

Pellish Describes Proposed National Institute Of Building Sciences

David Pellish, Housing Technology Officer of UDC, sees 1972 as the culmination of a long battle to establish a National Institute of Building Sciences.

At a crowded lecture sponsored by Ronald Woodward's Building Technology Committee, Mr. Pellish described the Institute as the single authoritative source of technical information for the Construction Industry throughout the country.

The Institute will test and evaluate materials and codes, advise on compliance for new products, and promote research to improve as well as develop new products. NIBS will publish a compendium of its standards at the end of its first year, with which all codes will have to comply. However, the administrative portions of these codes will remain a local matter.

NIBS will function independent of Government, to insulate it from politics, lobbies, and the snail's pace of federal bureaucracies, and will be administered by Architects and Engineers with minority representation by Government and Industry. It is felt this arrangement will resolve the ticklish matter of public accountability.

Structured as a "pyramid of technical committees" composed of experts, NIBS will operate regionally and nationally, with the secretary of each committee a professional paid by the Institute. NIBS is also, in fact, a super-agency, coordinating activities of other organizations such as ASTM and NFPA, and assigning projects to university and private research and testing facilities.

Although NIBS will ultimately be self-supporting through professional and industry subscriptions, initial funding will be authorized by Congress. Underwriting of costs for testing and publishing of findings will be done by sponsors and producers of new products.

David Pellish conceived of the idea for NIBS in 1967 as the technology officer for Sen. Paul Douglas' National Commission on Urban Problems. It is presently before Congress as part of the Housing Omnibus bill.

Mr. Pellish feels that people know they are paying too much for construction and would be receptive to a national institute that would certify cost saving methods of construction. The national AIA—among many other organizations—has spoken out a number of times in NIBS' behalf. The only dissenting voice has been organized labor.

Copies of the bill are available through the NYC/AIA.

DPH

Chapter Receives Council Grant

A decision to produce a slide-show on environmental awareness has won a grant of \$5,500 from the New York State Council on the Arts, led by Alan Schwartzman's Environmental Education Committee, the NYC/AIA will be the basic sponsor in a joint effort with the New York chapters of the AIP and the ASLA.

The first meeting of the three groups was held in January with Ralph Steinglass and Alan Schwartzman representing the chapter, and Bernard Spring as alternate. It was agreed that the joint committee would be concerned primarily with policy, while the method of presentation would be left to the director and photographer.

LY

Guest Editorial
C. Richard Hatch
"Is This Function Good?"

Architecture is a conservative institution. Its history is characterized by conscious archaizing, in Egypt and Greece as well as in Florence and Paris, down to our own era. The generation of architects that entered practice in the first quarter of this century was the first to reject history and tradition as a basis for design decisions. But by 1955, with that revolt still within living memory, Sigfried Giedion sensed "a new interest in architectural history...a new demand for continuity." Tradition is still a powerful force in architecture.

Even in revolt the glacial adaptation of architecture is evident. Only after three generations of urbanization, machine production, and the "cash nexus" did Modern Architects discern the need for new forms to reflect the already completed transition to industrial society. Long after more perceptive novelists and social critics had exposed the brutality and alienation which marks machine civilization, architects enthroned machine art and promised beauty in the naked expression of function. The servant tradition of architecture encouraged all but a few practioners to express function without asking "is this function good?"

Even the great modernists eventually needed the solace of tradition—how else is the architect to validate his intuition? Le Corbusier sought a Pythagorean system that "would make bad architecture difficult," Gropius experimented with "the new monumentality", Giedion asked for a solution to "the vaulting problem of today," and Mies' personal "god in the details" beckoned him ever closer to neo-classicism. Today these concerns are not compelling, and history is no longer a useful guide: only the most avid reductionist can find significant secular continuities. Today, *la plus ca change, la plus ca change*.

Having abandoned machine art and

functionalism architects are once again adrift, and seeking a rational and comfortable basis for design decisions. Robert Venturi and Denise Scott-Brown offer one which includes a new interpretation of tradition. Adding popular culture to Renaissance principles, theirs is an attractive combination of democratic architecture and venerable cannons.

The Venturis warn that these are not suitable times for "heroic and original" solutions, and that in abandoning the principles of the High Tradition in architecture, the profession has been lead to transform essentially simple programs into structural "ducks." The Venturis want to build straightforward sheds, and add architecture in the form of ornament redolent with associations. Only in this (historically proven) way, they argue, can buildings render rich psychological service while remaining within the narrow limits of logic and budget.

Venturi and Scott-Brown search for symbolic decoration for simple structures in Las Vegas, in the lobbies of Miami Beach hotels, and on the lawns of Levittown. The last unquestioning believers in consumer sovereignty in the market-place, they hold that these places put them in contact with the common user, the man in the (Main is almost all right) street.

The Venturis tell us to look not only at what the elite of the professional does, but at what people consume: learn from Levittown; get away today to Mac Donald's. What can we learn from Levittown? The soothing, false-status conferring symbols of the suburbs tell us very little about growing disatisfactions with work, stresses in the nuclear family, or loneliness. Miami Beach lobbies and Las Vegas extravaganzas are important only to those whose lives must have meaning applied to them as the Venturis would apply meaning to buildings. The world keeps getting

worse because we are not aware of the realities of contemporary life. We still pay too much attention to things and not enough to people.

Architects should learn to learn from people, not from structures; not from Levittown, but from Levittowners. The architect's conception of his responsibility must be extended beyond good buildings to good men. Design decisions should consciously expand options; every architectural work should extend the user's ability to understand and question function in society. And the process of creating the built environment should be exploited for its numerous opportunities to increase the community's sense of personal control over the content as well as the form of the home and workplace. Participation in the creation of form will provide more adequate psychological satisfaction than any applied symbols.

Believing that we all learn best through teaching, I am presently attempting to create (under a grant from Arnold W. Brunner Fund of the New York A.I.A.) a "design participation program"—materials which practicing architects can use to make contact with their usually invisible mass clients. It is no longer conceivable to take one's brief solely from bureaucrats or entrepreneurs, and works of sociology and field-trips to Disneyland are no substitute for direct communication between designers and the people who will use their buildings. Architects must insist on the participation of their real clients and make themselves instruments for the expression of an emerging common culture.

*C. Richard Hatch:
A.B. Harvard, B. Arch. Penn. (1963).
Founding Director of ARCH,
1964-1967. Author of environmental
and planning curricula for grades
K-12; e.g. Urban Action: Planning for
Change (Ginn, 1970). Brunner
Fellowship 1971-72.*

Letter To The Editor Unionization

Dear Sir:

We welcome the attention the AIA both nationally and in the New York Chapter is finally directing to the plight of architectural employees despite the fact that it was nowhere in evidence until those employees began to develop their own remedy in the form of unionism. But if the professional society leadership really expects architectural employees and students to BELIEVE their "white paper" claim to serving the interests of all architectural personnel rather than only or predominantly of the employers, they would be well advised to improve the objectivity and accuracy of their journalism.

As just one example, the December 1971 *Oculus* front page article on unionization asserts that the Jessor contract did not substantially alter salaries. The fact is that the majority in the bargaining unit won raises of \$25.00 per week and the average increase amounted to \$18.25 per week. And this occurred in the midst of the worst recession the field has experienced since World War II.

Lest there be any confusion, please rest assured that the purpose of the Architectural Division of the A & E Guild is not only to bring architectural wages and working conditions into proper relation to those of other professions and skills but also to encourage and facilitate the professional growth and standards, scope and public image of the field as a whole.

Very truly yours,

Ray Shannon, Business Representative
Architectural Division
Architecture and Engineering Guild
Local 66
American Federation of Technical
Engineers, AFL-CIO

How Well Do You Know New York?

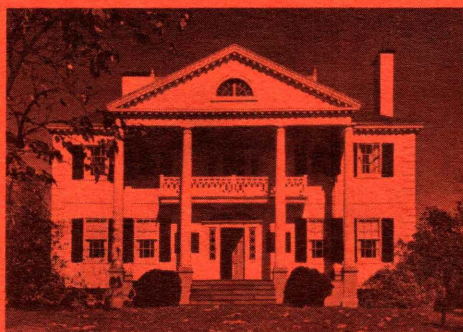


Photo: Landmarks Preservation Commission

Can you identify:

(1) the only house in Manhattan without a street number? (2) the mansion sold for a double strand of matched Oriental pearls? (3) the private park fashioned from a steep hill and a deep swamp? (4) New York's only open-air museum? (5) the old Indian trail to Albany? (6) New York's first suburb? (7) the New York hospital named for its pastoral view of Queens?

Answers to these questions are below. If you scored low, we suggest "Discover New York", Municipal Art Society guided tours, developed with help from the NYCAIA Historic Buildings Committee. These tours for non-tourists include a "classy glassy" 12-passenger bus, handsome polyglot guide, picnic hamper with Pinot Chardonnay (or Crème de Menthe frappée at night). You can tour "Around Manhattan", "Downtown and Midtown", "Old New York", or "Evening in New York". There's even a Rainy Day Special.

Seven days a week, 5 languages, 2½ to 4 hours, \$8.50 to \$12.50. Call Helen W. Swenson at 472-1415 for specifics.

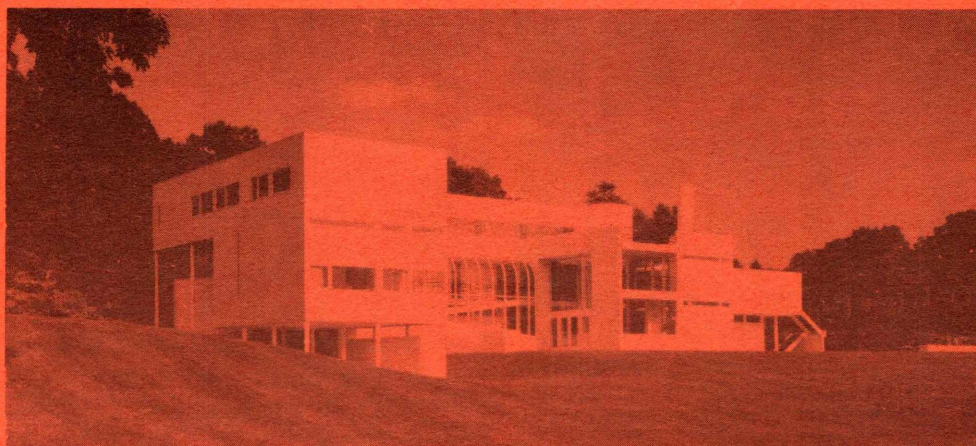
Answers to 1-7: (1) Jumel Mansion (1765), West 160th Street (pictured above); (2) The Morton Plant House, bought by Cartier's at the turn of the 20th Century; (3) Gramercy Park; (4) The South Street Seaport (19th Century restoration); (5) Broadway, also Manhattan's longest street; (6) Brooklyn Heights, a "peaceful place in the country" to which Wall Street financiers traveled by Fulton Ferry. Remember, Brooklyn Bridge dates from 1883. (7) Bellevue!

DPH

Blood Donations Needed

When it comes to donating blood there seems to be a million excuses. We can't afford to hear them anymore. There is no excuse for the fact that 60% of the blood supplied to New York's hospital patients is from commercial sources. Or, that their chances of getting hepatitis are 12 times greater because there isn't enough voluntarily-donated blood to go around. Our job is to close that gap. We can't do it unless you start caring enough to donate blood. To donate, call UN 1-7200. The Greater New York Blood Program Community Blood Council American Red Cross

**NYC/AIA Residential
Design Awards 1971**

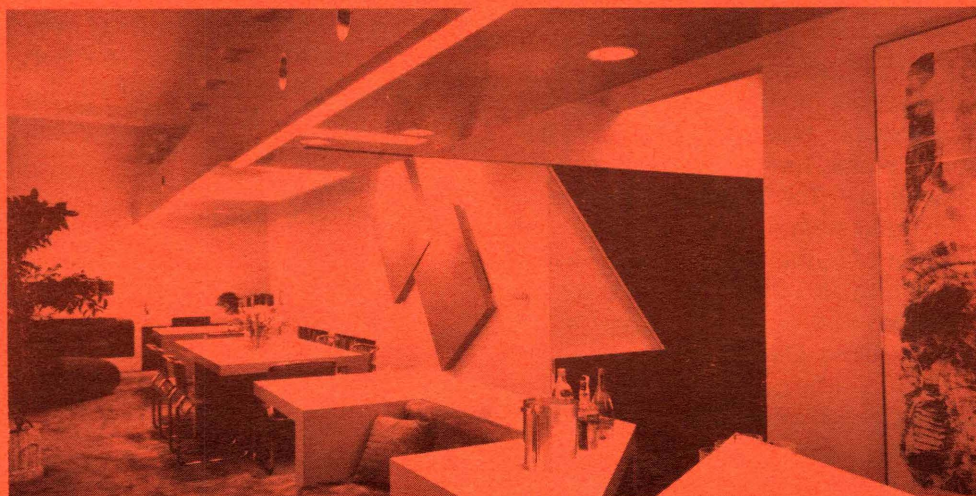
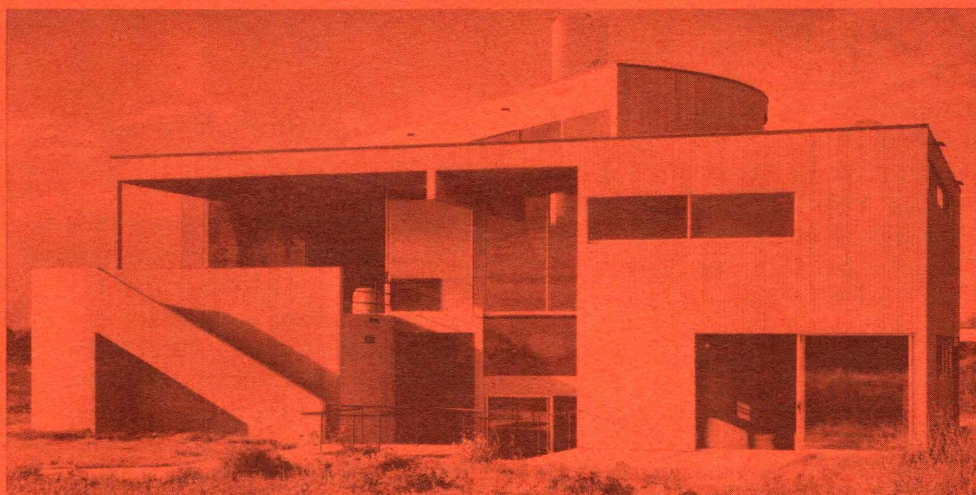


The 1971 Residential Design Awards were announced at the regular Chapter meeting January 14, 1972. We publish here, in full, the jury comments:

"The jury reviewed some sixty submissions and selected for citation four single-family houses, one renovated brownstone, and one apartment interior.

"Although the cited entries tend to be refinements or restatements of recent architectural developments, they do represent a high standard of achievement.

"As for the rest of the submissions, the jury felt that generally they lacked freshness and a unifying concept underlying the form. Even within the limited boundaries established by the competition, the jury was disappointed with the lack of submissions in categories other than detached single-family housing, particularly in the multi-family

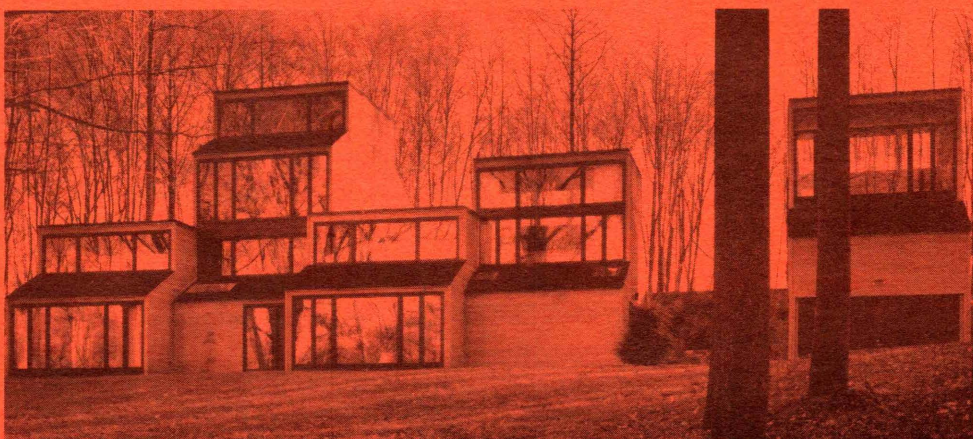
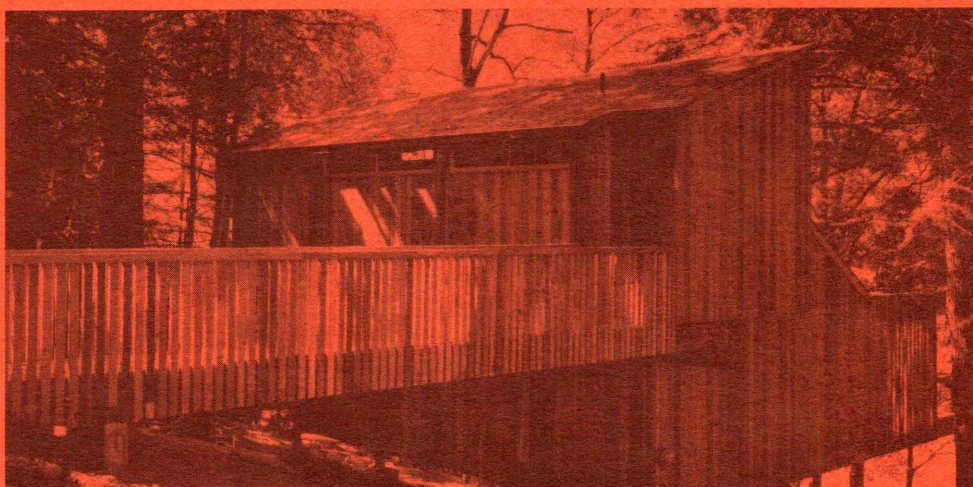
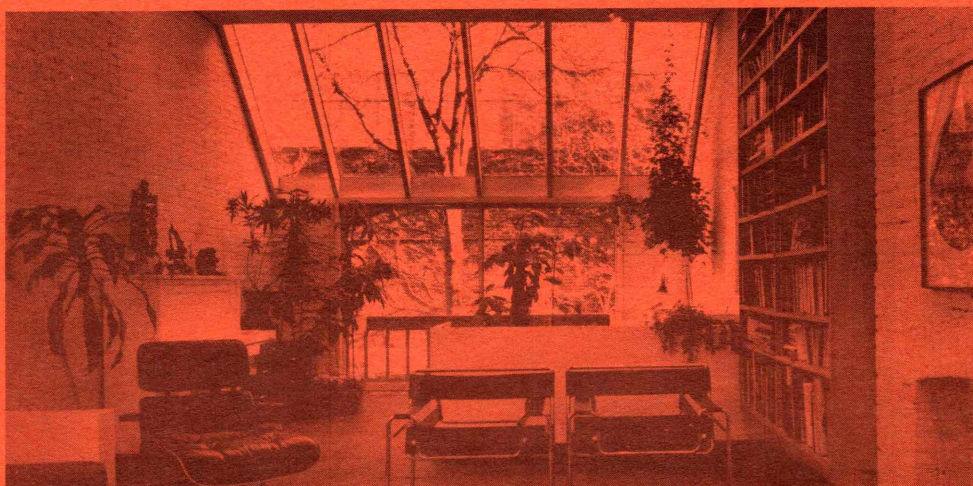


Top: Richard Meier
Middle: Gwathmey & Siegel
Bottom: Mayer & Schiff

category. Distressing, too, was the almost complete absence of housing using industrialized building techniques, or for that matter any type of residence that addressed housing needs in and about urban centers.

"Moreover, in a field where the house traditionally has been seen as an opportunity to experiment with solutions that could have broader applications, these submissions reflected an overriding concern with questions of form and style."

Samuel Brody
Julian Neski
Suzanne Stephens



Bottom: Alfred De Vido
Middle: Bernard Marson
Top: Peter Samton

Photo Credits:

Left Top: Ezra Stoller
Left Middle: Bill Maris
Left Bottom: Bill Maris
Right Top: David Hirsch
Right Bottom: Bill Maris

Nominations For The Committee On Nominations

Nominations for the Committee on Nominations were made at the regular Chapter meeting last January 14, 1972. The five-man Committee on Nominations will be elected by vote of the Chapter membership from the slate nominated from the floor of this meeting plus additional names which may be added by the Executive Committee.

The Committee on Nominations proposes nominations for Chapter Officers and Directors, and for the following elective committees: Ethics, Fellows, Finance, and Jury for the Medal of Honor and Award of Merit.

People nominated from the floor were: Gillet Lefferts, Jr., John L. O'Brien, Harvey Clarkson, Peter Samton and Herbert Oppenheimer.

People added to the nominating list by the Executive Committee January 17, 1972: Louis Lionni, Max Bond, Lo-Yi Chan and Nathan Jerry Maltz.

Guest speaker at the meeting was The Honorable David Grossman, Director of the Budget, City of New York.

Commission On Education

Architectural Schools Committee

Eschewing traditional AIA committee procedure which includes keeping minutes and developing resolutions, Bernard Spring's Architectural Schools "Un-Committee" is about to deal with several years of its "shirtsleeve" discussions. They are considering plans to film their informal meetings and subsequently edit them for showing in schools or on educational TV.

With Dean Spring (CCNY) at its helm, the committee is composed of the heads of most of the other architectural schools in the city. Among the perplexing problems they have been grappling with and hope to air on film are why talented architectural students "drop out", how can the office internship be made more meaningful, and what are the possibilities for inter-school cooperation.

Technical Education Committee

"Affirmative Action for JUMP!" by all Chapter members is urged by Chairman Frank Munzer. The Joint Urban Manpower Program (JUMP), is the design profession's way of bringing minority people in as technicians, trained in a government assisted program. To get further information on how your office might take "Affirmative Action", call him now at 725-2100.

Student Affairs Committee

The indefatigable members of Jerry Maltz's committee plan to conduct several of their future meetings at various architectural schools, rather than at AIA headquarters. In addition, AIA literature, such as the Calendar and *Oculus* is being made available to the students. This is part of the committee's efforts to reach future members of the profession. They are also planning a series of Saturday morning seminars for high school students to make them aware

of the possibilities of becoming actively involved in environmental design.

LY

Public Service Fund Progress

David Glasser, Chairman of the Public Service Fund Committee reports that volunteers are meeting "generally positive" reactions to their efforts to raise \$300,000 over a five year period to support minority scholarships. \$75,000 is to be raised by assessment of Chapter members. The program began in March of 1971.

Materials suppliers have been the best contributors so far. Owner-builders, general contractors and sub-contractors are also being approached. Chapter President Frost has written to some eight large contracting firms explaining the program and seeking support.

A detailed report of the contributors and assessments received will be published soon. An event to honor contributors is planned for this Spring. In the meantime, more volunteers are needed. Contact David Glasser.

JD

Financing Construction And The Architect

The notice said "OBITUARY—We note with sorrow the passing of the architect from the role of 'Master Builder,' " and the meeting January 17 was well attended. It was the first of several seminars on financial facts of life planned by the Committee on Financing of Construction.

Richard Roth, Sr., Chairman, introduced Peter E. Pattison, Vice President of Uris Buildings Corporation, one of the largest investment builders in the country, and James R. White, President of James D. Landauer Associates, Inc., which provides consulting services in the analysis of investment properties, land utilization studies, market analysis, new building planning and real estate financing.

Mr. Pattison quickly disposed of the Master Builder nostalgia by saying the last one he knew about was John Nash, who in 1810 got Cumberland Terrace in Regents' Park, London, built by getting the funds out of the Crown, ordering the materials, paying the workers and the rest. He said that in this day the street closings are arranged, the size and general shape of the building is established and the budget set before the architect is engaged. Certain latitudes remain for him.

Mr. White referred to Reston as a case where the developer had not done his homework in the market sense—i.e., the superior design was too good for the market. He said it is mandatory, before proceeding, to ask in a given location what rent, what sale price, will produce the desired income, and how much will the market absorb. He stressed that the architect, in order to participate effectively, must cooperate in this process and design within the budget. The architect must understand the finances if he is to persuade the client that extra costs are worth it. He recommended that architects have in-house financial knowhow, that they should have a capacity for figures as well as design. He added

that architects get commissions from clients who have confidence in their understanding of the total picture.

Mr. Pattison said that the only way architects can lead the building team is to assume financial risks as joint entrepreneurs. The name of the Atlanta architect John Portman was mentioned.

The above remarks, hopefully not taken too much out of context, show the plain talk of the evening. Dick Roth hopes that more young practitioners will come to future seminars, and he plans to invite an expert in mortgages to the next one. *GL*

Attendance At Membership Reception High

For the past three years the Membership Committee has been more active in seeking new members than ever before. One of its best means is the annual reception for new members which in the past was for new members only, but now includes prospective members. This year on Jan. 20th, 20 new members attended but significantly 65 prospective members also responded to the invitations. Frederick Frost and Jim Polshek gave brief descriptions of Chapter activities and reasons for joining.

The Membership Committee is still not satisfied however, as they feel there are too many unregistered architects who are not aware that they are eligible and very much wanted as associate members. With the list of names provided by sustaining firms they hope to reach many of these by mail. *KK*

Institute Combines Several Categories Into One Associate Membership

Secretary Der Scutt informs us that AIA has formed a new membership category called the AIA Associate Membership, which combines the previous Associates, Professional Associates and Professional Affiliates into one group. Eligibility is based on the following:

1. Those who are employed in a professional capacity by a licensed or registered architect.
2. Those who are professionally engaged in roles related to architecture in government, education, research or journalism provided, however, that the foregoing applicants shall be unlicensed or unregistered to practice architecture; or if so licensed or registered, they shall have been made in such status for not more than three years at the time of making their application.

They may use the title "AIA Associate Member" after their names. An associate member is automatically a member of the state organization. Any person may still be a member of the New York Chapter only. The Annual dues for an AIA Associate Member is \$35., the New York State Association \$15., and the New York Chapter, \$25. for the first five years and \$50. thereafter.

KK

Political Affairs Committee Gets New Member

The Executive Committee has decided to include a student member of the Student Affairs Committee to serve on the Political Affairs Committee.

Members of the Political Affairs Committee are appointed by the Executive Committee. George Konz is the first student appointee. David Werber will serve as alternate.

Executive Committee Actions

January 13, reconvened January 17, 1972

- Appointed David Todd to be chairman of a committee to prepare for the AIA convention at Houston in May.
- Discussed the Report on the Working Relationships of Architects and the City of New York, which was issued by the Urban Design Council, and determined to study carefully its proposal that there be a City Architect.
- Heard Robert Gatje, Chairman of the Public Agencies Committee, report that the Chapter was very erroneously being quoted as having approved the present edition of the city contract; that, on the contrary, many parts of it were not equitable, including the absence of provisions for arbitration.
- Approved the appointment of a student and a student alternate to the Public Affairs Committee.
- Approved the appointment of liaison with the City Commission on Human Rights.
- Heard Alan Goldsamt, Chairman of the Computers for Architecture Committee, describe his committee's survey of various applications which could be useful to architects; these will be presented at a meeting open to Chapter members at 1:00 on Monday, February 7.
- Heard a report on an Urban Planning Committee's meeting with representatives of the Rouse Company, as well as a representative of Senator Marchi, on the proposed plan for South Richmond on Staten Island.
- Discussed at length the Report of the AIA National Policy Task Force, which was first issued at the Grassroots East conference in Washington January 7-8. This

Report, which will be the principal business of the Houston Convention, was criticized by all members of the Executive Committee for the vagueness and poor style of its language as against the import of certain proposed policies such as land acquisition by government, which members of the Committee admired. It was resolved that the Committee could not approve the Report in its present form.

Candidates For Membership

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

Corporate

Ayla Karajabey Chatfield
Gilbert F. Dillon
Harry J. Groezinger
Norman F. Jacklin
Keith R. Kroeger

Associate

Theodore D. Kleiner

Welcome To New Members

The NYC/AIA welcomes the following members:

Corporate

Andrew C. C. Shen
Demetrios A. Siderakis
Robert E. Meadows
Henry Reiter
Henry C. K. Liu
Robert R. Markisz
George Wright
Stephen A. Lamb
Max Balassiano
Peter J. Catalano

WAA

Welcome To New Members

The Women's Architectural Auxiliary—whose membership is open to all women committed to helping young people to obtain an architectural education and specifically to wives of members of the NYC/AIA and to women members of the Chapter—is happy to announce the following new members:

Mrs. James Baker
Mrs. Leonard Battaglia
Mrs. Alfred De Vido
Mrs. William Hamby
Mrs. J. Arvid Klein
Mrs. Vincent La Ganga
Mrs. Michael Maas
Mrs. Thomas H. Price, Jr.
Mrs. Walter Scott
Mrs. Ronald Woodward
Mrs. Mario Zambetti
Mrs. Walter Zang

Membership information is available from Mrs. Alan Schwartzman, WAA Membership Chairman, through the Chapter.

New York Chapter
The American Institute of Architects
20 West 40th Street
New York, New York 10018
212 565-1866
George S. Lewis, Executive Director

Executive Committee
Frederick G. Frost, Jr., FAIA, President
James S. Polshek, 1st Vice-Pres.
Robert F. Gatje, Vice President
Samuel M. Brody, Vice President
Der Scutt, Secretary
James B. Baker, Treasurer
Lawrence Litchfield, Director
Howard H. Juster, Director
James A. Rossant, Director
T. Merrill Prentice, Jr., Director
Richard Stein, Director
Judith Edelman, Director

Oculus Committee
J. Arvid Klein, Editor and Chairman
John Doran
David P. Helpert
Kurt Karmin
Joel D. Kaufman
Linda Yang
