High-rise Urban Development at Chicago’s Wolf Point

This long undeveloped outstanding piece of land in Chicago's downtown will be the site of this urban design studio. The program of the project includes high quality facilities for office, hotel, and residential use, along with their necessary public / urban amenities, such as shops, restaurants, cafés, a contemporary art gallery, parking, and others. The program is flexible and subject to the careful consideration of students in order to make the best proposal within the immediate vicinity and the urban fabric of Chicago.

The site is limited in size and complex in its attributes, which are challenging to address urbanistically. Yet, herein lies also the reward of the project: the discovery and use of the apparent and not immediately obvious potentials of this prominent site.

Your job is to design well-working and attractive projects, which consider not merely the outside image of this urban complex, but also the quality of the inside from the viewpoint and interest of the public; or the significance of architecture in human experience.

Good site planning strategy is absolutely primary in your work, as well as the skillful organization of all the activities required by the program. In addition to the regular plans, sections, elevations, axonometric drawings, etc., you will need to work out and document on clear diagrams the complex circulation and structural system. These parts of the project will be complemented by computer renderings of external and internal views, which will be developed also by a series of built study models.

Work in the studio will start with site visitation and documented investigation, continued with researching precedents of high-rise buildings and urban complexes regarding their private and, more importantly public components, before starting the design process with recording your thoughts and ideas in sketchbooks what you need to keep handy and up-to-date even when you work on the computer. While the informative, attractive final documentation is important, so is the entire process of the design.

There will be presentations by your instructor and by you, the students, working in teams of two, as you will learn various aspects of urban design, the architecture of high-rise buildings, their structural and circulation systems, vertical cores, safety and security as well as how to integrate all these into a well-working and attractive complex.

I look forward to working with you all during the coming semester and wish you great success in your work; cheers……

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