

Today's News - Tuesday, December 17, 2013

- Campbell-Dollaghan reports on (and bemoans - as do we!) the break-up of FAT, "England's architect provocateurs": in a world "overrun by design smarm," they combined "biting criticism with laugh-out-loud wit that reminded us all that architecture and photoshop are not synonymous" (with pix to remind us).
- It's a (snowy) NYC kind of day: Soon-to-be ex-mayor, Bloomberg sets up "an urban SWAT team" - with many of his best from City Hall (and some of our faves) - to help other cities "solve knotty, long-term challenges" (clients will not be charged).
- Meanwhile, he still has a few days left to push through \$12 billion worth of real estate projects: "We haven't tried anything wacky at the last minute."
- Davidson hopes incoming Mayor de Blasio realizes that streets "belong to all of us, not just frustrated drivers in two-ton steel shells. Being a flâneur in New York" is "no longer an extreme sport."
- Saffron cheers a former Philadelphian getting "his chance to make Rome a more bike-friendly place" now he's mayor of the Eternal City; he's assured Romans "they would get used to it."
- Walker makes the case for tall buildings and the need to overcome "the conventional wisdom that tall means bad."
- Halbur takes her to task on a few issues re: tall buildings: "There are a lot of ways to structure a building envelope to house a significant number of people and a mix of uses without going up, up, up."
- Gunther makes an impassioned plea for Congress not to allow towers around the National Mall: it would be "an unconscionable sellout of the Republic's founding soul. No single generation should be so sanctioned" (and other nabes urgently need new construction).
- A suburban San Diego project will be either "the last piece of the 20th-century conventional suburban development pattern or it is the first step in rebuilding toward a 21st-century mixed-use, walkable, infill redevelopment pattern." (skeptics abound!).
- Badger parses the AIA/MIT "thick new report" on health and urbanism: "A recurring thread is one of humility: We don't know as much as we think we do, and there are certainly no silver-bullet design solutions for systemic public health problems."
- Oberholtzer on resilience and sustainability: they "are not synonyms, but rather complementary forces, a yin and yang, which must be tackled in equal measure."
- Calys on the decision to "defer decision" re: Crissy Field development in San Francisco's Presidio: it specifically calls out the Lucas proposal "with nary a word about the other two" that have "real merit. But if the only means to stop the Lucas project is delay the whole effort, then it's worth thinking about."
- Selldorf's Sunset Park recycling facility in Brooklyn is an "eye-catching civic project": "we turned the structure to the outside, which gives you this Prouvé kind of memory."
- Kiser's take on H&deM's Pérez Museum: it "reflects the natural and urban landscape of Miami and responds to the city's rapid growth as a cultural destination."
- Q&A with Ennead's Olcott re: Stanford University's new museum for the Anderson Collection: "We went through some wilder things - we said "What if we made it out of CorTen steel?" (the answer was "No").
- The "What Moscow Wants" exhibit may be over, but it gave young architects a chance to visualize an "awesome" city: "That Russia's emerging talent is often kept in the shadows did not go unnoticed by foreign experts."
- Call for entries: d3 Housing Tomorrow international ideas competition + DWR Champagne Chair Contest: create a miniature chair using only the foil, label, cage and cork (one of our faves).

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England's Architect Provocateurs Have Broken Up: FAT...that's built some of the most annoyingly brilliant buildings of the past two decades—is no more...Fashion Architecture Taste...one of the few dissenting voices in the crowd—combining biting criticism with laugh-out-loud wit that reminded us all that architecture and photoshop are not synonymous. By Kelsey Campbell-Dollaghan -- Sean Griffiths; Charles Holland; Sam Jacob [images]- Gizmodo

Bloomberg Focuses on Rest (as in Rest of the World): ...creating a high-powered consulting group to help him reshape cities...taking much of his City Hall team with him...Bloomberg Associates, will act as an urban SWAT team, deployed at the invitation of local governments to solve knotty, long-term challenges...In a twist on the traditional business model of consulting, clients will not be charged. -- Amanda M. Burden; Janette Sadik-Khan; Katherine Oliver; Kate D. Levin - New York Times

Going Out With Building Boom, Mayor Pushes Billions in Projects: The Bloomberg administration has been pushing through more than \$12 billion worth of real estate projects in its waning days, trying to solidify the mayor's claim to having transformed the face of New York City...Nearly 40% of the city has been rezoned during the mayor's 12 years in office...determined to finish public reviews for a number of "legacy projects"... "We haven't tried anything wacky at the last minute"... - New York Times

Pavement As Lab: How New York streets are an engine of urban invention...subliminal signals that the streets belong to all of us, not just frustrated drivers in two-ton steel shells...Being a flâneur in New York remains as intellectually invigorating as ever; it's just no longer an extreme sport...the next administration may be tempted to forget the frills. That would be a terrible mistake, because it's those background tweaks that improve life for everyone in the most democratic part of the city: its streets. By Justin Davidson -- Janette Sadik-Khan - New York Magazine

Former Philadelphian transforms Roman traffic: Ignazio Marino...got his chance to make Rome a more bike-friendly place when he was elected the city's mayor...Romans...were initially shocked to lose access to a major thoroughfare. But Marino assured them they would get used to it. By Inga Saffron - Philadelphia Inquirer

Tall is Good: How a Lack of Building Up is Keeping Our Cities Down: ...high density and great design can work together to create thriving, social communities. Still, there's another hurdle that these projects and many others have to surmount: The conventional wisdom that tall means bad. By Alissa Walker [images, links]- Gizmodo

Is Tall All There Is? Should planners be pushing to remove height limits to meet the growing demand for housing? Unless they are already in a densely-packed city, or there is a huge pent-up demand, super-tall buildings have the potential to drain life off of the street. There are a lot of ways to structure a building envelope to house a significant number of people and a mix of uses without going up, up, up. By Tim Halbur -- Alissa Walker; Gabe Metcalf/SPUR; Leon Krier; James Howard Kunstler; CNU- PLANetizen

Don't Allow Towers On The National Mall!: At stake is nothing short of our collective identity. To allow towers...is an unconscionable sellout of the Republic's founding soul. No single generation should be so sanctioned...There are huge swaths of the District in urgent need of new construction, and due contextual deference need not be an impediment. By Paul Gunther - Architizer

With One Paseo, Suburban Retrofitting Comes to San Diego: ...the 1.4 million square foot mixed-use project on 23 acres in Carmel Valley...is the last piece of the 20th century conventional suburban development pattern or it is the first step in rebuilding toward a 21st century mixed-use, walkable, infill redevelopment pattern"... - Voice of San Diego

Much of What We Know About Public Health and Urban Planning Is Wrong: ...MIT Center for Advanced Urbanism/American Institute of Architects...thick new report on "the state of health + urbanism"...A recurring thread...is one of humility: We don't know as much as we think we do, and there are certainly no silver-bullet design solutions for systemic public health

problems. By Emily Badger - The Atlantic Cities

Re-Sus-Citate Resilience and Sustainability for the Health of our City: "Sustainability" and "resilience" are not synonyms, but rather complementary forces, a yin and yang, which must be tackled in equal measure...New York is on track to be a national and international leader on environmental issues...has blazed a trail for sustainability with a widespread positive influence. By Michele Oberholtzer - The Sallan Foundation

Stop, start, and stop again: National Park Service says "defer decision": ...voices continue to be raised against the Lucas Cultural Arts onslaught in San Francisco's Presidio...why specifically call out the proposal with nary a word about the other two? ...both serious proposals with real merit. But if the only means to stop the Lucas project is delay the whole effort, then it's worth thinking about. By George Calys -- Chora Group/WRNS; EHDD [images]- San Francisco Examiner

Clean lines: Selldorf Architects' Sunset Park recycling facility in Brooklyn sets a new standard in sustainable design: As worthy a cause as a recycling facility is, it's hardly the most eye-catching civic project. Until now, that is..."we turned the structure to the outside, which gives you this Prouvé kind of memory." [slide show]- Wallpaper*

Herzog & de Meuron: Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM): ...reflects the natural and urban landscape of Miami and responds to the city's rapid growth as a cultural destination. By Kirsten Kiser -- Patrick Blanc; Arquitectonica Geo [images]- ArcSpace

Newsmaker Interview: Ennead's Richard Olcott Designs a New Museum for Stanford University [for the Anderson Collection]: "We went through some wilder things—we said "What if we made it out of CorTen steel?" and administrators said "No." [slide show]- Architectural Record

Young Architects Visualize an 'Awesome' Moscow: ..."What Moscow Wants" exhibit...was about giving young professionals the opportunity to showcase their talent — a rarity in a city where the architectural market is dominated by a few strong firms...That Russia's emerging talent is often kept in the shadows did not go unnoticed by foreign experts who arrived at the Moscow Urban Forum. - The Moscow Times (Russia)

Call for entries: d3 Housing Tomorrow international ideas competition; registration deadline: January 15, 2014 (submission deadline: January 25, 2014)- d3

Call for entries: DWR Champagne Chair Contest: create a miniature chair using only the foil, label, cage and cork from no more than two champagne bottles; deadline: January 14, 2014 [competition opens December 27]- Design Within Reach

Nuts + Bolts #7: Leveraging Your Passion: Principals already know what they love to do. It is learning to let go of the other, more mundane tasks that they find difficult. By Steve Whitehorn - ArchNewsNow



-- "Gathered Sky" by James Turrell, Beijing Temple of Wisdom, China
-- The Presence of the Past: Peter Zumthor Reconsiders LACMA, by Kirsten Kiser

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