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

## **NEWSLETTER**

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• AIA Conference on Architecture 2023 San Francisco, CA June 7-10, 2023 <a href="https://lconferenceonarchitecture.com">https://lconferenceonarchitecture.com</a>	
• Women's Leadership Summit Boston, Massachusetts September 14-16 <sup>th</sup> , 2023 Save the Date	
• Bronx Chapter Awards Manhattan Showroom May 25, 2023, at 6:00-8:30pm <a href="mailto:Sara@studio360s.com">Sara@studio360s.com</a>	
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## I Current Activities



April 20, 2023

### AIA BRONX CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

The meeting began at 6:04pm.

#### Attendees:

Faysal Banate  
Boris Baranovich  
Ofe Clarke  
William E. Davis Jr.  
Robert Esnard  
Antonio Freda  
Michael Goldblum  
Steven Gullon  
Nicholas Friedman  
Alvi Rahman Khan  
Linda P. Infante  
Alyssa Manfredonia  
Ken A. Koons, Jr.  
Ken H. Koons, Sr.  
Alyssa Manfredonia  
Robert Markisz  
Julian Misiurski  
Matthew Rezkallo  
Bryan Zelnik

#### Guest

Thomas A. Lull  
Architectural & Contract Sales Manager  
NYC Metro  
Armstrong World Industries

#### Agenda / Discussion

##### 1. Seminar:

Thomas A. Lull, of Armstrong World Industries presented a seminar titled "Bronx Acoustical Design for Today's Buildings." Armstrong ceilings and walls systems are a division of Armstrong World Industries. The Armstrong Company started during the civil war, in the mid 1800's as a cork company. Their original manufacturing product was using cork to insulate packages and making stoppers for glass bottles to preserve chemicals, foods, and liquids to ship without damaging. Saving and reusing wasted cork evolved into a worldwide manufacturing company. Flooring production expanded their business by producing wall coverings and ceilings. Approximately, ten years ago, Armstrong Industries split up into two independent companies: "Armstrong Flooring" and "Armstrong Wall & Ceiling Products."

The seminar and the meeting was sponsored by the Armstrong Wall and Ceiling company, now called Armstrong World Industries.

Tom Lull presented a seminar that covered the analysis and the various principals behind the:

- Interior Acoustical Design process and It is relationships to green buildings and sustainable designs.
- Options available to provide Interior Acoustical treatments which are appropriate for various space uses that are also visually appealing.
- Revealing the characteristics of acoustical ceilings and how they are integrated in green and sustainable building designs.
- Identification of the acoustic needs of different designs applications and the individual visual attributes including assisting to improve the ratings and LEED green buildings certifications.

Tom used charts and photos of buildings to illustrate and review the basic terminology of the three most important ways to measure and describe sound, as well as the characteristics of sound transportation. Sound absorption is characterized by the "Noise Reduction Co-efficient," (NRC). Which is the measurement of the sound dampening as a rate or the ability of surfaces to absorb sound. The higher rating the number is, means better absorption. The second most important measurement is the "Ceiling Attenuation Class," (CAC). This measures the ability of blocking sound, going from one space to another. Again, the higher the number the better. The third important measurement is the "Articulation Class," (AC) which measures the reflected speech sound, that passes over or through top of wall systems or furniture that divides joining spaces/workstations. The higher the number the better.

Tom described through diagram and building photos, the various ways acoustics ceilings can be designed. He demonstrated how color, shape, and size can make a difference in controlling and directing sound. One of the key ceiling techniques is to utilize acoustical; vertical or baffle ceiling treatments. Sound attenuation, using vertical baffles is unique, as the spacing of the baffle must be a slightly larger dimension than the vertical size of the baffle. The arrangement of baffles and ceiling tiles allow large spaces to function differently, in separate portions of the space. For example; in a large room where three or four people are working independently in one area, the sound needs to be limited only to their space. Then with a large group in another portion of the space, the surfaces should be reflective of the sound to allow the sound to carry and be focused on a speaker at the center of an area to be heard by a large group of people. Workplace environment can have specific acoustic designs to allow both quiet concentration and energetic collaboration. Health care and education spaces require a different strategy, as speech privacy is important and clarity of communication and controlling outside sounds is important for patients and for students.

Tom Lull concluded his presentation with a description of his company and its' available products. He showed many physical examples of how sound treatments can be assets and are integrated into the design of walls, as well as ceilings. He illustrated various building materials, tile shapes, and forms available from the Armstrong Industries Companies. Finally,

Tom urged the architects to feel free to contact him. He will assist their designs by analyzing sound issues, help specify wall and room assemblies, as well as, demonstrating the advantages of sound performance and the budget implications of specific projects. He recommends they contact him directly; he can be reached at:

Thomas A. Lull  
NYC Metro  
Architect & Contract Sales Manager  
Armstrong World Industries  
2500 Columbia Avenue  
Lancaster, PA 17603  
[Talull@armstrongceilings.com](mailto:Talull@armstrongceilings.com)  
Tel:201-407-5237

2. Adoption of April minutes:

The April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, minutes were reviewed by the members. Bryan Zelnik made a motion to approve the minutes and Julian Misiurski seconded the motion. The chapter then unanimously approved the minutes as proposed.

3. Next minutes dates:

The chapter welcomed new member Faysal Banate, Associate AIA to the meeting. In addition, this month, Nanette Gran AIA, although she could not attend, was also welcomed to the chapter.

The next meeting will be an in-person event, not on our normal monthly third Thursday meeting day, as it will be at Bendheim's Design Lab, at 200 Lexington Avenue suite 1601, New York, NY 10016. This will be the second of the chapters now, Annual Empowerment Scholarship Award Ceremony and members are invited to attend. However, after May the meetings will return to the normal Thursday virtual meeting structure, with a CEU seminar to start and the chapter business discussion to follow.

Therefore, the next scheduled meetings are:

May 25, 2023,	at 6:00pm	(In- person Award meeting)
June 15, 2023,	at 6:00pm	Virtual
September 21, 2023,	at 6pm	Virtual
October 19, 2023,	at 6pm	Virtual

4. Chapter Committees:

Bronx Public Project/ Student studio

Sarah Djazayeri and Michael Goldblum have implemented a AIA Bronx Chapter supported student competition of a Bronx Public Project, to re-purpose the unused Kingsbridge Armory in the Bronx. This effort was developed as part of a student CCNY senior class studio design student project. As Sarah was on a business trip to Italy, Michael reported on the status of the project. He indicated that the student studio class was divided into four design teams, with the goal of developing the vacant Armory into a vertical farm and community facility. The Bronx chapter joined with the Borough Presidents office, CCNY's school of architecture together with local people on a jury to evaluate the proposals and select two best designs. The program is to explore the re-development of the Armory into a major public community building, allow it to become a major asset for the community by

empowering the neighborhood and Bronx residents, to provide local jobs, produce food, as well as build knowledge and skills that can service the community at large. Michael reported the project is proceeding well and in the next few weeks, the schedule as planned is very tight in May with the;

Students finishing their design proposals	May 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2023.
Submitting to the jury	May 11 <sup>th</sup> , 2023
The jury review	May 16 <sup>th</sup> , 2023
Announcement of competition winner	May 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2023
Bronx AIA Awarding of prizes	May 25 <sup>th</sup> , 2023

Michael invited chapter members who would like to participate to contact Sara at [info@studio360s.com](mailto:info@studio360s.com) or him at Email: [mgoldblum@buildingstudio.com](mailto:mgoldblum@buildingstudio.com)

As noted above, the conclusion of the competition will be a presentation of the First and Second prize winners at the Bronx Chapter May event, on Thursday May 25, 2023, **Appendix I.**

#### Student Awards

As Sarah Djazayeri was out of the country and could not attend the meeting, Bob Esnard summarized the development of the Bronx Chapter empowerment awards program. The chapter started in 2022, which awarded to two CCNY architectural Bronx students. This year awards were extended to include two architectural schools: CCNY in Manhattan, Pratt Institute in Brooklyn both selecting two Bronx students each.

In the last few weeks, the awardees were chosen by their respective schools to receive the chapter Empowerment grant of one thousand dollars each. The presentation of the grants will be at the Bronx Chapter May 25, 2023, in-person event, that will also be celebrating the awarding of the CCNY studio competition First Prize of one thousand dollars and a Second Prize of five hundred dollars, to the two finalists of the Kingsbridge Armory Vertical Farm Facility project.

All chapter members will be receiving invitations to the Award Event from our Chapter President, Sara Djazayeri. All are urged to attend if they can, to not only help congratulate the awardees and their families but to have the chance to physically interact with each other. The event will be at Bendheim's Design Lab, 200 Lexington Avenue, suite 1601 New York, NY 10016 which is located between 32<sup>nd</sup> and 33<sup>rd</sup> street, **Appendix II.**

#### Associated Licensed Exams

Linda Infante has been coordinating the efforts to assist associates in their preparation to take the Architectural Record Exam (ARE). The associate's committee is still looking for members and extended an invitation to Faysal Banate, a chapter new associate member, to join them in their efforts to develop a (ARE) work study group. Linda indicated that she had discussion, with the AIA Queens chapter associate's coordinator Chris Fagan, who will schedule a joint study session between the Queens and Bronx chapter Associates. The goal is to have our members observe and participate with the Queens AIA Chapter study group and learn how they organize study sessions. Linda also urges other associate members who are interested to participate, to contact her directly via email: [linda@build-tech.org](mailto:linda@build-tech.org) .

5. Preservation of a Scarsdale modern residence.

As reported previously, in 1949 Simon Zelnick, FAIA was a charter member of the Bronx Chapter and designed a “modern” residential building at 78 Berkshire Drive, Scarsdale NY. Approximately a year ago, the residents of the surrounding community of the building contacted Bryan Zelnick of our chapter and the grandson of the architect to save the building from demolition. Bryan mobilized the surrounding community in Scarsdale and proceeded to logically and professionally lobby and pressure, first the “Committee for Historic Preservation” and ultimately Scarsdale’s “Board of Trustees”, to defeat the application to tear down the iconic mid-century modern home at 78 Berkshire Drive. The current building owners were looking to sell the house, demolish it, sub-divide the property and to build two new homes. Bryan did a wonderful job with the property neighbors and presenting evidence to show that the building met the criteria for preservation and that his grandfather was acknowledged as a “Master Architect”. The Bronx Chapter was delighted with the outcome and congratulated Bryan Zelnick who single handedly pulled together the effort to preserve this wonderfully designed residential structure by his grandfather, Simon Zelnick, FAIA.

6. New Business

The Bronx Chapter annually develops and offers four CEU credits by organizing every year, two tours worth 2 CEU each credits. The chapter partners with the Bronx County Historical Society to prepare and host the tours. This year the first tour had been scheduled for June and is planned as a south Bronx tour, highlighting the newly designated Landmark “Art Deco District”, and the residential construction on the Lower Grand Concourse. Due to scheduling conflicts, the tour has been rescheduled to take place a month later, on July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, Saturday at 10:00am to 12:00pm. It will be led by Roger McCormach, the Director of Education at the Historical Society and Julian Misiurski of the Bronx Chapter. The scope of the tour is to illustrate how successful public and private efforts develop and the major boulevard of the Bronx, the Grand Concourse. This area was one of the most successful middle income private sector financed residential Landmark neighborhoods of the city. It features the development of typical bearing wall, brick faced, wood structure residential buildings, in a unique architectural style. The area is a vibrant mixed used area, with parks, excellent mass transit access, schools, and government buildings.

As there were no additional new business items to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 7:35pm.

III. Next Meeting.

The next meeting will be an in-person event on Thursday May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at  
Bendheim’s Design Lab  
200 Lexington Avenue suite 1601, New York, NY 10016  
(Between East 32<sup>nd</sup> & 33<sup>rd</sup> street).

**Appendix I**

**The Kingsbridge Armory as a Vertical Farm Facility  
An Architectural Competition**

**Appendix II**

**AIA BRONX CHAPTER  
Annual Empowerment Scholarship and Competition  
Award Ceremony  
May 25, 2023**

# Appendix I

## The Kingsbridge Armory as a Vertical Farming Facility

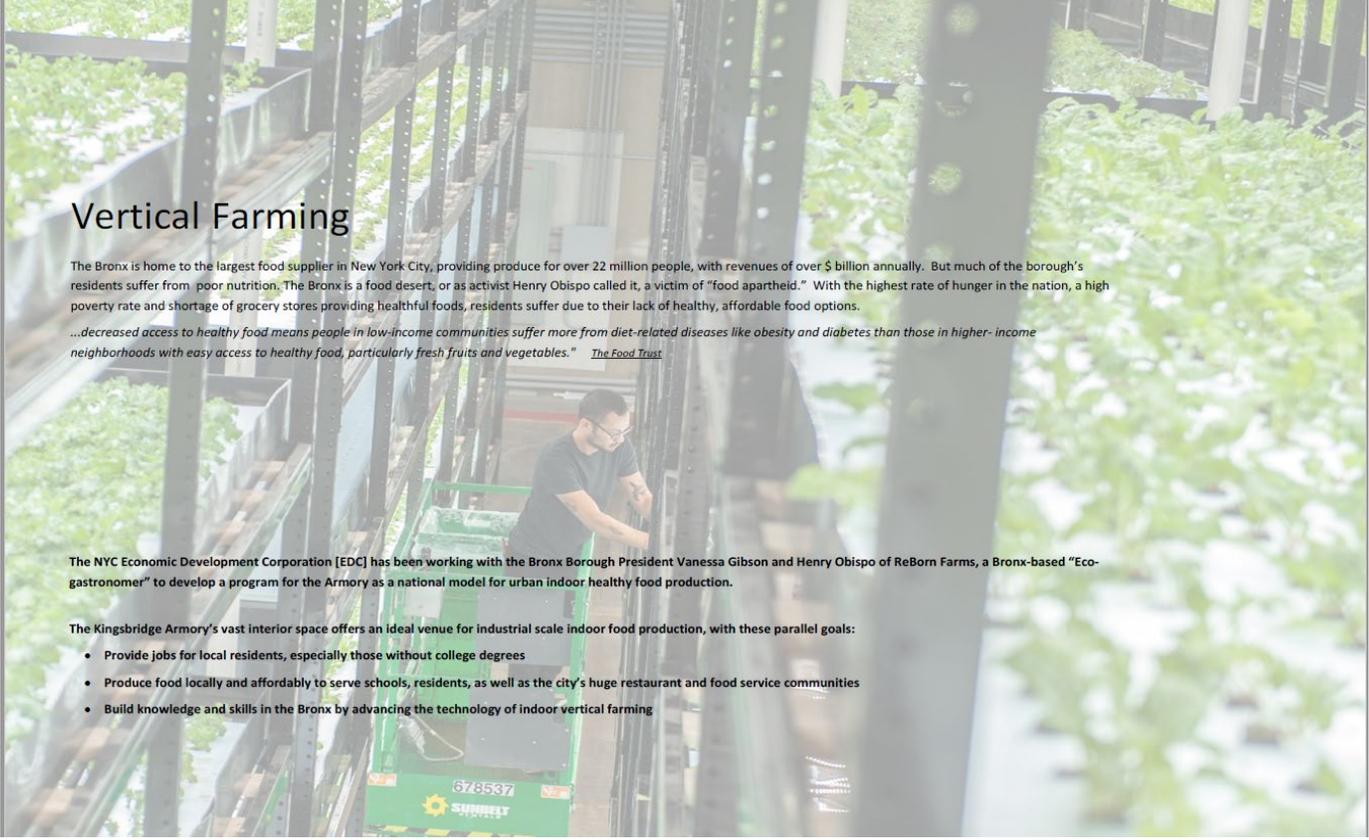
An Architectural Competition

Sponsored by:  
CCNY Spitzer School of Architecture  
American Institute of Architects Bronx Chapter  
Bronx Borough President Hon. Vanessa Gibson

# Introduction

The Kingsbridge Armory, a designated New York City and national landmark, one of the largest armories in the country, has sat empty and unused since 1996. This competition brings students at CUNY's Spitzer School of Architecture together with local groups, advocates and representatives of the Bronx Borough President's office to explore the possible use of the building as a center for urban vertical farming.





## Vertical Farming

The Bronx is home to the largest food supplier in New York City, providing produce for over 22 million people, with revenues of over \$ billion annually. But much of the borough's residents suffer from poor nutrition. The Bronx is a food desert, or as activist Henry Obispo called it, a victim of "food apartheid." With the highest rate of hunger in the nation, a high poverty rate and shortage of grocery stores providing healthful foods, residents suffer due to their lack of healthy, affordable food options.

*...decreased access to healthy food means people in low-income communities suffer more from diet-related diseases like obesity and diabetes than those in higher-income neighborhoods with easy access to healthy food, particularly fresh fruits and vegetables." [The Food Trust](#)*

The NYC Economic Development Corporation [EDC] has been working with the Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson and Henry Obispo of ReBorn Farms, a Bronx-based "Eco-gastronomer" to develop a program for the Armory as a national model for urban indoor healthy food production.

The Kingsbridge Armory's vast interior space offers an ideal venue for industrial scale indoor food production, with these parallel goals:

- Provide jobs for local residents, especially those without college degrees
- Produce food locally and affordably to serve schools, residents, as well as the city's huge restaurant and food service communities
- Build knowledge and skills in the Bronx by advancing the technology of indoor vertical farming

# From Professor Fabian Llonch's syllabus:

**SITE:** The Kingsbridge Armory, also known as the Eighth Regiment Armory, is a decommissioned armory at Jerome Avenue and West Kingsbridge Road in the Kingsbridge Heights neighborhood of the Bronx in New York City. It was built in the 1910s, from a design by the firm of architect Lewis Pilcher to house the New York National Guard's Eighth Coast Defense Command (258th Field Artillery Regiment) after November 1921. It is possibly the largest armory in the world. In 1974 it was designated a city landmark, and eight years later, it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Its military use ended, and it was turned over to city management in 1996. Since then, it has remained vacant as various proposals to redevelop it have failed.

The armory complex occupies almost the entire 5-acre block between West Kingsbridge Road on the south, Jerome Avenue on the east, West 195th Street on the north, and Reservoir Avenue on the west. Above Jerome Avenue is the Kingsbridge Road station on the New York City Subway's 4 train, from which the armory is visible. An empty moat runs across the front entrance of the building. At the center of the northern side are two smaller buildings: a garage, as well as a locker room and classrooms. On the north are public schools 86 and 340, with Jerome Park Reservoir to the northwest and Lehman College of the City University of New York about a block north. On the other three sides is a dense urban mixed-use development. St. James Park is a few blocks to the southeast, and the James J. Peters VA Medical Center, overlooking the Harlem River and Major Deegan Expressway two blocks to the east. The terrain slopes slightly toward the river.

**PROGRAM:** Vertical Farming is the practice of growing crops in vertically stacked layers. It often incorporates controlled-environment agriculture, which aims to optimize plant growth, and soilless farming techniques such as hydroponics, aquaponics, and aeroponics. The modern concept of vertical farming was proposed in 1999 by Dickson Despommier, professor of Public and Environmental Health at Columbia University. Despommier and his students came up with a design of a skyscraper farm that could feed 50,000 people. Although the design has not yet been built, it successfully popularized the idea of vertical farming.

The main advantage of utilizing vertical farming technologies is the increased crop yield that comes with a smaller unit area of land requirement. Another sought-after advantage is the increased ability to cultivate a larger variety of crops at once because crops do not share the same plots of land while growing. Additionally, crops are resistant to weather disruptions because of their placement indoors, meaning fewer crops are lost to extreme or unexpected weather occurrences. Because of its limited land usage, vertical farming is less disruptive to the native plants and animals, leading to further conservation of the local flora and fauna.

These advances have led vertical farming companies to raise unprecedented amounts of funding in North America as well as in other parts of the world such as the Middle East. Today, venture capitalists, governments, financial institutions, and private investors are among the principal investors in the sector. Vertical farming technologies face economic challenges with large start-up costs compared to traditional farms. In Victoria, Australia, a "hypothetical 10-level vertical farm" would cost over 850 times more per square meter of arable land than a traditional farm in rural Victoria. Vertical farms also face large energy demands due to the use of supplementary light like LEDs. Moreover, if non-renewable energy is used to meet these energy demands, vertical farms could produce more pollution than traditional farms or greenhouses.



## The competition

The entrants will produce an architectural design for the adaptive reuse of the Kingsbridge Armory as a vertical farming center. Entrants must incorporate this information in their design:

- Uses of all spaces
- Modifications to the exterior of the building, if any
- Drawings demonstrating the scale of the farming, the type[s] of farming to be employed, and the proposed types of produce

Entrants may consider proposing additional parallel uses that can take place within the 180,000-square-foot footprint of the building, including its gigantic main hall, its head house, and its cellars. Though none of these uses need be integrated into the design, the entrants should use their research into the needs of both the facility and the neighborhood to supplement the program as they see fit. Examples of these additional uses include the following:

- Academic facility for studying controlled-environment agriculture
- Training, changing, bathroom, break room and other support spaces for farm workers and staff
- Community meeting rooms and classrooms
- Offices for administration

Special consideration must be made of the landmark status of the building's exterior. Proposals should demonstrate how new technologies or other exterior modifications protect and enhance the historic value of the building. The design must also meet all New York City requirements for handicapped accessibility.

## Jury

- ☒ The jury panel is a diverse group of
- ☒ design professionals and community
- ☒ members who are uniquely qualified to
- ☒ evaluate the competition entries:

- Claire Weisz AIA, Principal: WXY Architecture and Planning
- Juton Horstman, Director of Planning and Development, Office of the Bronx Borough President
- Sara Jazayeri AIA: President, AIA Bronx Chapter
- Dean Marta Gutman, CCNY Spitzer School of Architecture
- Cory Herrala, Director of Preservation, NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission

## Eligibility

The competition is open to all students in the Spring 2023 studio section run by Professor Fabian Lionch. No professional qualifications are required. Design proposals can be developed individually or by teams (2 team members maximum).

## Competition schedule

Submissions must be received by	MAY 11 2023, 12 PM
Jury Review	MAY 16 2023
Announcement of Awards	MAY 19 2023

## Presentation deliverables:

- Site Plan
- Elevations (min.  $1/32'' = 1'-0''$ )
- Primary sections (min.  $1/32'' = 1'-0''$ )
- Floor plans (suggested scale  $1/16'' = 1'-0''$ )
- Enlarged sections and elevations highlighting key spaces or relationships (suggested scale  $3/8'' = 1'-0''$ )
- Details:
  - Envelope
  - Key materials
  - Site or landscape
  - 3D wall section
- Axonometrics/3D images providing information on systems or illustrating key architectural concepts
- Perspectives of principal elements
- Diagrams/Text for:
  - Energy usage and supply sources
  - Uses/Areas

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Please note the PRESENTATION DELIVERABLES listed above is a suggestion only. Participants can choose to use the entire list, a selection from it, or propose a completely different set that would explain their design in the most efficient manner.

## Recommended submission content

- Proposed plans and sections, multiple perspectives demonstrating the spatial quality of the structure/s, as well as operational needs and accessibility requirements.
- Demonstration of project construction, materiality, functions, management and maintenance; approach to environment, energy and sustainability and logistics.
- Visualizations, artist's impressions to illustrate how their proposal fits in with the quality, value, and significance of the Kingsbridge Armory.

# Appendix II

You're invited to the

# 2023

**ARCHITECTURE X GLASS**

**Annual Empowerment Scholarship  
and Competition Award Ceremony**

Thursday, May 25th, 2023  
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm  
at  
**Bendheim's DesignLab**  
200 Lexington Avenue Suite #1602  
New York, NY

Hors d'oeuvres and  
drinks will be served.

**HONORING STUDENTS FROM**

**Spitzer** The Bernard & Anne Spitzer  
Division of Architecture  
Pratt Institute  
New York

**Pratt**  
SoA

Please RSVP by  
**April 25th**  
at  
[info@studio360s.com](mailto:info@studio360s.com)

**HOSTED BY**



**Sara Jazayeri**  
President  
AIA Bronx Chapter  
and

**BENDEHEIM**  
ARCHITECTURAL GLASS

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**AIA Bronx**

The End