

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE

BUREAU OF OVERSEAS BUILDINGS OPERATIONS

INDUSTRY ADVISORY GROUP

WASHINGTON, D.C.

HELD ON

THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2015

FROM

10:00 A.M. TO 12:20 P.M.

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. MUNIZ: So, so let's start. Good morning, everybody. I'm Lydia Muniz. I'm the Director of the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations. And I'm really, really pleased to welcome all of you, to welcome all of the members of our Industry Advisory Group. This is the third annual meeting. It's the first meeting of our second two-year term. And today we have 23 IAG members in attendance. Twelve are returning, and 11 are new.

We're also in great company. We have over 350 attendees from industry, from other government agencies, from Congress, and we understand from the General Accounting Office. Be warned.

Before we, before we get underway, I'm going to turn this over to Connie Hines who is going to,

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Connie right there, who is going to go over a few housekeeping items and then we'll get started with our program.

MS. HINES: Good morning and welcome. My name is Connie Hines. (Indiscernible) look for your escort badge because someone is missing theirs and we do need to collect these on the way out. If you are missing it, I will be sitting here. Please come by and get it before we leave. In addition you may keep all your electronic devices this year but the wi-fi must be turned off. Video and pictures are absolutely strictly prohibited. And again, we will ask that before you speak you turn on your mike in front if you so that the recorder can get the transcription of this program. Thank you for your attention and enjoy.

MS. MUNIZ: Thank you, Connie. So I'd like to start with introductions. And I was going to do those introductions myself but I realized that it will be endless. And so why don't we start with Thom? If

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you could introduce yourselves, the organization that you're with, and if you could let us know and let the members know whether you are a new member of the IAG or whether you are a returning member? That would be great. And we'll also introduce the OBOT.

MR. MAYNE: (Indiscernible).

MS. MUNIZ: Press your mike.

(Laughter.)

MR. MAYNE: How's that?

MS. MUNIZ: Perfect.

MR. MAYNE: Thom Mayne, Principal at Morphosis. This is my, what, third year?

MS. MUNIZ: Yes.

MS. LEHMAN-SMITH: Debra Lehman-Smith with LSM here in Washington.

MR. HUGHES: Stanford Hughes, BraytonHughes Design in San Francisco. And this is my first meeting.

MS. MUNIZ: Great, welcome.

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MR. HIXON: Bob Hixon with McDonough Bolyard Peck and this is my first meeting.

MS. GILMARTIN: MaryAnne Gilmartin, President and CEO of Forest City Ratner Companies, developers, large scale urban developers. This is my first meeting.

MR. GALEN: Timur Galen, I'm a Managing Director and Co-Head of the Corporate Services and Real Estate Group at Goldman Sachs. I am returning. Thank you.

MS. DRAKE: Hi, I'm Susannah Drake, Principal of dlandstudio landscape architecture and architecture in New York City, actually in Brooklyn. And I guess this is my first meeting.

MS. COCHRAN: My name is Andrea Cochran. I'm a landscape architect in San Francisco, I have my own practice. And this is my first meeting.

MS. CHATFIELD-TAYLOR: Adele Chatfield-Taylor, President Emerita of the American Academy in

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Rome. And I'm a returning member.

MR. BLACKWELL: Marlon Blackwell, Principal of Marlon Blackwell Architects in Fayetteville, Arkansas, and department head of the Fay Jones School of Architecture at the University of Arkansas.

Returning member, sorry.

MS. BEHA: I'm Ann Beha, Principal of Ann Beha Architects in Boston, and I am a returning member.

MR. BALD: Sunil Bald, Principal at Studio SUMO Architects in Long Island City, New York, and Associate Professor at Yale University.

MR. HOCHULI: Jurg Hochuli, OBO Resource Manager.

MR. JONES: Casey Jones, OBO Director, or Deputy Director, for Program Development and Coordination Support, and Construction, Facility and Security Management.

AMBASSADOR MOSER: And I'm Will Moser and I'm the Principal Deputy Director of OBO.

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MR. MCNAMARA: My name is Patrick McNamara.
I'm the Managing Director of Planning and Real Estate.

MR. RUMPF: My name is Eric Rumpf. I'm the
Managing Director of Construction, Facility, and
Security Management.

MR. WOOD: Richard Wood, President and CEO
of Plaza Construction and I'm a returning participant.

MR. WHITTAKER: Jim Whittaker, President and
CEO of Facility Engineering Associates and Chair of
the International Facility Management Association,
returning member.

MR. SWIFT: John Swift, I'm a Principal with
Buro Happold Engineering in Boston, and I'm a
returning member.

MS. SNOW: Julie Snow, Principal at Snow
Kreilich Architects in Minneapolis, new member.

MR. SINGH: Tej Singh with Gilbane, new
member.

MR. SESIL: Dan Sesil, a partner with Lera

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Structural Engineering, and I'm a new member.

MR. SCIAME: Frank Sciame, Founder and CEO, Sciame Construction, returning member.

MS. RHEE: Patti Rhee, Ehrlich Architects out of Los Angeles, California, and I'm a new member.

MR. OPPENHEIMER: Nat Oppenheimer, Executive Vice President of it used to formerly Robert Silman Associates, now Silman, and I'm a returning member.

MS. NITSCH: Good morning, I'm Judy Nitsch from Nitsch Engineering in Boston. I'm a civil engineer and I'm a new member.

MR. MITCHELL: And good morning. My name is Thomas Mitchell. I'm Senior Vice President of FM3IS out of San Antonio, Texas, representative of the facility management professional community. I am day one, first time.

(Laughter.)

MS. MUNIZ: Welcome.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you.

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MS. MUNIZ: It really is a great pleasure to have all of you here, and again thank you for taking time out of your very busy schedules for making it here. And I thank you in advance for all of the work you'll be doing in the next two years as we ask you to participate in our project and in our program reviews.

I'm happy to report today that, that the Excellence Initiative that, that you're all a part of is delivering facilities that not only meet our security and our life safety standards, but also represent the best of American architecture, engineering, technology, art, and culture. This industry advisory group plays a significant role in that. I hope you all know that.

I'm grateful for all of the expertise, the discussion, the critiques that you've brought to all of the reviews that you've participated in. We are, we're improving our projects. We're seeing noticeable changes and improvements in both our projects, and

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again our programs. We have you comment on sort of our internal workings, our internal processes. And so having that input is, is and has been incredibly helpful and we look forward to that continued review and interaction with you over the next two years.

Some have argued, I'd like to start off with this, some have argued that, that excellence is just about pretty buildings, right? It's sort of, it's about flowers, it's about a, a gold leaf scroll on the outside of the building. But as I testified before Congress last summer, I emphatically reject that notion.

You are a group of professionals who know that great design is everything about a building. It's from the guts of that building. It's about how it meets all of the program requirements. It's about how it's going to last in the long term. It's about how it's going to be sustainable. It's about taking advantage of the best and, and the newest technologies

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that are going to make these buildings more efficient. I'm incredibly proud of those efforts and I'm proud to stand here, or to sit here rather, with you and to really talk about how the Excellence Initiative is not just about pretty buildings, it's about buildings that work and buildings that represent us and will represent us for years to come overseas.

We've shown time and again that, that all of our buildings meet all of the security and the life safety standards that they are required to meet. I think that really goes without saying. I think Thom is, is going to walk us through the Beirut project a little bit later in this, in this morning's session and I think all of us can appreciate that, that Beirut, as much as anywhere that we work, is somewhere where the security considerations really have to be taken into account. But what I love about the Beirut project is that it's a fabulous project. It's a wonderful building. It doesn't look like it is first

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visibly about the security. It's about the program and all of the requirements and how to solve for all of those needs in a meaningful way. So, so I thank you for coming here and for talking about that project in a way that illustrates exactly what I'm trying to describe here.

I again look forward to working with all of you over the next couple of years. We're going to start in a few minutes with a film that shows really the last year in, in OBO's work. As I think I mentioned to a few of you earlier, I think the Excellence Initiative and beginning to shift the organization in a way that, that we're really pushing to do better and better in terms of our building designs has, has been really years in the making. As many people can appreciate, change is not always easy. There have been many participants in this, from, from within our organization, within the State Department, within OBO. We've had great support from our industry

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partners and from the Industry Advisory Group. But change takes a long time. And what's wonderful about this year for me is that I feel like I'm beginning to see those changes. They are beginning to appear on the books. It's becoming real. And I feel that the momentum is behind us now and I have you and a lot of our industry advisors and industry partners to, to thank for that.

So before we, we hit this video I'd like to just go over a few quick highlights of the work that OBO does and has done and that you'll be seeing in, in this brief video.

We this year completed five major projects. We have many in the pipeline, about \$9 billion worth of projects in the, in the pipeline. But we completed five this year, bringing the total number of completed diplomatic facilities since 1999 to 121. And those have provided safe and secure facilities for over 32,000 people overseas. It's, it's a big number, an

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impressive milestone.

Working closely with our colleagues in the Bureau of Administration we awarded in FY '14 over \$2.2 billion in contracts. In addition to major new construction and major rehabilitation projects we implemented 113 physical security upgrade projects for existing facilities overseas.

Five new embassy and consulate sites were acquired: Dhahran, Guatemala City, Ankara, Kinshasa, and Hyderabad. In fiscal year '14 for a joint OBO and DS effort the department activated 14 new Marine security guard detachments, significantly raising the security profile of these posts.

We also continue to support the department goals in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. They are comprehensive efforts. They are critical posts. And nothing we do in those places is ever simple.

And finally amidst the devastation and destruction in Kathmandu, all of us have seen this

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recently in the news. As a result of our standards and of our building program one of the few buildings left standing and intact in no small part because of the seismic requirements is, is the U.S. Embassy. And it's great not just because it kept our people safe but because it was able to continue to serve as a vital platform for communication, for aid, for coordination in a place devastated by a natural disaster. And that's really what the State Department's mission is about. And so we're very proud of that and I just want you to think about that's the type of work that, that we do. This is, this is what it means in the end.

We have ten new AE firms hard at work under our worldwide indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity contract, what we refer to as IDIQ. We throw that around, as if anybody would understand. And these firms are working on our new construction and our major rehabilitations. We also have recently selected

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six new AE firms for our support services contract.

Before we turn over to the video, again I'd like to say our work isn't always easy. We travel around the world, not always the easiest environments, not always the safest environments. We do that with our OBO teams. We do that with our industry partners. We address complicated situations. But it's just incredibly satisfying work. It makes us proud. And I want you to know that it makes me proud that it also has the support of the department and it has the support of the Secretary. So I'm going to turn it over to this video.

Our Secretary who has traveled a lot on some very important missions was not able to be here today, but he did record a statement for us. So we'll turn it over there.

(Video plays.)

(Music.)

SECRETARY KERRY: Hi everyone. I very much

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wish I could be there to participate in this year's Industry Advisory Group meeting. You know, the work you do to support our Excellence in Diplomatic Facilities Initiative really couldn't be more critical. And you do it incredibly well.

Frank Lloyd Wright has this terrific saying, "Every great architect is necessarily a great poet. He must be a great original interpreter of his time, his day, his age." And ever since I was a young boy I've had a very special appreciation for the poetry of architecture.

I remember walking around in downtown Berlin and seeing the unmistakable plaques that began to crop up reading, "This building was built with help from the Marshall Plan." And it was a reminder of our common values. But it was also a reminder that buildings send a message to the world.

We want people to see and touch the face of America. And the first face that people often see is

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the facade of our embassies, or the glass plates of one of our new consulates. Our top priority for our embassies and consulates is and always will be safety and security. Nothing is more important. But make no mistake, we're thinking hard about the dangers of becoming a Fortress America.

I distinctly remember feeling and seeing those dangers in Vietnam, where villagers would examine us suspiciously and give us this stare that raised many more questions than we were able to answer. And in Iraq and Afghanistan I've revisited that stare as I passed through an embassy compound with masses of guns and big armored personnel carriers, and people who were there visiting or sitting around. There will always be a tension between the diplomatic imperative to get outside the wire, and the security standards that require our diplomats to work behind high walls, concertina wire, and heavily fortified buildings.

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I'll tell you, every diplomat worth their salt feels that tension and worries about the misimpression our security footprint can create in the minds of the people we're trying to reach. That's why the work of all of you is so important.

Our embassies and consulates need to protect our people, yes. But they also need to reflect the very best in U.S. architecture, construction, engineering, sustainability, and technology. They need to be welcoming and open and accessible. Getting that balance right is never easy. But I'm proud to say that together we're actually making great strides.

Today more than 100 of our embassies are finding new ways to power their facilities, reduce carbon pollution, and reduce energy costs. That is the power of our partnership in action.

It's often said that you campaign in poetry and govern in prose. Here at the State Department, poetry and prose, stunning facilities and strong

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diplomacy, have to go hand in hand. So thank you. Thank you for everything that you do, and I look forward to working with you as we pave the next miles of our journey together. Take care.

(Music.)

(Video ends.)

(Applause.)

MS. MUNIZ: Thank you for sitting through that. I'm sure, while it was lengthy obviously we're proud of all the work that we do with, with our partners. And I hope it, it shows folks who may not be as familiar with the portfolio really the, the breadth and the depth of it, right? So from ambassador's residence to housing for staff to new embassies to major rehabilitations to a terrific arts program to a really strong maintenance program to a great real estate team and, and their efforts when it comes to site acquisitions, we're really proud of all the work. And that saved you, while it was long it

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saved you hours of Power Point presentations.

(Laughter.)

MS. MUNIZ: So on that note I'd like to go to the IAG and Timur, you were going to do the read out for this year's IAG sessions and let us know how things, how things went and what the sense was.

MR. GALEN: Great. Thanks, Lydia. There were nine significant reviews undertaken by the IAG, bringing together nine exceptionally talented design and engineering teams and typically between three and four members of the IAG or adjunct members.

I think the, maybe the best way to survey the nine is by a kind of rough typology grouping. Two are essentially stewardship projects involving new construction on historically significant existing compounds, where the stewardship in each instance took rather different forms. The first of those is the U.S. Embassy in Asunción, Paraguay by ZGF. And I'm going to ask Marlon Blackwell to make a few comments.

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In Asunción in particular I think the key challenge was the construction of a replacement embassy within a really beloved, beautiful landscaped botanical garden but with important questions about the extent of landscape preservation, the best way to add or augment to that landscape, and to incorporate the program within the compound. Marlon?

MR. BLACKWELL: Okay, you hear me. Yeah, Timur, there was a lot of great discussions really centered around how to be responsive in many ways to the contextual pattern of a city and how to consider also the boundary of the wall of the site as a potential program cultural interface. So that's something that was relatively new in the discussion rather than being foreboding, how could you actually program that and understand it as an interface?

And then we also talked a lot initially about how to strategically curate the existing landscape, the vegetation, and places of interest and

begin to develop a more sequential narrative that would, for the entire site, that allows for the unifying of the new and existing terrain and structures for a much better relationship, integrated relationship between the buildings and landscapes. And that included entries into the site, entries into the Embassy itself, transitional spaces, and vistas which were a big part of the site which is very kind of linear. So it really lent itself to that.

And I think the other thing was, that we discussed when you do this it's always good to do something perhaps in one or two moves than 25 moves. And so we really worked hard together as a team to distill ideas, to work on editing relative to the landscape organization and building organization, the form, the material palette, tried to minimize all inessential formal moves. It simplified the aesthetics and the articulation and developed a very limited and environmentally sensitive material logic

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for the building finishes, both inside and out, as well as the hard and soft landscape surfaces.

I think ultimately the goal in working together with the team was to help the team arrive at a condition of resonance between the new Embassy and the city, the culture of Asunción, and the historic landscape of the immediate site. And I think from what I can tell that's where, a good direction on that.

MR. GALEN: Thank you, Marlon. The second of those two projects was a major rehabilitation of the U.S. Embassy in Athens undertaken by Ann Beha's firm. In Athens the key challenge was really the repurposing of an existing mid-century iconic building, really a great building, bringing it into the 21st Century. Preserving, protecting the integrity of the original building but imbuing it with all of the appropriate safety, security, and other attributes of a new building. I want to ask Adele Chatfield-

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Smith if you will please on behalf of the IAG?

MS. CHATFIELD-TAYLOR: Chatfield-Taylor --

MR. GALEN: Taylor, sorry.

MS. CHATFIELD-TAYLOR: -- actually. Thanks, Timur. The thing that strikes you first about thinking about the Walter Gropius Building in Athens, which is a great, great important world landmark, I would say, is how different the building, the codes are for the OBO than they were in the old days when that building was completed in the fifties. It's now violating the new rules in many different ways. It's much too close to the street. It's much too porous. And it lacks a great many things that need to be contained in the new building that will constitute better safety and security.

The, an outstanding issue that we're still worrying about is the, how to do the right thing about the open courtyard that is a great feature of this marvelous building. It is now open to the sky and as

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part of making sure that the building is not just going to become an obsolete appendage to the new building I think the courtyard will be a major consideration.

And at the same time the actual position of the offices of the leadership of that Embassy are a big question. Because the new building will obviously be better equipped with all of the new security, technology, and so on that is specified by the Code, and yet the old building is where in an ideal world visitors and many staff would still be positioned because you want it to be the life spring of the new operation. At least that's the way I see it.

So the courtyard remains a major issue. And it's a preservation dilemma writ large, because it may be in certain respects a repurposing of the building served but I think the answers lie in the fact that if you begin with the building to see what it is you must do to make the new addition work you get further and

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you get a much more rewarding outcome.

I have to praise the architects in this case, Ann Beha, who has tremendous experience in this kind of problem. And I think it's going to have a very peaceful and original solution. So that would be my footnotes on this matter.

MR. GALEN: Thank you, Adele. The next two projects are projects that will be executed in phases leading to ultimately the complete demolition of the existing compound and new building. The first is the U.S. Embassy in Colombo, Sri Lanka, also by ZGF. And in this instance the phasing is to accomplish the enlargement and replacement of the Chancery with a state of the art, again, safe and secure building meeting all of the most current requirements while preserving the State Department's presence on a site that provides it really extraordinary access to the host government. And Julie Snow is going to speak on behalf of the IAG to, with respect to Colombo. Julie?

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MS. SNOW: Thanks. I have to say that in two peer reviews we never once discussed how to make a pretty building, which is I think to your point.

We began I think the first review very much intending to look for a way of creating a U.S. presence that certainly celebrates our innovation and transparency and openness to the culture by really looking carefully at the culture itself and the patterns of urbanization in Colombo. So we looked at, at this idea of interspersing these gardens with the -

-

MS. MUNIZ: I'm going to interrupt you for one minute.

MS. SNOW: Sure.

MS. MUNIZ: John, would you put your phone on the floor?

MS. SNOW: Oh. So I can't remember where I was. But, oh, so we started to balance the idea of, of breaking down the scale of the building and then

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integrating it more clearly with the landscape. We had this incredible site that was right on the ocean and just this beautiful opportunity to create outdoor spaces. And I was reviewing with my friend Shane Coen from Coen Partners Landscape. And so this idea of creating this intense dialogue between landscape and the architecture was, was key.

The second review then turned into a longer discussion about the perimeter wall and with the smaller Embassy, you know, how do you give presence to the Embassy and still have this rather sensitive use of the urban pattern and still have this sort of non-negotiable wall around the entire compound? And so that became a larger discussion about how, how that wall could be manipulated and how, I think using the word ingenuity would be a fair description of how that discussion went.

MR. GALEN: Thank you, Julie. As with Colombo, the Embassy in Niamey, Niger is a new

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Chancery being constructed within a compound that already includes the Ambassador's residence and the American School which is adjoining. And so in this particular instance bringing that state of the art Chancery into the existing compound and its already existing adjacencies was the principal challenge. I'm going to ask Richard Wood if he would make some comments on behalf of the IAG team.

MR. WOOD: Our review clearly showed that the architect had thought through the very challenging site logistics and, you know, very sore need for additional square footage, and understanding that there had to be a series of phases in order to accomplish the full program. It was a very difficult challenge. In the end I don't think we actually could fit almost everything on the site with the logistical issues that they faced.

There was a lively debate about, you know, how we affect the architecture as a result of these

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challenges and I'm anxious to actually see the outcome of some of those discussions. But in the end there was a really thoughtful approach towards squeezing in, you know, buildings that had, that accomplished the goals of the design, allowed an operating facility, maintained operations during construction, allowed for, you know, the future development of, you know, recreational facilities and things that would actually enhance the experience there. And more importantly, you know, we had to think through the experience of the visitors coming in and how their access into the site and their experience inside the building as they, you know, manipulate through the building to the people that they were visiting was accomplished. And I'm anxious to see how it actually came out because it was a tough challenge.

MR. GALEN: Thanks, Richard. The next three projects are construction of new facilities on medium sized sites. And I think probably in each instance

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the architect would characterize them as not quite big enough. But each of the sites are about ten acres and all three in challenging environmental conditions. Two in very hot, arid places, and the third in a, in an equally hot but very humid climate. Each needing to respond to those climatic conditions as well as other site conditions. The first is the U.S. Consulate General in Hyderabad by Richard + Bauer. John Swift will make remarks.

I think in Hyderabad the, not only the climate but the site conditions themselves, the rocky outcroppings which are in fact cultural attributes to the site, important to the form of the city, presented yet challenge upon challenge. So John, you might want to describe the work of the IAG.

MR. SWIFT: Yes so -- my phone is on airplane mode, by the way, but my notes are on here so the, so actually Richard + Bauer are, they are the architects, they are the design architects on that

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team. And I thought they did a really thoughtful job of looking very closely at those challenges that you just outlined, Timur. And there, the three design solutions that they came up with, I thought what came out of that, instead of the other way around, having a form that they kind of liked and then trying to justify it with the, with the landscape challenges.

They also did a very nice job of looking at how vehicular and pedestrian traffic would move around the site and it had an impact on where the entrance might be. And there was a lot of discussion about where the right entrance would be for support staff versus people who will use the Consulate everyday.

The other discussion that we had which I think is important in these type of climates is, is if every place should be air conditioned. There are, you know, people in that culture are very used to being in the shade but not necessarily in 72 degree air conditioned thermal environments. And so we looked at

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if there are areas, especially for the local people if there are areas where they would be where it, you know, you weren't trying to cool it down to a very cool level and that would save energy. But it would also probably be more comfortable for people that are used to that.

So the other things we looked at a little bit were what the renewable energy opportunities might be but specifically in that part of the world how water gets used on this site, very, very critical. And so there was a lot of discussion about that, too.

MR. GALEN: Thank you, John. The second of these three projects is also a Richard + Bauer project, and so there was probably cross learnings between the two. It's the U.S. Consulate in Matamoros, Mexico. And here the Consulate design incorporated a latilla, which is a local building form, a shaded canopy as a strategy for welcoming and creating a harboring environment for visitors,

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applicants for visas and the like. And so the incorporation of local building strategies into a nonetheless 21st Century U.S. State Department specification was among the key challenges.

The IAG member who would have made remarks had he been here, Craig Schwitter, asked me to make remarks on his behalf. And so briefly Craig said that it was, much as I think several of you have described, a challenge to balance program adjacency and security requirements. That the success of the design in incorporating these requirements was without sacrifice to the design, speaking to the design excellence, overriding design excellence of the mission. The importance of the landscape design and the quality of the environment created was crucial.

The opportunity to drive towards more creative, less prescriptive engineering solutions was something that Craig wanted to underscore with respect to the envelope, the MEP systems, and the structural

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systems. The opportunity to challenge and rethink legacy standards and modules within the workplace itself to favor a higher performing workplace, and I think finally the importance, which several of you have spoken to already, of allowing sustainability and other performance criteria to directly influence the design.

The third of those -- so thank you, Craig, in your absence.

The third is the U.S. Consulate in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia by SOM. I was a member of that team. And here, too, the challenge was the balance of orientation, what I would describe as environmental orientation versus civic and security criteria, where the sun and the street weren't in the right places to make it easy. And the distance from the street wasn't quite what it, you know, what you would ideally want. And so balancing out those criteria, the emblematic presence of the, of the Consulate being balanced with

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the life of the people that work there, as well as the consular visitors, had to strike the right balance between those three. The programmatic logic within a relatively constrained site and then the logic of sustainability and how to build particularly site hardscape and landscape that were consistent with the sort of climatic challenges.

The IAG's job in the review to sort of provoke thinking and rethinking but the, absolutely the design being driven by, you know, a very well led team by Craig Hartman at SOM. And we're looking forward to the outcome.

The fourth type were really new Embassy projects underway in the Mediterranean climate, rather different from what we've just described, both roughly the same size accommodating some 350 or 400 staff positions. The first we'll obviously hear much more about, is the new U.S. Embassy in Beirut by Thom and Morphosis. The IAG member who will comment is Nat.

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Here again a, a challenging steep, steeply sloping rocky site, housing the entire U.S. Mission, not only the Chancery and the support facilities but also housing for the Chief of Mission, the Deputy Chief of Mission, and the entire American staff and other people passing through the post. So a complex program on a complex site. Nat?

MR. OPPENHEIMER: Thank you, Timur. I have my notes on my phone as well. We met twice over the course of a few months and as has been reported from the other groups it was an excellent, two very excellent sessions. Thom and his team had come to the meetings with an incredibly well considered project on a very difficult site. I won't say any more. You'll get to see quite a bit of it shortly. And we were able to very quickly elevate the conversation and discuss some key sort of design strategies. Knowing that they can execute them it was more of a discussion of the entire room where we were able to very readily

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engage OBO personnel as well, challenge some of the perceptions and so on.

And that included just discussing sort of overall site massing. It is a very large project, as you'll see. There are some very unique site constraints. So, so fitting the project well on the site was a, was a very robust discussion and it went to challenging OBO's general design criteria for dorm size in order, and actually validating and advocating on the design team's side for a slightly smaller apartment in order to bring the massing down to a real, real vibrant and wonderful design.

We got in, we went back and forth between very grand discussions and into specifics such as entry procession and so on, which I believe the design team found helpful to continue to advance the design and you'll see more today. I'm, I'm curious as well to see the outcome. And we got into some technical discussions. On a project of this size there was a

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lot of discussion within the room early in design of looking at the utilities and site utilities from the point of view of sort of a building design, which we are all used to, and the discussion started to morph into more of a design of an urban landscape sort of a, an urban infrastructure project rather than a building design. I'm not sure where that got left off but it was a very nice discussion about maybe this was a different type of project in terms of preparing the site for the building. I'm very happy to be involved. Thank you. Thank you, Timur.

MR. GALEN: Yeah, in, in my conversation with a number of my colleagues there was a very consistent theme, which was about the nature of the collaboration between the IAG review team and the design process. And Nat had some really particularly insightful observations in our conversations. So maybe you could talk about that broadly across the whole undertaking?

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MR. OPPENHEIMER: Yeah. I'll be brief, I know we're short on time. I think what I found wonderful, and I've been fortunate enough to be involved in a lot of unique projects where value engineering, peer review meetings, and so on can go many different directions. What I find incredibly inspiring about these meetings and was thrilled to be asked back is that we all seemed to come to the table, at least in the ones I experienced, with a real sense of respect for the design team and the work they've done, and a trust that they have the competency to get it done in the end. So it becomes much more of a discussion, an elevated discussion in a really wonderful way that I think can do great things in advancing the design without it becoming a back and forth about different ideas or better ideas. It's just, or good or bad ideas, it's just about better ideas. And that's, that was a really wonderful dynamic.

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MR. GALEN: Great, thank you. And then the final project is the new U.S. Embassy in Ankara, Turkey by Ennead Architects. This is again a steeply sloping, complicated site, complex program. Major elements needing to be brought together to create a unified whole and expression in a very skillful way across the site. The, Debra Lehman-Smith, not Taylor, will, will make comments on behalf of the IAG. Debra?

MS. LEHMAN-SMITH: Thank you, Timur. And I was honored to be with Susannah Drake for this as well. And an observation and to just really focus on what Nat had said is I think this really was one of the most organized and respectful peer reviews that we've been able to participate in. Everybody walked out of it, both of them, both in January and then again in March, with really feeling that Ennead and especially Richard Olcott who is really driving the design of it, got to a place where we helped through this State Department team to get to a better place

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than they had really envisioned originally.

So some just very specifics of Ankara is that it is a very challenging site. It's 25 meters. It goes east to west and it's very narrow. It's in a new ex-urban, that's what they called it, bustling space. So we're surrounded by a lot of new towers and hospitals and a divided highway, which says a lot. And so how do you really create a very, very special place for this Embassy? And it had to be safe, and it also had to have a sense of gravitas to it.

So the original three schemes they came up with were the garden monument and the courtyard scheme, which was really based on a Turkish planning module called puliah [phonetic], which is an organization of buildings around a central focus. So as we really came through this they've progressed from the garden and the courtyard scheme into one scheme that really dealt with a Consulate that has 300 to 400 people that visit it daily, extreme, again, physical

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requirements, and probably most brilliantly the land, blending together a really wonderful landscape and building together. They really create this harmony.

And the challenge was how do you take all the very wonderful Turkish precedents and have a very, very strong American dynamic building? And I think they've really come to that from really what are the program requirements. How do you see through the building through these wonderful courtyards? And I think the challenge going forward is how do you take these program requirements of all these embassies that are so strong and embrace what the interiors do as well and the sense of moving through a site not just visually through architecture but through use? And I think that's really the next challenge of this building, is for it to have this wonderful heart that it already does to take it to the next step. So it was really the best peer review I've been able to participate in. And Ennead could have not been more

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gracious and more accepting to make it the best building.

MR. GALEN: Thank you very much, Debra. So really just briefly in closing, I think it's fair to say that, you know, Lydia, Casey, your entire team have really charged us and I think we have internalized the charge of the necessity to balance complicated parameters, safety, security, sustainability, complex programmatic requirements, the quality of the workplace for the people that work there everyday, the representational importance of the buildings to the country in which they are located but representing not just the United States but also a sensitivity to the context in which they are, in which they are found. And that these all be done without sacrificing each to the other. That's, you know, the design excellence that we are striving to help facilitate. And I think universally each team has been enormously impressed by the outcomes of the

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process and privileged to be a part of it.

MS. MUNIZ: Thank you, Timur. And again, all of the IAG members, thank you so much. I realize it's an enormous time commitment and a great deal of thought and engagement goes into these reviews. But I really think that not only do each of the projects benefit from it but I feel like our entire organization is learning how to be a better client through those reviews. And they are influencing the way we're talking to our architects, our AEs, right from the beginning. So I'm really incredibly grateful and look forward to another couple of years of hard work on this.

So my, my next, my next point is really to introduce Ambassador Will Moser who is sitting, sitting right next to me. Ambassador Moser is as he described the new Principal Deputy Director of OBO. He is a career foreign service officer. He knows the department inside and out, is an invaluable advisor on

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strategy and strategery [phonetic], and I'm really, really grateful that he has been able to join the OBO team. He came just a few short months ago. So I'm going to turn it over to him so that you can hear in part what is it like for somebody who has spent most of their career overseas, living in the very buildings that you're helping us create? And what his time so far has been like at OBO? So Will, a great pleasure, I'll turn it over.

AMBASSADOR MOSER: Okay. First I want to thank all of the members of the Industry Advisory Group for being here today and I appreciate hearing your perspectives on each of the projects. It is a great education for me and I am definitely learning a great deal just from being around you. And I also want to extend a great, a great word of thanks to all of the people who chose voluntarily to attend today, whether they be our other agency colleagues, or people from the industry that works with us, our A&E

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contractors, our construction contractors. All of you, because you all have a great role in actually making our organization work and in making the State Department work.

As Lydia said, I am a career foreign service officer and I have been in the State Department for 31 years. My last tour was, well my first tour, better to say, was in Bamako, Mali in 1985. And I went from there to Bonn, which was then the capital of West Germany; to Cairo, Egypt; to Paramaribo, Suriname, where we got a good presentation on the new building there which, boy, I'll tell you why it needed to be replaced. Then from there back in the department, and then onward to what I call my post-Soviet phase where I served in Almaty, Kazakhstan; in Kiev, Ukraine; and then finally as Ambassador in Chisinau, Moldova. And before my time in Chisinau I was actually one of the people that intimately worked with OBO because I was the department's logistics director and I supervised

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the contracting authority that did the, that does the contracts for OBO and we had a very, very firm partnership. So I was very happy when I was asked to come back and join the OBO team after having had a very positive relationship with them.

Now I want to talk to you a little bit about what your service actually means to me as a foreign service officer. You know, when I first went to Egypt I wasn't in that nice tower that was, that's on the compound in Cairo. I was actually in the office building that was next to it, which was an old apartment building. And I walked, and this was in '89, and I walked in and I said, well, my office is, is okay. You could definitely tell it was an old building. But then I noticed that we had files in the bathtub. Because no one was going to take the bathtub out but we were going to use it for the files.

Then several years later when I went to Almaty, Kazakhstan, once again I was in an old

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apartment building, and once again in standard foreign service practice we kept the files in the bathtub.

The reason why I mention this is not to really say anything bad about the State Department per se but to say is you do not know what a difference these new facilities and these renovated facilities can make in the difference to a foreign service officer's life. In Moldova where I was the Ambassador I had, actually I set the new record. I was in a 115-year old building which was, showed every sign of age that you can imagine. And I want to note that it was not a historical structure.

But the reason I wanted to really make this point is it's not, I am not really your customer per se, who I want for all of the people that are representing industry here today to think of. Your true customer is that foreign service officer who is just beginning his or her career. The person that walks into that Embassy for the first time, or to that

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Consulate to be on the visa line, and they think, gosh, this is a great place to work. I have a beautiful piece of artwork in the yard. I have a very attractive facility. I have a functional facility where I can get my job done. And I can get out of the building, as Secretary Kerry so eloquently said, in order to perform the important diplomatic work that needs to be done.

And if I could add another one too, is as Lydia said today we have many, many of our employees now in very, very dangerous places around the world. And as a foreign service officer I think everyday about the spouses and the children that they leave behind when they serve in these places. And our responsibility in diplomatic security and in overseas buildings and in the whole State Department is to make sure that everyday we can answer the question if we have done enough to make sure that the facilities that these people serve in are as safe and functional as

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possible so they can do really some of what is our most important diplomatic work.

So yes, Lydia and I are going to hassle you. We're going to ask you questions and we're going to make demands of you. But I really want you to think about who your real customer is because you're going to, you're really trying to serve that, that foreign service employee who 30 years from now will be the Ambassador at one of the posts and he'll be sitting in one of those new facilities that you helped to design, that you helped to make functional, that you helped to make a really, really good place to work. Where you felt proud of the country you were representing and proud of the fact that you got the opportunity to go to work in this facility everyday. So thank you all for being here.

Now my opportunity right now is to introduce Thom Mayne of Morphosis who is going to talk to us about Beirut. I'm lucky that I don't have to say very

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much because he needs no introduction. I was told that I should mention that he was the winner of the Pritzker Prize, one of the highest, one of the highest prizes in the profession. So it is my pleasure.

The other person that I have the pleasure to introduce is someone that I have known for a number of years, is Wayne Ashbery who is our Deputy Assistant Secretary for Security Countermeasures. And they will be both talking to us today about the Beirut project. So Thom? Wayne?

MR. ASHBERY: All right, everyone. Good morning. The first thing I'm going to say is I'm not Thom Mayne.

(Laughter.)

MR. ASHBERY: I was asked to come today to provide a little perspective on the Embassy project in Beirut. And I have to thank Secretary Kerry and Ambassador Moser for setting up my remarks so perfectly, simply amazing given the fact that we

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didn't even discuss them beforehand.

But the question becomes why do we need a new Embassy in Beirut? The simple answer to that question from my perspective is that Beirut is a dangerous place. If we go through some of the history of what's happened to the Embassy in Beirut over the years, as far back as 1978 the U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon was assassinated, a very, very tragic event.

In April of 1983 the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon was attacked by a suicide bomber that killed 63 people. At that time it was the deadliest attack against a U.S. diplomatic facility.

In October of 1983 the famous, infamous Beirut barracks bombing occurred, killing 299 American and French servicemen.

In September, 1984 a suicide bombing targeting the U.S. Embassy Annex in East Beirut killed another 24 people.

For about the last 40 years Beirut has been

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going through civil unrest, political violence, and a civil war. Our current Embassy in Beirut more closely resembles a forward operating base than it does a U.S. Embassy.

So why do we need a new Embassy in Beirut? It's a dangerous place. But we need an Embassy more than for safety and security. As everyone has said today, our buildings represent a message to everyone who sees them and everyone that works in them. One of the things that struck me in a recent visit to Lebanon is the fact that despite that they've been going through 40 years of political violence, bombings, fighting, air strikes, that it's a vibrant city that has done every single thing that they can do as a community to make sure that that is not apparent on the surface. They repair the damage quickly. They rebuild the destroyed buildings. It is a vibrant place.

One of the things that they need from the

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United States of America is a message. They need the message that we are committed to their success. We need a platform for diplomacy in that city that allows us to send that message, that we are committed to their success, to peace and democracy in that region.

I go back to the statement that the current Embassy looks more like a forward operating base. That doesn't send the message that we need to send to the Lebanese. It also doesn't send the message that we need to send to the people that work in that facility. It's a tough place to work and has been for a long time. They need a safe, secure, functional facility that can allow them to enjoy the area that they live in, allow them to function in a critical area of diplomacy.

Now with that I'm going to turn it over to Thom so he can start talking about the project.

MR. MAYNE: That last sentence was perfect because from the very beginning we had a mental image

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of a somewhat fortified, safe Club Med.

(Laughter.)

MR. MAYNE: This is a, it's an extremely interesting, I think somewhat unusual project in that from the very get go it became evident that this was city making, or campus making, and quite different than the traditional embassy project. And we've organized the presentation that's going to talk about the site, which is hugely influential in the development of this project, and the response to that planning, etcetera, and then the role of landscape which moves back to the site. And I should say that it's a project that has been really captivating for our studio in that we've been interested in highly complex multi-performance types of problems and ones that are just about impossible to bring a huge amount of baggage. And this was a project which we could start from scratch and we had to ask really basic questions and we didn't come in with a lot of

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architecture. And in fact I'm never going to talk about really architecture today in a formal sense. That it's what you arrive at as you solve the multiplicity of problems that you're faced with in this project.

A bit redundant but maybe kind of interesting, because Kerry said it, and then your film said it again, and it's a little bit different but basically the same thing. And but what it talks about, and then we took out certain particular words, safety and security, openness and ingenuity, environmental stewardship and innovation, and the American taxpayer, i.e. cost model. The first thing that happened to happen on this project is there has to be an alignment with the essential values of the thing you're trying to solve. And it proceeds, it's about values and it's about the very, very sophisticated notion of the multiple functionalities of this building within political, within operational,

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within budgetary terms, etcetera, etcetera. And there has to be an agreement in terms of an alignment of an architecture with the aspirations of the project.

The project is going to start with the site and it's a, I'm not sure ex-urban, it's at the edge, it's in a, actually a, maybe a middle income residential neighborhood that's outside of the city as you see here that happens to be by coincidence or design very close to the existing Embassy. And it has a very, very particular set of circumstances that starts with topography. And you can see here we're looking southwest towards the city across the bay and the, it has, it has a prominence in terms of its, the topography, etcetera, and it has a shape which is going to be extremely important. So as we see it in this view, this is going to be extremely demanding in that it has a very large, because of the elongation of the site, it has a very long perimeter in terms of enclosing the amount of space that we have available

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to us and that's going to be very, very kind of important as you'll see as we go through the planning studies.

The, these slides don't convey the power. If you're at the site and you're actually moving through it, the people here that have done this will agree with me I'm sure, as you see the site it's actually much more powerful. And cameras can't even focus in the distance there, you see a little bit of a horizon, that's the city, and it's actually quite clear when you're there because you're focusing on it. And we're, you can see by the little -- you know I bought a computer for this presentation that I could draw on and I forgot you can't bring your computer to these things. And so I'm at a loss here, I was going to draw for you -- but you see on the upper left where we are? We're on the top of the site looking across to the city. And it's an extremely kind of prominent position of the site. And we're now in the middle

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thing. We're going to move down a total of about 80, 80 meters. And we're looking now to the west and we're looking at the residential development, etcetera. And then we're looking up at the site. We can't quite tell here but this is actually quite exaggerated and there's an existing chapel, the one kind of piece of architecture that exists on the site.

So here we are. And we're, we're now looking at the edge of the water and we're a kilometer from the water, more or less directly west. And again, you have a clear kind of idea of the shape of the site, the upper right being the high point. And so here we are. And we have a, this again kind of unusual condition that's kind of, finds its way inside this residential kind of place. And it's 44 acres of site gross. And here's the first issue.

As you take the little tail away, which is again all boundary with no, nothing in it, right? And you use your 30.5 meter setback, we have actually

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24.857 so we have basically half the site left as we look at the parameters of buildable area. And it's again going to be, we're forming a whole direction of what the project is going to be and how we're going to use this piece of site for the project. And then again looking at view, there's a strong view from the whole, even the lower portion of the site. But you get to the top of the site and you're going to get a 360-degree view and it's an absolute kind of prominent position that becomes kind of obvious which was going to be the very beginning of our kind of thinking of how we deal with it.

And then there's other conditions that are important. And there's a single roadway in the upper part in the yellow you're looking at, which has to do with access. And then the lower part of that is a valley, right? So it's completely inaccessible. So we have a very specific kind of series of places that we have for automobile entry. And it makes the site

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very one-sided, right? And very particular in that way. And it's going to give us an orientation which is going to be important. And then which became the most kind of serious thing that we looked at from the very beginning, as you are moving from bottom to top if you're moving within a pathway that's accessible it can't be a straight line. And it's a 1.2-kilometer walk from the bottom. And then this kind of fascinated me because all of a sudden it's very clear we're city making more than building making, right? This is a campus that you're moving a fairly large amount of distance. And then of course the really interesting one is the line below that, is the 80 meters. Right? You're, you're walking up a 25-story building, right? From top to bottom. And again, this is, we're just forming kind of a direction. How are we going to approach the limits that we're given here, the, seen both in terms of problems and potential? And then again when you cut a cross section in the

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other direction, same thing. You have a very kind of severe kind of condition of, whether it's 33 to 47 meters difference. And as again, it's going to have an effect of the site planning.

What, what we did early on is we started looking at the site in terms of a series of pads which are both kind of existing, and we modeled a bit. And we were trying to take this topography and rationalize it and seeing if we use certain parts of the site how that's useful to us in developing a somewhat more compact kind of organization. And I think if we had anything a priori in our heads it was from the very beginning it would be campus like and it would be, it had to be, have some control over its boundary, and it had to have an intensification and a density, right, connected to these things versus a dispersal. And when we looked at this we could take it about down in half, we're moving more in the 700 and we're moving up 45 meters and it became again we're slowly shaping

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kind of a direction of the project by just the analysis of the site. And again, it's fascinating because this is a project if you came in with an a priori idea, it would be meaningless. Right? You have to, you have to give in to an understanding of the demands of the situation and a project will develop out of that. And it made it fascinating.

So here we are looking at that. And it's going to develop into three different kind of ideas. And the first one is we're putting the Chancery on the top and we have the housing and then on the lower part of the site we have open space and in the second one we had housing. And we're, again, we're just kind of experimenting with what this stuff means in terms of placing the major kind of elements on the site. And we have the housing on the top and we have the Chancery in the middle with the, the park and the open space, so the lower part of the site. And then finally we had one that had the Chancery on top and

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the housing on the bottom and the park in the middle. And the notion was that you were going to go through the park everyday.

And it was, I think in the beginning it was our kind of, our interest was probably this was probably where we were going to go, and you're going to go separate domestic and work environment. And you would use the park as a kind of a space to breathe, and etcetera. But when I went and looked at the site and actually trekked around we were going, wait a minute, we're back to our 1.4 meter walk and our 80 meters vertical. And I'm not sure this is going to be something you want to do everyday as a necessity. And it also vastly increased the perimeter and made the project much more complicated, which we'll talk about in a minute, having to do with the defense strategy.

And so out of that, I was told you wanted to chip in a little bit. You tell me when you want to holler on that defense part.

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MR. ASHBERRY: I will.

MR. MAYNE: Here we go. We were looking at actually some existing schemes and they were dispersed, a series of buildings. And then we moved it to the other one, condensed. And it's going to be about peripheral boundary and it's going to be about absolutely a defense kind of strategy but it's going to be about also village making and campus making and a social structure and it's going to take us in a certain direction and it's going to be vital to how this thing gets developed.

And then if we look at the scheme that we're going to pursue, it was the scheme one. We're looking now at the Chancery in the top and the housing next to that and the open space below. And if you look at the program, let's wait one more slide, there we go. And it's going to turn into this, which I'm going to explain kind of piece by piece.

If you look at the bar, that's the key. If

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you look at the Chancery, the blue, we've got less than 20 percent of the total program. So that tells you right away this is a project, right, that has a huge amount of functional activities that are beyond the Chancery. And again, I think I'm, Lydia you can tell me if I'm correct, but the projects I've seen are pretty much all the blue. If we look at London, we look at Mexico City, etcetera. And it was a little bit of that stuff kind of added to it, but that's the project. And here's our project, and it's everything below, right? And it becomes a fascinating kind of project, right? That it becomes a very, very different kind of notion of our task as architects and let's say even urban planners in this case in terms of this particular project.

And then it's going to start with really security edge boundary as a vital part in the project. And so here we are and we're looking at kind of the circulation of this game. And of course what happened

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is we used the scheme in not coming across the park. We're now moving a shorter distance and I'm going to get to that as we talk about the housing vis à vis the NOB. And we're going to look at various types of movement and it's going to vary greatly. And whether you're looking at the median distance, which is now a seven-minute walk, or the worst distance in housing, which is a ten-minute, or if you're moving to recreation, which is the bottom which is the largest, right? It's still 12 minutes. And we're becoming kind of aware of how one uses this related to time and how accessible the work environment, the living environment, and the recreational environment is. And it's becoming vital in our, in our development of the schemes.

Too bad we don't have a model here. You're going to see as I go through this and plan a section, it's an absolutely three-dimensional project. And I think again the people here that have seen it may,

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right? That you just about have to have a model in a way and the photographs don't do it justice. But we'll do our best.

And so here we are with security. And we have the, the first, the first, the boundary with guard house, etcetera. And you'll see we've cut off the little tail from the very beginning. There was absolutely no use to include that. It was all edge and no, no space. And then we have kind of the next level of the 30-meter setback, which gave us our 24 acres, right? And then we have our five-meter anti-climb and we keep shrinking, right? And it's, again, it's having to do with the continued density of the project, right? That's balancing again security and social and various functional kind of parameters, which include an environmental one which I haven't spent a lot of time yet. There's too many things to talk about here. But it's also giving us a much more sustainable kind of a project.

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And then what you would have to see, it would be much more evident at the site, the dotted line coming right through the middle are high tension wires. And in our reviews it came up, I think, right? Right away with, I think Craig Hartman brought it up, right? That it becomes a, kind of a really powerful boundary. We used to have a whole lot of the housing slipping under it. And it just became really clear that we wanted to be beyond that. There seems to be a site above the wires and below the wires and it became more powerful when you see the site than it is in a diagram or a drawing.

And then we're looking at the internal evacuation. And this became everything. And if you can see the green line we can get everybody out of this building in 12 minutes walking at about 2 1/2 miles an hour, which is a fairly slow clip. So we can probably get them out really in about eight minutes if they pick up the speed a bit. And it was absolutely

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essential. And we can get them to the helipad, for the worst case condition. And it became, again, a part of the criteria from the get go.

So here we are. We have the NOB on the top of the site. And it will have kind of two entrances. And one will be the Consulate on the top, and then on the lower part will be the Chancery. And I think I'm going to have the next slide. And here we are looking at that. Can you, does that make sense to you? My thinking here is horrible. (Indiscernible) that large form comes out, right? And it's going to be one of the only kind of really obvious architectural events that we're using our design capital in this piece that is the most symbolic of the pieces. And it will use the topography. And here we are and we're cutting and section, and you're going to see as we go through this. There is a huge amount of the, half of the NOB is in the ground, is an augmented landscape. And it very much comes from our NOAA project. And it gives

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you these vast, a ceiling another couple of meters taller than this with a lot of space and a very, very open environment. And it's not read as building, it's read as site, right? And the thing you're going to read is this one bar as an object, and you'll see later in the photographs, the project is very much pushed in the ground and becomes very much part of the landscape and doesn't document itself as buildings in a traditional sense. And here we are with that one piece and it's going to go over a main street which I'm going to talk about, which is going to be the, kind of the center of the village. And then as you look out you're going to see the city, as you enter the main space of the Chancery. And again you're going to look straight ahead and you're going to be looking at the middle of the city.

And so here we are with the, the pedestrian entry into the Consulate and then a garden, a formal garden, and then you are entering the Consulate. And

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then below you're entering the Chancery, both walking and automobile, through this check point. And then you're entering at another garden, which will be again a formal garden. And what it doesn't show here the, from the lower part the staff, the housing connects into that same entrance. So it's extremely efficient. And again, kind of the view from that point.

And then the Chief of Mission and the Deputy Chief of Mission, the Ambassador's residence, right? And the Deputy. Right across from the main entrance. And you'll see in the landscape plan that this is the most formal garden and this is the symbolic kind of place of entry. And we've placed the residence and the Chancery in a kind of traditional axial form relationship. And so what's the red portion there is the garden. It actually slopes and it's this connecting tissue between the residence and the Chancery. And then that's, it's a single form that's going to carve out a space that's the formal entry

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into the Chancery. And then the view out of his residence. And then the housing.

The scheme is, it's continually developing. And if you remember at the first it was more of just a solid kind of mass and it's opened up a bit and inside that is going to be a major garden. And you're looking at these two bars, one, the lower one is double loaded, the upper one is single loaded, that have the 150-minus people working here. And they are going to be in direct connection to the entry, which you're going to see in a minute. So there's the entry piece, and they are going to be moving from housing to work or to the lower part of the project for the recreation.

And then we have the staff housing. Can you see the numbers? They are divided into communities. And it's, it's, every architect here knows that it's a Corbusian idea of, I lived in the sorts, Peabody Terrace at Harvard. It was one of the first projects

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that broke units down into small communities. And we did the same thing here. So as you're, of a huge staff you have a place to live and there's four units of floor and you have a place that you can identify, right, in terms of scale. And this is the definition of that. And if we kept going, it was too much to show you today, I could take you into the units and the entry spaces, etcetera, etcetera, which is much more detail. But you would belong to that community and it's based on a social, a social model. And here we are with that space in between.

And these lines look a little complex. They are actually quite simple. The units are, 80 percent of them are identical. I mean, there are some that turn corners and do a few things like that but they are the kind of odd ones, and even those are rationalized. We spent, oh, two decades working on kind of complex geometries that we could make quite simple. Frank would maybe attest to that.

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And then the courtyard in the middle. And it's, this gives you a grasp of the scale of things, right? It's a big project. That's a soccer field in the middle, right? So it's a, this is the passive landscape between the living, so it would be, if you wanted to play bocce ball or have a birthday party, or you have picnics, or you were reading, etcetera, this is, the service is there. And it goes back to our model of this is Beirut and it has a climate very similar to Los Angeles. And you're living outdoors ten months of the year at least, if not more. And it should be a Club Med. It should be a place that's extremely, that you can release the tension of the complexity of the situation and the place, etcetera. And it's a respite, right? And this is where there will be the most energy put in terms of landscape on this very, very large site.

And then the part that's probably the most difficult to read here if you haven't had a chance to

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look at this thing thoroughly is the vertical shift, because it's really much more about a sectional relationship. So you're looking here at the housing through the landscape which is cascading down. And we have a thoroughfare, a main street. And it, by doing that it allows us to have two vertical movement spaces, one at the right end which would be the recreational, right, and the end of the housing, and the other at the, at the Embassy end. And it simplifies movement. So you're going to come across the street and the site is moving down three levels. Make sense? Right?

And then we also purposely want to intensify the social connections. This is where you meet people from all the other communities because it's more or less a single street that binds the workforce to the Embassy proper. And it simplifies, and here we are again looking the other way so you see that street. And it's a, it's at the end of the park. It's a north

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facing, looking at the park that's going to be from the other side south facing. So it's going to be really a nice light condition. And it's going to be filled with indigenous trees, etcetera, for this, this kind of singular space. Because a lot of the other I'll talk to you about, is we left indigenous, and then you get this as you're looking through. And again, this large scale.

And then the fitness at the very end now, basketball, soccer fields, internal courts and weight rooms and all that. And they're going to use the bottom of the site. And then there is that line that goes around the leftover site. And what's left now below the bottom half, let's say, just about, is a running track and a place that could be used as needed, right? It will be left more or less indigenous. And then again, looking down from the housing to the pool and the volleyball, etcetera, etcetera. And again, this landscape is going to be

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planted more or less in an indigenous fashion and will over years will develop into something that was, what the site was a couple of years ago.

And then the community center, can you see the changes now? It's where the writing is, right? And this is on the street. And it's literally a main street. And on that street is eating facilities, markets, social spaces, pool rooms, all that kind of stuff. And it's going to be the center of the town, right? And it's where all the kind of recreational and kind of relaxing takes place. And there it is on the left. And it's glazing, it's protected in the interior. It's going to be the beginning of the park is right behind us and you're looking at above the Embassy, floating over the top, and again an axial relationship to the site. And it becomes the symbol of the whole community, right? It is the single kind of symbol that represents this place. And then below that a huge kind of opportunity for an art piece. And

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this is again, the hotel is going to be on the right,
this is going to be the center of this campus/village.

And then the Marine, the service guard above
that. And again, out of this roofscape we're cutting
pieces open for landscape and private areas. This one
for the Marines, the Marines. And then the hotel.
And again, that's coming right up at the very edge on
the right. And the security. And finally, the
service, the warehouse and the, all of the huge kind
of parking facility, maintenance, etcetera, which is
at one edge. And again, from the very beginning as we
were looking at the site we were very clear that we
wanted that to be clearly secondary. And as you are
moving from place to place you are only moving through
these kinds of desirable kind of functionalities of
the site and we're using all of the kind of attributes
of landscape and the hill. And then again the total,
the total complex. When seen in model, and
you look at the various pieces, you can see how it's

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been very much tailored to the site. And a lot of that also had to do with maximizing cut and fill, minimizing cut, etcetera. And we went through many, many iterations as we kept the site. The idea and the natural site kept getting more and more in alignment, right? And again, looking west there is no landscape here. If we put the landscape on this it's going to be just from the road, just about disappear. You're going to see when we get to landscape that the roofs are also very essential here. And again, in looking up the hill.

MR. ASHBERRY: Okay, can I jump for a second?

MR. MAYNE: Yeah.

MR. ASHBERRY: As all of you can tell, the program for this project is far different than a traditional Embassy project. It includes a city. I was going to say one of the reasons for that goes back to security. I was going to say Beirut is a dangerous place. Over the last 30 years our Embassy has rotated

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between being closed, being in lockdown. For 15 years the only way you could get in and out of our Embassy was via a helicopter and landbridge from Larnaca, Cyprus.

The situation in Beirut in some ways hasn't changed. While now during much of the times we operate we are able to go in and out via commercial airlines, there is still a very distinct possibility that at any given time our access to the airport is going to be restricted due to threat information or an increase in violence between the factions that are in Lebanon. So significant aspects of the scope of this project are to accommodate those security requirements for those times that we are in a lockdown mode and unable to move in and out of that compound. To be able to provide that safe, secure, working, living environment for our people that are working there under the harshest of security circumstances to allow our diplomatic mission to still continue.

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Incorporating those effectively into such a challenging site is why Excellence in Diplomatic Facilities matters. There are many approaches to this that could have been done that would not have worked very effectively. If you look at the distributed approach where all the different buildings would have been placed in different areas on the site, not only would it have been difficult for the people that are living there to traverse those 25-story climbs every time they wanted to go from one building to another, but it also would have been very difficult to secure. I was going to say people would have been transitioning from a security area to a non-secure area constantly throughout the day as they moved about the compound. The ability to incorporate an effective helicopter landing zone operation and do it in such a way that you can move to and from that landing zone under cover is an important part of the integration of these systems into this design. Some

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of those features tend to disappear in the overall design concept. That in fact represents some of the aspects of Excellence in Design, is the fact that some of these extreme security features become much less apparent as the design incorporates all the functions of this compound.

Another approach that was considered was consolidating everything on the top of the hill, which is the premier portion of the site. The challenge with that set of circumstances is it would have given the castle on the hill appearance. While from a security perspective I probably could have been very happy with that, it would have been easy to secure, it would have been safe, it would have been easy to protect, I was going to say but it would not have sent the correct message to the community that we live with or to the City of Beirut. Because our Embassy is not a castle on a hill. It is a community that is integrated within another community, and that's the

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message that needed to be sent. Thank you.

MR. MAYNE: Okay. The, back to the landscape, the, like I said, really the concluding part of this, we're going to divide it up into typologies. And the first which will be maybe the most traditional, the one you're looking at here, would be the passive space, the park connected to the residential. And because of the single double loading, we have two-thirds of the people focused on the park to start with, right? And it's internal and it's protected and safe, etcetera. And it would become the major passive recreational space. And then the lower part, the active, with the gym and the basketball, swimming, etcetera. And then the two formal pieces connected to the Chancery and to the Consulate, which would be the traditionally formal within the standards of embassies. And then there is an (indiscernible) and it's going to be very much to do with rethinking the perception of security and kind

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of challenging the reality of the height of the walls, etcetera, and masking that to some degree. And trying to find a balance between the reality of security and its communication in terms of its defensive strategy and to make it much more open, a sense of openness is probably the most difficult part of the job. I remember years ago I was a part of a committee that was with Moynihan talking about the GSA and it was just an amazing kind of conversation. I think, Casey, you were there, right? And an amazing talk, as he discussed the necessity, the reality of safety but of the importance of the communication of openness as it represents us as a culture. I'm speaking of the U.S.A. And we have the exact same problem here, to somehow find a balance between the reality and its communication as a culture. And that would be the role of this, the landscape. And then there's indigenous, and this could be more or less part of what the site looked like in, ten years ago, 15 years

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ago. And it would be places for future expansion, etcetera. And it would be the, part of the indigenous nature of the site. And so here you're seeing those are.

And then the other one that's key is the roof. And again, we're bringing this from a project we've done in China, from our NOAA project. It's going to be a, from our recent project in Dallas, the museum. It's going to be an indigenous roof but it's going to be a rockscape, etcetera. And so as you see this from uphill and as you experience the site you're going to see the huge amount of the architecture is seen as landscape. And we're in some ways even masking or we're blurring the difference between building and landscape. And it's just an interest we've had that, it's aligning with this particular project. And it's going to, it's going to give a very, very different kind of experience when you're here. The idea that you're living within a landscape

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and we're using that as the major kind of asset for the project versus architecture in a formal sense. That it's not going to be about the style of the building, or it's not going to be about being able to identify a particular architect based on architectural style. It's about the use of landscape as a middle ground, right, of identifying this particular place.

And then there's, we're just looking at now, focusing on kind of events and the location of those places and defining them. And it's going to be very much connected to the relationship of art and the integration of art. And again, we're extremely interested in kind of early formation of the connections between art and the work itself and making connections. And it doesn't come afterwards as kind of a decorative act, it's very much integrated. And I showed you that one piece that came earlier, the wall at the end of the piece is an obvious kind of example and we're looking for those kind of opportunities and

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to start helping define the types of art, the types of artists that would be the most appropriate for this project.

I've saved time. We are going to talk, are we going to talk? Is that the deal? Okay.

MS. MUNIZ: Thom Mayne, thank you so much for the presentation.

(Applause.)

MS. MUNIZ: Why don't we open the floor to questions from anybody on the IAG or anybody who has attended? We're open. And it could be to any of us, or to the presenters.

MR. MITCHELL: Thom, this should be a freebie for you. What did you enjoy the most about your experience? You sound very passionate about what you shared. But what would you say you enjoyed the most about the experience?

MR. MAYNE: What did I learn the most?

MR. MITCHELL: No, what you enjoyed the

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most?

MR. MAYNE: Enjoyed, oh when I, you mean as an occupant? Not as an architect?

MR. MITCHELL: I'll let you answer it.

(Laughter.)

MR. MAYNE: I think the situation has produced (indiscernible) has given us an enormous opportunity to produce something that didn't exist. And that I can't imagine anybody confusing their stay in Beirut at this Embassy with any other Embassy of any other country. And it came out of just utilizing what was there, maximizing (indiscernible). And I would think that it will be true that if you remember something it will be more about the spaces, landscape, etcetera. The building will fit in there somewhere. But it's going to be more about the campus overrules any building. In fact, it may be (indiscernible) in a sense it's all a single thing, right? And keeps working (indiscernible). And so you don't need to

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identify singular buildings. You identify particular places and spaces. And I think we're more interested in the notion of spaces than we are the objects. In fact you could claim (indiscernible) elements of things that are part object and it's more about spaces.

MS. COCHRAN: I, I was just curious since the landscape is so integral to the building, could you talk a little bit about, I assume there's a landscape architect on the project, and how that collaboration worked? Or, you know, what they brought to the team in terms of site knowledge and experience in this kind of climate?

MR. MAYNE: The, I'm sorry, the role of landscape?

VOICE: (Indiscernible).

MS. COCHRAN: Sorry. Sorry. Is there a landscape architect on the project?

MR. MAYNE: Yeah.

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MS. COCHRAN: And how, so did the collaboration work?

MR. MAYNE: You know he should have, they should have been here today. We're, Arne and I were talking. Arne? Where are you? Oh, he just left. I could, I talk about, I actually have loaded up here plant materials and we connected the typologies with already a group of plant materials that work in both performance terms, etcetera, for those areas. And I left that out precisely because I'm not a landscape architect and I'm interested in the broader -- oh, you keep following me with these things. Then our connection has been quite interesting, in that we've been in the line of the broader issues that have to do with the use and performance of the landscape before design. It, and it's been interesting because I think their notion was probably more to design things in Italy, make them look like something. And we've been pushing back, getting no, no, we don't want to do

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that. We don't know what it looks like. Not interested yet. We're interested in forming a broader condition of landscape as to how it belongs to this project. And we're at the point now where we can define these very clear distinctions of typologies that talk about whether it's formal garden, whether it's passive garden, whether it's active, etcetera, and we can connect that to a landscape vocabulary. And we're right now in a place where we're starting to look at I guess the more traditional notion of design as those things form into very particular places.

We're probably kind of somewhat unique and somewhat opposite that I'm a kind of open-ended guy and I don't like to close things unless I have to, and I like to keep the openness, the opportunities kind of pushed as far as possible before I fix them. And we're, we're at that place definitely with Sasaki. And I think most people, I mean a lot of people just design something a priori, and here it is. And we

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don't work that way. We consciously look at what the parameters are. And I'm interested in design as a somewhat more organic thing that kind of happens on its own. I'm just nurturing it a bit. We're trying to just pull out the potential of various aspects of the problem. And this one is so incredibly rich that we can operate from so many different directions in terms of the critique that has to do with the reiterative notion of how one scheme goes to the next. And again, I guess some of the people here, Lydia or Casey could probably tell you, if you looked at the various models we could do a kind of a study of just the evolution of this, right? Over the last six months. And it just keeps changing, having to do with the questions and conversation that it just, right? And it seemed to do it quite naturally I think, in this case. Do you agree?

MS. MUNIZ: Yes. I would, I think that's absolutely true. I think what's interesting though is

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the way you describe it as this, I think you and your group are open-ended but you're also very aggressive about trying to understand what are the constraints and knowing those right up front and having that drive sort of the design as it moves forward. Which has been really amazing to watch. And so I think that as the building evolved it is, it is fluid in, in a way that allows it to be responsive to this very complicated condition and to the sort of meshing of all of these different program pieces, whether it's a helicopter landing zone to a rec area to a representational Ambassador's residence. I think it just sort of, it knits more tightly and more tightly together as it moves forward. And it has been amazing to watch.

MR. MAYNE: And this is a project, Lydia you brought it up at I think the second, one of, the second or third critique. You change one thing and it immediately reflects on 12 other things. And so it's

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not like, oh, let's move the entrance from here to there. You move from here to there and then it triggers a whole series of responses. And so it's, it's, it takes up a lot of brain space, right? It's extremely kind of complicated in its interrelationships, which makes it a fascinating project. Right? And then if you look at again a change, how does that affect safety and the fence versus the social? And then you just, by the way, how does the environment figure in? And you keep adding all of these components together and you end up with this very kind of complex kind of a thinking process, right? A development process.

And it's, it's been fascinating for our studio, especially for the younger ones, well young in architecture is 30 to 50, in that it kind of epitomizes the importance of not using a priori design, not coming in already and this is what I do, and this is what I'm going to build. But the answer

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is nothing black, haven't got an idea, no idea, right? Which like, not totally true, but closer to that. And let's just see what comes out of it. And I think, again, I'm going to ask you, I would ask the question back, I don't, I couldn't at this point see any other way of solving the problem. That it would have been useless for us to come in with a priori because we would have had maybe four or six or ten of the requirements. But we missed 150 or 200 or something, right? I mean, there are so many of them. And they have to be worked through, through a sequence of, that's iterative. Which becomes I think totally essential that we keep, we push something out, we interrogate it, we question it. And then out of that interrogation a series of changes are made and then we put it out again, right? And it goes through multiple interrogations through this, this process. And it's, it's a lovely project that way because it is, it makes it so organic.

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MS. MUNIZ: I would add to that simply that this for me is sort of, is the answer to why one size doesn't fit all for folks who still think that we could have one standard embassy design and plop it down anywhere. Not only would it not work and be more expensive in this environment, it would be less functional. It would be less safe. It would be less thoughtful. It would be less respected by the people who work there and the people who are going to go by it everyday on their way to work, on their way home. And, and it's really, that's what I love about this project.

The, the other thing that, that maybe you didn't go to in as much detail here is that by, by building this entire building into this hillside there are whole sets of, there are whole facades that don't have to be built. In, in an environment that can get very hot and where water is very scarce it is going to be cooled naturally in the hottest months. The

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landscape and its sort of incorporation amongst things and sort of looking at natural plant materials is going to be really important in a place where water is scarce and is really a political issue as much as it is a resource issue.

So for, for me this is sort of the, the perfect example of how if you approach the problem with all of the requirements, you work hard, on a schedule, with a scope, with a budget, but you're always asking yourself is this the best we could do? Is this how it should be organized to be as functional, as secure as it possibly can be? When you ask those questions and when we as a client give you the right information, this is the kind of result that you get. And so I'm just incredibly proud to be part of that process.

MR. MAYNE: I have to say that in my fourth decade in my studio, it has been especially kind of gratifying to this point, I have to say at this point

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and we haven't even got, we are very, just getting started. And there's this huge conversation in architecture today about showing architecture to be kind of ego driven and blah, blah, blah, which I am so tired of, and I think it's just nonsense. And, and in fact, really strong work comes out of, an intelligence, an integrative intelligence, and a synthesizing intelligence, that has to do with problems like this. And it has much more to do with the vast numbers of problems you are trying to solve and integrating them into some singularity. And that's really the basis of any really important architecture. And then after that as an art form, well that's something a little more complicated. But it makes it, it's a great kind of opportunity to work outside of that realm and to be able to just talk about the performances of the building. That's what it is.

MS. GILMARTIN : Thom, particularly for the

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newbies in the group, if you could speak to how prescribed the use of the materials? You talked about the context and the location of the site. But in terms of materials, means, methods, and the use of particular features, whether it's curtain, wall or systems, how much of that is in the initial brief that you're give and how much of it can be --

MR. MAYNE: Yeah, that's certainly interesting. It's funny, the last time I was sitting at this table Tod Williams were presenting. And the part I remember, they were looking at the indigenous qualities of Mexico City and Mexico and they were actually showing fabrics. And it's who they are as architects. And I left thinking, wow, it's interesting how different we all are because it wouldn't be in my wildest imagination would I have thought of having given that presentation. And we're going to just approach it very differently. That's going to be way at the end from a, where a lot of it

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is going to be performance driven.

The housing is one-foot thick concrete. And we're looking now at the, we have some extremely good subcontractors in Lebanon for concrete and we have been visiting some of them and they are absolutely amazing buildings. And we want it indigenous. And we want it unstyled, simple, very, very simple. And it looks indigenous and it looks, it won't look elegant. No marble, granite, for sure. It's going to be simple and it will be about form. And it will be probably as white as we can make it, which is part of the landscape. And again, that sets off the landscape as the, as the foreground.

And we're, we're about to arrive there, maybe another couple of months, and actually the more specific notions of the material palette. But we're still dealing with organization space and it's amazing how, and maybe it became evident in the presentation, planning and architecture here are just woven

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together. And we're still, I'm coming in and I'm getting a little worried and saying hey guys, we've got to move into straight architecture here, we're still doing planning. But in fact it is a project where as you move things it's still in this in between, between planning and architecture.

And but the stuff you're talking about, in a generic sense we know the end of the piece is glass and we know certain pieces are solid. And we're looking at how do we make a curve shape, is it poured in place or cast in place? And I think one of the things that's changed usually in architecture in the last even five years is we're very much involved in construction early on and it's moving down. We used to do construction supervision and then working drawings and then DD. Now it's finding its way into schematic design where we're looking at the reality of our ideas through construction and we know that that's going to completely affect the cost modeling and that

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it happens at schematic design. If you are value engineering at its construction documents, you are devaluing engineering is what you are doing, right? That you have to have the chassis set up that works within a cost model.

So some of those decisions in materials come out of that and performance is central. Like we're already working at a detail level of the wall of the residence and its glass panels and solid panels. The glass panels have, as you know, mullions that are this big. We're trying to figure out what to do with them. And the walls are a foot thick, concrete, and on and on, and Arne Emerson is right behind me that can give you the real specifics of that. And we're at that level still. And again, the look will come out of a lot of the performances. It won't be I like, I want it to look a certain way because I like blue and it's going to be blue. It's going to come out of a broad series of forces that do that. And I think it's maybe

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kind of evident now, certainly the patterning of the windows has already been set up and we, they are going to be four different sizes of window. And we have organized it to simplify it, etcetera. And we're already well along in the rationalization of these that are leading somewhere. But we're not precise yet in terms of being able to say, right. So a material palette, right? Did that help you?

MS. GILMARTIN : Yes. Thank you.

MR. MAYNE: Okay.

MS. GILMARTIN : Thank you.

MS. MUNIZ: Any, any other questions?

VOICE: As a practical matter, not to add more constraints, but how are you dealing with water and sewage on this site? Is it going to be a self-sustaining site or will it have municipal support?

MR. MAYNE: It's not going to be self-sustaining. Arne, where are we with the environment on it?

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MR. EMERSON: A combination of both. We have some self-sustaining measures but we also are relying on municipal --

VOICE: All right.

MR. MAYNE: We've worked (indiscernible) for, you know, 30 years. It's, it's not going to be a, we built a just about an energy neutral building in San Francisco years ago, GSA. And but we could change, we had huge control of the project that could make it very much about energy. And this is a project that has too many control factors that the sustainability would be one of them and it would be highly efficient and intelligent. But the degree of self-sustainability is in the works. And again, that's a, if Erin McConahey was here today she would in a very elegant way kind of answer your question. But in brief it's still, it's a transitional development that takes place and which is continually talking about various potentials to make it very

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efficient. And we've started with a model that they are aware of, where they've worked with us a bit, that as we push things in the ground we're way ahead of ourselves and we're using, we're using natural systems, right? And we're, we're heading in the right direction. The same with the roof, etcetera. So that the building is already, has built into it a certain amount of sustainability in the initial idea.

VOICE: I was just thinking even the basic supply of water and the disposal of sewage, is that going to happen on the site through deep wells? Or is it going to require municipal support? Which then brings into its own, you know, security issues?

MR. MAYNE: I can't answer that question. Arne, come up. It's so funny, I didn't want to do this presentation by myself. I am a big idea guy --

(Laughter.)

MR. MAYNE: -- and this is, I'm like going, Arne, you cannot let me stand up here by myself and --

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MS. MUNIZ: Arne, move on up there. Move on over there.

MR. EMERSON: No really, I mean we've got a combination of both. We've got --

MS. MUNIZ: Speak --

MR. EMERSON: -- wastewater management on site but we're also going to be (indiscernible).

VOICE: Can't hear you.

VOICE: Turn on the mike.

MS. MUNIZ: He doesn't have one.

MR. EMERSON: We have a combination of both. We do have some amount of wastewater management and sewage treatment on site, but then we also need to be relying as well on some of the municipality and the utilities as well. So it's kind of a combination of kind of balancing what's available but then, you know, the amount of people working and living on site as well that we can treat on our own and then start to reuse and kind of treat that in a different fashion.

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So does that answer your question?

VOICE: Thank you.

MR. EMERSON: You're welcome.

MR. MAYNE: And you know it's funny, it's unique in that sense too because you can't open windows. Right? Something as simple as that, right? It's just absolutely huge, right? Because I'm going, oh, we can, we can, the units, the housing, which is the majority of the project, easily solved. Right? You kind of close them up during the day. They've been doing this in Italy for 500 years. And you open up at night and you're okay, but we can't do that. And so the relationship of security in this case and environment is probably the most conflictual one, right? That affects the future of the project environmentally.

MS. MUNIZ: Any other questions from around the room? We'll take one last question. Any others? Any others? Patrick, you want to, we have one minute.

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MR. MCNAMARA: I, I wanted just to tell a quick story about the site, the acquisition, how we ended up here. Because it is a challenging site, people have been talking about that. You know, we've been, we've been looking, we looked for a site in Beirut on and off for about ten years. This is actually, this is actually the second site we purchased in Beirut for the new Embassy. We purchased a site in the city in 2005. It was close to the, to the Green Line, which is the demarcation between the Christian and Muslim sectors of the city. Then war broke out in 2006 and after the war it was clear that for security reasons that site that we had purchased was no longer viable. So we had to start over.

But the, we were approached by the Catholic Church. They owned the site that we subsequently purchased that we called it the Church Site, which is adjacent to our current Embassy. And they approached us because they were interested in the site that we

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had purchased close to the Green Zone. So real estate in Beirut is very, very political because of the fissures, you know, in that society and region.

So we ended up swapping the site that we had purchased close to the Green Zone for this site with the Catholic Church. But they had owned it for over 250 years, since the late 1700s. And as you can imagine there were all kinds of issues. They were kind of benign landlords so there were adjacent landlords or landowners who had rights to portions of the property. They were goat paths across the property. Shepherds who had rights to graze it. It took us three years to work through all the easements and issues with the property boundaries, etcetera, etcetera.

So at the end of the, at the end of all that I went back to the Monsignor who was our interlocutor for the Church in Beirut and said, Monsignor, I think we're ready to close. And he said, well actually

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there's one more person I need to get approval from. And I said, well who is that? And he said, well he sits in Rome.

So the Pope ultimately approved this site. So I think that's a good omen for the project.

(Laughter.)

MR. MAYNE: I never heard that story. That will have to factor in here somehow.

MS. MUNIZ: Patrick, thank you so much. That is really the perfect description of how a lot of our land acquisitions go, in places in particular as complicated as Beirut. I mean, they are great stories but it's sort of the reality of these site acquisitions. And what's terrific about this site is that as challenging as it is, it's also wonderful. It's a wonderful, it's going to make a wonderful campus and a wonderful base for the project.

In closing what I'd like to do is remind us all, and this is an example to me. As, you know, as

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Wayne explained, as the Secretary mentioned, these embassies, these consulates are really the front door to the U.S. What we have to remember is that not only are people coming everyday for consular, for services. They are trying to get a tourist visa to the U.S. They are trying to get an immigration visa to the U.S. Or they are a U.S. citizen who is in trouble, who needs a replaced passport, who needs assistance. So they are, it's the front door in so many ways for those people who come, come to seek our help.

But it also, it also becomes a member of a community, of an urban fabric that people walk by everyday and they form impressions about who we are as a country. The department spends millions of dollars in public diplomacy funds. We work to convince people that democracy is the way to go, that civil society is important, that the U.S. is a benign force in the world. And having a building that talks about openness, about ingenuity, about the best that a

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society can bring, speaks volumes without having to say a word. And we know many of you have children, we have all been children, we know that lecturing is not effective. What's effective is when you walk by something and it tells you what it is, it tells you about the people who built it. And I think in a place like Beirut, but all over the world, we have dozens of projects in Sub-Saharan Africa, we have projects really all over the world that everyday will speak about who we are as Americans as well as providing an incredibly vital platform.

Secretary Kerry recently hosted a Chief of Mission Conference. All the Chiefs of Missions worldwide descend on Washington. Department leadership also attends. And he gave sort of a very meaningful, it was a sort of very meaningful paternal pep talk to all of us. And you would think with all these ambassadors and leaders from all over the world that we don't need that, but what he reminded us was,

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of was that we all listen to the news. We all hear of so many dire situations around the world, so many, so many places where politically it seems to be sliding backwards. And he reminded us all to take heart. He said you have to remember that things may not seem great in any particular, in any place that you analyze singularly at that moment. But if it were not for the American presence in that country that is helping bring water development projects, food and aid, consular services, political stabilization, if we did not have those platforms, things would be worse. Everybody chuckled because you don't want to hear, you don't want the end of the story to be things could be worse. But, but really all of these platforms are incredibly meaningful and they will be meaningful for the long term.

So I wanted to, to close with that as sort of the this is the context for all of the work we're doing, and why it's so important, but why I'm also

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grateful for all of you and for all the architects who work on, on our projects.

Before I close we have a program where we're going to be outside for a bit so we could talk with everybody who has attended. We'll then go to a lunch and have some closed door sessions this afternoon. Before I close, though, I would like to thank Christy Foushee, who I hope is not -- oh, Christy Foushee.

(Applause.)

MS. MUNIZ: And her team, who have taken care of all of the logistics and the programming for this effort. It's a tremendous amount of work and we really, really appreciate it. So I'm going to turn it over to you to tell us where we're going from here, and to adjourn the meeting. Thank you.

MS. FOUSHEE: Great. Thank you, Lydia. We are actually going to adjourn to just right outside these doors for a brief networking session. We have about 20 minutes left. So we'll close at 12:30

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officially. But if everybody just wants to start. We have both doors accessible if you just want to start heading out to the Delegates Lounge just behind us, we'll have a networking session where you can interface with OBO management, industry partners, and such. Thanks so much for coming today.

(Whereupon, at 12:20 p.m., the above-entitled meeting was concluded.)

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