A ‘Newer’ Orleans

Roll Call
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By Stephanie Woodrow

The visions six architectural firms have of what New Orleans could be are part of the exhibit “Newer Orleans — A Shared Space” at the National Building Museum. The Dutch and American architectural firms were asked “to create structures or landscapes to illustrate how architecture could facilitate community, create an urban icon and provide a way for New Orleans to connect back to the land.” MVRDV, UN Studio and West 8 represented the Netherlands’ vision, while the United States is represented by Huff + Gooden Architects, Morphosis and Hargreaves Associates.

“The Netherlands shares a genuine affinity to New Orleans because the Dutch also know what it means to live with the constant threat of flooding,” said Boudewijn van Eenennaam, ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the United States.

The exhibit includes drawings, sketches, blueprints and 3-D models of the proposals. Analysis of each of the projects, including costs and benefits of each design, are also on display.

“I am confident that in bringing the Newer Orleans exhibition to Washington, D.C., we will convince Americans that this beautiful city can and should be rebuilt and reinvigorated,” van Eenennaam said.

“It will definitely be going to New Orleans for the anniversary of the hurricane,” said Bryna Lipper, director of marketing and communications for the National Building Museum. She said the exhibit will travel elsewhere, although no places other than New Orleans have been confirmed.

“The ‘Building in the Aftermath’ series has become an important forum for professionals to exchange information about reconstruction and planning following a disaster,” said Chase Rynd, executive director of the National Building Museum. “With the Newer Orleans exhibition, the National Building Museum has an opportunity to share insights from our colleagues in the Netherlands about water management and the built environment. Presenting the Newer Orleans exhibition is one of many ways the museum promotes sharing knowledge following such devastation.”

The display, co-sponsored by The Royal Netherlands Embassy’s “Meet the Dutch” program and the National Building Museum’s “Building in the Aftermath,” went on display Friday and was attended by Sen. Mary Landrieu (D-La.). “Newer Orleans — A Shared Space” will be on display at the National Building Museum until July 30.

Organized by the Netherlands Architecture Institute, Tulane University School of Architecture and Artforum magazine, “Newer Orleans — A Shared Space” was funded
by Shell Oil Company, the Ministry of Economic Affairs of the Netherlands and the Royal Netherlands Embassy.

The National Building Museum is located at 401 F St. NW. It offers free admission and is open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.