Arch 573: High-Rise and Habitat Studio  
Fall 2017  
Instructor: Paul J. Armstrong, Associate Professor Emeritus

RE-IMAGINING THE SPIRE

The Chicago Spire was a supertall skyscraper project at 400 N. Lake Shore Drive in Chicago's Streeterville District. When originally proposed as the Fordham Spire in July 2005, the design had 116 stories and would have included a hotel and condominiums and been topped with a broadcast antenna mast. The design was by Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava, and Chicago developer Christopher T. Carley of the Fordham Company was spearheading the project. Related Midwest now controls the site.

Re-Imagining the Spire. The goal of the studio is to develop proposals for a new tower at the site of the ill-fated Spire. The original program for a hotel/condominium supertall tower will prevail. We will also consider the development of the site as an urban habitat and the circular foundation for the Spire.

Project Teams. The studio will work in project teams (3-4 members). Each team will be responsible for designing and developing an original proposal.

Integration. Proposals will be for a realistic, fully integrated, comprehensively designed tower—not a conceptual design. Structure, mechanical, circulation, and cladding systems will be designed and integrated with a multi-use program to realize a high performance solution.

Requirements. The studio will require at least two field trips to Chicago. The nature of the project requires research about the city and precedents in order to understand how to design a skyscraper that is programmatically and technically feasible as well as site-specific. The first few weeks of the semester will focus on site and case study research and building a site model. Students will have input from architects who are experienced in tall building design as project advisors. The design process will require multiple reviews (formal and informal) with expertise from faculty in related areas, such as structural engineering and mechanical systems. Special attention will be given to the integration of physical systems that has to occur at the very initial stages of the project.

Reviews. Pin-up reviews will occur frequently with models and drawings. There will be two formal reviews: a mid-term with schematic designs and a final review with design development. A detailed model and a full set of drawings of the project will be required for the mid-term and final reviews. The studio will culminate with a public presentation of the projects with invited architects as guest reviewers.

Field Trips. Two field trips are required. An Introduction Field Trip at the beginning of the semester includes a project introduction at the Chicago office of Solomon Cordwell and Buenz by Martin Wolf, FAIA, and Mark Frisch, FAIA, LEED. A second field trip will be scheduled to coincide with mid-term reviews conducted at the SCB office.

Required Texts.