



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
Hon. Stephanie A. Miner, Mayor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: September 22, 2015

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**CITY TO HOST TWO EVENTS INVITING THE
PUBLIC TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CREATING
DOWNTOWN'S NEXT GREAT PUBLIC SPACE**

Project Launch on Sept. 25, Ice Cream Social on Sept. 26 Will Give the Public an Opportunity to Meet Critically Acclaimed Designer Jerry van Eyck and World Renowned Artist Cecil Balmond; Offer Input On Future of the former Common Center Plaza/Perseverance Park Space

Miner: The Urban Space Design Project will add an artistic dynamic to Downtown Syracuse

SYRACUSE, N.Y.- Mayor Stephanie A. Miner announced today that this week City of Syracuse will host the team selected to create our next great downtown space, with critically acclaimed designer Jerry Van Eyck of !melk urban design and world renowned public artist Cecil Balmond. The public will have two opportunities to meet the team, first at the project launch on Friday, September 25 and then at an ice cream social in the park area on Saturday, September 26. They are the team working to reimagine the space that is now Common Center Plaza and Perseverance Park.

“This is an honor for our community to be able to work with innovators such as Jerry van Eyck and Cecil Balmond. This project will become an iconic space in Downtown Syracuse that every citizen and visitor of our community can enjoy,” said **Syracuse Mayor Stephanie A. Miner**. “I am excited these designers are here to work with us and I encourage the community to come out and meet them this week.”

Jerry van Eyck of !melk said: "We are proud to have the opportunity to create a great urban space in Downtown Syracuse. This wonderful city deserves a noteworthy community destination that will also have a fantastic art component. The activities this week are invaluable to the design process, we look forward to engaging the public, discussing ideas, and we can't wait to get started!"

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“I’m excited about the project because it’s an opportunity to really make a statement, situating an art piece in a major civic plaza. I will engage with the public, creating a narrative out of art and life,” said **Cecil Balmond** of Balmond Studio.

On Friday, van Eyck and Balmond will hold a Project Launch event at the [SUNY Oswego Metro Center](#), 100 South Salina Street, in Downtown Syracuse at 12:00 p.m. There will be a multimedia presentation explaining the artists’ past work, their design process, and the preliminary vision for the project.

On Saturday, the community will be able to gather and attend an ice cream social hosted by Jerry van Eyck to solicit public input on what the future of the space could be from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. At the ice cream social, there will be refreshments, entertainment for people of all ages, photo booths, and other fun, family-friendly activities. These activities will be designed to help people articulate opinions on what they hope to see in this space. The ice cream social will be held in Perseverance Park at the corner of Fayette Street and Salina Streets.

Mayor Miner added: “This project will have a direct impact on the more than 3,000 people who call Downtown home and the more than 30,000 who commute in every day for work. The goal is to create a new downtown space that will be for everyone in the community to enjoy and call their own. To be a success, the design team needs to hear from the public. I invite all of the community to participate in these sessions.”

The New Urban Space project is made possible with the support of partners throughout the community. Local non-profits, including the Central New York Community Foundation, have generously supported the organizing and community engagement efforts throughout the process. Support from the Gifford Foundation has made this weekend’s events possible.

Earlier this year, the Syracuse Urban Renewal Agency (SURA) awarded an RFP for design and construction of a new public space concept at this site to a team including !melk urban design and Balmond Studio. They were advised by a jury of experts in design, public art, landscape architecture, and community engagement who recommended the team that will create a new public space. The artists’ work is featured in global cities on multiple continents. Balmond was [profiled in the New Yorker](#) for his art in 2007.

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