

Honorary Membership

Nomination Narrative

Nominee: Dennis Pieprz

Nominee's Address: 64 Pleasant Street

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Phone: 617-926-3300

Nominator: Alan Ward, FASLA

To the Selection Committee:

I write to nominate Dennis Pieprz of Sasaki Associates as an Honorary Member of the American Society of Landscape Architects. Dennis is an urban designer educated at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design and the University of Toronto School of Architecture. He brings a collaborative approach to his urban design work, integrating landscape, planning and architecture with a critical understanding of the forces that shape contemporary cities.

For almost three decades at Sasaki, Dennis has led significant planning and urban design projects around the world that have been organized around a clear and beautiful landscape framework. His projects have received dozens of national awards in planning and urban design, including many national ASLA Awards. Through his design work, contributions to design publications, public speaking engagements, and academic positions, he has brought forward and made visible the essential role that landscape has in making important and lasting public places in cities, campuses and regions around the world.

Among Dennis's major achievements was leading the urban design effort for the firm's first-place-prize-winning Olympic Green—the international competition for the master plan for the 2008 Beijing Olympics. The Concept Master Plan has three fundamental elements. The Forest Park, and its extension southward, allows for the preservation of ecologically sensitive land. The Cultural Axis reflects the history of the city and becomes the conclusion of the great central axis of Beijing. The Olympic Axis links the Asian Games site with the National Stadium. In addition to providing a beautiful and culturally significant framework for the site of the Games, the plan calls for a mixed-use district to be built after the Games are completed, creating a vibrant lasting urban district for Beijing.

Dennis also led the design team for Penn Connects: A Vision Plan for the University of Pennsylvania. University of Pennsylvania President Amy Gutmann's inaugural goal was to "engage locally and globally," but the Schuylkill River and a rail corridor separate the university from Center City Philadelphia. The plan is a blueprint for the next half century for multiple university schools and lands with the primary goal of reconnecting the university to the river and to Center City. Irregular and triangular land configurations; lack of direct roadway access; and

multiple working rail lines all were daunting obstacles. The design creates new sports, recreation and public spaces and extends Locust Walk, an iconic campus feature. The “Bridges of Connectivity” serve as the conceptual armature for organizing the major land uses and development zones proposed for the East Campus area including the: “Living/Learning Bridge,” “Sports/Recreation Bridge,” “Health Sciences/Cultural Bridge,” and “Research Bridge.” The plan has garnered awards from the American Society of Landscape Architects; Society for College and University Planning/American Institute of Architects; Merit Award, Boston Society of Landscape Architects; and the Boston Society of Architects.

In the last decade, Dennis was design principal for the 2009 American Institute of Architects (AIA) Honor Award-winning urban design plan for the Lakeside-Southworks Urban District Waterfront in Chicago. This work was also recognized with two sustainable design awards from the Boston and Chicago AIA chapters respectively. Dennis led the master plan for the University of Balamand, Lebanon; which won a 2007 Honor Award from the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA). In 2009 the Abu Dhabi University Education Park master plan in the UAE was honored with a SCUP/AIA Award for Planning a New Campus District. The 798 Arts District in Beijing and the Providence 2020 Vision Plan in Rhode Island were both recognized with BSLA Merit Awards, and the Schuylkill River Gateway in Philadelphia was awarded a 2003 AIA Honor Award.

He has contributed to various international publications, both writing articles on current design issues and regarding the firm’s work. In addition to many others, his articles and projects have been published in *Architecture Magazine*, *Metropolis*, *Architectural Record*, *Landscape World Korea*, *Landscape Architecture China*, *Aquapolis*, and *Spazio e Societa*.

Dennis speaks regularly at conferences and academic institutions and teaches at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design. Recently he has presented “Factors of Quality in Urban Living: Sasaki Design” at Urban Quality Forum, in Hangzhou, China, “New University Design” at the NYU Abu Dhabi Lecture Series in New York, and “The Urban Design Framework: Case Studies in Sasaki Design” at the Landscape Urbanism Conference in Beijing, China. In the fall of 2010, he taught a planning studio at Harvard focused on the Boston Innovation District.

Dennis has served on many international design juries, most recently for the American Society of Landscape Architects National Design Awards and the Seoul Yueoldo Riverside Park Competition in Seoul, Korea. He is on the board of Harvard Design Magazine, and his design leadership has been recognized by the American Institute of Architects, the American Society of Landscape Architects, Progressive Architecture, The Waterfront Center, The Society for Campus and University Planning, Congress for the New Urbanism, and various chapters of the AIA. In the last ten years alone, Dennis’ projects have been recognized with over twenty national and international design awards.



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Gary A. Hack
*Professor of Urban Design
Dean Emeritus*

Members of the Selection Committee for ASLA Honorary Membership,

I would like to convey my enthusiastic support for the nomination of Dennis Pieprz for honorary membership in the American Society of Landscape Architects. I have known Dennis for many years, and seen him as a professional, as leader of one of the finest firms practicing landscape architecture, and a person providing leadership and service to the environmental professions.

Dennis led our effort to prepare a new master plan for our east campus at Penn, creating a powerful vision for a new sustainable park for recreation and leisure on the Schuylkill River, and a new set of connections between the university and Center City – projects which are now coming to fruition. He was among the finest professionals I have ever worked with. He begins with a fundamental understanding of the way that natural and human ecologies intersect, and produces plans that are visionary, but practical enough to become a reality. His many award-winning projects attest to his skills.

But perhaps his greatest contribution is in his leadership of Sasaki, one of the iconic firms in landscape, planning, architecture and other environmental professions. Sasaki is the quintessential cross-disciplinary firm, and Dennis has worked hard to ensure that each of its disciplines are strong, and that they are all at the table on complex projects from the beginning. He has personally mentored a generation of young professionals in how to collaborate, and has championed the firm's efforts to provide fellowships, internships and other support for young people beginning their careers. Those of us in the academy are deeply grateful for the support he has provided.

A few years ago I was greatly honored to become an honorary member of ASLA. I can't think of anyone who is more deserving of that recognition than Dennis Pieprz.

Sincerely,

Gary Hack, Hon ASLA
Professor and Dean Emeritus



Honorary Membership Nomination
ASLA
636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001-3736

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to encourage the selection committee to seriously consider Dennis Pieprz as an Honorary Member of the ASLA.

I have known Dennis for many years, collaborated on large scale urban redevelopment efforts, such as the US Steel Southworks redevelopment in Chicago, and I have taught with Dennis at the University of Michigan and Harvard.

Dennis is a remarkable talent that focuses his work on the environment, the clear understanding of the land and its natural systems, and how to design in balance with nature.

He is very much an "Ian McHarg" of our day, reaching out for the smartest solutions to accommodating growth and urban migration while respecting and strengthening our natural world.

Recognizing that our greatest challenge of the 21st century is the condition of our global environment, Dennis is the kind of professional that bridges well between architecture, urban design and landscape.

He believes and acts as if we are all connected and that professionals must collaborate to find the best solutions to our complex problems.

Dennis is the real thing; opinionated, stands up for what he believes and gracious to everyone involved.

I love collaborating with Dennis and his teams. He motivates, teaches and inspires the full team.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me.

Thank you for this consideration.

Sincerely,



Philip J. Enquist
Partner

ASLA Executive Committee
American Society of Landscape Architects
636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20001

re: ASLA Honorary Membership, **Candidate Dennis Pieprz**

Dear Executive Committee:

It is an honor for me to write this letter in support of Dennis Pieprz's candidacy for honorary membership in the American Society of Landscape Architects.

I have had the privilege of knowing and working with Dennis for over 20 years and honestly can say he is a unique leader in our field. Dennis's education background as an architect and urban designer allows him to lead complex urban projects both nationally and internationally. Dennis has led numerous highly collaborative interdisciplinary teams, establishing a big idea and vision for a sustainable future for his clients.

Dennis has led design teams for several award-winning projects, such as the 2008 Beijing Olympics Master Plan, the University of Pennsylvania Penn Connects Master Plan, and most recently the Dead Sea Development Zone Detailed Master Plan in Jordan and the Thu Thiem Master Plan in Vietnam.

Dennis, working in a design lead interdisciplinary practice or perhaps through osmosis, has become a very good landscape architect. Conversely, any landscape architect who has the pleasure to work with Dennis quickly will gain appreciation for his allied architectural and urban design background. Dennis brings his intellect, humor, enthusiasm, and passion to solving complex urban design problems in the most open and collaborative manner.

Dennis has said to me on many occasions, "It starts with the BIG IDEA and quickly becomes real through the collaboration and integration of the details." As a close friend and trusted colleague, I cannot think of another professional to whom I think our profession should be strongly connected.

I enthusiastically endorse Dennis for your consideration and appreciate the opportunity to express my support on his behalf.

Sincerely,



Mark O. Dawson FASLA
Managing Principal

Honorary Membership Nomination
ASLA
636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001-3736

Dear Selection Committee:

I am writing in my support for the candidacy of Dennis Pieprz for the ASLA Honorary Member Program.

Two years ago, as a Civil Engineer, I was elected a member of the ASLA Honorary Member Program and it was an honor to have been chosen.

Having worked with and observed Dennis over the last 20 years, I believe he definitely demonstrates an extraordinary capability to work with Landscape Architects in an office to inform and create landscape solutions within his Urban Design practice.

As an Urban Design Principal at Sasaki, Dennis always incorporates various professional disciplines as equal design participants. He believes in integration and collaboration...a true trait of an HASLA

I strongly recommend Dennis for your consideration and appreciate the opportunity to express my support on his behalf.

Regards,



Stephen E. Hamway, PE, HASLA
Principal

Dear Members of the Selection Committee for ASLA Honorary Membership,

I wholeheartedly support the nomination of Dennis Pieprz for honorary membership in the American Society of Landscape Architects. I have had the pleasure of knowing Dennis for five years, and consider him not only one of the most experienced and reliable urban and landscape design professionals I have worked with, but also a friend who can be trusted to uphold his values of environmental stewardship and social sustainability.

I have worked extensively with Dennis on various complex master plans in the city of Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates. Under Dennis' leadership, Sasaki developed climatically and culturally sensitive strategies for public realm and landscape design that won praise from a variety of developers and local approval authorities. The local development community was so impressed with Dennis' work that Sasaki's services, with Dennis at the lead, continue to be well sought after here.

Dennis' calm but assertive leadership and communication style make him by far the most trusted design professional I have ever worked with. He can be relied upon to provide fresh development ideas, solve complex design issues, and persuade people of influence, whether development executives or government decision making authorities. Dennis continues to mentor a strong cohort of young planners and landscape architects in Sasaki, who have delivered highly professional work for my colleagues and me. When I work with Sasaki however, I insist that Dennis leads the project; simply because of the wealth of experience and creativity he personally brings to the project.

I can't think of anyone more deserving of this honorable recognition.

Most sincerely,



Hugo Blomfield
M.Sc. Community & Regional Planning
Abu Dhabi
United Arab Emirates