

## Today's News - Thursday, May 8, 2014

- Pogrebin just made our day with news that the New York Public Library has made "a striking about-face" and has called off in its hotly-disputed plans for its 42nd Street landmark (Foster may be disappointed, but probably crying all the way to the bank with the \$9 million his firm was paid for its work).
- Bevan looks "beyond the brand blather" when it comes to towns aspiring "to brand themselves with city status - perhaps it's time to redefine what it means to be a city at all."
- Volpe takes a long look at NYC's Hudson Yards: "This 'quantified community' is a real-life urban laboratory for connected living, and its future, deep-pocketed residents will be its well-kept lab rats" testing lots of "big-picture buzzwords."
- Farrelly is fuming about a "massive new downtown development" proposed for Newcastle, Australia, that is "a weird mix of quasi-officialdom and outright gluttony" that sets a dangerous precedent for developer-led planning: "This is vampire-running-the-blood-bank stuff."
- Steuteville takes issue with Rybczynski's critique of New Urbanism.
- Betsky finds fault with NYC Mayor de Blasio's affordable housing plan that doesn't do much more than "formalize the idea that the city wants to keep building more cookie-cutter towers - a better solution would be to ask architects and others to come up with alternative models that might let New York develop in a denser, more integrated, and more sensible manner."
- Finch finds fault on both sides in the debate over London's towering future: "The Skyline campaign has demonstrated that it is easier to write a manifesto than it is to get an agreement on what it actually means" (with a warning of "a slight danger of zoo-itis").
- Wells explains resiliency's "growing pains" as it rapidly begins to influence urban sustainability and hazard mitigation planning: "The challenge ahead is to weave resiliency into planning and green urbanism."
- Green looks into how Cape Town is using "an inventive program" that uses urban design to transform a dangerous township "into a safer, more livable place."
- Eyefuls of Asymptote's master plan for cultural spaces in the Tuscan hills "that will become more than a flashy tourist center."
- An impressive shortlist of six teams in the running to design D.C.'s High Line spanning the Anacostia River.
- Even though the official announcement is scheduled for next week, Waite can't wait to tell us who's going to be tapped to design the U.K.'s 2015 Milan Expo pavilion (expect lots of buzz about beehives).
- Jacobs has a thoughtful Q&A with Rybczynski re: "his attachment to the past": "I think the celebrity aspect of architecture is not helpful. It's not making for better architecture."
- Dunlap delves into the fascinatingly curious history of Bucky's World's Fair dome - turns out "a little-known architect seems to have had a lot more to do with it."

To subscribe to the free daily newsletter [click here](#)

[New York Public Library Is Abandoning Disputed Plan for Landmark: ...a striking about-face...instead will refurbish the nearby Mid-Manhattan Library...something of a defeat for the library, which had already paid Norman Foster \\$9 million in private funds for his firm's work... By Robin Pogrebin -- Foster + Partners - New York Times](#)

[What makes a city a city - and does it really matter anyway? In the dizzying world of tech cities, garden cities and smart cities, perhaps it's time to redefine what it means to be a city at all: ...towns everywhere seem to have aspirations to brand themselves with city status...Beyond the brand blather, does the city distinction really matter? I think so - but... By Robert Bevan - Guardian \(UK\)](#)

[Hudson Yards: New York's next big neighborhood is its smartest: This "quantified community" is a real-life urban laboratory for connected living, and its future, deep-pocketed residents will be its well-kept lab rats...Resiliency, redundancy, future-proofing: These are the big-picture buzzwords... By Joseph Volpe - Engadget](#)

[Why Newcastle deserves better: ...the Chinese-language brochure that offers our treasures for sale paints NSW as little more than a government cash cow...proposes a massive new downtown development...a weird mix of quasi-officialdom and outright gluttony...When government and developer take the same end of the rope, it's all over...This is vampire-running-the-blood-bank stuff. By Elizabeth Farrelly - Newcastle Herald \(Australia\)](#)

[The health of cities depends on place-based development more than big projects: Cities take a physical form that either supports or is stressful to people outside of a moving vehicle or building. Witold Rybczynski, in his critique of New Urbanism, forgets that lesson. By Robert Steuteville - Better! Cities & Towns \(formerly New Urban News\)](#)

[What's at Fault with Mayor de Blasio's New York Affordable Housing Plan: The \\$41-billion, 10-year plan will involve the mass production of cells that does not develop the city in an integrated and sensible manner...formalizes the idea that New York wants to keep building more cookie-cutter apartment and condo towers...better solution would be to ask architects and others to come up with alternative models that might let New York develop in a denser, more integrated, and more sensible manner. By Aaron Betsky - Architect Magazine](#)

[Arguing about skyscrapers rarely results in sweetness and light: In debates over tall buildings, there is not nearly enough discussion about the ground plane: The Skyline campaign has demonstrated that it is easier to write a manifesto than it is to get an agreement on what it actually means...people are reluctant to acknowledge the potential virtue of the 'good ordinary' tall building, which allows an outstanding design to be just that. By Paul Finch - The Architects' Journal \(UK\)](#)

[Resiliency Growing Pains: Resiliency is rapidly influencing urban sustainability and hazard mitigation planning...The challenge ahead is to weave resiliency into planning and green urbanism... By Walker Wells/Global Green USA - PLANetizen](#)

[In Cape Town, Urban Design Reduces Violence: Through an inventive program, Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading \(VPUU\)...transforming Khayelitsha, one of the most dangerous townships in South Africa, into a safer, more livable place... has become a model for other townships... 10 more VPUU sites are in the works. By Jared Green \[images\]- The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects \(ASLA\)](#)

[Tuscan Geometry: Asymptote Architecture undertakes a cultural master plan in Italy...designing new landscapes and modern cultural spaces that will become more than a flashy tourist center..."Peccioli Cultural Masterplan"...while the amphitheater, music center, and Etruscan museum might represent the "anti-thesis" of tourism architecture, they will not be fading into the Italian background. \[images\]- The Architect's Newspaper](#)

[Six Teams Compete to Design D.C.'s High Line: The competition to design the 11th Street Bridge Park for the nation's capital moves on to the next round...estimated-\\$25-million project that will transform the existing bridge spanning across the Anacostia River into an elevated park. - Wallace Roberts & Todd \(WRT\)/Next Architects; Piet Oudolf/Glenn LaRue Smith/PUSH Studio/WXY Architecture + Urban Design; OLIN/OMA; Workshop; Ken Smith Landscape/Davis Brody Bond; Stoss Landscape Urbanism/Höweler + Yoon Architecture; Balmori Associates/Cooper, Robertson & Partners - Architect Magazine](#)

[Artist beats architects in contest to design UK's 2015 Milan Expo pavilion: A team led by artist Wolfgang Buttress and including BDP is poised to win the competition...with a concept based on a beehive. By Richard Waite -- Simmonds Studio; Joff + Ollie; AECOM \[images\]- The Architects' Journal \(UK\)](#)

Old, Good Things Seen Anew: ...Cooper-Hewitt National Design Award winner, Witold Rybczynski reflects on his attachment to the past: Have you intentionally positioned yourself as a traditionalist, a bulwark against the tyranny of the new? "I suppose that's just getting old and seeing the world change in ways you don't like. I think the celebrity aspect of architecture is not helpful. It's not making for better architecture." By Karrie Jacobs - [New York Times](#)

50 Years Later, Questions Over Who Designed a World's Fair Dome: R. Buckminster Fuller is credited with the design of the structure that is now a birdhouse at the Queens Zoo, but a little-known architect seems to have had a lot more to do with it. By David W. Dunlap -- Thomas C. Howard/Synergetics Inc.; Eggers & Higgins; Clarke & Rapuano; Andrews & Clark; Mark K. Morrison Landscape Architecture; Johansson & Walcavage [images]- [New York Times](#)



Interview: Patrik Schumacher: Zaha Hadid Architects' director talks about the global rise of parametric design, the advent of robotics in architecture, and the influence of 'The Matrix' on creating intelligent buildings. By Kevin Holden Platt [images]

Note: Pages will open in a new browser window.  
External news links are not endorsed by ArchNewsNow.com.  
Free registration may be required on some sites.  
Some pages may expire after a few days.

[Yesterday's News](#)

© 2014 ArchNewsNow.com