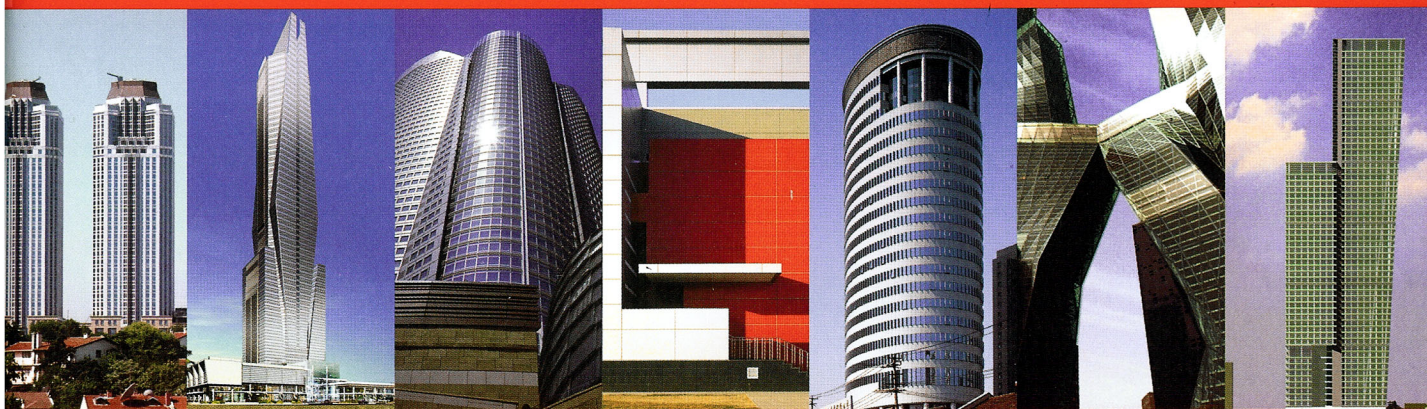


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SHANGHAI DIARY INTO AFRICA TALE OF TWO SYNAGOGUES BUILDING BIG IN THE NETHERLANDS
OUTSIDE VIEW: AMERICANS IN BRITAIN 50-YEAR WATCH: UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS

New York as Global City

Peaceful Waters

By Bonnie A. Harken, AIA

New York

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NEW YORK CITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Last February, the American delegation of the New Amsterdam Waterfront Exchange explored historic and new waterfront developments in Amsterdam. Two months later, the Dutch delegation visited waterfronts on the Hudson and East Rivers in New York.

Why undertake an exchange of expertise about waterfront redevelopment between New York and Amsterdam? Both cities share illustrious histories as global centers of maritime trade. Both now share the challenge of reshaping large, discarded industrial waterfront sites to meet the needs of 21st century urbanism and international commerce.

The Waterfront Exchange between the two cities was originally created with the Regional Plan Association. The hope was to create an international dialogue about how key waterfronts could have a tremendous impact on the future of both cities' historic centers and changing urban edges. Twenty-three high-level New York and Dutch public officials, developers, architects, urban planners, designers, and other waterfront experts participated.

In Amsterdam, the workshops focused on a new redevelopment frontier along the north bank of the IJ River across from the historic downtown. Amsterdam Noord's 620-acre, 3.1-mile-long zone is still occupied by industrial and maritime activity; however, rising real estate prices in the old center and changing needs have already begun to attract modern industries and creative uses. Along with a demand for housing, these have generated an interest in redeveloping the area with new businesses, recreation, and cultural facilities, and in providing new transportation links.

In New York, the delegates explored the Lower East River waterfront, where decades-long deadlocks have begun to ease. The workshop sites included Governors Island and the Brooklyn waterfront. The hope is to create innovative mixed-use redevelopments that reposition these waterfront areas within the context of the Lower East River including Lower Manhattan. There is the potential for a constellation of commercial activities, residential communities, and dramatic open spaces linked by

water, and the opportunity to reconnect adjacent communities both to the waterfront and to one another.

As the 12 New York and 11 Dutch workshop participants boarded boats, toured former factories, visited construction sites, and pored over maps, the cross-national dialogue began to emerge. The New Yorkers taught the Dutch about serendipity. The Dutch gave new meaning to the word consensus. Conversations flowed about the changing patterns of global trade and "left-behind" populations.

The dialogue climaxed with a presentation of findings by the Dutch delegation at New York's City Hall on the final evening moderated by Josh Sirefman, Chief Operating Officer of the NYC Economic Development Corporation, which shares responsibility for many of the sites. Here are some of their ideas for the Lower East River.

Piers 6 - 12:

This is a place for new housing, modern maritime uses, water-related recreation, and creative businesses blossoming in new low rise/high density, multi-tasking buildings in scale with nearby Carroll Gardens.

South Brooklyn Marine Terminal (SBMT):

Extend the planning zone from SBMT to the Brooklyn Army Terminal and develop the area into an “inland harbor” intermodal redistribution hub for the metropolitan area. Consolidate container freight port functions into a state-of-the-art terminal in Sunset Park, where deep-water channels and intermodal connections are already available.

Governors Island:

As the front door to New York, and in keeping with its distinguished role in historic events such as the first summit between the U.S. and Russia in 1988, Governors Island should serve as the signature meeting place for the region.

Dutch Treat

The shifting course of the public and private sectors in each city became a fascinating subtext. As the most densely populated country in Europe, planners in the Netherlands are masters of land utilization. Impressive large-scale development has taken place recently on a series of artificial peninsulas in Amsterdam known as the Eastern Docklands. The area went into decline in the 1970s after container port activities shifted the harbor further to the west. Today, the area's 217 acres are home to 1.3 million square feet of commercial space and about 8,000 dwelling units of which close to half are affordable housing.

Memorable new architecture on Amsterdam's waterfront includes MVRDV's colorful Silodam and Renzo Piano's NEMO (Metropolis Science and Technology Center). Architecture like this is part of a shift in the balance of public and private sector roles. On the Eastern Docklands, initial public master planning mandated site clearance and controlled private development. However, private developers and non-profit housing associations ultimately developed the site, overseen by Amsterdam's physical planning department.

But nothing in Amsterdam rivals the integration of commercial and residential development with public open spaces, art, and urban amenities of Battery Park City (BPC) – carved from a desolate 92-acre landfill site. The New York exchange began here with a welcome by Amanda M. Burden, AICP, Chair of the New York City Planning Commission, and Vice President of Urban Design during BPC's formative years in the 1980s. On a walking tour, Timothy S. Carey, President and CEO of Battery Park City Authority, emphasized the importance of environ-

mentally balanced development as demonstrated by Solaire. Designed by Cesar Pelli & Associates Architects, it is BPC's first building to give form to its new residential environmental guidelines.

New York can heighten its prominence as a global city by continuing to reinvent itself as a modern seaport with an abundant mix of activities. Why not find new ways to juxtapose port activities with jobs in emerging economic markets and housing for urban pioneers? Why not create compact port facilities nearer to population centers and use waterways for the distribution of regionally consumed goods? Why not accomplish all this with the most pioneering and inspiring architecture?

If we meet the challenges of reshaping key waterfront sites – through combined public and private commitment to innovation and visionary planning – our future waterways will be showcases of New York's leadership in global commerce and urban vitality.

Fort Jay on Governors Island is poised to play a vital role in the renewal of New York Harbor and Lower Manhattan (top left) The colorful Silodam apartment complex designed by MVRDV (below)

Amsterdam



BONNIE HARKEN