
UrbanPlanningUpdate

Newsletter of the Department of Urban Planning

01:03 June 2010

www.alhosnu.ae/dup/upu

Greetings from the Chair

The Department of Urban Planning (DUP) concluded a successful spring edition of its Planning Lecture Series. It brought to campus a number of distinguished scholars from across the world who offered insight on critical elements that are necessary to build sustainable cities. By focusing on urban planning and design, graduates are able to use “peripheral” vision, which brings together all aspects of the city into consideration for a strategic plan. The lecture series was well attended and warmly received by students, faculty and the professional community at large. Special thanks go to Vice Chancellor Sabouni and Provost Sheibani for their unwavering support.

— Adnan Husnéin, Ph.D.

Lang and LeGates Address ALHOSN Campus



The final lecture of the season on 27 April 2010 featured a presentation by Richard LeGates, Professor Emeritus of Urban Studies and Planning at San Francisco State University, and Fulbright Senior Specialist. LeGates explored “artistic” and “scientific” approaches to urban planning past and present and how those elements may converge when creating cities of the future. Professor LeGates is the author of *Think Globally, Act Regionally*, co-author of *The City Reader*, and co-editor of the Routledge urban reader series.

On 1 April 2010, the series brought international urban design expert Professor Jon Lang who discussed ways of achieving quality of urban spaces through development controls. Jon Lang is Emeritus Professor of Architecture at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia where he is associated primarily with the Master in Urban Development and Design Program (MUDD). Lang is also author of the book *Urban Design: The American Experience*

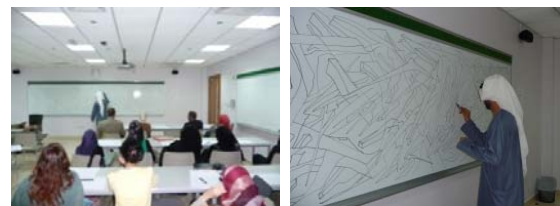
and *Urban Design: A Typology of Procedures and Products*.

Green Week @ALHOSN

This year, the annual Earth Day celebration was transformed into week-long activities on campus. Green Week @ALHOSN (22-29 April) featured a signature campaign for a pledge to protect the environment, documentary screenings, and a fun workshop (see next post). The screenings featured the Oscar winning documentary *An Inconvenient Truth* that made global warming the number one topic of conversation, and *Home* a documentary which is almost entirely composed of aerial shots of various places on Earth. The latter showed the diversity of life on Earth and how humanity is threatening the ecological balance of the planet. In addition, the ALHOSN website was changed to green to support campus-wide initiatives. Green Week was a joint collaboration between the Green Club, the Student Council and the Office of the Provost.

An Unconscious Workshop

Green Week @ALHOSN concluded its activities on 29 April 2010 with an afternoon of fun and self-exploration featuring artist Wasel Safwan. He led “An Unconscious Workshop” where participants were guaranteed to unleash the artistic giant within! The experience was both exhilarating and entertaining, and workshop attendees included students, faculty and staff. Wasel Safwan is an artist and architect from United Arab Emirates. He has participated in a number of exhibitions including the solo exhibit titled *Constructivism and UAEism*.



The Future Development of Desert Oases

Members of DUP faculty attended workshop sessions and roundtable discussions hosted by Université Paris-Sorbonne in Abu Dhabi on 12-13 May 2010. The workshop was devoted to the study of communities which settled in the Arabian

peninsula oases and featured international as well as local researchers.

MEED Green Building Middle East Summit

Several green initiatives in the region such as MASDAR in Abu Dhabi and ENPARK in Dubai were featured during the two-day conference and expo held from 24-25 May. DUP was present at the summit which addressed relevant themes such as the economics of green construction, making low carbon construction possible, efficient water management, waste and recycling, sourcing building materials ethically and responsibly, adapting to the impact of climate change, designing green, and creating sustainable cities.



The last theme was picked up by Doug Kelbaugh, Executive Director of Design and Planning at Limitless, a Dubai World company. According to Kelbaugh, “a traditional street and road grid with greater connectivity would make it quicker, easier and cheaper to get around.” In other words, shorter journeys, efficient use of fuel, less pollution and increased productivity. Professor Kelbaugh is a globally recognized expert, speaker and educator. He has authored numerous essays, editorials, and books on architecture and urban planning. (*Special thanks to Nicholas Hamilton Archer for facilitating a memorable experience!*)

DUP Welcomes a New Member

Ms. Marwa Yousuf has joined the Department of Urban Planning as a teaching assistant in late spring. Marwa earned a bachelor of arts in urban studies and a minor in design from the University of Minnesota in 2009. Welcome to DUP, Marwa.

Urban Incentives for Top Students

The Abu Dhabi Education Council has joined forces with UPC, the Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council, to provide scholarships and employment opportunities within the field of urban planning for Emirati graduating seniors and university students who have exemplary marks. An initial group of 15 students will be chosen to attend universities both in the UAE and abroad. To apply, eligible applicants should be natives of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi—high school students need a minimum average score of 85% on their

secondary school certificate while current college students must have a GPA of 3.0. (source: *Abu Dhabi Week May Issue*).

Site Visit to Burt Hill

DUP students conducted a site visit to Burt Hill, a design and planning firm on 22 April 2010. This was a required assignment for the Professional Practice and Internship Seminar (UPL 404). The visit was facilitated by the course instructor Dr. Seif Khiati.

Cityscape Centerpiece!

Post contributed by junior student Enass Khalil

A huge scale model of how the capital of the United Arab Emirates will appear in 2030 formed the centerpiece of this year's Cityscape Abu Dhabi (18-21 April 2010). For its massive representation of Abu Dhabi City, the Urban Planning Council (UPC) hired the UK firm Pipers Architectural Models to build a miniature of the entire island, including Shahama, Mussafah and Al Falah, as well as the islands of Saadiyat, Yas, Lulu, Reem and Sowwah.

According to *The National* (April 21, 2010), the model is by far the largest at the exhibit. “The mock-up was shipped to Abu Dhabi from London in 36 boxes containing 262 sections. The contents weighed more than eight tons when loaded for transport. Workers needed 260 hours to assemble and set up the model at the exhibition.” The model can be broken down into a series of stand-alone displays.



(photos courtesy of: www.thenational.ae & www.abudhabi.ae)

Quote of the Month: And to end this new issue of UPU on an optimistic note, we return to Doug Kelbaugh, “Tens of thousands of laborers, shop workers, hotel staff and office employees travel to and from work in privately-registered buses and vans, most of which are provided by the companies they work for. They are the unsung heroes of our transport system, as without them our roads would be even more congested, our journey times even longer, and our air and ground more polluted.” “The goal now is to encourage even more people to follow this example by taking the Metro or the bus for some trips.”

— Doug Kelbaugh, *Green Building Middle East Summit*, 25 May 2010