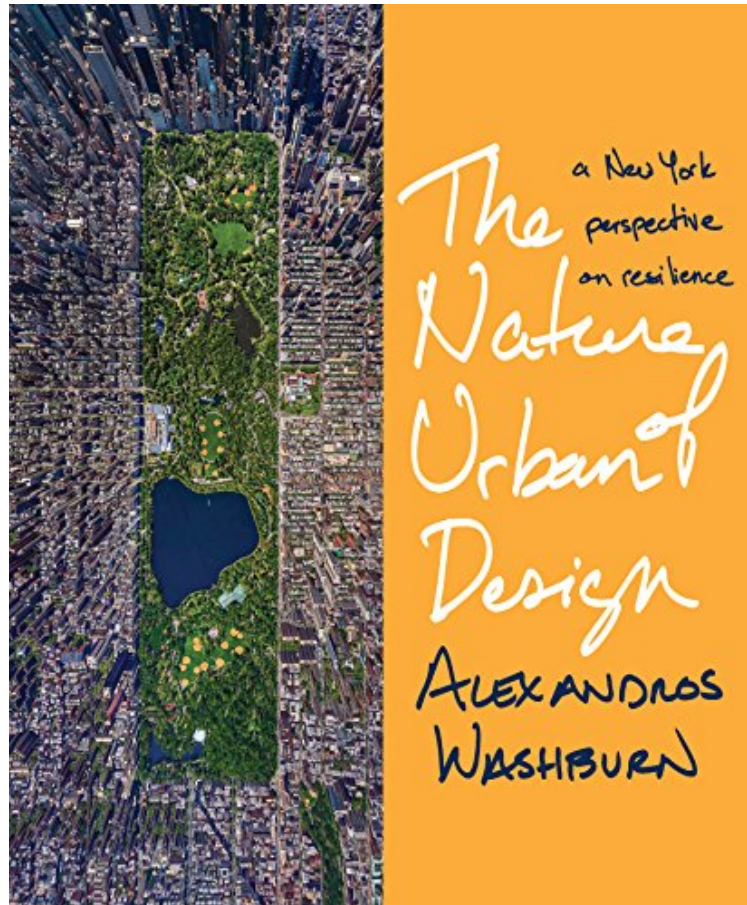


[Free pdf] The Nature of Urban Design: A New York Perspective on Resilience

The Nature of Urban Design: A New York Perspective on Resilience

Alexandros Washburn
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Alexandros Washburn : The Nature of Urban Design: A New York Perspective on Resilience before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Nature of Urban Design: A New York Perspective on Resilience:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Brilliant, beautiful, sensational! It is destined to become a classic. By Kevin Chavous Over a half-century ago, city planner Kevin Lynch wrote in his acclaimed book *The Image of the City*, " . . . we need an environment which is not simply well organized, but poetic and symbolic as well. It should speak of the individuals and their complex society, of their aspirations and their historical tradition, of the natural setting, and of the complicated functions and movements of the city world";. Since then, urban designers have dealt with the issue of planning for and creating the beautiful, well functioning, modern city in an ever growing, environmentally challenged world. *The Nature of Urban Design* is about cities and urban design in the age of climate change. Much like Edmund Bacon's *Design of Cities*, or Ian McHarg's *Design with Nature*, the book represents a kind of state of the art in the fields of architecture, landscape architecture, city planning and urban design. The author boldly declares that "Nature is the new civic virtue"; and focuses on a most critical matter- the resilience of the city during climate change and how we must mitigate and adapt. "In a city where there is a

desire for livability"; writes author Alex Washburn, "there is an opportunity for sustainability". As a resident of a coastal neighborhood in Brooklyn, New York that was ravaged during Hurricane Sandy in 2012, the author- who is a practicing urban designer- provides a unique perspective into the issue that very few professionals can. The Nature of Urban Design features a general overview of the process of urban design to those who are unfamiliar with it and also discusses what is termed the products of urban design- that is, "the rules, plans and projects that guide a city's transformation". Through personal stories and case studies, Washburn offers a fascinating glimpse into the inner workings of the Urban Design Division of the New York City Planning Department, the most renowned city planning agency in the United States. A chapter is devoted to the famed High Line- the mile and a half long elevated greenway on Manhattan's Lower West Side. The author reveals the untold story of the role (unknown to most people) that the city's planners and urban designers played in helping to create it. This is not a strictly New York City book. The author also references and cites examples from cities around the world. The book is geared more towards lay people, students and those in the allied professions; however, experienced, practicing design professionals will want it on their bookshelf. In writing for a wide range of audiences, Washburn faced a very difficult balancing act, but somehow- amazingly enough- succeeds. He never talks down to or over the head of the reader. Outstanding photography, stunning illustrations, phenomenal drawings- the book engages, instructs, and challenges you to understand and become a part of the urban design process. The most important quality of The Nature of Urban Design is the fact that it inspires. And without inspiration, there are no dreams, no great ideas, no plans of action, and no change. With respect to the future, the problems that lay before us are difficult, but not insurmountable. We must summon our collective strength, wisdom and ingenuity. It is through this book and others like it that our dreams of a better city and a better world can be realized.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Brilliant
By O. Jones
Anyone interested in the long term survivability of our species should read this book. Washburn's analysis is brilliant.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. a MUST have book for everyone, from experts to students
By Selective reader
Alexander Washburn has produced an outstanding work with a simply stated message: "The importance of individuals with the drive to make a difference in their own city because only they know what they love and value in their neighborhoods. How just a new approach to the Urban Design could help cities to evolve in this uncertain future." In all the clearly worded and beautifully illustrated chapters, the author uses the several years of experiences as Chief Urban Designer of the New York Department of City Planning to compare real American examples with other city always more important in the global scenario as Singapore and Seoul. This broad approach, combined with unusual clarity of expression and wonderful photos, makes the book enormously useful not only for professional response teams but also for a more general readership interested in the way that the Urban Planning could responsibly modify the way that our communities, urban infrastructures and cities are designed and built. For who, like me, live and study in Europe, with the secret career aspiration in the States, this book is a clear and simple overview of the Urban Planning field of work. I thank the author to have shared with us his tremendous knowledge and I suggest everyone to buy it, It's worth it!

The best cities become an ingrained part of their residents' identities. Urban design is the key to this process, but all too often, citizens abandon it to professionals, unable to see a way to express what they love and value in their own neighborhoods. New in paperback, this visually rich book by Alexandros Washburn, former Chief Urban Designer of the New York Department of City Planning, redefines urban design. His book empowers urbanites and lays the foundations for a new approach to design that will help cities to prosper in an uncertain future. He asks his readers to consider how cities shape communities, for it is the strength of our communities, he argues, that will determine how we respond to crises like Hurricane Sandy, whose floodwaters he watched from his home in Red Hook, Brooklyn. Washburn draws heavily on his experience within the New York City planning system while highlighting forward-thinking developments in cities around the world. He grounds his book in the realities of political and financial challenges that hasten or hinder even the most beautiful designs. By discussing projects like the High Line and the Harlem Children's Zone as well as examples from Seoul to Singapore, he explores the nuances of the urban design process while emphasizing the importance of individuals with the drive to make a difference in their city. Throughout the book, Washburn shows how a well-designed city can be the most efficient, equitable, safe, and enriching place on earth. The Nature of Urban Design provides a framework for participating in the process of change and will inspire and inform anyone who cares about cities.

"[A] cri de coeur for action by cities" (The New York Times Book)