



Published by the Bronx Chapter AIA Publications Committee to highlight activities and information of interest to the Practicing Architect.

Newsletter

NOTICE :Unfortunately, due to the current pandemic corona virus since March and due to the work from home order, March and subsequent newsletters will be abbreviated to include only the basic activities of the AIA Bronx Chapter until the health crisis is over.

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I Current Activities



Jun 18, 2020

AIA BRONX CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

Meeting began at 12:08pm

Attendees:

Bob Esnard

Dionisio Cortes

Bill Davis

Antonio Freda

Sara Djazayeri

Ken H. Koons, Sr.

Ken A. Koons, Jr.

Jerin Lisha

Josette Matthew

Robert Markisz

Julian Misiurski

Bryan Zelnik

Martin Zelnik

Agenda / Discussion:

1. Adoption of May minutes

The Minutes of the May 28, 2019 were emailed with this the notice for this meeting and Tony Freda made a motion to approve them and the motion was seconded by Ken Koons Sr., the May minutes were then unanimously accepted.

2. Next meeting dates and sponsorship

The next meeting dates will be:

Sept. 17, 2020 6:00pm

Oct. 15, 2020 12:00pm

Nov. 19, 2020 6:00pm

Dec. 17, 2020 12:00pm

Members discussed the above dates and decided to leave them stay as planned, as luncheons and dinners in the hope that the health crisis will be modified to allow in person meetings. Although we have scheduled and signed sponsors for the three virtual meetings, all the sponsors preferred to reschedule and not be part of a virtual meeting. Whether, we have a meeting at restaurant venue will depend on if they are able to open and members are able to have an in person meeting. This will obviously be decided over the summer break and members will be notified through the normal email Chapter Meeting Notices.

3. COVID-19 Public Health Emergency/State of the World

Several members had communicated with the Chapter Officers concerning the impact of the Health Emergency and the civil unrest on The Bronx. Ofe Clarke, the Chapter State representative wrote that we as professionals in The Bronx should develop as position on the cause surrounding the current civil unrest. She wrote,

“Let's not forget the disproportionate effect of Covid-19 on our neighborhoods. Please let us not remain silent as an organization.”

This triggered the Officers writing their thoughts and suggesting various possible statements for Chapter consideration. They proposed the idea of publicizing a Chapter position, underscored the importance of talking about discrimination, society, The Bronx and developing an appropriate public statement. The topic was added as a discussion item for the June Chapter zoom meeting to develop. Subsequently, at the meeting a discussion did take place and it was unanimously agreed that the **Chapter should make a public statement, as soon as possible**, preferably to be posted within a day or so of the meeting. Bill Davis agreed to draft a statement within 24 hours and attempt to put all the suggestions in as logical and concise a document as possible.

Subsequent to the meeting, Bill did made an excellent one page draft which was quickly circulated and commented on by approximately 10 members. The Chapter Officers after considering all the excellent modifications/thoughts they could, fashioned a succinct consensus Chapter Statement to be posted as follows;

Bronx AIA mourns with the families of the latest senseless murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and many more.

As we commemorate and celebrate Juneteenth, the date in which the last enslaved persons were freed after emancipation, the Bronx AIA membership shall go beyond the platitudes of standing in solidarity in recognizing that “Black Lives Matter” and the core values of the racial equality. We live and practice architecture in one of our nation’s poorest, most disadvantaged and diverse communities, therefore we see it as our special responsibility to expand our mission and pledge as Bronx AIA and community members:

To identify and reduce existing barriers and inequities that prevents increased racial diversification in our profession.

- ***To reach out to and engage all young people of color interested in architecture and encourage them to pursue our profession.***
- ***To continue our advocacy for community-based solutions to improving the quality of our immediate built environment.***
- ***To strengthen our resolve by partnering with like-minded professional, community, and educational groups.***
- ***To mentor and develop black, brown and other disadvantaged student and intern architects as they enter our profession.***
- ***To challenge assumptions, personal and professional, that inhibit our participation in the growth of our community.***

This is a moment of great opportunity for growth, inclusion and promise for the Bronx AIA, the profession and the nation.

The Bronx Chapter of the AIA

4. Chapter committees

The chapter committees due to the pandemic have been mostly handicapped as their activities are mostly in-person events. Each committee is hoping to schedule activities for the fall if optimistically, the Covid crisis subsides.

Events

Josette Matthew as Chairperson of the Events Committee is cautiously hopeful that the expected and publicly discussed return of major league baseball in the next months, she will attempt to resurrect a planned tour of Yankee Stadium, in conjunction with the Westchester+Hudson Valley Chapter. The event as was successfully held last season. A CEU credit tour was/will be combined with attendance at a home game after the tour.

5. NYC – DOB

The Department of Buildings promulgated several directives and bulletins over the last months. With the city entering Phase II Covid Designation Re-Opening construction industry activities are expanded to include “non-essential” construction projects, DOB has new very specific guidelines in terms of; filing for projects getting approvals and permits as well as safety regulations for construction.

DOB’s staff continues to work, but mostly electronically however, with construction activities significantly increasing, inspections will increase as well. All work will be subjected to random inspections that for a few weeks with violations only receiving warning notices. However, after the voluntarily conformance period is over violations will result in financial penalties of to \$5,000 per each summonses and noncompliance could result in Stop Work Orders. See attached;

APPENDIX

New York City, Department of Buildings,

COVID19 DOB NOTIFICATION

and

NYC, Department Of Buildings/Department of Health & Mental Hygiene,

Enforcement Guidance Notice

In addition, the increase of electronic filing requirement is a major concern to chapter members, as applicants with unusual or special issues can experience significant time delays in communicating and attempting to resolve their unique circumstances. A few members discussed having difficulty working with the DOB through email only. In the best case, occasional telephone calls are possible but cannot replace in-person contact. In addition, many members were concerned that the Covid crisis will be used in the future to eliminate or severely limit local/borough DOB office operations. This will add

cost and time to filing for processing applications for plans, permits, inspections and obviously the resolution of problems.

6. Information Cloud:

Josette Mathew volunteered and has been working on developing a Chapter Cloud to store all Chapter information and documents in a secure fashion. This has been a requirement of National AIA for a few years to allow; local chapter officials, the State and National AIA, construction organizations, as well as, chapter members access to; add, modify and work with AIA documents as appropriate and needed. As the Bronx Chapter has always been an unstaffed and volunteer organization we have not had the time or resources to satisfy this National requirement. Josette has been working with Valerie Brown, the Executive Director of the Westchester + Hudson Valley AIA Chapter and Bill Caplan the Bronx Chapter web site coordinator to create the cloud. Specifically, cloud creation should simplify many of the chapter needs as material is now physically in member and officers homes/offices in an unorganized manner and as officer's change over time many document are hard to find as we try to retrieve or modify them.

Josette reported that one issue has handicapped the effort was filing and managing an "internet" domain/address which annually will have a cost of or need to access it. Sara Djazayeri made a motion to fund the developing an internet domain, Bob Markisz seconding it with the motion then passing unanimously.

7. Continuing Education:

The Bronx Chapter's Chapter based programs and tours; of the Bronx buildings, neighborhoods and construction developments, all continue to be suspended, due to the pandemic virus. The ability to provide chapter based programs severally limits Chapter activities and with in-person meetings eliminated, sponsors who provide CEU seminars as part of meeting programs are also eliminated. Fortunately, the chapter has an arrangement with the Westchester + Hudson Valley Chapter and shares their CEU generated opportunities.

In addition, when possible, as Chapter leadership learns of them through email notices
The Bronx Chapter;

Has been sending free or at minimal cost, virtual CEU internet web based seminars to membership and

Circulates events held by sister chapters, or the State and National AIA, as well as construction organizations like ABX20 |Architecture Boston Expo, all which allow AIA members, to attend while observing the appropriate social distancing and health protocols, to minimize contagion risks.

8. New Business:

As this June meeting was the third virtual meeting since February due to the corona virus pandemic, it was the smoothest access to the meeting for members. It was successful, in that all members who had accepted were able to attend. However, due to the 40 minute limitation of the zoom connection, the meeting suddenly ended. It then required that attendees re open the zoom link. Unfortunately, several members did not make it into the second, concluding portion of the meeting. This immediately started a discussion that lead to the recommendation that the Chapter purchase a zoom license, allowing meetings to continue uninterrupted while also allowing Chapter Officers to conduct chapter activities with unlimited access, and hosting virtual conferences as needed. Sara Djazayeri made a motion to purchase a zoom license for a year, Bob Markisz seconded it and the motion was carried unanimously.

The only other new business discussed, was the impact on everyone, not only in construction, but the world. Members look forward to returning to normal soon.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15PM.

Next Meeting – If the health crisis continues through the summer months the meeting venue, Artie’s Restaurant may be closed. The next meeting will be on Thursday September 17, 2020 and;

If a **virtual zoom** meeting at 7:00PM

However, if an **in-person** a dinner meeting at the restaurant at 6:00PM

Membership will be informed of the type of meeting, virtual or not, by email Meeting Notices.

APPENDIX

NEW YORK CITY Department of Buildings

COVID19 DOB NOTIFICATION

June 28, 2020



**Department of
Buildings**

**Department of Health
& Mental Hygiene**

Issuance Date: 06/05/2020

UPDATED: 06/07/2020

Effective: Upon the City of New York Entering Phase 1 Reopening

NEW YORK CITY

Department of Buildings

COVID19 DOB NOTIFICATION

June 28, 2020

Greetings,

As New York City continues to re-open, the resumption of all permitted construction work can be seen across every corner of our City. In response, on Monday, June 8th, Department of Buildings (DOB) Inspectors began a citywide inspection sweep of every permitted site to verify compliance with State and City Phase 1 restart requirements.

Throughout the course of June we will continue to visit permitted work sites. For this month, there are no monetary penalties associated with our Phase 1 restart enforcement actions, but **effective July 8th, 2020** sites found out of compliance will be subjected to violations that carry financial penalties of \$5,000 per violation with the potential for a Stop Work Order. Continued noncompliance may result in additional summonses with accompanying civil penalties of up to \$10,000 for each offense. To reiterate, if during DOB's sweep, **any Construction Code and Electrical Code** non-compliances are observed, Inspectors will take appropriate enforcement actions, including the potential issuance of violations with monetary penalties.

To be clear, if a single Phase 1 restart violating condition is observed on your site on or after July 8th, 2020 – your site will be assessed a violation that carries a financial penalty of \$5,000. If your site does not have a [Safety Plan](#) and [State Affirmation](#) conspicuously posted and/or is lacking proper hand hygiene stations, your site will be issued a Stop Work Order in addition to the financial penalty. Stop Work Orders will also be issued if five or more violating conditions are observed on your site.

To understand what is expected of your site, please refer to the [Interim Guidance for Construction Activities During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#), our [“Do’s and Don’ts” Document](#), and our [“What To Know” One-Pager](#).

For additional information on the Phase 1 re-opening, please visit nyc.gov/buildings. On our Phase-1 re-opening [webpage](#), you will find resources including [DOB's Phase 1 Re-Opening Guidance](#), [FAQs](#), and the [State's Interim Guidelines](#). **If you have any questions, please reach out via email to COVID19@buildings.nyc.gov.**

Thank you



**Department of
Buildings**

**Department of Health
& Mental Hygiene**

Issuance Date: 06/05/2020

UPDATED: 06/07/2020

Effective: Upon the City of New York Entering Phase 1 Reopening

To: Owners and Contractors

Purpose: Guidance to owners and contractors on enforcement of New York State (NYS) Department of Health Interim Guidance For Construction Activities During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency issued on May 13, 2020; NYC Mayoral Executive Order No. 120 issued on June 3, 2020 and Executive Order No. 123 issued on June 7, 2020; pursuant to NYS Governor's Executive Order 202.34 and subsequent orders.

Related

- AC 28-103.8
- AC 28-201.1

Code/Zoning subsequent Section(s) and Operating

- New York State Gubernatorial Emergency Order 202.34 and orders and related New York State Department of Health Guidelines
- New York City Mayoral Emergency Orders

Information:

- NYC Health Department "*Reopening New York City: Frequently Asked Questions What the Constructions Businesses Need to Know*"

In accordance with [NYS Governor's Executive Order 202.34](#) and subsequent orders, construction projects subject to permits issued by the NYC Department of Buildings, or otherwise regulated by the NYC Construction Codes and the NYC Electrical Code are permitted to proceed provided they comply with the [Interim Guidance For Construction Activities During The COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#) published by New York State (NYS Interim Guidance).

The standards contained within the NYS Interim Guidance apply to all construction activities in operation during the COVID-19 public health emergency until rescinded or amended by the State. Employers are required to develop a plan for each construction site and submit an affirmation to the State as required in the NYS Interim Guidelines. The NYS Interim Guidelines are minimum requirements only; employers can require additional precautions.

In accordance with Section IV of the NYS Interim Guidance, completed safety plans must be conspicuously posted on the construction site. The State has made available a [business reopening safety plan template](#) to guide business owners and operators in developing plans to protect against the spread of COVID-19.

In accordance with the [Mayor's Emergency Executive Order No. 120](#) and Executive Order No. 123, the Department of Buildings will periodically be checking construction sites for compliance with employer safety plans required by the NYS Interim Guidance, including, but not limited to, the following requirements:

- Ensure 6 feet of distance between personnel, unless safety or core function of the work activity requires a shorter distance.
- All personnel and visitors to construction sites must wear face coverings appropriate for their task, unless medically unable to do so.
- Tightly confined spaces (e.g., elevators, hoists) occupied by 50% maximum allowed number of people.
 - 50% capacity must be posted within the cab AND at each landing
- A site safety monitor must be designated whose responsibilities include continuous compliance with all aspects of the site safety plan.
- Appropriate signage is posted throughout the site to remind personnel to adhere to proper hand hygiene, physical distancing rules, appropriate use of personal protective equipment, and cleaning and disinfecting protocols.
- Safety plan(s) are conspicuously posted on site and include a copy of the submitted State affirmation.
- A communication plan for employees, visitors, and clients is available at the site.
- A continuous log of every person who may have had close contact with other individuals at the work site or area is kept at the site.
- There are hand hygiene stations available on site and readily accessible to workers.
- A cleaning and disinfection log is present at the site with minimum daily entries.

For additional information we also recommend that Owners and Contractors review The NYC Health Department FAQ “Reopening New York City: Frequently Asked Questions What the Constructions Businesses Need to Know.” In addition to general business compliance it also provides information on best practices that can be implemented by employers at their construction sites.

During the first 30 days of construction resuming, the Department will focus on education to help the industry learn how to implement the new standards and procedures. Initial DOB violations issued during these first 30 days carry no financial penalty. Following this period, violations will result in financial penalties and further noncompliance may result in Stop Work Orders and summonses with accompanying civil penalties of up to \$5,000 for each offense.

Any violation of these requirements, or other New York State or New York City mandates, is subject to enforcement including issuance of violations and associated penalties.

References

- [NYS Governor’s Executive Order 202.34](#)
- [Mayor’s Emergency Executive Order No. 120](#)
- Mayor’s Emergency Executive Order No. 123
- [Interim Guidance for Construction Activities During The Covid-19 Public Health Emergency](#)
- NYC Health Department [“Reopening New York City: Frequently Asked Questions What the Constructions Businesses Need to Know.”](#) published by NYC DOH (UPDATED: June 4, 2020)

THE END