

Architect redraws World Trade Center

Designs sought to resurrect fallen historic structures in New York

Freedom Plaza is the name La Jolla resident Dick McCormick has taken for a fledgling design project he is currently working on. His hopes are that it will be considered for selection by the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation and native New Yorkers as a suitable replacement for the World Trade Center.

Joining McCormick in the design process of Freedom Plaza are Al Whitley of Whitley consulting group, and Lindsay Brown as chief designer.

McCormack, Whitley and Brown are forging ahead with their design in spite of the fact that the LMDC has already chosen six finalists who will vie for the prestigious job of rebuilding the site of the former Twin Towers.

"I'm not sure how, to whom or when to present our design, which is nearly finished," said McCormack, "but we have some very bright people working on it and hopefully we will get it seen by those who are in charge of the heady task of making the final decision."

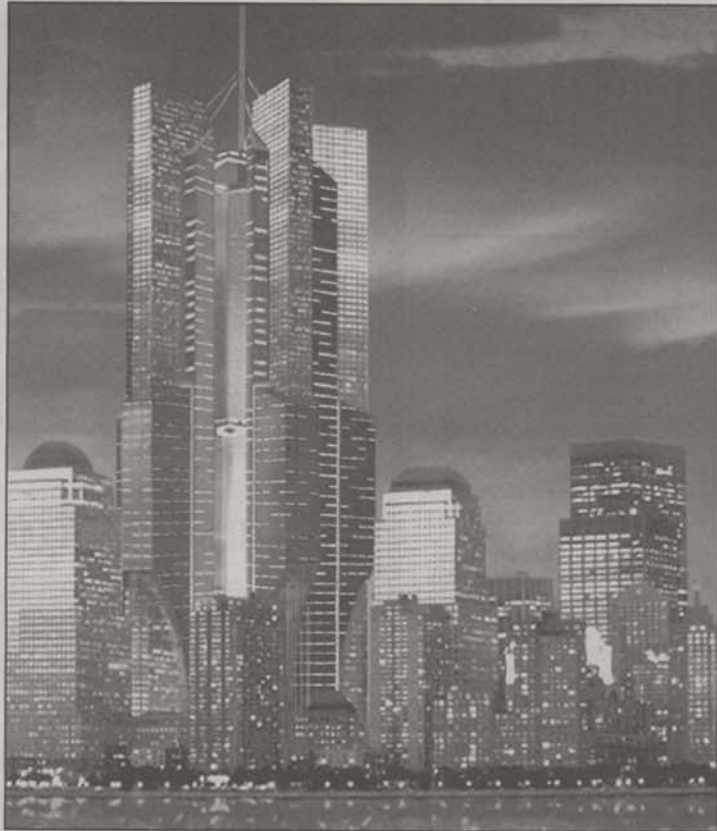
The plaza is comprised of five parallelogram shaped buildings arranged in a star-shaped pattern. Each structure will be 93 stories tall. At three junctures throughout the span of the building, pentagon-shaped walkways will connect the five buildings. A communications mast will extend through the middle of the buildings, 1,776 feet into the air.

Also, McCormick's team's design will preserve the footprint of the original towers, a stipulation that most of those close to the project consider vital to any design chosen.

McCormack's building is rife with symbolism and statement.

The pentagon walkways connecting the buildings are commemorative of the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. The 93-story height of the buildings symbolize the heroes of Flight 93, which crashed in Pennsylvania. The 1,776 foot height of the communications spire represents the year the Declaration of Independence was signed.

It is the desire of McCormick's team that their design be viewed by as many people as possible, hopefully to generate interest in what they feel is a very appropriate,



Artist's rendering of Freedom Plaza by Lindsay Brown.

respectful and inspiring design. Six earlier designs for the rebuilt site were unveiled last year but were widely criticized for their lack of imagination and mundane design.

"They weren't inspirational," said Whitley. "The (company) hired a firm to come up with the six proposals, and the people of Manhattan said, 'It doesn't tell the story.' Because the outcry was so negative, they said 'Let's start from scratch again. Let's come up with six different designers and they will come up with what we'll look at as a beginning.'"

If such an occurrence happens again, McCormack's group wants to be able to

present their finished design.

"It's such a high-profile job," said Brown, "that if it's not inspirational and symbolic of American renewal, if people don't agree with the idea behind it, it's going to start all over again."

Though McCormack's group is tiny in comparison to the megafirms currently competing for the honor of redesigning the World Trade Center, Brown hopes that the powers that be will consider Freedom Plaza in some way. The group's proposal can be found online at www.whitleygroup.com.

• By Lance Vargas