

Report of the Third Havana Harbour Charrette

Conducted
29 March to 4 April, 2009

Cuban and Norwegian Chapters
Council of European Urbanism



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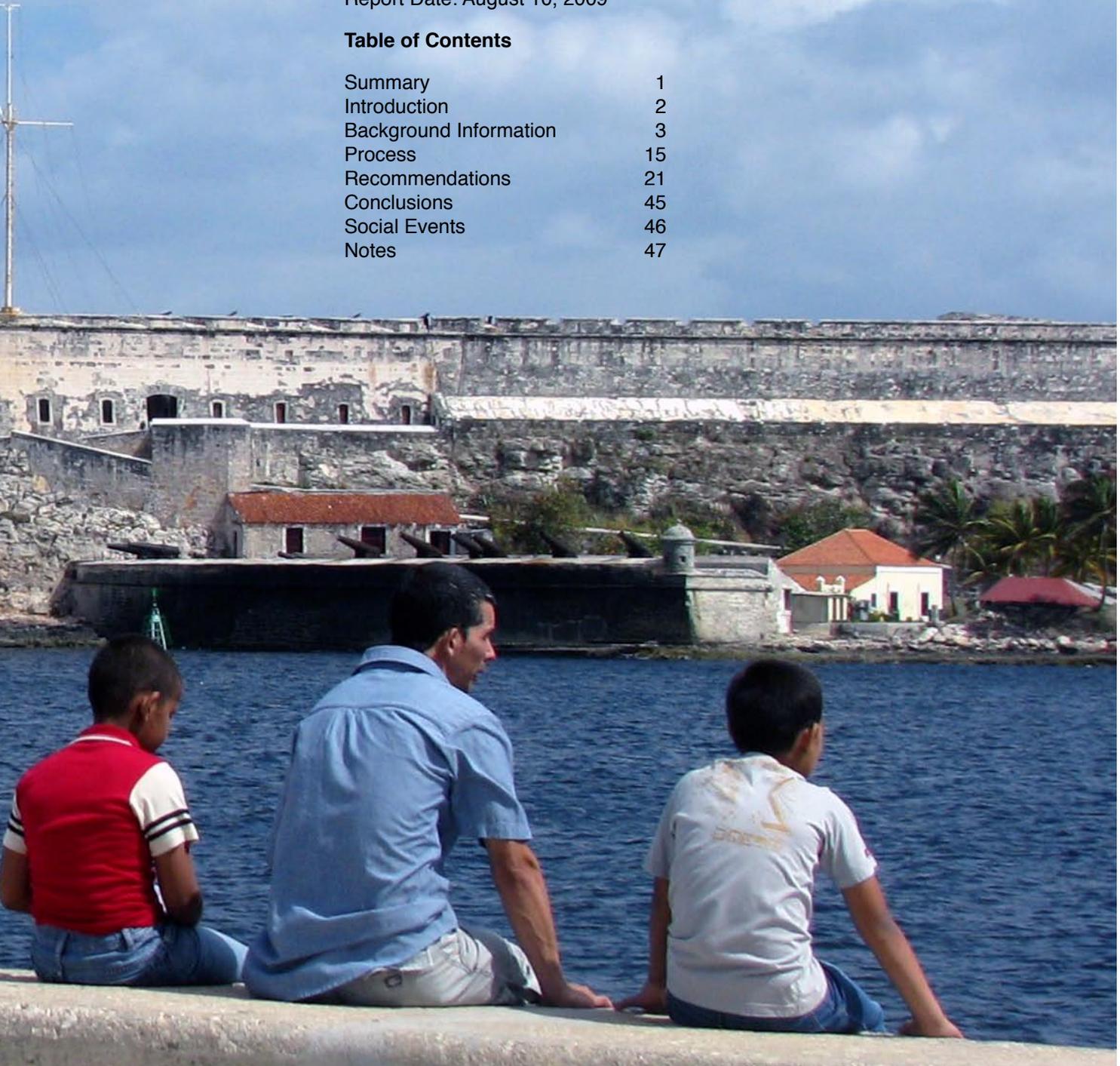
Charrette Organizers: Cuban and Norwegian Chapters - Council of European Urbanism
Charrette Partner: Academy of Urbanism (UK and Ireland)

Julio César Pérez Hernández
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Report Editor: John Pilling
Report Date: August 10, 2009

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Special Thanks

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Summary

Thirty architects, landscape architects, planners, and designers from Australia, Europe, North America, and Cuba recently came together for the third Havana Harbour Charrette.

The purpose of this, and the other two charrettes preceding it, is to bring together members of both the international and Cuban design community to propose strategies for implementing the concepts of “A Master Plan for XXI Century Havana,” authored by Cuban architect Julio César Pérez Hernández

In Mr. Pérez Hernández’s words, “the plan is not an official document, but an act of love for the City of Havana and those who live there.”

The charrette’s focus is the waterfront revitalization portions of the master plan. The harbor was historically the economic engine of Havana’s economy but like many ports has been hit by its inability to handle large container shipping resulting in obsolescence of the port facilities.

The study area comprises Old Havana, the elevated link from the National Railroad Station, the former Tallepiedra power station, the Atarés peninsula, the traditional Afro-Cuban community of Regla, the redundant adjacent oil refinery and the attractive fishing port of Casablanca.

It is generally believed that the harbor’s regeneration can provide a good model for the rest of the city.

The charrette’s strategic development proposals provide for up to 25,000 units of social housing, community services, and infrastructure supported by 2.5 million square meters of for-profit construction for international enterprises.

Proposed commercial activities to be housed in the for-profit buildings build on the capabilities of Cuba’s well-educated workforce. They include extra-care and private housing; health services for international patients; small-scale, clean industry; expanded maritime leisure (including more cruise ships); and a roll-on-roll off ferry terminal.



Pérez Hernández commenting on this year’s results, said: “Again, as with the master plan, the three international charrettes held in 2007, 2008 and 2009 have provided a long term vision and a comprehensive planning strategy for the area for the first time in history.

“Team work stemming from the charrette has produced lots of ideas that encompass the proposal of a spine boulevard along the harbor perimeter to become a buffer zone that grants protection and public space, and allows views to the water.”

“The transformation of the current derelict industrial character of the harbor and its conversion into a modern recreational, commercial and sport harbor provides the city with a magnificent opportunity to create new economic and urban values, a new image and a safe environment.”

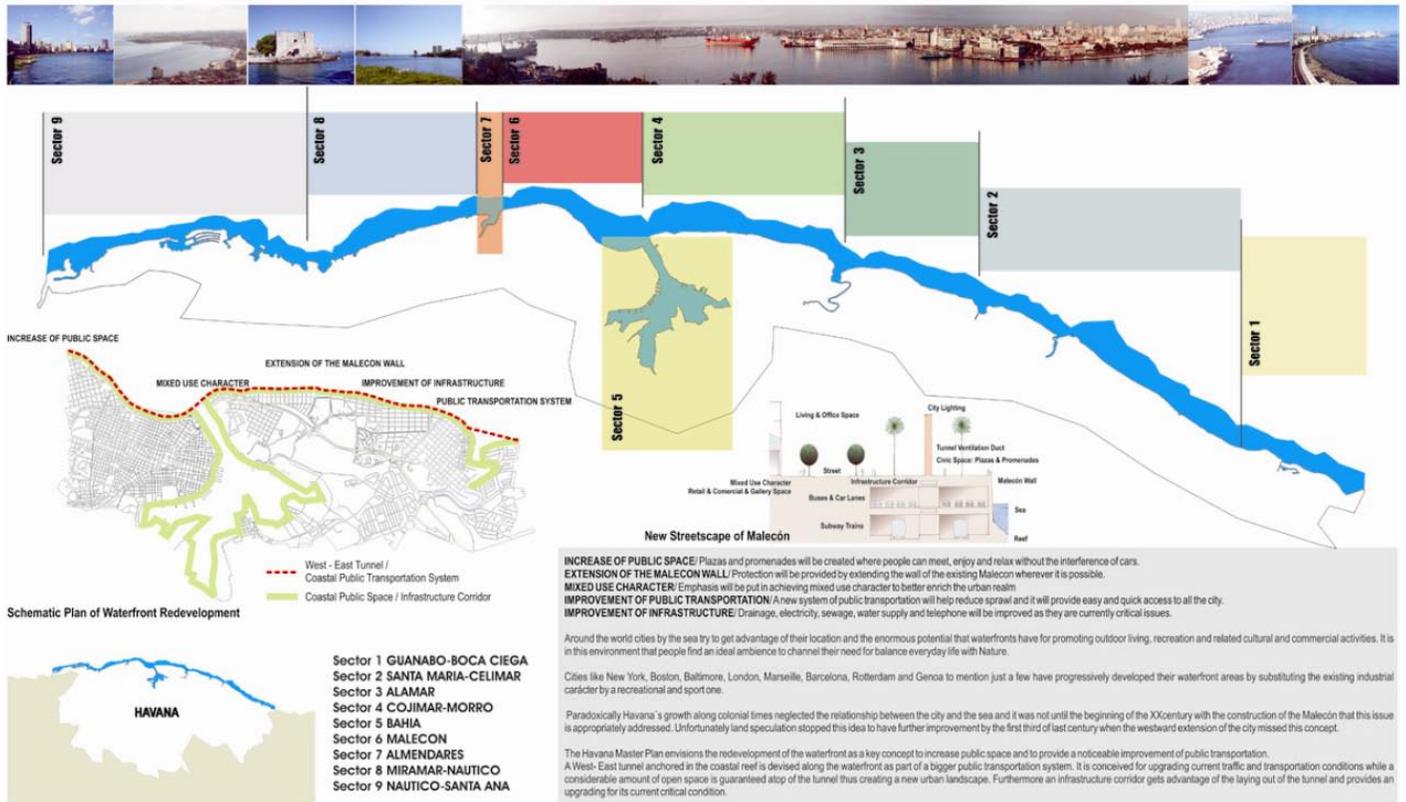
“The harbor, thus, can become a gateway to the city with new mixed-use buildings responding to the waterfront, a new public transportation system that incorporates different means of transport -from bicycles to light rail - and ensures total connectivity,” added, Pérez Hernández.

Roger Zogolovitch, representing the UK-based Academy of Urbanism that was attending the charrette for the first time said: “The charrette was provocative, exciting and a highly creative intervention with contributors drawn from all over the world. The opportunity of engaging with the social, economic, historical and cultural heritage of Havana made the journey memorable.”

“The open ended charrette process has the benefit of a two way exchange - of us all learning from the Cuban experience and in our final report leaving our imprint of ideas, emotions and visual response as part of the exciting process of evolution of this extraordinary Caribbean city. The UK Academy of Urbanism welcomes its inclusion and our members present enjoyed the creative engagement.”

see note 1

Introduction:



The III Havana Harbour Charrette took place between March 92th and April 4th in Old Havana, Cuba with the participation of people from Australia, Belgium, Canada, Cuba, England, Germany, Norway, Slovakia and United States of America.

The Charrette was preceded by a week tour of three World Heritage Sites of Cuba: Havana, Cienfuegos and Trinidad led by Cuban Professor Julio César Pérez as in the two previous editions.

The III Havana Harbour Charrette was organized by the Cuban and the Norwegian Chapters of CEU together with US architect John Pilling and Slovakian urban designer Jana Milosovicova. The Academy of Urbanism (UK & Ireland) co-partnered the event, and Moderno AS (Norway) handled its financial administration.

The III Havana Harbour Charrette was developed according to the schedule prepared, proposed and submitted by Julio César Pérez to the CEU and the organizers. Who all agree about focusing on different aspects of the harbor and the detailed planning of Casablanca as the revitalization of the Havana waterfront is one of the key concepts stated in A Master Plan for XXI century Havana (1) and the Harbour Sector is one of the most important sectors defined in it.

A complete set of scale plans and aerial pictures was provided for the different teams to use in their work.

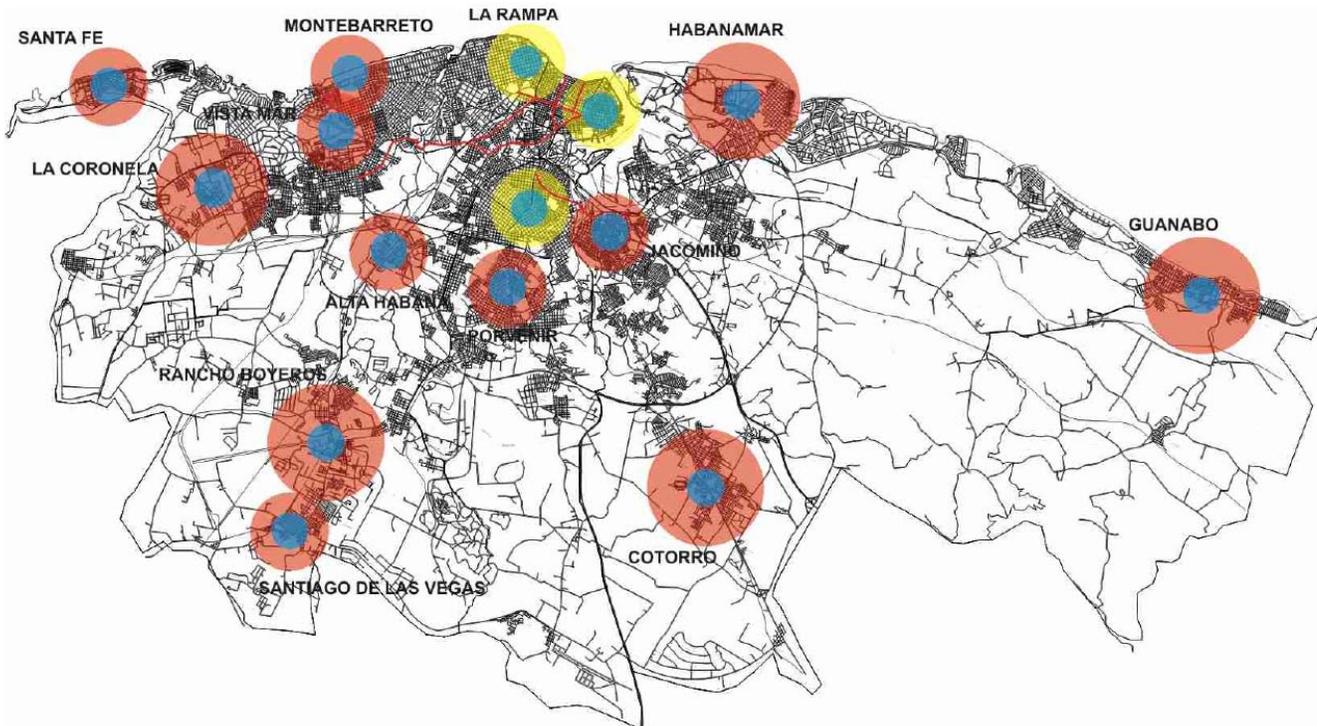


As the design work progressed, Julio César Pérez met with all the teams to focus on the aspects that were either criticized or needed refinement. Some elaboration on the concepts of the Master Plan for XXI Havana arose from these meetings.

The III Havana Harbour Charrette was filmed by Nancy Kenney, President of New Urbanist Media, and Consuelo Althouse for further educational use on-line as Charrette Development.

See note 2

The Havana Harbour Charrette and “A Master Plan for XXI Century Havana”



Havana is a city full of magic and poetry and a city with a spirit - Genius Loci - that gives life to both people and place. It is still today a polycentric city with a heritage spanning over 450 years within an extension of 727 square kilometers and a current population of over 2.2 million inhabitants. Although housing, public transportation and infrastructure are critical issues that affect its current functioning, the diverse kinds of urbanism and architecture that inform its still well kept urban fabric are worth saving.

“A Master Plan for XXI Century Havana” is a comprehensive urban project conceived and developed by Professor Architect Julio César Pérez Hernández and his team. The Master Plan was not commissioned by anyone, it is a work of love, a professional and human endeavor for the salvation of the city and it has been done for free. It is not an official plan, but an individual reflection on the city, its history, and its urban evolution and at the same time a proposal for preserving its urban and architectural legacy while creating new economic and urban values for the future.

For the first time in history the Master Plan for Havana provides a vision for a comprehensive plan and spans from urban planning to urban design. This is demonstrated along the introduction of the present document - as the city's growth was always based on partial projects - and with the proposal.

The master plan is conceived for 4.5 million people, aimed at preserving the city's historic urban and architectural legacy, and intended to encourage future urban and economic development.

The plan aspires to recreate a pedestrian friendly urban ambience that encourages outdoor living - according to Cuban's idiosyncrasy - and social and cultural integration where people can meet, work, relax, and enjoy.

All around the world cities by the sea try to get advantage of their location and the enormous potential that waterfronts have for promoting outdoor living, recreation and related cultural and commercial activities.

Paradoxically, Havana's growth along colonial times neglected the relationship between the city and sea based only upon defensive criteria. It wasn't until the beginning of the twentieth century that this issue was addressed with the Malecón.

The master plan envisions waterfront redevelopment as a key concept to increase public space and to provide noticeable improvement to public transportation.

The harbour sector is considered in the Master Plan to be the most important part of the waterfront development. The principles of its regeneration can be applied to the rest of the city.

In environmental terms, the proposal involves sanitation of the harbour area and the existing rivers. One of the key aspects of the plan is to turn the current industrial character of the harbour into a sport and recreational one allowing at the same for the increase of public space in its entire perimeter and creation of new mixed use areas mostly for residential, commercial and cultural facilities as well as sports.

See note 3

The following overall concepts are the backbone for the work for Havana Harbour:

A long-term vision that is comprehensive, embraces all issues, and recognizes their inter-connectedness;



Genoa dirac300 / Alvaro (flickr)

A change in the harbour's character from its current industrial orientation into a recreation, commercial, and sport center;

The **Harbour as the gate to the city** giving Havana a new image of its economy and urban values;



Barcelona Transit James Aslasken (flickr)

A comprehensive public transportation system connecting the whole;



Busquets, J.: Barcelona. The Urban Revolution of a Compact City. Presidents and Fellows of Harvard College, 2005 p. 441

A spine boulevard accessible to all along the waterfront with plazas, squares, parks, and promenades that frame views to the water;

Open spaces defined by buildings with active ground floors forming a continuous edge;

Green areas woven both visually and physically into the whole area;

Elimination of existing pollution and its sources;

Social and cultural integration which provides for the interests of all the harbour's communities.



Mixed Use buildings to guarantee vitality at all times of the day and night; and

New buildings that respond to the waterfront.

See note 3



Breen, A.; Rigby, D
The New Waterfront: A Worldwide Urban Success Story.
Thames and Hudson, 1996. ISBN 500 34145 1; p. 166

Urban Design Principles for the Third Havana Harbour Charrette

At the beginning of the charrette Julio César Pérez elaborated on the overall concepts of the Master Plan for XXI Havana with sets of principles as an additional guide to the upcoming work:

1. Improve Existing Identity and Enhance Local Character
2. Involve the Community. Places are for People
3. Invest Effectively. Good Design is Good Business
4. Create Excellent New Places. Have a visionary approach. Think Big
5. Deliver Sustainable Environmental Solutions. Think of Future Generations
6. Connect Places visually and physically
7. Manage the investment and think of Maintenance
8. Regenerate throughout, LEED
9. Work together. Get the team right-multidisciplinary
10. Review our Work. Improve continuously

Architecture and Development

1. All waterfront developments should be proposed with destinations defined and connections planned
2. The scale of buildings immediately bordering the waterfront should be of a maximum of 4-7 story buildings that actively engage the public space instead of towers and frame and allow views to the water

3. Free standing, iconic buildings need to be mixed-use buildings
4. Ground level uses should be commercial or public institutional uses that support public activities and animate the urban realm

Creating Great Places

1. Major destinations and active areas should allow evening activities
2. Parks should not be at major destinations
3. Seasonal activities should be integral to each destination
4. Start with the idea of 10 Destinations (Places, activities). Connect them
5. Public Use and Public Outcomes- primary objective
6. Public Access along the Waterfront
7. Promenades serve the best Waterfronts
8. Limited roads and good edges

Connections and Access to the Waterfront

1. Access to waterfront is best achieved with esplanades, ramblas, and linear parks that draw people to them and then pull them down the water
2. Parking should be off site with access being by trolleys and ferries
3. Vehicle access other than transit should have few or no presence and access should be limited by deliveries.

Waterfront (re)development

Worldwide, port cities have formulated and implemented plans for revitalizing their harbours. Examples such as Barcelona, Berlin, Boston, Brisbane, Charleston, Detroit, Edinburgh, Genoa, Hamburg, Honolulu, Lelystad, London, Marstrand, New York, Palma de Mallorca, Shanghai, Sydney, and Vancouver provide a perspective for envisioning a future for Havana.

Common problems for these ports were the need for:

- **Transformation** from previous, mostly industrial uses to new ones;
- **Decontamination and revitalization** of large areas;
- Creation of **complex urban systems**; and
- Creation new **representative places** for leisure, relaxation, housing, and commerce.

Successful harbour transformation projects have focused on:

- **Design** - proper response to tradition and local DNA;
- **Functionality** - (among others) Connectivity, Governance, Energy efficiency, Resilience and Longevity;
- **Sustainability** - responsible planning in the age of global warming;
- **Quality** Urban Architecture /and Open Space;

Here are four examples of this worldwide redevelopment process.



http://www.krierkohl.com/projects/proj_batavia.html
Accessed 15 March 2009

Lelystad Batavia Haven

An example of harbour location redevelopment is in the Netherlands where most of the projects are about creating new cities on “greenfields” or new created land. The exposed location of the harbour district Batavia Haven on the water with an ideal southwest orientation calls for an urban design proposal based on a clear approach.

Through intensive collaboration with the client, a design concept was quickly developed that respected the basic requirements of the community and the interests of concerned parties in the area, including the firms in neighboring Batavia Stad and the operators of “de Bruine Vloot”, the Hanzestad company.

Source: www.krierkohl.com



MorBCN (flickr)

Barcelona

Barcelona’s old waterfront on the Mediterranean was an out of date industrial land cut off from the rest of the city by a highway and railway. Like Havana, growth in the city was once focused away from the waterfront. However, the city’s plan for the 1992 Olympic Games changed all that. The highway was put underground, thus reconnecting the city with its waterfront. New beaches, parks, and neighborhoods were created on this newly-open land. A reorganization of railroad, sewage, and water infrastructure proved incredibly valuable. Finally, at the edge of the sea opposite the Olympic Village, the city built a broad new beach, for which sand continually must be imported.

Barcelona used public-sector funding to leverage private investment, a familiar technique today that was not common 15 years ago. The federal government spearheaded beach development and the suppression of the highway, which inspired private investors to partially support Olympic Village’s conversion into private housing. These projects spurred private development all along the waterfront.

source: <http://www.planphilly.com/node/475>, Accessed 20 March 2009



bitblue (flickr)

Genoa

As is the case for Havana Harbour, the port of Genoa started as a natural inlet. It began to be used in the Fifth Century BCE. The first records of port facilities there date from about the year 1000.

The history of the Port and its development coincides with the history of shipping. Port lands were expanded and developed to match innovations in vessels and cargo handling. During the 20th century, the port traffic moved more and more to the Western part of the city and the old area remained practically unused until the restructuring centered around an international exposition in 1992 gave it back to the community.

The idea driving the Old Port's redevelopment was to create a seamless, open-ended link between the city and the sea. The Port's features, including the Bigo, the cotton warehouses, 17th Century customs storerooms, and the new aquarium, rise up from and look out onto the sea. The project gave back the city her old harbour.

Besides the Old Port, Genoa has other redevelopment sites – Boccadasse (old settlement) and Nervi where, the historicizing principles in architectural renovation were applied. These sites were not about "projects" but about visual images and translation into how the things work – what is nice, what makes the DNA of the area.



Nrbelex (flickr)

London, Canary Wharf

Although it has an overpowering scale incompatible with the goals for Havana Harbour, Canary Wharf gives lessons on what is needed for the success of large-scale, comprehensive development. The project, which had over 1.3 million square meters completed or in construction in 2004 is now the central business district of the London Docklands and the third office node of Greater London. The project was politically controversial and widely regarded as a planning disaster when the venture went bankrupt in the late 1990's. Canary Wharf initially failed as a result of a recession, competition from the City of London, poor transportation links, few national tenants, complicated finances and developer overconfidence. After its initial failure, Canary Wharf's developer at the time of bankruptcy assembled a syndicate of investors to buy the project back and rectify many of the initial, functional problems. In doing so, the developer completed one of the most remarkable real estate turnarounds in modern history.

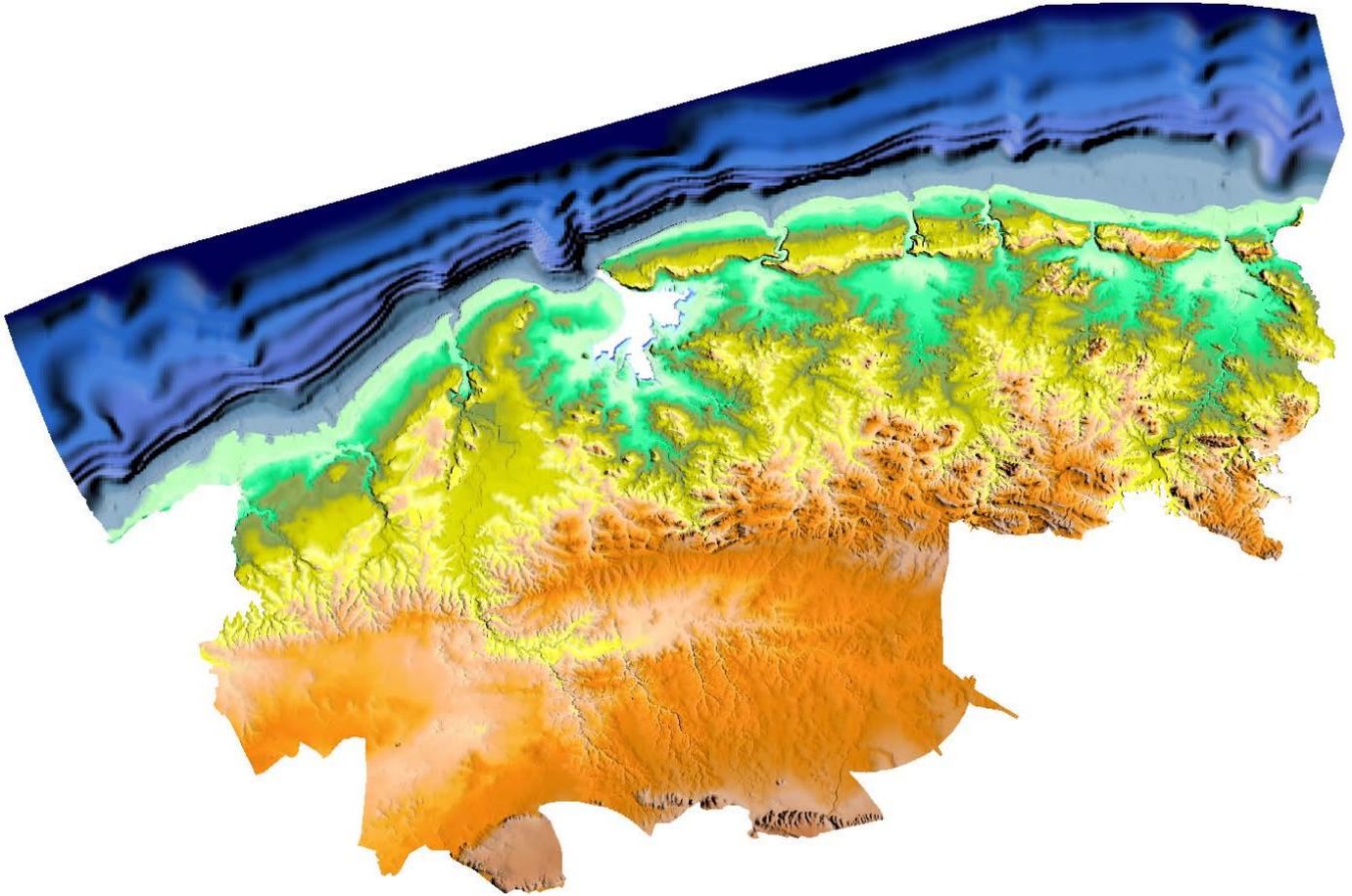
Source: ULI-Urban Land Institute: Remaking the urban waterfront. Washington D.C., 2004.

Lessons learned

The challenge for the third Havana Harbour Charrette has been to combine all the criteria evident from international examples - Design, Functionality, and Sustainability - to assure the sensitive development of Havana.

See note 4

Havana Harbour's Topography, Bathymetry, Flooding, Storm Surges, and Pollution



Experts from the National Institute of Geophysics and Astronomy have studied Havana and its Harbour:

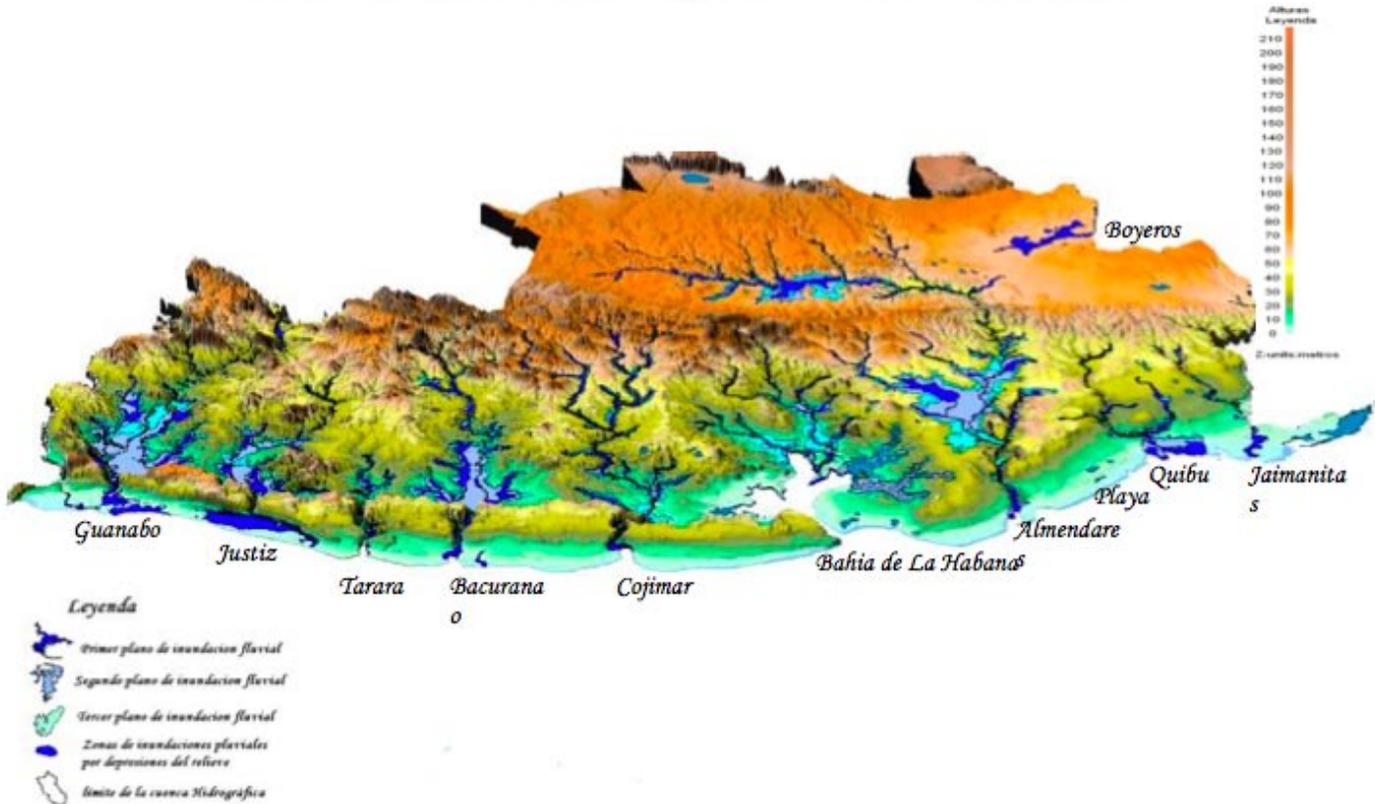
- To evaluate current weather and consider the impact of climate change in order to propose practical solutions for urban design that will adapt and mitigate predicted effects;
- To propose how to restore it to its original, pre-Columbian condition and to reestablish its ecological equilibrium;
- To strengthen the conditions for the conservation of biodiversity and to augment ecological sustainability.

These results of their studies are shared to foster collaboration between Cuban and International participants for the Third Harbour Charrette.

Flooding from rains

The digital model of the landscape of Havana and its surroundings show hills and higher land to the south, but, especially in Habana del Este, coastal bluffs near the edge of the ocean. Rivers in the region run north. The coastal bluffs are the result of Cuba's position on the Caribbean Plate resting on the North American Plate. Over time, the coastland has risen, and the rivers have flowed into basins behind the bluffs and carved canyons in the bluffs to reach the sea. Havana Harbour, with its narrow entrance is one of these types of basins.

Imagen 3D de las zonas susceptible a inundaciones por intensas lluvias en Ciudad de la Habana

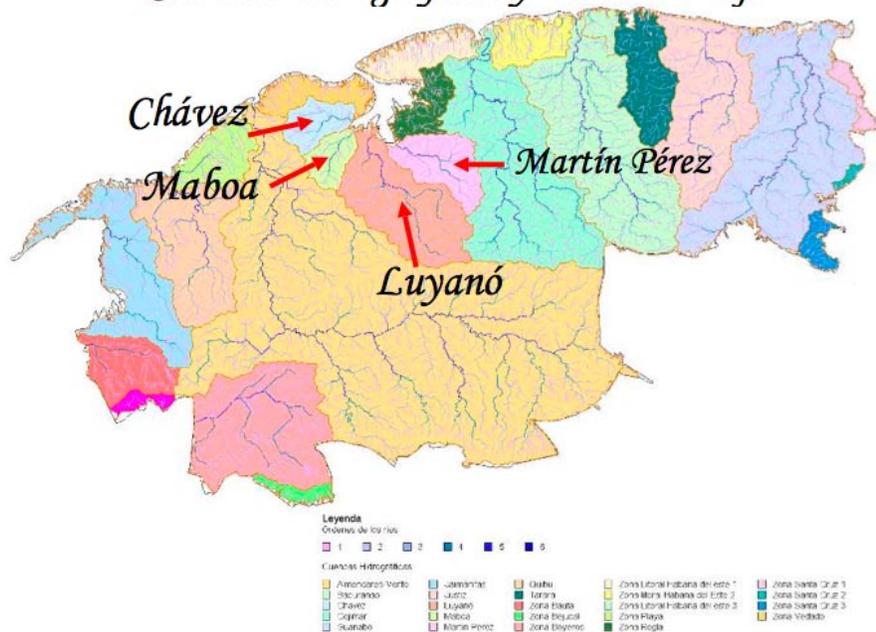


Cuencas hidrográficas y red de drenaje

The Harbour is drained by four small rivers, and it has a wetland on its eastern edge which is shared with the larger river draining the basin to the east.

The potential for flooding from rain is on the south and west sides of the Harbour - Atares and Old Havana south of Cerro. These locations also have a higher water table and more ground water.

The long term solutions to flooding require reducing impermeable surfaces at the upper reaches of the drainage basins. This is strategy requires metropolitan action. For the areas immediately within the harbour, building design should account for one or two meters of flooding.



Flooding from ocean storm surges

Topographic and Bathymetric imagery shows the succession of wave benches that typifies Havana's land forms. Again, the result of interaction between Cuba's portion of the Caribbean Plate and the North American Plate.

The areas most affected by surges align with the maritime canyons created by ancient erosion of the surface streams and rivers. There is a significant submarine canyon outside the mouth of the harbour with additional ones to the west all the way to the Almendares.

The topography of Old Havana and Habana del Este limits the effect of the surges to just the area around the harbour mouth. The harbour itself does not experience much flooding from surges, because the harbour entrance is narrow and relatively shallow.

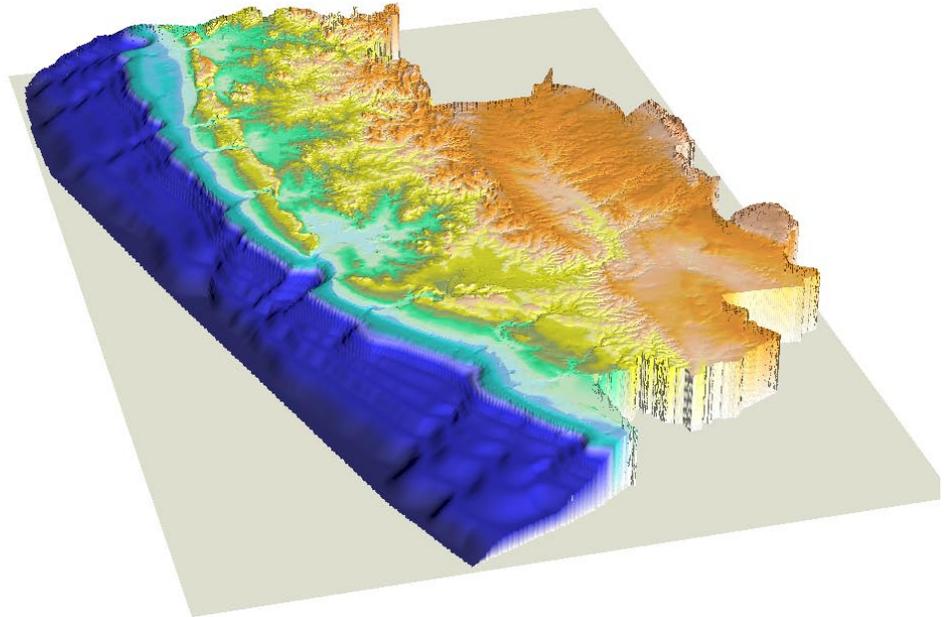
There are far greater flooding problems west of Old Havana, from Centro Havana to the bulk of El Vedado, where Storm surge flooding generally goes as far into the district as Linea. There is considerable flooding for all the coastal districts to the west of the Almendares as well.

The same building solutions that account for flooding from rain will also work for storm surges.

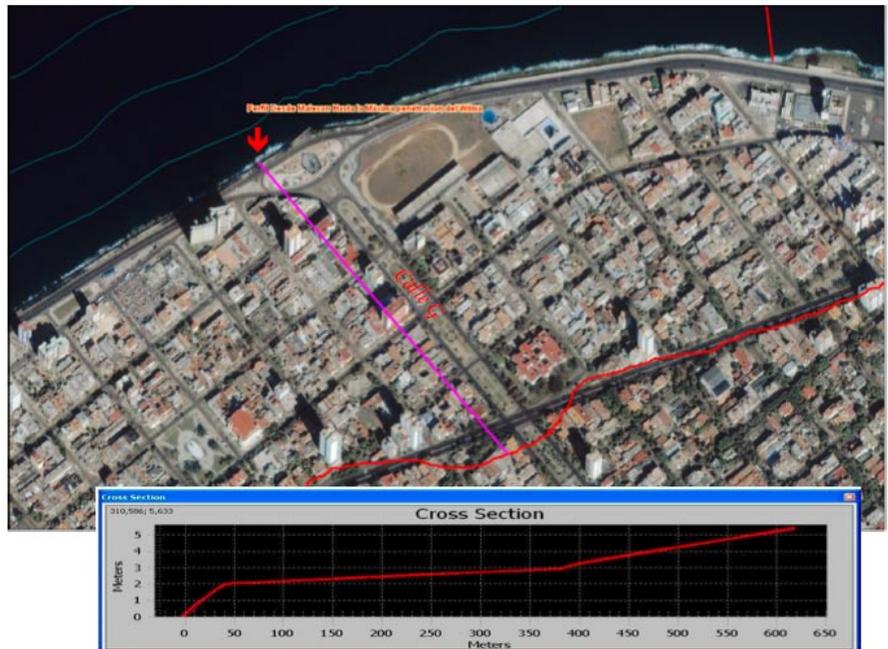
Harbour Pollution

The bulk of the pollution is organic as opposed to chemical. Remediation begins with eliminating the current sources of pollution by means of upgraded sewage treatment. As is the case with flooding, the solution requires a metropolitan strategy. Pollution within the harbour is exacerbated by the very low turnover of tidal water from the sea. What saves the harbor from storm surges is also what makes it more polluted than bodies of water with greater tidal and fluvial volumes.

See note 5



Ejemplo del Huracán Wilma





The charrette study area is about 22 square kilometers. Its boundaries are The Prado, Monte and Christina to the west; The Via Blanca to the south; the wildlife reserve to the east, and the Via Monumental to the North. The charrette has defined its planning districts as La Habana Vieja and the neighborhoods of Cárdenas, Arsenal, and Tallepiedra; Atarés; Regla; Refinería and the wildlife reserve; and Casablanca.

About 4.6 square kilometers of the study area is the harbour itself. About half of the actual land area is existing urban fabric deserving preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration. 75% of the remaining half is outdated industrial landscape and 25% is vacant land. Both the industrial landscape and vacant land are suitable for new urban development.



La Habana Vieja and its adjacent neighborhoods to the south have an area of about two square kilometers. This portion of the charrette study area is defined by the distinctive urban fabric and architectural monuments of the UNESCO World Heritage site. La Habana Vieja is a center for the arts and tourism. The revenues from tourism support the rehabilitation and restoration of the residential fabric. Urban design proposals within the landmark area focus on enhancing public spaces. New development will be concentrated along the waterfront within the historic district, the now redundant railroad yards of the Arsenal and Cristina neighborhoods, and the area around the Tallepiedra power station, which is being decommissioned.

The development of the harbours at Mariel and Matanzas envisioned by Cuba's national plans will render the Atares container port and industry obsolete in the future, leaving one of the largest pieces of real estate for new development on Havana's harbour. This is the portion of the charrette study area most compatible with higher density development.



Atares, with an area of about four square kilometers, is overlooked by an historic fortress of the same name which sits on a hill at the western end of the district. Atares is an industrial docklands separated from the rest of the city by the brownfield site, Cayo Cruz - an abandoned dump - as well as the Via Blanca, a major industrial highway and transit link to Havana's suburbs to the east.



Regla is a 19th century village surrounded by 20th century docklands and industry. It has an area of about three square kilometers. Its original fabric sits on a hill which forms a peninsula extending into the center of the harbor. It consists of one and two story buildings fronting narrow streets which make up roughly rectangular blocks. Steep bluffs separate the village from the flatter, industrial docklands to the west and the refinery to the east. Regla is an Afro Cuban cultural and religious center anchored by the Church of Our Lady of Regla on the waterfront at the northern end of the peninsula. Development goals in Regla are a mix of those for La Habana Vieja and Atares. The 17th century fabric needs rehabilitation. The docklands will become obsolete, and they can be developed into new neighborhoods with a lower density than that of the new proposals for Atares.



JR

Casablanca has an area about four square kilometers. It is a fishing village directly across from Old Havana, separated by the 350 Meter wide harbour entrance channel. Its urban character is entirely unique from other settlement around the harbor, resembling more a Mediterranean hill town than a traditional Hispanic pattern of blocks and plazas. It is defined by some major landmarks, the Morro and Cabana fortresses, the Cristo de la Habana, the Meterological station, and the shipyard. The plateau above the village, between La Cabana and the Via Monumental has the largest amount of vacant land within the charrette study area. Ever since the completion of the tunnel linking Old Havana with Habana del Este, there have been plans for developing this acreage. Habitation Camille Cienfuegos, the Panamerican Village and Alamar, to the north and east of Casablanca all date from after the second revolution. They were developed on the principles of Team 10 with very mixed success. There will required remedial development using principles of urbanism and the goals of the Master Plan. The Master Plan envisions a lower density development on the plateau south of the Via Blanca and high density development on the ocean front land to its north.



JR

Refineria and the wildlife reserve on the eastern end of the harbour have an area about three square kilometers. With the recent completion of the refinery in Cinefuegos and the planned development of new refining capacity in either Mariel or Matanzas, the existing refinery on the harbour will become obsolete. Since this area has been used for the petroleum industry for many decades, it's likely that this will be the major brownfield site of the harbour and perhaps all of Havana. It may take many decades to remediate its conditions. The Master Plan's proposals call for this district to be used for large scale parkland and playing fields. A resource for the residents living around the harbour as well as those in Centro Habana.

Regeneration schemes: “It’s the people, stupid!”

This material is taken from a commentary on the BBC Bristol Web Site about their series on architecture and urban design. When Julio César was at a conference in Europe, Mr. Ferguson gave him a copy of the video about regeneration from the series to share with the charrette participants.

“George Ferguson, the outspoken architect from Bristol claims many of our cities are being left devoid of life by poor regeneration schemes.

Ferguson, who is a former president of the Royal Institute of British Architects, thinks his fellow architects don’t spend enough time thinking about people and how they will use public spaces.

George Ferguson was one of the architects behind **Bristol’s new Harbourside** area. During a visit to Bristol, George praised Corn Street market, which he believes is an area of good practice, where the street is buzzing with life.

“I love this street with its wonderful architecture and great buildings. But they’re mere empty shells if we haven’t got the people here,” he said.



Gloucester Docks: kennysarmy (flickr)



Bristol: PhilippaCrabbe (flickr)

He argues regeneration schemes are failing to create vibrant places that people will want to visit.

“Unless we attract people it’s nothing. It’s got to be about the people, stupid,” he said.

George Ferguson says of the **Gloucester Docks Regeneration**: “If the aim of regeneration is to breathe life back into a city, I find this emptiness a bit spooky”.



New Harbour Copenhagen: 13bobby (flickr)

To make his point, Ferguson decides to visit **Copenhagen**, to see if there are any lessons to be learnt. He says the Danish capital is an inspiration because people have been put at the heart of the planning process.

He says Copenhagen had lost its way but with clever redevelopment its fortunes have been revived. The city is now a vibrant place, full of life and energy.”

See note 6

Process

Day 1. Monday, March 30th

On Monday morning, March 30, the participants met at the Old Havana model where they received a detailed explanation of Old Havana and the harbor area by Julio César Pérez Hernández, President of the Cuban Chapter of CEU before he led a walking tour along the perimeter of the harbor. The participants were told about Old Havana's historic background, architectural styles and the features of the different urban spaces they passed by together with the potential of the area along the tour which included a ferry boat visit to Casablanca, a fishermen's town across from Old Havana.

The afternoon session took place at the Hostal Conde de Villanueva, in Old Havana and it featured a series of presentations by Slovakian urban designer Jana Milosovicova about Waterfront Development Projects, US architect John Pilling, about the 2008 Havana Charrette whose Report he was responsible for editing and Cuban architect Julio César Pérez about Alternative Futures for Havana after which teams were formed for working starting the next day in the morning.

Teams were formed to start working in the different sectors of the harbour site related to the ones within the concept of the Redevelopment of the Waterfront, one of the key features of A Master Plan for 21st Century Havana. The previous work done in the area was considered the precedent for this year's work so there were 2 teams who targeted the Sectors that were considered according to the site's vocation and landscape features:

Team 1: Old Havana, Atarés and Regla:
led by BAC Professor US Arch. John Pilling.

Steve Ashmore, Richard Aylwin, Nelson Edwards, Joel Estévez, Alex Ginard, Héctor Gómez, Ståle Holgersen, Petra Havelka, Jana Milosovicova, Oriam Morales, Jean Rice, Julio C. Román, Sarah Timmerman, Juan Carlos Toledo, and Loren Witzel.

Team 2: Casablanca Sector:
led by British Architect Roger Zogolovitch.

Joanna Alimanestianu, Raymel Capote, Milvia Céspedes, Gilles Cherry, Alexis de la Cruz, Angela Dabkiewicz, Audun Engh, Yanei García, Esteban Martínez, Julio César Pérez, Steve Purviss, Marién Ríos, Kathrin Rupp, Mónica Santos, and Claus Zapffe.



Day 2. Tuesday, March 31st

The morning session was introduced by Julio César Pérez who also introduced PhD Alberto Enrique Garcia's presentation. Alberto is a geographer who works at the National Institute of Geophysics and Astronomy.

The Casablanca team decided to split into two minor teams each one addressing different issues. While a group led by Joanna and Academy of Urbanism member British architect Gilles Cherry decided to focus on the program, the other one led by Academy of Urbanism member British architect Roger Zogolovitch and Cuban architects Julio César Pérez, Esteban Martínez, Alexis de la Cruz, Milvia Céspedes, Marién Ríos and Yanei García decided to work on several site proposals.

John Pilling made an inventory of the problems of this zone for the new participants—lack of open views to the water, lack of sports areas, lack of public transportation, lack of cultural activities and recreational activities, need for comprehensive connectivity, highly polluted area, lack of pedestrian zones, etc..

At the end of the afternoon session there was a pin up by Team 2 as Roger Zogolovitch and Joanna Alimanestianu asked for submitting to the whole group some preliminary ideas as they have returned to the site in the morning and met with some residents of the community. Roger Zogolovitch stated that the ferry boat was considered the fastest way to go from Havana to Casablanca and vice versa but that the location of its terminal is not adequate and he presented a conceptual sketch recognizing the differences in the area and their vocation. Raymel Capote also presented some sketches that try to catch the spirit of Casablanca's architecture.

Both teams agreed to present their preliminary ideas the next day in the morning. The session was adjourned at 6.40 pm.





Day 3, Wednesday, April 1, 2009

The Morning session started with an introduction by Julio César who encouraged the teams to prepare the afternoon's presentation of preliminary ideas to take place after lunch.

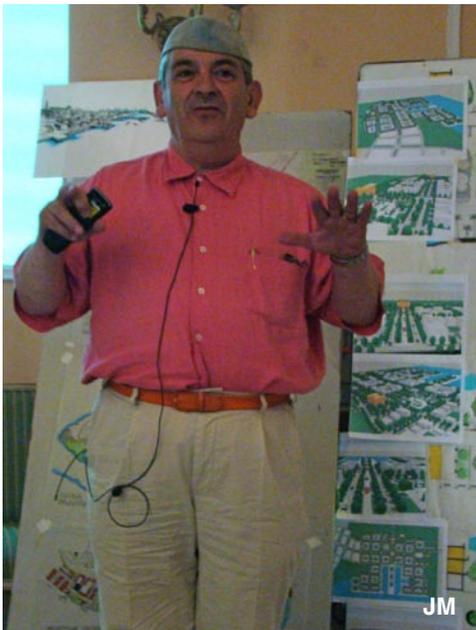
The presentation was moderated by Julio César who asked US Professor and Architect John Pilling to introduce Team 1's work and Academy of Urbanism member Roger Zogolitch to introduce Team 2's work.

Day 4, Thursday, April 2, 2009

Julio César Pérez also encouraged the Casablanca team to provide a more detailed Master Plan for Casablanca for the next days' presentation. He suggested Joanna Alimanestianu and the people who were working together with her to produce an illustration where The Transect Theory could be represented. He suggested that the Old Havana, Atarés and Regla team should produce more concrete proposals to be elaborated and illustrated as the work was too theoretical and lacked a true architectural and urban expression to show people.

In this regard, the team working on Old Havana, Atarés and Regla agreed to back up their analyses with drawings. This team based their proposals on:

1. Making a Real Harbor with tourist ships, boats
2. Create public gardens, parks, promenades, sports fields
3. Create green roofs, walls and terraces, and courtyards
4. To provide the scarps with green
5. Re-route traffic by simply removing redundant roads
6. Re-use key buildings
7. Turn the elevated track into a promenade
8. More ferries and commerce
9. Good use of close to the water areas in Regla
10. Increase Regla's centre character



Given the importance and the amount of work done and to be further done for Casablanca, US Professor John Pilling decided to join the group in search for more synthesis and definition of the plans that were submitted to the audience in the presentation.

The teams worked intensely along the whole morning and afternoon.

Day 5, Friday, April 3, 2009

Julio César met with the two teams to check the work produced so far and encouraged both teams to synthesize the ideas that were worked out so far for the next day's final presentation. He emphasized the need to deal with all the aspects that were discussed in the previous presentation and asked the two teams to consider the relationship among the territories they dealt with, the transition to be established and the visual and physical boundaries and links to produce a seamless urban fabric.

In the case of Casablanca he encouraged the team to take into account the three 'S' that are present in Casablanca: Spirit, Scale, and Sustainability.





Day 6. Saturday, April 4, 2009

All the illustrations and documents were pinned up and ready for the final presentation as scheduled. They showed a big increase not only in the amount of work but above all in the refinement and quality of it compared to the previous presentation and even compared to the work developed during the 2007 and 2008 events for which all the participants were very happy.

Julio César thanked all the participants and attendees. Mr. Jan Tore Holvik and Lisa Reeve Stearns, Norwegian Ambassadors in Havana, Jenny White, Secretary of Science and Culture from The British Council in Havana, and Harald Wisgirdatis, First Secretary and Counselor from the German Embassy, were in the audience together with Cuban and foreign participants from different institutions.



The presentation started with a summary of the whole process and then each team's presentations followed.

Julio César Pérez thanked both teams for their presentations and praised the high quality of the work accomplished. He asked the audience for comments and critics.

Joanna Alimanestianu and several other participants thanked Julio César Pérez for the organization, preparation and for his leadership of the Charrette. Julio César expressed his gratitude for the participation of both local and international attendees and concluded that the 2009 Charrette had been very fruitful and beneficial for Havana.

See note 2

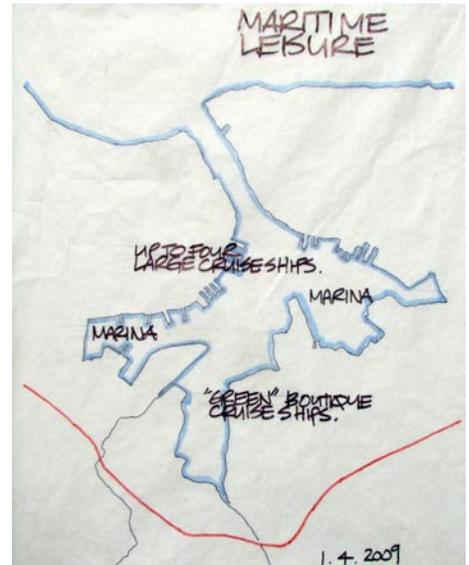
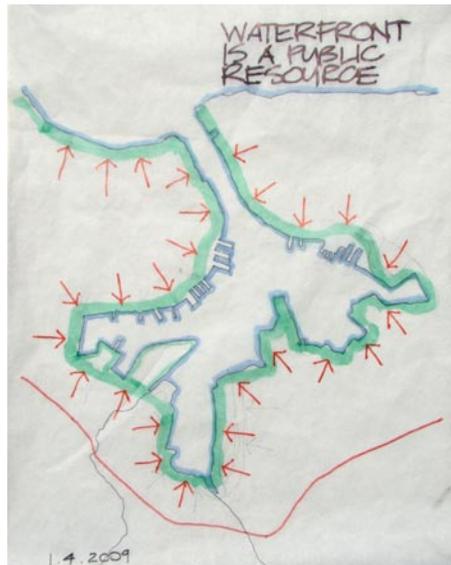
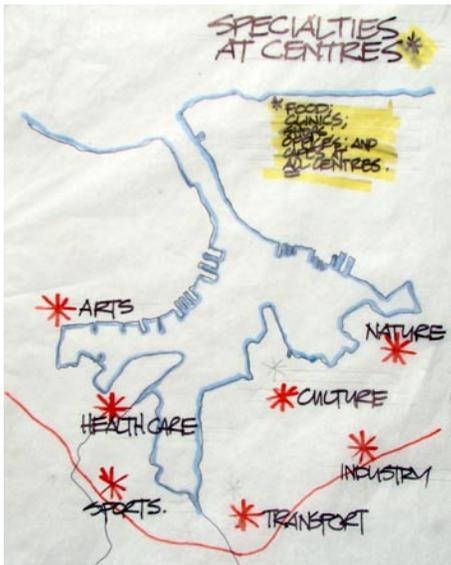
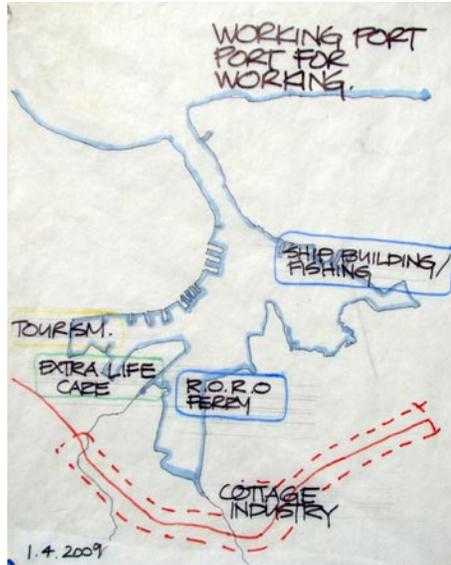


Recommendations

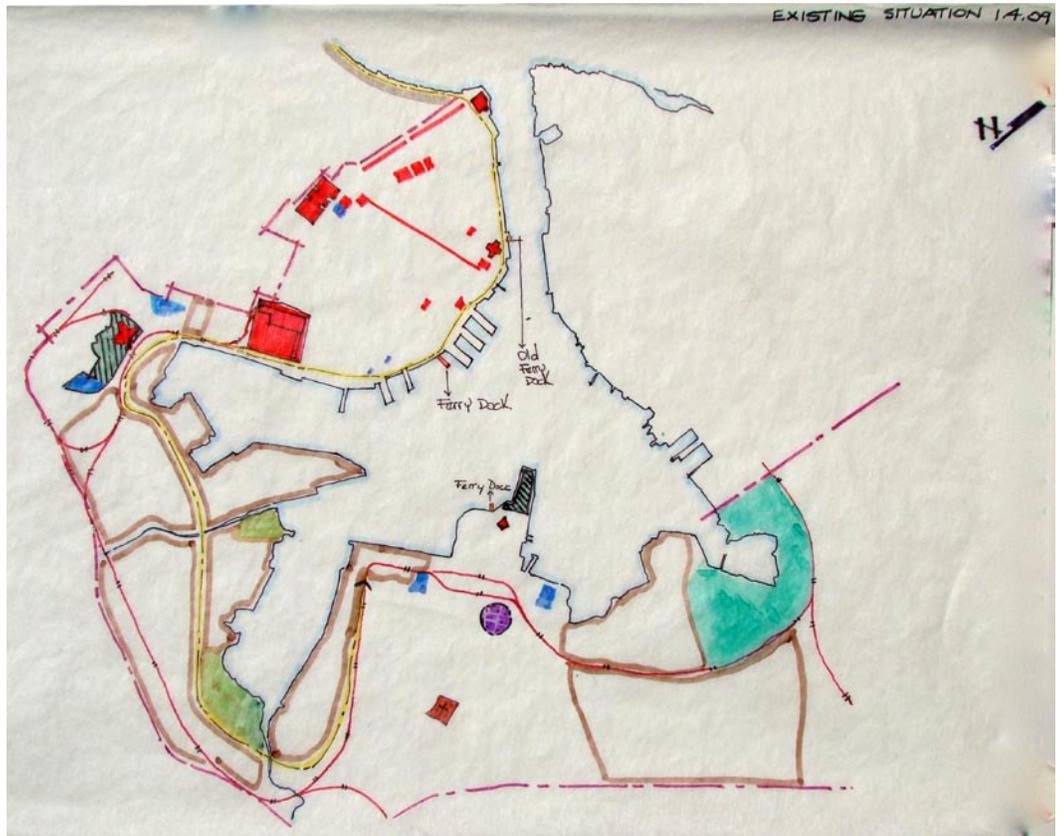
Preliminary Presentation:
April 1, 2009

Team 1 - La Habana Vieja, Atares,
Regla, Refinera

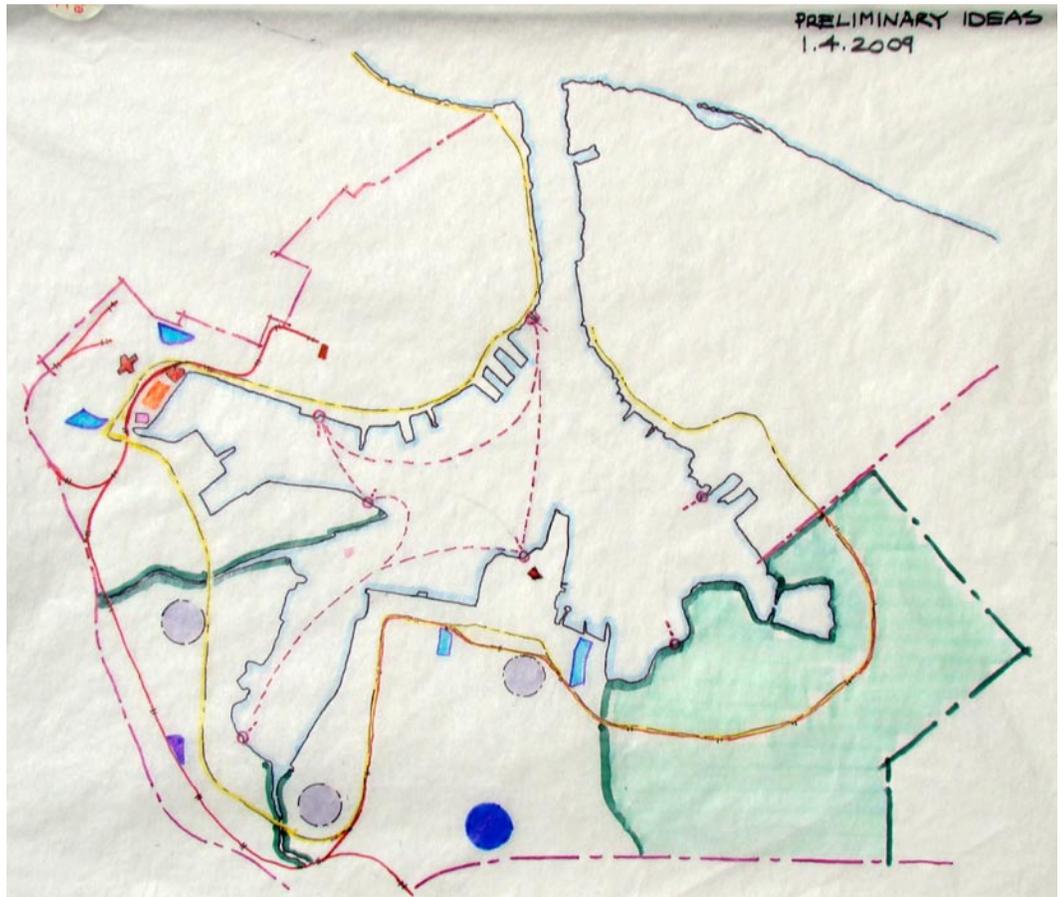
Professor John Pilling referred to operational aspects and concretely about how to bring this plan into reality which Julio César valued as a great contribution. John explained the need to focus on this issue by locating maritime leisure facilities that allowed for ferry service and sailing boats as well as green cruising and commercial enterprises and offices, marinas, as the waterfront is a public resource.

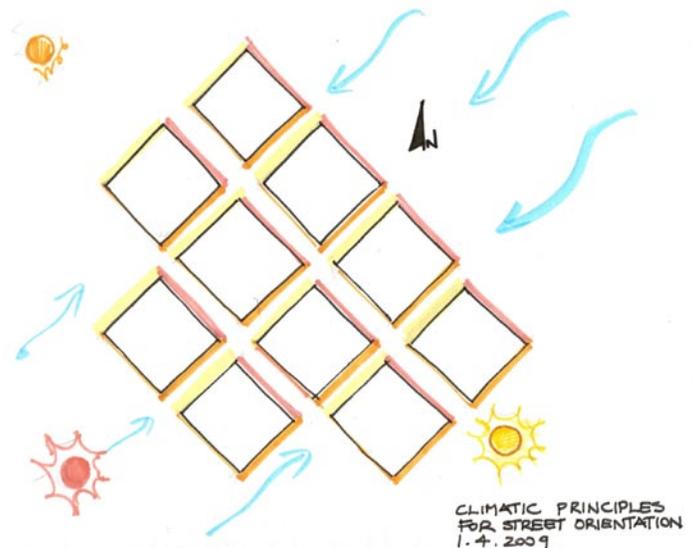
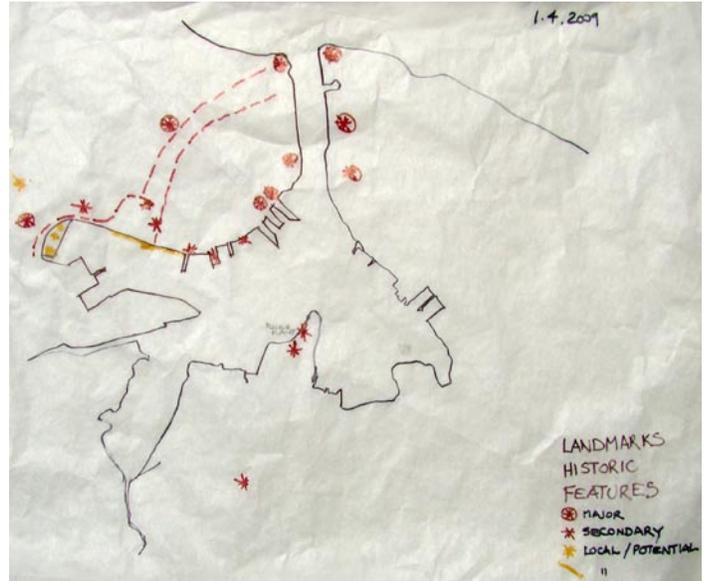


He was followed by Canadian architect Nelson Edwards who spoke about Nature and the City and Australian architect Jean Rice who said she'd found inspiration by looking at historical plans of the harbor of Havana where there was a lot of land reclamation. Both of them identified a huge potential for green areas.



- DEVELOPMENT PHASES
(HISTORICAL PROGRESSION → UNDER-
STOOD PATTERNS)
- LAYERS
 - INFRASTRUCTURE
FERRY CONNECTIONS
LIGHT RAIL
 - NATURAL ENVIRONMENT (MAPPING OF CHANNELS)
HELP TO FORM & GUIDE, ORIENTATION OF DEVELOPMENT
 - MAINTAINING OF WORKING HARBOUR (SHIPS...)
 - USES (Housing, COMMERCIAL OFFICES, PUBLIC SPACE...)
 - SPORT + LEISURE
 - TOURISM
 - CULTURAL CENTRES, COMMUNITY FACILITIES
 - NATURAL SYSTEMS WITHIN THE CITY
 - BUSINESS
 - LOCAL COURTES (INVENTORY OF EXISTING
USE, BUILDINGS (HIST)...)
 - RECONNECTING THE COMMUNITIES
(ESP. WITH THE WATERFRONT)
 - (PHASING)
- 1.4.2009



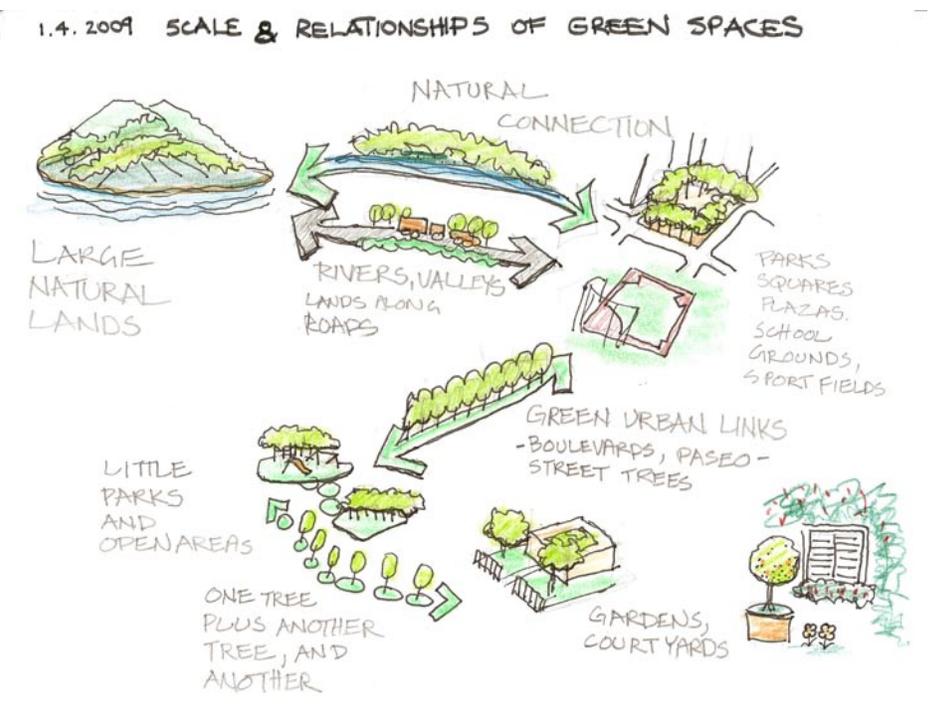
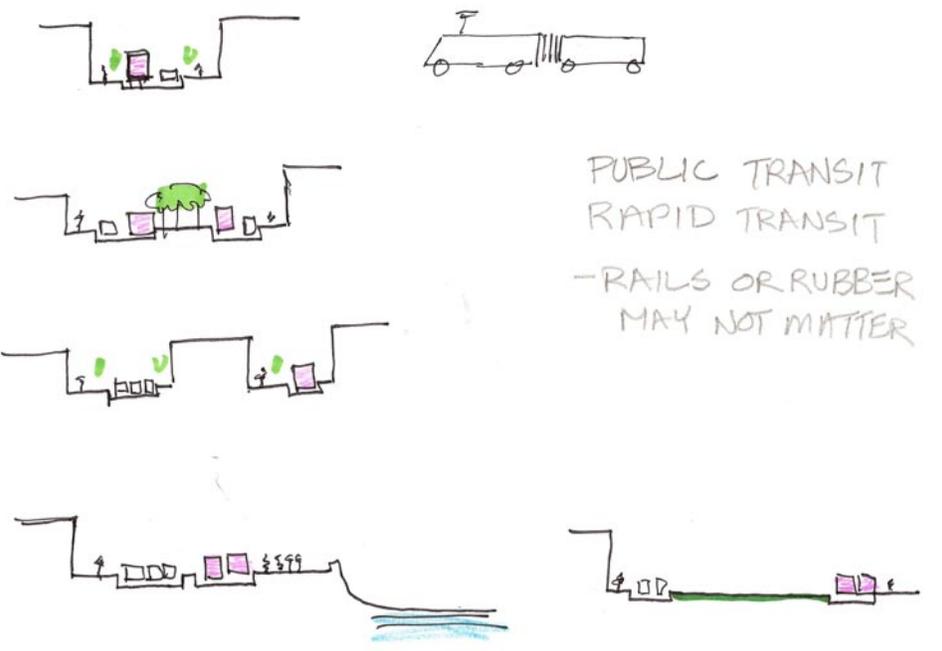
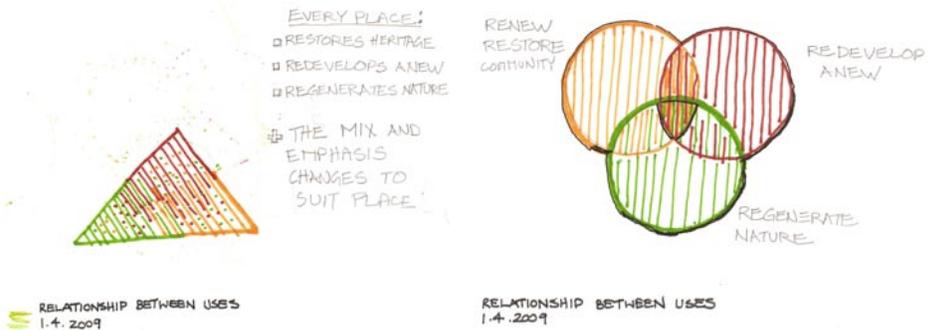
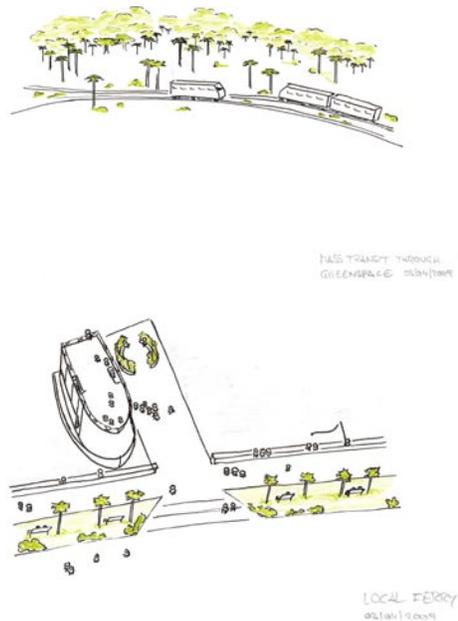


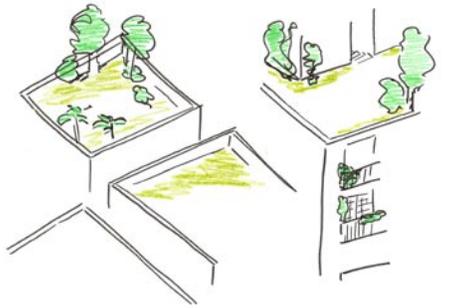
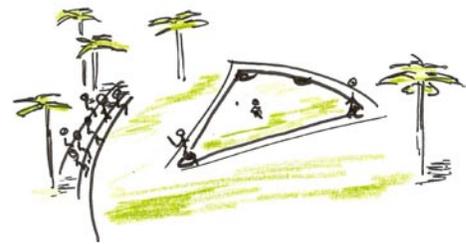
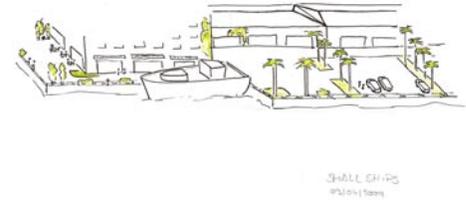
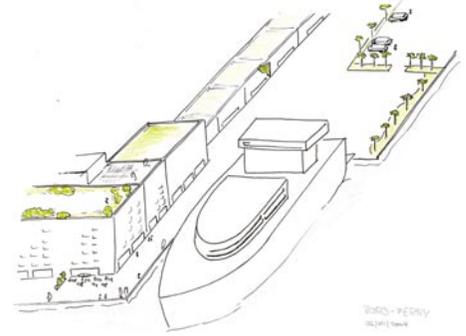
Nelson Edwards addressed the issue of the social relationship between community groups while Cuban architect Juan Carlos Toledo pointed out the key sites for redevelopment along the waterfront boulevard idea as a strip of public space extending along the harbor perimeter.

The group also insisted on taking into account the results of the 2007 and 2008 Charrette so other issues that were addressed in this group's presentation were:

1. Allow for a seamless urban pattern that extends the existing fabric
2. Considering the Atarés Castle area for redevelopment (public space & park use)
3. The Tallapiedra Power Plant Station as the New Havana Tate Gallery
4. New neighborhoods with promenades oriented to the sea
5. Make best use of the Atarés peninsula with new mixed-use development
6. Phases of development
7. Linking the National Trains Station with the Cristina Train Station
8. Respect the strong cultural components

See note 2

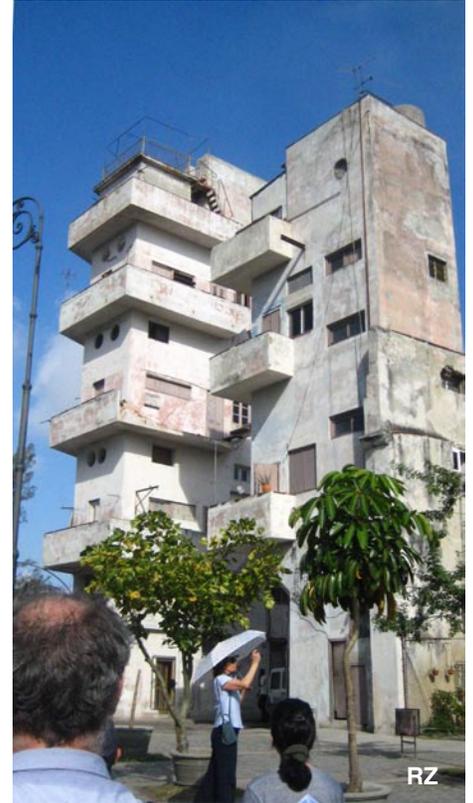




Team 2 - Casablanca

Academy of Urbanism member Roger Zogolovitch praised the work done in the 2007 and 2008 Charrette when he was asked to present the work the team did for Casablanca.

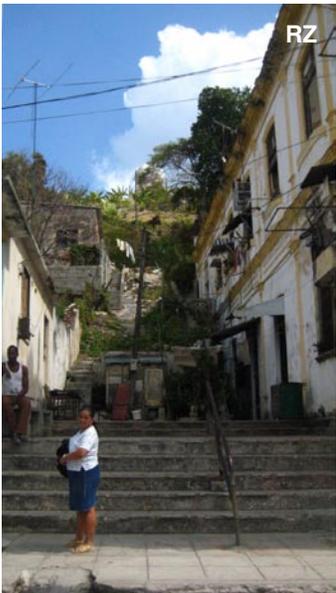
He spoke of the inspiration he found in the beautiful texture of the stone and the traditional elements of the Alameda de Paula which he called a beautiful street in a dilapidated landscape and the links between the train, the ships, and the port. When he showed a modern building he took a picture of the day before he said the Cubism was as important to modern architecture as Classicism for the Renaissance and modern architecture has a strong presence also in Old Havana where many different architectural expressions converge harmoniously. He also mentioned the sculptural power of the elevated railroad lines and its importance to frame views and the poignant image of the Power Station of Tallapiedra.



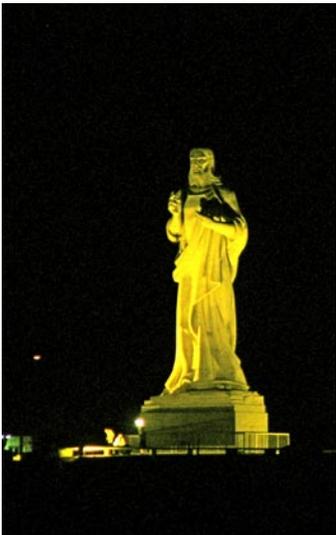


He then talked about Casablanca's city façade across a narrow body of water, the Hershey train, the house's typologies and how architecture deals with topography, the presence of the decaying shipbuilding industry that still keeps around a thousand of jobs and the waterfront condition and its potential for future redevelopment.

His slide presentation showed his appreciation for the grids proposed in former events that adapted to the existing topography and he made a statement about the strong difference between the plateau located up the hill with its strict geometry linked to the army housing project built in the 1940s in the area and the sinuous one down the hills by the water.



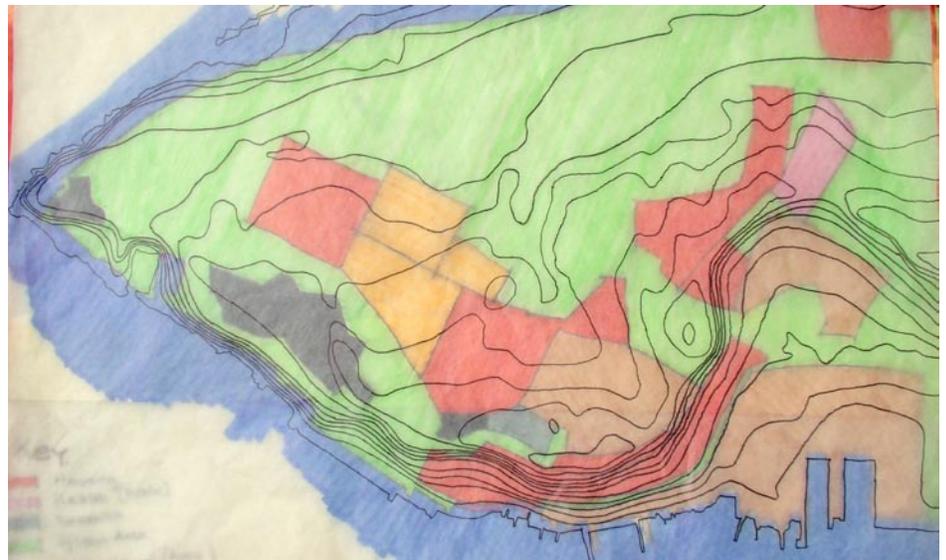
He also pointed out the cultural landmarks like the Jesus Christ statue and the Colonial forts of El Morro and La Cabaña where the Art Biennial and the International Book Fair are celebrated every year. He mentioned that transactions already take place in the area that is closer to the water so that permeability should be increased in terms of commercial development and opening views to the water and to Old Havana.

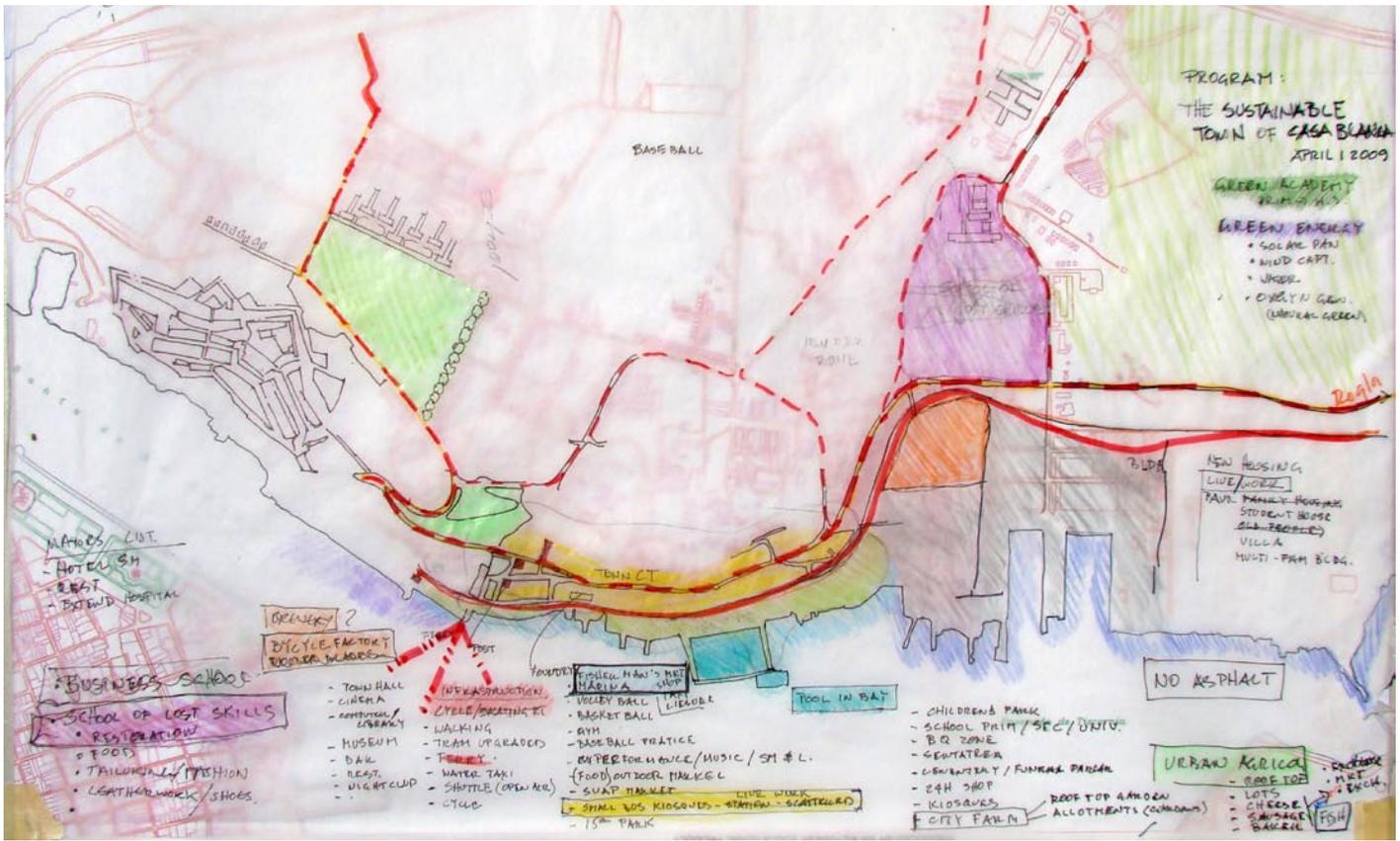


After the slide show, US- Belgian architect Joanna Alimanestianu presented. She said it was important to try to identify the character of this place as a town - not a city - with live and work spaces based on the heritage and to create a sustainable town for the future allowing urban architecture to provide food for the town and water taxis to provide transportation. She also mentioned the need for a marina and a school of lost skills and crafts where technicians and craftsmen are trained to further work in the restoration together with restaurants, cafes and small hotels.

British architect Gilles Cherry said it was important to find a generator of local employment – maybe biotechnology - and advocated the repairing of ships in the area as for keeping some of the industrial use that identified the area and asked where to go from here.

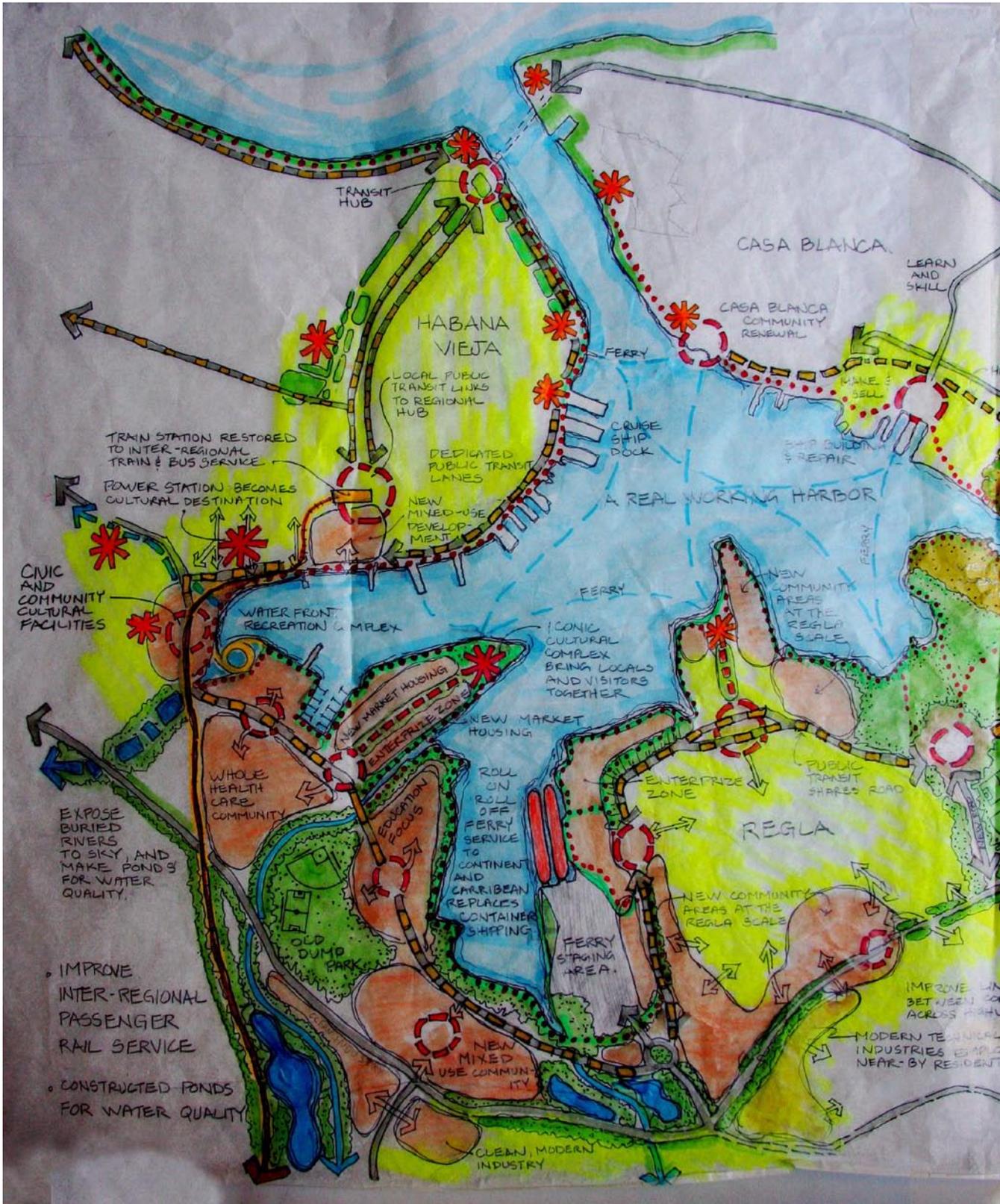
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Final Presentation
April 4, 2009

Team 1 - La Habana Vieja, Atares, Regla, Refinera





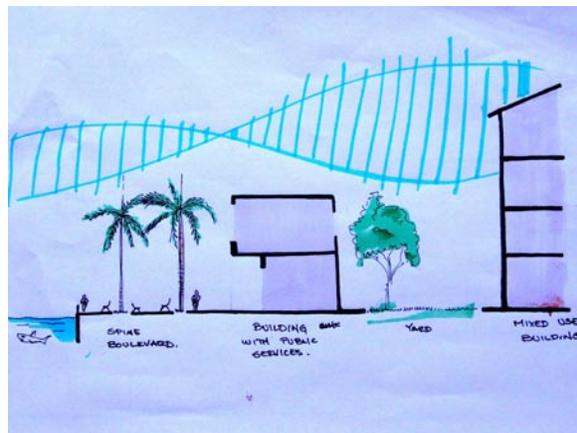
US Professor John Pilling was in charge of the introduction of the work developed by the Old Havana, Atarés and Regla team. He was followed by British journalist Richard Aylwin, from Aylwin Communications, who emphasized the importance of the work developed in terms of economic, ecological, social and technological sustainability.

Australian architect Jean Rice explained the overall approach and the work process based on the analysis of both natural and man-made factors – Climate, History, Culture, Social and Financial setting. She also considered the needs for the city that gave way to the strategic concept that would be further explained.

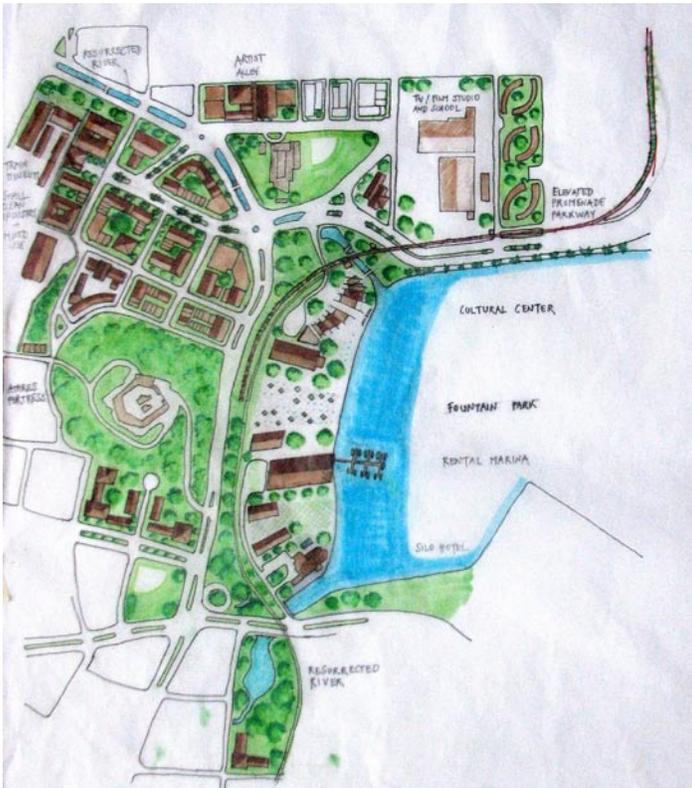
Canadian architect Nelson Edwards developed the strategic concept related to Nature and the City and the need to improve public transport on water and land for the new communities, improve recreational and cultural facilities to create a working harbour with clean modern industry.



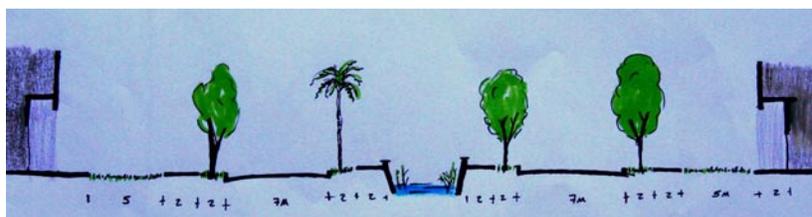
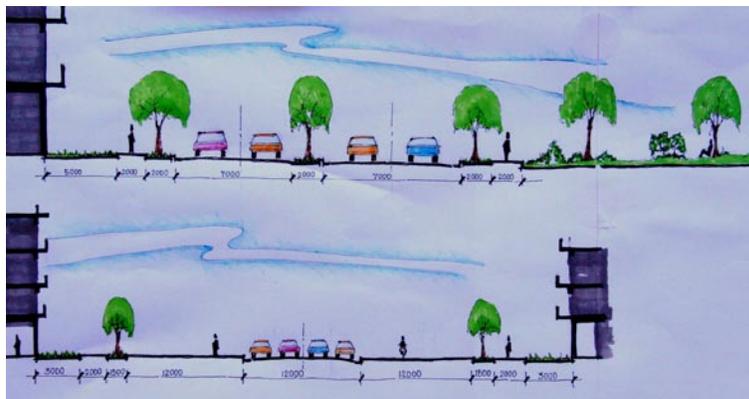
Cuban architects Alex Ginard, Oriam Morales and Juan Carlos Toledo spoke about the detailed options for each territory once they are unified by the spine boulevard along the harbor.



Australian architect Jean Rice and US architect Loren Witzel talked about improving both the urban and the architectural realms.

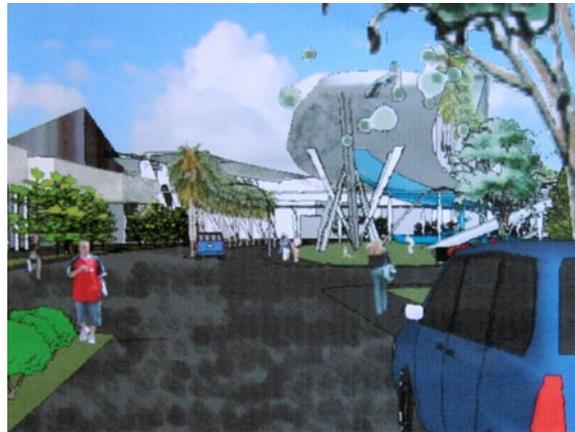
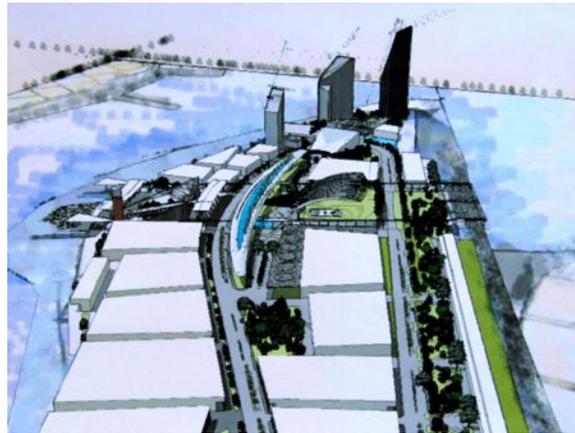
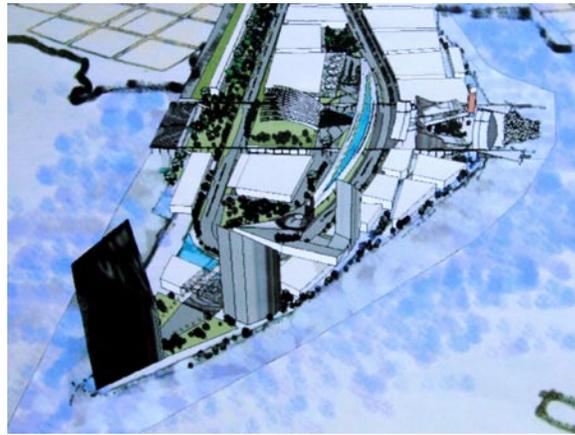


Cuban architect Joel Estevez presented the work done for Atarés and its peninsula and showed detailed street sections of the new developments.



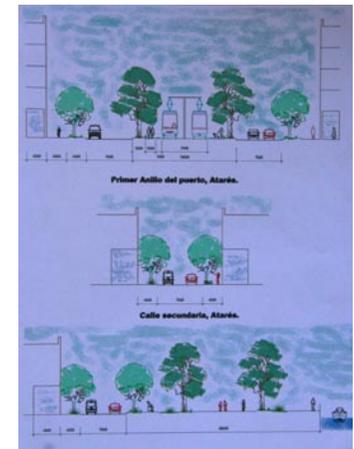
Cuban architect Hector Gomez made a presentation for the Atarés peninsula while Slovakian architect Petra Havelka showed her proposal – Havana a waterfront city - for the future use of the elevated tracks.

Petra showed how the old structure of the elevated railroad could become a new destination with multiple amenities for the people while framing views to the water under the shade provided by the structure kept as part of the city's identity and still as very cheap solutions.



Hector developed a detailed project for the peninsula that considered the former proposal elaborated during the 2007 Charrette but with its own variations and expression. Both presentations were considered very creative and a great contribution to the Charrette. They were considered contemporary interventions in existing contexts that added value to them while respecting their essence and bringing new and fresh ideas.

See note 2



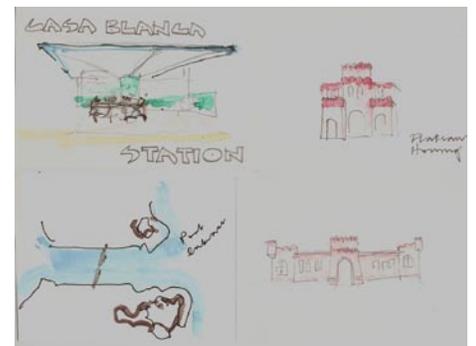
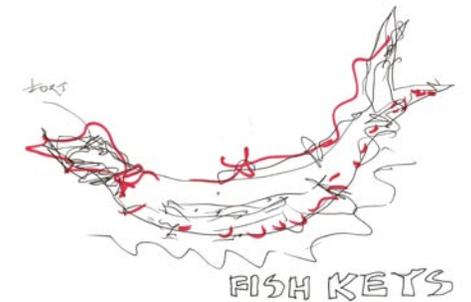
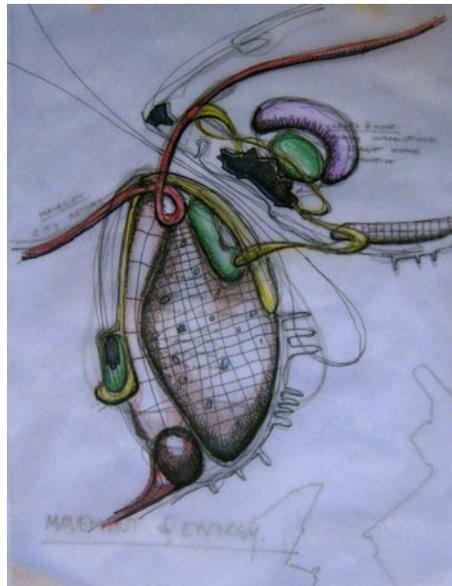
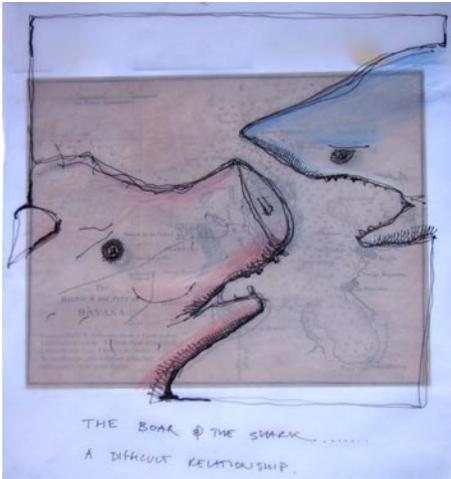
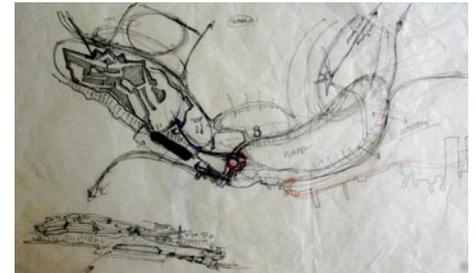
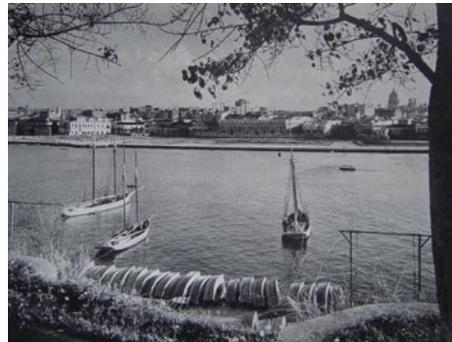
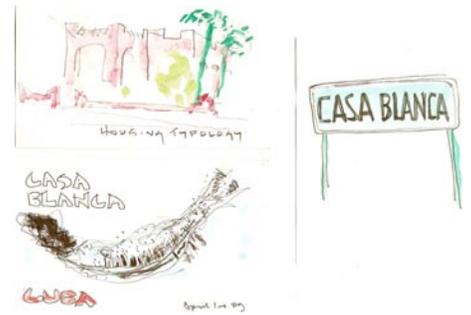
Australian architect Jean Rice concluded the team's presentation with a beautiful remark:

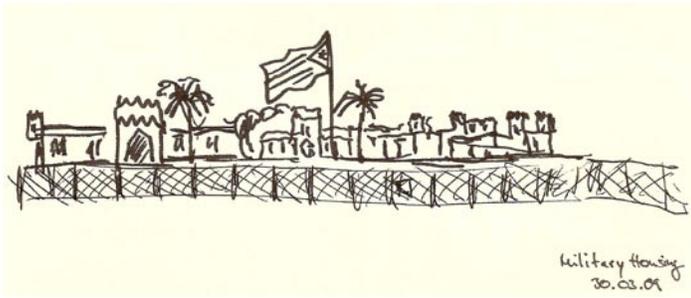
Cultural identity is the fragrance of the earth, the myths we live on and the legends that sustain us....

Moonis Raza

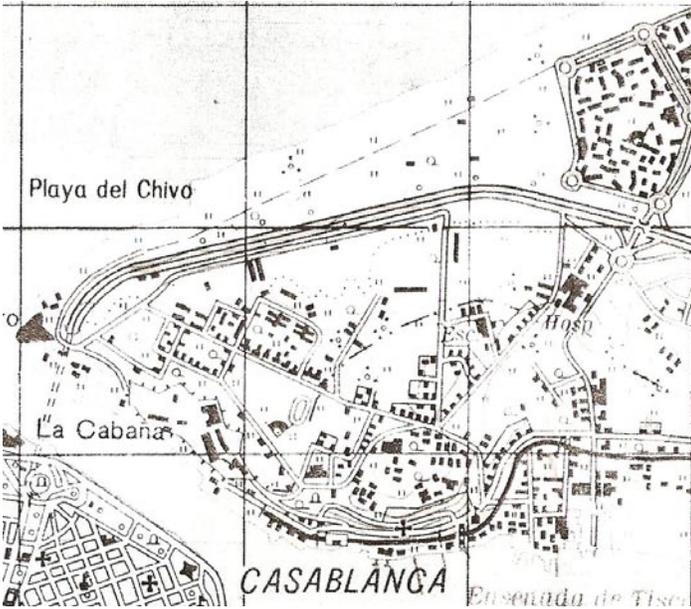
Team 2 - Casablanca

After a small break the presentation continued with the Casablanca team's work being summarized by British architect Roger Zogolovitch who made a slide presentation that departed from Havana's historical and cultural background and focused on Casablanca's physical conditions and the town's own features. The slides showed drawings and illustrations as well as old maps and sketches done by other members combined with photographs that helped to understand the proposals that were displayed later.

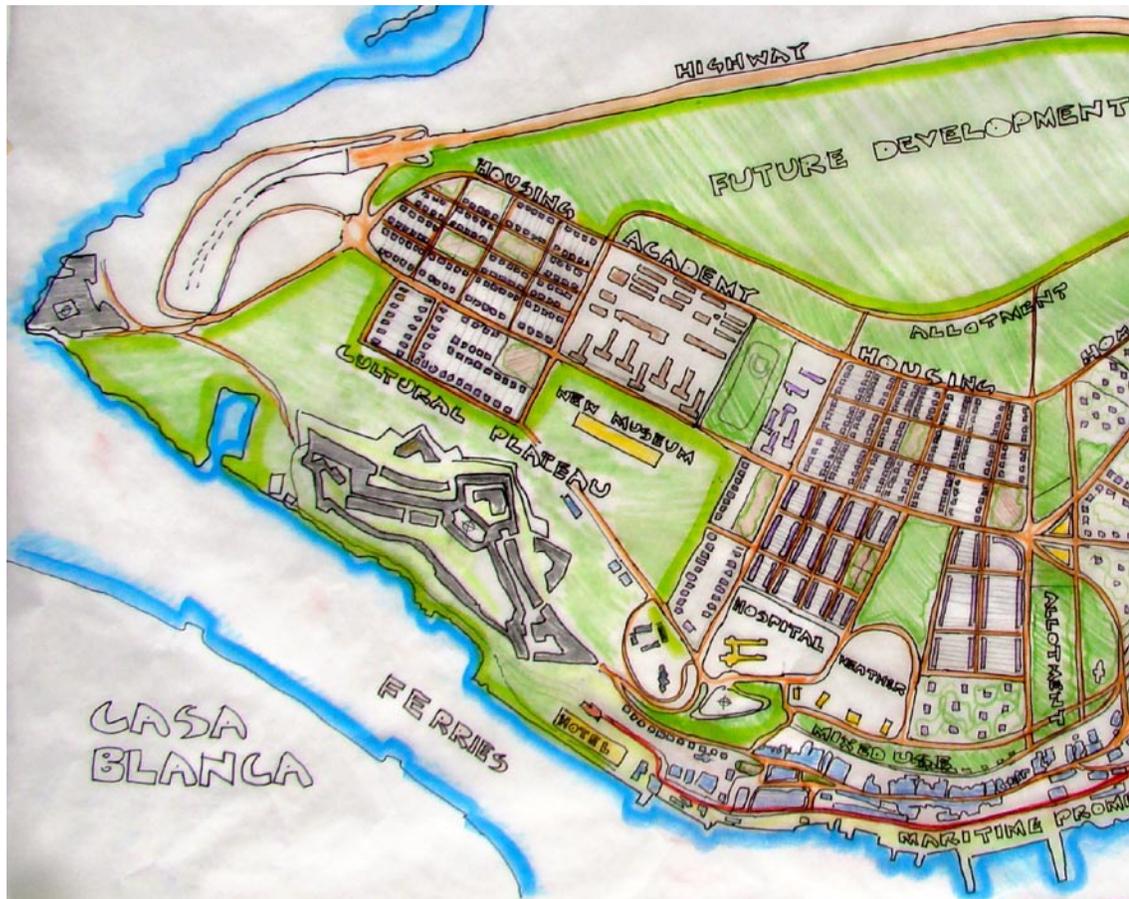


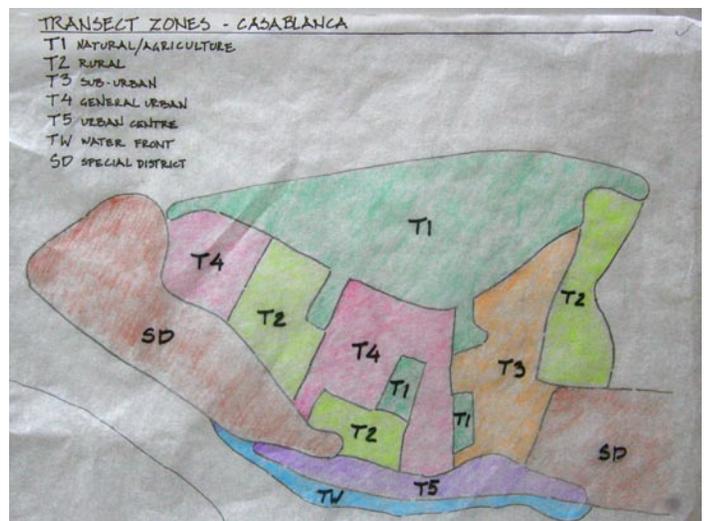
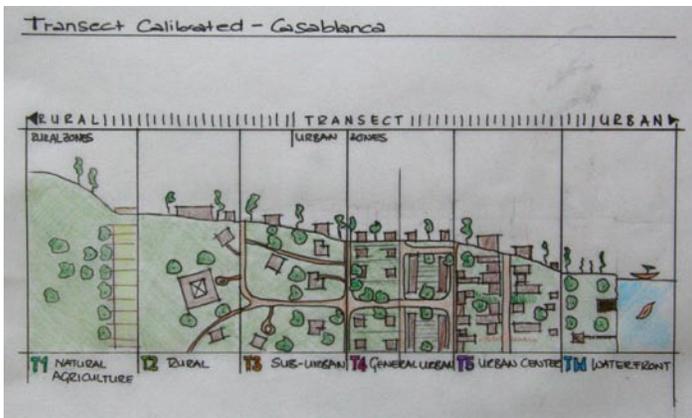
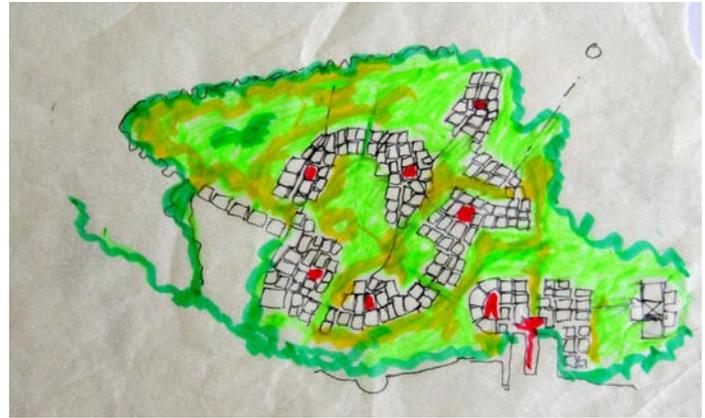
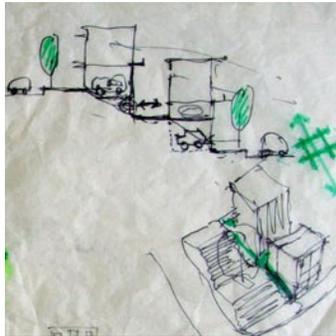


He mentioned again the importance of the transactions that already take place in Casablanca as a departing point together with the need to reinvesting to provide better quality of life and the issue of how well you invest your money. The Hershey line was highlighted not only as an important mean of communication but as a major attraction as well - it is the only electric train still running in the American region. He signed out that the dilapidated condition of the town, its housing stock and public space demanded a plan to rebuild and to improve the urban condition. He alluded to the similarities of Casablanca and Venice at some point in one of the slides to signify the potential for the transformation of Casablanca and for it to become a very attractive place looking at Old Havana across the harbor.



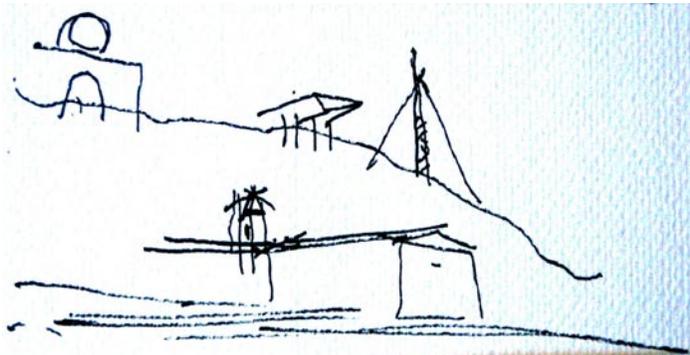
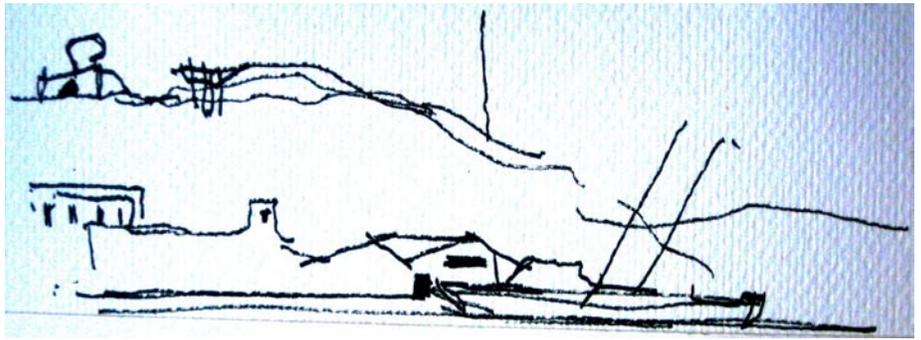
The proposal called for re-using the dismantled industrial structures and for considering three major areas according to the topographic conditions: one up the hill where the existing Cartesian grid is to be extended a second one down the hill following the contours where a maritime promenade would allow for a market, cafes and restaurants with open views to the sea that would consider the need for an appropriate enclave for the Hershey train stop and also a big open space related to the cultural area of La Cabaña fortress he called the cultural plateau. A third area containing spontaneous housing would be kept - after being rebuilt - within the urban fabric to be provided together with the adequate infrastructure.

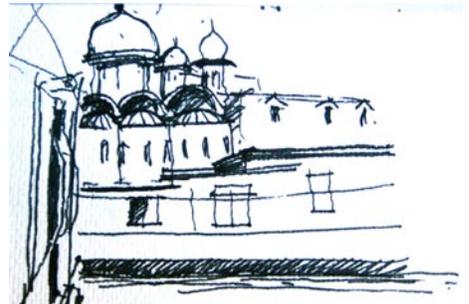
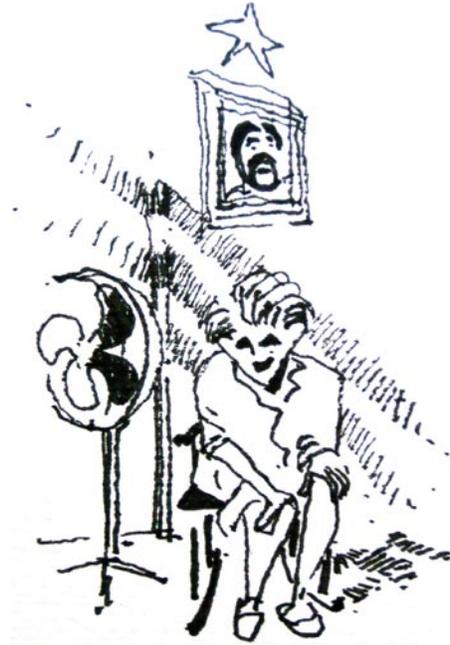
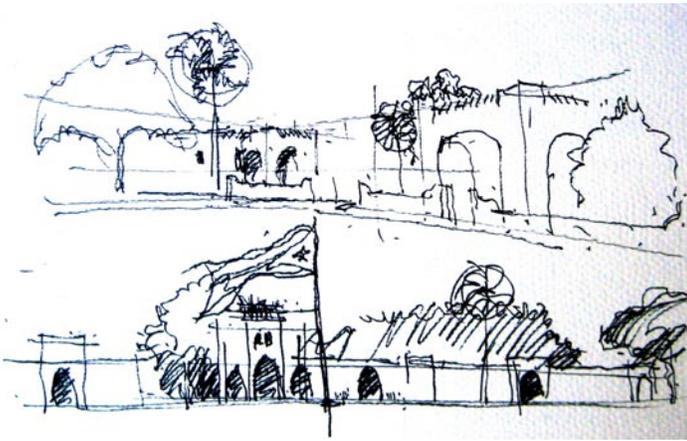




US-Belgian architect Joanna Alimanestianu insisted on Casablanca is not a city and neither a neighborhood but a town with an authentic identity in the way people live, and work and play: a vibrant place where people want to live. She illustrated the Transect Theory being applied to Casablanca. Some other schemes showed the urban approach of the down the hill area where terraces and staircases coming up the hill are combined with small side squares and parks that link the new buildings.

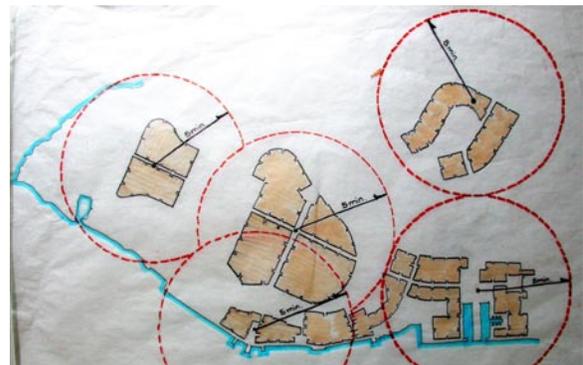
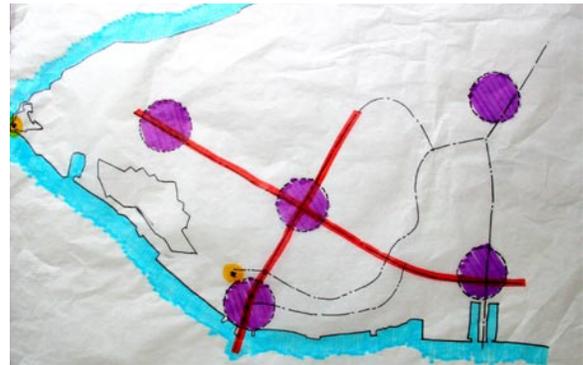
Cuban architect Raymel Capote talked about the evocative images of the industrial landscape, the main lines of the terrain, the nearby city, the harbor and he regretted the derelict harbor, and worst of all the current view from the arrival of the ferry facing the new Orthodox Church, because of having nothing to do with the Cuban culture.

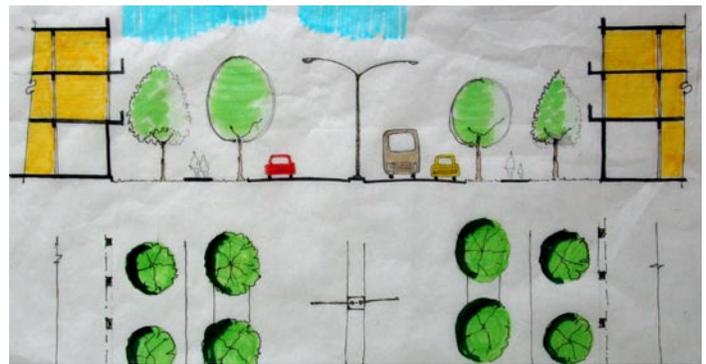
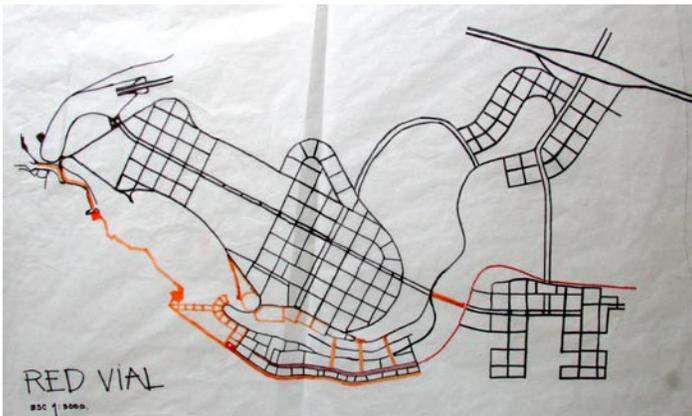
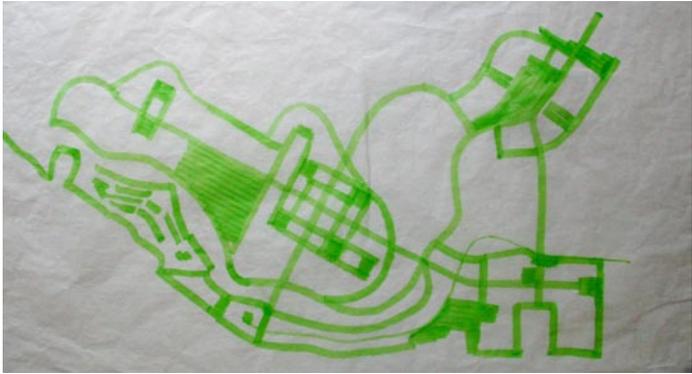






Cuban architects Alexis de la Cruz, Marién Ríos and Yanei García showed alternative master plans for Casa Blanca. The scheme recreates and reinterprets both urban and architectural traditional patterns based on the urban and architectural typologies that are found in Havana and in Casablanca: plazas, squares, promenades, porches, and courtyard buildings as a simple and pragmatic way to achieve a sustainable urbanism that claims a strong presence of the civic space for the people.





They also created a detailed urban design plan for the easternmost area of the town with new mixed-use buildings, open air cafes, art galleries, restaurants, small marinas, and shops. The design allows appreciating the proposed human scale of the compact blocks with porches along tree-lined streets and promenades oriented to the sea and a new railroad station for the Hershey train located on a square that terminates the view of one of these streets.

See note 2



Comments From Guests

Professor Mario Coyula asked about how do we begin and where is the money coming from. The question was answered by John Pilling and Julio César himself by saying that you begin with a plan like this we're presenting that allows knowing where to depart from and where to get to. Julio César also explained that a financial master plan is also being worked by international experts in economics, finances and banking to submit to the central government together with A Master Plan for 21 Century Havana.



Yosiel Marrero from the Antonio Núñez Jiménez Foundation 'Nature and Man' praised the work developed along the Charrette and the integrated way the different problems of the harbor –sewage, water supply, transportation, infrastructure, and green areas- were analyzed and targeted with the use of alternative technologies. Canadian architect Nelson Edwards also insisted in addressing the problems with such a vision while John Pilling said that there is a comprehensive agreement about Casablanca's values and potential. Finally British architect Roger Zogolovitch pointed out the benefits of a global Charrette for Havana and thanked all for this wonderful opportunity to work with international colleagues and to contribute this way to a great place.

See note 2



Conclusions

Both the Norwegian and The Cuban Chapter of CEU were happy with the development of the 2009 Havana Charrette and its outcome. The organizers considered it a great accomplishment. All were grateful for the participant's contribution.

The participants were extremely satisfied with the results of the Charrette and their contribution to the regeneration of the Havana harbor. Team work proved to be efficient, creative and inspiring.

The III Havana Harbor Charrette was successful not only in achieving a high quality work based on the continuity of the many ideas worked out previously but for focusing on the operational issues as claimed by US architect Professor John Pilling that allowed going a step beyond past considerations and plans.

The more intense and detailed work developed along the 2009 Charrette on Casablanca after the valuable discussions between the members of the team –Roger, Gilles, Alexis, Esteban, Steve, John, Marién, Yanei, Milvia, Angela, Claus and Julio César - provided even more concrete and refined ideas and proposals that were accordingly expressed in fine free-hand drawings and digital illustrations. So it was considered that an important step was done in moving the vision from the general to the particular, seeking to make it real.

The Charrette participants agreed that The Master Plan for 21st Century Havana is indeed the most integrated and humanist vision so far developed for the future prosperity of the city and its citizens although it still needs a stronger strategy aimed at securing a proper consideration for its formal adoption.

The participants believe that the principles applied to the regeneration of the Havana harbor can be applied to the rest of the city.

A future effort should be aimed, however, at finding ways to pilot the concepts (physical projects, human projects) and an ongoing project organization should be formed with a view to continuing the work indicated by the three events.

Alternative ways should be found to build upon locally available resources to do the required work expanding the effort with appropriate collaboration and substantive funding should be sought to underwrite this effort.

The relationship we can develop with Casablanca could be a manageable and appropriate way to do this - proving the value of the plan as a means to realize the priorities of citizens as well as wider national ideals.

The Cuban and Norway CEU chapters were able to work together and team up with international colleagues in reaching common ground about the importance of preserving the values of the city of Havana and at the same time creating both economic and urban values for its future and for its citizens.

See note 2

Social Events

March 29th, 2009

Opening Reception

The Cuban and the Norwegian Chapters of CEU - the Council of European Urbanism - welcomed the participants and introduced The III Havana Harbour Charrette in the evening at the Hostal Conde de Villanueva in Old Havana.

After the official Charrette-opening Reception some of the team members dined at Hostal Valencia with wonderful food and, even more - with Jean Rice's wonderful dance performance (as she joined the local dancers).



April 1st, 2009

British Embassy Charge D'Affairs

A reception hosted by the British Embassy Chargé D'Affairs Caitlin Jones and her husband Stephen Bradshaw took place at their residence in the evening. Julio César Pérez launched the INTBAU Cuba Chapter.

Audun Engh said a few words of gratitude on behalf of CEU and delivered a copy of the 2008 Charrette Report edited by John Pilling to Caitlin Jones while Roger Zogolovitch spoke on behalf of the Academy of Urbanism.

Mr. Jan Tore Holvik and Lisa Reeve Stearns, Norwegian Ambassadors in Havana, Jenny White, Secretary of Science and Culture from The British Council in Havana, Marco Giomini, Cultural Advisor of the Italian Embassy, and Harald Wisgirdatis, First Secretary and Counselor at the German Embassy, attended the reception together with Cuban and foreign participants from different institutions.

After the reception at the British Embassy many of the participants met at the opening of a new art gallery in El Vedado showing the work of the artist group called 'The Merger.' Then some 10 people had a late dinner in El Vedado, after which they left for a long walk in the streets of El Vedado together.

April 2nd 2009

Norwegian Ambassador

There was a reception and supper offered by Mr. Jan Tore Holvik and Lisa Reeve Stearns in the evening at their residence



The evening at the Norwegian Embassy was followed by a very nice private after party at the apartment of Monica Santos with Cuban Charrette participants and their guests for several Cuba Libres, wonderful talks and an exhausting Domino game. Other participants who had visited "Fresa y Chocolate" earlier in the evening returned to Sra. Santos's apartment for the Cuba Libres and Dominos.



April 4th, 2009

Wonderful evening at the day of the final charrette presentation - everyone relaxed, but most of all, feeling that the 2009 Cuba charrette adventure is almost over. Most of the participants, Cuban as well as international, met at the beginning of the long night at a roof open air Jazz Concert in Calle Teniente Rey, from where most of us went into Bar Monserrate. Here, the whole bunch of about 15 people was enjoying the live music of a local band, the Cuban lady, participants as well as Jean made a wonderful dance performance..



Around midnight, after the bar had closed, the group decided to walk down the Paseo del Prado and then the whole way to El Vedado along Malecón. Here, we met local Cubans, had fun and enjoyed the live music provided by some very talented local guitar players until about 4 AM



April 5th, 2009

“Good-bye” football game organized on Sunday after the charrette by the Cuban architects, spontaneously joined by most of the international participants as well. This was – besides the opportunity to prove the sport skills - a wonderful occasion for all of us to say to each other a goodbye, thank you and – see you in 2010!

See note 4

Notes

0. Architectural and Urban Design work depicted in this report was created at the III Havana Harbour Charrette by its participants
- 1, Summary written by Richard Aylwin
2. Introduction, Process, Recommendations, Comments by Guests, and Conclusions written by Julio César Pérez Hernández
3. Edited from material in “**A Master Plan for XXI Century Havana**” by Julio César Pérez Hernández.
4. Edited from material prepared by Jana Milosovicova.
5. Edited from material prepared by PhD Alberto Enrique Garcia.
6. Directly quoted from BBC website

Photo Credits

charrette participants:
 JM: Jana Milosovicova
 JR: Jean Rice
 LW: Loren Witzel
 CZ: Claus Zapfe
 RZ: Roger Zogolovitch

11 images from websites or texts are credited at the image itself.

Other photos and writing are by the report editor, John H. Pilling

