

CIVITAS ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF COMPETITION TO REIMAGINE THE EAST RIVER WATERFRONT



COURTESY CIVITAS

UP THE RIVER

Imagine floating in a gondola through East Harlem. How about leisurely kayaking through Hell Gate, the East River's most dangerous bend? What if signage alongside the FDR drive promoted neighborhood engagement in Jenny Holzer-style graphics?

Above: First-place scheme by Joseph Wood. These somewhat outré civic solutions represent the first-, second-, and third-place winners of the Reimagining the Waterfront competition, sponsored continued on page 18

PENNPRAXIS CELEBRATES TEN YEARS TRANSFORMING PHILLY PLANNING

WELL PRACTICED

For over 30 years, Philadelphia's Delaware River waterfront was considered a corrupt wasteland of opportunity where RFP followed RFP but nothing got built. Then, suddenly, a master plan materialized and was adopted by City Council last month. The success of "A Civic Vision for Central Delaware" is

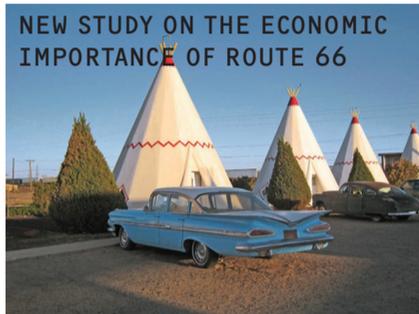
credited by many to PennPraxis, the non-profit consultancy arm of PennDesign at the University of Pennsylvania. Praxis is celebrating its tenth anniversary this year. "They reoriented the direction the city was going in," said Inga Saffron, architecture critic at The Philadelphia continued on page 11

Proposal for Pulaski Park in Philadelphia.



COURTESY PENNPRAXIS/WRT

NEW STUDY ON THE ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF ROUTE 66



COURTESY AMANDA DAGUE

Mother Road

"It winds from Chicago to LA, more than two thousand miles all the way," as the song goes, inspiring endless Googies and even a vintage television show. And now a new study shows that Nat King Cole's famous line still rings true as Americans continue to get their kicks along iconic Route 66, to the tune of \$132 million per year in economic impact. The National Park Service continued on page 14

AIA ISSUE: REGIONALISM NOW

30 YEARS SINCE CRITICAL REGIONALISM TOOK ROOT, LOCATING PLACE STILL MATTERS. SEE PAGES 25-31. PLUS NEW AIA CENTERS IN BOSTON, D.C., RALEIGH. SEE PAGES 10, 14, & 16.

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DOWNTOWN PARK RENOVATION UNEARTHS MURKY PAST

ONLY COLLECT



COURTESY NYC PARKS

Until recently, downtown Manhattan's Collect Pond Park was an unloved and unlovely triangle of sunbaked broken concrete adorned with a few sad benches. Crammed on Leonard Street between Centre and Lafayette, it was a park of last resort, a better-than- continued on page 17

BBG VISITOR CENTER MAKES AN ENTRANCE. SEE PAGE 20



ALBERT VEZERKA/ESTO

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Envisioned view of Center City Philadelphia from the Delaware.



COURTESY PENPRAXIS/WRT

WELL PRACTICED continued from front page *Inquirer*. PennPraxis was created to allow both students and professors the chance to practice in a real-world environment through analyzing and developing proposals for actual urban situations. In its first decade, the program has billed some \$16 million in international consultancy fees.

One of the first projects they tackled was the waterfront. Penn Design's then-dean Gary Hack said such university/civic exchanges are commonplace in China, but are rare stateside where liabilities are a major concern. When Hack presented the idea to then-president Judith Rodin, he recalled her responding, "Liabilities? What are you talking about—I have five hospitals!" Hack said the same hands-on approach works for planning. "Hospitals are critical to education and I argue that it's the same for architecture," he said.

Skeptics were concerned that Penn was doing the city's job, but given the area's troubled history, most Philadelphians were ready to throw up their hands. Mayor Ed Rendell, later governor and more comfortable in smoke-filled back rooms than public planning, promoted giving the place over to the salivating casino industry. His successor, Mayor John Street, was no less dubious, but many give him credit for allowing a non-governmental organization to take the lead. All the while, the William Penn Foundation, one of Philadelphia's most powerful

philanthropic organizations, backed up the effort financially.

As Praxis developed its waterfront plan, they relied on traditional media to gain traction and also launched an independent and now a very popular website called PlanPhilly.com. "PlanPhilly had more impact than anything that I can think of in years," said Gary Jastrzab, executive director at the City Planning Commission. "They really stepped in and created a whole new group that follows planning closely."

Their approach has deep grass roots. Months of community meetings headed up by Praxis director Harris Steinberg mined the riverside communities for ideas, rather than presenting them with developers' pre-cooked plans.

It hasn't hurt that shortly after, the city's latest mayor, Michael Nutter, threw full support behind planning, giving teeth to the previously ignored Planning Commission. The mayor killed the shady Penn's Landing Corporation and formed the Delaware River Waterfront Corporation. Jastrzab credited Praxis's work on the riverfront with spurring a citywide zoning overhaul that will go into effect this August. "They conducted what is considered an unprecedented civic outreach process," he said. "With that central [Delaware] master plan underway, Mayor Nutter then was able to provide the political foundation for a citywide master plan."

TS



COURTESY COOK+FOX ARCHITECTS

tall building in Brooklyn."

Cook said the towers' skins are currently being designed, but each building will have its own identity. Landscaped areas are subtly incorporated into the site and Weintraub has created installations on the rooftops. "We've created a series of recesses on the street wall where we could incorporate green spaces," Cook said. A glass market hall leads through the site to the planned Willoughby Park by Michael Van Valkenburgh. A future third phase calls for an even taller building that Cook said will anchor the corner with a strong sense of verticality.

BRANDEN KLAYKO

Architect: Cook+Fox with Lee Weintraub Landscape Architecture
Client: Washington Square Partners
Location: Brooklyn
Completion: 2015 and 2016

UNVEILED

CITY POINT PHASE 2

With the four-story retail complex ready to open along Brooklyn's Fulton Street Mall, City Point's second phase, designed by Cook+Fox with Lee Weintraub Landscape Architecture, is ready to move forward with

two residential towers—standing 19 and 30 stories and holding a combined 650 units—sitting atop a 500,000-square-foot retail podium. "The whole project is envisioned conceptually as one project—a big mixed-use transit-oriented development," said Cook+Fox partner Rick Cook. "This is a perfect spot for a

SPIRAL BONDING



A staircase creates a community in a building that needs one. That's the philosophy behind the ornamental stair designed by **Mitchell | Giurgola Architects** for NYU's newly renovated **School of Continuing and Professional Studies**. Rising through a triple-height space that links classrooms and lounges, the inviting series of elliptically shaped treads and landings promotes a collaborative environment that lets students looking to learn and grow connect with mentors. Coupled with its new high-performance curtain wall enclosure, it has helped **7 East 12th Street** become a light-filled vertical campus within this prestigious university, encouraging students to climb to new heights with each step.

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Architect: Mitchell | Giurgola Architects
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