

PLACEMAKING MANIFESTO

Writers' Workshop Notes | 10/23/17

Moderator

Kathryn Firth, Urban Design Director, NBBJ, Moderator (for Christine Dunn, Sasaki & BSA Director-at-Large)

Authors/Panelists

Christina Lanzl, Urban Culture Institute & BSA Placemaking Network founder and co-chair

Robert Tullis, GID Urban Development Group & BSA Placemaking Network co-chair

Anne-Catrin Schultz, Wentworth Institute of Technology, Department of Architecture

Participants

Polly Carpenter/BSA Foundation, Anthony Clayton, Deborah Fennick, Júlia Hilário, Marek Jacisin, Victoria LaGuette, Doris Martinez, Neil McCann, Stephanie Osser, Sergio Arturo Perez, Coco Raynes, Eric Reinhard, Renata von Tscharnner, A. V. Woodworth, Sara Wermiel, Douglas Wohn, Claudia Zarazua

Copies of the draft manifesto were handed out and are available [online](http://www.architects.org/committees/placemaking-network) on the BSA Placemaking URL:
www.architects.org/committees/placemaking-network

1. Introductions

The BSA Placemaking Network celebrates its 10-year anniversary with the release of the Placemaking Manifesto. Celebrate the Manifesto launch and a conversation soliciting community input with the co-authors, Christina Lanzl, Robert Tullis and Anne-Catrin Schultz. Christine Dunn, Principal at Sasaki and BSA Board Director at Large, was scheduled to moderate. Christina thanked Kathryn Firth, NBBJ, for moderating and gave a shout-out to Christine Dunn, Sasaki & BSA Director-at-Large, who was called away. Kathryn introduced the [three authors/presenters](#), Christina Lanzl, Robert Tullis and Anne-Catrin Schultz.

2. The Manifesto

- Each panelist honed in on 2 of the 6 paragraphs and briefly introduced the main points:
 - Quality of Life & Active Participation (Christina Lanzl)
 - Sense of Place & Collaboration and Communication (Robert Tullis)
 - Caring About the Community & Tradition and Innovation (Anne-Catrin Schultz)
- Each presenter ended by posing a question or a dilemma

Summary

Placemaking is about sense of place. Everybody – people of all backgrounds, ages and abilities – can participate in creating successful public places. Everyone can serve the agenda of excellence in design, healthy communities and thriving neighborhoods. Our built environment is a common good that comes alive through an understanding of how humans instinctively relate to space, design leadership that leverages it, and activity programming that capitalizes on it.

3. Discussion & Writers' Workshop

The 16 seminar participants commented, asked questions and made editing suggestions. Additional wordsmithing is underway. The overall goal is to keep the main document to 1 page.

Here are some of the suggestions and questions the group developed:

- *What is the Definition of Manifesto?* – A “public record of opinion” (Thesaurus) as well as “carries out prescriptive notions for change” (Wikipedia)...
- *What is the Definition of Community?* – 1. A group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common; 2. A feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals (Merriam-Webster)...
- Can we use the Manifesto’s green, italicized words to further develop content?
- Should we add a headline/mission statement to the *Placemaking Manifesto* as a lead-in, e.g. *At the Placemaking Network, we explore what it takes to make distinctive open spaces in the city.* OR: *The Placemaking Network explores what it takes to further the creation of high-quality, distinctive public places.*
- PLACEMAKING = What transforms space into place? The five (or six?) senses need to be engaged. Include the following elements:
 - Timelessness
 - Shared experience and shared memory
 - Permanent vs. temporary
 - Static vs. non-static
 - Provides the connective tissue between places
 - Add an element of physical activity
- What is place? – e.g. experience by the five senses within a short walk
- How do we foster good leadership so that the development of public places moves in a good direction?
- Who offers, provides, conducts oversight?
- What is the role of non-profits in the planning process?
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- Which popular precedents need to be studied and analyzed? Examples are:
 - Quincy Market, in the 1970s: Jim Rouse was a private developer with a vision of authenticity
 - Vietnam Memorial by Maya Lin: profound statement about historic tragedy
 - Disney World: corporate vision to exploit phantasies of children
 - Universal Studios: invented narrative of a place, a realized concept of many cultures coming together, all with their own artifacts, from different points of time,
 - Q: Was the narrative inclusive?
 - A: It was not of our time. Instead, no one owned that moment because it was not real.
- What is the role of public vs. private funding in placemaking?
- Which advice would we share with coming generations?
- Which issues should we address? Examples:
 - Identity, storytelling and education as important aspects
- How do we train people?
- How do we mark place, history and time through public art? Examples are:
 - Ross Miller’s shoreline at Faneuil Hall Plaza: a different, discreet, word-of-mouth experience
 - Mags Harries crushed bronze veggies at Haymarket: a vernacular topic that explains the function of place during the week, when the vendors are NOT there
 - Crispus Attucks flagstone circle in front of the Old State House: a timeless and unobtrusive marker of important history