AIA BRONX CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

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

Events and Education Opportunities

- **AIA Conference on Architecture & Design**
  June 4-7, Boston
  Boston Convention & Exhibition Center, Exhibit Hall A-B
  AIA Conference on Architecture & Design 2025

- **2024 AIA- Bronx Scholarship Awards Event**
  May 1, 2025, 6:00PM-8:00PM
  Carlisle Floors Showroom, 5th Floor
  150 East 58th Street,
  New York, N.Y.

- **AIA Bronx 2025 Spring Tour - Norwood/Urban Planning (2 CEU)**
  June 28, 2025, 10:00AM-12:00PM
  Valentine-Varian House
  3266 Bainbridge Avenue,
  The Bronx, NY 1067
  besnard@dzco.com

Table of Contents

I Current Activities:
- Chapter Virtual Meeting Minutes of April 17, 2025 Page 2
- The Bronx Chapter AIA welcomes new Members
  Henry Arias, Assoc. AIA
  Edaet Mamudoska, Assoc. AIA
  Florim Zharku, Assoc. AIA

II Next Chapter meeting June 26, 2025, Page 6
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9948476766

III Appendix Page 7

I Current Activites

April 17, 2025

AIA BRONX CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

The virtual meeting started at 6:04PM.

Attendees:	Guest:
Antonio A. Perez	**Christina Keegan**
Antonio Freda	**Architectural Marketing**
Bryan Zelnik	**McKEON Door East**
Hirinha Pena	44 Sawgrass Drive, Bellport, New York 11713 USA
Jerin Lisha	D. 631-466-5597
Julian Misiurski	O. 631-803- 3513
Ken A. Koons, Jr.	www.McKeonDoor.com
Ken H. Koons, Sr.	
Matthew Rezkallo	
Ofe Peterson	
Robert Esnard	
Sara Djazayeri	

Agenda

1. Seminar Presentation

Christina Keegan, Architectural Marketing, for McKeon Door East Company utilizing slides and illustrations of examples of their door systems and how fire doors can be used safely and economically. McKeon is a fire door manufacturer that offers solutions for large openings in firewalls and fire barriers. Christina explained the different types of fire-rated separations, and outlined six essential requirements for opening protections, including proper labeling, smoke activation, and egress compliance. She also introduced a new hybrid fire shutter curtain product that has a 90-minute UL 10B label, allowing it to be used in 2-hour fire-rated separations.

Fire Shutter Systems Applications

Her discussion focuseds on various fire shutter systems and their applications in different projects. Christina explained the advantages of a vertically coiling fire shutter system that can be assembled on-site, which is useful for projects with limited headroom and side room. She then described a vertically coiling fire shutter with deployable egress, which allows for dual egress directions and is used in Penn Central's Moynihan Railroad Station. Christina also discussed a side coiling fire shutter system that requires minimal overhead space that can turn corners, making it suitable for large openings with limited headroom. She provided examples of these systems in use at various locations, including Hudson Yards and 665 5th Avenue, and explained their closing mechanisms and egress options.

Door Systems and Egress Stores

In the meeting, Christina discussed various door systems, including those with floor tracks, head tracks, in egress doors. She outlined the benefits and limitations of each system, such as the size of the pocket required and their aesthetic impact. Also mentioned was the use of cable and weights for counterbalance and the potential for side sliding doors. She illustrated examples of projects where these systems were used, including a project with challenging conditions where the egress doors were placed behind a side sliding shutter. Christina also mentioned the availability of systems with 3-hour ratings and the use of accordion door fire shutters.

Paddle Egress System Drawbacks and Alternatives

Christina discussed the challenges and drawbacks of using paddle egress systems, particularly in high-traffic areas like New York City's Grand Central Terminal. She highlighted the system's lack of code compliance, reliance on battery backup, and potential for impeding traffic flow. Also, she pointed out the need for proper installation of the system and the potential for service and maintenance issues. She suggested alternative solutions, such as using a 3'-0" by 7'-0" door, and emphasized the importance of considering fire safety over cost.

Horizontal Fire Shutter System

Christina discussed a horizontal fire shutter system that closes on a tabletop plane, used to change the configuration of an atrium to a two-floor common spaces. He explained that this system eliminates the need for smoke evacuation and 1-hour fire barrier construction, resulting in significant cost savings. She emphasized the importance of considering how these systems perform in actual fire events, sharing examples of their durability and discussing potential challenges such as water accumulation on horizontal shutters.

Summary

Christina Keegan concluded the presentation by reviewing the unique features and benefits of using McKeon Door Company products. She indicated her pleasure to share information with Bronx Chapter members and encouraged members to contact her anytime with questions or if she could be of further assistance in designing a fire door system in any of their projects. Her contact information is;

Christina Keegan
Architectural Marketing
McKEON Door East
44 Sawgrass Drive, Bellport, New York 11713 USA
D. 631-466-5597 O. 631-803-3513
www.McKeonDoor.com

2. Adoption of Minutes

Bob Esnard, secretary began the meeting with an overview of the April 2025 minutes and introduced this month's meeting agenda. The March 2025 meeting minutes were posted on the screen for review. As there were no comments on the minutes, a motion to adopt the March 2025 meeting minutes was made by Tony Freda, seconded by Julian Misiurski and unanimously approved.

3. Schedule for Next Meetings

The schedule of the next meeting was discussed, and it was emphasized that the most important thing that needed to be done at today's meeting, was a discussion of the upcoming Chapter Awards Event; Reviewing the upcoming schedule of monthly meetings, also, highlighting specific dates for meetings, as by the time this month's minutes will be published, the chapter's annual May award ceremony will have already taken place, on May 1, 2025.

In addition, the next formal meeting will be June 26th, after which, unless there is some urgent need, there usually is a brief summer break from monthly meetings. After June's meeting, the following meeting will be on September 18th two months later.

Therefore, the proposed next meeting dates are;

May 1, 2025,	Award Event 6:00PM- (In person) 150 E. 58th St, 5th Floor, Carlisle Floors, New York, NY
June 26, 2025,	6:00PM– (Virtual)
September 18, 2025,	6:00PM– (Virtual)

4. Chapter Committees

Sara Djazayeri outlined the May 1, 2025, Bronx Chapter annual Award Event, which will replace the May monthly chapter meeting. She shared on screen the invitation to the Student Competition and the Empowerment Grant Event. Sara explained that the event venue and date had been confirmed. She is expecting a good number of attendees. This year unfortunately, the venue only had availability on May 1st, which is early compared to previous years. This created a conflict with the timeline of the Student Competition since the judging will not be completed by May 1st. Therefore, the Chapter awards will be granted instead of one in two Events;

- 1st -The Bronx Chapter Event on May 1st will include **Empowerments Grants** awards and awarding **Certificates of Participation** for all 14 students, entered in the competition.
- 2nd - on May 14th at the Bronx Borough Hall Rotunda where the **Student Competition's** First and Second Place winners will be announced.

Empowerment Grant

Sara indicated that empowerment grant awards will be a bit different than in past years. Three years ago, the chapter began the Empowerment Program with CCNY. This year we reached out to the 6 Architectural schools in New York City. Five schools, Cooper Union, Columbia, Pratt and CCNY participated. There are a total of 6 students who will be granted Empowerment Grants of $1,000 each, as well as award certificates. Sara also confirmed that the chapter's budget for these grants was the same as in 2024. This was possible as the chapter had a new sponsor as well as a chapter member, Bryan Zelnik's generous donation of $1,500 towards the grants, in memory of his father Martin and Simon, his grandfather, both former members/officers of the chapter. Sara concluded by thanking Bryan again for reaching out the schools, following through with the process of selecting the awardees and his perseverance and financial assistance in support of Bronx Architectural students.

Appendix - I AIA – Bronx Awards Event

Student Competition

The Student Competition project will be for the redevelopment of a vacant "Old" Bronx Borough Courthouse, in the Melrose neighborhood is proceeding on schedule. This Beaux-Arts style building will be repurposed by the students for public use, to have this building become an asset for the neighborhood and the Bronx. Due to the scheduling conflict, Sara expects the jury/selection process and public selection announcement to be in a second event on the afternoon of Wednesday May 14th. The jury selection of the First and Second place designs and the award presentation is only two days apart; a question was raised, of how the checks could be written, and then presented and delivered to the winner? Michael Goldblum, who has been wonderfully coordinating this chapter effort, then graciously volunteered to get the names of the winners to Ken Koons Jr., the chapter Treasurer on the selection day and on the next day, pick them up and personally present the awards that afternoon at the May 14th event. Sara and the board warmly thanked Michael for his commitment and for doing such a good job!

Appendix - II AIA – Student Competition Awards

5. DOB – Update

Tony Freda who is the Chapter's representative to the "Architects' Council of New York"(ACNY), reported on a new initiative of ACNY, to form a "not for profit" foundation composed of architects, engineers, interest groups, including the ACNY, a component engineering group, and a few other businesspeople who are in the zoning and building code industry. This new organization is called the "Architects and Engineering Foundation. Its basic purpose is to educate architects and engineers on NYC zoning, building codes, as well as the Department of Buildings(DOB) regulations and filing procedures. Most interesting, is that the DOB may be hiring this foundation to teach its own plan examiners and other government agency officials, about zoning and building codes. This is directly due to the lack of funding the DOB has been able to allocate to teach its own people. Therefore, this is need is primarily for the regulatory government agencies, not **only** for us, the private sector architects and engineers. Tony indicated that it will be very interesting to see how this effort is realized. ACNY voted to request seed money from each of the components of the new foundation to contribute $2,000 each. The contributions would not be from AIA Chapters but from the ACNY as an organization, to which we contribute. The concept is that if the when foundation creates a "training" course the participants/students; government or industry professionals would pay for the training as is currently done for professional CEU education credits. Therefore, there should be income that can sustain the operations of the foundation.

Tony also discussed the recent DOB, "in person" presentation in Brooklyn concerning the Cities new housing initiative titled **The City of Yes**. That presentation and others are and will be, accessible on "YouTube" videos for free. To access these videos, search for the "The City of Yes" and you'll find the seminar presentations. The first one is available now, and the next one will be posted online and will publicize what presentation are done recently.

Tony ended his update report by pointing out the Bronx Chapter did not pay our ACNY fee/dues. The Bronx Chapter was the only ACNY member in this situation. Ken Koons Jr. our Treasurer indicated that after last month's meeting, he did send a check which they should shortly receive and should make it **easier** for Tony.

6. AIA Bronx 2025 Chapter Spring Tour - Norwood/Urban Planning

AIA National approved the chapters' Spring 2025 Norwood/Urban Planning Tour. Roger McCormick, The Director of Education for The Bronx County Historical Society, and Julian Misiurski will lead the walking tour of Norwood, Bronx, NY. The Tour will chronical Norwood's place in the Bronx and New York City Urban

Planning as well as the physical investment and the growth of Norwood will be reviewed. Included will be how historical, architectural and infrastructure construction impact residential areas, the regional railroad, roads, and reservoirs within and adjacent to the Norwood neighborhood. The tour will take place Saturday **June 28, 2025** at 10:00AM- 12:00PM and will be worth 2 CEU credits. The Tour will start and end at the Valentine-Varian House, 3266 Bainbridge Avenue, in the Bronx, NY 1067.
Appendix III - AIA Bronx 2025 Spring Tour - Norwood/Urban Planning

7. New Business
AIA 2025 National Convention – June 4-7, Boston

Everyone was reminded about the this years' national AIA convention. Chapter members who plan on attending should let Sara Djazayeri or Bob Esnard know as soon as possible to coordinate attendance and be counted as official representatives of the Bronx Chapter. On the first page of all our chapter newsletters under **Events and Education Opportunities** , as well as, on our AIA National's website there are notices with an invitation for all AIA members to attend the Annual AIA Convention in June. When registering they will be able cast votes at the appropriate; caucuses, meetings and have our unique Bronx voice be heard as part of convention discussions. This convention is in Boston, not too far from us. It is important for those architects who have never attended a AIA Convention, to experience the "professional" comradery and interaction that takes place when architects from across the country get together to discuss/deal with the day to day, as well as the development and construction issues that face us all. Members are urged to attend!

S**AIA Bronx Proposed Mentorship Series**
Sara had proposed at last month's meeting, organizing mentorship sessions for AIA Bronx members. Unfortunately we did not get a chance to fully discuss or work on it. The idea was reviewed again and the proposal is attached below again for member's consideration. Her thought is to develop a quarterly series possibly with guest speakers to discussion on job-related issues.

It was suggested that we should work on it again and the issue was concluded with a request for members who are interested on working on the mentorship series could contact by email Sara at info@studio360's.cm or Bob at; at; besnard@dzco.com
Appendix III– AIA Bronx Proposed Mentorship Series

8. Adjournment
As no additional new business was presented or issues raised, a motion to adjourn was agreed to and the meeting concluded with a reminder that the next meeting will be virtual on June 26th.

Therefore, the **April 2025** meeting ended at **7:34PM.**

II Next meeting:
Thursday, June 26, 2025 @ 6:00PM
Virtual - ZOOM meeting link
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9948476766

IV Appendix

Appendix I

AIA – Bronx Awards Event Page 8

Appendix II

AIA – Student Competition Awards Page 9

Appendix III

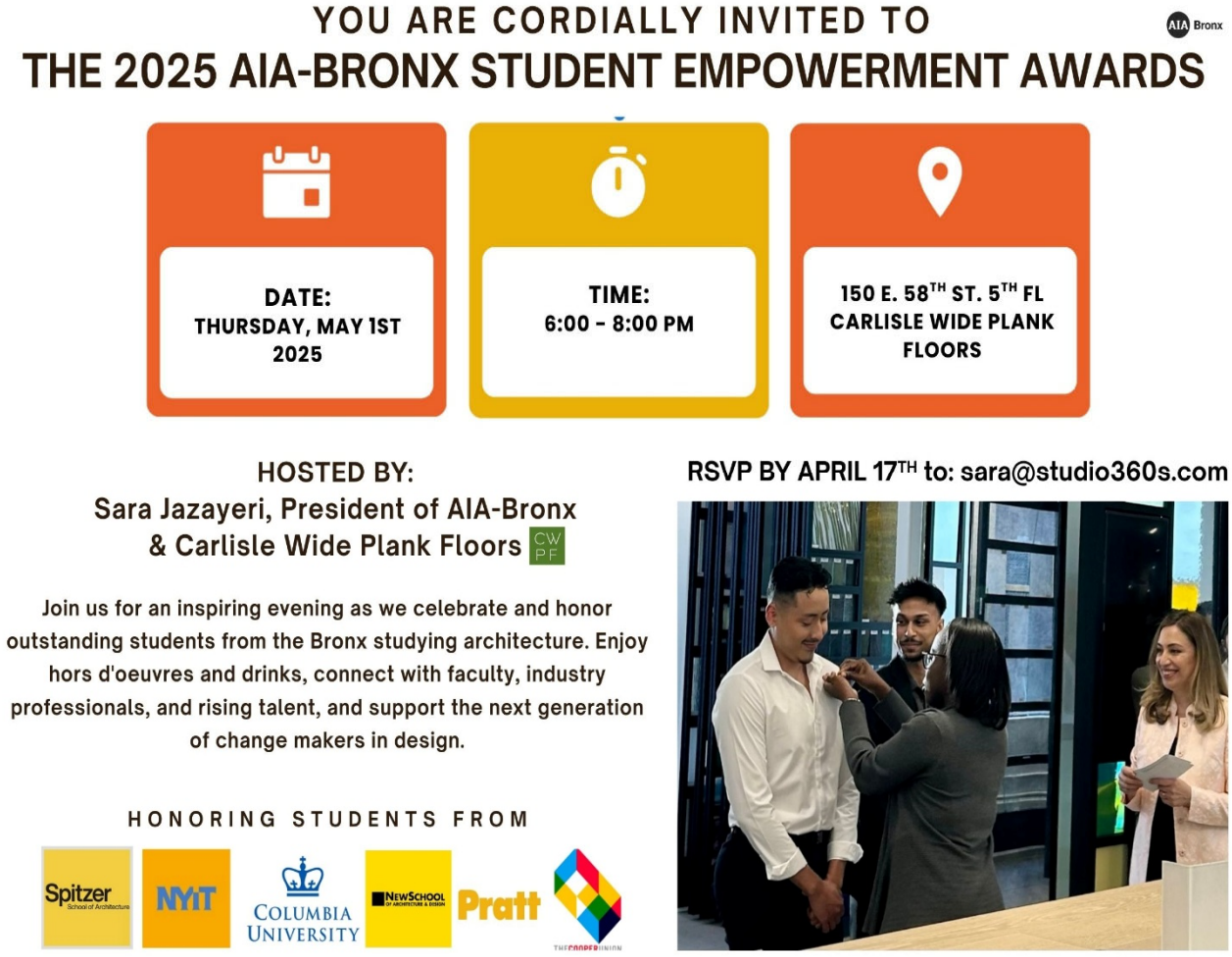
AIA Bronx 2025 Spring Tour - Norwood/Urban Planning Page 10

Appendix IV

AIA Bronx Proposed Mentorship Series Page 11

Appendix I

AIA – Bronx Awards Event



Note after April 2025 meeting meet at the AIA Bronx Awards Event was held on May 1, 2025 and the following six students received an Empowerment Grant

Andrew Lin	**Columbia University**
Nadeysh Ojasmar	**Columbia University**
Dayanara Rodríguez	**CCNY**
Helena Uceda	**Cooper Union**
Brianna Martinez-Burns	**Pratt**
Yulissa Luciano	**NYIT**

Appendix II

AIA – Student Competition Awards

Note after April 2025 meeting meet at the AIA Bronx Awards Event was held on May 14, 2025 and the following CCNY Studio Competition First Place and Second Place Designs were awarded to;

First Place

Noor Al Muzahid
Taseen Rahman
Jaydin Parker

Second Place:

Elan Grabarnik

Appendix III

AIA Bronx 2025 Spring Tour - Norwood/Urban Planning

Norwood/Urban Planning

Course Number: AIA Bx19
This course is **2 LU|HSWs.**

About this Course

The Director of Education for The Bronx County Historical Society, and a Bronx AIA Architect will lead a walking tour of Norwood, Bronx, NY, illustrating its' place in the Bronx, New York City, and Urban Planning. Included are how historical, architectural and infrastructure construction impacted residential areas, the public transportation, roads, and reservoirs within the Norwood neighborhood of urban America. Urban planning, public and private investment within the context of the growth of Norwood will be reviewed. The area grew from the bridges connecting Manhattan in the 18th century, as well as the construction of the railroad, Albany Post Road and Boston Post Road connecting New York City to Albany and Boston. The major roads and Parkways through the neighborhood such as; Gun Rill Road and the Mosholu Parkway, give easy access to the Bronx's regional parks; Pelham Bay Parkway, Mosholu Parkway, Crotona Parkway and Bronx River Parkway in or adjacent to Norwood.

Tour Specifics

Date	Saturday - **June 28, 2025**
Time	10:00AM – 12:00PM
Start and End	Valentine-Varian House 3266 Bainbridge Avenue, The Bronx, NY 1067
Price	Architect Member **$20** Associate Member **$20** Non-Member **$30**
Register	Bob Esnard **besnard@dzco.com**

Appendix IV

AIA Bronx Proposed Mentorship Series

AIA-Bronx Mentorship Series

Empowering the Next Generation of AIA Architects

AIA Bronx

The **AIA-Bronx Mentorship Series** is an open and transparent conversation for all **architecture students and emerging professionals.** This program provides real-world insights into the profession through candid discussions led by experienced architects.

How It Works

📅 **Quarterly Sessions (for now!)** – One session every **3 months**, expanding to **weekly** next year.
🔧 **Guest Architect Speakers** – Each session features a different mentor sharing insights via **Zoom.**
🎓 **Diverse Career Paths** – Learn about traditional and non-traditional roles in architecture.
💬 **Open Conversations** – No lectures—just honest discussions where **everyone participates!**

What Makes This Different?

- **Total Transparency** – Real talk about **salaries, career struggles, and industry secrets.**
- **Practical Advice** – Learn how to navigate challenges like firm culture, client relations, and salary negotiation.
- **Problem-Solving Focus** – Hear how seasoned architects tackle real-life issues in the field.
- **Community-Driven** – A safe space for students and early-career architects to ask anything.

Get Involved!

🙌 **Open to ALL architecture students, emerging professionals, and architects.**

🚀 **Join the conversation. Learn from real experiences. Build your future.**

📩 **Stay updated—follow AIA-Bronx Instagram for session details!**

The End