

Chapter Survey on Fall-off Widely Noted; Construction Industry Meets

The Chapter has given wide circulation to its solid figures indicating that work undertaken in 1973 was down 55% from 1969.

Paul O'Dwyer, President of the City Council, has been particularly impressed with the implications for the City's construction industry, and a series of significant meetings have ensued culminating with one on May 31 in the Council Chamber at City Hall attended by a strong representation of the construction industry, management and labor. It was well covered by press, radio and TV.

A 14-point proposal, prepared by a committee of which Chapter President Prentice was chairman, was reviewed and generally approved.

The points were:

1. Speed-up presently approved projects in the pipeline and movement into immediate construction.
2. Work to reinstate federal funding programs such as 236 housing subsidies, mass transit, etc. FHA Section 23 rent subsidies 221 D3 for Rehabilitation.
3. Work to clear up defaults on Mitchell-Lama Housing Projects and recommend an end to mortgage arrears within the year to free funds from the City capital budget.

4. Explore inducements to industry to locate in New York City, providing abatements, consultation on real estate opportunities and available sites close to mass transit, cultural institutions, labor markets and housing.
5. Develop funding for quality rehabilitation to augment housing needs where appropriate.
6. Revise mortgage banking practices and eliminate financial discrimination.
7. Emphasize utilization of local contractors, consultants, architects, manufacturers and suppliers in the greater New York community.
8. Release funds for advance planning and design to prepare construction documents to be completed once funding becomes available. The City should endeavor to influence the State to do likewise.
9. Create a Building Code Commission consisting of representatives of architects, engineers, owners, financiers, construction and building materials suppliers and manufacturers to continually revise the technology and methods of application of the Building Code.
10. Eliminate unnecessary delay in obtaining rulings from the Board of Standards and Appeals and other agencies.
11. Relocate of professional Civil Service personnel from in-house design staffs to the Building Department, to accelerate review processes and eliminate long delays in securing approvals.

12. Streamline procedures in Comptroller's office to avoid delays of payment to contractors and others.

13. Withhold compliance with INTRO #1 until standards of environmental responsibility and energy conservation have been clearly defined through consultation with the construction industry and construction professionals.

14. Reconsider previous proposals to create a post of City Architect to be the responsible agent to coordinate and expedite all matters dealing with design and construction.

A committee of ten was then formed, chaired by Prentice, to determine how and where to apply pressure. The first move was to organize concerted lobbying for the housing bill before the House of Representatives, with recommended amendments, particularly to include 236 funding. Several people familiar with Congress had stated at the meeting that pressure from New York had not been well organized. That fact pointed up the potential value of Mr. O'Dwyer's having brought this group together.

GL

Ed. Note: We call your attention to Tim Prentice's letter on Page 3.

Executive Committee Actions

May 8, 1974

- Authorized the Student Affairs Committee to conduct a program for high school students during the summer (see article).
- Approved a recommendation by Arthur Seckler, chairman of the Building Code Committee, that the Chapter approach the Architects' Council to form a city-wide building code committee.
- Agreed to maintain liaison as a member of a group of allied professional organizations to exchange information and arrange joint meetings such as the joint meeting to hear candidates for city office last fall.

Welcome to New Members

The NYC/AIA welcomes the following members:

Corporate

Carl S. Muskat
Kenneth L. Irving
William Cohen
Peter Capone
Etel T. Kramer
Arnold Lezdkalns
Yin Hsuan Peng
Max Reiter

Professional Associate

Tara D. Lamont

Associate

Donald J. McSherry

Candidates for Membership

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

Corporate

Richard Bienenfeld
Alexander Cooper
C. William Eilers, Jr.
Eric B. Kiviat
Leland Lee Taliaferro
John S. Whedbee

Associate

Ludwig Glaeser
Walter E. Mystkowski

David Specter's Book on Urban Spaces Published

Urban Spaces is a beautiful book about beauty in the urban landscape. New York Chapter member David Kenneth Specter is its author/photographer.

The book, published by the New York Graphic Society, is primarily a photographic essay. Mr. Specter shows what he finds desirable about the urban landscape, the "planned" and the "unintentional", aerial panoramas and paving patterns alike. Urban spaces are explored from many visual angles to give the reader a new awareness of the cityscape.

Sad to note, most of what Mr. Specter finds admirable is in Europe. Much is the natural legacy of period adding to period, of course. But the author is an optimist; he believes that these amenities can be planned for and built today. The message is there: Architects should strive consciously to develop vistas and enhance surroundings for people, and cities should use the powers within their zoning laws to induce developers to provide land and funds for public spaces.

MES

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City Architectural Work: In-House or by Private Firm?

The following letter was written May 16 by NYC/AIA President T.M. Prentice, Jr., to the Mayor, Comptroller, President of the City Council and the five Borough Presidents.

We contend that private architectural firms can perform City work at substantially less cost to the City than its own agencies such as the Department of Public Works. Our purpose in writing to you and to the other members of the Board of Estimate is to request that a thorough City analysis be made of the comparative cost of architectural work, City agency versus private enterprise.

You have frequently heard Mr. Richard Izzo, representing some 5,000 Civil Service workers, protest the awarding of consultant contracts to private firms. It is time to get at the true facts.

In 1965 a report by Eugene Hult, then Superintendent of the Office of School Buildings, Board of Education, found that the direct labor costs of the Bureau of Design for 22 buildings, modernizations, conversions and additions completed between January, 1962, and October, 1965, were 63.07 percent higher than the cost of design by private architects.

While Mr. Hult's figure may not accurately reflect current conditions, we have every reason to believe that work done in-house remains appreciably more expensive to the taxpayers.

Is it City policy to strengthen the Civil Service at the expense of private enterprise? An article in the TIMES on February 3, 1974, reports Edwin H. Brunjes, director of a force of 220 City architects and engineers as chief of the Public Works Department's bureau of building design, as projecting (to quote from the article) "a five-year level of work to keep his staff fully occupied, and he contracts out only the surplus to private architectural or engineering firms." At a meeting at this Chapter on December 18, 1973, Mr. Brunjes said that 65% of DPW projects would be done in-house in 1973-74 and that the percentage would rise further the following year.

Now, it is not our contention that public agency staffs be eliminated. But we do advocate a policy of no hiring of new personnel until a more equitable balance is achieved between work done in-house and by private firms. To maintain City staffs at full strength, preempting a greater percentage of the work as the total number of projects declines, can only result in driving private enterprise out of town.

We also submit that architectural and engineering personnel now being put in competition with private firms could better be used elsewhere in city government. The Department of Buildings, for instance, is undermanned to the point where processing of plans is seriously delayed, at great cost to everyone. Why not move trained architects and engineers from overstaffed agencies into that Department?

New York City is a great world center of the architectural profession. But we are now in deep trouble. A survey just completed by this Chapter reveals that work done in New York architectural offices is down 55% from 1969. Work done by City agencies, while not surveyed by the Chapter, apparently remains 100%. Is this not a clear example of what ails New York — that there are less and less taxpayers around to pay for more and more City services?

We ask that you support our request for an analysis of the cost of work done by City agencies on the order of that done by Eugene Hult, referred to above. We are ready to cooperate in organizing this analysis. We also ask that the City make a study of how it can better utilize the large architectural staff it now possesses to provide better services for our total community rather than continuing the present policy of duplicating the services of the independent professional.

Letters To The Editor

Re: "A Buyer's Market"?!
(May *Oculus*)

I have just finished reading the article in your May issue of *Oculus* pathetically entitled "A Buyer's Market"?!

Having attended the April 2 meeting in New York City, at the invitation of the Chapter, I am sincerely disappointed that your organization would see fit to print such an obviously biased and sarcastic article. Anyone who attended the meeting with their ears and minds open to a fair evaluation of the subject matter would not have long remembered the observation, "a buyer's market". Furthermore, anyone with a reasonable acute business sense would have recognized the comment for what it was, a plain and simple statement of fact projected by a gentleman whose business it is to protect the best interest of his clients, and whose personal philosophy is one of complete openness and straightforward discussion. In an age when Government is being so severely criticized for being inward and concealing and secretive, such an observation might better have been met with appreciation than sarcasm.

It seems to me rather ironic and somewhat disenchanting, that this particular article should appear face to face with a lead article pointing to the dramatic decrease in work available to the industry. You say in the article that you "... shall expend every effort to bring the facts to the attention of public officials, the industry and the public". Yet you choose to scoff at a major public agency which has spent much time and energy in the development and employment of methodologies intended to overcome the very problem which has been a primary cause of the downturn in construction: the financial non-feasibility of many proposed projects given conventional plan-design-construct procedures. At least two of our five design/build projects to date would almost certainly not have been constructed without these innovative procedures.

Those professionals in your organization who are in touch with what is going on in the industry, certainly are aware of the extent to which our design/build projects have been advertised, both formally through newspapers and recognized industry magazines, and through public meetings, some of which have been held in your own Chapter Headquarters. Both *Building Construction News* and *Engineering News-Record* for example, advertised the Smithtown Hospital project selected for particular criticism in your article. Those who have been interested enough to follow these projects are also aware of the very satisfying response from the professions and the contracting industry (31 teams applied at Brockport, 19 at Rockefeller University, 13 at Smithtown). One need only speak to our clients to determine their level of satisfaction with projects completed or under construction.

As a career professional and as an individual who has spent hundreds of hours weighing all sides of the design/build argument, particularly as it relates to our own projects, I can only add that my mind is still open. I sincerely hope that misguided and inaccurate articles such as yours do not serve to entice other professionals to close their minds to the subject. For without a continued and open dialogue between governmental building agencies and industry the 55% figure is far more likely to go up than down.

*Douglas C. Hasbrouck, P.E.
Director, Design and
Construction Services,
Dormitory Authority, State
of New York*

Escalation Clauses in Subcontractors' Contracts

Martin Raab, the Chapter's representative on the Mayor's Construction Industry Advisory Council, reports that its Escalation Subcommittee has met to discuss the subcontractors' request for escalation clauses in their contracts with the City. This is an extremely difficult problem for which to find an equitable solution.

The proposal which the subcommittee has decided to recommend to the City is that the bidding for City jobs be accomplished through a two-part proposal. The first part would consist of a lump sum, taking into consideration all escalation and contingencies in the normal manner. The second would be a lump-sum bid without escalation considerations.

Escalation would be provided by tying the contract directly to a cost index from the time of signing to a time in the future, say when each subcontract is 50% complete. Such a procedure would then give the owner the chance of assuming the escalation risk, if he so chose, rather than having it fully assumed by the subcontractors, as is now the condition, and one which is violently objected to by the subcontractors — causing them to raise bids unnecessarily and resulting in a rising number of defaults and/or claims.

Annual Luncheon June 19 at South Street Seaport

Come to South Street Seaport on June 19 when the Chapter gathers for its annual meeting on board the Robert Fulton — cocktails on the top deck and buffet lunch in the grand saloon! Each year the meeting has been in a new and different location; this East River setting should be outstanding, especially for those who have never visited the Seaport, which is on South Street at Fulton Street, south of Brooklyn Bridge (of which a great view).

The new officers, led by Herbert Oppenheimer, will be installed and honors will be awarded. Gruzen & Partners will receive the Medal of Honor, and the Award of Merit will go to Richard Ravitch, President of HRH Construction Company. Honorary Membership in the Chapter will be awarded to Edward J. Logue of UDC, and there will be Special Citations for Harmon Goldstone, Joseph Roberto, Peter Stanford (President of the South Street Seaport Museum), Richard Stein, and posthumously to Shadrach Woods.

Cocktails will be 11:45 to 12:45, followed promptly by lunch. The charge will be \$10.00 per person, which includes cocktails. Please make advance reservations, checks made out to New York Chapter/AIA.

This should be a great occasion. Welcome aboard!

Summer Workshops For High School Students

Two enterprising CCNY fourth-year students of architecture, Petr Stand and Barry Erenberg, have organized a four-week summer program of architectural/environmental workshops for high school students interested in learning more about their physical surroundings.

Both CCNY students have been active in the AIA Student Affairs Committee and in the interdisciplinary Student Education Committee. They have patterned their program after the SEC Workshops (see *Oculus*, Jan. 1974) and the SAC Saturday Seminars which have been held during the year (see *Oculus*, March 1974).

Each Saturday morning, the students will go on a field trip to a significant and carefully chosen site in New York City, where they will discuss the design program and its implications; the elements of architecture: light, texture, color, scale, movement, etc; construction technology; and the historic, psychological, political, and economic aspects of the area. Students will be encouraged to record what they see through sketching and photography.

Each Wednesday morning, the group will meet at the CCNY School of Architecture to solve basic design problems related to the field trips. Drafting and model making will be part of the program.

To our knowledge, this is the first such opportunity offered to public high school students in the New York Area. To recruit participants, the Board of Education will publicize the program throughout the New York City school system. It is being funded jointly by NYC/AIA and the CCNY School of Architecture, in addition to which CCNY is providing space and facilities.

Jerry Maltz



South Street Seaport

To Be Or Not To Be Is Just One Of The Questions Facing The NYSAA



L. to R.: Herbert Oppenheimer, 1st Vice President, NYC/AIA; Bruce Hartwigsen, Vice President, NYSAA; Roger Hallenbeck, 1st Vice President, NYSAA; and T.M. Prentice, Jr., President, NYC/AIA

Early in May, a special session of the Chapter's Executive Board met with the NYSAA's ad hoc committee to evaluate proposed changes to the State organization. (See the Sept. and Dec. 1973 and the April 1974 *Oculus*.) The well-attended meeting was conducted by the State Association's President-Elect Roger Hallenbeck. His committee was composed of Vice Presidents Larry Litchfield, Bruce Hartwigsen and Albert Efron.

This was one of many such meetings they have recently conducted throughout the State, and the committee is remarkable for its in-depth approach to problems plaguing the NYSAA. Much interest is being generated, too, simply by the travels of these four men from Chapter to Chapter.

A five-page outline prepared by Mr. Hallenbeck served as the basis for far-reaching talk. Among the topics covered was the question of goals for the State organization. Under consideration is a shift to greater concentration on legislative lobbying and better liaison with State agencies.

The most startling topic of all was the open airing of the question of the existence of the NYSAA altogether. Should it, for example, be replaced by a regional council composed of Chapter presidents? Discussion focused on the lack of communication among — and redundant nature of — some national, state and local committees. This subject led to an appraisal of the present NYSAA publications, the *Empire State Architect* and the *Newsletter*.

The Chapter's Executive Board was unanimous in urging that the State organization's headquarters be moved to Albany. The structure of the convention was also discussed.

Mr. Hallenbeck's committee (which will also be meeting with former State presidents) is now beginning the formidable task of tabulating the findings for presentation to the NYSAA's Board of Directors. The job is not an enviable one.

LY

The Moles in the Second Avenue Subway

The future of the Special Transit Land Use District for the Second Avenue Subway was the subject of a Zoning Committee meeting held at the Chapter on May 14.

Chaired by Charles Hughes, the Committee invited those architects who have contracts with the Transit Authority, fifteen in all, and Raquel Ramati of the City Planning Commission. Unfortunately, representatives of only two architectural firms attended the meeting.

The temporary legislation establishing the Special Transit Land Use District expires this December. Ms. Ramati presented the current work and general direction the Planning Commission is taking in order to establish "Guidelines for Permanent Legislation."

There are four basic "guidelines", classified as Major Amenity, Minor Amenity, Starts Unknown, and Development Areas. The most thoroughly developed guideline at this point is the Minor Amenity — when the opportunity exists for the creation of an easement for an off-street subway entrance large enough to accommodate one stair and one escalator.

Tables for different types of easements relate to a set of drawings.

In return for the granting of the off-street easement the developer would be permitted obstructions based on a system similar to the current "sky exposure plane" relationships in the Building Code.

Every aspect of the proposed legislation is fraught with difficulty in its technical understanding and delicacy in its negotiation. Not mentioned but significantly influential in the related negotiations are the local Community Planning Boards who are anxious to see that neither are commercial districts made of their residential areas nor that the densities of their residential areas increase as a result of bonuses to developers.

Another significant problem area is the transition between development and Transit Authority property at the easement. Aside from the matter of who will excavate to where and with what funds, and who will pay for, maintain and service the escalators, the question arises as to who bears ultimate liability for accidents occurring within the easement area.

NJ

The AIA Convention A Disjointed Affair

This article will be disjointed too — quick notes to meet *Oculus*' deadline.

There were huge parties and lots of good company. No one who attended the Pension Building Ball will forget the colossal, dramatically lighted interior court. You could take your pick of 40-plus seminars ranging from the Theme Session on "A Humane Architecture" to small ones on "What's Happening in Architectural Education," "Current Housing Programs and Policies," "Women in Architecture," etc.

The business sessions — this was the Institute's annual meeting — were awkwardly scheduled. The advance calendar mailed to members listed Wednesday as all business, but not until one arrived did he learn that Thursday afternoon was also allotted to business — principally consideration of resolutions — and this at the tail end of a convention which began in fact at the F. W. Dodge party (very good) Sunday evening. Many delegates had left by Thursday afternoon.

The Institute's proposal to keep its program within its present scope but to permit the budget to rise with the Consumer Price Index, with several provisions affecting individual and sustaining firm dues, passed. New York Region delegates were unable to obtain consideration of an amendment to limit an increase in the Institute budget to 7%, and an amendment to make 4% failed. Under the proposal which passed, individual dues are slated to generate a reduced proportion of the Institute's income. New York efforts to ascertain what we may expect in future individual and sustaining firm dues were not successful.

New York Chapter members, and many others, felt that the most interesting business before the convention was our resolution calling for amendments to the Standards of Practice which would focus attention on mutual obligations of employers and employees. The resolution was attacked from two sides: those who simply did not like the idea, and those who took issue with certain individual provisions. The resolution did not pass, but it was slated for the record that the Board of Directors was to study it in detail with a view toward introducing revised language next year. The Chapter's proposal to change the Bylaws to reword the preamble to the Standards of Practice did pass, so that it now reads that the object of the AIA shall be to organize and unite in fellowship "the members of the architectural profession . . ." It formerly read "the architects."

This writer feels that the Chapter's Employer-Employee Relations Committee accomplished a great deal. It gained the support of the Institute's Personnel Practices Committee, and the discussion of the resolution on the floor made it evident that this question was tossed aside. The Chapter, through the New York directors on the Board, will exert every effort to keep employer-employee relations in the forefront.

Our resolution on political contributions was modified in the Resolutions Committee to delete the provision requiring that architects report political contributions to their chapters (it was obvious there was to be little support), and to support current Institute policy. It is evident that the Institute, through recent Board actions, is now vigorously prosecuting the problem. Passage of our modified resolution reinforced that commitment.

Whether because of the scheduling or otherwise, many of our registered delegates were not present at caucuses and business meetings, and many did not vote for officers. Lou Giacalone presented a resolution from the floor which would have required a more concentrated scheduling of business sessions, but there were not enough votes to bring it before the convention. Those few of us who stuck it out intend to formulate some proposals as to next year.

GL

Executive Committee To Rate a Movie (?)

An environmental awareness slide show with musical background and voice commentary has been put together by a committee made up of representatives from the New York Chapters of AIA, AIP, and ASLA. The AIA representatives come from the Environmental Education Committee, chaired by Alan Schwartzman. The project originator and director is NYC/AIA member Barry Benepe, and the committee selected John Fulop as photographer.

The 20-minute show is designed to appeal to young or old, layman or professional, and offers good and bad examples of what people do and can do to their environment.

Major funding for the project comes from a \$5,500 grant from the State Council on the Arts, plus an additional contribution of \$300 by each of the three participating groups.

The slide show will be presented to the Executive Committees of the three groups at AIA Chapter Headquarters June 5. Each Executive Committee will make its own determination of the merits of the program. If approved, additional copies of the program will be made for distribution.

NJ

DiMartino Foresees Little New School Construction; Design to Continue In-House

Ralph DiMartino, Acting Director of the Bureau of Design for the New York City Board of Education, addressed a late-April open Chapter meeting sponsored by the Educational Facilities Committee.

The meeting was part of Janko Rasic's Committee's continuing program to bring together — for discussion — client agencies and private architects. Mr. DiMartino gave a comprehensive and forthright appraisal of the interrelated city and private architectural roles. Unfortunately, the news he brought a capacity crowd was not good for the private practitioner.

Uppermost in everyone's mind was: would there be City work available for the private office? Mr. DiMartino is sympathetic to the problem. Yet several factors work against the City's turning to outside architects. First, the Bureau of Design, he explained, is charged by law to design new school buildings. It acts primarily as the architect for the local school board, and then as a review agency for the work of private architects.

Second, the Bureau has a staff of 240 charged with estimating, design, specifications, contracts, school manual, and art commission liaison.

Third, according to Mr. DiMartino's predictions and statistics, the program for new schools will be meager beyond 1974. Future work heavily involves upgrading of existing facilities for additional or replacement seats. This work is administered by the Board's Reconstruction and Modernization Division because the program emphasizes mechanical and electrical improvements, with little concern for planning and design changes.

This lessening of work combines with the size of the Bureau of Design and its primary responsibilities to result in the majority of future work being done in-house. This is true already, since 10 of the 12 schools being designed under the new small school program are being done by the Bureau itself.

Is there any way of comparing the cost of private versus in-house design? Mr. DiMartino stated that, although no current statistics exist, he believed the cost was about equal, "when considering the total design and construction cycle".

Still, Mr. DiMartino discussed the architect selection process. A panel of architects is set up at the site selection stage and brochures are requested for submission to the local school boards. Local boards can then select an architect or propose another architect subject to the review of the central board. The panel is rotated so that all architects on the Board's list are given the opportunity to be interviewed by local boards.

Regardless of this process, Mr. DiMartino repeated that if their work load permitted, the Bureau of Design, by law, must serve as the architect for a proposed school project. This approach, he said, has been acceptable to the local school boards and no objections have been received.

It's All Over But the "Summery"

This is the last regular issue of *Oculus* until September. In July the "Annual Review" of Chapter activities will again be edited and published by the *Oculus* Committee. The summaries in the Review will be written by the NYC/AIA's Commissioners and their Committee Chairmen.

We'd like to hear from any Chapter members who would enjoy working on *Oculus*' 10 issues planned for next year.

DPH