

EAVESDROP: ARIC CHEN

## MORE ON COLUMBUSGATE

You may have heard about the rather chummy e-mail exchanges between NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission chair **Robert Tierney** and **Laurie Beckelman**, who represents the Museum of Arts and Design (MAD), about the museum's plan to take over and unrecognizably alter 2 Columbus Circle. (She's a former Landmarks Commission chair herself.) Several snippets from the e-mails—like one in which Tierney tells Beckelman, "Let me know how I can help on the trouble ahead"—have been published in both *The New York Times* and *New York* magazine. They were obtained by the preservationist group Landmark West under the Freedom of Information Act and easily lead one to think that Tierney, who has refused to even call a hearing to designate (and thus preserve) the original Edward Durell Stone structure, is in cahoots with MAD. Some might call that a conflict of interest.

And so, as a public service, we'd like to refer you to [www.landmarkwest.org](http://www.landmarkwest.org), where you can see transcripts of the lot. Some of our favorites? There's one in which Tierney forwards to Beckelman a letter from an opponent of the MAD plan (get it? MAD plan?) along with the note "Do you want to see some, all, or any of these letters?" "I would really appreciate seeing all of them," Beckelman replied. On May 8, 2003, before Community Board 5's final vote to approve the sale of the building to the museum, Tierney wrote to Beckelman, "Good luck tonight." And "Call anytime...in office now," he later offered. Cute, huh? As it happens, we hear Landmark West, which has filed a lawsuit under these new circumstances, has retained the legal services of **Whitney North Seymour, Jr.** He's the former U.S. attorney who in 1971 tried to block publication of the Pentagon Papers. Welcome to the other side.

## THE NYU BRAND: DOWDY

New York University may finally be discovering what everyone else has known forever: Its facilities are pretty ugly. So could the institution, which continues to produce more dogs than a breeding kennel, actually be building something that doesn't, as one architect recently put it, "look like an abortion"? Kinda sorta. We hear the university's Stern School of Business is planning a bit of a makeover. "They realized that in order to remain competitive among business schools, they needed to pay attention to their physical image [no kidding!]," says one source, referring to Stern's homely complex of buildings on West Fourth Street, the latest of which was completed in only 1993. Nevertheless, only baby steps are being taken for what requires a giant leap: The proposed renovations, being designed by **Margaret Helfand** of Helfand Architecture, would largely be limited to a new entrance and lobbies, lounges, and other interior public spaces. But, hey, it's a start.

## A MEMORIAL TEAM SPIN-OUT

When it comes to the Ground Zero memorial, **Michael Arad** is definitely in the driver's seat. Arad, who designed its competition-winning scheme, recently won a MINI Cooper at the AIA convention in Las Vegas. But when we heard rumors that landscape architect **Peter Walker**, who has also been brought into the memorial project, was claiming the car for himself, we braced for yet another power struggle. However, "Not true," Arad told us, joking that Walker has so far resisted steering the wheel from the passenger's seat.

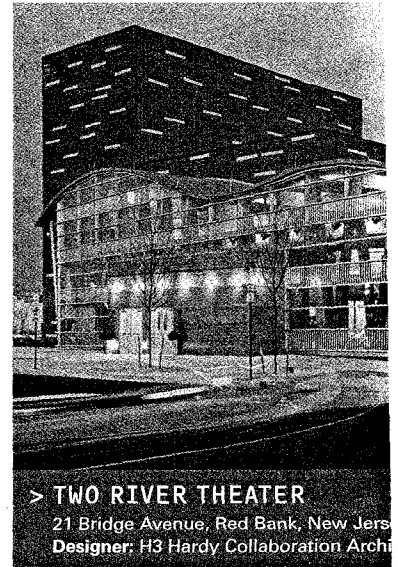
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**PRIVATE DOMAIN** continued from front page  
the City of New London said, "Fifty- six percent of our [city's] land is exempt from taxes, we have an 80 percent commercial vacancy rate, and an unemployment rate that is double the state average." According to the project's supporters, the development, which includes a hotel, 80 residential units, 680,000 square feet of office space, a Coast Guard museum, and a promenade along the Thames River, will

Kelo, 7 landowners filed suit against the city in 2000, arguing that their land was not being taken for a justifiable public use, as is required in the Constitution's 5<sup>th</sup> Amendment since profits would go to a private developer. The plaintiffs also argued that the development could have proceeded on the 65 acres of public land without destroying their homes.

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OPEN &gt; THEATER



> **TWO RIVER THEATER**  
21 Bridge Avenue, Red Bank, New Jersey  
Designer: H3 Hardy Collaboration Architects

H3 Hardy Collaboration Architecture's Red Bank, New Jersey, doesn't have a marquee like Frank Lloyd Wright's, it shouldn't need one, especially since it's full of theatergoers. "It's open and going on inside. It can be a public room

The first permanent home of the Two River Theater's tenth anniversary season begins. The foot building is split into three distinct volumes frame the lobby and its drama and horizontal fritting along the glass is lively. "We wanted it to be whimsical and playful." The brick volumes are also patterned with horizontal lines, described as a response to the lintels and window sills of the surrounding buildings. Inside, the auditorium holds 150 seats, which means that no seat is further than 36 feet from the stage. The building also act as a secondary studio theater with