Museum: ...explores a subject so wide and so fundamental to American life that it inevitably touches the pleasure buttons of nostalgia. There are places where one wishes the stress were different...But the curators have managed to tell a complicated story clearly and engagingly. And they haven't neglected complex questions... By Philip Kennicott [slide show]- Washington Post

Structural vision: The architectural landmarks, and a few interiors, of Delhi from the 1950s to 1980s, captured when they were crisp and new: "Delhi Modern: The Architectural Photographs of Madan Mahatta" [at Photoink, New Delhi]...documentary evidence of a time when architects, urban planners and state departments came together...when the whole business wasn't left to private developers...- Business Standard (India)

Toronto transit: "Building Storeys 2012" at Steam Whistle Brewery reveals beauty in greasy, hidden train yards: ...a photographic exhibition organized by Heritage Toronto, examines the city's transit infrastructure...a timely reminder that transit can be taken any way but not for granted. By Christopher Hume- Toronto Star

"The Great Inversion and the Future of the American City" by Alan Ehrenhalt: Readers tag along to such locales as Chicago, Phoenix, Philadelphia and Denver as the author explores how these metropolises, so different at first glance, are being reshaped by very similar urges and trends. By John King- San Francisco Chronicle

SEEDocs to Premiere Online May 18: The first in a series of six mini-documentaries...features the six national winners of the 2012 SEED Award for Excellence in Public Interest Design -- BNIM; Make it Right; Atkins Olshin Schade Architects; Architecture for Humanity; MASS Design Group; etc. - Design Corps / Social, Economic, Environmental Design Network (SEED)

Who Designed the Space Needle? Victor Steinbrueck's contributions have been given short shrift, leaving the design of what is arguably Seattle's most important structure clouded by assumption and innuendo to this day. By Dale Cotton -- John Graham, Jr. [images]- ArchNewsNow



-- ALA Architects: Kilden Performing Arts Centre, Kristiansand, Norway

-- Santiago Calatrava: Innovation, Science & Technology Building, Florida Polytechnic, Lakeland, Florida

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