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Peninsula BEACON

Thursday, February 20, 2003

Published by San Diego Community Newspaper Group

www.sdnews.com

Vol. 22, No. 4

Local designers chosen to develop WTC site proposal

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The Beacon

Although his design concept for a new complex on the site of the World Trade Center was not chosen, Dick McCormick said he still has hope that someone will see the design's symbolism and decide to build it anyway.

McCormick, who lives in La Jolla and runs an energy company in Mira Mesa, said he wanted to do something to help New York City after the terrorist attacks Sept. 11, 2001. McCormick said his heart is close to the city, because he grew up in Brooklyn.

"I love New York City and I think it's a great place," McCormick said. "When this thing happened, I flew back there on the first plane I could get. I walked around the site a couple of times; I was not prepared to see what I saw."

McCormick, who used two Point Loma designers to help refine his vision on the computer, said he wanted to do something to help after the World Trade Center towers were destroyed in the biggest terrorist attack on U.S. soil. Soon after the towers fell, there were six proposals to replace the towers, but the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC) rejected all six. They then called for a nationwide Request for Qualifications (RFQ).

"When [the original six designs] got

rejected, I came up with a concept that the more I worked on it, the better I liked it," McCormick said. "I've been at a couple of businesses where I've done some design work."

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footprints for the old
trade centers are
honored.'**

— Dick McCormick

McCormick had some experience with design as an engineer, so he decided to come up with a concept for a complex at the site of the fallen towers. He called his concept "Freedom Plaza." He did some rough sketches by hand and then hired designers Lindsay Brown and Al Whitley of the Whitley Group in Point Loma to put the design on a computer.

"When I did my sketching, it was not nearly as advanced as what the computer design allowed us to do. Al Whitley and Lindsay [Brown] aided greatly in taking a concept and moving it into something that you could picture and see from a number of different angles," McCormick said.

The design consists of five towers,

each connected to one another, and a pentagon-shaped building in the center of the five towers — which form a star shape. The design is reminiscent of people coming together in trying times and holding hands in a circle, McCormick said. There are also other symbolic elements within the framework of the design.

"We realized that we had a site that was symbolic, with the tying together of these buildings. We set the height of the ground-supported communication mast at 1,707.6 feet, and then there's a place there for each of the flights," McCormick said of his design. "Each of the footprints for the old trade centers are honored. They become hallowed ground, and they wind up reflecting Flight 11 and Flight 175 in their dimensions."

In September, McCormick submitted an RFQ to the LMDC. His RFQ and design proposal was one of 400 submissions.

According to McCormick, LMDC chose only seven from the 400 possible designers. Those seven firms were then given the opportunity and funding to create a design for the organization. Those designs were submitted to LMDC in the last few weeks.

McCormick said he knew his RFQ and proposal would not be chosen by the LMDC, because their choice was based

only on credentials. However, he has not given up hope that his design may be considered in the future.

"Those designs have come in now,"

he said. "When we look at those and compare them to our own, we think our own measures up, more than measures up against the others," he said.