

## Ad Hoc Committee On Status of Profession Makes First Report



Percival Goodman speaking: At table (Left to right)  
Robert F. Gatje, John C.B. Moore, Jerry Maltz,  
Richard Stein and Peter Samton (out of photograph)

The New York Chapter moved into a new stage in its evaluation of its future course of action at an open meeting on December 11, called by the Chapter's ad hoc committee on the Status of the Profession. It followed an intensive three month investigation by all the Chapter's committees, looking into where we are, how we got there and what we can do to improve the situation. Chairman Richard Stein summarized the major points made in 15 committee reports as a background for the discussion. The full text of the reports can be seen at Chapter headquarters.

Plans for follow-up activities to be begun within the next four to six weeks include:

- The development of a unified and coordinated Chapter position on all aspects of building, in a form suitable for presentation to the platform committees of the Democratic and Republican Nominating Conventions. It would require not only the full involvement of all forces within the Chapter, but close liaison with other levels of the AIA, other professional and planning groups, the other sectors of the construction industry. Advance work would be undertaken with public figures with whom the Chapter has developed good working relations.
- A series of open seminars and meetings to make further investigations into the various special fields covered by our committees. These would involve outside specialists and other interested groups and would amplify the statements prepared by our platform committees.
- The formulation of a continuing set of coordinated Chapter activities designed to help our profession re-establish itself on an effective and respected basis.

The discussion provided more details and suggestions, in addition to demonstrating an underlying feeling of frustration and impatience at the present inability to work constructively as professionals at a suitable income level.



For example, we should:

- Work with all architects and architectural groups in our area (Milton Glass).
- Remember the cross-sectional nature of our membership—both employers and employees—in developing programs (Kalas, Employer-Employee Relations Committee).
- Take advantage of foundation funding and available time to make studies—possibly competitions of projects useful to the city (Percy Goodman).
- Press for Federal funding for projects that can be undertaken immediately (There were several references to WPA and the 30's) (Salerni, Ehrlich).
- Inform the membership through summaries and mailings for rapid enlargement of participation (Giorgio Cavaglieri).
- Expand interests and type of work; work with community boards, others (Raymond Jean).
- Reinvestigate ethics standards concerned with direct participation in building.
- Look into the elimination of unnecessary and expensive standards in housing and other areas of building (Housing Committee).

Themes recurring in the committee reports stressed the urgency of programs with immediate results, programs that would reinforce communities: Rehabilitate housing, adapt loft space for health delivery services, upgrade existing educational facilities and performing such services as surveys, research and inspections. Concern was expressed that the general public will have to have a better picture

of the profession and its useful works if we are to reestablish and raise the economic status of our members. Our opportunities will be related to our ability to provide structures that will have the least damaging effect on environment, energy supplies and material availability.

A generalization that is beginning to emerge from the various reports and comments is that there may well have been a fundamental industry-wide mis-evaluation of the impact of our past scale of building. The single large project appears to have generated many requirements for infra-structure and services that have been ignored or underestimated; simultaneously, large projects have caused major dis-integrations to the scale and continuity of the urban texture.

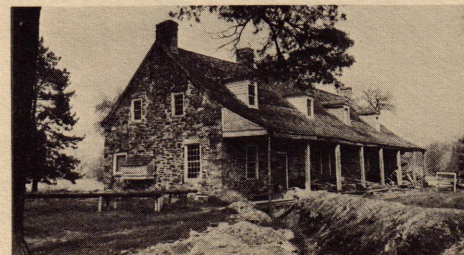
A program of new infill buildings, rehabilitation and recycling existing buildings, selective expansions and community upgrading appear to offer a basis for renewing cities, providing more work per construction dollar for building trades workers, demanding a high level of professional involvement to evaluate and design these facilities. In all, there would be a reduced impact on the environment. These kinds of changes can also be achieved more rapidly, all allowing those suffering from urban deterioration to benefit from the steps taken to correct it.

There is an urgent need for volunteers with time and energy if the potential benefits of this Chapter meeting are to be realized. If there is sufficient Chapter response, the Ad Hoc Committee can develop its activities to move into two areas—an in-house committee, sorting out the findings of a series of seminars and further committee studies, and another committee to coordinate our activ-

ities with other professional groups, segments of the construction industry, community groups and political figures outside of the Chapter. Together they will provide the material for a Program Committee, working with our own Political Affairs Committee.

The Ad Hoc Committee—Dick Stein, Peter Samton, Jerry Maltz and John Moore—urge your participation, your ideas and your attendance at a follow-up meeting in January (watch the January Calendar).  
*Stein, Samton, Maltz*

### **Early Architecture In Ulster County Editor, Barry Benepe**



Johannis Decker House, Built 1720

*In New Paltz, the church records were kept in French until 1730. Then Dutch, not English took over. English finally made it, but not until 1799, about 130 years after the conquest of New Netherland.*

This and other lively notes are included in Mr. Benepe's preface to this paperback book on 17th, 18th and 19th century buildings in Ulster County. Old stone "heirloom" houses are a major feature.

It's a handsome book with 200 good photographs. For those who would like to tour, there are maps locating 84 items worth a visit.

The book is available from the Junior League of Kingston, RD 5, Box 161, Kingston, N.Y. 12401. Price, \$5.95, postage, \$.50. New York State residents include sales tax.



## Panel Discussion On Architectural Education

The Architectural Schools Committee, Jonathan Barnett, chairman, has organized a very interesting series of five panel discussions for students and professionals on the role of architectural schools in these uncertain times. Barnett is moderator. At each panel the same questions are asked: Are the schools of architecture teaching what they should be teaching? Can they do their job better?



(Left to right) Hugh Hardy, James Polshek, Jonathan Barnett (moderator), John Hedjuk and Alan Forrest

At the first meeting in November the panelists were Richard Stein, Bernard Spring of CCNY and John Burgee. In December a larger crowd heard Alan Forrest of Pratt, Hugh Hardy, John Hejduk of Cooper Union and James Polshek of Columbia, and the gulf between school and practice seemed to be as difficult to bridge as ever.

Future panels will deal with: User Needs, February 18; Real Estate and Development, March 10; and Government, April 21.

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## Liability Insurance Meeting

At a well attended December meeting sponsored by the Office Practice Committee, Richard Dickens Chairman, members again voiced alarm over the severe increases in premiums and compared notes on their experiences.

Although a survey has not been made, those present confirmed that premiums with CNA have in many cases more than doubled this year, some far more than that. Several told of experiences encountered with other carriers. Apparently at least two companies, Northbrook Casualty and Imperial, both Chicago based, are offering coverage on errors and omissions that matches Schinnerer at substantially lower premiums.

It was also confirmed that retro-active coverage by the new carriers is provided in most cases so long as prior insurance had been held. Problems relating to gaps in coverage during change-overs were mentioned as being avoidable but caution in this regard was advised to all contemplating such a move.

A number of firms complained of the lack of knowledgeable agents in our field, making it all the more difficult to obtain accurate comparative data when shopping for insurance.

In order that architects may make their own investigations, the following information is offered: Carriers other than CNA were listed in the Institute's September 23 memorandum to the membership. The local agent for Northbrook Insurance Co. is Parkington Associates, 39 Broadway; and for Stuyvesant Insurance Co., Professional Coverage Managers, 116 John St. An agent who has compared the policies of several carriers, and who has been highly recommended by one chapter firm, is Randall E. Porter at Mather. Ltd., 116 John

St. Also recommended is John Weaver of Clinchy, Weaver and Hawkins, 200 East 42nd St.

The Office Practice Committee wants to collect all possible information about carriers and agents in order that future issues of **Oculus** can make more information available. Please get in touch with George Lewis at the Chapter office; information will be dealt with in confidence.

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## Postal Service Architect Selection Forms

The Postal Service will use new Federal forms 254 and 255 that architect and engineering firms must complete and file if they wish consideration for award of design contracts, effective Jan. 1, 1976. Firms now on file for postal projects with old standard form 251 need not submit a new form 254 until their present filing is one year old.

The new forms are required for both national and regional postal projects. Firms should, therefore, submit the new forms at both regional and national offices. National projects are those managed by the Postal Service Real Estate and Buildings Department in Washington with a total value of \$3-million or more. Projects of lesser value are undertaken by the five postal regions. The projects are announced in the Commerce Department publication "Commerce Business Daily," which is available at the Chapter office. The new forms are available from the Government Printing Office and the General Services Administration, Washington, D.C.



## Executive Committee Actions

December 3, 1975

- The Foundation allocated \$12,000 for financial assistance in 1975-76 for minority architectural students; this amount was generated in the last year of the 5-year assessment program.
- Approved certain committee budgets.
- Appointed representatives to the NYSAA, the Fine Arts Federation and the Concrete Industry Board (see elsewhere in this issue).

## Actions on Public Issues

- Joseph Wasserman, co-chairman of the Housing Committee, testified in favor of the proposed Zoning for Housing Quality Developments at a Planning Commission hearing on November 19.
- Telegrams were sent December 3 to all NYC congressmen urging defeat of two amendments to the tax reform bill. One of the two, which would have had the effect of discouraging investment in rental housing through prohibiting offsetting of losses, was defeated. The other, which would have affected investment plans through its requiring payment of a minimum amount of tax, passed.
- Richard Ferrara, Chairman of the Historic Buildings Committee, testified on October 14 before the Landmarks Commission in favor of plans for a hotel to be built at the rear of—and requiring some demolition of—the Villard Houses. He noted that the latest plans incorporated the Gold Room (the Chapter had vigorously argued for this), but that problems remain to be resolved.
- The Zoning Committee, Charles Hughes, Chairman, sent telegrams December 17 to the Board of Estimate supporting a proposed complex of stores and theaters on 2nd Avenue between 58th and 59th Streets.

## Appointments

- Jonathan Barnett and Abraham Geller have been appointed Chapter representatives to the Fine Arts Federation. In their second and third years as delegates are Jordan Gruzen, C. Ray Smith, James B. Baker and Alexander Kouzmanoff.
- Paul Silver has been appointed Chapter representative to the Concrete Industry Board.
- Pratt Institute has appointed Rosaria Piomelli Chairperson for Faculty Affairs at the School of Architecture.
- The Chapter is now authorized three representatives on the board of the State Association of Architects. Sarelle Weisberg and Kurt Karmin have been appointed delegates to join Peter Samton, who was appointed last fall.

## Candidates for Membership

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

### Corporate

Carl Kaiserman  
Frank Lasusa  
Stephen C. Solomon

### Associate

Najib Peregrino-Brimah

## Welcome to New Members

The NYC/AIA welcomes the following members:

### Corporate

David Termohlen  
Frederick A. Bland  
Gary Dennis Gaw  
Gary B. Vowels

### Associate

Penelope J. Jastrey

## So You Want to Be a Surveyor of Unsafe Buildings?

Buildings Dept. Commissioner Jeremiah Walsh recently issued a list of Surveyors of Unsafe Buildings as required by section C26-80.5 of the Administrative Code. He noted, "Any licensed professional engineer or registered architect who would want to be added to the list should have his name submitted, in writing, to the department by the county chapter of the A.I.A. of the borough in which the survey is to be made. . . ." Members who wish to be nominated should notify the chapter office.

A typical assignment for a surveyor is to inspect an abandoned building and write a report recommending that certain things be done like tinning up windows; this might be submitted to a court, which might then require action by the owner.

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**Executive Committee 1975/76**  
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