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GRAND CENTRAL

The Landmarks Preservation Commission held hearings on April 10, 11, and 14 on Certificate of Appropriateness applications for (1) an office building above the roof of Grand Central, and (2) an office building on its site. In both proposals, architect Marcel Breuer provided for restoring the Concourse and for extensively improved pedestrian circulation.

The Chapter has expressed opposition to any new building on this site since the possibility was first made public in fall, 1967. In the Executive Committee on April 9, 1969, after intense discussion on recommendations by the Historical Buildings and Urban Design Committees, a 10-1 vote opposed the applications. Excerpts from the Chapter's statement to the Commission by First Vice President Todd for President Douglass follow:

"We cannot at this time accept the premise that an office building at the Grand Central site is inevitable. . . . We believe that the validity of the Landmarks Law is a measure of our cultural maturity, and it is essential not only to the preservation of values of the City, but for the quality of the entire environment. . . . We also hold in high esteem our fellow architect, Marcel Breuer, . . . and this makes our stand in opposition even more meaningful." Avenues suggested for solving the problem were the possibility of the National Monument designation; compensatory reduction of city taxes; use of existing laws for sale of air rights above landmarks.

"We believe that the present existence of Railroad-owned property concentrated here presents a situation which could result in chaotic, unrelated construction on a huge scale unless a firm, effective master plan for the whole Grand Central area is developed. . . . It would seem appropriate for the long-run interests of Penn Central. . . . to undertake the needed broad master planning of the entire area, in conjunction with the City Planning Commission. . . . including convenient, accessible offices and hotel facilities, adequate rapid transit systems, pedestrian walkways both at grade and under cover, and vastly improved retail services. This overall effort is essential to provide rational land use in this area."

A statement consistent with the above was submitted by the national AIA through its Committee on Design. Individual Chapter members made statements both in support of and against the two applications.

AMICUS CURIAE BRIEF

The Chapter, by 9-2 vote of the Executive Committee on April 9, has submitted a brief as a "Friend of the Court" in the unusual lawsuit which the City and the Department of City Planning have brought against Lincoln Plaza Associates and the Board of Standards and Appeals. Whitney North Seymour, Jr., submitted the brief on behalf of the Chapter on April 14. The Board had granted the developer a variance permitting a larger building opposite Lincoln Center in the proposed Lincoln Square Special Zoning District than would be allowed under the present Zoning Resolution and possibly under the proposed Special District.

The Lincoln Square Special Zoning District would permit private developers to put up larger, denser buildings than present zoning permits, in return for certain amenities including plazas, underground walkways, coordinated garage entrances, with setbacks and arcades to conform to the scale of Lincoln Center. David Todd appeared before the Planning Commission on January 29 to express the Chapter's support of the Zoning Amendment for this Special District.

The amicus curiae brief was filed because of the widespread conviction that any confusion as to the relative roles of the Planning Commission and the Board is deleterious, and because the Executive Committee believed the Board's action in granting this variance endangered the Planning Commission's exercise of its responsibility to plan effectively for the City's future development. The Chapter recognizes the integrity and motives of the Chairman and the Commissioners of the Board, all of whom are highly regarded by the architectural profession, and it submitted the brief in the hope that the Court's action in this case will end the misunderstandings between these two major City agencies and encourage them to work together in the public interest.

MEETING ON ADVOCACY PLANNING

On Thursday, May 15, at 5:15 p.m. there will be an informal meeting at Chapter Headquarters to discuss aspects of advocacy planning. Barry Jackson and others will describe a few representative projects in the Central Harlem-East Harlem area — how they have fared and what may be learned from them. Find out what advocacy planning actually means.

NEW YORK CHAPTER, THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS
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ANNUAL MEETING JUNE 4

The Chapter's Annual Meeting for the installation of officers will be held June 4, 12:30, at Delmonico's, Park Avenue at 59 St. The WAA will present its annual grants to architectural schools for student scholarships, and President Douglass will present Chapter Awards. Award winners will be announced in the June "Oculus".

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FUND

Otto Teegen is directing the Equal Opportunities Committee's fund raising for its program of scholarship and grants-in-aid to minority group architectural students. This is an important program, a special fund raised through the donations of firms, individual members, and friends of the Chapter. The Education Scholarship Committee will meet soon to make as many and as large grants as funds permit. In the five previous years, 61 grants have been made, not always as generous as would have been wished.

The support of Chapter members has been, on the whole, wide-spread, and the fund so far this year stands at \$5,000 plus. The Women's Architectural Auxiliary expects to augment this total substantially following the Crystal Ball, and if last-minute contributions come from firms and from individuals, no matter how small, the Scholarship Committee can make this program significantly more effective. Checks should be made out to The New York Chapter, A.I.A. Foundation, Inc.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

The Institute's pilot Professional Development Program began locally March 1 on the subject The Architect and the Law. George M. White, AIA, who is also an attorney, and Gerald Aksen, General Counsel to the AIA, led a one-day intensive briefing covering liability, libel, surety, contracts, and arbitration.

In this first year of the Program there will be three more seminars in New York; the next on Specifications, led by Harold Rosen on June 7, 8:30 to 5:30 p.m., location to be announced. Checks for \$25. (including lunch) should be sent to the New York State Association of Architects, 441 Lexington Avenue, N.Y. 10017.

SKETCHES

Two conferences of interest are being held in May. The Housing and Development Administration and the Practicing Law Institute will jointly sponsor a one-day forum on May 9 at the New York Hilton to explain to the city's business community a new program designed to attract private investment and building of low- and middle-rental housing. The forum will explore the various opportunities recently opened in the housing field by a new provision of the 1968 Housing Act (S236) coupled with the existing Federal income tax incentives and recent changes in the NYC Mitchell-Lama Program. The Mayor said that it "is essential to the economic and social well being of the City that the legal, building and investing communities understand this program and act upon it."

On May 12, 13 & 14 "Apartment Construction News" is sponsoring the Apartment Builder/Developer Conference & Exposition, also at the New York Hilton. This is a national conference. Registration care of National Expositions Company Inc., 14 W. 40 St., 564-8714.

Blank walls in Manhattan have recently been transformed into gigantic murals by artists with the assistance of urban planner David Bromberg. Color transparencies of walls painted by Allen D'Archangelo, Jason Crum and Robert Wiegand are being shown at the Museum of Modern Art with studies of possible new projects. The colossal geometric patterns in bright colors — yellow, blue and white — fed into the street scene sometimes prompts the refurbishing of the area, but the purpose is community improvement in a deeper sense. Selected by Arthur Drexler, Director, Department of Architecture and Design, 2nd floor. Through May.

Special group flights have been arranged with the AIA and the United States Travel Agency beginning in June & leaving from Boston or Washington. Write to Mr. Gilbert Paul at the Agency, 807 15th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

Central Park has become one big gallery for environmental sculpture by students of Cooper Union and the School of Visual Arts. They will be on display throughout the park until May 15th.

CSI Elections: The Metropolitan New York Chapter of the Construction Specifications Institute has elected James A. Strosnider of Frederic R. Harris, Inc., Consulting Engineers, President; and the following three as vice presidents: Eugene Jaffe of David Todd & Associates; C. Corey Mills of Harrison & Abramovitz, and Alvin D. Skolnik of S.O.M.

Important book: "Urban Design, Manhattan," by the Regional Plan Association, prepared by Rai Y. Okamoto and Frank Williams, Viking Press, \$17.50. This covers the Association's proposals for the Central Business District which were previewed last year at the Architectural League, including the "Access Tree" principle and the recommendations for arresting the spread of "Slab City" through specific locations of high-rise density.

REPORT: URBAN CAMPUS SEMINAR

The School Committee, C. Gates Beckwith, Chairman, under a grant from EFL, sponsored a discussion Mar. 19 on Architectural Design and the Urban Campus; the panel included Mrs. Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, Dr. Seymour Hyman, of the City University, Walter Netsch of SOM Chicago, and Jerry Avorn, Columbia student & author. Alan Green, Secretary of EFL, moderated; Leonard Cohen represented Percy Sutton, Manhattan Borough President. Columbia architecture students passed out a 6-page report by the school's Executive Council (students and faculty) with recommendations for the University's development.

Mrs. Moholy-Nagy said the urban university has made a greater contribution to western civilization than any other institution. The idea of a university ideally located in a remote setting is of American origin, and it stemmed from the days of the Land Grants. On the subject of the University as part of the surrounding community, she stated that she disagreed completely. The University's physical "envelope" must promote good relations between students and faculty, faculty and faculty, and faculty and administration. New campuses must be free, fluid, open, flexible environments, different from that of the Community, with their own quality.

Dr. Hyman, read the first sentence of the Columbia report observing that it coincided exactly with his point of view. The first step in building University structures is to determine the need. At CUNY an academic plan is translated into space requirements by educators and then turned over to the architect, who is expected to produce an esthetically satisfactory design within the budget. Community involvement is achieved by providing academic programs of interest to the Community and in some cases by its participation in University planning. The University must maintain a separate identity: people do not want to go from a slum to a store front; they want to go "up the hill" to the College.

Jerry Avorn, felt that students take over buildings because they are uncomfortable. He described crowded dorm rooms and stiff formal class rooms. Administrators and trustees believe that a teacher lecturing to a group of students is the only proper method of education. He compared architects to brick layers who build what they are told to without considering the political and moral aspects of the project, and he contended that designing a building for South Africa is a moral decision: architects cannot use the excuse that they were only following orders; they must refuse to build in city parks and design inferior class rooms. Mrs. Moholy-Nagy asked the students if they would turn down commissions when they were in practice. They shouted yes! She said ha!

Walter Netsch observed that education was a process that began with the design of the building. The "envelope" of the building depends on educational functions, but he warned many accepted building types are not appropriate for urban universities. Education must react to community needs, theories based on elite-ism must be forgotten.

REPORT: "THE HOUSING AGENCY GAME"

The main topics of discussion were red tape, industrialized housing, and human values verses the dollar, in that order. A standing room only crowd listened at Chapter headquarters, Mar. 25th to "Three Case Histories Illustrating the Impact of Housing Agencies on Architectural Design." Jerrald Karlan, co-architect with Paul Rudolph, explained their City project Tracey Towers and complained of delays. Tracey Towers is being processed fast and has been 2½ years to the middle of working drawings. Others of his projects are 6 years to the same point. He singled out the new CPC's Urban Design Group for inexperience and for changing designs already approved by the Housing & Development Agency. Alfonso DiMeo, representing the HDA, admitted delays but cited a long list of agencies requiring reviews.

Herman Jessor described his 15,000 unit State aided Co-op City, and emphasized the relative luxuries achieved at \$25 per room as opposed to the current norm of \$50. He said he got along fine with the Agency. Samuel Paul in a well prepared paper attacked the FHA's new AMP (Accelerated Multi-Family Processing) program's inconsistencies and claimed it does more harm than good. Edwin Schaffer of the FHA said the guide was developed with the AIA and is intended to give more responsibility to architects.

Mr. Jessor, asked why prefab or industrialized construction was not used on Co-op City, said he investigated the European approach thoroughly and is all for it but was advised it would not work in NYC because of union and other problems. Mr. Stein said even if it had been proposed, it would have been rejected as the State is not in the business of experimental housing. Mrs. Ada Louise Huxtable asked if technology was not the answer to the rent problem and who was going to get it started other than government agencies? Mr. Stein replied that was are a good 10 years from systems building and as far as rents go, the cost of structure is only a small part of the overall cost.

Ralph Pomerance regretted that the users of multi-family housing had been left out of the discussion. With eloquence he asked that we stop talking about dollar room values and begin thinking of human values. Edward Shiffer is the Housing Committee chairman. Seymour Jarmul headed the program subcommittee.

STATEN ISLAND GREENBELT

The Chapter was represented in favor of Alternate Route 4, which would keep Section I of the Richmond Parkway out of the Staten Island Greenbelt, at an uproarious hearing March 25 at Richmond Community College. August Heckscher had to weather severe heckling, but so did speakers for Route 1 (through the Greenbelt). Sample: Head of prominent local organization was complaining that the city planners could not make up their minds — were for Route 1 twenty years ago, now want Route 4, "if this is long-range planning, we'll all wind up living in tree houses". Bellow from rear: "With you, there won't be any trees left on Staten Island!"

LINEAR CITY—DEAD OR ALIVE?

George Seidensten—Project Manager for the Brooklyn Linear City Project indicated that the entire project was being reviewed at state and local levels and that major revisions and modifications to the original scope and extent of the work were expected. A staff of 10 professional and technical personnel have been assigned to the design team office in Brooklyn. Effort has been made to involve the existing community and special interest groups at all levels. Tentatively the development would have included schools for 20,000 pupils, 6,000 housing units, a community college, a regional shopping center and space for industry and recreation in conjunction with the proposed Cross Brooklyn-Queens Interboro Expressway.

However, delays resulting in coordinating different levels of governmental control and planning policy and differences in individual neighborhoods community objectives have caused several agencies to re-evaluate their participation. The New York Board of Education feels that it can no longer tolerate construction delays in the Canarsie and Brownsville sections. Agency rejection of projects of this nature and the refusal of community groups to work together may eliminate opportunities of creating exciting and coherent projects integrating transportation and existing urban environments.

ENGINEERING AWARDS

The New York Association of Consulting Engineers presented its Grand Awards to Syska & Hennessy Inc. and Weiskopf & Pickworth for their mechanical, electrical, and structural design of the Aviation and Space Building of the L'Enfant Plaza complex in Washington, D.C.; Architects I. M. Pei & Partners. First prize for Mechanical Engineering—S. A. Bogen Engineers for sewage treatment plant at New York Institute of Technology, Old Westbury. Second prize for Electrical Engineering—Slocum & Fuller for central computer facility for TWA, Rockleigh, N.J. First prize in Structural Engineering—Weiskopf & Pickworth for the design of the James Forrestal Building, Washington, D.C.; architects Curtis & Davis, Fordyce & Hamby Associates, and Frank Grad & Sons. Second prize went to DiStasio & Van Buren for the FDR Post Office by the Office of Max O. Urbahn.

The jury included Stephen A. Kliment AIA, Frederick A. Davidson, Jr., Commissioner NYC Department of Public Works; John M. Kyle, Chief Engineer-Port of New York Authority; Gordon Wallace of the Naval Facilities Engineering Command; and Hunter Hughes, editorial director of "Consulting Engineer" magazine.

FEDERAL BILL NEEDS SUPPORT

Those who support S.1532, a bill in the U.S. Senate to prevent unions from blocking the use of prefabricated products, should communicate with legislators. President Douglass, who attended the recent AIA—CEC Convention in Washington, believes this bill, introduced by Sen. Edward Gurney (R-Fla.), to be extremely important in encouraging modern construction methods to meet the volume of building the country faces.

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

Owen L. Delevante has been elected vice chairman of the Construction Standards Board of the USA Standards Institute. He is an executive associate of Frost Associates.

Starting July 1, *Bernard P. Spring* will become Dean of the School of Architecture, City College, New York.

Gustave R. Keane partner of Eggers & Higgins, has been appointed to the national AIA committee on Administrative Practice.

DATES TO REMEMBER

■ **Sat. May 3** — Hospitals & Health Field Trip to Columbia Presbyterian Hospital Center X-Ray Therapy Building, 9:30 A.M.

■ **Tues. May 6** — Hospitals & Health Lecture "Neighborhood Family Care Center," Speaker, Jack Schneider, Administrator Neighborhood Medical Care Demonstration Health Center at Chapter Headquarters, 5:15 P.M.

■ **Wed. May 7** — NYCAIA—WAA Second Annual Crystal Ball at Waldorf Astoria, Cocktails 8 P.M., Dinner 9:30 P.M.

■ **Tues. May 13** — Technical Committee Lecture, "The European Experience in Industrialized System Building" by Dr. Riccardo Mereaglia, Chairman & Managing Director of Impresa Generale di Costruzioni MBM s.p.a. at 5:15 P.M.

■ **Thurs. May 15** — Meeting on Advocacy Planning. Chapter Headquarters, 5:15 P.M.

■ **Wed. May 21** — Pre-Convention Luncheon at Lancaster Hotel, 22 East 38 Street, 12:30 P.M.

■ **May 22—23** — Conference on the Urban Environment and its Future. New York Hilton. Sponsored by the School of Engineering, City College.

■ **Wed. June 4** — Annual Luncheon at Delmonico's Hotel Park Avenue at 59 Street at 12:30 P.M., Colonnades Room, Cocktails Petit Salon, \$8.50 per person.

■ **June 22—26** — AIA Convention, Chicago, Illinois.

CANDIDATES FOR MEMBERSHIP

Information received by the Secretary of NYCAIA regarding the qualifications of candidates for membership will be considered confidential.

Corporate

Allan Ira Bass
Owen Beenhouwer
Walter Penman Bogner
Morton Frank
Barry H. Fishman

Benjamin Goldfarb
Malcolm Holzman
Norman Pfeiffer
Henry G. Philipps
William John Rupp

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

The NYCAIA welcomes the following new members:

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Francisco T. d'Aquino
Robert P. Darlington
Martin Joseph Hyman
Carmelo D. Marullo
William R. Maurer
F. William Mitchell

James D. Morgan
Peter Anthony Piven
Paul W. Reilly
Thomas Barrett Stanley
Terry G. Twitchell
James M. Vella

Associate

Nagui Mitry Barsoum
Faber Birren
Joel D. Kaufman

Royston Kent
Eric E. Micheels
John J. Wynne