

Workshop #6: “An Architect, An Artist, And A Developer Walk Into A Bar...”

SEPTEMBER 23, 2013

Questions on the table at this workshop were:

- Given these three perspectives, what are the overlapping interests that will, or that do, guarantee a workable, sustainable model for collaboration that embeds art into a project’s initial design and development concept? What are the opportunities? The constraints?
- What would a final “protocol”, or at least an informal, but rigorous, arrangement, look like?
- What collaborative tools can be developed to support this effort?

Leading the discussion was Tamara Roy, Senior Associate Principal with ADDInc.; Gillian Christy, Sculptor; and Mark McGowan, Manager of Development with Skanska.

From Tamara:

- Architects need to be less egotistical – built environments benefit from multiple layers of artistic input
- Expand definition of ‘art’ – even tight sites can have creative street furniture, landscape design, public lobby art, building murals, green walls, etc
- Use MassArt as a positive example – all aspects are part of school’s mission to infuse city with art – landscape, building, commissioned art in public and private spaces, construction art
- Where else does JOY come from?!

From Mark:

- How does this fit into the project’s proforma?
- What does it replace?

- Where does art go on tight urban sites?
- What does art do for the community, the tenants, the building, the investors?
- What happens if the art is “forced”?

From Gillian:

- Bring artist in early. By getting an artist involved prior to final design can allow more freedom and unexpected outcomes.
- Use "Embrace" at The Plant as an example that when public art piece was chosen it became the name and logo of the project.^[1]_{SEP}
- Collaborative design process with the team. Meeting with the group to determine public art design can be a fun process and meet needs of the project. This could be 4- 12 weeks of design work, often \$1500 fee to artist. This is more desirable than a contest or RFP selection process. Use "Wave Traveler" as example.
- Community engagement: artist leads public participation efforts in the surrounding community. Use "Pathways" in Fitchburg, MA as example.
- Ultimate goals of public art. Create relatable pieces of art that are meaningful and are a powerful connection to the place in which they are sited.