



---

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 New York State's work from home order of March 2020, subsequent newsletters will be abbreviated to include only the basic activities of the AIA Bronx Chapter until the health crisis is over.

	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Page</u>
I	Current Activities:	2
	Chapter Virtual Meeting April 15, 2021	
II	Related Articles and Education Opportunities	
	• APG University Online	
	May 13, 2021 - 1:00pm – PICP System Design and Construction (1CEU)	
	May 27, 2021 - 1:00pm – LEED V4.1 Changes (1CEU)	
	<a href="https://www.echelonmasonry.com/oldcastle-apg-university-online">https://www.echelonmasonry.com/oldcastle-apg-university-online</a>	
III		
	• The AIA '21 National Convention is now scheduled as an all-digital AIA Conference on Architecture due to the continuing COVID-19 health crisis.	
	June 2021 will be series of four unique online events.	
	<a href="https://conferenceonarchitecture.com">https://conferenceonarchitecture.com</a>	
	• AIA New York State	
	Safety Assessment Program - Event Summary   Online Registration by Cvent.	
	May 20, 2021 & May 21, 2021 – 9:00am to 12:30pm (7CEU)	
	May 27, 2021 & May 28, 2021 – 9:00am to 12:30pm (7CEU)	
	<a href="https://www.echelonmasonry.com/oldcastle-apg-university-online">https://www.echelonmasonry.com/oldcastle-apg-university-online</a>	
IV	Next Chapter Meeting is Virtual and on Thursday May 27, 2021 at 6:00pm.	6
	Appendix	7

---

I Current Activities



April 15, 2021  
AIA BRONX CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

Meeting began at 12:05pm

Attendees:

William Davis Jr.  
Ofe Clarke  
Sara Djazayeri  
Bob Esnard  
Antonio Freda  
Ken H. Koons, Sr.  
Ken A. Koons, Jr.  
Jerin Lisha  
Josette Matthew  
Julian Misiurski  
Martin Zelnik  
Anna Maldonado  
Seymour Weintraub

Guest

Mahawa Diakite  
Northeast A&D Representative  
Landmark Ceramics, USA, Inc.  
Tennessee

Agenda / Discussion:

1. Seminar:

The seminar on “Sustainability in using Ceramic Tiles” was presented by Mahawa Diakite, the Northeast Representative of Landmark Ceramics. She introduced Landmark Ceramics a domestic porcelain tile manufacturer to members, discussed healthy and sustainable green building, using porcelain tile and further discussed how porcelain contributes to a green environment, throughout its entire life cycle from cradle to tomb. She discussed the features and benefits of porcelain use as well as the range of applications for porcelain tile.

Sustainability is a basic consideration and a design goal of all modern construction and utilizing ceramic can be a good choice. When ceramics are used in construction it always contributes to energy efficiency ratings as well as assisting indoor air quality. The seminar reviewed these concepts and highlighted the relationship of ceramic tile to:

- Understanding the categories of LEED V4.
- Understanding why ceramic tiles can be beneficial to an occupant’s comfort and health.
- Understanding how ceramic tile can contribute to the energy efficiency of the building.

- Understanding how the porcelain tile production process contributes to a sustainable green environment.

Ceramic tile has one of the best sustainable materials used in construction, as most ceramic tile is manufactured in a “close loop” process. Tile utilizes recycling and the manufacturing process efficiently manages power resources. In addition, ceramic tile lasts longer than most floor finishes and needs minimum maintenance, both of which results over time in lower costs for an owner per square foot. Ceramic tiles are manufactured at a very high firing temperature over 2,000°f. It burns off all organic compounds so tiles after installation are immune to; bacteria, mold, and other irritants that contribute to allergies and asthma. In addition, it has very low gas emission and generally does not degrade air interior quality with zero VOCs. Finally, tile is one of the few construction materials that last as long as the building does and owners can salvage the material without using any harsh chemicals and reuse the material in construction again.

The result is that ceramic tile has one of the highest rated LEED ratings which allow builders and owners to satisfy requirements needed to obtain certifications in LEED credits as illustrated in the chart below.

PORCELAIN TILES FOR LEED			
OBJECTIVES	REQUISITES	PRODUCTS CREDITS	CREDITS
<b>SUSTAINABLE SITES (SS)</b>			
To reduce the influence of the heat island effect on the microclimate and natural habitats to the absolute minimum.	Heat island effect reduction	The light-colored tiles , used in outdoor areas, help reduce the heat island effect (the thermal gradient difference between urban and suburban areas) to minimize the impact on the microclimate. All thanks to the high values of solar reflectance coefficient of porcelain tile products.	1
<b>MATERIALS AND RESOURCES (MR)</b>			
Commit to using products and materials with low environmental, economic and social impact and for which information is available on the entire life cycle.	Certified EPD available.	EPD can be thought of as a virtual identity card for products and describes their impact on the environment during all stages of the life cycle: from extraction of raw materials to their disposal.	1
	Certified PEF available.	PEF (Product Environmental Footprint) is a declaration of environmental sustainability introduced and supported by the European Union.	1
	Raw materials.	Transparency throughout the extraction phase of raw materials.	1
	Content of recycled material.	Porcelain tile containing more than 10- 20% preconsumer recycled material content and has the goal of reducing its impact on the environment by minimizing the extraction and manufacturing of raw materials.	MAX 1 POINT
<b>INNOVATION IN DESIGN (ID)</b>			
Developing products with innovative features in complete respect of the environment.	Transparency and optimization.	HPD (Health Product Declaration). This is a complete report drafted in accordance to the HPD Standard.	2
<b>INDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY (IEQ)</b>			
Reduce the concentration of chemical contaminants that might affect air quality and the environment.	Use of materials with low emissions.	Porcelain tiles do not release any volatile organic substances (VOC) into the environment.	1

The seminar was concluded with a review of the various products that Landmark Ceramics produces. Mahawa described the range of the porcelain Landmark Ceramics available for interior, exterior wall to floor applications, with a range of trims and accessories to complete any space. Lastly, she touched on glazed porcelain tile options for people looking for a smarter alternate to Luxury Vinyl Tile (LVT). Such as; Porcelain Pavers, Veneers, Bricks, Tiles and Porcelain Mosaics and how they can be economically and efficiently installed.

Mahawa's presentation was professional, informative and well received by Chapter members. If members are interested in learning more about Landmark Ceramics or are interested in samples she can be reached at:

Mahawa Diakite  
Landmark Ceramics USA, Inc.  
Cell: 615-305-7530  
Email: [m.diakite@lcusa.com](mailto:m.diakite@lcusa.com)

2. Adoption of March minutes:

The Minutes of March 18, 2021 were attached to the March meeting notice for members to review. A correction was made to the minutes concerning: Item 4 – The Chapter Committee report on Education was revised. It included all the members of the Education Committee who participated in “The Committee’s Original Outreach Program” on March 10, 2021 indicated in bold type.

The attendees were; **Sara Djazayeri, Ofe Clarke, Janelle Velez, Afnan Al-Rashid, Bryan Ortega, Carlos Matute, and Jonathan Medina**, who had a very successful Virtual Program. The video was created by **Bryan Ortega**.

The corrected Minutes were attached to the last two Meeting Notices sent to members. Marty Zelnik made a motion to include the corrections for approval of the minutes, which was seconded by Julian Misiurski, and the March minutes were then unanimously approved.

3. Next Meeting Dates:

Since the March meeting, several of the newer members of the Chapter informally requested, if possible, that all future virtual Chapter meetings take place in the evenings as they could not attend day meetings, due to work commitments. After a short discussion, it was agreed that the idea of having 6:00pm evening meetings exclusively during the Covid crises, should be reviewed at the next meeting. However, as it stands, the future dates as scheduled are:

May 27, 2021	6:00pm
June 17, 2021	12:00pm
September 23, 2021	6:00pm
October 21, 2021	12:00pm

4. New York City – DOB:

Several members of the Chapter indicated that since the DOB has been operating virtually, and the DOB borough offices are closed, both combined with the exclusive use of the “DOB NOW” digital system, making communicating with DOB is problematic for applicants. There has been a continuation of problems processing approvals and interactions with DOB. Tony Freda indicated that the DOB process is frustrating. However, he thought there was one interesting benefit, that at least professionals do not waste time waiting on lines in the borough offices. He encouraged people to take the DOB seminars and instruction videos that are offered online to help navigate the system. The other advantage he pointed out was that if you navigate and answer the computer questions correctly, it is possible to have “paper” move expeditiously through DOB. Unfortunately, the inability to directly communicate for emergencies or clarifications remains an issue. It requires several days to weeks, for DOB to respond by email to specific questions. A question was raised about the “opening up” of City offices that the Mayor publically announced to start on May 3, 2021. It is hoped that some of the DOB borough offices functions could be part of the Mayor’s

program to open city offices and allow staff to be physically available for some resuming of in-person contact with DOB staff.

5. Chapter Committee:

- Bronx Blueprint:

Bill Davis reviewed the Bronx Blueprint Committee's efforts where several new Chapter members have actively participated in the discussions. The thoughts included possible new directions the Chapter may want to explore; to interface with the Bronx Community as well as, to possibly impact public perception about Bronx issues and Architecture. He pointed out that some of the issues that the committee discussed, touched on and aligned with ideas the Chapter has been also reviewing. One was the concept to implement a mentoring program by establishing a Chapter, "mentor/mentee" pairing program. Bill indicated that he hopes to schedule a committee meeting or two, to work on how; to implement a mentorship program, to support the Education Committee's efforts, as well as, in what form architects can/should involve themselves in selected Bronx and community issues. He hopes the committee can evolve an implementation strategy for one or more of these ideas for the Chapter's consideration.

- Emerging Professionals: (EP)

Ofe Clark a Director of AIA New York State with Janelle Velez-Casey and Josette Matthew of Emerging Professional represented the Bronx Chapter in Albany. She and Josette attended the Emerging Professional Forum last Friday, April 9th and Ofe submitted this summary; There were about 8 chapters represented and all voiced what our local needs and wants were. While the state component will think on how to address some of these issues, they want to know from the local chapter, what specific help we are seeking. The Bronx EP Co-chairs has a meeting next week that they will try to narrow down our wants into something more tangible and report back to the larger group here for suggestions on how we think the state can help us. We discussed the 3 main topics of the state for 2021 which is mentorship, education, and leadership. These all align with the topics and strategies the Bronx Blueprint Committee of the Bronx Chapter identified, we just need to select one to start and execute.

6. New Business:

There was no new business or issues to discuss. However, there was a general feeling that we should make every effort as a Chapter to include as many Chapter members as possible and to encourage potential new graduates and other members of the architectural profession to join our efforts.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:34pm.

Note: A few days after the meeting Tony Freda received from the Architects Council of New York City the attached **Appendix** to the minutes, "New Safety Legislation" concerning construction in New York City. Tony requested it be included in the Newsletter for Bronx Chapter member's information and possible discussion at the May meeting.

IV. Next Meeting:

As the health crisis continues and the meeting venue at Artie's Restaurant is only open for outdoor dining, the next meeting will again be a Virtual meeting on:

**Thursday May 27, 2021**

**at 6:00PM**

**Appendix**

**New Safety Legislation**

# Appendix I

## New Safety Legislation

### Appendix

NEW YORK—Today, the New York City Department of Buildings (DOB) announced five new construction safety bills and comprehensive updates to NYC’s construction codes introduced by the New York City Council. The newly introduced code revisions and safety requirements work in tandem to better protect the public and construction workers on the job.

“TKTKTK,” said **Buildings Commissioner Melanie E. La Rocca**. “TKTKTK.”

#### Construction Safety Legislation

Over the last two years, construction safety efforts spearheaded by the Department, including the implementation of a first-of-its-kind construction safety training requirement, have led to a 34% decrease in injuries on building construction sites in New York City. These new bills would help further reduce injuries and fatalities on construction sites by licensing general contractors who perform construction work, requiring more site safety supervision at larger work sites that present the greatest safety risk, strengthening requirements for cold-formed steel construction, and permanently banning the dangerous use of stand-off brackets for suspended scaffold work.

The five proposed construction safety bills include:

#### 1) **Intro. XXXX: Licensing General Contractors**

- Requires all general contractors to be licensed by DOB and to demonstrate their experience, including practical experience working in the construction industry, receive site safety training, and be responsible for the work they perform under their permits.
- Allows DOB to take disciplinary action against general contractors, including, if necessary, suspending or revoking a general contractor’s license.

#### 2) **Intro. XXXX: Requiring DOB-Licensed Safety Professionals on Major Construction Work Sites Between 7 – 9 Stories**

- Drops the threshold to require full-time DOB-Licensed Site Safety Coordinators (SSCs) or Site Safety Managers (SSMs) to seven stories and above.
- Requires contractors to submit Site Safety Plans to DOB for review and approval before work on major projects in the seven to nine story range can commence.

### **3) Intro. XXXX: Requiring DOB-Licensed Construction Superintendents on Major Construction Work Sites Seven Stories and Above**

- DOB-Licensed Construction Superintendents would be required to serve full-time alongside SSCs or SSMs at major construction projects starting at seven stories and above and assume responsibility for site safety and overall management of the construction project.
- Limits the number of non-major construction projects for which a Construction Superintendent may be designated, with the goal of having a dedicated Construction Superintendent at non-major construction projects for which they are required by 2026.

### **4) Intro. XXXX: Strengthening Requirements For Cold-Formed Steel Construction**

- Builds upon a [2019 Buildings Bulletin](#) issued by DOB creating new safety requirements for special inspectors, construction superintendents, design professionals, and permit holders who are performing cold-formed steel light-frame construction work in New York City.
- Aimed at preventing the overloading and improper installation of cold-formed steel, which have previously resulted in injuries, fatalities, and property damage at construction sites in New York City.

### **5) Intro. XXXX: Banning Stand-Off Brackets**

- Builds upon a [2019 Buildings Bulletin](#) issued by DOB, which prohibited the use of stand-off brackets for C-hook suspended scaffold installations, by making that prohibition permanent.

## **Construction Code Revisions**

The proposed construction code revisions would be the first comprehensive updates to the current Administrative, Plumbing, Building, Mechanical and Fuel Gas Codes since 2014. The revisions were drafted by technical committees comprised of engineers, architects, attorneys, planners, and tradespeople, along with representatives of the construction, labor, real estate industries, and utility companies as well as DOB and interagency stakeholders.

A total of 627 new or expanded changes to the existing codes are proposed, along with thousands of minor changes. The committee updates were guided by aligning with improved national safety standards and technical advancements since the last revision cycle. When enacted, they would go into effect the following year.

Revision highlights include:

- **Emergency Response Enhancements**
  - Increases the minimum required dimensions of the elevator emergency hatch.
  - Permits the use of batteries as the required secondary power source for the FDNY endorsed Auxiliary Radio Communication System (ARCS).
  - Expands number of high-rise residential buildings that require emergency voice communication systems.
  
- **Fire Protection Enhancements**
  - Mandates use of more stringent fire blocking, thermal barriers and testing when combustible exterior wall systems are used.
  - Mandates that whenever exits discharge directly outside and not through a protected area or vestibule, that FDNY access be provided to the exit stairway either from the protected area or within a minimum distance of it.
  
- **Vertical Transportation and Accessibility Enhancements**
  - Establishes clear compliance criteria for elevator systems to ensure greater accessibility and usability for building occupants with physical and cognitive abilities.
  - Requires door locking monitoring in all Limited Use/Limited Application lifts (LULA) in order to minimize the risk of people and objects becoming caught.
  
- **Elevator Safety Enhancements**
  - Requires the same elevator-in-readiness to serve all floors to reduce building evacuation times in the event of an emergency.
  - Amends inspection timeframes for elevators and boilers to bring them back into service faster.
  
- **Protecting Tenants, Streamlining Building Occupancy and Promoting Increased Affordable Housing**
  - Requires new special inspection of buildings undergoing construction to ensure the protection of tenants.
  - Clarifies what construction documentation is required to receive a new Certificate of Occupancy (CO).
  - Reduces the required 8ft basement clearance height for two-family homes to 7ft to increase affordable housing opportunities.
  
- **Construction Safety Enhancements**
  - Permits the use of netting, low barriers, and chain link fencing in lieu of requiring only solid fencing that creates blind tunnels for pedestrians.
  - Creates a new license type for advanced crane technology, such as articulating boom cranes and roto-telehandlers, to ensure these cranes are operated in a safe manner.
  - Improves the safety and consistency of the underpinning of existing buildings.

- **Building System Construction and Inspection Enhancements**
  - Require smoke tests for special gas vents to ensure the safety of building occupants.
  - Require all pipes, tubings, and fittings in the mechanical system to comply with the applicable reference safety standard.
  - Codifies maintenance, condition assessment, and reporting requirements for parking structures.
  
- **Sustainability and Resiliency Enhancements**
  - Expands the applicability of flood zone requirements of the 100-year flood hazard area to all critical facilities (including fire, rescue, ambulance, police stations, and designated emergency shelters) located in the 500-year flood zone.
  - Mandates annual visual inspections of dry floodproofing systems and triennial full-scale deployment of dry floodproofing in the presence of a special inspection agency.
  - Permits and supports the use of alternative energy production processes, including hydrogen fuel cells.
  - Increases the material choices available to builders by expanding the use of sustainable building materials such as cross-laminated timber and structural composite lumber.

To support the implementation of the code updates, DOB will conduct training and outreach regarding the new requirements, and adjust our internal operations as needed.

**THE END**