AIA BRONX CHAPTER OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

Published by
Bronx Chapter AIA Publications Committee Info@studio360s.com
Highlighting activities and information of interest to the Practicing Architect

Events and Education Opportunities

- **DOB Bronx Industry Meetings**
  1775 Grand Concourse, 5th Floor
  Second Wednesday of each month 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM
  Register to attend the meeting – In person only
  BronxPER11Appointments@buildings.nyc.gov

- **AIA Leadership Summit 2027**
  February 10-13, 2006
  AIA Leadership Summit is a training event for AIA chapter leaders.
  Registration is open soon!

- **AIA Conference on Architecture & Design 2027**
  May 19 to May 22, 2027
  The event will be held in the Pennsylvania Convention Center.
  Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
  Save the date

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

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I Current Activites

October 15, 2026

AIA BRONX CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

The virtual meeting started at 6:04PM.

Attendees:
Antonio Freda
Bryan Zelnik
Hirinah Pena
Julian Misiurski
Ken A. Koons, Jr.
Ken H. Koons, Sr.
Linda P. Infante
Matthew Rezkallo
Michael Goldblum
Nico Zapata
Ofe Pearson
Robert Esnard
Sara Djazayieri
Yehuda Mann

Guest:
Alain Lok | Senior Business Manager,
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Smart Concrete® Solutions

Agenda

1 Seminar Presentation

Alain Lok, Senior Business Manager for the Northeast USA at **Kryton International Inc**., presented the seminar with **Greg Maugeri**, Kryton's long-standing distribution partner in the Northeast. Alain joined from Vancouver, the company's home base, and introduced the subject of crystalline waterproofing and the company's concrete durability products. The discussion focused particularly on **KIM (Krystol Internal Membrane)** which is a crystalline admixture technology and the use of crystalline materials to reduce concrete permeability and improve performance over the life of a structure. It uses Krystol® technology to trigger a catalytic reaction between unhydrated cement and water, growing a protective crystalline network through the concrete's pores, capillaries, and cracks — giving it long-term, adaptive self-sealing properties. **KIM** was referenced as the benchmark for ACI 212.3R Chapter 15 requirements for Permeability Reducing Admixtures for Hydrostatic Conditions (PRAH).

The presenters explained that crystalline admixtures react within concrete to form crystals that fill pores and capillaries, limiting the movement of water through the concrete. They distinguished between products that reduce permeability under non-hydrostatic conditions and those designed to resist

hydrostatic pressure. The presentation referenced the industry's classification of permeability-reducing admixtures and the performance criteria associated with products intended to provide waterproofing without relying on a separate membrane.

The discussion covered the technology's response to cracking and water intrusion, including the role of water in activating further crystalline reactions where moisture reaches unreacted material. The presenters also discussed corrosion resistance and summarized third-party research comparing concrete mixes. They described the reported results for a mix incorporating **KIM** and explained how crystalline admixtures may contribute to concrete durability. By creating the integrated sheathing category over a decade ago, the traditional system of sheathing and tape replaces the need for house wrap on walls and felt underlayment in roof applications. It streamlines continuous air and water barrier performance in structural roof and wall assemblies, and it has changed the way concrete can be built.

The presentation concluded with a question-and-answer period which explored how the material performs in structures that remain submerged or are exposed to sustained hydrostatic pressure, whether the benefit lasts for the life of the concrete, and how it behaves in marine environments. It was explained that, the product's mechanism, the crystalline reaction can continue when water reaches areas of the concrete where the reaction has not yet occurred. Thus, making the concrete more and completely effective and waterproof.

Alain Lok summarized the presentation, and his company **Kryton International Inc**. as a pioneer of crystalline waterproofing and the inventor of the crystalline waterproofing admixture and has been waterproofing concrete structures with its proprietary Krystol® technology since 1973. Kryton's Hard Cem® and KIM® products offer reduced carbon emissions that can garner LEED certification and enhance environmental sustainability over a project's lifespan. Kryton has won awards for innovation, manufacturing, best place to work, and entrepreneurship. Kryton is an active member of the American Concrete Institute, International Concrete Repair Institute, American Shotcrete Association, and many other thought-leading organizations. Kryton exports its Smart Concrete® products to more than 50 countries globally. They can be contacted at:

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2. <u>Adoption of Minutes</u>

The business meeting was called to order at 7:11 PM and **Bob Esnard,** the Chapter Secretary, officially welcomed new attendee **Yehuda Mann** to the business portion of the chapter meeting. He shared the prior meeting minutes and summarized their general contents, including the previous seminar, the Chapter's routine business, committee activity, the fall tour, and the earlier discussion of Department of Buildings matters. The prior meeting materials also included information relating to local requirements and **Accessory Dwelling Units**. After inviting comments, Bob called for a motion to approve the September minutes. A motion by **Linda Infante** and second by **Julian Misiur**ski were offered, and as no objections were raised. The September minutes were declared adopted.

Schedule for Next Meetings

The Chapter identified November as the next meeting. It was noted that the Chapter has generally not held a regular meeting in December in recent years because attendance is typically low during the holiday period. President **Sara Djazayeri** the Chapter President indicated that she would organize a December luncheon this year with all Chapter members to be invited to attend. In any event, after the November meeting the next business meeting will be in January.

Members were reminded that the next meeting in November would also provide an opportunity to revisit committee assignments, encourage additional volunteers, and proceed with the required vote on the proposed officers and directors' slate.

Therefore, the schedule of upcoming meetings is as follows:

November 19, 2026 – 6:00 p.m. – Virtual
December 17, 2026 – Holiday Luncheon – Time and format TBD
January 21, 2027 – 6:00 p.m. – Virtual
February 18, 2027 – 6:00 p.m. – Virtual

4. Nominating Committee

Ken Koons Sr., the chair of nominating committee, prepared with other members a proposed slate of officers and directors. Unfortunately, **Ken** could not get his computer audio working and requested the chapter secretary to review the proposed officers which are:

Officers

President -	Sara Djazayeri
Vice President -	Julian Misiurski
Treasurer -	Kenneth Koons Jr.
Secretary -	Robert Esnard

Directors

Ofe' Clarke
Kenneth Koons Sr.
Leila Pena
Bryan Zelnik
Nico Zapata
Linda Infante

As the officers and directors agreed to serve the only changes to the slate for2027 that **Ken Koon's Jr.'s** committee proposed is adding **Linda Infante** and **Tony Freda** because of their participation and service to the Chapter. Both were described as especially active contributors to chapter events and attendance at meetings.

The discussion emphasized the importance of maintaining the Chapter's formal governance practices. It was explained that properly identifying officers and directors, keeping required documents current, and following AIA procedures help protect the Chapter and maintain its relationship with the larger organization. **Volunteer-run** chapters, such as ours, find these administrative responsibilities difficult to maintain, but the Chapter's more consistent procedures have helped it operate effectively and cooperate with other chapters. It was pointed out that the chapter is run by us as volunteers without paid staffing. This gives us an advantage eliminating unnecessary bureaucracy allowing the schools and the chapter to directly select students and grant the awards .

Also, as part of the discussion, it was raised whether committee chairs should be included in the governance list and be voted on. **Bob Esnard** clarified that the officer-and-director slate is a separate matter from committee chairs. The chapter's charter requires committee appointments and chairs are managed by the President. **Sara Djazayeri** agreed to select an updated list of committee chairs so that the assignments could be reviewed at the next meeting and hopefully additional members will be encouraged to volunteer.

Members were reminded that the Chapter's charter requires the slate to be published before a vote. Accordingly, the slate was not elected at this meeting; as it is to be circulated in advance of the next meeting, when members will have the opportunity to vote and raise any questions.
Appendix I – 2027 Proposed Officers & Directors

5. Empowerment Grant Committee

The Chapter referred to its continuing grants program as part of the work planned for the coming year, alongside the student competition and other committee activities. **Bryan Zelnik** discussed the timing for contacting schools regarding the Chapter's student scholarships from all six architecture schools simultaneously for student grants. Last year's efforts were highlighted as a major milestone. This **Bryan** is planning to send outreach letters in November. The Chapter's approach has been to keep the process straightforward and allow the participating schools to identify appropriate students and select students efficiently.

Sara reported that City College of New York (CCNY) had invited her and **Bryan** to attend an event in the next few weeks to recognize the student who received the AIA Bronx scholarship. She described the prior year's Awards event as impressive, noting that CCNY had presented a substantial overall scholarship program. As **Sara** and **Bryan** are unable to attend this year, **Syeeda Simmons** who is involved with **Women in Architecture and Emerging Professionals** and manages the Chapter's Instagram presence is expected to represent AIA Bronx at the event.

6. Emerging Professionals, and Women in Architecture

Sara recognized **Linda Infante's** ongoing work helping students and emerging professionals understand the path to architectural licensure. **Linda** serves as a point of contact for members and others seeking guidance on licensure questions and had previously given a presentation to students at CCNY. Sara had I invited **Linda** to speak to students again, explaining that these visits help make the Chapter better known to schools and provide students with contact when they encounter questions or difficulties related to licensure.

Sara also reported on planning for a joint **Women in Architecture** event involving committees from the five boroughs, Long Island, and Westchester. AIA Queens had offered to host the event in a space available to it at no cost. The gathering had initially been planned for November 10, but that date did not work out. The organizers intended to reschedule it for January, and AIA Bronx expected to participate. No final January date was confirmed during the meeting.

7. Student Competition

The Chapter is continuing its relationship with CCNY about developing a physical New York City Bronx "actual" project for the 2027 Bronx Chapter student competition. **Michael Goldblum** continues to work on this effort and as usual is persistent in following up with the school. At the time of this meeting, however, the school or the Borough Presidents staff had not yet agreed on a project site that works for all the participants. It was observed that the project-selection process often takes time and may not be finalized until spring. **Sara** emphasized that the Chapter wanted the competition to be based on a real project rather than a fictional design exercise. The members agreed that identifying a suitable site and coordinating with the school were the next steps.

8. Fall Tour - Orchard Beach& Hunter Island

Julian Misiurski discussed the planned Orchard Beach tour and said the weather forecast appeared favorable, with possible rain overnight or early in the morning but better conditions expected on the day of the tour. The tour would revisit a tour planned that had been attempted a couple of years earlier, when the **Orchard Beach Pavilion** renovation was still underway. **Roger McCormack from the Bronx County Historical Society** was expected to accompany the group and discuss Orchard Beach's history, the original public-works and Parks context, and the renovation and upgrading of the pavilion.

Sara confirmed that the tour was open to the public and offered to promote it through Facebook pages serving Bronx neighborhoods. **Julian** agreed to email her the flyer because he does not use Facebook. **Bob** noted that the Chapter's tours can introduce architectural history to audiences beyond those who ordinarily attend historical or architectural events, and that partner organizations value the participation of architects. The Chapter undertakes tours at least twice a year. If the Orchard Beach tour attracted a good turnout, members could consider future tours, including a possible tour of City Island.

9. Budget Audit/Review

Ken Koons Jr. the Chapter Treasurer reviewed the Chapter's budget assumptions and his audit committee of 2026 expenditures. He explained that many costs are fixed, including insurance and accounting, and that the budget currently continued to appropriately provide for **Student Empowerment Grants, Women in Architecture, and Emerging Professionals.** The Chapter also maintains an emergency reserve for unexpected insurance increases or possible legal expenses. Because meetings remain virtual, the allocation for meeting venues is very small, producing savings compared with the traditional in-person meetings.

Ken identified insurance as his principal concern, noting that costs have risen substantially and that the Chapter is required by AIA National to initiate and/or maintain required national program initiatives for; **fiscal integrity, conflicts of interest, business practices and insurance policies**. Because the current year is not an AIA Chapter Certification year, some expenses had been trimmed, and funds reallocated toward anticipated insurance increases of at least 10 percent. He said next year there will be a proposed adjustment intended to keep the overall budget approximately level with the previous year while preserving the existing program categories and outreach activities. He will prepare a comparison of the proposed 2027 budget with the prior year and share it with the chapter secretary to publish with this month's Newsletter. If the comparison was not ready in time to include in the minutes, it would be circulated separately before the budget vote at November's meeting.

Ken also noted that membership dues notifications would likely be sent in late November or mid-December. He expected approximately half of members to pay before the end of the year, with the remaining payments following, and recalled January 15 as the likely deadline.
Appendix II – Budget Comparison 2026-2027

9. DOB Update

Linda Infante reported on a recent monthly public meeting with the Department of Buildings Commissioner, which she attended with **Hal Dorfman**. Approximately 10 to 12 people attended, most of them architects. Linda described the discussion as active, with participants raising several specific problems affecting filings and plan review. She said the Commissioner appeared willing to listen to job-specific concerns and take down job numbers for follow-up.

A central concern was **DOB staffing**. **Linda** understood that the Department was operating under a hiring freeze and had lost staff through departures and retirements. She reported that only about six or seven people remained at the end of meeting when it was indicated that only two data-entry clerks were handling "payment-related" work. In her view, these shortages were contributing to delays, and she was concerned that further departures could make the situation worse.

Linda described several recurring filing and plan-examination problems. Some applications were being marked incomplete even when the examiner's response appeared to be a standard objection rather than a missing item. In other cases, objections were issued for matters that Linda believed were already clearly addressed in the submitted drawings. She said architects were frustrated by these issues and by review turnaround times. The **Commissioner** reportedly indicated that response times had come down to approximately **18 days**, although the delays had been longer during the summer.

She also reported that **DOB** was using the **2025 Energy Conservation Code** for plan reviews and that three new bulletins were expected, though they had not yet been posted. The Department was also working with City Planning to clarify the treatment **of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs**). **Linda** reported the requirements had not been sufficiently clear to examiners and that further guidance was expected as the agencies worked toward a more consistent approach.

Members discussed the practical value of bringing specific cases to the Commissioner's attention. **Linda** recommended preparing a short list—perhaps three projects where the architect was truly stuck—rather than an extensive list and bringing the relevant job numbers to the meeting. The Commissioner could then record the numbers and indicate whether his office would investigate. **Bob** noted that attendance was relatively small at these public meetings, which can make it easier for architects to raise individual problems. The Chapter agreed that these meetings **are useful opportunities** to communicate recurring issues, even though the staffing constraints may limit how quickly they can be resolved.

6. New Business

No separate new business item was raised before. However, there was a discussion reviewing the Chapter's **continuing priorities**: maintaining member participation, updating committee assignments, completing the nominating process, developing the student competition, contacting schools about scholarships, promoting the semi-annual chapter Bronx tours, and communicating members' concerns to government construction related agencies such as **DOB**.

7. **Adjournment**

Bob asked whether there was any further business. Hearing none, he thanked the members and guests for attending, encouraged continued participation in future meetings, and the meeting was adjourned. Members were wished a good night and the **October 2026** meeting ended at **7:52PM.**

II **Next meeting:**

Thursday, November 19, 2026, 6:00PM
Virtual - ZOOM meeting link
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9948476766

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Appendix I– 2027 Proposed Officers & Directors

Nominating Committee Recommendation

The 2026 Officers and Directors proposed for 2027

OFFICERS

President - Sara Djazayeri
Vice President - Julian Misiurski
Treasurer - Kenneth Koons Jr.
Secretary - Robert Esnard

Directors

Ofe' Clarke
Kenneth Koons Sr.
Leila Pena
Bryan Zelnik
Nico Zapata
Linda Infante
Tony Freda

Appendix II – Budget Comparison 2026-2027

2026 - 2027 Bronx Chapter Budget		
	AMOUNT	
EXPENSE CATEGORY		PROPOSED
	2026	2027
ACCOUNTING Annual tax filing and bookkeeping services.	$400	$ 500
AIA COMPLIANCE AND CONSULTANTS Required AIA reporting, filings, and consultant support.	$750	$ 600
ARCHITECTS COUNCIL Annual dues to participate in the statewide Architects Council of New York (ACNY).	$550	$ 550
COMMITTEE - FELLOWSHIP FAIA Support for AIA Fellowship candidates	$1,000	$ 100
COMMITTEE STUDENT EMPOWERMENT Scholarships, competition awards, printing, event materials, and ceremony support.	$7,000	$ 7,000
COMMITTEE WOMEN IN ARCHITECTURE & EMERGING Workshops, networking initiatives, and competition awards.	$1,000	$ 1,000
COMMUNICATIONS / MARKETING / DIGITAL PRESENCE Website hosting, Zoom subscription, social media, and marketing.	$2,700	$ 2,700
EMERGENCY RESERVE FUND Mandatory safety buffer for unexpected or urgent chapter needs.	$5,000	$ 5,000
INSURANCE Annual liability insurance required for chapter operations.	$2,200	$ 2,400
LEGAL — $1,000 Legal review, contract support, bylaws updates, and compliance needs.	$1,000	$ 1,250
MEETING VENUE Covers costs for in-person chapter meetings, and events	$1,000	$ 1,000
MEETING EXPENSES FOR OFFICERS/DIRECTORS Local travel, meals, and incidental expenses for leadership meetings.	$1,000	$ 1,500
MEMBERSHIP / ASSOCIATES SUPPORT Student sponsorships, fee assistance, or small stipends for emerging professionals.	$400	$ 400
TOTAL	$24,000	$ 24,000

THE END