IBPE Symposium & Meeting
23 May 2003
EDRA 34 Conference
Minneapolis, MN, USA

Kato, Schramm, Walden, van Meel, and Mallory-Hill (left to right) meet at EDRA 34

On Friday, 23 May 2003, five members of the IBPE group presented at a symposium entitled: "Performance Evaluation of Office Buildings "at the Environmental Design Research Association conference in Minneapolis. The session was chaired by Dr. Ulrich Schramm, who began the symposium with a presentation about the IBPE group, its history and objectives, to an enthusiastic audience of about 30 people. This included a description of the *Integrative Framework* and the important goal of establishing building performance feedback mechanisms throughout a building's lifecycle.

The introduction was followed by Schramm's own presentation: "Building Performance Evaluation at the Beginning Point of the Building Life Cycle: Strategic Planning for a UK Corporate Headquarters Building." In this presentation Schramm, an educator and architect from Munich,

Germany, described an experience from professional practice of using a participatory process as part of strategic planning to establish the location and program requirements for a new office building in the UK. Schramm concluded that building performance evaluation approach used in the case study was beneficial to strategic planning.

The second presentation in the session was by Shauna Mallory-Hill on "Feeding Forward Workplace Performance Evaluations into the Early Phases of the Design Cycle". Mallory-Hill is a doctoral student from the Eindhoven University of Technology and a member of the IBPE-Netherlands group. Mallory-Hill described her experience of creating a POE toolkit to do workplace comfort evaluations of innovative workplaces in the Netherlands and UK. To make the information more accessible to architects, Mallory-Hill created the Workplace Environment Design Aid or [WEDA], a prototype case-based design aid, to demonstrate how collected data might be stored and recalled via the internet.

Akikazu Kato, the IBPE representative from Japan and Toyohashi University of Technology, provided the third presentation entitled: "Parallels in Cross-Cultural Building Performance Evaluation Methodology." In collaboration with doctoral student Pieter Le Roux and others, Kato has been developing a structured approach to comparing the various criteria used to evaluate building performance around the world. In his discussion, Kato questioned whether defining minimum or obligatory standards, instead of optimal standards, really defined "good workplaces."

The fourth presentation was by Rotraut Walden, from the University of Koblenz in Germany entitled: "Intelligent Offices for the University of the Future." In her presentation, Walden described the use of a "Mapping Sentence" in the design of an occupant survey. Walden then went on to describe how the survey was used to help

evaluate various design requirements for the new "University of the Future" as the University of Koblenz moved from one campus to another. A user needs analysis focusing on the gap between the actual state of the existing buildings and user requirements was also undertaken as part of the study. Concentrating on the results of the study relating specifically to workplaces, Walden highlighted the key features identified to be the most important to Students and Faculty. The results of this research are being used to aid in relocation and strategic planning for the new "University of the Future."

The final presentation in the symposium was provided by Juriann van Meel, from Delft University Department of Real Estate and Housing and ICOP Workplace consultants in the Netherlands. van Meel's presentation was entitled "Municipal Offices in Enschede (NL): Lessons to Learn." In his presentation, van Meel described how the shortcomings of a new large Municipal Government office building were first identified and then addressed through a highly participatory process with the occupants. In this process, the designer/consultant takes on the role of facilitator rather than expert. van Meel concluded that while difficult, a participatory design review process can be very powerful.

IBPE Meeting

The five members of IBPE present at EDRA met briefly after the Symposium to have a general discussion about progress and, in particular, about the book project. Everyone was eager to see the book project move forward and were encouraged to hear that a potential publisher had been found. Two main issues were discussed:

(1) Need to establish a set of technical writing format guidelines for all of the authors to follow
(2) Need to identify the focus/audience for the book.

The first issue does not seem to be a problem. It is assumed that as editors and main contact persons with the publisher, Jacqueline (Vischer) and Wolfgang (Preiser) would establish the technical guidelines for the publication. This would include setting deadlines for submission.

The second issue raised a lot of questions. Given that the current book prospectus contains contributions from both new and old IBPE members, it is becoming hard to establish what aspect of the original IBPE objectives will be reported on in the book and to whom will they be of interest:

- Is it about the **integrative framework**? Have we gone beyond POEs? Do we have enough cases/examples to talk about performance evaluation of all stages of the lifecycle?
- Is it about **Universal toolkit** (methodologies and instruments)? The job of bringing together each country's toolkits and forming a "Universal IBPE toolkit" still remains. Is someone going to compare and contrast the various approaches? At what point (if ever) do we bring the toolkits together? Would the authors of more established methodologies (ASTM, Building Use Studies) be willing to alter their tools to create a "universal tool"? How do we correlate our findings with each other (create one big central database around certain criteria) if we use different collection methods/criteria? Is this a book about different methods used in various countries? (collected works?) Is this a book for someone wanting to generate case data for themselves – a handbook? A set of tools?

- Is it about a particular building type: **(innovative) office buildings and workplace environments**? Would the information we have collected help multi-national organizations, who want to build workplaces in different countries, better understand local cultural concerns and needs in relationship to work environments? Are the results of the various case studies significant enough to begin to establish design guidelines or suggestions for optimizing or improving the quality of similar workplace environments?

It was decided that without the participation of the more IBPE members, and in particular Jacqueline and Wolf, it was too difficult to resolve these questions at EDRA. Indeed, the interests of the publisher may well already pre-determine what the focus of the book should be. If this is the case, then this focus needs to be clearly identified as soon as possible by the editors and distributed to all authors so that we may begin the task of creating our Chapters.

Kato and van Meel have an impromptu data exchange in the hallway.