

***Erie Street Plaza Competition Summary
and
Frequently Asked Questions
February 15, 2006***

The Third Ward Comprehensive Area Plan, prepared in conjunction with area businesses and residents and adopted by the Common Council in June 2005, identifies the Erie Street Plaza as an important open space within the Third Ward.

In order to develop the site as a significant open space befitting the high design standards of the Third Ward, DCD held a major design competition. Of the thirty seven international responses received, ten firms were selected to come to Milwaukee to interview. Five firms were then selected to complete schematic designs for the plaza.

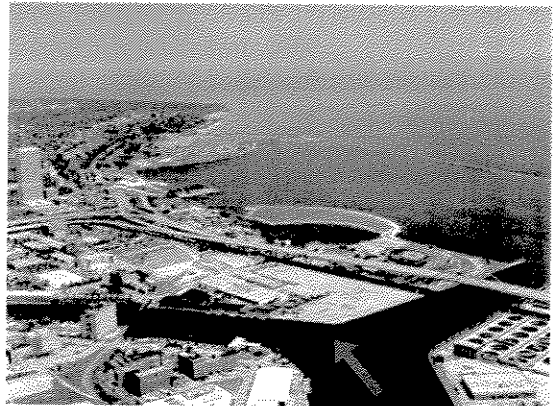
A jury of five nationally recognized architects, landscape architects and artists was invited to select a winning design from the five finalists.

The winning design team consists of Stoss Landscape Urbanism, a landscape architecture firm from Boston, MA, Vetter Denk Architects from Milwaukee and GAS engineering from Milwaukee.

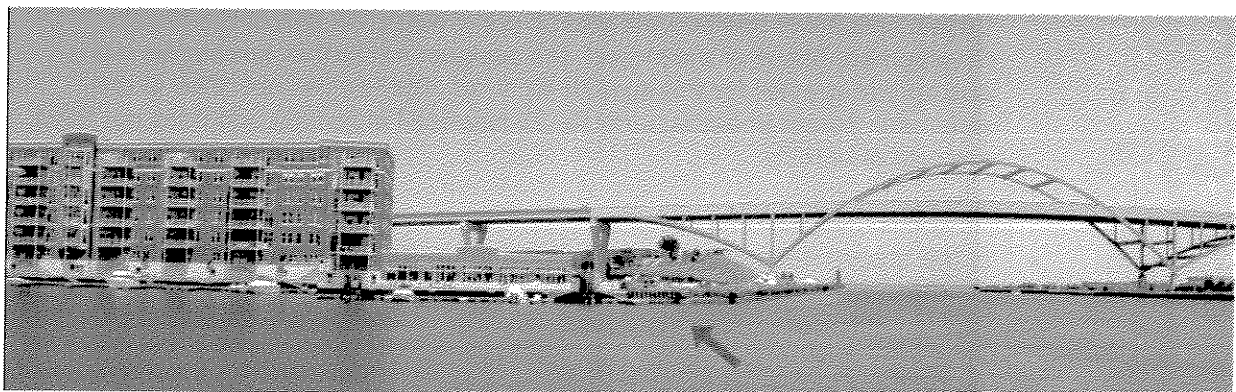
As DCD staff has shared the winning design with various stakeholder groups, several questions have arisen. The following page is a compilation of those questions and answers.



Aerial photograph of the site and surroundings



Oblique photo looking northeast



Panoramic view of the site from across the Milwaukee River

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Competition Process -

- *Who was involved in the process?*

The Department of City Development organized the process with the assistance of a nationally recognized competition consulting firm who has worked on both large and small scale competitions. DCD developed the project goals, timeline and detailed site descriptions for the finalists.

After the five finalists were chosen, a stakeholder workshop was held at the Italian Conference Center to allow invited stakeholders to voice their concerns and ideas for the development of the site.

2. Design -

- *Why was this design chosen?*

The proposed "sustainable garden" will become significant as a local park. It will resonate with, and complement the other uses and features of the Third Ward. Over time it will become a neighborhood landmark that also appeals to persons from around the City and the region.

The solution works with large numbers of people as well as just one person or a few. As a social place it has high degrees of flexibility - both for different seasons as well as over the years - it has the potential for change and adaptation as this part of the Third Ward changes.

This landscape will be a destination place in the Third Ward - a park or garden for the neighborhood. Because of the unique environmental features the place will also be a destination spot for persons in the larger community and region interested in ecological and environmental issues.

Of the proposals submitted, the selected plan appears to have the best chances of being constructed within a reasonable timeframe and within the project budget. The project also will produce minimal intrusion on surrounding sites.

3. Bamboo -

- *Will bamboo grow here, specifically with the cold winter winds in this location? Will it need to be braced when it gets very tall?*

Certain species of bamboo will grow in our climate. As part of the design development phase of the project, the designer will further investigate the appropriate species for this specific location. The species specified in the schematic design phase is hardy to -25 degrees Fahrenheit and does not need any type of bracing.

- *Is the steam necessary to grow bamboo in this location?*

Steam may not be necessary for the bamboo to grow at this location. However, the added heat and moisture will help to provide a microclimate to maintain the

foliage of the bamboo during the winter months. The purpose of the steam is also to provide warm areas in winter to encourage year-round use of the space.

- *Will the bamboo be easily damaged, and what happens if it is damaged?*

Bamboo is a very resilient, fast growing plant. If damaged, the plant will regenerate quickly.

4. Maintenance –

- *What are the costs of long term maintenance of the plaza, bamboo and marsh areas?*

Long term maintenance costs will be comparable with other landscape areas found throughout the City. Detailed maintenance estimates will be established as the design develops.

- *Who will maintain all aspects of the plaza (bamboo, lighting, benches, clean up etc.)?*

Currently the City and BID #2 have an arrangement where the BID maintains some of the City owned segments of the Historic Third Ward riverwalk. To maintain this plaza, the City will enter into an agreement to encompass the maintenance of the riverwalk segments and this plaza with appropriate funding.

- *What will prevent trash from accumulating in the marsh grasses? And who will be responsible for clean-up?*

As in any open space, trash may accumulate from time to time. A routine clean-up program will be incorporated into the maintenance agreement.

- *How resilient are the benches to graffiti?*

As design development proceeds, the designer will be asked to address this issue.

5. Public Health and Safety –

- *In winter, how much steam will condense and form ice on the ground, posing a potential hazard? Will the steam cause a visual block?*

The steam is intended to produce a soft mist. It will not diminish visibility. The implications of potential condensation associated with the soft misting of steam will be studied as the design develops.

- *If the steam is generated from stormwater, is there a danger of aerosolization of hazardous contaminants?*

As design development proceeds, DCD/DPW will work with the designer to identify if this is, in fact, a health concern and if so, to insure proper precautions are taken.

- *Will the marsh grasses and warmth generated from the steam in winter provide a desirable habitat for rodents?*

The individual planting areas are very small and intended to be planted with perennial plantings that will change with the seasons. Without the presence of a food source, it is unlikely that the plaza plantings will attract additional rodents.

- *Will the bamboo grove so dense, that it provides a 'hiding place' for vagrants?*

The bamboo will be planted in such a way as to not provide a 'hiding place' for vagrants. In addition, as the bamboo develops, it can easily be thinned if needed.

- *Will the warm steam pits will be an attraction in the winter for homeless?*

The steam pits can be programmed with a timer to only emit heat at certain times of the day/night. In the event that loitering would occur here, it will be handled in the same manor as it is throughout the Third Ward.

6. *Flooding -*

- *If the plaza water is allowed to enter the plaza, is there a potential of water reaching the building?*

During design development, detailed site grading will be engineered to prevent water from reaching the building.