

Oculus

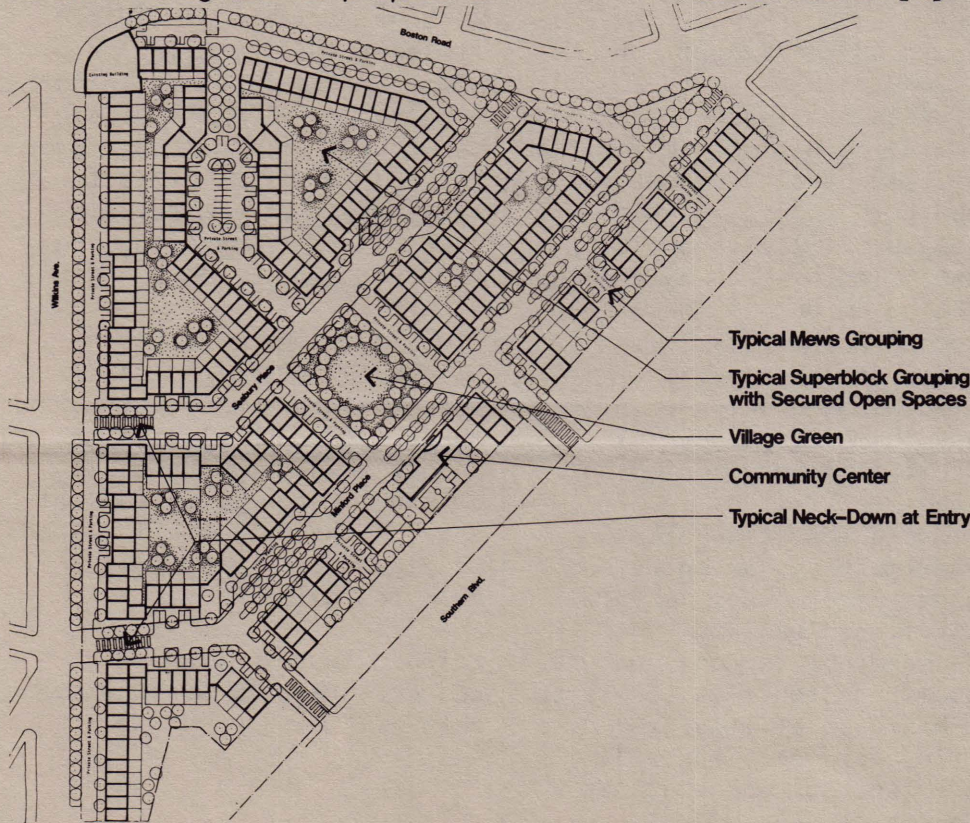
Chapter Assists City in Planning the Charlotte Street Area of the South Bronx

On Aug.2 the Chapter received a letter of acceptance from the New York City Housing Authority in response to our proposal to prepare a site plan and design controls for the Charlotte St. Area of the South Bronx. This marked the beginning of an occurrence which may well be unique in the Chapter's history to date, in that we agreed to prepare a

design study for a specific project in an effort to upgrade its design quality.

Subject to the Authority's letter of authorization our design team met on a number of occasions. We were joined at various times, by Max Schreiber and Renato Sobotka

continued on page 2



Site Study prepared by the New York Chapter, AIA for the New York City Housing Authority of the Charlotte Street area in the South Bronx. The site is bounded by Boston Road, Wilkins Avenue and Southern Boulevard. North is to the top of the plan.

NIAE and Chapter Plan Career Day for Nov.4

For many young men and women, choosing a career in Architecture is frequently a process of taking bits and pieces of third-hand information and mixing thoroughly with youthful idealism. The problem has been of great concern to professionals and educators in the field for some time.

Making an intelligent and informed career decision will be the focal point of Career Day, an annual event, co-sponsored by the NIAE and the Chapter.

This exploration in the fields of Architecture and Interior Design will be held at the Martin Luther King High School, Lincoln Center, on Nov. 4. Dorothy King and Sidney Shelov will co-chair the program.

Last year's event, which was held at Washington Irving High School was most successful. Among the notables who took part in that gathering were John Johansen who keynoted the program, Kevin Roche, who gave an after lunch address, and Lewis Davis wrapping up. The 475 students who took part were broken up into various architectural and educational workshops.

Stanley Salzman, Director of

continued on page 4

Executive Committee Considers Nominations to Institute, NYSAA, Chapter Assists City Art and Landmarks Commissions and Attends to Other Matters

The Executive Committee met four times during July and August. The extra sessions were needed to complete committee organization and other business.

In July, planning started for the 1982 AIA Convention: Peter Samton was nominated as chapter convention chairman. George Lewis reported that progress is being made toward future new chapter space in Villard Houses.

In August, the Committee endorsed James Doman, Charles Hoyt, Stanley Maurer, Elliot Willensky, architects and Richard Buford for nomination by the chapter as candidates for Landmark Commission appointments, and endorsed Margot Gayle for nomination to the Art Commission.

In September, Herb Epstein appeared to put in his bid to run for Institute President-elect again next year and the committee voted to support Bill Rose, current president of NYSAA, as national Director from the New York Region.

In other actions, the committee,
●voted that the Chapter recommend that the Racquet Club be designated a landmark
●authorized that Richard Roth, Jr. be asked if he'd run for president-elect of NYSAA.
●decided that instead of an urban design committee, John Belle will supervise the organization of a panel of members who would join ad hoc committees on specific issues.
●discussed William Conklin's proposal for a series of evening meetings at the Chapter to celebrate New York's architectural schools.
●learned from John Belle that

the First Annual Urban Design Conference will be held in New York on Oct.18-21, and voted to host a chapter evening event for the participants on Oct.18.

●heard Anna Halpin's report on an exploratory meeting with the other borough chapters to discuss a single New York City chapter, and suggested that Peter Samton be asked to continue with the effort to integrate the chapters.

●heard Bert Blumberg's report on meetings to advise the Parks Department on updating and improving fees, budgets and contracts for Parks Department work.

●made plans to establish a policy for use of the Women's Architectural Auxiliary Eleanor Allwork Scholarship fund.

●approved the budget for 1978-79.

●decided to press for the nomination of I.M.Pei for the AIA Gold Medal for next year.

●heard that Jane and Ben Thompson will give an illustrated lecture at the chapter meeting on Oct.18 in conjunction with the first Urban Design Conference.

●planned an evening of discussion on St. Vincent's Hospital expansion plan in Greenwich Village.

●learned that the Parks Department has accepted the Chapter's proposal to raise consultant fees.

●decided not to continue the Equal Opportunities Committee emphasis on affirmative action for women and will have the chairwoman act as liaison to AWA.

Complete minutes are available in the Chapter office.□

Iris Alex

continued from page 1

of the Housing Authority, Richard Rosenthal of HPD and Peter Magnani of the Planning Commission, all of whom made valuable contributions. A scheme and controls were drafted and then modified, refined, and finally presented on an informal basis to the Housing Authority and to the chairman and staff of the Planning Commission. The reaction in each case was enthusiastic optimism as to the overall impression created by the scheme, although at the time of this writing it seems likely that major revisions will be made as the result of recent reviews by the agencies responsible for implementation of the project. Regardless of the end results of our effort we have, at the very least, filled a void by bringing a number of issues into focus and by providing a basis for the evolution of a plan for the Charlotte St. project which might otherwise have taken shape in an altogether different way.

It is our hope that the Chapter's participation will prove valuable and that our advice and counsel will be sought on an ongoing basis during the course of the balance of the design efforts on Charlotte St. Hopefully - More to follow!□

*Herbert Mandel, Richard Blinder, Herbert Oppenheimer
John Ellis*

Survive or Prevail

The Dilemma of Continuing Education

Continuing Education is a relatively new game for professionals, the latest in educational toys. It is marked by skilled entrepreneurs who promise to let you stay afloat, maintain prominence in the field and outsmart the competition. The main rule of the game is to wrap in a palatable package an obscure but convenient subject and to convince those who do not play that they may be the only such ones left on the block. It is a game for the rich: it may cost three or four hundred dollars if played at home, more (transportation, room and board) if played elsewhere. The clincher is speed: two days in all, rarely longer.

Continuing education is not an unnecessary luxury, but there must be more to it than a short, tax-deductible vacation. There are many reasons for further education in architecture: the most obvious may be regeneration but the most basic need is rethinking the profession by individuals made mature by experience. Continuing education must not be directed at answering questions of professional survival. Rather, it should address issues related to continuous professional adjustment to the changing role of the architect in society. Architects who went to school ten or more years ago grew in a climate quite different from that of today's practice. No curriculum planner could have foreseen the changes in culture and lifestyle of the last decade. The architectural practice of a society of surplus had to adjust to the present awareness of shortages.

Meeting the client's budget today implies more than counting dollars and cents: parsimonious use of materials, labor

and resources has become an unwritten code of ethics. Power-devouring structures have been replaced by energy-conscious building; urban renewals by urban rehabilitation and reuses of obsolete building types. Computers provide previously unattainable flexibility of planning and drawing, with projections into the future, at least for long-range management forecasting. Liberation movements have made us aware of specific needs of minority users, as for instance the concept of barrier-free architecture, so as not to exclude the handicapped. Through environmental monitoring the architects learn how the structures they design perform over the years in the context of the community and its evol-

ution. Making assumptions about the way people use buildings is known to be very dangerous. The examples from Chandigahr, Brasilia and Pruitt-Igoe will suffice. Important lessons can be learned from such post-mortems. The evolution of the profession in the last decade and both its technological and socio-economic roots have been reflected by legislative changes, local and national, which place new restraints and open new opportunities, whose consequences cannot be ignored.

The need for continuing education is not a new concept in architecture, certainly not for the sole purpose of facing the

continued on page 4



Frau mies van der Rohe and son.

Drawing by Albert Lorenz

continued from page 3

threat of reaccreditation. Continuing education should aim at adjusting the thinking of the architect to both technological and philosophical changes in the profession as they have occurred over the last years. These changes are not merely stylistic as some senior architects would like us to believe. They are fundamental societal changes that call for the profound involvement and understanding by both educators and practitioners. Keeping up with the times cannot be achieved by a cursory glance at the multicolored pamphlets of the construction industry, peddling the latest in gadgetry and plastic materials. Schools of architecture would best avoid a similar race in pamphleteering. A sober and responsible approach must be defined leading from what continuing education is to what it must become.

Only a few architectural schools have experienced the changes in the profession and reflected them in a progressive curriculum. These schools are now in the position to be the focal point of a realistic continuing education and to offer, along with leading professionals and the professional organizations, structured series of seminars to fulfill more than the mere formality of the requirement. □

Rosaria Piomelli



Stanley Salzman and Kevin Roche at last year's NIAE Student Day. Photo, J. Ashworth

continued from page 1

Education for the NIAE and the guiding force behind career day feels that this year's event will be of even greater value to the students who attend. "This year we will have 10 workshops as opposed to last year's 8. There will be 24 schools of architecture represented. Information centers will be set up throughout the school to assist parents as well as students. Our location is something really special. Martin Luther King is a beautiful new school and being right in the heart of Lincoln Center makes it all the more exciting."

There will be a great variety of events for students to investigate. Half of the group will be involved in workshops. Architectural housing, energy conservation, restoration and just about every area of interest and concern to would-be architects will be showcased. The second half of the student group will be concerned with

education and how best to prepare for a career in architecture. The two groups switch assignments in the afternoon.

Harry Simmons will be the keynote speaker. The students will be treated to lunch and Philip Johnson, who'll address the gathering. Cynthia Peterson will wrap up the day's activities.

The cross section of students this year should be quite diverse. According to Salzman, "We hope to reach all sorts of kids: inner city blacks, suburbanites, young women and people who have never thought of architecture as a possible career."

"Our goal," according to Salzman, "is to see to it that every young person considering architecture as a career comes away with a clear understanding of the nature of the profession." □

Darrel Biati

New York Chapter
The American Institute of Architects
 20 West 40th Street
 New York, New York 10018
 212/730-1221
 George S. Lewis, Executive Director

Executive Committee 1978/79
 Charles E. Hughes, President
 William J. Conklin, 1st Vice President
 Joseph Wasserman, Vice President
 John Belle, Vice President
 Iris S. Alex, Secretary
 Ralph Steinglass, Treasurer
 Jonathan Barnett, Director
 Michael McCarthy, Director
 Rosaria Piomelli, Director
 Bertram Blumberg, Director
 Laurie Maurer, Director
 Martin Raab, Director

Oculus Editors
 Denis Glen Kuhn
 Kenneth Ricci

Cathanne Piesla
 Chapter Staff Member