

# Memorial

**W**ith the official conclusion of the recovery process at the end of May, the memorial process for the World Trade Center site entered a new phase. Earlier that month LMDC enlisted the services of Beyer Blinder Belle to do the master plan for the site under a fast-paced schedule, culminating in the announcement of a preferred scheme by December 2002. At the time of

this document's printing, the first six schemes—each centered around a design approach to the memorial—are being aired to the public for the first time. The grief for the near 3,000 individuals lost is still very much with us. We are still grappling with the most appropriate way to express this grief in the reconfiguration of the World Trade Center site. The two competing impulses are still present: one to rebuild the City triumphantly and the other to preserve much of the site as "sacred ground." Finding a consensus along this spectrum continues to be the focus of our work.

The Memorial Working Group of the Civic Alliance was set up as a steering committee of representatives of more than 20 groups and individuals who have an interest in shaping plans for memorializing the victims and survivors of 9/11. Organized in October 2001, the Working Group has been focusing on developing an understanding of how the disaster of September 11th has impacted different people in different ways. It has also looked at how the events of 9/11 can be commemorated in the context of broader plans for rebuilding the World Trade Center site and the surrounding Downtown district.

This chapter is structured into two major parts. In the first section, we detail a series of findings that outline the diverse interests and forces present, which must be taken into account if an effective resolution is to be found for the memorial process. In the second section, we give a series of recommendations that we believe should serve as an effective framework for a memorial design process.



**Fig. 6: Impromptu Memorial at Union Square, September 2001**  
(Photograph: Nathaniel H. Brooks/Van Alen Institute)

## FINDINGS

LMDC has been overseeing the production of a master plan for the World Trade Center site under a seven-month deadline. The Working Group's concern is that the schedules for the master plan of the site and for the memorial process are on separate parallel tracks. If this remains the case, a portion of the site will be set aside for the memorial and designed at a later date. We feel that this would be a missed opportunity for the design of the overall site, where ideally the memorial would be developed in conjunction with the remaining development parcels. Therefore, our findings raise the following three critical issues:

- The master planning process is well underway with the announcement of the six scenarios by LMDC. However, it remains to be seen if the redevelopment process allows enough flexibility to accommodate both a memorial process that has yet to be developed and for creative memorial plans as they evolve.
- Each of the six schemes defines a location and urban design approach to the memorial, prior to conceiving an actual design for the memorial itself. Yet alternatively, the design of the memorial could come first, based on the program and mission, which in turn would determine its location.
- The events of 9/11 have affected a wide variety of constituents outside the victims' families. In addition to current efforts of family members in groups such as the LMDC Families Advisory Council, it still needs to be determined who else should be included in the process and how participation should be achieved.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the above findings the Memorial Working Group makes the following recommendations.

### **Adopt a Blueprint for a Clear Memorial Process.**

We urge the LMDC to use the principles established in the following Blueprint as the basis for creating an inclusive memorial process. The Blueprint emphasizes the need to coordinate the redevelopment of the site with the planning of the memorial(s), to establish an interdisciplinary advisory committee to best integrate the creation of a memorial(s) with the general planning process for the site, to seek the consultation of experts

in memorial planning, to develop a clear sequence of steps, to hold an open design competition, and to ensure diverse public input throughout the process.

### **I. Coordinate time frames of memorial and planning into one process.**

Ideally, under less urgent and complex conditions, the mission statement and the program for the memorial could be established first and would drive the urban design of the overall site. Instead, we are dealing with the necessity of making a series of complex and pressing decisions first about the transportation, infrastructure and sub-surface conditions.

Given this, we need to make the case for initiating and synchronizing the memorial process—or at least the program development/master planning phase—so that a superior, more holistic design for the site will result as the two evolve together. To that end we recommend the following:

- Announce the start of the memorial process and outline a timeframe for it, now that the recovery period has officially come to a close.
- Establish benchmarks that would coordinate the master plan with the memorial process—i.e., the presentation of the three schemes in the fall would coincide with the completion of a mission statement; and the announcement of a final scheme in December would coincide with the completion of the preliminary memorial program phase.

### **II. Establish a new inter-constituency advisory committee structure.**

Currently, the memorial topic has been the focus of the LMDC Family Advisory Council, as is appropriate for the group most directly and tragically affected by the event. Building on their work to date, it is our recommendation that another approach be considered. Given the complex nature of the urban design solution(s) required, and the immense number and variety of affected constituents involved we propose a new committee structure. This entails the establishment of two committees, which would function both independently and together, to comprise an advisory structure for the memorial process:

- A “Memorial Advisory Committee” comprised of a small group (9 members) of design professionals, including one or more who is a(n): architect, planner, landscape architect, transportation planner, urban his-



**Fig. 7: Tribute in Light (view from Church Street) March, 2002**  
(Photograph: Marcus Woollen/Van Alen Institute)

ice, cultural religious and educational institutions.

- As we envision it, one or two delegates from each of the eight existing LMDC advisory committees would be chosen to participate on the Memorial Steering Committee and would channel input from those committees accordingly. Not all delegates need to be equally represented; for example, a greater number of delegates could be from the current LMDC Family Advisory Group.
- With this proposed structure, the nine LMDC advisory groups would in effect serve as a larger “task force” to the smaller Memorial Steering Committee.

Additionally, we recommend having liaisons that represent those affected from New Jersey, and the national and international communities. Should the site ultimately become a national memorial, a representative of the National Park Service should be present as well.

- The purpose of this group would be to promote a more integrated discussion about the memorial among affected constituents than is currently possible because the advisory groups are defined by single categories. Members of the Memorial Steering Committee should also reach out beyond existing advisory groups to include new members in each category so as to broaden the input and perspective on the memorial process.

torian/preservationist, visual artist, etc. The purpose of this group would be to provide professional expertise and design guidance throughout the process. They would also serve as an advisory committee to the LMDC/PANYNJ professional consultants to ensure that the memorial is fully considered in all aspects of the general planning process for the site.

- A “Memorial Steering Committee” comprised of a larger group (21-31 members) of directly affected constituents, including victim’s family members, survivors, rescue and recovery workers; those also adversely impacted such as community residents and workers; and those involved in the life of the downtown/civic community, such as leaders of social serv-

Both groups would confer privately and then together on every stage of the memorial process. Each group would have to reach consensus both internally and then together on decisions at every stage of the process. If necessary, a decision could be reached first by an internal majority vote within each group, and then finalized by two affirmative group votes. Despite the difference in size, each group would in effect have one single vote, and no decision would be reached unless it received two concurring group votes.

LMDC officials/staff leadership in conjunction with designated members from the LMDC board

would not cast a vote on their own behalf. Rather, their role would be to moderate the process and to ensure its integration with the overall master plan of the site. To this end, they would send decisions/issues back to the groups for further deliberation or modification as necessary.

**III. Hire a consultant, or team of consultants, specifically for the Memorial process.**

We believe it may be wise to issue an RFP for these consulting services, not limited to specific professions, out of which one may assemble a single firm or combination of entities to provide advice on the memorial process. There are a number of professionals from diverse fields who have specialized in memorial planning and would offer much needed expertise on this complex topic.

Also, we recommended earlier that LMDC have a point of contact on their staff that would focus specifically on memorial issues and would be the spokesperson for LMDC to the public and the press. We strongly support LMDC’s recent creation of such a position, in particular, the additional role this person will play in the potential integration of cultural activities and memorial development.

**IV. Outline a clear sequence of steps.**

Indicate a clear sequence of actions such as:

- Selecting a consultant
- Defining a mission statement
- Developing a preliminary program
- Deciding upon the design selection process
- Inviting/selecting the designers
- Designing competition/jury
- Developing program
- Developing design
- Implementing/constructing the memorial

Each step should be informed by public input through a transparent process whereby public input is gathered (via public hearings, lectures, outreach), responded to (via website, etc), and incorporated.

**V. Plan a design competition and select a jury.**

The design of a memorial should be a competition or an RFP open to everyone, internationally and professionally. In addition, a set of people may be invited to submit proposals. Selection should be determined by one anonymous round of entries. The final judging should be done by both the “Memorial Advisory

Committee” and the “Memorial Steering Committee.” If an agreement is not reached, a second round of the competition should be limited to the top contenders.

**VI. Ensure public input at each stage and specify other means of input and response explicitly.**

- Hold frequent public meetings on a regular schedule regarding memorial development. This would include topics such as mission, process and content.
- Develop a systematic way to synthesize input—from the website, Listening to the City, etc.—and report back to the general public regularly the ideas that are being incorporated and why. This is a recommendation put forth recently by both the Association of the Bar of the City of New York Task Force on Downtown Redevelopment (ABCNY) and the New York Metro Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA) which we feel is crucial.
- LMDC/PANYNJ should be officially responsible for the collection, archival, and coordination of ongoing temporary memorial initiatives.
- Implement this Working Group’s proposed public outreach initiatives described in greater detail in the following section.

**Continue an Outreach Campaign to find a Common Language and Common Ground.**

The success of “Blueprint for a Clear Memorial Process” depends upon continuing the Civic Alliance Memorial Working Group’s public outreach campaign. Directed toward the diverse stakeholders, this campaign will both elicit ideas and help structure the evolving discussion with parameters for creating a permanent memorial. This campaign has four components that each work to ensure public input at every stage of the memorial process.

**I. Develop a meaningful set of questions for the memorial portion of “Listening to the City” on July 20.**

To facilitate public critique of the LMDC’s six development proposals at “Listening to the City,” we developed the following questions:

1. How should the location of the memorial site be determined? Should the location be determined first or should the design idea for the memorial generate the selection of the site?



**Fig. 8: Tribute in Light (view from North Cove, Battery Park City) March, 2002**

(Photograph: Marcus Woollen/Van Alen Institute)

2. Does the time frame for the master plan allow for enough flexibility to accommodate plans for the memorials to evolve?
3. In addition to the families, who should be involved in the memorial process? If diverse participation is desired, how is it best achieved?
4. What are the essential components in an effective memorial process?
5. What values should the memorial(s) convey?
6. How important a factor is size in the development of the memorial(s)?
7. Regardless of size, should the memorial(s) be

fully integrated into the 16-acre development? How can the master plan process allow for both possibilities? Could there be physical thematic, or value driven connections? Should these values be reflected in the design of the overall redevelopment?

8. How should the creator(s)—the designers—of the memorial(s) be chosen?
9. Should memorialization extend into other parts of Lower Manhattan and beyond?
10. What role would temporary/interim memorials play in the overall memorial process?

**II. Use community design workshops to facilitate public input.**

Use community design workshops to gather public input and to work through difficult issues as they arise. These are smaller, less expensive versions of the major effort “Listening to the City.” These workshops will lead to a better understanding of stakeholders’ key concerns and identify contested and/or critical decision areas regarding the site and its role in the memorial process.

**III. Create a Memorial Website.**

We are delighted that LMDC is issuing a RFP for a website for the memorial process at this time. The website should function as a resource to coordinate efforts, inform the public, facilitate archiving memorial processes and broaden outreach. It should serve as the central repository for the outpouring of creativity that has occurred in response to 9/11. The site should post information as well as receive ideas. This website could link to the many other memorial related sites such as “Imagine New York” and the Mayor’s new initiative inviting memorial ceremony suggestions.

**IV. Develop a public lecture series.**

Fund a six-month lecture series, to commence in the fall, on the Memorial process. Lecturers could include a broad range of people and professionals, such as government officials, architects, planners, academics and family members who participated in, led or designed memorial processes in other cities. Other lecturers could be noted cultural historians and writers who can provide a perspective on the cultural context within which this memorial is being created. Each lecture

could have a keynote speaker followed by a panel that takes questions from the audience. The lecture series would provide powerful content and commentary on the process for the memorial website on an ongoing basis.

**V. Develop a questionnaire.**

Offer the public a questionnaire addressing the memorial issue as a means of receiving widespread public input. This questionnaire would present respondents with multiple choice questions in order to collect information uniformly as well as provide them the opportunity to answer open ended questions and comment freely. It would not be intended to address specific design issues. Rather, the questions would be more general regarding the type of memorial, important places, size, etc.

The questionnaire should be developed by those with expertise in the design, collection and analysis of questionnaires. It should reach a diverse audience, especially those who may not have been able to participate in previous face-to-face events and workshops, victims’ families and survivors.

**VI. Supplement these critical components with efforts that would increase and enhance the public’s involvement in the development of a memorial.**

- Establish a network through the public library system for people to give and get information, for those who are not computer users.
- Establish a central place for exhibits and input on the memorial process. A recent New York Times editorial suggested an exhibit at Grand Central Station. Other ideas include an “info-box” akin to what was created in Berlin at Potsdammer Platz, to be located Downtown near the site.
- Support other ongoing outreach efforts.

**CONCLUSION**

In this document we advocate the adoption of the Blueprint for a clear memorial process. We recommend that the time frame for the memorial process be synchronized with the master plan process for the entire site, and that a new inter-constituency advisory committee structure be established. We continue to advocate for a wide variety of public input on the

memorial process, through such initiatives as public hearings, a website, a questionnaire, a lecture series, community design workshops and other events. These are some of the many ways to better understand the depth and quality of feeling around the events of 9/11. If attention is paid to developing an inclusive, transparent and wide-reaching process, we believe we can design a powerful and successful memorial to commemorate the events of 9/11, while also moving forward with the repair and rehabilitation of Downtown.

July, 2002

**Memorial Working Group**

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