THE SKY LINE

DESIGNING DOWNTOWN

How will so many people with so many different ideas agree on the new proposals for the World Trade Center site?

BY PAUL GOLDBERGER

The first six proposals for rebuilding the World Trade Center site were unveiled last July, at a press conference in Federal Hall, on Wall Street. John Beyer, of Beyer Blinder Belle, the architectural firm that drew up most of the plans, sat on a platform in the hall's grand marble rotunda, as did Louis Tomson, the president of the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation. Alexander Garvin, the L.M.D.C.'s head of planning, stood at the back of the room, and when the presentation was over he slipped out a side door. He knew the proposals were a disaster: six variations on the same theme, none of which rose to the historic occasion. The designers seemed to be concerned primarily with arranging eleven million square feet of office space around Ground Zero.

Garvin's absence from the stage wasn't entirely by choice. He had lost several battles about the direction the plans were to take—mainly with the Port Authority, which built the original World Trade Center and still owns the land and wants to restore the commercial space that was blown to bits on September 11th. But Garvin also had arguments with his colleagues at the L.M.D.C. Louis Tomson, a longtime associate of Governor Pataki, favored working with the Beyer plans. Two members of the corporation's board, Roland Betts, founder of the Chelsea Piers sports complex in Manhattan, and Billie Tsien, an architect, were less enthusiastic. "I felt really uncomfortable when those schemes were publicly presented, and I wondered why I was on this board," Tsien told me.

A few days after the press conference in Federal Hall, a public meeting was held at the Javits Center to hear a broad range of responses to the new proposals. The meeting took place on a sweltering Saturday, but nearly five thousand people showed up anyway. They sat at round tables and answered questions on electronic instant-polling devices. They were asked to evaluate the six schemes as excellent, good, adequate, or poor, and in every case the largest number of votes fell into the category of poor. When the participants were asked to select the feature of the plans that bothered them most, the highest number of votes went to "Schemes not ambitious enough." The second most troublesome thing, according to the poll, was the excessive amount of office space that all the plans included.

The L.M.D.C. had been saying all along that the plans were only conceptual and shouldn't be viewed as if they were finished designs, and that a long period of public dialogue was expected, but it was hard to have a dialogue about something that everyone seemed to hate. Daniel Doctoroff, the city's deputy mayor for economic development and rebuilding, who shared Garvin's reservations about the plans, made no attempt to hide his delight that they had been so roundly rejected. "It strikes me that what occurred today has been profound," he told the crowd. He was reminded, he said, of Abraham Lincoln's "Right makes might" speech in 1860 at Cooper Union. Like that occasion, the event at the Javits Center would change history.

The meeting at the Javits Center was, in fact, an emblematic event in the history of city planning, but it could perhaps be better compared to the time, in 1968, when the author and critic Jane Jacobs destroyed the records of a public hearing about the expressway that Robert Moses wanted to run across Lower Manhattan. Jacob's act of civil disobedience—those were the days when people burned draft cards to protest the Vietnam War—was intended to stop a big project. For the next generation, most public activism in the realm of city planning was intended to prevent things like highways and sewage plants and tall buildings from being built. Since you don't get reflected by proposing unpopular things, over the years fewer and fewer big public projects were initiated in New York. That is one of the reasons the original plans for Ground Zero were so cautious, and so bland. Nobody wanted to be Robert Moses anymore.

Alex Garvin didn't want to be Robert Moses, either, but in the course of the day at the Javits Center he began to act like a man who realized that something was happening that might save his job. He wandered around the floor, listening to conversations and watching the polling results flash onto screens high up in the center of the room. "Five thousand people in a room arguing passionately about urban design!" he said. "This fills me with hope."

It was clear that the six plans would probably have to be junked altogether, and Billie Tsien and Roland Betts soon emerged as the prime movers in an effort to shift the direction of the process. They encouraged the rest of the L.M.D.C. board to listen to Alex Garvin. He had no power to make the Port Authority change its position, but he could do something to erase the memory of the six discredited schemes. Garvin, who is sixty-one and has spent most of his career teaching planning at Yale and working in city government, is a trained architect whose first job was working for Philip Johnson. With the support of Betts and Tsien, he decided to play the architecture card. He set out to make the L.M.D.C., at least for a few months at the end of 2002, into the most conspicuous architectural patron in the world.

It was a shrewd decision, because it moved the planning process to an arena that the Port Authority had traditionally shown little interest in. With the help of New York New Visions, a group of architects who had been making proposals for establishing guidelines at Ground Zero, Garvin announced late last summer that the L.M.D.C. wanted
to hear from any architect who felt qualified to make a design for the Trade Center site. Four hundred and six teams of architects responded, and in September a panel of advisers was selected to winnow the list. They included Betts and Tsien, together with Terence Riley, head of the department of architecture at the Museum of Modern Art, and Toshiko Mori, chair of the department of architecture at Harvard. Garvin had wanted to include the architect Daniel Libeskind, who has had a reputation as a creator of commemorations of tragic events ever since the completion four years ago of his Jewish Museum in Berlin, a kind of de-facto Holocaust memorial. Garvin tracked down Libeskind and his wife and partner, Nina, who were at the opening of the Architecture Biennale in Venice. "Libeskind agreed to do it, and Nina said it was just as well, since they had been thinking of submitting their qualifications"—to make one of the new designs—"but figured that there was no way they would be selected," Garvin says. "Then it turned out that Libeskind couldn't make the meeting date and so he submitted anyway, and we ended up choosing him."

Seven teams of architects were chosen for what Garvin called the Innovative Design Study, as if to emphasize how different it was from the first round of proposals. In addition to Libeskind, there was Norman Foster; a team led by Rafael Viñoly and Frederic Schwartz; a team consisting of Richard Meier, Charles Gwathmey, Peter Eisenman, and Steven Holl; a team including Greg Lynn, Jesse Reiser, and Ben Van Berkel; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill; and Steven Peterson and Barbara Littenberg, partners in a small firm of architects and urban designers in New York. It is almost easier to name the famous architects who did not participate. (Frank Gehry said no thanks, as did Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown.) The teams were given eight weeks and
forty thousand dollars each to produce their designs. The amount was a pit-
tance—a big architectural model can cost ten times that much—but the L.M.D.C.
figured that few architects would turn down the chance to produce a design
for the most famous building project on earth, even for nothing.

The architects were asked to come
to New York in mid-October for a day-
long briefing with Garvin. What they
got was not only a tour of Ground Zero
but a talk from Garvin about his vision
for downtown. He told the architects he
wanted them to think about Ground
Zero in the year 2020 in terms of four
people he imagined would be using the
future Trade Center site. “The first is
a person who lives south of Liberty Street
in a converted old building, works in
TriBeCa, and came to the site because he
saw an ad for a cultural event there,”
Garvin said. “The second is a business
traveller who came to Lower Manhattan
on the A Train to attend a conference at
the new conference center, and noticed
that there was an opera in the new opera
house and went to it at night before
going back to his hotel. The third is a
tourist who comes to see the memorials
at Ground Zero and stays at a more
modest hotel. And the fourth is a com-
muter who arrives by ferry, walks to work
in Lower Manhattan, has lunch on Fult-
on Street, and then takes the No. 4 sub-
way from the new train station to a
meeting uptown.”

Garvin monitored the designs closely,
and he required the teams to make pre-
sentations as they went along. The fa-
mous architects were told that they could
get by with less office space than had
been required in the summer, not be-
cause the Port Authority has reduced its
demand that the old commercial space
be replaced but because it might let
some of the space be put into new
buildings that could go up on sites near
Ground Zero. The architects were re-
quired to allow for substantial retail
space and also for a large station that
would accommodate the area’s various
subway and train lines, and Garvin told
them to include a hotel and confer-
ence center, cultural facilities, and a
memorable skyline element. They were
also asked to replace part of the grid
of streets that had been taken away
when the original World Trade Center
was built, and to design the projects so
that they could be built in phases, over
many years.

When the new proposals were
unveiled to the public, in mid-
December, at a three-and-a-half-hour-
long press conference on the stage of
the Winter Garden, at the World Financial
Center, Alex Garvin did not stay in the
back of the room. He introduced the ar-
chitects with the air of an impresario
who had managed to bring his show to
Broadway. And every one of the new designs
—there are nine, since the team led by Rafael
Vivioly submitted three schemes—was
serious and worth talking about.

Garvin had said that the L.M.D.C.
intended not to pick a single winner
but, rather, to use the project as a source
of ideas. Once the designs began to
emerge, however, he decided to give up
on his notion of treating the architects’
work like a smorgasbord, picking and
choosing what was best, “We said we
could combine these, but it’s not going to
happen,” Garvin said. “The designs are
polar opposites. You can’t really take half
of Greg Lynn and put it with half of
Richard Meier.”

Actually, you couldn’t pull half of
Richard Meier together with much of
anything, considering what Meier and
his colleagues produced: a set of five iden-
tical 1,111-foot-tall towers that are criss-
crossed by horizontal sections, so that the
structure forms a grid in the sky—the
world’s biggest ticktacktoe board. The
quirky towers have an austere, mini-
malist elegance, but if you take away the
horizontal elements they look uncom-
fortably like five little World Trade Cen-
ters. They are even set on a superblock,
like the original World Trade Center.
There is, to be fair, a subtle and profound
aspect to the design, which the architects
call Memorial Shadows Park, based on
the notion that the shadows of the origi-
nal World Trade Center towers at the
moment of their destruction would be
projected westward from the footprints to
become piers extending into the river. But
the gargantuan squares in the sky seem
more like a comic-book artist’s notion of
futuristic architecture than like the work
of four of the most sophisticated ar-
chitects of our time. (Or is it three? Given
how little of Eisenman’s characteristic
style of slashing, slicing angles is visible
here, I wonder how involved he really
was.) Meier and Gwathmey have always
loved grids—some of their most elegant
houses are based on exquisite com-
positions of squares—and Holl just finished
a building at M.I.T. in which the whole
façade is a grid. But a pattern that works
giving all she had in the world to promote Rick's so-called career in that dedicated way Claire so loved, not realizing it was Jenny herself she loved—or was it Nina—but wanting them all to succeed in spite of rent and the violence that sent Jenny to her, tender Jenny but transparent, Claire could see right through Jenny if she danced in front of light and fast, as if there might be other dances waiting to be danced; that was Jenny and here she comes, it's Jenny not Claire, I might have known, Jenny now working in some convenience store, its logo half visible on the bag clutched to her chest. I open my mouth to say Hi, the bundle snorts at me from a drooping snout between red eyes while Jenny's stare shoves the void into my gaping mouth that I close barely in time to see that it wasn't Jenny after all, nor was it Claire or even Nina, just someone with a bundle of virulent convenience, behind me now, my grateful breathing glad she did not know me.

—Dorothy Tanning

for a small building or a household object can appear bizarre as a thousand-foot tower. The architects describe the project as "a matrix of voids and solids that remind us of the presence of those absent, and allow us to reflect and dream." A certain amount of pious rhetoric was evident in almost all the presentations, surely in reaction to the overdose of pragmatism in July. Daniel Libeskind explained his brilliant and powerful design by describing Ground Zero after it was excavated: "The heroic foundations held and stand as eloquent as the Constitution... We need a journey with deliberation and procession... through the Edge of Hope, the Museum of Memory." Libeskind calls his project Memory Foundations, and it is based on the idea that the enormous concrete slurry wall that kept the Hudson River out of the World Trade Center foundation should be retained as the heart of a below-ground memorial, which would surround the footprints of the twin towers. In Libeskind's plan, the excavation at Ground Zero would remain open and exposed, and visitors would journey downward into it. There would also be a museum structure and an elevated, curving promenade allowing visitors to view the site from above. The eastern portion of the site would have taller commercial and cultural buildings as well as the required train station, but the tallest structure of all would be primarily symbolic: a 1,776-foot-tall tower at the northwest corner of the site that would contain a series of landscapes inside open trusswork, "because gardens are a constant affirmation of life." At ground level, Libeskind proposes putting a marker in the pavement in the name of each rescue company that responded on September 11th, set on a direct line between Ground Zero and the rescuers' home base, making the pavement throughout the site a latticework of commemoration.

Libeskind's greatest gift is for interweaving simple, commemorative concepts and abstract architectural ideas—there is no one alive who does this better. His buildings are crisp and sharp, and he is the most likely figure to put together the conflicting constituencies. He described his project with an almost schoolboyish earnestness. Norman Foster, by contrast, was suave. Lord Foster—he is a British peer—appeared in a black turndneck and rhymed about the difficulty of giving physical form to the complex set of issues surrounding Ground Zero: "How do you measure intangibles? How do you measure empti-
Daniel Libeskind's proposal for the World Trade Center site is anchored by a symbolic tower; Norman Foster's has the world's

is both more expansive and more zestful than the buttoned-up tower produced by their elders. It is even more gargantuan, however—almost terrifyingly so. It would be one of the world’s largest buildings, and, while it could be built in stages as five separate structures, when the whole thing was finished it would be one interconnected colossus containing more than ten million square feet.

Is this a super-high-tech version of Paolo Soleri's city made out of a single building? The structure looks like a set of vast X-shaped towers, mounting toward a high center point; several of the sections rise on the diagonal, and while from some angles the building would be quite graceful on the skyline, from others it would appear to have a huge, bulging midriff. Greg Lynn, who presented the project clearly, made the structural system seem quite rational. He explained that the building would have multiple cores and stair towers for safety, and several enormous floor areas where the various towers connect horizontally. At the sixty-sixth floor, a five-story-high space would join all the towers horizontally. Lynn called this "a five-story city in the sky, a new kind of urbanism." He described the huge, triangular gateways under the X's as "sacred, cathedral-like space," which I hope would be true, although it is possible to envision them as invoking not awe but fear. The best element here is the "sky gardens," landscaped terraces every few stories that recall the work of the late visionary architect Roger Ferri, who designed several skyscrapers with hanging gardens twenty years ago. (Ferri was something of a hovering presence at the presentation of the designs, many of which include some form of garden in the sky.)

Rafael Viñoly, who worked with Frederic Schwartz of New York, Shigeru Ban of Tokyo, and Ken Smith of New York in a team that became known as THINK, produced three schemes, ranging from the somewhat practical to the highly theoretical. The first, called Sky Park, is a sixteen-acre park atop a base of cultural facilities, surrounded by three office towers to be designed by different architects. The second, called Great Hall, is more ambitious but somewhat ominous: the site of Ground Zero is surrounded by a wall of thirty-story buildings and covered by a glass roof to create what Viñoly describes as "the world’s largest room." The mammoth room incorporates the footprints of the twin towers, which would be surrounded by glass walls, so that the footprints would appear, alas, to be imprisoned in the world’s largest terrariums. This plan also has a very tall slender tower off to the side, and incorporates a large train station. The other dense plan is more daring conceptually, and also more appealing. It places conventional buildings containing offices, hotels, and retail space along the eastern side of the site, and calls for open frameworks to be built around the footprints of the original towers. The frameworks, square Eiffel Towers, would have viewing platforms at about the height of the roof of the twin towers, and cultural facilities set into the frameworks, like drawers, at various intervals on the lower levels. "So the World Trade Center becomes the World Cultural Center, sort of like the Eiffel Tower with functions," Viñoly says. "You never touch the footprints, and yet the footprints make possible the structure." It is a beautiful work of art, and could have as powerful an emotional impact as Libeskind's.

The team headed by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill made a similar decision to emphasize a conceptual statement over a purely pragmatic plan. In Skidmore’s case, this was probably a wise strategic move; the firm has not been looking very visionary lately. It has been working for
the developer Larry Silverstein—who held the lease on the twin towers—both as an over-all planner and as the architect for Seven World Trade Center, the building adjacent to Ground Zero that Silverstein has already begun to construct. Skidmore set itself up as den mother to a group of younger artists and architects, perhaps as a way of burnishing its artistic credentials. The result is a project top-heavy with concept and weak in aesthetics; nine wavy towers of identical height fill the Ground Zero site as a statement “intended to demonstrate how an increasingly densified city can be a better place to live and work.” As in some of the other designs, there are appealing gardens and public spaces high above ground level, but this project is a blur on the skyline, not the memorable element that the L.M.D.C. called for. It does make a strong statement for sustainability and environmental sensitivity, but it is hard to believe that this will be enough to satisfy the craving for emotion that affects all judgments made about the architecture of Ground Zero.

And then, finally, there is the one traditional scheme, by Steven Peterson and Barbara Littenberg, who have been working as consultants to the L.M.D.C. for the past year. Their design studies yielded the notion of a landscaped promenade down West Street framing the view of the Statue of Liberty, which was one of the only things retained from the infamous six original plans. On the basis of their earlier work, they got themselves invited to the current party, to which they came dressed in Brooks Brothers, knowing full well that everyone else would be garbed in Prada. Peterson presented the plan as a re-creation of the essential elements of the New York cityscape. “This is not Houston or Dallas,” he said. “New York is a city of towers.” Their plan has some delicate and subtle urban-design gestures, including a memorial that consists of a large garden around the footprints of the twin towers, surrounded by the walls of medium-rise buildings, as if Turtle Bay Gardens, the common back yard between a block of brownstones in the East Forties, were raised to monumental civic scale. The footprint of one tower would be a reflecting pool, and the other would be an amphitheater with nearly three thousand seats, in commemoration of the people who died at the Trade Center.

But the architecture of the Peterson and Littenberg plan is dreary. They may have thought that people would find it comforting to have a pair of fourteen-hundred-foot-high skyscrapers that look like the Empire State Building, but, next to the startling reinventions of the skyscraper that other architects have come up with, their towers seem tired. The public and critical craving for boldness that brought down the initial six plans last July is, at least to some extent, a craving for the new. The skyscraper is the greatest contribution American architecture has made to the world, but technology and the environmental movement have made boxes like the World Trade Center obsolete. It is hard to imagine a better place than Ground Zero to demonstrate what the skyscraper might become in the future.

Architecture surely seemed to matter that morning in December at the press conference in the Winter Garden, if only because a roomful of public officials was sitting still for a three-and-a-half-hour festival of avant-garde culture. But not that much has actually changed in the planning process since last summer. “It is like putting lipstick on a hog,” said Robert Yaro, president of the Regional Plan Association, a civic group. “Nothing has changed except you have a lot of fancy architects on this go-round. They are still designing the same thing,
just prettier.” And the forces that have made planning at Ground Zero a process of Byzantine complexity have not gone away. If anything, they have become more intense.

The L.M.D.C. was set up by Governor Patiki to oversee the reconstruction of the Trade Center site, but it has only limited power, because it does not actually control the land it is supposed to plan; the Port Authority does. Patiki shares control of the Port Authority with James McGreevey, the governor of New Jersey, which means that the governor of New Jersey can veto anything that happens on the site, a power that, curiously, the mayor of New York lacks.

The Port Authority is an immense bureaucracy that has traditionally operated in private, away from the glare of press and publicity. It is used to controlling information, not to being the subject of public scrutiny, and it is certainly not in the habit of dealing with internationally famous architects who are accustomed to telling their clients what to do.

When Alex Garvin, the architect in charge, the Port Authority decided it needed an architectural consultant of its own, and it hired Stanton Eckstut, an urban designer with whom Garvin has had a somewhat tense relationship. Eckstut—who was one of the principal planners of Battery Park City—and Garvin are supposed to work together to evaluate the new architectural proposals, and to come up with a preliminary plan by the beginning of February. But Eckstut has been busy making plans of his own, and he thinks that the Port Authority has had an unfair rap as an opponent of good architecture. “It gets blamed for everything,” he said to me.

There are other people with their own plans, too. The Civic Alliance, a consortium of groups organized by the Regional Plan Association, is probably the most important. The group put together the Javits Center meeting last July, and the morning after the Winter Garden presentations it held a press conference to criticize the L.M.D.C. program and to unveil the results of a workshop on the future of Lower Manhattan. Scenarios were proposed for a “livable neighborhood,” a “creative hub,” and a “global office” center.

Larry Silverstein and Frank Lowy—the chairman of Westfield, a huge shopping-mall company that leased the Trade Center’s retail space—believe that their leases give them the right to rebuild, and the Port Authority has said it intends to honor them. Silverstein and Westfield are the beneficiaries of insurance policies on the twin towers that could pay them between three and a half and seven billion dollars for their loss. If they get the larger amount—the matter is in litigation—they will have so much money that they could pay for new skyscrapers all by themselves, without borrowing a cent, although the L.M.D.C. and the Port Authority would retain control over the designs.

The one political figure who could cut through the morass of competing interests is Governor Patiki, but he has shown little interest in doing so. In fact, if any public official has demonstrated imagination about the future of downtown, it is Mayor Bloomberg. A week before the presentations at the Winter Garden, Bloomberg delivered a speech to the Association for a Better New York, a business group, in which he laid out what he called the city’s “vision” for Lower Manhattan. Bloomberg’s talk was the first time a New York City mayor had made a major address on the subject of urban design since John Lindsay, and it was remarkably sophisticated for a public official. “Lower Manhattan’s competition to be a global center isn’t just midtown, or even Chicago or Los Angeles,” Bloomberg said. “Increasingly, it is London and Berlin and Hong Kong.” The Mayor dared to criticize the original World Trade Center as a misguided idea, and he said that the future of Lower Manhattan was not as a commercial district alone. Bloomberg imagined new housing, waterfront developments on the East River, and new rapid-transit connections between Lower Manhattan and the airports. He said he wanted to turn West Street into a promenade lined with seven hundred trees, “a Champs-Élysées or Commonwealth Avenue for Lower Manhattan,” and he proposed a new park over the entrance to the Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel.

The speech was a clever move politically. Bloomberg didn’t criticize the Governor, but by positioning himself as the man with the plan, he made it impossible to miss the contrast with the Governor. Bloomberg’s speech was largely the work of Daniel Doctoroff, the deputy mayor who cheered on the naysayers at
the Javits Center last July. Doctoroff has been determined to reclaim some power for the city over Ground Zero. Last summer, he floated the idea of trading the New York City airports, which the Port Authority operates but the city owns, for the Port Authority's sixteen acres at Ground Zero, a deal that would take the Port Authority mostly out of the business of planning the Trade Center site. The land swap, which the Mayor mentioned in his speech, remains a possibility, although no serious negotiations have taken place lately. The Port Authority makes more money from the airports than it ever did from the World Trade Center, and that gives the city a strong bargaining chip. Doctoroff likes to look at the city in terms of bold strokes. He conceived the idea of bringing the Olympics to New York, and he hired Alex Garvin to come up with a physical plan to make the Olympics work throughout the five boroughs. Ever since then, Garvin and Doctoroff have been close. Many of the ideas put forth in Bloomberg's speech are things that Garvin has been promoting.

The planning process, which seemed to move so slowly for so many months, is now on an accelerated timetable. But Alexander Garvin and Stanton Eckstut have to see eye to eye over the coming weeks, and the tension between the L.M.D.C. and the Port Authority, which has burst out into the open several times over the past year, will have to be kept in check. (“I could take any of these schemes and do a plan from it,” Eckstut said to me, whereas Garvin says he thinks that a couple of them will not work at all, although he will not say which.) Both men have said that they do not expect the final plan to replicate any of the proposals exactly, and Garvin has raised the possibility of choosing one architect's master plan and asking another architect to design one or more of the buildings for it. Once the agencies decide on a course of action, Governor Pataki, who continues to have the most power here; Governor McGreevey, who still has some power through the Port Authority; Mayor Bloomberg, who is moving toward taking a bigger role at Ground Zero; and Larry Silverstein and Westfield will all have to agree to it.

None of the plans, it should be said, take into account the forces of the real-estate market, which at the moment is so depressed that a builder would have to be crazy to put up so much as a single square foot of office space in Lower Manhattan. The neighborhood has been losing its status as the prime financial center for more than half a century; after the destruction of the World Trade Center, several large financial concerns, like Lehman Brothers, abandoned the area altogether. (Thirty-seven of Lehman's forty floors in the World Financial Center are still empty.) And since businesses have increasingly come to believe that they should decentralize their operations in the name of security, even those companies interested in remaining in Lower Manhattan aren't likely to want more space very soon. Still, real estate does work in long cycles, and there is no question that better transit access, waterfront development, and more housing and cultural facilities would make Lower Manhattan a much stronger competitor to midtown Manhattan and even to New Jersey. No one thinks that a substantial amount of new office space will be added for a decade.

In the meantime, another member of the L.M.D.C., Anita Contini, has been working on how to plan a memorial to the victims of the September 11th attacks. The architects in Garvin's program were not asked to design a memorial explicitly, but only a plan that would allow for one. A separate design competition for a memorial will be held later this year, and in preparation for it Contini has taken members of her staff and victims' families on tours of memorials around the country, including the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington and the memorial to the Oklahoma City bombing. She has also invited scholars and other experts to talk to the group about the meaning of memorials and their connection to architectural history.

But perhaps the memorial should not be thought of as a separate venture. Almost all the new Ground Zero plans are both memorials and master plans, and one lesson of this round of the design process may be that our culture creates too rigid and arbitrary a divide between sacred space and everyday space; after all, the great cathedrals of Europe were also marketplaces and community centers—focal points for every part of urban life. Are we still capable of experiencing a sense of awe at one moment and going about our business the next in the same place? The realities of the city are all around us on these sixteen acres, just as the memories are.