Collaborate, Not Compete:
A New Paradigm for Design

With the growing complexity of landscape projects, collaboration within discipline is ever increasing. Eschewing the typical relationships of design/production or national and local, firms that would typically compete are setting aside their differences and teaming up. This session explores the unorthodox collaboration between national firms designing together.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

— Learn how landscape architects are collaborating together to pursue exceptional design opportunities

— Understand the complexities, challenges and successes of competing firms that choose to collaborate

— Discover management strategies to guide successful collaborations between landscape architecture firms

— Understand how to retain firm identity and design authorship when working with your competitors
Joseph James, ASLA, Reed Hilderbrand LLC
Joe James is a Senior Associate at Reed Hilderbrand and leads in-house professional development series. He earned a Master of Landscape Architecture at the Rhode Island School of Design and holds a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture from Michigan State University. Over his tenure with Reed Hilderbrand, Joe has managed the creation of Repentance Park and City Hall Plaza in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and the renovation of the Blue Garden in Newport, Rhode Island. He is currently collaborating with his professional colleagues at Buffalo Bayou and the Houston Arboretum & Nature Center. Joe is an adjunct professor in the Rhode Island School of Design’s landscape architecture program.

Steven Spears, ASLA, Design Workshop, Inc
Steven Spears, PLA, AICP, joined Design Workshop in 2004 after practicing throughout the United States and Australia. He became a partner in 2013. Spears holds a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree with honors from Ball State University and earned a Masters of Fine Arts in Design from the University of Texas at Austin. Spears is a member of the Urban Land Institute, American Society of Landscape Architects and American Planning Association and is a registered landscape architect in Texas, Indiana, and Colorado. After numerous years with the Aspen office, Spears co-opened the Austin office in 2008. A firm believer in the quadruple bottom line design process of integrating economic sustainability, environmental sensitivity, community benefit and profound art/aesthetics, Spears’ design and planning work has been recognized at the state and national level. Spears has a rich portfolio of both private sector and public sector clients. He provides in depth knowledge on both sides of the table, and has built a reputation to creatively design, entitle and implement complex assignments.

Scott McCready, ASLA, SWA Group
Mr. McCready is a Principal in SWA's Houston office with over 20 years of both regional and international experience in Landscape Architecture, Planning and Urban Design. Scott’s projects have ranged from large scale urban and campus planning to the detailed design of public spaces and gardens. Through his work Scott seeks to find innovative solutions to complex sites, synthesizing place-making and infrastructure needs to create environments that enrich, educate and endure. Over the past 15 years Scott has engaged in a number of projects along Houston’s waterways, including Buffalo Bayou Park, Bagby to Sabine Promenade, Rosemont Bridge and Brays Bayou. Combined with his experience in urban infill and educational landscapes, Scott’s work seeks to enhance the social and ecological infrastructure of the urban environment, while broadening access and connectivity to open space within the city. Scott has a degree in Landscape Architecture from the University of Massachusetts. He is a registered Landscape Architect and member of the American Society of Landscape Architects. Scott has collaborated on numerous projects throughout Texas recognized through local and national awards and publications.

Lisa Delplace, ASLA, Oehme van Sweden and Associates
Lisa E. Delplace, Principal and CEO of Oehme, van Sweden & Associates, has over 27 years of professional experience. Her extensive knowledge of ecological processes and her commitment to their artistic execution result in a strong, sculptural relationship between architecture and landscape that is evident in her body of work. Ms. Delplace is responsible for the planning, design and execution of many of the firm’s commissions, which range from urban corridors, monumental civic spaces and public gardens to estates and urban residences. She holds a Masters of Landscape Architecture from the University of Michigan and a Bachelor of Science in Park Planning and Design from Michigan State University.
Outline:

Questions/topics to be explored during this session

a. Benefits, strengths/weaknesses, complementary skills
   i. Different firms view landscape through different lenses – how do the different vantage points develop a unified design approach?
   ii. How do the strengths of each firm complement each other?
   iii. Is the sum of the parts greater than each?

b. Structure & design management
   i. How to get beyond a forced marriage?
   ii. How to work most effective: charettes, workshops, etc?
   iii. Blurred roles vs. defined roles

c. How do you define or combine design voice? Claim authorship?
   i. How do two different design aesthetics and approaches coexist within one project?
   ii. How does one set aside ego to do what’s best for the project?

d. How do you divide or balance fee?
   i. Two fees? One umbrella?

e. How do you convince a client that two design voices are better than one?

f. Is this an atypical scenario or paradigm for the future of the profession?