Stop the Murdoch (Flt 93) Memorial Blogburst: Crescent mosque violates the only physical requirement for design entries

Description

Defenders of the crescent design for the Flight 93 memorial describe the landform around the crash site as a bowl shape that fairly dictates the use of a crescent design. On the Mike and Juliet Morning Show, Memorial Project Chairman John Reynolds was asked by host Mike Jerrick: â€œWhy couldnâ€™t you just use some other shape?â€• Reynolds cupped his hands together for the audience and insisted that the design had to be a crescent:

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> Because, if you do this with you hands, this is the land there. This bowl is America holding its heroes.

But in fact, the site is not a bowl shape at all, as one can tell by looking at the topo lines on the site plan . The land slopes continually from north-northwest to south-southeast:

Crescent Bowl35%

The Sacred Ground Plaza that marks the crash site sits between the crescent tips (above the 4).

Instead of following the rim of a bowl, the crescent starts on a ridgeline above the crash site and circles around to well below it, passing across the middle of a wetland that sits about 70 vertical feet below the crash site.

Not only is the crash site not a bowl, but the crescent actually does not fit the natural landform at all. Of all the designs entered in the design competition, Paul Murdochâ€™s Crescent of Embrace is the only one that that fails to meet the Memorial Projectâ€™s single stated physical requirement: that design entries should â€œrespect the rural landscape.â€• (Scroll down to â€œpurpose.â€•)

To create the full arc of the crescent, a raised causeway will have to be filled in across the wetlands that collect about half-way out the lower crescent arm:

Raised causeway, 'healing landscape' 40%

This filling in of the wetlands would never be allowed in a private project. There are environmental laws against it.

To sneak his design past the requirement to leave the landscape undisturbed, Murdoch played a very clever trick. His preliminary Crescent of Embrace design did not build a causeway across the wetlands. It only showed a quarter circle of red maple walkway, with a natural footpath skirting around the bottom of the wetlands area instead of crossing it:

Preliminary crescent design 55%

This original crescent design already had the flight path breaking the circle, turning it into what was called from the start the Crescent of Embrace, so it seems that Murdoch had in mind from the beginning to memorialize the terroristsâ€™ circle-breaking/crescent-creating feat. He could well have had the basic geometry of his full terrorist memorial mosque already worked out, but he knew that he would never make the first cut if he broke the competitionâ€™s one rule and violated the wetlands, so he only showed a little bit of crescent, and had his innocuous looking footpath skirt the wetlands.

To turn his preliminary design into a full Islamic crescent, Murdoch needed to build his causeway. How did he justify this violation of the wetlands? With typical brass, declaring that the causeway created a â€œhealing landscapeâ€•:

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> Here visitors will be most aware of continuously connected living systems as the circular path literally bridges the hydrology of the Bowl. [â€œWetlands,â€• p. 5.]

The highway department should hire this guy for P.R.. He could sell the environmentalists on how close a new road will bring them tonature. Why, they will be â€œliterally bridging it!â€• What could be better? Good pitch. The Memorial Project bought it.

Most remarkable is Patrick White, vice president of Families of Flight 93. In private conversation at the Memorial Projectâ€™s July 2007 meeting, White told one of Alec Rawlsâ€™s compatriots that an expensive drainage system had been developed for the crescent design and that no other design *could* work on the site because this elaborate drainage system would only work with the crescent design.

Duh. The crescent design is the only design out of all thousand submitted that *needs* a drainage system. Every other design left the wetland untouched, as the Memorial Project had asked. Yet these people all really seem to mean it when they insist that this is the only design that fits the land.

Didnâ€™t they notice that not one of the other thousand designs was a crescent? How could that be, if the landform really dictated a crescent? How did they get so wrapped in the emotion of the crescentâ€™s â€œhealing embraceâ€• that they canâ€™t see anything else?

Because Paul Murdoch is an artistic genius who had these grieving people in the palms of *his* hands. The man is diabolical!

Stop the Memorial Blogburst
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1. Leadership
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