



Published by  
Bronx Chapter AIA Publications Committee [Info@studio360's.com](mailto:Info@studio360's.com)  
Highlighting activities and information of interest to the Practicing Architect

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I Current Activities



September 19th, 2024  
AIA BRONX CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

The virtual meeting starts at 6:03PM.

Attendees:

Ofe Pearson  
Sara Djazayeri  
Robert Esnard  
Antonio Freda  
Michael Goldblum  
Ken A. Koons, Jr.  
Ken H. Koons, Sr.  
Jerin Lisha  
Julian Misiurski  
Robert Markisz  
Matthew Rezkallo  
Bryan Zelnik  
Nico Zapata

Guest:

Brooks Perlin  
Principal  
Eco Supply Center  
Direct 718 233 1343  
Main 718 218 6737  
[brooks@ecosupplycenter.com](mailto:brooks@ecosupplycenter.com)

**Agenda / Discussion**

**1. Seminar Presentation**

The presenter, Brooks Perlin, Principal of Eco Supply Center began with a discussion of interior and exterior applications of sustainable materials. Eco Supply, a company known for custom furniture and sustainable products, showcased the benefits of their eco-friendly paper composite surfaces. The manufacturing process involves pre-dyed recycled paper running through an eco-bind resin bath, which is then dried and rolled into sheets. The special resin used is made from phenol, methanol, and ethanol and is part of a Waste to Energy process, reducing the carbon footprint compared to traditional manufacturing methods. This makes the material not only sustainable but also cost-effective.

Various applications of the material were illustrated, such as exterior cladding, rain screens, interior wall panels, and countertops. Its use in commercial food prep environments, like National Science Foundation (NSF)-certified cutting boards, highlights

its durability and machinability. The material is also suitable for computer numerical control (CNC) machining, adding to its versatility across different industries. With its ability to withstand harsh conditions and resist delamination, it is a popular choice in museums, conservation areas, and high-traffic commercial environments like restaurants and retail stores.

**Design, Customization, and Fire Rating:** One of the key points of the presentation was the material's design flexibility. The surfaces can be customized with various patterns and thicknesses, making them suitable for shower walls, wall paneling, and countertops in both residential and commercial settings. The material's durability and low maintenance make it ideal for environments requiring frequent use and exposure to wear and tear. In addition to its sustainability, the material has a Class A fire rating, making it safe for use in areas such as fire surrounds and chimney enclosures. Lead times for orders are typically two business days if the product is in stock, and four weeks if not, which was highlighted as another benefit for clients looking for timely installations.

**Cost and Fabrication Details:** The cost of the material was discussed in relation to its benefits. It is less expensive than traditional plastic laminates and can be used for both indoor and outdoor applications. For larger installations like countertops, the material is fabricated using techniques like biscuit joints and two-part epoxy for seams, ensuring durability and aesthetic appeal. The largest available panel size is five feet by twelve feet, and various thicknesses can be chosen depending on the project requirements.

Brooks ended the discussion with a question-and-answer period. Members inquired about the differences between solid and laminated pieces, and it was explained that laminated pieces are pressed with a core material, such as bamboo, to enhance durability. These laminated surfaces do not delaminate over time, making them highly reliable in high-impact environments. The meeting concluded with an invitation from the presenter to provide additional resources and information, with Brooks offering to connect individually with anyone interested in seeing practical examples of the materials or learning more about the passive house project in Brooklyn. His contact information is;

Brooks Perlin  
Principal  
Eco Supply Center  
Direct 718 233 1343  
Main 718 218 6737  
[Brooks@ecosupplycenter.com](mailto:Brooks@ecosupplycenter.com)

## 2. **Adoption of Minutes**

The Chapter President Sara Djazayeri asked that members at the start of the business portion of the meeting, when we have all members' attention, review how the chapter should **manage** the monthly meetings. Sara indicated that we should promise members after the one-hour seminar, we end all meetings after **+/- 30minutes**. The hope is to not

spend so much time discussing all issues, as we lose members' attention. There was a brief discussion with most members indicating that we should try to have a more focused meeting. A suggestion was made that we just should to vote or talk **only** about critical issues and if a major discussion is necessary, we simply schedule a special meeting or committee meeting to work things out to only briefly describe the issue and then vote. It was proposed that we try with this meeting, to see if we can be more efficient with our time.

With that, Bob Esnard, the Chapter secretary, briefly reviewed the June chapter activities summarized in the June Minutes. The one significant highlight of the June 2024 meeting was the great success of the May Awards Event with the very positive Bronx Borough President's office, Architectural Schools, student and AIA involvement.

Then to "implement" speeding up of meetings, Bob asked if there were any issues or questions about the June minutes. As there were none, June 20, 2024, minutes were declared unanimously approved as written.

3. **Schedule of next meetings**

The meetings for the remainder of the year were reviewed. It was agreed that for the foreseeable future with the exception of December when on the scheduled meeting day the chapter is planning a holiday luncheon.

The next Meeting Dates are:

October 17, 2024,	6:00PM - (Virtual)
November 21, 2024,	6:00PM - (Virtual)
December 19, 2024,	Holiday Luncheon (date tentative TBD)
January 16, 2025,	6:00PM - (Virtual)

4. **Bronx Chapter Design Awards for 2024;**

As noted in the June Minutes, over the last Months, several members recommended that this year, the chapter should revive an Annual Architectural Design Award process. Therefore, in May when the chapter received the AIANYS Design Awards for 2024 titled **Built By New York**, President Sara Djazayeri indicated that we should participate as she wanted to have the chapter participate in the state's AIANYS sponsored competition. We have not participated the past 6 or 7 years. This competition is only for architects in NY State. All the NY chapters submit one or two projects selected by their chapter. NY AIA member architects present their projects, which do not have to be in the state and can be anywhere. The Executive Committee composed of the chapter officers; the President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary, decided to participate by having a quick competition within our chapter. They requested members over a two-week period to submit their projects to them for review.

At the end of the summer the Officers of the Chapter unanimously chose two projects, one by Bryan Zelnik and the other by Michael Goldblum. NYAIA in the next few months will go through their process to pick out the Statewide winners.

**5. Riverdale Historic District - Tour:**

The Bronx Chapter will have its second tour of the year on Saturday October 26, 2024 on May 25, 2024, at 10:00am – 12:00pm for 2-CEU. As the chapter has done in the past, the tour is organized together with the Bronx County Historical Society. The tour will take place in the Riverdale Historic District in the Northwest Bronx and will be led by Roger McCormack, the Bronx County Director of Education and supported by Julian Misiurski, AIA the chapter's Vice President. The last time we had a tour in Riverdale; there was a lot of interest, so much so, that we had to turn people away.

The tour will describe the history of development in Riverdale and what led the NY Landmark Commission to designate the district. The area has growth using transportation by horses, horse-carts, boats, and ultimately the railroad arriving. Riverdale is what it is today because of its rich history.

**Appendix I – Riverdale Tour**

**6. AIA Washinton DC Convention 2024**

Nico Zapata represented the Bronx Chapter at the national convention and briefly described his experiences. Nico had planned on attending and was gracious to volunteer to attend the business functions as our representative. National AIA has been trying very hard to get volunteer chapters like ours to get more involved. Nico described the organization of the convention as different than in years past. Everything was done by an "app" and only after the app was released, were attendees able to see everything that was offered and other happenings. The moment the app was released he could see everything available to him.

Nico on behalf of the chapter also represented the Bronx AIA as a delegate in the voting for the next AIA president. The next national AIA president will be from NY. In addition to this, Nico witnessed a lot of by-laws presentations, but none passed. Many people were against the proposed by-laws. However, Nico felt most of the people who argued against issues did not have substantial reasoning as to why they disapproved of the by-laws.

However, he attended a couple of the seminars and tours. He described the tours as being phenomenal. He found the National Church especially interesting because he is currently working on an episcopal church in Brooklyn. As Nico explains, one of the best parts of the convention was the comradery of the architectural "community". People were open and wanted to learn about one another. He met quite a few different architects from various locations in the country and it was, overall, a great experience.

We were happy to have been represented by Nico and thank him for his participation and report.

7. **Chapter Committees**

Bronx Public Project/CCNY Studio Competition

Members reinforced the idea of continuing another student competition over the next spring college term Michael Goldblum assumed that we are going to continue and do the competition with City College as we have done in the past. Michael had just emailed the dean at City College, and cc'd Sara, inquiring about the Deans' interest going forward. He has not heard back yet. Additionally, Michael met today with the borough president's chief planner, who is the main liaison with the community and city agencies. As soon as Michael hears back from the dean, and he assumes she will want to go forward with the student competition again, we start a process to select the specific Bronx Deign Project for the students to work on. Michael indicated the borough president is hoping to get sponsorship, which is great news. If successful, school and students' would not have to pay for the materials and supplies.

Student Awards

Sara and Bryan Zelnik indicated they will communicate with the Pratt Institute, and the CCNY teaching faculty's respectively, to be sure the schools have the selection process in place. Each year there can be staff and administration changes and it can be a hectic process if the schools are not organized to choose two upper class architectural students for the chapter 2025 grant program. Each of the two candidates will receive a \$1,000 cash grant.

The popularity and publicity of these chapter grants triggered an inquiry from the Barnard College about expanding the Empowerment Grants to include two students. Sara spoke to Columbia University and Barnard College about extending our program to their schools. They have students from the Bronx that are currently on the path to becoming architects.

Sara also indicated that Barnard students will also be not only Bronx residents but will be women. However during the discussion it was revealed that they would not be in an Accredited Architectural Program. The Barnard Students would be in a Pre-Architectural Program.

In the current situation we are discussing, there's a chance that the students will not pursue an architectural degree and certification. There are several local Bronx/NYC schools that are not accredited schools, including junior colleges, that all have deserving Bronx pre- architectural students. These schools do not have architectural students.

If we are to be consistent we should look at other New York City architectural schools first.

Michael pointed out that New York Institute of Technology, Cooper Union, and Parsons are all architectural schools. It was also discussed that the Chapter had a very complete, intense debate over several months on just this issue. The grant selection criteria were voted on several times, indicating that the grants are a professional program not a scholarship program. The basis for the grants was to be given to; Bronx disadvantaged residents, upper class architectural students in an accredited architectural program, and without racial, sexual, political or religious preference.

There was a call to vote on the issue to get the sense of the members present;

**To expand the Bronx AIA Chapter's Grant Program to students/women deserving to a pre-architectural program rather than an architectural program?**

The Change was; **defeated**

It was then suggested that we table this topic to see if there is a different way to support women. Perhaps, if there are more people involved in the discussion a better argument can be made one way or another.

Associate/License Exam

Linda Infante has been very much a part of the ARE efforts and is unfortunately going to step back from this role as committee chairman because she has one more ARE exam to prepare for and take and doesn't have the time to coordinate the ARE student sessions. We are very happy that she has been able to have two seminars successfully presented. She has been a true asset, and her heart is in the right place.

The last ARE seminar which is certified for 1CEU credit was presented by Bob Esnard on the topic of "cracks". There were only a few associates and two members in attendance. If needed by the chapter this seminar can be offered and presented again within the future as the certification lasts for the next 3 years.

Sara expressed gratitude to Bob because he works so hard behind the scenes for our chapter. She wanted to take a moment to thank him.

8. **DOB – Update**

There was no discussion or update

9. **New Business**

Public Service Announcement

Michael Goldblum made a public service announcement about the Bronx and the NY Landmarks Commission. There was an unveiling for the first landscape feature in the Bronx: **The Old Croton Aquaduct Park which is NYC's 1<sup>st</sup> linear park** designated as the Bronx's first Landscape Landmark. There was a very nice ceremony across from Bronx community college.

**Appendix II – LPC Historic Landmark**

AIA National Scholarship Reimbursement

Julian Misiurski reported on his research on the **AIA National Scholarship Reimbursement** program which can match AIA local chapter efforts, such as our grant program previously discussed to support architectural students. He described when the national AIA gives awards, they **only can give it directly to the school**, for the funds to be applied only to the student's tuition bill. They don't give money directly to the students. When our chapter gives money to the student, it goes directly to the student to help in any way they need it. We just make sure the student is in school so the money can help them with **no** strings attached. After a discussion that Sara and Nico illustrated how much better it is administratively and most important to directly help the student not the school.

It was generally agreed that we should not use this National Reimbursement Program unless it will be consistent with the Chapters policy. Julian and Bob will investigate if the program will allow reimbursing the chapter and allow us to continue specifically assisting students directly and not only pay tuition.

Chapter Web Site

Sara Djazayeri briefed members on the *Chapter Website*. Bill Caplan, our current webmaster, has kept our website updated even though he doesn't have the time to commit to the website that is needed to create and maintain it needs to be. The number one issue is the need to develop **content on a regular basis**. Sara requested that members and their firms submit high quality photos for us to publish on our website. In addition, perhaps one of our younger

members, who are comfortable working with computer generated articles/information, could volunteer to help with making our chapter web site and internet presence more active.

**10. Adjournment**

As no additional new business was presented and we were able to have a 30-minute meeting, a motion to adjourn was made and unanimously seconded,

**The meeting ended at 7:32PM.**

**III Next Meeting:**

**Thursday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024.**

**6:00PM Virtual meeting via ZOOM**

**ZOOM meeting link**

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9948476766>**



**IV Appendix**

**Appendix I**

**Riverdale Tour**

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**Appendix II**

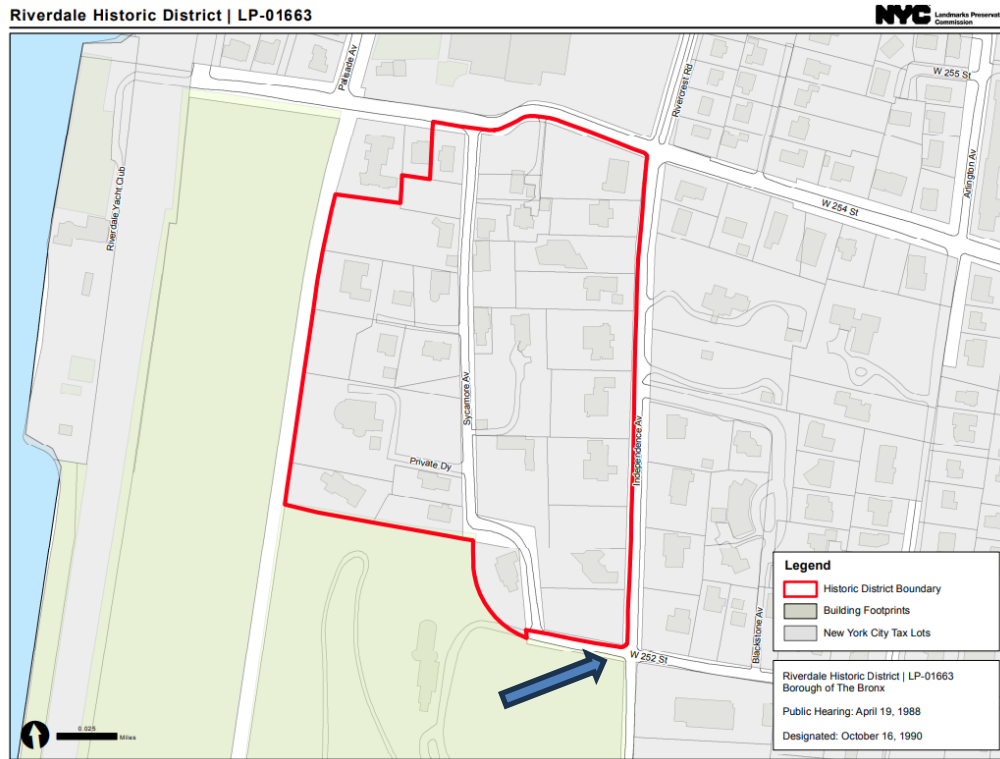
**LPC Historic Landmark**

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## Appendix I RIVERDALE TOUR



## RIVERDALE HISTORIC DISTRICT BRONX, NY 2024



**AIA Walking Tour Riverdale Historic District: Saturday, October 26<sup>th</sup> - 10 am-12 p.m.**

**AIABX02/2018 - 2 CEU.**

**AIA Members: \$20**

**Non-members: \$30**

The AIA/Bronx County Historical Society walking tour will explore the Riverdale Historic District, one of the first settled suburbs in New York City. The district encompasses the stretch of land between Independence Avenue and Sycamore Avenue, between West 252<sup>nd</sup> Street and West 254<sup>th</sup> Street.

The area, laid out in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by developer William Ackerman, was a planned suburban development, one of the first of its kind in New York City. The tour will focus on the city beautiful movement and urban development in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, explore the history of The Bronx and Riverdale with a particular focus on urbanization, and delve deeply into the architecture of the historic district, which includes stately examples of colonial and colonial revival architecture.

The tour be led by Roger McCormick of the Bronx County Historical Society, and Julian Misiurski, AIA will also stop at landmarks and historic sites in Riverdale, including the Wave Hill Estate and Lou Gehrig's home.

**The tour will begin and end at:**

**The intersection of 252<sup>ND</sup> Street & Independence Avenue, Bronx NY**

**Contact information:**

**Bob Esnard, AIA [besnard@dzco.com](mailto:besnard@dzco.com)**

**Roger McCormack, BCHS [education@bronxhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:education@bronxhistoricalsociety.org)**

## Appendix II

LPC Historic Landmark

# Highbridge Historic District

New York, NY



Constructed between 1839 and 1848, the Highbridge was built as part of the Croton Aqueduct system, which carried water from Westchester to New York City. The Bridge is an individual NYC landmark, listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, and included in the Croton Aqueduct National Historic Landmark. Closed to the public since 1960, the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks) and the NYC Department of Design and Construction (DDC) undertook a project to rehabilitate the Highbridge as a pedestrian walkway and bicycle pathway.

**Designation:** *National Register of Historic Places, New York State Register of Historic Places, Croton Aqueduct National Historic Landmark, NYC Individual Landmark*

**Awards:** *Municipal Arts Society MASTERworks Award for Best Neighborhood Catalyst for the High Bridge (2016), New York Landmarks Conservancy Lucy G. Moses Preservation Award*

**ZOOM meeting link**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9948476766>

**The End**